



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS
Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education

REPORT ON THE NATIONAL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION DIALOGUE AND LAUNCH OF LEARNING NEEDS IDENTIFICATION TOOL & RESOURCE GUIDE



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These include: Uganda Society for Disabled Children (USDC), Children at Risk Action Network (CRANE), KATALEMWA Cheshire Home, Cheshire Services Uganda (CSU), Sightsavers Uganda and Sense International.

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CONTENTS

5 INTRODUCTION
PURPOSE
RECOGNITION
ATTENDANCE

6 EXPECTATIONS
TESTIMONIES



7 SUCCESS STORY

7 DIRECTOR CHILDREN AT RISK ACTION
NETWORK



8
SPEECHES

THE COMMISSIONER SNE: MR. ONEN NEGRIS
HON NDEZI ALEX – MP FOR PWDS, CENTRAL REGION

9 THE DIRECTOR B&SE MOES : HAJI
MULINDWA ISMAEL
GUEST OF HONOUR : HON. JANET KATAHA
MUSEVENI.

10 COMMITMENT

14 RESPONSES TO SPEECH

11 PANEL DISCUSSIONS

13 QUESTIONS & RESPONSES:
CONCLUSIONS

15



WAY FORWARD

16 RECOMMENDATIONS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADD	Action on Disability and Development International
CRANE	Children at Risk Action Network
CSU	Cheshire Services Uganda
CWD	Children With Disabilities
DSNIE	Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education
ELECU	Education Local Expertise Centre in Uganda
KCCA	Kampala City Council Authority
KIU	Kampala International University
KYU	Kyambogo University
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
NTC	National Teachers College
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PTC	Primary Teachers College
PWD	People with Disabilities
PWSN	Persons with Special Needs
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SQUAMI	Special Needs Quality Assurance & Monitoring Initiative
UNAD	Uganda National Association for the Deaf
UNEB	Uganda National Examinations Board
USDC	Uganda Society for Disabled Children

INTRODUCTION

INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH EDUCATION

Under the theme: “**Enhancing Inclusive Development Through Education**”, The Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) through the Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education (DSNIE) in partnership with Uganda Society for Disabled Children (USDC), Children at Risk Action Network (CRANE), KATALEMWA Cheshire Home, Cheshire Services Uganda, Sightsavers Uganda and Sense International organised the first National Inclusive Education Dialogue and launch of the National Learning Needs Identification Tool and Guide.

PURPOSE:

- Bringing together different sectors and stakeholders in the promotion of inclusive education;
- Building consensus among stakeholders on desired inclusive education strategies in Uganda towards achievement of SDG4;
- Creating awareness of the existence of the National Learning Needs Identification Tool and Resource Guide to the Learning Needs Identification Tool in Uganda;
- Discussing with stakeholders on strategies to integrate the Tool and Resource Guide in their programs.

RECOGNITION

The success of the Dialogue was highly dependent on the commitment of the staff of the SNE department and the cooperation of development partners who were at the forefront of the development of the Learning Needs Identification Tool and Resource Guide. These included: Uganda Society for Disabled Children (USDC), Children at Risk Action Network (CRANE), KATALEMWA Cheshire Home, Cheshire Services Uganda (CSU), Sightsavers Uganda and Sense International.

ATTENDANCE

In attendance were representatives from, MoES, Core PTCs, CRANE, Sightsavers Uganda, USDC, KATALEMWA Cheshire home, Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), Academia – Makerere University, Kampala International University (KIU), Uganda Martyrs University – Nkozi and Kyambogo University (KYU), Special Needs Quality Assurance & Monitoring Initiative (SQUAMI), Action on Disability and Development International (ADD), World Vision, Save the Children, Education Local Expertise Centre in Uganda (ELECU), Finn Church Aid, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD), Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA) and children representatives.

