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Generating and Using Disability Data in Education

Guidance for Strengthening USAID
Programming and Local Systems

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I. Introduction

USAID's Commitment to Disability-Inclusive Education

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is committed to strengthening disability-inclusive education systems so all learners can access education, learn in an inclusive environment, and thrive. [USAID's Education Policy](#) (2018), [Global Disability Summit Commitments](#) (2022), [U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education](#) (2024), [U.S. Government Strategy for Children to Thrive](#) (2024), and [USAID Disability Policy](#) (2024) reflect this commitment. To achieve quality disability-inclusive education, USAID employs the [social model of disability](#), embodied by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which identifies societal barriers—not people with disabilities—as obstacles to full inclusion. Thus, “disability is the result of the negative interaction that can occur when people with certain functional conditions [...] encounter barriers in society.”¹



Achieving the goal of disability-inclusive education in countries where USAID supports education programming requires involving multiple stakeholders, ensuring the availability of key resources, and fully implementing enabling policies.² This guidance focuses on one particular resource, disability data, and its important role in strengthening USAID education programming and local systems.³ Disability data refers to information about children's and youth's functional limitations that can be used to help us understand how learners with disabilities experience systems, what their needs are, and how well policies and interventions work for them.⁴ Collecting and using these data allows USAID and partner countries to better serve individuals with disabilities' needs through education programming.

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Audience and Use

The primary audience of this guidance is USAID Mission staff working to strengthen local disability-inclusive education systems through USAID education programming. Mission staff should use this document as a guide to ensure USAID activities align with USAID disability data requirements and to strengthen local disability data systems. Missions should consider collecting and using disability data throughout the [USAID Program Cycle](#), to understand the landscape of disability-inclusive education in planning and design, monitor and evaluate programming's disability inclusivity, and inform activity collaboration, learning, and adaptation.

An additional key audience is USAID's implementing partners (IPs). IPs should use this guide to inform decisions about which data to collect and use to monitor, evaluate, and learn in the context of USAID activities. They can also use it to inform efforts to strengthen local systems' access to and use of disability data through USAID programming.



Planning and Design:

Disability data can provide important information on the landscape and needs within disability-inclusive education in the planning stages of a CDCS, project, or activity.



Activity Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation:

Disability data can be used to monitor and evaluate education programming to ensure it meets the needs of learners with disabilities during activity implementation.



Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA):

Disability data can be used as part of CLA activities to inform program adaptation.

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Exhibit A: How to Use this Guidance Alongside the Disability-Inclusive Education Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Guide

This disability data guidance is a companion to the [Evaluation Guide on Measuring Disability-Inclusive Education](#). The Evaluation Guide provides detailed strategies for monitoring and evaluating disability-inclusive USAID programming. Some of these strategies make use of different types of disability data. The disability data guidance focuses on these types of disability data and their uses for both USAID programming and local systems strengthening.

In This Guidance

Building upon USAID's 2020 Disability Data How-To Note, this guidance discusses three purposes for disability data that can be applied to USAID education programming or to a local education system's programming by [monitoring education programming performance](#), [meeting learning needs](#), and [monitoring education programming's inclusivity](#). These different purposes often require different data to ensure we do no (more) harm to the individuals and communities we serve (see Exhibit B). No one purpose is more important than the other. A context that addresses all three purposes reflects the social model of disability by addressing barriers to education at several levels to allow all learners to access education, learn, and thrive. For an example of how these purposes interact together in a local system, [see Section V. How the Three Purposes for Disability Data Interconnect](#).

Exhibit B: Disability Data and Doing No (More) Harm

USAID is committed to doing no (more) harm through its programming. Doing no (more) harm, as defined by [USAID's Disability Policy \(2024\)](#), is “the undertaking of development, humanitarian, and peacebuilding assistance interventions that do not put participants at greater risk than would be the case without the intervention. Do no more harm acknowledges that harm may have already occurred, and the goal then is to ensure that more harm does not occur beyond the point of intervention and that, to the extent possible, actions are undertaken to mitigate and address past harm that may have occurred.” Several key principles and guidelines, such as those presented in the [Data Protection Toolkit](#) and the United States Federal Evidence Agenda on Disability Equity, help to ensure collecting disability data does no (more) harm.

