Making Sustainable Development Goal 4

disability inclusive in Romania

**Case study**

Mirjakhon Turdiev

Syracuse University

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1. **Introduction**

In 2000, the global community kicked off the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) worldwide with a great ambition for the next fifteen years. Among the eight MDGs, the **Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education** targetedall children, including boys and girls, everywhere to enable them to complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015. (United Nations, n.d.) 40 million of the 115 million children not attending primary school in developing countries have disabilities. Very often, children with disabilities are not recognized, get frustrated with school and drop out (The World Bank, 2009). It is simply impossible to achieve universal primary education without accommodating the educational needs of those 40 million children having disabilities.

Unless disabled people are brought into the development mainstream, it will be impossible … to give every girl and boy the chance to achieve a primary education by the same date which are key among the Millennium Development Goals agreed to by more than 180 world leaders at the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000 (Wolfensohn, 2002)

The Millennium Development Goals Report of 2015 produced by United Nations recognizes that “although significant achievements have been made on many of the MDG targets worldwide, progress has been uneven across regions and countries, leaving significant gaps. Millions of people are being left behind, especially the poorest and those disadvantaged because of their sex, age, disability, ethnicity or geographic location.”, (United Nations, 2015)

The current case study is conducted with the aim of reflecting development aid of The World Bank (WB) from disability inclusiveness perspective to scrutinize the gaps and opportunities in aid realization for making it inclusive of persons with disabilities. For this task, Rural Education Development (RED) project in Romania is chosen to zoom in the project through the lenses of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all(United Nations, 2018)**.** I envisage that the outcome of this study provides evidence and recommendations to the WB’s aid workers on how to design and implement future projects like RED in order to contribute to the achievement of the SDG 4. Based on this case study, I declare that the RED project of the World Bank in Romania omitted the inclusion of children with disabilities in its implementation.

The methodology of conducting the study mainly included review and analysis of project documents of the RED project, statistical reports on disability in Romania and scholarly articles on disability, education and rural versus urban development. All the referred materials are examined from Sustainable Development Goal 4 “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” prism to reflect the gaps and opportunities for disability inclusive rural education development.

The *Introduction* part is followed by *Background information* *and context* part which provides general information about the situation on persons with disabilities and their education in Romania, objectives and components of the RED project, and overview of SDG4 targets in relation to the education of children with disabilities. The third, *Integration of disability perspective into RED Project* part as the main part of the paper discusses each component and indicators of the RED project from the standpoint of inclusion of children with disabilities in the project’s activities. And the *Conclusion* section summarizes the findings and deliberations of this case study.

1. **Background information and context**

Prior to the discussion of disability inclusive rural education development as input to achieving SDG 4, it is critical to have an understanding about the core dimensions and context for disability inclusive rural development in Romania. In this part of the paper, three dimensions are discussed as background and rational for the case study: a) overview and reflection of the RED Project’s goals, objectives and components; b) Sustainable Development Goal 4 “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”; and c) situation and opportunities for the education of children/persons with disabilities in Romania, including in rural areas of Romania;

1. It is an undisputable fact that during the period of 2000 – 2015 significant positive changes took place in compliance with eight Millennium Development Goals globally. Nevertheless, the review and reports on the accomplishments of MDGs by the end of 2015 accentuate the need for further works on all the MDG areas in Post-2015 Development Agenda period. Because, it has been observed that certain groups of people and geographic areas did not benefit equally as others from the MDGs. Secretary – General of United Nations Ban Ki-moon explicitly stated “…Progress tends to bypass women and those who are lowest on the economic ladder or are disadvantaged because of their age, disability or ethnicity. Disparities between rural and urban areas remain pronounced.” (United Nations, 2015)

Continuous and dedicated advocacy events by disability civil society and international organizations on ensuring the Post-2015 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) to be disability inclusive nudged the process of SDG development to consider the persons with disabilities in SDGs. Number of high level and grass root level events, and statements were made on ensuring SDGs are disability inclusive along with their targets and indicators. As a result, additionally to all SDGs that reference inclusion of ALL during SDG period, five following SDGs clearly specify targeting the persons with disabilities and disability issues in the areas related to education, growth and employment, inequality, accessibility of human settlements, as well as data collection and monitoring of the SDGs:

