



Save the Children

Kabataang Aralin sa Lahat Ibahagi (**KASALI**) in the Philippines

A study of whether and how children with disabilities are being included in classrooms and early childhood centers

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BCPC	Barangay Council for the Protection of Children
COA	Commission on Audit
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DRR	Disaster Risk and Reduction
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development centers
ES	Elementary schools
FGD	Focus group discussion
IE	Inclusive Education
IRA	Internal revenue allotment
KII	Key informant interview
LGU	Local Government Unit (also known as Barangay)
POPCOM	Commission on Population
RPT	Real Property Tax
SPED	Special Education
VAWC	Violence against Women and Children
T1	Teacher 1 (and so forth)
P1	Parent/caretaker FGD 1 (and so forth)
B1	Barangay KII 1 (and so forth)

Note: Though the acronyms CWD and PWD are often used to indicate Children with Disability and Person with Disability, these are deliberately not used in this report. This is because the use of acronyms to describe human beings is considered demeaning. Also, pseudonyms have been used for anonymity of participants or persons/cities referred.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kabataang Aralin Sa Lahat Ibahagi (KASALI) Project, 2014 – 2018, has created an opportunity for Save the Children to advocate for (disability) inclusive education (IE) in partnership with the government, civil society, and community stakeholders. The project contributes to achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 which promises to deliver quality inclusive education and ensures that the most disadvantaged children have an equal opportunity to learn. It also advances the Philippine Department of Education Road Map that aims to provide equal opportunities for children with disabilities to access education projects and services responsive to their individual needs. KASALI (meaning ‘being included’ in Filipino) operates in selected Early Childhood Care and Development centers and elementary schools in Paranaque, Taguig and Pateros – part of the National Capital Region of Manila, Philippines.

The executive summary provides an overview on the initial impact of KASALI project on inclusive classroom/school practices, inclusive culture and on schools and local government unit systems. Sanjay K. Nanwani of Harvard Graduate School of Education spearheaded the study, with the support of the KASALI team. While the KASALI project is from 2014-2018, the study was conducted in 2017, focusing on the initial project results.

Objectives

This study intends to probe into the KASALI project and build evidence in the following areas:

A. Inclusive School/Classroom Practices

1. What IE training content and strategies are being used in KASALI-assisted schools? To what extent are these strategies being used effectively? To what extent are these strategies used by un-trained teachers? How do teacher strategies differ in regular and special education (SPED) classrooms? What types of classroom inclusion

strategies (SPED or regular) facilitate better participation and learning of children with disabilities?

2. For those teachers observed to be using IE instruction strategies well, what enabling factors (IE-related and otherwise) assist teachers in applying positive classroom practices? For those teachers observed to still be using more traditional or less effective instructional strategies, what gaps or barriers exist to their adoption of improved inclusive practices?

B. Inclusive Culture

3. What emerging positive effect/s in terms of knowledge, attitudes (and behaviors or practices, if there are) towards disability and inclusion are reported by children, parents and teachers as brought about by project interventions? How does the project contribute towards increased knowledge on issues of inclusion for children with disability among school children, parents and teachers/education personnel? How do these then trickle down to attitudes and to a certain extent, negative/positive behaviors or practices towards children with disabilities?

C. School and LGU systems

4. What IE content and strategies are being used in local government units (LGU)? Up to what extent are these strategies being used effectively? (i.e. mapping of children with disability, multi-stakeholder planning, use of disability lens in school and LGU planning processes)
5. How do these strategies contribute towards improvement in education service delivery for schools and local governments? Increased budgets for children with disability?



Sampling and Methodology

The study used a mixed research methodology with classroom observations in 12 Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) centres and 12 elementary schools, key informant interviews (KII) with selected ECCD and elementary school teachers and with six local government unit officials, and focus group discussions (FGD) with parents of children with disability and with Department of Education Division officials. A KASALI Inclusive Quality Education tool was developed for the classroom observations, focusing on how teacher practices addressed participation and learning in regular classrooms that had included children with disability, alongside their peers.

The sample aimed at getting insights on how IE was being advanced in all three KASALI project cities. The insights from key persons in different sectors (government, schools, Department of Education, and homes) provided a snapshot of the state of inclusive education.

Key Findings

Inclusive School/Classroom Practices

Observations revealed that ECCD and Elementary School Teachers trained under KASALI project demonstrate understanding of the concept of inclusive education and implement inclusive education strategies. This is particularly

demonstrated through their sound classroom management skills, which in turn, contributed to creating safe, inclusive environments and building strong, positive relationships with students. Elementary school teachers appeared to be more responsive to the learning needs of children with disability compared to ECCD teachers, displaying varied accommodation and modification strategies during classroom instruction.

ECCD and elementary school teachers' testimonies revealed that they benefited from KASALI capacity-building activities. Various factors aided teachers in applying IE instructional strategies efficiently, including: a). capacity to broaden perspectives regarding children's learning needs and abilities; b). a capacity to come to terms with the idea of disability; c). embracing the idea of inclusion; d). teacher's awareness of cultivating learner self-esteem; e). a disposition to protect learners; f). greater confidence in one's capacity; and g). acquiring greater knowledge on positive classroom practices.

If IE instructional strategies are applied efficiently, in parallel with the necessary support and services for children who need those, inclusive education shows social and academic benefits for children with and without disabilities. The benefits include meaningful friendships, respect, and better appreciation and understanding of diversity. In a well-designed inclusive classroom, learners with disabilities meet higher academic expectations – both from their



peers and their teachers and may also see positive academic role models in their classmates.

Inclusive Culture

To capture the general viewpoint on inclusive culture, the study delved into the following key topics: **1)** cultural mindsets relating to children with disability; **2)** social discrimination; **3)** parental resistance; **4)** parental views and attitudes on educational experiences of children with disability; **5)** attitudes associated to mainstreaming; **6)** project contributions of education personnel; **7)** attitudes relating to positive discipline; and **8)** changing views on children with disability.

Overall, findings revealed that parents, teachers and education officials hold a negative perception of children with disabilities and a mixed viewpoint on their educational experiences and pathways. Children with disabilities continue to be considered a ‘curse’ or their respective disability regarded as contagious. Such perceptions are deeply cultural and are manifested in different ways. It is imperative that this cultural mindset – one which is not specific to the Philippine context - is overcome so as to develop robustly inclusive societies which are respectful and celebratory of diversity, in all shapes and forms. The negative perception of children with disabilities may be manifested through acts of social discrimination at the community level. Parents of children with disabilities affirm bullying and discrimination experiences in public places.

It is interesting to note that while some parents share social discrimination experiences by others, parents themselves also manifest discriminatory attitudes and behaviors towards their own (as well as other) children with disability, manifesting in varying degrees of resistance, shame, and/or pity. On the other hand, there are parents who indicate more positive attitudes towards their children with disability as well as towards the idea of disability.

When it comes to the educational experiences of children with disability, it appears that a number of parents prefer their children with disability to be educated through Special Education Centers (SPED), where children with disability learn together, and not with and through interaction with children without disability. Parents expressed concern over bullying and discrimination by the child’s peers (children without disability) and even teachers. They also commented on the lack of capacity in general classrooms to address children’s different individual learning needs, lack of developmentally appropriate learning materials, big class size, lack of teacher preparation and inadequate support from teacher/ teacher aide. Parents and Department of Education Officials’ attitude towards mainstreaming appear to be complex and there is a call for teachers and parents to work closely together to resolve multiple challenges collaboratively.

Among parents, teachers, education personnel and even Barangay officials¹ - there is an increased awareness on positive discipline. However, there are

¹ Barangay is the Philippines’ smallest local government unit. The term ‘barangay’ is also known as village.

still contradicting practices in schools and homes, and positive discipline initiatives mostly occur when school cards are issued, which necessitates the integration of positive discipline in the broader educational and local government unit system.

The information gathered from this study indicates that there is more to be done to successfully advocate for and practice inclusive education. The clear challenge lies in overcoming deeply entrenched cultural perceptions, behaviors and attitudes. While there is a change in the cultural mindsets towards children with disability, concerted and strategic efforts continue to be necessary – reversing such mindsets requires constant exposure to different ways of understanding and thinking and using IE champions to show that inclusive education is possible.

Initial gains have been made through the KASALI project as observed by education personnel, highlighting the importance of protecting and including children with disability in mainstream educational settings. The project has also established ‘interlinkages’ with key organizations and various stakeholders, capacitating teachers and guidance counselors to better support children’s learning and protection needs even in times of emergencies, and lastly, increasing parental engagement with their children’s education.

School and Local Government Unit (LGU) systems

The study explored whether and how effectively IE content and strategies were used in local government units. This is critical in advancing IE and refers to Barangay mandates, mapping of children, institutional functions, provision of materials and services, developing a disability lens, and budget issues.

KASALI advocacy efforts has placed IE at the forefront of Barangay priorities. To sustain initial achievements, there is a need to raise quality and depth of awareness among Barangay officials, including how they understand IE and its operationalization, and in turn make constituents aware to better assist the communities they represent. Mapping of children with disability was

successfully completed with the help of key LGU workers, particularly that of Barangay Health Workers. It is recommended to establish a tracking system and database of children with disability embedded within the overall LGU and education system.

Since IE calls for interlinkages and multi-stakeholder collaboration, there is a need to delineate the roles and functions of institutions in advancing IE. This includes - but is not limited to - provision of materials in daycare centers (DCC) and schools and delivery of specific services for children with disability. This is an opportunity to harmonize initiatives from different institutions. Moreover, the Barangay LGUs advanced the development of disability lens through awareness raising efforts demonstrated through monthly high-visibility events, information-education-communication (IEC) materials, and education initiatives.

Budgets for children with disability appear to be inadequate, non-existent, or shared (i.e. budget for persons with disability in general, which was therefore shared with that for senior citizens). It is positive that the Barangay Council for the Protection Children (BCPC) have been set up and are allocated a budget, but this is clearly insufficient. This indicates the importance of securing political will to advance the IE agenda and to ensure resources (financial and other) for effective implementation and execution.

While the study may have provided a snapshot on the state of inclusive education and the initial impact of KASALI project, one of its limitations is that children were not directly part of the study. The research also laid the groundwork in pursuing further studies in IE and posed questions that invite future research.

Overall findings from the research indicate that KASALI project has had a positive impact on advancing inclusive education in the Philippines. Families, schools, communities and local government units must continue to play their role to close the gaps of inclusion in education and contribute to the promotion and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and of Sustainable Development Goal on Quality Education.



RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The study conducted from June to January 2018 (including the planning phases, on-site field work and writing of the report) is part of the *Kabataang Aralin sa Lahat Ibahagi* (henceforth **KASALI**, meaning ‘being included’ in Filipino) project implemented since 2014 in selected Early Childhood Care and Development (henceforth **ECCD**) centres and elementary schools in Paranaque, Taguig and Pateros – part of the National Capital Region of Manila, Philippines. Its focus is to advance quality learning opportunities and protection in an inclusive environment for pre-school and elementary school children in these regions pre-selected by Save the Children.

KASALI is a targeted inclusive education project. ‘Inclusive education is one dimension of a rights-based quality education which emphasizes equity in access and participation and responds positively to the individual learning needs and competencies of all children’ (Save the Children 2014, *Save the Children stands for inclusive education*). Given that inclusive education (henceforth **IE**) is child-centred, it is the education system’s responsibility (and not the child’s responsibility) to adapt, to guarantee that every child ‘is supported to meaningfully participate and learn alongside his/her peers and develop to his/her full potential’ (ibid). While inevitably making sense of **IE** related content, practices and strategies in homes, schools, and *Barangays* (local

government units) as they pertain to all children, the focus and findings of the study are particularly focused on children with disability. Though arguably every person has disabilities (much in the same way that every person has abilities) - or will probably be temporarily impaired at some point in life – this study focuses on children with the following disabilities:

Boy with cerebral palsy; girl with visual impairment; (additionally over-aged boy without disability but included in class due to lack of previous education; abandoned by parents fostered by teacher assistant) **(T1)**

One boy and one girl speech impairment/speech delay **(T2)**

Girl undiagnosed – ADHD (teacher’s opinion) **(T3)**

Boy 1: Red flag; ADHD; Boy 2: Cleft palate. Operation done. No speech issue. Lip deformity obvious;

Girl: Red flag: learning disability/GDD (Red flags as stated by teacher) **(T4)**

Three boys undiagnosed: two ‘without focus’ (teacher); one who ‘might have ADHD’ (teacher) – **(T5)**

Boy and girl with possible speech delay and red flagged for autism **(T6)**

Girl with behaviour problems and speech delay **(T7)**

Boy with undiagnosed poor retention **(T8)**

Girl with development delay and mild autism **(T9)**

Three boys and one girl: boy with learning disability (i.e. dyslexia); boy red flagged with low vision; boy red flagged with behaviour issues; girl red flagged with learning disability **(T10)**

3 boys and one girl, all with development delay: one boy with autism; one boy with dyslexia **(T11)**

Two boys and two girls with hearing impairment; two more boys absent from class: one with epilepsy; one undiagnosed, short tempered and does not want people to look at him **(T12)**

Note: Classification of disabilities (*Magna Carta for Disabled Persons of RA 7277*) in appendix 1.

It is important to note that the disabilities of the children above (19 boys and 11 girls) were not all medically diagnosed. From the 30 children above 6 were undiagnosed according to conversations with participants.

The study's focus on children with disability is in line with the implementation of KASALI in its third year, where emphasis was laid in disability-inclusive programs and services; as well as with Article 28 and Article 23 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which respectively point to the right of each child to education, and the responsibility of governments to guarantee that children with disability receive quality education. Lastly, it is also in line with Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which refers to the rights of disabled people to education and to governments being responsible to guarantee an inclusive system.

It is important to note that a medical or clinical diagnosis is not automatically useful for teachers. This is because it does not necessarily tell a teacher how to teach a child with a particular disability. In too many countries total dependence is laid on clinical assessments and a disability is only seen as a medical issue, which is obsolete (Heijnen Maathuis, in conversation). Since the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), disability has increasingly become a human rights issue (WHO 2011). There is also ample evidence that Persons with Disability and Children with Disability are affected by poverty and worse socioeconomic conditions than persons without disabilities. Given that disability is a development issue that goes beyond a medical issue, it is important that a medical assessment goes together with a social-emotional, environmental and pedagogical assessment (Heijnen Maathuis, in conversation).

The study undertaken intends to support the country office in the following areas: 1. Gather evidence on the effects and/or emerging impact of KASALI's project model for advocacy; 2. pinpoint areas for further design improvements; 3. Develop strategies for project sustainability within the government systems; 4. Identify how the project strategies and approaches can be integrated in the Save the Children Philippines' programming in early childhood and basic education. The findings of the study intend to advance IE in a country where only 2% of about 2 million children with disabilities have access to education opportunities and are in school (Department of Education Order No. 79, Series of 2009).

IE places the responsibility of adaptation on educational institutions (i.e. where it is educational institutions that adapt to learners, and not vice versa). Furthermore, IE can only be achieved if all learners have access to quality education. Quality education entails accounting for what is learnt, and how learning happens and is brought about, and why. To the degree that learning is conceived beyond strictly literacy, numeracy and academic learning outcomes (which are important in their own right), and integrates a more humanist approach, children will potentially be able to develop as integral human beings.

Providing conditions in educational settings for integral human development requires a 'humanist approach' to education. While 'humanist approach' is a broad term that lends itself to multiple interpretations based on a range of factors (e.g. geographic and cultural context, learner characteristics), in this study it is understood from a competency lens. This competency lens comprises the following: **1)** empathy (Eisenberg, 2000; Hoffman, 2000); **2)** anger management (Hanish, Eisenberg and Fabes, 2004); **3)** assertiveness (Lange & Jakubowski, 1980); **4)** active listening (Gordon, 1970); **5)** perspective-taking (Selman, 1980); **6)** creative generation of options (de Bono, 1970, 1985); **7)** consideration of consequences (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Slaby & Guerra, 1988); **8)** critical thinking (Ennis, 1987); **9)** equality of respect and recognition (Lynch and Baker, 2005); **10)** equality of power (Lynch and Baker, 2005). What competencies are prioritized, how and why, may depend (and should largely depend) on who the learners are (both as individuals and members of larger groups); what needs learners have; and the contextual and cultural specificities of the environments they live in. These environments include the classroom, the school, the home (unless they are street children and do not have a home per se), and the wider community.

Finally, it is important to note that the research questions (each with respective sub-questions) were formulated by Save the Children Philippines, based on needs and gaps identified to ensure effective ongoing project implementation. Questions 1 and 2 focus on inclusive school and classroom practices; question 3 focuses on inclusive culture; questions 4 and 5 focus on school and Local Government Unit (LGU) systems. (Note: question 3 does not report findings from children but focuses on reports by parents and teachers/education personnel).



