

EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN THE AMERICAS AND MIDDLE EAST



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Purpose

- Relate experiences regarding education programs in the Americas and Middle East
- Review issues shared across countries
- Identify obstacles related to education programs
- Describe programs that can serve as models for education programs for children with disabilities



Experiences in the Middle East and Americas

- Countries unique and varied but circumstances for development of educational programs often similar
- Countries include Egypt, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Bolivia, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia



Issues: central role of parents

- Initiatives often result of parents seeking educational programs for their child
- Response has often taken the form of resources from both private and public sector
- Leadership in many countries have often been the effort of parents
- However, the ‘family’ oriented cultures have is both a positive and sometimes a limitation



Issues: development activities

- Most countries have laws that either permit or mandate education for persons with disabilities
- Public efforts that have been successful have often been led by the leaders—often the First Ladies of the country
- The availability of human resources has contributed to effective programs



Issues: development activities

- The most successful efforts have been in the private arena
- Limited resources have been used most creatively
- Private efforts have often led to more attention to the needs throughout the country
- There is an openness to new ideas



Obstacles: societal

- Lack of rights
- Attitudes
- Laws are ignored
- Advocacy- either missing or inadequate
- Limited public knowledge



Obstacles: practical

- Bureaucratic barriers
- Inadequate funding or total lack of funding
- Inadequate or a total lack of trained personnel
- Inadequate technology
- Lack of specialists
- The two major issues are need for training and need for funding



Models for educational programs

- Continental School in Cairo
- Center for Discovery
- Neuvo Amanacer

Gracias
Thanks

