

INDONESIA

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I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is the largest archipelago in the world and is situated between two continents, Asia and Australia and between two oceans, the Pacific and the Indian ocean. About 6,000 of the 13,667 islands and islets are inhabited by the population of 210 million. In 1998, the Ministry of Social Affairs noted that about 2.5% from the total population are disabled or handicapped. The estimate today is that there are 5,250,000 persons categorized as handicapped, of which 50% are school age children. However, only 1.83% or 49,483 children are enrolled in Special Schools.

The first Special School for the blind in Bandung, West Java started in 1901. In 1927 another Special School was established, catering for the need of the mentally retarded. Three years later, in 1930 a Special School for the deaf was also established in Bandung. After these first schools, many other Special Schools for children with special needs were built and established since the independence of Indonesia in 1945.

Within the Ministry of Education and Culture, in 1965 a section of Special Education was established. The section was later expanded as a Division and in 1975 a Sub-Directorate for Special Education was established in the Directorate of Primary Education. The role of the Sub-Directorate was to provide guidance and supervision for the development of public and private Special Schools. The government of Indonesia is currently giving more emphasis on the development of special education and is proved by the expansion of the Sub-Directorate into the Directorate of Special Education in the year 2000. The Directorate has to expand its responsibilities with giving attention all children with special needs, including the gifted and talented children as well as children with learning disabilities and autistic children.

Besides the schools under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of National Education, the Office of the Minister for Social Affairs has some training centres for the training of people with special needs. Vocational skills are also provided at those training centres to give them the opportunity to become independent and be able to earn for their living.

II. SPECIAL SCHOOLS IN INDONESIA

Special education is provided at the primary and secondary education level and is part of the national education system in Indonesia. There are three types of special schools, namely (1) Sekolah Dasar Luar Biasa (SDLB = Special Primary School), (2) Sekolah Luar Biasa (SLB = Special School consists of kindergarten, primary school, junior secondary school and senior secondary school under one roof), and (3) integrated school. The integrated school is where the students with special needs are learning together with the normal children.

At the SLBs, different levels of schools are located in one school, namely Kindergarten - 2 years
Primary school - at least 6 years

Junior secondary school - at least 3 years

Senior secondary school - at least 3 years

The Special Schools are categorized as:

SLB-A special school for visual impairment

SLB-B special school for hearing impairment

SLB-C special school for mild intellectual disability

SLB-C1 special school for moderate intellectual disability

SLB-D special school for physical impairment

SLB-E special school for emotional disturbed and social mal-adjusted

SLB-G special school for multiple handicapped

At present there are 39 public Special Schools and about 1,000 privately owned schools. The private schools are either owned by Foundations or individuals and vary in condition from very good to very bad. Some private schools have a very small number of students and do not have permanent school buildings. Some schools are located in a garage of a home. These small schools are usually initiated by parents whose child has special needs and are not willing or cannot afford to send the child to a Special School.

There are 49,483 students with varying disabilities in the Special Schools and many of them come from middle or low-income families. A lot of the children with special needs are not sent to school with different reasons such as (a) not accepted at a general school, (b) no Special School available in the vicinity, (c) cannot afford to send the child to a Special School, or (d) the parents are unaware that there are Special Schools.

The educational components in special education are:

1. Curriculum

The curriculum for Special Schools was developed with taking into consideration the

disabilities of the students. The curriculum content of kindergarten and primary school is adjusted to the conditions of the students, while at junior and senior secondary schools more adjustments are made in the teaching methods used. At primary school and junior secondary school a special subject is added to the curriculum to teach the students to take care of themselves and live independently.

At junior and senior secondary schools a large portion of the curriculum is for skill training to prepare the students to become productive and be able to earn for their living. The skill training offered depends on the school and the students can choose what skills they want to learn. Although the curriculum provides a variety of skills to be chosen, but the facilities in many of the Special Schools are still limited to conduct quality skill training.

2. Teachers

The teachers of the Special Schools are specially trained to teach students with special needs. In 1952 a senior secondary school for special education teachers (Sekolah Guru Pendidikan Luar Biasa = SGPLB) was established in Bandung and later five other schools were built in different locations. Since 1996 the training of special education teachers was upgraded to higher education level. At present there are seven public universities offering a program in special education, namely in Bandung, Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, Padang, Makassar, and Surakarta. A private university in Bandung is also offering a program in special education.