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Inclusive School/Classroom Practices

1. What IE training content and strategies are being used in KASALI-assisted schools? To what extent are these strategies being used effectively? To what extent are these strategies used by non-trained teachers? How do teacher strategies differ in regular and SPED classrooms? What types of classroom inclusion strategies (SPED or regular) facilitate better participation and learning of children with disabilities?
2. For those teachers observed to be using IE instruction strategies well, what enabling factors (IE-related and otherwise) assist teachers in applying positive classroom practices? For those teachers observed to still be sticking to more traditional or less effective instructional strategies, what gaps or barriers exist to their adoption of improved practices?

Inclusive Culture

3. What emerging positive effect/s in terms of knowledge, attitudes (and practices, if there are) towards disability and inclusion are reported by children, parents and teachers as brought about by project interventions? How does the project contribute towards increased knowledge on issues of inclusion

for children with disability among school children, parents and teachers/education personnel? How do this trickle down to attitudes and to a certain extent, negative/positive practices towards children with disabilities?

School and LGU systems

4. What IE content and strategies are being used in local government units? Up to what extent are these strategies being used effectively? (I.e. mapping out of children with disability, multi-stakeholder-ship planning, inclusion of disability lens in school and LGU planning processes)
5. How do these strategies contribute towards improvement in education service delivery for schools and local governments? Increased budgets for children with disability?

SAMPLING

Six elementary school classroom teachers and six ECCD classroom teachers were observed. Two elementary school teachers were observed in each of the three cities targeted by KASALI: Taguig, Pateros, and Paranaque. Regarding ECCD centers, though the intention was to also observe two classroom teachers in each of the three cities mentioned, due to scheduling issues three classrooms were observed in Pateros; two in Paranaque; one in Taguig.





Three selection criteria were established to select which teachers were observed: **1)** Teachers who had been trained by KASALI; **2)** Teachers with at least one child with disability in their classroom (given that the study conducted focuses on children with disability); **3)** General Education teachers with children with and without disabilities with developmental ages of three (3) to twelve (12) years in their classrooms. All teachers except T7 met all three criteria. In T7's case the teacher had not been trained by KASALI but met the other two selection criteria.

Also, the intent was to select Special Education teachers to be observed and interviewed, with children with and without disabilities with developmental age of three (3) to twelve (12) years in their classrooms, who had ideally received KASALI inclusive education training. This was not possible due to logistic issues. KASALI team members initially contacted the schools to request permission to conduct classroom observations. Which classroom teachers were finally observed was decided by the school principal.

The twelve teachers observed were interviewed after the observation was conducted. The interview intended to delve in greater depth on teachers' knowledge, practices, and attitudes regarding children (with and without disability). A thirteenth interview was also conducted with one of the interpreters assisting learners who were either deaf or hearing impaired in one of the classrooms (i.e. T12's classroom).

Six interviews with Barangay captains or officials were conducted, two each in each of the three cities. Additionally, five FGDs with parents/caretakers of children with disability were also conducted: one in Pateros, two in Taguig, and two in Paranaque. Lastly, two FGDs were conducted at two Departments of Education (one FGD in each). These FGDs included Grade School Principals and/or Assistant Principals who had managed the school under the KASALI program for at least 2 years; these FGDs also included DepEd officials and teachers.

The above sample aimed at getting insights and getting a sense of how IE was being advanced in all three cities KASALI had targeted. Also, insights from persons in different sectors (government, schools, Departments of Education, and homes) aimed at providing a broad picture to address the multiple research questions.

TOOL DEVELOPMENT

A classroom observation tool (i.e. KASALI Inclusive Quality Education, or IQE) based on needs of children with disability was designed to observe and make sense of teachers' classroom practices. The IQE was particularly focused on IE, which by definition comprises of all children, though one part of the study was primarily concerned with teacher practices addressing the particular needs of children with disability. The focus was on how teacher practices addressed participation and learning in regular classrooms of children with

disability, alongside their peers, to develop their potential. The IQE was designed by adapting CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System), designed by researchers led by Dr. Pianta at the University of Virginia to improve the quality of education in early childhood, elementary and upper elementary schooling. While it began as part of a national study in early childhood development, its focus eventually shifted to teacher accountability. This is in line with a core idea of learning:

'It is within the students, of course, that the learning occurs, but it is within the teacher, who sits at the juncture of forces above, below and sideways that the learning situations are framed' (Bazerman, C., 1994, page 29)

While CLASS focuses on the quality of classroom interactional processes (Pianta et al, 2011), the IQE is designed to achieve the same purpose, but its focus is on teachers' inclusive education practices and interactions as they particularly pertain to children with disability. It works across any subject area.

The IQE has three broad domains:

1. Socio-emotional, cognitive and physical support (**SECPS**);
2. Classroom organization (**CO**);
3. Instructional support (**IS**).

Each domain has three dimensions: the **SECPS domain** comprises the following dimensions: **a)** inclusive practices and climate; **b)** exclusionary practices and climate; **c)** teacher sensitivity to, and awareness of, developmental needs of children with disability. The **CO domain** comprises the following dimensions: **a)** instructional accommodation for specific functional areas; **b)** productivity; **c)** spatial organization. Lastly, the **IS domain** comprises the following dimensions: **a)** concept development; **b)** quality of feedback; **c)** instructional dialogue.

DOMAINS	Socio-Emotional, Cognitive and Physical Support (SECPS)	Classroom Organization (CO)	Instructional Support (IS)
DIMENSIONS	Inclusive practices and climate	Instructional accommodation for specific functional areas to facilitate learning and development of CWDS	Concept development
DIMENSIONS	Exclusionary practices and climate	Productivity	Quality of feedback
DIMENSIONS	Teacher sensitivity to, and awareness of, developmental needs of children with disability	Spatial organization	Instructional dialogue



Each dimension above has its respective behavioural markers with a yes/no column (See appendix 2 for a description of each dimension). The design of the IQE is supported by empirical evidence pointing to the importance of teacher practices in the microcosm of classrooms (Pianta et al, 2011). Research also indicates that teaching IS the single most important school-based variable predicting academic growth (Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard University).

The IQE is complemented by a set of guiding questions (see appendix 3) to be used in an interview with the teacher observed immediately after the classroom observation is conducted. These questions intend to support the observations and obtain a broader and deeper understanding of teachers' classroom practices.

A second part to the study – equally important – comprised semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Key informant interviews (henceforth KII) were conducted to Barangay captains or officials (*appendix 4*). Focus group discussions (henceforth FGD) were conducted separately with 1) Department of Education personnel, principals and teachers (*appendix 5*), and with 2) parents of children with disability (*appendix 6*).

DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected by the research support team: Giselle Maurene P. Bombay (Team Leader); Hannah Grace T. Gamis (Researcher); Grace Ruth K. Araneta

(Researcher); Aletheia G. Canubas (Translator). Additional staff supported with documentation, transcription and data gathering. Data was collected with direct supervision from either the principal investigator (Sanjay K. Nanwani), the KASALI Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) Officer (Jose Daniel Fortades), or both. In the occasional cases when neither were present (mainly due to cancellations from either Barangays or schools or other, requiring rescheduling) a Save the Children team member was present (Achilles Reuben Montebon, Community Mobilizer of Paranaque). Data collection (i.e. field work) took place from October 11 to October 27, 2017 and focused on three cities which had been selected by the KASALI team: Paranaque, Taguig, and Pateros, all comprising Metro Manila.

From October 11 to October 27th, 1) classroom observations were conducted in both ECCD centers and elementary schools, using a self-designed observation tool; 2) Key Informant Interviews (KII) were conducted with ECCD and elementary school teachers (immediately after classroom observations had been done); 3) KIIs were conducted with local government unit (or Barangay) officials (preference was given to interview Barangay Captains to the degree possible); 4) Focus Group Discussions (henceforth FGD) were conducted with parents of children with disability; 5) FGDs were conducted with selected Department of Education Officials (division level). Participant selection was based on those who had preferably participated in the KASALI project, and/or had familiarity with it. Similarly, site selection was based on the three cities mentioned.

DATA ANALYSIS & METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed was thematic analysis: data was analyzed (i.e. read iteratively over the course of two months) with a focus on pattern recognition. In this phase comprehensive notes were taken to get a sense of participants' answers. Note taking also focused on possible relations between answers from different group participants (i.e. parents, teachers /educational staff, Barangay Captains or officials).

Transcripts of KIs and FGDs were read at different points. Initial readings were aimed at becoming familiar with the data and getting a general sense of their views; later readings focused on data which addressed individual research questions with their respective sub-questions.

FINDINGS RESEARCH QUESTION 1

What IE training content and strategies are being used in KASALI-assisted schools? To what extent are these strategies being used effectively? To what extent are these strategies used by non-trained teachers? How do teacher strategies differ in regular and SPED classrooms? What types of classroom inclusion strategies (SPED or regular) facilitate better participation and learning of children with disabilities?

Before presenting the findings of question 1, it is important to define *differentiating instruction*: it is a form of instruction that seeks to “maximize each student’s growth by recognizing that students have different ways of learning, different interests, and different ways of responding to instruction” (Save the Children IE Training Manual). It may be used for accommodating or modifying instruction based on students’ unique needs and abilities (ibid). *Accommodation* provides supports and services to help students access the general education curriculum and demonstrate learning validly; *modification* involves making individualized changes to the content and performance expectations for students (ibid).

There are different types of accommodation: 1) Presentation Instructional Accommodations (i.e.

accessing instruction through alternate modes including visual, tactile, auditory, and a combination of visual and auditory mechanisms); 2) Response Instructional Accommodations (i.e. completing assignments, tests, and activities in different ways, or solving problems using an assistive device or organizer); 3) Timing and Scheduling Instructional Accommodations (i.e. changing the allowable length of time to complete assignments, tests, and activities, including changing the way the time is organized); 4) Setting Instructional Accommodations (i.e. involving the location in which a student receives instruction or the conditions of an instructional setting in order to reduce distractions, receive distracting accommodations, or increase physical access). (**Note:** these definitions have all been taken from the Save the Children IE Training Manual).

It is also important to mention that, similar to students with mild to severe disabilities, high ability students also benefit from instructional accommodation and modification strategies. However, the focus of the study was on strategies employed to address the needs of children with disabilities.

Early Child Care and Development (ECCD)

Observations conducted in ECCDs showed teachers with sound classroom management skills, creating safe, inclusive environments and/or building strong, positive relationships with students (e.g. T1, T2, and T3). This was accomplished in a variety of ways: a) one teacher addressed children using the term ‘po’ (a term used in Tagalog to denote respect, often towards elders or people in positions of authority); b) using an adequate and reassuring tone of voice; c) providing the same opportunities for children with disability as their classmates to engage in activities and assigned tasks (e.g. art work, crafts, board activities, answering questions formulated; story telling sessions); d) not demonstrating preferential treatment to children with disability, hence not singling them out or drawing a line (intention or unintentionally) between them and the rest of their classmates. This was the case for example with a child with cerebral palsy who was engaged in a painting activity, providing him the opportunity to use a paintbrush and engage in fine motor physical activity (T1).

Most classrooms were equipped with television screens and some with karaoke, used for the whole class to engage in diverse gross motor physical activities (e.g. observed with T3, combining dancing with singing, and in T7's class). In line with the above, observations also showed teachers not displaying exclusionary and negative practices.

The strategies above effectively contributed to advance IE, facilitating participation and learning not only of children with disability but of the class at large. To what extent these strategies are used by non-trained teachers cannot be determined since all teachers observed had received training. Similarly, how teacher strategies differ in regular and SPED classrooms cannot be determined since SPED classrooms were not observed.

As regard to differentiated instruction, observations in four of the ECCDs did not show teachers implementing accommodation and modification strategies. Only one teacher (T2) implemented a variety of accommodation strategies: a) she assigned each group of children during arts class different tasks (i.e. accommodating strategies through flexible teaching) that were appropriate to their ability, while proving children with disability-peer collaboration; b) more time was given to specific children to finish class activities; c) children with disability and other classmates whose reading skills were not as developed as their peers' were given extra time to process information.

In a second ECCD (T1), though not differentiated instruction per se, the teacher made an exception with a child with cerebral palsy, who was not required to wear shoe socks over his shoes given his unsteady gait when walking, hence ensuring his safety.

Whether accommodation was used, one teacher replied the following:

"None. We don't see any disadvantage because we don't... they [children with disability] are able to adapt. They are able to adapt even if they are physically disabled... we are able to let him/her have PE [Physical Education] classes, s/he is able to participate in dancing and the other kids' play....even the trampoline. We also give him/her time to be alone, though with an assistant

to be with him/her. That's what we see sometimes" (T1)

The above excerpt reflects awareness and responsiveness on the teacher's part, giving a student some 'time out' from the class routine. This may be particularly important for children with certain learning disabilities who need this time to disengage for some time.

The same teacher also reported assigning extra work to children with disability to not fall behind (T1):

"... we give him extra time... at least 30 minutes after the regular class and then we give him assignments to do and work, like writing syllables, which is... will benefit him when he enters first grade"

A second teacher referred to providing individualized support to children with disability:

"... we have activities where I play alongside him. There are manipulative (tactile) puzzles, like numbers and alphabet games from Save the Children. Sometimes we use scissors and we make a puzzle where we pretend the pieces are parts of the body. So, it's just more on activities" (T4)

To conclude this section, the evidence suggests that although there are some promising classroom management practices supporting children with disability, only one of six teachers observed implemented accommodation strategies. It is important to note that teachers may be using accommodation and/or modification strategies in other class sessions. However, observations suggest that teachers require greater preparation regarding accommodation and modification strategies that address children's respective disabilities.

Elementary schools

Observations of elementary school teachers suggest appropriation of IE content and confirm implementation of IE strategies. Five of the six elementary school teachers observed, displayed very sound classroom management practices. They successfully created safe, inclusive environments; had strong positive interactions with the class at large as well as with children with disability; celebrated and encouraged students' success in learning; staged well practiced routines (e.g. combining

instructional, vocabulary learning activities with singing, T7); evidenced clearly structured lesson phases (T7,T8,T9,T11,T12).

Teacher practices provided socio-emotional, cognitive and physical support. Teachers' voices were mostly reassuring, and their tone and disposition was respectful (except one teacher) – which contributed to creating safe, inclusive environments and strong, trusting relations with learners. In some cases, teachers' voices were described as 'sweet' in observation notes from research support team (T9, T11); in one case it was described having a 'firm but neutral tone' (T7). Teacher interactions with students were positive, checking on work of children with disability (T8) as well as on the work of the rest of the class. Teachers praised the work of a child with disability (e.g. boy in T11's class). Teachers were courteous to students (e.g. saying thank you) and addressed them by their name (T9). An instance observed showed learners laughing at the teacher when she forgot a specific dancing step, to which the teacher laughed too (T7), denoting a friendly and relaxed rapport between both.

Multiple opportunities for physical support were provided, where learners engaged in both gross motor (e.g. dancing in T7 and T9's class) as well as fine motor physical activities, through art work requiring use of sharp objects like scissors and knives (T8); tying yarn, coloring, gluing, cutting, and hole punching (T11). In the observed lesson where learners used sharp objects, the undiagnosed boy with disability who was red-flagged with possible learning disability and poor retention engaged in the same activities as his peers. The teacher monitored his craft work as well as that of the class at large.

T7, T8, T9, T11, and T112 displayed sound practices pertaining to classroom organization based on, but not limited to, children with disability. Their lessons evidenced clear lesson objectives; adequate sequencing and management of learning activities, notably in a lesson where singing and dancing activities occurred at different stages of the lesson skillfully, weaved into phases involving vocabulary learning and group work (T7). Teachers ensured that materials for the lesson were available (e.g. T8's art class) and were responsive to learners'

requests (e.g. girl with disability requesting crayons in T9's class).

Teachers also provided sound instructional supports: a) lesson objectives were reinforced with visuals and demonstration (T8), which, while benefitting all learners, were particularly important for children with disability (particularly with hearing impairment); b) through group work and peer collaboration (T8, T11, T12); c) adequately paced lessons (T9, T12) with internalization process of children with disability recognized; d) Teachers also engaged in feedback loops with learners.

In one of the schools where a child with disability had speech issues, the teacher was tactful to not put her on the spot (T9). She confirmed in the post-observation interview that that child has an inclination to withdraw herself if she felt she could not catch up with her classmates, hence respecting and showing awareness of her learning rhythm.

Teachers also supported the learning of learners at large, including children with disability. For example, when a child with disability was drawing her letters 'ng' (which was part of learning a set of words with those letters), the teacher clarified to her that the inside of the letters was supposed to be colored, and not just with the outline traced (T9). She was also reminded to write down her name. Based on the whole observation lesson, this strongly suggested very sound and solid teaching practices which successfully advanced IE. (It is noteworthy to mention that this particular teacher had her own child with ADHD, which in all likelihood positively influenced her levels of awareness of and responsiveness to needs of children with disability and classroom management skills in general).

