

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: ASSESSING EL SALVADOR'S CAPACITY FOR
CREATING INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITIES USING A CAPACITY ASSESSMENT
FRAMEWORK

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Increasing education access for children throughout the world is a frequently discussed topic in the international community. Efforts to meet international goals such as Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals have included providing developing nations with grants, loans and other services such as technical assistance. Despite these efforts, there are many students who still do not have access to an education, with many students being those with disabilities. Through an exploratory case study, a capacity assessment framework was used to assess El Salvador's capacity for creating inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. Interviews with government officials, non-governmental organizations, parents, teachers, and school administrators were conducted. Additional data was collected through observations and document reviews. The results of the study indicate the need for capacity building assessments as such assessments reveal the strengths and needs of a system's ability to provide inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. El Salvador's strengths include the presence of established policies identifying students with disabilities and the presence of an entity (CONAIPD) which brings private and public organizations together to discuss access issues related to persons with disabilities. Furthermore, there are several advocacy organizations trying to increase their involvement and supports for

parents and schools in order to increase and improve educational access and opportunities for students with disabilities. The capacity assessment also revealed the areas of need for El Salvador to increase its capacity in providing inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities, which included strengthening authority legitimacy, developing a consistent definition and identification process for students with disabilities and increasing teacher training and resources. Collectively, these results imply the need for additional capacity assessments as well as the need to reassess the assistance provided to nations with developing school systems that are trying to meet goals set forth by the international community.

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EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES USING
A CAPACITY ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANDES	<i>Asociacion Nacional de Educadores Salvadoreños</i> (National Association of Salvadorans Educators)
ARENA	Nationalist Republic Alliance party
CABEI	Central American Bank for Economic Integration
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDP	Christian Democratic Party
CISP	Consortium on Inclusive Schooling Practices
CONAIPD	<i>Consejo Nacional de Atencion Integral a la Persona con Discapacidad</i> (National Council for the Comprehensive Care for Persons with Disability)
CSE	Center for Special Education
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
EDUCO	Educacion con la participacion de la comunidad (Community –Managed Schools Programme)
EFA	Education for All
EPDC	Education Policy and Data Center
ERP	Earthquake Recovery Program
EXCELL	Excellence in Classroom Education at Local Level
FMNL	Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front
FUNPRES	<i>Fundacion Pro Educacion Special de El Salvador</i> (Foundation Pro Special Education of El Salvador)
FUNTER	<i>Fundacion Telethon Pro Rehabilitacion</i> (Telethon Foundation Pro-Rehabilitation)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product

GNP	Gross National Product
ICAISE	International Capacity Assessment for Inclusive Education
ICF	International Classification of Functioning and Disability
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act
IDRM	International Disability Rights Monitor
IEP	Individualized Educational Program
ILO	International Labour Organization
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MINED	Ministry of Education
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics
NCESNET	National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training
NCESS	National Committee for Education Support Services
NCSENO	National Coordination for Special Education Needs Office
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Economic Cooperation and Development
PODES	Organization for the Promotion of Disabled Persons of El Salvador
RI	Rehabilitation International
UCA	<i>Universidad Centroamericana</i>

	(Central American University)
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nation Children’s Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USDE	United States Department of Education
WHO	World Health Organization
2021 NEP	2021 National Education Plan

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental human right which provides children, youth and adults with the power to grow, reflect, make choices and enjoy a better life. It breaks the cycle of poverty and is considered the key ingredient in economic and social development (Jonsson & Wilman, 2001; Peters, 2004; UNESCO, 1997). The World Education Encyclopedia (2004), identifies three functions that education is designed to fulfill. First, education is a basic human right which means that people require education not only for structured information but also as a tool for gaining skills, attitudes and values which they can build upon later. Second, education is used as a means of meeting other basic needs such as employability and quality of life. The third factor is that education is an activity that sustains and accelerates economic development of countries.

Education is a means of investment as it trains and prepares skilled workers at all service levels and affects every sector of the economy (UNESCO, 1997). “Education enables individuals to make the transition to new social orders by providing self-understanding, better knowledge of the choices available, and a critical appreciation of the nature of change itself” (World Education Encyclopedia, 2004, p.18). Both empirical evidence as well as theories suggest that primary education and the early years of secondary education are recognized as being the most vital to economic growth (Abblet & Sengleson, 2001). Considering this evidence, Porter (2001) notes that when a large share of youth fail to complete primary education, the productivity of the labor force, the potential for knowledge-driven development, and the reservoir of human potential from which society and the economy can draw are all fundamentally constrained. Essentially, education has major influences upon social, cultural, and economic characteristic of

people and communities, ultimately contributing to economic growth and productivity at the local, national and global levels (Brink, 1997).

Disparity in Educational Access and Opportunity

Despite the established importance of education and its effects on society's health, economic and social stability, world statistics show that there is a wide discrepancy in educational access and opportunity in the world. In more developed countries, such as the United States and Western Europe, students are provided with the opportunities, resources and supports to enjoy education as a basic right that often leads to economic stability, access to health care and other life-long benefits. In the US, 98.3 percent of students ages 7-13 were enrolled in schools in 2002. For other age groups, ages 5-9 and 14-17, the percentages were slightly lower, 95.2 and 96.4, respectively (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005). Although the US and similarly developed countries still have room for improvement in many areas of their educational system (Harris, 2001; Johnson & Ginsberg, 1996), comparatively, they provide greater and better educational opportunities than other regions of the world, such as in developing countries, where the status of educational access and quality are quite different.

The World Bank (2005) and the United Nation's Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2005), cite the critical need for improving the educational conditions in many countries with developing economies around the world. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2005) indicates that an overwhelming number of students from regions such as Latin America, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa do not have access to basic education. More specifically, UNESCO (2005) estimates that 113 million children, ages 6 to 11, 60 percent of them girls, do not attend school. *The Latin*

American and Caribbean Regional Report (UNESCO, 2005) also highlights the inequalities of education, specifically in access to secondary and tertiary education. Parts of the Latin American region have low attendance in early childhood programs, with most of the attendees being from higher-income groups. Another report, *Educating the World's Children: Patterns of Growth and Inequalities* (Education Policy and Data Center (EPDC), 2005), also documents the inequalities of school access and discrepancies among developing countries. Countries like Malawi, Cambodia and Guatemala have had increasing rates of school attendance but also have high dropout rates at the primary school level, meaning that although children start primary school, many do not finish. There are countries with wide discrepancies in male-female and urban-rural comparisons. In Benin, for example, there is a 14 percentage point gap for male-female education. Although the male-female comparison is the one most frequently cited, the discrepancies for urban-rural populations are even greater. In places such as Ethiopia, Burundi, Niger and Mali, there is up to a 51 percentage point difference in school attendance between urban and rural population. Other indicators on the urban-rural discrepancies include the dropout rates. In Bolivia, 90 percent of students in rural areas dropout out of school before the end of the primary cycle. Similarly, in El Salvador, only 19 percent of students residing in rural communities complete the primary grades (Arvone et al., 1999).

The majority of children who do not access to basic education opportunities are those living in poverty (Fletcher & Artiles, in press; Jonsson & Wiman, 2001; Tomasevski, 2003). Regions that have particularly low levels of educational access for poor children include South Asia, the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Latin

America. For example, according to UNESCO (2005), in sub-Saharan Africa and in Asia, less than three out of four pupils reach grade 5. In South Asia, an estimated 60 percent of women are illiterate and nine countries, including Mexico and Brazil, are home to 70 percent of the world's illiterate.

Concerns in developing countries are not only about improving access to education but also about the quality of education. It is well documented that even when children in developing countries do have access to education, the quality is poor (Marlow- Ferguson, 2004; Tomasevski, 2003). For example, the quality and availability of textbooks, curriculum and instructional materials, and classroom equipment are often inadequate. In addition to the material and physical needs, there are also concerns with the quality of teaching practices, teacher training, teacher salaries, and lack of educational policies and/or enforcement (Fletcher & Artiles, in press; UNESCO, 2005; World Bank, 2005).

The literature on the benefits of education, particularly in developing countries is also clear. Studies that have looked at the investment of education, such as the *World Bank's East Asian Miracle* (1993), show high returns in low and middle income countries (Abblet & Slengeson, 2001). World organizations including UNESCO, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Bank cite the following examples of the benefits of educating children, particularly girls.

- A child of a mother in Zambia with a primary education has a 25% better chance of survival than a child of a mother with no education.
- In Bangladesh, women with a secondary education are three times more likely to attend a political meeting than are women with no education.

- Educated girls generally have a significant lower risk of HIV infection.

(USAID, 2005, p.3)

Education in Latin American

Educational opportunities in Latin American regions, which include Central America, South America, Mexico and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean island, vary. Quality degree of access, retention and drop-out rates vary across the region and are often linked to poverty. UNESCO (2005) also reports that Latin America is lagging with education access and quality. Furthermore, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) (2003) data on Latin America indicate that there are still significant needs in access and quality of education in this region. Many Latin American countries are burdened with inequality and poverty as well as the lack of access in social mobility and educational opportunities (Artiles & Fletcher, in press). Compounding the potential problems of access is the fact that the Latin American region is home to an estimated 40 percent of the world's population of children (Albarran de Alba, 1996; Artiles & Fletcher, in press), signifying that many of the educational issues that have been identified by the international community rest in this region.

Students with Disabilities

While there are concerns about educational opportunities and quality for all students, the statistics for students with disabilities in developing countries are even more disturbing. Although there is not a universal definition for the term *disability* (McLaughlin & Ruedel, 2005; United Nations (UN), 2005), a frequently accepted and cited definition of disability includes those with speech difficulties, learning disabilities, cognitive, physical, sensory and emotional difficulties, mental conditions or mental

illness, and whose disabilities may be more or less visible to others (Peters, 2005; UNESCO, 2005). In 2003, the World Bank reported that an estimated 40 million out of the 115 million children who were out of school have disabilities. There are large discrepancies between developed and developing countries in terms of providing education to students with disabilities. For example, in the United States, 97 percent of children with disabilities currently participate in public education. In developing countries, however, between 90 and 98% of school-age children with disabilities remain out of school and 99% of girls with disabilities continue to be illiterate (Jonsson & Wiman, 2001; UNESCO, 2005; USDE, 2005). For those who do attend schools, it is typically in segregated and separate schools (Porter, 2001). In non-urban areas, the conditions for youths with disabilities are even worse (Education Policy and Data Center, 2005; Porter, 2001).

Jonsson and Wilman (2001) warn that excluding this group of students from educational opportunities can be damaging to a society as it virtually ensures that these children will live in long-term or life-long poverty and be an economic burden to their families and communities. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) (2001) also highlights the importance of offering students with disabilities opportunities for development so that communities and society can benefit from their contributions.

The number of students with disabilities is another concern. Studies of children with disabilities in developing countries (Peters, 2004; UNESCO, 2005) suggest that the proportion of children with special needs may be significantly higher than what the currently available statistics suggest. Due to factors such as increased armed conflict, child labor, persistent poverty and violence and abuse (World Bank, 2003), the number of

persons with disabilities is reported to be on the rise (UNICEF, 2004; Wiman, Helander & Westland, 2002). More specifically, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)(2001) reports that the percentage of people with disabilities approaches 20% in regions that have endured major social disruptions such as wars and natural disasters.

International Efforts to Increase Access to Education

The international education community including the World Education Forum, UNESCO, USAID and the World Bank realized that there is great disparity between access and quality of education throughout the world. Numerous countries and organizations including the World Bank, USAIDS, the World Health Organization (WHO), UNESCO, and United Nation Children's Fund (UNICEF) have come together to address the issues of educational opportunities worldwide, with universal primary education (UPE) for all children at the top of the agenda.

The goal of achieving universal primary education has been on the international agenda since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was affirmed in 1948, which stressed that elementary education was to be made freely and compulsorily available for all children in all nations. This objective was restated on many occasions by international treaties and in United Nations conference declarations (UNESCO, 2005; World Education Encyclopedia, 2004).

Education for All

Education for All (EFA) is an international declaration developed in 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand, in response to the educational needs for children throughout the world, with particular attention on developing countries. Concerns of illiteracy rates are estimated at over 80 million people around the world and educational inequalities and

disparities prompted the world community to gather and to place access to basic education as the top priority on the international development agenda. The landmark EFA declaration was signed by representatives from 155 countries and major international agencies including the World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF and the WHO. The intent of this coordinated effort was to prompt international donors to ensure universal primary education and life-long learning accessibility to every person in every nation, and to focus in countries where the need is the greatest. When originally established in 1990, the EFA goals were to:

- 1- Expand and include early childhood education;
- 2- Provide free compulsory education of good quality by 2000;
- 3- Ensure equitable access to life-skills programs to adolescents and youth;
- 4- Expand adult literacy by 2015;
- 5- Eliminate gender discrepancies in primary education and secondary education by 2005; and
- 6- Enhance educational quality. (UNESCO, 2004, p.29)

After ten years of effort and recognizing that there was a strong probability that the 1990 EFA goals would not be met, the World Education Forum gathered again in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000. This meeting reaffirmed and modified the EFA goals to what are now known as the six Dakar goals: 1) expand early childhood care and education; 2) provide free and compulsory education of good quality by 2015; 3) promote the acquisition of life skills by adolescents and youth; 4) expand adult literacy by 50% by 2015; 5) eliminate gender disparity by 2005 and achieve gender equality in education by

2015; and 6) enhance educational quality. Major changes made to the goals during the Senegal meeting included extending the timelines.

The Salamanca Statement

Following the Jomtien meeting, the international community increased its efforts to equalize educational opportunities, and advocating in the disability arena demanded stronger support for full access to education for students with disabilities. The response to these efforts came in June 1994, in Salamanca, Spain, with the signing of the *Salamanca Statement and Framework for Actions on Special Needs Education* (Salamanca Statement). More than 300 participants, representing 92 governments and 25 international organizations ratified the Statement which furthered the objective of EFA by promoting inclusive education for students with special education needs (SEN), including children with disabilities. The SEN definition under the Salamanca Statement is as follows:

Students such as those with “physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other condition...disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas and groups.
(UNESCO, 2004, p. 6)

The Salamanca Statement defines inclusive education as the following:

Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged

or marginalized areas or groups. (The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Education Needs Education, 1994, p. 14)

The Salamanca Statement calls for governments to consider a series of recommendations designed to improve the access and quality of education for students with special needs. These recommendations include:

- give the highest policy and budgetary priority to improve their education systems to enable them to include all children regardless of individual differences or difficulties;
- adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise;
- develop demonstration projects and encourage exchanges with countries having experience with inclusive schools;
- establish decentralized and participatory mechanisms for planning, monitoring and evaluating educational provision for children and adults with special education needs;
- encourage and facilitate the participation of parents, communities and organization of persons with disabilities in the planning and decision-making processes concerning provision for special educational needs;
- invest greater effort in early identification and intervention strategies, as well as in vocational aspects of inclusive education;
- ensure that, in the context of a systemic change, teacher education programs, both pre-service and in-service, address the provision of special needs

education in inclusive schools. (The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Education Needs Education, 1994, p.18)

The Salamanca Statement was a major step in publicizing and establishing the need for inclusive education for children with disabilities throughout the world. The guiding principle of the framework is that all children regardless of their abilities-physical, intellectual, social, emotional or other conditions should be educated in inclusive public schools that recognize and respond to a continuum of special needs students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curriculum, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities (Peters, 2004; Salamanca Statement, 1994).

Impact of EFA and the Salamanca Statement

The international community has focused many resources and much effort on improving access to education for students with and without disabilities in developing countries. For example, the *Overview of USAID Basic Education Program 2000-2001*, reports that the USAID spent over 58 million dollars in 1999, over 54 million dollars in 2000, and over 60 million dollars in 2001 in education related activities. These activities included teacher training, curriculum development, textbook production, community participation, assistance to ministries of education, and strategic technical assistance (USAID, 2002). Likewise, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank provides interest-free credit and grants to assist with various projects and programs in education (IDB, 2005; World Bank, 2005). While these efforts can be linked to decreasing the gender gap in education and reducing illiteracy rates (Education Policy

and Data Center, 2005), they have not been enough to resolve issues like equal educational access and inclusion. Furthermore, in some countries, economic and social inequalities impacting educational opportunities have widened rather than narrowed in the last 25 years (Mittler, 1999). The World Education Encyclopedia (2004) also reports that, despite progress made, many countries still have enormous disparities in who is educated. Among the countries participating in the EFA goals, many have not reached the goals that were rewritten in 2000 and some EFA observers are doubtful that the goals are even obtainable (Jonssen & Wiman, 2001). Specifically, over 30 countries are not on track to achieve universal primary enrollment by the estimated date of 2015. In addition, 35 countries are not on track to meet the 2005 gender goals at the primary and secondary levels.

As for students with disabilities, the available statistics on educational opportunities show minimal changes in access and the number of students with special needs excluded from schools remains above 90 percent (UNESCO, 2005). Moreover, there is still significant segregation and discrimination in providing children with disabilities with educational access and opportunities, that is *if* they are provided with educational access of any sort (Peters, 2004; UNESCO, 2005b). This situation is largely due to society's attitudinal barriers as well as the continued practice of exclusion for youth who are vulnerable and marginalized (UNESCO, 2003). Some of the major causes of exclusion and segregation for children with disabilities include inappropriate teaching materials, inaccessible buildings, inappropriately designed curricula, inflexible and content-heavy curricula and untrained and unqualified teachers and staff (UNESCO, 2005).

The lack of progress in providing increased educational access to students with disabilities has caused international leaders to question what assistance might be required to assist transitioning and developing countries obtain better results in providing educational access to all students (UNESCO, 2003). Under EFA, no country can reach universal primary education (UPE) unless they provide primary education for all children, including those in remote areas, extremely poor, from ethnic minorities or those with disabilities (Data Center & Educational Policy (DCEP), 2005). Even for countries which are near 90% enrollment, new and additional resources and efforts will be necessary to reach that last 10%, which will be a challenging task.

Although the efforts made to address the issue of access, equity and educational quality are notable, international educational organizations suggest that current assistance efforts are not working because developing countries lack the basic economic, social or technical capacity to adequately and effectively use assistance and successfully respond to the goals and expectations of EFA (USAID, 2004; World Bank, 2005). Education task forces, such as the Canadian Summit of 2002, suggest that there are at least three needs that must be met in order to provide an educational opportunity for all. First, there needs to be commitment from the developing country, including provisions for adequate funding and the development of sound education strategies. Second is a developed-country response, which asserts that developed countries must accept greater responsibility in resource contribution to assist developing countries. Third is the need for better assessment of EFA progress including collecting, processing and analyzing data on school attendance and other important EFA indicators. Another suggestion affirmed by the Academy of Educational Development (2005) and other international development

organizations (Data Center & Educational Policy, 2005; USAID, 2005) is to engage in capacity building within developing countries so that the country can help formulate ideas and better use their in-country resources to reach EFA and inclusive education goals.

Capacity Building

Researchers, policy makers and other leaders in different industries have used the concept of capacity building to evaluate and assess the potential, ability or capability of a group of people, team, company or even society to attain self-proposed goals (Welsh, 2003). Capacity building approaches vary and change depending on the organization and its mission. The concept of capacity building has evolved from a standard approach to a systematic and individualized method of analyzing a system's needs (Porter, 1998). The term "capacity building" has been defined in a variety of ways and has different connotations for different groups of people (Reddy, Taylor & Sifunda, 2002). Floden, Goertz, and O'Day (1995) state that capacity is a general term that refers to the ability or power to do some particular thing or reach specific goals. Brown, Lafond and Macintyre (2001) define capacity building as a process that enables a person, group, system or organization to perform better and meet objectives. Similarly, Miles and Ralston (2002) state that capacity building is acquiring and using knowledge and skills, building on assets and strengths, respecting diversity, responding to changes and creating the future.

Since the concept of capacity building has been used in many fields, including economics (Porter, 1998; Welsh, 2004), technology (Akubue, 2002), and the health industry (Reddy, Taylor & Sifunda, 2002), the purpose, indicators and models of capacity building also vary. Despite these differences, various researchers (Reddy, Taylor &

Sifunda, 2002; Sajiwandani, 1998) agree that capacity building in the political, economic, and social sciences benefit all people. In the United States, capacity building, in the context of education, is often seen in the literature in terms of teacher's knowledge and skills and teacher training (Massell, 1998). Recently, capacity building in education has been considered as a key component to all facets education. It has also been suggested that capacity building in education should be applied more systematically when considering major reforms and has often been used as a framework to help those shaping education reform policies (Floden, Goertz & O'Day, 1995; Massell, 1998). A major reason for an increase in the use of capacity building models in education is due to the acknowledgement that simply imposing mandated change, standards and incentives alone are not sufficient to actually improve educational opportunities or opportunities (Massell, 1998).

Capacity Domains

There are several domains that are considered key when building capacity in education. These domains differ depending of what is being targeted for change. For example, Dervis (2005) suggests that the priorities of capacity building include: 1) policy analysis and planning; 2) capacity to formulate policy; 3) human resources, including training and skill development; and 4) capacity against corruption. Others (McLaughlin, Warren & Nolet, 1998; Ramos & Ferreira-Pinto, 2002) consider more popular elements such as physical, social, human and system wide to be the most critical. Similarly, Patel (2005) states that capacity building includes some of the more frequently identified domains and defines *physical capacity* as equipment and capital, *human capacity* as the

education and skill set of an individual and *social capacity* as the “nature of interactions between individuals in a community through networks and institutions” (p.66).

The framework used in this study utilized a capacity assessment framework building model, which draws from the literature on capacity building and includes three frequently cited domains. The World Bank has also used a capacity framework to assess capacity building in areas such as health and public expenditure management. The domains used to assess capacity are: institutional capacity, organizational capacity and human capacity. More specifically, the World Bank identifies them as follows:

1. *Institutional capacity*: including the policies, legislation, and the systems of goals and incentives.
2. *Organizational capacity*: groups of individuals bound together for a specific purpose, with objectives and internal mechanisms, staff and other resources to achieve them.
3. *Human capacity*: people with the ability to define objectives, design and implement programs, raise resources and deliver services.

The domains identified by the World Bank (2005) are accompanied by general objectives but have varied depending on the country where this framework has been applied. For example, for the human capacity domain, the objective used for the case in Benin included, “in-service training of teachers, inspectors, principals, and regional ministry staff” (p.32). For the organizational capacity domain, the objective was to, “strengthen the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research (MNRES) capacity for planning, managing the sector’s human and financial resources” (p.32). The indicators that follow the World Bank’s capacity framework are specific to general education issues

and would not be appropriate to use for an evaluation of inclusive education. Thus, for this study, the indicators that accompany each capacity domain are based in the literature related to inclusive education for students with disabilities. The indicators and assessment framework that were used in this study are further discussed in Chapter 2.

Need for Capacity Evaluation

A serious obstacle to progress is the absence of data on educational efforts and outcomes (Porter, 2001). It is critical to conduct an evaluation of a system before implementing and setting goals that may turn out to be unrealistic with the current capacity of that system. Both Welsh (2003) and Porter (1998) suggest that capacity building activities should happen prior to implementing a new law or a new service so that an organization can be prepared to independently implement the new requirements and achieve the intended goals. The evaluation of a systems capacity to perform certain skills or reach specific goals is also important to determine what is working and what changes are needed (Connolly & York, 1994). These recommendations are important in the context of EFA and the Salamanca Statement, which require major changes in educational systems and which have seen little success in the efforts to implement the proposed goals.

Capacity in Developing Countries

The Salamanca Statement and numerous progress and monitoring reports developed by UNESCO and USAID affirm the need to better understand the capacity of developing countries in order to increase educational opportunities for all students, including those with disabilities (UNESCO, 2004; USAID 2005). This is especially important if the expectation remains that developing countries will achieve EFA goals by

the targeted date. There has been a growing consensus that economic and state capacities are critical and cannot be taken for granted in low-income countries (Fukuyama, 2005). The international community tends to respond by providing direct services to low-income countries, which often bypasses and weakens indigenous institutions (Fukuyama, 2005). In other words, some services and technical assistance are preplanned in one country, typically a northern country, brought to the country “in need,” and executed without giving the in-country government the opportunity to experience or the tools of developing such services by themselves. This type of activity prevents systems and organizations from developing their own capacity.

Researchers (Artiles, in press; Welsh, 2003) continue to point out the importance of setting realistic targets for a country or a community and that it can only be done when taking the community’s status into account and putting proposed expectations and policies into their own context. The same argument is emphasized in other fields. Akubue (2002), who has focused on capacity building in technology in developing countries, alerts trainers about the false assumption that just because a machine or technique works well in the country and circumstances in which it was created and nurtured, it ought to do as well in another locale.

It is important to note that solely providing resources such as financial supports is not the answer to capacity building. International donors like USAID and the World Bank provide donations and grants to developing countries which are then used for numerous reasons such as program development or technical assistance. Even with monetary assistance from USAID, which had a budget of 200 million dollars for basic education in 2002, and other grants and loans from agencies such as the World Bank and IDB, the

progress in meeting EFA in developing countries is slow. Yet, how money may be spent is as important as the amount of support. Additionally, the budgets and contributions of international donors to developing countries are nominal compared to the estimated \$8 billion dollars per year that are needed to meet EFA goals (Dakar Framework for Action, 2000).

Need for Assessment of Capacity in Latin America

As noted earlier, the Latin America is a region facing serious challenges in meeting EFA goals. An IDB study (1997) reports that the percentage of students with disabilities in this area are about 18 percent, which is almost double the international statistics of 10 percent. Education for students with disabilities in this region is mainly segregated. Clearly, this is an area with many needs yet limited resources when it comes to inclusive education. There are also few data on the current status of the region's educational system for students with disability and its capacity to implement the Salamanca goals (Porter, 2001; USAID, 2001).

The Study

This research study addressed the lack of information regarding a developing education system's capacity to implement inclusive education opportunities. Specifically, the study was a single exploratory case study conducted in El Salvador, located in the Latin American region. El Salvador is one of the countries that has received support from international agencies, including USAID to develop its education system and improve access to education. Over the last decade, USAID has supported programs in El Salvador that have targeted students with disabilities and those wounded in armed conflict (USAID, 2001). These activities have focused on increasing human capacity, training

teachers in inclusive education practices and early childhood and family education services. Despite this assistance, the number of students with disabilities in El Salvador who have access to education is estimated to be less than one percent (Porter, 2001).

For these reasons, El Salvador offered an excellent opportunity to use a capacity assessment framework designed to analyze the current status of this country's institutional, organizational and human capacity as it relates to creating inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. This country shares similar characteristics with other developing countries trying to meet EFA and Salamanca Statement goals including limited resources for education, under qualified personnel and staff and a history civil conflict. The results of this study can be instrumental in assisting El Salvador in developing goals and objectives to increase inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. The findings provide additional information and data on the status of students with disabilities and education, which is an area where further research is much needed (Porter, 2001; USAID, 2005; World Bank, 2005).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this investigation was to apply a systematic model for capacity to assess the capacity of El Salvador's educational system to develop inclusive education opportunities for students with disabilities. A secondary purpose was to gather data on El Salvador's current inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions and sub-questions:

1. Using a capacity assessment framework, what are the characteristics of El Salvador's educational system capacity to implement inclusive education for students with disabilities?

Sub-questions:

- What is the institutional capacity for inclusive education, including educational and disability legislation, authority legitimacy, fiscal and infrastructure and resources?
- What is the organizational capacity of El Salvador's educational system as it relates to the ability to create inclusive education, including the presence of internal committees and mechanisms, bounded groups and administration and supervision of students with disabilities and the department and municipality-level?
- What is the current status of human capacity in El Salvador's educational system as it relates to creating inclusive education, including its evaluation tools to gather and evaluate data, and the presence and effectiveness of an on-going professional development system?

2. What are the current inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities in El Salvador?

The specific questions were derived from the capacity building domains previously identified. In addition, the literature related to facilitating inclusive education for students with disabilities was also a major consideration in determining the capacity domains.

Significance of Study

This study provides a means for profiling a country's educational system in order to better target assistance and resources. In addition, it provides a way to assess the current capacity of El Salvador's educational sector and to identify areas of strengths and needs as it relates to providing inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities. Furthermore, the results of this study may assist international and local agencies and organizations like non-governmental organizations (NGOs) plan assistance and allocate resources to other countries seeking to develop inclusive educational programs.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, this study only addresses the inclusive educational opportunities for students in primary grades. Second, the definition of students with disabilities is limited to include students considered to have disabilities as defined within El Salvador. As a result, students with other special needs, as defined by the Salamanca Statement, are beyond the scope of this study.

Other limitations to this study include the fact that the study was conducted in only one country: El Salvador, so while the findings might apply to other countries sharing similar characteristics as El Salvador, no claims can be made that the findings are generalizeable. Also, due to time and resource constraints, the data collected mainly came from participants in two regions of the country: San Salvador, which is the capital of El Salvador and Santa Ana. However, the study included representatives from national agencies and organizations, governmental institutions including the Ministry of Education (MINED), public schools, and university personnel. Including these representatives ensured that there was a voice and representation from all parts of the

country and therefore the study results are an accurate reflection of El Salvador's overall educational system capacity.

Even with the identified limitations this study provides insight to the current status of inclusive education in El Salvador. Furthermore, it helps to identify the areas of strengths and needs as related to the capacity of the country to provide inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities.

Definition of Terms

This section provides an introduction to the vocabulary and definition of terms used in this study.

Capacity Building- The ability or power to do some particular thing such as reach specific goals of systematic reform (Goertz & O'day, 1995) resulting in improved decision-making and efficiency in service delivery (Sitthi-Amorn, 2000).

Developing Country- For the purpose of this study, the term developing country will be defined as a country where people "live on far less money - and often lack basic public services - than those in highly-industrialized countries. Five out of the world's six billion people live in developing countries, where incomes are usually well under \$1000 a year." (World Bank, 2005).

Departments- Part of the administrative structure of El Salvador, which includes 14 departments. Comparable to States in the US.

Education for All (EFA)- EFA will be defined as the international commitment aimed at providing every boy and girl in the developing world with a quality, free and compulsory primary education to reach the following goals:

- Ensure universal primary education for all children by 2015

- Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education
- Improve early childhood care and education
- Ensure equitable access to "life skills" programs
- Achieve a 50 percent increase in adult literacy by 2015
- Improve all aspects of the quality of education
- Progress on the Millennium Development Goals

Human Capacity- The ability for people to define objectives, design and implement programs, raise resources and deliver services through a system of professional development and training.

Inclusive Education- The term inclusive education will be used as defined by the Salamanca Statement:

Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups.

(The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Education Needs Education, p. 3)

Institutional Capacity- The establishment of policies about inclusive education, and a system of goals and incentives that promotes inclusive education for students with disabilities.

International Organizations- For the purpose of this study, international organizations will include the United States of Agency for International Development (USAID), the

World Bank, UNICEF, the Inter-American Development Bank and any other agency that is involved in providing assistance to developing countries.

Municipalities- Part of the administration structure of El Salvador, which includes 262 municipalities. Comparable to “counties” in the US.

Non-governmental organization- A non-governmental organization (NGO) is a not-for-profit, voluntary citizens’ group, which is organized on a local, national or international level to address issues in support of the public good. Task-oriented and made up of people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizens’ concerns to Governments, monitor policy and program implementation, and encourage participation of civil society stakeholders at the community level.

Organizational Capacity- Having internal mechanisms that promote groups of individuals to bind together for a specific purpose, with objectives and other resources to achieve them.

Students with disabilities- Children and youth whose needs arise from disabilities or learning difficulties.

Students with special needs (SEN)- This term will share the Salamanca term for SEN

Students with physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other condition...disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas and groups. (UNESCO, 2004, p. 6)

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the literature review on topics related and relevant to the study. The first section presents an overview of current international efforts to promote education for all students with disabilities. This is followed by a discussion of how disability is defined and the problems that the lack of a clear definition can pose to achieve EFA. The second major section discusses what is meant by inclusive education in the context of EFA and also presents the literature to capacity building. Finally, the history and present context of El Salvador's efforts to achieve EFA are discussed.

