



Information gathering template prepared for the Global Education Monitoring Report 2021 - Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia - Inclusion and education: All means all.

Azerbaijan

This profile has been commissioned by NEPC as an input for the 2021 regional report on inclusion and education in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. This version is a working draft and will be subject to further copy-editing. Its content has not been edited nor verified by the GEM Report team. The views and opinions expressed in this paper, including anecdotal evidence from interviews, are those of the interviewees or researchers of this profile and should not be attributed to the Global Education Monitoring Report, to UNESCO or to NEPC. The information in this document was current in June 2020. The profile can be cited with the following reference: “Profile commissioned by NEPC for the Global Education Monitoring Report 2021 - Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia - Inclusion and education: All means all”. For further information, please contact gemreport@unesco.org.

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2021

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Acronyms

ASPU – Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University

BSU – Baku State University

CMAPR - Commission on Minors' Affaires and Protection of their Rights

PWD – Person With Disability

CWLHC – Children With Limited Health Conditions

IDP – Internally Displaced Person

EU – European Union

MOE – Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan

MOH - Ministry of Health of the Republic of Azerbaijan

MOLSP - Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Republic of Azerbaijan

PMPC – Psychological Medical Pedagogical Commission

MASPC - Minor's Affaires and their Social Protection Commission

MIA – Ministry of Internal Affaires

PMPC – Psychological Medical Pedagogical Commission

SCWFCA - State Committee of Woman, Family, Children Affaires

UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund

Introduction

The template for the Profiles was a survey designed to collect information from countries in order to collect structured information to be used as the basis for the GEM Regional Report analysis work.

The survey respondents were specifically requested to not focus exclusively on children with disabilities, but include information on all of the groups considered to be vulnerable to exclusion or at risk of being marginalised, stereotyped or subject to discrimination, including for reasons such as gender, location, poverty, ethnicity, language, beliefs and religion, migration or displacement status, sexual orientation or gender identity expression.

The overall goal for the Profile was that the information provided in relation to each country identifies:

1. challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for the implementation of inclusion in education policies;
2. the ways in which countries monitor inclusion and exclusion in education (at individual and system levels);
3. challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for supporting inclusion in education created by sectors other than education and arrangements needed to co-ordinate work among government sectors, tiers of government and with other stakeholders to overcome overlapping dimensions of exclusion;
4. key policy solutions that are being implemented and key drivers of policy change.

The Profile begins with background information on the people completing the template.


The next section provides a short descriptive overview of the country's system of inclusive education.

This is followed by main sections presenting quantitative and qualitative data linked to each of the seven themes for the report:

- 1.laws and policies;
- 2.governance and finance;
- 3.data;
- 4.curricula, learning materials and assessment;
- 5.teachers and support personnel;
- 6.schools;
- 7.communities, parents and students.

Each section begins with a key guiding question (marked in italic text) that frames the overall information provided.

This is followed by the specific questions on the main issues for the topic that should be answered.



Sections 1 and 2 focus on information relating to legislation and policies.

Section 3 focuses upon available data and the aims and procedures for data collection.

Sections 4 to 7 focus on information relating to policies and policy implementation in practice.

The information provided focuses on compulsory education (i.e. potentially -pre-primary, primary and lower secondary, and possibly upper secondary education). Only specific issues related to inclusion in early childhood education and post-compulsory education were considered when necessary.

Survey reply and respondents

Country: Azerbaijan

Author / Institution:

Elmina Kazimzade, Ulviyya Mikayilova/ Centre for Innovations in Education

Data collection: Mirfaiq Mirheyderli, Aygun Dadasheva

Contributors: Yulia Karimova, independent expert

Farid Suleymanov, Inclusive Education Specialist, EU funded "Ensuring teacher readiness for inclusive education"

Project implemented by "Regional Development" Public Union

Mayis Aliyev – Lawyer, professor of Law Department at Baku State University

Has the information in this profile been discussed with and validated by a government representative?

No / **Yes**

No / **Yes**

If yes, who and what is their professional capacity, role?

- Vafa Yagublu, Head of General Education and Preschool Education department, MOE
- Faiq Mirheydarli, School principal of school included in the pilot project on Inclusive Education
- Lala Kazimova, representative of Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MOLSP)

Which other people have been key informants? What is their professional role?

Leyla Taghiyeva, Project Director, EU funded "Ensuring teacher readiness for inclusive education" Project implemented by "Regional Development" Public Union

- Dr. Rena Ibragimbekova, Gender Education expert
- Alimammad Nuriyev, Head of NGOs Alliance
- Irana Məmmədli, Vice dean of Social Science and Psychology Department, Baku State University

What was the main challenge during the preparation of the profile?

Not all the information and especially data is available publicly

Contacted MoE representatives hesitated to provide necessary information without an official permission

The national legislation doesn't offer a clear-cut conception or definition of vulnerability or related terminology

Social isolation regime limited opportunities for contacting and interviewing necessary informants

Please list the 5 most informative sources on inclusion in education (academic papers, policy reviews, evaluation studies etc.) for the country published since 2015 and provide links to the originals:

1. Accessibility to Education for children with limited health opportunities. Center for Economic & Social Development (CESD). Baku, 2016 (Sağlamlıq imkanları məhdud şəxslərin təhsilə çıxış imkanları: real vəziyyət, beynəlxalq praktika və təkliflər. İqtisadi və Sosial İnkişaf Mərkəzi)

2. Consolidated Second & Third Periodic Reports of the Government of Azerbaijan under Article 33 on the Convention, 2019 http://sosial.gov.az/uploads/images/image_750x_5dea52b22451a.pdf

3. State of Inclusive Education in Azerbaijan (research paper) developed by Institute for Democratic Initiatives. Baku 2018 (Azərbaycanda İnküziv Təhsilin Vəziyyətinə dair Araşdırma sənədi. DTİ) <https://idi-aze.org/az/azerbaycanda-inkluziv-tehsilin-veziyyetine-dair-arasdrma-senedi-metn/>
http://cesd.az/new/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/CESD_EU_Policy_Paper_Education.pdf

4. Titterton, M. & Smart Helen (2019) Improving Inclusion and Access for People with Disability in the Caucasus: The Case of Azerbaijan. Chapter in book on Inclusion, Equity and Access for Individuals with Disabilities. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan

5. The knowledge, attitudes and practices towards the Children with Disabilities In Azerbaijan. MOE & UNICEF report. 2018

6. Mikayilova U., (2019). Inclusive Education Reform(s) in Azerbaijan: An Attempts of Critical Policy Analysis, Azerbaijan Journal of Educational Studies, 2019, #3. <https://journal.edu.az/files/2019/%E2%84%963/Ulviyya%20Mikayilova.pdf>

If internal, non-public or working documents were used, please add a note here.

1. Recommendation report pre-service teacher training (2019) prepared by consultancy team of Project on Teacher readiness for inclusive education. EU funded project led by Regional Development Public Union. (*Available upon request*).

2. Policy review of Inclusive Education in Azerbaijan. Final report (2019) prepared by consultancy team of Project on Teacher readiness for inclusive education. EU funded project led by Regional Development Public Union. (*Available upon request*).

Country system overview

1.1. Provide a brief (maximum 1 page) narrative of the country's compulsory educational system. Specifically, provide information about:

Principles of General Education (the General Education Law, 2019, <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/42543>) (article 3):

3.1.1. humanism – acceptance of national and universal values; prioritizing free development of personality, human rights and freedoms, health and safety, care and respect to environment and humans, tolerance;

3.1.2. equality – ensuring affordability of education, creating equal educational environment for all children, and ensuring their educational rights;

3.1.3. integration – development of general education system through adaptation to progressive international experience;

3.1.4. quality – compliance with existing general education standards, norms, social and economic demands, interests of individuals, society and state;

3.1.5. continuity – continuous transfer of knowledge and experience accumulated in the field of general education to future generations;

3.1.6. flexibility – adequate adaptation of general education system to changes in social and economic area, timely implementation of innovations based on their evaluation;

3.1.7. continuity – ensuring mutual connections between different levels of education based on existing education standards, curricula and plans;

3.1.8. democracy – freedom of worldview based growth and development of learners, public-private partnership in organization of education, increasing autonomy of educational institutions.

On the basis of General Education Law, the main goals of general education in country are (Article 7):

Upbringing citizens and individuals who understand the responsibility for the society, respect national and universal values, national traditions, human rights and freedoms, follow ideas of patriotism, able to make independent decisions, thinking creatively, following healthy life style, has broad world look, high culture and intellect; preparing them to public life and effective work, ensuring their development based on state and nation's ideas.

The Education Law was adopted in 2009, while The General Education Law -in 2019, taking into consideration the social and political changes occurring in the country, education reforms that have been implemented and strategic goals defined in policy documents developed during last few years.

Education system is managed by the Cabinet of Ministries and the Ministry of Education. The Cabinet of Ministries decides the education strategy and supervises implementation of the General Education Law, and the relevant

legislative acts and documents. It also defines state standards for education funding, as well as regulation for scholarship and salary payment.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) is a central body overseeing the education system. It participates in the development and implementation of the state policy for education. The Ministry of Education supervises

4 446 general educational institutions and also 52 HE institutions, 111 vocational institutions, 56 specialized secondary educational institutions and 1803 preschool educational institutions. (The State Statistical Committee. <https://www.stat.gov.az/source/education/>) Under the MoE a number of bodies including the Institute of Education being a main research body in the education, and editorial boards of several scientific journals.

The State Examination Center, established in 1992, is responsible for preparing and conducting school graduation and university admission examinations.

The State provides the following guarantees in the field of general education (Article 5): equal opportunities to every citizen for getting general education without any discrimination based on gender, race, language, religion, political views, ethnicity, social status, health status;. assessment of knowledge, continuing education without discrimination based on gender; guarantees a right of every citizen to get general education for free; guarantees identification of talented children, their development and continuous education.

According to the General Education Law (2019, <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/42543>) (article 11) a structure of general education includes the following General educational institutions (EIs): all general EIs, other entities providing general educational services, information centers related to activities of general EIs, sport, health and leisure camps, general educational authorities and the entities affiliated to them (11.1.1.); and NGOs, associations and societies, scientific and methodological councils operating in the field of general education (11.1.2.).

General education system operates at the following levels (Article 11.2):

11.2.1. preschool education level (the age of 5 - necessary school readiness which is provided at either preschool institutions or general schools);

11.2.2. primary education (I-IV grades);

11.2.3. basic secondary education (V-IX grades);

11.2.4. full secondary education (X-XI grades).

a. the different types of schools, institutions and educational provision within the system and the age range / ISCED levels of learners they cater for

According to the General Education Law (article 12) general EIs in Azerbaijan can be public, municipal or private (12.3). There are the following types of general educational institutions: (12.14)

ISCED 1: Primary Education-ages 6–9 (primary general schools) (12.14.1.);

ISCED 2: Lower Secondary education -ages 10-14 (basic general schools) (12.14.2.);

ISCED 3: Upper Secondary Education-ages 15-16 (full secondary schools) (12.14.3.);

ISCED 2&3: Lower and Upper Secondary Education-ages 10-16 (lyceums) (12.14.4.), gimnaziya (12.14.5.), ISCED 1,2&3: Primary, Lower and Upper Secondary Education-ages 6-16 (general education boarding (internat) schools (12.14.6.), integrated (for typical children and children with limited health conditions) boarding schools (12.14.7.), integrated general education schools (12.14.8.), special schools (12.14.9.), special boarding schools; special boarding schools (12.14.10.), integrative boarding gimnaziya (12.14.11.), secondary boarding school for children deprived from parenting care 12.14.12.), other schools (12.14.13.).

In General EIs structures of political parties and religious entities can not be created (12.11.).

In General EIs pupils are holding special uniforms (12.13.).

b.the different authorities responsible for different types of provision etc.

- Ministry of Education and regional departments –responsible for provision of general education
- Executive Committees -responsible for supervision of preschool EIs including school readiness programs delivered by these institutions.

c.any major external support programmes provided in the past 5 years e.g. bilateral - GIZ (German Society for International Cooperation) and USAID; or multi-lateral e.g. UNICEF, European Union, ADB (Asian Development Bank).

- 1. Enabling Civil Society to Play a Greater Role in Advancing Socio-Economic Rights of Vulnerable Populations.**
UNDP project 2016-2019 with total budget \$2 343 434, carried out by **United Nations Development Program** The overall objective of the project is to increase the role of the civil society in advancing the socio-economic rights of vulnerable populations. The main accomplishments related to inclusive education were the followings: the capacity and technical base of Regional Children Mental Health Department of Shirvan City was enhanced to increase access of disadvantaged children and youth and their families to inclusive social services, providing support for more than 100,000 disadvantaged children and youth from Shirvan and surrounding regions. A public awareness campaign was conducted to present and advocate the findings of the researches on inclusive education in regional center Mingechevir.
- 2. Program on Enabling civil society to play a greater role in promoting socio-economic rights of vulnerable populations** implemented over 2016-2018. The project had a budget of EUR 2 million, funded by the EU, and benefitted from the organisational support of UNDP. The overall aim of the program was to support the development of a vibrant civil society advocating for and working on social inclusion, equality and human rights advancement of vulnerable groups. To achieve this, 12 local CSOs acted as Implementing Partners of the program.
- 3. Promotion of Inclusive Education through Traditional Arts. A three-year project- 2019-2021 with a total budget of \$742 091, carried out by the European Union, the United Nations Development Program and the Center for Traditional Art of the Icherisheher Administration.** The goal of the project is to expand access to inclusive professional programs for children and youth with disabilities, taking into account their development needs. Within the framework of the project, mixed youth groups will have the opportunity to acquire professional

skills in the field of arts and crafts. The project aims to use the experience of inclusive education both locally and internationally.

4. **Expanding inclusive quality education for children with disabilities in Azerbaijan.** The EU co-funded 2018-2020 project with budget EUR 527 993 (90% of total budget contributed by EU), carried out by Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Azerbaijan with UNICEF. The overall objective of the action is to create an environment in which there will be an increased access to quality education for children with disabilities in regular schools across the country, while simultaneously addressing public misperceptions and attitudes that create barriers to inclusion of children with disabilities in society. Since 2018 nine inclusive education resource centres were established in existing schools in the seven districts of the country, namely Baku, Sumgayit, Ganja, Guba, Shaki, Agjabadi and Gazakh. Resource centers are intended to provide professional support to local teachers, school principals and parents, including in terms of education materials and equipment. Among the recent EU-funded activities, an Inclusive Education Centre was opened at the Baku Pedagogical University in 2019.
5. **Ensuring teachers readiness for Inclusive Education.** The EU co-funded 2018-2020 project with budget EUR 629 770 (85% of total budget contributed by EU), carried out by Regional Development Public Union, Local Governance Assistance Public Union and Research of Social Rights Public Union. The main objectives of the project are to develop and modernize teacher training curricula, textbooks, courses and educational materials; to improve skills and knowledge of primary education teachers and other professions in support of children with disabilities; to ensure resource availability for primary education teachers and other support staff; and to improve enabling environment, legal framework and policies for the inclusive education system. So far the following results were achieved: comprehensive package of teacher development programs on inclusive education, 18 trainers have been trained on inclusive education teacher training programs and 12 pre-service training sessions with participation of 236 teachers has been organized at Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University and its regional branches. Also comprehensive legislative and policy analysis on inclusive education has been conducted and 6 Inclusive Education Centers have been established within Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University to serve as regional teacher development and awareness raising hubs. A working group on integrating teacher development program on inclusive education into the curriculum of ASPU has been established and is functional.

1.2. Are there specific features of the compulsory education system that impact on inclusion that should be kept in mind when reading the country response?

Area	Yes/No	Description of the feature
Early tracking of learners into a particular educational pathway	Yes	Early tracking for children with disabilities is conducted by psychological-medical –pedagogical commissions (PMPC) with the purpose of identifying type of educational provision (special, regular, inclusive, home-based). They are operating in each administrative unit (cities and rayons).