These guidelines include mandates to use measurement tools for the appropriate purpose and communicate accordingly. Disability measurement tools fall into several categories, such as functional questionnaires, functional disability screening tools, developmental assessments, medical screening tools, and more. To do no (more) harm, it is essential to ensure the data produced by the tool is accurate enough to support the decisions made, that the data are used correctly, and that communication with the learners, educators, and caregivers is appropriate for the tool used. For example, decisions about programming or policy require aggregated data and can rely on lower-stakes tools that produce less accurate estimates; while decisions about individuals' lives require individual data and must employ thorough communication and rely on higher-stakes tools that produce more accurate estimates.

For more information on selecting tools for specific purposes, see [USAID's Disability Tool Selection Guide](#) and the [Best Practices in Generating Data on Learners with Disabilities Brief](#).

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The remainder of this guidance is organized around the three disability data purposes. Each section describes the purpose, discusses the data needed to achieve the purpose, addresses do no (more) harm considerations, and demonstrates the application to both the local education system and USAID programming.

Call to Action

Since USAID's last Disability Data How-To Note was published in 2020, the international education sector has strengthened the production and use of disability data in key ways. Efforts to validate and develop disability measurement tools have increased the [availability of data on children and youth with disabilities](#) and improvements in school-based screening approaches, tools, and resources provide a better understanding of learners' needs.

While strengthening disability measurement tools and the systems that use them remains crucial, it is now time to invest heavily in generating evidence—which will often rely on using these tools and systems—on **what works to improve learners with disabilities' access and learning outcomes globally**. Through this call to action, USAID seeks collaboration with partners and stakeholders—including organizations of persons with disabilities/disabled persons organizations (OPDs/DPOs)—to generate and use evidence on what works to improve learners with disabilities' access and learning outcomes so all learners can access, learn, and thrive.

II. Monitoring Education Programming's Performance

What Data Do We Collect?

Monitoring education programming's performance includes monitoring access, learning outcomes, and other educational outcomes for learners with disabilities. This requires us to disaggregate these performance data by disability. To do this, we collect data on the functional status of the population of learners we are interested in (see Exhibit C). Data on functional status reveal how a learner can function instead of revealing impairments or generating a diagnosis. Disaggregating performance data by functional status (disability) allows USAID and partner countries to understand how well programming reaches persons with disabilities and if they are benefitting from it. Thus, while these data are collected from individuals, they are aggregated and analyzed to draw conclusions about a group of people, not to make decisions about individuals' lives.

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How Do We Do No (More) Harm?

Tools that collect data on functioning do not need to directly ask about an individual's disability status—disability status may be unknown; if known, accidentally sharing disability status may put the individual at risk of stigma or other repercussions; and individual interpretations of “disability” vary widely. Tools that collect data on functioning (see Exhibit C) provide sufficient accuracy to enable data disaggregation without putting individuals at risk, and they provide more consistent data. Since these tools examine functioning and are used to draw conclusions about groups rather than individuals, they can be used in contexts with limited formal support for learners with disabilities without doing (more) harm. Once collected, disability data can be used to disaggregate learner outcomes, allowing for comparisons between learners with disabilities and those without disabilities, thus providing valuable insights for decision-makers.

Exhibit C: Functional Disability Data Tools

Many tools ask about an individual's level of functioning, instead of directly asking for disability status. These tools are particularly useful for obtaining disability data in the education programming context. USAID promotes using the tools developed by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics (WG) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (see below) that have been validated in several contexts to gather disability data. These tools are based on the set of six functional domains defined by the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health. For more information on how to use these tools and to select which one is most useful for you, see [USAID's Disability Data Tool Selection Guide](#).

- [The WG/UNICEF Child Functioning Module for 2- to 4-Year-Olds](#)
- [The WG/UNICEF Child Functioning Module for 5- to 17-Year-Olds](#)
- [The WG/UNICEF Child Functioning Module for 5- to 17-Year-Olds – Teacher Version](#)
- [The WG Short Set on Functioning](#)
- [The WG Short Set on Functioning – Enhanced](#)

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Application to Local Systems Strengthening

Disability disaggregated data are a critical resource for any education system seeking to achieve equity and inclusion for learners with disabilities. These data equip ministries with the information necessary to make decisions on education policy, programming, and funding. Different countries use different approaches to capture data for disability disaggregation (see Exhibit D).