Historically, students with disabilities have been deliberately excluded and marginalized in educational systems throughout the world. They have been prohibited from participating in educational opportunities, vocational and job training activities and prevented from being part of their communities (Peters, 2004; Porter, 2001). Statistics regarding students with disabilities and education are scarce or often unavailable (Jonsson & Wiman, 2001; UNESCO, 2005). Much of the data available are on the northern regions such as the United States and European countries and a large extent of the data available for transitioning and developing countries are limited and unreliable. The data that are available on education and children with disabilities in developing countries, however, are distressing. Numerous reports (Peters, 2004; Porter, 2001; UNESCO, 2005; USAID, 2005) indicate that the number of children with disabilities that have access to school range from a mere one to ten percent. In the Philippines, about 1.6% of students with disabilities attend schools. Porter (2001) reports that in Nicaragua, the education needs of 97.6 percent of children with disabilities could not be met. Similarly, in El Salvador, out of an estimated 222,000 students with disabilities, only

2,000, or less than one percent, were able to be served in schools throughout the country. In Mozambique, out of 170,000 children attending regular schools, 1,167, or 0.7% are children with disabilities. For those children who have access to education, their education is typically segregated and provided in special schools (Porter, 2001). One problem that complicates efforts to achieve education of children with disabilities is the definition of what constitutes a disability.

Defining Disabilities

The most common image that society has of children and adults with disabilities is that of someone who is pitiable, physically disabled or has another type of disability that requires the child to need more involved supports, such as mental retardation or autism. The reality, however, is that the population with disabilities make up a much more heterogeneous group. In fact, the word *disability* varies in meaning and interpretation from country to country and even within countries (Peters, 2004). The variation on the term *disability* is so great that there is still no universally agreed upon definition of disability (Peters, 2004; UN, 2005). There have been attempts to establish a definition but there has not been a consensus to accept and apply the definition throughout the world. In 2001, the World Health Organization (WHO) developed the International Classification of Functioning and Disability (ICF) which provide a three-part, multi-dimensional framework: 1) impairments of body functions and structure, 2) the limitations of participation in activities, such as work education, etc., and 3) level of limitations based on environmental factors. The organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has also identified a categorical system of disability including: 1) students whose disabilities have clear and biological causes, 2) students who

are experiencing learning difficulties for no particular reason and 3) students who have difficulties arising from disadvantages. A number of countries and organizations, including the World Bank, have adopted the ICF classification of disability (McLaughlin & Ruedel, 2005), yet other countries use either a medical or social model to define and identify persons with disabilities.

Not having reliable and universally accepted definition or classification system of disability poses many problems. First, it is impossible to really know the number of persons with disabilities without a universally accepted definition (Porter, 2001; UNESCO, 2005). Second, it is difficult to collect or compare reliable data without having a universally accepted definition or classification system of disability (Dudzik, Elman, & Metts, 2002; Montes & Massiah, 2005). Third, major decisions on who is educated, habilitated or treated are tied to a classification system (McLaughlin & Ruedel, 2005).

In 2000, the IDB attempted to conduct a comparative analysis on informal surveys in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) to determine the prevalence of disability in the region. The results varied significantly and cross-country comparisons were not possible due to variances in methods and definitions of disabilities (Dudzik, Elman & Metts, 2002). Montes and Massiah (2005) also attempted to conduct cross country analysis in Latin America and the Caribbean countries but were also unsuccessful due to inconsistencies in the definition of disabilities. Montes and Massiah highlight the need and importance of having a consistent definition or classification system for disabilities as the absence of one prevents researchers from gathering reliable and comprehensive data, which in turn limits the understanding of the changing dynamics among people with disabilities. Additionally, the lack of data prevents the development

and monitoring of public policies and effective programs that promote inclusion and other public services.

Cultural Considerations in Defining Disabilities

It is important to note that culture plays an enormous role on how children and adults with disabilities are identified and served in a country. Ingstad and Whyte (1995) highlight the differences between culture and the identification of disability and stress that cultural factors are especially involved in attempts to count and identify cases of disability. Cultural views and norms drive much of what is accepted or unaccepted as a disability. Similarly, these same cultural factors often establish which persons with disabilities are to receive or not receive services or special treatments (Ingstad & Whyte, 1995). The Maasai, for example, do not necessarily see or treat children with disabilities differently. According to the Maasai, it is wrong to kill or mistreat children who are deformed or impaired. Children and adults with disabilities in the Maasai culture are treated like everyone else and are expected to attend school like everyone else, marry, hold jobs and even become leaders in their communities. Conversely, in Northern countries, such as in the US and Western Europe, it is more acceptable to abort children who will be born with abnormalities than those who are developing normally. If a child is born with a disability, the more significant the disability, the more social exclusion the child experiences. In Euro-America, however, the political and social system of disability is well established, compared to other parts of the world. Euro-American assumptions about disability are elaborated by laws, administrative procedures, medical diagnoses, welfare institutions, professional organizations and business interest as well as a political

philosophy that having a disability entitles one to the political privilege of financial support and support services.

Ingstad and Whyte (1995) propose that cross-cultural studies involving disability issues consider the cultural construction of disability of the Western society as Western and Northern concepts, practices and organization are often carried over to other contexts. Many of the practices and procedures that are in place in the Euro-American regions are echoed in proposed educational reforms such as the EFA, the Salamanca Statement and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Prevalence

Prevalence of disability is difficult to establish considering the lack of a consistent definition and reliable available data (Jonsson & Wiman, 2001). There have, however, been attempts to calculate an approximate number of persons with disabilities. In the 1970's, Rehabilitation International (RI) developed a rough calculation of the number of persons with disabilities world wide. They estimated that about 10% of the world's population are born or acquire a disability within their lifetimes. Of this 10%, which are approximately 600 million persons, UNICEF (2005) proposes that around one quarter, or 150 million, are children. Other reports (Dudzik, Elman & Metts, 2002), however, indicate that the number of children affected by a disability is even larger, with percentages reaching up to 25% in regions with extreme and persistent poverty, in some rural areas or in locations affected by armed-conflict. In another report by Lomosky and Lazarus (2001), they estimate that, in some parts of Africa, the population of persons with disabilities may reach 40 to 50 percent. The *Third Report on the Implementation of the USAID Disability Policy* (2003) further asserts that the number of persons with

disabilities can reach up to 20% and that if families and relatives are included, 50% of the population in developing countries could be adversely affected by disability.

Inclusive Education

This section defines what is meant by inclusive education, specifically as it is used in the international context. The most commonly used definition of inclusive education in the recent international literature is the one provided by *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action* (1994), which defines the fundamental principle of inclusive education as:

All school children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities. There should be a continuum of support and services to match the continuum of special education needs encountered in every school. (p.12)

Although the rhetoric on inclusive education has increased since the development of the EFA goals and the signing of the Salamanca Statement, the notion of inclusive education is not new. Previous documents such as the United Nation's *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* of 1949, mention inclusive education as a human right. In the 1960's, a reevaluation of policy led to a stronger demand to de-institutionalize persons with disabilities and to promote more socially inclusive practices (UN, 2004). In 1975, The General Assembly adopted *The Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons*, which

stated that persons with disabilities were entitled to the same political and civil rights as others, including education, medical and placement services. These early attempts by the UN supported the rights and inclusiveness of persons with disabilities but attitudinal barriers still led to little attention and inaction to promote the proposed goals, including the one on inclusive education and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Key Features of Inclusive Education

Successful inclusive education involves a multidimensional effort that must include a variety of key players in schools, communities and organizations (Strieker, Salisbury & Roach, 2001). Considering the available statistics on inclusion and the slow progress made thus far, it is also evident that developing, implementing and supporting inclusive educational programs is not an easy nor fast process.

The Consortium on Inclusive Schooling Practices (CISP)(2001) proposed a number of factors for successful inclusive education. These six factors are: curriculum, accountability, assessment, professional development, funding, governance and administrative procedures. Under curriculum, it is important to consider an inclusive design so that the curriculum is designed broadly enough so that it supports the learning needs of all students. Accountability is also key and should involve the reporting of data for all students, including those with disabilities. Additionally, accountability should be based on student outcomes rather than environmental or external data.

Successful inclusion also requires the use of assessments. First, the Consortium suggests that the exclusion of students with disabilities in standardized or other testing should be kept to a minimum. Second, there should be policies that provide for alternate assessments for students with low-incidence disabilities. Last, assessment data should be

used for accountability purposes. Another important aspect of inclusive education is providing professional development. In this step, it is important to involve all personnel in addressing the needs of students with a full range of abilities and disabilities.

Additionally, there should be transdisciplinary training of general and special education teachers. The professional literature on teacher training also suggests that, “Knowledge, skills, disposition, and views of self are the four interdependent dimensions of teacher capacity needed to educate an increasingly diverse student population” (CISP, 2001, p. 15).

Funding school systems appropriately is also critical in structuring inclusive educational systems. It is important to provide school systems the same amount of money for students with disabilities, whether they are educated in an inclusive or segregated setting. Additionally, there should be provisions to allow adequate funding for students with more significant disabilities. Lastly, funding should allow for training and staff development opportunities for special and general education teachers. Governance and administrative strategies must also be considered in order to have inclusive school systems. It is important that governance policies try to unite the lines of authority from the state to the local level. Furthermore, these policies should promote quality instruction for students with and without disabilities. Administrators and school leaders must also provide teachers with resources and ensure that they have time for collaborative planning, meetings and mentoring new teachers (CISP).

The *Open File on Inclusive Education* (UNESCO, 2003) also suggests key factors in making inclusive education a possibility. First, education systems must be supported with clearly articulated policies and principles which address system-wide development.

Second, it is important to provide teachers with the skills and training to enable them to provide instruction to all students. Training must also be systematic and long-term. Third, assessments must be used continuously to evaluate student progress. Also, parents and students must be recognized as key contributors to the assessment process. Finally, early assessment of a child's difficulties must also be considered as part of the assessment process. Another key factor is to have established support systems. This means supports for students, teachers and parents. These support systems can be informal or formal and can include members of the community and other specialists. Partnerships with families are also important in establishing successful inclusive systems. Other key factors include attention to the curriculum, funding management, and transition assistance.

Barriers to Inclusive Education

While the key components of inclusive education may be outlined for countries and states to follow, the implementation of successful inclusive education does not come without challenges and barriers. Studies and reports in the area of inclusive education suggest that there are several barriers in providing inclusive education, especially in low-income areas and developing countries. One of the greatest barriers is the negative attitudes and customs by most societies related to students with disabilities and their rights to educational opportunities (Peters, 2004; Porter, 2001; UNESCO, 2005). Changing society's views of children and persons with disabilities is not an easy task, especially when these views are so embedded and reflected in society. Other barriers include economic factors, isolation and distance, which can be compounded by inaccessible transportation systems, and limited access to assistive technology and devices (Rousso, 2001). Despite these challenges and barriers, there are successful

programs and initiatives that are in place, as previously described in the cases of Viet Nam, Romania, South Africa and Portugal.

Costs and Benefits of Inclusive Education

One of the concerns of inclusive education is cost. For many developing countries, the available budgets are often not enough to meet even the basic needs in education. Although it is difficult to calculate the cost of educating children with disabilities that are excluded from education, studies have been conclusive in determining that the cost of inclusive education, where children are taught in integrated schools, is far less than that of separate, segregated and exclusive education, where the construction of separate schools, buildings and institutional settings as well as separate resources are necessary (Baker, Wang, & Walberg, 1995; Peters, 2004; UNESCO, 2005, Wiman, Helander, & Westland, 2002; Zigmond, 1995,). Moreover, economic arguments have surfaced and provided a more thorough and thought-provoking view on the cost of excluding and marginalizing children and adults with disabilities.

Jonsson and Wiman (2001) suggest that educating a child with a disability may be nominally higher than educating a child without a disability in a general education setting and in less segregated setting. These researchers also claim that many cost-effective analyses on educating children with disabilities are “incomplete” and superficial as they do not consider the lifetime increment benefit and concentrate more on the more immediate cost. In other words, providing a child with a disability with an education will cost less in the long run because it will defuse the incremental lifetime cost on his/her community or society in the long run- which includes a facet of costs such as unemployment, health and social welfare.

In addition to the cost-benefit of inclusive education, there are also other social and educational benefits for all students and educators involved in this process. Peters (2004) and Turnbull and Turnbull (2004) report that the benefits of inclusive education include increased social, personal and communication skills for children with disabilities including those with low-incidence disabilities. Baker et al. (1995) further evaluated the literature on inclusive education and the most effective setting for children with special needs. They reviewed three different meta-analyses which looked at nearly 80 studies between 1980 and the mid 90's. They found that there were positive effects in educating children with disabilities in inclusive settings. More specifically, they determined that students with disabilities who were educated in regular education classes did better socially and academically compared to those students educated in non-inclusive settings. Recent reviews of inclusive research (McLaughlin, et. al., in press) support the findings of enhanced social and communication competence. However, most if not all of the studies that have evaluated inclusive practices have been conducted in countries with well developed educational systems. The support for inclusive education in developing countries is based on social goals and perceived social values. There is however, a body of research, conducted in developing countries, that discusses the factors that lead to the development of inclusive practices (Roach, Salisbury & McGregor, 2002). The literature speaks to the importance of having certain factors in place such as vision, training, and specific supports in order to make inclusive education a reality. The importance of building the capacity of the educational system to implement inclusive practices, coupled with a clear policy that favors inclusion cannot be underestimated.

Inclusive Education in the International Agenda

In addition to EFA and the Salamanca Statement, as discussed in Chapter 1, world leaders agreed to develop a set of time-bound and measurable goals that combat hunger, poverty, disease, and illiteracy. At the 1990 United Nation Millennium Summit, the Millennium Developmental Goals (MDGs) were developed and presented: 1) halve extreme poverty and hunger; 2) achieve universal primary education; 3) empower women and promote equality between women and men; 4) reduce under five mortality by two-thirds; 5) reduce maternal mortality by three quarters; 6) reverse the spread of disease, especially HIV/AIDS and Malaria; 7) ensure environmental sustainability; and 8) create a global partnership for development, with targets for aid, trade and debt relief (UN, 2005). The goals are expected to be achieved by 2015. At the top of the MDGs list, the goal of universal primary education (UPE) is echoed again.

The MDGs further reinforce that education for all or universal primary education has become a top priority in the international agenda. Within EFA and the MDGs, it is also evident that the notion of inclusion is suggested if not expected in order for countries to reach the proposed goals (Hegarty, 2001; Porter, 2001). Without a major increase in inclusive practices for children with disabilities, no country will be able to meet any of the goals that call for educating all children.

Hegarty (2003) argues that EFA will not be achieved without inclusive education. He reminds us that EFA calls for education for *all* not education for some. Additionally, he suggests that the language of the goals specifically calls for inclusive education:

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and

2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in different circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality (p.4).

He also states that in order to include students with disabilities, it must be done through regular schools as segregated schools are too expensive and have proven to be unnecessary, except for a very small proportion of cases. Finally, Hegarty concludes that schools and districts which take inclusive education seriously are the ones most likely to meet the targets of UPE and EFA.

Efforts to Achieve Inclusive Education

Consequent to the international initiatives, countries around the world are attempting to address inclusive education in their education agendas. These attempts, however, have not gone without challenges in implementing inclusive educational practices. In the countries of the North, the move towards inclusive education has been difficult due to traditional policies and practices such as segregated or exclusive education for groups that have been labeled “different” based on religion, wealth, or other factors (UNESCO, 2004). Even with these challenges, however, the concept of inclusive education is seen in practice, although mostly in countries such as Canada, Australia, the United States and parts of Western Europe. Students with disabilities in these regions tend to have greater opportunities not only in education but also in employment and other community activities. In the United States, for example, there are established laws such as the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), passed in 1975, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which require schools and other education settings to provide equal access for students with disabilities. Collectively,

these and other laws also promote that children and adults with disabilities have access to education, employment, transportation, accommodations and other necessary services.

Nonetheless, there are still significant issues and inequalities among children with disabilities, even in developed countries. In the United States and Canada, children with disabilities from low-income families are still over-represented in segregated educational settings (Donovan & Cross, 2002). Also, there continues to be segregation and separation of children with low incidence disabilities (Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001).

In developing countries, the major constraints in providing educational opportunities to children with disabilities include the serious shortage of resources such as adequate facilities, qualified staff, education quality, supplies and learning materials and administrative support (UNESCO, 2004). Because of these limitations, inclusive practices and schools in developing countries are not as common as in more developed countries. Nevertheless, there are examples of countries that have begun major initiatives to promote inclusive education.

In 1991, Viet Nam initiated a major reform and pilot projects for the inclusion of students with disabilities. The Ambrose Model of Systems Change (1994) was applied to improve inclusive educational opportunities for children with disabilities. The model includes five elements: a vision, skills, incentives, resources and an action plan for change. Villa et al. (2003) traced the key collaborative steps that took place to increase inclusive education in two communities, including a rural community and a typical urban district in Viet Nam. Programs for children with disabilities in both of these districts were non-existent prior to the pilot program. Viet Nam's Center for Special Education (CSE) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) started with identifying children with disabilities

through child-find and, unlike much of their previous work, focused on the inclusion of all children with disabilities, including those with low incidence disabilities, rather than one specific type of disability. Through this process, they were able to identify 1078 children. Collaboratively, CES and CRS provided training to administrators, teachers and parents of children with disabilities. This training included information on the history of special education services, the benefits and rationale for inclusive education, group instruction, individualized educational programs (IEP), modifications, assessment, family services and other information related to special education and inclusion. At the conclusion of this process, local level teams were developed to evaluate systems change and provide supports (Villa et al.).

In 1995, four years following the initiation of the pilot project, 1,000 of the 1,078 students with mild, moderate and low incidence disabilities were successfully included in regular education classrooms in their communities. Follow-up data indicated that teachers were more open to including students with disabilities because of new training, resources and knowledge on inclusive practices. Teachers and parents also expressed an increase in expectations for children with disabilities.

As a result of the outcomes of these projects, there were national policy changes including one that prohibited the exclusion of children with disabilities in preschools. In 1998, the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training changed their philosophical stance and, for the first time, promoted that 90% of children with disabilities could be educated in regular education classes. That same year, USAID helped to fund a project that expanded the pilot project into three other districts. Again, the results were impressive. In less than two years, the number of students attending schools in those

districts went from 1,304 to 4,300 students (out of 5000 that were identified). The per pupil cost of educating students with disabilities in the regular education classes was \$58 per year, compared to \$20 for regular education students and \$400 for students with disabilities educated in segregated schools and settings (Villa et al.).

Today, Viet Nam provides inclusive models of education in 51 out of their 61 provinces and is considered the most inclusive country in Asia, in terms of educating children with disabilities. Even with this progress, 95% of children with disabilities in Viet Nam still do not have access to school. Villa et al. (2003) state that countries attempting to provide inclusive education face barriers such as the lack of educational policies and organizational structures. The authors also point out the importance of allowing communities to come up with their own approaches that work for the country's own cultural context and that simply imposing a US model may not necessarily work in a country like Viet Nam.

Another country attempting to increase inclusive educational opportunities for children with disabilities is Romania. Specially after the signing of EFA in 1990, Romania made efforts to reform their educational system to enable schools and other educational institutions to provide efficient educational services using available human and material services (UNESCO, 2001). The same year EFA was adopted, the domestic legislation was amended to support inclusive education. In addition, there have been reforms in the curriculum, and assessment and certification of special education and teacher training. There has also been an increase in the number of children with disabilities that are placed in "mainstream" kindergarten. Romania also developed the

State Secretariat for the Handicapped, which set specific goals for including children with disabilities in mainstream education (UNESCO, n.d.).

After many years of providing education based on the different ethnic groups (Black, colored, Indian and White), South Africa is also attempting to restructure their education system and provide more inclusive education for all students, including those with special needs. Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001) report on how South Africa restructured their educational policies and legislation to provide all students with seven years of basic education and two more years of compulsory education. The South Africa School Act states that all public schools must admit learners and serve their educational needs and requirements without discriminating in any way. The Ministry of Education also appointed the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCESNET) and the National Committee for Education Support Services (NCESS) to conduct a needs assessment and make policy recommendations specifically related to students with special needs. At the conclusion of the assessment, the NCESNET and the NCESS included the following as part of their recommendations to improve inclusive education:

Education and training policies legislation, advisory bodies and governance and organizational arrangements which emphasize capacity building at leadership and management levels and the fostering of intersectorial collaboration at all levels; and, information advocacy and mobilization programs to facilitate a shift in thinking about “special needs and support” in the country towards an understanding of and support for the development of an inclusive education and training system. (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001, p. 314)

Consequent to these efforts, many students with different types of disabilities such as students with Down syndrome, and physical and sensory disabilities have been successfully included in regular schools and classrooms. Some of these students have facilitators in the classroom, although these arrangements are often privately funded arrangements. There are also other programs, including Primary Open Learning Pathway, which focuses on curriculum adaptations for over-age students to be integrated and included in more age-appropriate settings.

South Africa's initiatives to promote inclusive education at the national and provincial level aim to provide inclusive education through capacity building strategies, including the development and monitoring of in-service training, and resource development. While these initiatives provide many opportunities, they also provide certain challenges. One of the key challenges is the massive poverty facing Africa. It is hard to provide an adequate and inclusive education while there are still many schools that lack the basic resources including toilets, safe buildings and access to electricity and water. Despite these concerns, Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001) state that there are a number of examples of schools in Africa that have successfully provided inclusive education by pulling from all available material and human resources. These authors also believe that through interdependence and collaboration, inclusive education is an obtainable goal for schools in South Africa.

Freire and Cesar (2005) evaluated inclusive practices in Portugal. As one of governments in attendance at the Salamanca Statement signing in 1994, Portugal has restructured much of their educational system to reflect their commitment to the inclusion of students with disabilities. Some of these changes included amendments to their

educational laws and procedures. These changes provided a legal base to afford students with disabilities an equal and inclusive education. While these major legal changes are commendable, the researchers found that they are not always easy to transfer into the school system or classroom. Some of the practices seen in the schools involve an increase in inclusive placements, as far as environments are concerned (more students were included in typical classes with non-disabled students), but not necessarily a quality education for students with disabilities. Additionally, teachers are not always given the skills, knowledge, or planning time to work together to be able to provide all students with a quality education. Even so, Portugal is attempting to establish a more inclusive education system by promoting collaborative partnerships with parents, and other educational communities. Although the efforts by various countries are encouraging, it is important to note that no country, developed or developing has implemented a fully inclusive educational system (Jonsson & Wiman, 2001).

El Salvador

This study was conducted in El Salvador which is the smallest country in Central America and has the region's second largest population: 6.6 million (US Department of State, 2006). The country has many of the characteristics that have been identified as making a region particularly vulnerable to an increased number of children and persons with disabilities. These include high rates of poverty and a history of armed-conflict and natural disasters. From 1980-1992, El Salvador endured a 12-year civil war that claimed nearly 80,000 lives. During this period, there were numerous human-rights violations from both governmental forces and the left-wing guerillas. Only six years after the end of the civil war, the country faced several natural disasters including Hurricane Mitch in

1998, which killed 374 people and caused massive disruption. Three years later, in 2001, two devastating earthquakes left 2,000 people either dead or missing, 8,000 injured and 1.5 million homeless. Most recently, El Salvador continues to struggle to cope with the growing gang violence, which is exacerbated by ongoing economic devastation from the civil war. Other post-war social problems include rural unemployment which has led to a highly transient population and significant immigration, especially to the United States.

Education in El Salvador

El Salvador provides a legal guarantee of a free education to all students between the ages of 7-15. The total public expenditure of education is 2.4% of the gross national product (GNP) and the adult literacy rate is 78.7% (EFA, 2004). According to the data gathered in 2000 by Inclusion Inter-Americana (2002), a non-profit parent organization in El Salvador, the number of school-aged youths with disabilities was approximately 222,000. Out of these 222,000, only two thousand attended school and the schools that they attended were special and segregated schools. A number of problems confront the improvement of education in El Salvador. For example, education as a career does not carry much prestige. Teachers in El Salvador do not always have the appropriate training, at either the pre-service or in-service level. Many of the teachers in El Salvador, as well as in other Latin American countries have low-academic levels such as a high school degree and minimum college experience, and for many of them, the teaching profession is a second choice career (Gajardo & Gomez, 2005).

In the schools, teachers face many difficulties including low teacher compensation, which does not encourage good professional performance. In addition, the average teachers teach 40-45 students per classroom, often on double shifts with few

textbooks and other teaching materials. Principals and administrators often lack the skills, salary or authority to create or support competent and coherent school teams (Garardo & Gomez, 2005).

There are also few studies or published information on inclusive education models in El Salvador. Inclusion Inter-Americana (2002) published a study of 16 children who were deaf and blind and who were included in a general school. They were included in two secondary schools, the Liceo Getsemani or Colegio Evangelico CentroAmericano, with interpreters who were privately paid by a parent association. According to the study, the students did not receive any curricular or instructional accommodations beyond having an interpreter. In 2002, the first seven students successfully graduated from their respective secondary schools and the program continues to grow with the collaborative partnership between the schools and the parent association.

Efforts to increase inclusive education for children with disabilities are slowly emerging in El Salvador. International agencies such as USAID, the World Bank and the IDB have provided funding for initiatives and projects that promote improved educational opportunities for children in El Salvador, but there have been few grants or programs that specifically target special education or inclusive education. The programs that have been developed have been small and temporary programs targeting only a fraction of the population that is in need of such services.

One of the projects funded by USAID, the *Excellence in Classroom Education at the Local Level (EXCELL)* project, targeted 250 rural schools in El Salvador. Through this project, principals were provided with trainings and support to improve education in their schools. A guidebook on inclusive practices was also developed to assist principals

and teachers with an introduction to the main principles of inclusion and an introduction to inclusive practices (EQUIP 1, 2006).

Another project funded by USAID and the Kennedy Foundation was a teacher training activity in 2003. The purpose of the training was to provide teachers with knowledge, skills, and tools for early detection, referral and working with children with disabilities in the classroom. In addition, USAID provided technical assistance to Don Bosco University to improve services in orthopedic technology. There were also a few other projects done in collaboration with UNICEF and Save the Children that targeted early childhood education and pre-school education (USAID, 2003).

In addition, there are small organizations, such as parent organizations and advocacy groups that have formed to provide supports to parents of children with disabilities. For example, Inclusion Inter-Americana was developed by a parent association and now provides supports for a more inclusive education practices. Another organization involved in improving and expanding inclusive education for students with disabilities is FUNPRES: Fundación Pro Educacion Special de El Salvador. FUNPRES's efforts are coordinated with the MINED to increase inclusive education in El Salvador. FUNPRES also works with parents and other disability-focused community organizations. Most of these efforts, however, target few students, comparing to the number of students who have been identified as having a disability in El Salvador. Aside from the aforementioned efforts and the education laws that are discussed later in the chapter, there is no documentation on inclusive education practices in El Salvador.

Capacity Building

Capacity building is not a new concept and has been used in a number of fields to improve human resources and organizational structures. The meaning of capacity building varies depending on the context where it is being used. For example, Harris (2004, p. 241) defines capacity building as, “creating the conditions, opportunities and experiences for collaboration and mutual learning.” The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines capacity building as, “technical assistance, training, information sharing, technology transfer, materials development or funding that develops, enhances, or sustains an organization to better serve customers or operate in a more comprehensive responsive and effective manner (Oliva, Rienks, Udoh, & Smith, 2005, p. 307). Subramaniam (2003) suggests that capacity building is similar to “development” or “strengthening.” She further defines these terms as creating, reforming or supporting activities that facilitate sharing of experiences, strategies and knowledge. Patel (2005) reports that capacity building is, “the process by which individuals, groups, organizations, institutions and societies increase their ability to (1) perform core functions and (2) understand and deal with their development needs in a broad context and in a sustainable manner” (p.66). She also suggests that capacity can be divided into three realms: social, physical and human. She defines social capacity as the networks and interactions in a community through networks and institutions; physical capacity as the equipment and capital; and human capacity as the education and skill set of individuals.

The use of capacity building approaches has been seen in areas such as health, sciences, technology and education. The literature also supports the function and importance of capacity building in these areas. Patel (2005) states that capacity building

helps cultivate a sense of ownership and responsibility, made possible by assuring local participation in the decision-making process. Reddy, Taylor and Sifunda (2002), used capacity building to improve research and collaboration relating to HIV and AIDS prevention between South Africa and American partners. More specifically, they used capacity building as a deliberate effort to augment health and social sciences research outputs as well as human capital. This was done with training in collaboration with the intent to improve decision-making and efficiency in service delivery. The outcomes of collaboration and capacity building to improve research outputs proved to be successful. The groups from Africa and the US felt that they had learned from each other and were better trained and prepared to conduct research and provide specific services in their field. Likewise, Oliva, Rienks, Udoh and Smith (2005) used a capacity building approach to develop, implement and evaluate an innovative HIV prevention program. The organizations involved in this study, a university and community-based organization, needed to build capacity in the areas of outreach, recruitment and follow-up in order to successfully implement the program. This was done through discussion groups and skills sharing. The results of the project proved that collaboration and capacity building approaches were effective in implementing and delivering services of the HIV prevention program.

Subramaniam (2003) also used capacity building to create networks and support groups for poor women in India. She argues that capacity building initiatives are not only important at the organizational and governmental level, but they are also critical in developing informal networks and support systems at the local level. Additionally, capacity building initiatives at the local level, such as community-based and other

support groups, can lead to the creation of more formal networks and organizations.

Subramaniam also adds that capacity building should be viewed not only as the transfer of new skills and knowledge but also as a route to addressing oppression.

Evaluating Capacity

Evaluating capacity can be an informative tool to determine the status of a system as well as predict how the system will respond to new initiatives. Evaluation can generate new knowledge on what works, for whom, and in what circumstances (Connolly & York, 2002). System evaluations are often focused on processes rather than outcomes but a systematic evaluation can help establish accountability as well as compare and contrast the effectiveness of capacity building activities. Every year, hundreds of evaluations of different programs or systems are carried out to identify processes and outcomes-mainly for accountability requirements, but few of these evaluations are carried out to evaluate the capacity of an organization (Horton et al., 2003).

Connolly and York (1994) suggest that in order to evaluate capacity of the organization, one must consider the nature of the organization and knowing to ask, “Capacity to do what?” (p.38). In addition, an evaluation of capacity must be guided by indicators of what is considered relevant to or which define the elements of capacity. Capacity evaluations are useful for strengthening and enhancing organizational effectiveness as well as to improve efforts and sustain high-impact programs for a long time.

Capacity Building in Education

New policies, reform initiatives and higher expectations are a major part of the education system. However, few of these policies or initiatives provide a structure to

build the capacity to improve education or implement new ideas (Harris, 2001; Jonhson & Ginsberg, 1996). Traditionally, capacity building in education has primarily been seen in the area of teacher training and school improvement (Massell, 1998; McLaughlin, Warren & Nolet, 1998). Massell (2000) summarizes four major capacity building strategies used to improve education systems in various districts in eight states in the United States. These strategies included: 1) interpreting and using data; 2) building teacher knowledge and skills; 3) aligning curriculum and instruction; and 4) targeting resources for low-performing schools. Building capacity for internal school improvement requires the assistance of outside supports, such as state and governmental policies (Harris, 2001; West, 2000).

There is strong evidence suggesting that capacity building is a critical consideration when looking at educational reform and large-scale change (Massell, 2001; Roach, Salisbury & McGregor, 2002; UNESCO, 2004). While there is literature available on the importance of capacity building and the important domains or aspects of capacity, there are not many evaluation or assessment models that evaluate system capacity (Connolly & York, 2004), much less models that evaluate the capacity for providing inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities.

Summary

Today, it is recognized that educational services and current practices for students with disabilities in developing countries are insufficient and inadequate (UNESCO, 2005; USAID, 2005). The cost of continuing to exclude students with disabilities from basic education is increasingly clear to international leaders. Efforts by the international community to create educational opportunities, specifically inclusive education are

notable but these efforts have not proven to be enough to make changes as expected (Freire & Cesar, 2003). Thus, it is critical to better understand what needs to be done to develop the capacity of a country's education system to be inclusive.

Building capacity evaluations have become instrumental in identifying the status of a system or unit. These strategies have been used in educational reform and have been effective in not only detecting what the possible problems or needs may be, but also in identifying solutions in the context of that system or unit (Connolly & York, 1994; UN, 2005).