		<p>According to the Statutes of PMPC (The Cabinet of Ministries of AR, order #74, Apr 29, 2002)</p> <p>http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/1530</p> <p>“ It was created with the purpose to conduct diagnostics of physical, intellectual and/or physic delays at children with limited health conditions, to make a decision on their enrollment to special education based on that diagnostics, provide relevant advising to parents/legal guardians, consider any controversial issues”</p>
‘Double-shift’ patterns to the school day (i.e. learners attend fir either a morning or afternoon session)	No	<p>There are 4395 general public schools (State Statistics Committee, 2018/2019. https://www.stat.gov.az/source/education/). In 3040 schools (69.2% of schools) lessons are conducted in one shift, while in 1355 schools (30.8% of schools)-in two or three shifts. 84.7% of pupils being educated in general public schools attend morning sessions while 15.3% of pupils attend afternoon sessions.</p>
Grade retention	Yes	<p>In 2011 the Cabinet of Ministries approved an exemplary School Charter (Order #5, Jan 13, 2011. https://edu.gov.az/az/pdf/303/3178) which is recommended to general public schools for developing their own school charters. The exemplary School Charter states the following: “At the level of primary school grade retention of pupils because of poor academic performance. Those pupils are provided with access to other educational programs based on a decision of PMPC (Article 4.16.). The only reason for a grade retention of primary school pupils is a long lasting illness, or unattendance of school (Article 4.17).</p> <p>According to one of the leading national education portals (AzTehsil.com, https://aztehsil.com/news/10246-sinifde-qalmaq-gorxusu-bu-hansi-hallarda-mumkundur.html), the Minister of Education stated at the annual education conference that in 2018-2019 school year more than 4000 pupils were exposed to grade retention. Considering that 1543089 pupils were educated in general public schools in 2018-2019 school year, it comprises 0.26% of the total general public school pupil population. The Minister also stated that according to grade retention rules, pupils are exposed to grade retention if they do not attend for a long</p>

		<p>time lessons on 4 and more subjects. If the number of unattended subjects is less than 4, pupils may be given summer assignments. One of leading experts informed the site that poor academic performance on 4 and more subjects is also a reason for grade retention. He told that pupils of 5th, 7th and 9th grade also can be exposed to grade retention.</p> <p>However, there is a window of opportunities. According to the Exemplary School Charter, pupils who could not attend classes due to some reasons, can be self-educated, and can be provided with a state certificate if they pass graduation examinations successfully (Article 3.10.). Also</p>
Multiple languages of instruction	No	<p>In 2011 the Cabinet of Ministries approved an exemplary School Charter (Order #5, Jan 13, 2011. https://edu.gov.az/az/pdf/303/3178) which is recommended to general public schools for developing their own school charters. The exemplary School Charter states the following: “Language of instruction in general schools is Azerbaijani language (article 1.10)” and “In accordance with desires of citizens and founders, instruction in general schools can be conducted in different languages under condition of meeting state general education standards, except Azerbaijani language, Azerbaijani literature, Azerbaijani History, Azerbaijani Geography subjects (article 1.11)”. The Exemplary Charter also states the following: ““Every year in September schools can establish school readiness classes for children at the age of 5 representing small peoples in order to eliminate difficulties related to language of instruction”.</p>
Policies on access to compulsory education in local schools	Yes	<p>In 2011 the Cabinet of Ministries approved an exemplary School Charter (Order #5, Jan 13, 2011. https://edu.gov.az/az/pdf/303/3178) which is recommended to general public schools for developing their own school charters. Article 2.4 of the Exemplary Charter states the following: “Every year in September schools can establish school readiness classes for children at the age of 5 and having normal intellectual and physical development”.</p>

		<p>The Exemplary School Charter also states that pupils are accepted to school under provision of birth and health certificates (Article 4.5)</p> <p>Children having limited health conditions indicated in the list of health limitations approved by the Cabinet of Ministries in 2002 (Order #77, May 10) can be provided with home education provided in accordance with special education plan (Article 3.9)</p> <p>The Article 16 on admittance of persons with limited health conditions to educational institutions it is stated that persons with limited health conditions can be accepted to general EIs based on a decision of psychological-medical-pedagogical commission (PMPC) and medical expert commission.</p> <p>A window of opportunities: according to the Exemplary School Charter pupils who did not attend many lessons due to various reasons, can be entitled to individual education (Article 3.8.).</p> <p>Also the requirements and conditions requested for Managing Individual Education were presented in the decree of MOE issued in 2014.</p> <p>http://edu.gov.az/upload/file/emre-elave/2014/645/ferdi-teskili-haqqinda-qaydalar-645-sayli-emre-elave.pdf</p>
<p><i>Policies of economic & ICT provision in rural and urban areas</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Schools located in capital are better equipped and employ the best teachers that creates disparity in quality education provision. Baku, the country's capital, generated 71.8% of national output and received 74.5% of total capital investments in 2016. Regions outside Baku represented 78% of the population and 62% of businesses but received only 17% of bank lending. Internet access in urban areas is also 10 percentage points higher than in rural areas. Urbanization has increased because of better job opportunities in cities, particularly in Baku, posing a decreasing the number of students in rural areas.</p> <p>This economic disbalance creates a disparity in quality of inclusive education at urban and rural levels</p> <p>https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/510266/cps-aze-2019-2023.pdf</p>

		<p>One of expected outcomes of the State Program on Development of Inclusive Education of Persons with Limited Health Conditions for 2018–2024 (Approved by President of AR on Dec 14,2017. http://baku.edu.gov.az/upload/file/inkluziv-tehsil-dovlet-proqrami-2018-2024.pdf) (Article 4.0.) infrastructure at all levels of education must be accessible for persons with limited health conditions (4.0.1.); all persons with limited health conditions will get a wider access to information through introducing information technologies (4.0.2.) (http://baku.edu.gov.az/upload/file/inkluziv-tehsil-dovlet-proqrami-2018-2024.pdf)</p>
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1.3. In the country's system which groups are considered to be vulnerable to exclusion from education? Who has identified these groups as being vulnerable to exclusion?

The Law on social protection of children who lost their parents or whose parents were deprived from parenting skills (<http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/3859>) defines several categories of children needed for special social protection and entitled to preferences in the field of general education:

- Children who lost their parents-children under age of 18 whose both parents died;
- Children deprived from parenting care: both parents are not known; parents were deprived from parenting rights or their rights were limited; parents disappeared (were lost); parents are not capable for being employed; parents who are in custody, refused from a child, refused to take a child from social institutions;
- Also children under the age of 18 if one parent died, but another parent has a disability of the 1st or 2nd category are also considered as being deprived from parenting care;
- Girls in families in conservative families, especially living in rural areas (personal view);
- Children from extremely low-income families who are obliged to work (personal view);
- Children from families being refugees or internally displaced persons (personal view)

1.4. Please provide a brief (maximum 1 page) narrative overview of the historical development of inclusion of vulnerable groups in education in the country.

Government statistics approximate that about 5.6% of the population in Azerbaijan has a disability while 2.6% of children have a disability (UNICEF, 2017) – figures which are below international estimates (WHO and World Bank, 2011). While official estimates are available, the government, in the recent Voluntary National Review of Sustainable Development Goals, acknowledges that gaps exist in national data collection including information regarding disability (Republic of Azerbaijan, 2017). UNICEF (2012) indicates that over a million children with disabilities are not included in official data sets within the CEE/CIS region. This may be a consequence of various factors such as medically-oriented

definitions and poor understanding of disability, inefficient data collection systems, and negative attitudes stigma towards disability (Grimes, Stevens, & Dela Cruz, 2018).

In the academic year 2015-2016, '6,275 children with disabilities were enrolled in special schools (3,148), boarding schools (2,468) and in classes for children with disabilities in general education schools (659)' (State Statistical Committee, 2017). According to UNICEF (2017), many children with disabilities who are integrated in regular schools are not included in the mainstream classrooms and are taught in separate classrooms using a special curriculum. The inflexible and inaccessible curriculum is a barrier for children with disabilities to fully participate in mainstream settings (Grimes et al, 2018).

Definitions of inclusive education are based on a medical perspective and existing national policy frameworks related to inclusive education contain stipulations which may further exclude children from mainstream education (Grimes et al, 2018). For example, the Constitution provides for the promotion of the right of all children to education (article 42) and protection of their rights and liberties (article 26). However, article 25 states that 'Persons with impaired health are entitled to all rights and carry all duties vested by this constitution, except in cases when enjoyment of rights and performance of duties is impeded on their limited abilities' (Republic of Azerbaijan, 1995). This can serve as a systemic barrier to children from diverse backgrounds accessing inclusive education and other government support services.

Inclusive Education is a new concept in Azerbaijan as demonstrated in prevailing models of education provision for children with disabilities. The Education Law (Republic of Azerbaijan, 2009) promotes the provision of equal educational opportunities for all children. It is not explicit however that education should be offered in mainstream settings and the law supports the use of special curricula for children with 'limited health.' In the same manner, the Law on Education (Special Education) of Persons with Disabilities (2001) perpetuates an integration model wherein children are allowed to attend regular schools but are taught separately using a special curriculum (UNICEF, 2017).

The Law on the Prevention of Disability, Rehabilitation of Invalids and their Social Protection (Republic of Azerbaijan, 1997) ensures they are 'entitled to the full scale socio-economic, political, private rights and freedoms and prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability.' Article 15 ensures that children with disabilities can be educated through home-based or school-based settings. The quality of home-based education for children with disabilities is poor (UNICEF & CIE, 2008).

Azerbaijan aims to ensure the rights of children to inclusive and quality education through international and national frameworks. Signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006), the country, especially in the recent years, has been continuously advancing its efforts towards fulfilling these commitments.

The Second State Programme on Inclusive Education 2018-2024 (Republic of Azerbaijan, 2017) was enacted to provide the country's strategic direction in inclusive education. The Programme aims to reform existing legal frameworks in alignment with international conventions, establish structures and processes that support inclusion, strengthen capacity of teachers and other relevant stakeholders, provide facilities and resources, advocate for inclusive education among stakeholders and enhance monitoring mechanisms for IE implementation (Republic of Azerbaijan, 2017).

In July 2018, the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disability was passed to guarantee that the core principles of inclusivity are enabled in the system. While it ensures that general education and vocational training are available for persons with disabilities organised either in 'special or inclusive education,' the policy still supports segregatory models such as 'home education, individual or remote education programmes' in cases where it is difficult to provide special conditions for children with disabilities (Republic of Azerbaijan, 2018).

Significant progress has been made in the country and there is an ongoing momentum towards reforming the system towards full inclusion as evidenced by recent laws and programmes. However, a coherent legislative framework compliant with the principles of the General Comment No. 4 to the UNCRPD is absent in the country at present (Grimes et al., 2018). Segregation and exclusion from the general education system remains to be supported in various national policies. Current legislations related to inclusive education must be comprehensively reviewed and harmonized with internationally accepted standards.

(Reference: Policy Review on Inclusive Education in Azerbaijan, Final Report attached)

In Azerbaijan for a long time, disability was treated primarily as a social welfare issue, otherwise known as the 'medical model of disability'. This reflected the widely held belief that people with disabilities needed care and assistance, being unable and incapable of living their own lives. The people with disabilities were seen as objects of social welfare and not as subjects in their own right, let alone entitled to the full enjoyment of the rights to work, education, health and other basic human rights.

First Inclusive Education Policy cycle. From 2003 to 2011, Azerbaijan heavily invested in inclusive education reform in terms of ensuring technical assistance, establishing partnerships, strengthening human capacity, and allocating financial and administrative resources. The reform efforts were intense due to efforts led by multiple governmental and non-governmental players such as Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, World Vision Azerbaijan, Early Childhood Program Open Society Foundation, UNICEF, and the Center for Innovations in Education and other NGOs. However, despite the efforts of these actors, the reform had a limited impact upon the national education policy and in achieving the main goal of inclusive education: to allow all children with special needs the opportunity to attend any regular school within their community. The first cycle of inclusive education reform in Azerbaijan was not aimed to resolve the problem of segregated education of CWD but rather to bring an issue of inclusive education to the national educational landscape. The justification for the reform could be identified not as inclusive vs. segregated education for CWD, but rather segregated education with added inclusive education component.

Second Inclusive Education Policy cycle. After a new Minister of Education was appointed in 2013, a new inclusive education policy cycle started with adoption of the National Strategy for Educational Development in 2013 (President Office, 2013). The Strategy listed several strategic activities related to inclusive education such as "preparation of development and inclusive education programs for children with special needs;...development of inclusive education methodology; ...implementation of optimal inclusive education models; ...creating universal regional advising centers

providing consultancy on... issues related to education and development...of children with special needs”(President Office, 2013, pp. 6-7).

Within the second cycle an inclusive education pilot project has been initiated in two regular schools with donor funding and the assistance of UNICEF. It seems the new policy cycle also began with an incremental approach, however, the advantage of the new cycle is that it started in the context of positive attitudinal changes generated by pilot projects undertaken in the previous cycle. The concept of inclusive education has been already accepted by governmental bodies, civil society organizations and particularly by school communities and society at large.

Third Inclusive Education Policy cycle. Since 2018 significant changes in previously adopted laws might be considered as a sign of a shift from medical model to social model at policy language. In 2019 in laws on Children’s Rights and Educaiton and other laws related to social protection of children with disabilities the medical terms were replaced by terms highlighting the educational needs of children and person development. While the definitions were revised and adopted there is challenge with a whole-society approach to inclusive education.

Although there is still a great need for state inter-sectoral efforts in partnership with international donors and local communities to overcome the infrastructure barriers to inclusive education such as distance to health and education facilities, physical access difficulties and poverty.

Another important aspect of inclusive education movement is that it is still generally understood as inclusion of persons with disabilities or limited health conditions disregarding other categories of children.

UNICEF Azerbaijan (<https://www.unicef.org/azerbaijan/inclusive-education>) identified the following challenges towards inclusive education

- The Government of Azerbaijan is committed to supporting the rights of children with disabilities through inclusive education, but there remain challenges to delivering on that commitment including:
 - Lack of legislation and policies that ensure students with disabilities can access and participate in education on the same basis as students without disabilities
 - Schools lacking physical access for children with disabilities
 - Teachers lacking experience in working with children with disabilities, as well as the necessary knowledge to use assistive technologies in the classroom
 - Misinformed attitudes and long-held social norms that keep children with disabilities in isolation

Section 1: Laws and Policies

What is the framework of legislation, policy and guidelines for supporting the development of an inclusive education system?

1.5. Have international/UN conventions/declarations to protect the rights of groups who are potentially vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion been integrated into national and/or regional law?

Convention/declaration on	Law	Comments
Child rights (UNCRC)	<p>Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan</p> <p>Law on Child's Right of The Republic Of</p>	<p>On March 18, 2009, as a result of the referendum carried out for making amendments and changes into the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the norms which are significant for provision of human rights, including children's rights, were incorporated therein. Therefore, important provisions on state protection of children without parents or guardians and children deprived of parental care; involvement of children in works that may cause threat to their lives, health, or morality; prohibition of recruitment of children under the age of 15; and the state supervision of implementation of children's rights were incorporated into Article 17 of the Constitution.</p> <p>Article 25 of the Constitution, persons with disabilities have all the rights and duties set forth in the Constitution, except for the rights and obligations that are difficult to implement due to their limited ability.</p> <p>According to the Article 42 Every citizen has the right to education; The state guarantees free obligatory secondary education.</p> <p>Article 42 also states that education policy in Azerbaijan is under the control of the state.</p> <p>The preamble of the law states:</p> <p>This Law defines the rights and freedoms of children in the Republic of Azerbaijan in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other international law.</p>

	Azerbaijan (May 19, 1998)	Article 35 of the Law on Children’s Rights provides for the protection of children with mental and physical disabilities through reduced or free medical or psychological aid, social and psychological rehabilitation, education, labour, and prevention measures.
Children Rights*	Law on social protection of the children who lost parents and deprived of parent guardianship Adopted, 1999 Amended, 2019	This Law determines content, actions of the state providing for social protection of the children who lost parents and the faces deprived of parent guardianship, and also carried to them up to 23 years, governs the relations arising in connection with provision and implementation of this providing. The term “upgrading, medical institutions, social protection institutions or other similar institutions” was replaced by the term “social service institutions” (2019)
Disability (UNCPRD)	The Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On education (special education) of persons with limited health opportunities”, adopted in 2001 Azerbaijan State Programme on Inclusive Education, 2017 The Law of Republic of Azerbaijan on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (May 31, 2018)	To enshrine education and protect the rights of disabled people. The UNCPRD definition of inclusive education was endorsed in the Azerbaijan State Programme on Inclusive Education. Basically, the Law encompasses concepts, such as reasonable accommodation, universal design etc., envisaged in UNCPRD. This law promotes inclusive education but is also contradictory in that at the same time supports ‘integration’ of persons with disabilities and still advocates special education in delivering vocational training of persons with disabilities. (Reference: Policy Review on Inclusive Education in Azerbaijan, and Final Report attached)
1.Disability (UNCPRD)	2.Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan	This Law according to <u>Item 1 of part 1 of article 94</u> of the Constitution of the Azerbaijan Republic determines bases of state policy concerning persons with disability and children with limited health opportunities. The

	<p>About the rights of persons with disability</p> <p>3.Amended on December 2019</p> <p>The Law On Television and Radio Broadcasting (2002)</p>	<p>main functions are the followings: to determines tasks of the state in the field of protection of rights, regulates elimination of the risks promoting disability, liquidation of all forms of discrimination on the basis of disability, rehabilitation of persons with disability, their full participation in life of society and creation of conditions for their social integration, active participation in decision making on the strategy and programs concerning them, complete and equal enjoyment of the rights and freedoms of persons with disability and also the relations arising in the sphere of protection of their honor and advantage.</p> <p>For example, Articles 34 and 36 provide for adjustment of residencies of PWD and CWD to be equipped with special communication lines if necessary and eligibility for telecommunications allowances for PWD and CWD.</p> <p>In order to ensure information accessibility via media Television and Radio Broadcasting provide for broadcasting of programs of education, training and information for people with hearing impairments.</p>
<p>Gender (Convention on discrimination against women CEDAW)</p>	<p>Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on State Guarantees of Equal Rights for Women and Men (2006)</p>	<p>The 21-article Law aims to eliminate all forms of gender-based discrimination and ensure gender equality in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres</p>

Ethnicity or language (UN Declaration on Rights of persons belonging to National, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities)	The Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Education Approved, 2009 Amended, 2019	Education in general schools of the country is also offered in Russian and Georgian languages along with the Azerbaijani languages.
Other (e.g. Rights of indigenous people)		

4.2 Provide an overview of general education legislation impacting on the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups:

Name and link	Year and status (enacted, under preparation etc.)	Description of key content
<p>Law on Education of The Republic of Azerbaijan 2009 (Amended in 2018)</p> <p>http://www.e-ganun.az/alpidata/framework/data/18/c f 18343.htm</p>	<p>Approved 2009</p> <p>Amended 2018</p> <p>Enacted, June 19, 2009</p>	<p>The Law was amended with additional provision for education of children with limited health conditions (29.0.41.): they can be admitted to regular schools as well to be educated in inclusive classrooms as a duty of the State.</p> <p>In line with the State Program on Inclusive Education, it is recommended that the Law on Education be amended to ensure that persons with disabilities (PWD) are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that CWD are not excluded from free and compulsory kindergarten, primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability, in line with Article 2(a) of the CRPD.</p> <p>Preamble of the law</p> <p>This Law defines the basic principles of state policy and general conditions for regulating educational activities, ensuring the right of citizens to study, as envisaged in the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, plays a key role in the adoption of relevant laws and other regulatory legal acts on separate stages of education.</p> <p>Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan is a strategically important priority, reflecting the interests of citizens, society and the state, both secular and uninterrupted.</p>

		Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan is based on international human rights conventions and other international treaties ratified by the Republic of Azerbaijan, developing and integrating into the world education system based on the priority of national-moral and universal values in education.
General Education Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/42543	Enacted, March 29, 2019	Preamble of the law General education in the Republic of Azerbaijan is based on the Law on Education, international human rights conventions and other international treaties to which the Republic of Azerbaijan is a party, develops integrating into the world education system based on the priority of the values of the Azerbaijani people and universal values in the field of education.
The Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Pre-school Education http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/35791	Enacted, April 14, 2017	Preamble of the law This Law defines the principles of state policy in the field of providing pre-school education in the Republic of Azerbaijan, the organizational and legal and economic basis of preschool education in accordance with paragraph 1 of Article 94 of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
Law on Education (special education) for Children with Limited Health Opportunities http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/4353	Approved 2001	

4.3 Provide an overview of education policy or guidelines impacting on inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups:

Name and link	Year and status (enacted, under preparation etc.)	Description of key content
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<p>State Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan</p> <p>http://www.e-ganun.az/framework/27274</p>	<p>Enacted, October 24, 2013</p>	<p>The Strategy is the only policy, through the aim to help improve raise educational quality that demonstrates some alignment with GC4. Particularly, the State Strategy identified modernization of human resources in the field of education as one of the strategic objectives. It aims to create competent educators that will ‘apply innovative training methods and promote effective learning content, and include inclusive training for those who need to improve the professionalism of the learners, build new systems for evaluating students’ achievements, identify the talent of learners and develop inclusive educational programs for children with limited health conditions’.</p> <p>(Reference: Policy Review on Inclusive Education)</p>
<p>The State Programme on Development of Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities in 2018-2024</p> <p>http://www.e-ganun.az/alpidata/framework/data/37/f_37269.htm</p>	<p>Enacted, December 14, 2017</p>	<p>Duties of the State Program:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Taking measures to adapt educational institutions and education programs to the needs of persons with disabilities; 2.Developing in-service and pre-service teacher training programs for education of persons with disabilities; 3.Developing a legal framework to ensure the right to inclusive education in all levels of education for persons with disabilities; 4.Establishing a database of persons with disabilities involved in inclusive (integrative) education; 5.Conducting awareness-raising campaigns together with relevant government agencies to highlight the importance of social integration and education of persons with disabilities.
<p>Social protection of Orphans and Children deprived from parental care</p> <p>http://www.e-ganun.az/framework/3859</p>		<p>The Law (Article 5) lists the state guarantees for education for children without parents or were deprived from parenting care out of state budget, provision of twice higher stipends, full salary during the internship, allowances for purchasing textbooks, learning materials and supplies, their medical treatment; freeing from transportation costs (except taxi) for reaching homes and</p>

		Eis including vacation time; provided with clothes and shoes for all seasons, one time allowance twice higher than average monthly salary after they graduate from higher and vocational educational institutions.
State Strategy on Development of Social Services in Azerbaijan 2020-2026 http://sosial.gov.az/uploads/images/image_750x_5d2c2a78da75f.pdf	Under public discussion	This strategy aimed modernization of social services provided to vulnerable groups in order to ensure long-term quality social protection of population. One of the key strategy dimensions is to prevent children from admission to special institutions, ensure their development in the family or alternative care services provision (Art. 4.5)

4.4 Please describe any specific plans and strategies designed to support inclusion in education (e.g. national strategy on migrant learners):

Name and link	Year and status (approved, under preparation etc.)	Description of the focus
State program for the placement of children living in state-owned child institutions in families (deinstitutionalization) and alternative care in the Republic of Azerbaijan (2006-2015) https://edu.gov.az/en/page/402/5251	Approved, 2006	The main objective of the Program was to replace children living in the state-owned child institutions, organize alternative care mechanisms and ensure its rational use by recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding enshrined in the United Nations

		Convention on the Rights of the Child.
<p>National Action Plan on defense of rights of persons with disabilities (2014-2018)</p> <p>http://www.udpo.az/read.php?lang=1&content=1873</p>	Approved 2014	<p>Was aimed to improve a legislation related to persons with disabilities; independent living; employing their intellectual, physical, social and vocational skills; full access to information and its use; equal rights to get education and fulfill their potential; get support for their employment, vocational education, expanding their employment opportunities; ensure accessibility of physical infrastructure; equal access to medical services, including early intervention and diagnostics; equal opportunities for social protection, social services; ensure their full participation at local, regional, national and international levels in social, and political activities, etc.</p>
<p>The State Program for the Development of Inclusive Education for the Persons with Disabilities 2018-2024</p> <p>http://www.e-ganun.az/alpdata/framework/data/37/f_37269.htm</p>	Approved 2017	<p>This documents sets out the strategic direction the national government, in collaboration with key local and international development organisations will undertake to ensure the elimination of</p>

		<p>barriers for persons with disabilities to full and meaningful participation in education. The Program aims to reform existing legal frameworks in alignment with international conventions, establish structures and processes that support inclusion, strengthen capacity of teachers and other relevant stakeholders, provide facilities and resources, advocate for inclusive education among stakeholders and enhance monitoring mechanisms for IE implementation (Republic of Azerbaijan, 2017).</p>
<p>Law on Social protection of Internally displaced people https://www.udpo.az/read.php?lang=1&content=1039</p>	<p>Approved 1999</p>	<p><i>To provide preschool and secondary education services for children from IDP families near by refugee camps and IDP settlements. (Art 11)</i></p>
<p>Family Code of Azerbaijan http://gender-az.org/index_en.shtml?id_doc=93</p>	<p>Approved 1999 Amended 2001</p>	<p>The Family Code of Azerbaijan recognises a number of important child rights: for example, the child’s right to (i) reside and be reared by his/her family, (ii) associate with his/her parents and other family members/relations, (iii) be protected”. In addition, Article 64 of the Family Code states that “parents can be deprived from parental rights</p>

		if they abuse of parental rights”.
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4.5 Is there a definition of inclusion in education?

No No information available Yes

If yes, please provide the definition and give the official source:

If no, please give further information:

There are three official definitions of inclusive education, defined in two laws and the state program, which slightly differ from each other:

1. Inclusive education is a joint education of persons with disabilities with others in educational institutions (The Law of Republic of Azerbaijan on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (May 31, 2018))
2. inclusive education – involving children with disabilities in the general education institution together with healthy students through creating special conditions and special teaching (General Education Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan, March 29, 2019)
3. Inclusive education is the involvement of children in a school with their peers, regardless of physical, mental, intellectual and other characteristics (State Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic Azerbaijan, October 24, 2013)

4.6 Is there a definition of vulnerable groups?

No No information available Yes

If yes, please provide the definition and give the official source:

If no, please give further information:

A person in need of social assistance and protection, with limited life activity as a result of various mental, spiritual, physical defects and diseases that cause the violation of the overall development of the body

(A Law of Republic of Azerbaijan on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities, 1992 Art 2)

4.7 Is there a definition of special educational needs?

No No information available Yes

If yes, please provide the definition and give the official source:

If no, please give further information:

The Law on Special Education (2001)

The law on education of people with disabilities (Special Education Law) enacted in 2001 defines special education as type of pre-school, primary and vocational education of people with disabilities by means of creation of special conditions. Special conditions refer to the conditions created for people with disabilities to receive pedagogical-psychological, medical, social and other services.

4.10 Please provide information on any future developments planned for inclusion in education.

“The State Programme on Development of Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities in 2018-2024”, December 14, 2017, envisages development of inclusive education through fulfilling the following duties:

1. Taking measures to adapt educational institutions and education programs to the needs of persons with disabilities;

2. Developing in-service and pre-service teacher training programs for education of persons with disabilities;
3. Developing a legal framework to ensure the right to inclusive education in all levels of education for persons with disabilities;
4. Establishing a database of persons with disabilities involved in inclusive (integrative) education;
5. Conducting awareness-raising campaigns together with relevant government agencies to highlight the importance of social integration and education of persons with disabilities.

4.9 Please provide information on any reports, evaluations and/or reviews of legislation and/or policy relating to inclusion in education, since 2015. This could include official and parallel reports on UNCRPD etc.

- State of Inclusive Education In Azerbaijan (research paper) developed by institute for Democratic Initiatives. Baku 2018. (Azərbaycanda inklüziv təhsilin vəziyyətinə dair araşdırma sənədi
- Titterton, M. & Smart Helen (2019) Improving Inclusion and Access for People with Disability in the Caucasus: The Case of Azerbaijan. Chapter in book on Inclusion, Equity and Access for Individuals with Disabilities. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan
- Policy review of Inclusive Education in Azerbaijan. Final report (2019) prepared by consultancy team of Project on Teacher readiness for inclusive education. EU funded project led by Regional Development Public Union.

4.10 What are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hindrances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to laws and policies in the country?

Challenges

- Existing legislation reflects some aspects of inclusion.
- However, there is no evidence that the legislation reflects the principle of equality, which plays a key role in the application of inclusive education.
- There is a law approving the activities of integrated learning institutions, including policies that support special education, integrated learning and home education for children with disabilities.
- The aforementioned forms of education are incompatible with the principle of inclusion and are models of segregation that do not provide equal access to education.
- The distinction between inclusive education and integrative education in legislation and policies is not clear.
- The policy on the criteria for determining disability is still using medical terminology as “handicap”.
- The law does not explicitly state that children with disabilities have the right to free education in pre-school educational institutions and kindergartens.
- The legislation does not define effective quality assurance and monitoring procedures for inclusive processes across the system.
- It is not clear in the legislation that state standards are based on inclusive principles that ensure equality for all children.
- Creating inclusive leadership, principles and cultures at all levels of the education system is not clearly defined.

- Legislation and policies promote segregated education in the form of special education as an option for children with disabilities (usually the only option).
- The law provides for high quality education for all students, but at the same time, different state standards have been adopted for the education of persons with disabilities.
- There is no requirement for legislation and documentation to bring assessments and examinations in line with the principles of universal design.
- The law does not explicitly state that inclusive classrooms with appropriate support are the most appropriate conditions for all children with disabilities.
- There is no confirmation of a strategy for the abolition and gradual reduction of all forms of special education and home education for children with disabilities in law and politics.
- There are some provisions in the legislation to protect the rights of all children, but they need to be improved.
- There are policies that contradict the equality of treatment and discrimination against all individuals.
- The specific and detailed processes that must be undertaken to ensure the implementation of child protection measures are not clearly defined in the legislation.
- The law does not explicitly state the right of persons with disabilities, including public schools and preschools, to access transport, information and communication in all public facilities.
- The existence of special education raises questions about whether children with disabilities have equal access to the same education as others.
- According to Universal Design for Learning, it is recommended that the right to have access to the same level of high quality and flexible curriculum be clearly reflected in policy.
- There is likely to be inertia and resistance, or stigma both at a structural and cultural level that reflected in policy and laws.

Section 2: Governance and Finance

How far are inclusive principles underpinning policies at national and local levels effectively supported by governance and financing mechanisms?

5.1 Is there formal collaboration across ministries on inclusion in education?

£ No £ No information available X Yes

If yes, in which areas does this take place and who is involved?

Area	Yes/No	Description: what mechanism, who is involved and how
Policy development, implementation and coordination	Yes	MOE plays key role in development, implementation and coordination of inclusion in education through the partnership with Ministry of Labor & Social Protection, MOH and State Examination Center State Program on Inclusion
Identification of needs / referral for services	Yes	<p>Medical institutions under Ministry of Health provides initial screenings at birth.</p> <p>The inter-ministerial commission titled A Psychological Medical Pedagogical Commission (PMPC) a team of health workers, education experts, psychologists and local experts convening and discussing the best educational pathway with the family based on the child's individual needs.</p> <p>PMPC functions are (1) to provide diagnosis of children with limited health opportunities and identification of physical, mental and (or) mental types disorders, (2) to take decisions on involvement to special education, to provide appropriate advice to their parents or other legal representatives, and intervention in case controversial issues.</p> <p>PMPC operates at district level and established based on decision agreed between Ministry of Social Protection and Labor (MSPL), Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ministry of Education (MOE) and placed at district education departments based on degree approved at local level. National PMPC at country level establishment is made by Ministry of Education.</p> <p>District PMPC develops and submits the reports based on regular meetings of commission members to Central MPPC at MOE.</p> <p>Source: Degree on Psychological Medical Pedagogical Commission, Approved by Cabinet of Ministries, 2002</p>

		<p>http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/1530</p> <p>The district Commission on Minors' Affaires and Protection of their Rights (CMAPR) are intended to be the lead institutions charged with the care of juveniles in conflict with the law and at risk. The Commissions on Minors have a wide range of obligations; from placing and monitoring juveniles in special educational institutions, petitioning the pardoning commission, to making social policy recommendations to minimize juvenile delinquency and promote the well-being of juveniles.</p> <p>The Commissions on Minors have the responsibility and right to employ alternative measures to imprisonment and placement into open and closed type institutions from among a list of effective tools provided in the legislation when considering less serious crimes and crimes of less serious public threat</p> <p>Source: Law on Approval the Statement on Minors Affaires and Protection of their Rights http://www.e-qanun.az/alpidata/framework/data/1/f_1034.htm</p>
Data sharing	yes	<p>Source: Degree on Psychological Medical Pedagogical Commission, Approved by Cabinet of Ministries, 2002 http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/1530</p> <p>In period from 2008 to 2015 control-coordination group have been established within the Ministry of Education and the State Committee on Family, Woman, Children Affiares (SCFWCA) to develop a national database for local agencies to identify children who are not in school, and to track absentees over time and across districts. Established from the State Program on Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development in 2008–2015. Membership includes representatives from the SCFWCA; the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, and the MOLSP. https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/910091/download</p>

Monitoring and evaluation	yes	<p>The decision on establishment of PMPC in form of counselling centers was approved in 1994 in Program on Implementation of Comprehensive Program for Disable Persons. http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/14652</p> <p>Monitoring of PMPC activities is implemented and coordinated between MOE & MOH, and Ministry of Labor and Social Protection and relevant district departments. PMPC is accountable to all three Ministries.</p> <p>State control on children rights is coordinated between Commissions of the State Committee for Family, Women and Children, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, The Ministry of Youth and Sports and guardianship and custody units within local executive authorities.</p> <p>Source: Presidential Decree No. 626 of 8 May 2012 on Approval of the Government Monitoring of the Implementation of the Rights of Children. http://sosial.gov.az/usaq-huquqlarinin-hyata-kecirilmsin-dovlt-nzarti-qaydasi</p>
Quality assurance and accountability	yes	<p>Accountability issue: District PMPC develops and submits the reports based on regular meetings of commission members to National PMPC at MOE.</p> <p>Source: Degree on Psychological Medical Pedagogical Commission, Approved by Cabinet of Ministries, 2002 http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/1530</p>
(others ...)		

5.2 Are there shared responsibilities between central and local governments on inclusion in education?

£ No £ No information available X Yes

If yes, in which areas does this take place and who is involved?

Area	Yes /No	Description: who is involved and how
Policy development, implementation and coordination		<p>All policies are developed centrally (MoE, it is its mandate stated in its Statutes) and implemented locally (local education departments (LED) and Executive Power). The LEDs report to the MoE, while the MoE monitors the implementation at the local level. Financing of EIs at the local level is provided locally. Only 20 schools in Baku are under the direct supervision of MoE (not Baku Education Department) and are financed out of the MoE budget. Through monitoring of implementation at the local level some coordination most probably occurs</p> <p>Each local Executive committee plays an important role in activities of three key bodies at the local level: 1) the Commissions on Minor's Affaires and Protection of their Rights 2) the Department for Adoption and Guardianship, and 3) the Psycho-Medico-Pedagogical Commission. http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/1530</p> <p>Source: Degree on Medical Psychological Pedagogical Commission, Approved by Cabinet of Ministries, 2002</p>
Identification of needs / referral for services	Yes	<p>PMPCs are responsible for the following tasks to be coordinated and shared with MOE, MSPL & MOH at district and central levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to carry out psychological and medical-pedagogical examination of children at early and later ages, to identify their developmental features; - to make decisions on the involvement of children with disabilities in special education; - to identify the type of institution providing special education for children with disabilities; - make recommendations on individual learning plans; - confirm or modify the diagnosis for children with disabilities; - advise parents or other legal representatives of children with disabilities; - provide advice and advice to pedagogical, medical and social workers on the organization of special education for children with disabilities and the rights of their parents or other legal representatives; - Identify special education forms; - to make decisions to exempt students from the classroom and final exams; - give feedback for free psychological, medical and pedagogical correction of persons with physical, mental and / or mental retardations; - provide feedback to persons with disabilities who are in need of serious training and who have disabilities between the ages of 11 and 14 to be sent to a special educational institution; <p>Source: Degree on Medical Psychological Pedagogical Commission, Approved by Cabinet of Ministries, 2002</p> <p>http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/1530</p>

		http://www.e-qanun.az/alpidata/framework/data/1/f_1034.htm
Data sharing		<p>The database on children with disabilities established by PMPC shared between MOE, MOLSP & MOH.</p> <p>CMAPR is Source: Degree on Medical Psychological Pedagogical Commission, Approved by Cabinet of Ministries, 2002</p> <p>collecting the data on children deprived of parental care, abandoned children, CWD to be submitted to Commissions members presenting MOE, MOE, MOLSP and local executive authorities (see section 3).</p> <p>http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/1530</p>
Monitoring and evaluation		<p>District CMAPTR along with PMPC is the second key actor in the monitoring and evaluation of inclusive education implementation at local level.</p> <p>The main purpose of the commissions on minor's affairs and protection of their rights is to support the upgrading, protect their rights and legitimate interests, supervise the behaviour, prevent illegal actions. The Commissions on Minors have the following obligations: placing and monitoring juveniles in correctional institutions, petitioning the pardoning commission, making social policy recommendations to local and central authorities in order to minimize juvenile delinquency and the well being of juveniles.</p> <p>The commission includes the heads of education, health, internal affairs, cultural institutions and other institutions. Representatives of non-governmental organizations (public associations and foundations) may also be included in the commission.</p> <p>Source: Law On Approval the Statement on Minors' Affaires and Protection of their Rights http://www.e-qanun.az/alpidata/framework/data/1/f_1034.htm</p> <p>Presidential Decree No. 626 of 8 May 2012 on Approval of the Government Monitoring of the Implementation of the Rights of Children.</p>
Quality assurance and accountability		<p>Development of criteria, tools and methods for assessing developmental characteristics for the involvement of people with disabilities in education is coordinated between MOE, MOH and MLSR.</p> <p>Source: State Program for the Development of Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2018-2024</p> <p>https://azertag.az/xeber/2018_2024_cu_illerde_Azərbaycan_Respublikasında_saglamliq_imkanlari_mehdud_sexsler_uchun_inkluziv_tehsilin_inkisafi_uzre_DOVLAT_PROQRAMI-1121083</p>
(others ...)		

