

**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING**

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH AND SPORT

**POLICY
ON
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

YEAR 2018

FOREWORD

The education system in Cambodia was completely destroyed in the late 1970s. Later, through the concerted efforts of the Royal Government of Cambodia with supports from development partners and international communities, the education sector in Cambodia has progressed significantly. Many primary schools have been built to meet the educational needs of children in their localities. At the same time, lower secondary schools have been established down to commune level. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport has developed and implemented Education Strategic Plan (ESP) to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Special Education Office was established in 2000 under the Primary Education Department with the major responsibilities in providing educational services to children with disabilities, children from ethnic minorities, children from poor families, girls and other disadvantaged children. In 2016, the Special Education Office was upgraded to become Special Education Department with wider scope covering inclusive education for persons with Special Needs from kindergarten to higher education.

In 2008, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport developed a Policy on Education for Children with Disabilities and has now updated it to the Policy on Inclusive Education. The goal of the Policy on Inclusive Education is to equip persons with special needs with knowledge, skills and attitude to become active citizens and to be able to live in harmony in the society. The Policy covers wider scope from kindergarten to higher education and from public to private educational institutions. Moreover, the Policy on Inclusive Education responds to the regional and global trends while reflecting the educational and cultural contexts of Cambodia.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport would like to convey sincere appreciation to all relevant government ministries, institutions and development partners who have supported and continue to provide and improve quality education services especially inclusive education for persons with special needs.

Phnom Penh,
Minister of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport

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1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, there are over 1 billion persons with disabilities of which 200 million are facing difficulties in their livelihoods according to the National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018. In the next few years, disability issues will become a growing concern because the disability rate keeps increasing as a result of chronic diseases such as diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular, stroke, etc. This requires increasing attention from all of us to seek immediate solutions.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) states that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. On 13 December 2016, the United Nations (UN) adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy or exercise of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field on an equal basis with others.

In Asia and the Pacific, it is estimated that there are about 650 million persons with disabilities, accounted for 15% of the total population, who are being ignored or excluded. In response to this issue, on 29 May 2013, the Ministerial Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities 2013-2022 adopted the Incheon Strategy “Make the Right Real” and Framework for Action to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. The strategy sets out a vision for Education 2030 for sustainable development and has placed an emphasis on inclusive and equitable education to ensure equal opportunities for all regardless of sex, age, color, race, ethnic minority, language, religion, political view, birth or disability especially vulnerable people. The Declaration notes “leaving no one behind.”

Cambodia has been through civil war and genocidal regime that has left many negative consequences specifically the increase in numbers of persons with disabilities. Also, there are Cambodian people with disabilities that have been caused by mines and unexploded ordnances left from the civil war. Besides this, other disabilities are caused by traffic accidents, work accidents, pre-natal and post-natal problems, aging and others. According to the Census Report 2013 by the Ministry of Planning, there were 301,629 persons with disabilities in 2013, which accounts for 2.06 per cent of the total population of 14,676,591. Among the total number of persons with disabilities, 157,008 persons are male, (52.05 per cent), while 144,622 persons are female (47.95 per cent). The number of children with disabilities aged between 0 to 14 years old stands at 32,056, which is 10.63 per cent of the total disability population. The data from these can be used as a foundation to determine realistic actions and necessary investments for all persons with disabilities.

The Royal Government of Cambodia has set out the Rectangular Strategy, Phase III, in which the Rectangle 4, Side 3, Priority 4 states that further implementing the national policy on disability through Disability Action Council (DAC), strengthening the implementation of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and promoting the enhancement of the rights and welfare of the disabled persons to align with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018 sets out 10 strategic objectives focusing on poverty reduction of persons with disabilities; the

provision of equal access to quality health services as well as physical and mental rehabilitation; and justice intervention services to reduce elimination, discrimination, abuse, violence and exploitation of persons with disabilities. The Strategic Plan also seeks to promote participation of persons with disabilities in expressing their opinions; to promote access to information and communication for persons with disabilities; to ensure gender equality and empowerment for women and children with disabilities; and to strengthen and expand cooperation at international level.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport implemented a Policy on Education for Children with Disabilities (2008 to 2018) to ensure equal opportunities for all children and youth so that they have access to basic education in both formal and non-formal structure, without bias in terms of living standards, gender, geography, physical appearance and ethnic group. As a result, 54,838 children and youths with disabilities (22,621 female), have enrolled in school in the school year 2017-2018.