The major international organizations, including the World Bank (2004) and USAID (2005) acknowledge that capacity building is necessary in order to meet EFA goals. Moreover, the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action explicitly mentions the need for “international co-operation to support the launching of... new approaches and capacity building” (p.45). Thus, a capacity evaluation of El Salvador's educational system, such as the one described in Chapter 3, has the potential to inform planning and resource allocations at international and local levels.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides information on how the study was conducted. More specifically, the chapter outlines the development of a capacity assessment framework and how it was used to assess El Salvador's capacity for providing inclusive education opportunities for students with disabilities. The methods and procedures used, including the steps to select and contact the participants, interview processes, transcribing and translations, coding and data analyses method and validity and reliability measures are also discussed.

Capacity Evaluation Framework

For the purposes of this study, an assessment framework was developed to evaluate El Salvador's capacity for providing inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. Using the literature from Chapter 2, as well as domain and indicator guides identified by the World Bank and the CISP (2001), I developed a capacity assessment framework (CAF) which includes capacity domains and corresponding indicators that assessed specific areas that are key in developing and providing inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities.

The first step in developing the CAF was reviewing the literature on capacity building. Through this review, several key "domains" were identified as important in capacity building. These domains were not only identified in the literature relating to education but also in the literature of capacity building in other areas such as health, transportation and technology, as explained in Chapter 1. These are: institutional, organizational, and human capacity. These three domains have been used by the World Bank (2005) in capacity assessment in numerous developing countries to evaluate

education, transportation and health services. These domains also emerged throughout the capacity literature. Thus, these three areas formed the basis for the CAF to be used in this study. Following the identification of the key domains, indicators corresponding to each domain needed to be established. While the World Bank's model provides specific indicators, these indicators were not related to inclusive education. Rather, they were indicators evaluating the broader educational system of Benin (2005). The indicators selected were gathered from the literature on successful inclusive education, best practices and approaches to inclusive education and from specific indicators identified by the CISP (1996, 2001). The CISP was a 5-year federally funded project which specifically focused on building the capacity of state and local systems to deliver inclusive educational services (Roach, Salisbury & McGregor, 2002). Several publications were then made available, including a manual that identified specific target areas and indicators for successful inclusive education. The indicators identified by the CISP were derived from the research based on effective schooling practices. These indicators were modified for this study using the literature related to educational capacity building and what is known about inclusive education in developing countries. This resulted in a framework of evaluating capacity that includes three domains: institutional, organizational and human capacity and a total of 10 indicators. The domains and indicators were cross-referenced with each other by reviewing the capacity domains and indicators and assuring that they were also representative of what the literature on inclusive education and capacity building suggest. It is important to note that the framework was used as a starting point but was modified and expanded based on the data gathered throughout the time of the study. For the purposes of this study, the preliminary

framework just described will be referred to as the capacity assessment framework (CAF) until the revised framework is presented in Chapter 4. Table 3.1 outlines the list of domains and the corresponding indicators.

Table 3.1- Capacity Domains and Indicators for CAF

<i>Domain/Definition</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
Institutional Capacity/ <i>The institution's ability to develop and implement policies and a as a system of goals and incentives</i>	1)The government has clear and established policies about inclusive education that unite federal, state and local governments. 2) There is an accountability system in place that promotes the inclusion of students with disabilities. 3) There are funding sources available for districts to draw from for students with disabilities.
Organizational Capacity / <i>The institutions abilities and practices in bounding individuals and groups together to come up with goals, objectives, and resources.</i>	1) Groups of individuals such as central and local government officials, advocacy groups and other local organizations collaborate or gather together to feel a greater sense of ownership for all students. 2)State and local-level administrators oversee special education as well as general education and receive training to consider the needs of students with disabilities in their planning. 3) There are internal mechanism such as councils and committees to promote collaboration with other social agencies, state and local community and parents.
Human Capacity/ <i>The institution's abilities and practices in providing training and resources to state and local district personnel to design and implement programs and to deliver services.</i>	1) A system of professional development and professional training is in place and addresses the learning needs of students with the full range of disabilities. 2) Staff development is ongoing and provides districts with the tools and resources to develop objectives and come up with the resources to achieve the goals. 3) There are opportunities for state and local districts to unite and come up with goals and objectives for all students, including those with disabilities. 4) Federal, state and local agencies are given the training and resources to learn to raise resources and develop objectives.

Definitions adapted from *Consortium on Inclusive School Practices (2001)*

Study Design

This study utilized a case study design. In the last thirty years, case study research has become increasingly popular in the field of education and has been used to evaluate students, school teachers, and policies (Merriam, 1998). Case study methodology is considered an understanding-oriented exploration of a “bounded system” or a case (or cases) over a period of time through detailed and in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (Creswell, 1988; Gay & Airasian, 2003). Yin (1994) defines case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (p.13). He further explains that there are three types of case study approaches: exploratory case studies, descriptive case studies and explanatory case studies. The type of case study most appropriate can be decided based on the type of research questions posed, the control the researcher has over events, and the focus on contemporary or historical events.

Historically, case study methodology has been used to investigate the uniqueness and complexity of a single case or a “bounded system.” Examples of case study research include single cases such as a student with a disability, or a system such as a school or governmental agency (Martens, 1998). Earlier models of case study (Yin, 1994) advocated more structured approaches but current practices reflect a less structured and more narrative approach (Shank, 2002). Sources used to gather data for a case study include documents, reports, observation, interviews, audio-visual material and artifacts (Creswell, 1998; Gay & Airasian, 2003; Martens, 1998; Merriam 1998; Yin, 2004). Case study methodology is selected as a mode of inquiry for its uniqueness and for what it can

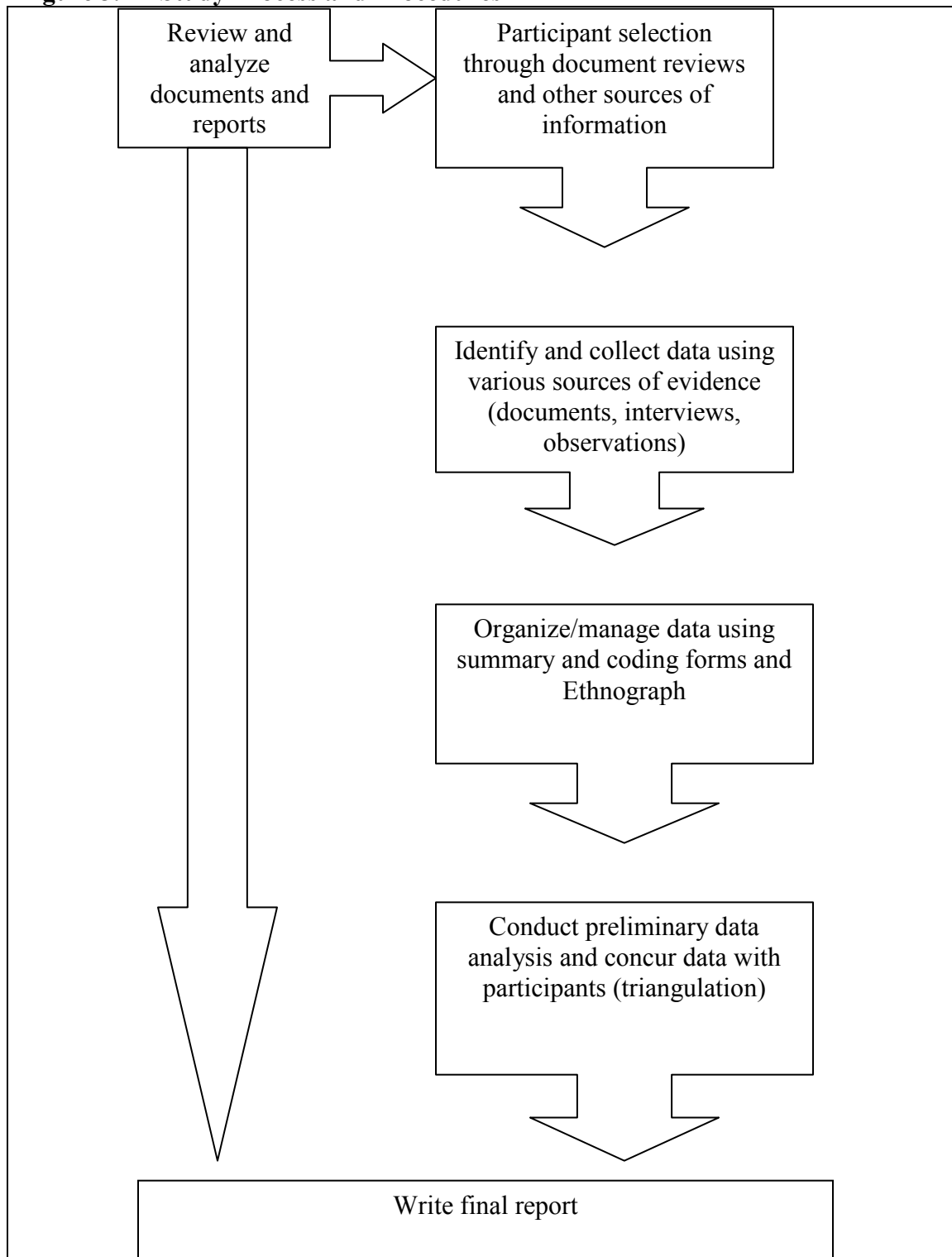
reveal about a phenomenon (Merriam, 1994). It is also useful as a process that helps uncover and understand projects, events and programs (Stake, 1998). Case study inquiries are especially useful when describing, illustrating and exploring a situation or when trying to explain links and interventions that are too complex for survey or experimental strategies (Yin, 1994). It is an approach well-suited for an in-depth understanding of a single instance or a bounded system (Merriam, 1998; Stake 1995; Yin, 2003). For these reasons, an exploratory case study was selected to apply a systematic framework of capacity to assess the capacity of El Salvador's education system and secondly, to gather data on El Salvador's current education status for students with disabilities. The goal of an exploratory case study is to answer "what" questions and develop a hypothesis and propositions for further inquiry (Yin, 2003), which represents the purpose of this study. For this study, the educational system of El Salvador was considered to be a single case.

Procedures

An exploratory case study approach allowed a variety of persons who were familiar or involved in the domains of capacity building in inclusive education opportunities for students with disabilities to be interviewed. Using the typical procedures of case study methodology, such as interviewing, observing and conducting document reviews and analysis, I was able to uncover and better understand the current status of El Salvador's educational system and its capacity to provide inclusive educational opportunities for children with disabilities as well as answer the posed research questions. The key steps suggested (Merriam, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2003) in a case study protocol were followed, including: 1) screening and selecting the nominations (or participants) through document review, key informants and other sources of information

such as Web sites; 2) identifying and collecting data using various sources of evidence such as documents, interviews, observations, and other sources; 3) organizing and managing data; 4) conducting preliminary data analysis; and 5) writing the final report. The procedures and steps followed are outlined in further detail in the next section. They are also graphically presented on Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 Study Process and Procedures



Organization Descriptions and Selection

The following are descriptions of the organizations and agencies that were represented by respondents and/or key informants who participated in this study. For anonymity reasons, detailed information on each participant's role and job function is not revealed. An explanation of why each organization was identified is also provided.

Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education (MINED) of El Salvador is the leading governmental organization responsible for educational leadership and organizational development and enforcement. The MINED oversees the 14 departments in El Salvador and provides guidance to all school municipalities. For these reasons, it was important that representatives from this agency, including high level administrators from the National Coordination for Special Education Needs Office (NCSENO), participated in this investigation. The respondents and key informants from the MINED were able to provide a wealth of information on the organization, management and policy processes of El Salvador's education system. Key informants represented the special education unit, and the areas of teacher capacity and training and curriculum development. These participants were also able to add a viewpoint on the curricular expectations for all students as well as teacher training trends and requirements.

Public School Personnel

Principals, regular education teachers, and special education teachers from two selected schools that were providing inclusive education for students with disabilities were also included in this study. These schools were identified by FUNPRES, the largest special education association in El Salvador. I asked representatives from FUNPRES to

select two schools that met two criteria. First, the schools needed to be practicing inclusion by providing educational opportunities for all students with disabilities. Preferably, I wanted these schools to be the ones which they consider “models” of inclusive education practices in El Salvador. Second, one of the schools needed to be in an urban area and the other needed to be in a rural setting. My reason for setting these criteria was twofold: first, I wanted to visit and interview teachers and administrators who were part of an inclusive school to learn about what they were doing differently that made their schools effective in including students with disabilities. Considering that 53 out of 100 Salvadoran school-aged children live in a rural area (MINED, 2004), it was also important that I interview school personnel from a rural school. The purpose of interviewing school personnel was to find out how the policies that are in place at the national level are enforced or interpreted at the local level. Another reason was to learn about teacher training and practices in schools and what informal support circles they had in place.

I interviewed a total six individuals from both schools. In each school, I interviewed an administrator, a regular education teacher and a teacher who worked with students with disabilities or, as referred to in El Salvador, the support room teacher. The teachers who were interviewed were identified by the principal as teachers who work with students with disabilities and provide or collaborate in inclusive practices.

Parents

Two parents of children with disabilities were also identified to participate as key informants for this study. The parents were chosen by the school administrator and classroom and special education teachers who also worked in the schools and taught their

children. The teachers and administrators making these selections were the same school personnel who participated as key informants for the study. Parents' perspectives and experiences were an integral part of the study. They were able to share their experiences on how they felt the school system was structured and their interpretation of disability and special education services. Furthermore, parents discussed the issues that exacerbate the challenges in participating and supporting their children in school, such as poverty, literacy issues and employment.

University Personnel

To learn about teacher training at the university level, two key informants from the *Universidad Centroamericana "Jose Simeon Cañas,"* also known as *UCA* and considered the most prestigious private university in El Salvador were interviewed. One of the key informants was a high-level administrator in the special education department as well as a professor. The second key informant also had a dual role: as a professor in the education department and as a high-level administrator in the MINED.

The UCA was founded in 1965 at the request of a group of Roman Catholic families who wanted an alternative to the National University of El Salvador (*Universidad Nacional de El Salvador*). The UCA is a private non-profit University located in San Salvador whose motto is, "A University for Social Change" and has become recognized as the home to well-known scholars and intellectuals. Today, the UCA offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in the areas of humanities, engineering and architecture and social and economic sciences.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Administrators and other staff members from FUNTER and FUNPRES, non-governmental organizations, were included in this investigation. NGOs can play an important role in advocacy and services for students with disabilities. The largest NGO working for inclusive education in El Salvador is the Special Education Foundation of El Salvador (FUNPRES) or *Fundación Pro Educación Especial de El Salvador*. FUNPRES was established in 1989 with the mission and goal to promote and encourage educational opportunities for children with disabilities and to increase diversity as well as inclusive education. The organization is involved in different initiatives including teacher training and other collaborative projects with advocacy organizations and the MINED. FUNPRES is contracted by the MINED to assist in the identification, development and support of the support classrooms in public schools. Recently, FUNPRES has also started providing teacher training on inclusive education for students with disabilities at the private school level. Representatives from FUNPRES played a key role in providing important information regarding special education opportunities for children with disabilities and the current special education system of El Salvador. They were also helpful in identifying and coordinating school visits and interviews with school personnel. A high level administrator and a staff member were invaluable in providing insight and information relating to the current capacity of El Salvador's system to provide inclusive education for students with disabilities.

Telethon Foundation Pro-Rehabilitation (FUNTER) or *Fundacion Teleton Pro-Rehabilitacion*, sometimes also referred to as the National Rehabilitation Center for People with Disabilities, was the second NGO to provide respondents and key informants

for the study. Established in 1987 to serve the rehabilitation needs of Salvadoran citizens who were injured in armed-conflict, FUNTER is a high profile, well equipped outpatient medical rehabilitation center that offers services, such as physical and occupational therapy, vocational and job training, prosthetic services and psychotherapy, to children and adults with disabilities. Most of the individuals who seek services from FUNTER are those with limited economic resources who cannot afford services from private hospitals or clinics. FUNTER provides a wide variety of services including medical care, assistive devices such as prosthetics and technology supports, physical therapy, psychosocial therapy, social work and counseling services, economic assistance and education and vocational training.

Recently, FUNTER has gone through some infrastructure changes that have allowed them to increase and improve services. As a result of the massive damage caused by the disastrous earthquakes in January and February of 2001, FUNTER was awarded nearly US\$300,000 under USAID's Earthquake Recovery Program (ERP) to reconstruct its buildings. A key theme of ERP includes "building back better," which requires that all construction projects funded under ERP are designed based on international standards with adequate accessibility for persons with disabilities such as ramps, wider doors and sanitary services (USAID, 2005). Aside from occasional grants from USAID and other donors, FUNTER also holds an annual telethon which is nationally televised and raises money to fund its staff and general costs.

National Council for the Comprehensive Care of Persons with Disabilities (CONAIPD).

The CONAIPD or *Consejo Nacional de Atención Integral a la Persona con Discapacidad* was established in 1993 and is the national entity that regulates the national

policy on disabilities, *Ley De Equiparacion De Oportunidades Para Las Personas Con Discapacida* or the Law of Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

The council oversees and enforces disability policy in areas such as disability prevention, health, independent living and access and integration of people with disabilities.

CONAIPD also brings together associations and organizations from different areas such as the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, the MINED, parent advocacy groups, and disability advocate groups. One of CONAIPD's major goals is to collaborate with a variety of organizations and groups to provide better services to persons with disabilities in El Salvador. A high level administrator representing CONAIPD was included as a key informant for the study.

Salvadoran Federation of Parent and Friends of People with Disabilities.

A representative from the Salvadoran Federation of Parent and Friends of People with Disabilities or *Federación Salvadoreña de Entidades de Padres y Amigos con Discapacidad* was selected as a key informant for the study. The federation focuses on developing and supporting parent and advocacy groups in each special education school as well as in other locations. This federation is considered to be the largest parent organization in El Salvador and is active in their participation with other disability-related organization. It also promotes parent involvement and knowledge of rights and policies for students with disabilities. The high-level administrator who participated in the interview is also a parent of two children with disabilities.

Organization for the Promotion of Disabled Persons of El Salvador (PODES):

PODES is a non-profit organization which primarily concentrates its efforts on advocacy and providing assistive devices such as prosthetics to persons with physical

disabilities. PODES was established in 1992 with the goal to provide supports for Salvadorans injured in the 12-year civil war. It is also involved in awareness activities and promoting fitness and recreation opportunities for children and adults with disabilities. A high-level administrator who participated in the study also had a disability which was a result of the armed conflict in the 1980's.

Participant Selection

To gain an understanding of El Salvador's education system and to answer the research questions posed in this study, it was necessary to identify and include a variety of participants in the data collection process. The term participants will be used to refer to all persons who directly provided information related to the study, such as those I spoke with and had some sort of interaction, whether on the phone, face-to-face, or through an interview. Participants included parents, teachers, school administrators, government officials, advocacy agency administrative and representatives, and NGO representatives. To differentiate between participants who participated in in-depth interviews and those who provided information outside an interview setting, the terms "respondent" and "key informants" will also be used. "Respondents" refers to those individuals who provided informal information or guidance related to the study in a mode outside a scheduled and structured interview process. Respondents were those who provided facility tours and resources including reading materials and suggestions on additional contact persons. "Key informants" refer to those individuals who participated in in-depth interviews and provided more detailed information.

In case study inquiries, key informants are selected through purposive sampling. Merriam (1998) explains that, "Purposive sampling is based on the assumption that the

investigator wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p.61). Yin (2003) further recommends that criteria be established in selecting the participants for the study. He also adds that screening procedures should be conducted and finalized before formal data collection begins.

Key informants were selected based on the following criteria: 1) the informant needed to have knowledge or experience that somehow pertained to or related to one of the capacity domains (organizational, state, or human capacity); 2) at the time of the study, the key informant was involved or affected by the structure and/or organization of the capacity domains; and 3) the key informant was willing to participate in the study. The key informant selection was based on information from reports or websites that suggested or identified certain individuals or organizations/agencies as key players related to capacity building in education. These included individuals who were somehow connected or related to the agencies or organizations that are considered important or relevant in the capacity building domains and/or indicators. Since respondents were considered to be those providing informal information, such as tours of the organizations or schools and historical or relevant information about the school or organization, there was not a pre-established criteria for “respondents.” Once a preliminary participant list had been established, I called the organizations to explain the study and invite the participants to be included in the investigation. During the telephone conversations, I asked for feedback on other potential key informants, whether or not they were in the same organization, who could add relevant information to the investigation. At the conclusion of the initial phone calls, I was able to expand my preliminary list of

participants (n=20). Upon my arrival to El Salvador, I started contacting and meeting with both respondents and key informants to confirm, schedule and conduct interviews and visits. These in-country exchanges resulted in further changes to the preliminary participant list. As I provided more in-depth information to the participants and they gained a better understanding of the scope of the research, they were able to suggest additional individuals who would be an asset to the investigation as well as who may not be so appropriate. Two participants from EDUCO were removed from the list based on feedback from the MINED. Key informants from ANDES were not able to participate due to being “unavailable.” It is interesting to note that before my arrival to El Salvador, a respondent agreed that they would participate in the study. This was confirmed twice: once during my initial call and again the week before I arrived in the country. Once I arrived, I called again to ask for a specific time during the week I had been told they would be available for an interview. During this call, I reminded them, as I was doing with all other participants in the study, that I was there to learn about El Salvador’s education system and I would be interviewing several organizations in the country including NGOs, school personnel and the MINED. Immediately after I mentioned the MINED the respondent who I had spoken to twice before, stated that ANDES had no affiliation with the MINED and were not part of their system in any way. I explained that I was interviewing a variety of participants from different organizations to learn about the education system and since they worked with teachers, that I was interested in including them in the study. The respondent told me that the key informant was not able to participate in the interview during the week we had originally discussed. I explained that I would be in the country for three weeks and could be available at other times. The

respondent stated that they would call me back. After two more unsuccessful attempts to schedule an interview and offering to work with their needs, which included interviewing any designee who could tell me more about ANDES and El Salvador's school system, driving three hours to the location where the original key informant was supposedly visiting and making myself available during evening hours or weekends, they were removed from the list of key informants. I later understood that this was most likely a reflection of the ongoing political tension that still lingers between organizations from the conflict era, which is explained in more detail in Chapter 4.

The key informants added once in-country included two key informants from a University as well as two key informants from a second NGO, FUNTER. This process followed Merriam's (1998) and Yin's (2003) suggestions that case study research is an "evolving" process and depending on feedback and information gathered during the data collection process, other participants may be added to the participants to "fill in gaps" or gather a more complete perspective.

The final list of participants totaled 35: 16 respondents and 19 key informants. Key informants were carefully chosen based on their experience and the positions they held so that they could provide information and insight related to the study. Another essential consideration in the key informant selection was that their knowledge and experience of El Salvador's system at the national level. Although this was not the case for all participants, it was important to get a perspective that was representative of the whole country not just of certain departments. Except for school and university personnel and parents, I was able to identify and interview at least one high-level administrator from each participating organization who had experience and knowledge on how their

organization was involved at the national level. Table 3.2 specifies the number of key informants and the agency or organization that he/she represented.

Table 3.2 Selected Key Informants

No. of key informants	Agency and Representatives
3	<i>Ministry of Education of El Salvador</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-level administrators • Representative from general education division
2	<i>University of Central America (UCA)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor • Administrator
2	<i>FUNTER</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-level administrator • Assistant to high-level administrator
2	<i>FUNPRES- The Special Education Foundation</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-level administrator • Administrative representative
3	<i>Advocacy Agencies:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Federación Salvadoreña de Entidades de Padres y Amigos de Personas con Discapacidades</i> • <i>CONAIPD- Consejo Nacional de Atención Integral a la Personal con Discapacidad</i> • <i>Promotora de la Organización de Capacitados de El Salvador</i>PODES
8	<i>Public Schools</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrators • Reg. Ed Teachers (one teacher from each school) • Support Room Teachers • Parents (one parent from each school)
Total= 20*	

* one participant is counted twice in this table as s/he had a dual role at the MINED and at the UCA

Sources of Evidence

Yin (1994) and Merriam (1998) explain the importance of using a variety of sources when conducting case study research. Key sources in case studies may include documentation, interviews, observations, archival records, and physical artifacts (Creswell, 1998; Yin, 2003). Yin adds that the preceding sources complement each other and that no single source has a complete advantage over the other. In fact, using a

combination of various data sources is not only encouraged in case study designs but it is also considered one of the strengths of case studies (Martens, 1998; Yin, 2003). Another important reason for using multiple sources of evidence is for triangulation purposes (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003), which will be discussed later in the chapter. The data sources that were used for this investigation were in-depth interviews, documents and observations.

In order to collect data through face-to-face interviews and conduct school and site observations, I spent three weeks in El Salvador. This time was spent organizing and conducting interviews and field visits and collecting resource materials from participating organizations. During my visit to El Salvador, I was able to conduct 17 of the 19 interviews. Due to schedule conflicts, two interviews; one with a university participant and another with a MINED official were conducted via phone upon my return. Interview procedures are discussed below.

Document Review

In addition to the interviews, a variety of documents were reviewed. Document reviews are considered to be the key sources of informant case study in research (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1994; Yin, 2003). The term “document” refers to reports, investigations or studies, letters, newspaper clippings, proposal and progress reports (Yin, 2003). Documents are useful in providing and corroborating information and augmenting data from other sources (Merriam, 1998). For this study, documents relevant to El Salvador’s education system and the proposed research questions were reviewed. These documents were collected from a variety of sites and organizations including reports and studies conducted by the World Bank, USAID, IDB, and the

Ministry of Education of El Salvador. While in El Salvador, I asked participating organizations for documents and reports that included information about their organizations. Organizations that had available reports and documents that included more information relating to them or the educational system of El Salvador made them available to me. The documents collected while in-country were of particular importance for two reasons. First, most of them were not available electronically nor via the internet so I may not have been able to access them from outside the country. Second, they provided great insight related to programs and other related information. For example, FUNPRES provided written information frequently asked questions relating to support rooms. While in El Salvador, I asked for suggestions or recommendation on an education resource library, a family resource center, or other locations that might provide written or electronic information to parents, teachers or citizens about schools, special education, or disability policies. No such place was identified and all recommended that I asked for the documentation from the direct source. A partial list of the reports, websites, pamphlets, flyers, is outlined in Appendix A. The document review process, which included reviewing, analyzing and coding, occurred *throughout* the data collection procedures, as suggested by Merriam (1998) and Yin (2003).

Observations

The third source of evidence used in this inquiry included informal observations. Observations are an important part of qualitative research as they provide the researcher with a better understanding of the case at hand (Stake, 1995). They are also a useful tool to triangulate research findings and can be used in conjunction with interviewing and document analyses to substantiate findings (Merriam, 1998). The observations in this

study took place in the two schools identified as employing inclusive education practices. Since these schools were thought of as “models” of inclusive education practices, I wanted to see how students with disabilities were “included” and whether they received accommodations or modification in the classroom. I also wanted to see the interactions between the students with disabilities and the rest of their classroom peers as well as the interactions with the teachers.

School visits lasted an average of seven and a half hours. I visited the schools once and spent five hours in one school and 10 hours in another school. The difference in observation visits was a result of teacher and administrators schedules and availability. The principal of the school where I only spent five hours was not available in the morning, so my visit was in the afternoon. When I visited the schools, I was able to observe students in regular classrooms and in support classrooms where they received additional services. More specifically, I observed the teachers who were also key informants. The teachers were observed while in the class that included the children (who had disabilities) of the parents who also participated in the study. These observations served to corroborate or triangulate part of what the teachers (both regular and special education) and parents reported in their interviews.

The observations were conducted before the interviews, so that teachers did not alter their behaviors based on the interview questions. During the observations, I used the Classroom Observation Form, Appendix B, which outlines questions that guided my observation notes on student interactions, accommodations for students with disabilities, and when possible, curricular modifications for students. In addition, I took notes on general class and school observations such as instructional material availability and

potential accessibility issues for students with disabilities (i.e. unavailability of ramps, inaccessible classes and restrooms, walkways and roads surrounding the schools). The length of the observations ranged from 20 and 45 minutes. The length of an observation was dependent on teacher and student class schedules and availability. The informal observations served as a window to better understand what “inclusive practices” look like in El Salvador and if in fact what is expected or directed from governmental agencies/organizations is actually practiced at the school level. The observations were also useful to understand other challenges that teachers and schools face such as the high number of students in each class, limited instructional materials and resources available for instruction, and infrastructural barriers.

Participant Interviews

Interviews are an essential source of information in case study research. Interviews in case study research are more like a guided conversation rather than a structured interview and should incorporate open-ended questions (Yin, 2003). I conducted a total of 19 interviews. The majority of the interviews (n=17) in a face-to-face format and some via phone (n=2).

When conducting the interviews, I followed a specific protocol, as provided in Appendix A, which included informing key informants about the purpose of the study, asking permission to audiotape the interviews and reading the confidentiality statement. To make sure that participants understood terms such as a “study,” “investigation,” or “confidentiality,” I explained the concepts using other terms and examples. For the term “confidentiality,” for example, I explained that whatever they shared with me would not be shared with others and that although their specific answers could be part of my final

report, their names would not be identified. I reemphasized that these expectations were very real and therefore that I took the consent and confidentiality statements very seriously. This type of explanation was specially important and necessary for the parents and school personnel who were interviewed as they seemed unaware of the research study process and protocol. Each key informant signed a consent form. The interviews ranged in length from 30 minutes to two hours and 50 minutes with the average lasting an hour and ten minutes. Most of the interviews were conducted at the participant's corresponding organization. For example, I went to MINED to interview MINED personnel and to FUNPRES to interview FUNPRES personnel. Teachers and administrators were interviewed during my school visits. During the interviews, I used a data collection form (Appendix C) to take notes on the participants' statements but this was not done consistently as some of them seemed distracted or uneasy when they saw me taking notes while they answered questions.

The interview protocol. Yin (2003) suggests that interview questions should be used as a "guide" not as a fixed set of questions, meaning that the questions can change to fit and follow the dynamics of the interview and the key informant. The interview questions used for the interviews conducted in this study included a combination of new questions, which I felt were important and needed to be incorporated, as well as questions that had been previously used in capacity building evaluations and assessments (Massell, 1998; Massell, 2000; McLaughlin, Warren & Nolet, 1998). The interview questions were aligned with the research questions and were developed to probe for information related to the framework domains and indicators (see Appendix D for interview questions). The questions for the key informants depended on their role and the organization which they

represented. Although there was a specific question set, some participants were asked more questions related to a specific domain than another. For example, the majority of the questions that I asked the school and university personnel were from the organizational and human capacity domain while the high-level administrators from the MINED and the other organizations were asked many more questions that were focused on the institutional and organizational domains. At the conclusion of each interview, I took time to go back and summarize my understanding of the participants' answers. I did this by paraphrasing and summarizing what I had understood from their answers to the questions under each capacity domain. This step gave participants the opportunity to clarify or in some cases, add or elaborate on a specific interview topic or question. It was also useful as a preliminary step for members check and to ensure cultural awareness and understanding, which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

Transcriptions and Translations

Translating qualitative data from one language to another can be a complicated and delicate process. As the need for mutual understanding at the international level increases, more and more researchers and organizations are conducting cross-cultural and cross-language research (Barbili, 2000). While cross-cultural and cross-language research that includes an English-language component, such as the final written report, with people who speak little or no English has increased (Temple & Edwards, 2002), the research on translation issues and its effects on the process has not been well explored (Birbili, 2000; Esposito, 2001; Hwa-Froelich & Westby, 2003; Temple, 2002; Temple & Edwards, 2002; Tsai, et al., 2004). The lack of research on translation issues is evidenced by the number of published studies that include multi-language and cross-cultural factors,

but those rarely mention or explain the effects or process of translation in the methodology of the study (Birbili, 2000; Mason, 2005; Temple, 2002, Temple, Edwards & Alexander, 2006). The part of translation that has received some attention is the use of interpreters in qualitative research processes and analyses. Esposito (2001) defines the term translation as, “the transfer of meaning from a source language (SL) (such as Spanish) to a target language (TL) (such as English)” (p. 570). Temple (2002) adds that translation includes, “...both written and oral accounts in research.” (p. 845).

The recommendations on the best way to translate cross-language data are contradictory or as Temple (2002) summarizes it, “The debates in the translation field mirror in some ways those in research methodology on perspective and position in research” (p.846). For example, Esposito (2001) urges researchers to use, “...professional, credentialed interpreters” (p.577), which, she suggests, can be located by contacting the translators’ guild. Other researchers (Hwa-Froelick & Westby, 2003; Temple, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2206) oppose or question these suggestions.