5.3 Are non-governmental organisations and/or associations involved in governance processes?

£ No £ No information available X **Yes**

If yes, please describe their involvement:

There Law on Public Participation was adopted in 2013 (<http://e-qanun.gov.az/framework/26879>). According to the Law, every executive entity (MoE for example) has to create a Public Council with a purpose (Article 3) of involving public at large to participation in the governance, conduct a public control over their activities, to have a collaboration, ensure accountability and transparency, consideration of legitimate interests of citizens while development, implementation of public policy/government policy as well as decision-making process, defense of rights of citizens. Public participation may have different forms (Article 5) such as Public Councils, public discussions, public hearings, studying public opinions, public discussion of legislative acts, written consultations. Any citizen, any NGO, any other public entity can propose candidates for being elected to Public Councils (Article 6). Public Councils function on a volunteering basis.

Membership in Working groups and ministerial Boards.

If no, please give further information:

5.4 Are there any accountability mechanisms to promote the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups?

£ No £ No information available £ Yes

If yes, what is the focus of the mechanisms?

Area	Yes/No	Description of the focus/actors involved (e.g. state/non state)
Appeal process for rights violations	yes	<p>According to the Constitution of Azerbaijan Republic, everyone including persons with disabilities have the right of appealing to the court. Children with disabilities are examined by the presence of their parents or tutors in the preliminary investigation. The National Preventative Group under the Office of the Ombudsman identifies and prevents child rights violations. In 2016 a Management Information System with UNICEF's technical support was developed for this Group to improve the data collection, analysis and management of monitoring visits, hotline calls and complaints from children.</p> <p>Source: UNICEF Annual report 2017. Azerbaijan https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Azerbaijan_2017_COAR.pdf</p> <p>According to the Law on the Rights of the Child and the Family Code, when a child's rights and interests are violated, including failure of parents in their responsibilities in a child's education and upbringing, the child has the right to apply to a number of nonjudicial state bodies, as well as the courts. A child can apply individually or through their representative depending on the right that has been violated and the</p>

		<p>corresponding procedural rules thereof. The child and/or parents can apply to the state bodies: Central and local Commissions on Minors' Issues and Protection of their Rights, the State Committee on Family, Women and Children Issues, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Although these bodies cannot exercise any judicial powers, they are responsible for taking measures to prevent violations of children's rights and may bring an action on behalf of the child in domestic courts.</p> <p>The parents are obliged to protect their children's rights and interests and, according to the Law on the Rights of the Child, all natural and legal persons must accord preference in their activities to the best interests of the child and create conditions for the exercise of children's rights.</p> <p>Parents may defend their children's rights as their legal representative against any person, without special authorization from the child. In the event of a conflict between the rights of parents and their child, the competent local authority is required to appoint a representative to defend the child's rights and interests.</p> <p>Source: Family Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan No781IQ, 28 December 1999, Art. 51.5; Law on the Rights of the Child, Art. 12, Art.59</p> <p>Under article 46, 56 and 57 of the Code of Civil Procedure, non -governmental organizations can participate as third parties in legal proceedings.</p> <p>Source: Access to justice for children: Azerbaijan (2014). Child Rights International Network</p> <p>https://archive.crin.org/sites/default/files/azerbaijan_access_to_justice.pdf</p>
School inspection	no	
Other quality assurance processes (e.g. standards for teaching, support services etc)	N/A	No teacher standards
Monitoring and evaluation (e.g. data collection on attendance,		No information available

participation, achievement, funding)		
(others ...)		

5.5 Please describe the general mechanisms for funding schools. Give details on: which institutions provide funding; what they provide; how they provide it and to whom, which mechanisms they use to allocate resources; and their respective roles and responsibilities.

Funding mechanisms	Description of who, what, to whom and how
Centralized financing with limited school financial autonomy	<p>In accordance with the Law on Education and the Law on Civil Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan and other laws, the schools subordinated (20 schools) to the Ministry and financed from the centralized expenditures. These schools have own autonomous budgets and manage them independently. Other schools have a limited financial autonomy and are provided with funding planned according to strict norms of funding per pupil;</p> <p>MOE is responsible for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To prepare proposals for the efficient use of property of EIs and enterprises subordinated to the Ministry and the financial rehabilitation of education institutions and to conduct financial monitoring; - To provide implementation of relevant measures associated with the financing of education and scholarship expenditures of students, receiving education under the state order, in higher educational and medical institutions, implementing the personnel training under the state order and the application of per capita funding mechanism in higher education institutions; - To ensure implementation of fiscal planning, financing and accounting for the administrative apparatus of the Ministry of Education; - To provide fiscal planning and financing of State Programs and measures, implemented by the Ministry of Education, as well as the Ministry's measures and other centralized ones; - To prepare forecasts on the network of general education institutions financed by the Ministry and to participate in the preparation of proposals on the establishment and expansion of general education institutions and the changing of their type;

	<p>- To participate in the preparation of proposals on forecasting of pupil and student admission in accordance with initial vocational, specialized secondary and higher education institutions.</p> <p>In case of boarding schools for children with disabilities under</p> <p>Source: The General Education Law, 2019, http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/42543)</p> <p>Law on Civil Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan http://www.stateproperty.gov.az/news/view/5001-Law-of-the-republic-of-Azerbaijan-on-civil-service</p>
<p>Special education institutions including Educational institutions with Integrated learning</p>	<p>NOTE: Educational institutions with integrated learning are former specialized schools for children with disabilities. It was renamed in 2016 based on orders of the Cabinet of Ministries & MOE</p> <p>Source: The order of Education Minister's on changing the names of educational institutions, 2016 https://edu.gov.az/az/page/408/12819</p> <p>The technical and facilities including buildings, cafeterias, connected buildings, medical, correction and rehabilitation offices, sports equipment, training equipment, and library funds are funded by the state and municipal budget. Therefore other founders are eligible to contribute to those institutions as well.</p> <p>Statement on Special educational institutions, 2002 http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/1725</p> <p>Amended in 2017 http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/36710</p>

5.6 Do schools have flexibility to use funding allocations to support the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups?

No No information available Yes

If yes, please describe the flexibility:

If no, please give further information:

Schools have limited financial autonomy due to centralized system of school financing.

5.7 Please describe the specific mechanisms for funding the inclusion of vulnerable learners and their families in education (e.g. benefits, cash transfers, scholarships). Give details on: which institutions

provide funding; what they provide; how they provide it and to whom, which mechanisms they use to allocate resources; and their respective roles and responsibilities.

Funding mechanisms	Description of the who, what, to whom and how
State budget	<p>Family allowance benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benefits for disabled children under age 18; - Benefits for children who lost the parent head that caused the family income loss; - Full orphan’s special benefit. Paid to a guardian for a full orphan. <p>NOTE: A year ago the allowance increased from 82 to 150 AZN (~75 euro) for children under 18 with disabilities, and from 68 to 80 AZN (40 Euro) for each member of the family for the loss of the head of the family.</p> <p>-A pension of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan for those who are caring the children with limited health opportunities under age 18 was approved in 2019</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/41983 2. Funding mechanism: Targeted State Social Assistance (TSSA) is a state monthly allowance entitled to low-income families. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social assistance is funded from the state budget. - Social assistance is set for 2 years from the 1st month of applying for it. - The disadvantaged family has the right to apply again for social assistance. 3. Qualification conditions: Families with the right to receive TSSA are low-income families with low monthly income that is doesn’t depend on them are entitled to a TSSA for the benefit of each member of the family (the criterion of need is 143 manats (~70 euro). The causes of law income that do not depend on person include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Person’s disability; - Person constituting as labour pensioner; - A person takes care of person with a first group disability, a child under the age of eighteen, or a disabled child under the age of 18; - If person at the age under 23 is studying; 4. Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted according to changes in the 5. consumer price index. <p>Allowance delivery: Children’s allowance is a payment which is distributed to the parents or guardians of children.</p>

	<p>Governance: MOLSP provides general oversight. Local branches of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population administer benefits and pay benefits to unemployed parents.</p> <p>State Social Protection Fund (http://www.sspf.gov.az), through its departments and regional branches, collects and manages contributions and finances benefits.</p> <p>10. http://sosial.gov.az/en/Eligibility-tssa https://bakuresearchinstitute.org/the-social-protection-of-mothers-and-children-in-azerbaijan-the-systems-capability-and-scope/</p> <p>12. http://sosial.gov.az/post/2018</p>
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5.8 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of funding and resourcing relating to inclusive education.

Annual report on the work the National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development and other institutions to identify policy and programming actions that can accelerate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) in Azerbaijan: the level of engagement of different groups, including the private sector, media, parliamentarians and the public, among others, in understanding the Goals and the actions such as events, workshops and other activities taken across the country.

United Nations Azerbaijn. Paartnership framework 2016-2020. Progress report 2018

<http://unazerbaijan.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/2585-AZERBAIJAN-REPORT-english-WEB-FILE.pdf>

5.9 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to governance and finance issues in the country?

Challenges

Lack of financial school autonomy limiting school capacity in planning, implementation and monitoring the Inclusive education at school level

The dominating role of PMPC and CMAPTR (being stigmatised with its medical approach) with limited community involvement and limited rights of parents to question or oppose the decisions.

A weakness of the funding formula for special schools based on counts of children with special needs is the focus on the disability label rather than educational needs.

Social insurance – mainly pensions and cash based social assistance are more advanced than social services provision.

A lack of data on children from low income families who may leave school because they are made to work and contribute to household income. This is especially true in rural areas, where pressure is high for children to help on the farm, and also for girls to marry early.

Opportunities

The government are continued to take the measures to prevent children from institutional placement and family support

monthly benefit for parents/caregivers who take care of children with disabilities under age 18 approved in 2019

https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Azerbaijan_2018_COAR.pdf

Section 3: Data

What data on inclusion in education is available to understand if progress is being made towards equitable learning opportunities for all learners?

5.10 Please indicate if the following frameworks are in place, provide a link and give a brief description of their aims and focus:

Framework	Yes / No	Description
<p>For monitoring and evaluating the implementation of national-level inclusion in education policy</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The following state agencies are involved in the state monitoring of the implementation of protection of children rights including education rights for learners from vulnerable groups:</p> <p>SCFWCA: in accordance with Family Code collect and maintains the data base on children deprived from parental care and adopted children (2.1.2);</p> <p>MIA: implements measurements to prevent minors in socially dangerous situations, as well as against the parents or other legal representatives who do not fulfil the responsibilities for their children upbringing and education (2.2.2);</p> <p>MOE: monitors the implementation of compulsory general secondary education , keeps records of minors in educational institutions who do not attend classes without justified reason or regularly drop out of school, ensures that necessary measures are taken for learners upbringing and compulsory general secondary education (2.3.;</p> <p>collects and maintains the records of children deprived of parental care, children who lost the parents and manages their involvement in education (2.3.5);</p> <p>Manages the diagnosis of CWD, children with deviant behaviour with support of psychological-medical-pedagogical commissions in order to make a decision on their involvement in special education, to provide relevant advice to parents or other legal representatives (2.3.7);</p> <p>jointly with relevant executive authorities organizes the education of children with deviant behaviour, children with limited health conditions, orphans and children deprived of parental care (2.3.8);</p> <p>MLOSP: organizes rehabilitation and social protection of children with limited health conditions, provides them with prosthetic and orthopedic products, wheelchairs and other rehabilitation facilities (2.5.1); maintains a database on children with limited health conditions;</p>

Local executive authorities: identifies children who have lost their parents and are deprived of parental care, abandoned children, and minors who are in need of guardianship or custody due to their health (2.8.2);

in accordance with the Family Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, keeps initial records of children deprived of parental care, selects the forms of placement of children deprived of parental care, taking into account specific cases of deprivation of parental care, as well as monitors their upbringing and education (2.8.3);

The General responsibilities for state monitoring shared among mentioned state agencies are as follows:

to implement the state policy aimed at ensuring the upbringing of every child in the necessary material and living conditions, the formation of a citizen (3.1.1.);

To monitor the implementation of the requirements of the laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the protection of children's rights (3.1.2);

to monitor the priority of children's interests; 3.1.3.

to monitor the inadmissibility of discrimination in ensuring the rights of the child (3.1.4);

to monitor the provision of children's right to appeal (3.1.5);

to take measures to create a healthy and safe environment for the physical, mental and spiritual development of children under normal conditions (3.1.6);

to prepare annual reports on the state of children's rights (3.1.7); to participate in monitoring the investigation of the situation with the protection of children's rights (3.1.8);

to conduct needs assessment and researches on solving children's issues. 3.1.9.

There is electronic database on monitoring information managed by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children of the Republic of Azerbaijan (7.1., 7.4).

Source: Rules on State Monitoring of the Implementation of Children Rights. Decree of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2012

<https://edu.gov.az/az/page/92/5533>

	<p>National Steering Committee on Child Labour. The Committee is aimed at identification of government priorities in the sphere of child labour prevention to facilitate efficient mobilization of resources. Established through the Global Action Program on Child Labour Issues Project and comprising representatives from the MLSPP, the SCFWCA, the Ministry of Education, the Employers' Confederation, the Trade Unions' Confederation, the OSCE, UNICEF, and the ILO.</p> <p>State Committee on Family, Women and Children's Affairs (SCFWCA) is leading agency in https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/910091/download</p>
<p>For quality assurance across all levels of the system (national, regional, school)</p>	<p>Each year Commission on Minors Affairs and their Rights Protection (CMARP) consisting of representative of MOE, MOH, MLSP, MIA, SCFWCA, Ministry of Youth & Sport, local executive authorities develops annual report and submits to SCFWCA. The final report after discussion with Committee members and Head of SCFWCA is submitted to the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.</p> <p>Source: Rules on State Monitoring of the Implementation of Children Rights. Decree of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2012 https://edu.gov.az/az/page/92/5533</p>
<p>Providing guidance on the use of a range of different data sources for evaluation and self-review at different levels (national, regional, school)</p>	<p>Each year the CMAPR shall form a group of experts to conduct monitoring for current year, provided that it does not exceed 10 people. The monitoring expert group includes representatives of government agencies form the Commission, non-governmental organizations and independent experts lawyers, human rights activists.</p> <p>Source: Rules on State Monitoring of the Implementation of Children Rights. Decree of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2012 https://edu.gov.az/az/page/92/5533</p> <p>State Committee on Family, Women and Children's Affairs (SCFWCA) is central executive agency that is responsible for implementing child-related policies and Creation and maintenance an interagency case management</p>

		database on child rights. https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/910091/download
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5.11 What data is collected on learners from vulnerable groups, how and why?

	Responsible agency	Form of collection	Purpose	
Children with limited health conditions (CWLHC)	PMPC	Parents/caregiver submits the application to district (rayon/city) PMPC Mainstream school principle/parents submit application to PMPC	To identify type of impairment and form of education To identify type of impairment entitling to home schooling	Statement on Psychological Medical Pedagogical Commission http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/1530
CWLHC	MOLSP	Medical institutions send the information on CWLHC to Medical Social Experts Commissions by 18 regional clusters within MOLSP. All procedures are managed confidentially through online system.	To allocate children allowance To provide rehabilitation facilities & services	Decree on the calculation of the children benefit for parents, or other legal representatives of those involved in special education, enrolled to specialised boarding schools, health and rehabilitation centres, and medical centres, 2001/ No200. Baku: The Legislation Collection of the Republic of Azerbaijan: http://eqanun.az/print.php?internal=view&target=1&docid=2930&doctype=0 .

Early marriages	Executive committees, Municipalities, Local Police departments	Information from schools/local education departments Local executive authorities	To prevent school dropout To inform legal structures in order to prevent illegal action	Source: Rules on State Monitoring of the Implementation of Children Rights. Decree of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2012 https://edu.gov.az/az/page/92/5533
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5.12 Please provide the available data relating to all learners in the compulsory education system and where they are enrolled for their education.

All questions can be answered using the country's own data sources as far as possible. Alternatively, the data can be provided from publicly available international sources e.g. UIS: <http://data.uis.unesco.org/index.aspx?queryid=216> or UOE: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Main_Page

Please give a clear reference to the Source in the column provided.

In the Learners column, as far as possible:

- provide actual numbers as far as possible and not estimates.
- only use 0 when the data is zero.
- use M to indicate missing data.
- use NA to indicate the question is Not Applicable (i.e. the country does not have that type of provision).

All questions refer to ALL learners in the education system, not just those formally identified as belonging to a group that is vulnerable to exclusion.

Please provide notes to clarify any issues with the data and include a specific note on the calendar year and/or school year the data refers to.

