

**TRAINING COURSE IN
INTELECTUAL DISABILITIES**

JFY 2002

COUNTRY REPORT

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COSTA RICA

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Country Report

I. General Information:

1. Name of country: Costa Rica
2. Area (sq.Km): 51.700 km²
3. Population: 3.810.179 (According to the Census of year 2000)
Rural Area: 1.560.765
Urban Area: 2.249.414
4. Infant mortality rate: 10.82 for 1000.
5. Literacy rate: % of population under 5 years and less for instruction level: Any grade: 10.4, Elementary School: 52.8, High School: 25.1, University: 11.7.
6. Education (compulsory): Pree-school (transition cycle), Elementary School (from first to sixth grades), High School.
7. Unemployment rate: 6.2 Total people unenployment: 71.938

II. Situation of People with Intellectual Disabilities

a. Finding & diagnosis of I.D.:

Early diagnosis of I.D. in Costa Rica have improved because of the medical procederes, technical and early intervention for just born children in ages betwen 0 and 6 years old. *Tamizaje test*, are compulsory to every new born baby. With those test, doctors can determinate the precase of metabolic disorders that are connected to intelectual and/or physical disabilities. That way, if there is any medical reponse to the diagnosis.

b. Early Intervention:

Public Sistem Education in Special Schools, has Early Intervention level, for children from 0 months to 3 years old.

All the activities programed in this level use the objectives and materials recommed in the Guide for the Integral Development of Ministry of Health for children under six years and the Didactic Guide for the Learning and Development for children from 0 months to 3 years old of Preschool Department of the Ministry of Education (MEP), among other books.

The objective are emphasized in Early Intervention in to prepared children and their families to focus on the skills necessary to perform an active funcional and satisfy.

c. Education:

In Costa Rica the Elementary and Special Education in public institutions are free of fees. The concept of students with special educative needs is used.

For people with I.D., the Ministry of Education (MEP) offers public service since they are babies, in programs of Early Intervention and from I to IV cycles when they grow up.

In the Special Education Schools, the student's individual plan includes the development of the adaptative skills, such as: communication, self-care, home living, social skills, communitive use, self-direccion, health and safety, funcional academics, lesiure and work.

All of those skills are based of the definition of Mental Retardation (Cognitive Disabilities) that is currently the foundation in the public special schools programing.

The concept of Maintreaining has been used a lot less, and the concept of Inclusion is the official one, because it gives the opportunities to all the students with I.D. to attend regular classrooms and activities for educational and social expiriences. At the same time, the student can recieve the support academic and extracurricular that empowers him or her to learn all the adaptative skills needed to perform in the community or neirbordhood he or she belongs.

Currently, the importance of the educational programs relays in the needs for support instead of the intellectual deficit itself that the student may present. It includes the desing of the curricular adaptations (significative, non- significative and access). Because of that the Ministry of Public Education has reoriented the job funtions and atributes for the Special Education Teachers, in order to give support to the students to attend regular schools.

Other permanent support services inside the Elementary Schools give to the students with special educational needs curricular programs to improve their learning. (See figure N° 1).

Most of the students with I.D. receive Special Education according with their age in Special Schools, where the educational programmes include emphasis on language and social skills, motor skills development, family support, opportunities for inclusion with peers without disabilities and fuctional accademic and prevocational skills as well.

Public system in Special Education offers the following services:

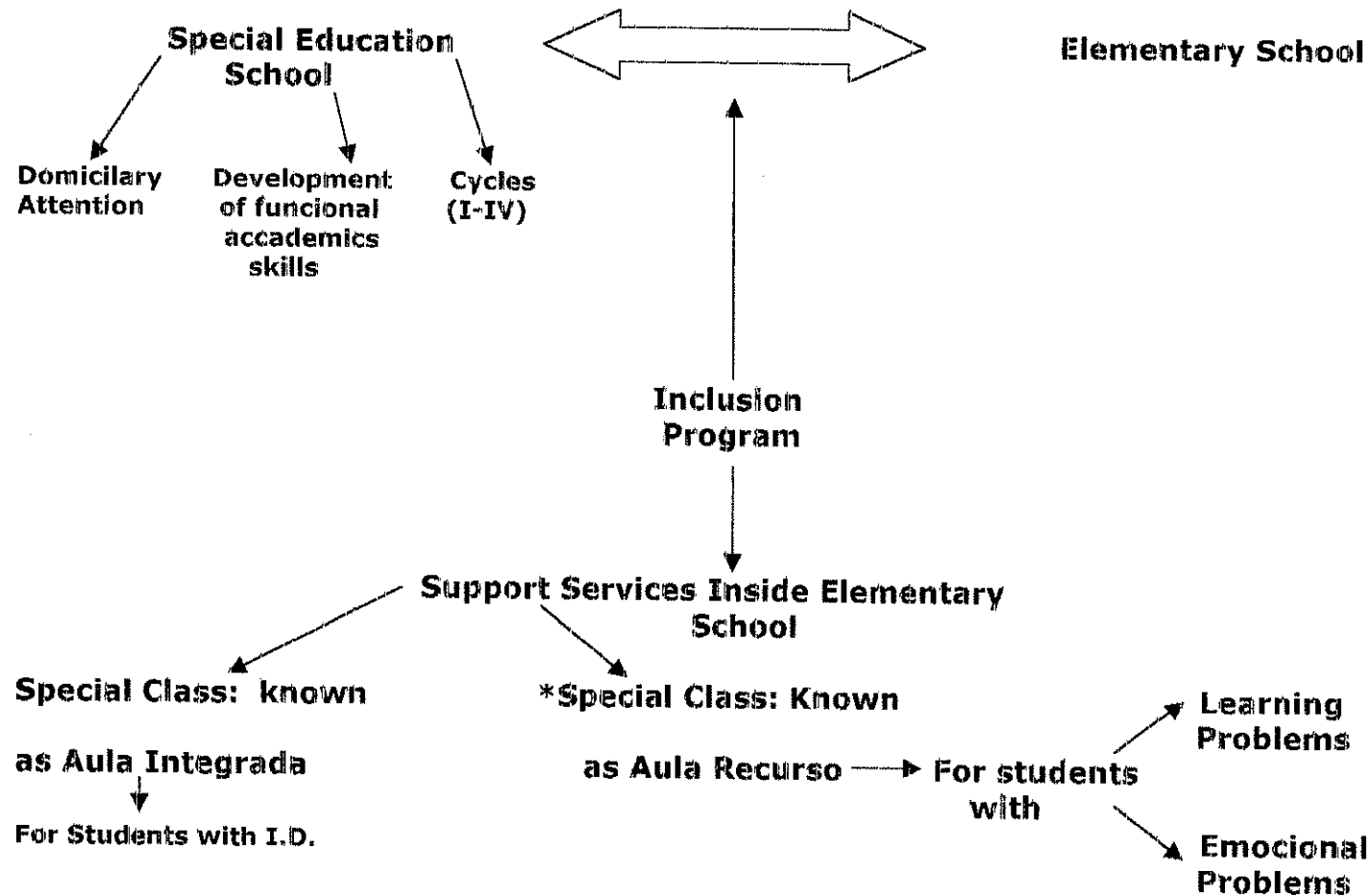
Cycle	Group of Age / Years old
Pre-school	3 to 7
First Cycle	7 to 10
Second Cycle	10 to 14
Third Cycle	14 to 17
Fourth Cycle	18 to 21

d. Vocational Training:

In addition to, language and communication, knowledge and participation in the environment, knowledge of the body, and identity construction, the vocational training it is another one of the curricular areas in the studies program for people with I.D. in Special Education.

In the thrid and fourth cycle the students with I.D. get training in motor skills development, functional general evaluation, security skills, maturity, in order to improve the process of transition from a teen-ager to an adult.

Fig. 1: Support Services inside Elementary School and relationship with Special Education School



* Permanent Support Services are the responsibility of Special Educational teacher who coordinates the work with the regular teacher at the regular class.

Those activities must be done by the students with and without support through the making of different projects and with the help of equipment, tools and basic instruments. For example: jewelry (necklaces, earrings, bracelets); car wash projects, basic cooking, recycled paper, among other activities.

e. Employment:

Today, the possible opportunities to obtain a job for people with I.D. in Costa Rica, demand a hard work for all the government institutions that are concerned with that specific situation.