Article 74 of the Kingdom of Cambodia's Constitutional Law stipulates that, "the State shall provide assistance to the disabled persons and to the families of combatants who sacrificed their lives for the nation." Article 38 of the Education Law also states that, "the state encourages and promotes to have special education for disabled persons and outstanding learners who are gifted and/or talented. Special Education provided for outstanding learners appropriate to their intelligence and talent and provided a suitable education for disabled persons." On top of this, Article 27 to 32 of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities promotes rights of learners with disabilities to have access to education.

To comply with the Constitution, Education Law, Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other related policies, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport has developed the Policy on Inclusive Education. The Policy sets out vision, goal, objectives, strategies and implementation plan to promote rights of persons with disabilities so that they have access to inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities.

2. VISION

All persons with special needs have rights to inclusive and equitable quality education and opportunities for life-long learning.

3. GOAL

The goal of the Policy on Inclusive Education is to educate all persons with special needs to have knowledge, skills and attitude so that they are able to contribute to the development of society.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Policy on Inclusive Education are as the following:

- 4.1. To ensure early identification, assessment and immediate intervention;
- 4.2. To provide access to inclusive and equitable quality education and life-long learning opportunities;
- 4.3. To build capacity and enhance professional development for all teachers as well as school management;

4.4. To raise awareness and promote participation.

5. STRATEGIES

To achieve the above-mentioned goal and objectives, the Policy entails the following strategies:

5.1. Develop legal framework and mechanism

- Develop legal letters and mechanisms to effectively implement the policy;
- Promote and enforce the implementation of policy, legal framework and related existing and new mechanisms;
- Develop action plans with specific activities, time, resources and responsibilities;
- Disseminate the policy and action plan for implementation.

5.2. Develop inter-ministerial collaboration for early identification

- Work in collaboration with relevant ministries and institutions in early identification by using an officially approved identification toolkit;
- Work in collaboration with relevant institutions and agencies to provide assessment and immediate intervention for all person with special needs;
- Identify and assess for types of disabilities; and provide assistive devices and rehabilitation services to ensure persons with special needs have access to education.

5.3. Develop a robust data collection and information system

- Update Educational Management Information System (EMIS) to incorporate data on all learners with Special Education Needs into the system;
- Collaborate with Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training (MoLVT) to incorporate data of persons with special needs receiving vocational training;
- Collaborate with Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY) to incorporate data of persons with special needs both in and outside the education system;
- Regularly analyze data to identify barriers to education and resources required to educate all persons with special needs;
- Regularly update a database of specialist agencies who provide services on early identification, assessment and rehabilitation.

5.4. Provide access to inclusive and equitable quality education

- Ensure the provision of school registration services for learners with special needs and enable them to receive appropriate education;
- Ensure that the national curriculum and textbooks respond to the diverse needs of all persons with special needs;
- Ensure that special education program is compatible with the national curriculum and that textbooks are available for use in all public and private educational institutions;
- Develop inclusive education program for learners who have intellectual disability;
- Introduce flexible teaching methodologies in the national curriculum that are student-centered, participatory pedagogy and culturally appropriate;
- Provide adequate teaching and learning materials to meet individual needs of all persons with special educational needs;

- Develop Individual Education Plan for all persons with special needs that identifies their learning and support needs;
- Encourage and support all educational research activities of all persons with special needs;
- Develop a fair assessment system and introduce flexibility to enable all persons with special needs to participate in the exam by providing them “reasonable accommodation” explained in the Glossary;
- Develop Integrated Classes in all study grade levels to provide age-appropriate learning for all persons with special needs;
- Develop social assistance schemes to support persons with special needs;
- Include learners and university students with special needs into mainstream classes where possible;
- Introduce sporting services, arts, and other services appropriate to the needs of learners with special needs.