Exhibit D: Examples of Disability Data in Local Education Systems



In Nepal, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is using the WG/UNICEF Child Functioning Module to integrate functioning data into its EMIS system. USAID/Nepal and its [Reading For All](#) Activity initiated this effort with follow-on support to the Ministry provided by the USAID Early Grade Learning Activity and the USAID Equity and Inclusion in Education Activity.



In Rwanda, the National Council of Persons with Disabilities is developing a [Disability Management Information System](#) that is planned to be interoperable with other management information systems, including EMIS and the Ministry's Comprehensive Assessment Management Information System.



In Armenia, data on children with disabilities in the EMIS are connected to administrative data on children receiving disability benefits. This can be used to identify children who are receiving benefits who are not in school and therefore not included in the EMIS.

Regardless of the approach, two considerations are key for ensuring data usefulness for the education sector:

1. *Tracking functional status must be inclusive.* If an Education Management Information System (EMIS) is used to provide disability data on learners currently enrolled in the education system, alternative systems or approaches should be put in place to capture the functional status of children and youth with disabilities who are out of school. For example, data from the [UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys programme](#), which collects both in- and out-of-school children's and youth's functional status, may be useful.
2. *Disability data must be used in combination with other data.* Disability data for monitoring education program performance are most useful when they allow actors to understand how equitable

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outcomes are for learners with disabilities compared to learners without disabilities. This requires linking functioning data to other data or databases that contain data on learner outcomes. For example, functioning data, when combined with reading outcomes data, may demonstrate different outcomes for learners with disabilities compared to learners without disabilities. While combining functioning data with other data may require linking data at the individual level, all data should be analyzed and reported at the aggregate level, not the individual level.

USAID and its partners can play a critical role in supporting a partner country to establish or strengthen data systems that collect functional status information. USAID programming can demonstrate data usefulness in both smaller scale programs and those at scale while strengthening the systems that allow for the sustained capture and local actors' use of these data.

Exhibit E: Citizen-Generated Data: Ensuring Data are Inclusive

Since many learners with disabilities cannot access education, collecting disability data solely in educational contexts risks further excluding these learners. While USAID programming may seek to understand the functional status of children within an activity population, when the goal is to strengthen local data systems, learn about children and youth outside of the education system, or produce data that are useful beyond activity monitoring, data collection outside of the educational setting should be considered.

Several approaches exist for collecting functional status data to capture both in-school and out-of-school children and youth. Successful approaches actively engage DPOs/OPDs, embodying the principle, “Nothing without us.”

One emerging approach with evidence of early success is citizen-generated data. Citizen-generated data are data that “people or their organizations produce to directly monitor, demand, or drive change on issues that affect them. It is actively given by citizens, providing direct representations of their perspectives and an alternative to datasets collected by governments or international institutions.” Citizen-generated disability data have the potential to include individuals who are not able to access education, galvanize local and national actors to budget and program appropriately for persons with disabilities, and strengthen existing data collection and analysis systems. This is especially important for marginalized groups, such as persons with disabilities, who are often excluded and uncounted in official statistics. For example, citizen-generated data on disability in the Philippines produced data disaggregated by disability on individuals in 20 villages, which led to local-level commitments to adopt the study’s recommendations and national-level plans to adopt citizen-generated data across the Philippines’ National Capital Region.

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Application to USAID Programming

Data on functioning are important for USAID education programming because they allow USAID to disaggregate indicators by disability status, which is useful for planning, adapting, and reporting progress on USAID inclusive education programming.

Disaggregating by disability status is required for all education standard foreign assistance outcome indicators and is strongly encouraged for all output indicators, as noted in [USAID's Compendium of Disaggregate Reference Sheets for Education Programming](#). USAID's [Summary of Disability Inclusive Indicators](#) specifies which education indicators include the disability disaggregate. Data collection on disability status may follow recommended sampling procedures for the standard foreign assistance indicator, and may use any tool validated for collecting disability status in the relevant age group.