Other partners who attended the meeting included the Media – TV and Radio channels, Kampala School for the Physically Handicapped, Fountain Publishers, Secretary General Uganda Commission, Social Services Uganda, Uganda National Association for the Deaf (UNAD), Deputy Mayor – Central Division, Ministry of Public Service, National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB), the national MP representing Women with Disabilities, Commissioner SNE- MoES, Assistant-Commissioner Policy Analysis and Planning MoES, Commissioner Guidance and Counselling MoES, Commissioner MoPS, Deputy Mayor KCCA – Sam Gombya, Board Member for the UMA.

Guest of Honour: Hon. Janet Museveni, First Lady & Minister of State for Education and Sports.

EXPECTATIONS:

- Launch of a Tool and Resource Guide that will help identify the needs of children with special needs in schools;
- Highlight ways of including everyone in the inclusive education campaign;
- Talk about the possibility of having a waiver on taxes for the products for the PWD;
- All stakeholders take affirmative action for Inclusive Employment;
- UNEB and curriculum developers to put in place mechanisms that support children with intellectual disability to compete favourably with children who do not have this disability;
- Develop mechanisms on how to protect CWD against violence;
- Identify ways to implement laws that support inclusive infrastructure in public facilities;
- The tool developed should be able to measure the progress of inclusive education in schools;
- An increase in the budget to support SNIE implementation.

TESTIMONY:

I am Jane. Will the government introduce more secondary schools that host children with disability? I studied from Kampala School for the Handicapped in primary. After my PLE, it was so hard to get a school to take me on in secondary.





I lost hope when I finished my PLE. My mum tried to look for schools for me, but I was rejected because of my dyslexia. In one of the schools where I was given an admission letter without prior knowledge of my condition, they rejected me as soon as they saw me, saying they thought my mum was bringing a person, not my type. She felt devastated as many schools lacked the services that could support her to learn. They did not understand me, and many feared saying how will they transcribe for a person like me, especially that they did not have the services necessary. Finally my mum tried Centre for Lifelong Learning, where Dr. Paul Njuki accepted me, supported me, and enabled me to be what I am today. I was losing hope, but if more schools that support children with different disabilities are established, then children like us will have hope for the future. I thank Dr. Paul Njuki for the great work done.

SUCCESS STORY

SPEECHES:

Director Children at Risk Action Network (CRANE):

CRANE works in partnership with Viva to keep children safe. One of the pillars is working with Persons with Special Needs (PWSN). CRANE works with the Uganda government and other relevant strategic networks to ensure that interventions are sustainable. The National Dialogue is to create room for the implementation of the National Learning Needs Identification Tool and other policies



Faith Kembabazi; Director Children at Risk Action Network, **Charles Bakabulindi;** current State Minister for Sports in the Ugandan Cabinet, **Alex Ndezi;** Parliament PWD representative showing the dummy of the book.

Funded by DFID to support national advocacy initiatives, special focus is on supporting the visibility of the invisible. Everyone is differently abled in one way or another and is therefore a candidate to become a person with a special need.

CRANE has been working with SQUAMI and other partners to advance the cause of CWSN.

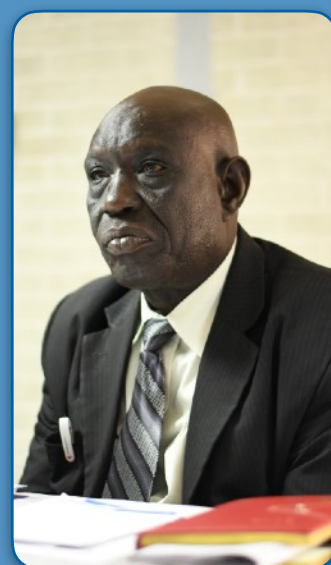
Call to Action: It is the responsibility of everyone to understand the special needs around him or her, in order to play an important and influential role in promoting the cause of the invisible child. LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND. Spread the news about SN and join our cause to promote inclusive education in Uganda.

THE COMMISSIONER SNE: MR. ONEN NEGRIS

In line with the international requirements, the launching of a tool for identifying learners with SN will enable everybody including parents, teachers and neighbours to understand and appreciate the challenges that these children are going through and support them accordingly.

