

The rights of young children with disabilities: moving beyond the UNCRC

Gerison Lansdown

ISSOP, Bonn, 27/29th Sept 2018

A snapshot

- Up to 100 million children are born with a disability or become disabled before age 19
- Only around 10% of children with disabilities in the developing world receive an education.
- More than 80% live in developing countries and have no access to services
- Many are excluded and invisible within their communities
- Many are in institutions with no contact with their families
- In many countries, their birth is never registered

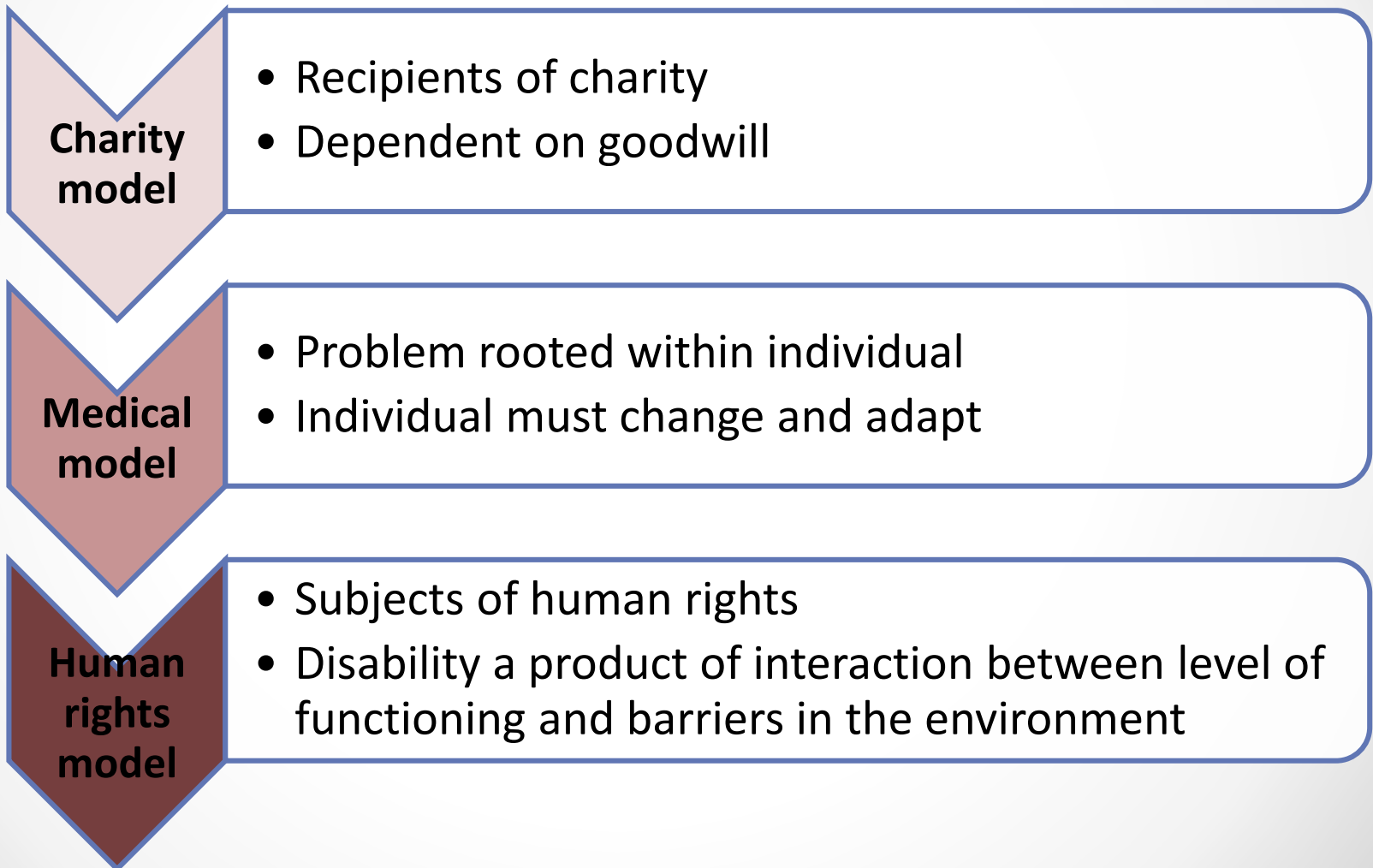


in other words...