Exhibit F: Approaches for Sampling

One of the challenges in collecting and using disability data in USAID programming is that too few learners with disabilities may be captured in the sample to allow for statistical comparisons. There are some methods for addressing this issue:

1. *Use existing disability data.* In contexts where there is existing disability data, a USAID program may seek permission to access and use these data to include individuals who may have a disability in the study sample.
2. *Oversample.* A USAID program may over-sample from areas known from other research to have higher rates of disability.
3. *Stratify the sample.* In contexts without existing disability data to inform the sample, a USAID program may consider collecting functioning data before taking the outcome measurement. Then, Missions and IPs may use this disability data to stratify the study sample to ensure learners with disabilities' inclusion.

While standard foreign assistance indicator disability disaggregates are essential for reporting through the annual Performance Plan and Report data call, they are also useful for informing program adaptation through collaborating, learning, and adapting and for planning future USAID investments through context analysis.

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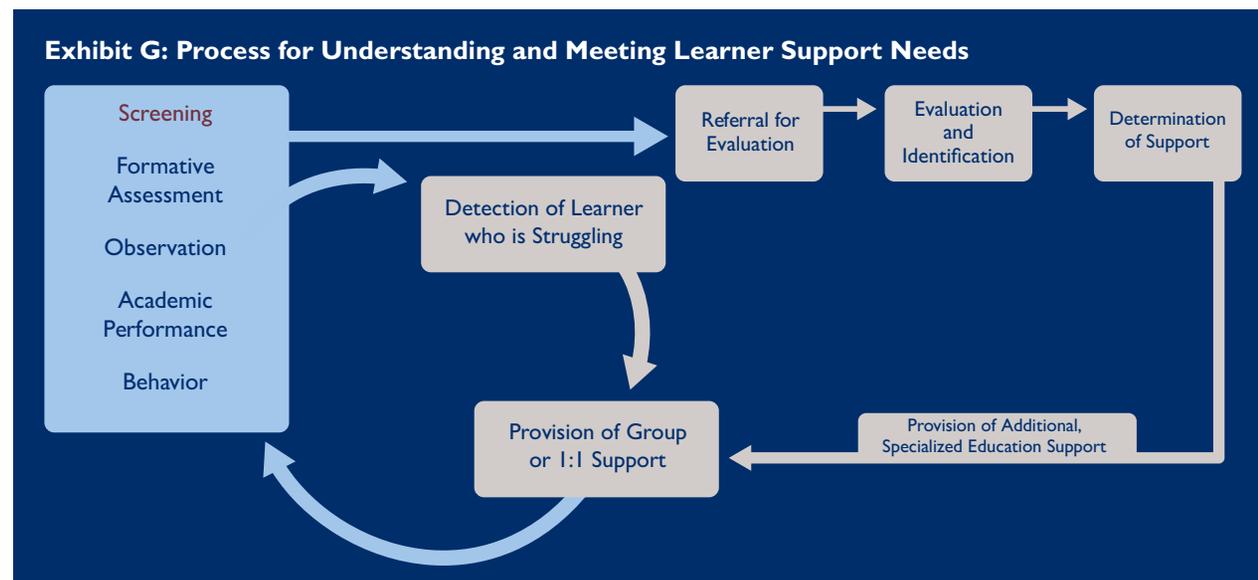
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III. Meeting Learners' Support Needs

What Data Do We Collect?

Meeting learners' support needs requires collecting and using data to understand how a learner is struggling and what educational support they need. This ongoing process (see Exhibit G) involves educators, special educators, school leaders, etc.—often supported by caregivers and even learners. These actors use data from sources such as **formative assessments, observation, academic performance, behavior, and screening tools** to determine how a learner is struggling, regardless of a known disability status, and to provide group-based or 1:1 learning support. While these sources can provide information on the same areas of functional difficulties that are used for disaggregating data, they usually go into much greater depth. Educators and learning environments should apply [Universal Design for Learning](#) (UDL) principles throughout the process of using data to understand a learner's needs. For example, educators may implement formative assessments that allow for multiple means of expression or provide learners with multiple means of engagement while receiving group-based support.

