

TECIP: BASELINE CHECK, autumn term 2017

Introduction

Before the beginning of the TECIP project, we knew that the share of students with SEND in TVET colleges was quite low, and the number of female students was even lower. While some groups with disabilities (such as those with either hearing or visual difficulties) may find it easy to obtain training and education. It was also estimated that there might not be not enough trained staff for inclusive education, and attitudinal barriers exist. In addition, there is a need for suitable curriculum. Malle (2015) noted that, among other things, the TVET for the SEND student requires adaptive educational materials and facilities.

In the beginning of September 2017, we re-evaluated teacher education for inclusive technical and vocational education. In Addis Ababa the key persons in FTI and AU were interviewed to check the current situation and compare it to the project's planning. Baseline information was collected also during the starting events via qualitative and more structured questionnaire.

Overview of possible changes to key issues of the TECIP project between the project's planning (2015) and start time (September 2017)

Project plan	Project start time
There were no curricula or training modules on inclusive practices with appropriate materials for future TVET teachers in the FTA.	Although there are no formal curricula or training modules that directly address inclusive education practices, some activities were implemented in this regard in TVET colleges. While making curriculum revisions, some colleges tried to make the curricula inclusive by considering students with disabilities. They also tried to create an accessible environment for students with special needs. For example, colleges will not be accredited if they are not accessible.
There were no teachers specialized in inclusive education and special needs in TVET teacher education.	This is still the situation now.
TVET teachers had minimal knowledge and skills regarding special needs; only single training days in sign language had been delivered in some colleges.	This is still the situation now
Collaboration between different stakeholders and parties was weak.	This is still the situation now.
There was limited knowledge regarding inclusion among administrators and other stakeholders.	The leadership has undergone training on how to make colleges both accessible and inclusive.
There was no training model to root the learnt matters to the regions and local colleges.	This is still the situation now.
There were no official statistics about students with SEND in TVET. Based on a recent study, the estimated share of the SEND students in TVET is 0.07–0.55 %.	This is still the situation now.

Baseline 2.1

During November 2017, awareness raising events were organised in five towns. Two events took place in Addis Ababa, and the rest occurred in Dire Dawa, Bahir Dar, Mekele and Hawasa. The goal was to collect baseline information regarding awareness of inclusion and related issues from the key administrative stakeholders of IE. The events recruited more than hundred participants, and 111 completed the questionnaires concerning their opinions on inclusive education. Four questions were presented, with three being open-ended. The event moderators delivered the questionnaires to participants and returned the completed questionnaires to the researchers. Participation was voluntary, and all collected data was kept anonymous and confidential.

The questionnaire firstly surveyed the concept of inclusion. It was found, that the participants were aware of the concept, and they described it in practical terms (teaching people with disabilities) as well as connected values (for example equality). Some of the responses discussed the links between special education and inclusion.

Figure 1 summarises the participants' own estimates of how they viewed their own perception of inclusion. All participants knew about inclusion, and most considered their knowledge either average or good. Slightly less than 10% estimated that they knew the concept well.

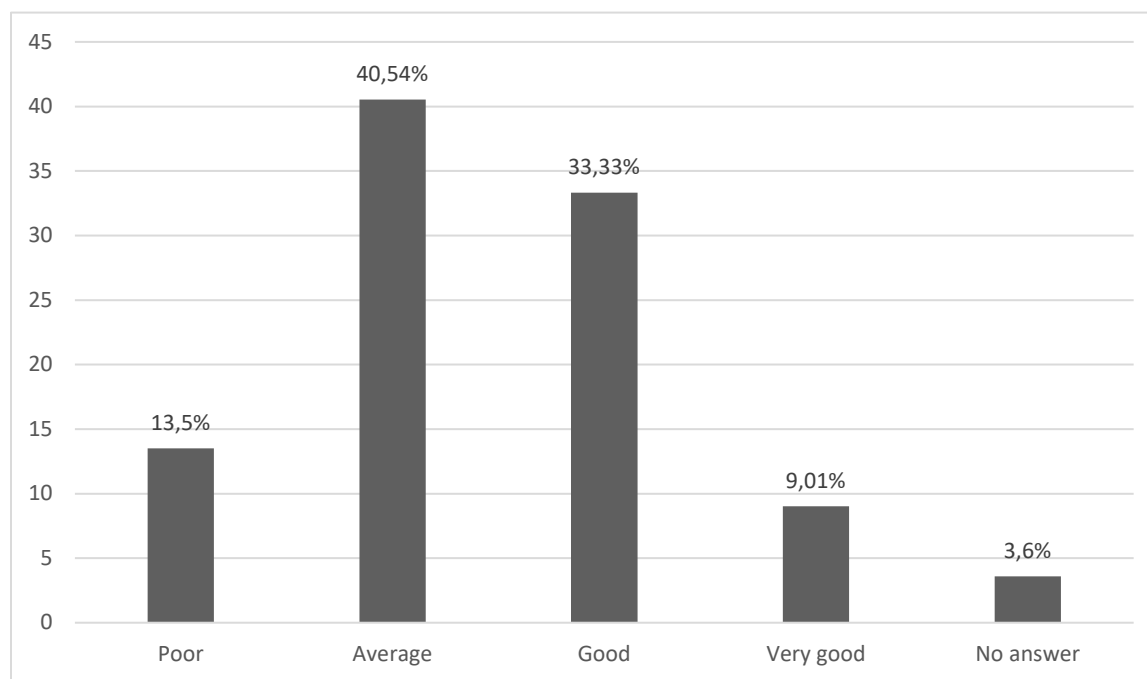


Figure 1. *Participants' (N=111) estimations of their own levels of understanding of inclusive education. Data collected during six different awareness-raising events.*

One of the survey questions was as follows: 'According to your opinion and/or knowledge, how is the issue of inclusive education addressed in technical and vocational education?' Even though there was concern regarding the implementation of inclusion, several respondents reported having good personal and/or organisational experiences regarding efforts to teach people with disabilities. Many good solutions have already been implemented at various levels, yet not widely, and experience has been gained for individual students when considering support measures and adjustments.

When respondents were asked to list the major challenges to implementing inclusion, their responses included facilities, materials and equipment, skilled manpower, curriculum and attitudes.

Baseline 3.1

To determine the baseline study of current teacher trainers' knowledge, practices and future interests regarding inclusion (Baseline 3.1), we created a questionnaire and delivered it to the participants of the Federal Technical Institute seminar on the first day (9.11.2017). The participants (N= about 75) were staff from the Institute. The questionnaire was based on an earlier study by Forlin et al. (2011), which has been successfully used worldwide (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). Slight adaptations were made to ensure that participants could complete the form during the seminar day. A total of 59 participants completed the questionnaire, of which 17% were female. The average age was 36 (range 24–58). The participants were well educated; most had either a bachelor's or master's degree. Per the preliminary findings, over half of the respondents claimed to have interacted with disabled persons. When we asked about previous training concerning educating disabled people, 54% stated that they had received no training, while 10% claimed to have had a significant amount of training. Many of the respondents (66%) claimed to have had at least some experience in teaching disabled students. The participants in this survey were quite confident in teaching disabled persons. Only 3% considered their confidence low. Most of the respondents estimated their knowledge of legislation and/or policies concerning inclusive education as average.

Conclusions (shortly)

We conclude, that participants show interest in to develop inclusive education and to support such efforts, thus it is clear that the planned training will bring together teachers willing to develop schooling. Some are very confident and experienced in inclusive questions, and some inform, that they need more information. Here and there are good practical examples of inclusive solutions, too. There could be a possibility for benchmarking.