

How to promote the inclusion of children with all types of disabilities at school?



Location: Fazenda, Praia City, Santiago Island

Stakeholders involved: Ministry of Education and Sports (MES), Family and Community.

DESCRIPTION OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION



Capelinha School is one of the oldest schools in the city of Praia, located in a residential, populous neighbourhood. Recognised for the quality and commitment of its teachers, Capelinha works with a group of eight children with different kinds of disabilities. A group which including children with developmental, physical and learning disabilities. The children are divided into different classes and levels of education in regular classrooms. Six teachers with specific pedagogical training including short training sessions on how to work with children with

disabilities are involved in this example of good practices.

This opening to receive an initiative of this kind makes Capelinha a school that respects the rights of the child and demonstrates their commitment to education and inclusion of children with disabilities.

Based on what can be observed, teachers are committed to the learning of children with special educational needs, by creating innovative strategies to promote their social and cognitive development. To this end, these teachers took part in awareness-raising activities, and were trained and monitored by the Ministry of Education about the process and in teaching and learning techniques toward children with disabilities.

The activities at the school are shared with the entire school community, counting on with a strong commitment of the parents and carers of children with disabilities.



FACTORS THAT MADE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PRACTICE POSSIBLE

- The commitment by teachers to providing a rich environment favourable to learning for students with special educational needs;
- Creativity and motivation of the entire educational community in the production of materials and activities for inclusion of children with disabilities and of their families;

- Monitoring of experts from the Ministry of Education and the opportunity of teachers to participate in training and capacity building courses which provide teachers with practical, everyday tools. For example, resources used to develop the fine and gross motor skills (wood cubes, rubber balls, cutting and pasting, etc.). These teachers mainly participated in lectures to raise their awareness about the process of inclusion in primary education, organised by the centre for Inclusive Education of the Ministry of Education;
- Open-minded management which supports the inclusion of children with disabilities, allowing the school to be a participatory school, where everyone is part of the pedagogical mission of the school.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

- A major difficulty has been the physical and architectural barriers of the school which do not favour the free movement of children in wheelchairs. Where this is the case, these students attend classes in the rooms of the ground floor;
- The lack of adequate teaching materials has been, by the other hand, a constant challenge. To overcome this problem, teachers have been relied on their creativity by producing materials and adapting existing ones;
- The belief of parents that children with disabilities, mainly those with cognitive disability, do not learn has been a limiting factor in this initiative. To reverse this bias the teaching staff has recorded the progress of these students, showing the parents the social and cognitive gains their children have made throughout the process.

EFFECTS OF THIS EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICES

- Children who were once confined to the house, and therefore without access to a social integration and interaction with other children have the opportunity for and the right to education in a rich environment full of possibilities for learning and of respect for their differences;
- Parents and guardians are more aware of their children's development and their real learning abilities;

- More qualified teachers who are more open to the practice of inclusion, its strengths and challenges;
- An education community more aware of the rights of people with disabilities, especially the right to education.

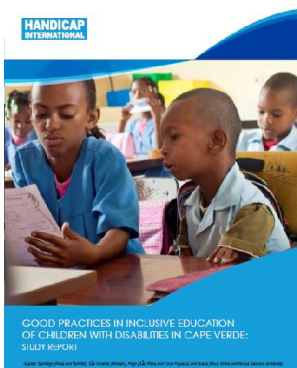
“Education is a right ... our school has an obligation to accommodate all children.” School manager

HOW CAN THIS PRACTICE BE IMPROVED?

- Increased sharing between teachers of produced resources and carrying out joined activities in order to make them accessible to all students and planning of educational activities. For instance, small reading groups, group dynamics as simulation, activity in which a colleague stands in the place of another to get the idea of the other person’s world;
- Involvement of parents in activities with the children so they can experience the daily lives of their children and provide continuity at home;
- That teachers, parents and carers, and students take greater advantage of the MES Resource Room in Pedro Gomes Secondary School, in Achada Santo António, 3km away from Capelina Escola. This is a strategic and important resource for the continued teaching and learning process;
- Creation of a Centre for Study and Research, with a multidisciplinary perspective, where teachers can reflect on their practice and on the different learning strategies needed in this approach to learning.

For more information:

Full project report: [Report on good practices in inclusive education of children with disabilities in Cape Verde](#)



Criteria for the good practices: see page 6.

Recommendations from the good practices: see page 33-34.

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