Many of the Special Schools do not have enough teachers, especially teachers for skill training. Although the eight universities produce Special Education teachers each year, the numbers are not enough yet. Teacher in-service training is programmed each year to upgrade the competencies and skills of the existing teachers.

3. Facilities

Facilities at a Special School consist of classrooms, workshops for practice and facilities for rehabilitation services. Ten public Special schools were selected as model schools and provided with more equipment, dormitories for students and guesthouses. Models and other teaching aids as well as equipment for skill training are provided for the model schools. These model schools were designed to be used for in-service teacher training of the teachers of other schools, conducting research and are used for trials of new methods or new equipment. These model schools are called SLB Pembina (Feeder Special School).

Facilities of the private schools are provided by the owner Foundations and depending on their available funds, the facilities of these schools varies from poorly equipped to very well equipped. Each year the government has allocated some funds to be given to private schools to assist them in providing better quality education for their students.

4. School management

Management of a Special School differs from general primary and secondary schools, because different student services has to be provided such as rehabilitation services and skill training. More activities and equipment has to be administered as well as the special care for students with special needs. Management of the student dormitories also need to be given special attention, especially where the students need help to care for themselves.

5. Funds

Operational cost of a Special School is higher than at a primary or secondary general school because of the special services provided for the students and maintenance of the equipment and buildings. The government is providing budget for operational cost of the public schools and is assisting the private schools by providing a block grant that can be used to buy equipment, renovate the school building, or other activities.

III. Directorate of Special Education

The Sub-Directorate of Special Education was developed into the Directorate of Special Education (DSE) in 2000 at the time a restructuring within the Ministry of National Education was carried out. The responsibilities of the Directorate are to:

1. develop policy for special education;
2. plan and program the development of special education;
3. develop management system for special education;
4. standardize curriculum and evaluation system for special education;
5. develop and standardize facilities development programs;
6. develop student development programs;
7. monitor and evaluate development programs for special education.

To conduct the responsibilities and functions of the Directorate, one Sub-Division for Administration and five Sub-Directorates were established:

1. Sub-Directorate for Program Development
2. Sub-Directorate for School Management
3. Sub-Directorate for Curriculum and Evaluation System
4. Sub-Directorate for Facilities Development
5. Sub-Directorate for Student Development

With the wider scope of responsibilities and function of the Directorate for the development of Special Education, the available human resources should be able to perform all the functions of the Directorate. At present there are 149 staff at the Directorate of Special Education, distributed

among the five Sub-Directorates and one Sub-Division. The existing staff have varying educational background, ranging from high school graduate to masters degree. Only a few staff have the background in Special Education, therefore training and further education of the staff has to be programmed in the near future.

With the decentralization in the government, the provision of guidance and supervision of the Special Schools in each of the 30 provinces differs. In some provinces there is a Sub-Division for Special Education, while in others the guidance and supervision of Special Schools is integrated in the Basic Education Sub-Division or in the Out of School Education Sub-Division.

IV. Current Programs of the Directorate of Special Education

All the efforts to improve Special Education is in line with the governments' policy to enhance access to education, to increase the quality of education, to increase the relevancy of educational programs and to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of education programs. This means that all components in education should be improved and professionalism of teachers and managers should be enhanced.

There are several issues and problems in Special Education and solutions to those problems have to be sought. Some of the main issues are:

- The numbers of Special Schools are not enough to cater for the needs of children with special needs
- The Special Schools are located in big cities and are not accessible to children living in the rural areas
- The quality of education provided by the Special Schools needs to be improved
- Many of the existing Special Schools do not have adequate facilities
- For many of the parents, having a handicapped child is an embarrassment and they do not want to send the child to school

Improvement of the Special Schools is done through improvement of curriculum, provision of books and teaching aids, media and equipment, training of teachers and school managers, rehabilitation of school buildings and building of new classrooms, and many other activities. With the limited budget from the government, prioritizing of activities has to be done.

For the improvement of Special Schools there are two sources of funding, which are the routine and development budgets. The routine budget is mainly used for salary of teachers and staff, maintenance of school buildings and facilities, and consumables. Other activities for the improvement of Special Schools is funded through the development budget which is provided each fiscal year.