Children with disabilities commonly experience:

- Widespread discrimination
- Social exclusion, social isolation and fewer opportunities for friendship and play
- Disproportionate levels of physical and sexual violence
- Extreme poverty
- Denial of access to education
- In some circumstances, denial of the right to life

Approaches to disability



Implications of the models

Medical Model

Disability is an abnormality or deformity

Being disabled is negative

Disability resides in the individual

The remedy for disability-related problems is to cure or 'normalise' the individual

The agent of remedy is the professional

Human Rights Model

Disability is a difference

Having an impairment is, in itself, neutral

Disability derives from interaction between the individual and society

The remedy for disability-related problems is a change in the interaction between the individual and society

The agent of remedy is the individual or their advocate

In other words.....



**Human rights based
approach**

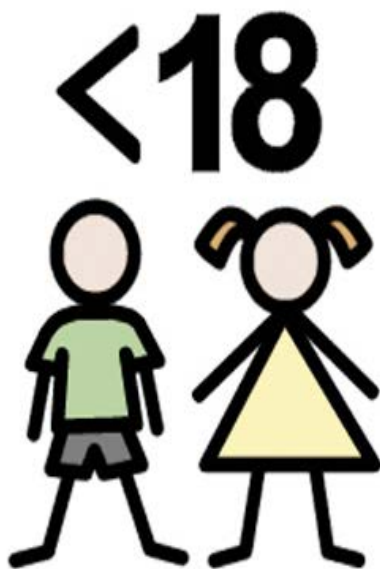


**Charity based or
medical approach**

Changing recognition of rights of children with disabilities

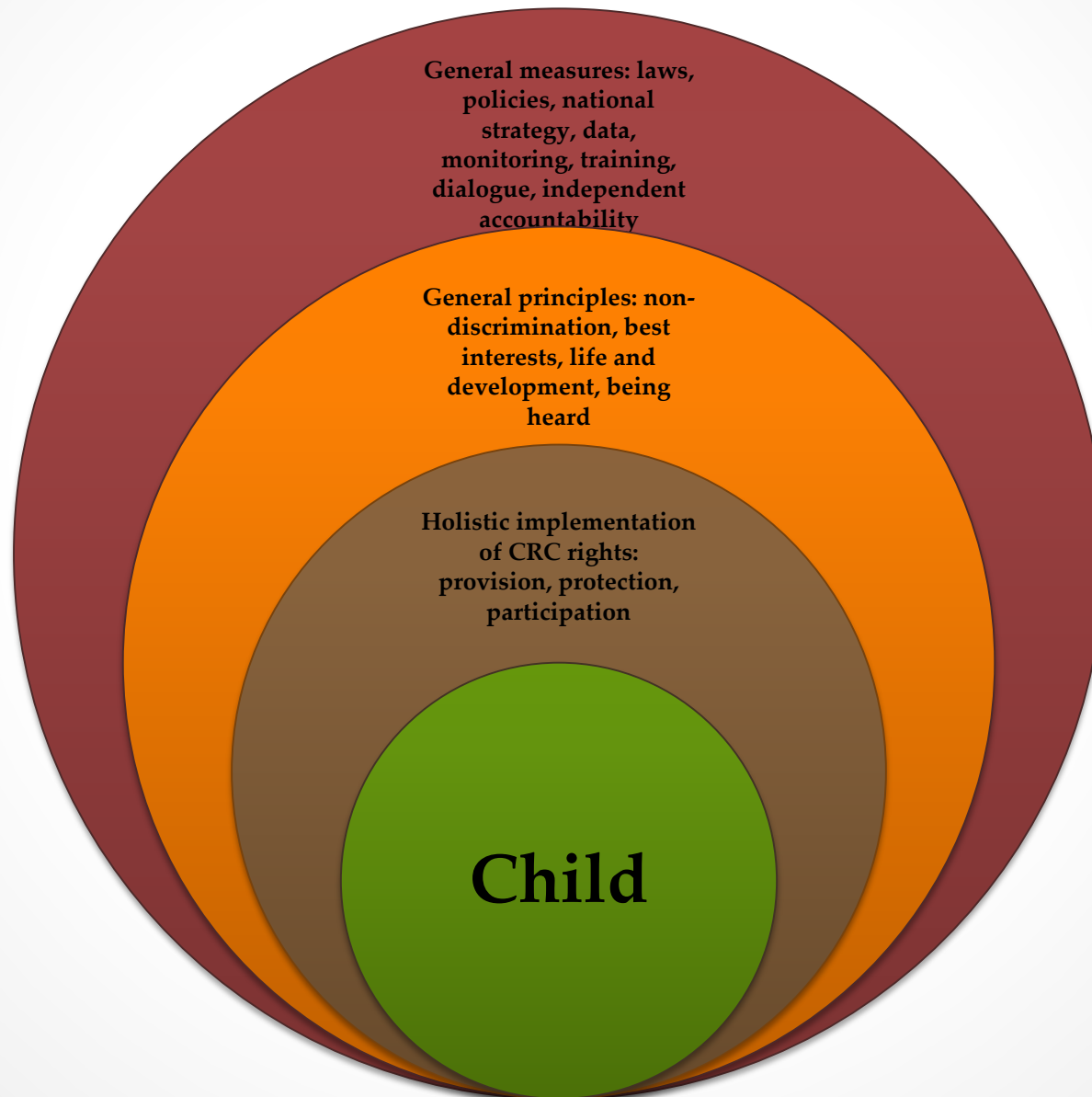
UN Convention on the Rights of the
Child, adopted by the UN General
Assembly in 1989

