

Country Report

1. Name of Training Course: THE GROUP TRAINNING COURSE IN MENTAL RETARDATION IN FY 1992
2. Name of Participant: María de los Angeles Rodríguez Ruiz
3. Name of Country: Costa Rica
4. Name of Your Organization: -Universidad de Costa Rica  
-Complejo Educativo Modelo  
a) Kindergarden Balloons  
b) Special Classes
5. Organization Chart:

Participants are requested to outline their funtion of the organization and their own job.

- 1) Job: Universidad de Costa Rica. as a supervisor teacher.  
Function: to visit different places for special education. to guide the teacher in different aspects such as diagnosis. planning. class organization. behavior. etc.
- 2) a. Job: Complejo Educativo Modelo. as the Principal of "Kindergarden Balloons".  
  
function: To guide kindergarden teachers with integrated special children. coordination of academical programs. and guidance for parents. etc.
- b. Job: Teacher of special education children with learning disabilities and behavior.  
  
function: To coordinate through the psychologist the parents' task: and to treat the patient directly as well as his difficulties.

6. The current situation and trends in rehabilitation services.

Participants are requested to outline the status of educational, welfare/social and medical systems and services, financial aids and voluntary activities for people with mental retardation in their own country.

To explain the educational, social and medical services in Costa Rica it is necessary to draw attention to each of the institutions that lead in these areas.

In the area of education we have the Ministry of Public Education (M.E.P.) which is the one that coordinates all the material related to education.

In the medical area we have the Ministry of Health and the Social Security System (Caja Costarricense del Seguro Social C.C.S.S.) which are the ones that cover all the health services in our country.

The social area is attended by the welfare and housing fund, (Instituto Mixto de Ayuda Social IMAS and Asignaciones Familiares) which have different social and welfare programs.

The information about the education system will be more exhaustive than the other themes, because this is the area in which the participant is specialized.

The Costa Rican education system is managed by the M.E.P. which offers free teaching opportunities for all the children and teenagers. There is also the General Assesory of Education that coordinates all the efforts within the education related to exceptional children.

In concern to mentally retarded people, the area of special education in Costa Rica gives them the following alternatives:

1) Special education schools which look for moderately and severely retarded children. These schools accept all the exceptional people who are less than five years old and the children with severely characteristics from five to sixteen years old.

2) Integrated classrooms: which are special education services into regular schools. They are for moderately and mildly discapacitated children who finish these classes at the age of fifteen.

3) Pre-vocational and vocational services. They are in special education schools whose objectives are social and laboral integration for severely and moderately retarded students.

The mildly retarded population has a service at high school of vocational workshop whose objectives are to guide the student towards the participation in the world of work.

4) Programmes based on Community attention. It makes

diagnosis of educational needs and community research to assist handicapped people in a comprehensive manner.

The different levels in special education are:

a) Early stimulation for development: to severely retarded children from zero to five years old (I and II cycle).

b) Kindergarden: for severely retarded children from five to seven years old.

c) School: special education service for I and II cycle to mildly and severely handicapped children from seven to fourteen years old.

d) High School: pre-vocational III cycle for mildly mentally retarded teenagers from fourteen to sixteen years old. Vocational IV cycle for mildly retarded teenagers from sixteen to eighteen years old.

The mildly mentally retarded children should regularly attend early stimulation and kindergarden institutions.

Registration: it depends on the severity of the condition and the age of the student. Registration for class distribution is as follows:

Special Education Schools: 12 to 16 students.

Integrated classes for mentaly retarded: 16 to 22 students. Pre-vocational and vocational services: 10 students. In 1991. the Ministry of Public Education in Costa Rica offered the following services:

- 20 special schools with 2171 students treated by 18 special education teachers.
- 203 integrated classrooms for mentaly retarded with 3964 children treated by 195 special education teachers.
- 14 pre-vocational and vocational services with 54 teachers for 637 students.

There are 10 private schools with 558 students and 19 special education teachers.

In the medical area it is important to explain that there are no special or exclusive services to assist handicapped people in general.

In Costa Rica there are two organizations that administer the different health services. There is the Ministry of Public Health (M.S.P.) that is available to all citizens, and the Social Security System (C.C.S.S.) that covers 80 % of the services. This institution guarantees workers medical services. In specific cases of exceptional children the benefits of medical attention are available for them all over their lives if one of their parents is insured as an active worker. If the parents die they can obtain the orphan fund and financial aid.

This organization gives health services to some schools.

To refer to the social services status, it is necessary to explain that in Costa Rica the exceptional population does not have special aid from the government; they can receive temporary assistance as any other citizen under difficult economic circumstances.

In the social area, there are many services given by the Welfare and Housing Funds (I.M.A.S and Asignaciones Familiares) that offer food, housing and financial aid. It also helps to coordinate services with other institutions. Those institutions also offer guidance in communal projects that have integrated handicapped people.

In Costa Rica there are different associations formed by parents, professionals, friends and exceptional people working for them. There are 36 associations formed by parents, friends and professionals.