A few cases of differentiated instruction strategies were observed. Teachers reported in interviews that children with disability could manage the class work as their peers. A teacher reported using different reading comprehensions for a child with disability with learning challenges. Accommodation in terms of timing was observed, where children with disability were given extra time to complete tasks while giving individual students activities so they didn't get bored, as a teacher explained. Another teacher mentioned grouping students

by levels and abilities. This last approach, while intended to advance personalized learning, ought to be considered with caution since only relying on ability grouping may make children who experience learning challenges stand out.

In T12's class where there were four children (two boys and two girls) who were either deaf or hearing impaired, an interpreter was available. She indicated that she would interpret those moments 'When the teacher gets mad... I interpret it for deaf students, so they are also aware of what's happening.' She added:

"But sometimes, it depends, sometimes its individualized. There are some kids who receive these things differently. Some kids get scared when someone is angry, they don't want to go to school anymore. There are others who seem to have a high shield so it's okay, they seem relaxed. They think "teacher got mad but I'm not included in that... it's the regular [students] she's mad at" (T12 class)

Interestingly, though the interview suggests a degree of awareness and knowledge on how to respond to needs of children with disability, she does not use inclusive language when referring to 'regular' students - implicitly implying that children with disability were 'irregular' students.

Large class sizes (perhaps over forty or fifty students based on regional and global class sizes) makes it quite challenging for teachers to maximize each student's growth. Nevertheless, interviews with teachers indicate that there is almost an instinctive (as well as deliberate) effort to cater to individual students' interests (e.g. T8, who recognized children with disability's interest in 'practical' arts involving craftwork). Also, it is important to note that teachers frequently provided informal formative assessment to children with disability and the class at large. This was particularly notable when learners were engaged in individual or group activities (e.g. in art classes), or during feedback loops. Informal formative assessment was given in the form of feedback, praise and questions to provide direction and guidance towards knowledge, understanding or cultivation of dispositions.

Like ECCD observations, elementary school teachers observed had all been trained by KASALI.

No SPED classroom was observed. Hence, to what extent these strategies are used by non-trained teachers cannot be determined since all teachers observed had received training. Similarly, how teacher strategies differ in regular and SPED classrooms cannot be determined for the same reason.

To conclude this section, evidence suggests that elementary school teachers (comparatively to ECCD teachers) were more aware and responsive to the learning needs of children with disability. This may be due to better teaching preparation. ECCD teachers' discourses suggest less teaching preparation, and more of an inclination to display maternal dispositions towards children. This may also be due to the difference in age of learners in ECCD centers and elementary schools.

FINDINGS RESEARCH QUESTION 2

For those teachers observed to be using IE instruction strategies well, what enabling factors (IE-related and otherwise) assist teachers in applying positive classroom practices? For those teachers observed to still be sticking to more traditional or less effective instructional strategies, what gaps or barriers exist to their adoption of improved practices?

Teachers interviewed in both ECCD centers and elementary schools pointed out that the KASALI trainings had been greatly beneficial to them. Based on their testimonies, this section presents a variety of enabling factors which assist teachers in applying positive classroom practices by using IE instruction strategies well. The factors identified were the following: a capacity to broaden perspectives regarding situations in the classroom; a capacity to come to terms with the idea of disability; buying into the idea of inclusion; teacher's awareness of cultivating learner self-esteem; a disposition to protect learners; greater confidence in one's capacity; and acquiring greater knowledge.

The first enabling factor assisting teachers in applying positive classroom practices was the capacity to broaden perspectives regarding situations in the classroom: *"Our being open-minded about the situation... that the kid, regardless if they have*

disabilities or not, will be included in a regular class” (T1)

A second enabling factor assisting teachers in applying positive classroom practices was a capacity to come to terms with the idea of disability, including children with disability, thereby becoming more accepting of them:

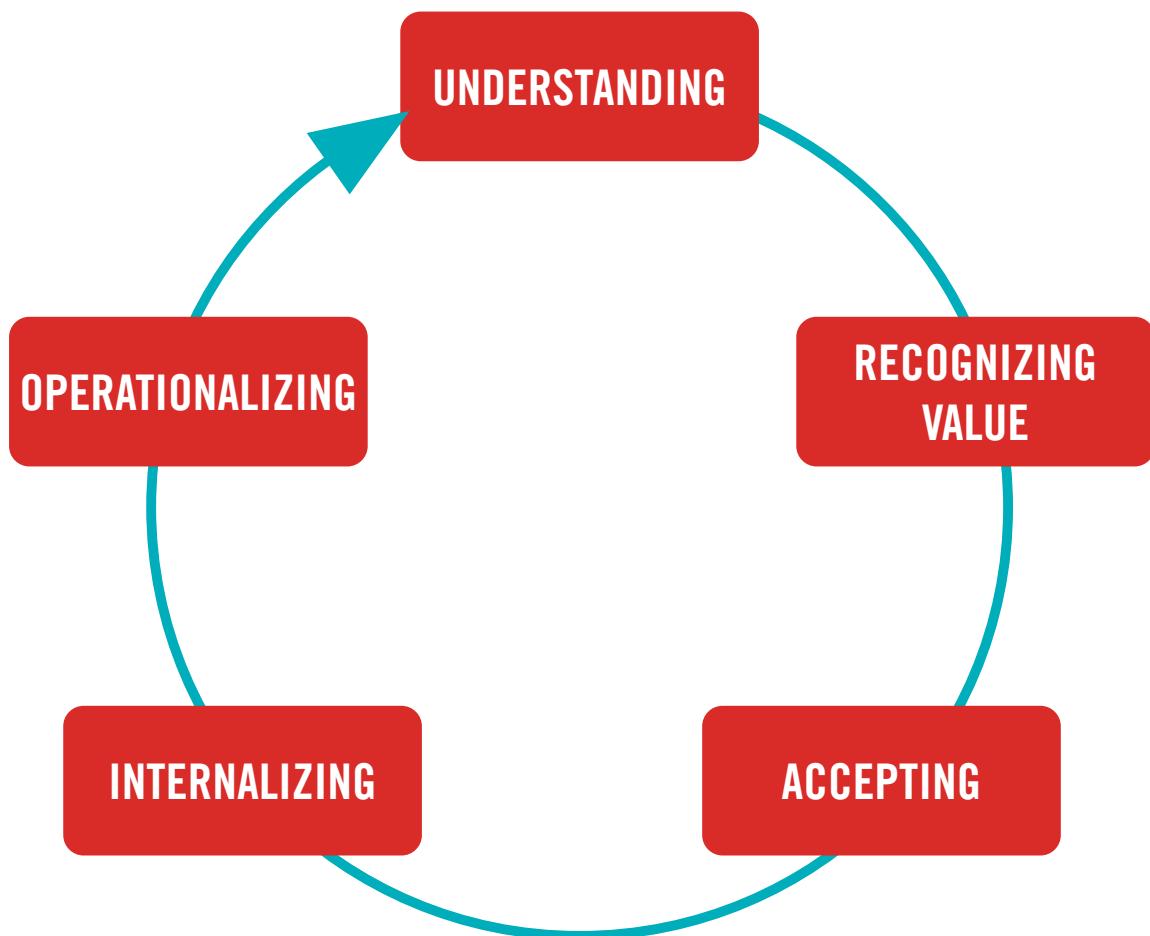
“It’s a big help because before when we have not yet attended seminars, I don’t know how to handle... how to approach parents and the kids because it’s difficult. I really didn’t want to accept children with disability before but when I was able to attend [a training] on inclusive [education], it has helped me and the school a lot” (T3)

Along the same line, a third enabling factor assisting teachers in applying positive school practices was buying into the idea of inclusion, viewing it as beneficial, or as one teacher put it, ‘liking’ inclusion: *“For me, I like inclusion, Ma’am Grace because it’s positive for both [children with disability and children without disability]. It’s an advantage for both the regular kids and the children with disability... they will have unity. It’s a beautiful sight because they have a relationship,*

they gain [a sense] of brotherhood - sisterhood and they are at ease with each other. That’s what’s nice with Save the Children. I like that” (T9).

Interestingly, the teacher above refers to ‘regular kids’, implicitly implying that they are distinct from ‘irregular’ kids. This denotes lack of inclusive language.

The idea of buying into a concept (i.e. inclusion) or a specific education philosophy (i.e. inclusive education) appears simple but can actually be complex, requiring first understanding a concept or approach; then recognizing its value (or how it is advantageous for learners); then accepting it and internalizing it; and lastly being able to implement and operationalize it, hopefully effectively (see diagram below).



In the case of a teacher, who accepted a 10-year old (who did not have a disability but was a fostered boy) in her class of 4-5 year old's, his inclusion into the classroom community was linked to the teacher's awareness of cultivating learner self-esteem (fourth enabling factor):

"... the 10-year old we are fostering. We feel that we are helping build self-esteem. And then, their...their [relationship] with their classmates... I think there's no discrimination. I guess that's the advantage" (T1)

The very idea of being aware of 'self-esteem' is critical to conceiving education as a process that empowers learners. In contrast, if it is not recognized or operationalized (potentially due to multiple reasons), it ultimately disempowers learners. In these cases, teaching practices defeat a core and fundamental purpose of inclusion: empowering students.

The above teacher's awareness of self-esteem is linked to a reference to protection from an adverse environment where the fostered 10-year old could be bullied:

"It's like we are able to protect him from the environment where he will be bullied, where he knows nothing of, even at the age of ten" (T1)

Similarly, a disposition to protect learners (fifth enabling factor) is present in another teacher interviewed, when asked about advantages of inclusion:

"It's good because we take care of the children so that they won't... what do you call that... they won't get hurt" (T2)

The teacher with the 10-year old in her classroom of 4-5 year old's, celebrates birthdays, which can be socio-emotionally important events in a child's life – socially validating them in a sense:

"Also, we see his... he was very happy when he spent his birthday, 10th birthday here last October 10. You know it, their eyes... you can really see he was very happy. You can also see his classmates were very happy. So, they really see him differently. Yes, it's like that. It's not 'oh he's older, why is he only singing like that now... why

is he singing children's songs only now?" (T1).

While 'including' a 10-year old in a classroom with younger students may be well intentioned, it is also arguably not necessarily an inclusive and age-appropriate placement - which seems to happen quite often in the Philippines (Heijnen-Maathuis, in conversation).

Teacher 'buy-in' of inclusion was also reported by another teacher, who stressed participation of all despite 'impairments':

"We want them to... Everyone will be able to participate. Even though they have impairments, we need to include them. How to handle the children with disability. One needs to learn how to be very patient. And it's not just for those with disability" (T6, emphasis mine).

The following excerpt complements the excerpt above, indicating the teacher's awareness of inclusion as encompassing learners from different socio-economic and other backgrounds:

"The advantage is anyone can be accepted. It is good to accept children who have never gone to school as well as children who are well-to-do but are disabled. Because it was not like that previously" (T4).

Equally important is the reference to a potential shift in terms of inclusion as the last sentence suggests. It is interesting to note how a teacher's disposition towards protection contributes to safer classrooms where learners become protective of each other:

"They also learn. For example, with their classmates, they say, 'Hey, that's not allowed. It might hurt someone.' They learn that. 'Do not punch people; that is not allowed. That is bad.' Things like that" (T5).

The excerpt above suggests how teachers act as socialization agents through what they do in the classroom and the types of behaviors they enact inside it, and how these are potentially reinforced in learners - or alternatively rejected by them.

A sixth IE enabling factor assisting teachers in implementing positive classroom practices was greater confidence in one's capacity, which led to

‘self-efficacy’ (i.e. trusting in one’s capacity and acting accordingly). In this regard, upon being asked how she had benefitted from the KASALI trainings, this teacher replied the following:

“Actually, in a big way. Really big. Because it’s as if... like in the instance that I handle children with special needs, I am capable of handling them. Even if, although I studied as a caregiver I know what their other needs are” (T5)

She added: *“So far, right now, my knowledge on how to handle them has been enhanced. And also, what kinds of activities are appropriate for them” (T5).*

The same teacher above then listed a number of areas relating to IE, which depending on level of appropriation and effective implementation of each, would be knowledge areas potentially leading to IE enabling factors in themselves to contribute to positive classroom practices:

“I’ve learned a lot, like classroom structure and how to accept them, how to detect disabilities at the outset, what the red flags are, where to refer them, PES [parent education seminars] for the parents, how parents should handle them and how to teach them positive discipline, that they shouldn’t spank their children” (T5)

Another teacher also referred to knowing how to ‘handle’ children (employing the same verb as the teacher above):

“The trainings are very helpful not only to me but to all of us who joined the training. Because we now know how to handle those children and needs special attention. So, we know how to handle them properly inside the classroom” (T7)

Self-efficacy was also apparent in a teacher interview who suggests how she could implement differentiated instruction (what she calls ‘intervention’) for a child with ADHD:

“For example, the pupil with the... if it is medically tested already. If the child has ADHD, okay we can do intervention on what their interest [is] in the lesson. We use the differentiated instruction for them” (T7)

Greater knowledge (beyond that which is implicit in the extracts above) – what one teacher refers to as

being ‘enlightened’ – was a seventh enabling factor assisting teachers in applying positive classroom practices:

“When I attended KASALI, I was enlightened a bit. I learned that this is the reason, this is how it is” (T11 referring to children with disability and their needs)

This knowledge, combined with understanding, came in various forms. For example, a teacher was in a position of potentially identifying a disability that was beyond that prescribed in a formal medical diagnosis:

“And there’s declared [diagnosis] yet but based on my observation, I think she has mild... mild autism” (T9)

This teacher had her own child with ADHD as she said in the interview:

“Personally, my child has ADHD. I also experienced him not being included because the school said: ‘we are not ready.’ Whenever I see Linda, I remember my son” (T9)

Along the same lines a teacher referred to not being in a position of definitively declaring a child as having a disability, but suggesting awareness of potential disability indicators (i.e. red flags) and the importance of assessment:

“So far, in here, I cannot really say that [they have disabilities]. Because in the morning.... Because they came from a different daycare. So, it only now that I am handling them. But I did see some red flags in some kids... that is why I talked to Sam (refers to a Save the Children person) yesterday if we can have them assessed. But of course, the parents, you cannot really [force them]. They cannot immediately accept that it is the way it is. That when you say they child will be checked up, they say something like, “Oh no, does my child have an illness?” Like that.”

The excerpt above indicates a degree of resistance on parents’ part to accept the disability of their child (this is addressed in greater depth in a later section).

Another teacher declared awareness of inclusion, stating that one of its advantages was socialization: *“Sometimes its advantage is that they learn how to*

socialize... The kids also learn that the other kids are, 'Oh he/she is like this.' They understand that he/she needs... that he/she has special needs that should not be ignored" (T5)

Socialization of children with disability (and opportunities to socialize) cannot be, and should not be, taken for granted in a country where disability is often a source of shame, leading children with disability and persons with disability to be isolated, misrecognized and marginalized.

Teacher knowledge was also manifested through associations to inclusion. For example, a teacher associated inclusion to access to education (without which classroom practices are irrelevant):

"The advantages, we give them... the same opportunity with the others that they got. They can also pursue their study until, as long as they want" (T7)

In line with teacher knowledge, teachers' sense of self-efficacy not only increased but it led them to position themselves as educators to the community:

"There are disadvantages because let's say for example, there are families who do this... The members of the family themselves say that there is no disability; they do not admit it. Second, there are some families who do not accept them. They say, for example, that he is a curse. But some do understand that they are from our... that they are given as trials. They say, "This is a trial that can bless us if we overcome it." But it's not just the family because there are those who bully them within the community and malign their disability. They think that the child has absolutely no value. When I see this happen, I educate them" (T4)

To conclude this section, the set of enabling factors presented above, which were identified in helping teachers employ positive classroom practices were the following:

- Broadening perspectives regarding situations in the classroom
- A capacity to come to terms with the idea of disability
- Buying into the idea of inclusion
- Teacher's awareness of cultivating self-esteem
- A disposition to protect learners

- Greater confidence in one's capacity
- Greater knowledge

This set of enabling factors operate in complex and often overlapping ways, reflecting a philosophy of education which translates into a 'way of educating', and a way of creating inclusive classroom environments.

Whereas this section focused on enabling factors which helped teachers employ positive classroom practices, the next section focuses on gaps or barriers which prevent teachers from adopting improved practices to advance IE.

Gaps or barriers preventing adoption of improved practices

Data shed light on eight specific barriers impeding (or interfering with) adoption of more effective teacher practices: **1)** Insufficient appropriation of IE; **2)** Inability or lack of effectiveness in operationalizing an inclusive approach to education; **3)** Teachers' lack of knowledge or proficiency in sign language; **4)** Not creating safe learning environments; **5)** Inappropriate student group size; **6)** Poor classroom management manifested through inadequate pacing; **7)** Inadequate use of materials; **8)** Lack of instructional dialogue. These are analyzed in greater depth below.