* **Goal 4** on inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of life-long learning opportunities for all focuses on eliminating gender disparities in education and ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities. In addition, the proposal calls for building and upgrading education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and also provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all. (United Nations, n.d.)
* In **Goal 8**: to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, the international community aims to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value. (United Nations, n.d.)
* Closely linked is **Goal 10**, which strives to reduce inequality within and among countries by empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, including persons with disabilities. (United Nations, n.d.)
* **Goal 11** would work to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe and sustainable. To realize this goal, Member States are called upon to provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, such as persons with disabilities. In addition, the proposal calls for providing universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, particularly for persons with disabilities. (United Nations, n.d.)
* **Goal 17** stresses that in order to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development, the collection of data and monitoring and accountability of the SDGs are crucial. Member States are called upon to enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS), which would significantly increase the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data that is also disaggregated by disability. (United Nations, n.d.)

In this case study, SDG 4 is mainly referred as the rational for including disability perspective into the projects with the similar goals and objectives. Here are specific examples of consistencies between SDG 4 and RED Project:

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| **SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all** | **Project Approval Document (PAD) of the RED Project** |
| “Target 4.1:  … ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes | “The overall objective of the project is to have rural schools’ students benefit from improved access to  quality education…”  “Equity issues will be given priority in monitoring implementation.” |
| “Target 4.a:  Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all  ” | “… objective would be achieved through: … (ii) improvement of teaching conditions of rural schools both with respect to adequate  minimum facilities and provision of basic teaching”  “The objective of this sub- component is to upgrade education conditions in the most deprived rural schools to a minimum functioning standard.” |
| “Target 4.c:  … substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States” | “The project will improve teaching and learning in rural schools by improving teachers' skills and qualifications and by providing the basic facilities and materials required for efficient instruction.” |

1. Inclusive education provides the same learning environment for students of diverse backgrounds and abilities. The goal of inclusive education is to ensure that all students learn and play together, with a sense of safety and belonging (United Nations General Assembly, 2017). The Rural Education Development (RED) Project is implemented in Romania with US$ 60 Million loan provided by World Bank and US$ 30 Million of the Government of Romania for the period of six years from 2003 till 2009 (World Bank, 2010). The Project Development Objective (PDO) was to have rural schools’ students benefit from improved access to quality education, as evidenced by higher achievement scores and completion and transition rates. This objective would be achieved through: (i) professional development of teachers and principals of rural schools; (ii) improvement in learning conditions of rural schools both with respect to adequate minimum facilities and provision of basic teaching-learning materials; (iii) promotion of school-based innovation programs and community participation; and (iv) improvement of policy making capacity of local and central education authorities/agencies (World Bank, 2003). The achievements and outcomes of the project would be measured and monitored against the following six principal indicators:
2. increasing rural students' achievement scores in compulsory education as evidenced by assessments and examinations by end of school year 2008-2009;
3. reducing the gap between urban and rural achievement scores in compulsory education by end of school year 2008-2009;
4. increasing the compulsory education completion rate in rural areas by end of school year 2008-2009;
5. reducing the gap between urban and rural completion rates in compulsory education by end of school year 2008-2009;
6. increasing the transition rates to upper secondary and tertiary education for rural students by school year 2008-2009;
7. reducing the gap between urban and rural transition rates to upper secondary and tertiary education by end of school year 2008-2009 (World Bank, 2003)

According to the Project Appraisal Document (PAD), equity issues would be given priority in monitoring implementation. Equity in this case is seen in two dimensions. First, it is the equity that can be measured by comparison of performances of rural schools within counties (the comparison is rural against rural over time) and between counties. The other dimension to observe changes in equity is by comparing equity between rural and urban schools over time in the entire country (World Bank, 2003). The objective of the project would be achieved through implementation of four components of the project:

Component 1: Improve teaching and learning in rural schools.

*Sub-component 1.1.: School – based teachers’ professional development*

*Sub-component 1.2.: Career development opportunities for teachers*

*Sub-component 1.3.: Basic education conditions in schools*

*Sub-component 1.4.: Teaching – learning materials*

Component 2: Improve school-community partnerships.

Component 3: Strengthen monitoring, evaluation and policy – making capacity.

Component 4: Strengthen project management capacity (World Bank, 2003).

According the Implementation Completion and Results Report (ICR), the project has achieved satisfactory outcomes. Out of six Project Development Objectives indicators three exceeded, two achieved and one fully achieved making the project as successful project.

