

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY

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BACKGROUND

The pandemic had a direct impact on access to education for children with disabilities.

Children could not study at school as usual.

Studying online was more difficult for children with disabilities.

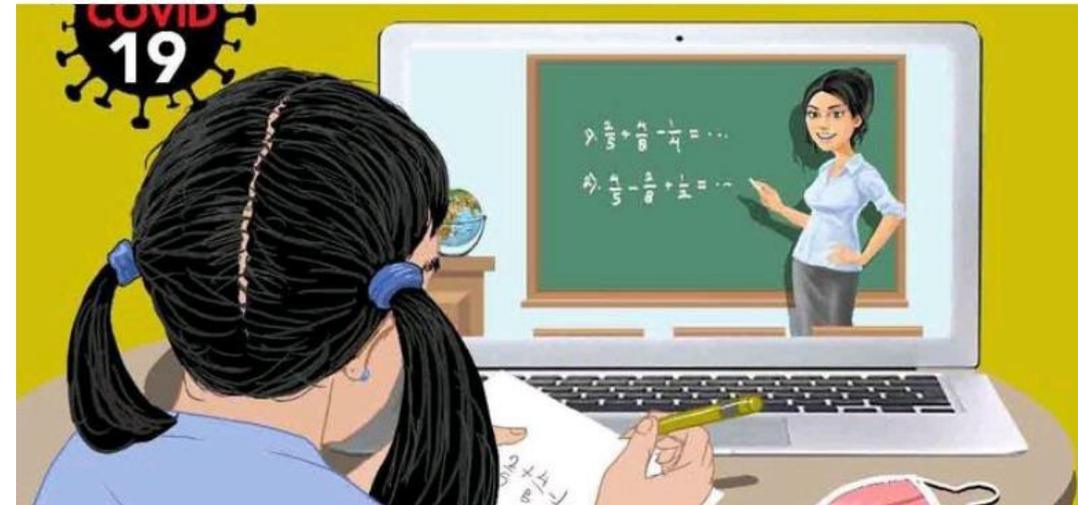


SITUATION OF EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES DURING COVID-19

1. No face-to-face teaching at the beginning of the pandemic, it was very difficult for children to get their rights, especially those with intellectual disabilities and those with autism; no learning media such as cellphones because most children, especially in special schools, came from villages.
2. It was difficult to access and adjust to online learning, so in the first year of the pandemic children with disabilities became left behind in lessons; their level of understanding of lessons reduced, and their behavior was very different from when they were at school.
3. After one year of Covid, teachers were able to visit children to provide learning; but limited teachers and distance to the homes meant they could not go around all children with disabilities. So not all of them were given lessons equally. We (Organisation of People with Disabilities) were afraid of getting sick if we went to collect the children.
4. Children missed out on social interaction, which is very important for children with social and behavioural difficulties who were benefiting from the routines and supports at school.

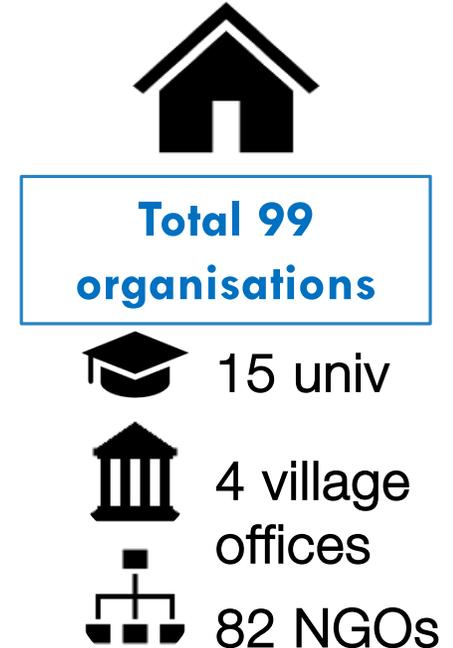
OBSTACLES TO EDUCATION DURING COVID

1. not all children had access to a Smart Phone, laptop or tablet
2. many parents did not have skills to support their children to study; this was worse for children who have particular support needs which teachers are experienced in providing.
3. there were no experts who can provide education to students with disabilities.
4. lack of visiting teachers
5. Learning materials were difficult to understand and not accessible for all children



LITERACY VOLUNTEERS – LOCAL SOLUTION TO SUPPORT CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES OR SEVERE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

- Initiated by several NGOs and universities whose activities and students had to work and learn from home during pandemic
- With support from INOVASI (a partnership education program Australia – Indonesia), volunteers including uni student-teachers helped children in their area
- They communicated with schools in their village to find students with disabilities or severe learning difficulties to offer support in reading
- Literacy volunteers help children for about 10 weeks
- Most children improve at least one level in 10 weeks (beginner, letters, words, paragraph, stories)



Data March, 2022

Improvements in children supported by literacy volunteers



Light to medium intellectual difficulty, improved 1 level from readings letters to reading words

Concentration and attention difficulties, and fine motor difficulties. Started as a beginner level to reading syllables

Speech difficulty, from reading words to reading paragraphs

Social interaction difficulties, from reading letters to reading words

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. there should be visiting teachers available for children with disabilities
2. parents should be given training / information about supporting education for children with disabilities at home
3. governments should provide training for teachers to support learning methods and materials for children with disabilities during school closures, particularly in online learning methods