For those teachers using more traditional or less effective instructional strategies, a series of gaps (or barriers) were identified impeding teachers' adoption of improved practices. Firstly, data suggests an insufficient appropriation of IE, either in terms of knowledge and/or dispositions. For example, how teachers spoke and referred to children with disability was a clear indicator of appropriation, or lack thereof, of IE:

"...it's better if there's more protection for them, because we know that they are not like the normal kids" (T10).

The teacher above drew a line between what she termed as 'normal' kids and children with disability, using the term 'normal' multiple times throughout the interview. This is an example of lack of appropriation of IE, where the teacher does not view difference as normal. IE requires developing

‘a system that can respond effectively to diversity’ (IE Concept Paper, Inclusive Education Learning Event, IELE 2016, Save the Children, Sweden). Similarly, teachers expressed a sense of sympathy (which suggests a deficit perspective) rather than implementing IE strategies through proactive, informed teaching practices (which might suggest a capacity based and strength-based perspective):

‘It is very much okay for them to be included because we cannot just be apathetic to them, because they are also children, Ma’am, and they were given life’ (T6).

The extract above takes account of the content of the message conveyed but also its tone, which may suggest a sense of pity and a lack of both, an appreciation for, and a celebration of, diversity.

Though the study did not interview children, children are sensitive and aware of a sense of sympathy being expressed towards them – which is not particularly conducive to their development. In a similar line, a teacher’s discourse, though showing what may be an inclination to inclusion irrespective of learners’ socioeconomic strata, suggests an assistance related perspective (a common approach towards those viewed as ‘weaker’) combined with a religious connotation:

“Ma’am, inclusion of all these children is very advantageous because that is where you can detect... You do not distinguish between rich or poor. You must accept all the children who are assigned to you especially if the child needs special care or is a person with disability. So, the advantage is that you can help their families. Maybe

the Lord gives them to us because it is rare for people to persevere and be patient with them” (T4)

IE demands not an assistance related perspective towards children who are different (which they naturally are), but rather flexible and responsive approaches to education which employ differentiating instruction based on children’s needs.

A second gap identified, impeding teachers’ adoption of improved practices, was inability or lack of effectiveness in operationalizing an inclusive approach to education. This is so despite teachers participating in KASALI trainings and being exposed to core concepts underlying inclusion. Though teachers refer to concepts like ‘positive discipline’, ‘accommodation’, ‘individualized education plan’ and others in interviews, implementation of concrete IE accommodation strategies may be lacking.

For example, in one classroom (T8) students were asked to read instructions on the screen, but the child with disability in that class could not read (or had difficulty with reading). This child had possible mental or learning disability (or both) and undiagnosed poor retention. The teacher’s approach may be deliberate, aimed at capitalizing on strengths of children who can read, or of those whose reading skills are strong. It cannot be confirmed if this approach is deliberate and informed (or spontaneous and uninformed), but if it were the former, it would require providing all students (and not some students) with opportunities to display their respective strengths and competencies in different ways to guarantee IE). Also, IE strategies



in the form of provision of assistive devices, or peer collaboration in this instructional phase, would have addressed this particular (or similar) situation.

A third barrier observed is teachers' lack of knowledge, or proficiency, in sign language, thereby not being able to communicate with ease and precision with children with hearing impairment (T12). Though there was an interpreter in this classroom, it is important to ensure that both teacher and interpreter are proficient in the subject being taught, to be able to communicate instructionally and otherwise with all students

A fourth barrier observed was teachers not creating safe learning environments (T10). Disrespectful and exclusionary behavior on the teacher's part was observed when making fun of one of the handwriting and chubbiness of the child with disability. The child with disability had learning disability (i.e. dyslexia). Though the study cannot confirm what constitutes 'good' handwriting (particularly during early developmental stages) for this teacher, the teacher's interaction strongly indicates ridiculing. A second disrespectful behavior observed was when the teacher made fun of another child with disability's counting skills while trying to grasp the scoring system. Observers from the institution sitting at the back of the class laughed also, while children in class did not. These events and teacher interactions in this school constitute an outlier.

It is important to note that the teacher's disrespectful behavior (above) was not only displayed towards children with disability but other classmates as well, using an inadequate and condescending tone and manner while correcting a child's mistake. This behavior, which contrasts with the generally respectful behavior of other teachers observed, indicates lack of tact and sensitivity which is adverse to children's social and emotional wellbeing and development. The teacher's practices are contrary to the tenets of IE, which 'focuses on what children can do and on their potential for further learning, rather than on failings and shortcomings' (IE Concept Paper, IELE 2016, Save the Children, Sweden). It not only affects children's level of psychological and physical comfort in the classroom but potentially leads them to acquire these adverse behaviors and dispositions.

A fifth barrier relates to inappropriate student group size (which is distinct from class size): though collaborative group work lends itself to peer interaction and peer learning (and teaching), large student group sizes (i.e. bigger than 6 children) were observed. This puts quality collaboration and learning at risk, where children with disability and peers end up as bystanders instead of engaging actively. Though some children may be disposed to engaging more actively while others may be inclined towards engaging less actively (or engaging differently), it is important to consider adequate group sizes that provide all learners with the space to voice their concerns and views. More importantly, it is important that group members play a concrete role (i.e. have a task) in the group work which contributes to group achievement (Heijnen-Maathuis, in conversation). Group members can also be rotated so children get an opportunity to develop different competencies within the group work (Heijnen-Maathuis, in conversation). This has implications for deeper learning, which requires adequate levels of learner engagement and peer interaction.

A sixth barrier is poor classroom management, manifested through inadequate pacing (T10). Though T10 extended the given time for a specific group activity based on written exercises, this time still was not ample enough for some of the children with disability. For other activities pacing was too fast not only for children with disability but for many other children as well. The fast pacing meant that the children with disability with learning disabilities did not have time to process the information.

Additionally, the interpreter in T12's class referred to T12 not 'adjusting' and hence not incorporating an adequate pace for children who were hearing impaired:

"Like in the curriculum, let's start with disadvantages. In the curriculum, the approach is fast paced. The regular teacher does not adjust... the way she teaches the lesson is like what you saw a while ago. She teaches the lesson according to the goal she wants to reach. So, it's the deaf who will adjust to the pace"

What she says above indicates what is exactly contrary to a central tenet of IE: systems and



schools adapting to the needs of children (with and without disability), and not children adapting to systems and schools.

The interpreter also touched on the crucial point of the mother tongue of children with disability, and

“Example in Filipino, in the curriculum of Filipino [subject]... the deaf’s mother tongue is English, right? If that’s in Filipino, I had to interpret it using finger spelling and then I have to translate. For example for ‘copy the letter of correct answer (in Filipino)’, I need to finger spell the words, then quickly translate it in English. Sometimes, it’s just too fast”

The above indicates the often fast-paced teaching practices, suggesting that teachers need greater skill development to integrate adequate learner processing time. This is challenging since each learner has his/her own learning and processing rhythm.

Finally, timing and pacing is of crucial importance. Every child processes information not only in different ways but also at different rhythms. Effective teaching practices ought to consider these important factors. Similarly, in the instances of collaborative work, it is important to realize that different groups of learners require different amounts of time to perform an assigned task. Hence it is also important to ensure that those groups who may finish a particular task earlier are given other complementary tasks. This is in line with IE and may help ensure a smooth classroom flow.

A seventh barrier which relates to poor classroom management was inadequate use of materials (T10). This was observed in a math class where the teacher employed a typical fruit (i.e. calamansi) when attempting to teach multiplication by using fruits which were too small to be seen clearly. This is particularly adverse to children with visual impairment but also to other children in the process of grasping new mathematical concepts, where adequate size of learning materials used facilitates conceptual understanding.

An eighth barrier impeding adoption of more effective practices was the lack of instructional dialogue between teacher and learners (T10). This was the case in this institution where ‘listening to respond’ versus ‘listening to understand’ predominated on the teacher’s part. Listening to understand is typically evidenced through use of facial gestures, head nods and sounds (as indicators of active versus non-active listening); and perhaps more importantly through speed at which responses are given, where interlocutors (in this case children) are not interrupted while speaking. Non-active listening (T10) was observed in interactions with the class at large. This specific trait may constitute an inherent personality trait; however, it is one that has serious implications in the classroom, often having a very adverse effect on learning and teaching processes. It also denotes a lack of awareness of the importance of learners’ voices, who need to raise their voices to reaffirm themselves as persons or learners, or both; and who need to listen to themselves and be listened

to. It is through these mechanisms that deeper and meaningful learning can take place, and learners are able to consolidate, internalize and appropriate content, skills and dispositions.

Eight barriers impeding (or interfering with) adoption of more effective practices were identified and presented above:

1. Insufficient appropriation of IE
2. Inability or lack of effectiveness in operationalizing an inclusive approach to education
3. Teachers' lack of knowledge or proficiency in sign language
4. Not creating safe learning environments
5. Inappropriate student group size
6. Poor classroom management manifested through inadequate pacing
7. Inadequate use of materials
8. Lack of instructional dialogue

These eight barriers, more than emphasizing teachers' limitations per se, point to the intellectually complex task of teaching. Teaching entails addressing, effectively coordinating, and aligning a range of elements within the complex microcosm of classrooms. These range of elements are part of more complex systems (i.e. cognition, emotion) which are associated with what, how and why children learn. In particular, how and why children learn is not static but dynamic: it changes as children acquire new knowledge and advance (or regress) from one developmental stage to another.

The fact that teaching is intellectually complex points to the importance of why it ought to be an informed practice (irrespective of who the learner is, or the learners are, and where they are geographically and psychologically situated). Ideally, teaching requires an acute awareness of the distinct micro processes at play in the multiple interactions that learning spaces potentially lend themselves to, through informed practice. In this sense, teaching is as complicated as neurosurgery (Saphier, Harvard University, Closing the Achievement Gap Summer Institute 2017). To the degree that teaching practices are methodically and conscientiously approached, they will be a conduit to inclusive education.

Finally, two aspects which stem from data are noteworthy, even though they do not constitute instructional strategies per se, but rather structural or external factors affecting improved practices. First, teachers mentioned specific learner situations relating to their potential, or diagnosed, disability as particularly challenging:

"When they are uncontrollable. Especially when they want what they want. It's difficult. It is difficult to facilitate... especially if they're like that they are uncontrollable. It is very difficult" (T2)

Similarly, a teacher referred to ADHD learners' hyperactivity:

"... the disadvantage, especially those with ADHD, is that they are really too hyper. It doesn't matter what you do... Make them a leader. Make them... Whatever activity you ask them to do, sometimes they will not listen. That's why there are times when the class is disrupted. Especially at this age that they are 3 and 4 years old" (T2)

Secondly, one teacher referred to the challenge of addressing potentially difficult questions from children without disability, which demanded some form of explanation regarding those children with disability:

"The disadvantage that we see is when someone asks, and we cannot fully explain what it is. One instance, is like Linda's 'are you sick? Why is your hand like that?' His hand looks like a clam, like that. The only answer I could give is 'no, it's not an illness. That's what God gave him... God gave us different [appearances]. That's what God gave him.' So, it's like that, that's the appearance God gave him. So [I answer] like that" (unspecified teacher KII)

This excerpt shows a teacher who manages the situation by resorting to a discourse with a religious connotation - religion being a dominant cultural trait that is characteristic of the Filipino culture. As mentioned earlier, IE requires seeing difference as normal, and celebrating diversity.



FINDINGS RESEARCH QUESTION 3

What emerging positive effect/s in terms of knowledge, attitudes (and practices, if there is) towards disability and inclusion are reported by children, parents and teachers as brought about by project interventions? How does the project contribute towards increased knowledge on issues of inclusion for children with disability among school children, parents and teachers/education personnel? How does this trickle down to attitudes and to a certain extent, negative/positive practices towards children with disabilities?

This section documents attitudes and negative/positive practices towards children with disability. It includes emerging positive (and negative) effect/s in terms of knowledge, attitudes and practices towards disability and inclusion reported by parents, teachers and education personnel. The following sub-topics are discussed below in greater depth: 1) cultural mindsets relating to children with disability; 2) social discrimination; 3) parental resistance; 4) parental views and attitudes on educational experiences of children with disability; 5) attitudes associated to mainstreaming; 6) project contributions among education personnel; 7) attitudes relating to positive discipline; 8) Changing views on children with disability.

Cultural Mindset

Data from interviews with parents and teachers suggests a generally negative attitude towards children with disabilities at a macro level, which is

deeply cultural and is manifested in different ways. Children with disabilities may be considered a ‘curse’ (DepEd FGD) or their respective disability (perhaps more so when it concerns mental disability) regarded as contagious (DepEd FGD). This cultural mindset is based on beliefs without foundation, as a DepEd participant pointed out:

“It’s a misnomer to say that having a child with disability is like a curse. It is not a curse like we believed in the old days. So, we need a shift in belief system” (DepEd FGD).

In this line of thought, a Barangay official referred to parent denial as their ‘number one problem’:

“Our number one problem are the parents in the denial stage. We come to them with the barangay program, but they deny [that their child is disabled]. They would say ‘my child is normal’ but I know that there’s something wrong with the child. It’s like they’re embarrassed. That’s a problem for us. Sometimes we’d like to see the child and join him/her to the barangay program, but the parents won’t even let the child out of the house” (B1)

It is interesting to note in the excerpt above that some parents view their children (irrespective of the disability) as ‘normal’. It is not clear, however, if the participant interviewed (i.e. barangay official) rejects this normalcy or points to children’s disability, when saying, “but I know that there’s something wrong with the child”

Relating to perspectives on normalcy, a Barangay official employed the adjective ‘normal’ to describe the community the Barangay oversaw:

“... so I’m actually glad that we only have a few [children with disability] which means it’s very normal here in Aguho, healthy...yes, they are only five of them” (B2)

The fact that the official claimed there were only five children with disability is what made the community ‘very normal’. This indicates that sensitization efforts on what is ‘normal’ continue to be needed.

IE is based on the principle that all children are normal, irrespective of their strengths, weaknesses, abilities and/or disabilities. This suggests that notions of normalcy, even from government workers, often do not comprise, or ‘include’ those children with one or more disabilities. It is imperative that this cultural mindset – one which is not specific to the Philippine context by any means - is overcome to construct robustly inclusive societies which are respectful and celebratory of diversity, in all shapes and forms.

Social Discrimination

Constructing robustly inclusive societies entails a concerted effort at a macro (i.e. societal) and micro (i.e. community based, beginning in the neighborhood and at homes) level. In this regard, data indicates community discrimination:

“I know it’s hard for us when people feel afraid to our child. At the end, we are being discriminated especially when travelling. From my experience, when my child was about to step in the tricycle, it immediately run. Seems like they don’t want to pick us because we have a special child with us. Another was when we were in the elevator, one of the passengers has a Jollibee [popular Filipino fast food chain] meal or something with him. Because it’s my child’s favorite so he stared at it. But the man took it away from my child’s sight and he stared at my child badly. It really pains my heart, for my child I will do everything even fight others” (P5)

Another participant referred to being okay with bullying as long as her child with disability was not referred to as ‘pilantod’ (an adjective meaning ‘deformed in the legs’ or ‘crooked’ in Tagalog, online Tagalog Dictionary):

“I’m fighting those who called my child ‘pilantod’. It’s okay with me that he is being bullied just don’t say that he is ‘pilantod’ because it really breaks my heart” (P5)

Another parent referred to discrimination in public places like malls, where Filipino families often spend their leisure time:

“I watch over him when playing outside because there are people who make crazy sign pointing my child. One time, when we went to the mall, this couple looked at my child with disgust. The girl really verbally harassed my child. I said that, what she was doing was illegal and there’s a law about it. Then her boyfriend tried to calm her and explain that this kind of children should be given proper attention and not discriminate. I really experienced a lot and it’s not easy” (P5)

Parental Resistance

Parents also manifest discriminatory attitudes and behaviors towards their own (as well as other) children with disability, manifesting varying degrees of resistance, shame, and/or pity:

“Even though she’s heavy, he still carries her. At least if you carry her, it’s not obvious she’s disabled” (P1, grandmother referring to her son and her granddaughter who could not walk).

“My child [referring to father of child with disability] is a male. I think he feels pity for his daughter, especially since she’s a girl. Of course, he doesn’t want to see her that way. He perseveres to carry her” (P1, grandmother referring to her son and granddaughter).

The excerpt above, beyond pity, indicates a gender bias. It is not clear, however, what underlies the gender bias: if the bias reflects girls being considered weaker than boys, or suggests a ‘father-daughter’ bond, or other.

Data indicates non-acceptance expressed in varying degrees:

“They were in denial. They didn’t accept. They didn’t bring him to the doctor for 2 years” (P3, relative referring to parents of child with disability).

