

### Handbook on best practices in Africa & Asia:

## Improving disabled students' inclusion within Catholic universities



Under the direction of

Dr. François Mabille, Secretary General of IFCU Dr. Montserrat Alom, Director of CIRAD



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## **01 INTRODUCTION**

## **01 INTRODUCTION**

### 01.1.

## Towards more inclusive Catholic higher education institutions

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) adopted in 2015 are commonly considered as values and principles that need to be achieved by every country. Among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, SDG 4 is entitled to "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". "Inclusive" and "equitable" refer to marginalized communities and their access to education: it includes migrants and refugees, children and youth facing poverty, women, and people with disabilities among others.

Economic and social precariousness encountered in a number of African and Asian countries creates unfavourable conditions for the inclusion of people with disabilities. Indeed, disability is highly linked to poverty and marginalization: it is potentially both a cause and a consequence.

According to the last Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM Report) of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) released in 2020 and focusing on Inclusion, children and youth with disabilities are the biggest victims of exclusion around the world. Exclusion faced by people with disabilities can be the consequence of two different factors which, combined, increase even more the risk of being excluded in some ways: the type of disability itself, but also an unfriendly environment such as the lack of schools, technological tools, health and sports facilities adapted to certain types of disabilities. The Concept Note for the 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report on inclusion emphasizes four different types of exclusion: physical, social, psychological, and/or systematic (such as financial or documentation requirements). Inclusion of people with disabilities needs to be addressed by different stakeholders, at the international level: not only international organizations and States providing the legal framework for creating a more inclusive society for people with disabilities, but also non-profits acting on the field (including associations of persons with disabilities), families, academics and researchers providing and sharing knowledge, as well as the business world, creating more inclusive employment policies and adapting their practices to the various types of disabilities they have to face.

One relevant legal framework at the international level is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), highlighting the responsibility for States parties and regional integration organizations having signed and ratified the Convention to ensure inclusive education for all ages. The CRPD counts 181 ratifications, and 96 States and regional integration organizations have ratified the Optional Protocol so far. More specifically, article 24 outlines the right of persons with disabilities to education, the need to ensure that they are not excluded from the general education system based on their disabilities (including "general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning", based on article 24-5). They must have access to education without any discrimination and with equal opportunity. Through the enforcement of national laws. States parties should ensure an accessible education environment in terms of facilities, an adapted training offer, and should provide a frame for further awareness on disability related issues. The GEM Report also highlights the need for teachers to be trained and given pedagogical support to help children and students with special needs, including people with disabilities. The report eventually emphasizes that more teachers with disabilities should be hired so that children and students would be aware of disability issues earlier, thus creating a positive change in the community.

Progress in inclusive education needs to be assessed by updated and accurate data. Gathering data at an international level is a significant challenge. In its latest publication, the GEM Report stated that there is an important lack of data regarding individuals with disabilities, on the classification of different types of disabilities, and the needs resulting from these types of disabilities. The previously stated GEM report focusing on inclusion outlines that only 21 countries have living and ongoing surveys gathering information on disability and chronic illness, out of 86 reviewed countries.

Another encountered challenge is the difference of understanding regarding definitions of inclusive education, disability and classification of disabilities, and other related notions. Sometimes, these definitions vary from central to local administration in one and the same State, thus creating a gap in understanding issues as well as in developing actions in response to these issues. Eventually, these challenges also have an impact on monitoring actions.

Thus, there is not only a need but also a responsibility for international governmental organizations, non-profits, as well as higher education institutions (HEIs) to work on general concepts and raise awareness, towards a better collection of data and more adapted responses. Over the last three years, IFCU has carried out a flagship project on "University social responsibility", under which has been developed a reference framework covering inclusiveness policies and practices within Catholic higher education institutions.

### • Elements on the African continent:

While the World Bank estimated 15,3% of the world population had moderate or severe disabilities in 2011<sup>1</sup>, it gives the exact same estimation number for the Africa region. Finding accurate data on higher education specifically might be difficult. However, looking at the number of children with

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>WorldBank(2011).*WorldReportonDisability*,p.30.Availableonline:http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/665131468331271288/pdf/627830WP0World00PUBLIC00BOX361491B0.pdf

disabilities attending school leads us to understand that the proportion of students with disabilities able to have access to higher education is generally low. Indeed, according to the African Report on Children with Disabilities published in 2014, less than 10% of children with disabilities receive a certain form of education, and only 2% of the children with disabilities attend school in Africa<sup>2</sup>.

At the regional level, the African Union adopted in January 2018 the "Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa". While article 4 of the Protocol is focusing on States' duties, article 16 specifically highlights the right to education on an equal basis than others. At the regional, national as well as local levels, the assessment of developed actions and progress must consider the specific context of low-income countries. Indeed, according to FIRAH (International Foundation of Applied Disability Research) and as presented in its report focusing on North and West Africa<sup>3</sup>, there is a social discrimination towards people with disabilities that has been noticed both at the private (family) and public levels, besides an economic challenge due to the lack of communication and information technologies.

Facing an unfavourable social and economic context, there is a need for families, non-profits, academics, companies and public sector to work together on awareness raising on challenges and difficulties encountered by people with disabilities in their everyday life, including at school.

### • Elements on the Asian and Pacific region:

In Asia and the Pacific, around 690 million persons would be living with disabilities, based on the report provided by the High-Level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> ACPF (2014). *The African Report on Children with Disabilities: Promising starts and persisting challenges*. Addis Ababa. The African Child Policy Forum (ACPF), p. 67.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Togo, Ivory Coast, Libya, Mali, Algeria, Morocco and Senegal.

of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities Report, held by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Several factors could lead to an increase of the number with disabilities in the region: population ageing, climate-related disasters (significantly important and prevalent in the region), and poor working conditions in certain countries among others. Even though 43 out of the 50 countries have ratified the CRPD, only 12 of these States have implemented anti-discrimination legislation to protect people with disabilities. Being more and more aware of disability-related issues in the last past years, governments and non-profits/organizations of persons with disabilities of the region worked together at the regional level and developed the Incheon Strategy to "Make the Right Real", based on the principles established in the CRPD.