1. In order to discuss the possibilities of RED type projects to be inclusive of children with disabilities, it is necessary to explore the policies, available resources, stakeholders, institutions, experience, knowledge as well as possible opportunities to ensure their engagement in the project to extend the project impact to disabled community. The number of studies and published materials raise the differences in living, including education, of persons with disabilities in urban versus rural areas. Level of poverty, as the potential cause of poor education, is one of the key determinants of gap between rural and urban population. In contrast to poverty in urban areas, “…children with disabilities living in rural areas are isolated and have few role models or services available to them. There is little transportation for these children and they have very few peers of similar disability, age and economic status…. Urban settings may have a greater array of special education services because they can interact with other social service agencies, such as Universities, to provide a better and more comprehensive service model.” (Amanda Stansell, 2013)

The country report for Romania on equality of educational and training opportunities for young disabled people prepared by Academic Network of European Disability (ANED) experts in 2010 summarizes key policy execution concerns regarding the education of persons with disabilities in Romania. According to this report, the responsibility of public authorities in guaranteeing the access of students with disabilities to education and professional training is highlighted by Art. 19 (a) of the Law 448/2006 which legitimizes the education of children and young students with disabilities in special settings and integrated settings in Romania (Diana Chiriacescu, 2007). Romanian legislation refers to two types of support in schools: support teachers and itinerant teachers (mobile teams). Their role is to support children with SEN [special educational needs] and schools in the inclusion process, including the elaboration of individual service programmes (ISP) and their sub-components, the personalized intervention plans (PIP) (Diana Chiriacescu, 2007). Majority of special education units are in urban areas, 84.9% as compared to 15.1% in rural areas (European Parliament, Directorate General for internal policies, Policy Department C: Citizens' rights and constitutional affairs civil liberties, justice and home affairs, 2013). In compliance with RED project’s attention to equity issues for monitoring project achievements, the situation with equity of children with disabilities, especially in rural areas, demands more targeted interventions. The educational system does not provide suitable solutions for children with disabilities. As a result, in practice, children with disabilities are frequently excluded from the mainstream education environment. “Special schools for children with disabilities exist, but they embody a segregationist approach as they fall short of providing educational services adapted to the specific needs of the different types of disabilities. The discriminatory view is also reflected by the terminology used in the majority of legal instruments which currently use the term “handicap”, which has rather negative connotation when compared with the notion of “disability”” (European Parliament, Directorate General for internal policies, Policy Department C: Citizens' rights and constitutional affairs civil liberties, justice and home affairs, 2013).

“Concerning the accessibility of school infrastructure, communication means and learning materials, articles 18 and 19 (h) of the Law 448/2006 oblige the public authorities to be responsible for making schools accessible in all aspects (removing architectural barriers, communication accessibility etc). In practice, despite progress in recent years (due to a National Disability Strategy that has targeted accessibility of public buildings) a majority of school buildings have still problems, not only in terms of architecture barriers, but also in terms of equipment for communication for learners with specific needs (e.g. computers, easy-to-read materials, information in Braille etc). Art 18. of the same law mentions that education facilities (at all levels) must adapt their premises, furniture, textbooks and school materials to the needs of persons with disabilities, including sensory disabilities. The article mentions the use of assistive devices and software, including for examinations. The problem here is that, in many cases, school managers and local authorities do not have a correct understanding of the concept of “reasonable accommodation”” (Diana Chiriacescu, 2007)

Support services for inclusion (in schools or in the labor market) are offered by NGOs that can be utilized as important local resource. They usually offer a wide range of support services that are not available (or are not sufficient) in communities. Among these are:

- Support teachers;

- Mediators for employment, coaches and job seekers;

- Assistive devices and adapted equipment for learning, communication, mobility;

- Sign language interpreting;

- Adapted transportation (Diana Chiriacescu, 2007).

For instance, “Asociatia RENINCO Romania: The National Network for Information and Cooperation to Support Community Integration” ([http://www.reninco.ro](http://www.reninco.ro/)) as national non-profit organization comprised of over 50 active NGOs and 500 professionals and parents aims to support and encourage community integration and the inclusion of children and youngsters with special educational needs, derived from disabilities or other conditions, through educational and social measures. The organization targets professionals in the field of education and parents, children and youngsters with special educational needs (derived from a disability or from other conditions), their families, authorities’ representatives and policy makers through trainings, action-researches, studies and publications to advocate the community integration and the inclusion of children and youngsters with special education needs (European Network on Inclusive Education & Disability, n.d.).

