



Education of Children with Disabilities in Azerbaijan: Barriers and Opportunities (Draft Research Findings)



UNICEF Azerbaijan Country Office
Center for Innovations in Education



INTRODUCTION



- Areas of Analysis

- LEGISLATIVE

- POLICY & REGULATIONS

- RESOURCE ALLOCATION

- PRACTICES




Educational provision for CWD in Azerbaijan

- Special Schools
- Special Boarding Schools
- Home Schools
- Special Classrooms in Regular Schools
- Inclusive Classrooms
- Not educable children



Legislation Analysis: Directions

- The principles of equality, non-discrimination and equity
 - The major national laws on education vis-à-vis international requirements for inclusive education
 - The mechanisms of the Special Education Law and consistencies between this law and other relevant legislation norms
- 

Teaching Practices: Methodology

- **Non-participant observation was conducted during teaching process. Sometimes conversation with teachers and parents was conducted**
- **Observation and assessment of teaching practices in home classrooms, special schools, special classrooms in regular schools and in pilot inclusive classrooms**
- **Observed teaching practices were analyzed based on the developed assessment instrument**

Teaching Practices: Observation Instrument

Area 1: Physical environment-classroom arrangement, supplies and equipment, placement of children, use of teaching supplies

Area 2: Learning environment- what kind of learning environment teacher creates for students, if all the children are involved in the learning process, what kind of communication teacher creates- at the levels of student-student, student-teacher and etc. This area also assesses the level of tolerance and to what extend teacher is able to involve ALL the students

Teaching Practices: Observation Instrument

- **Area 3: Teaching methods** What kind of teaching methods teacher uses for better learning and understanding of students, individualization, differentiated teaching strategies
- **Area 4: Social environment** If the social environment created in the classroom prepare children for further life? What kind of social models students do learn? Are the parents involved in the process of teaching their children?

Legislation Analysis: Methodology

- The comparative analysis of the national laws and the relevant international documents and the review of the regulations of the national laws:
- Comparing the specificities of educational concepts supported by the international and national legislations
- The analysis narrows down by discussing the content of the regulations produced based upon the national education laws
- The report mainly considers the major opportunities and barriers on the way of children with disabilities to receiving the quality education
- The consistencies and inconsistencies within the according national law system have also received certain attention

Legislation Analysis: Opportunities


- The Constitution of the Azerbaijan Republic is declaring the importance of human rights protection and their provision within the national context

The Article 12 declares that “the protection of human and citizens rights and freedoms is the ultimate goal of the state” and that “the human and citizens rights and freedoms listed in the Constitution are implemented in accordance with international agreements supported by the Azerbaijan Republic”

“the state is providing the equality of rights and freedoms for every individual



Legislation Analysis: Opportunities

- Azerbaijan has committed itself to reformulation of the national policy toward the children with disabilities
 - Currently, many national and international stakeholders in Azerbaijan are interested in the reformation of the education system for the children with disabilities
- 

Legislation Analysis: Barriers

- **1.** The Azerbaijani legislation system which is aiming to embrace various needs of children with disabilities does not possess a clear-cut and comprehensive strategy on realization of educational rights of these children.

A system which should provide an explicit mechanism on protecting children's rights in every area, including education has not been built. Rather, it presents a fragmented and sometimes disorganized and disconnected picture which negatively affects the integrity of rights of children with disabilities

Evidences

- Vague language
- No consistency in terminology
- Equal rights for all, but different abilities
- No participation of a child in all matters affecting him or her
- No rights for CWD to be equal members of the society
- CWD may be provided with additional assistance
- No requirements for school accessibility
- Special standards and curriculum
- No inclusive education provision
- Health certificate
- PMPC
- No voice to parents

Legislation Analysis: Barriers

- **2.** The national legislation doesn't fully comply with the international documents. Even though it declaratively adheres to the internationally accepted principles on equality for children with disabilities, consequently it presents a radically different approach and system for educating the given category of children.

Namely, it starts from supporting and building upon special education which segregates the children and continuously put them in disadvantaged positions

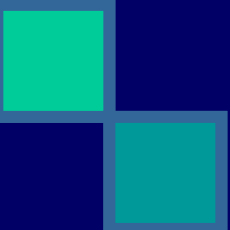

Legislation: Barriers

3. The regulations presenting the mechanisms of the laws lack concrete description of tasks and accordingly, responsible structures for the implementation, supervision and monitoring of those tasks.