Compared with the number of children attending primary school in Asia and the Pacific, the number of disabled children enrolled in secondary education drops by 52,7%. Therefore, children with disabilities will probably have less chance to have access to higher education, because a lot of them were not able to prior attend secondary school<sup>4</sup>. Conscious of the challenges faced by people with disabilities in accessing higher education, the Association of Southeast and East Asian Catholic Colleges and Universities (ASEACCU, regional association of the International Federation of Catholic Universities -IFCU- in Asia and the Pacific) decided to focus its 2017 annual meeting on "Catholic Educational Institutions and Inclusive Education: Transforming Spaces, Promoting Practices, Changing Minds». During the meeting, academics exchanged their views on inclusive education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> ESCAP (2017). Report of the High-Level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities. 2013-2022, Beijing.

### 01.2.

## IFCU project to improve accompaniment of disabled students

Addressing access to higher education for people with disabilities is a crucial issue for higher education institutions and, in particular, for Catholic HEIs in the light of the Church's humanistic values and intellectual tradition.

In this regard, IFCU launched an international project entitled "Towards an Inclusive Culture and Pedagogy" in 2014, with the aim of improving disabled students' access to Catholic HEIs in Latin America, Europe, Africa and Asia. Prior to the implementation of the project, IFCU worked jointly with the CRESGE (Research center of the Université Catholique de Lille, France) to establish a baseline survey of disability and higher education within IFCU member universities, and also non-members. Among numerous results on practices of universities, the study distinguished three different groups of universities regarding their ability to address the issue of disability in higher education: 1) Very advanced inclusion policy; 2) Draft or informal inclusion policy; and 3) Inclusion policy being weak or absent.

The first phase of the project, which took place in Latin America, involved different types of actions: interactive training sessions, coaching to participating universities, elaboration of inclusion plans, preparation of a bilingual comprehensive guide to design an inclusion plan, as well as the setting-up of an international observatory (dedicated website led by the Universidad Católica de Valencia, Spain). The project implemented in Europe (covering IFCU Eastern and Western European member institutions) consisted in the organization of a training meeting in Spain, together with training sessions and workshops, good practices sharing among participating universities, and study visits to two HEIs featuring advanced policies and practices in the field of inclusion (France, Belgium), including grants for participants from European Catholic universities to take part in later. As a customized strategy had to be developed when approaching each region, the actions developed in Africa and Asia were built on the following specific objectives:

Bringing the inclusion of disabled students at the centre of Catholic university's concerns in both Asia and Africa by the organization of two awareness-raising workshops in member institutions in 2018 (India and Ivory Coast), which brought together not only academics and students, but also practitioners and reached out to non-academic stakeholders in the spirit of a university-society partnership.

Improving university schemes by sharing good practices that make disabled students' access and stay within the institutions easier, mainly through a methodology that combined a questionnaire-based survey administered to all IFCU members in the two regions and documentary research leading to the preparation of the present handbook.

Building an international network covering Asia and Africa, as well, to exchange on methods and practices in the field, based on the expertise acquired since the very first phase of the project and on the International Observatory created in collaboration with the Valencia team in order to make the Catholic experts' community grow.

### Project implementation in Asia and Africa targeted the following types of actors:

Disabled students themselves as feedback received following the workshops organized jointly with member universities showed that students were sometimes refraining themselves from considering higher education because of their disabilities. Therefore, disabled students also need to be informed and aware of their rights, and of the different tools and facilities adapted to their type of disability. Students in general to promote inclusiveness, and to understand the concept of disability and the challenges disability induces in terms of access to higher education.



Disabled students' families to encourage their children, sometimes despite of a refraining social and cultural context.

University personnel (including heads of disability units), academics and teachers, so that they become more aware of the various difficulties encountered by disabled students. Thus, they can become familiar with different pedagogical tools and modalities and, in general, better deal with disabled students' concerns (psychological issues, disability-friendly facilities, mentoring systems, etc).

Heads of universities, who may bring systemic change (including material and physical facilities, management of courses for disabled students, training of trainers, hiring personnel trained specially to work with persons with disabilities, etc.)

**6** Non-governmental organizations (NGO) working jointly with universities and/or health services in order to promote access of disabled students to universities and to higher education in general. For instance, in Africa, the projects' workshop was jointly organized with "Humanity and Inclusion" (formally "International Handicap"), a very well-known NGO which agreed to be a future partner of African Catholic universities on this specific topic.

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Health services dedicated to disabled students, by providing specific information on their personal situation and disability.

### **Activity 1:**

### Organization of an awareness workshop in Asia (Christ 'deemed to be University', Bangalore, India)

In Asia, the International Centre for Research and Decision Support (CIRAD) worked jointly with the Association of Southeast and East Asian Catholic Colleges and Universities (ASEACCU) to move the project forward.

In 2017, the Association's General Assembly, dealing with the general topic of "Catholic Universities and Inclusive Education: Transforming Spaces, Promoting Practices, Changing Minds", included as one of its strands the issue of inclusive higher education.

Later, on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018, CIRAD organized, in collaboration with Christ (Deemed to be University) in Bangalore, a disabilityawareness workshop on university campuses. This encounter brought together different types of actors working on the inclusion of people with disabilities, and more specifically on their access to higher education. The workshop gathered 80 participants: academics (West Catholic University UCO-Angers; CHRIST Deemed to be University, Loyola Marymount University, St. Joseph's College), non-profits (Association for People with Disabilities), representatives of the public sector (National Institute for Empowerment of persons with Multiple Disabilities, State Commissioner for Disabilities Govt. of Karnataka), as well as representatives of the private sector (Dhvani Foundation), helping to set up projects on inclusive education.