“But sad to say, his father, until now seems unable to accept him so it’s very hard for me” (P2, grandmother referring to her son and grandson).

Another parent’s testimony refers to a ‘need’ for accepting children with disability, and the potential consequences if this need is not met:

“We need to accept them even if they are different because if we don’t, nothing will happen to them. They will not grow” (P2)

Interactions with other parents indicated more positive attitudes towards their children with disability as well as towards the idea of disability:

“He’s gentle while growing up. Has empathy for other people. When I do laundry, he brings me coffee or water. When he notices I’m already tired, I lie down, and he would stroke me “Nanay, are you sleeping?” There. He’s a delight to be with. He’s a sweet kid. That’s why until now, I always bring him with me when I go out. He’s always with me” (P3). (Note: ‘Nanay’ is another form for mother in Tagalog).

Other parents’ attitudes refer to the idea of normalcy: *“We treat him as if nothing’s wrong. Normal. He’s always with us” (P3).*

“Just like us, we treat her normally. As in normal. Same when she goes to school. I leave her there. That’s it. Sometimes we bring her to the malls. For her... She’s very happy. She mingles with normal people” (P3).

Another positive attitude on parents’ part that the data sheds relates to access to education of children with disability, despite the physical challenges of getting to the school:

“I sometimes bring her to school, we carry her. The problem is, now that she’s grown, of course, she’s growing and we’re getting older. We can no longer carry her. So, we persevered. So that’s how we did it during trips to the school. However, they moved to another place. In another barangay. I’m in [name of city] and they’re in [name of city]. I cannot do it anymore, it’s far. Because we always ride the tricycle. That’s what we sometimes ride” (P1)

Data also suggests parents’ awareness of the concept of inclusion and how it is operationalized through participation - even when the quality and degree of inclusion and participation may be limited (as the word ‘somewhat’ suggests):

“The child joins in activities somewhat” (P1).

In line with the above excerpt, a DepEd official suggested how parents’ views towards access to education have positively changed:

“... parents also before are not, if they have this kind of kid they are not letting them to enter the school” (Dep Ed FGD).

Perhaps more importantly, data suggest that parents themselves can become aware of their own limitations towards children with disability:

“Because during that time, conditions like that were not out in the open, and I didn’t know better” (P3).

Parental views and attitudes on educational experiences of children with disability

FGDs show that some parents prefer SPED, some have negative views of the treatment of children with disability and teacher preparation in IE, while others have positive views of IE. FGDs with parents included references to the educational experience of their children with disability, which relate to parents’ attitudes, and others’ attitudes, towards children with disability. Data suggests that some parents prefer their children with disability to be educated through SPED (i.e. where children with disability learn together amongst themselves, and not with and through interaction with children without disability). This is due to a number of factors as the following excerpts show:

“Persons with disability must be stay together. Because before I used to mix my child in a regular class. He always cries because he cannot write on the blackboard because of his hand condition. He is always left behind. He was joined with the regular class” (Parent FGD).

The excerpt above suggests that accommodation is lacking in this particular case, and that surely a ‘hand condition’ can be addressed by providing

different ways of engaging with content beyond writing on the board. Successful accommodation allows learners to engage in activities, and learning in general, in creative ways.

Another parent referred to children with physical abilities (as well as other disabilities not mentioned in this case) are vulnerable to multiple forms and degrees of teasing from their peers:

“My child is in SPED school, sometimes we conduct exercises for the children mostly from SPED school. There are times that some students from regular school are scorning the children with physical disabilities. Saying things like “You’re ugly” “You’re abnormal”. For us parents, it’s really hard, my child has autism and is hyper” (P5)

Other parents’ discourses went beyond teasing and referred to bullying from peers and even teachers (as well as drawing a line between ‘normal’ students and children with disability):

“For now, I want him to be separated to avoid bullying for them. They really can’t keep up with the normal students so it would be difficult for them to handle” (Parent FGD).

“For me, it is really better if SPED is set apart from the normal students since bullying is inevitable. Just like what happened to my child, it was even the teacher who bullied him” (Parent FGD).

Along these lines, another participant reported discrimination from a teacher:

“Don’t bother bringing her to school, she’s useless” (P1).

Beyond the teacher’s case above, discrimination also exists from parents of children without disability: a participant reported how these request teachers to ensure that their children do not sit next to children with disability in class. From all the participants in the study, only one referred to this type of discrimination. It is, however, important to note that FGDs or interviews were not conducted with parents of students without disabilities.

Counteracting discriminatory attitudes and behaviors of the kind above or other, requires

deliberate strategies aimed both at adults and children to understand (i.e. theoretical dimension) and cultivate (i.e. behavioral dimension) respect in the classroom, in the school, and beyond. The idea of respect comprises knowledge, values and dispositions on different ways of respecting others: for example, children may be exposed to the content of what is said and what is not said; what could be said differently and why; how the content, or message, is said and not said; how it could be said differently and why. Also, it is imperative that not only teachers in the classroom but all adults in the school model respect active and deliberately, understanding that they act as socialization agents, and ideally as role models for all children.

A third parent expressed preference for SPED on the basis that children with disability - beyond forms of teasing (which may or may not be innocent or harmful) and bullying - are vulnerable to extreme abuse and cruelty from peers:

“Based on what I see, when it comes to public schools, it is difficult to mingle with children with disabilities. Eventually they could not study since it is challenging for them [followed by inaudible]. Since there are many kids in public schools due to access to education, many kids try to “destroyed” children with disabilities. It’s a pity at times” (P1)

Other educational experiences parents referred to suggest teacher’s lack of preparation, or lack of support in the form of teacher aides, in managing classrooms:

“And then the teacher said “mommy, he should have a tutor” I said ok but nothing good came out of it. Because the tutor always had to run after him. When that didn’t go well we transferred him here. A private school there, Holy Family, we enrolled him there. It was under SPED. And then nothing. The teachers couldn’t cope. They’re just running in circles” (P3)

The school at large needs to have an institutional set-up that supports teachers’ challenging work in the classroom, or other, settings. Ideally, teachers should be able to focus on learning and teaching processes, and less on managing disruptive cases. It is, however, important to note that ‘children who are disruptive are often trying to communicate

something. Only if we understand why and when the child is disruptive, can we respond with more appropriate pedagogical approaches. Inclusive classrooms should, for example, also have quiet corners for learners who are easily distracted, or who distract others' (Heijnen-Maathuis, in conversation).

Another parent referred to class sizes:

"Of course, with the volume of the students, the teacher can't address her needs" (P3)

Large class sizes arguably require 1) creative ways to address learning; and 2) respond to different learner styles. This may mean that large class sizes can be capitalized upon in different ways.

Another parent interestingly made a distinction between her child and those children who 'look normal':

"Look at the kids here, they all look normal, but my child can't reach their minds, they have their own world. You can't expect them to enter your world, you have to enter their world" (P2)

Beyond the educational experiences presented above, data also reveals parents whose experiences have been positive (albeit positive experiences reported being comparatively fewer in the study):

"And then at [name of city], we cannot afford since the tuition was so expensive. And then the fare to [name of city] and [name of city]. I said let's wait for a school at SPED like this here. Just like with Teacher [name of city]. It's good that he's already improved. He can already talk with people like us. He used to be shy" (P3)

"Until slowly, he adjusted. And we became at ease. He's adjusted. The child goes to school. After 4 years, when we're staying there we moved. We moved to [name of location], we can already leave him. So, I bring him to school and fetch him after 3 hours. He's really adjusted" (P3, grandmother).

"When she was 6 years old, I sent her to school. Because she wanted to go to school. I had her tutored, she learned to write her name. Afterwards, we went home to [name of city]. We enrolled her there. She loved school, she can go by herself" (P3, grandmother FGD).

The excerpts above suggest that adjustment of children with disability in so called 'regular' classrooms is a gradual process. This is true of children with and without disability: different children require varying time frames and different approaches (depending on their personalities and individual strengths and weaknesses) to develop certain skills, such as the communicative skill (first excerpt). IE needs to identify individual learner needs and set up systems to address these. A disability lens (though necessary to account for) need certainly not be the only lens employed to set up inclusive education systems.



Attitudes associated to mainstreaming

Attitudes of parents, and specifically preferences for non-inclusive SPED instruction, are related to attitudes associated to mainstreaming. Data in the study evinces children with disability viewed from a deficit perspective (in contrast to a capability, or 'strength based' perspective). DepEd officials made a distinction between 'educable' and 'trainable' students:

"Educable are those who can be mainstreamed in the regular class. With mild disability. With mild intellectual disability, mental ability" (DepEd 1).

Upon further prompting regarding the distinction between 'educable' and 'trainable', the participant expanded:

"When we say educable children, these are the children that without disability, they don't have the opportunity to be enrolled in a regular classroom setting. So, in other words these are the children on street, because there are problems in their personal circumstances. Kasi [meaning 'because'] some of them belongs to the broken family and they themselves said that they are the one feeding themselves. In other words, yes, they support themselves. For them to survive" (DepEd 1).

Irrespective of the distinction, trainings should also continue to be aimed at inclusive language and terminology.

In this line of thought, accommodation was referred to as functional academics, designed to help children with disability become more autonomous:

"Functional academics, like for example in mathematics I teach them how to read time, tell the time, counting money and then they also learn how to travel without their parents. And then skills that we help them become productive. Like for example I teach them how to bake cake, cookies, whatever. We also [make] dishwashing liquid" (DepEd 1).

While being autonomous for children with disability and children without disability is important, this process may take place at the potential expense of cognitive (and other) stimulation and development of competencies. This calls for teachers and parents

working closely to determine how these multiple concerns are addressed collaboratively.

Project contributions among education personnel

Education personnel noted advantages to protecting and including children with disability in educational settings, and pointed to the positive impact of KASALI:

"... in the part of our division office ma'am, it is really an advantage on our part because it really helps out intensify the implementation of DepEd mission and vision... to all our schools or areas of concern with respect to the policy, education for all. A respective of whether children have disability we have to cater them. So that is really in line our goal of "Education for All" policy. So, we do not admit or say that we can do this alone in the DepEd, because of limited resources. Through tie up or interlinkages with organizations such as Save the Children it helps us, makes our task easier, so that we are to capacitate our people in the field with respect to catering children with disability" (DepEd 2).

It is promising that the above excerpt refers to 'interlinkages' with organizations. This is a key element to capitalize on for effective advances in IE.

In a second DepEd FGD, education personnel commented on the advantages of IE:

"One of the advantages that... is good for this inclusive education is that nobody will [be left] behind. All pupils with disability will be accepted and they will feel that they are normal... that they are welcome in the education system in the Philippines" (DepEd 1).

The fact that the excerpt above refers to children with disability feeling normal may be the result of not feeling normal. It is important that IE strategies account for deeply entrenched cultural beliefs (societal, community level and other) so that children with disability (and others) do not feel that they are not normal, but simply human beings.

Education personnel also pointed to a second key aspect, namely capacity building aimed at teachers:

"Because in the field we do not have enough teachers who can cater children with disability, but through Save

the Children we are able to conduct capacity building on how to train our teachers in the field handle children with disability. It's really an advantage on the part of the division office and to our field, having this kind of program. This is not actually a new program to DepEd. This is our own program. It just so happens that our partners, Save, happen to be our partner in enforcing and implementing this program" (DepEd 2).

IE requires teachers who are knowledgeable about IE, both conceptually and in terms of operationalizing it to effectively address not only the needs of children with disability but all children.

It is also promising that there are efforts to train guidance counselors to ensure the enforcement of the child protection policy:

"... we have at least conducted series of training to all our guidance counselors and designate at the field, to ensure that the child protection policy will be strictly enforce in the field. So, that's one way of ensuring that this policy is strictly implemented in the field ma'am" (DepEd 2).

Beyond capacity building efforts of education personnel, IE requires constant monitoring to ensure that it is effectively enforced.

The principal of one of the schools also noted the positive impact of IE:

"At the school level, because of the implementation of the inclusive education we were able to implement also the "No Children Left Behind" because of that. And another advantage of course is our children not... those without disabilities were able adjust to children with disabilities. They were able to acquire the patience when children with disability are with them in the classroom. So, they have acquired that, it's like... they take care of them. Their attitude, they do not bully" (DepEd 2).

The above excerpt suggests that IE is being advanced effectively at the school level. Education personnel also indicated how they told parents to bring their children with disability to school:

"I told them that your children with disabilities please do not hide them in your houses. Bring them to school and we will see whatever we can do" (DepEd 2).

A second participant mentioned some success in ensuring access to education, after persuading parents:

"They don't want to bring them to school. But we have identified some during our child mapping stage in the barangay. Some of them had positive responses, they enrolled their child. We have included them as our regular pupils" (DepEd 2).

Educational personnel play an important role in persuading parents and caretakers to ensure that all children have access to education.

Regarding potential Disaster Risk and Reduction (DRR) events, it is promising that educational personnel are aware of specific needs that children with disability may have:

"At the local school level, we have intensified the protection of our children with disability. Especially during intended, or probable causes of disasters. So, in the program of DRR we specified the children with disability as our prime concern" (DepEd 2).

While DRR measures apply to all children, children with disabilities may need special assistance in the event of natural disasters (e.g. earthquakes, floods). This is particularly important in the Philippine context.

Regarding regards infrastructure that is friendly to and for children with disability, it is promising that educational personnel mentioned the installation of ramps and rails in schools. Comfort rooms (i.e. lavatories) were also inside the classroom in some cases, thereby facilitating access and supervision.

Attitudes relating to positive discipline

Data suggests an increased awareness of positive discipline among teachers, education personnel, parents and Barangay officials. It is promising how Barangays themselves are consolidating their knowledge on positive discipline to then 'educate' parents:

"As what we said when Save the Children got us, we are not so ready to be [advocates] of positive discipline but when we roll out our topic, we see the differences of the parents whom we were able to [talk to] so we now

have our advocacy that even if Save [the Children] no longer requires us to 'have roll outs here' but when we see other mothers and we ask how she disciplines her child and you see that she hurts them... that's what we [correct her], we were able to give back. That's our initiative, 'teach this mother about this' (B4).

Similarly, it is interesting how Barangays are adopting positive discipline initiatives aimed at parents during periods when report cards are given out:

"... it's like our initiative when we first rolled out about 'positive discipline'. The principal in [name of city] saw it and since only a few parents were able to attend... he saw it and said "I like what you are doing. Can we invite you during giving out of report cards?" It's not part of Save the Children anymore. It's like they borrowed us, which is not a problem. So, during the giving out of report cards, before they handed the cards, we talked a bit on discipline" (B4)

As important as this initiative is, positive discipline needs to be integrated into the broader educational system (and not in particular periods of the year such as during report card periods).

It is also promising that Department of Education divisions in cities are practicing positive discipline:

"We emphasize that kind of discipline in learners. Because whenever our learners behave this way if in case ask their parents to come, we emphasize not to inflict any harm towards their children. Because we in school we follow positive way of disciplining our learners. And therefore, when there is a, what you call a corporal punishment at home, there is a contradicting implementation of disciplining our learners. So that's one challenge also we met in school; because not all parents respond our call" (DepEd 1).

The problem that the participant refers to above – namely contradicting practices on positive discipline in schools and homes – is one that cannot be neglected and requires sensitizing parents and the community at large.

Isolated cases of parents who mentioned spanking their children with disability were also reported:

"She is reprimanded, she gets spanked. Though it was not a hard one although we want her to know that she committed a mistake and that is the consequence for her actions" (P1, grandmother referring to children with disability spanked by father).

Another parent mentioned 'spanking gently':

"If the child is talkative I slap the mouth." "I don't usually spank but there are times I do gentle spanking" (Parent FGD).

It is important to reinforce that any form of physical (or psychological) punishment is a violation of children's rights and is harmful in the immediate and long term.

It is also important to continue advancing efforts to sensitize communities on child abuse and how to protect children from it:

"I think the people are not that aware about child abuse. But they know that the barangay must act on children being abused. They are aware of that. But regarding knowledge of the technical aspect of the resolution, I don't think they are aware too much because it's not being explained to them" (B3).

Parents and other adults may not be aware of legal 'technicalities' but this should not stop them from ensuring that positive discipline is practiced as part of advancing IE. Similarly, it is important to offer a venue in which to discuss perspectives of a religious nature which may refer to practices that are contradictory to positive discipline. One teacher referred to the following:

"It was said in the Bible, even in the Bible, you can see that spanking your child helps in correcting the child's behavior, so it's really allowed for a parent to spank the child, that's just it. But now, even the expression that you are angry, they get traumatized so that's not allowed. You should use positive discipline" (B3).

Despite the biblical reference above, it is promising that there is greater sensitization regarding positive discipline:

“The expression on your face, your tone of voice and how you say things, and your actions, all of those things should be positive” (B3).

The above is evidence of awareness of tone of voice, actions, and how children are spoken to.