The activities include:

1. Curriculum and books

Improvement of curriculum consists of adjustment curriculum content to the developments in science and technology as well as adjustment of teaching methods to the disabilities of the students. Since the numbers of students in Special Schools are limited, publishers are not interested to publish the text-books needed for these students. Books are written by teachers of the Special Schools, and then printed and distributed to the Special Schools.

2. Improvement of facilities

The public schools are provided with teaching aids and media to be used in the teaching learning process as well as equipment for practice. Every fiscal year some of the private schools were given matching grants to be used to improve facilities.

3. Block grant

The private schools have been given matching grants to build additional classrooms or purchase equipment by the government. But the foundation that owns the school has to provide at least a similar amount of money for the construction of classrooms or purchase of equipment. After the decentralization (started in 2000), both public and private schools are eligible for a block grant from the government. The grant can be used for whatever is needed by the school, as long as it is to improve the quality of educational programs or to increase the number of student intake. The amount of the block grant ranges from 15 million to 50 million rupiah depending on the number of students in the school. The bigger schools with more than 200 students were given 50 million rupiah (about US\$ 5,000).

4. Scholarships

The available scholarships provided each year for primary and secondary school students did not cover the Special School students. Therefore, starting in 2001 scholarships are provided for students of the Special Schools. The purpose of the scholarships is to:

- Help the parents of the students
- Motivate the students to do their best in school
- Motivate parents to give more attention to the education of their handicapped child
- Motivate the schools to provide better education services for the students

Each school is given an allocation of 10 scholarships for one calendar year. The funds are sent to each school and the principal is responsible to distribute the scholarships to the needy students. Criteria for the recipients are students from low-income family and orphans. The amount of money given to each school is 3.6 million rupiah, equivalent to US\$ 360. Each student will receive about US\$ 3 a month. A very small amount, but enough to pay for the school fees in a public school.

5. Training of teachers

Each year, teacher training programs are conducted to improve the teachers' professionalism and capability in teaching and training the students with special needs. Contents of the training programs include teaching methodology, curriculum content, and the use of teaching aids and media. Since it has been proven that the students with special needs can be trained in limited vocational skills, training programs for the teaching of vocational skills are also conducted.

6. Management training

To improve the management and administration of Special Schools, the school managers are trained in school management and administration. Emphasis is now given to school based management. With the decentralized system, schools have to be encouraged to make their own decisions instead of waiting for guidance from the central office and the provincial office. The managers of each school are responsible for the program implementation and provision of the resources for the school. The central office is only providing the basic guidelines and each school is able to improvise and adjust to their local needs and situation.

To encourage the community to be involved in the school based management, a School Committee is set up to be part of the school management. Members of the School Committee are from the community, parents, and teachers. The School Committee will work with the school management for the progress and development of the school.

7. Vocational skills

At the junior and senior secondary level, the students of the Special Schools are trained in vocational skills. These skills are provided so that the graduates are able to do some productive work and earn for their living. The skills taught depends on the disabilities the students have. For example many of the visually impaired students learn body massage, the hearing impaired students can learn sewing and embroidery, agriculture, woodworking etc. The mentally handicapped students can learn manual weaving. Equipment is provided for the schools and teachers are trained to be able to teach the vocational skills.

8. Acceleration program

The Directorate of Special Education is also responsible for the development of education services for the gifted and talented. Several schools have been selected to be included in a pilot project where special classes in the schools are catering for the needs of the students with an above average IQ (>130). The program is conducted so that these bright students can finish their education in a shorter time, for example the 6 years primary school can be shortened to 5 years. With the acceleration program, students do not have to skip a class and lose some of the curriculum content because the teachers are taught how to teach according to the curriculum in a shorter time.

9. Inclusive education

After several years in a Special School many of the students with special needs are able to adjust to learn at a regular school together with other children. Depending on the severity of the impairment, the students can be taught together with the "normal" students. In many cases, the students can go to school in a general school since their first school year, if the school is able to provide the additional services for the student. Therefore, several Special Schools are appointed to pilot Inclusive Education program. The benefit for the disabled students is that they adjust to normal life and it will be easier for them after they graduate. While the other students will learn that there are other people who sometimes need their help and be more responsive to other peoples' needs. School managers and teachers of the pilot schools are trained to provide inclusive education for "normal" students and students with special needs.