In contexts with fully operating, formal, screening–referral–identification processes, either school-based **screening**⁵ or the process within the learning environment may lead to a referral for **evaluation**, disability identification, and determination of additional, specialized support. Depending on the learner's challenges, the screening–referral–identification process may remain entirely in the education system or interact with health and other systems. Regardless of the pathway, the goal in education is to provide support to learners that removes barriers and allows them to learn in inclusive education settings.



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Exhibit H: Examples of Approaches to Understanding Learner Support Needs



Fiji: In Fiji, teachers and caregivers use data from the WG/UNICEF Child Functioning Module, in combination with data on environmental factors, as a basis for discussion of any areas of concern for the particular learner. Based on this discussion, the teacher and caregiver agree on which educational support will be provided in the classroom.



Vietnam: In Vietnam, community workers are conducting disability screenings for children under age six to identify potential disabilities. Children who are flagged by this formal screening undergo formal identification/diagnosis by a multidisciplinary team of professionals trained on how to identify and best support children with disabilities with early intervention. Caregivers and educators are then trained on how to provide these support, in addition to connecting children with rehabilitation and other support.

How Do We Do No (More) Harm?

Detecting and meeting learner needs, unlike collecting functioning data on a population, requires a focus on the individual learner in *both* data collection and analysis. Even learners with the same diagnosed disabilities or similar apparent struggles may require different educational supports and may have different learning goals; thus, these learners should not be compared to each other.

In the learning environment context, multiple data sources provide information on a learner's strengths and areas of difficulty. Since these data sources do not need to directly identify disability status, they can be used with a low risk of harm by educators, caregivers, and learners to determine areas for learning support. Exhibit I provides information on approaches to determine a learner's needs in a learning environment. Repeatedly using these data sources can reveal the need for support beyond what the educator or learning environment can provide with current resources. Where a formal screening–referral–identification system exists, these learners may be referred for evaluation by educators.

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Exhibit I: Approaches for Determining Learner Support Needs

USAID conducted a series of 15 semi-structured interviews with inclusive education experts and disability specialists. These interviews inquired into how implementers determine learners' learning support needs and respond with appropriate support, particularly without relying on diagnostic data. Interviews included perspectives across four geographic regions using a snowball sample.

The interviews, and a desk review of 30 related resources, revealed several approaches for collecting data to understand learners' areas of struggle and support needs. The approaches, listed below, used a variety of tools and were used to **1) screen learners for difficulty in general**, and **2) assess learners' difficulty in specific skill areas**, such as literacy, math, or social-emotional learning. The approaches used for both purposes included teacher classroom observation, reviewing school performance data, interviews with learners to understand their self-reported strengths and challenges, school-wide meetings to understand the learner in other school contexts, caregiver meetings to gather feedback on learners' experiences at home, formative assessments to understand skills gaps, routine weekly or monthly assessments for teachers to obtain quick feedback, dynamic assessments to measure a learner's potential to learn, and holistic assessments to understand root causes impacting learning and math skill development.

Read the full summary report here: [Approaches for Determining Learner Support Needs](#).

When screening for the purpose of referring learners for evaluation and identification, it is critical to maintain data privacy, ensure tools are implemented appropriately, and communicate findings to learners and their families. USAID programs should consider [context analysis](#) or community resource mapping to ensure this screening-referral-identification process is well-functioning before considering individual screening. USAID's [Tools and Considerations for School-Based Universal Disability Screenings](#) provides a detailed overview of how to establish a screening and referral process, how to select a screening tool, how to prepare and administer screenings, and what to do after screening is completed. It also provides a list of available screening tools that may be used in an educational setting.

Application to Local Systems Strengthening

Detecting learners' needs and providing support is crucial to an education system's ability to educate all learners. While many USAID partner countries are working toward strong screening-referral-identification systems, countries should also invest at the education service delivery level. This approach allows education systems to provide support for learners who are struggling in the short term while making long-term investments in strengthening screening-referral-identification systems related to disability. To prioritize investments, countries should first assess the current landscape⁶, and recognize that other sectors—such as health, social protection, and more—may play integral roles in fulfilling learners with disabilities' rights.

