

Outline of the presentation for Japan education forum, 2017

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Abstract:

Based on some of the research findings and global policy initiatives on inclusive education, this presentation discusses the issues and barriers to provide quality education for persons with disabilities in low and middle income countries. Despite efforts to achieve Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which ended in 2015, the task of ensuring that children with disabilities are able to access school remains unfinished. Even if these children are enrolled in school, the quality of the education they receive remains relatively low.

However, there has been a shift in the international policy trends of education provision for children with disabilities. Following the Salamanca World Conference in 1994, special and integrated education gave way to inclusive education, which is slowly being implemented in both developed and developing countries.

Incheon Declaration of the World Education Forum in South Korea in 2015 recognizes the inclusion and equity in education of people with disabilities and states that “no education target should be considered met unless met by all”. Likewise, the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have also clearly incorporated the inclusion of people with disabilities. SDG 4.5 in particular mentions vulnerable persons including people with disabilities. But SDG 4 cannot be achieved without improving access to quality education for children with disabilities. Without quality education, people with disabilities will be unable to develop their full employment potential. Yet, they have lower school enrollment and completion, fewer years of schooling and academic achievements compared to those without disabilities.