### Seven topics were discussed during the workshop in India, through presentations and questions/answers sessions:

- Awareness-raising actions addressed to the university community;

- Understanding the concept of disability;

- Specific facilities for students with disabilities & physical facilities in universities;

- The socio-demographic profile of students with disabilities;

- The different types of accompaniment and educational tools to respond to certain types of disabilities;

- Difficulties encountered and ways to deal with students with disabilities;

- Fundraising to finance solutions adapted to different types of disability.

In addition to addressing the notion of "disability", experts highlighted the role of the university community in promoting and implementing awareness-raising actions. They emphasized that these actions should target university management staff, teachers, students and their families. The question of specific physical facilities for students with disabilities in universities was addressed, highlighting for instance the practices of Christ (Deemed to be University), as well as the different types of support and educational tools planned and adapted to certain types of disabilities. It was mentioned that such students could, for instance, be given special privileges like separate examination rooms, extra time, special question papers, scribes based on the nature of their disability ... The difficulties encountered in the conduct of these activities were put forward, as well as possible recommendations. Thus, the Centre for Counselling and Health Services of the Christ (Deemed to be University) reminded the importance of paying attention to the emotional and psychological state of these students, and the need to discuss and work with their parents. Christ (Deemed to be University) gave the example of students with disabilities who can get language training, leadership skills training, training in public speaking, or sessions to enhance their self-esteem and self-confidence.

### **Activity 2:**

### Organization of an awareness-raising workshop in Africa (Université Catholique d'Afrique de l'Ouest 'UCAO', Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso)

Together with the Catholic University of West Africa (UCAO) and more specifically its international Rectorate located in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), CIRAD set up a campus disability awareness-raising workshop on September 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The meeting convened various actors concerned by and working on the issue of access to higher education for people with disabilities: it gathered 20 participants, including academics (different geographic units of the Catholic University of West Africa, University of Ouagadougou I, University of Ouagadougou II), non-profits (Humanity and Inclusion, *Association des élèves et étudiants handicapés du Burkina, Union Nationale des Associations Burkinabé pour la Promotion des Aveugles et Malvoyants*) and public sector (Ministry of Women, National Solidarity and Family).

A wide range of topics related to the access to higher education for people with disabilities were covered. Eight topics were discussed during the workshop in Burkina Faso:

- Understanding of disability;
- Specificities of hosting students with disabilities in universities;
- Types of accompaniment for persons with disabilities;
- Disability and Accessibility;
- Awareness-raising actions addressed to the university community;

- Actions of Non-profits for helping students with disabilities in accessing higher education;

- Courses for students with visual disabilities in universities;
- Pedagogical adaptations for persons with visual disabilities.

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The focus was first on understanding the concept of disability, identifying barriers to accessing higher education, and students' special needs. Non-profits presented their work to promote access to higher education and to improve students' integration. Students' mobilization played a key role in some cases in Burkina Faso, particularly in public universities. Academic leaders shared the types of support offered within their institution: guidance, health, school life, with an emphasis on "Universal Design for Learning (UDL)". Hospitality in universities appeared to be a central issue, since it has a major impact on the social integration of students with disabilities. This encounter also was an opportunity to bring students together and share their testimonials with the participants.

In response to the difficulties addressed during the sessions, some recommendations were mentioned for a three-step awareness:

- Prior to the university course (communication strategy, establishment of specific commissions for disabled students);

- During the university course (setting up of accessible university buildings, presence of assistants adapted to the type of disability, adaptation of the duration of the training);

- Downstream from the university course (support for professional integration, making employment of disabled people easier in Catholic universities);

It was agreed that awareness and training should always be encouraged for students in general, teachers, staff and leaders of the university, associations involved in the university life, and for students with disabilities themselves. Following the meetings, there has been strong enthusiasm and hope regarding further actions (projects on the field, but also more in-depth training and tools provision, good practices exchange, research and publications) that could be developed on the topics raised during the sessions.

### 01.3.

### Why this handbook of good practices?

The International Federation of Catholic Universities is a network gathering around 230 higher education institutions from all over the world. Being a member of IFCU means to be part of and have access to a very rich and wide network in terms of knowledge, research, project management, training, capacity building, institutional and technical accompaniment, and good practices sharing.

The first step consists of defining what a "good practice" is. According to the publication "Making It Work" elaborated by Handicap International, a "good practice" can be defined through 5 different criteria<sup>5</sup>:

- a tangible and positive change has been observed after the practice has been implemented;
- the action that has been developed **Z** may be reproduced;
- the action must be continued by the actors responsible for the implementation and successful development of the practice;
- - the practice must be focused on the person(s) supposed to benefit from the practice;



the action must comply with a global range of common values and principles.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> L. Adams, M. Guy, U. Last (2015). Making it Work: Bonnes pratiques pour une inclusion du handicap dans le développement et l'action humanitaire. Lyon: Handicap International.

Regarding the issue of disability, the values that are considered as part of common values and principles are, among others: non-discrimination, equality between men and women, respect of self-independence and capacity of making choices for everyone, accessibility, etc.

As enriching and useful IFCU's network can be based on the diversity of its members, it also sometimes leads to important challenges. One of the main challenges is the lack of access to accurate information, to have a clear picture of good practices within the network. FIRAH illustrates this problem in its General Mapping document, stating that the main challenge remaining in African countries regarding research on disability issues is the lack of concrete elements. Different methods were used to get accurate and updated information of practices and actions developed by IFCU member universities in this field: paper and on-line documentary research on potential practices and/ or projects, a questionnaire-based survey asking for detailed information about practices implemented in universities, and phone calls to universities' representatives and special needs units (if applicable).

Some universities in specific regions encounter difficulties to have access to information, especially because of internet and electricity deficiency, due to a specific economic, social and political context. Also, the cultural and social context can sometimes draw both physical and intellectual barriers: disability and inclusive education may not always be a priority for some scholars. Whether the lack of information is due to economic issues or cultural views, it leads to the same consequence: universities do not have access to and do not necessarily share valuable information about their research and teaching activities, and so about good practices they might have identified and/or developed.