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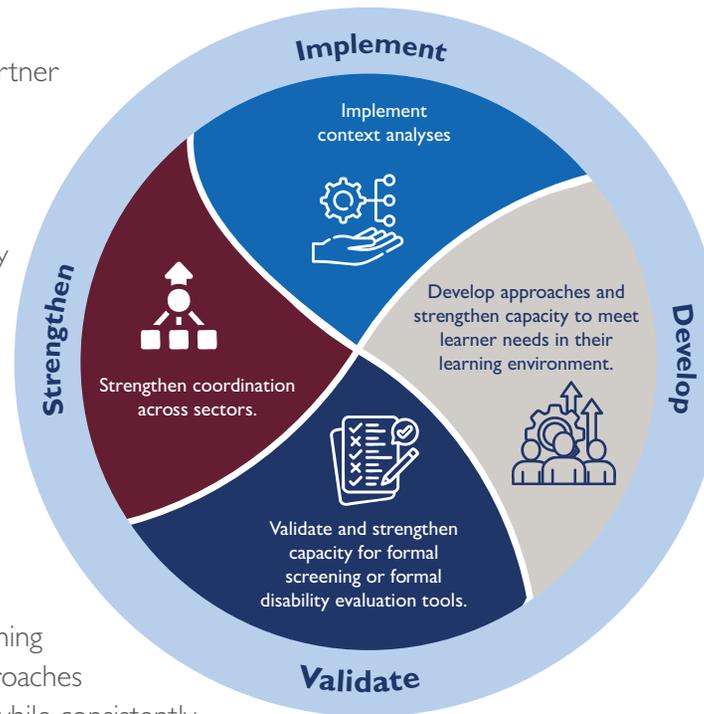
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Application to USAID Programming

USAID programs can play a critical role in helping partner countries detect learner needs and determine the necessary educational support, whether formally or informally, in the following ways:

- ▶ *Implement [context analyses](#).* USAID programs may conduct context analyses that inform USAID programming and help partner governments determine where to invest in local systems.
- ▶ *Develop approaches and strengthen capacity to meet learner needs in their learning environment.* Little published information exists on supporting learning environments, educators, caregivers, or communities in detecting and meeting the needs of learners who are struggling. USAID programming may pilot such approaches to identify which approaches best result in the provision of relevant support, while consistently applying UDL principles. Additionally, USAID programs can develop training materials to be handed over to the government for educators, school heads, or local ministry officials, etc. on how to meet learners' needs in the learning environment.
- ▶ *Validate and strengthen capacity for formal screening or formal disability evaluation tools.* While many screening and educational evaluation tools exist, few are validated in the countries where USAID operates. Furthermore, not all countries have trained professionals to implement such tools with accuracy. USAID education and health programming can collaborate to validate particular screening or disability evaluation tools in a local context or train health or educational professionals to implement such tools.
- ▶ *Strengthen coordination across sectors.* Ensuring children and youth access education, learn, and thrive requires collaboration across multiple sectors. USAID programming may work to strengthen connections with health and other sectors to provide learners with disabilities access to further assessment and diagnosis, early intervention programs, enrollment in social protection programs, connections to DPOs/OPDs, and access to assistive technology and rehabilitation services.

Critical to USAID programming's success in this area is a plan to sustainably strengthen local systems in coordination or collaboration with local actors, including DPOs/OPDs.



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What Is It?

Monitoring an education program's or system's inclusivity is crucial to improved access or learning for learners with disabilities and requires collecting data on the enabling environment in which inclusive education occurs. Many countries and programs have relied on **inclusive education indicators or frameworks** to meet this purpose. An inclusive education framework is a set of areas that, if strengthened, can improve an education program's or system's inclusivity. These areas are monitored through developing indicators. Indicators may examine the individual or classroom level, the school level, or the system level, and they may look at inputs, processes, or outcomes at each of these levels.⁷ Examples of indicators may include the number of teachers trained in inclusive education, the number of physically accessible schools, the number of learner supports—including assistive devices—provided to learners, the inclusive representation and accessibility of teaching and learning materials, the proportion of a budget reserved for inclusive education, etc. See Exhibit J for additional areas to measure mapped by level and input/process/outcome.

