Preparing Feedback to the CRPD Committee on the Draft General Comment on Article 24

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What are the main strengths of the draft General Comment?

a. An important victory: title refers to the Right to Inclusive Education, not just the right to education

b. Draft provides good arguments for our members to use with government
   i. Educational case
   ii. Social case
   iii. Economic case

c. Draft identifies barriers to inclusion

d. Draft defines the right as a “process that transforms culture, policy and practice in all educational environments”
What are the main strengths of the draft General Comment? (Cont.)

e. Draft distinguishes between segregation, integration and inclusion

f. Draft recognizes that placing students with disabilities within mainstream classes without appropriate support does not constitute inclusion

g. Draft prohibits exclusion based on impairment or its degree “to the extent of the potential of the individual”

h. Draft says denial of reasonable accommodation is discrimination and immediately applicable

i. Draft says support measures must be compliant with goal of full inclusion
What are the main strengths of the draft General Comment? (Cont.)

j. Draft says education must rest with the education ministry

k. Draft calls for transfer of resources from segregated to inclusive environments

l. Draft recognizes the important role of families

m. Draft calls for new assessment methods
Issues of Concern for members of Inclusion International

a. Paragraph 39: “deliberately retrogressive measures would require the most careful consideration”

b. Paragraph 67: stresses early intervention but needs to be inclusive too
c. Paragraph 73 a: raise different opinions as to what people think about models of trainer of trainers to be encouraged

Paragraph 73 b: raise different opinions as to the use of special schools as resource centres
Paragraph 58: should be strengthened to ensure that investments in education for all foster an inclusive approach and should more clearly reference goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals.
Issues raised on webinars

• Highlight Value-Add of Inclusion
  o Should emphasize that inclusive education has value beyond academic outcomes. There is value in learning and being together

• Equal Certification
  o Students should receive equal certification. Many schools provide a separate certificate for students with disabilities. These can lead to further segregation – ie not accepted for higher education or don’t meet standard required for employment.

• Focus school-wide
  o Emphasis on teachers could marginalize role of school principal – makes classroom unit of analysis not the school.

• Strengthen Intersectionality
  o Living in the community; access to justice/judicial systems that are effective and responsive; refugees; vocational training
Issues raised on webinars (con’t)

Attitudes

• Sensitizations of government – highlight that education is a right not a commodity; provision of inclusive education should be a priority. Language that affirms the need for a change of attitude and a rethinking and reframing of how disability is understood; affirm to governments that inclusion is not only for a few but for all. Must be written in a way that governments will understand and respond to.

• Sensitization of educational partners – inclusive education needs support from teachers’ federations and unions to be successful.

• Sensitization of schools – inclusion should be priority over integration or mainstreaming; GC should highlight that separate classes within regular schools is not inclusion;

• Sensitization of general public – in particular parents of children without disabilities in the school – to support inclusion.
Issues raised on webinars (con’t)

• Out of school children
  o No reference to huge #s of out of school children who have a disability. A new paragraph could call for a strategy to ensure that children out of school due to disability are included.

• Policy revision not just replacement
  o Governments may not need to create new policy; revising existing policy may be effective.

• Generalities miss particular vulnerabilities
  o The GC is cross-disability and general in its focus. The particular vulnerabilities of people with intellectual disabilities miss being highlighted (i.e., vocational training; including people with more significant support needs)
Issues raised on webinars (con’t)

• Support to Families
  o Role of families should be highlighted more – should note the need for investment in supporting families and giving training to families.

• Teacher Training
  o Emphasis needed on the importance of preparing all teachers for inclusion.

• Data, Evaluation and Monitoring
  o Need better and more useful data to influence and impact change to policy and practice
  o Strengthen the reference to monitoring (para 30) – system needs to be precise and independent.
  o Highlight strategies on how to implement evaluation systems
Issues and concerns please contact:
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