5.5. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for girls and women with special needs

- Educate parents and community people about the benefits of education for girls and women;
- Hold special promotional activities regarding rights to education for girls and women;
- Provide education on health, safety and protection to girls and women with special educational needs;
- Take appropriate and immediate measures to protect girls and women from violence, human trafficking and all forms of abuses;
- Encourage girls and women to participate in decision making in their community;
- Ensure that girls and women enroll in school and are included in activities in both school and community;
- Ensure the provision of vocational training, life skills and sports to girls and women with disabilities;
- Provide scholarships to study both locally and abroad for girls and women with disabilities.

5.6. Develop a country-based Universal Design Standards for the construction of all school buildings and good sanitation

- Ensure that the country-based universal design standards are included in the Quality Control Guidelines;
- Encourage that all educational institutions have proper bathrooms which meet the needs of all persons with special needs;
- Ensure that necessary changes are made to existing structures that do not meet the country-based Universal Design Standards;
- Promote the construction of dormitories for learners with special needs;
- Ensure that there are libraries, labs, and standardized materials responding to the needs of all learners with special needs;
- Ensure that sporting facilities, environment and access to schools and classrooms are appropriate to the needs of persons with special needs.

5.7. Build capacity for teachers and school management

- Give priority to learners with disabilities in taking an entrance exam to become teachers in the government;
- Train teachers to teach all persons with special educational needs at all levels of education;
- Provide additional benefits to teachers who are qualified in teaching students with disabilities;
- Build teacher capacities regarding inclusive education to keep pace with the advancement of technology and globalization;
- Improve pedagogy on disability for pre-service and in-service teacher training;
- Develop skills of teachers to meet the diverse needs of persons with special needs;
- Develop pre-service and in-service training for teachers.

5.8. Raise awareness on the Policy on Inclusive Education

- Develop a media strategy at national, provincial and district levels using different tactics;
- Develop a guideline on good practices for all educational institutions to use during school enrollment campaigns;
- Collaborate with private educational institutions to ensure that all persons with special needs are able to enroll in schools;
- Ensure the provision of rights and special support in the learning process to all persons with special needs.

5.9. Strengthen knowledge, roles, responsibilities and participation of all stakeholders

- Raise awareness on rights to education for all to persons with special educational needs;
- Publish this policy document in braille;
- Strengthen knowledge, roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders to implement this policy;
- Promote and encourage parents and communities to understand about the impact of disability and share information and experiences to support persons with disabilities and poor families who have children with disabilities so that they have access to education;
- Establish Social Equity Fund for schools to get more funds in order to support persons with special needs.

6. ACTION PLAN

To achieve the above-mentioned strategies, the Ministry has to focus on the following activities:

6.1. Organizational Mechanism

- Re-define Working Group on Children with Disabilities at MoEYS level;
- Re-define Working Group on Children with Disabilities at the Provincial Department of Education, Youth and Sport (PoE) and District of Education, Youth and Sport (DoE) and school levels;
- Establish a Social Equity Fund to support persons with special needs. This fund should be managed by special committee in order to raise funds especially in pagodas and restaurants.

6.2. Legal Framework

- A Working Group for Children with Disabilities shall be led by the minister of MoEYS. Members of the Working Group on Children with Disabilities shall be appointed by MoEYS Prakas;
- Working Group on Children with Disabilities at the provincial level shall be led by Directors of PoE. Working Group on Children with Disabilities at district level shall be led by DoE Chief. Working Group on Children with Disabilities at school level shall be led by school principals. Members of the three Working Groups shall be appointed by nomination letters from PoE director, DoE chief and school principal respectively;
- Social Equity Fund Committee should be appointed by MoEYS Prakas.

6.3. Financial Support

In order to finance the mechanism and activities in each strategy, MoEYS needs funds from the following sources:

- MoEYS;
- Development partners and donors;
- Social Equity Fund; and
- Other sources.

6.4. Human Resource Development

To ensure the quality of implementation of the Policy on Inclusive Education, the Ministry has to focus on building capacity for Working Groups on Children with Disabilities at national, provincial, district, commune, and school levels; and on building capacity for teachers at National Institute of Special Education (NISE) so that they can provide training courses on this subject to other teachers at all educational institutions.