Therefore, IFCU has the responsibility to reach out to universities, identify and highlight the practices that could be developed in other higher education institutions. The main objective is for universities to learn from each other, thus to create a more inclusive environment for people with disabilities within their institution. The examples provided in the present handbook will facilitate the identification of good practices within universities, and then provide concrete examples to other universities concerned by improving disability and access to higher education.

The present handbook will put an emphasis on different good practices that have been identified within IFCU member universities within the framework of the said project. It will focus on different topics, each one being illustrated by a good practice seen and developed within one university:

- Infrastructure
- Awareness-raising/advocacy
- Financial assistance
- Training
- Acting with families/communities
- Tools & materials to reach equity in the classroom
- A comprehensive institutional policy
- Accompaniment of students
- Offer in disability studies & research

### Each good practice highlighted in the handbook will be presented as followed:

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- title of the practice
- institution at the origin of the practice
- start-up year
- target of the practice
- detailed overview of the practice
- other available resources related to the practice.

The reading of this guide will allow higher education institutions to ask themselves general guestions about their practices regarding access to higher education for people with disabilities, and to draw up a general overview of the existing practices as well as the strategies being developed. This reading will also allow institutions to compare their practices with the contents of international reference texts and standards (CRPD, Sustainable Development Goals 2030, regional legal tools, etc.), thus highlighting their own reality in the light of internationally recognized objectives. The handbook is also meant to provide hints for improvement to all higher education institutions wishing to promote disabled students' access to university life. Finally, the guide also seeks to raise the reader's awareness of the general theme of disability, related to the broader topic of social responsibility of universities. It will also highlight the importance of developing academic and research activities on this theme, especially considering the lack of consensus regarding basic definitions, pedagogical tools and disability-friendly practices in the higher education milieu.



## 02 GOOD PRACTICES BY AREA

## 02.1. Infrastructure

### **Inclusive facilities for children**

**Institution:** Institute for Inclusion and Special Needs Education, University of Makeni, Makeni, Sierra Leone

**Start year: 2005** 



### **Target:**

Children with disabilities (CWDs)/persons with disabilities themselves, and

teachers of mainstream schools, who will be confident in their knowledge and experience of how to include CWDs in order to respect their right to education and become fully part of society, employable and ready to raise and support their own children.

### **Best Practice Overview:**

The mission of the Institute of Inclusion and Special Needs Education (ISNE) Programme is to guarantee the right of individual children and young people with Special Needs to Education, in particular to good quality education, through an inclusive approach allowing for the full development of their talents and dignity as equal citizens of Sierra Leone.

• The mainstream classrooms of the 45 schools that received training are now more inclusive;

• Ramps and rails in school building and toilet for easy accessibility have been built in the 45 schools;

• Partnerships have been developed with Government Ministries like the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children Affairs (MSGCA) and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), as well as with psychosocial personnel, religious leaders, NGOs, private sector donors and other types of donors.

### **Online resources:**

http://unimak.edu.sl/wordpress/routes-to-study-and-learning/ departments/centre-of-excellence-for-special-education

### **Rooms and Accommodation** for Students with Special Needs

Institution: Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan

**Start year:** Since its foundation in 1908, Sophia University has provided various support for students with disabilities. After setting up the position of "Coordinator for Students with Special Needs" in 2013, the supporting system has been integrated in the university policy.



**Target:** Students enrolled at Sophia University who are experiencing significant constraints in their academic work as a result of their disabilities.

### **Best Practice Overview:**

On 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018, the university opened resting rooms for students with special needs where students can take a rest, have lunch, etc. Interviews with students to get their feedback about the rooms were planned in order to enhance support by deploying a full-scale operation on the whole campus.

In 2019 the Sophia Corporation secured new accommodation including kitchen and bathroom with special access for students with disabilities.

A broad range of departments are involved to provide special support in a collaborative way, such as: the Center for Academic Affairs, the Center for Student Affairs, the Health Center, the Counselling Center, the Office of Property, the Library, the ICT Office, etc.

### **Resources on-line:**

Guideline Handbook and Brochure for Students (available on website):

https://www.sophia.ac.jp/eng/studentlife/support/with\_others.html

### **Convenience Facilities** for Disabled Students

Institution: Catholic University of DCU 대구가톨릭대학교 Daegu, Daegu, South Korea



Target: Students with disabilities

### **Best practice overview:**

The university proceeded to the installation of convenience facilities in order to improve the integration of students with disabilities within the campus and eliminate barriers to their participation.

This initiative falls within the framework of the Disabled Student Support Center, a dedicated service that was created to improve the social integration of disabled students and improve their quality of life. The Center ensures the right to learning and living through appropriate support that meets disabled students' needs, expands their opportunities for higher education while conducting inclusive education with general students, as well.

### **Online resources:**

Virtual visit of the campus (link to the video below) http://www.cu.ac.kr/life/welfare/facilities

Understanding disability http://www.cu.ac.kr/life/welfare/disability

**Rehabilitation International Korea** http://www.freeget.net/main.php

Web Accessibility National Certification http://www.webwatch.or.kr//Situation/WA Situation.html?MenuCD=110



# Awareness-raising / advocacy

### Awareness-raising actions for a disability-friendly educational community

**Institution:** Catholic University Institute of Buea (CUIB), Buea, Cameroon





Start year: October 2019

### **Target:**



Persons with disabilities in the educational community, and

some orphans.

### **Best Practice Overview:**

The university conducts a first phase consisting of identifying students with disabilities in the community. A second phase will follow through actions aimed at raising awareness about disabled students' situation in order to create a disability-friendly environment and eliminate barriers to participation in community life.

