

Training the teachers and their trainers in Inclusive Education

Armenia – Bridge of Hope

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

The aim of the project is to increase the number of inclusive schools in Armenia by supporting mainstream schools and training their teachers. A key part of the programme is the provision of training courses on Inclusive Education at the Armenian State Pedagogic University.

QUOTE

“Moving from Inclusive Education towards employment and a dignified life for people with disabilities.”

- Ms. Susanna Tadevosyan, Bridge of Hope

FACTS & FIGURES

- 200 mainstream schools are supported to become inclusive, and about 5,000 teachers from these schools are trained in all aspects of Inclusive Education.
- 2,200 children with disabilities receive their education in inclusive schools.
- Inclusive Education has become a regular component of teacher-training programmes in Armenia, and two compulsory and two optional courses on Inclusive Education are offered at the Pedagogical University at both the Bachelor and Masters level.
- Based on the results of this project, education law and related normative documents have been revised and developed to ensure the sustainable development of Inclusive Education in Armenia.

PROBLEMS TARGETED

In Armenia, there is still a segregated approach to education of young people with disabilities. Pedagogical universities educate general education and special education teachers in separate programmes and departments. Additionally, there is a lack of a support system to inclusive schools when it comes to organizing the education of children with disabilities in mainstream classes. Because of this separation, there is widespread stigmatization of children with disabilities in Armenia, which prevents their full inclusion in society.

SOLUTION & METHODOLOGY

By raising awareness and increasing the understanding of Inclusive Education within the Armenian State Pedagogic University, future teachers will be prepared to meet the diversity of needs of children in a classroom. To achieve this goal several activities have been conducted, including seminars on “Human Rights and Disability,” “Disability Language and Ethics,” and “Social Model of Disability” – attended by some 150 lecturers and 1,200 students from all pedagogical faculties. Later, four film shows were presented on disability and Inclusive Education, followed by interactive discussions and debates among students, lecturers, persons with disabilities, and parents of children with disabilities. Increasing the number of inclusive schools provides a pilot model by which to test and propose clear mechanisms and policy guidelines for the transformation of special schools into psycho-pedagogical support centres. Furthermore, parent support groups were established to encourage parents to send their children to inclusive schools and to provide assistance through that process.

OUTLOOK & TRANSFERABILITY

The results of the project, which cost about \$2.5 million, were evaluated as replicable and effective and were therefore adopted by the government for countrywide expansion. The model of Inclusive Education has also been presented at various international conferences and meetings and is now well-known in many countries in the Caucasus region, in Europe, and in other ex-Soviet countries. The success and effectiveness of the project rests on the leadership role of parents of children with disabilities, disability organizations, and constructive partnerships with all key stakeholders. In 2016 teachers from 225 schools in two remote provinces of Armenia will be trained and their schools will be supported to become inclusive. Further, six special schools will be trained and prepared to be transformed into psycho-pedagogical support centres for inclusive schools.

Photo: Yes

CONTACT

Bridge of Hope

Ms. Susanna Tadevosyan

Armenia

www.bridgeofhope.am

+37 491 40 52 19

bridge@arminco.com

tags: education, peer-to-peer, low and middle-income countries