Transforming the education systems for children with disability in Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste

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Dr Frances Gentle

RIDBC Renwick Centre
For Research and Professional Education
Overview

- Background and impetus of the study
- Research methods
- Results of PNG study
  - Priorities for future education system growth
  - Family issues to be addressed by the education system
- Research conclusions and recommendations
Papua New Guinea & Timor-Leste systems of education for children with disability

BACKGROUND AND IMPETUS OF THE STUDY
Origins of the study

- **Papua New Guinea**
  - Christian Brothers review of Mt Sion Centre, Goroka EHP (2003)
  - Train-the-trainer & bachelor degree programs (VI) (2003-present)

- **Timor-Leste**
  - ICEVI needs analysis (2002)
  - Train-the-trainer education programs (VI) (2002-2012)
  - Establishment of braille production centre

- Request (early 2007) from Kirsty Sword Gusmao, wife of the former President of Timor-Leste to support the government’s education reform process in the area of disability
Issues of human development in PNG & Timor-Leste

Human Development Index, 2009

7 Small Island Developing States in the Asia-Pacific region included in the HDI rankings

- Quality of Life indicators:
  - Long & healthy life
  - Decent standard of living
  - Knowledge/education

(United Nations Development Programme, 2009).

HDI ranking 1 = Iceland; HDI 177 = Sierra Leone
Current education provision for children with disability in Timor-Leste

- 1.02% of Timor-Leste’s primary school population of 196,000 has a disability (2008)
  - Major types of disabilities of 972 school-age children surveyed in 2007/8: Intellectual (24%), physical (21%), vision (16%), hearing (15%), multiple/complex (9%)

- 1 special day school situated in Dili, the nation’s capital, with 32 enrolments in 2010
Timor-Leste survey of primary school enrolments of students with disability, 2008

Types of disabilities:

- Intellectual: 24
- Physical: 21
- Seeing: 16
- Hearing: 15
- Speaking: 11
- Complex: 9
- Other: 4

% of total 972 students with disabilities

Female 36%
Male 64%
Enrolments Taibessi Special School, Dili, 2010
RESEARCH METHODS
Core components of the study (2006-12)

- Theoretical foundation: Systems & transformational human rights perspectives

- Data collection methods
  - Input from leaders, practitioners & people with disabilities in fields of education, health & rehabilitation
    - PNG case study – 19 participants
    - Timor-Leste Research Reference Group – 13 members
  - Published & unpublished documentary data

- Data analysis methods:
  - Qualitative, case-oriented & variable-oriented analysis, document analysis, conceptual framework
Linking the research problem & purpose

Research problem
• To develop a way forward in providing high quality, affordable, & relevant educational services for children with disability in Timor-Leste that overcome the national human development constraints limiting educational system growth & reform.

Research purpose
• To offer recommendations for national educational planning & priority setting in Timor-Leste that are drawn from the study of Papua New Guinea & Timor-Leste’s educational systems for children with disability & their families.
Research phases

Research formulation & ethics approval

- Literature review & research methods (participants, interview schedule, data methods)

- Case study (PNG) & documentary (PNG & T-L) research - systems analysis

- Timor-Leste model & reference group review

- Current & future components of education system promoting enrolments – transformational analysis
Conceptual model to support data analysis

**Vision/goal**
- National educational goal setting in the area of disability

**Beneficiaries**
- To achieve our national vision/goal, how must we look to learners with disability & their families?

**Teaching & learning**
- To satisfy beneficiaries & stakeholders, which educational structures & processes must we excel at?

**Growth & reform**
- To achieve our national goal, how must the educational system grow & improve?

**Governance & fiduciary**
- If we succeed, how will we look to our stakeholders
RESULTS OF PNG STUDY

Educational system for children with disability
Inclusive education policy & reforms implemented since mid-1990s

- Inclusive education policy
- Inclusive Education Unit in Department of Education, with IE superintendent & inspectors
- Range of education options
  - Enrolment in local schools
  - Small number of school support units for students with severe hearing impairment
  - Non-formal & informal education programs (home, community & hospitals/clinic-based) for children not attending school
  - Support from special education resource centres (SERC)
Learning support staff

- Employment of PNG nationals, including people with disability (850 wantoks)
- Government pays salary of education support staff in public & private schools & SERCs
- Mainstream schools: Internal resource officers & teacher assistants
- School support units: Teachers with training in deafness & sign language
- SERCs: Education & rehabilitation personnel with disability-specific training
Student diversity, SERC program diversity

- School-based programs (formal education)
  - Disability-awareness programs for staff & students
  - Teacher consultation & professional support – workshops based upon staff needs
  - Direct learning support for students
  - IEP development & implementation
  - Vision & hearing screening & referral programs
Student diversity, SERC program diversity