A number of researchers (Edwards & Alexander, 2006; Mason, 2005; Temple, 1997; Temple, 2000; Umaña-Taylor & Bamace, 2004) warn that the addition of interpreters in the translation process in qualitative research can add another complex dimension to data analyses. Temple adds that if a researcher chooses to use a translator, he/she needs to acknowledge his/her dependence on that translator, for both words and perspective. She also explains how the data interpretation can be highly influenced and altered based on the additional interpreter’s views, culture, socio-economic status and fluency of the language, among other factors. Similarly, Tsai et al. (2004) emphasize that, “one translator’s choice of translation will not necessarily be in agreement with that of

other translators” (p.8). Hwa-Froelich and Westby (2003) assert that proficiency in accurate translation is not sufficient and criticize the training and use of professional interpreters in fields such as health-care and education.

When looking at specific cross-language research, the methods followed to translate data from one language to another differ. Esposito (2001) used focus groups to interview Spanish-speaking Latinas about menopause, their health risks and interactions and expectations with health care providers. The focus groups were conducted and audio-taped in Spanish using a Spanish-speaking facilitator. At the same time, a professional translator listened to the content of the focus group discussions in a sound-proof room and simultaneously interpreted the conversations into English and verbally recorded them. In the end, there were two versions of the audio-taped conversations: one in English and one in Spanish. To transcribe the interviews, the English version was typed and entered into a word processor for analysis. The Spanish audiotapes, “were translated and transcribed into English by a professional transcription service” (p.575). Based on this quote, it is not clear whether the Spanish audio-tapes were transcribed in Spanish, and then transcribed again in English or if they were directly transcribed into English from the Spanish audio-tape version.

In another cross-language study on blood testing as a screening method for prevention of colorectal cancer, Tsai et al. (2004) interviewed Mandarin or Cantonese-speaking participants to learn about appropriate intervention programs. The interviews were conducted by a multilingual and multicultural staff and translated into English to audiotape. The English audiotapes were then transcribed by an English-speaking research assistant. Differing slightly, Umaña-Taylor’s and Bamanca’s (2004) approach to

translations and transcribing added an additional component to their process. They conducted focus groups to collect data from Spanish-speaking Latino families from Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico and Puerto Rico. The details of the study are limited because the authors concentrate on the process and considerations of Latino focus group, rather than the specific details of the research. Umaña-Taylor and Bamanca note that when data are collected in Spanish, data transcription is further complicated. In their study, “staff member A” transcribed the entire Spanish audio-tape from the focus group meetings into Spanish. They note that the reason they had to take this additional step was because the person who would be analyzing the data was a non-Spanish speaker, therefore the interviews needed to be transcribed and translated for meaning. The same person who completed the translation and transcription from the Spanish audiotape also translated the interviews into English. In the third step, a second staff member, “...listens to the tape and subsequently double-checks both the transcription and translation for any words that may have been misunderstood, misspelled or not heard at all by staff member A,” (staff member A being the person who originally conducted the transcriptions from Spanish into English) (p. 269). Like Esposito (2001), the latter part of the process is not clear as it does not mention which translation document is “double checked,” the Spanish version or the English version.

McHatton and Correa (2005) also conducted a cross-language study with Mexican and Puerto Rican mothers of children with disabilities. They investigated discrimination and overall experiences and a mixed method design which included a 16-page questionnaire that incorporated “in-depth interviews” (p.25). To explain their measures, instruments and translation methods, McHatton and Correa wrote the following:

The interview protocol was 16 pages long and consisted of 160 questions, both open-ended and embedded Likert-style survey questions. The protocol addressed five domains: the child, initial identification/perception of cause, help-seeking behaviors, family life, and ideas and concepts of childrearing. Interviews were conducted in Spanish, English, or a combination of both based on the parent's preferences and were scheduled to accommodate the parents. Transcripts were translated into English and then reviewed by the interviewer for accuracy. (p.133)

McHatton's and Correa's study serves as another example of how vague or unclear translation methods are reported in cross-language research. In reviewing the last sentence of their instruments and translation methods, it is difficult to understand what they used to transcribe the data because it is not clear whether they transcribed from a hard-copy of the survey or from audio tapes. Furthermore, they are not clear on who collected the data during the interviews and what role that person played in the translation and analysis of the data.

While there are significant differences in the way that cross-language translation methods are conducted and reported, researchers (Esposito, 2001; Temple, 1997; 2002) agree that translations should convey meaning or be meaning-based rather than word-for-word equivalents. Additionally, it is important that the translator have socio-cultural knowledge of both cultures to avoid misunderstandings when confronted or observing a cross-cultural interaction (Hwa-Froelick & Westby, 2003). Also, because there are many perspectives and assumptions that go into translations, Temple (1997) highlights the importance of the researcher being as involved as possible when translating data. She notes that much can be lost when translators who are not directly involved in the data

collection are given the task to translate and interpret qualitative data. Temple (2002; 2006) further asserts that there is really no correct choice when it comes to selecting a bilingual researcher, nor is there one way of translating, but what is important to remember is that the outcome may differ depending on who is involved in the data collection, translation, interpretation and analyses.

Following Temple's suggestions, I conducted, translated, and transcribed all interviews on my own. Originally, I contemplated the possibility of hiring someone to assist me with the transcriptions and translations but considering the literature of cross-language research, I decided to transcribe, organize and analyze the data on my own to avoid the risk of losing the meaning of the original interpretation and experience (Tsai et al., 2004). Following similar methods to Tsai et al. (2004), the interviews were conducted and audio-taped in Spanish. Then, I carefully listened to each interview and transcribed them directly into English, skipping the verbatim transcription into Spanish. During the translations and transcriptions, I considered the "true" meaning of what was said by the participants, rather than focusing on a literal word-by-word equivalent, which is not recommended (Esposito, 2001; Temple, 1997).

Data Analyses Procedures

The goal of data analysis is communicating understanding (Merriam, 1998). The analytical stage is considered to be one of the most challenging phases in case study research. Because of the amount of data that is involved with qualitative studies, Yin (2003) recommends a structured plan and techniques for analyzing data. Creswell (1998), Merriam (1998) and Miles and Huberman (1994) note that analysis procedures vary depending on the data collected.

A key suggestion offered by qualitative researchers (Merriam, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2003) is that the data analyses procedures start early in the data collection process. Merriam (1998) adds that collection and analyses are simultaneous in qualitative research. The main justification for doing this is so that the researcher has an opportunity to collect new or necessary data, fill in gaps or to test hypotheses (Miles & Huberman, 1994). When researchers do not start analyzing data early in the data collection process, the task of reviewing data that has been expanding for weeks, months or years can be overwhelming, and possibly lead to poor data interpretations and analyses. In this study, data were organized using a variety of coding methods as well as Ethnograph, a qualitative software program. To analyze the data, I used what Glaser and Strauss (1967) refer to as a “constant comparative method,” which is further explained later in this chapter.

Data Organization

A system for organizing and managing data in qualitative research is key to the success of the study (Merriam, 1998) and if mismanaged, it can lead to wrongly coded, or mislabeled data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Because of the variety of qualitative data sources, there are different ways in which collected data can be organized including coding, writing and storing memos and field notes and using software programs to enter, store and organize data. In this study, I managed the data using a combination of codes, self-memos and document summaries and the qualitative software program.

Ethnograph

Software programs have become increasingly popular in storing and organizing qualitative data and are especially useful for coding and categorizing large amounts of

data (Yin, 2003). For this study, I used *Ethnograph V5.0* to code, memo and to manage my data. This program provided an opportunity to manage and organize the data electronically and to access and print coded data and themes into separate reports. I limited the use of *Ethnograph* to the data management of the large amounts of narrative text but did not use it or rely on it to do conceptual data analysis. Before transferring information into *Ethnograph*, I transcribed all my interviews using a word processor. I copied and pasted the information in *Ethnograph* and began the coding process.

Coding

Coding data is considered part of data analysis and should start as you begin collecting data (Merriam, 1998; Miles and Huberman, 1994). Merriam (1998) defines coding as, “a way of assigning some sort of short hand designation to various parts of your data” (p.164). Similarly, Miles and Huberman (1994) add that coding is a way to assign tags or labels to “chunks” of information such as words, phrases and paragraphs in order to later retrieve and organize. In this study, data was coded by capacity domains and indicators. The codes for institutional capacity, organizational capacity and human capacity were INS CAP, ORG CAP, and HUM CAP, respectively. Data was first coded under each capacity domain. Following this first level of coding, I continued with the second level by assigning numbers based on the indicator for each domain. For example, data that related to policies and laws were chunked and labeled INS CAP1, to represent data pertaining to the first indicator under institutional capacity. This coding continued with all data that easily “fit” into corresponding domains and indicators. It is important to note that because the capacity indicators were modified as a result of the interview data, not all indicators had emerged before the coding process. Consequently, there were data

that did not fit neatly into the pre-existing indicators of the capacity framework before it was modified. These data were coded into the larger domains (i.e. INS CAP, ORG CAP, HUM CAP) but not into specific indicators. The reports on the data that had missing indicator numbers were printed for analysis. As a result, new and modified indicators emerged under institutional capacity and human capacity. This is explained further in Chapter 4.

Memos

I used memos in Ethnograph to identify important information that was not part of the CAF but that was relevant to the study. For example, information mentioned by key participants on poverty, child labor, and armed-conflict memories or experiences were all memoed. I used these memos to guide me in through the contextual part of the study, making sure that the points that were mentioned throughout the study were part addressed in the historical and social context of El Salvador.

Document Summaries

To summarize and organize notes and information gathered through documents, document summary forms were used, as shown on Appendix F. These summaries were used to compress and abbreviate the major points and themes of reports, manuals and documents. For example, a comprehensive MINED report which included large amounts of data corresponding across several domains and indicators included brief summaries under each domain and its corresponding indicator.

Analytical Strategy

To analyze the data of this study, I used the constant comparative method, developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Although this method was designed as a means

to develop grounded theory, the constant comparative method has been adopted by researchers not seeking to build a substantive theory (Merriam, 1998). The basic process in constant comparative analyses is moving beyond basic description and coming up with themes and patterns based on the data at hand. This strategy calls for the researcher to compare “incidents,” and “remarks” with each other until themes or categories and sub-categories are developed (Merriam, 1998). It is important to note that the emerging themes are “concepts” captured and “indicated” by the data, rather than the data itself (Taylor & Bogman, 1984 as cited in Merriam, 1998). Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998) note that in some case studies, patterns or categories will be known in advance through the research questions or through categories that fit the framework of the study. These predetermined categories then serve as a template for the analyses. Since there were predetermined categories in this investigation (domains and indicators), themes were organized within the predetermined domains: institutional, organizational and human capacity domains and their corresponding indicators. To accomplish this, I looked at the multiple sources of data (i.e. key informant interviews, observation data, document summaries, organization Web sites and reports) to compare them to one another until the theme emerged and could then be categorized into the framework’s indicators. For example, for the first indicator (policies relating to inclusive education) under institutional domain, I compared data reported from various sources such as parents, teachers, administrators, MINED, CONAIPD and NGO officials, documents and reports (i.e. the Constitution of El Salvador, the reports on the Law of Equalization for Persons with Disabilities, the General Education Law, and MINED and CONAIPD reports) to

establish the pattern for the corresponding indicator. An important part of this process was continuing to compare and contrast the sources.

While much of the data naturally corresponded to the pre-determined domains and indicators of the framework, this was not the case for all the data. New themes emerged that corresponded to the larger domains but did not fit into an indicator. For example, the data kept revealing the absence of infrastructural resources as a barrier in providing inclusive education for students with disabilities. This was evident in interviews with a variety of key informants (i.e. advocacy representatives, NGO officials, government officials) and my school observations. In addition, reports from the MINED highlighted the challenges and barriers in resources for all schools, particularly rural and other marginalized areas. As new themes emerged, I compared them to the preexisting indicators to identify differences and similarities. In some cases, the themes or data were part of an existing indicator but the indicator had not been written specifically enough to easily allow the inclusion of those “chunks” of data. For instance, data relating to the identification process and definition of students with disabilities kept emerging. When analyzing and matching these data to an indicator, it was not clear if it belonged as a separate indicator or if it could fit into the first indicator related to policies, which read, “The government has clear and established policies about inclusive education that unite federal, state and local governments.” What was evident was that the lack of a definition of a disability and processes to identify students with disabilities kept emerging and was clearly an issue in providing inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities. To incorporate the theme into the policy indicator, but specify the need and importance of a definition of a disability and processes to identify students with disabilities, the indicator

was reworded to read, “The government has clear and established policies about inclusive education, including the definition and identification process of students with disabilities, which unite national, departmental, and municipal government.” This modification allowed new themes to be incorporated to already existing indicators with added specificity.

This analytical approach continued until a revised framework emerged. At the conclusion of the analyses, three additional indicators were added to the framework: two under institutional capacity and one under human capacity. The revised framework and indicators are described and explained in more detail in Chapter 4.

Validity and Reliability Measures

In qualitative research, reliability and validity are measured differently than in more traditional quantitative approaches. To ensure reliability and validity in this study, I employed a number of techniques to strengthen both reliability and validity.

Reliability

Reliability in qualitative research is not determined by the ability to “replicate” the study and end with the same results. Elaborating on the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985), Merriam (1998) explains that reliability in qualitative research should question, “whether the results are consistent with the data collected” (p.206). To strengthen reliability, Yin (2003) suggest that researchers should “make as many steps as operational as possible and to conduct research as if someone were always looking over your shoulder” (p.38). Merriam (1998) adds that triangulation, or using data from multiple sources, can add to both reliability and validity.

Following Yin's (2003) and Merriam's (1998) suggestions, I assured that my results were consistent with the data by, 1) providing a literature review which covers the context of the study and the proposed assessment framework; 2) outlining the procedures of the study including participant and school selection and criteria, organization descriptions, interviewing procedures and questions; 3) identifying how the sources of information were located and used to answer the research questions and assess the capacity domains and indicators; and 4) documenting the analytical strategies and processes used to develop the findings.

Construct Validity

Construct validity is used to prove that the results of the study are valid and not a result of the researchers' "subjective judgments" (Yin, 2003). To increase construct validity, Ying (2003) outlines three strategies: multiple sources of evidence, a chain of evidence and review of the draft findings by key informants. Building on Guba and Lincoln's (1989) work, Mertens (1998) suggests a confirmability audit to corroborate findings. Sieber (1992) also suggests addressing cultural sensitivity as a way to ensure that participants' voices are communicated effectively. All five strategies are used to establish credibility of the study.

Multiple Sources of Evidence

As noted above, the sources of data for this investigation included documents, interviews and informal observations. To verify my findings, I used pattern-matching logic, and then triangulated the data with other sources such as documents, interviews, and observation notes. Using Campbell's examples (1975), Yin (2003) describes pattern-matching as a way to strengthen internal validity by comparing an empirically-based

pattern with a predicted one. For instance, I compared information from IDB and MINED reports, which outlined the costs related to the natural disasters and the impact that these costs have on the infrastructure of El Salvador's system, including education, against the information I gathered from key informants and my school observations. Comparing and contrasting the data from multiple sources, allowed me to verify information as well as identify rival explanations that needed further exploration, such as the political tension and competition that exists among the organizations and agencies working together through CONAIPD, which is discussed further in Chapter 4. By comparing and contrasting information from various sources I was able to validate findings and eventually propose a modified version of the preliminary capacity assessment framework.

Chain of Evidence

A chain of evidence is used to “trace the evidentiary process backward” (Yin, 2003, p.105). To do this, I provided a systemic outline of the case study where the preliminary framework is presented and defended using literature on capacity building, inclusive education and comparative/international education including major agenda items such as EFA and the Salamanca Statement. I outline, defend and support the framework with various sources including studies and reports on capacity building and inclusive education practices. Additionally, I explain how using a variety of sources (i.e. interviews, observations, and reports) from different participants (parents, teachers, administrators, government officials, NGO representatives, etc), I collected and analyzed the data. Furthermore, I provide examples of how I used the constant comparative approach to identify new themes in the framework. In Chapter 4, I provide specific examples drawn from interviews, documents and observations, to justify how I came to

the study conclusions and findings. Lastly, I asked a bilingual and bicultural evaluator to conduct an audit of the data to further affirm my findings. In total, I was able to establish a chain of evidence that allows the reader the option to trace the evidence from conceptual framework to the findings.

Members' Check

Member checking refers to the process of taking data and tentative interpretations back to the participants that provided the data (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003). Due to language differences, two key informants were selected to conduct member checks on the findings of this study based on their ability to read the findings or have access to someone to interpret the findings from English to Spanish so that they could confirm accuracy and plausibility. I emailed a draft of the findings to both key informants and asked them to review for accuracy. One member spoke English and felt comfortable with the material. The second key informant relied on an English teacher, whom I had met and spoken to during my school observation and felt comfortable that he would accurately translate the material, to translate the findings for her. Additionally, I had conference calls with both key informants to ensure their understanding of the findings and to answer any questions they had.

The first key informant participating in the member check made suggestions about the terminology used to describe El Salvador's local school systems. In my draft findings, I used the term "local districts" to describe what municipalities in El Salvador really are. The key informant suggested that the change in terminology would more accurately represent the school system structure of El Salvador. He also reported that the General Education Law was passed in 1995, not 1990, which is what I had in my draft

report. To verify this, I went back through my data and realized that I had in fact made an error on the date the law was passed. I made the corrections accordingly. He also told me that the allocation per student was not US\$13 dollars and that he believed it was US\$25. We exchanged emails and phone calls on this issue as seven of the key informants had verified that the amount allocated per student was US\$13. I asked if he could help me verify the amount because I wanted to make sure to report it accurately in my report. When we spoke again, he told me that he had tried verifying the amount but could not get a definitive answer from his office staff. He told me that the people that would know the number for sure would be the principals of the schools. I told him that I had checked with two administrators and that they had reported US\$13 as the amount allocated per student. He told me that if the principals had reported that amount, then that was the accurate amount and apologized for the confusion (US\$13 per student, per year). He also noted that, of many reports written about El Salvador's status, regardless of the field or discipline (i.e. economics, health care), this was one of the few reports that he had read that traced the history of El Salvador prior to the armed conflict, such as the history of the indigenous Indians and Maximiliano Hernandez Guitierrez. He suggested that this was an important part of El Salvador's history in understanding the history of marginalization in El Salvador. Aside from those comments he said he felt that I had accurately portrayed the inclusive education system and status of El Salvador. Lastly, he told me that while the ICAISE was a very good way to organize and evaluate the data, he thought it was important to note that some of the indicators of the ICAISE reflected a first world country experience.

The second key informant had two comments. First, she mentioned that the contextual background provided on El Salvador was impressive and important for readers to understand that the current issues in El Salvador were not solely the result of the armed conflict. The second comment was that I had not accurately represented the allocation of the US\$13 correctly. She told me that in addition to what I had mentioned on the draft findings (that the US\$13 goes towards maintenance and instructional materials), that those US\$13 were also for infrastructure, any repairs, desks, chairs, blackboards and any other item that the school needed. Aside from those two comments, she said that everything else was represented accurately.

Audit

Guba and Lincoln (1989) recommend an audit to attest that the data can be traced to original sources and that the process of reaching data findings can be confirmed. Based on these suggestions and considering that this study included bilingual data, I hired a bilingual and bicultural external evaluator to conduct an audit by reviewing my data sources and findings. The evaluator is from Brazil and has a background in education as a former teacher, which helped her understand the terminology and context of the data. I developed an audit protocol which outlined two steps for the evaluator: 1) randomly select parts from the transcribed interviews and compare against the audio interviews for accuracy, and 2) randomly select two indicators from each domain (institutional capacity, organizational capacity, and human capacity) and verify findings by reviewing data sources (reports, coding summaries, web sites, transcriptions, etc.) for accuracy, including material in Spanish. Through this audit, I was able to assess the credibility of my translations and transcriptions as well as the interpretations of my findings. Due to the

large amounts of data, the evaluators conducted random audio audits (confirming translations transcriptions) for seven interviews, or 38 % of the total number of interviews. At the conclusion of her audit, we discussed minor differences in language interpretation such as the term awareness which was my translation of the Spanish term “*sensibilizar*.” While not quite a literal translation, she agreed that awareness was an appropriate functional translation. She confirmed that the other data was accurately translated and represented in the findings.

Cultural Sensitivity

Siebert (1992) and other researchers (Mertens, 1998) highlight the importance of cultural sensitivity, especially when the population being studied is different than that of the researcher. Researchers should do this by making sure that participants’ voices are heard and that there is an effort to communicate and share decision making. To ensure cultural sensitivity, I reviewed my understanding of their answers at the end of the interviews to make sure I had a clear understanding of what participants had said. Additionally, the member check process involved the participants and I sharing information and exchanging opinions on what we both thought was accurate, as explained earlier.

Methodological Limitations

All research approaches have strengths as well as limitations (Gay & Airasian, 2003). Although case studies can be very insightful, there are some limitations that are inherent to this particular methodology. First, the researcher serves as the primary instrument of both data collection and data interpretation and analysis. Second, there are concerns about generalizability since case study inquiries usually involve one case or unit

and can not be generalized or systematically applied to other situations. Finally, the structure of data analysis is interpretive, which can cause readers to question the validity of the findings. This section presents the limitations specific to this study and how those limitations were addressed.

Limited Time at Site

Ideally, case study research, like most other qualitative approaches, is supposed to be extensive and exhaustive with the data collection processes. Due to resource constraints, the field visits in El Salvador were limited to one three-week trip. While the site visit was limited to a three-week trip, phone interviews and exchanges of data collection of reports, articles and other documents lasted over a period of 14 months.

Participant Candor and Participation

A concern and possible limitation of this study is participant candor. Some of the topics that were discussed are sensitive issues in El Salvador (governmental policies and structure, history of armed conflict, political tension, etc.). This may have caused certain respondents to not be as completely open or candid throughout the interviews and/or data collection procedures. This was particularly obvious with one of the key informant was very limited in her answers when we discussed the role of MINED or any other government organizations, especially when addressing a limitation of the organization, such as authority legitimacy. I attempted to address this by indirectly reminding him/her of confidentiality procedures. Although a confidentiality statement was provided to each key informant, the nature of the interview questions may have caused some informants to distort or withhold information.

Balancing Specificity and Anonymity

Thick and rich-descriptions are keys to the quality of case study research (Merriam, 1998; Mertens, 1998). To protect informants, however, I found it necessary to be purposively ambiguous when discussing some of the findings, including details of participants' positions and roles. This may limit the thickness and richness of the descriptive data.

Summary

This study is a single-case exploratory study that assesses El Salvador's capacity to provide inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities using a capacity assessment framework. Using procedures and methods identified in case study literature, (Creswell, 1998; Denzil & Lincoln, 1994; Gay & Airasian, 2003; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Martens, 1999; Merriam, 1998; Shank, 2003; Yin, 1994 and 2003), the specific study's procedures are outlined, including methods in translation and transcription issues.

Using data from interviews, documents and observations, the theoretical framework, or in this case, the predetermined capacity framework is assessed and eventually modified to incorporate the study findings. To address reliability and construct validity, I discuss triangulation, members check and chain of evidence and a conformability audit. Lastly, limitations of the study including limited time at site, participant candor and participation and cross-cultural limitations are discussed.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

The purpose of this investigation was to apply a systematic model for capacity to assess the capacity of El Salvador's educational system to develop inclusive education opportunities for students with disabilities. A secondary purpose was to gather data on El Salvador's current inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities.

The chapter begins with an overview of the historical and social context of El Salvador including the political structure, the armed conflict, poverty and other factors that have affected the current conditions of El Salvador and its education system. The context also includes a description of current inclusive educational practices for students with disabilities. This is followed by an explanation of how the evaluation of the study data led to a revised and modified framework which includes two additional domains and four indicators. Lastly, the findings for each of the corresponding framework domains and indicators are explained and discussed.

Historical and Social Context

As noted in Chapter 2, El Salvador has experienced significant political upheaval and natural disasters. In this chapter, I expand on some of these factors to provide a richer description of the country and how the various historical and social factors affect current educational opportunities. Although El Salvador gained its independence from the Spaniards in 1838, it was controlled by oppressive regimes throughout the 20th century (Mine Action Information Center, 2006). It is the smallest yet most densely populated country in Central America. The population is estimated to be 6.9 million, with a majority of citizens being under 18. The language of the country is Spanish and the majority of Salvadorans are either Roman Catholic or Protestant. The average family has

three to four children and between 40-50% of the Salvadoran population lives in rural areas (US Department of State, 2006; Washington Office on Latin America, 1997). The population of school age children living in rural areas is estimated at 53% (MINED, 2006).

El Salvador endured a long and violent civil war throughout the 1980's and into the early 1990's. While trying to recuperate from the 12-year war after Peace Accords were signed in 1992, El Salvador was struck by a series of natural disasters including earthquakes and associated landslides, hurricanes and a volcano eruption. While the annual rate of economic growth has increased in the last several years, it has not been enough to keep pace with the population growth rate (Save the Children, 2006).

Political History and Landscape

El Salvador is a democratic republic governed by a president and an 84-member Legislative Assembly. The president serves a 5-year term and members of the assembly serve for 3-year terms. The country has an independent Judiciary and Supreme Court. Since the independence from Spain, 14 European elite families, known as the "14 families," or simply "the 14" owned and controlled most of the land. They created and managed large coffee plantations, often on the land of displaced Indians. Coffee became the most important cash crop and the wealthy continued expanding their holdings at the expense of the indigenous population. By the 20th century, coffee exports provided 95% of El Salvador's income to only 2% of the population (Bernard, 2006). The result is that there is almost no middle class in El Salvador.

Beginning in 1931, the country was under the dictatorial rule of General Maximiliano Hernandez Martinez. In 1932, after years of frustration relating to agrarian

issues, Indian peasants rebelled under the leadership of Augustin Farabundo Marti, the founder of the Central American Socialist Party. Their rebellion included seizing towns and killing planters and government officials. General Maximiliano Hernandez Martinez responded with a racial war on the indigenous Indians. The massacre or *La Matanza* was the largest massacre in the history of the hemisphere, killing 30,000 people including women, men and children. Marti was also caught and executed in 1932. The massacre instilled a fear in rural workers and peasants as they were perceived as communist and targets of the governing administration. Consequently, the indigenous Indians (Pipils), severed their ties to their culture, adopted Spanish as their language and began intermarrying with non-indigenous groups. For the next 50 years, El Salvador was under military rule.

In 1972, Jose Napoleon Duarte of the Christian Democratic Party (CDP) opposed the presidential military candidate. Duarte won but was denied election by fraud and sent into exile. Pressure for reform increased and resulted in armed resistance from numerous leftist groups. The right responded by unleashing “death squads” to intimidate and eliminate proponents of reform in the country. By the late 1970’s the leftist guerillas had consolidated under Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). At the same time, the violent exchanges between the left and the right had transformed into a civil war. The war began to attract international attention and was called genocidal by the UN Truth Commission (Golden, 2006).

As the violence and deaths escalated, Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero condemned the terrorism and publicly asked United States President Carter to end the military aid to El Salvador. By this time, the war was claiming an average of 3,000

people per month, with cadavers clogging the streams and tortured bodies thrown in dumpsters and on the streets of the capital weekly. Romero begged for international intervention but was alone among the bishops. Many accused him of being “politicized” and of seeking popularity (Golden, 2006). On March 24th, 1980 Archbishop Romero was assassinated by the right-wing terrorists while celebrating mass. One week after his death, the US approved \$5.7 million in military aid. That same year, Duarte of the Christian Democratic Party was installed by a coup (junta) who had been working together since the previous year to liberalize the political system and set legislative elections for 1982. With the support of the junta, Duarte was able to draft a new constitution, which was adopted in 1983 by a constituent assembly that had been elected in March 1982. Between 1982 and 1984, El Salvador was led by interim President Alvaro Alfredo Magaña. In 1984, Duarte defeated Magaña and became the first constitutionally elected president in 50 years. During his time in office, Duarte distributed land but did not displace the oligarchy. Balancing the left and right was extremely challenging and by April 1987, an estimated 62,000 people had been murdered, most of whom were noncombatants murdered by death squads and government forces. Human-rights violations by both the right-wing government security forces and the left-wing guerillas were rampant. By 1989, Duarte had lost support and was facing allegations of corruption. Death tolls continued to increase and El Salvador was facing historically low prices for the nation’s main agricultural exports (US State Department, 2006).

In 1989, Duarte lost the presidential elections to Alfredo Christiani from the Nationalist Republic Alliance party or ARENA, which had been created in 1981 by Roberto D’Aubuisson and other hard-line conservatives which included members of the

military. With the support of the private sector and rural farmers, ARENA had almost won the presidential elections in 1984. By 1988, ARENA had attracted support from business groups. All those factors combined contributed to ARENA's victories for both the legislative and presidential elections of 1988 and 1989, respectively. During President Alfredo Cristiani's 1989-1994 administration, El Salvador was able to achieve the Peace Accords and bring an end to the 12-year civil war which left 75,000 dead and cost the country more than \$2 billion dollars. In addition to the 75,000 deaths and the monetary cost, there were hundreds of thousands of men, women and children who were left injured. Following the Peace Accords during the Christiani administration, a new mandated Land Transfer Program allowed 35,000 eligible beneficiaries from among the former guerrillas and soldiers who fought in the war to receive land (US State Department, 2006). .

In 1994, 1999, and 2003 ARENA scored consecutive presidential victories with President Armando Calderon Sol, President Francisco Guillermo Flores Perez, and President Elias "Tony" Saca, respectively. While the FMNL has still not achieved a presidential victory, their growing strength and support can be observed through their increasing numbers in the Legislative Assembly seats.

The Psychological Cost of War

In 1992, when the civil war was officially over, El Salvador was left impoverished, dismantled and deeply divided. The war had inflicted physical and psychological damage on the majority of the population. Seven years after the end of the war, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)(1999) conducted a country report on El Salvador and the post-war effects. Focus groups, surveys and in-depth

interviews were used to learn about the state of El Salvador. The study participants included a combination of over 1,000 combatants from both the guerrillas and the government sides, as well as politicians, professionals and civilians such as women and men who had witnessed and experienced the war. The results of the study candidly show the social, economic and psychological impact of the war on the Salvadoran people. About two thirds of the participants who were interviewed reported that a family member had been killed in the war and 29 % said they lost contact with a close relative. The negative experiences and psychological effects of the war produced a pessimistic outlook of the future; almost half of the participants (49%) in the study reported that they expected more war in the future. Only 29% said they believed that there would be lasting peace (ICRC). A different assessment of the health sector identified street and household violence, alcoholism and drug addiction as health consequences of the war (Ugalde et al., 2006). In 1996, El Salvador had one of the highest homicide rates in the world (17 per 1000) (Ugalde et al.).

Today, terrifying memories of the war are very much alive and still haunt many Salvadorans. On numerous occasions, both study participants and persons whom I had met casually, vividly recalled specific incidents from the war and spoke of incidents such as bodies being dumped and burned or how the guerrillas or the militant groups would come around knocking on doors forcing families to provide food and shelter for the evening. This was particularly evident one early morning while the driver, a representative from FUNPRES and I were in the car on our way to a school visit. While I reviewed paperwork, the representative from FUNPRES called my attention and pointed at a pedestrian overpass and said:

You see that bridge where those people are walking, that is where they used to hang people's heads during the war. You'd see them in the morning on your way to work. By the evening they would take them down, but the next morning you'd see another set of them- just hanging there.

The driver added:

Yes, I remember when we'd see the piles of bodies when I would take my kids to school. They'd be right there in the corner of the street-just sitting there like nothing.

To this day, the experience of the armed conflict is evidenced by how people relate to one another and how they view each other. This extends to the ways in which government and organizations collaborate and the level of trust they have for one another. This was evident in several interviews related to inclusive education as discussed below.