In reality, it significantly complicates defending and realizing the rights which are granted by the national legislation itself



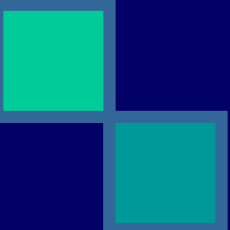

Teaching Practices

- 
- Opportunities:
 - Education for the majority of CWD is provided
 - Barriers:
 - Quality of Education is poor
- 



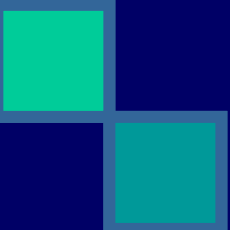

Survey

THE TASK WAS TO IDENTIFY:

- 
- Educational opportunities meet the individual needs of CWD
 - Barriers to integration of CWD into mainstream education system from point of view of parents, teachers and school directors & other stakeholders
- 

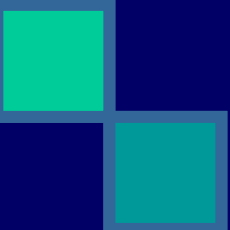



METHODOLOGY

- OVER 800 PARENTS
 - 300 TEACHERS
 - 53 SCHOOL DIRECTORS
 - 13 REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL CHIEFS
 - 11 HIGH RANKING GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
 - 31 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS
- 
- 



METHODOLOGY

- QUANTITATIVE DATA
 - FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWS
 - PARENTS OF CWD
 - TEACHERS (MIXED)
 - DIRECTORS
 - REGIONAL EDUCATION CHIEFS
- 
- 