Process of insertion in the labor market for people with disabilities in general, has constant impediments because of the social competition and the few opportunities in the same market in the city and rural area.

The insertion in the labor environment under regular conditions is possible in companies with open politics for the people with I.D.

In supermarkets and restaurants workers with I.D. are doing a specific job.

Sheltered are still places that offer training in manual skills and learning about norms and rules required to do a job. But in these places also work persons with light level of I.D. They don't have opportunities to get a better job according with her or his abilities.

In my opinion we need more insertion in regular jobs for persons with level I.D. and more projects for specific people with severe I.D. with the support and technology that they need.

f. Financial assistance:

The Public Special Education programs depend on the government budget, so new services can be opened, with the salaries paid to the people involved, and all the equipment and facilities that every schools requires.

There are companies which finance specific projects in some of the special schools, such as some Non Government Organizations (NGO'S).

Also, Costa Rica has signed several agreements with other Governments as Japan, United States of America and Spain, in order to get social educational and medical benefits from special equipment, technology, training and grants.

g. Others:

In the last five years the quality of Special Education offer for students with I.D. has advanced because other educational and therapeutic services are in the curricular program for these population.

These services are:

- Physical Therapy (PT)
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Inclusion Program
- Speech Therapy
- Domiciliary Attention
- Development of Academic abilities: functional reading and writing skills.

The professional team at the Special Schools chooses all the services and programs to improve the student's learning according with their specific needs and potential.

Some of the Special Schools in the city of San José have all the services, but in the rural area the schools have only some of them.

h. Laws concern with I.D.:

Costa Rica has established the regulation for the services, programs and related issues such as rights of the people with disabilities. The

Government has signed many international declarations, agreements and conventions acts and Laws. Some of them are:

- 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations).
- 1949 Republic of Costa Rica Politic Constitution that declares the equality of everyone without any kind of discrimination because of race, religion and any other situation.
- 1975 Declaration of Rights for Disable People (United Nations).
- 1982 Wordwide Action Program for the Disabled
- 1988 Tax incentive Law for Employers which Hired Discapacity People, was approved by the Congress
- 1989 National Politics on Prevention of Deficiency, Disability and Integral Rehabilitation (Costa Rica)
- 1991 Law N° 7219 of Agreement 159 of Work International Organization about the Professional And Employment Readaptation of the Disabled People approved by the Congress.
- 1994 Word Declaration of Education for All (Thailand)
- 1994 Declaration of Salamanca (Word Conference for People with Special Needs, Spain)
- 1996 Law N° 7600: Equality of Opportunities for People with Disabilities in Costa Rica, was approved by the Congress.
- 1997 Politics, Rules and Proccedures for Educational Access for the Students With Special Educational Needs. (Costa Rica)

i. Community – Based Rehabilitation Programs:

These programs in Costa Rica are functioning under the name of SILORES: Integrated Local Systems of Rehabilitation.

Their work focus on providing to the population with disabilities the vocational training regarding to the kind of industry prevailing in the rural town. These programs have the technical support of the National Council of Rehabilitation and Special Education (CNREE) and the Public Educational Ministry (MEP) and Non Governmental Organizations (NGO'S).

j. Government agencies concern with I.D.:

The actual Law N° 7600: Equality of Opportunities for People with Disabilities in Costa Rica, has established a new focus in politics and procedures in all the areas and services for these population.

Rights, quality of life, opportunities and access to education, medical services, transportation and work are important points to take into consideration in this law, which cause is to be real in the society.

For this reason, the government agencies concern with I.D. are making an effort to chance the services for the benefit of the people with disabilities in general. Some of these agencies and their main goal are:

- Public Ministry of Education (MEP): Establishes all the politics related to Special Education and educational services for students with special education needs.
- National Council of Rehabilitation and Special Education (CNREE): leads the national politics about disabilities and the national an international declarations and agreements for this topic in the country.
- Caja Costarricense del Seguro Social (CCSS): was established to let the costarrican have a medical assistance subsidy provided by different physicans. The CCSS gives the families who have a member with severe handicaps a lower pension for life, annual as a form of aid.
- National Center for Childhood Welfare (PANI): Besides the politics of MEP and the laws aproved for CNREE for people with disabilities, this institution has created welfare programs for children with disabilities.
- National Center of Rehabilitation (CENARE): performs the general politics for physical rehabilitation in Costa Rica. It has a multidisciplinary team for the attencion of people with disabilities, that includes doctors, social workers, Physical Therapist, Ocupational Therapist, and others.