### Main actions:

- Identify disabled students (primary school kids, university) students), basically targeting physically challenged, visual impaired and those with hearing disabilities;
- Educate the parents and care givers at home;
- Educate the university community as a whole about disabilities.

The university plans to ensure that adequate policies and practices are in place at all the education levels in the community (elementary, secondary and university) and beyond.

### **Online resources:**

Website : https://cuib-cameroon.org/

### Meeting day between students and children with disabilities on the university campus

**Institution:** Université Catholique d'Afrique Centrale (UCAC), Yaoundé, Cameroon



Start year: 2016

Target: Students and children with disabilities

### **Best Practice Overview:**

• Project from the Social Science and Management Faculty of the Université Catholique d'Afrique Centrale on the campus of Ekounou in Yaoundé (Cameroon);

- Organization and animation of a day named «Catholic inclusiveness» by the Vice-Dean of the Faculty;
- This meeting is an opportunity to add a social and charitable dimension to the transmission of knowledge;
- This annual meeting has been scheduled on the university calendar.

### **Online resources:**

Report of this annual meeting https://ucac-icy.net/facultes/colloque-sur-les-handicaps/

### Persons with Disabilities Formations Programme

**Institution:** Rajagiri College of Social Sciences, Kalamassery, India



Target: Students, professionals, government, universities, NGOs.

### **Best Practice Overview:**

The Rajagiri College launched several programmes dealing with disability in depth to reach a better knowledge about this topic. Among these programmes, we can highlight the Rehabilitation for Persons with Disabilities Formations Programme, sponsored by the National Institute for the Orthopedically Handicapped, which brings together scholars, associations' delegates and different types of organizations within society.

### The Programme addresses several topics, such as:

- Rehabilitation of persons with motor disability situation;
- Setting-up a framework of a social model of disability in India;
- Intervention of NGOs working in this field;
- Disability and quality of life for schizophrenic people in home-care situation;
- Application of the law for disability at the local scale.

### **Online resources:**

https://www.rajagiri.edu/

### Asia Pacific Meeting on Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction: Changing Mindsets Through Knowledge

**Institution:** Ateneo de Manila, Quezon City, Philippines



Start year : April 22 and 23, 2014

Target : Experts, governmental delegates and universities

### **Best Practice Overview :**

A delegation from the university was invited to attend the Asia Pacific Meeting on "Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction: Changing Mindsets Through Knowledge", which took place at Sendai Mediatheque, Sendai, Japan, on April 22-23, 2014.

The event was organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in cooperation with Rehabilitation International and the Nippon Foundation. The meeting brought together disaster risk policy experts and disability policy experts from various Governments, and disability rights experts from civil society organizations in the Asia-Pacific region.

### **Online resources:**

ESCAP website and resulting report from the Meeting: https://www.unescap.org/resources/outcome-document-asiapacific-meeting-disability-inclusive-disaster-risk-reduction

## 02.3. Financial assistance

### Scholarships for disabled university students

**Institution:** Université Catholique Bukabu, Bukavu, Democratic Republic of Congo



**Target:** Disabled students enrolled at the university who are experiencing significant constraints

### **Best Practice Overview:**

The social service of the Université Catholique Bukabu brings financial support for tuition fees for students who are in need, for excellent students in difficult situations and for students with disabilities, thanks to the institution's own fund and to the donations of several partners at the local, national and international scale.

### **Online resources:**

https://ucbukavu.ac.cd/scholarships/

### Scholarships and Loan Schemes for the Visually Challenged

**Institution:** Saint Xavier's College, Mumbai, India



**Start year:** 2003

Target: Students with blindness and low vision

### **Best Practice Overview:**

The Xavier's Resource Centre for the Visually Challenged (XRCVC) is an integral part and a separate Department of St. Xavier's College -Autonomous, Mumbai, India.

The XRCVC was started in 2003 as an effort to ensure an inclusive environment at the institution for its students with blindness and low vision. Having created an inclusive set-up for its own students, keeping with the College's long tradition of creating social impact within the larger community, the XRCVC has become a national advocacy and support centre for the blind and low-vision across the city and the country.

The XRCVC offers a range of direct support, including financial support, such as Scholarships and Loan Schemes to deserving students.

### **Online resources:**

XRCVC annual reports http://www.xrcvc.org/about/annual-reports.htm

XRCVC website http://www.xrcvc.org/direct-support-training/scholarships-loan-schemes.htm 02.4. Training

### Training to Special Needs Education (SNE)

**Institution:** Institute for Inclusion and Special Needs Education, University of Makeni (UNIMAK), Sierra Leone

**Start year:** 2005



**Target:** Main focus is on teaching mainstream teachers and specialist teachers of mainstream schools so that they are confident in their knowledge and experience of how to include children with disabilities (CWDs) in order to respect their right to education and become fully part of society, employable and ready to raise and support their own children. University students and other actors of society are also eligible for some of the training modules.

### **Best Practice Overview:**

The mission of the Institute of Inclusion and Special Needs Education (ISNE) Programme is to guarantee the right of individual children and young people with Special Needs to Education, in particular to good quality education through an inclusive approach allowing for the full development of their talents and dignity as equal citizens of Sierra Leone.

Even though the Programme is also committed to raising-awareness and treatment-based actions, its main objective consists of providing training as follows:

•Training of specialist teachers for children with hearing impairment and visual impairment;

• Training of mainstream teachers on how to identify children with disabilities, knowing the impact of each of the disabilities for the children, how to give appropriate support to such children and how to make effective referrals;

 Training of undergraduate and postgraduate students in inclusion and special needs education; • Training of social workers, Ministries' delegates, Department and Agencies (MDAs) religious leaders, Disabled people's organizations (DPOs) and other organizations working with children on how to identify children with disabilities, knowing the impacts of each of the disabilities to the children, how to give appropriate support to such children and how to make effective referrals.