Natural Disasters

In the 1990's, as El Salvador struggled to recover from the war, it was struck by a series of natural disasters. El Salvador's topography shows that the country is bisected by a volcanic front, a linear belt of active volcanoes and accompanying seismic zone that lead to high rates of upper-crustal earthquakes, explosive volcanic eruptions and landslides- three of the most destructive geological hazards (Rose, Bommer & Sandoval, 2004). Additionally, El Salvador is located in a subtropical hurricane zone, which is a target area for both Atlantic and Pacific cyclones. In the years following the Peace Accords, El Salvador was hit by numerous hurricanes and earthquakes. In 1998, Hurricane Mitch, the second deadliest Atlantic Hurricane in history, killed 240 people, forced 500,000 from their homes due to flooding and misplaced 85,000. Buildings and

schools were destroyed, leaving tens of thousands of children with no schools to return to. As much as 80% of maize crop was lost and coffee plantations and sugar cane crop were severely affected. The cost of the destruction to the country was \$388 million, equivalent to 3% of the gross domestic product (GDP) (Rose et al.).

On January 13, 2001 a deadly earthquake with a magnitude of 7.6 on the Richter Scale hit El Salvador. Exactly one month later, on February 13, 2001, El Salvador was struck with a second earthquake with a magnitude of 6.6 on the Richter Scale. Combined, the earthquakes and associated landslides killed 1259 people and damaged or destroyed more than 300,000 homes (Bommer et al., 2002). Furthermore, it left thousands homeless and/or jobless. The last earthquake before the 2001 earthquakes occurred in San Salvador in October 1986 and left 1,500 dead. The damages of the 1986 earthquake were equivalent to 31% of the GDP for that year (Rose et al., 2004).

Most recently, in October 2005, the Santa Ana volcano, the largest volcano in El Salvador, erupted and discharged sulfuric gas, ash, and rock on surrounding communities and coffee plantations, permanently displacing 5,000 and killing 2 people. Also in October of 2005, Hurricane Stan unleashed heavy rains causing flooding throughout the country which resulted in 67 deaths and the evacuation of more than 50,000 people. Damages related to Hurricane Stan were estimated at US\$355.6 million (US Department of State, 2006). The projected annual cost of earthquakes amounts to US\$150 million or 1% of the GDP, with El Salvador absorbing about half of that amount. The earthquakes that hit the country in 2001 cost US\$1.6 billion and required an additional US\$700 million of public expenditures (IDB, 2005). In addition to the financial costs, the psychological, social and physical disruptions that such natural disasters cause are

enormous. While most Salvadorans have been directly affected by hurricanes or earthquakes, the poorest Salvadorans live in the areas with the highest risk, in steep slopes and along rivers (Rose et al., 2004) and therefore they were the most affected.

Poverty

Like many other Latin American countries, El Salvador continues to battle poverty and its effects on education, crime, and child labor. Research on poverty in any country has consistently shown that the causes and effects of poverty are detrimental, complex and multidimensional (Khan, 2001; Miller, 2006). According to Miller (2006), high poverty rates have been linked to low levels of educational attainment which in turn cause a domino-effect of low levels of formal education, low wage earning jobs and subsistence living which creates a cycle of poverty.

About 50% of the total population and about 60% of the rural population live below the poverty line (ILO, 2006), of which 37% lives below the national poverty line and, about 15% of the population live in extreme poverty or below US\$1 per day. Generally, rural areas around the world are typically more prone to poverty. Additionally, people living in extreme poverty are disproportionately rural, with nearly two-thirds living in remote rural areas (Khan, 2001; Osava, 1999). In El Salvador, approximately 50% of the population lives in rural areas of the country and, as poverty trends show, face particularly lower levels of poverty. There is also a correlation between ethnic background and extreme poverty in rural areas. This is a result of the history of physical and cultural marginalisation which excluded indigenous groups from growth trends and from an educational system that did not recognize their languages (Osava, 1999).

Child Labor

In 2002, the results of the Salvadoran Household Survey revealed that in 67.3% of cases in rural areas, drop-out from school appeared to be demand-related, where households indicated that school was too expensive or because the child had to work inside or outside of the home (Save the Children, 2005). Acute poverty often obliges children from those household to contribute to family income from a young age as it may be the only way to ensure that basic needs can be met. Accordingly, there is a high proportion of child labor in El Salvador, particularly in the rural areas. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) (2006), of the 2.2 million children under the age of 19, an estimated 440,000 work, with 60,000 of them being between the ages of 10-14. The worst forms of child labor in El Salvador have been identified are: commercial sexual exploitation, fishing, fireworks, scavenging in garbage dumpsites, and the sugarcane industry (ILO, 2006).

In El Salvador, like in other developing countries, poverty results in low education levels, child labor and crime rates. These issues perpetuate the inability of the country to stabilize economically and provide the needed resources to its citizens, including the infrastructure, supports and funds to offer a quality education to all school children.

Physical Infrastructure

The physical infrastructure of El Salvador, such as roads and buildings, has been unstable due to the armed-conflict factors and the on-going natural disasters that the country has endured. It costs the country millions of dollars each time it faces a catastrophe like Hurricane Mitch, Hurricane Stan or other major natural disasters. The

exact degree of deterioration has not been measured but there are certain indicators which evidence the impact. For instance, in 1995, the municipality of San Salvador was collecting only 36% of the 517 tons of garbage generated on a daily basis. Also, it is estimated that 40% of urban households are not connected to sewage systems. Despite improvement efforts and monetary assistance from international donors to rebuild or improve infrastructure throughout the country, it has been difficult to build and maintain adequate buildings, including schools. Between, 2000-2004, the MINED invested US\$193 million in routine and emergency repairs related to schools and other education-related buildings. The destruction of repeated natural disasters has been so massive throughout the country, that there are still many schools, particularly in the rural areas, that are inadequate and do not have basic services such as water, electricity and basic sanitation systems or services (MINED, 2006a; Save the Children, 2005). Schools in over 100 rural municipalities and marginalized urban areas have been identified by the MINED as needing emergency assistance and are still awaiting reconstruction and restoration (MINED).

Unquestionably, the history and social context of El Salvador is an integral part of its current state and inevitably has affected the country's service systems, including health care, social safety, and its education system.

Educational Context

El Salvador has a total of 6,098 schools, of which 5117 are public schools. El Salvador's education structure is made up of grades 1-11 and is divided into three cycles or *ciclos* and the *bachillerato*: grades 1-3 make up the first cycle; grades 4-6, make up the second cycle; and grades 7-9 make up the third cycle. Grades 10 and 11 make up the

bachillerato. El Salvador's government regulations state that children between the ages of 7 and 10 are entitled to be in school, mandating only three years of basic primary education (National Labour Committee, 2006). The MINED is the organization charged with overseeing the education in the country's public schools and provides guidance through progress monitoring and policy-development and enforcement.

In the last four decades, El Salvador's education system has gone through a variety of reforms and changes. In the 1970's, before the armed conflict era, El Salvador designated 25% of its national budget allocation towards education (International Development Research Centre (IDRC), 2006). Throughout the 1980s, when the armed conflict was at its peak, El Salvador's education system was severely affected, starting with a significant drop of the GDP, from 3% to 1.6%. The distribution of resources from the MINED was another dramatic change, with only a very small budget allocated to investment and non-salary inputs. There were also rural communities with limited access to traditional education and, in some areas; the communities themselves took responsibility for providing educational opportunities for their children. By 1989, El Salvador's basic education system faced a series of challenges including inefficient management, low enrollment, high repetition (50%+), high dropout (20%), and low fiscal allocations for primary education (World Bank, 2002). Salaries accounted for 96% of the MINED budget, leaving less than one dollar per student per year for expenditures such as textbooks, teaching materials and other operational inputs (IDRC, 2006; USAID, 2005).

By the beginning of the 1990's, the internal efficiency of the education system was very poor. One of every six children in the first grade did not complete the school year and one in five had to repeat the year. This resulted in students taking an average of

9.4 years to complete primary education, which is designed to be completed in six years (IDRC, 2006). The impact of the armed conflict was even more significant in rural areas as much of the combating was played out in those areas, thus preventing education access to a large segment of the rural population. Consequently, by 1989, the gross enrollment rate at the pre-school and primary levels had fallen below that of 1979, from 82.6 to 81.9 (IDRC, 2006; World Bank, 1995).

During the Christiani administration, from 1989-1994, the emphasis of the MINED turned to increasing the quality, equity and efficiency of education by increasing efforts to improve preschool and primary education, with an added priority to the rural zones, which have traditionally been neglected (IDRC, 2006; MINED, 2006b). To improve education and increase community participation in rural areas, the World Bank supported El Salvador in establishing the *Educacion con la participacion de la comunidad* (Community –Managed Schools Programme) or EDUCO program. This program gave parents and communities more power and authority in their local schools by allowing them to be members of their school boards and have a voice in the decision-making processes such as making budgeting decisions, hiring administrators and teachers and having the authority to terminate employment contracts as necessary (MINED, 2006b; World Bank, 1995).

In 1994, the government of El Salvador requested financial support from the World Bank and other international agencies, including USAID and IDB, to improve education quality and modernize its education system. Efforts throughout the mid and late 90's concentrated on extending EDUCO to other rural areas and fostering

decentralization by shifting control to local school boards, municipalities and community groups (World Bank, 1995).

Special Education

It is important to note that there is very limited published information regarding special education in El Salvador. Aside from the *Technical Orientation Manual: Support classroom Administration and Curriculum* (MINED, 2001) and informal forms provided by FUNPRES, there were no other printed information of special education services for students with disabilities in El Salvador. It is also interesting to note that none of the key participants at the school level mentioned the technical manual. Neither the NCSENO itself nor the MINED's Web site has published material that identifies their scope of work or who they serve relating to students with disabilities. Thus, the information in this section was collected from interviews with key informants from the NCSENO, MINED, FUNPRES, FUNTER, PODES, the UCA, teachers and administrators, parents of students with disabilities and advocacy organizations.

The MINED developed the NCSENO which is charged with the responsibility to oversee the development and delivery of special needs education services at the national level. The services provided for students with disabilities are through regular education schools that have a support room or in one of the 30 special education centers throughout the country.

Current Inclusive Education Opportunities for Students with Disabilities

There are efforts through FUNPRES and the NCSENO of the MINED to provide inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities. These services include developing *aulas de apoyo* or support rooms, which are classrooms that are designed to provide

services to students with special education needs, which includes those with disabilities.

The Technical Orientation Manual: Support Classroom Administration and Curriculum

(MINED, 2001) outlines the development of support classrooms in regular education schools and the roles of administrators, regular education teachers and support room teachers in a school as well as processes on identifying students with disabilities.

Additionally, this manual includes information on the theory of students with learning problems, forms and templates which can be used to collect anecdotal data on students and checklists to assist teachers identify learning problems. FUNPRES supports the content of this manual by using it as the guide to prepare, train and support schools with support classrooms.

Based on written information provided by FUNPRES (a frequently asked questions flyer that is given to administrators when starting a support classroom in the school) and interviews from key informants from the MINED, FUNPRES and school personnel, support rooms are developed based on the budget availability of the MINED to provide training and the fiscal resources to provide a salary for a support room teacher. Additionally, the school must be “willing” to establish such rooms in their schools, as principals have the final word as to what students are served in his/her school. According to high-level officials from the NCSENO, MINED and FUNPRES, there are approximately 500 schools with support rooms, less than 10% of the 5117 total schools in El Salvador.

The types of services provided in support rooms include assessing students, providing individual or small group work instruction, providing supports to general education

teachers, identifying resources such as speech language therapy and working with parents (FUNPRES, n.d.).

Student Assessment

Support room teachers are responsible for “diagnosing” students with learning problems and disabilities. During a school visit, a support room teacher stated that teachers use a form to identify students who may have disabilities. The form, which is in Appendix G, also helps them to determine if the student has mental retardation depending on how many behaviors from the list he/she is showing. The form was developed by FUNPRES and resource teachers use it to assist them in making the determination of whether a student has or does not have a disability. It includes short statements such as “[student] presents attention and concentration difficulties,” “repeats grade,” “when dictated to, [student] asks for statements to be repeated several times” (FUNPRES, n.d.). The teacher explained the process of identifying a student with a disability as follows:

First, [the evaluation begins with] the general education teacher. When they observe a child that is not doing well in a classroom and they observe that a child is not performing at a certain level then we would look to see if the child has a disability. So the regular education teacher talks with the resource teacher and then we decide together to find out what is going on. We do an evaluation and then we make a decision... I give the students a test to see if they have hyperactivity and if they need medication I refer them to the local hospital to be medicated with Ritalin or some other type of medication.

An administrator at the same school confirmed that the resource teacher was the person in charge of identifying students with disabilities:

The support classroom teacher, who has been trained in that area, he provides the general education teachers with a form so that the teacher can determine what students present those problems. The teacher sends that [the form] back to the support classroom teacher and then the support classroom teacher gives the student a separate evaluation where he determines if he has mental retardation or not- based on a point system. The test verifies the grade level of the student. If the child scores at two or more grade levels [below his/her grade level] then the student has mental retardation. If a student shows that he/she is lower than two grades than where he/she should be, then that student has a more severe disability, which may mean that we cannot serve them. So far, the tests that he has conducted have only identified students with mild mental retardation - nothing more severe. So depending on the student's problem, then the resource teacher tells the regular education teacher if and when the child will be served.

At a different school, I asked a general education teacher about the type of students in his class and the process of identifying students with disabilities. The response again confirmed that resource teachers are identifying students with disabilities:

[I have] students with different types of retardation- retardation for one reason or another. [There are] other students who are deaf and there are also students who have language problems. When we have a case like that, we report it to the support classroom teacher. Then she steps in and evaluates the student. Based on the results of that evaluation, then we make other decisions. We look to see if the student needs to attend a special education school so that they can give the student another evaluation.

The process of identifying students with disabilities through the support room that I visited was consistent. Through other interviews with NCSENO and FUNPRES officials, however, I learned that support room teachers are not supposed to be “diagnosing” students. Rather, they should be referring students who may need a more formal evaluation to a special education center, where there are psychologists that conduct such evaluations. A NCSENO official reported:

No- they [the teachers] shouldn't [diagnose students]. I can not say they don't do it but they should not. I get very concerned with the topic on labeling and identifying...I tell them [the support room teachers] to look at their [the students'] functional development and their curricular competencies- if that is what you want to call an evaluation. But they are not the specialist to decide whether a student has or does not have an intellectual disability and I ask that they (teachers) respect that... So what I tell them is that an evaluation is important but it should not determine the placement of a student- it should determine what supports the student needs. But today still, teachers have the nerve to say [based on what teachers see and their interpretations of students' behaviors], “oh, that student has mental retardation,” but they should not. But the evaluation process should really be a psychological evaluation.

Individualized and Group Instruction

Teachers, parents and school administrators reported that support room teachers work with small groups or provide individualized services to students with disabilities. Students who are served in the support rooms are pulled out of their general education classes to receive services mainly in reading, writing and math. One of the support room

teachers shared that sometimes s/he attended the general education classroom to provide supports for the students directly in their classes but that that service was something that s/he did on his/her own and that other support teachers did not typically go into the general education classes to provide services. During both of my school observations, I was able to observe teachers providing services to either one student or a small group of students. On one occasion, the support teacher was working on teaching a student the alphabet while four other students sat on the side of the room on a bench with nothing to do. When I asked the support room teacher what the students sitting on the side were doing, he stated that they are in the support room until they are “ready” to go into a class. In other words, these students are not placed with a regular education teacher and spend their time in the support room while the support room teacher provides services to students who are pulled out from the general education classrooms. The rest of the students who receive services from the support room receive mainly in a segregated setting since it they are “pulled out” from their classes to receive supports with other students with disabilities.

Working with Parents

Part of the work that support room teachers do is work with the parents of student with disabilities. The two support room teachers that were interviewed reported that they provided parents information on additional services, such as hospitals or special center services. For example, one support room teacher said:

I have formed a support group for parents who have children with hyperactivity.

They meet once a month and discuss issues...it is a way to make them aware [of

their child's need and strengths] because it is not always easy to tell a parent that their child has hyperactivity.

Both parents who were interviewed did not recall working in a support group. One parent did mention that she had been called in by the principal when they found out that her daughter, who was six years old at the time, was working with her at the sugarcane fields. The parent explained:

I used to go to work and bring my little girl with me. One day the school asked [the students] who went to cut sugar canes and my daughter told them that she was one of them- so they said something to me [about her working]. They sent for me and they told us that we cannot force the children [to work] or take them to work with us. Sometimes you do not take them because you want to but [rather] because of the necessity- there is no one to leave them with. So they told us that they were going to give us school supplies [as an incentive for parents to send their children to school] and they also tell us that the government [through different programs for the school] helps out a lot here [at this school].

Defining Students with Disabilities

Based on interview data collected through key informants, FUNPRES and the NCSENO deliver services for students who fall under the SEN definition, which is identified in the Salamanca Statement (discussed in Chapter 1), and includes a much broader description of students with special education needs such as those with “physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other condition...disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural

minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas and groups” (UNESCO, 2004, p. 6).

A NCSENO official verified this with the following comment:

A school that has a support room, assists those students [students with disabilities] and also serves students with special needs that are not associated with disabilities, such as those with learning problems [students with reading and math difficulties]... so the support room has two functions: providing guidance with the processes for including students with disabilities and to serve those students that need assistance but that are not associated with a disability.

A FUNPRES official affirmed this practice:

Well, to tell you the truth we work with all of the schools that provide some type of special services. I mean, we also work with schools that have programs on violence and such ...schools that have support rooms, schools for the deaf, special centers, integrative school, so basically we work with any school that provide some type of special needs service.

Because the NCSENO and FUNPRES services are for students who fall under the SEN definition, which is very broad, as opposed to exclusively with students with disabilities, the scope and quality of services for students with disabilities is even more limited. Additionally, there is not a common agreed-upon definition for students or person with disabilities, which complicates the identification process, as discussed above by the NCSENO official. This is discussed further under indicator one of the institutional capacity domain.

Number of Students with Disabilities

The number of students with disabilities is not collected in any systematic form in El Salvador but estimates on the number of students with disabilities in Latin American countries with similar profiles as El Salvador's, range from 10% to 25% (UNICEF, 2005; USAID, 2003). Since there was no documentation that identified these numbers, and I was interested to know what the estimated number was among key informants, I asked key informants the following: 1) the total number of students with disabilities, including students with low-incidence disabilities in the country and, 2) the number of students with disabilities that have access to an education, whether in a regular education setting or in a special education schools. The responses to these questions varied significantly, with several key informants estimating the opportunities of students with disabilities much more positively than the international organization estimates. One support room teacher responded:

In this department, I would say 100% [of students with disabilities have access to an education]. We have a project with the Republic of Haiti where we will be forming a committee to work on including children with disabilities so I think all of them will have access to education.

When I asked him what percentage of students with disabilities currently have access to an education in the country, he said:

In the whole country, I would say about 80% because it is something that we are trying to give coverage [attention] to.

A high-level official from CONAIPD, who coordinates services and works with parent complaints relating to inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities, hesitated to answer the question but responded:

I could not tell you in a percentage [how many students with disabilities have access to an education]...there is always the population that is not assisted because of different reasons. The mom is afraid to send her son to school, she doesn't want him to be mistreated, she still keeps him at home super protected, or because they are not able to take him because they have accessibility problems. So we can't talk about percentage of the population, but there are still people who don't go to school, especially in the rural areas.

I probed further and asked her if she felt that there were enough schools if all students with disabilities, regardless of their disabilities, wanted an education and the issues she mentioned above were not present:

I believe so. I believe so. But not talking about [considering] quality. I believe what we need is to transmit the idea, so the work in the communities is very important, because one father may say, "Why am I going to send my child to school if there is nothing to do there. He is going to harvest coffee or corn", so there is a lot of work to do with parents to convince them to give the opportunity their children deserve. But I think so [that there are enough schools in the country to serve all students with disabilities regardless of the type of disability they have].

Only two key informants, one from an NGO and another from a university, estimated a percentage that corresponds with the projected numbers from international reports (IDMR, 2004). The NGO key informant answered:

That is a very hard question to answer. According to the Pan American Health Organization, the percentage of persons with disabilities in Latin America is about 17%. There have been other numbers thrown around such as 12%. So if we look at El Salvador, which has about 6 million people, and about 3 million of them are children or under 18 years of age, even the education system does not know what this number is- which is a big problem, I would dare to say that if about 12% of the population has a disability, about one or two percent of them are receiving an education. Some people measure the number of students with disabilities in our country by only counting the number of students receiving special education in special education schools or in deaf schools- but that is not correct- as a matter of fact if you look at that number it's less than 1% of the population. Now, you may ask where are the rest? They are probably at home or we just have not been able to contact them.

Another informant laughed when I asked her the question:

I would say one percent in the rural areas [have access to an education]. It is minimal. I can say that in the rural areas there is no attention to special education- I would say even less than one percent.

When I asked an official of the NCSENO for the number of students with disabilities included in regular education schools, she responded, "I do not have an exact figure but I think about 1000."

The need for additional support rooms has been discussed but there is nothing in place that is moving that intention to a reality. An administrator from the UCA discussed the need and the ongoing rhetoric on increasing inclusive education but when I asked her if the MINED would be opening more support rooms soon, she laughed and responded:

I would really like for that to happen but I'm not very hopeful. The MINED is trying to start a policy on inclusion. The idea is that all schools should include all children so that it [special education] is not treated as a separate system. But that also implies that we need more clarity as far as how integration will work. For example, will special education teachers be able to work in the regular education classroom? I am not sure if that has been defined yet or how they plan to support the regular education schools so that inclusion can be effective-because inclusion does not mean just having the students in the school. It means that the school must be able to respond to all students' needs, including those students with disabilities. So as far as I'm aware, there is no policy that addresses that [moving towards more inclusive schools].

The responses above, indicates the lack of data and its effect on awareness relating to students with disabilities and their opportunities to education. The fact that high level officials in important positions that supposedly influence or promote the education of students with disabilities do not fully understand the scope of the problem, may indicate the priority that is placed on increasing and improving educational opportunities for students with disabilities. More importantly, the answers related to the limited number of inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities,

illustrates the need for additional schools and inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities.

Special Education Centers

There are a total of 30 special education centers in El Salvador. These centers serve students with disabilities such as visual impairments, blindness, deafness and physical disabilities. The number of special education centers are not enough to serve all students who are supposed to attend centers based on their disabilities. For example, if a child has a physical disability or a visual impairment, the parents will likely seek a special education center for the student to attend. When I asked a high-level official from FUNPRES if all students with disabilities had the opportunity to attend a school, whether segregated or not, she explained:

That's a very good question. Well, in theory one would say yes. Let's say a child with severe mental retardation goes to a special education school, you would think that they [the school] would take him [enroll him]. But, it's not that they will take him because they don't want to but you really do have to look at what we have. For example, there are only 30 special education centers in the country and the centers are located in the capital of each department or close to them- so let's say this child lives in Pipal [a rural area in El Salvador] and the school is in Chalatenango, this child is most likely not going to be going to school. Now, he could try to go his local school or a regular education school close to his home but I would not be able to tell you whether they would take him [allow him to enroll at the school] or not. So I think it's kind of relative. Another example is the

schools for the deaf. There are several schools for the deaf in the country, however, if the child does not have access to that school-I do wonder what happens to them: does the regular education school take them? I don't know-I hope they do because it would be too difficult for the child to transport himself to a special education center [since there are so few and far part]. We are fighting...for regular education schools to take these children into the schools. So, in theory, yes, the schools are there and no one can tell them [the students] not to come to the schools. The problem is whether the children will come because of the distance. This is one of the reasons why it's so important for rural schools to implement inclusive education.

Although the exact number of students with disabilities is unknown, it is clear that there are not enough schools or services for students with disabilities to receive an education, whether in an inclusive or segregated setting.

Current Education Efforts

In the last decade, there have been some impressive gains for students in El Salvador. For example, the net enrollment rates revealed that 89% of students were enrolled in the grade that corresponded to their age, up from 66% in 1992. Moreover, the poverty rates have decreased (Save the Children, 2005). In 2005, El Salvador invested US\$43 million to launch the 2021 National Education Plan (NEP), which bases parts of its short-term and long-term goals and objectives on the commitment to reaching the MDGs and other international initiatives (MINED, 2006a). The 2021 NEP outlines 10 programs, which were developed based on data collected by the MINED on test scores,

attendance, and other indicators, with corresponding objectives and goals in areas such as reading, math, languages, technology and school infrastructure (MINED, 2006a).

Numerous international donors including USAID, the World Bank, Japan, and the Central American Bank of International Integration (CABEI), Spain, are supporting El Salvador with the 2021 NEP, which includes longitudinal goals. The key goals for the 2021 plan are: 1) increase access to education, 2) elementary and middle school effectiveness and 3) increasing international competitiveness. The ten programs outlined in the 2021 National Education Plan include: *Educame* (Educate me), *Comprendo* (I Understand), EDIFICA, and Compite (Compete). All the programs have an individual emphasis, which focus on the key goals listed above. Table 4.1 outlines the international donations supporting the Plan as reported by the MINED (2006a).

Table 4.1: International Donor Allocations for the 2021 NEP

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Financial Contribution</i>	<i>Program</i>
USAID	3,995,782	I UNDERSTAND Program-language
LUXEMBURGO	3,187,911	EDIFICA – School Infrastructure
JAPON*	2,100,000	MEGATEC
USDA	4,200,000	School Relief
INTERVIDA	1,200,000	EDIFICA, I UNDERSTAND and I CAN Programs
ESPANA-AECI	597,100	TEACHER DEVELOPMENT
Canje Deuda – España	2,500,000	EDIFICA – School Infrastructure
TOTAL	15,280,793.00	

Special Education Efforts and Gains

One of the top objectives under the 2021 NEP is access to education and education for diversity or *educacion para la diversidad*. Under education for diversity, the plan calls for an increase in inclusive education for students with special needs, which includes students with and without disabilities. The objectives outlined in the Building Schools Program or *EDIFICA* 2021 National Plan (MINED, 2006a) plan are to focus on the schools with the greatest needs, which are located in the rural and poor areas, and that have emergency needs. Furthermore, the plan calls for assistance in marginalized urban areas in San Salvador. Through the EDIFICA initiative, the MINED further promotes the education of students with special needs in special schools but also in regular education schools with the goals of “improving the quality of life for persons with limitations” and “to promote collaboration between the State [country], communities and families on prevention and attention to special education” (p.21).

The 2021 NEP also addresses “equity and attention to diversity” (p.56) through the All Equal or *Todos Iguales* plan. One of the goals identified for students with disabilities under this plan is an increase of \$37 dollars per student for special education centers. An official with the NCSENO elaborated on this upcoming change:

This is my favorite question right now. Well, the regular schools receive US\$13 per student. We have been working on a proposal to increase the amount of money for students with disabilities in these regular schools. They told us that this year, it would be increased gradually. But this year, we were able to increase [funds] for special education schools [to \$50 per student, per year].

I asked the key informant about additional funding for regular schools that are providing inclusive education for students with disabilities. She responded that they are currently working to increase the amount of funding for students with disabilities in regular education schools. She added that this change is expected to happen in the next coming school year. However, the information and data of the 2021 NEP contradicts the latter statement of increasing funds for students with disabilities in general education schools, as discussed below.

In a press release from the University of Chicago (2005), President Antonio Saca visited the Harris School of Public Policy Studies and shared the following relating the goals and visions for the 2021 National Education Plan and the vision for the Salvadorian people.

Our goal for the 2021- Education Plan, the year in which we will celebrate two hundred years of independence- is to provide greater opportunities for Salvadorans to reach a higher education level, offer state of the art technical and technological education, develop science and technology for the well being of our society and have a fully computer educated and bilingual population.

We are committed to educating our people to achieve the country we want: a secure, equal, productive, competitive and democratic country focused on its people, growing steadily and with a consolidated identity. Our policy to invest in our people will render a more skilled, healthier and more productive labor force able to respond to the demands of the business and goods and service production models of this century (www.harrisschool.uchicago.edu, Press releases section, ¶ 9 and 10).

Ongoing Concerns

Despite the efforts of the MINED and international donors, education indicators in El Salvador remain among the worst in Latin America (IDRC, 2006; Save the Children, 2005; World Bank, 1997). School enrollment and dropout rates are still high with approximately 16.1% of 7 to 9 year-olds and 11% of 10-12 year-olds not attending school. In 2002, only 75% of students between the ages of 15-19 had completed sixth grade.

In addition, the MINED reports that educational opportunities for students in rural areas are even worse as education services are often insufficient or not available due to resource allocations. As a result, students from rural areas are at a higher risk of repeating grades and dropping out of school before the third grade (MINED, 2006a). There illiteracy rates of persons over 10 years of age in 2004 was 15.5%, with a higher percent in rural areas (24.5%) than in urban zones (9.6) (MINED, 2006a).

Inclusive Education- Still not a Priority

Inclusive education for students with disabilities is still not a priority in El Salvador. While there are efforts from organizations such as FUNPRES and the NCSENO it is not nearly enough for what is needed to identify and serve all students with disabilities in regular education schools. The level of commitment to providing students with disabilities an inclusive educational opportunity, and in turn the commitment to achieving EFA, is also evidenced by priorities set in the newly developed programs of the 2021 NEP. Millions of dollars have been designated to programs such as MegaTec, which promotes technology in education or COMPITE, whose goal is to increase bilingualism for students.

The two programs with an identified emphasis on students with disabilities, Todos Iguales and EDIFICA, do not mention goals, objectives, indicators, or improvements for inclusive education or the needs of students with disabilities outside of those students attending special education centers. While the goals of the plan EDIFICA include “improving the quality of life for persons with limitations” and “to promote collaboration between the State [country], communities and families on prevention and attention to special education” (p.21), it is important to note what this means and how the MINED intends to execute these goals. Under the desegregated goals and plans of the EDIFICA program, it is interesting to note the following:

Special education schools will oversee that the educational spaces respond to the requirements addressed in the Law of Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and in the Attention to Diversity in the Education System policy. (MINED, 2006A, p.21)

The program description and objectives do not mention or address accessibility issues for regular education schools in their future plans. In addition, according to a school administrator, the term “oversee” means that the funding to make the schools accessible will come from the school budgets, or the \$50 per student, per year allocations.

Under Todos Iguales, the leading program in the 2021 plan that addresses “attention to diversity,” the MINED identifies two goals: 1) to increase the annual expenditure of each student attending a special education center from US\$13 to US\$50, as explained earlier, and 2) to invest US\$500,000 in improving physical resources by providing equipment to special education centers. There are no identified goals or funds that address increasing the expenditure for students attending regular education schools and a mere .6% of the

total 2006-2010, 2021 NEP budget has been allocated to the Todos Iguales Plan. A list of the budget distributions for the 10 programs under the 2021 NEP is provided in Table 4.2. Meanwhile, there are still hundreds of thousands children that do not have the opportunity to even access some form of an education, much less a quality and inclusive education.

Table 4.2: 2021 National Education Plan

Estimated investment of loaned funding per program (2006-2010)

	PROGRAM	IDB	IBRD	CABEI	TOTAL
1	Read Playing (Pre-school /6 years old)	1.2	-	-	1.2
2	I Understand (1 st – 6 th grades)	1.9	-	-	1.9
3	Curriculum Development TERCER CICLO Y MEDIA	-	1.7		1.7
4	Articles/ Chapters/Texts (1 st – 9 th grades)	6.7	3.0		9.7
5	Professional Development of Teachers	1.9	3.7		5.6
6	Teach me (7 th – 11 th grades)	-	13.6	-	13.6
7	Basic Accelerated Education (2 nd – 6 th grades)	8.0			8.0
8	Scholarships (Middle School)		2.8		2.8
9	MEGATEC (Technology)	-	14.8	-	14.8
10	Connect Yourself (Elementary and Middle School)	-	7.9	15.0	22.9
11	EDIFICA (All levels/ emphasizing 100 poorest Municipalities)	37.9	11.0	-	48.9
12	I can (Young students from urban schools)	8.8	4.9	-	13.7
13	Effective Group of Schools (Solidarity Group)	5.5	-	-	5.5
14	Rural Middle School Education (EDUCO)		6.3		6.3
15	All Equal (Special Education)	0.2	0.4	-	0.6
16	Compete (English 7 th – 11 th grades)	5.0	3.6	-	8.6
17	Assessment and Certification (All levels)	4.6	7.2		11.8
18	University of El Salvador	-	-	4.0	4.0
19	Supervision Administration	3.3	3.9		7.2
20	Financial Costs	-			-
21	First Commission/Representatives	-	0.2		0.2
TOTAL (In US\$ millions)		85.0	85.0	19.0	189.0

Source: 2021 National Education Plan, MINED (2006)

Key : IDB= Inter-American Development Bank

IBRD = International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

CABEI = Central American Bank for Economic Integration

Contextual Considerations

To fully understand El Salvador's education system, its contextual background must be considered in the evaluation process of any sector analysis or capacity assessment as factors such as the armed conflict, natural disaster experiences and poverty issues have had a direct impact in developing inclusive educational opportunities for all students. As a result of this consideration, the CAF was modified to better assess El Salvador's capacity of providing inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities.