METHODOLOGY

- QUALITATIVE DATA

- IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS


- MINISTERIAL OFFICIALS
- MILLI MECLIS
- NGO & INGO

- FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

- PARENTS OF TDC
 - TEACHERS (MIXED)
- 



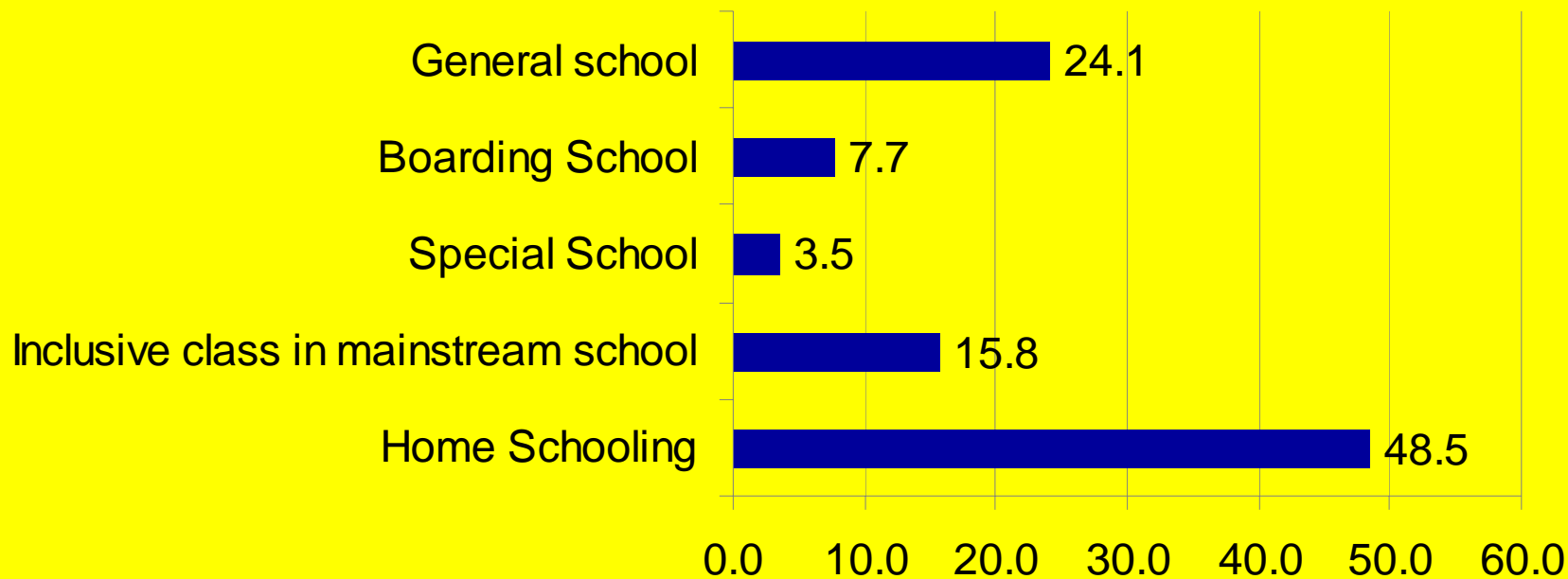
METHODOLOGY

- LIMITATIONS AND WEAKNESSES
 - TWO FAILED GOVERNMENT INTERVIEWS
 - FEAR OF PUNISHMENT
 - LACK OF TRUST TO SURVEYS AMONG PEOPLE IN GENERAL
 - LIMITED EXPERIENCE IN FGD
 - LACK OF SKILLED INTERVIEWERS
 - LACK OF SKILLED FGD FACILITATORS
- 

KEY FINDINGS


■ EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Graph 1. Educational provisions for disabled children (%)





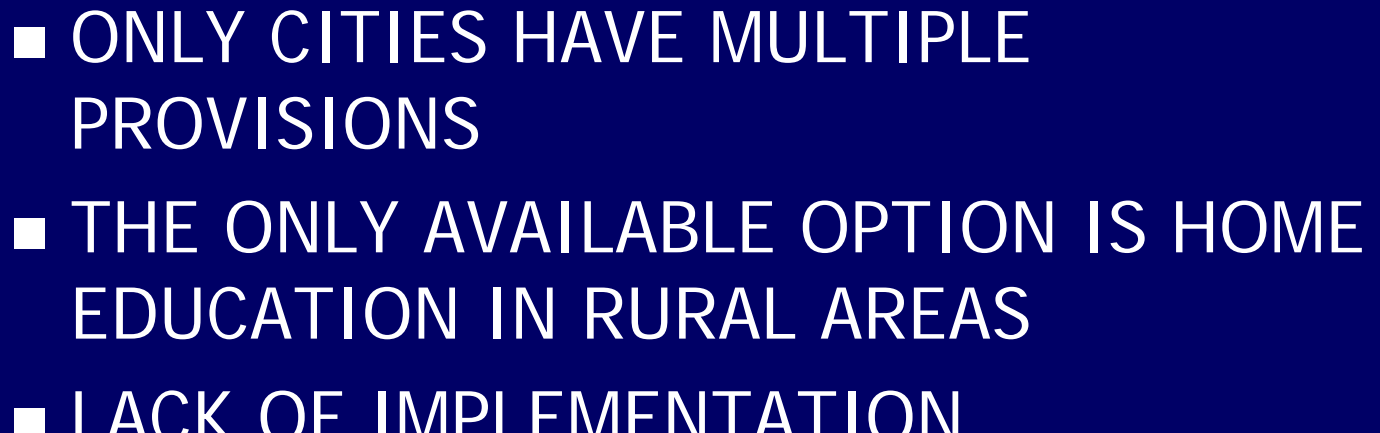
KEY FINDINGS

- BARRIERS TO EDUCATION
 - FOUR VARIABLES
 - AVAILABILITY
 - ACCESSIBILITY
 - AFFORDABILITY
 - QUALITY
 - KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES
- 