Changing views on children with disability

Though it is difficult to determine definitively from the study how increased knowledge on issues of inclusion for children with disability trickles down to attitudes, the above excerpts referring to knowledge in different areas, attitudes and practices associated with inclusion for children with disability give important initial insights. Having said this, it is important to note that there were some examples in the study pointing to a possible change regarding how children with disability are viewed:

“It’s said that there’s no different kid, they are all kids. So, if the children with no disability enjoy that then I guess the children with disabilities can enjoy that also. So, their world also expands” (Barangay B4).

It is also interesting how there are initiatives from the Barangays aimed at parents, so they internalize inclusion:

“... we are trying to let our constituents know that there’s no difference between children with disabilities and those without disabilities. You can bring them together. That’s it, Ma’am. We do try to make them understand that. If I may also add that being a parent, I have been a focal parent of the children with disability... like before,

we roll out to other schools...we tell them that you as mothers of children with disability should be the first to spread info that their child is not different from the others. You show them that there should be equality. Help us spread that... since you were the ones whom this idea was shared. Please help us spread... to the 20 parents of children with disability whom we were able to roll out this [info], if you will be able to tell this to five other parents, we can spread this until many people have learned about the children with disability” (B4).

The official above refers to a word of mouth sensitization process so attitudes trickle down at a community (and society) level. This is a key aspect which cannot be neglected as efforts to sensitize on IE are advanced. Word of mouth sensitization can have a domino effect, leading to children without and children with disability being seen from an inclusive lens.

While KASALI contributes in important ways towards increased knowledge on issues of inclusion for children with disability among parents and teachers/education personnel, it is clearly a challenge to overcome deeply entrenched cultural behaviors and attitudes. Data suggests that while there is a change in cultural mindsets towards children with disability, concerted and strategic efforts continue to be necessary. Reversing cultural mindsets requires constant exposure to different ways of understanding and thinking. Trainings with (rather than trainings to) parents and teachers/education personnel should provide multiple opportunities for them to think about, and feel, how interactions with children (with or without



disability) can be disempowering and harmful, and how they can be empowering and healthy.

FINDINGS RESEARCH QUESTION 4

What IE content and strategies are being used in local government units? Up to what extent are these strategies being used effectively? (i.e. mapping out of children with disability, multi-stakeholder-ship planning, inclusion of disability lens in school and LGU planning processes)

This section presents IE content and strategies being used in local government units and gives insights into how effectively this is being done.

It includes a discussion on the following:

1. Barangay mandates
2. mapping of children
3. institutional functions
4. provision of materials and services
5. developing a disability lens
6. budget issues

As distinct as these topics are, they share a common denominator insofar as they are closely connected to advancing IE and addressing especially the needs of children with disability. Data emerges from key informant interviews with local government unit officials (i.e. Barangays officials).

Barangay Mandates

It is important to note the role of the Barangays: 'SECTION 384. Role of the Barangay. - As the basic political unit, the Barangay serves as the primary planning and implementing unit of government policies, plans, programs, projects, and activities in the community, and as a forum wherein the collective views of the people may be expressed, crystallized and considered, and where disputes may be amicably settled' (The Local Government Code of the Philippines).

The mandate of Barangays includes such varied areas as assisting the city or municipal mayor and the Sanggunian members in the performance of their duties and functions (Section 389, C); maintenance of peace and order or on occasions of emergency

or calamity within the Barangay (Section 389, F); Enforce laws and regulations relating to pollution control and protection of the environment (Section 389, I). These, among others, include preparing annual executive and supplemental budgets of the Barangay.

Mention of the above components of the Barangay mandate is intended to point to the range of functions Barangays are supposed to execute. Though FGDs with DepEd officials pointed to IE being in place for years (even if it was not referred to as IE) through the EFA 2010 (Education for All), KIs with Barangay officials pointed to the contrary:

"The persons with disability [programs and policies] have only come to light 3 months ago" (B4)

Similarly, an interview with a teacher after conducting a classroom observation reported the following:

"To encourage the... because this is experimental. There's still very few doing inclusion but DepEd already has to have this applied already" (T11).

The excerpts above point to IE having become another area of concern for Barangays. Relatively recent advocacy efforts appear to have put the idea of IE at the forefront. It is hence important for Barangays from the onset to understand how their multiple functions relate to their overall strategic objectives, and how these objectives are part of a macro governance set up at both the national and regional levels. This understanding should elucidate where IE stands in this big picture of responsibilities, duties and functions; and perhaps more importantly what components of IE are prioritized, how and why. Different components of IE are probably prioritized in different ways for different reasons, depending on the composition of the communities that Barangays represent. In this process, it is of utmost importance to account for how many children are children with disability. More importantly, however, how much of a budget is allocated to advance IE is possibly the most important factor. (This is discussed in greater depth below).

As much as awareness needs to be complemented with concrete strategic planning which lead

to concrete action paths, raised awareness of Barangay officials cannot be taken for granted: the quality and depth of this awareness, and how they understand IE and its operationalization, should in turn influence the awareness of the communities they represent, and ultimately how they benefit from it. Two participants emphasized these ideas:

“I hope that the KASALI Program will be extended because I think it’s nearing its end. It has been a big help for us, particularly in [name of school]. It has raised awareness to the people with regards to how to treat the children with disability” (B1).

“Save the Children gave me an opportunity to see my role as a [barangay] captain to my constituents who are left behind and one of these are the persons with disabilities” (B3).

Both excerpts above touch on fundamentally important elements of IE: the first emphasizes ‘how’ children with disability are treated; the second highlights the official’s ‘role’ in regard to those ‘left behind’. Without underestimating these important views, it is equally important to not single out children with disability, in the process of advocating for their rights and addressing their needs.

Mapping of children with disability

Specifically, regarding initiatives related to mapping of children with disability, a Barangay health worker interviewed mentioned that Barangay Health Workers perform the mapping of children with disability, and ‘check’ on their needs:

“Uh, Barangay Health Worker. They are the ones from the City, they’re just for the Barangay. They are the ones who do the mapping to check on [what the] needs are. Of course, the Barangay can’t give all these needs, but we prioritize those who are really needy” (B4).

The official indicates that not ‘all these needs’ are addressed, and that they are prioritized based on ‘those who are really needy’. How prioritization of needs is done, and what needs are responded to and what needs are not, is critical to IE. It is of vital importance that appropriate funding is allocated to address all needs to the degree possible.

Regarding the frequency of mapping of children with disability, the same participant reported the following:

“... similar to the elections... because it’s usually... for example, we have a new president of persons with disability, they are the ones who work. Now, whenever its election period, we know that there’ll be new members, so we need to do mapping. Of I what I know, they do mapping every six months” (B4).

The above excerpt points to the importance of databases of children with disability (as well as children without disability) that are not dependent on election periods or political initiatives. They need to fundamentally be needs based, irrespective of political election periods.

Related to the above, a Barangay official referred to the POPCOM (Commission on Population), which is responsible for the following:

“For the purpose of furthering national development and increasing the share of each Filipino in the fruits of economic progress and meeting the grave social and economic challenge of a high rate of population growth, a national program which respects the religious beliefs of the individuals involved shall be undertaken” (Republic Act No. 6365).

The participant indicated that a pilot survey was underway in Santa Ana, Pateros, led by POPCOM. It may be recommendable that the POPCOM also integrates specific mapping of children with disability and persons with disability to identify and address the former and the latter’s needs.

Institutional Functions

Regarding functions of different institutions, these should be clearly delineated. What functions are Barangay functions and what functions are other institutions’ functions is critical to attainment of objectives and effective addressing of needs. In this regard, a Barangay official reported the following:

“Actually, the Barangay does not intervene with the schools because we have the Department of Education (DepEd) division office for that. Whatever policy the division office has we implement in our schools... When they have activities, the Barangay



supports them 100%" (B5).

The above points to the importance of ensuring strategic inter-institutional planning and collaboration. Irrespective of functions, support in terms of 'activities' certainly can, and ideally ought to be aligned to educational initiatives, which are critical to operationalizing IE – ensuring that needs of all students are met to the degree possible.

Multi-stakeholder planning and collaboration was reported by some Barangay officials, pointing to the BCPC (Barangay Council for the Protection of Children):

"We also see to it that some principals of the schools within the barangay are part of our committees and councils which involve the protection of children" (B1).

The participant above also pointed that 'BCPC is not that active but if there's a need to meet we inform them that we will be having a meeting', and that the 'target' was to hold meetings every three months (B1).

Regarding multi-stakeholder collaboration, it is also promising that BCPC members of respective Barangays hold meetings:

"We submitted the ordinal resolution with regards to ECCD, we have that. We update the BCPC every year because members come and go so we needed to do that. The LGU also sees to it that they get to meet the BCPC of all Barangays" (B1).

The above also suggests yearly employee turnover, which if not managed accordingly, can have adverse effects.

Provision of Materials and Services

Interviews with Barangay officials suggest that Barangays' responsibility included (and was perhaps focused on) provision of materials (both to DCCs and schools):

"Even if they are day care centers, the barangay still gives them some things like books, as well as other needs such as for programs...the barangay provides those" (B4).

Upon further questioning, it was not clear to the official which institution provided books for children: whether it was the Barangay (in this case B4) or the municipality. A second participant, upon being asked the relationship between schools and Barangays, reported the following:

"There are a lot of aspects to it... for example... When it comes to educational materials. The structure itself is provided by the barangay together with the city (government). The daycare that you saw was constructed by the barangay with the help of the city government and the furniture was also provided by the barangay, as well as the educational materials" (B5).

A third participant from a third Barangay reported following up on the delivery of two wheelchairs by the DSWD (Department of Social Welfare and Development) as well as referring to the provision of

IDs to obtain discounts for medicine and transport (B2). Birthday cash gifts (not clear if for all children or children with disability were also being discussed (B4).

A fourth participant, upon being asked how Barangays and schools collaborated, mentioned different services, including materials:

“One is scholarships, free summer classes, reading books, and school supplies. The barangay pays for the allowance of the teachers in the summer classes” (B1).

The fact that classes are given in the summer is important since it provides opportunities for social, emotional and cognitive development. However, it is important that summer classes do not replace the holidays, which is a period when children (with and without disabilities) can exercise their right to play and relaxation as outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Barangay officials also reported having a VAWC (Violence against Women and Children) desk, where cases of violence against children with disability are reported:

“... they are included in the treatment that is designed for the children, special treatment by the VAWC officers. So far, since I have been the Secretary, we have not encountered any problem that involves children with disability” (B1).

Another Barangay official reported the existence of a Peace and Order Council as well as Barangay Peace and Security Officers to manage traffic:

“For example, if they need someone to assist the parents and students before the class starts and during dismissal, we send our tanods (barangay peace and security officer) so they could help in organizing the traffic of the students, since, as you can see, our school grounds is small, so it tends to be congested. The reason why this school seems to receive a special treatment from the barangay is because it is just beside our building” (B1).

These are key initiatives aimed at protecting children with disability and children without disability – protection being integral to IE.

Developing a Disability Lens

As part of developing a disability lens, Barangay officials reported organizing programs and awareness building events: *“About children with disability... uh last year, based on what I know, we really have person with disability organizations about... well for children with disability, what we normally do for them is we have a program every children’s month. There’s a children’s month. Included in that are the children with disability as well as those without disabilities. That’s what they are advocating for here, that the kids will be equal and not different. So, that’s it usually. There’s also a Christmas Party. Also, those who need hearing aids, the barangay gives them” (B4).*

Monthly awareness building thematic events (e.g. children’s month) may be important but it is essential that awareness building translates into sustainable efforts to address children’s needs. It is equally important that initiatives are advanced throughout the year in a consistent manner to establish and sustain inclusive education, through periodic monitoring. Similarly, a Barangay official reported Olympics events for children with disability (B2). While sports and recreational activities are important, it is essential to also consider activities where all children can play and engage together.

Beyond awareness raising events through programs, flyers posted in Barangay buildings were also observed. For example, the Pateros Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office, had wall posters and flyers with a rights-centered perspective on issues of positive discipline; on ‘10 things we can all do about disability’, among others.

The ten areas include:

1. knowing about disability
2. cultivating mutual respect
3. ensuring access to health and welfare
4. promoting rehabilitation and disability services
5. supporting inclusive education
6. championing employment
7. creating an inclusive environment
8. securing social protection (with a PWD, or person with disability, ID card above it)
9. enabling and empowering people
10. realizing rights.

These are all important efforts geared towards developing a disability lens, but it is imperative to be cautious of signaling a community of people and children. Secondly, it is important to provide versions of these flyers in local languages; thirdly, it is important to convey these messages not only through text but also through images, which may facilitate internalization; fourthly, it is important to convey these messages not only through written text but also through braille for people with visual impairment.

Developing a disability lens was also advanced through educational initiatives such as parent education seminars (PES), conducted by Barangays. PESs were also conducted, both in Barangays (e.g. B2, B3) and educational institutions (e.g. T4's institution). In B2 PESs had been interrupted due to construction work. In a fourth interview, the Barangay official reported conducting trainings:

"And also, with the trainings, especially with the SPED, I think. Because I was involved with the BOO, the Barangay office... BOO is about the Barangay organization and headed by Lucia Carino [name changed]. The training they had was very basic, no specialization... (inaudible) languages, math, etc. The standard subjects... but I think when it comes to specialization there was none" (B5).

The above excerpt highlights the importance of ensuring coherence both in terms of content and sequence, addressing needs in progressive levels. It also highlights identifying specific gaps in different Barangays representing different communities.

Participants also referred to conducting seminars to parents in different schools:

"We were able to roll out to three schools already this October. We have been to three schools – [name of school 1], [name of school 2] and then [name of school 3] and next is [name of school 4] integrated... that's our last school" (B4).

It is important to ensure that parents of children with and without disability in all schools and DCCs participate in these seminars, as part of scaling efforts consistently.

Budget issues

It is imperative that adequate budgets allocations are in place if IE is to be advanced effectively. One Barangay official interviewed referred to an insufficient budget:

"Maybe in... from what I said that there's a budget... the budget collected by the Barangay does not seem enough because we are not really... maybe because our Captain is quite boastful (haha), he also says he is boastful. Our vehicles, it's just for the Barangay... So, like us, what we do in the barangay... all the things being fixed in the barangay is from the budget of the barangay. Maybe persons with disability are not being given much... maybe because of our captain's pride, he keeps on saving before spending... maybe it's like that" (B4).

The official interviewed explained that there were plans to set up a person with disability office which had been halted:

"What I know is that there will be a person with disability office here. But there is still much confusion because we are still prioritizing those which needs to have their spot... like that, that needs to be adjusted. This construction below the BDRR... when the upper part is finished, it will have an extension... might be for the person with disability. That's it. ... before there should have been a space there, but they suddenly implemented [President] Duterte's... that... those for drugs. So there. That's the plan, the person with disability office will be there but the fight against drugs campaign is also there but you can't combine these, so it must all be reorganized again" (B4).

The above highlights the importance of securing political will at the very highest levels to advance agendas (in this case the IE agenda) to ensure resources (financial and other) for effective implementation and execution.

The KII conducted with a committee member (i.e. 'Kagawad' in Tagalog) of B4 reported the following:

"Our [budget] is 37 million... our IRA [internal revenue allotment] which comes from the city is 22 million. What happens with the RPT [Real Property Tax] which is 16 million to complete the 37 million is not realized because

the tax payers in the real property tax almost do not pay so it's all just on paper...that we have a 37 million budget. There are many who do not pay, even in the RPT, land tax, alone. We cannot complete the 16 million which should have come from the RPT" (B4).

The above indicates that despite an allocated budget, the latter is contingent on tax payments. This puts service delivery to children with disability at risk, thereby not guaranteeing that the allocated budget is used for what it is intended to be used.

Two other participants reported that 1% of the total Barangay budget was allocated for PWDs and senior citizens, each representing 0.5% (B4, B6). One Barangay official reported that the budget for PWDs was shared with the budget of the senior citizens; the second Barangay official explained that funding for children with disability was taken from the 0.5% for persons with disability (B5). In addition to scarce budgets, the participant reported that 'The persons with disability [programs and policies] have only come to light 3 months ago', clarifying that it began in August 2017; this coincided with the first general assembly of persons with disability held in B5. An election was held, 'from the president down to the auditor', where the intent was to create committees:

"They were organized and our challenge to them is to identify and create committees amongst themselves and identify what their needs are. Then we submit it to the council so that we can allocate budget for their needs" (B5).

The above initiative is promising but perhaps instead of creating separate committees of persons with disabilities, it would be better to include persons with disabilities in existing committees and structures (Heijnen-Maathuis, in conversation).

Another Barangay official indicated having a 'specific budget for BCPC (Barangay Council for the Protection of Children)' (B1), and that the budget for persons with disability and children with disability was shared (as in other Barangays). The Barangay Record Keeper in B1 pointed to the BCPC budget being 'just a small amount' (i.e. 50,000 PHP, Philippines peso, annually, equivalent to approximately US \$ 1,000).