#### Among others, training modules include :

- Trained teachers cascade their training to their colleague teachers;
- Using Inclusive Pedagogy in the classroom to meet the different learning styles of each CWD as appropriate;

• Writing of an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for each CWDs that comprises the type of disability, the learning/access needs of the child, the goals to achieve for the child and actions to take to achieve those goals.

#### **Online resources:**

http://unimak.edu.sl/wordpress/routes-to-study-and-learning/ departments/centre-of-excellence-for-special-education



# **Disability sensitization workshop**

**Institution:** Christ (Deemed to be University), Bangalore, India

**Target:** University students with disabilities



#### **Best Practice Overview:**

A disability sensitization workshop was conducted at Christ (Deemed to be University), Bangalore, which covered the basic understanding and learning of A to Z in Braille and Sign Language, along with awareness and insight to the challenges of people with disabilities.

During the workshop students from disadvantaged groups participated in language training, leadership skill training, training in public speaking, as well as in sessions to enhance their self-esteem and self-confidence. The counsellors along with medical doctors and nurses assisted the specially challenged children to build their selfesteem and confidence through continuous interaction with them and peer support.

New students were informed about the disabled-friendly infrastructure that was in place on campus (deemed as inclusive campus) and also about the special privileges they are entitled to like separate examination room, extra time, special question papers, scribes based on the nature of disability as per the university guidelines. Lastly, it was brought to their attention that the university sponsors 10 physicallychallenged students every year in collaboration with Goldman Sachs.

#### **Online resources:**

https://giftabled.org/

Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities http://www.disabilityaffairs.gov.in/content

The National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India

http://www.nhfdc.nic.in

# Teachers' training and pedagogical materials' production

**Institution:** Saint Louis University (SLU), Baguio City, Philippines



Start year: February 2007

Target: Persons with individual specific needs

#### **Best Practice Overview:**

In February 2007, Saint Louis University (SLU) founded the Institute for Inclusive Education (IIE) with the mission "to ensure that learners who are most vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion, particularly the persons with disabilities, are assured equitable success in education through inclusive practice".

The IIE provides services and training to public and private school teachers in order to equip them with the attitude, knowledge and skills to deal effectively with diversity in their classrooms.

The IIE also pays attention to the specific needs of individual children and makes needed materials and resources available, e.g., by producing Braille books for children with visual impairment.

#### **Online resources:**

SLU website

http://www.slu.edu.ph/index.php/institute-for-inclusive-education

# 02.5. Acting with families/ communities

# Actions with families to foster engagement and advocacy

**Institution:** Institute for Inclusion and Special Needs Education, University of Makeni, Makeni, Sierra Leone

Start year: 2005

**Target:** Families of disabled children, local communities and the society as a whole.



#### **Best Practice Overview:**

The Institute of Inclusion and Special Needs Education (ISNE) from the University of Makeni promotes actions with families of disabled persons and local communities to foster engagement and advocacy in favour of the rights of individual children and young people with special needs to education (SNE). Some actions conducted so far:

• Conduct Community Education Programmes to influence negative beliefs and practices towards children with Pan Disabilities and learning difficulties;

- Recruit parents of children with SNE who have become the most successful students to spread information;
- Help children with SNE connect to disabled role models;

• Advocate for remuneration of salaries for trained and qualified teachers in special education with extra points for their professional training;

• Design, develop and produce all that Government, NGOs, Missions and media personnel, head teachers, police, lawyers, Health Services, parents and social welfare need in terms of training;

• Develop diagnoses and assessment for pan disabilities and learning difficulties;

• Advocate for the advancement of social security and disability;

• Make understand community beliefs about disabilities and special education;

• Promote the use of interactive approaches to address the real needs of people with disabilities for living in community;

• Address the issues that prevent full integration into society for persons with disabilities and people with learning disabilities.

#### **Online resources:**

http://unimak.edu.sl/wordpress/routes-to-study-and-learning/ departments/centre-of-excellence-for-special-education

# **Rehabilitation on a Community Basis** Programme (RBC in French)

**Institution:** Université Catholique du Graben, Butembo, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)



Target: Persons with disabilities and community members

#### **Best Practice Overview :**

As disability situations are closely related to poverty, there are difficulties within families and communities. Hence, the launch of the Rehabilitation on Community Basis Programme (RBC) :

• Within the framework of the inclusive community development to promote equality of chance, addressed to persons with disability, this programme leads to several multi-sector projects made up of five sections : medical, educational, economic, legal and child protection;

• This programme includes community agents identified within the parish as well as voluntary members from the sick-person support group;

• Cooperation with the Faculty of Law for the rights of persons living with disability and legal aid to children and adults living with disability.

#### **Online resources:**

https://afri-can.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/rapport-sessionsur-le-genre-et-handicap-OK.pdf

# 02.6. Tools & materials to reach equity in the classroom

# Academic Support for Students with Special Needs

Institution: Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan

**Start year:** 1908 and strengthened backing since 2013, when the supporting system was integrated in the university policy.

**Target:** Students enrolled at Sophia University who are experiencing significant constraints in their academic work as a result of their disabilities.



#### **Best Practice Overview:**

Students are provided support within the scope of the university's capacities with regard to assistance in classwork and laboratory work, exams and university events. Students benefiting from assistance are required to attend class.

#### **Examples of assistance:**

• Visual impairment: digitization and enlarged copies of class material;

- Hearing impairment: use of FM systems;
- Physical disabilities: improvements in facilities and equipment, change of classrooms;
- Mental disabilities: provision of notes ;

• Developmental disabilities: adjustments in seating arrangements and other arrangements in the learning environment, lending of noise-cancelling earphones.

The accommodation of special needs of students with chronic illnesses is considered provided they can produce medical certificates.

A broad range of departments and staff are involved to provide special support in a cooperative way (Center for Academic Affairs, Center for Student Affairs, Faculty and department staff, Health Center, Counselling Center, Office of Property, Library, ICT Office).

