

Empowering Disabled Children in Kazakhstan: New UNICEF Report

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Disability is a global challenge, involving not just physical problems but also many social and integration issues. In 2012, around 1 billion people worldwide were living with disabilities, including 400 million living in poverty in lower income countries. Of these, many are children. In Kazakhstan in 2012, 1.33% of children under 18 were living with disabilities — higher than neighbouring countries such as Kyrgyzstan at 1.25% and Tajikistan at 0.80%.

A new report commissioned by UNICEF and co-authored by four researchers at UNU-MERIT's School of Governance, [Sonila M. Tomini](#), [Michaela Vanore](#), [Sepideh Yousefzadeh](#) and [Franziska Gassmann](#), studies the lives of children with disabilities in Kazakhstan.

The "Situation Analysis of Children with Disabilities for the Development of an Inclusive Society in the Republic of Kazakhstan" draws on a broad range of data: primary documents, focus group discussions, as well as interviews with teachers, parents of children with and without disabilities, children with and without disabilities, government representatives, and specialists working in non-governmental organisations.

The report builds on best practices for the education of children with disabilities and identifies areas for improvement within existing social policy, legislation and systems. Policy recommendations are tailored to Kazakhstan and relate to: the evolving definition of disability, monitoring tools, changing attitudes, promoting ability, supporting children and their families, community-based rehabilitation and support, inclusive health, and inclusive education. See the full report in the media kit.

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