A fifth Barangay official also spoke of a 1% budget allocation to BCPC from the total Barangay budget:

"Our BCPC has a 1% budget. We really allot budget for them... It's 1% of the IRA which is 4.9 [million], so it's about 40,000 per year" (B2).

The above indicates the need to increase budgets significantly to advance IE and address the needs of all children, including children with disability.

A sixth Barangay official referred to the Commission on Audit and problems regarding 'how to disburse funds':

"When it comes to budgeting, it's hard because COA (Commission on Audit) is very strict now. That's where we have problems, how to disburse funds. We get delays here. I just talked to Treasurer. I said 'Treas [treasurer],





we are very slow. We still have funds. We still have some funds we can give our constituents”, especially because we have allocations for the elderly and the persons with disability. I had it worked out already, this week, the fund should already be released” (B3).

Streamlining and ensuring transparency in funding processes, including disbursement of funds, is essential to effectively advance IE.

Lastly, it is promising that efforts for a legal framework which comprises resolutions are underway:

“We have resolutions on inclusive education. You cannot reject [the children] because what happens now is that they don’t want to include the children with disability to regular schools? We said, there’s a law no on that so you can’t say ‘no’ if someone enrolls at your school. We said that to the principals and teachers” (B2).

This section indicated IE content and strategies being used in local government units and gave insights into how effectively this is being done. Barangay mandates, mapping of children, institutional functions, provision of materials and services, developing a disability lens, and budget issues are all critical in advancing IE. How synergies can be created among them is complex but of critical importance.

FINDINGS RESEARCH QUESTION 5

How do these strategies contribute towards improvement in education service delivery for schools and local governments? Increased budgets for children with disability?

This section discusses how the strategies discussed in earlier sections contribute towards improvement in education service delivery for both schools and local governments. It begins with budget issues, which is arguably the single most critical issue to advance IE and address the needs of children with and without disability. It then presents promising policy related efforts; and ends with a discussion on deficient infrastructure in schools and ECCDs, as well as efforts aimed at countering this situation.

Budget issues

What is evident from the data collected is that IE, and addressing the needs of children with, and without, disability effectively requires urgent, increased budget allocations. Interviews with Barangay officials pointed to budgets for children with disability to be inadequate, non-existent, or shared (i.e. budget for persons with disability, which was in turn shared with the budget for senior citizens). It is positive that BCPCs have been set up and are allocated a budget, but this is clearly insufficient. Evidence of this is ample.

The following excerpt indicates a non-existent budget in that specific Barangay.

“Parent Education Seminar [PES]. 30,000 is allotted for the whole year. We allocate that which we got from the barangay council for protection of children, BCPC. We put the PES under the BCPC, so we can allocate 30,000. And then when I became aware of the program of Save the Children, with KASALI, and the First Read, I told the council maybe we can allocate funds of the children with disabilities” (unspecified Barangay).

This second excerpt indicates an insufficient budget:

“... because the barangay’s fund is really not that big. We only have a small fund. If you compare it to other cities, our budget is really very small because [name of city] is just part of the common Metro Manila so other cities have more budget than us” (B2).

A third consideration is to not prioritize personally based preferences of Barangay Captains or officials. This may adversely affect persons with disability (and by default children with disability).

Promising policy-related efforts

Having noted the need for increased budgets, there are efforts underway and an inclination to fund initiatives to advance IE. For example, given scarcity of funds, participants pointed to seeking funding from sponsors:

“... we are able to give the fund even if its small. It’s just that because our barangay is small and Pateros is small, whatever we can give we give and the rest we source out from sponsorships” (B2).

Other Barangays have ordinances that are currently being reviewed aimed at protecting children, including children with disability: *“An Ordinance Establishing Child Protection Policy in the Barangay [B3] and Appropriate Funds”* (B3).

Similarly, there is an effort to pass resolutions which have implications for IE:

“Resolution 23 series of 2015: A Resolution to Support and Adopt Early Learning Stimulation, Literacy and Numeracy as a part of the Barangay ECCD Programming

for Children aged 0-4 years old” (B3).

These are all important initiatives which require adequate funding.

Barangay officials also reported providing transportation to training sites or medical service sites; providing educational materials or assistive devices, and monitoring delivery of both. Beyond this, resolutions for ‘supplementary’ funding were passed:

“We also have a resolution which we will still pass this Thursday (Oct 26) because COA needs it. It’s just a resolution that allocates 70,000 cash gifts for children with disabilities” (B3).

Alternatively, funding was sought from funds of other divisions (e.g. Youth Council fund). Similarly, there are funding efforts aimed at capacity building to address educational needs of parents from LGUs: *“I want to focus on the education of the child. Because these kids, especially those in wheelchairs, their parents tend to neglect them. For me I want the parents to undergo training on how to properly take care of their child. The barangay will support it”* (B5).

Deficient infrastructure

The strategies discussed in the preceding sections of this paper to advance IE do not contribute towards improvement in education service delivery for schools due to a deficient infrastructure. The physical (i.e. buildings and centers) as well as the spatial (i.e. spaces indoors and outdoors) dimensions, both in terms of quality and quantity, are critical to address IE effectively. Data indicates a limited number of SPED schools - ‘only chosen schools’ (DepEd 1) – have SPED. In fact, participants reported that out of a total of 24 schools in this Barangay, only two had SPED.

The above may ideally indicate that instead of SPED schools, budgets may be being allocated to regular schools which accept and welcome children with disability. This is more cost effective than having separate SPED schools. SPED schools may be necessary for children with disabilities for whom integrating in regular schools is particularly

challenging. However, what data points to is that even those so called ‘regular’ ECCD centers and elementary schools, in their majority, do not have adequate infrastructure.

Inadequate infrastructure is evident in different ways. For example, for those children with disability in wheelchairs or with mobility difficulties, accessibility was not wheelchair-friendly (T2 classroom,P1); narrow door frames, steep stairways, and classrooms not on ground level with no elevator buildings impeded children with disability on wheelchairs (T2 classroom); windows without security bars contributed to physically unsafe environments (T2 classroom). DepEd participants indicated that a division office (unspecified) had had an assigned engineer for the last three years to ensure ECCDs and schools complied with the ‘building code’ (DepEd FGD). This included compliance with fire exits (B3) as well as disaster management mechanisms set up and tested, which also account for children with visual and hearing impairment.

For children with disability who were particularly sensitive to loud environmental noise, specific school and classroom locations did not help. Deficient and unsafe classroom walls, as well as inadequate room temperatures, were also referred to:

“The walls should not be that hard; it should be soft because there will be children who will lay on them, who might fall... also the ventilation... because it’s so hot there, the children become restless. What the mayor did was to put aircon now because before it’s really very hot. Now, they all have air conditioning so at least the facility is improving” (B3).

Despite inadequate infrastructure, data also pointed to efforts aimed at countering this situation. The following excerpt indicates prioritizing the completion of an ECCD center:

“First is to finish the ECCD Center. After that, we want to ready the scholarships, our free education. We’d like to be able to give them, when we go house to house among the children with disability, whatever to support them. That’s what [we aim for] - that we should be able to include this in the budget. We should be able to give them if there will be funds remaining” (B2).

In addition, interviews with Barangay officials point to awareness of ensuring accessibility for children with disability, both in wheelchairs and otherwise: *“What’s the impact? I guess so that they will feel... is my answer correct... that they will feel, the people with disability will feel that they are accepted by the community that’s there’s no reason for them to just be in their house because their accessibility in the barangay is being worked out” (unspecified KII).*

A third initiative to counter deficient infrastructure, importantly, is to have a space where PWD and CWD concerns are addressed (B6, observed in Barangay visit).

Beyond accessibility, deficient infrastructure may also comprise inadequately resourced educational centers. A participant pointed to accessibility as critical to children with disability, and went on to differentiate between different needs among children with disability:

“When we say children with disability, it’s still access, right? Maybe I would suggest the provision of their needs with regards to what is their disability, whether it’s in the eyes, ears or in need of special wheelchair. But for me, I think the most important is the dialogue with the parents” (B1).

Adequate infrastructure should account for children with different disabilities as well as children without disabilities, when considering elements constituting physical and spatial dimensions. The idea that children with different disabilities need to be addressed differently (as well as different degrees or severity of such disabilities) is a core principle of IE.

The above section has discussed budget issues, promising policy-related efforts being advanced, and issues relating to infrastructure. These are by no means the only important issues that need to be considered to advance IE, but three which stand out in the data. They are clearly connected.

Recommendations

Program implementation

1. Scale up KASALI trainings to teachers/ education personnel, principals, parents, caregivers, community development workers, facilitators, and local and regional government officials to reach untapped areas (both urban and rural). Consider particularly vulnerable, poverty-stricken areas with comparatively higher populations of children with disability.
2. Trainings to teachers focused on accommodation and modification strategies that focus on children with specific disabilities, thereby deepening knowledge on addressing specific disabilities and specific needs of children.
3. Trainings to teachers focused on use of technological resources and assistive devices to address needs of children with disability and without disability.
4. Integrate mapping of children with disability not only based on children at school, but also children out of school (i.e. mapping at community level).
5. Consider children with and without disability to participate in certain training sessions for deeper awareness; for giving children a voice and a space to express their views and concerns; and granting adults the opportunity to learn from children with and without disability.
6. Consider a 'train the trainer' system whereby trained principals, teachers, education personnel, parents, Barangay officials, and others, can roll out trainings themselves in their own, as well as other, institutions, and communities at large – thereby becoming advocates, champions and change agents to advance IE themselves. This initiative grants the possibility to comply with civil society's responsibility towards IE. (A 'train the trainer' system may require strict quality control mechanisms to ensure effective training by them is rolled out).
7. Continue refining the inclusive education language component in the KASALI training - language being a vital element to appropriate IE and ensure non-discriminatory attitudes, dispositions and behaviors. Consider providing opportunities to reflect on what is 'normal' and 'abnormal', 'regular, and 'irregular', among other terms.
8. Continue refining the positive discipline component in the KASALI training. Consider including children, their voices, and views on punishment in part of this training component as a mechanism to sensitize adults and learn from children.
9. Consider including a more comprehensive training module on classroom management skills and dispositions aimed at principals, teachers and all adults in educational settings. This may include the idea of school climate and classroom climate to acquire and appropriate skills and dispositions that are inclusive - not necessarily through rational mental processes but through unconscious mental systems (i.e. implicit mind). The aim of this ought to be creating genuinely robust inclusive schools, classrooms, homes, and other.
10. Include a component on different types of learner groupings to counter the possible adverse effects of large classroom sizes (i.e. ability grouping, interest grouping, and other), thereby responding to diverse needs and interests. This component may include how teachers can ensure that children (with and without disability) are equipped with knowledge, skills and dispositions needed before introducing new content.
11. Providing teachers with the know-how to create child-to-child teaching and learning, where children (with and without disability) support each other and each other's learning.



12. Consider a training component based on teachers'/education personnel, parents', government officials' social-emotional learning to respond effectively to all learners. This includes learning about, and being respectful of, difference and diversity; learning about different perspectives; learning to listen to each other's opinions and accepting difference of opinions; learning to disagree; learning how to be kind to each other; learning how to solve conflicts in non-violent ways. Peace education initiatives and social-emotional learning initiatives in Colombia and other parts of the world may be considered for this training component.

13. Design/refine a checklist of indicators to identify and measure sensitization of inclusive education among adults and children.

2. Advocate for teacher preparation that includes IE.

3. Drive efforts to ensure school leadership (i.e. principals and others) buy-in of IE, establishing school-wide, inclusive structures.

4. Training for teachers/education personnel and principals on school and classrooms spatially friendly for all children (with and without disability). Focus on accessibility and easy mobility of children with and without disability (e.g. ramps, handrails, wide doorways, etc.); furniture organization; child-friendly, safe furniture (table corners, chairs, etc.); seating arrangement suitable for children with and without disability; adequate lighting and temperature.

School wide educational initiatives

1. Advocate for Olympics for children with disability and competitions that support children with disabilities winning when competing against peers without disabilities, e.g. in a wheelchair race (where children without disabilities may also use wheelchairs).

Political and economic sphere

1. Continue advocacy to ensure there is political will at the highest levels that trickles down in the system to advance IE.

2. Continue advocacy to establish adequate (and separate) budgets to advance IE and to respond to the needs of all children (with and without disability) – including infrastructure of schools and classrooms.

3. Ensure that the Pledge of Commitment established on the 27th October 2017 in Manila is carried through and implemented by the following: Department of Education; Department of Social Welfare and Development; Commission on Human Rights; Council for the Welfare of Children; Department of Interior and Local Government; National Council for Disability Affairs.
4. Continue advocacy efforts to strengthen legal and political framework to ensure compliance with international and national standards: Republic Act No. 8980, Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Act, and other.
5. Push for effective monitoring systems to oversee IE, including both preventive and responsive service delivery.
6. Push for children becoming active participants and members of the Barangay council (where they exercise their voice and make decisions), to complement already existing efforts on CFLG (Child Friendly Local Governance). This initiative can potentially counter exclusion of children from central discussions on issues pertaining to them, and where they are supposed to be the ultimate beneficiaries.
7. Push for inter-institutional planning and collaboration with a focus on making systems efficient and capitalizing on synergies (including institutional know how, resources, and other).
8. Push for multi-stakeholder collaboration with a special focus on clear delineation of mandates and functions; means; authority; and responsibility to guarantee IE.
9. Push for efficient and effective use of data on child protection issues to inform evidence-based policy development, advocacy and good practices.
10. Consider partnerships with Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs), private sector,

academia, medical allied professionals, government agencies, and civil society organizations to strengthen IE (e.g. funding for diagnostic assessments, treatments, collaboration in training delivery, and other).

Limitations of study

One limitation of the study is that it focused on children with different disabilities. While this is important, given that they share common concerns and needs, it is crucial to note that each disability is distinct, and each person (with or without a disability) is unique. This has implications for IE, particularly when employing accommodation or modification strategies. What may work for a specific individual may not work for another.

A second limitation is that children were not interviewed, and hence were not directly part of the study. As important as children's voices, concerns and views are, they were not included due to the already broad research concerns of the study, which comprised parents/caretakers, teachers/ education personnel, and government officials. It is highly recommended to conduct a second study which integrates children's voices, concerns and views as part of the KASALI project.

A third limitation is the IQE (i.e. observation tool employed) to conduct classroom observations. While all domains of the IQE are relevant in both pre-elementary and elementary schools and classrooms, ideally each domain merits its own observation tool, adapted and better suited to specific age ranges and children's developmental stages.

A fourth limitation relates to school principals selecting what teachers were observed, inclining themselves to select those teachers perceived as better prepared to advance IE.

The principal investigator was not Filipino and though perhaps multicultural in some ways, the PI was new to the country and its customs. This is both a disadvantage and an advantage: a disadvantage because of limited cultural and contextual knowledge; an advantage because one brings a fresh, or virgin, perspective when conducting the

study. Limited cultural and contextual knowledge was countered through reading, information gathering, and skype and other conversations with the local team from early on, before arriving to the country research site.

While the research support team was locally based, spoke Tagalog and were culturally sensitive and knowledgeable of the local culture (unlike the PI), they were (or had been) also parents or relatives of persons with disability and children with disability. This provided them with a good sensitivity when collecting data from participants, which is a strength-in-itself. However, this may have also affected issues relating to objectivity when interacting with participants. Though dispositions and experiences are part of each person's human make-up, it is important to take note of the above.

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent from participants was attained. In the cases where participants had difficulty reading the consent form, or English was not their mother tongue, the purpose of the form, and their rights as participants, were explained to them. This included 1) explaining intended uses of the research; 2) confidentiality and anonymity of research participants; 3) voluntary participation in the study, free from coercion; 4) avoiding harm to participants.

Integrity and quality of the research was ensured throughout the different phases of the study. Research design, tool development, data collection, data analysis, and final write up of the report was conducted with integrity and quality as guiding principles. Research support team was selected based on their experience, sensitivity, and rigor in conducting research. Training for research support team - both on use of classroom observation tool and conducting KIs and FGDs - was conducted by the PI in the presence of the Save the Children Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) Officer.

Approval to conduct the study from the Ethics Committee, Save the Children, was granted before field work was conducted.