Federation of National Organizations of Disabled People in Romania – ONPHR ([www.onphr.ro](http://www.onphr.ro)) is another local non-profit organization with the goal of contributing to the change of the destiny of persons with disabilities by promoting the concept of independent living for all and unrestricted participation in social life. Essential considerations include legal advice on disability, improving the quality of development assistance and recovery services, rehabilitation and support for disabled people (Federation of National Organizations of Disabled People in Romania – ONPHR, n.d.). The organization works on creating favorable conditions for equalization of opportunities to affirm and full integration of people with disabilities in Romania at all levels of community life: social, professional, educational, cultural, sports etc. (European Network on Inclusive Education & Disability, n.d.).

1. **Integration of disability perspective to RED Project**

The RED project’s target beneficiary is rural school students in Romania. The project intervention aimed at improving rural education, including the improvement of the situation with equity, through specific project activities under four project implementation components. In order to examine the conceptual and practical prospects for integrating disability perspective into the RED project, the activities and approaches for implementing each component need to be reviewed one by one. The next table provides ideas and considerations on how the activities of each component could be enriched with inclusion of disability perspective in the project to reach the SDG 4 for persons with disabilities. It encompasses recommendations on involvement of and collaboration with disability focused NGOs and parents of children with disabilities.

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|  | **Original Rural Education Development (RED) Project based on PAD and ICR** | **Recommendations for disability inclusive Rural Education Development (RED) Project** |
| **Component 1: Improve teaching and learning in rural schools through:**   * *providing school-based professional development for teachers;* * *supporting career development of rural teachers;* * *ensuring that minimum standards are met for school utilities, furniture and basic teaching materials.* | **Sub- Component 1.1: School- Based Teachers Professional Development:**  The objective of this sub-component is to support a conceptual and practical change in teaching that is critical to the improvement of student learning.   * The education reform encourages “student centered approaches” as the principle of this component. * Modular trainings on improving the quality of the mainstream teaching practice include   *Interactive, student-centered teaching;*  *Continuous assessment in the classroom;*  *Adapting the curriculum to the rural environment.*  *Multi- grade teaching;*  *Learning support;*  *Romanian as a second language;*  *Learning about students’ background* | This objective should explicate the student by stressing the types of students who usually face inequality and discrimination by the teaching approaches, practices and methodologies. Students with disabilities should be considered as part of those students.   * The “student centered approach” should provide additional details on specifying students with disabilities, including physical and developmental disabilities. * It is crucial to offer training modules on the equality of persons with disabilities as well as their inclusion in mainstream education setting. “Asociatia RENINCO Romania” (<http://www.reninco.ro/index.php/ct-menu-item-7>) might be considered as the potential provider of such trainings as organization experienced in this field. Disability Equality Training (DET) module provides practical knowledge on how to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in mainstream society, including schools (Equal Equality) * Trainings on basics of Romanian sign language “Limbajul Semenelor Romanesc” (LSR) should be part of this sub-component as fundamental skill for basic communication between teacher and deaf student who uses LSR; * The conceptual and practical knowledge and skill on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) should be the part of the teacher trainings. The UDL concept goes beyond the notion of disability accessibility by considering the needs of ALL. The potential providers of UDL knowledge can be an NGO “CAST” as one of the progressive organizations in offering trainings on UDL (CAST, n.d.) |
|  | **Sub-Component 1.2. Career Development Opportunities for Teachers:** The objective of the sub-component is to assist rural teachers to obtain formal qualifications as teachers  for compulsory education through an ODL (Open and Distance Learning) program.   * MER has the responsibility for setting qualification standards with the   National Board for Teacher Training and the National Council for Evaluation and Accreditation of Higher Education.   * Many institutions besides public universities and the MER must cooperate. They include: private education institutions, NGOs, and consulting organizations have experience in training practicing teachers, particularly in helping teachers apply what they learn to their teaching. * As the principles of training program design, all study programs must lead to a diploma that will allow teachers who participate to progress towards becoming tenured teachers. If a participant's completion of a program of study is to have acceptability nationally, the curriculum framework and delivery system's structure should be the same throughout the country * Each module's design will include the following:   \* explicit knowledge, abilities, and competences that a participant must exhibit for successful completion of the module;  \* a pretest of the participant's position vis a vis these objectives (could be used to award exemption);  \* the content of the module;  \* activities and assignments, written and practical as well as required and suggested for participants to complete;  \* cases and simulations (as appropriate);  \* additional readings, either attached to the basic materials or as referrals in a bibliography;  \* auto-evaluation tests for participants (with feedback loops to the textual materials);  \* a summative evaluation mechanism for the participant to demonstrate completion of the  module (may include tests, a portfolio, a demonstration, etc., and may be used as the pretest  for exemption as well). | * It is necessary to include the skills and knowledge of teachers on disability inclusive education and the equality of persons with disabilities as qualification standard. * Special education teachers from special schools, Disabled Peoples Organizations (DPOs) such as “Asociatia RENINCO Romania” and parents of students with disabilities must be in involved as providers of trainings programs and/or consultants as the project should benefit disabled population. * Accommodating the needs of all students, including the students with various disabilities, to offer equal opportunities for quality education must be the principle for training program design. * As addition, the methods and practical tools for barrier-free participation of students with disabilities must be the integral part of each training module’s design; * The training participants must be equipped with the instruments to evaluate the level of accessibility of provided education to ensure the effectiveness of delivered knowledge to the students with disabilities |