Rights of the Child



Adopted by the UN General Assembly
in 2006

Implications of the CRC



Implications of the CRPD for children

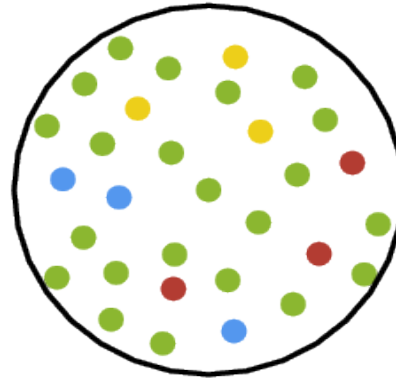
Identifies and highlights those rights that are commonly disregarded for children with disabilities eg birth registration, protection from violence, health, play and recreation

Provides further interpretation and elaboration on the implementation of key rights eg inclusive education, right to family life and ending institutionalisation, freedom from inhuman treatment, reasonable accommodation

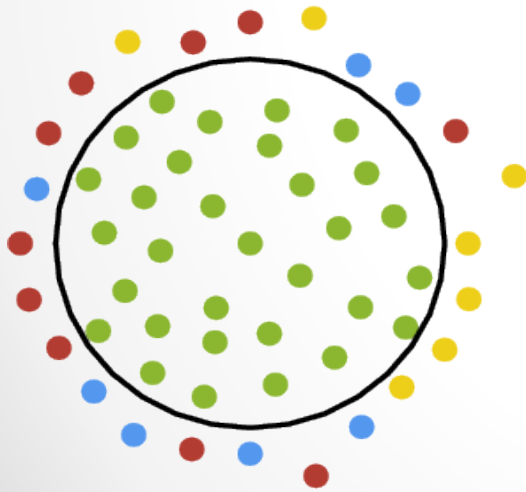
Elaborates additional measures required by governments eg ending discrimination, removing all barriers (legal, physical, communication, transport, cultural and attitudinal), habilitation and rehabilitation