6.5. Project Implementation

Develop a medium and long-term Action Plan to implement the Policy on Inclusive Education by consulting with stakeholders in order to gain support and to ensure the effectiveness of the policy implementation. This plan shall reflect the vision of policy and mutually supplement other policies. The Action Plan for inclusive education shall cover the scope from kindergarten to higher education.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

To effectively implement the Policy on Inclusive Education with quality, a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system needs to be developed and proposes for the improvement of policy implementation by focusing on the following:

- The objectives and 10 strategies of the policy;
- Indicators in the Implementation Plan;
- Achievements compared to the pre-defined objectives and indicators;
- Benefits received after schooling.

8. CONCLUSION

The Policy on Inclusive Education sets out vision, goal, objectives and strategies for education for persons with special needs, which is the roadmap for them to receive education and gain knowledge, skills and attitude to become skilled citizens so that they are able to improve their livelihoods and contribute to social development.

The successful implementation of the policy requires human, financial and material resources, which are indispensable factors.

The Ministry of Education Youth and Sport hopes and believes that relevant departments, development partners, parents, communities, public and private educational institutions and all stakeholders will involve in promoting, circulating, supporting, and successfully and effectively implementing this policy.

GLOSSARY

Reasonable Accommodation: refers to the modification and adjustment of places, facilities or assistive devices to ensure that persons with special needs can fully participate in teaching and learning process.

Inclusive Education (IE): is a dynamic process of addressing and responding positively to the diversity needs of individual and groups through participating in learning, cultures, and communities and reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education. It involves changes, modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies that include all persons in education system. It is a process that helps expand the education system responsibility in delivering education services to all learners.

Person with Special Needs: refers to all persons with disabilities who need additional supports on special teaching methods in their learning.

Persons who are Gifted and/or Talented: are those who have one or more abilities developed to a level significantly higher than their same age peers. Gifted persons excel in academic subject. Talented persons excel in those skills that require vision spatial skills or practical skills such as art, design, music, dance and performing arts. They come under persons with special needs if they have other needs that hinders in their learning.

Special Educational Needs: is an education system that is designed to facilitate the learning of individual who, for a wide variety of reasons, requires additional supports and adaptive pedagogical methods in order to participate and meet learning objectives in an educational program. Reasons may include, but not limited to, disadvantages in physical, behavioral, intellectual, language, culture, migration, living on the streets, poverty, emotional and social capacities. Educational program in special need education may follow a similar curriculum as that offered in the parallel and regular system, however, they take the individual's particular needs into account by providing specific resources (e.g specially trained personnel, equipment or space) and if appropriate modified educational content or learning objectives.

Inclusive Class: refers to a class that includes all children in education system both formal and non-formal, without any limitation due to race, behavior, physical, intellectual, society status, language, culture, religion or other specific criteria.

Integrated Class: refers to a separate class for only learners with disabilities conducted in formal schools. Commonly, learners with disabilities such as hearing difficulties or intellectual disabilities are put in the same class to make it easier to teach. Inside the integrated class, learners with disabilities will receive special education services such as how to use braille or sign language from well-trained teachers as well as having chances to communicate with other children who are not disabled. Once they received all of these necessary skills such as reading and writing in braille, persons with disabilities can transfer to study in normal class if there is an availability of well-trained teachers or that learners with disabilities can continue to receive special services there.

Individual Education Plan (IEP): refers to a mechanism that responds to different needs of individual and groups, because the learning growth of children with special needs requires their teacher to have a plan to constantly monitor and evaluate the student learning progress. IEP is an extra action plan of teacher's lesson plan to identify the children's learning needs and to find different methodologies to help them based on their individual needs. At the end of the year, teachers should review the plan to determine if the used methodologies are effective, the pre-defined objectives are met and what needs to be improved.

Disability: refers to the impairment or complete loss of parts of body, intellectual or mental that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis.

Equity: refers to the provision of services that responds to the diverse needs of individual or group. In terms of education, equity occurs when learners with special needs get extra supports and appropriate coordination so that they are able to enroll in school and catch up with the rest of their peers.

Special Education Class or School: refers to a school solely for persons with special needs. The examples of this type of school include a school that only teaches students with autism or a school that teaches only blind students or students with low vision.

Assistive Devices: refers to equipment aimed at reducing the effects of children with disabilities. For example, wheelchairs or crutches are for children with mobility difficulties. Magnifying glasses is for children with low vision.