Exhibit J: Indicators for Measuring Program or System Inclusivity

Level	Inputs	Processes	Outcomes
System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy • Staff professional development and teacher education • Resources and finances • Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate • School practice • Collaboration and shared responsibility • Support to individuals • Role of special schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation • Student achievement • Post-school options
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy • Staff professional development and teacher education • Resources and finances • Leadership • Curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate • School practice • Classroom practice • Collaboration and shared responsibility • Role of special schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation • Student achievement • Post-school options
Individual or Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources and finances • Leadership • Curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate • School practice • Classroom practice • Collaboration and shared responsibility • Support to individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation • Student achievement • Post-school options

Citation: Loreman, T., Forlin, C. and Sharma, U. (2014), "Measuring Indicators of Inclusive Education: A Systematic Review of the Literature", *Measuring Inclusive Education (International Perspectives on Inclusive Education, Vol. 3)*, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Leeds, pp. 165-187. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-363620140000003024> page 169

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How Do We Do No (More) Harm?

Data used to monitor programs' or systems' inclusivity may be qualitative or quantitative depending on the indicator. For example, a policy analysis might use qualitative approaches to collect data on the education policies' inclusivity; a school inventory review or community survey may collect quantitative data to understand the support available in schools. Since monitoring the system's or program's inclusivity does not require using data on the individual learner at the individual level, the immediate risk of harm is to the system, program, or environment itself, not to the individual. Thus, developing inclusive education indicators must be contextually grounded and inclusive in itself.⁸

Application to Local Systems Strengthening

There are several examples of countries and regional bodies that have developed inclusive education frameworks and indicators to inform decision-making at the country level. Such indicators may be used by a country to monitor changes, focus attention on sub-systems that may require improvement, support teachers' development, etc.⁹ While the contextual relevance of any inclusive education indicators is paramount, [Exhibit J \(above\)](#) provides a list of potential areas to monitor through indicator reporting. Education systems may monitor indicators in many ways, including by tracking changes through an EMIS system or by launching regular [accessibility audits](#) or [education sector analyses](#).

Application to USAID Programming

USAID's Education Policy (2018) lays out six key principles to drive USAID decision-making and investments in inclusive education that together emphasize the importance of systems strengthening, local ownership, and evidence and data. USAID inclusive education projects may monitor programming inclusivity as a way of embodying these principles, especially if this monitoring uses indicators that are contextually relevant and which may serve as models for future local government use.

Several frameworks exist for monitoring USAID inclusive development¹⁰ and disability-inclusive development programming¹¹ more generally. To monitor USAID disability-inclusive education programming, USAID's standard foreign assistance and supplementary education indicators include [several indicators](#) that can be used to monitor education programming inclusivity in alignment with USAID's standards of inclusive development and disability-inclusive development. In addition to available standard or supplemental education indicators, USAID education projects may consider developing custom indicators that best reflect the project needs when no standard indicator exists. Further, the [Evaluation Guide on Disability-Inclusive Education](#) contains additional, specific guidance on measuring the inclusivity of the learning environment and physical environment. Finally, UNICEF and the WG's [Inclusive Education Module](#) is a useful tool for collecting information on environmental factors affecting school participation.

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Beyond USAID standard, supplemental, and custom indicator reporting, USAID's education sector maintains additional standards to ensure all education programming is disability-inclusive, as listed below:

- [Twin-track approach](#). While not all USAID education programming may directly target persons with disabilities' specific needs, all USAID education programming must include persons with disabilities.
- [UDL](#). At the 2022 Global Disability Summit, USAID committed to incorporating UDL principles into all new USAID education programs.
- [Educational materials](#). Equity and inclusion should be promoted in all educational materials developed by USAID activities.

A USAID project may develop and monitor indicators to track their adherence to these standards as well.

V. How the Three Purposes for Disability Data Interconnect

A country that generates and uses data to monitor learner performance, meet learner needs, and monitor education system inclusivity can ensure all learners access education, learn, and thrive both within and beyond the educational environment.

- A country that [monitors performance](#) knows not only the percentage of children and youth with a disability, but also which learners are in or out of school, which are learning, and which are thriving outside of the learning environment by accessing work or being engaged in their communities. These data enable the country to allocate resources to districts or schools in which learners need more support to access education, learn, and thrive.
 - For example, a national census reveals there is a high proportion of out-of-school learners with disabilities in District 3, and that those in school are not performing to the same level as their peers without disabilities. The Ministry of Education allocates resources to District 3 to initiate community awareness programs about the importance of education for learners with disabilities, while launching an inclusive education teacher training track at District 3's teacher training college.
- Education systems and settings that [understand and meet learners' needs](#) will know which learners are struggling, regardless of whether the learner has a known disability and how that disability has been defined. These education systems can then divert resources to learners who need more support to access education, learn, and thrive.