- Home, community & hospital/clinic-based programs (non-formal & informal education)
  - Involvement of families & community leaders
  - Disability & education awareness activities (e.g. role plays)
  - Disability screening, assessment & referral
  - Early intervention and ECCE programs to prevent developmental delays & promote health & survival of children with disability
  - Storytelling, playtime and home-to school bridging programs
  - Activities of daily living (ADL) & income generation programs for adolescents & adults with disability (e.g. training in produce and livestock farming)
Student diversity, SERC program diversity

- Home, community & hospital/clinic programs (cont)
  - Community volunteer program in non-urban communities – recruitment, training
  - Outreach patrols to remote communities
  - Mentor programs provided by people with disability
    - Advocacy and counseling programs for parents/carers & people with disabilities
    - Networking & partnership-building programs with local service providers – local businesses, churches & local schools
    - Resource provision, including books, stimulating toys, crutches, wheelchairs
PNG Education enrolment rates an issue

- 0.21% of primary and secondary school population of 1,098,000 has a disability (2008)
- 0.09% (n=5700) of PNG population of 6.3 million enrolled in special education resource centre (SERC) services (2009)

(Papua New Guinea Department of Education, 2009; 2010)
Location of 5700 SERC clients, 2009

Provinces of Papua New Guinea

- New Ireland
- Morobe
- Southern Highlands
- Enga
- Eastern Highlands
- Manus
- Western Highlands
- Milne Bay
- East New Britain
- West New Britain
- Madang
- East Sepik
- Western
- National Capital District
- Bougainville
- Chimbu
- West Sepik

% of population of province
Types of disabilities of 3931 children aged 0-18 years enrolled in SERC programs

- Physical (mild-severe): 22
- Learning disability: 27
- Intellectual (mild-severe): 6
- Vision imp/blind: 11
- Hearing imp/deaf: 10
- Multiple: 6
- Emotional: 2
- Speech imp: 2

% of 3931 clients aged 0-18 yrs
Types of disabilities of 1766 adults aged over 18 years enrolled in SERC programs

- Physical (mild-severe): 50%
- Learning disability: 2%
- Hearing imp/deaf: 12%
- Vision imp/blind: 20%
- Intellectual (mild-severe): 3%
- Emotional: 2%
- Multiple: 10%
- Speech imp: 2%
- Learning disability: 1%
Comparison of disabilities of children & adults enrolled in SERC programs

**% of 3931 children aged 0-18 yrs**
- Speech imp: 2
- Emotional: 2
- Intellectual (mild-severe): 6
- Multiple: 10
- Vision imp/blind: 11
- Hearing imp/deaf: 22
- Learning disability: 27
- Physical (mild-severe): 20

**% of 1766 adults**
- Speech imp: 2
- Emotional: 2
- Intellectual (mild-severe): 3
- Multiple: 10
- Vision imp/blind: 20
- Hearing imp/deaf: 12
- Learning disability: 1
- Physical (mild-severe): 50
Comparison of age & program enrolments

Five age groups of SERC clients

- CBR
- Home-based
- Monitoring
- Integration support
- Unit-based
- SERC-based

Number of SERC clients

0-5 yrs
6-8 yrs
9-14 yrs
15-18 yrs
18+ yrs

0 200 400 600 800 1000 1200 1400 1600 1800 2000

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Promoting enrolment, retention & achievement rates for children with disability

PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE PNG EDUCATION SYSTEM GROWTH
(a) Growth in leadership & governance

1. Government leadership & financial commitment to growth in education system capacity
2. Stakeholder partnerships – government, civil society, organisations of people with disability (DPOs), parent groups, international development organisations,
3. Government commitment to sustainable education system growth in rural & remote regions
4. Improved data collection, management & reporting systems
5. Improved school governance through growth in school inspectorate.
6. Training in financial management & bookkeeping for SERC managers
(b) Growth in human capital

1. Recruitment & training of school learning support staff (resource officers)
2. Growth in professional skills of mainstream school staff (curriculum & pedagogy)
3. Incentives for school staff to support children with disability
4. Recruitment, training & retention of SERC staff
5. Growth in tertiary-level training programs in area of disability
6. Government funding of SERC community-based education providers
7. Growth in SERC community volunteers & incentives
(c) Growth in education services, programs & enrolments

1. Growth in school resources supporting students with disability (hearing aids, low vision aids, braille equipment & books, wheelchairs & physical aids)

2. Growth in number & capacity of SERCs to deliver programs
   a) SERC sub-centres in rural & remote communities
   b) Growth in SERC programs (school, community & home-based) & resources
(d) Responsiveness of education system to family issues limiting school engagement

- Education system must be responsive to the issues, needs and expectations of families with children with disability
Family issues and needs that limit enrolment, retention and achievement rates for children with disability

FAMILY ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED BY EDUCATION SYSTEM
Issue 1  Social & cultural beliefs

- Cultural beliefs about the causes of disability
- Limited awareness of the educability of children with disability
- Family shame & social stigma
- Family concerns about the personal safety of their children - on the way to school & bullying at school
Issue 2: Geographical location

- Approx 85% population living in rural & remote communities (PNG & T-L)
  - Subsistence farming & cash crops
  - Limited provision of education & rehab services in non-urban communities