#### **Online resources:**

Guideline Handbook and Brochure for Students: https://www.sophia.ac.jp/eng/studentlife/support/with\_others.html

## Free Speech-to-text Software & Relay Service

**Institution:** Australian Catholic University (ACU), Australia



Target : ACU staff and students

#### **Best Practice Overview :**

The University made available in a free manner a Speech-to-Text Software. It's a software that reads texts or converts spoken words to text. This software is available for both ACU staff and students on ACU's PCs.

University students may also resort to the National Relay Service, namely, a phone solution which assists people with hearing or speech impairments to communicate. This initiative, promoted by the Australian government, allows for communicating with a hearing person who is using a phone even if the disabled student can't hear or don't use their voice. This service counts on Relay officers who help in every call and is available 24 hours a day, every day.

#### **Online resources :**

https://www.communications.gov.au/what-we-do/phone/services-people-disability/accesshub/national-relay-service

# 02.7. A comprehensive institutional policy

# Policy statement and dedicated services

**Institution:** Australian Catholic University (ACU), Australia



Target : All ACU staff and students

#### **Best Practice Overview :**

The university has developed a comprehensive policy towards inclusion, including:

• The ACU Disability Policy Statement that sets a whole framework for the integration of inclusiveness in the university's life;

• A dedicated Disability Service that is available on the university's six campuses and can be contacted by either students or staff;

• Resources and links on the ACU website towards national laws and initiatives, like the <u>Human Rights Commission: A brief guide to</u> the Disability Discrimination Act;

• Information on access to employment in Australia for disabled students, with helpful links and guidelines, including Job Access Australia, assistance and workplace solutions for people with disabilities, including information regarding financial assistance offered by the Commonwealth Government to employers of people with disabilities.

#### **Online resources:**

Disability support site https://www.acu.edu.au/student-life/student-services/disabilitysupport

Job Access Australia: https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/people-with-disability

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2010C00023/Html/Text

## **The 360 Approach to Inclusion:** From Admission to Graduation

**Institution:** St. Xaviers' College Mumbai, India

**Start year:** In March 2016 the institution started ideating on a 360 Approach to Inclusion that



would enable the college to become the first of its kind in offering an end-to-end holistic inclusion experience for its students from admission to graduation. The approach was implemented for the first time during the academic year 2017-18.

Target: Students with diverse disabilities

#### **Best Practice Overview:**

The uniqueness and the advantage of the 360 Approach to Inclusion is in its ability to balance between individual needs and system constraints within the Indian context. The system has been conceived as a space for disabled persons to become self-advocates. The policy body includes thus disabled members to ensure that all institute policies on inclusion are ideated with user groups.

The College features a comprehensive structure for inclusion of services delivery:

• Enabling Committee: management body for policy level decisions;

• Xavier's Resource Centre for the Visually Challenged (XRCVC): centre engaged in delivering inclusion services, targeting in a particular way visually challenged students;

• Student Inclusion Cell (SIC): a student body composed of students with and without disabilities that looks at inclusion and accessibility on campus;

• Inclusive Accommodation: accommodation for students with disabilities run by the College;

• Getting the system Moving: initiative orientated towards getting all stakeholders involved.

The underlying ethos of this approach was in creating inclusion within each of the college's processes rather than create a separate service/process for inclusion.

#### **Online resources:**

Inclusive education approach: http://xaviers.edu/main/index.php/inclusive-education-provisionfor-students-with-disabilities

Xavier's Resource Centre for the Visually Challenged (XRCVC) website www.xrcvc.org

# Building an inclusive environment

Institution: Miriam College (Philippines)

Start year: 1926

**Target:** Deaf students, other students with disability

#### **Best Practice Overview:**



Creation of the Student Support Programme (formerly, Office of the Programme for Learners with Special Needs) in 2007 where the officer-in-charge is equipped with the necessary skills to be able to address the needs of this group of students.

Provision of education from Junior High School to the Graduate Programme for students who are deaf: inclusive classes from the Junior High School in the Skills Development and Technical Education Centre (SDTEC) to the university's Graduate Programme (the Centre opened its doors to students who are deaf starting in the academic year 2017-2018).

Provision of support services (interpreters, notetakers, tutorials) for students who are deaf.

Provision of a welcoming environment:

• Sign Language Classes held during lunch break for staff of the different offices to equip them with basic sign language skills for easier communication with students who are deaf.

• Disability Sensitivity Training offered to SDTEC faculty and volunteers every start of the school year.

• The Guidance Counsellor counts on skilled interpreters for the deaf.

• Observance of the Deaf Awareness Week where a week-long crash course in sign language is given to all 1<sup>st</sup> year students by the university's Differently-Abled Students Association organization

(this activity is organized under the Student Support Programme in partnership with First Year Development Programme).

• A designated area is reserved for PWDs (Persons with disabilities) when general assemblies are held.

• Interpreters are present in all activities for persons who are deaf

Entrance Exam: An interpreter for applicants who are deaf is provided for the duration of the exam and a separate venue is provided for them.

Employment:

The university tries its best to look for employment for PWDs. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) with UNILAB Foundation is in place under "Project Inclusion" that facilitates on-the-job training, work placement opportunities and livelihood options for them.

#### **Online resources:**

https://www.mc.edu.ph





# **Stella way towards inclusion**

#### Institution: Stella Maris College, India

#### **Start year:** 2015

#### Target:

**Low:** Students who have basic or low needs for special assistance.



**Medium:** Students with medium needs for special assistance and support system.

**High:** Students who have high need for special assistance or cannot do without assistance.

#### **Best Practice Overview:**

In order to develop awareness and also to provide necessary guidance and counselling to differently-abled students, the functions of Stella Maris Enabling Unit are as follows:

• Facilitate admission of differently-abled persons in various courses;

• Provide guidance and counselling to differently-abled individuals;

• Create awareness about the needs of differently-abled students and other general issues concerning their learning;

• Assist differently-abled graduates to gain successful employment in the public as well as private sectors;

• To ensure admission of as many differently-abled students as possible through the open quota and also through the reservation meant for them;

• To study the aptitude of differently-abled students and assist them in getting appropriate employment after their studies;

• To celebrate World Disabled Day in the month of December in the campus and also in the rural and urban communities to create awareness about the capabilities of differently-abled students;

• To prepare annual reports with case histories of differently-abled persons;

#### **Online resources:**

Website http://stellamariscollege.edu.in/

# 02.8. Accompaniment of students

# Disability Accompaniment and Follow-up

**Institution:** University of Saint Joseph (USJ), Macao, China

**Start year:** During the academic year 2007 - 2008, the university had its first visual-impaired student enrolled as pre-university student. USJ is the first university to receive Special Educational Needs (SEN) students in Macao.