There are only 10 associations formed by parents. There are 105 associations constituted by: institutions, workshops and centers of disabled people.

There is a total of 151 associations that work to obtain benefits for the exceptional population in Costa Rica.

### Institutions that give Services

Social Area	Medical Area	Educational Area
<pre> graph TD     A[IMAS] --&gt; B[Asignaciones Familiares]     B --&gt; C[food services financial services housing aid]             </pre>	<pre> graph TD     A[C.C.S.S.] --&gt; B[Hospitals and Clinics]     C[M.S.P.] --&gt; D[Sanatoriums]             </pre>	<pre> graph TD     A[MEP] --&gt; B[Academic Schools pre-vocational and vocational services]             </pre>

### Outline of the forms to obtain the different services

Social Area	Medical Area	Educational Area
<pre> graph TD     A[IMAS] --&gt; B[Asignaciones Familiares]     B --&gt; C[For poor people socio-economic study]     C --&gt; D[food housing financial aid]             </pre>	<pre> graph TD     A[CCSS] --&gt; B[social security]     C[MSP] --&gt; D[Health Services]             </pre>	<pre> graph TD     A[MEP] --&gt; B[Educational Services]             </pre>

7. Participants are requested to show the specific principle or philosophy of education and welfare/social services in their country and to state their own views or comments on it.

The philosophy of Special Education in Costa Rica follows these principles:

- 1) Normalization: The exceptional individual should interact with the rest of the people under normal conditions according to his characteristics and evolutive stage.
- 2) Integration: To incorporate the exceptional person into society as an active member. Integration is applied to the familiar, scholastic and social levels.
- 3) Educability: Based in the fact that every human being has the right to participate in the educational process, no matter how handicapped he is.
- 4) Organized Participation of the Community: The social responsibility of the community in the presence of the challenge involved when assuming an exceptional population.
- 5) Integral and Integrated Attention: A social and biosycho view which pretends the full development of the potentialities of the exceptional person who has to interact with society under the least restricted means.
- 6) Participation of the Family: The participation of the family is fundamentally important in the identification of the specific needs of the handicapped.

What follows are some of the objective for Special Education of Exceptional People in Costa Rica:

- 1- To promote the integral development, to achieve the full participation of society.
- 2- To facilitate educational services
- 3- To carry out detection and prevention actions.
- 4- To develop vocational actions and laboral locations.
- 5- To promote the participation of the family and the community in preventive deficiencies and disabilities as well as special education needs.

6- To propitiate innovative experiences at school and community level.

7- To encourage the personnel for the prevention of deficiencies and disabilities; as well as for the detection of special educational needs:

8- To coordinate with other parties in order to achieve concrete actions for prevention, detection and attention.

9- To foster the national and international interchange of information as well as experiences concerning prevention: detection and attention of the special population.

#### My point of view

Special education as part of the rehabilitation process aspires to give opportunities to develop the maximum of the potentialities to persons who belong to minority groups, due to the fact that for their characteristics they break the pattern. The possibility to provide this resource to exceptional persons is in Costa Rica an obligation conceived by the Political Constitution since every citizen has the right to acquire gratuitous education. Due to the fact that Costa Rica is a country of the "third world", it is not possible to achieve all the objectives and principles of Special Education. Some of the limitations can be seen in the lack of material as well as in the lack of class hours received by the exceptional children.

The philosophical principles focus in the exceptional persons and their needs; and in the possibility of providing them a way of life similar to the opportunities of any other Costarrican. The results of putting into practice these principles can not be evaluated because they have been recently created.

The united efforts of the family and the community will offer the exceptional being and adapted world for him (normality), making him an active part of it (integration) and providing him devices for his personal improvement.

8. Service delivery system and relevant laws and regulations

Participants are requested to draw an organization chart or flow chart (starting from sections at the lowest level for every agency in their country which is responsible for service delivery systems.

The organization of the service delivery system is based in national policies of special education which were developed after four decades of effort. The CNREE (Consejo Nacional de Rehabilitación y Educación Especial), published in December, 1989, a decree signed by the President and the Ministers of Health, Education, Work and Social Security, and of National Planification and Policy. This decree is based on the declaration of human rights, "La Carta para los Años 80" (International Rehabilitation), the "OIT" (Organización Internacional del Trabajo), the OMS (Organización Mundial Para la Salud) and the OPS (Organización Panamericana para la Salud).

The policies involve the following fields:

1) Prevention (Primary and Secondary)

a- Primary: Referring to:

- Attention
- Health
- High risk population
- Programs of immunization regarding preventive illness
- Measurements concerning accidents because of work.
- Diminishing of noise and pollution because of industrial smoke.

b- Secondary: Referring to:

- Detection of precocious deficiency
- Diagnosis group and treatment
- Familiar guidance to detect deficiencies and inabilities

2) Integral Rehabilitation

- To place rehabilitation services in every socio-cultural context
- Activities of early rehabilitation
- Developing rehabilitation services, physical, mental, laboral, educational and social
- Community participation, family and those with inabilities

3) Physical and Mental Rehabilitation, Early and Individual

- Services of application



- Increasing of common resources
- Carry out activities for older persons
- Develop concepts of self-care
- Provide domiciliary attention
- Create services in hospitals
- Elaborate appareils

#### 4) Special Education

- 1) It goes from the severely disabled population to the gifted persons. The services offered are of day-student school regime.
- 2) Transportation is provided
- 3) It fasters the participation of the family and the community
- 4 )It includes programs of prevention and diagnosis
- 5) The curriculums offer the greates possibilities of development and are adapted to the individual differences.