- Resource centres (PNG) located in main towns
  - Limited road & transport infrastructure in non-urban areas
  - Limited family finances & time to travel to towns
Issue 3: School accessibility

- Inaccessible school buildings, classrooms, toilets, playgrounds
- Limited availability of physical access resources, e.g. wheelchairs & mobility aids
- Limited provision of learning resources, e.g. hearing aids, braille
Issue 4: Financial needs of families

- Approx 85% population employed in subsistence farming & small-scale community-based enterprises
- Prohibitive costs of school fees, uniforms, books
- Children with disability kept at home to support family’s livelihood – tend crops & livestock, help with household chores
Issue 5: Health & nutrition

- Poor health & nutrition that impact upon capacity of children with disability to learn and thrive
- Malaria & malnutrition main causes of health problems and premature death
- High incidence of village births without access to health care professional
- Mortality rate 0-5yr olds: 6.8% (PNG) & 5.6% (T-L)
- Stunting 0-5yr olds: 44% (PNG), 58% (T-L)
Issue 6: Post-school employment & social & financial independence

- Limited employment prospects – disincentive for poor families to invest their money in education for children with disability
- Reliance on family for housing, living, medical, food & other needs
- Need for training in income generation, self-help skills & independent living skills
Education of children with disability in PNG & Timor-Leste

RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS
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<td>4.3 Priorities in education services, programs, &amp; enrolments</td>
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Scales depicting supportive & constraining features of national goal setting for education of children with disability

Features supporting goal achievement

Priority areas for future growth & reform

Long-term aspirations of the national educational goal

Goal alignment with the national education mission, vision, & constitutional directives

Participation of people with disability & their families in national educational goal setting
Scales depicting supportive & constraining features of the governance system supporting enrolment of children with disability

Features supporting growth in enrolment rates

- Participatory governance at national & provincial education levels
- Development of a national special education plan & statement of policy & guidelines

Priority areas for future growth & reform

- Representation of people with disability & families on district and local educational governance bodies
- Government leadership & commitment of financial, human & physical resources
- Responsibility of school inspectors to monitor IE policy implementation & enrolment & retention rates
Scales depicting supportive & constraining features teaching & learning infrastructure

Features supporting growth in enrolment rates

Priority areas for future growth & reform

- Adoption of rights-based & inclusive culture by all schools
- Financial, human, & physical resource provision through stakeholder partnerships
- Links between unmet educational needs of children & families & educational marginalisation
- Recruitment, training & retention of staff committed to inclusive education

Enrolment in local schools as the first & foremost placement option for children & families

Establishment of special education resource centres (SERC) to provide formal & non-formal services

Innovative SERC services & programs in rural & remote regions
Recommendations offered for Timor-Leste educational system for children with disability

Perspective: National educational vision & goal setting; stakeholders & beneficiaries

1. Development of long-term national vision & goal of a disability-inclusive educational system through extensive consultation process

1.1 National educational vision & goal setting; stakeholders & beneficiaries

1.2 Alignment & integration of the national goal & vision with the overall national education mission & vision

1.3 Participation of people with disability, families & other key stakeholders in development of the vision & goal

Perspective: Governance perspectives

2. Development of an IE policy & implementation plan, & government leadership & long-term commitment to achieving education growth & reform

2.1 Development of an IE policy & implementation plan, & government leadership & long-term commitment to achieving education growth & reform

2.2 Establishment of “participatory” inclusive education (IE) governance bodies at national, regional & district/local levels of the education system

2.3 Establishment of an Office of Inclusive Education (NOIE) within the Ministry of Education (MoE) (national IE coordination & management centre)

2.4 Expansion of school inspectorate system & responsibilities school inspectors for IE policy implementation & monitoring enrolment & retention rates for children with disability

Perspective: Teaching & learning perspectives (curriculum, services/programs, staffing, resources)

3. Provision of (school & community-based learning support & IE services & programs, with focus on rural & remote services

3.1 Provision of (school & community-based learning support & IE services & programs, with focus on rural & remote services

3.2 Recruitment, training & retention of teachers & specialists with knowledge & skills to educate children with disability

3.3 Expansion of MoE “education management information system” (EMIS) to include demographic & enrolment data for children with disability

3.4 Responsiveness of teaching & learning infrastructure to diversity of family & child needs, including factors limiting enrolment & retention rates
In conclusion

- Study’s focus: PNG & Timor-Leste educational systems for children with disability
- Theoretical foundation: Qualitative, systems theory, and transformative human rights perspectives
- Data sources: Case study, reference group & documentary (published & unpublished), researcher’s empirical knowledge
- Study highlighted the supportive & constraining features of the education system that influenced enrolment rates for children with disability
- In 2008, the Timor-Leste Ministry of Education adopted several major components of the Timor-Leste model
- Further research needed to expand the study’s results
References


- Add PNG DEPT ED 2010 ANNUAL REPORT