Data on learner access to compulsory education	Learners	Notes	Source
(i) What is the <i>potential population</i> of learners for the compulsory education system in the country (i.e. how many children are in the country that	Total: Male: Female:	See Table 1 (attached)	The State Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan https://www.stat.gov.az/?lang=en

should, by law, be in some form of compulsory education)?			
(ii) How many learners are enrolled in all forms of education (i.e. educational settings maintained by the ministry of education or by other authorities such as health, welfare or labour ministries)?	Total: Male: Female:	See Table 2 (attached)	The State Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan https://www.stat.gov.az/?lang=en
(iii) How many learners are out of any form of education (who by law should be in some form of education)?	Total: Male: Female:	See Table 3 (attached)	http://uis.unesco.org/country/AZ
(iv) How many learners are enrolled in mainstream schools (i.e. all learners, not just those with recognised needs or from vulnerable groups)?	Total: Male: Female:	See Table 4 (attached)	The State Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan https://www.stat.gov.az/?lang=en
(v) How many learners are enrolled in mainstream schools and spend the majority of their time (i.e. at least 80% or 4 days of the week) in inclusive groups/classes with their peers?	Total: Male: Female:	See Table 5 (attached)	The State Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan https://www.stat.gov.az/?lang=en
(vi) How many learners are enrolled in mainstream schools and spend the majority of their time (i.e. at least 80% or 4 days of the week) in separate, special	Total: Male: Female:	See Table 6 (attached)	Interview with ministerial officials published in newspapers.

groups/classes, away from their peers?			
(vii) How many learners are enrolled in totally separate, special units and/or schools, away from their peers?	Total: Male: Female:	See Table 7 (attached)	The State Statistical Committee https://www.stat.gov.az/?lang=en

5.13 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of data collection and monitoring for inclusion in education.

The **UNICEF Annual Reports** spotlights results for children achieved by UNICEF and its partners across multiple sectors in Azerbaijan. The reports also provides the recent data and analyses on inclusive education developments and related issues such as social assistance, children rights protection and outlines recommendations for policy makers and other involved stakeholders.

UNICEF Annual report 2017

https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Azerbaijan_2017_COAR.pdf

UNICEF Annual report 2018

https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Azerbaijan_2018_COAR.pdf

5.14 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to data collection issues in the country?

Challenges

- Data reliability. There is inconsistency in two data sets gathered from official sources, e.g. from MOLSP, MOE and data gathered by independent researchers or NGOs.
- The challenge of obtaining all child data from the relevant government authorities resulting from the unavailability of unique identifiers is still not resolved.
- There is no publicly available information on differentiated data on out-of-school learners by typology of out of school children to identify those who never attended school, those who dropped out, those who are currently out of school, but late entry is expected.

Opportunities

The Government decided to undertake a Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey in 2020, with preparatory work underway from 2017. It will provide key disaggregated data on the situation of children in a number of sectors and will enable more systematic monitoring of equitable progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In 2018 the new module of data collection on children with disabilities, the UNICEF/ Washington Group on Disability Statistics Module on Child Functioning, was introduced and tested through integration into the national Household Budget Survey, covering over 7,000 children. This made Azerbaijan the first country in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia Region to implement this module. However, there is a need for further review and adaption of the methodology to the local context.

The data generation function of the National Child Databank within the State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs continued to be improved through linking and synchronizing the databank with other sectoral databases via the establishment of data transfer systems.

UNICEF reached an initial agreement with the State Statistics Committee and the National Coordination Council on Sustainable Development for the introduction of multi-dimensional child poverty measurement in the coming two years.

https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Azerbaijan_2017_COAR.pdf

https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Azerbaijan_2018_COAR.pdf



Section 4: Curricula, learning materials and assessment

To what extent are curricula, learning materials and different assessment processes and procedures adapted to the principles of inclusive education?

5.15 Curriculum

a. Does the curriculum content include and represent all learners?

No No information available **Partially** Yes

If yes or partially, please provide a description and available links, including to underpinning values and principles.

A Concept of General Education on National Curriculum (The Cabinet of Ministries of AR, order #233, Oct 30, 2006. <http://portal.edu.az/index.php?r=article/item&id=194&mid=5&lang=az>) lists principles of development of National Curricula: "...consideration of national and universal values; creating conducive learning environment for all learners; student-centeredness...". The Concept also provides a definition of general education: "General education is ...a process taking into account the age, physiological, psychological, individual characteristics and capabilities of pupils...". These principles and considerations were repeated in the State Standards and Curricula for General Education (The Cabinet of Ministries of AR, order #103, June 3, 2010. <http://edu.gov.az/upload/file/tehsil-pillesinin-dovlet-strandartlari-ve-programlari.pdf>)

If no, please give further information:

b. Does the process of curriculum development involve the participation and contribution of different stakeholders?

No No information available **Yes**

If yes, please provide information on stakeholder involvement.

If no, please give further information.

Usually, any curriculum development is held by a Task Force convened by the order of the Minister of Education. In addition to the Task Force members, curriculum drafts are being sent for a review by other reps of education community and uploaded to web-sites and facebook pages. That's why every subject curriculum for general education, on its first page lists the authors and contributors representing the Institute of Education (a main research body affiliated to the Ministry of Education (MoE), Universities, schools, independent experts, NGO reps). A sample curriculum for "World Knowledge" could be followed on the link <https://en.calameo.com/read/004766599adac0f57e654>.

Parents and community participation in the process of curriculum development has not been documented in the general education curricula's cover pages.

c. Is there guidance/procedures for schools to ensure that the curriculum content takes account of all learners (e.g. using flexibility to address differences due to gender, culture, religions, the ethnicities/nations living in the country, their history and culture, differences related to disability and socio-economic background, LGBT community).

No No information available Yes

If yes, please give a description and examples of this flexibility.

If no, please give further information:

One of the priority directions of the State Strategy on Development of Education

(2013, retrieved from <https://president.az/articles/9779>) is development of development and inclusive education curricula (teaching programs) for children with special needs (1.2.4).

The State Standards and Curricula for General Education (The Cabinet of Ministries of AR, order #103, June 3, 2010. <http://edu.gov.az/upload/file/tehsil-pillesinin-dovlet-strandartlari-ve-proqramlari.pdf>) lists the requirements to the curricula content (point 2.1.): “ A content of general education is defined based on interests and demands of individuals, society and the state, reflects national and universal values , is built on principles of humanism, secularity, continuity, integration” and “ A content of general education takes into account age-related, physiological and psychological peculiarities of learners...” (point 2.2.).

The State Standards and Curricula for General Education also lists requirements to general education infrastructure (point 3.4.2.): “The infrastructure of general education includes safety of learning environment, supplying with pedagogical cadres, buildings with necessary capacities, supplementary buildings and equipment, simple sport yard and equipment, health point with health cadres, ..., library, communication and other utility systems, **internet**”.

The school autonomy with regards to teaching content selection is limited. The system of learning resource selection including textbooks, student notebooks and teacher guidebooks is centralized. Pupils in public and municipal general educational institutions are provided with textbooks at the expense of the state:” Public general educational institutions are supplied with 6623135 items of 261 titles of textbooks and teachers guidebooks for 1-9th grades and 10-11th grades....” (Order of the Minister of Education of AR on effective provision of general educational institutions with textbooks and teacher guidebooks. Order #508, July **28, 2016**, <https://edu.gov.az/az/page/162/12813>)

d. If individual education plans (IEPs) are used, please describe the procedure for developing (who is involved and how), what they focus on (specific curriculum areas; cross curricular competences; support strategies etc.) and how IEPs are implemented, used across the school?

Individual Education plan is mentioned in several policy documents.

According to “The list of diseases entitling to home education and guidelines for organization of home education” (The Cabinet of Ministries of AR, order #74, Apr 29, 2002. http://www.e-ganun.az/alpdata/framework/data/1/f_1724.htm) organization of individualized home education is a responsibility of a general school located nearby (Article 5).

The Law on Education of Children with Limited Health Conditions (Special Education Law) (2001, <http://www.e-ganun.az/framework/4353>) provides the following definition of home education: “home education is a form of general education provided by pedagogical staff of relevant school to those who can not be educated in educational institutions due to limited health conditions” (article 1.0.14).

Home education could be implemented as a general education (45 min long lessons) or special education program (40 min long lessons) (Article 10). Daily lesson load is for 2 hours at a primary school level, and 3 hours at a

secondary school level (Article 11). While developing IEPs a priority given to recommendations of PMPC (point 12). Lesson schedule for education at home is approved by a general school principal based on agreement with a head teacher and parents (Article 14). Education at home is conducted in accordance with general school curriculum or special school curriculum (depends on child development peculiarities) (Article 15). Attendance of a pupil educated at home is registered in a class attendance journal (Article 17). Pupils at home entitled to home education can be promoted from grade to grade and be free of examinations based on decisions of PMPC (Article 18). Teachers teaching pupils at home are appointed voluntarily (Article 21).

According to the Statutes of PMPC (The Cabinet of Ministries of AR, order #74, Apr 29, 2002.

<http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/1530>) one of the objectives of PMPC is providing recommendations for IEP (point article 3.4.).

The Law on Education of Children with Limited Health Conditions (Special Education Law (2001, <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/4353>) mentions IEP in the article on rights of parents/legal guardians of children with limited health conditions “ a right to be introduced to IEPs and participate in their implementation” (article 6.1.3.).

No other evidences/procedures on IEPs were found.

e. Are there different curricula or programmes for specific groups of learners at risk of exclusion (e.g. ethnic minorities or minority language groups)

£ **No** £ No information available ×**Yes**

If yes, please give a description of the main characteristics/organisation.

If no, please give further information:

Yes, for learners with limited health conditions, the learners who want to be educated in a language of instruction different from Azerbaijani and/or on curricula of internationally accredited education programs.

The General Education Law (2019, <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/42543>) states that the State guarantees equal conditions for citizens of AR, as well as foreigners and people without citizenship for getting general education (Article 4.0.24). The States also guarantees opportunities for getting general education without any discrimination based on gender, race, language, religion, political preferences, ethnic origin, social status, health conditions (Article 5.2).

The Law states that general education is conducted in accordance with general education curricula (Article 13.13).

The Law states the following re language of instruction in general education: a language of instruction in public schools is Azerbaijani (6.1.); based on desires of citizens and founders of educational institutions, and/or based on international agreements of AR, language of instruction could be different from Azerbaijani; curricula could be different under condition if they meet national general education standards, or curricula of internationally accredited education programs (6.2.); if a language of instruction is different from Azerbaijani, several subjects- Azerbaijan history, literature, language, geography subjects must be taught (6.3); if learners want to be educated in public general schools in a language of instruction different from Azerbaijani, in accordance with established guidelines they have to be

interviewed for knowledge of the chosen language (6.4.); if learners have weak Azerbaijani language speaking skills they must be provided by preparatory classes and courses (6.5).

Special curriculum is provided for learners with limited health conditions. The General Education Law also states that education of children with limited health conditions must meet special education standards (Article 8.5) and special education programs (curricula) for development of social skills and integration to public life children with limited health opportunities are implemented (Article 9.6.).

According to the Law on Vocational Education (2018, <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/39275>)

Education of persons with limited health opportunities are educated in accordance with special vocational curricula promoting their social adaptation and public integration (Article 8.6.).

5.16 Learning materials

a. Is there autonomy for schools and teachers to select learning material/textbooks etc?

No No information available **Yes (but partially)**

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

“The Textbook Policy for General Education System” (MoE, order #33, Jan 23, 2006,

<https://edu.gov.az/az/page/77/1011>) provides provisions re textbook policy, its main principles, the requirements to textbooks, and evaluation of textbooks, etc.

The policy identifies a role of schools in the implementation of the textbook policy: schools together with school Parent-Teacher Associations chose textbooks (11.2).

According to this policy, all pupils educated in general public schools in AR are provided with free of charge textbooks (2.1.); textbooks of foreign countries can be used in general schools under permission of the MoE (2.3.4.); a right for choosing alternative textbooks is given to Pedagogical Councils of schools, subject teachers and Parent-Teacher Associations (2.4.2.); any e-textbooks approved by the MoE can be used (9.1.).

b. Are there policies to ensure the availability of textbooks/materials that promote the inclusion of learners from different vulnerable groups? (e.g. resources relevant to different ethnic groups etc.)

No No information available **Yes**

If yes, please give a description.

Free textbooks provided in Russian, Georgian (main textbooks). “Sign Language” – dactyls and gestures are used as a means of communication in special boarding schools and preschools for children with hearing and speech impairments. Textbooks for Mother Tongue and Mathematics, Workbook on Mathematics for primary grades for Children with Hearing Impairments (Grades 1-4), and Methodical Handbook for Teachers are published. Consolidated Second & Third Periodic Reports of the Government of Azerbaijan under Article 33 on the Convention, 2019 http://sosial.gov.az/uploads/images/image_750x_5dea52b22451a.pdf

If no, please give further information:

c. Is there guidance/procedures to help schools to make learning materials accessible for all learners? (e.g. Braille/large print for learners with visual impairment, materials in other languages).

£ No £ No information available **X Yes**

If yes, please give a description.

The special schools and boarding schools for children with disabilities are

A formal policy or guidelines on that issue has not been found. But one of the largest media portals published an article on multiculturalism in education policy: "Azerbaijan in the education policy and its implementation takes into account the requirements of "The European Charter of Regional languages and Languages of Small Nations" (adopted by the European Council on Nov 5, 1992). ...For learning mother tongues by representatives of small nations (Avar, Kurdish, Udi, Tsakhur, Hebrew, Knynaliq, Talish, etc) at primary school level 2 lessons a week are scheduled. 2 hours per week of teaching Lezgi language are scheduled in schools in 6 rayons populated with Lezgis in all grades (1st to 11th). ...For this both curricula, textbooks and teacher guidebooks are published under the MoE approval. In 3 rayons general education is provided in the Georgian language. There are schools with Russian language of instruction. Languages of other nations are taught in 1st-4th grades only. In the Institute of Education in 1989 a department of methodology for teaching languages of small nations was established. ...15 titles of textbooks were published for that. ...In addition to textbooks on Mother Tongue for each listed small nation an illustrated book "We are Learning our Language" for 1st graders was published and distributed (Azerbaijani multiculturalism in education policy, 05.08.2019, <https://multikultural.az/az/multikulturalizm/9/azerbaycan-multikulturalizminde-tehsil-siyaseti/>)

For learners with visual impairments textbooks are published using Braille print.

d. Is ICT used to improve access to materials for vulnerable groups?

£ No £ No information available × **Yes**

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

There is an e-textbook portal created by the MoE (<http://www.e-derslik.edu.az/site/index.php>) where all the textbooks in e-format are available for free under the necessary registration.

The government has strengthened the role of distant education for learners with disabilities. (The law on Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Art. 20.2

<http://huquqiaktlar.gov.az/StatementDetails.aspx?statementId=42222>

e. Are there specific financial and practical resources available for textbooks/materials/ICT for different vulnerable groups?

£ No £ No information available × **Yes**

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

In accordance with "The Textbook Policy for General Education System" (MoE, order #33, Jan 23, 2006,

<https://edu.gov.az/az/page/77/1011>) all pupils educated in general public schools in AR are provided with **free of charge textbooks** (2.1.).

5.17 Assessment

a. Is there a national/local assessment framework that includes all learners?

£ No £ No information available **X Yes (only for learners with either disabilities or limited health conditions mainly)**

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

According to the Statutes of PMPC (The Cabinet of Ministries of AR, order #74, Apr 29, 2002.

<http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/1530>) one of the objectives of PMPC is making decisions on transitions from grade to grade and freeing from final graduation examination (point article 3.10.).

According to the guidelines provided in “The Attestation of Persons Those who due to Various Reasons did not Complete General Education at or level” (The Cabinet of Ministries of AR, Order# 12, Jan 21, 2010. <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/29152>) some pupils with limited health conditions can be freed from the general school graduation examination based on a permission of PMPC (1.13).

Moreover, recently the state applied new rules in order to support people who are in need of special protection. Thus, persons in need of special social protection will be exempted from payment during their education in higher educational institutions on a fee-paying basis in accordance with the law on “Vocational Education”: persons needed special social protection are educated in vocational educational institutions for free (20.8) including the following four categories of learners (those who lost parents or whose parents were deprived from parenting rights (20.8.1); those with disabilities being referred to 1st, 2nd and 3rd disability categories (20.8.2.); family members of those who were killed during the war (20.8.3.); those who are under the age of 20 and have parents with disabilities referred to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd categories and/or have parents with monthly income below of minimum average wage (20.8.4).

According to the Education Law (2009) the State creates conditions for education of “...those who need for a social protection” (Article 5.6.). 2009,

<http://www.e-qanun.az/alpdata/framework/data/18/c f 18343.htm>)

In Azerbaijan, those pupils who get the higher score at the university admission examination, are entitled to free of charge Higher Education, while others have to pay tuition fees. The Law on “Social Protection of Children who Lost their parents or whose parents were deprived of parenting rights”(1999, amended in 2019, <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/3859>) have the following social protection in the field of education (article 5): free of charge education in municipal and private higher education and vocational educational institutions; are provided with stipends; free transportation to and from educational institutions.

b. Is there guidance for teachers on how to use curriculum-based assessment to identify all learning needs in the classroom?

£ No £ No information available × **Yes, but partially**

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

On Dec 28, 2018 new guidelines for school-based assessment were approved by the Collegiate of the MoE (Order #8/1, <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/41102>). The document provides guidelines for conducting diagnostic assessment: "2.1. Diagnostic assessment is conducted in the beginning of a school year and/or the beginning of each teaching unit in order to have initial assessment results for knowledge and skills of pupils". The document also provides guidelines for conducting formative assessment: "3.1. Formative assessment is conducted for tracking performance of learners on each curriculum subject and the extent of meeting curriculum standards, identify the difficulties in this process and eliminate them. Teachers using formative assessment assist pupils to acquire curriculum content".

But the Guidelines cannot be implemented for assessment of learners with limited health conditions being educated in special and general educational institutions (in special educational and inclusive educational classrooms) (1.2.2.). The Guidelines also do not mention any other special needs in education.

c. Is there guidance/procedures on providing access to tests/examinations when learners need additional support/reasonable adjustments?(e.g. adapted materials, extra time etc.)

£ No £ No information available × **Yes (partially)**

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

Learners with limited health conditions are provided with some additional support for final general school graduation examination (extra time, individual examination observer).

According to "The Guidelines on The Final Examination (Attestation) of Learners Enrolled to General Education" (The Cabinet of Ministries of AR, Order #498, Dec 12, 2016.