聖若瑟大學 UNIVERSITY OF SAINT JOSEPH

**Target:** Students with disabilities at campus level

#### **Best Practice Overview:**

To ensure appropriate provision for students throughout their course, those with disabilities are integrated into the normal university environment. To make them engaged into university life, the following best practices have been implemented:

• Meetings before formal school to identify their needs are scheduled. These meetings allow for informing their respective Deans and Programme Coordinators so that they can follow-up with the professors and language instructors on the kind of support needed. They also make it possible to inform the Information Technology Office and some administrative offices in order to customize the documents to them in a proper format (e.g. visual impaired students);

• Regular follow-up meetings with SEN students to assess their progress and whether any other assistance is required (normally at the beginning of every semester);

• Involvement of disabled students in the annual campus inspection to check the barrier free access facilities;

• Involvement as student ambassador(s) working in different university units like the Office for Student and Alumni Affairs, so that they can contribute to organizing any type of activities such as orientation, social gatherings as well as to provide support to other SEN students; · Participation in external activities and in regional conferences (for instance inviting a student wheel-chair user to join the Student Affairs Conference in order to provide them more exposure);

· Counselling services are provided for mental illness cases through the university Center for Psychotherapy Services;

 Financial support that the university seeks to get from the Macao SAR government for the visual-impaired students to recruit student helpers in organizing their learning materials and purchasing the necessary equipment.

#### **Online resources:**

Website https://www.usj.edu.mo/en/student-with-special-needs/

Master of Education with Specialization in Special Needs and Inclusive Education

https://www.usj.edu.mo/en/courses/ma-education/



# 02.9. Offer in disability studies & research

### Several programmes on Inclusive Education and Disability Studies

**Institution:** Australian Catholic University (ACU), Australia



Target: ACU students

#### **Best Practice Overview:**

The University is involved in social responsibility through several programmes focused on disability or integrating such a topic, which address both undergraduate and graduate students.

The university has thus developed a Bachelor of Inclusive Education and Disability Studies specifically concentrated on disabled persons' needs, but such a path may be found in other programmes in the science education field. For example, the Graduate Certificate in Education includes a specialization on inclusive practice, which is designed for teachers and allied professionals who have particular interests in inclusive approaches to practice. Students will have opportunities to extend their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the history of the movement toward inclusion in schools and the community, specific approaches to developing more inclusive classrooms and other educational and community environments, and the additional needs often expressed by children with additional learning needs including those with special gifts and talents as well as those with complex learning and behavioural challenges. The same specialization may be found in other programmes like the Master of Education.

#### **Online Resources:**

Bachelor of Inclusive Education and Disability Studies https://www.acu.edu.au/handbook/handbook-2021/course/ bachelor-of-inclusive-education-and-disability-studies

# Bachelor of Inclusive Deaf Education

**Institution:** Uganda Martyrs University, Kampala, Uganda



🚯 Uganda Marcyrs Universicy

**Start year:** Academic year 2018 - 2019

**Target:** All students including those with disabilities (specifically the deaf students at the beginning), teacher trainees, future secondary school teachers and the entire university community.

#### **Best Practice Overview:**

The Faculty of Education has started a 10-year project consisting of developing and implementing programmes to train secondary school teachers of students with disabilities to enable these students to achieve their academic potential, reach higher institutions of learning and live their dreams like all other persons. As the numbers of students with disabilities increase in higher learning institutions, the culture and pedagogy will naturally become inclusive in order to meet their needs. The university chose to start with hearing loss due to the fact that deaf students are more disadvantaged than other students with disabilities and have been left out of many things because of their deafness.

A new teacher training programme, the "Bachelor of Inclusive Deaf Education", has been developed and accredited by the National Council of Higher Education;



The university has partnered with Royal Dutch Kentalis, an organisation from the Netherlands specialized in Deaf Education;



The university provides lecturers with information about the need to adjust pedagogy and back up identified students with disabilities.

All stakeholders are gathered, including the deaf community, the Ministry of Education, secondary schools and teachers in schools with deaf students, parents and the entire university community.

#### **Online resources:**

Website www.umu.ac.ug

# The Research Center of Communication Disorders

**Institution:** Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan



Start year: 1996

**Target:** Scholars and the scientific community; more generally, students and people with speech impediment.

#### **Best Practice Overview:**

The creation of a Research Center of Communication Disorders has allowed the university to:

- Support clinical and research practices for the graduate students majoring in Communication Disorders;
- Conduct basic and clinical studies on communication disorders;
- Hold lectures and symposiums for researchers and for the public;
- Publish an Annual Report showcasing research activities to the public.

The Center is currently involved in research studies, ranging from a "Preliminary study on how to differentiate difficulties in reading and related disorders", "Research on childhood aphasia: development of evaluation method and intervention programme", to "Development of cognitive neuropsychological evaluation on aphasia". The latter benefits from funds by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science and the British Council as part of a joint project with Newcastle University, United Kingdom.

#### **Online resources:**

Website of the Center https://dept.sophia.ac.jp/is/solific/en/surecc/

Sophia Linguistic Institute (SOLIFIC) https://dept.sophia.ac.jp/is/solific/en/



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