The Public Education Ministry is organized in four broad areas:

- 1- Scholastic Special Education
- 2- Non-scholastic Special Education
- 3- Fomentation of the gifted student
- 4- Professional rehabilitation

#### 5) Professional Rehabilitation.

- 1- To use common resources
- 2- To guarantee the non-discrimination of laboral trade
- 3- To encourage public and private companies so that those disabled participate with special regulations.

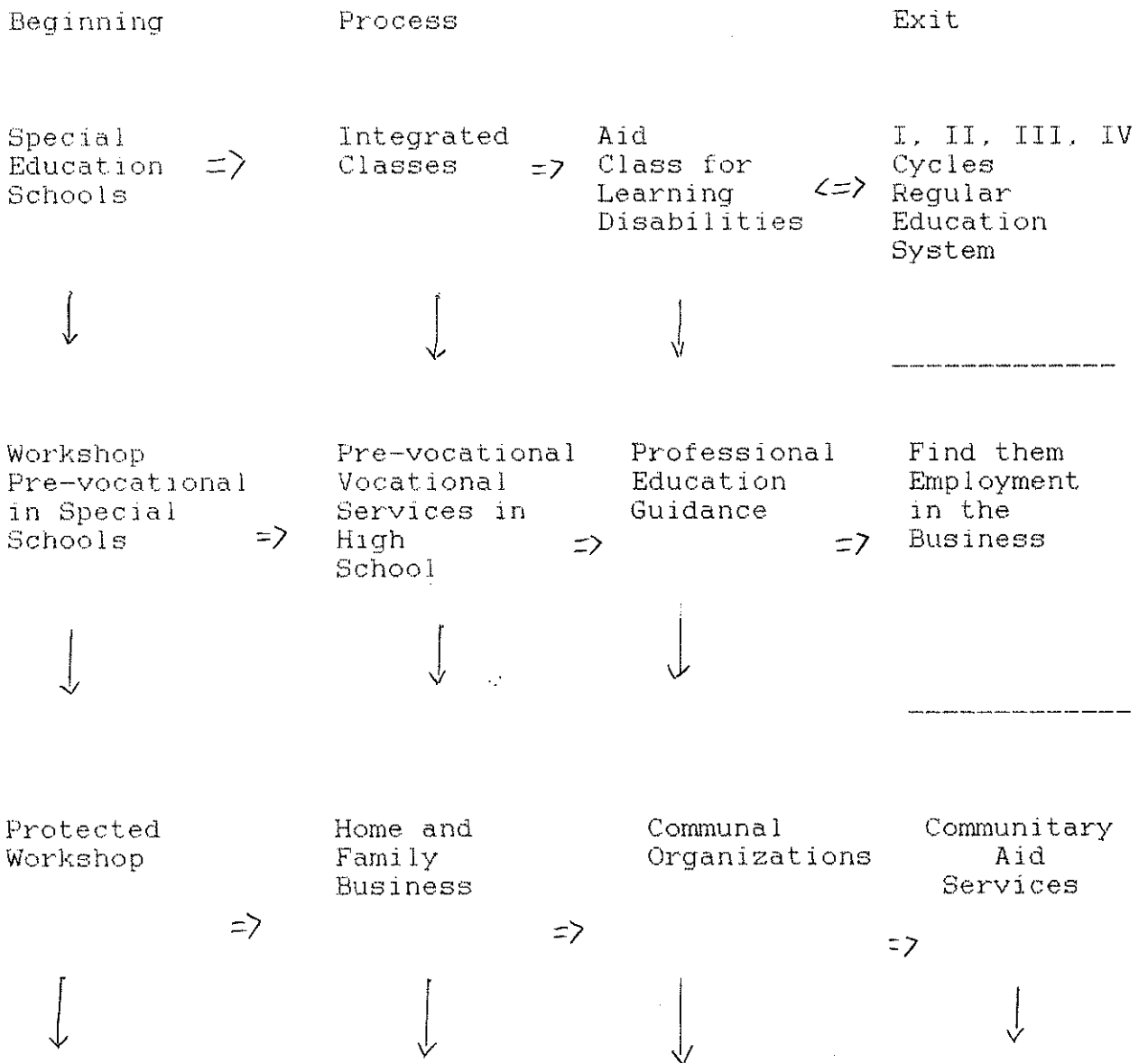
#### 6) Social Rehabilitation

Some of the policies include the following:

- Guidance, support, and social and economic protection.
- Adaptations for the use of communitary buildings
- Elimination of architectonic barriers

Educational System

SOCIETY:



-The world of work and possibilities of finding employment for them.