|  | **Sub-Component 1.3. Basic Education Conditions in Schools:** The objective of the sub-component is to upgrade education conditions in the most deprived rural schools to a minimum functioning standard. More specifically, through this sub-component rural schools  will be helped to meet basic needs of students for school utilities and furniture.   * The target schools were selected and prioritized based on the following criteria:  1. *the severity of the school deprivation;* 2. *the number of students enrolled;* 3. *the poverty of the community*  * The MER commissioned the preparation of a Manual on Appropriate Solutions for Upgrading Schools. It is to be used to guide the preparation of cost-effective upgrading plans for schools. Also, separate Handbook on maintenance will be developed to include guidelines and norms for communities on maintenance and management of school utilities. * The acquisition of teaching and learning materials was a major success for the Project and one of the best news for the schools. For instance, the number of libraries in rural schools doubled—there are now 30 percent of rural schools with libraries today, as opposed to 15 percent at project start. | While comprehending the objective, the interpretation of “minimum functioning standard” must be clearly described explicating the needs of students with disabilities.   * Target school selection and prioritization criteria must consider the *level of accessibility of education conditions for students with disabilities*. Otherwise, the schools, which do not fall under these 3 selection criteria, might fall out from project’s intervention even though they lack accessible conditions for basic needs for the students with disabilities. * Preparation of both manual and handbook must be based on universal design principle and practice to ensure that school is fully accessible for all students, including students with disabilities. “Cost-effectiveness” approach must not be a factor for not providing necessary accessibility features in the school. * The teaching-learning materials provided to project target schools and libraries must be in accessible format for all users, including students with disabilities. For instance, as necessary, the media and software materials must be equipped with screen readers such as JAWS (Job Access With Speech) for blind or visually impaired people, captioning or CART (Communication Access Real-time Translation) for the Deaf or students with hard hearing. |
| **Component 2: Improve school-community partnerships through:**   * *increasing local participation in addressing problems of school quality through a school-community grants (SCG) program.* | The objective of the School- Community Partnership component is to empower schools and communities to effectively improve the quality of education inrural schools. Schools and local authorities will be encouraged to collaborate in diagnosing problems and in formulating and implementing solutions.   * This component will (i) provide assistance to Local Education Councils (LECs), and county Commissions for Education Innovation and Development (CEIDs); and (ii) fund and manage a School- Community Grants (SCG) Program for the purpose of motivating and assisting communities in implementing local initiatives to improve learning. | * Local Education Councils (LEC) members must have representatives from Disabled Peoples Organizations (DPO) or parents of children with disabilities to ensure the needs and interests of students with disabilities are part of the LEC activities; * School-Community Grants (SCG) should specify the consideration of disability needs in every SCG application as eligibility criteria; * Teacher-parent education approach should be encouraged to develop and support regular interaction between teachers and parents on collaborative efforts for better education outcomes by students with disabilities; * World Health Organization (WHO) authored Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Guidelines should be applied widely. In particular, Education component of the CBR Guidelines should be referred as a source ideas and practical interventions for school-community partnerships. The role of CBR is to work with the education sector to help make education inclusive at all levels, and to facilitate access to education and lifelong learning for people with disabilities (World Health Organization) |
| **Component 3: Strengthen monitoring, evaluation and policy – making capacity through:**   * *increasing the capacity of Ministry of Education and Research (MER) and local authorities to monitor equity issues in education, disseminate information on the performance of schools, and formulate strategies and policies to improve learning.* | The overall objective of this component is to ensure the sustainability of the project by strengthening capacity in leadership and decentralized educational management at the local level and increasing the institutional and analytical capacity at national and local levels for policy analysis, formulation and planning. |  |
|  | The objectives will be attained through:   * establishing the National Education Indicators (NEI); * improving the National Education Database (NED); * preparing a National Assessment of Basic Education (NABE). | * Disability disaggregated data collection and maintenance must be the integral part of NEI. The administrators and all parties involved in education data collection must be informed and educated about the students with disabilities and their education needs. The communication and information products on NEI must be delivered in accessible formats for all, including the persons with disabilities, for more participatory and active feedback collection. * The inclusive education concept and principles must be at the core of NABE. The assessment of entire education system, structures and practices at rural areas must encompass individualized approach to student’s achievements based on individual learning needs, including customized methods, curriculum and settings for learning. |
| **Component 4: Strengthen project management capacity through:**   * *assisting project implementation units;* * *assuring project monitoring and evaluation activities are conducted;* * *developing information, education and communication strategy for increasing awareness of policy and decision makers.* | The objective of this component **is** to provide support to project implementation, including project monitoring and evaluation and to ensure that all stakeholders and the public at large are informed about the project. |  |
|  | The Project Management Unit (PMU) coordinates and oversee the overall project implementation by supporting and monitoring project components at national and local levels through County Project Implementation Units (CPIU) and School Rehabilitation PMU (SR PMU).  The SR PMU will: (i) coordinate the activity of defining and prioritizing the list of schools to be upgraded; (ii) coordinate the distribution of the Manual: (iii) contract the development of the maintenance guidelines and ensure its distribution; (iv) procure design services and upgrading works; (v) monitor the quality control of works; (vi) monitor the consultation process at local level. | All the units and branches in charge for the implementation of the project must go through disability equality trainings to gain basic understandings on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in project activities. The PMU should closely engage with national level DPOs or association of DPOs to consult on disability inclusiveness of the project implementation.  At SR PMU level, a representative of DPO or parents of children with disabilities should be part of project planning and implementation process on a regular basis for consulting purposes.  The teachers of special school for students with disabilities should be engaged as resources teachers and specialists |

