From hidden children to inclusive education in the Ukraine

Ukraine - The Canadian Centre on Disability Studies

SUMMARY OF PROJECT
The goal from the project is to advance inclusive education in two regions (Lviv and Simferopol/Crimea) in Ukraine by developing civil society capacity, supporting policy development and enhancing the capacity of the school system to deliver quality education for all students, including those with disabilities.

QUOTE:
“Inclusion is not a goal, but a process. And it is not just a process of integration of children with special needs, but a process of broadening of our consciousness.”

– Ms. Oksana MYKOLIUK, journalist from a Ukrainian news website “The Day”

FACTS & FIGURES

• 5 new teacher training courses were developed

• 25 policies were amended/developed on the national level regarding the education for persons with disabilities and the implementation of inclusive education

• 106 children with disabilities joined over 50 mainstream schools across Crimea in the autumn of 2012 – the activities in Crimea were suspended after political turmoil in 2013/2014

• 90 children with disabilities joined over 40 mainstream schools across the city of Lviv

PROBLEMS TARGETED
Children with disabilities were hidden from Ukrainian society for a long time. Many children with disabilities were separated from their parents and placed in special educational establishments or “special boarding schools”.

SOLUTION & METHODOLOGY
The project took a multi-level approach to create the conditions to support inclusive education:
• The establishment of policy frameworks in Ukraine, which promote inclusive education in schools and communities in the two pilot regions, and nationally. These policy frameworks include the Ukrainian Index of Inclusion, which was approved by the Ministry of Education and Science. The Index was developed by the project in collaboration with the Open Society Foundation.

• The increased role and capacity of civil society organizations to support and advance inclusive education in the two pilot regions and nationally (created network of parents became an instrumental tool of information and knowledge exchange, advocacy and lobbying.

• Five 18-hour courses on inclusive education have been integrated into the national IPUT (Institutes for Professional Upgrading of Teachers) curriculum taught to all working teachers across Ukraine.

OUTLOOK & TRANSFERABILITY
The organisation is trying to create real change in how the education system in Ukraine operates. As a project, CCDS focused on creating a framework and infrastructure in terms of policies, legislation, and resources to support inclusive education in Ukraine beyond the existence of the project. Although the project has ended now, there is still support for new initiatives and reforms. The new government already passed a law that supports inclusive education. Furthermore, Mr. Valeriy Sushkeyvich, a wheelchair user who was active in this project, was installed as an ombudsman for disability issues in Ukraine.

Photo a1:
Participants in a workshop painting an egg during an exhibition of the project in Lviv.

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