Revising the Capacity Assessment Framework

In this section, I discuss the CAF and the changes that were made to the framework based on the results of the study. A comparison of the two frameworks is outlined on Appendix H.

This study utilized a capacity assessment framework, which included three capacity domains and 10 indicators, as a guide to assess specific areas of El Salvador's capacity to provide inclusive education to students with disabilities. The framework was developed using the literature on capacity building, inclusive education and practices in comparative and international education. It also considered information from reports on major international agenda issues such as EFA and the MDGs. Based on this literature, three major domains were identified as key to the ability of a system to provide inclusive educational opportunities to students with disabilities: institutional capacity, which refers to El Salvador's ability to develop and implement policies that promote inclusive education; organizational capacity, which refers to structures and practices that bring individuals together to collaborate in developing inclusive education; and human

capacity, which refers to the quantity and quality of El Salvador's personnel and the supports available to support these personnel in implementing inclusive education in El Salvador. To assess the capacity of each domain, specific indicators corresponding to each domain were identified. The indicators were specific items characterizing the domains that were developed, as described in Chapter 2, based on the literature in both international development and inclusive education.

The indicators were used to organize the questions in the interview protocol which was used to obtain information from key informants. Additional data from reports, documents and observations were also used to gain information about each indicator. Much of the information obtained easily corresponded to the predetermined domains and indicators. There were other data, however, that did not fit into any of the domains but which were judged to be critically important and necessary in the evaluation of El Salvador's capacity to provide inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. This included information on the armed-conflict experiences, infrastructure issues, limited fiscal resources, and the legitimacy of authority, all of which have significantly affected El Salvador's ability to create inclusive education. Some of this information was considered to be contextual background. However, it became clear that the information on infrastructure, fiscal sources and the legitimacy of authority needed to be incorporated as part of the CAF. To accomplish this, I returned to the literature on capacity building, reevaluated the domains and indicators and made the appropriate changes and modifications based on the existing data. The changes and modification of the capacity assessment framework are discussed below.

Institutional Domain

The changes under institutional capacity included rewording the first indicator to reflect a more precise definition and adding two new indicators. The first indicator within institutional capacity, which relates to established policies about inclusive education, was reworded to include a component on the definition of students with disabilities and the process for identifying these students.

One of the new indicators was added as result of the data collected and the literature on recent capacity building evaluations that emphasize the importance of a strong government that is capable of developing and implementing laws to make changes related to poverty or education (Fukuyama, 2006). Homer-Dixon (1999) led team of researchers, which conducted an investigation in countries dealing with environmental scarcity and internal coherence (i.e., India, China, Indonesia). They identified a set of indicators which affect a state's capacity to serve its people through services and products. One of the indicators mentioned by Homer-Dixon is the strength of the state's moral authority or the extent to which the populace obeys out of a sense of alliance and duty rather than as a result of coercion. Building on Homer-Dixon's work, I adapted and included an indicator under the institutional domain to evaluate what I call "authority legitimacy." For the purpose of this study, the authority legitimacy indicator refers to the structure and strength of the existing authority structure to enforce policies to the extent where the populace obeys and complies with rules, laws, and regulations relating to inclusive education. More specifically, this indicator assesses the enforcement practices of the specific organizations in the system that oversees compliance to laws relating to inclusive education.

The second indicator added under the institutional capacity domain relates to infrastructure resources. This indicator assesses the availability of infrastructure resources such as physical access to school buildings and how these resources affect a department's ability to provide inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. This indicator focuses on the infrastructure of buildings, roads, ramps and accessibility of other infrastructures related to schools. As with the authority legitimacy indicator, it became apparent that infrastructure resources were essential to providing inclusive education for students with disabilities.

Organizational Capacity

There were minimal changes to the indicators under organizational capacity. The indicator related to internal mechanisms such as councils and committees promoting collaboration was reworded to first specify parent collaboration and then community and social agencies.

Human Capacity

The indicator changes within the human capacity domain included adding an additional indicator and modifying the wording of two other indicators. An indicator addressing the availability of tools and processes to gather information on students with disabilities that could be used to allocate fiscal resources and implement strategies such as professional development was added to the human capacity domain. This indicator focuses on how a system gathers information on the current conditions and needs of students with disabilities through a census or other data-collection efforts to obtain information about the numbers of students with disabilities attending schools, etc. Furthermore, it assesses how this information is used.

The indicator relating to a system of professional development addressing the learning needs of students with the full range of disabilities was modified to include an incentive component and the corresponding resources to provide supports to students with a range of learning disabilities. Lastly, the indicator addressing departmental and local efforts to raise resources was deleted from the framework as it was considered redundant.

The modification and expansion of the framework resulted in adding three new indicators to the institutional and human capacity domains (two under institutional capacity and one under human capacity) and modifying the wording of three indicators (one under each domain) to reflect a more precise definition of the indicators. The remaining five indicators were left unchanged. Finally, I substituted the terms “federal,” “state,” and “local” to “national,” “departmental,” and “municipal,” respectively, to reflect El Salvador’s education system structure.

Cultural and Contextual Considerations

The changes to the CAF were also a result of the cultural and contextual reality of El Salvador. As I collected and analyzed the data, it became clear that the original framework assumed an “Americanized” or “Western” context and reality. For example, the original framework assumed that certain factors such as infrastructural resources and authority legitimacy would already be a part of the education system and were not included in the indicators. The original CAF was flawed in that its indicators evaluated a system addressing issues beyond the fundamental needs of providing an inclusive education system, such as infrastructure and monetary resources. Consequently, indicators more appropriate to El Salvador’s cultural were identified, as described above.

The modifications and changes to the capacity framework resulted in a more precise and comprehensive evaluation tool for capacity assessment in creating inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. As a result, I named the new, revised framework: *International Capacity Assessment for Inclusive Education* (ICAISE).

ICAISE Findings

This section outlines the findings under each of the 10 ICAISE indicators. It is followed by a summary of the findings for each capacity domain: institutional, organizational and human capacity.

Institutional Capacity

Institutional capacity refers to the country's ability to develop and implement policies and a system of goals and incentives. To gather information on this domain, I asked participants about their knowledge on established policies about inclusive education at national, departmental and local level. I also asked about the enforcement of these policies and who oversaw and enforced such policies. Key informants and respondents were also questioned about school infrastructures and available fiscal resources for including students with disabilities. I also asked questions related to their knowledge and experiences with an accountability system for including students with disabilities. To triangulate the data from the key informants, I reviewed documents from CONAIPD and the MINED, which were the two entities most frequently mentioned when discussing policies, accountability issues, enforcement of policies, and fiscal and infrastructural resources. Data from the observations conducted in the school were also used to evaluate the indicators under this domain.

Indicator 1- The government has clear and established policies about inclusive education, including the definition and identification process of students with disabilities, that unite national, departmental and local government.

This indicator addressed the policies associated with inclusive education for students with disabilities. Key informants were asked about their knowledge and understanding of the policies of such laws and their interpretation of these laws as related to inclusive special education. Other questions for this domain were related to key informants understanding of the definition of the term “disability” and their knowledge and experiences in the identification process of students with disabilities.

Policies on inclusive education. El Salvador has two national laws and several agency policies that outline the inclusion and opportunities of students with disabilities. In 1993, a national policy named the Law of Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities was passed to protect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities in education, employment, and accessibility. More specifically, the law states the following:

All persons with disabilities have the right to:

- Be protected of any kind of discrimination, exploitation, humiliating or abusive treatment or account of their disability;
- Receive education with the appropriate methodology that facilitates their learning process;
- Architectural facilities to move easily within and have access to public and private institutions with a constant flow of visitors;
- Their information, and their labor and professional rehabilitation;

- Get employment and perform a paid job and not be discharged on account of their disability;
- Be assisted by suitable personnel in their integral rehabilitation;
- Have access to scholarship systems. (CONAIPD, 2006, Rights section, ¶1)

Another law outlining the opportunities of inclusive education is the General Law of Education or *La Ley General de Educacion*, passed in 1990 by the General Assembly.

This law states:

The education of persons with special education needs will be offered in specialized institutions and in regular education centers [regular schools], according to the needs of the student, with the attention of a specialist or trained teacher. Special schools will offer educational and vocational services to the population whose conditions do not allow them to be included in the regular school. (MINED, 2006, p. 6)

The General Law of Education provides more specificity on the opportunity for students with disabilities to receive an inclusive education but stipulates the need for a trained teacher or specialist to provide “attention” to the student.

The Constitution of the Republic of El Salvador also outlines the rights of the Salvadorian citizens to an education. Article I states that “all Salvadorans have the right to an education” and Article III indicates that all Salvadorans are equal before the law and that all individuals enjoy the same rights regardless of nationality, race, gender, or region (Constitution Society, 2006). Similar to the Law of Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, the Constitution does not specify inclusive education.

Furthermore, it does not identify individuals with disabilities as one of the groups protected under this law.

Key informants varied in their responses regarding their knowledge of policies relating to students with disabilities and education. When asked about these policies, such as, “Are there any policies stating that students with disabilities have a right to an inclusive education,” or “What laws are in place that provides students with disabilities the right to an inclusive education?” there were a number of answers that included the Constitution of El Salvador, and policies set forth by the MINED and FUNPRES. Two key informants mentioned the Law of Equalization for Persons with Disabilities and the General Law of Education. When I asked more specific questions, such as, “Does that law state that students with disabilities have the right an inclusive education?” Or “What exactly does that law/policy say about inclusive education and students with disabilities?” key informants acknowledged that there was no law with that level of specificity. The following presents the variety of answers on policies and laws relating to the education for students with disabilities. Officials from the MINED, NGO representatives and school personnel including a teacher suggested that the Constitution includes the policy which guarantees students with disabilities an education. For example, A MINED official from the National Coordination for Special Education Office stated:

That policy can be found in the nation’s Constitution which states that everyone has a right to an education- whether you are healthy or have a disability or other type of problem- so that is already embedded in the constitution.

An NGO representative answered similarly, “I believe if it [the Constitution] says all Salvadorans should have access to an education that means that all students should have

access to schools.” Likewise, a general education teacher added, “Yes, the General Education Law states that [the right to an inclusive education] as well as the Constitution of the Republic. So yes, the Constitution says that all children have the right to an education.”

When I probed further and asked about the precise wording of the Constitution, a high-level administrator from the National Coordination for Special Education Office of the MINED commented on the continuing struggle with the interpretation of the wording of the Constitution:

I have asked myself if there should be specific laws targeting persons with disabilities- but we have not matured that far yet. For example, I believe if it [the Constitution] says, “All Salvadorans should have access to education,” that means all students should have access to school. I think it would be ideal to think of it that way, but the reality is that, in practice, it is not being carried out that way yet- there is still a separation- a mental separation between the two populations.

In addition to mentioning the Salvadoran Constitution as a source of the education policies, key informants such as teachers, principals and NGO representatives often brought up certain policies or programs that FUNPRES or the MINED have in place. For example, when answering the questions about policies for students with disabilities, a teacher responded:

FUNPRES has been working with the Ministry of Education to develop these [policies]. There are different types of trainings that talk about how to treat students appropriately so these trainings help teacher to use the strategies in the

classroom, so yes, there exists a plan to address how to treat these students.

A school administrator added:

Yes, there are policies. Institutions such as CONAIPD and FUNPRES are the ones that have collaborated to make sure that these types of students can also be educated outside of special schools. They are also showing the MINED and other people that we can serve these students in regular schools, too- as long as there is a support team and teacher training.

When I probed further and asked key informants about specific policies that protect students with disabilities and their right to an education, a high-level administrator from FUNPRES, who is a key player in promoting inclusive education and developing support classrooms, clarified that the policies set forth by the MINED and FUNPRES do have limitations and that there is the need for a national law on inclusive education:

Well, the Ministry of Education has disseminated various documents which have been modified over the years. But a policy specifically for special education has been discussed but because of the lack of funds and organization, no [there is no such law. I do think that there is a need for a national policy on inclusive education or integrated education, whatever you want to call it.

A school administrator also revealed that, to date, there is still nothing concrete that stipulates the rights of an inclusive education for students with disabilities:

We have always requested some type of written norm because all we get is the news that the Ministry sends us on their theories that we should be an inclusive school open to receive students with disabilities or specific learning problems. But there is nothing that is written that tells us we should accept a certain number of

students... there is a book on the rights of students but nothing on [students with disabilities]...the only thing that they tell us is that we can have up to 45 students in a class and when we have more than 45, then we can split the class *if* we have the additional teacher and infrastructure.

The knowledge level of key informants relating to policies focusing on the educational rights of students with disabilities was limited and inconsistent. Furthermore, only two key informants mentioned the Law of Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and the General Education Law as laws protecting the rights of students with disabilities, which may indicate the lack of knowledge of education policies in general, even among high level administrators in governmental organizations and schools. Lastly, there seems to be confusion about the policies that are in place as some key informants brought up guidelines set forth by FUNPRES or the MINED as the principal laws that promote and protect the rights for an inclusive education for all students with disabilities.

Definition of disability. Another policy area that interferes with El Salvador's inclusive education is the lack of a definition for the term "disability." The Law of Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities defines disability as "any temporary or permanent restriction of a psychological, physiological or anatomical function resulting from an organic impairment" (IDRM), 2004, ¶ 2).

Identification process. El Salvador does not have a formal or established process to systematically identify children or adults with disabilities. To learn about the identification and evaluation process of students with disabilities, I asked key informants from the MINED, FUNPRES and school personnel who were directly or indirectly

involved in the process of identifying students with disabilities to explain the process. Their responses reflect the inconsistencies in how students with disabilities are identified. Two resource teachers, one general education teacher and an administrator reported that the evaluation process is done at the school level, as explained earlier in this Chapter. Other key informants responded that the evaluation was conducted through a medical doctor and yet others reported that it was done through a psychologist or neurologist, or by the Ministry of Health. When I asked the same question (What is the process of identifying students with disabilities in El Salvador?) to a university administrator who is also a professor in special education. The response was:

Well, the psychologists and neurologists do the diagnosis. Students also go to private clinics to get diagnosed. We also have a clinic here with psychologists who also diagnose and can diagnose learning problems, too.

When I probed further to ask if she thought some of the testing was subjective, she responded:

I don't think so. They are professionals who have been trained in that area [psychological evaluations/diagnosis] and know how to do a diagnosis. With attention deficit or other learning problems, which are more related to education, there has not been a systematic training for teachers to be able to do it.

A representative from an NGO suggested that students with disabilities are identified through medical doctors:

Usually, the disability part is decided from the medical doctors. For example, when a baby is born after a traumatic pregnancy the doctor naturally tests the baby for cerebral palsy or some type of delay in their fine motor skills- so that is

normally done by the doctors- even in the rural areas. Of course it is a lot slower over there [in rural areas] because it is not until the mother realizes that the child is not developing the same way like walking or talking or sitting up.

A MINED administrator from the NCSENO responded:

It [the evaluation process for identifying students with disabilities] is still very subjective. For education purposes, our special education schools do the psychological and pedagogical evaluations that determine cases of intellectual disabilities. In cases of deafness, blindness, it is a little bit easier but in cases of intellectual disabilities it is through pedagogical and psychological evaluations [that we make decisions], such as should the child go to a regular education school where there is a support classroom because his retardation is not too complicated and there is potential [for the student to attend a regular school]- where they [the school can] provide supports.

When I asked parents about their understanding of the term disability, one parent did not have an answer, she just looked at me and did not respond. I then asked her what she or her family knew about special education or disabilities and she just shook her head as if she was not familiar with the terms I used and responded, “nothing.” Yet, these were the same terms used by teachers, administrators and all other key informants. I then asked her how the school had explained what her daughter’s individual needs were. She responded:

They told me that she is really behind. But sometimes I don’t even understand why she is so behind. Sometimes her father says, “Oh, leave her with me; I will take care of her!” But I do not like him to force her [to try to school work such as writing or reading]. I don’t feel good when he does that [pressures her].

A MINED official who is involved in teacher training expressed concerns and the difficulties that the education system is facing as far as evaluating and identifying students with disabilities:

Well, that has been a topic where we all throw the blame on who should be diagnosing the students. In some schools, they can count on the psychologists but in other schools, teachers are doing that job and to do that they need to be prepared to be able to do an appropriate job. So there are a few challenges.

An NGO official shared similar concerns:

We really need evaluation centers and resources. Sometimes we have kids where we think there is one thing wrong with him and then it turns out that there is something else wrong with him-why? Because the student has not been evaluated properly. But I think if we were able to evaluate the students appropriately and then gave the teacher the information of what they need to do based on the student's evaluation, then we would really be helping out the teacher.

A high-level administrator from an NGO who provides trainings to schools on how to identify and work with students with disabilities was intrigued when I asked her who or what decides who has a disability:

That is a really good question! Well, I think the Ministry of Health. But it depends. For example, if the child has cerebral palsy the Ministry of Health and the doctor would be able to detect that. Now, [but] if the child has mental retardation, they would be identified in the school. So I think it depends on the area [type of disability]- wow, that is a really good question- no one had ever asked me that before. But no, there is not an agency that identifies them and keeps

a registry of this information. Sometimes we even have parents who just go to the schools for the deaf and they themselves have identified their child's disability.

So, I don't think that we have someone or something in place that identifies who has a disability.

There are major inconsistencies and contradictions in the processes used to identify students with disabilities. Respondents were also unclear as to who is responsible for the disability identification process, which has according to key informants from FUNPRES and the NCSENO, has resulted in mislabeling students or excluding them from educational opportunities. As noted above, one high-level official, who is intricately involved in providing training for schools with resources rooms, was even surprised and had to think about this question and how to answer to it.

Indicator 2- There is authority legitimacy where the structure and strength of authority is clear to the extent where the populace obeys and complies with rules, laws and regulations relating to inclusive education.

As previously stated, El Salvador has the Law of Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. The CONAIPD is the authority or leading entity charged with the responsibility to enforce the law which calls for the protection of persons with disabilities in areas such as education, employment, and access to buildings. Their Web site declares their authority and commitment to enforcing the laws that protect persons with disabilities:

The Council is the ruling entity of the National Policy of Comprehensive Care for People with Disabilities. It also coordinates the activities on the various sectors on behalf of Persons [*sic*] with disabilities. (¶2)

The CONAIPD responds to citizen complains on violations by reporting them back to the organizations such as the MINED or Ministry of Labor to let them know that such complaint has been made. A high-level official from the CONAIPD explained their response to complaints.

We help people with disabilities that come to us... to report a complaint, to ask for support, or [report] specific problems such as not receiving attention from somewhere {employment, education, access}...CONAIPD seeks the resources to resolve their situation. If they have a particular case [a specific complaint about a specific agency or organization], we look for help with the corresponding institute [the place that the person is complaining about]. Sometimes, we are lucky and can provide them with a positive answer, other times it takes time [to receive a response], sometimes it is no [there is no solution].

Key informants from all levels, the MINED, NGOs, advocacy agencies and school personnel were clear and consistent in their responses about authority legitimacy in enforcing disability policies relating to education. From the data on all the sources I gathered, there does not seem to be an entity or governmental organization that can mandate that schools include students with disabilities in their schools. A high-level administrator from a large NGO responded:

It [the law] is written but it is not being followed- not at a satisfactory level at least. I say that because schools, mainly private schools, are able to deny entrance to a child with a disability. So the decision is still left up to the schools- I'm not sure if it's the principal or the teachers.... They decide in the end who can enroll and who can't. They don't always tell you to go because you have a disability but

what we see is that our children are not accepted. Many times they will tell you that the teacher is not trained to work with children with disabilities and that the child will cause the rest of the class to fall behind.

When asked about who enforces education policies relating to students with disabilities, a high-level administrator who is involved in creating support classrooms for students with disabilities through the MINED summarized the reality of El Salvador's authority legitimacy in enforcing inclusive education policies:

Well, the CONAIPD supposedly oversees this. They complain [report it back] to the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Health [or the corresponding organization] if something is not done [if they are out of compliance in what they are supposed to be providing based on the Law of Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities]. But... they have no authority to make anyone do anything. There are no sanctions applied if schools do not comply. They can complain to the MINED, the MINED can complain to the schools, but in the end, if the school does not want to do it, there is nothing that can be done.

I asked the administrator about any other agencies that are in place to enforce policies relating to students or persons with disabilities:

Unfortunately, no. Like I said, it is supposed to be the job of the CONAIPD, but they also have their hands tied. The law exists, but unfortunately, we return to the same thing. For example, what happens when a citizen does not comply with a law? They go to prison-right? The problem is that you go to prison when you have murdered someone or when you have robbed someone or when you have not paid taxes- but the laws that we're talking about are different-it's like we still

need to identify sanctions for when these laws are violated. For example, CONAIPD states that every business will hire at least two persons with a disability for every 50 that are employed- but they [businesses] do not have the capacity to do this. I think that sometimes these laws function backward-we can't punish those who don't comply with the law so we reward those who do. So they have this contest where they reward those companies who do you hire persons with disabilities. So there really isn't anything in place or any sanction to penalize those schools or companies that do not comply with the Law. There are also no sanctions for businesses that do not have accessible building-those who do not have ramps. So if you look around it's rare to see an accessible building.

A high-level administrator from the National Coordination Special Education Office of the MINED also admitted that although there are organizations working to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities, the teachers who do accept students do it because they care and want to do it not because they have to do it:

The teachers who have students with disabilities in their classrooms do it because they have some type of conviction, awareness, and because they have received some training.

When given a specific example and asked what parents can do or where they can go to receive resources or assistance, if their son/daughter is not accepted into the school because of his/her disability, a school teacher responded:

Well, I think the Ministry of Education is a good place where they are very open and can deal with those types of situations [parent complaints]. But in reality, I don't think it [forcing schools to accept students with disabilities in their schools]

is something that could be changed. It [a goal like that] would have to be something set for the long term. But in reality, an institution or organization [where parents can go for resources], I don't know of any. The only leader [leading organization] that would be able to do something like that would be the MINED, but another organization or advocacy group, I don't know of any.

Another high-level administrator from an advocacy agency adds:

CONAIPD is creating many technical norms, improving the laws and things like that, but in practice, you do not see anything [follow-through or compliance]

An NGO representative shared similar experiences:

There is a place in the Ministry of Education where parents can go and complain but I don't know if there is any follow-through. I have never heard of the process starting and ending in the parents' favor.

Another school administrator shared that principals do have the last word in whether to accept students with disabilities in their schools. When I asked about how administrators decide what students with disabilities are allowed to enroll in schools, he answered:

Well, it depends on the situation. For example, let's say we receive a student from another school and we notice that he has some type of a disability such as a physical disability or behavior problem. Based on that, we know that this will present a challenge for the regular education teacher. So if a school does not have a support classroom, then they know that this student will present a problem in the classroom. So for some institutions, it is a policy for them not to accept these children.

A high-level administrator of a parent organization who is also the parent of two students with disabilities explained what is typically done when parents have a difficult time enrolling students who have disabilities into regular education schools:

We rely on the good relationships that we have developed between organizations because we know that the government is not willing to do certain things although they've signed it into law. Unfortunately, in Latin America, laws are passed but they are not followed.

For this indicator, there was consistency among all key informants that, although there are a number of laws and policies related to education for students with disabilities, there is a lack of authority legitimacy regarding these laws. In other words, there are no entities that have the authority to force schools to provide inclusive education opportunities for students with disabilities.

Indicator 3-There are fiscal resources available for municipalities to draw for students with disabilities and their specific needs.

Limited fiscal resources is one of the most critical challenges facing El Salvador's education system. Schools are given US\$13 per student, per year, regardless of the student population they serve. The \$13 per student, per year must cover all expenses including utility bills such as phone, and electricity, security, materials, and maintenance. Aside from that budget, schools have no additional funds to draw upon to educate children with additional needs such as students with disabilities. Regardless of the school location and student population, all public general education schools receive the same amount of money per student. Administrators and teachers candidly explained the difficulties of working with such limited funds and trying to provide an appropriate

education to all students. A school administrator, who helps administer and manage the funds for a school, explains how the money is allocated to each school and how it is spent:

The MINED holds a census every year during April and that census determines the amount of money that the MINED will give each institution for the following year. It is \$13 per student, but that money goes for everything. What I mean for everything is infrastructure, instructional material, if we need to contract any services, we must use it from those funds. If we need services such as lighting, water, phones or anything else, you need to pull from that.

The administrator added that once the bills are paid, there is not enough money left for instructional materials. He explains how schools go about prioritizing with such a limited budget:

What we do is to get together with the board of directors, which includes parents, students and community members and we prioritize at the beginning of the year to decide what we will be needed most. We start with the most urgent materials and then move from there.

School administrators find it challenging to work with the limited funding that is provided to them per student as it is hardly enough to keep the school functioning with the main necessities such as utilities (water, phone, electricity, security). Once all necessities are paid, there is little money for instructional materials or other school functions for students and parents. A school administrator highlights the difficulties in providing students and teachers with appropriate materials and resources when there are such limited funds available.

I have to have certain resources available, and when you need resources, you need money. For example, a copier, a computer, many schools do not have that. We have a computer but it is broken and we do not have the resources to fix it. Additionally, schools have limited flexibility on how to utilize their funds. When I asked about funding to help students purchase books or uniforms, a support classroom teacher who also has an administrative responsibility responded:

No, those funds cannot be used for students. What sometimes happens is that teachers pull money from their own salaries to help those students that do not have the resources to purchase books or uniforms. We get together to help students who do not have enough.

Another school administrator explained that the funds that are provided could not be used for teacher training either. When I asked him about outside donors such as businesses or parent donations, the school administrators were clear that, due to competition [other organizations and schools] this was nearly impossible:

There was a time when companies did donate but then they developed policies to not donate because it costs them too much. There are some that do- for example, we received some empty buckets from a company who had already used the content of the buckets and they do not need them anymore- they were going to throw them out. They gave them to us and now we use them as trash cans. But they will not donate anything that is new or that they could use. We are always soliciting. We solicit when we find out that there is someone who has something that they no longer need. But if we ever solicit to a large company, we do not receive a response.

A school administrator from a rural school added how community and parent donations are even more difficult in rural schools:

This depends on the reality of where the school is located. I cannot compare parents from other areas to parents in rural areas-their economic situation is very different. The only way the community can help us is attending meetings, coming in when they are asked, helping their child with homework. Even if they cannot read...we tell them to at least observe them doing their homework. But monetary help, we just can't. And like I said, 60% of parents do not know how to read and that is a big problem because many times parents cannot help their children and check their homework.

A different school administrator shared his thoughts on the structure and what he called the “culture” of education financing in El Salvador:

The problem is that even if we want to improve certain situations we have to look at our own truth, and the reality is even if we say “*we need this to help our own people*” there are not enough funds in the national budget. They [the national government] allocate funds for other goals, not education- that is the problem. And they send us an extremely limited amount of money. So it is really with our own government, there just aren't enough funds to help. They can do other things but as far as funds to provide assistance to people with [education], they are not there. We can ask but it is never provided.

As we discussed what else the MINED could do to assist them in providing services for their students, he added that they could probably advocate and ask for more money for education:

For example, the last stadium that was built cost US\$8 million dollars. With that money, so much could have been done for schools- there are so many that need classrooms. Look at our school, we have classrooms with a tin roof that is being held up with bamboo stick out in open air. I think they could do research to find out where classrooms are needed. But I think that is part of our culture- building malls or remodeling the mayor's office, which costs thousands of dollars, instead of investing in education.

As he said this, he pointed to the makeshift classroom that was outside of the school building with a tin roof and four bamboo poles holding it up. There was a portable chalkboard and approximately 30 chairs with no desks for the students. The ground of the classroom was unfinished with a mixture of gravel, grass and debris. The grounds were shared with the students who used the same area during recess to play soccer.

Indicator 4-There are infrastructural resources allowing districts to provide inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities including access to schools and buildings.

This indicator considered issues related to accessibility for students with disabilities. The IDMR (2004) reports that a major obstacle in including students with disabilities is the lack of accessible facilities. In El Salvador, the Law of Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities states that all persons with disabilities have the right to “architectural facilities to move easily within and have access to public and private institutions,” (CONAIPD, 2006, Rights section, ¶1). Key informants mentioned that school buildings are supposed to be accessible for all students and persons with disabilities but the reality is that the majority of schools in El Salvador are not accessible

to children with disabilities, especially for those with physical disabilities. Judging from the observations at the two schools I visited, neither of the schools were accessible as they did not have ramps or curb cuts. In order to reach both schools we needed to drive through unpaved roads, which would make it extremely difficult if not impossible for children who use wheelchairs to access the schools. Additionally, the restrooms were small and narrow and had running water only part of the day. Students and staff had to walk outside on an unpaved ground with rocks and debris and go up one unfinished and unstable step to be able to enter into the bathroom. A high-level administrator, who works with a large NGO that provides services for students with physical disabilities, explains how infrastructure is a major issue in accessing education for students with physical disabilities:

I feel that if there is not a larger effort and something where we are also preparing the child to enter the school then we are preparing them to fail. And that is not fair because the failure does not come from him but rather from his environment. I say that because if you go to any town, you will see that the school is located at the top of the hill. It has stairs with no ramps, no bathrooms for children with disabilities- and that is the majority of the schools- so how will they go to school? Just to get to the top of the hill- the mom can carry them until they are about five years old- or seven, to exaggerate a little, but after that- the children are bigger than their moms. And even if they have a wheelchair, if there is no road then it does not matter anyway. And if there are stairs, the wheelchair won't help you either. You still need to lift the child.

Another high-level administrator who uses a wheelchair and has experienced infrastructure barriers himself adds:

Another issue that is addressed in the law is eliminating the architectural barriers. The law exists that all public buildings such as supermarkets, theaters, anything public has to be approved...one would assume that by this time, we could count on that [accessible buildings, ramps, elevators, etc.]. There are a variety of things that are not respected. For example, the sidewalks and curbs have to be accessible for persons with disabilities. But what do people do? They park their cars on the curbs and they leave them there, they leave them there. There are fines for those things but people are not informed so that nothing is done about it.

I asked this key informant what families do when they are denied education for children with disabilities due to lack of accessibility and infrastructure:

They have the right to complain but these are things that are not so easy to resolve or that the teacher or principal is going to fix. If it is a public school, you can complain but having them resolve it is left to be seen. I feel that they just don't care and they care even less when it is private, but if they complain to CONAIPD they can sue.

I asked if there had ever been a law suit for violating disability-related laws specifically related to access to education, he had not ever heard of one. When I asked other teachers, administrators, NGO representatives and MINED officials, no one had ever heard of one either.

This high-level administrator reflected on his experiences and added that when one speaks out, there seem to be changes but that it is still not easy:

I think that when you know the law you can demand that your rights be respected. I have gone to establishments, like the supermarket where they have those circular counters at the front of the doors that you have to go through. [I tell them] I want to enter and shop there, I bring my money [I am a customer], too. They tell me, “oh, come around here through this entrance.” I told the guy I did not want to go through that entrance. The next time I went there, they had removed those circular counters. Another time I wanted to go into a restaurant, I told them to get the manager so that he could help me get in and so that he could see that there are costumers who want to get in but can’t because of the access system they have in place. Next time I went there, there was a ramp.

From my observations, interview data and document information (MINED, 2006a), there are major infrastructural limitations such as inaccessible schools with no ramps, elevators or accessible restrooms that prohibit students with disabilities access to schools. It is important to note that the history of natural disasters in El Salvador, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, have had a significant impact on the country’s infrastructure and its ability to provide accessible schools for all students.

Organizational Capacity

Organizational capacity refers to the abilities and practices in bounding individuals and groups together to come up with goals and objectives. More specifically, the domain examines how well groups collaborate and plan together to develop and meet goals for students with disabilities. The indicators in this domain included how well individuals from the different organizations knew each other, if they worked and

collaborated together and how community and parents were included as part of the school.