<http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/34466>):

"2.5. The State Examination Center creates conducive conditions for organization of graduation examination of persons with disabilities. Persons with visual impairment belonging to the 1st group of disabilities are provided with an individual observer and their examination time is extended for 1 more hour.

2.6. Final Attestation of pupils who did not participate in the final graduation examination at the end of lower secondary and full secondary education can be considered by the Center case by case at the individual basis based on either appeal of general educational institution or individual appeal. ...".

Prior to the examination, these individuals apply to the State Examination Center for registration. Special halls are organized for these persons and observers are appointed individually, depending on their degree of limitation.

According to anecdotal evidences, learners with visual impairment are provided with oral reproduction of written tests, but no formal regulations were found.

d. Are there specific arrangements and/or formal procedures to support the assessment of the specific needs of learners who need additional support in their learning? (e.g. those with disabilities)

£ No £ No information available × **Yes, partially**

If yes, please give a description, including clear information on the focus of needs identification procedures and who is involved in the procedures (learners, parents, professionals):

If no, please give further information:

The Law on Education of Children with Limited Health Conditions (Special Education Law (2001, <http://www.e-ganun.az/framework/4353>) states several provisions re assessment of the specific needs of learners who need additional support in their learning-those with disabilities: need for speech therapy services for pupils in general educational institutions (Article 14); rehabilitation services for those pupils with severe disabilities and health conditions (Article 15). According to the Law (Article 21), PMPCs provide recommendations on organization of special education of children with limited health conditions to parents/legal guardians, pedagogical staff..." (21.3.7.).

Also according to newly developed Guidelines on Organization of Psychological Services in general educational institutions (text is not available, submitted to the Cabinet of Ministries of AR for the approval) school psychologists will be conducting psychological diagnostic assessment of pupils, creating their psychological "passports", etc.

e. Is ICT used in the assessment of vulnerable groups?

£ No × **No information available** £ Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

5.18 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, studies, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 relating to issues around curricula, learning materials and assessment processes.

"Towards Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education: Opportunities for Action. Retrieved from:

<http://edcon.ada.edu.az/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Download-File-1.pdf>

A Summary of Key Findings:

Gender role disparity represented in general school textbooks, for example

Themes in Men's Gender Roles: income provider, smart, dominant, patriotic, hero, brave man

Themes in Women's Gender Roles: nurturer/ care giver mothers, housewives, dedicative, courageous women.

Women are represented 3 times less in Azerbaijani literature textbooks.

High level of gender stereotypes: Women are excluded, or representation quality was much lower.

Female characters were mostly presented in domestic roles with more passive identity attributes.

Highest level of gap between two genders; Females are less represented in occupational roles

Recommendations:

Other subject textbooks need to be analyzed whether they are gender sensitive or not.

Educators should also be trained with techniques that empower them to tackle with gender-based materials, deliver them students in an unprejudiced way.

Textbook writers should analyze the textbooks for reduction of male dominance as much as possible.

Aliyeva, E. An Overview of the National Curriculum Development Process for Azerbaijan, The Online Journal of New Horizons in Education – January 2016 Volume 6, Issue 1. Retrieved from: <https://www.tojned.net/journals/tojned/articles/v06i01/v06i01-03.pdf>

A Summary of Key Findings and Recommendations

Performance level recommended for Azerbaijan. Three levels of performance are recommended to Azerbaijani curricula: Novice, Apprentice, and Proficiency.

To add core values to Azerbaijani curricula:

Inclusive: The national curriculum addresses the needs for all students in all schools, irrespective of educational setting, with access to a wide and empowering range of knowledge, skills and values. This curriculum recognizes and accommodates different starting points, learning rates, and previous experiences of individual students or group of students. Students' cultures, physical or mental challenges, race, class, and gender are respected individually while at the same fostering the common goals and aspirations of all students.

Flexibility. The curriculum must be adaptable to the particular needs of different schools and communities. It must also be responsive to social and technological change and meet students' needs arising from that change process. In particular, the curriculum must encourage effective use of new technologies as tools for learning and production. The framework provides the means to balance what is common to the education of all students with the kind of flexibility and openness required for education in the 21st century; **Collaboration.** Education is the shared responsibility of students, teachers, parents, tertiary educators and the community. Successful implementation of the curriculum framework requires a collaborative approach to planning by all concerned and a collective responsibility for students' achievement of the intended outcomes.

Philosophy The philosophy of specifically, the philosophy related to curriculum development should ensure that students acquire mastery of basic learning in basic skills and the ability to think independently and critically. These outcomes should be ordered toward understanding and believing in the Azerbaijan way of life, to act democratically in their relationships with others, to develop in themselves attitudes of respect and helpfulness towards others, to want and to be able to perform well some portion of the work of the world, and to utilized the acquired knowledge and skills necessary to do this with satisfaction to themselves and society

Assessments Assessment provides for judging the quality of education delivered to the students relative to the goals and expectations delineated in the curriculum. Both within and between assessments should be used with the first form of assessment, i.e., within assessment, based upon multiple classroom indicators. Within assessments provide information regarding the actual content of individual student achievement while between assessment provides for a rank or ordinal level of achievement relative to the population that has been used to establish the norm.

Johnstone, C., Burton, L. "Out of the Box": A Formative Evaluation of Active Learning Policy and Practice. DRAFT Active Learning Evaluation. Miske Witt & Associates Inc. UNICEF Azerbaijan, December 6, 2013 5 Retrieved from:

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Christopher_Johnstone3/publication/281785913_Out_of_the_Box_A_Formative_Evaluation_of_Active_Learning_Policy_and_Practice/links/55f8b35608aeba1d9f10ae1d.pdf

A Summary of Key Recommendations

Determine the extent to which teachers utilize formative assessment data to inform future lessons.

Work with NGOs and school districts to design a coaching/school-based professional learning community model of professional development that will eventually replace the current 10-day training model. Emphasize the role of coaches to build teacher capacity for building opportunities for critical thinking and problem-solving.

Work with NGOs and school districts to develop and implement training for AL coaches

Create a structure for sustaining the AL coaching/school-based professional learning community model

Work with NGOs and school districts to develop and implement training for school directors and deputy directors on AL methods and school-based professional learning communities.

Karimova, Y., Kazimzade, E., Mikayilova, U. The Second Education Development Project. Project Achievements Indicators Study. Sigma Research Center for Development and International Collaboration. Baku, December 2015. Report to MoE Azerbaijan and World Bank.

5.19 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to curricula, learning materials and assessment processes in the country?

Challenges:

General education curricula were developed and approved about 10 years ago. Considering that inclusion has become a priority in national education policy which is reflected in key strategic documents and state program, curricula are lacking inclusion as a principles or core value. As a consequence, the curricula accept all children as equal and typical, and treat them all similarly. However, this equity brings about the unified approach to children without understanding and acceptance of special needs in education, and differentiating content, learning materials and assessment based on those special needs. This lack of flexibility also brings about similar conclusions re learning materials and assessment.

In the school curriculum/subjects content and textbook a positive images of Children with disabilities are not reflected well.

Opportunities:

General education curricula must be renewed and/or updated with the most recent developments in the field of education both national and international. The concept of equity should be explored to be accepted not as equity of inputs only, but outputs as well. A concept of special needs should be introduced and guide curriculum and learning materials development, as well as assessment. All these will be in line with national and state strategic priorities.

There is a need to amend Article 10 of the Law on Education relating to the school curriculum to include public awareness campaigns and/or learning resources to promote a positive image of persons and children with disabilities.

Textbook Evaluation criteria on inclusiveness within State Textbooks Approval Policy includes two categories: (1) application of differentiated approach in learning and (2) respect to diversity.

Recently government approved the new Procedures on Textbook Development that make possible to purchase and use the educational resources based on the list of suggested supplementary learning materials, teachers guidebooks approved by School Pedagogical Council. This rule gives the opportunity for schools to choose and use the resource for inclusive education.

Section 6: Teachers and support personnel

How are staff in schools prepared to accommodate students of all abilities and backgrounds, in terms of their initial training, continuing professional development and their attitudes to inclusion?

5.20 Please list type of staff, their numbers and required level of education for the position in different type of educational institutions

Type of staff	Number	Required education	Comment
Mainstream schools			
Professional staff (psychologists, pedagogues, social pedagogues, speech and other types of therapists)	154 808	<p>Bachelor's degree is required for professional staff except primary teachers</p> <p>Psychologist Degree of field: educational psychology, General Psychology or Social Psychological Service in Education</p> <p>Pedagogues (teachers) Degree in fields: Primary education (either BA or vocational degree), subject pedagogy</p>	<p>Source: The State Statistic Committee 2019 https://www.stat.gov.az/source/education</p> <p>The speech therapists, correctional pedagogues and school psychologists positions are included to the staff composition of all types of schools. However there is a shortage of those specialists in the mainstream schools.</p> <p>https://dejure.az/az/legislation/thsil-sahsi-iscilrinin-gulluqcu-vziflrinin-vahid-tarif-ixtisas-sorgu-kitabcasi</p> <p>Decree of the Ministry of Labour & Social Protection, 1997</p> <p>Needs Assessment on Teachers in general education and vocational lyceum, rules on Teachers recruitment and replacement, Ministry of Education, 2015</p> <p>The order # 511 dated on 29.04.2015 http://baku.edu.gov.az/az/page/263/730</p> <p>Since 2019 the role and functions of school psychologists were strengthened at policies level: Amended Education Law 2019, Law on Psychological Support 2019:</p> <p>Based on data 2019 the school psychologist employment equals 64%. And currently 2 500 school psychologists work at schools</p> <p>(From interview with MOE official published in newspaper)</p>

		<p>Social pedagogues and other professionals</p> <p>MA degree in Social and Psychological Service in Education</p> <p>BA Degree in fields: Correctional Pedagogy</p>	<p>https://azpost.info/azərbaycandaki-orta-məktəblərin-yalniz-64-faizində-psixoloq-var/</p> <p>NOTE: The separate data on teachers & other professionals is not available.</p> <p>The speech therapists, correctional pedagogues and school psychologists positions are included to the staff composition of all types of schools. However there is a shortage of those specialists in the mainstream schools. Speech therapists may be upon the school request if there are many children with speech difficulties (300 children). The regulation is not clear how it could be done. But the most important that speech therapists are not available in mainstream schools</p> <p>Source: Baku State University (BSU) Psychology Social Science Department website http://sociology.bsu.edu.az/az/content/62ocial_elmlr_v_psixologiya_fakltsi_zr_ixtisaslar</p>
Teacher Assistants (specify role and add rows as required)	NA	<p>Pedagogical vocational degree for initial level position is required</p> <p>Bachelor's degree is required for advanced level</p>	<p>Source: Employment classification for General Education https://dejure.az/az/legislation/thsil-sahsi-iscilrinin-gulluqcu-vziflrinin-vahid-tarif-ixtisas-sorgu-kitabcasi</p> <p>Decree of the Ministry of Labour & Social Protection, 1997</p> <p>In accordance with The pilot IE schools do not have teacher assistants, but has a correctional pedagogue and speech-therapist. (From the interview with school principal of IE pilot school)</p> <p>De-jure the job description for teacher assistant is adjusted by Unified Wage Scale for Employees in Education Sector. De-facto teacher assistants are not available in mainstream schools.</p>
<u>Role of Teachers Assistants</u>	<u>NA</u>		<p>The teacher's assistant deals with issues related to the education of persons with disabilities (special education), legislation on child rights, as well as decisions made on children with disabilities.</p>

			<p>The teacher's assistant involved In the inclusive education classes, where the education of children with disabilities is organized according to their individual development, plan and subject curriculum; conducts consultations with the school psychologist and speech therapist to identify the developmental characteristics of children with disabilities and to conduct appropriate educational work, updates the student's parents or legal guardians about the students achievement in their mental and physical development; advises on career development.</p> <p>Source: Employment classification for General Education. Decree of the Ministry of Labour & Social Protection, 1997</p> <p>https://dejure.az/az/legislation/thsil-sahsi-iscilrinin-gulluqcu-vziflrinin-vahid-tarif-ixtisas-sorgu-kitabcasi</p>
School medical officer and/or nurse	M	Medical training	<p>Duties: To provide first-line medical assistance to students and staff; to be responsible for the delivery of assessment and treatment of minor illness and injuries ; to deliver care within the boundaries of the role, focusing on student well-being and health education; to administer vaccination and preventive measurement on health support at school.</p> <p>Professional activities reflected in the Degree on Medical service in educational institutions № 218, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated in 2010</p> <p>http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/21005</p>
Mentor on Inclusive education	M		<p>Duties. This position exists at Centre on Learning support of Baku City Education Department. The main functions are the followings to provide support to school teachers on inclusive education</p>

			<p>Organizes an awareness-raising work on the essence, importance and philosophy of inclusive education. Develops mechanisms adapted to the Azerbaijani education system to transform schools into an inclusive educational institution, create and promote an inclusion environment. The world is constantly investigating the innovations in the field of inclusive education and, accordingly, organizes enlightenment. Collaborates with existing schools in providing inclusive education, learns from their experiences, and promotes successful practices in schools. Provides suggestions and recommendations to teachers on how to adapt the curriculum to the needs of students involved in inclusive education, to select the appropriate teaching methods. Provides advice on the inclusion of teachers in schools with inclusive component training in this area. Develops evaluation criteria and framework documents to assess teachers' involvement in inclusive education. Inclusive education provides methodological support to schools in the field of ongoing applied research in applied classrooms. Prepares proposals to organize parent education activities in inclusive education.</p> <p>http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/37434</p>
School psychologist	<u>2 500</u>	Degree of field: educational psychology, General Psychology or Social & Psychological Service in Education	<p>Duties: conducting diagnostic tests and assessments for pupils/students, incl. assessing their individual developmental and educational needs and psychological and physical abilities, in order to identify their strengths, predispositions, interests and aptitudes or talents, and reasons behind educational failure or difficulties in functioning, incl. barriers and constraints which make it difficult for them to function and participate in the life of the school; assessing educational situations in the school in order to address educational problems which create barriers or constraints to active and full participation of pupils/students in the life of the school providing psychological and pedagogical / educational support to</p>

			<p>pupils/students in line with the needs identified, 65social65r65g effects of development disorders; preventing behavioral disorders; initiating various types of support within the school and pupils'/students' environment outside the school; developing and conducting psychological support programmed; supporting parents and teachers in the assessment and development of pupils'/students' individual abilities, predispositions and aptitudes or talents; working in Psychological Medical Pedagogical Commissions, Commissions on Minors' Affaires & Protection of their Rights and other relevant bodies</p> <p>Note: The data gathered from interview with MOE officer (https://lent.az/news/332002)</p>
Social pedagogue roles and functions	<u>NA</u>	Degree of field: Social pedagogue, or Social Psychological Service in Education	<p>Duties. Carries out activities on students upbringing, education, development and social protection, identifies students psycho-medical-pedagogical characteristics and social environment and living conditions; assesses the interests and needs of students, difficulties, controversial situations, behavioural issues and provides social support and assistance; mediates and facilitates cooperation between students, educational institutions, families, various social services workers, local executive bodies and other administrative bodies. Determines the goals, methods, forms of social and pedagogical work, takes measures to address personal and various social problems, social protection and social assistance, and the rights and freedoms of pupils (educated, child) persons; organizes various types of social activities , participates in the development and approval of social projects and programs aimed at the development of social initiatives; supports humane, morally healthy relationships in the social environment, the healthy safe psychological environment</p>

			<p>Coordinate the social assistance to children in emergency (deprived of parental care, early pregnancy, homeless)</p> <p>De-jure the job description for social pedagogue is adjusted by Unified Wage Scale for Employees in Education Sector. De-facto social pedagogues are not available in mainstream schools.</p> <p>2017 Order #13-1 Decree of Ministry of Labour & Social Protection</p> <p>http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/37434</p>
Special schools			
Teachers	M	Bachelor's degree is required	<p>The duties are the same as in general schools</p> <p>NOTE: The separate data on teachers in special schools and boarding schools for CWD is not available</p>
Professional staff (psychologists, pedagogues, social pedagogues, speech and other types of therapists)	1422	Bachelor's degree is required for professional staff	<p>NOTE: Provisional estimates of teaching & professional staff in special schools and boarding schools for CWD. The State Statistical Committee 2019</p> <p>https://www.stat.gov.az/source/education</p>
Teacher Assistants (specify role and add rows as required)	M	<p>Pedagogical vocational degree for initial level position is required</p> <p>Bachelor's degree is required for advanced level</p>	The duties are the same as in general schools
Correctional pedagogue (special education specialist)	M	A degree in the field of Correctional pedagogy is required	<p>Duties: Correctional pedagogue manages and implements the comprehensive plan of activities on the development of children and youth and protect their educational rights in general and special schools, specialised boarding schools and boarding schools with integrated education, rehabilitation centres within the</p>

			<p>existing opportunities and conditions; provides guidance and assistance to teachers in identifying special educational needs of children; provides recommendations to teachers and parents on the education of children with special needs and the setting up the measurements of children's academic achievements; monitors and coordinates the process of effective cooperation between teachers and other professionals to ensure education of a child with special needs; Provides advice to parents on the development, treatment and rehabilitation of children, directs them to specialists and services, closely participates in the work of Psychological-Medical-Pedagogical Commissions (PMPC); carries out individual and integrated group work with children with special educational needs, helps them in adaptation to the social environment, correct and develop speech abilities; supports the children learning and upgrading process.</p> <p>2017 Order #13-1 Decree of Ministry of Labour & Social Protection</p> <p>http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/37434</p>
Other institutions offering education if they exist (i.e. children's homes, young offenders institutions etc).			
Teachers	M	Bachelor's degree is required	The duties are the same as in general schools
Professional staff (psychologists, pedagogues, social pedagogues, speech and other types of therapists)	M	Bachelor's degree is required for professional staff	In according to Exemplary Charter for Special educational open and closed types of institutions for young offenders (approved 2003) professional staff members coordinate, implement and provide monitoring of medical, psychological services provision including educational provision within State Curriculum Standards.