1. **Conclusion**

The international development, during the period of Millennium Development Goals (MDG), aimed at solving number of global problems faced in the world. Increasing education and literacy level of population in developing countries was one of the major goals of MDGs. Accordingly, the Rural Education Development (RED) project of World Bank supported the improvement of education of school children in rural Romania. However, the evaluation of efforts towards MDGs proved the needs for more sustained and comprehensive approach to reach the education goal for all. As the inheritance of the MDG, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) have been developed and approved for Post-2015 Development Agenda. One of the SDGs is primarily focus on education which is SDG 4: *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.* The current case study reviewed the RED project from SDG4 perspective, in particular, ensuring that RED targets and benefits the children/students with disabilities as well.

It is worth to consider that additional communication with and information collection from the project workers and other stakeholders, which was not conducted, could contribute more information and even slightly different outcome for this study. The conclusion for this case study involved mostly the review of Rural Education Development (RED) project documents and other rural education and disability related study materials in Romania. It is revealed that the project could be more successful and effective if disability perspective was included into its components. The project goals, objectives and indicators for evaluation do not deliver any indication of targeting the students with disabilities. Overall, disability inclusive education perspective is missed in the project’s approach. It does not deliver any data and information regarding the participation of children with disabilities in this rural education reform project activities. Disability disaggregated data collection and analysis are the missed opportunities of the project. Locally available support services such as support teachers, assistive devices and adapted equipment for learning, communication and mobility, sign language interpretation and adapted transportation of NGOs could be utilized to make the project more effective for children with disabilities. The future similar development projects of World Bank and other development agencies should emphasize the disability inclusion perspective in all components and aspects of the aid delivery, including in its goals, objectives, monitoring indicators, implementation structures and systems as well as budget allocation and human resources development. Real progress for SDG 4 will necessitate substantive change at the national, sub-national, and local levels (Aaron Benavot, 2018)

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