



Spark



With Children in the **MIDDLE!**

Mainstreaming and **I**nclusion of children
with **D**evelopmental **D**isabilities in **L**earning
in **E**thiopia

Resources and Recommendations for School Leaders

in partnership with:



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Checklist of suggested interventions for principals

MIDDLE includes a teacher training and supervision programme, with facilitators' and participants' manuals, but much more can be done to support children with developmental disabilities. Below we provide recommendations for additional activities to promote inclusion and support for children with developmental disabilities at your school and we detail the resources we offer to help with these activities.

- A key recommendation of MIDDLE is to divide the special unit into different groups, based on children's skills and needs, and to include some children with developmental disabilities in inclusive classes. We enclose a resource and needs assessment questionnaire to decide how many special unit levels you can create, and a template that to decide criteria for allocation to the different special unit and inclusive classes.
- We also recommend to promote opportunities for all children with developmental disabilities to be fully included in the community of peers for break times and recreational activities. The enclosed resource and needs assessment questionnaire can also help with this task.
- It would be helpful for the mini-media club to run a mini-media programme on developmental disabilities and inclusion, to raise peers' awareness. We enclose some information the mini-media club can use to create this programme.
- You can promote the creation of an inclusion club, or enhance an existing one, using our ideas for school club activities.
- You can also help caregivers of children with developmental disabilities start a peer-support group, using our ideas for supporting caregivers.
- Children with developmental disabilities may be at increased risk for abuse, maltreatment, injuries and health-related emergencies. Having a strong safeguarding system that considers these children can help you protect them. We enclose a checklist of suggested safeguarding system revisions relevant to children with developmental disabilities.
- MIDDLE also includes a handbook with some information for teachers on safeguarding, sexual and reproductive health education and first-aid. You can make this handbook available to teachers so that they can know more about how to protect children with (and without) developmental disabilities.
- Finally, you can run more community-wide awareness-raising events, to raise awareness in the wider community (for example public transport drivers and local health workers) and to fundraise for more resources, materials and accessibility improvements in the school building. MIDDLE includes three flyers that you can use for these events.

Assessment of inclusion resources and needs

General questions to consider training and awareness raising needs:

- ❖ How many regular classes for each grade are there? How many in total?
- ❖ How many regular class teachers are there?
- ❖ How many non-teacher members of staff? What are their roles?
- ❖ Are there any internal resources to guide/train/support teachers?

Questions to consider children's inclusion in regular classes:

- ❖ How many children are there per regular class?
- ❖ Are any children with developmental disabilities currently included in regular classes? And with other disabilities?
- ❖ Are there any children with only physical and sensory (but not developmental) disabilities in the special unit? What are the barriers to including them? Could a special needs education teacher support them in a regular class?

Questions to assess how many new special unit groups are necessary and possible:

- ❖ How many special unit classes are there at the moment?
- ❖ How many children are there in the special unit? With what disabilities?
- ❖ How many special needs education teachers teach in the special unit?
- ❖ How many nannies/ support staff?
- ❖ How many groups of two (among teachers and nannies) could be created to support separate groups of children in the special unit?
- ❖ How many physical classrooms are there in the special unit?
- ❖ Are there any additional classrooms, storages or offices which are (almost) unused and could be used as special unit classrooms? If not, is there any other space that could be used for separating special unit children's groups?

Questions to consider additional needs for increased inclusion and support:

- ❖ Is there a range of material teaching resources for special needs education?
- ❖ Are there complains about the availability of sanitary and health resources?
- ❖ Are there complains about the accessibility of toilets and other facilities?
- ❖ Do children with developmental disabilities have access to transport options?
- ❖ Is there a school safeguarding system?
- ❖ Is there a health professional on site or other designated staff member for first-aid?
- ❖ Are there complains about the safety of the school and its fences and gates?
- ❖ What are the recreational spaces (playground, refectory, other)?
- ❖ Is the special unit in a separate compound? How is it separated? Would it be possible to remove any fences and gates that separate it?
- ❖ Do children in the special unit share breaks with other children? If not, can schedules be changed and/or turns be made to make this possible?
- ❖ Are there student-led mini-medias?
- ❖ Are there other extracurricular activities/ clubs that include children with developmental disabilities and/or promote inclusion?
- ❖ Is there a parent-teacher association? Could they help raise awareness and/or promote inclusion?