Teacher Assistants (specify role and add rows as required)	M	Specialised pedagogical vocational degree for initial level position is required Bachelor's degree is required for advanced level	
Inspectors	M		Inspectors are employed by district executive committees: collects data on children deprived of parental care. http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/1034
Inspectors (police officers)	M		Child inspectors are special police officers dealing exclusively with children with deviant social behaviour, juvenile offenders in conflict with the law.
<i>Others (please specify and add rows as required)</i>			

5.21 Please indicate if education/training on inclusion in education is available for the following groups of professionals.

Type of staff	Yes	No	No information	If yes please state if pre- or in-service, mandatory or optional, who provides education/training and summary of content
Head teachers/School directors	YES			<p>inclusive education for school – In-service short-term training for school principals, mandatory.</p> <p>Provider: Educators professional development Institute</p> <p>Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principles and values of Inclusion - What is the role and responsibilities of school principals to support IE

			Source: http://www.tipii.edu.az
Teachers	YES		<p>Educators professional development Institute offers the following courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Course on Learning in Inclusive classrooms - Optional in-service teacher training <p>Provider: Educators professional development Institute</p> <p>Content:</p> <p>Inclusive Education: theoretical and practical considerations. http://www.tipii.edu.az/noduploads/document/8588_oxu-materiali-inkluziv-tahsil.pdf</p> <p>Course on IE/compulsory</p> <p>Provider: Azerbaijan State Pedagogy University</p> <p>Content: Comprehensive package of teacher development program on inclusive education has been developed under the EU project on Readiness of Teachers for Inclusive Education. The package consists of 4 program (Teacher development methods, rights based inclusive education, cooperation, creating inclusive classroom practice).</p> <p>NOTE: The course was designed within EU Project on Teacher Readiness for Inclusive Education and will be launched in 2020-2021 academic year</p> <p>Source: Project information fact sheet, 2019 https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/rdpi_inclusive_educ_pif_rev_0.pdf</p>
Teacher Assistants	Yes		In current Pilot IE Project correctional pedagogues takes the responsibilities of Teachers Assistants as well. So educational program for correctional pedagogues provided by Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University that might be considered as training for this type of professionals.
Professional Staff	Yes		In 2019-2020 UNICEF and Regional Development Public Union developed and implemented training on IE for school principals and non-teaching school staff. The training module provided by ASPU and Teacher Professional Development Institute.

			Source: Project presentation on Modernizing of Education System in Azerbaijan through the Involment of Civil Society & Introducing Inclusive Education (in PPP format /available upon the request)
Teacher Trainers	Yes		<p>NOTE 1. Since Azerbaijan committed to Inclusive education agenda local and international organizations were providing various TOT programmes. However, there is no clear data on the number of teachers trainers and a challenge caused by recognition of certificates proving skills of trained persons and lack of qualification standards.</p> <p>NOTE 2: New developments in TOT system related to project funded by EU. More than 300 Teachers trainers are expected to be trained and certified within EU Project lead by UNICEF and Regional Development Public Union. Those trainers are first cohort of institutionalised teachers trainers who will be involved in training conducting in 9 Resource centers for teachers, parents and students throughout the country and regional branches of ASPU</p> <p>Source: Project information fact sheet, 2019 https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/rdpu_inclusive_edu_pif_rev_0.pdf</p> <p>Ensure Readiness of Teachers for Inclusive Education. Project information fact sheet, 2019 https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/unicef_ie_pif_rev.pdf</p>

a. If you answered no to any of the above, please provide further information:

5.22Is education and training of teachers aligned with national policy goals on inclusive education?

No No information available Yes

If yes, please give a description.

All in-service and preservice training institutions recognize the state policy with the national agenda on inclusion, as stipulated in the State Programme on Inclusive Education, Law on Special Education and other related legislation frameworks.

In 2019 ASPU developed and consulted with EU project consultancy team revised curriculum and syllabus for the Specialty of the Correctional Pedagogy to align the topics and curriculum content better with international and national policy directions on inclusive education.

If no, please give further information:

5.23 With respect to the main initial teacher education programmes, describe how inclusion in education is addressed in it (i.e. requirement for number of academic credits under European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), subjects and topics covered, focus etc).

HE institutions	Degree	Subject /status	# of working hours	Content	Note
Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University (ASPU) and branches in 6 regions					
Specialty: Corrective Pedagogy	BA	Inclusive education/ mandatory	150	The main features, principles of inclusive education and the organization of pedagogical work with students with special needs Legislation basis Additional education.	The main learning outcomes the basic knowledge and skills on IE <i>Source: Recommendation report pre-service teacher training (2019) prepared by consultancy team of Project on Teacher readiness for inclusive education.</i>
Specialty: Corrective Pedagogy	MA	Attributes of professional s of Teachers	60	Typology of children with disabilities	The main learning outcome gathering basic teaching skills on special education support to children with disabilities

		at Inclusive Schools Corrective pedagogy/ mandatory			Source: the same
Specialty: Social and Psychological Services in Education	BA	Inclusive education / mandatory	150	The main features, principles of inclusive education and the organization of pedagogical work with students with special needs Legislation basis Additional education.	
Baku State University					
Specialty: Social and Psychological Services in Education (2 level)	BA	Inclusive education issues/ mandatory	60	Introduction to IE Definition of IE, principles & values of IE Psychological characteristics of children with special needs	Advanced course on IE values and principles Source: http://sociology.bsu.edu.az/az/content/72social_elmlr_v_psixologiya_fakltsi_zr_ixtisaslar From interview with vice dean of BSU Social Science & Psychology Department Irana 15/03/20

				Support to learning of children with special needs Inclusive education for Children by type of impairment	
Specialty: Social and Psychological Services in Education (4 level)	BA	Inclusive Education/mandatory	45	Introduction to pedagogy of children with special needs	The main learning outcome is getting the IE basic knowledge on inclusive education Source: the same
All specialties at university	BA	Introduction to Gender studies/Optional	30	Introduction to gender definition, gender equity, gender issues in education	http://sociology.bsu.edu.az/az/content/

5.24 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 relating to initial teacher education and/or professional development issues.

- Modernizing the Education System in Azerbaijan through the Involvement of Civil Society and the Introduction of Inclusive Education

Recommendations for Pre-service Teacher Training for Inclusive Education, 2019. EU funded project led by Regional Development Public Union

The report aimed at addressing gaps in teacher quality in pre-service and in-service teacher education. The consultancy team developed recommendations on including Inclusive Education topics to all Specialties within Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University (ASPU):

- Align the content of the inclusive education topic with international and national policies on inclusive education

- Use the Inclusive Education Teacher Development Programmes to develop the topic syllabus and related materials. The programmes are based on international evidence of effective teacher development for inclusive education and are based on the UNCRPD and GC4
- Ensure students first fully understand the basic theoretical concepts before introducing practical strategies. It is important to build a strong foundation and inclusive values first, to avoid superficial and unsustainable implementation. The Inclusive Education Teacher Development Programmes provide an example of how to move from theory, over values and general skills to specific teaching approaches and classroom strategies.
- Try not to overload the topic with content and theory. It is important to provide enough time for students to process their learning through individual and collaborative reflection. It is furthermore helpful to provide opportunities for practical experiences. This can either be through internships, interviews, classroom observations or role plays.

Authors propose short-term, medium term and long term actions in order Correctional Pedagogy Speciality to gradually reform entire curriculum for Correctional Pedagogy Specialty at ASPU to prepare students better for their role in inclusive education and to align the course with international and national policies on inclusive education.

Mikayilova, U., Kazimzade E. Teachers as Reflective learners. *Voprosy obrazovaniya / Educational Studies*. Moscow. 2016. No 2. P. 125–145 <https://vo.hse.ru/data/2016/07/04/1116612820/Mikailova%202-2016%20EN.pdf>

This paper builds on current research trends on professional teacher development in Eurasian countries, including the diversification of teacher training, opportunities for professional teacher networking, and developing a collaborative community culture within schools and the broader education community. This study aims to explore teacher beliefs and thoughts on the effectiveness of professional development, specifically in the context of the Education Sector Reform Project (ESRP), implemented in Azerbaijan during 2008–2013. This study analyzes quantitative data from two surveys—the teacher self-assessment and the education reforms assessment.

In the prevailing conventional teacher training system, teachers are perceived as beneficiaries of professional development programs. However, over the last decade, policy-makers are beginning to attach greater importance to professional development where teachers are seen as learners that are encouraged to make professional development decisions based on their needs. Including teachers in the design of professional teacher development programs might be suggested as a way to ensure learning activities have a greater impact on the quality of teaching. Such a participatory approach that strengthens teachers' roles as decision makers in their professional development has the potential to advance teacher support during education reforms. Education researchers also have an important role as facilitators mediating dialogue between teachers and policy-makers in order to build an effective partnership within the education community.

5.25 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to teachers and support personnel in the country?

Challenges

The current period in Azerbaijan education might be defined as a transitioning stage from decreasing support to Special Education to support of Inclusive Education.

There are many common misconceptions and stereotypes which challenge inclusive pedagogy values in teaching which are still conceptualised based on medical model of disabilities.

The functions of inclusive education teacher is relatively new. There are still some common misunderstandings of the roles and responsibilities of inclusive education teachers. According to anecdotal evidences, some teachers in inclusive education still think that they deal with the whole class while a teacher assistant is responsible for education of a child with disabilities. De jure the position of teacher assistant are adjusted by labor legislation but mainstream schools are not eligible to employ the additional staff due to limited financial autonomy. There is a need for political and financial structural changes at secondary education to support mainstream schools in adoption and maintaining inclusive education.

The teacher training system is facing the following challenges that negatively impact effective transition from correctional pedagogy (special education) to inclusive education caused the following challenges

Hidden curriculum based on special education values and approaches

Poor coordination of curriculum and syllabuses revisions between universities and in-service teacher institutions

Another challenge is a poor interdisciplinary connections between IE related subjects and specialties included to pre-service teachers curricula. In spite prioritizing inclusive education at the national level, the education system still keeps two tracks of learning (regular and special). Still all the qualified professionals capable and mandated to support children in need are accumulated at special schools while regular schools mainly have one psychologist on staff. So, through including children with special needs to regular schools the system increases a load on and responsibility of regular teachers without providing adequate and qualified support.

Opportunities: One of directions of The State Strategy on education development (2013) is development of a competent teacher, teacher training programs on inclusive education. So, this process has started and is developing on ongoing basis.

Also in the next 5 years is expected create learning opportunities for up 5,000 children with disabilities immediately up to and up to 20,000 children across the country. These outcomes are envisaged as impact of the EU funded project on Expanding Quality Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities Azerbaijan led by MOE, UNICEF and RDPU

Schools

How does the work of schools, school management and leadership impact on access, participation and provision of equitable opportunities for all learners?

9.1 Who is excluded from attending any form of school?

According to the Law of Education (2009, 2019) and MoE's rules for school admissions there are no any group of children that could be excluded from attending any form of school. There are several types of school provision in the Republic of Azerbaijan: special (support) schools (for children with various types of impairment), boarding schools, home schooling and general education schools.

In order to be enrolled to a support school or a boarding school, parents of a child of respective age (usually 6-7 years old) are recommended to apply to the local PMPC for the assessment; and based on that assessment a child is provided with the access to either support, or boarding school. The Commission decision is basically dependent on the level of disability.

When it comes to general education schools, children are accepted based on location principle, which means that all children living in a specific area should be accepted by the local school. Based on this principle, children with disabilities could be accepted, as schools have no justified basis to refuse from admissions. During the education process things can change – if a child does not cope with the requirements of general education program (for many various reasons), parents are advised by the schools to apply for the assessment to the aforementioned PMPC. If parents follow school's recommendation, a child with diagnosed disability could be transferred either to a support school, or provided with home schooling. Home schooling is an educational service that could be provided for children with mental or physical disabilities and equally to children with a physical disease that may create difficulty travelling and/or spending long time in a school (there is a list of such diseases that qualify applicant for receiving home schooling service).

Please give reasons for this group being excluded from attending school and describe any form of alternative provision made for them?

Children with special needs enrolled to homeschooling.

Home schooling becomes an option in cases of children with special needs. Home-schooling education is carried out in accordance with the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of May 10, 2002, No. 77. PMPC operates under each district (city) education department. Pupils with disabilities (somatic, neurological, surgical, skin, and psychoneurological diseases) based on PMPC decision are eligible to study at home. According to the rules, children with disabilities can be educated at home or in a secondary school level in the area where the student lives. Home-schooled children must demonstrate learning by taking a comprehensive exam, which is proctored by the regional representative for Ministry of Education. This way, pupils will eventually receive the certification as an officially recognized document for the next level of education.

9.2 Are there issues around the over- and under-representation of different vulnerable groups in different school settings?

£ No £ No information available **X Yes**

If yes, please give a description and provide any data/evidence that is available

There is no reliable data and evidence-based research on over and under-representation of different vulnerable groups in different school settings.

1) Early marriages

There is data presented in national and international reports on school drop- out cases among girls caused by early marriages. 11% of girls in Azerbaijan are married before the age of 18 and 2% are married before their 15th birthday. Rates of child marriage are highest in villages on the Absheron peninsula, in the southern regions located alongside with the border with Iran, (Lenkaran, Lerik, Yardimli, Masally), northern (Guba) regions, and in the Absheron, Sabunchu, Nardaran, Garadagh and Azizbekov districts of the country's capital, Baku.

Source: <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/child-marriage/azerbaijan/>

2) Social economics disadvantages (poverty) and disabilities

The many CWLHC from IDP families, living in frontline villages cannot get educational support due to shortage of professionals. <https://oc-media.org/features/children-with-disabilities-are-being-left-behind-in-azerbaijans-frontline-villages/>

3) Roma children. According to anecdotal evidences, there are some small Roma communities in Azerbaijan whose children do not attend schools. No research, no documented evidences on that are available.

If no, please give further information:

9.3 Please give details on the main admissions criteria for schools.

a. Highlight any issues with the national polices.

Admission of pupils to comprehensive schools is carried out on I and X classes.

Since recently, the admission of pupils to the first class is conducted on-line.

Generally, mentally and physically “healthy” (this must be proved by a health certificate) children who have reached their 6th birthday before September 15 (including September 15) are admitted to the first class of secondary schools.

The admission of children to the first classes is conducted based on the application of one of the parents (other legal representative). The medical record of children, certified copies of birth certificate shall be attached to the application. In the application of a parent (other legal representative) shall be reflected the main and foreign languages which the child will learn, and information on whether or not he attended preschool education.

All applications must be registered and submitted online <https://mektebeqebul.edu.az/az/>

Source: Rules for acceptance and placement of pupils to comprehensive schools <https://edu.gov.az/en/page/303/533>

b. Where schools set their own admissions criteria, please outline any impact on inclusion.

There are EIs for talented children -lyceums, gymnasia providing educational services to children successfully graduated from primary schools (since 5th grade). School administration implements a selective admission to middle level based on exams designed for identification/admission of learners from group so-called gifted or talented children. The selection exam consisting of IQ tests, diagnosis of child readiness to school education that create a difficulty for children who are not taking special tuition classes before school admission. In fact, such selection procedures create a great challenge for children from vulnerable groups to be admitted to those type of schools.

9.4 Please provide information on the different forms of support that are available to learners in schools.

a. Inclusive pedagogy, personalised learning and universal design approaches

No No information available Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

b. counselling and mentoring possibilities

No No information available Yes

If yes, please give a description.

Regular general schools do not have such opportunities

If no, please give further information:

c. input from specialist teachers/therapists

No No information available Yes

If yes, please give a description.

This support is available in special school and boarding institutions only

If no, please give further information:

d. input from learning support assistants

No No information available Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

Pls see answer in c.

e. availability of ICT/ assistive technology

No No information available Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

f. Please describe any other forms of support available.

9.5 Please give a description of the strategies in place for practically supporting mainstream school staff teams to increase their capacity to be inclusive and to improve access, participation and achievement for all learners.

Strategy	Description of the focus
<p>Since 2017 MOE organises Annual Competition on School Grants http://www.grants.edu.az/</p>	<p>MOE provides funding to support (1) local general education schools and (2) individual teachers in partnership with (a) local communities or (b) a consortium of schools. The purpose of this program is to provide competitive grants to applicants with a record of improving school environments, student achievements and teaching and learning practices, in order to expand the implementation of, and investment in, innovative practices that are demonstrated to have an impact on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, supporting conducive school climate, increasing school leadership capacity, to support quality psychological, social counselling, to disseminate the knowledge about CWD, to empower teachers as inclusive education actors.</p> <p>These grants will (1) allow eligible entities to expand and develop innovative practices that can serve as models of best practices, (2) allow eligible entities to work in partnership with the private sector and communities, NGOs and (3) identify and document best practices that can be shared and taken to scale based on demonstrated success.</p> <p>One of the priority announced in Grant competition is Public Awareness Campaign on inclusive Education among school communities and Support to Psychological service in school.</p> <p>http://www.grants.edu.az</p>
<p>Program on Improving the education and career development of persons with disabilities and CWLHC</p>	<p>Improving the organization of education for children and youth with disabilities, creating conditions for their involvement in inclusive education (preschool, primary, secondary, technical, vocational and higher education).</p> <p>Source: Law on Improving the education and vocational guidance of people with disabilities and children with disabilities. 2018 http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/39591</p>
<p>...</p>	

9.6 Please provide information regarding school buildings and infrastructure.

a. Are there schools that face infrastructure issues that are barriers to inclusion?

X No £ No information available £ Yes

If yes, please give a description and provide information on what barriers, how they are monitored and any data/evidence that is available.

If no, please give further information:

The physical access for children with disabilities is provided in a few schools. Most of school buildings were built in Soviet time without any considerations to ensure accessibility for CWD.

b. Are there strategies and/or initiatives to improve school buildings and infrastructure?