The MoES is coming up with a policy on inclusive education called the NIEP and this activity will be the height of getting the policy draft approved.

Observation: The Ministry can consider using sports as a means of including all people. Special Olympics would be a better way to include the PWD. Therefore, this calls for us to come up with a working document that guides us to implement this. It will open doors for us to be among the signatories for inclusive sports in the world.



Mr. Onen Negriz
The Commissioner SNE:

HON. NDEZI ALEX – MP FOR PWDS, CENTRAL REGION:

Uganda has a history of launching programs that are not budgeted and planned for by the government. The launch of the National Learning Needs Identification Tool is a big step that Uganda has taken. Donors are excited to fund the initial activities. However, the future of the Tool is uncertain due to budget constraints at the time the donors pull out.

- National budget constraints and poverty have continued to be a challenge to the realization of the government's innovative programs. This explains why the percentage of the national cake given to SNE is meagre.
- Many SN teachers have been trained and graduated; however, we never see them in action as many have resorted to doing other business due to low pay.
- Inclusion of CWD in schools. In principle, the idea is good, however, it is challenging in most special needs schools for example; all children, like children with visual impairments, usually struggle with accessibility in all forms.

APPEAL:

- Increase budget for the SNE department if the implementation and attaining of the SDGs is to be achieved.
- Look into the issue of salary for teachers of children with special needs. Since the salary for science teachers was increased, the salary for the SNE teachers ought to be increased as well.
- Visit the special needs schools, conduct a needs assessment and offer support where necessary.

THE DIRECTOR BASIC & SEC. MOES : HAJI MULINDWA ISMAEL

The dialogue and launch are timely to support the implementation of the SDG 4; which emphasis is on “ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” thus LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND. The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995 - article 30 provides education as a right to everyone. Without a tool for the identification of children with special needs, it is impossible to include everyone. It is at the heart of the Ministry to ensure that everyone has access to quality, inclusive and equitable education. Learners with special needs are expected to access and participate in education at all levels. Stakeholders should have a common understanding of the inclusive education approach that works better in Uganda.



Haji Mulindwa Ismael
The Director Basic & SEC.
MOES

COMMITMENT:

- Through the Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education, MoES is committed to the provision of materials, training teachers and subvention grants to schools.
- The National Inclusive Education Policy is underway. The Directorate should support the push for approval of the policy in order to authentically address the challenges of and support learners with special needs.

GUEST OF HONOUR : HON. JANET KATAHA MUSEVENI.

The Guest of Honour was represented by Hon. Charles Bakabulindi, the Minister of Education and Sports (in charge of Sports). Uganda is a signatory for both national and local networks that support education. Children with Special Needs (CWSN) have historically suffered injustices and barriers that are socially constructed on the basis of social ignorance and negative attitudes. The Ministry is at advanced stages of concluding the assessments to inform future planning and interventions in SNE.

COMMITMENT:

The MoES is committed to promoting inclusive education for all children in the country. This is an opportunity for parents to identify the learning needs of their children and support them right on time.

The Ministry is committed to supporting measures that lead to enhancing inclusive education and promoting access and participation of children with special needs in an inclusive setting through:

1. Finalising the development of the NIEP with a costed action plan and implementation;
2. Rolling out the National Learning Needs Identification Tool and progressively reviving the Education Assessment Resource Centres to aid appropriate placement of learners;
3. Capacity building for teachers, both pre-service and in-service;
4. Provision of special teaching and learning materials for learners with special needs;
5. Commissioning and conducting a national study to establish the unit cost of education for a child with special needs in an inclusive school setting;
6. Reviewing the education management systems to include comprehensive indicators to generate data on all categories of learners.



RESPONSE TO SPEECHES:

- SNE is technical, whoever teaches sign language is very technical, thus the issue of salary will be looked into.
- Sports can and will be used as a tool to bring all leaders together to discuss the issues that affect inclusion. This is a good starting point for discussion on how to engage all leaders.
- The organisers together with the responsible Hon Ndezi should get in touch with the Commissioner for Sports to address the issue of inclusive sports. Point of emphasis should be to identify inclusive sports activities that can be made compulsory for all schools in primary and secondary during the sports term/season. This way, CWD/SN will not be left out.

