



# **The imperative of inclusion**

**CRS' experience in improving  
educational outcomes through  
changing attitudes and behaviors in  
Southeast Asia**

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# Presentation Outline



- What is Inclusive Education (IE)?
- What are we doing in IE?
- What have we learned?
- Are children learning?
- Conclusions

# Inclusive Education

For CRS:

Inclusive Education recognizes that all children are different and can contribute with these differences to making the school a better place for everyone. It assumes that differences between human beings are normal and it emphasizes diversity.



# CRS' work in IE: Southeast Asia



- Viet Nam: + 15 years
- Laos: 6 years
- Cambodia 2 years
- *Systems strengthening*: working with ministries to develop/implement IE policies;
- Building teachers' and administrators *skills and knowledge* in IE;
- *Strengthening assets* at the community level by (1) providing direct services to CwDs and their families and (2) by supporting community engagement in IE

# CRS' Approach to IE

## **Building Assets**

**CwD:** recognition of ability; recognition of rights; social inclusion; assistive devices;

**Parents:** understanding of role in support and education; skills to rehabilitate CwD; attitudes

**Teacher & Administrators:** skills to manage a class, Individual Education plans, attitudes

## **Key project strategies:**

-Engage the Ministry at all levels

- See parents as drivers of change, at home, in school and in the community

-Use successes to generate wider uptake e.g. parents associations join Disabled People's Organization

## **Strengthening Systems & Structures:**

School infrastructure; Early assessment & school screening systems;

Community support systems and parents' associations: help to/from school; Support to parents; peer support;

Ministry of Education Policy; national teacher training curriculum; coordination of service providers

# What have *we* learned?

1. Quality inclusive education requires a holistic approach and political will

–Focus both in & out of the classroom

–Policy development,  
combined with  
capacity-building  
and direct services

–Coordination across  
stakeholders





# What have *we* learned?



2. Attitudes, values, and knowledge are the foundation to change

# What have *we* learned?



Helping their children to fulfill their true potential



Changing attitudes in the community



Supporting teachers and schools



Advocating for policy and rights

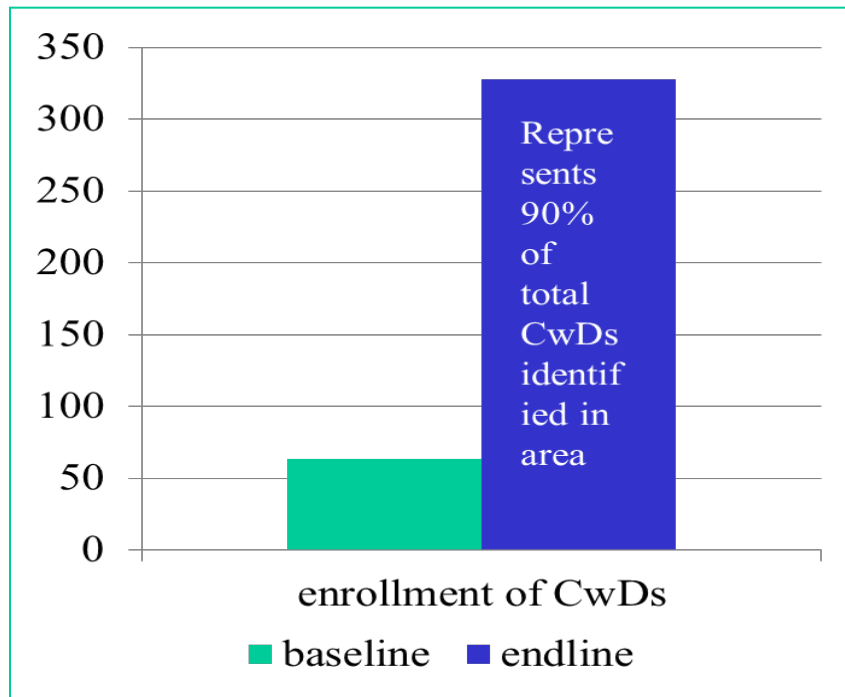
3. Parents are the drivers of change in the community



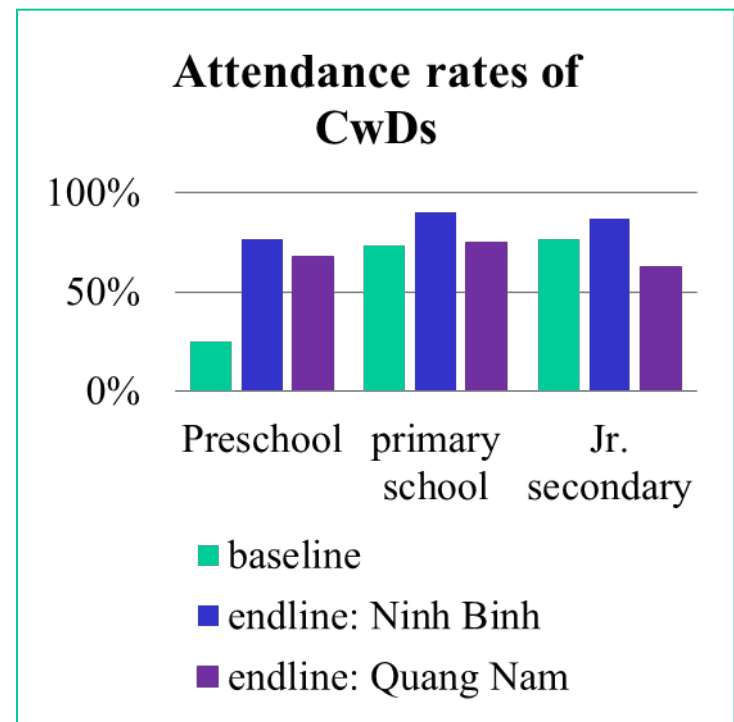
# But are the *children* learning?

- The *right to attend school* is being recognized:
  - In Cambodia, 80% of CwD regularly attend school.

## CAMBODIA



## VIET NAM



# But are the *children* learning?

- *School staff* are increasingly promoting IE:
  - In Lao PDR, at evaluation, 83% of schools had IEPs in place;
  - 90% of observed classrooms showed that teachers were implementing at least some IE strategies and child-centered methodologies – with ALL learners
- *Children are succeeding* in school:
  - In Cambodia, 80% of CwD passed/promoted to the upper grades (18% repeated, 2% dropped out)
  - In Laos, 53% of CwD improved test scores after 1 year
- *Longer-term outlooks* are improving:
  - In VN, 800 youth w/disabilities (40% women) have been trained in VE/IT.
  - Of these, 80% have found employment



# Challenges

- Secondary school still out of reach for most CwDs
- Screening for children with learning disabilities is not yet happening in Laos and Cambodia
- Need for more in-depth gender analysis – Girls with disability are viewed/treated differently than Boys with disability.
- Measuring the impact of IE on other children in the class.

# Conclusion

“All children and young people of the world, with their individual strengths and weaknesses, with their hopes and expectations, have the right to education. It is not our education systems that have a right to certain types of children.”

(B. Lindqvist, UN Special Rapporteur for Persons with Disabilities, 1994)