

Skills development for youth living with disabilities in four developing countries

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Paper commissioned for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2012, Youth and skills: Putting education to work This paper outlines some of the key challenges and opportunities regarding skills development for youth with disabilities. It focuses on those who are no longer in formal education, but who, for a variety of reasons, are not yet in formal employment. Where possible, it outlines the extent of labour force participation amongst youth living with disabilities, and discusses the barriers to participation. In order to highlight these challenges and opportunities, the paper explores the situation in four low- and middle-income countries to better understand how economic growth, or lack thereof, impacts on youth employment. The four countries selected – China, Sri Lanka, Kenya and Sierra Leone – all experience high youth unemployment rates (in line with many countries across the world) but for a variety of different reasons. All four countries have also made attempts to redress the inequities experienced by persons with disabilities, but as yet it is unclear the extent to which youth with disabilities have been impacted by these initiatives. This report examines what opportunities are available to youth with disabilities specifically, and how effective are they in facilitating social inclusion and creating sustainable employment. Using case studies to illustrate successful targeted programmes, the paper also draws together information on key policies and practices that appear to be significant components in facilitating social inclusion and creating sustainable employment opportunities.

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