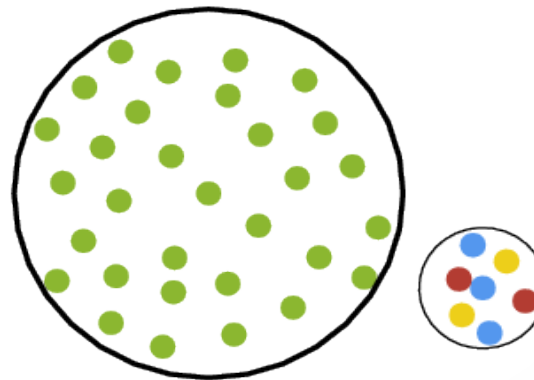
...and establishes the right to inclusive education



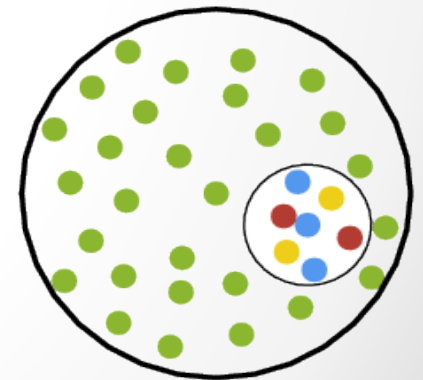
Inclusion



Exclusion

