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Colour key

	International
	National
	District/region
	Local/school

About the author

Richard Rieser is a disabled teacher who taught for 25 years in primary, secondary and further education. He worked as an Advisory Teacher for Inclusion in the London Borough of Hackney. Until 2009 he was the Director of Disability Equality in Education (DEE), an NGO that provided training and resources for inclusion. Richard currently runs World of Inclusion Ltd. He was Chair of the Alliance for Inclusive Education (1990–2002). He is the author of *Disability Equality in the Classroom: A Human Rights Issue*, *Altogether Better*, *Invisible Children*, *Disabling Imagery*, *All Equal All Different*, disability equality in education course books and numerous articles. He has collaborated on several television programmes, including Channel 4's *Count Me In* (2000). *Making It Work: Removing Disability Discrimination* (2002), was a collaboration between DEE and the National Children's Bureau. Richard has produced three DVDs for the UK Department for Education and Science on 'reasonable adjustments'. He produced a DVD, *Developing Inclusive Education in South Africa* (2008). He was a member of Equality 2025, a panel of disabled people who advise the UK Government (2006–2010). He led a project on bringing disability into the school curriculum for the UK Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (2010). He has been on various government advisory committees since 1992 and a member of the SEN Disability Tribunal since 2002.

Internationally, Richard has presented papers and training courses at the International Special Education Congress (ISEC), Birmingham, 1995; the ISEC, Manchester, 2000; the European Disability Forum (EDF), Copenhagen, 2002; the EDF, Athens, 2003; North South Dialogue II, Kerala, India; an empowerment course in Mumbai, India, 2004; Sicily RAI, 2003; Disabled Peoples' International (DPI) Conference, Winnipeg, 2004; North South Dialogue III, New Delhi, 2005; UN, New York, August 2005; Mauritius, 2006; Argentina Inclusion Week, funded by the British Council; DPI 7th World Congress, Seoul, 2007; South Africa, 2007–2008; Saudi Arabia, 2008–2009; Russia, 2007–2008; France, 2008; Geneva, 2008; Dubai, 2009; Spain, 2009–2010; EU, Brussels, 2010; Ukraine, 2010; United Nations, 2010; Papua New Guinea, 2011; Serbia, 2011; Azerbaijan, 2011; Poland, 2011.

Richard represented the UK Disabled People's Council at the 6th, 7th and 8th sessions of the Ad Hoc Committee charged with developing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). He is a Board Member of the European Disability Forum. He made presentations at a meeting of the Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled in Johannesburg, 2007 and at a seminar at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) People's Forum in Kampala, 2007. He was invited by the South African Government on a speaking tour of South Africa in February and March 2008, and produced a training film about good practices on inclusion in South African schools. Richard chaired the UK UN Coalition Campaign to reduce the reservations the UK placed on the UNCRPD.

In September 2010 and 2011 Richard addressed the Conference of States Parties in New York on the implementation of Articles 24 and 32 of the UNCRPD.

Foreword

The Commonwealth member governments and the Commonwealth Secretariat are committed to the achievement of the two education-related Millennium Development Goals of universal primary education for all and the elimination of gender disparities at all levels of education. The Commonwealth Secretariat is therefore striving to ensure that all children, regardless of their gender, age, socio-economic status, disability or ethnicity, have access to quality education. We aim to achieve this by working with Commonwealth governments as trusted partners to attain education of good quality.

This formulation implicitly includes disabled children and students, but is not explicit about those with physical and mental impairment, who for far too long have been ignored, stigmatised, discriminated against, stereotyped and excluded from the education system.

In 2006, the United Nations advanced the development agenda by agreeing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). In 2007, at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Kampala, it was agreed to implement this Convention throughout the Commonwealth. Already more than half the nations of the world have ratified the Convention and 80 per cent have signed it. The task now is to ensure implementation of its provisions. Key among these is the paradigm shift from the old 'medical/charity' approach to a 'rights based/social model' approach, where the barriers in society are tackled, whether they be attitudinal, organisational or environmental, which for far too many years have prevented disabled people thriving and reaching their potential.

In this revised and expanded second edition of *Implementing Inclusive Education: A Commonwealth Guide to Implementing Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, a picture of the future is constructed by critically examining programmes geared towards inclusive education across the Commonwealth and beyond. Article 24 of the UNCRPD requires the development of an inclusive education system at all levels, where children and students with disabilities can be part of their local school alongside their non-disabled peers, with the right support and accommodation to develop academically and socially. It has been necessary to revise and update this publication as more countries have since signed and ratified the Convention. Inclusion of children and students with disabilities is an issue of values and morality. We should engage in restructuring our education systems to make this a reality, as everyone benefits and our societies are stronger and more democratic as a result. The recent World Health Organization *World Report on Disability* showed that 15 per cent of the world's population are disabled – one billion people.

I hope that Ministries of Education in the Commonwealth and beyond will draw on the many examples of promising practice and tools described in this publication to undertake a thorough review of their existing practices to ensure that children and students with disabilities are fully supported in participating in education and in our societies. That is a future where all are valued and achieve their potential, through an education system where all are equal.

I urge governments, international agencies and other key stakeholders to redouble their efforts to prioritise this issue as we learn from each other and explore new ways of working to achieve inclusive education.

Ransford Smith
Deputy Secretary-General
Commonwealth Secretariat
February 2012