Criteria for allocating children with developmental disabilities to special unit and inclusive classes

During the MIDDLE training programme, special needs education teachers are invited to develop proposed allocation criteria to be submitted for principals' approval, using the template below.

Level	Can do all activities listed without support	Can do all activities listed with minimal support	Can do all activities listed with support
Special Unit 1 Children who do not meet criteria for SU2			
Special Unit 2 Children who meet all the criteria in this line:			
Special Unit 3 Children who meet all the criteria in this line:			

<p>Special Unit 4 Children who meet all the criteria in this line:</p>			
<p>Inclusive Class with Special Unit Support Children who meet all the criteria in this line:</p>			
<p>Inclusive Class Children who meet all the criteria in this line:</p>			

Information for children running the mini-media

Developmental disabilities are differences how children think, learn, communicate, and behave. Some children may also have difficulties moving and doing things.

Developmental disabilities are not a curse or an illness, so they are not contagious, and they are no one's fault. Children with disabilities deserve our love and understanding. All children have the right to come to school, learn, and be a part of our community. Some may learn in a special unit, and others regular classes.

Together, we can make our school a happier and more inclusive place. For this to happen, we need to talk and learn more about them. So, we have turned to you to ask to make a mini-media programme. You can help other students understand their peers with developmental disabilities and realise that each of us feels excluded some of the time and it is never nice for anyone. You can talk to them about children with developmental disabilities and help them understand how they can be kind and inclusive, by inviting them to play, checking in on them, seeing if they need help in class or during break times, discouraging bullying and being role models in how we treat children with developmental disabilities.

Below is a list of things you may want to include in the mini-media programme. You do not have to follow it precisely if you don't want to: you are the expert in running mini medias! However, the items with an exclamation mark (!) are very important.

Content checklist for mini media program

Introduction

- ❖ Explain what developmental disabilities are!
- ❖ Developmental disabilities are not a curse, or an illness and they are not contagious.
- ❖ Children with developmental disabilities have the right to be in this school and be included.

Main Points

- ❖ Explain that we should never treat children with developmental disabilities differently or use hurtful words
- ❖ Everyone can be excluded or bullied sometimes and it's never nice: you can tell a personal experience and/or encourage children who are listening to think about a time they were excluded and how it felt.
- ❖ Children with developmental disabilities may need some extra help from the teacher at times. This is not unfair or a reason for bullying them: everybody needs a little help sometimes.
- ❖ Remind listeners that we all have our differences, and that's what makes our world so beautiful. We should celebrate these differences and be friends with everyone.
- ❖ Encourage listeners to be friendly and act as positive role models towards individuals with developmental disabilities. Specific ways they can help are: !
 - Inviting them to play (Note: some children may prefer some games, for example quiet games. Or they may not want to play on some day. If they say no once, try inviting them another time for another game).
 - Checking in on them to see if they need help in class or during break times.
 - Speaking up when you see bullying happening.
 - Being role models in how we treat children with developmental disabilities.

Ideas for activities in school clubs

- ❖ Interactive activity such as quiz to learn more on developmental disabilities.
- ❖ Storytime session inclusive of personal testimonials to understand the experiences and challenges faced but also emphasise importance of empathy, inclusion, and acceptance.
- ❖ Role-play where they step into the shoes of individuals with developmental disabilities and give examples of their perspective.
- ❖ Q&A discussion panel set up with a special needs education teacher/nurse to help people clarify any questions and gain insight from first-hand experiences.
- ❖ Reflection day that allows people to share their thoughts and opinions on developmental disabilities.

Ideas for principals to support caregivers

Caregivers of children with developmental disabilities can face psychological challenges due to practical difficulties in supporting their children and due to social isolation. The school could support them organise a peer-support group.