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- District 3 teachers, made aware of the national census data by their local Ministry of Education officials, use formative assessment to identify learners who are struggling. Experienced head teachers provide training on implementing and analyzing data from formative assessments, as well as providing appropriate support. District 3 learners who are struggling receive support in the classroom, such as group-based instruction, extra time to complete tasks, etc.
- Educational systems that **monitor education system** inclusivity ensure resources are diverted to respond to performance monitoring data and needs assessment data so learners can access education, learn, and thrive.
 - The national Ministry of Education and District 3’s local ministry officials systematically collect data on inclusive education indicators, such as the number of teachers who graduate from the inclusive education track, the number of schools with procedures for understanding learner needs and providing support, and the percentage of learners with a disability who are in school and out of school. When District 3 falls behind its targets, the national government provides additional resources to ensure all learners can access education, learn, and thrive.

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Endnotes

- 1 USAID, [Nothing Without Us: USAID Disability Policy](#). 2024: page 12.
- 2 See [USAID's The 5Rs Framework in the Program Cycle](#).
- 3 USAID defines “local systems” as the “interconnected sets of actors—governments, civil society, the private sector, universities, individual citizens and others—that jointly produce a particular development outcome.” ([Local Systems](#), 2014). Throughout this document “local systems” refers to the interconnected set of actors that influence disability-inclusive education in a country.
- 4 See chapter 4 of the United States Federal Evidence Agenda on Disability Equity.
- 5 Screening tools may be part of both the learning environment process and the formal screening–referral–identification process. When a screening tool flags a learner as struggling in any particular way, the appropriate response may be to support a learner in the learning environment before referring for evaluation and identification, or to refer the learner immediately for evaluation and identification. Which path to take depends on what the tool is screening for, if the learner has been screened before and shown no progress, or if the learner is already receiving support that is yielding no or little improvements.
- 6 Several resources are available for assessing a landscape, including [USAID's Applied Education System Diagnostic Toolkit](#), [UNICEF's Education Sector Analysis Methodological Guidelines](#), [The RISE Education Systems Diagnostic](#), and the [Harvard/Kennedy School's PDIA Toolkit](#).
- 7 [Loreman, T., Forlin, C.](#) and [Sharma, U.](#) (2014). “Measuring Indicators of Inclusive Education: A Systematic Review of the Literature,” *Measuring Inclusive Education (International Perspectives on Inclusive Education, Vol. 3)*, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Leeds, pp. 165-187. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-363620140000003024>.
- 8 Sharma, U., Jitoko, F., Macanawai, S. S., & Forlin, C. (2018). “How Do we Measure Implementation of Inclusive Education in the Pacific Islands? A Process for Developing and Validating Disability-Inclusive Indicators,” *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 65(6), 614–630. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2018.1430751>; European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (2024) [Development of a set of indicators – for inclusive education in Europe](#).
- 9 Mezzanotte, Cecilia, and Claire Calvel. (25 October 2023). “[Indicators of Inclusion in Education: A Framework for Analysis](#),” OECD Education Working Paper No 300.
- 10 USAID's standards of inclusive development are relevant to all USAID education programming. [USAID's Inclusive Development: Additional Help for ADS 201](#) presents a general framework for inclusive development that includes conflict sensitivity, nondiscrimination, inclusion, equity, accessibility, and equality.
- 11 USAID's [2024 Nothing Without Us: USAID Disability Policy](#) highlights key areas in which USAID programming can operationalize disability inclusion, including engaging local DPOs, collaborative partnerships, inclusive and accessible communications, appropriate budgets, the provision of universal design plus reasonable accommodations, recognition of disability across one's life course, systems strengthening, and inclusion in the USAID acquisition and assistance process.

I. Introduction

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III. Meeting Learning Needs

IV. Monitoring Education Programs' or Systems' Inclusivity

V. How the Three Purposes for Disability Data Interconnect