10. Educational services for drug users

In the last years, many school age children became drug users and are being treated against the use of drugs. Very young students have consumed drugs and they were usually expelled from school. It will then be difficult for them to go back to school after they successfully finished their treatment. Since these children still have a future, special measures have to be taken to give them a chance to finish their secondary education. A study is being carried out in 2001 to find the best alternative education services for the ex drug users. Can they be integrated back into their former school or is there another way for them to finish their secondary education? The study is being conducted now and the results will be available at the end of the year.

V. International Cooperation

Improvement of the Special Schools is carried out continuously through the Development Budget provided in each fiscal year. Further improvement is done through soft loans from several countries. Australia and Norway have given assistance for the improvement of Special Schools. A soft loan from the Spain government to provide sheltered workshops for 7 Special Schools is in process. More assistance is still needed to enhance the improvement in quality as well as quantity of Special Education. Networking with institutions and organizations for Special Education will be beneficial for the development of Special Education in Indonesia.

1. Braillo Resource Centres

With the assistance of Norway, 7 Special Schools have been developed to become Braillo Resource Centres. These centres are equipped with Braillo machines for the printing of braille books for the visually impaired students in each region. For example, the Centre in Jakarta

will serve the Special Schools in four provinces, namely Jakarta, Lampung, West Kalimantan and Central Kalimantan. The teachers of the centres have been trained to use the Braille machines to convert Latin script to Braille, so that the visually impaired students can access knowledge and technology from the Braille books.

Teachers and staff from the Directorate of Special Education were sent to Norway to study at the Oslo University to obtain their Masters' degree in Special Education. They will now be able to contribute to the development of Special Education in Indonesia.

2. Sheltered Workshops

The sheltered workshops are going to be established at 7 Special Schools. Students and teachers can be trained and work at the sheltered workshops and products are going to be sold through the schools' cooperative. The workshops will be equipped with the necessary equipment and the master teachers are going to be trained at the technical and vocational education development centres (VEDC Malang, TEDC Bandung, VTUC Jakarta, VEDCA Cianjur and VEDAC Yogyakarta). The master teachers will then train other Special School teachers in teaching the vocational skills.

3. Networking with international organizations

To get information on developments in Special Education around the world and to get assistance for the improvement of Special Education in Indonesia it is very important to network with other countries and international organizations in Special Education. As mentioned before, Norway is assisting Indonesia to develop Special Education for the visually impaired while Spain is going to assist in the development of sheltered workshops.

Networking with organizations and institutions in other countries responsible for the development of Special Education is essential for exchanging information on new techniques and technological changes in teaching aids and media.

VI. Future Programs of the Directorate of Special Education

New programs and initiatives are being planned for implementation in the near future, such as:

1. Skill Training Centre in Jakarta

A Skill Training Centre is going to be established in Jakarta to provide training for graduates of the Special Schools. The program consists of 6 months basic training in the Centre and 6 months on-the-job training in industry. Graduates will be given a certificate of competence when they pass the skill test at the end of the program. This program will help

the graduates to find better employment according to the competencies they master. The program is being developed by a joint team from the Directorate of Special Education, the Directorate of Technical and Vocational Education, the Office of Education in DKI Jakarta, and assisted with professionals from the technical and vocational education development centres.

2. Resource Centre for Special Education

The Directorate of Special Education is going to set up resource centres for special education. These centres will function as resource for Special Schools and the community for the use of learning aids and media. A selection of aids and media will be displayed and training in its use can be conducted for individual persons or organizations.

3. Educational services for Autistic children

In the last few years more children have been diagnosed as having autism problems. Several clinics are providing educational services for these autistic children and some schools have classes for the autistic children. The Directorate of Special Education is going to provide assistance to these schools with block grants, training of teachers, and scholarships for the students.

VII. Better Education, Better Life

Each child is special and each of them has their own needs. Therefore the better education services are provided for them, they will be able to have a better life. This also applies for the children with special needs, such as the handicapped, the gifted and talented, children with learning disabilities etc.

Education services for children with special needs are costly and need special attention of the teachers and school managers. Therefore professionalism in providing these services for the children with special needs is one of the goals to be reached in Special Education. Another goal is easy access to special education for the children with special needs. With these missions reached, the vision of **Better Education, Better Life** can become reality for the children with special needs.