KEY FINDINGS - BARRIERS

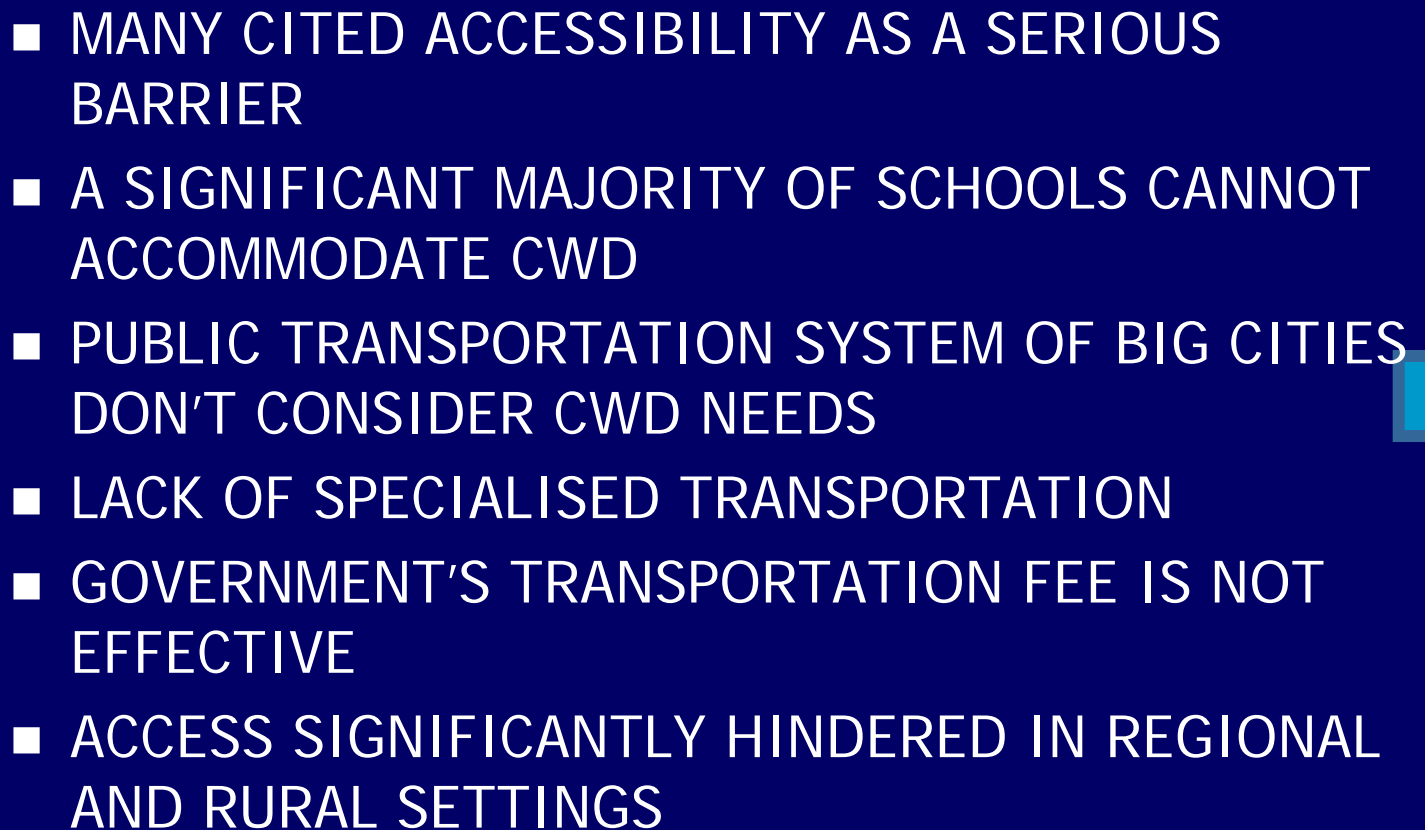
■ AVAILABILITY

- ONLY CITIES HAVE MULTIPLE PROVISIONS
 - THE ONLY AVAILABLE OPTION IS HOME EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS
 - LACK OF IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS OF LAWS
 - LACK OF SUFFICIENT FUNDS
 - LACK OF SPECIALISTS
- 



KEY FINDINGS - BARRIERS


■ ACCESSIBILITY

- MANY CITED ACCESSIBILITY AS A SERIOUS BARRIER
 - A SIGNIFICANT MAJORITY OF SCHOOLS CANNOT ACCOMMODATE CWD
 - PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM OF BIG CITIES DON'T CONSIDER CWD NEEDS
 - LACK OF SPECIALISED TRANSPORTATION
 - GOVERNMENT'S TRANSPORTATION FEE IS NOT EFFECTIVE
 - ACCESS SIGNIFICANTLY HINDERED IN REGIONAL AND RURAL SETTINGS
- 



