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Developing Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities in Sri Lankan Universities (IncEdu)

Biannual Newsletter

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What is IncEdu?

The IncEdu project addresses an important issue in higher education in Sri Lanka that has not received adequate attention. It intends to develop a system of support for equalising opportunities for students with disabilities in Sri Lankan Universities.

The main activities of the project during the period of 3 years (2020-2023), include, creating community awareness, develop competency of staff of the partner universities in Sri Lanka and to establish a model support centre with required equipment and assistive technology.

It is believed that promoting and developing access to inclusive education should be given priority in order to treat those students without discrimination and to protect their rights.

The project partnership consists of 4 well renowned European Universities;

- *Masaryk University, Czech Republic,*
- *Zagreb University of Croatia,*
- *Transilvania University of Brasov, Romania*

and

- *Uppsala University of Sweden,*

and 4 universities from Sri Lanka:

- *University of Peradeniya*
- *University of Ruhuna,*
- *Eastern University* and
- *Sri Lanka Technological Campus.*



CREATING MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

National Universities in Sri Lanka admit a limited number of students with disabilities from among those who satisfy the minimum requirements for University admission under the category of 'special intake'. The total such number of students enrolled in national universities is small compared to overall enrolment and is limited to courses in Social Sciences and Humanities.

The small number of enrolment of students with disabilities in Universities stems mainly from the lack of awareness and capacity on the part of educators, administrators and society in general to handle their needs and requirements, as well as due to organisational obstacles.

Therefore, this project aims at addressing these issues by raising awareness among stakeholders including academic and non-academic staff of the University and policymakers in higher education, building capacity in the Universities to provide services to facilitate the needs and requirements of those students, and to creating a conducive learning environment for the students with disabilities.

It is expected that the project will have a greater impact and create more opportunities for students with disabilities in higher education by increased community/society awareness of rights, needs and requirements of those students in accessing higher education.

Main Activities of IncEdu?

- A model student support centre at the University of Peradeniya (UOP). This centre will particularly be set up in UOP and will serve as an example for the other Universities of Sri Lanka to set up their units with the updated equipment to enable more SWDs in pursuing higher Education
- Equipment assistive technology and other facilities
- Awareness activities Enhancing/creating community awareness of the needs and requirements of the SWDs can play a major role in developing support services for the SWDs.
- Capacity building workshops and training programs To share knowledge and experience among staff in building capacity in higher education
- Training of trainers Awareness programs will be conducted by the trainees disseminating the techniques learnt from the EU partners
- Creation of new policies for SWDs



THE KEY AIM OF THE PROJECT IS TO DEVELOP A SYSTEM OF SUPPORT FOR EQUALISING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SWDS IN SRI LANKAN UNIVERSITIES. THIS IS TO ENSURE THE RIGHTS OF SWDS TO ACCESS HIGHER EDUCATION, TO COMBAT DISCRIMINATION BY INSTILLING AWARENESS AND TO ESTABLISH A SUSTAINABLE SUPPORT NETWORK FOR SWDS IN SRI LANKAN UNIVERSITIES.

Recent Events...



Kick Off Meeting

The inaugural meeting of the EU funded capacity building project on “Developing Inclusive Education for students with disabilities in Sri Lankan Universities (IncEdu)” was held on 26th February 2020 in Kandy.

The event was attended by Prof. Upul B. Dissananayake, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Peradeniya, Prof. O. G. Dayaratne Banda, Dean, Faculty of Arts and other officials from the University, and representatives from the partner Universities.



Online Survey

An online survey was conducted among partner universities with the aim of actively supporting the concept of inclusion by creating a classroom environment for Sri Lankan University Students with Disabilities (SWDs).

Since this Project targets to develop mechanisms/systems that will enable to provide higher quality academic programs for the University SWDs in Sri Lanka, the questionnaire was structured to identify basic needs, existing limitations and obstacles of SWDs' academic programs, awareness, opinion, attitudes and beliefs towards SWDs'.



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LEARN MORE



Launch of the Official Website

The official website of the IncEdu was launched at the Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya on the 20 June 2020. The event was participated by Professor O. G Dayarathne Banda, Dean Faculty of Arts of University of Peradeniya, Professor Anoma Abhayarathne, Coordinator IncEdu and many other academic members representing the IncEdu.

The website is now online at www.pdn.ac.lk/cbhe-incedu/.





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