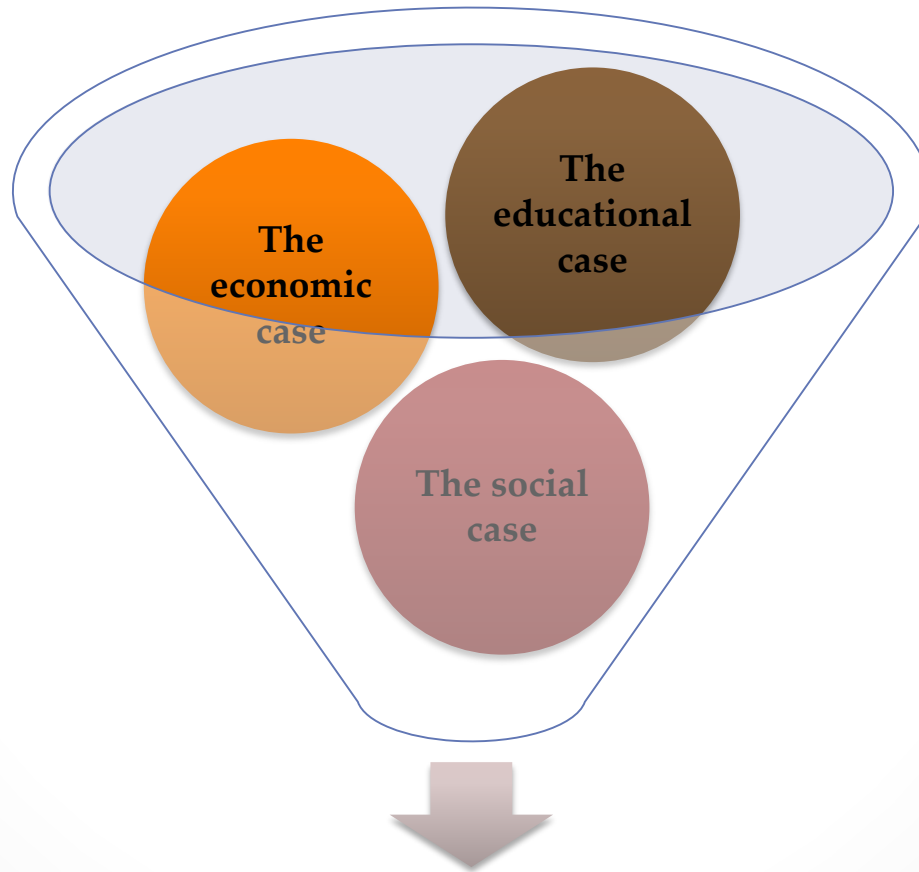


Segregation



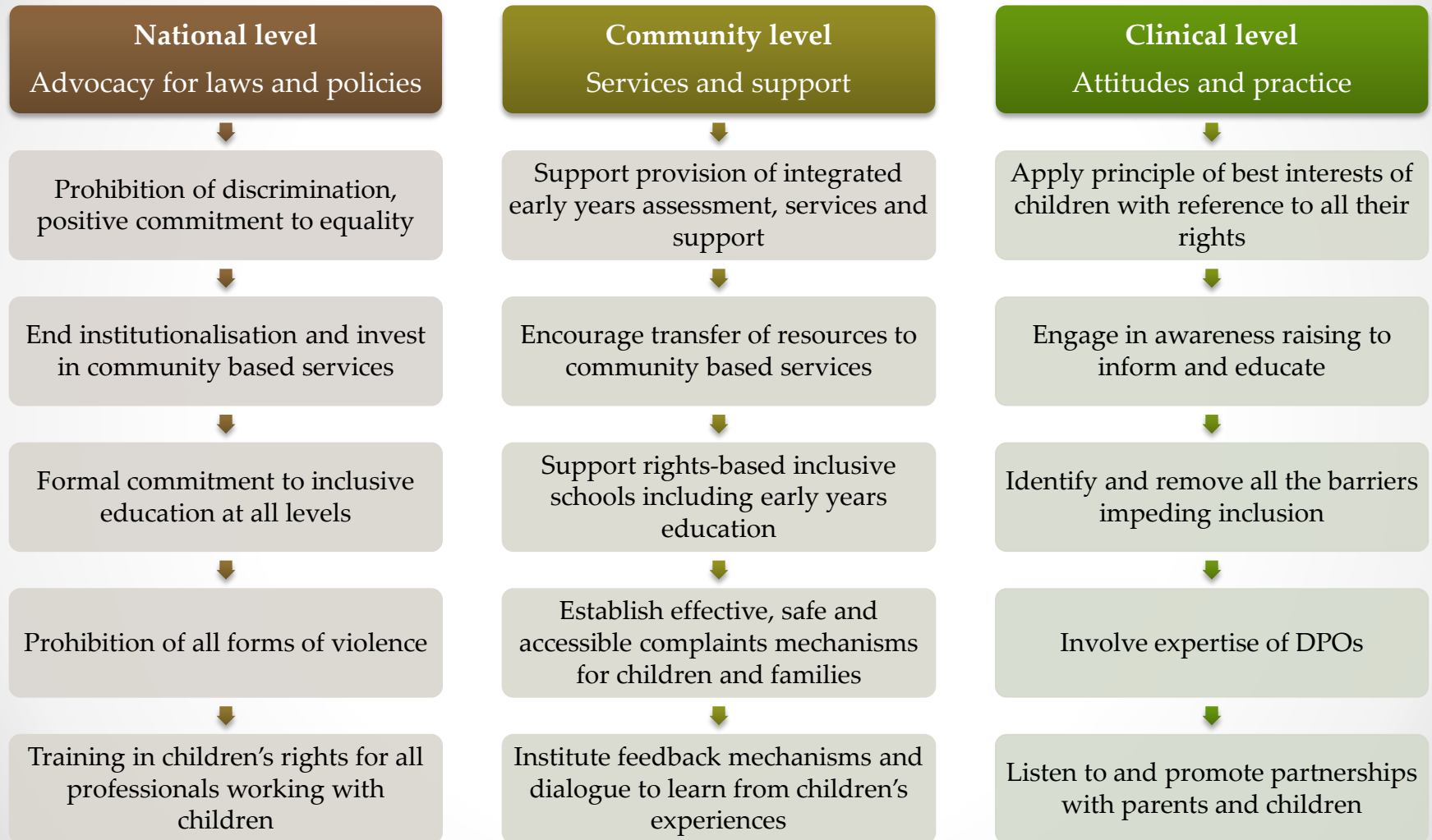
Integration

Why does inclusive early education matter?