KEY FINDINGS - BARRIERS

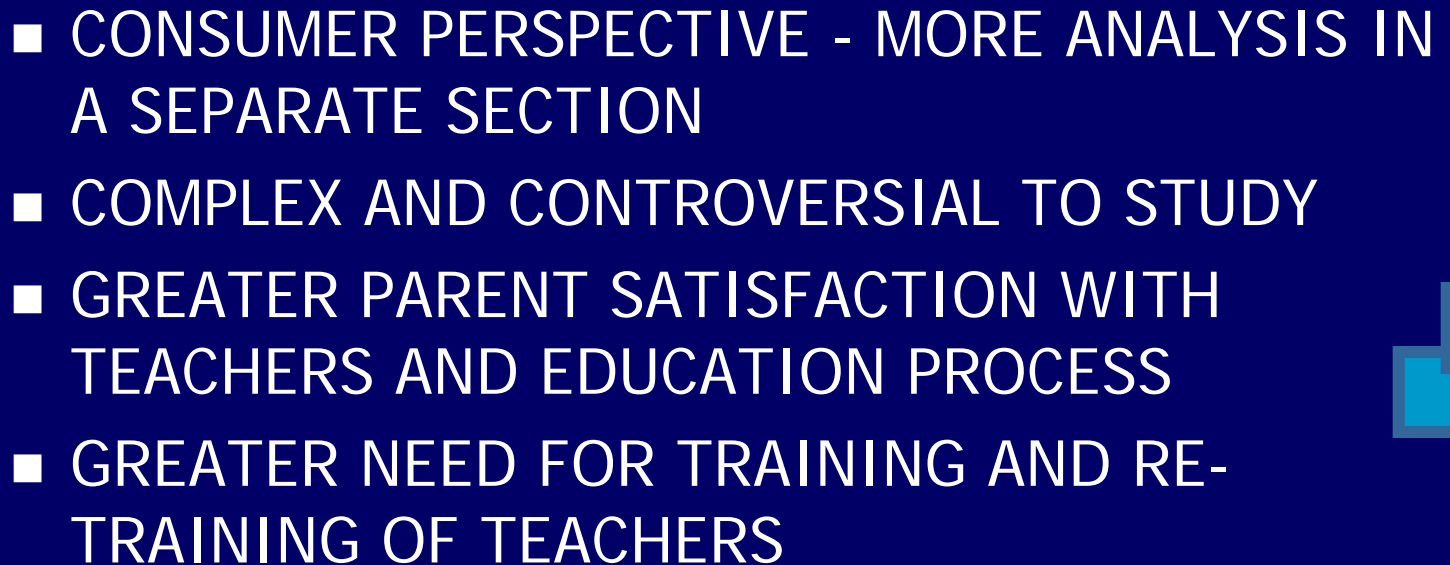
■ AFFORDABILITY

- FINDINGS ARE CONTROVERSIAL
 - FINANCING IS A BARRIER – 27%
 - MORE PROBLEMATIC IN RURAL THAN URBAN
 - FAMILIES SPEND ONLY 5% OF INCOME FOR CWD EDUCATION
 - MEDICAL EXPENSES GIVEN PRIORITY (DEFECTOLOGY)
 - GREATER (83%) DISSATISFACTION WITH GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
- 



KEY FINDINGS - BARRIERS


■ QUALITY

- CONSUMER PERSPECTIVE - MORE ANALYSIS IN A SEPARATE SECTION
 - COMPLEX AND CONTROVERSIAL TO STUDY
 - GREATER PARENT SATISFACTION WITH TEACHERS AND EDUCATION PROCESS
 - GREATER NEED FOR TRAINING AND RE-TRAINING OF TEACHERS
- 



