The UNICEF/WG Module on Inclusive Education

Update on the development of the Module on Inclusive Education

Claudia Cappa (UNICEF)
Elena De Palma (Istat – WG)
Mitchell Loeb (NCHS – WG)

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The UNICEF/WG Module on Inclusive Education

- Since 2012 UNICEF and WG have been working on an extended set of questions on child disability that focus on environmental factors and participation in school:
  - to provide an overview of environmental influences on participation in school
  - to identify areas with key bottlenecks
  - to provide information that can inform policy
Background (1)

Children with disabilities are:

• less likely to ever go to school
• less likely to learn essential skills if they do go to school and
• more likely to drop out before completing a full course of education.

✓ Disability is often a more significant factor in relation to exclusion from education than gender or geographical location, and living in poverty.

✓ To children with disabilities, exclusion from education sets out a disadvantage for the rest of their lives, putting them at a higher risk of negative social and economic consequences such as isolation, neglect, abuse, poverty and preventing them from full participation in society.
Background (2)

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (art. 28 & 29) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (art. 24).

- The Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all.

- Poor availability of data on children with disabilities in school and out of school affects the policy-makers’ capacity to define strategies and to take appropriate actions in order to promote their full participation in school.
Steps in developing the Module:

• To build a **conceptual framework**: Expert meeting in June 2013

• To **search and review existing survey tools** – with a focus on environmental factors and participation of children with disabilities in school

• To prepare a **draft module** and its revision

• To **validate** the Module: cognitive and field testing in 2015-2016

• To **finalise** the Module by 2016
ICF: disability and environmental factors

• Disability is the interaction between a person with an impairment and an unaccommodating environment.

• ICF: Five categories of environmental factors that may influence participation:
  1. Products and technology
  2. Natural environment and human-made changes to environment
  3. Support and relationships
  4. Attitudes
  5. Services, systems and policies.

• Environmental factors may act as barriers or facilitators to participation of individuals.
The Conceptual Framework (a)

- Consultation with experts led to a conceptual framework that guided the development of the questions.
- It identifies four main domains of barriers to school participation to be addressed in the Module:
  - Attitudes
  - Getting to school
  - Accessibility
  - Affordability
The Conceptual Framework (b)

1. Attitudes
   - parents perceptions
   - their perceptions of - other’s attitudes
   - societal and cultural norms
   - other children’s attitudes
   - school staff perceptions

2. Getting to School
   - transportation (characteristics of all aspects of the system and the need for assistance)
   - environmental and social safety
   - weather/seasonality
The Conceptual Framework

3. Accessibility within the School
   - physical accessibility (entryway, corridors, bathrooms, lunch room, classroom, common areas etc.)
   - information accessibility
   - communication accessibility
   - programmatic accessibility/adaptability
   - teacher and school attitudes towards disability

4. Affordability
   - fees, costs, and competition for resources associated with attendance
   - availability of types of assistance (financial, assistive devices, rehabilitation)
   - non-educational benefits (e.g., meals)
Out of school children

• Furthermore, it was deemed important to develop a separate section of the questionnaire aimed at getting information on reasons why a child may be out of school.
Search and Review of survey tools:

- Database search (PsycInfo, Google Scholar):
  - search terms: *environment, support, facilitator, barrier, attitudes, assessment, measurement, survey, self-report, participation, disability/ies.*

- References lists from retrieved publications were reviewed to identify additional studies involving the development or use of environmental measures

- UNICEF Database

- Demographic and Health Survey (DHS)
Results of the review:

- **32** measures in 20 different countries
- **668** questions related to environmental factors
- primarily used in smaller-scale research studies, and answered by a proxy respondent:
  - typically the parent or primary caregiver
- many of the surveys used outdated definitions of disability, focusing on disability as a primary cause of lack of participation.
Draft module and revision

- Questions from the selected measures have been mapped in the four domains of barriers.
- A first draft set of questions was developed using survey questions from the desk review and gaps were filled by additional questions covering the four domains.
- June 2014: the first draft was reviewed by internal UNICEF specialists in education and statistics.
- September 2014: the second draft was discussed at a small technical meeting with UNICEF and WG.
- December 2014: technical consultation with external experts to finalize the module.
- A first cognitive test was carried out in USA in 2015.
- The validation process will continue in 2016 the final version.
The Module on Inclusive Education...

- focuses on *formal* education
- focuses on environmental influences on school participation, considering:
  - children in school
  - out-of-school children
- captures the interaction between environment and participation
- captures information on children with and without disabilities
- can be used across a variety of school contexts
- is intended to be used in conjunction with the Module on Child Functioning and Disability
- relies on parental perceptions/assessments
Sample questions: *Attitudes*

*Now I would like to ask you some questions about schooling for children with disability.*

Do you think children with *behavioural* disabilities should attend a regular school, special school for children with disabilities or not attend school at all?
Sample questions: *Attitudes*

We would like to understand why you answered as you did. Do you agree with the following statements?

- Special schools are better prepared to meet their needs
- These children feel most comfortable in special schools
- These children are most safe in special schools
- It is better for children without disabilities to be separated from children with disabilities.

We would like to understand why you answered as you did. Do you agree with the following statements?

- These children do not need to be educated
- These children are not able to learn
- Schools cannot meet the needs of these children
- These children would not be safe at school
- It would be bad for children without disabilities if children with disabilities went to school
Sample questions: School environment/
Getting to school

• Can (name) get to school by him/herself?
• How does (name) usually get to school?
• How long does it usually take (name) to get to school?
• Is (name) safe travelling to/from school?
Sample questions: School environment - Affordability

- In the (20xx) school year, did your household pay for the following items?
  - School tuition fees
  - Transportation to/from school
  - Meals at school
  - Boarding fees
  - Private tutoring
  - School materials and supplies
  - Assistive devices/technology
  - Special services and assistance
  - Other fees (exam fees, admission fees)

- Did you receive any assistance in cash or in kind for any of these expenses?

- Where did you receive the assistance from?
Sample questions: School environment - Accessibility

I am now interested in knowing about the school that (name) is attending.

• Do (name)’s teachers care about (hi/her) success in school?
• Does (name) have books that (he/she) is able to use?
• Does (name) receive special services or assistance in school?
• Is the school responsive if you have concerns about (name’s) education?
• Does (name) move around the school easily?
• Does (name) feel accepted by (his/her) classmates?
Sample questions: *Out of school*

*We are interested in understanding the main reasons why *(name)* does not attend school.*

Does *(name)* not attend school because:

- there is not enough money to pay the costs of *(his/her)* schooling
- needs to work, earn money or help out at home
- it is unsafe for *(name)* to travel to/from school
- It is unsafe for *(name)* to be in school
- school is too far away
- no one is available to travel with *(name)* to/from school
- transport services are inadequate
Sample questions: *Out of school*

- (Name) does not receive special services or assistance (....) that he/she needs to attend school
- (Name) does not have assistive device/technology (.....) that he/she needed to attend school
- Teachers mistreat (name) at school
- (Name) was refused entry into school
- (Name) cannot move around the school or classroom
- (Name) cannot use the toilet
- School does not have a program that meets (name’s) learning needs

School does not help (name) in finding a good job
Next steps:

- Cognitive tests: additional in 2016
- Field tests in 2016
- Finalization of module in 2016