Indicator 1- Groups of individuals such as national, departmental and local government officials, advocacy groups and other local organizations collaborate or gather together to feel a greater sense of ownership for all students.

The CONAIPD brings together various organizations from the private and public sector to discuss the rights and other issues, including educational opportunities, for persons with disabilities. This entity unites private and public sectors to come together and discuss issues affecting persons with disabilities in areas such as health, employment, accessibility and education. While the CONAIPD does not solely address educational issues, it does include organizations working with educational issues such as the MINED, FUNPRES and the Salvadoran Federation of Parents and Friends of People with Disabilities. Additionally, it includes representatives from disability groups such as those with sensory or physical disabilities and those who acquired a disability due to the armed conflict. The CONAIPD brings the representatives from the entities together on a monthly basis and assigns subcommittees to address more specific issues such as pending complaint cases in education or health access. While these efforts are admirable, the effectiveness of the CONAIPD is questioned by some of their participants. Based on key informant comments, there appears to be a lack of “togetherness” or cohesiveness among the organizations that work together through CONAIPD. Key administrators from NGOs and the MINED elaborated on the lack of cohesiveness and collaboration among the organization. Six key informants were very knowledgeable of the CONAIPD’s mission and its work and their organization had been or were, at the time of the study, part of the

organization such as a member a committee or sub-committee. When I asked about the CONAIPD's monthly meetings and what is accomplished at these meetings, one key informant laughed as she responded:

Hmmm. That is a really good question. Well, we talk about complaints that have been made and we try to figure out what organization can work with that particular complaint. We vent about issues. The MINED is also present so we get to hear about those issues. In principle, I think it is a good idea, however, the issues get to be brought into a large meeting that lasts only two to three hours per month and it is just not enough for us to get into all the issues...I think the CONAIPD is good. What I think can be improved is its effectiveness.

A different key informant from a large NGO discussed the interest in participating with the CONAIPD:

They meet once a month but lately we have only seen them three times a year...since we are not part of the committee right now, it is somebody else representing us. We have already done it before because we draw names since the majority does not want to be in it because you go there to waste your time.

When I asked about collaboration and cohesiveness among agencies, a MINED official responded with a similar tone: "I think we are in the process of learning. I think that there is [in the CONAIPD] a relationship, but there is less coordination and even less effectiveness." I also asked if there was a clash in the views or philosophies about how to work with individuals with disabilities, an NGO official explained some of the tension that the organizations go through in some of the CONAIPD meetings.

Well, maybe not among the ministries or the NGOs. I think that it has to do with the fact that we realize certain things cannot be done because we lack the resources or because it takes a longer period of time. But there is definitely a clash between the NGOs and the ministries versus the disability associations. These associations throw a lot out to the different government entities because they really want to see more done. So there are definitely major issues with that. The disability organizations are very confrontational, very critical, and they just want to see more and more. And in many ways I understand that because all of their lives they been discriminated against, they haven't had the services etc. but yes, there is a lot of confrontation with the disability organizations.

Answering the same question, another official from a different NGO added:

Yes, absolutely! First of all, there is great competition on monetary resources but more importantly, in my personal opinion, is that there is not a common vision. For example, what comes first, the ramps or the traffic lights with voices? That has been a huge argument. Another big favorite argument is the telethon [the annual event discussed in Chapter 2]. They all think that we should send it [the proceeds] to them and that they should approve it first. Well, we are not in agreement with that and we say it- as long as we do not offend anyone. Another thing is what do people with disabilities want? I find a lot of contradictions.

One NGO representative indicated that part of the reason for the tension among disability-related and advocacy agencies was the funding issues:

Even the NGOs hide information from each other so that we do not find out who is funding who. We try to prevent that information from getting out. We think that if other organizations find out that they're funding us then they may try to take

that funding from us and then we will lose that agency. So we have that type of stuff going on between us.

When I asked another representative about collaboration and cohesiveness among the organizations, she laughed and answered:

I think that to feel united, you need to have a common goal. I mean I would really like the opportunity to work with them but everyone thinks that the telethon is something that is never ending and that we should give them money aside from everything else we need to do- so they don't look for anything else, they just want us to finance them.

Another reason organizations do not work together is due to their differences in philosophies about serving students with disability. An NGO representative discussed these challenges when explaining the lack of collaborative work with other organizations:

No we don't work with them because they're not as involved in the education pieces like we are. If we get a child with a physical disability then we do recommend them [to a different NGO], but as far as working with them collaboratively, we have not done that.

When I asked about working with a specific organization, she responded:

They gave us a lot of headaches. They closed several centers but they had this medical view about students and disabilities. We have been telling them since 1989 that they need to make changes...this has given us a lot of headaches because they have been integrating students that should not have been integrated. They also did not prepare the field for what was coming. So we have been trying to work with that. But honestly, I believe that [the organization] is a very closed

institution. First of all, it is headed by medical doctors so they think that they have the final say.

An NGO representative also commented on the efforts of a different NGO and questioned their integrity as an NGO. In the following quote, she suggests that some NGOs are not really NGOs and are more involved with governmental organizations:

[That NGO] has already been [a representative for all other NGOs] in the CONAIPD, although they are not the least bit interested in participating [in the CONAIPD]. They should be the representative for education [based on all they do with the MINED] but not for the NGOs...they came to us for some project but we said no.

During the interview questions that related to a “sense of togetherness,” it also became apparent that political tension from the armed-conflict still lingers and is very much a part of the struggle in collaborative efforts. While not everyone directly referred to ARENA versus FMNL, one NGO official made it clear that a major issue with CONAIPD was its struggle with depoliticizing the group. When I asked her to clarify, she candidly responded:

I'm talking about either being on the left or the right. All the associations of persons with disabilities that were started either during or after the conflict are completely to the left and the government organizations are obviously very much to the right- so the perspective is lost. We're fortunate because we are neither on the right nor on the left. The associations hate us and the CONAIPD- who are on the right-and the government organizations support us with the telethon but they do not have us completely aligned with them- they would like to have us by their

side fighting with the disability associations- but that is not our role- because if we got involved in that, we would not get anything done. In our agency, no one asks you if you are with ARENA or with FMNL- they ask you, “where does it hurt?”

Published materials such as the CONAIPD’s web site (www.conipd.gob.org), states that collaboration between governmental and disability agencies is consistent. In reality, as the interview data showed, there are tension points, philosophical differences and resource competition that are prohibiting the various organizations from really working together in a collaborative and united manner and share ownership for all students and persons with disabilities.

Indicator 2- Departmental and municipal-level administrators oversee special education as well as general education and receive training to consider the needs of students with disabilities in their planning.

In contrast to the previous indicator, the findings that follow address departmental and municipal-level supervision of students with disabilities. Additionally, this indicator deals with trainings provided to departmental and municipal-level administrators to consider the needs of students with disabilities in their planning. There was little evidence of collaboration or educational planning for education for student with disabilities among departmental and municipal-level officials. While there are monthly departmental-level meetings that unite administrators from the corresponding municipalities, the focus of these meetings are not related to students with disabilities. Instead, these meetings are used to update administrators on national and departmental issues. A school administrator explained:

We have monthly meetings by departments. They gather all the principals at the university with our region consultant and they inform us of everything that is going on [updates] at the MINED. As far as CONIPD [or other meetings related to students with disabilities], it is only when there is an even, which is once per year.

A large part of the education of students with disabilities is overseen by FUNPRES, with which the MINED contracts. The primary way that FUNPRES supports the education of students with disabilities is through informal school visits that are conducted once or twice a year by their technical specialist. These visits consist of meeting with the resource teachers and discussing students who have been identified as having a special education need, and who may need services from a support classroom teacher. During both of my school visits, I was able to observe a FUNPRES representative conducting one of these meetings. The interactions between the FUNPRES specialist and the teachers occurred during recess and even during class times when students were working on an assignment. The extent of this visit included brief and informal conversation with the resource teachers and general education teachers of the students who received services. FUNPRES staff and teachers discuss progress and any concerns relating to those students. In one case, the resource teacher asked for assistance with a student who was having a difficult time with her hearing aids. The FUNPRES representatives took some notes and told her she would look into it and would get back to her.

There are no structures at the departmental level that oversee special education and the needs of students with disabilities. The monthly departmental meetings unite

administrators from the municipalities but do not address the needs of students with disabilities. What is in place is provided episodically by FUNPRES and is inconsistent.

Indicator 3- There are internal mechanisms such as councils and committees which promote collaboration between parents, community and other social agencies to support inclusive education.

Various government organizations and NGOs have attempted to increase collaboration among agencies and communities to promote the education and inclusion of students with disabilities. As explained earlier, the CONAIPD brings all these organizations together to promote and increase collaboration among all organizations including the private and public-sector. Aside from the larger disability organizations and NGOs such as FUNTER, FUNPRES, PODES and the Federation of Parents and Friends of Persons with Disabilities, there was no evidence of formalized internal committees that intermix at the departmental and local levels to promote the collaboration between parents, community and other social agencies.

At the local level, some schools report that they have developed internal school committees to promote a sense of community and support among students, parents and staff. One of the schools that I visited reported that they had developed committees and support group for parents. The support classroom teacher shared the following:

Actually, just yesterday we had an assembly for parents to talk to them about their rights of students with disabilities as well as the rights in the workplace.

I have also formed a parent support group for parents who have children with hyperactivity. They meet once a month and discuss issues...so it is a way to make them aware because it is not always easy to tell a parent that the child has

hyperactivity- the first thing that they usually say is “no, my child is not crazy,” since they are not very well educated that is the first thing that they think.

A school administrator from the same school confirmed that the resource teacher did have a group of parents with whom he worked. When I interviewed a parent from the same school, who had a child with a disability who received services from the support classroom, and asked her what her knowledge was of special education and students with disabilities, she responded that she did not know. When I asked her what she would do if she had a question about services for her child, she said that she did not know. I also asked her where parents would go for help if they had a question about special education services, again, she did not know. She did acknowledge that the school provided parents with information on health issues and how to counsel their sons and daughters. The absence of internal committees and councils at the local and school levels may explain why parent knowledge of the disability laws and advocacy organizations such as CONAIPD, FUNTER, and the Federation of Parents and Friends of Persons with Disabilities was also non-existent. Neither of the parents that participated in the study had ever heard of these organizations and did not know where to go for help or to seek assistance for their children. When I asked one parent if she would like to see more supports for her and her 11-year-old child, she started to cry and shared the following:

The teacher told me that she [the child] just won't be able to continue since she is moving into high school and that she will not be able to do it [the academic work]. I would really like for my daughter to stay in school. He [the current teacher] is not very patient so he says no [the student cannot continue in school]. And they will not take her at the special education school because she can talk

and there are a lot of students at the special school who are deaf and mute but my daughter talks a lot. If you talk to her, you can understand a lot of what she says. At least I understand her...He told me to put her in some type of vocation [program to learn how to sew]. I tried doing that but since everything is dictated, she was not able to learn or understand either.

This parent's daughter uses hearing aids that were donated to her through FUNPRES. One of the hearing aids does not fit her ear as it is too large for her and she does not wear it because it is too painful. Consequently, she is not able to hear or participate in class as the majority of the class instruction is delivered through dictation. To gain a better understanding of what parents do when they are faced with these types of situation, I asked the mother what her thoughts were when the classroom teacher told her that she would have to pull her child from school by the end of the year; she responded, "That she [the daughter] just can't continue- if that is what he [the teacher] says." Although this parent was not familiar with resources such as CONAIPD or a parent organization, she had a clear understanding of what was not available to her child:

She [the resource teacher] told me that she [the daughter] has been passing because the teacher says that it is only because the MINED does not permit that students with disabilities are not passed onto the next grade level but that is only until the sixth grade...the person who made me lose hope was the teacher because I just wanted her to keep going to school but he told me that the support classroom was also only available until the sixth grade but not after that.

While El Salvador has limited modes with which to bind groups together to better serve students with disabilities, there is certainly an interest from advocacy groups, NGOs and

the MINED to make this a possibility. All key informants who were asked about their interest in working and collaborating with other groups expressed an interest or said they were willing to participate if the opportunities were available.

Human Capacity

Human capacity is an essential part of providing inclusive educational opportunities to students with disabilities. The literature on inclusive education conclusively highlights the significance of teacher training and resources such as instructional materials in order to truly provide an inclusive environment for students with disabilities (Turnbull & Turnbull, 2005). This domain refers to the institution's abilities and practices in providing training and resources to state and local district personnel to design and implement programs and to deliver services. To learn about El Salvador's human capacity, I asked key informants questions about their system of professional development and professional training related to students with disabilities. Furthermore, I questioned school personnel and students' parents about the resources and activities which help them to come up with resources and develop and work towards goals specific to students with disabilities.

Indicator 1- The country has evaluation tools and resources in place to gather and evaluate information relevant to their interest and to make reasoned decisions to maximize their resources for students with disabilities

El Salvador does not have a formal or systematic way to gather and evaluate information related to the number of students with disabilities. There is no formal evaluation tool that can assess the total number of students with disabilities in El Salvador and even the most basic data on students with disabilities obtained with less

formal tools such as the MINED Enrollment Census or *Censo Matricular* (MINED, 2004) are not reported. In the MINED Enrollment Census, schools are required to report a plethora of student and school data such as the total number of students enrolled by age, grade, gender, local and departmental zones, public and private school enrollment, including increases and decreases in numbers as well as teacher and administrative ratios. There is not one piece of data in the report that addresses students with disabilities including data such as the total number served, number of support classrooms, or the number of students who are denied education based on their disability. So while lack of resources can serve as a justification as to why there is not a tool in place to assess the number of students with disabilities in the country, advocates highlight the non-existence of data related to students with disabilities in less formal reports, such as the MINED Enrollment Census, as an example of the blatant lack of interest in even learning about the current status of students with disabilities in the country.

Lack of data on students with disabilities is a significant problem for El Salvador. Because such data do not exist, they cannot be used for decision-making purposes such as strategic planning, program development and funding distribution. The annual Enrollment Census report does not include any data on students with disabilities. Without information related to students with disabilities or students who are receiving special education services there is no way to do program planning. A key informant from an NGO discussed the lack of a measurement tool in identifying students with disabilities and the challenges posed by this:

The Ministry of Education really has not found a way with which to count the students. Even if you look at the census that is done for each school- we ask about

the number of teachers, the number of students, the services that they provide, but they do not ask about the number of children with disabilities that are served in that school. There are times when parents just go to schools and register their student without telling anyone anything until the school figures out how to work with his child. So the problem of services is really big but I think the problem is that it is still not know how to count the number of kids with disabilities. It is shocking to see how many students are in the special education centers and they do not tell anybody about them.

Other informants acknowledged that the lack of an evaluation tool to identify students with disabilities creates a major challenge:

From what I know, there is not a census in the country to help provide that exact number. We would really like to conduct studies but it takes money and resources to do that.

The absence of an evaluation tool poses many challenges in identifying the number of students with disabilities in El Salvador. Key informants were aware that such an instrument is needed and would be valuable in learning about the population of students who need such services.

Indicator 2- A system of professional development and the corresponding resources and incentives are in place to address the learning needs of students with the full range of disabilities.

El Salvador does not have a strong professional development system focusing on the needs of students with disabilities. There are no funding sources with which to develop or establish a professional development system at the local level and schools do

not receive a budget for professional development. The professional development limitations start at the university level as students with disabilities are not addressed during any of the courses that pre-service teachers have to take. For students who want to be special education teachers, there are only three required courses in special education. Furthermore, preparation programs mainly prepare students to work in special education centers rather than in regular education schools.

In-service training for teachers in regular education schools is minimal and inconsistent. The University of Central America (UCA), offers program for in-service teachers that incorporates courses relating to students with disabilities. Most of the in-service teacher training is provided by FUNPRES. These trainings are inconsistent, limited and available only for some of the schools that have resource rooms, which represent only 10% of all public schools in El Salvador. Topics addressed in the trainings include disability awareness and procedural guidelines such as how to develop and manage a support classroom, identification and referral process for students with disabilities, suggestions and tips for collaborating with regular education teachers and role-specific responsibilities such as administrators and support classroom teacher duties (MINED, 2001).

The professional development opportunities and supports provided by FUNPRES are focused on students with learning problems such as difficulties with reading, math, and writing or with behavior problems. They do not address the learning needs of students with the full range of disabilities. When there are opportunities for teacher training and professional development, there are no corresponding resources that follow such trainings. For examples, if teachers are told that they need to use manipulatives or

visuals to teach students with certain learning needs, they are not provided with those materials nor with the funding to purchase them.

Pre-service professional development and training. Starting at the university level, pre-service general education teachers do not receive any courses that address special education or students with disabilities. Students who are majoring in special education take three courses in special education and their internships are usually completed in a segregated school for students who are deaf, blind, or for students who have mental retardation. This pre-service preparation is criticized by some as not being effective enough to really prepare teachers to work with students with disabilities. An NGO official who works with support classroom teachers explained:

That is one of our biggest concerns. We are always aware about training them.

The type of training the special education teachers receive.... Well that is one of the biggest criticisms that I have about special education teacher training. I don't know how it's done in the United States but I've always thought the teacher should learn how to be a regular education teacher first then they should concentrate on one specific type of disability such as deaf and blindness, mental retardation, learning problems or whatever so the problem is that they get a little bit of everything but then they have nothing that they are specialized in.

Teachers who are assigned to work in the support classroom are not required to have a special education background. There is no policy outlining the education requirements of resource teachers and schools typically prefer first-grade teachers to fill those positions, as explained by an NGO official:

They [school administrators] often prefer first-grade teachers in a support classroom since they have been working with teaching how to read and write for a long time. So that is why there is no policy that requires the support classroom teacher to be a special education teacher- so the teacher just needs some type of experience in education.

I asked her if she believed that 100% of resource teachers should have a special education background.

Not really...the reason for this is because the special education training here [in El Salvador] is not very good. So many times I think it's better to have a first-grade teacher in the support classroom.

In-service professional development and training. To meet the demands of an increasingly diverse student population in regular education schools, the UCA developed an in-service teacher certificate program to provide general education teachers with a background and basic methods on working with students with disabilities. The program focuses on teaching reading, writing and math. Reading comprehension and curricular modifications are also covered through this program. The number of teachers who take advantage of this certificate opportunity, however, is limited. A key informant from the UCA elaborates:

The number of teachers that look to further educate themselves to be able to serve these [students receiving special education services] is very minimal. We have 5000 schools and at this university, we have only graduated 40 teachers with the certificate that I was talking about. And with FUNPRES, I am not really sure how many teachers they have trained.

Non-university special education training for in-service teachers and administrators is provided by FUNPRES and some by the MINED, but it is mainly limited to schools with a support classroom, which exists in 500 out of over 5000 public schools. According to reports from teachers and principals who participated in the study, there is not one consistent way in which teacher training and professional development is delivered. One teacher from the school explained his professional development experience in becoming the support classroom teacher for his school:

One training was about a week long and the second training was about two months long. The last training was when they came to observe me from the Ministry of Education. After that training, they selected me as the best in the department.

An official from the MINED who oversees special education training at the national level said that schools are provided with training “about twice a year.” When I asked if this training was provided to the whole school, she responded:

Yes, well let me clarify. We do trainings but we have not had the resources to do the trainings with the entire school [all teachers and administrators]. We have a team that is like a support team, which includes the principal and a couple of teachers- or those who have the student. The teacher that has the student [general education teacher] they receive training in the process of integrating the student. So we use this team to help us replicate the training because training the whole school would be too expensive.

A school administrator who has a support classroom in the school where he works contradicted the number of trainings offered by the MINED and expressed concerns

about the minimal training related to special education for administrators. He further explains the effects that this has on administrators' ability to supervise other teachers to make sure they are responding to students accordingly:

Two trainings in the last three years is what I have received. And the trainings that we receive are not the same as the ones that teachers receive. The ones that the teachers receive are sometimes three or five days long. School principals have never received anything like that- they give us a summary of a training and provide it in a morning or in an afternoon [session]. So our knowledge is really very superficial and general. The basics- I think that we really need a lot more...you can't really supervise or evaluate teachers if you don't really know what their job is so we [the principals] try to educate ourselves on the processes and documentation- but we do not have that knowledge because we are not specialists.

Addressing students with the full range of disabilities. The trainings and professional development provided by FUNPRES are concentrated in schools with support classrooms, which mainly provide supports for students with “learning problems.” *The Technical Orientation Manual: Support classroom Administration and Curriculum* (MINED, 2001) describes students with learning problems as those “students who present problems in areas such as reading, writing, math and language... and behavior problems” (p.6). As a result, the professional development trainings and supports that are currently in place are limited to include information on students with “learning problems,” such as attention deficit and hyperactivity and language and communication disorders (as explained by school administrators and support classroom

teachers) and do not cover the full range of disabilities such as mental retardation and other low-incident disabilities. An NGO official who oversees the support classrooms in regular education schools made this remark when I asked her about the inclusion of students with more significant disabilities:

A child that has mental retardation has a right to an education but to an education in a special school. If a child with mental retardation goes to a regular school and tries to register himself, if the school is any good, they may take him, but if not, they won't take him. And if they do take him, they are going to have them on the side doing social activities or working on social relationships but it is not like they're going to work with him like other students...because it is difficult to have a severe student in a classroom.

Teacher incentives. El Salvador does not have a strong incentive system in place that promotes teacher participation in professional development for students with disabilities. When teachers are invited to attend professional development opportunities, they are not reimbursed or paid for their time. They are also responsible for paying related costs such as food and transportation. According to a school administrator, most trainings are held on weekends. Some are offered in San Salvador, the capital of the country, where teachers have to travel long distances, making it difficult for them to participate in trainings even if they wanted to.

Some teachers don't always show up. Some can't because of economic reasons because they can not afford it or because that may be the only day that the teachers spend with their families.

To learn about other incentives that promote the inclusion of students with disabilities, I asked about other incentives for schools and/or teachers who are currently working and including students into their schools and classrooms. The responses provided by key informants suggested that there are very few incentives to encourage or recognize schools and teachers who are providing inclusive opportunities for students. A high-level administrator from FUNPRES addressed this issue:

No, nothing like that [incentives] exists. For the schools that do include students with disabilities, we use them as models and examples- but as far as incentives, there is no such thing in place.

Similarly, a school administrator added:

No, the only thing that happened last year, they selected one teacher from each department- so I consider that an incentive. Some people only consider things that are economical as incentives but there are other types of incentives [like teacher satisfaction].

A collaborative effort with the MINED and CONAIPD does acknowledge one person per year who has demonstrated successful inclusive practices in their schools. A MINED official explained how this incentive works:

Well, starting four years ago, we started doing this contest on inclusive education. It is called *Experiencias Exitosas en Educacion Inclusiva [Successful Experiences in Inclusive Education]*. We prepare the contests and the schools write their report on their practices and experiences and their successful practices. Then we have a panel that is made up of university personnel who train special education teachers. They then decide which experiences qualify for successful inclusive education

practices. Then, they go to the sites to make sure that what they wrote is the reality [of what they are doing]. Then, after those site visits, they decide who the winner is. We follow that with an evening where the Minister of Education and the First Lady come and we have a moment on TV where we talk about those successful experiences.

This official further explained that submissions for this contest can be done individually or as a group of two or three teachers. School principals, however, are not allowed to participate. Incentives for including students with disabilities minimal, sporadic, and only includes teachers.

It is interesting to note that when I asked, “What do you consider to be the most important resources needed to increase and improve the inclusion of students with disabilities?” all participants mentioned professional development as either number one or number two. For example, one NGO officials answered:

First, I think that we need to start with teacher training. There are no *special* strategies to use with students with disabilities. If we equip teachers with a trunk of specific methodological teaching skills and another trunk with a positive attitude, that teacher can teach any student.

Another NGO responded, “Trained educators and schools without barriers, meaning teachers that know how to treat our children and with schools that are accessible.”

A school teacher and an administrator, respectively, responded similarly, “We would need more training, that would be first. Then we would need appropriate resources.” “The second point is to provide professional development and make teachers aware...”

A different school administrator added:

I really do think that teachers need more training, more tools on how to work with children because there are several things to consider, too, such as their self-esteem and how to improve their lives [for students with disabilities].

A MINED official who is also a university professor shared the same sentiments.

We really need a lot of awareness and teacher training so that teachers really know about attention to diversity- we are not all the same, not all of us learn the same. We have a lot of teachers who are very resistant and want to keep teaching the same way, in the same place. So maybe with training and supports- I know that FUNPRES and the MINED are trying but I do not think it is enough to reach all teachers.

Organizations like FUNPRES and the National Coordination for Special Education Needs Office of the MINED continue to collaborate to improve professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators. Additionally, universities such as the University of Central America (UCA) are working towards providing professional trainings for in-service teachers to better prepare them for the demands of a diverse student population. Nonetheless, there are limitations and inconsistencies in El Salvador's professional development system. It does not include or provide corresponding resources such as training materials and teacher incentives to promote professional development related to inclusive education for students with disabilities. The lack of employment opportunities for special education teachers discourages students from pursuing a degree in the field, as explained by the UCA representative. A minimum number of in-service teachers receive professional development related to students with disabilities as FUNPRES is the only organization in the country that provides such opportunities.

Indicator3- Staff development is ongoing and provides departments with the tools and resources to develop objectives and come up with the resources needed to achieve those goals and objectives.

There was little evidence of any kind of activities or entities that supported staff, teachers, and/or parents at the departmental or municipality-level to unite and develop goals for students with disabilities. As previously explained, the CONAIPD brings together governmental and non-governmental organizations with the purpose of increasing collaboration among agencies to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities. Although these efforts include addressing topics related to inclusive education and students with disabilities, the organization does not specifically focus on educational issues.

The only two organizations that appear to be working together in developing informal processes are FUNPRES and the MINED. Even these efforts, however, seem to lack structure and organization. Due to the inconsistencies or in some cases the complete lack of a disability definition, evaluation and data collection tools and instruments and an accountability system, it is difficult to unite to develop goals and objectives for all students including those with disabilities.

Because of various factors such as lack of priority in addressing the needs of students with disabilities and the lack of personnel to oversee the progress of students with disabilities, El Salvador does not provide systematic training or resources to teachers and other school personnel that is ongoing and creates an environment conducive to providing inclusive education opportunities for such students.

Chapter Summary

A CAF was developed to assess the capacity of El Salvador's ability to provide inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. The framework assessed three different areas: institutional capacity, organizational capacity and human capacity and included 11 corresponding indicators to evaluate each domain. As a result of the data collected in El Salvador, which included school and site visits and class observations, interview with key informants and document reviews, the indicators of the CAF were modified to reflect a more effective and comprehensive evaluation of the capacity domains, based on El Salvador's social context. Considering the changes, a more specific and descriptive name was given to the framework: International Capacity Assessment for Inclusive Special Education or the ICAISE framework.

Using data from documents, interviews and observations and the ICAISE framework as a guiding tool, I was able to assess El Salvador's capacity to provide inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. More specifically, I was able to evaluate the country's institutional, organizational and human capacity using specific indicators that addressed key parts of capacity building as indicated in the literature on capacity building and inclusive education. As a result, I was able to identify the strengths and needs of El Salvador's capacity with more specificity and in key areas of capacity building for inclusive education. The following outlines a summary of the findings each of the capacity domains.

Institutional Capacity

El Salvador's institutional capacity for providing inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities is still developing. There are laws in place but

there is no authority legitimacy to enforce laws and policies that promote the rights of students with disabilities.

Formal Policies

El Salvador has national laws that outline the rights of persons with disabilities to an education. Both the Law of Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and the General Law of Education state that persons with disabilities have the right to an education and should not be discriminated against due to their disabilities. In addition, The Constitution of the country also states that all Salvadorans have the right to an education. In theory, these laws guarantee an educational right to persons with disabilities but because they do not specify the right to an inclusive education for students with disabilities, it is up to local school to decide whether they will enroll students with disabilities. There is also limited knowledge among educators and even high-level administrators in the MINED and NGOs about the laws relating to the educational rights of students with disabilities. Parents have little or no information about disability-related laws and do not have an understanding of the concept of disabilities and its effects on student learning.

Authority Legitimacy

One of the areas of greatest needs in El Salvador's institutional capacity is strengthening its authority legitimacy in how the current laws are enforced. There was complete agreement among all study participants that there is no person or entity that can enforce the laws protecting the educational rights of students with disabilities. The CONAIPD is the organization charged with enforcing the Law of Equalization for Persons with Disabilities but it does not have any authority to oblige any organization to

comply. There is not only a lack of authority legitimacy in the enforcement of educational rights but also in other important areas such as accessibility.

Funding and Fiscal Resources

There is a lack of funding for districts to draw from to deliver services to all students, including students with disabilities. The allocated funds for each school, which is US\$13, per student, per year, are not enough to purchase office materials such as copiers and paper or instructional materials, such as books. There are also no additional funds for students with disabilities. This academic year, the MINED increased the per year student allocation for students attending special education school to US\$50, an increase of US\$37. This increase does not pertain to students with disabilities attending regular schools, possibly further discouraging the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular education schools

School Infrastructure and Accessibility

The infrastructure of El Salvador's schools are not adequately built or sufficiently equipped to provide opportunities for students with disabilities including students with physical disabilities. Many of the schools, particularly in the rural areas, do not have running water or sanitation systems. The majority of schools in El Salvador are not equipped with accessible restrooms, ramps, doors, or other necessities. Paved roads are rare in many rural areas, making it difficult for students with mobility disabilities to even physically reach the school.

Inclusion in El Salvador

Based on the data collected through this study, I noticed that the concept of inclusive education in El Salvador for students who are considered to be "included"

means that students have access to the regular education school and are physically included. However, there were no curriculum or assessment modifications that allowed for these students to fully access all educational opportunities, as one may see in an education system such as that of the United States where there are efforts to provide curriculum access for students with disabilities.

Organizational Capacity

El Salvador has certainly made efforts in improving its organizational capacity bringing groups and organizations together so that they are able to work collaboratively to feel a greater sense of ownership for all students. The CONAIPD is the national entity that unites governmental and non-governmental agencies, as well as public and private sectors and disability-related advocacy groups in discussing issues related to persons with disabilities in areas such as education, health and employment. While these efforts are important, the participating agencies question CONAIPD's effectiveness in truly uniting all the organizations. Key informants who represented organizations that came together through CONAIPD consistently reported its ineffectiveness. Additionally, there is a sense of animosity among the organizations. Part of it is due to the lingering political tension from the armed-conflict year. Key informants reported that the organizations are clearly divided into the "left" or "right" and that the focus and goals of the CONAIPD is therefore lost. Moreover, informants report that because the CONAIPD is essentially a government institution itself, non-governmental organizations distrust its efforts and integrity. Another major reason why there is apprehension among these organizations is due to the competitiveness of funds. The lack of funding causes these organizations to compete with one another as apposed to coming together to build a greater alliance to

promote and improve services for persons with disabilities, including the educational rights of students with disabilities.

Planning and Collaboration

There is no planning and collaboration at the departmental and municipal-level for students with disabilities. Monthly departmental meetings with principals from all Municipalities do not address the needs of students with disabilities. Aside from sporadic visits from FUNPRES, regular education schools are not planning or collaborating with other departmental or municipal-level persons or organizations. Regular education schools do not report information on the presence of a support classroom, the number of students with disabilities attending the schools or the number of students with disabilities denied enrollment due to their disability or because a school is over its capacity and cannot enroll any more students.

Collaboration among Parents, Communities and Social Agencies

There are various organizations in El Salvador that are working hard and are truly interested in the betterment of students with disabilities and increasing their opportunities to an inclusive education. Many of these organizations work with few resources and overextend themselves in trying to reach as many parents and students as possible with the resources available. However, due to factors such as limited funding resources, these organizations cannot reach their designated targets such as parents, teachers and students. For example, the Federation for Parents and Friends of Persons with Disabilities is based out of a parent's home due to lack of resources. The effectiveness of these organizations is lessened since they are not able to reach parents who need to know about them for advocacy or other purposes. So while there are mechanisms in place that were developed

or established with the goal of promoting collaboration between parents, the community and other social agencies, the lack of resources prohibits their abilities to accomplish those goals and objectives.

Human Capacity

Human capacity is a key component in accomplishing the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular education schools (Turnbull & Turnbull, 2006). El Salvador's system of human capacity is not adequate enough to provide the needed trainings and resources to develop an education system that promotes, encourages and supports inclusive education for students with disabilities.

