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## EdData II

Education Data for Decision Making

Data for Education Programming in Asia and the Middle  
East (DEP/AME), Task Number 15

# **Situation and Needs Assessment for Inclusion of Students who are Blind/Low Vision or Deaf/Hard of Hearing in Morocco: Report Summary, Findings and Recommendations**

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## RTI International

- RTI International is leading the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Education Data for Decision Making (EdData II) project. Data for Education Programming in Asia and Middle East (DEP/AME) is EdData II Task Order Number 15, AID-OAA-BC-11-00001.
- From July to October, 2016, RTI conducted an in-depth situation analysis in Morocco of the education of children with disabilities—in particular those with vision and hearing disabilities—and the associated legislative, financial, and school-based resources available to support the education of these children.



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## Introduction

- Morocco has made great efforts to improve the country's education system.
- The Government of Morocco's interest in improving its current educational system for children with disabilities is evidenced by the MNEVT's request to conduct this assessment.
- Using the results from this analysis, Morocco has the opportunity to reform its education system for children with disabilities and serve as a regional and international leader.



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## What is Inclusive Education?

- Provides a system in which all learners are able to receive an education.
- Accommodates the differing needs of individual students, regardless of disability or severity of disability.
- Strives towards a setting where students are educated in the “least restrictive environment” - at their local schools educated in the same classrooms as their non-disabled peers.



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## Why Inclusive Education?

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which Morocco ratified in 2009, requires all countries to implement an inclusive education system.
- Research shows that inclusive education benefits learning outcomes for all children and not just those with disabilities.
- Though initial costs may be expensive, maintaining an inclusive system incurs less costs overall than implementing segregated systems.



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## Overview

- This was a detailed situation analysis of the education of children who are deaf/hard of hearing and who are blind/ have low vision within the country.
  - Conducted by RTI with input from international, regional and local experts
  - Supported by USAID and Ministry guidance
- Deliverables:
  - Report with summary of findings and recommendations.
  - Presentation of findings to USAID, Ministry, and stakeholders.



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## Research Questions

- How does current legislation compare to international legislative standards?
- What are the gaps, if any, between law and practice related to the education of children who are blind/have low vision and/or are deaf/hard of hearing?
- What are the demographic characteristics of school-aged children with disabilities? How do these prevalence rates compare with global and regional trends?
- How do current educational practices compare with universally accepted best practices for the education of children who are blind/have low vision and/or are deaf/hard of hearing?
- What services or resources exist to support the education of children who are blind/have low vision and/or are deaf/hard of hearing, and how do these compare universally accepted best practices?
- What is the status of current national capacities and budget for education of children with disabilities?



## Multimodal Approach





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## Reach of the Analysis

- Reviewed more than **70 resources** in Arabic, French and English, including a desk review of regulatory, legal texts, and official frameworks.
- Received **70 parent organizations surveys** from OAPAM and Association of the Deaf.
- Interviewed more than **40 individuals** and stakeholders.
- Observed **5 schools** in Morocco.



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## **Analysis Limitations**

- Short timeline with August being a traditional holiday month.
- Delayed school start for schools reaching students with disabilities. In particular, the schools for the deaf not in session and the team was unable to observe.
- 40 deaf person organization (DPO) survey responses received from members of the deaf association and only 1 received from OAPAM: unable to publish OAPAM result separately to protect the respondent's privacy.
- OAPAM distributed and collected parents surveys, which might make parents less forthcoming.



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## Analysis Topic Areas

- Stakeholder Engagement
- Legislation and Policy Framework
- Disability Prevalence Rates
- General Situation of the Education of Children with Disabilities
- Education Practices for Children Who Are Blind/Have Low Vision
- Education Practices for Children Who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing



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## Stakeholder Engagement: Findings

- General lack of coordination between stakeholders.
- Multiple ministries working on education of children with disabilities with no clear leadership.
- Disabled persons organizations not proactively or routinely consulted.