k. Non Governmental Organizations (NGO'S) dealing with the activities and issues concern with I.D.:

Today in Costa Rica there are 124 NGO'S as known Assosiations or Fundations that carry on activities for people with disabilities. These is a list of some of them:

Name	Address	Phone	Fax	Mailing	Localizati
Asociación de apoyo a la unidad de rehabilitación de Turrialba	Continuo a la escuela Mariano Cortéz	556-6304		143-2250	SILOR Turrialba
Asociación Hogares Sagrada Familia	Urbanización Palma de Mallorca San Rafael de Escazú, la Aurora de Alajuelita	228-9998 228-6595	252-2896	1230-1250 Escazú	Alajuelita
Asoc. ión de Padres de Familia Instituto Andrea Jiménez	San Francisco de Dos Ríos, Urbanización la Cabaña	250-5047	250-5047	722-2400 Desamparados	San José
Asociación de Padres de niños con P.C. de Rehabilitación	B° La Pitahaya, San José del hotel Torremolinos 150 Norte (YAOHAN)	223-8869	223-8869	781 Centro Colón	San José
Asociación de Padres y amigos de la persona excepcional	Hatillo 5, 250 mts. Sur de los Multifamiliares	254-1266			San José-Hatillo
Asociación Pro atención personas con discapacidad del cantón de Alajuelita	De la Clínica de Alajuelita 50 mts. Norte	252-0706	289-8376	190-2010	San José
Fundación Déficit Atencional	Curridabat, de la Heladería POPS 500 mts. Sur. Apartamento Erasol N° 2	280-1901	280-7122		San José
Asociación Pro Ayuda a la persona con discapacidad de Alfaro Ruiz	500 mts. Oeste del Parque carretera a Guadalupe frente al Redonde!	463-3674	463-1274		Alajuela-Zarcero
Asociación Pro Ayuda a la persona minusválida de Palmares	Altos del Mercado de Palmares centro, Alajuela	453-3373 453-1453	453-3373		Alajuela-Palmares
Asociación Pro niño, adolescente y adulto excepcional	De la Finca APSE San Pablo de Heredia 25 mts. Oeste, calle cementerio	269-8055	262-0838		Heredia
Asociación Social y Laboral Pro excepcionales	100 mts. Norte del Salón comunal de San Isidro de San Ramón	445-8754			Alajuela-San Ramón
Asociación Talita comi: Taller social de Naranjo	Unidad Rehabilitación de Naranjo, cruce de Cirri, detrás del plantel del MOPT	450-0683			Alajuela-Naranjo
Fundación Servio Flores Arroyo	Alajuela, detrás del Hotel Hampton Inn rumbo a B° Fátima	442-9629	442-9629		Alajuela

III. Outline of our Organization:

The Instituto Andrea Jiménez was founded in 1974 as a semiprivate organization. Is a Special School responsible for the education and training of people ranged from 0 to 21 years old with I.D. and physical and mentally disabilities.

It covers a population of about 53 students. The school program is based on school and family participation that emphasized in the development of skills for independence and self-sufficiency.

The support services offer to the students are decided by the Technical Council according with the individual needs. The population is divided by groups of age. There are 5 educational cycles (with the respective levels), 4 special educational services and 2 specific programs: Domiciliary Attention and Inclusion for the attention of the students. (See figure N° 2)

I have been working in the Special Program known as Domiciliary Attention. The main goal of this program is to give professional orientation for the better management of the students at home and to offer direct support for the families. It is the newest program at the Institute.

Along with the student's parents, we choose the skills and behaviors that the student needs to improve. The activities are focus in: development of daily living skills, independence and autonomy, based on habits and routines according with the age and the special needs of the students.

I coordinate the progress of the house program with all the professionals at school who related to the student's attention.

Figure 2

INSTITUTE ANDREA JIMENEZ

Organization Chart