Evaluation and Data Collection

There is no evaluation or data-collection tool to identify the number of students with disabilities in El Salvador. Even self-reports by the regular education schools do not collect data on the number of students receiving special education services. The MINED Annual Enrollment Census does not include any data related to students with disabilities and their educational status or opportunities, whether segregated or not. Due to the lack of data, there is a misconception of the number of students with disabilities in the country, with several of the key participants reporting inaccurate availability of services for students with disabilities.

Adequate Number of Schools and Supports

It is evident that there are not enough schools or supports for students with disabilities in El Salvador. Support rooms, which are the classrooms that provide supports for students with special education needs, including those with disabilities, are only available in less than 10% of the more than 5000 schools in El Salvador. Additionally,

there are only 30 special education schools for students with physical, sensory and other low-incidence disabilities. These few schools are mainly located in the capitals of each department, making it difficult for students to access the schools, particularly for students in rural areas.

Professional Development

There is not a systematic way in which staff and personnel are trained to provide learning opportunities to work with students with disabilities. The only schools that receive professional development related to students with disabilities are those schools that have support rooms and even those professional development opportunities are inconsistent and sporadic. The number of school staff who receive such training is also limited to just three or four persons from the school. Schools that are interested in receiving more professional development opportunities to improve services for their students are not able to do so because there are no budget allocations for professional development.

Incentives

There are few incentives for schools, teachers and principals to provide inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. For example, schools do not receive any additional funding to support students with disabilities in their classrooms. The professional training opportunities that relate to students with disabilities are often voluntary and are provided on weekends with no pay. Additionally, teachers who attend these trainings incur transportation and meal costs that are not reimbursed back to them.

Recently, the CONAIPD and NCSENO office started a program where a teacher who is providing model services to students with disabilities is recognized annually. The

winner is recognized by attending a dinner with the First Lady. Even for this incentive, however, teachers have to be willing to write a report outlining the details of their services to students with disabilities. There are no monetary incentives for this award.

Community and Parent Resources

While some schools seem eager to improve and increase services for students with disabilities, they do not have the tools and resources to develop goals and objectives to come up with such resources. Community supports such as business donations are scarce due to the large number of donation-seeking organizations and the low number of donation-providing organizations. Unavailability of resources is perpetuated by other factors such as poverty and low parent participation. For example, although some schools may try to raise money through parents, in some communities, especially rural communities, parents are not able to support the schools in this manner as they are working through their own financial struggles.

CHAPTER V: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The purpose of this investigation was to apply a systematic model for capacity to assess the capacity of El Salvador's educational system to develop inclusive education opportunities for students with disabilities. A secondary purpose was to gather data on El Salvador's current inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. The study was guided by the following research questions and sub-questions:

1. Using the *International Capacity Assessment for Inclusive Special Education* framework, what are the characteristics of El Salvador's education system to implement inclusive education for students with disabilities?

Sub-questions:

- What is the institutional capacity for inclusive education, including educational and disability legislation, authority legitimacy, fiscal and infrastructure resources?
- What is the organizational capacity of El Salvador's educational system as it relates to the ability to create inclusive education, including the presence of internal committees and mechanism, bounded groups and administration and supervision of students with disabilities and the state and local level?
- What is the current status of human capacity in El Salvador's education system as it relates to creating inclusive education, including the use of an evaluation instrument to gather and evaluate data, the presence and effectiveness of a professional development system and the availability of

fiscal and material resources provided to enable schools to provide inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities?

2. What is the current status of inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities in El Salvador?

Significance of Study

This study provides a means for profiling a country's education system and assesses El Salvador's capacity in providing inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. Areas of strengths and needs are identified and thus can be used to target assistance and resources. The findings of this study also adds to the much needed data on the current status of educational opportunities for students with disabilities in El Salvador. Additionally, the development and application of the ICAISE addresses the need for capacity building evaluations as they are considered an important tool to determine the status of a system and generate knowledge on what works and in what circumstances (Connolly & York, 2002).

Research Methodology

I conducted a single case study of El Salvador's education system to assess the capacity of El Salvador to provide inclusive education for students with disabilities. A case study design was selected as it is specifically useful when describing, illustrating and exploring a situation or when trying to explain links and interventions that are too complex for survey or experimental strategies (Yin, 1994). Purposive sampling was used to identify key informants who were able to provide information related to the indicators identified to measure El Salvador's institutional, organizational and human capacity. The pool of participants included key informants from the Ministry of Education, NGOs,

advocacy groups including a parent federation, university personnel and school personnel from two schools including regular education teachers, support classroom teachers and school administrators. I interviewed 19 key informants and gathered other less informal data from 16 respondents, which totaled to 35 study participants. Other data sources included document reviews and informal observations in schools and classrooms with teachers and students. Using the ICAISE framework to provide a systematic guide of collecting data, I triangulated the data by providing multiple sources of information for each capacity domain. Methodology limitations included limited time at site, participant candor and participation and anonymity issues.

Implications of Findings

As discussed in Chapter 4, the case revealed that there are numerous limitations in El Salvador's capacity to provide inclusive education to students with disabilities, including limited fiscal resources, lack of policy implementation and authority legitimacy, minimal collaboration and supports among departments and municipal-levels, infrastructural needs, and an inadequate system of professional development . Nonetheless, there are also strengths in some areas such as a number of written policies that identify the inclusion of students with disabilities and educational opportunities, the establishment of an entity such as CONAIPD, which brings organizations together, and the willingness and interest of school staff and organization officials to work together and learn how to increase inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. Additionally, there are some early signs of teacher recognition and incentives for including students with disabilities into the regular education schools. Appendix I outlines the strengths and needs identified through the capacity assessment. While these

findings are not generalizeable, there is important and valuable information that can be drawn from the results of the study. The following section addresses the implications of the findings.

Need for Capacity Evaluation

The results of this study address the need for capacity evaluation as indicated in the capacity building literature (Connolly & York, 1994; Massell, 2001; Roach, Salisbury & McGregor, 2002; UNESCO, 2004). The results of this study, as explained in Chapter 4, indicate the importance, value and need of capacity evaluations. Through a systematic approach that evaluates strengths and needs of an education system's capacity to provide inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities, interested parties can learn much about what is working, what is not working and what is necessary to continue to build on identified needs. For example, El Salvador has policies in place that identify education for students with disabilities. The flaw in executing those laws is in the country's authority legitimacy and its ability to oversee and enforce such policies. Therefore, future allocations could be targeted to specifically address authority legitimacy instead of establishing educational policies for students with disabilities, since they are already in place. The result of such systematic evaluation, can provide needed information for strategic planning and resource allocations.

Questioning El Salvador's Priorities and Commitment

While it is important to support developing countries in their attempts to reach international education goals such as the EFA and UPE, it is also important that the country itself be responsive to the needs of its people, including students with disabilities. Considering the statistics of El Salvador's students and their educational attainment, it is

difficult to conclude that El Salvador's government is committed to improving and increasing the inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. This becomes even more doubtful when the country's current 2021 NEP designates millions of dollars to programs that are targeted to increase technology and bilingualism in the schools (i.e. CONECTAME, MegaTec). There is not an alignment between what is needed and how the country is responding to these needs. For example, the MINED clearly outlines the limitations of rural areas and the lack of educational opportunities for students in those areas. It also publicizes the concerns on illiteracy and drop out rates and the country's need to increase and improve education for all students in order to be more competitive and improve its economy. Their responses to these needs, however, do not indicate a priority to address more basic educational issues such as educational access for all students.

The lack of El Salvador's commitment to improving educational opportunities for students with disabilities is also evident. For instance, although there is not a large-scale data-gathering tool that identifies students with disabilities throughout the country, the MINED does have the Annual Enrollment Census, which collects data on various factors. There are few efforts, however, to collect and include information relating to students with disabilities in this report. Furthermore, their recent 2021 NEP does not place a priority in addressing inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities as the only two plans that identify special education are only addressed in the context of segregated settings. So while there are capacity limitations due to factors such as the country's history and fiscal resources, it is also evident that the country does not

prioritize the needs of education for students with disabilities with the country's current resources.

Capacity Development in El Salvador

The education system in El Salvador is not adequate or prepared to serve students with disabilities as there are no supports or incentives for teachers to provide such services, among other factors. Additionally, there are not enough schools to serve students with disabilities, either in an inclusive or segregated setting. Though there is not a quick fix to these issues, it will be important to hold El Salvador's education system accountable in investing from its own resources to address such needs. Based on the current status of current educational opportunities for students with disabilities, there is a clear need for additional capacity development in El Salvador. Capacity development differs from capacity building in that it is a gradual process which builds on the resources that are already in place, as apposed to "quick fix" responses such as technical assistance or monetary donations without a careful and considered plan on its use and implementation (Capacity Development Resource Center, 2006). This suggests that while there is still a need for outside donors and assistance, El Salvador is also responsible for increasing their efforts to make inclusive education a reality for all students with disabilities.

Reassessing Assistance and Allocations to El Salvador

In UNESCO's report: *Education for All: An Achievable Mission* (n.d.), it states that "EFA is affordable" (EFA is affordable section, ¶2). The findings of this study suggest that increasing educational access and opportunities for all students is not just about additional funding. This is evident in El Salvador's history on international

assistance and monetary allocations. For example, international donors have and continue to spend millions of dollars in loans and other forms of assistance to help improve educational opportunities for students in El Salvador (MINED, 2006a; USAID, 2005; World Bank, 2006). Yet, this has not made a significant difference in educational attainment and access for Salvadorian children (Save the Children, 2005). In addition to the dismal statistics on dropout rates, grade repetition, and other education indicators, schools are only receiving a mere US\$13 dollars per student, per year to pay and meet all the needs of the school, not nearly enough to expect them to provide adequate education for all students. Fukuyama (2005) warns that providing direct services to a country can further weaken the receiving-institution and prevent it from developing its own capacity, which may be what El Salvador's education system is experiencing.

Findings Suggest a Revised Framework to Assess Capacity

While the findings of this study are valuable, it is important to note that the original CAF was not an appropriate evaluation tool for El Salvador as it was based from the literature on inclusive education in the United States and American organizations such as the World Bank and USAID. This suggests the need to reevaluate how developing countries are assessed and if it is a fair assessment of their contextual reality. Based on the data revealed, particularly the context and current status of El Salvador, the ICAISE framework was modified to better evaluate and identify the strengths and needs of El Salvador's capacity to provide inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities. While the modifications made to the ICAISE were to meet the context of El Salvador and thus implement a more culturally-appropriate evaluation tool, additional work is necessary to test and revise the framework. This could include further

modifications to the framework to make it even more comprehensive and culturally appropriate for El Salvador or other countries with developing education systems.

What do UPE, EFA and the Salamanca Statements Really Mean?

The findings of this study prompt questions regarding international goals such as Universal Primary Education (UPE), Education for All (EFA), and goals of inclusion for all students with special education needs under the Salamanca statement (UNESCO, 2005). For example: How are these goals really measured and are those numbers really valid? As this study shows, there are many students that are left out who are not accounted for in El Salvador's education system, so what happens to those students and what do we really mean by Education for All? The scope of this study did not include an evaluation of the EFA and UPE progress indicators but it does prompt the question of the value of EFA and UPE for all children. For example, if a country reports that it is providing education for 90% of all its students, who is monitoring the accuracy and exactness of the reported 90% figure? In the case of El Salvador, for instance, their UPE and EFA figures would be flawed and inaccurate as they do not have data on the number of students with disabilities who are not attending schools. What is known, according to officials from the MINED, is that there are many more students "out there" that are not accounted for and do not have access to an education.

Future Research

There is still much information needed to fully address the complexity of building and assessing capacity to educate students with disabilities in an inclusive environment, especially in countries that struggle to meet the needs of their regular education populations. More specifically, future research should address culturally appropriate

evaluations for developing countries and other non-U.S. systems that are not providing education to all students with disabilities. Evaluation processes should include a systematic approach that identifies strengths and needs of education systems in order to build on the strengths and strategically identify resources and allocations based on the needs. This type of informative evaluation is what will be useful in getting each country closer to providing all students with an inclusive educational opportunity, regardless of the students' abilities, and meeting EFA and UPE goals.

Appendix A :Document Review List

Document			
R	W	O	
			Canadian Association for Community Living
✓			Inclusive Education in Central America; Current Diagnose and Challenges for the Future 2004
			Consortium for Policy Research in Education
✓			How States are Trying to Build Local Capacity for Standards-Based Reform: A Guide for Special Educators 1998
✓			State Strategies for Building Capacity in Education: Progress and Continuing Challenges 1998
✓			The District Role in Building Capacity: Four Strategies 2002
			Consortium on Inclusive Schooling Practices
✓			A Framework for Evaluating State and Local Policies for Inclusion 1996
✓			Determining Policy Support for Inclusive Schools 2001
			Constitucion de la Republica de El Salvador
	✓		constitution.org
			Disability Awareness in Action
✓			Disability Law and Policy around the World 1995
			Disabled Persons Association
✓			The Definition of Disability 2005
			Education Policy and Data Center
✓			Educating the World's Children: Patterns of Growth and Inequality
			Educational Quality Improvement Program
✓			How to Make Decentralization Work; Assessing the Latin American Experience 2004
			Education Week
✓			G8's Loan Forgiveness in Selected Poor Nations could Benefit Education 2005
			Inclusion International
✓			A New Focus on Education for All 2004
✓			Disability and Inclusive Education 2001
✓			Education for All: A Gender and Disability Perspective 2004
	✓		inclusion-international.org
			Inter – American Development Bank
	✓		iadb.org

		International Disability Rights Monitor
✓		2003 IDRM Compendium Report: El Salvador
		International Labour Organization
	✓	Ilo.org
		Kohler
✓		Taxonomy for Transition Programming; a Model for Planning, Organizing, and Evaluating Transition Education, Services, and Programs 1996
	✓	Landmine Survivors Rehabilitation Services Database
		MINED
	✓	mined.gob.sv
✓		2021 National Educational Plan: Fundamentals
	✓	National Council on Comprehensive Care for People with Disabilities
	✓	Equal Opportunities for People with Disabilities and its Regulations Law
	✓	Let's understand; what is a disability?
	✓	Let's avoid the Disabilities
	✓	Technical Rules of Accessibility
		National Foundation for Educational Research
✓		Inclusion and EFA: Necessary Partners 2003
		Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
✓		Students with Disabilities, Difficulties and Disadvantages: Statistics and Indicators for Curriculum Access and Equity (Special Education Needs) in Latin America and the Caribbean.
	✓	PODES – Promotora de la Organizacion de Discapacitados de El Salvador
	✓	Catalogue of Prothesis and Orthotics
		Promotion of the Education Reform in Latin America and the Caribbean
	✓	Report of the Educative Progress of El Salvador 2002
		The Futurist
✓		Progress Report on Development Goals 2005
		The Institute for Educational Policy
✓		Capacity Building in Education in the Countries of the Region 1999
		Tom Welsh

✓		Education Reform for Employment: Deciding National Priorities and Programmes: An Alternative Perspective 2003
		The World Bank
✓		(Marc Sommers) Children Education and War: Reaching Education for All (EFA). Objectives in Countries Affected by Conflict 2002
✓		Development Outreach; Today's Critical Challenge: Building Capacity to Achieve the MDGs 2005
✓		Direction in Development. Expanding Opportunities and Building Competencies for Young People; A New Agenda for Secondary Education 2005
✓		Education for All: A Gender and Disability Perspective (nd)
✓		Education for All: Including Children with Disabilities 2003
✓		Education for All (EFA): Keeping the Promise of Inclusion for People with Disabilities 2004
✓		The Right to Education for Persons with Disabilities: Towards Inclusion 2004
	✓	worldbank.org
		UNESCO-United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
✓		Education for All; an Achievable Vision (nd)
✓		Education for All, the Quality Imperative 2005
✓		Education in Crisis: The Impact and Lessons of the East Asian Financial Shock 1997-99 2000
✓		Guidelines for the Design of Centres for Street Children 1997
✓		Including the Excluded: Meeting Diversity in Education. Example from Romania 2001
✓		Including the Excluded: Meeting Diversity in Education. Example from Uganda 2001
✓		Make It Happen; Examples of Good Practice in Special Needs Education & Community-Based Programs (nd)
✓		Our Challenge 2004
✓		Social Dialogue in Education in Latin America: A Regional Survey 2005
✓		The Dakar Framework for Action. Education for All 2000
✓		The Salamanca Statement and The Framework for Action on Special Education 1994
✓		The United Nations and Disabled Persons – The First Fifty Years (nd)
✓		Understanding Education Equality 2005
✓		World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons (nd)
		UNICEF-The United Nations Children's Fund
✓		UNICEF & Disabled Children and Youths (nd)
		USAID-United States Agency for International Development
✓		First Annual Report on Implementation of the USAID Disability Policy 1998
✓		Overview of the USAID. Basic Education Programs 2000-2001
✓		Policy Paper: Program Focus within Basic Education 2000

R= Report W=Website Review O=Pamphlet, Flyer, Booklet, Press Releases, etc.

Appendix B : Classroom Observation Form

Location code: _____ Date of observation: _____ Time of observation: _____ Total number of students: _____ Total number of students with disabilities: _____ Number of adults in the class (teacher, paraprofessional, volunteer, etc.) _____	
<i>What to observe</i>	<i>Notes</i>
<i>Where are the students with disabilities included? (Do they attend a regular school, classroom, activities, etc.?)</i>	
<i>How are the students with disabilities included? (paired with students, given the same activities, modified activities/)</i>	
<i>Is what is been observed representative of what laws/regulations state? (How?)</i>	
<i>How do students without disabilities and teacher work with the student (s) with disabilities? (Interactive, exclusive, etc.)</i>	
<i>What types of accommodations does the teacher use to include the student (s) with disabilities? (Different curriculum? Modified tests/exams, etc.?)</i>	
<i>Other observations?</i>	

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Steps for All Interviews</i>
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce self: • Greet and thank participant for willing to be part of the study • Explain the purpose of the study • Add brief summary of study here:
Consent Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a copy of consent form to participant • Make sure participant provides either written consent
Permission to audiotape interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participant for permission to audiotape the interview- make sure he/she initials the audiotape part on the consent form
Participant check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participant if he/she has any questions before starting the interview
Conduct interview	ASK QUESTIONS HERE
Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize interview answers and themes (participant check) • Thank participant for participating. • Ask participant if he/she has any additional questions or comments. • Inform participant of follow up procedures (corroboration and participation/members check for preliminary findings)

Appendix D: Data Collection Form SAMPLE

Interviewee code:	
Date	

Time	
Place/Location	
Position of Interviewee and organization name	
Describe setting/location	
Capacity Domain(s)	
Interview Questions Institutional Capacity	
<p>Background information questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What agency do you work for? 2. What is your title (what do you do)? 3. What are your responsibilities in your job? 4. How long have you been employed with this organization? 5. Does part of your work require that you work with education issues? 6. How would you describe the organizational structure of the education system in El Salvador? 7. How does the agency you for fit into the structure of El Salvador's educational system? 8. Does the structure change or has it been consistent? <p>Questions on established policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. What is your knowledge of the official educational policies (established rules and regulations) that are in place in El Salvador? 10. Where can these policies be found? 11. How did you learn about them? 12. Who else is familiar with there policies? 13. Who else should be familiar with these policies? 14. How do other people learn about these policies? 15. What do you use to distribute policy information to people working in education such as teachers and administrators (trainings, email, pamphlets, etc.)? 16. What resources do you use to distribute policy information to other people such as parents and community members? 17. Who is in charged of distributing this information? 	
Thank the participant and remind him/her of your commitment to confidentiality.	

Adapted from Creswell, J.W. (1998)

Appendix E: Interview Questions

Institutional Capacity Domain
<p>Background information questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- What are your responsibilities in your job?

- 2- How long have you been employed with this organization?
- 3- Does part of your work require that you work with education issues and special education?
- 4- How would you describe the organizational structure of the education system in El Salvador?
- 5- How does the agency you for fit into the structure of El Salvador's educational system?
- 6- Does the structure change or has it been consistent?

Questions on established policies:

- 7- What is your knowledge of the official educational policies (established rules and regulations) that are in place in El Salvador?
- 8- Where can these policies be found?
- 9- How did you learn about them?
- 10- Who else is familiar with there policies?
- 11- Who else should be familiar with these policies?
- 12- How do other people learn about these policies?
- 13- What do you use to distribute policy information to people working in education such as teachers and administrators (trainings, email, pamphlets, etc.)?
- 14- What resources do you use to distribute policy information to other people such as parents and community members?
- 15- Who is in charged of distributing this information?

Questions about special education and inclusive policies:

- 16- What can you tell me about special education or students with disabilities?
- 17- What are the policies on special education?
- 18- Where can these policies be found?
- 19- Who knows about these policies?
- 20- How do they know about these policies?
- 21- What steps do you take to inform teachers/administrators about policies and regulations?
 - a. Parents?
- 22- How are these policies enforced?
- 23- Who develops these policies?
- 24- What happens if there is a parent concern or complain relating to special education?
 - a. Who do they go to?
 - b. Is there a formal process?
 - c. Is there a committee or person assigned to work on these issues?
- 25- Who is considered to have a "disability?"
 - a. Is this stated in your policies?
- 26- Where do students with disabilities go to school?
- 27- How was this established (where they go to school)?
- 28- Do you have policies about inclusion?
- 29- What do the policies say about inclusion?
- 30- How is inclusion defined?

- 31- How do you know about these policies?
- 32- Who else knows or should know about special education policy?
- 33- How do parents of children with disabilities know about these policies?
- 34- Do all students with disabilities have access to education? If so, can they attend any school?

Questions on systems of goals and incentives:

- 35- Are there national goals for education (assessments, attendance rates, etc.)?
 - a. What are the goals?
 - b. Do these goals include children with disabilities?
 - i. If so, what are those goals?
- 36- How do school systems learn about the goals?
- 37- Are there incentives or sanctions for schools that achieve/don't achieve the goals?
- 38- Who teaches children with disabilities?
- 39- Is their pay different than a regular teacher?
- 40- What are the education requirements for:
 - a. Regular education teacher?
 - b. Special education teacher?
- 41- How many children are included/integrated in regular schools?
- 42- What types of supports are there for regular schools that include children with disabilities in the schools?
- 43- What types of supports are there for special schools?
- 44- Are schools that include children with disabilities recognized in any way?
- 45- Are principals or teachers recognized or compensated in any way for teaching children with disabilities?
- 46- Can you tell me anything else about incentives and goals related to special education and inclusion/?

Organizational Capacity Domain

Interview Questions for Organizational Domain:

Backgrounds Questions:

- 1. How long have you been employed with this organization?
- 2. What part of your work requires that you work with education-related issue?
- 3. What part of your work requires that you work disability related issues?
- 4. How would you describe the organizational structure of the education system in El Salvador?
- 5. How does the agency you work for fit in the structure on the education system?

Questions on Collaboration and Ownership:

The following questions will all be related to work done in relation to students with disabilities:

- 6. What, if any, other organizations do you work with in relation to students with disabilities?
 - a. Governmental organizations?
 - b. Parent organizations?

- c. Teacher/administrative organizations
 - d. Advocacy organization?
 - e. Student Organizations?
 - f. Other?
7. Who has established these practices (that you work with other agencies)?
 8. Are you required to work with these agencies/organizations/groups?
 9. How do you work together with this organization?
 - a. Meetings
 - b. Exchanges
 - c. Shared resources
 - d. Other
 10. How often do you communicate or work with these organizations?
 11. When you meet, do you discuss students with disabilities?
 12. If so, what are your discussions about?
 13. Did you receive direction and training to work or collaborate with these agencies?
 - a. Is so, what type of training or resources did you receive?
 14. Do the organizations that meet together feel a sense of “team” when discussing issues related to students with disabilities?
 - a. If so, how?
 - i. Do they plan together?
 - ii. Does everyone have a voice?
 15. Are there team leader or “state” (departamentos) or “local” representatives that provide guidance or whom you report to?
 16. Who oversees or manages your meetings?
 17. What type of authority do you or anyone in your organization have over issues relating to students with disabilities?

Questions about Internal Mechanisms:

18. Are there committees that have been formed from working with the partner agencies?
 - a. If so, what are the roles of these committees?
19. Do these committees reach out to other agencies?
 - a. Social agencies?
 - b. Parents?
 - c. Other?
20. If so, how do they do this?
 - a. Meetings
 - b. Calls
 - c. Newsletters
 - d. Other?

The following questions will be asked if there are currently NO collaborations or meetings with other agencies.

21. Would you be interested in working with other agencies?
22. What types of supports do you think you would need to accomplish this?

- a. Time?
 - b. Training?
 - c. Funds?
 - d. Other?
23. What agencies do you think would also want to be involved?
24. What do you think it would take to encourage/convince other agencies to get involved/participate?
25. Do you think that it would be beneficial to work with other agencies?
26. What do you would be accomplished in collaborating with other organizations?
27. How do you think working with other agencies would help the education of students with disabilities?
28. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Human Capacity Domain

Background Questions:

29. What agency do you work for?
30. What is your title?
31. How long have you been employed with this organization?
32. What part of your work requires that you work with education-related issue?
33. What part of your work requires that you work disability related issues?
34. What part of your work requires that you work with children with disabilities?
35. How would you describe the organizational structure of the education system in El Salvador?
36. How does the agency you work for fit in the structure on the education system?

Professional Development Opportunities:

37. What can you tell me about trainings and professional development?
38. How is this done?
- a. Seminars?
 - b. Online?
 - c. One-on-one?
 - d. Teams/Groups?
 - e. Other?
39. Who is this provided to?
40. How are these persons selected?
41. Who selects these participants?
42. What do the trainings consist of?
- a. Procedures
 - b. Goals/plans
 - c. Technical assistance
 - d. Training on a new area?
43. Who provides these trainings?
44. How often are they done?
45. Are the trainings regular (i.e. monthly, bimonthly, annually?)
46. Do these trainings provide training in developing goals and objectives for your organization (related to students with disabilities)?

47. How do these trainings teach you to raise your own resources?

48. Does your organization encourage you to develop goals and objectives relating to students with disabilities?

49. Is this process formalized?

a. If so, how?

b. By who

c. Who oversees it?

50. How does your organization encourage you to work with other agencies?

51. Who encourages you?

52. Is time allotted for this?

53. Are there any other opportunities to unite with other agencies and organizations?

54. Is it voluntary or part of your job/responsibilities?

Funding and Resources:

55. What type of funding does your organization receive to provide trainings?

a. By whom?

b. How much?

c. How often?

d. Who manages it?

56. What are other resources are available for trainings?

Questions to be asked if there are NO professional training opportunities?

57. Why do you think there aren't any trainings provided?

58. Why do you think there aren't more meetings to help you unite with other agencies?

59. Would you be interested in receiving training and resources related to children with disabilities?

60. If asked or invited, would you attend these trainings?

61. How do you think professional development would help you?

62. How do you think other agency representatives would respond if training were available to them?

63. How do you think collaboration between your agency and other agencies may change if you had the training to work together and set goals?

64. Do you think this type of resource would benefit you?

a. Education/services quality?

b. Children with disabilities?

c. How?

Appendix F: Document Summary Form

Type of Document:	Source: _____ Date retrieved or picked up: _____	Domain Code(s) and Indicators
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Reflective Questions	Domain			Indicator		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
1. Name and/or description of document						
2. Significance of document.						
3. Brief summary of content.						
4. Is document central to any one contact and/or domain?						
	√			√	√	
Other relevant points:						
Documents/reports:						
Additional Notes:						

Adapted from Miles and Huberman (1994). An Expanded Sourcebook: Qualitative Data Analyses

Appendix G: FUNPRES Observation Guide for Support Room Referral

Student

1. Substitutes, inverts, omits syllables and words
2. Attach/ join words and sentences
3. Asks for a word to be repeated many times during dictation
4. Writes without leaving spaces between words
5. Do not understand the meaning of what he/she reads
6. Inverts numbers and quantities
7. Present difficulties in recognize his own body, form, and color
8. Does not appropriately in time and space
9. Does not pronounces correctly one or more phonemes
10. Inverts, adds, omits letters and syllables during dictation
11. Attach/blend/combine words and sentences during dictation
12. Has difficulties to understand a request
13. Repeats grades
14. Has difficulties in paying attention and concentrating
15. Has in his movements
16. Inverts pictures when copying them
17. Is not in the same academic level as the grade he is studying
18. Studders when speak
19. Has difficulties to do basic math problems
20. Is restless and inattentive

Source: FUNPRES (n.d.) Translated form

Appendix H: CAF and ICAISE Framework Comparisons

CAF

Institutional Capacity/ <i>The institution's ability to</i>	1)The government has clear and established policies about inclusive education that unite federal, state and local governments.
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<i>develop and implement policies and as a system of goals and incentives</i>	<p>2) There is an accountability system in place that promotes the inclusion of students with disabilities.</p> <p>3) There are funding sources available for districts to draw from for students with disabilities.</p>
Organizational Capacity / <i>The institutions abilities and practices in bounding individuals and groups together to come up with goals, objectives, and resources.</i>	<p>1) Groups of individuals such as central and local government officials, advocacy groups and other local organizations collaborate or gather together to feel a greater sense of ownership for all students.</p> <p>2) State and local-level administrators oversee special education as well as general education and receive training to consider the needs of students with disabilities in their planning.</p> <p>3) There are internal mechanism such as councils and committees to promote collaboration with other social agencies, state and local community and parents.</p>
Human Capacity/ <i>The institution's abilities and practices in providing training and resources to state and local district personnel to design and implement programs and to deliver services.</i>	<p>1) A system of professional development and professional training is in place and addresses the learning needs of students with the full range of disabilities.</p> <p>2) Staff development is ongoing and provides districts with the tools and resources to develop objectives and come up with the resources to achieve the goals.</p> <p>3) There are opportunities for state and local districts to unite and come up with goals and objectives for all students, including those with disabilities.</p> <p>4) Federal, state and local agencies are given the training and resources to learn to raise resources and develop objectives.</p>

Definitions adapted from *Consortium on Inclusive School Practices (2001)*

ICASE

Institutional Capacity- El Salvador's ability to develop and implement policies to promote inclusive education for students with disabilities.	<p>1. The government has clear and established policies about inclusive education, including the definition and identification process of students with disabilities, which unite national, departmental and municipal government.</p> <p>2. There is authority legitimacy where the structure and strength of authority is clear to the extent where the populace obeys and complies with rules, laws and regulations relating to inclusive education.</p> <p>3. There are fiscal resources available for departments to draw from for students with disabilities and their specific needs.</p> <p>4. There are infrastructure resources allowing districts to provide inclusive educational opportunities for students with disabilities including access to schools and buildings.</p>
Organizational Capacity- The structures and practices that bring individuals together to collaborate in developing inclusive education.	<p>1. Groups of individuals such as national, departmental and municipal government officials, advocacy groups an other local organizations collaborate or gather together and feel a greater sense of ownership for all students</p> <p>2. Departmental and municipal-level administrators oversee special education as well as general education and receive training to consider the needs of students with disabilities in their planning.</p> <p>3. There are internal mechanisms such as councils and committees which promote collaboration between parents, community and other social agencies to support inclusive education.</p>
Human Capacity- The quantity and quality of El Salvador's personnel and the supports available to support the personnel to implement inclusive education.	<p>1. The country has evaluation tools and resources in place to gather and evaluate information relevant to its interest and to make reasoned decisions allocate their resources for students with disabilities.</p> <p>2. A system of professional development and corresponding resources and incentives are in place to addresses the learning needs of students with the full range of disabilities.</p> <p>3. Staff development is ongoing and provides departments with the tools and resources to develop objectives and come up with the resources to achieve the goals.</p>

APPENDIX I: ICAISE Strengths and Needs

ICAISE: El Salvador's Strengths and Needs

- Strengths
 - Policies
 - CONAIPD-bringing organizations together
 - Starting incentives (CONAIPD and MINED)
 - Organizations are in place
 - Willingness to learn and collaborate
- Needs
 - Definition/identification process
 - Authority structures
 - Funding for students with disabilities
 - Additional schools/infrastructures
 - Facilitator/training on working together (CONAIPD)
 - Additional supports at the departmental level
 - Evaluation tool
 - Professional development

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