Call for Action: All the partners are to use this Learning Needs Identification Tool as an everyday activity tool. It is necessary to build the capacity of the learning and teaching institutions to use this tool through trainings, mentorship and support supervision.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

Two panels were constituted. The first panel comprised of Mr. Brighton Barugahare - Assistant Commissioner - Policy Analysis, Education Planning & Policy Analysis Department; Dr. Ojok Patrick – Kyambogo University, Head of Department and a teacher of Disability Studies, and Dr. Eria Paul Njuki. The second panel constituted of representatives of Equal Opportunities Commission Uganda, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, and Ministry of Public Service.

The panel presentations focused on unpacking the term inclusion as the generally agreeable process of adjusting systems to respond to the diverse needs of all learners. This involves promotion of access and retention in the formal education system for all children including those with SN. The presentations further elaborated on the roles of different actors and the ministries concerned.

EXTRACTS FROM THE PANEL DISCUSSION:

Prevalence of exclusion in the education system: There is high prevalence of exclusion within the country's education system. For example in terms of attendance for the last 6 years (2012-2017). The RIA and NIEP analysis on the prevalence of exclusion within the country's education system indicates that out of the 3,656,926 eligible children for pre-primary enrolment, only 600,000 were enrolled, meaning 3,056,926 were excluded. Similarly, out of the 7,359,874 eligible for primary education enrolment, 8,459,720 enrolled, with a variance of -1,099,846. The question is where the -1,099,846 children are coming from. This causes an alarm of ghost enrolment. Out of the 3,858,753 eligible for tertiary or post-secondary education, only 201,376 enrolled, excluding 3,657,377 persons. In 2017, only 0.81% (820) students with special needs out of a total of 101,186 students sat for the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE) examinations (UNEB, 2017).

All education for some or some education for all: Do we care about the observation that was made by the UN committee experts on the rights of persons with disabilities? Are we promoting All Education for Some or Some Education for All? In the absence of statistical data on the number of CWD, it has continuously been difficult for Uganda as a country to report accurately on the status of children with disabilities. The next UNCRPD status report for Uganda is due on 25th October 2020 and it is our obligation to submit the findings a year before the date.

Early identification of special needs: The Tool covers 21 conditions seen in children in Uganda. It helps individuals who are at risk of failing to benefit from inclusive education. The tool is not diagnostic in nature and will not entail what support to give a child, except to define what a child is at risk of. Other tools will definitely be developed. The tool is a merger between theory and practice. Technically, the identification process seeks to establish whether learners should be included in a list of those with SN. For this reason, all learners should be screened, because the tool is meant to identify children who require necessary follow up assessment to enable them to benefit from inclusive education.

Roles of different ministries: Different ministries are playing different roles to ensure inclusiveness is attained in the different institutions of learning and workplaces. The ministries are advocating for inclusive employment: employment policy allows a qualified person with a disability to apply for a job and to be assisted to succeed. Training and capacity building is affirmative action. This also includes working in liaison with Uganda National Association of the Deaf (UNAD) to create provisions of national interpreters in the local government and ministries. The advice is to contact the sector ministry so that a uniform voice is heard. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development is mandated to support implement all programs related to disability. As such, the ministry established a comprehensive structure from national level to community level. A Minister position in charge of PWD is in place, although vacant. The ministry is working with different NGOs like USDC, which is training teachers on inclusive education and ensuring that those who cannot attain achievement through the formal education system can access the vocational institutes.