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Inclusive Education: What, Why, and How, A Handbook for Program Implementers, Save the Children 2016

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LIST OF
APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Classification of disabilities (Magna Carta for Disabled Persons of RA 7277)

Learning disability	Persons who, although normal in sensory, emotional and intellectual abilities, exhibit disorders in perception, listening, thinking, reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic
Mental Disability	Disability resulting from organic brain syndrome (e.g. mental retardation, acquired lesions of the central nervous system, dementia) and mental illness (psychotic and non-psychotic disorders)
Orthopedically handicapped	Persons whose impairment interferes either permanently or temporarily, with the formal functioning of the joints, muscles or limbs
Hearing impairment	Persons with hearing impairment are those with auditory disabilities ranging from mild to profound hearing loss
Visual disabilities	Persons with visual impairment are those with visual disabilities ranging from partial to total loss of vision
Multi-handicapped	Are persons with more than one disability such as those with mental retardation-blindness, mental retardation-orthopedic handicap, deafness- blindness and others
Person with autism	A developmental disability, having onset before 30 months of age, which is marked by disturbance in development, language and relationships with persons, activities and objects
Person with behavioural problems	Are those who cannot adjust to socially accepted norms of behavior and, consequently, disrupt their academic progress, the learning efforts of their classmates, and interpersonal relations; their emotional and social development is so seriously impaired they cannot benefit from instruction in an ordinary class

APPENDIX 2A

KASALI Inclusive Quality Education based on Needs of Children with Disabilities

DOMAIN: Socio-Emotional / Cognitive / Physical Support based on needs of Children with Disabilities	
DIMENSION	DESCRIPTION
Inclusive Practices and Climate	<i>Inclusive practices and climate</i> reflects how positive and inclusive the classroom climate is through teacher practices. It is concerned with T-CWD relationships and interactions, and how teachers demonstrate respect through their use of language, tone of voice and behaviour; how they listen; how they celebrate diversity; how they invite a range of ideas and perspectives; how they promote collaboration and positive interactions among peers; how teachers frame situations where children with disabilities and the class at large are comfortable in seeking guidance from the teacher and peers. It is concerned with identifying good practices based on overall positive classroom climates.
Exclusionary Practices and Climate	<i>Exclusionary practices and climate</i> reflects how negative and exclusionary the classroom climate is through teacher practices. It is concerned with Teacher-children with disabilities relationships and interactions which may be disrespectful through language, tone of voice and behavior; teacher display of exclusionary language or behavior, and response to these among peers; T display of harmful teasing or bullying and response to these among peers; humiliating, psychological and/or physical punishment. It is concerned with identifying adverse practices based on overall negative classroom climates.
Teacher sensitivity to, and awareness of, developmental needs of children with disabilities	<i>Teacher sensitivity to, and awareness of, developmental needs of children with disabilities</i> reflects teachers' timely responsiveness to the developmental needs of children with disabilities. This includes providing opportunities to engage in diverse gross motor physical activities; diverse fine motor physical activities; supporting children with disabilities in performing classroom activities, individually and collaboratively with peers.

APPENDIX 2B

KASALI Inclusive Quality Education based on Needs of Children with Disabilities

DOMAIN: Classroom Organization based on needs of children with disabilities	
DIMENSION	DESCRIPTION
Instructional accommodation for specific functional areas to facilitate learning and development of children with disabilities	<i>Instructional accommodation for specific functional areas to facilitate learning and development of children with disabilities</i> considers the type of disability that CWDs have and the respective accommodation teachers provide to facilitate learning and respond to individual developmental needs. This includes materials provided; strategies employed; adequate timing and pacing; tailored instructions; differentiated instruction and/or individualized educational plans adapted to the needs of children with disabilities.
Productivity	<i>Productivity</i> considers teacher preparedness and time management to provide meaningful learning opportunities efficiently. It includes clear lesson objectives and activity goals; adequate sequencing and management of learning activities; readily available materials; maximizes learning time of children with disabilities; and smooth transitions from one activity to the next.
Spatial Organization	<i>Spatial organization</i> refers to the physical set up of the learning environment and effective use of space to address the needs of children with disabilities. It includes classroom accessibility; easy mobility of furniture; child-friendly furniture; furniture set up to facilitate interaction and collaboration between children with disabilities and peers; seating arrangement; lighting conditions; overall room conditions.

APPENDIX 2C

KASALI Inclusive Quality Education based on Needs of Children with Disabilities

DOMAIN: Instructional Support based on needs of children with disabilities	
DIMENSION	DESCRIPTION
Concept Development	Concept development refers to teachers framing situations to provide support to children with disabilities to develop concepts and conceptual understanding. It includes providing real world connections that are relatable; collective construction of knowledge through peer interactions; discussions, clarifications and connections pertaining to themes and activities; capitalizing on prior and existing knowledge of children with disabilities; capitalizing on capacities and abilities of children with disabilities; opportunities to internalize and assimilate knowledge, content, ideas, and skills through teacher supervision, independent or group practice.
Quality of Feedback	Quality of feedback refers to how the teacher provides feedback to support CWDs in expanding their learning and understanding. It considers formative development and evaluation versus solely focusing on summative evaluation (i.e. a score; indicating right and wrong answers without due explanation). It includes feedback loops with children with disabilities (i.e. back and forth exchanges to refine learning); follow up questions; prompting completion of tasks and thought processes; building on responses through clarification and expansion; encouraging adequate persistence. It is based on addressing learning as a process and not solely as a product.
Instructional Dialogue	Instructional dialogue refers to how teachers promote dialogue oriented to learning processes. It includes asking open-ended questions; providing children with disabilities with opportunities to voice their opinions and ideas in plenaries, group work, and pair work; active listening (i.e. ('listening to understand' predominates over 'listening to respond'); providing opportunities for exchanges and interactions between children with disabilities and peers as well as with their teachers, that build on one another (focus on depth and refinement of knowledge, skills, other)

APPENDIX 3

Post observation questions for teachers observed

1. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of protection and inclusion of children with disabilities in the school?
(Note: respondent's answer may focus on advantages or vice versa. Use follow up questions to focus on aspect not covered, or covered in less depth if necessary)
2. How many children with disabilities are there in your class? Please explain briefly the impairments of these.
3. Describe how you benefitted from the training?
4. How could you have benefitted more from the training? (E.g. aspects not covered or not covered enough regarding children with disabilities and their respective needs; accommodation strategies; instructional strategies)
5. What inclusive education strategies do you use to address or respond to their needs?
6. Follow up question: In what ways do you promote an inclusive classroom and school environment?
7. What are the challenges of implementing inclusive education strategies?
8. What specific accommodation strategies are used to address or respond to their needs? (i.e content, process, output)
9. What are the challenges of implementing inclusive education strategies?
10. What would you need to better support you to advance inclusive education practices, and inclusive classroom and school climates for children with disabilities?

APPENDIX 4

Key informant interviews to barangay captains / officials

A. Initial perceptions

1. How is the relationship between the Barangay and the schools, and the Barangay and the day care centres? How involved are the schools and day care centres?
2. Are the schools and day care centres active members of the Council?
3. How is the Barangay involved in the educational planning processes in the schools and day care centres?
4. What services and support does the Barangay provide for children with disabilities?
5. How are these services and support delivered? What challenges are encountered in the process?
(**Note:** Gauge quality of service and support)

B. Policies, laws, and structures

1. What policies and laws are in place aimed at the protection and inclusion of CWDs?
(**Note:** respondent's answer may focus on protection over inclusion or vice versa. You may subtly request greater depth on aspect covered less, or greater relevant information on aspect covered more)
2. What structures exist, aimed at the protection and inclusion of CWDs?
(**Note:** respondent's answer may focus on protection over inclusion or vice versa. You may subtly request greater depth on aspect covered less)
3. Which of these policies, laws and structures are being executed at present?
(Note: Respondent may refer to one of three options; you may wish to follow up to dig deeper regarding other options not covered in respondent's initial answer)
4. Which are in place but are not being executed? Why is this so?
(**Note:** employ tact: purpose is to understand, not blame in ANY way, shape or form; Non- accusatory manner but open to understand and gauge information).
5. What would you say is the impact of these policies, laws, and structures?

C. Implementation

1. What is the allocated budget for the protection and inclusion of children with disabilities and how is it distributed? (e.g. teacher training; efficient delivery, staff, other)
1. How are these policies, laws and structures implemented?
(**Note:** Gauge information on process of implementation, from design to actual implementation on the ground)
2. What facilitates the effective implementation of the above? (Gauge good/sound practices)
3. What challenges and difficulties exist in terms of effective implementation of the above?
(**Note:** Gauge direction of improvement efforts)

4. How could these implementation challenges and difficulties be overcome?
(**Note:** Gauge resources, human, financial, and other required to improve implementation)
5. How is implementation monitored and by whom?
(**Note:** Gauge monitoring mechanisms if they exist)

D. School level

1. What support is provided to individual schools to ensure protection and inclusion of children with disabilities?
2. What specific staff at the school level is supported and how? (e.g. teachers, principals, administrators, children, parents, other)
3. How could this support be (even) better provided?
4. Are there specific resource centers, units and/or mechanisms that are provided to support schools? How effective are they?
5. What challenges do these resource centers, units and/or mechanisms face? How could these challenges be overcome?
(**Note:** Gauge how service delivery could be more effective and efficient?)
6. Are schools and school buildings adapted to address the needs of children with disabilities? How?
7. What challenges exist for these adaptations? How could these challenges be overcome?
8. Are classrooms adapted to address the needs of children with disabilities? How? What challenges exist for these adaptations? How could these challenges be overcome?
9. Are there other ways in which schools and classrooms could and should be adapted to better respond to the needs of children with disabilities?
(**Note:** physical and non-physical)

E. Future actions

1. What mechanisms are NOT in place that would be important from your perspective / in your opinion?
2. What services are NOT provided that would be important to provide from your perspective / in your opinion?
(**Note:** Potentially touchy / delicate question. You may consider using the adjective 'expert' before 'perspective' or 'opinion').
3. What would be needed to ensure the required mechanisms and services are in place?
(**Note:** Gauge recommendations, suggestions for improvement)
4. Is there anything that you would like to add (that we might not have touched on and that you consider important to address the needs of children with disabilities?)
(**Note:** Gauge other areas not covered or insufficiently covered areas)

APPENDIX 5

Focus group discussion questions to school heads / division heads / principals

A. Initial perceptions

1. What do you think are the advantages of protection and inclusion of children with disabilities in the school?
(Note: respondent's answer may focus on protection over inclusion or vice versa. You may subtly request greater depth on aspect covered less, or greater relevant information on aspect covered more)
2. Do you think there are disadvantages regarding protection and inclusion of children with disabilities in the school?
3. To what degree would you say the school is inclusive and protective of children with disabilities? How? (Please explain).

B. Policies and structures

1. Is there a protection and inclusion lens / perspective in the School Improvement Planning (SIP)?
2. What programmes are in place aimed at the protection and inclusion of children with disabilities?
(Note: Gauge quality and nature of programmes)
3. How do the division offices support and monitor components of the SIP?
4. What policies are in place aimed at the protection and inclusion of children with disabilities?
(Note: respondent's answer may focus on protection over inclusion or vice versa. You may request greater depth on aspect covered less. Also, policies can refer to Barangay, DepEd and school level.)
5. What structures exist, aimed at the protection and inclusion of children with disabilities?
(Note: respondent's answer may focus on protection over inclusion or vice versa. You may subtly request greater depth on aspect covered less)
6. Which of these policies and structures are being executed at present?
7. Which are in place but are not being executed? Why is this so?
(Note: Employ tact - purpose is to understand, not blame in ANY way, shape or form; Non- accusatory manner but open to understand and gauge information).
8. How are the policies and structures localized?
9. What is the allocated budget for the protection and inclusion of children with disabilities?
(Note: Gauge financial structure; district and school level)
10. What are the school's current enrolment policies of children with disabilities?
(Note: Gauge access)
11. What would you say is the impact of these policies and structures?
(Note: impact may be multidimensional: on school setting; on school culture; on children with disabilities range of needs, educational and other; influence on community, home and other settings)

C. Implementation / Practices

1. How well has the School Improvement Planning (SIP) been implemented? What challenges exist in its implementation?
2. How is inclusion and protection of children with disabilities practiced in the school?
(**Note:** Gauge concrete on the ground activities and actions at school level)
3. How is inclusion and protection of children with disabilities practiced in the classroom setting?
(**Note:** Gauge concrete on the ground activities and actions at classroom level; take account of teacher and peers)
4. What measures and actions could be taken to ensure better practices aimed at protection and inclusion of children with disabilities?
(**Note:** i.e. What is not being done? How could what is being done be done better, more effectively?)
5. What are the specific needs of children with disabilities (a) in the school and (b) in the classroom?
(**Note:** Gauge what are the needs of children with disabilities and nature of needs; physical, socio-emotional, cognitive, communicative, or other; obtain specific examples if possible)
6. How are these (school-based and classroom-based) needs of children with disabilities addressed?
(**Note:** Gauge how needs of children with disabilities are addressed)
7. How could their needs be better met?
(**Note:** i.e. what is not being done? How could what is being done be done better, more effectively?)
8. What specific staff at the school level is supported, and how, to address the needs of children with disabilities? (e.g. teachers, division heads, administrators, parents, other)
9. How is discipline conceived in the school?
(**Note:** Gauge positive discipline practices that are restorative, punitive, both. Obtain information regarding concrete practices and ways in which discipline is cultivated)
10. How is exclusion and negative behavior towards children with disabilities addressed?
(**Note:** Gauge policies, structures and concrete actions in place)

D. Accommodation

1. Are schools and school buildings adapted to address the needs of children with disabilities? How?
(**Note:** Gauge school level infrastructure adaptation allowing easy mobility of children with disabilities; wide doorways, ramps, handrails; lavatories)
2. What challenges exist for better adaptations? How could these challenges be overcome?
(**Note:** focus is on physical adaptation)
3. Are classrooms adapted to address the needs of children with disabilities? How?
(**Note:** Gauge classroom level child-friendly furniture; classroom seating arrangement suitable for mobility of children with disabilities; peer interaction between children with disabilities and peers)
4. What instructional accommodation is provided for children with disabilities at the classroom level?
(**Note:** Gauge accommodation of specific functional needs to facilitate learning and development of children with disabilities; specific learning aids: e.g. hearing aids; visual aids; pacing activities)

5. Are curricula and assessment methods adapted or adjusted in any way to address the needs of children with disabilities? How is this implemented? How do division heads monitor implementation in schools?
6. What challenges exist for better adaptations? How could these challenges be overcome?
(**Note:** focus is on physical, instructional, curricular, or other adaptation / accommodation)

G. Future actions

1. What is needed to better address the protection and inclusion of children with disabilities from your perspective / in your opinion?
(**Note:** Gauge better support mechanisms; recommendations, suggestions for improvement)

APPENDIX 6

Focus group discussion questions to parents

A. Initial perceptions

1. Tell us about your experience with your child (with disability).
2. How did you find out about your child's situation?
3. How do you promote the protection and inclusion of your child at home, at school and elsewhere?

B. Policies, laws and programmes

1. What policies and laws are in place aimed at the protection and inclusion of children with disabilities?
(**Note:** Gauge quality and nature of programmes)
2. What programmes are in place aimed at the protection and inclusion of children with disabilities?
(**Note:** Gauge quality and nature of programmes)
3. How effective are these programmes? (Note: Gauge quality of programme, execution and programme delivery – LGU and School level)
4. To what degree do you think there is a protection and inclusion lens / perspective in your child's school? What could be done to improve this?
5. To what degree do you think there is a protection and inclusion lens / perspective in your Barangay (and other Barangays)? What could be done to improve this?
6. To what degree do you think there is a protection and inclusion lens / perspective at the community level at large? What could be done to improve this?

C. Accommodation

1. Is your home adapted to address the needs of your child? How?
2. How else do you adapt and respond to the needs of your child?
3. Do you discipline your child? How?
(**Note:** Gauge positive discipline practices that are restorative, punitive, both. Obtain information regarding concrete practices and ways in which discipline is cultivated)
4. What are the challenges to address the needs of your child?
(**Note:** policy implications, attitudinal dimension, other)
5. What would be needed to better address the needs of your child?
(**Note:** Gauge external mechanisms)
6. What would you need to better address the needs of your child?
(**Note:** Gauge personal aspects without violating privacy)

D. School Level

1. Tell us about your experience with your child at school.
(**Note:** Gauge school experience; relationship and interactions with schools; positive aspects; challenges, other)
2. Tell us about your child's experience at school.
(**Note:** Gauge child's school experience from parents' perspective; positive aspects; challenges; SPED or non-SPED)
3. To what degree would you say the school is inclusive and protective of children with disabilities?
How?
4. How has your experience been in using Barangay level programmes and services?
(**Note:** Gauge quality of programmes and services)
5. Describe your experience when enrolling your child in school.
(**Note:** Gauge enrolment aspects; access)
6. How do you access school services for your child?
(**Note:** i.e. challenges or obstacles encountered in process of requesting AND service provision or delivery)
7. In what ways could the school support the protection and inclusion of children with disabilities more from your perspective / in your opinion?
(**Note:** Gauge recommendations, suggestions for improvement)

E. Future Actions

1. What is needed to better address the protection and inclusion of children with disabilities from your perspective / in your opinion?



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