The human rights of the child

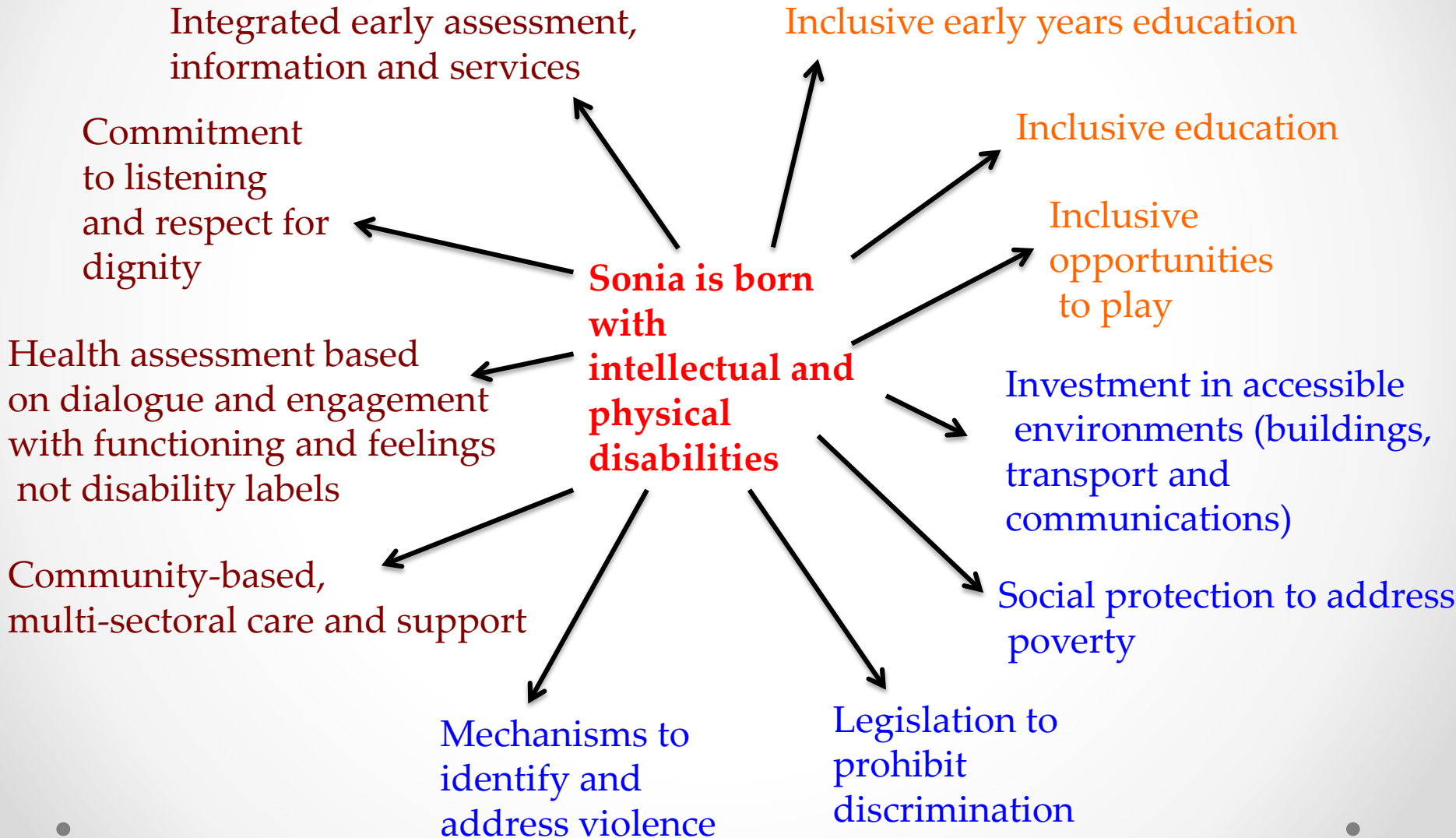
Implications for work of health professionals: Applying both CRC and CRPD



Disaggregated data collection, monitoring and accountability

A rights based approach for the child

A right to non discrimination, best interests, optimum development and being heard



Summary

- Children with disabilities are subjects of rights not merely recipients of charity, support or protection
- Both CRC and CRPD contribute to a rights-based approach and need to inform policy and practice
- Ending discrimination requires both removal of barriers and commitment to inclusion
- Important to focus on a holistic approach to the rights of the child
- Optimum health and well being requires measures beyond health services
- Collaboration across professions, parents and people with disabilities essential



Equality or equity?