- ❖ In a peer-support group, caregivers come together regularly (for example once a month) to share their challenges and support each other.
- ❖ The school could provide a space for this and help with initial organisation, to help get the group meeting started.
- ❖ The parent-teacher association could help with organisational aspects.
- ❖ The school could consider providing coffee.
- ❖ The school could also consider calling in a social worker for facilitating the peer-support group: these groups typically work best with the facilitator; however, they can still be beneficial even if they are only attended by the caregivers without facilitators.
- ❖ Additionally, caregivers could come together to produce an income-generating activity, where they make something (objects, food, etc.) to sell and earn some money, as many caregivers of children with developmental disabilities face financial challenges.

Health Services Referral Form

Student:
School:
Grade:
Parent/Caregiver:
Teacher completing the form:
Date of form completion:

How long have you known the child for? _____

Are you referring the child for an injury or physical health concern/pain? Y / N

If you have answered Yes, please describe the injury and event when it happened or the health concern in the box below.

Are you referring the child for a disability concern? Y / N

If you have answered Yes, answer the question below by completing the checklist.

What concerns do you have about the child? Please cross all that apply:

- Vision difficulties
- Hearing difficulties
- Motor difficulties
- Seizures
- Difficulties reading
- Difficulties counting
- Cognitive difficulties
- Difficulties understanding
- Communication difficulties
- Social interaction difficulties
- Difficulties playing, performing daily living activities, or other activities

- High sensitivity to sensory stimuli
- Low sensitivity to sensory stimuli
- Attention difficulties, getting distracted
- Very talkative when not required or allowed
- Wanders when not required or allowed
- Behavioural outbursts
- Unexplained repetitive behaviours
- Other behavioural difficulties
- Other concerns. Please write your concern: _____

If you can provide more context or clarification of your concerns briefly do so in the box below.

Information for the Health Professional: this form has been provided to teachers to support them in referring their concerns to Health Centers. The following page includes a form for you to complete and send back to the teacher through the parent/caregiver if appropriate and if the child has been referred for disability concerns. Please consider doing this, as your recommendations may greatly support teachers in their practice.

Information from Health Professionals to the referring teacher

Student: School: Grade: Parent/Caregiver: Referring teacher: Health professional completing the form: Date of health assessment:
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Have you found any disability or behavioural concerns in the child? Y / N

Have you referred the child for formal diagnosis? Y / N

If you have answered Yes to any of the two questions above, please report the concerns found.

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Please indicate your recommendations for the teacher (for example, does the child need to sit closer to the teacher / board, what support they need)

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Are you happy for the teacher to contact you? If so, please include your phone number: _____

Checklist of safeguarding items relevant to children with developmental disabilities

Here are a few items relevant to safeguarding children with developmental disabilities that principals may want to think about when updating their safety procedures. Please consider whether these are relevant to your context and can be feasible and useful.

Procedures/Systems

- ❖ Presence of a system to report bullying or abuse within the school, known to students and teachers.
- ❖ Presence of a designated person (if not the principals) that deals with report complains and has some knowledge of developmental disabilities (for example their communication difficulties).
- ❖ Public contacts of local emergency medical services available to all teachers and in all classes.
- ❖ Presence of designated trained first-aid responders for the entire school community, available on site for immediate assistance in emergency cases.
- ❖ Provision of contact-information cards/bracelets to children with disabilities in case they run away.
- ❖ Handbook on sexual and reproductive health training, signs of abuse and neglect, safety and first-aid for children with developmental disabilities available to all teachers in a school office / other training provided on these topics.
- ❖ Presence of a code of conduct for staff.

Suggested items to include in the code of conduct

- ❖ Avoid corporal punishment.
- ❖ Refrain from giving medication (except trained health workers).
- ❖ Only offer sweets/food with the caregivers' permission.
- ❖ Incorporate age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health education in teaching.
- ❖ Supervise children with developmental disabilities at all times.
- ❖ One member of staff should never be alone with only one child.
- ❖ Remove potential dangers in the class or report them to the designated safeguarding person for removal (e.g. hiding plugs, removing dangerous items).
- ❖ Report all suspected harmful situations through school's reporting system.
- ❖ Keep confidentiality of reported situations at all times, except for when reporting through the school reporting system.