£ No £ No information available X Yes

If yes, please describe the strategies, their aim and focus.

Strategy	Description of the focus
Program on Improving the education and career development of persons with disabilities and CWLHC 2014-2018	Adaptation of the existing infrastructure in educational institutions to ensure access of persons with disabilities and children with disabilities. http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/39591

9.7 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) from any recent reports, systematic evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of the school system, potentially drawing on information from school inspections and / or school self-review work.

Exploring five international case studies of leadership policy, preparation, and practice under the framework of policy borrowing and adaptation, Magno attempts to understand and account for commonalities and differences across 5 country contexts including Azerbaijan. approaches are being formulated and accepted, including an examination of motivations, influencers, actors, institutions, and implementation processes. global political objectives to improve schools by increasing accountability, transparency, and professionalism. This exploratory and descriptive study focused on a whole-school level where school leadership primarily resides. In chapter on Azerbaijan case the following questions are addressed: How leadership is approached in national context? How school leaders address the challenges of school improvement by increasing accountability, transparency and professionalism? How professional development programs prepare the school principals for leading inclusive school culture?

Magno, Cathryn (2014). Perspectives from Azerbaijan: Cultural Hybridity and Leadership Transparency: Forming Accountability in Azerbaijan, Chapter 4, in book Comparative Perspectives on International School Leadership: Policy, Preparation and Practice

9.8 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to schools in the country?

Challenges

- Lack of legislation and policies that ensure students with disabilities can access and participate in education on the same basis as students without disabilities.
- Schools lacking physical access for children with disabilities

- Teachers lacking experience in working with children with disabilities, as well as the necessary knowledge to use assistive technologies in the classroom
- Misinformed attitudes and long-held social norms that keep children with disabilities in isolation

Source: Inclusive Education Program, UNICEF 2019

<https://www.unicef.org/azerbaijan/inclusive-education>

- Still a child with disability and his/her parent can't make decision on own education. This decision is still made by PMPC based on medical diagnosis (personal view).

Opportunities

Inclusion is in the focus of a key strategic document—the State Strategy on Education Development; The Second already State Program on Development of Inclusive Education is approved and is being implemented; the legislation on education including terminology and language are constantly evolving –all this are evidences and opportunities that the process of inclusion is in the development.

Section 7: Communities, parents and students

How far does the wider school community support learners to access and benefit from education opportunities?

9.9 Have there been any campaigns to raise awareness of inclusion in education at national or local level?

No No information available Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

Inclusion in education for children with special needs (limited health conditions in national terminology)

has become a priority for national education policy. That's why several key documents state

the importance of raising awareness of inclusion at the national level.

Raising awareness of parents: One of the priority directions of the State Strategy on Development

of Education (2013, retrieved from <https://president.az/articles/9779>) is development of a

"Competent Parent" program for systemic pedagogical and psychological awareness of parents aimed

to ensure sustainable development of children (1.1.2)

One of the main goals of The State Program on Development of Inclusive Education of Persons with Limited Health Conditions for 2018–2024 (Approved by President of AR on Dec 14, 2017. <http://baku.edu.gov.az/upload/file/inkluziv-tehsil-dovlet-programi-2018-2024.pdf>) is conducting advocacy and public awareness ...on the importance of providing access to education and social integration of persons with limited health conditions (3.0.5.). And as a consequence, of the State Program outcomes will be increasing level of awareness of public on rights of persons with limited health conditions to education (4.0.6).

UNICEF Azerbaijan *promotes inclusive education through...public awareness campaigns*

(<https://www.unicef.org/azerbaijan/inclusive-education>): " step towards introducing inclusive education in the country... An integral part of this process should ...be the work with parents - both with parents of children with and without disabilities, so that adults, due to deep-rooted stereotypes, do not interfere with the convergence and joint development of children, even if they are so different".

The awareness campaign is very wide, and not only state and international organizations are involved in this process, but many activists as well. It is impossible to reflect here on many publications, TV talks, performances, etc being a part of this down to up conducted campaign. As one of the examples, would be relevant to refer to a Facebook group (very wide spread format for civic activism in Azerbaijan) (<https://www.facebook.com/1935861469997322/posts/2138949053021895/>)

called Inclusive Education where activists inform the following: "We start month long public awareness campaign on Inclusive Education. We provide information on activities which will be conducted within the campaign in this video. You also can review our research on the current situation with the inclusive education through the following links:

<http://idi-aze.org/.../inklziv-tehsille-bal-arasdrma-senedi-.../> conducted by the Institute of Democratic Initiatives (IDI). Another example of active use of social media platforms as space for public awareness campaign on Inclusive Education is Facebook group created by individual is virtual group called Inclusive Education and Society <https://www.facebook.com/saidahkmedli/>

MOE-funded School Grants competition on Development and Innovations in Education. One of the priority of the competition is public Awareness Campaign on Inclusive Education and Improvement of social pedagogy and psychological counselling, support conducive schools environment. During 3 year 25 projects consisting of 13 individual and 12 organizational initiatives with total budget more than 150 000 manat (approximately EUR 75 000) were funded in the last 3 years. This competition helped to encourage teachers and schools to initiate and implement the series of Innovative school-based practices, community and team building projects on Inclusive Education issues generated by teachers and schools themselves. This competition helped to make shift in the schools and teachers roles in inclusive education from passive beneficiaries of ready programs to ideas generators, project designers, managers and implementors and regional networkers.

<http://www.grants.edu.az>

9.10 Does legislation/policy support parental involvement in schools?

No No information available Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

According to Article 34 of the Law on Education (http://www.e-ganun.az/alpdata/framework/data/18/c_f_18343.htm),

parents have rights choose the education institution for their minor children; to receive information about the organization of the educational process, the quality of education, their children's attendance, behavior and the academic performance at their chosen educational institution; to participate in the management of the educational institution and collaborate with educational institutions and organizations, put forward suggestions and render voluntary donations for the improvement and upgrade of material-technical assets and technical support of the teaching process.

Parental Involvement in General education is also outlined in/regulated by several strategic documents and legislative acts.

The development concept paper "Azerbaijan 2020: Vision for Future" (https://president.az/files/future_az.pdf) was adopted in 2012. It emphasizes the importance of introducing a state-public governance model for educational institutions (EIs) through the involvement of parents into governance.

The State Strategy on Development of Education (<https://president.az/articles/9779>) was adopted in 2013.

It also strategizes the need for involvement of parents in the governance of EIs through participation in parent-teacher associations, and other self-governing bodies (3.2.3.). One of the strategic goals is the

development of the Competent Parent program is to promote the pedagogical-psychological enlightenment of parents (1.1.2).

The General Education Law (<http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/42543>) adopted in 2019, also supports the idea of democratic and participatory governance and its transparency (articles 20.6) to be ensured through creating parent councils at EIs. The law recognizes parents as participants of educational process (Article 21.0.5), their right for choosing an EI for children (Article 24), a right to be informed about organization and quality of teaching process, child behavior and learning motivation, as well as a right, participate in a governance of EI; partner with an IE and propose recommendations for improvement of teaching process and school facilities. *The General Education Law* (article 24) recognizes rights of parents to provide donations; to defend rights of their child to get education, as well as participate in organization of various events in the EI. *The General Education Law* obliges schools to collaborate with parents and keep them informed about the achievements of the child (article 23.3.11), and his/her school attendance (article 24). The Law has provisions regarding the responsibilities of parents such as the responsibility for following internal guidelines and procedures of EIs, and to partner with them. *The General Education Law* states a responsibility of parents to attract their child to education in a school. The Law makes leadership and teachers of schools responsible for collaboration with parents for the education and development of a child.

The Law on the Rights of a Child (<http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/3292>) was adopted in 1998. It recognizes parents as responsible for defense of rights and dignity of a child (article 7), to ensure a child's healthy growth and development, per universal and national values; to prepare a child for independent living, develop a full potential of a child, meet a child's both material and moral needs, and defend child interests (article 19). The Government can intervene in parents' rights only in case of emergency.

National mechanisms are established to provide participation of parents in the governance of schools.

The Exemplary Charter of General School (The Cabinet of Ministries of AR, Order #5, Jan 13, 2020; <https://edu.gov.az/az/pdf/303/3178>) states that in order to ensure democratic and transparent school governance, various governing and self-governing bodies can be created at school (General Assembly, Councils of Guardians, Parents, Pupils, as well as Pedagogical, Scientific, Methodological Councils) (5.3.).

The Statutes of General School Pedagogical Council (MoE, 2010, <http://www.tipii.edu.az/noduploads/document/mumi-tahsil-muassisasinin-pedaqoji-surasi-haqqinda.pdf>) states that a leader of a school Parent-Teacher Association is a member of a Pedagogical Council, the highest governing body of a school (2.1). Also, according to the Statutes, if in case of a discussion of relevant issues, a school principal can invite representatives of other public associations created at schools, as for example School Council, Council of Legal Guardians, child parliament, and parents to Pedagogical Council meetings with a right of having an advisory vote (2.4.).

Similar provisions are stated in The Law on Vocational Education (2019, <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/39275>) (Article 16.5) and The Exemplary Charter of Vocational Educational Institutions (The Cabinet of Ministries of AR, Order #65, Feb 26, 2019; <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/41633>) (Article 4.10.). The Exemplary Statutes of a Pedagogical Council of Vocational Educational Institutions has not been found.

The Exemplary Statutes of Pedagogical Councils of Colleges (<https://edu.gov.az/az/page/299/845>) does not mention an opportunity for participation of governing and self-governing bodies in a Pedagogical Council meetings.

9.11 Does legislation/policy support collaboration between schools and stakeholders in their local communities (e.g. services/employers)?

No No information available **Yes, partially**

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

The General Education Law (2019, <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/42543>) recognizes education authorities and municipalities (21.0.6.) and any physical persons and legal entities collaborating with the general educational institutions in the field of education (21.0.7.) as participants of the General Education.

The Law on Vocational Education (2019, <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/39275>) lists any physical or legal entities collaborating with the vocational educational institutions (17.0.7) as participants of vocational education.

Neither The General Education Law nor The Law on Vocational Education directly recognize employers as participants of general or vocational educational process (Article 21 in GEL and Article 17 in LVE).

However, The Law on Vocational Education (2019, <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/39275>) has some provisions related to employers. For example, in the Article 11 on internship at job places and education at industries mentions that students can have internship and training provided by employers (11.1.); paying extra-salary for mentoring internship to the directly involved employees of industries (11.2.); signing internship agreements with employers (11.3.).

According to the Exemplary Charter of Vocational Educational Institutions (The Cabinet of Ministries of AR, Order #65, Feb 26, 2019; <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/41633>) representatives of industries and employers can be members of a Pedagogical Council (Article 3) which is the highest governing body of vocational institutions.

9.12 Does legislation/policy support the development of learning communities in local/regional areas e.g.support for schools to work together; involvement with universities, support services to provide research evidence and development of innovative practice?

No No information available **Yes**

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

The Law on Education (http://www.e-qanun.az/alpidata/framework/data/18/c_f_18343.htm), in its article 25 on research in education system states that rese(research centers, labs, departments, etc) is conducted in research institutes, universities and its units (25.1.); research in the field of education should be innovative by nature and should

be aimed to improve existing knowledge on the history of education, education development and problems; organization and management of education, modern teaching methodology, etc (25.4.).

The Exemplary Charter of Vocational Educational Institutions (The Cabinet of Ministries of AR, Order #65, Feb 26, 2019; <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/41633>), among rights and responsibilities of vocational educational institutions lists the following research and development activities:

- To conduct research on issues relevant to activities of VEIs; create Task Forces and commissions (3.2.8.);
- To involve independent experts and specialists to own activities (3.2.9.);
- To hold conferences, consultations, seminars on issues relevant to own activities (3.2.10.);
- To survey or get advising from state authorities, local self-governing bodies, legal and physical entities (3.2.12.);
- To provide reviews, suggestions relevant to own activities, conduct analysis, prepare analytical reports (3.2.13.);
- To create own enterprises or participate in participate in the governance of other enterprises (4.2.5.).

The General Education Law (2019, <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/42543>) in its article 31 on entrepreneurship and innovative activities in the field of general education states the following:

General educational institutions can be involved in enterpruenership and innovative activities in accordance with their profile(31.1.); with this purpose to create small production; set up paid services such as interest clubs and groups, out-of-class activities, exhibitions, etc. (31.2.); to be involved in innovative activities (31.3.); to direct generated income to development of education, incentives of staff and their social protection (31.4.). For that general educational institutions are given some preferences in purchase and usage of equipment, supplies, etc. other goods necessary for these activities (31.5.).

9.13 Does legislation/policy set out a role for NGOs, DPOs, or other organisations representing vulnerable groups?

× **No Not directly** £ No information available £ Yes

If yes, please describe the role. Specify which non-governmental actors are particularly active in inclusion in education and how they operate.

If no, please give further information:

Pls see information provided in 7.2. Directly, the legislation/policy does not recognise NGOs, DPOs, or other organizations representing vulnerable groups as participants of general education process. However, parents of vulnerable or any other physical or legal entities participating in education process can formally create their own organizations/councils and be a part of the governance of EIs.

9.14 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) from any recent reports, systematic evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of parental and wider community involvement in the work of schools.

Shukakidze, Berika (2013). Comparative Study: Impact of Family, School, and Students Factors on Students Achievements in Reading in Developed (Estonia) and Developing (Azerbaijan) Countries

A Summary of Research Findings: To what extent are family-related variables associated with PISA 2009 ninth-grade reading scores in Azerbaijan? Since information regarding household financial condition is not collected under PISA 2009 international assessment more emphasis was put to analyze data regarding parents' education. Data analyses demonstrated that in Azerbaijani case a parents' education did not have statistically significant impact on students' academic performance in reading.

- Johnstone, C., Burton, L. "Out of the Box": A Formative Evaluation of Active Learning Policy and Practice. DRAFT Active Learning Evaluation. Miske Witt & Associates Inc. UNICEF Azerbaijan, December 6, 2013 5 Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Christopher_Johnstone3/publication/281785913_Out_of_the_Box_A_Formative_Evaluation_of_Active_Learning_Policy_and_Practice/links/55f8b35608aeba1d9f10ae1d.pdf

A Summary of Key Recommendations:

- Collaboratively identify the roles and responsibilities of teachers and parents in the education of a child
- Periodically revise the roles and responsibilities based on new ideas or needs
- Create or strengthen the school's parent-teacher association. Consider ways of involving parents in decision-making processes in the school.
- Maintain regular meetings between teachers and parents to discuss school improvement plans.
- Develop a communication plan for sharing important information with parents. Teach parents about the new curriculum, methods, and assessment procedures
- Conduct periodic "listening sessions" between teachers and parents to identify areas where they require further support

9.15 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to communities, parents and students in the country?

Rights of parents/legal guardians in general education can be summaries the following way: (i) to choose EI for their children; (ii) to be informed about their child; (iii) to defend rights of their children and to participate in the governance of EIs; (iv) to build partnership with EIs and to provide suggestions for improvement of teaching process and school infrastructure.

Responsibilities of parents/legal guardians in general education can be summaries the following way: (i) create conditions for a holistic development of their children, ensure they receive compulsory education; (iii) ensure their moral growth and development and respect to national and universal values.

Challenges:

General Education Policy and Legislation:

Does not differentiate parents whether their children are vulnerable or not; through this equal and unified approach general EIs may leave problems of parents of vulnerable children out of their focus and development;

Does not directly recognise NGOs, DPOs, or other organizations representing vulnerable groups as a participant (stakeholder) of educational process, unless they are set up by parents or have partnership relations with EIs. There are pros and cons of such an approach to identification of participants/stakeholders; (i) schools do not have criteria, mechanisms or guidelines, and even time to evaluate activities of various CSOs and upon that build partnership relations; (ii) through the existing rather narrow approach to defining stakeholders schools limit the available opportunities to get additional support or to refine their efforts. As an example, after a suicide of a teenager school pupil because of bullying at schools, the MoE strengthened efforts to prevent bullying at schools with means of A Friend of a Pupil project when volunteers guide and help pupils in need. This role can be played by CSOs. Another side of the problem is about the responsibility of parents when schools, GEIs and overall education community have a little of means to influence those parents who force their children to leave a school for a range of reasons from early marriages to early employment needs.

The role of parents as decision makers is not clearly defined in education policy documents. No any other legal or policy document or regulation has been found which could clearly define the role of those governing and self-governing bodies in a school governance, and how they can exercise their rights. A Law enforcement mechanism for this is needed.

For example, the MoE created a hot line for getting any complains including those of parents. If a meaningful mechanism or procedure for raising problems, and solving those problems exist in general EIs, there would not be such a strong need in this hotline.

Opportunities: Parents, partner organizations, including those which are community-based, municipalities are recognised as participants of general education process and stakeholders. Overall education system recognises the importance of parents being satisfied with quality of educational services and/or being partners with GEIs. According to anecdotal evidences, Parents themselves are active at least in urban area. They create facebook groups for the classrooms and schools, actively engage and discuss schools and teachers; are active in social media. Parents of children with disabilities create NGOs. Parents are influential force in today's education. Many important issues in education have been raised by parents. For instance, need for inclusive education for children with disabilities has been constantly pushed by parents of children with disabilities being united under various NGOs.

The great step towards the NGOs empowerment in decision making, implementation and monitoring of social policies for vulnerable people is clearly stated in the State Strategy on Development of Social Services in Azerbaijan 2020-2026 (under public discussion). In the program is stated the government commitment to Develop of rules for accreditation of non-governmental organizations operating in the field of organization of social services for vulnerable groups and definition of requirements and criteria for accreditation of organizations. In addition the role of NGOs is identified as an equal partners in the implementation of State-funded Projects on Social Protection and services in order to ensure the long term impact of those projects throughout the country.

http://sosial.gov.az/uploads/images/image_750x_5d2c2a78da75f.pdf

This is a strong basis upon which many positive issues could be brought to policy and strengthen their role.