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## **Stakeholder Engagement: Recommendations**

- Establish special education as the responsibility of the MOE rather than having multiple ministries assuming responsibility of special education.
- Establish a unit of inclusive education within the MOE.
- Establish funding for inclusive education within the MOE's budget.
- Support the participation and active engagement of DPOs and parent organizations in existing national monitoring mechanisms.



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## Legislation and Policy Framework: Findings

- Morocco's current laws and policies related to disabilities rights do not provide the specificity needed to ensure that all children with disabilities have access to quality education.
- The current strategic plan does not clearly articulate a commitment to inclusive education or detail how the government will transition to a more inclusive system in the future.



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## **Legislation and Policy Framework: Recommendations**

- Develop specific inclusive education policies and a supporting comprehensive strategic plan to move towards an inclusive system of education.
- Establish a process to regularly consult with disability organizations in the development and the implementation of education policies and strategic planning.



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## **Disability Prevalence Rates: Findings**

- Due to the different data collection methods and instruments, it is difficult to obtain an accurate number of children with disabilities within the country.
- Standard data collection methods are not systematically used by the government, which results in inconsistency in the reporting of disability prevalence in Morocco.



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## **Disability Prevalence Rates: Recommendations**

- Use functionality questions to assess the prevalence rates of disability.
- Explore options for implementing vision and hearing screening within schools.
- For planning purposes, consider using the World Health Organization (WHO) estimate of 15% of the total population of school-aged children with a disability.
- Develop a system to track data related to children receiving special education services in the country.



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## Education for Children with Disabilities: Findings

- The vast majority of children with disabilities in Morocco are not receiving any form of education; this is especially true for girls with disabilities.
- Those who do attend school are most often educated in highly segregated settings that are not aligned with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).
- Past efforts made through the good intentions of the MOE, such as the development of integrated classrooms, have unfortunately resulted additional barriers that can limit educational opportunities for children with disabilities.



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## **Education for Children with Disabilities: Recommendations**

- Ensure that all schools in Morocco are physically accessible to children with disabilities.
- Remove the requirement to receive a medical certificate as a precondition to receiving special education.
- Transition current segregated schools to serve as regional resource centers for schools, integrating students currently enrolled in these segregated schools into mainstream classrooms.
- Work with stakeholders to build sensitivity about the value of inclusive education.
- Expand vocational training opportunities.



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## **Education of Children Who Are Blind/Low Vision: Findings**

- The current education system has limited ability to provide education for all children who are blind or have low vision.
- Many schools lack access to assistive devices and technology, which could ensure that children who are blind have access to the full curriculum, including the ability to study science.



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## **Education of Children Who Are Blind/Low Vision: Recommendations**

- Conduct an inventory of current assistive devices and evaluate needs for assistive technologies; explore opportunities to expand purchase of brailers or other assistive devices that better aid the education of children who are blind/have low vision.
- Ensure that all students who are blind/have low vision have the opportunity to access the full national curriculum.
- Develop in-service training and tools for teachers in how to modify curricula and/or adapt classroom instruction to teach children who are blind/have low vision.



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## **Education of Children Who Are Deaf/Hard of Hearing: Findings**

- The current education system limits the potential of children who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- The current system does not provide bilingual instruction using trained teachers and certified sign language interpreters.
- The current system does not allow for children who are deaf to attend school past the primary level.
- Schools for the deaf or hard of hearing do not follow the national curriculum.



## **Education of Children Who Are Deaf/Hard of Hearing: Recommendations**

- Ensure that children who are deaf/hard of hearing have access to not just primary school but also early childhood, secondary, vocational, and higher education opportunities.
- Establish schools for the deaf that teach children in bilingual instruction using sign language.
- Strengthen sign language services within the country.
- Develop in-service training and tools for teachers to modify curricula or adapt classroom instruction to teach children who are deaf or hard of hearing in all education settings.



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## Conclusion

- Morocco has the opportunity to reform its special education system to better respond to the needs of all students in the country.
- Though this transition may be challenging, the challenges are not insurmountable and will result in a more cost-effective system that will lead to better learning outcomes for all children, with and without disabilities.
- Morocco is positioned to be a leader within the region if it were to choose to work towards the goal of inclusion.



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**Thank you!**