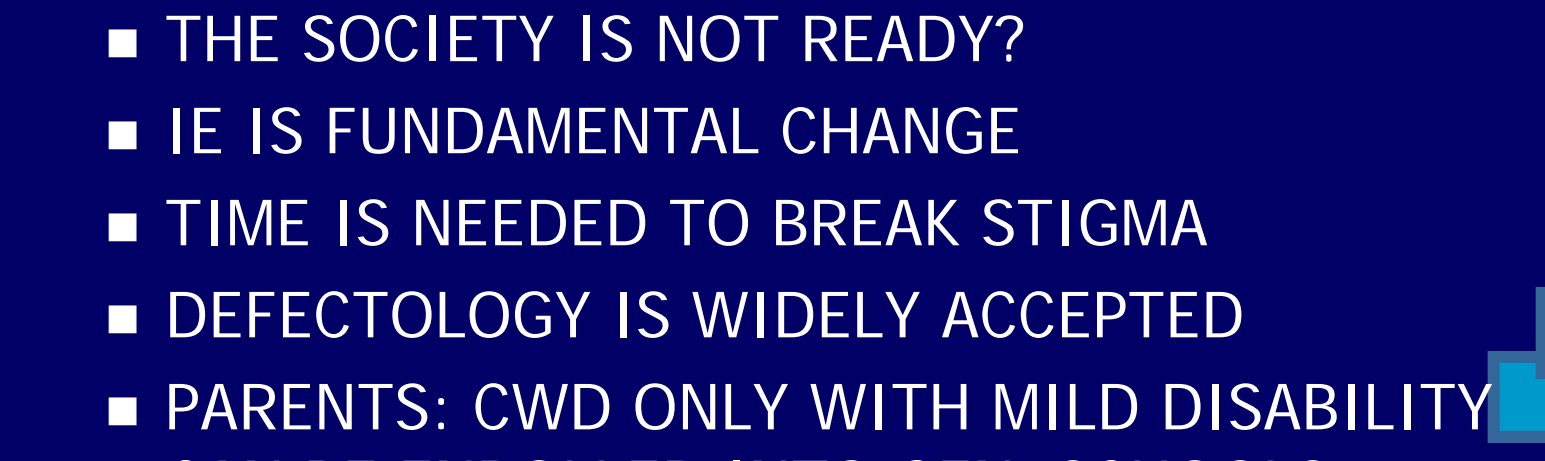
KEY FINDINGS - BARRIERS

- QUALITY

- LACK OF SPECIALISTS
 - LACK OF TEACHING SUPPLIES (ALL KINDS)
 - NO ADDITIONAL PAYMENT & NO ASSISTANTS
 - NO STANDARDIZED INDICATORS TO MEASURE SUCCESS AND PERFORMANCE
 - SOVIET INDICATORS OUTDATED
 - NEW INDICATORS ARE NEEDED
- 



KEY FINDINGS – BARRIERS

- KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES
 - THE SOCIETY IS NOT READY?
 - IE IS FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE
 - TIME IS NEEDED TO BREAK STIGMA
 - DEFECTOLOGY IS WIDELY ACCEPTED
 - PARENTS: CWD ONLY WITH MILD DISABILITY CAN BE ENROLLED INTO GEN. SCHOOLS
 - MANY BELIEVE CWD WITH SEVERE DISABILITY MUST ATTEND SPECIAL SCHOOLS
 - GENERALLY POSITIVE ATTITUDES AMONG AVERAGE CITIZENS!!!
- 




KEY FINDINGS – FAMILY

- CHALLENGES

- INSTITUTIONAL

- ACCESSIBILITY, BUREAUCRACY AT SCHOOLS AND RELEVANT AGENCIES
 - LACK OF CHILD AND PARENT SUPPORT MECHANISMS

- ATTITUDINAL

- LACK OF KNOWLEDGE IN COMMUNITY
 - FEELINGS OF MERCY RATHER THAN UNDERSTANDING
- 



KEY FINDINGS – FAMILY

- AVAILABLE SUPPORT SYSTEMS

- GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL AID: MAX 35 AZN (around USD \$40)


- REGARDED AS INEFFECTIVE (92%)

- STATE BUDGET GREW 10 TIMES, WHEREAS THE ASSISTANCE INCREASED 2.5 TIMES (2002-07)

- MANY BELIEVE THEY NEED 300 AZN/MONTH




KEY FINDINGS – FAMILY

- AVAILABLE SUPPORT SYSTEMS
 - MORE THAN 60% OF PARENTS EXPECT OTHERS THAN STATE TO SUPPORT
 - BUT NOT ALL HAVE THE RIGHT ATTITUDE
 - MANY FEEL MERCY THAN ACCEPTANCE
 - PARENTS NEED PSYCHO COUNCELLING
- 




KEY FINDINGS – FAMILY

- EXPECTATIONS FROM EDUCATION
 - ABOUT 78% PARENTS *BELIEVE* IN EDUCATION'S POSITIVE OUTCOMES
 - EDUCATION WILL INCREASE EMPLOYMENT CHANCES
 - ALL PARTIES SUPPORT EDUCATION OF CWD
 - STILL CALL FOR SEGREGATION
- 

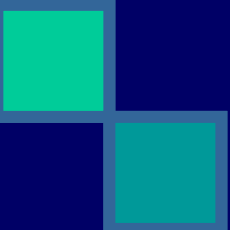



KEY FINDINGS – SERVICES

- ONLY 25% OF CWD RECEIVE SPECIALISED SERVICES
 - MANY SCHOOLS HAVE ONLY PSYCHOLOGIST AVAILABLE
 - SOME SCHOOLS OFFER SPEECH THERAPIST
 - MAJORITY DON'T HAVE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST OR PHYSICAL THERAPIST
 - SPECIALIST PREPARATION IS A SERIOUS CHALLENGE
 - MANY PROGRAMS BASED ON DEFECTOLOGY
- 

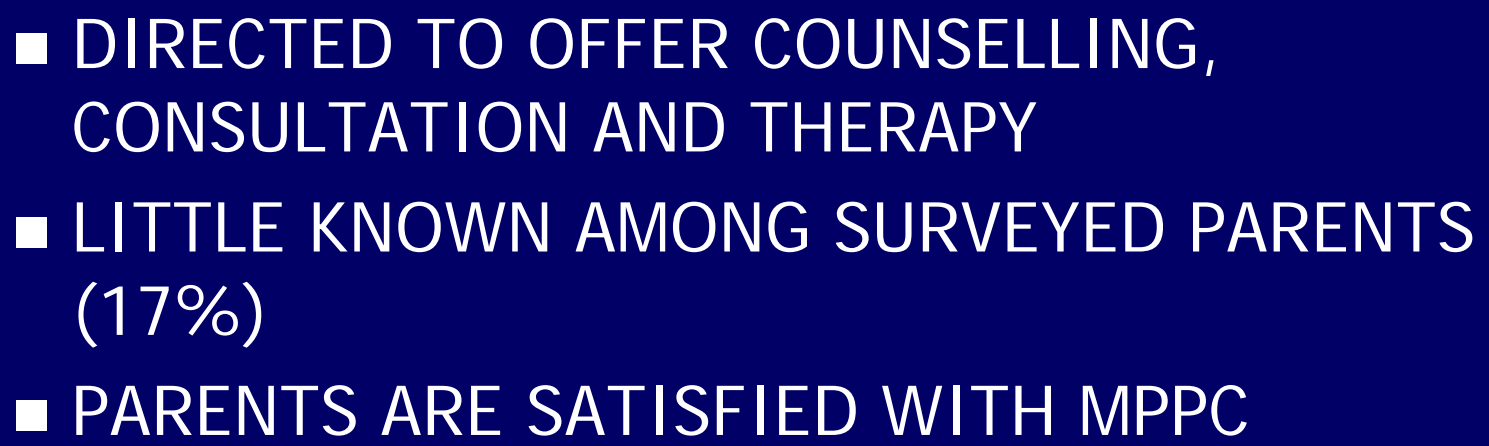


KEY FINDINGS – SERVICES

- ONLY A HANDFUL NUMBER OF COMMUNITY-BASED REHABILITATION CENTERS
 - IN URBAN AREAS ONLY
 - LARGELY VARY IN SIZE, METHODOLOGY, QUALITY AND TARGET POPULATION
 - LIMITED GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION AND PARTNERSHIP
 - LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF THE CENTERS AMONG PEOPLE
- 
- 



KEY FINDINGS – SERVICES

- MPPC AS ALTERNATIVE CARE AGENCIES
 - DIRECTED TO OFFER COUNSELLING, CONSULTATION AND THERAPY
 - LITTLE KNOWN AMONG SURVEYED PARENTS (17%)
 - PARENTS ARE SATISFIED WITH MPPC
 - EXAMINATION LASTS ONLY 15 MIN.
 - REPORTS OF BUREAUCRATIC OBSTACLES
- 



KEY FINDINGS – SERVICES

- THE EXISTING CLASSIFICATION OF DIAGNOSES IS PROBLEMATIC
 - MANY CITE MPPC MEMBERS' LOW ENTHUSIASM AND POOR QUALITY OF SERVICES
 - LIMITED INCENTIVES FOR THE COMMISSION MEMBERS (NO ADDITIONAL PAYMENT)
 - LIMITED OR NO OVERSIGHT ON MPPC WORK
 - THE COMMISSION CAN MERELY OFFER MEANINGFUL SERVICES
- 