OBSERVATIONS:

- An inspection tool for public service captures issues of disability. The Local Government Act provides for establishment of the council and PWD are planned for at the lower level. Other policies that promote inclusiveness include the Policy on PWD, the Action Plan on CWD (Pg. 16), and the CBR guidelines.
- Currently, what takes place is promotion of segregated education institutions over an inclusive education system.
- We should be working with NUDIPU and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities to create a database for PWD. The database should be able to tally with job competencies, so that in the event of a job being available, a PWD is contacted to take it on.
- There are policies in place, but the implementation has continued to be a challenge.
- Uganda is to submit the UNCRPD status report on 25th October 2020.
- There is a lack of data on disabilities.
- Public interest litigation can be utilised as a strategy to promote access to justice.
- It is necessary to re-activate the National Advisory Council for PWDs.

WAY FORWARD:

- Preparation of a costed plan for the NIEP and embarking on approval process with a draft.
- Data collection: It is important to lobby with the Uganda Bureau of Statistics to collect data nationwide.

- Conduct policy study to isolate jobs and processes where PWD are catered for at their workplaces. This should translate into making jobs available for PWD.
- Ministries and local governments need to procure customised furniture for PWD.
- Service delivery should cater for language interpreters in every sector, including the courts of law.

CONCLUSION:

The formulation of the NIEP is a reform process and initiative which is long overdue. It is a critical intervention for sustainable, effective and impactful education and training aimed at generating social economic reform. Therefore, it is a call to the general public to be more accommodative.

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES:

Question	Response
Do we have a working tool that guarantees the identification and equal treatment of all students.	A guide is in place to support the Identification Tool implementation.
Dr. Patrick Ojok in his presentation mentioned: Uganda does not seem to have a law that has reasonable accommodation - there is no clear law that caters for the reasonable accommodation for PWDs.	The PWDA mentions reasonable accommodation in relation to termination of work. The Uganda constitution highlights reasonable accommodation for PWD.
What is best for Uganda as a country as opposed to importing new models?	Maybe a three-chromed approach that accommodates special needs.
When will teachers be identified and trained in the use of the Tool?	As soon as the Tool is printed and made accessible to the training schools.

Who is responsible for ensuring that PWD access quality social services especially in institutions of higher learning?	It is important that advocacy and legal awareness is created. Enforcement of rights emanates from awareness. There is need for advocacy for PWD to know their rights under the law and the procedures to follow in pursuing those rights
Is there a budget allocated to support implementation of the Tool if approved?	The Tool will be approved, with or without a budget attached to it. We have put it in plenary to ensure that we all allocate resources and support implementation of the Tool.
How will the existence of the Tool be made widely known?	Plans are in place to empower academia especially at the university level. Kyambogo University will provide coordination. A MoU will be developed to build capacity of the universities. A proficiency certificate will be issued to those who will act as National TOT. A cascade model will be used.
Is it possible to add more secondary schools that accommodate children with dyslexia and other persons with disabilities?	The Tool addresses all forms of disability.
In inclusive education, the key person is the teacher. What is going to be done to have system change in training teachers?	Our system has left out many, but the cabinet has approved the national teacher policy to address the challenges we have had with teachers.
What are we doing to prepare these children to fit into the mainstream education?	The ministry is procuring materials to support children with disabilities. The schools concerned are encouraged to avail themselves of the necessary materials to support inclusive education.

WAY FORWARD/ ACTION POINTS:

- NIEP: Develop a series of instruments to guide implementation of the policy. These should include: the standards, guidelines, procedures, strategy, baseline. The gaps in the policy need to be quantified in terms of the financial loss or gain to the country if the policy is in place/approved. The cost effectiveness of the policy in relation to the country's GDP needs to be established. Develop a costed action plan.
- Recruitment: MoES to work with the relevant academic institutions, identify SNE aspects in schools and recruit teachers in these schools. Before any teacher is posted to any school, the Ministry of Public Service should consider those that are able to host the students with SN first before any other school.
- Coordination: MoES alone cannot achieve this. It needs coordination with the different ministries if this is to be achieved and this should be done immediately
- Implementation: Create awareness in as many schools as possible on the Tool and Resource Guide. MoES is to carry out an evaluation on the Tool in a period of one year. Develop other materials that support implementation of the Tool, including a work plan, MEAL guide, manuals.
- Capacity building for the users to include trainings, mentorship, on spot monitoring. The users should include the teachers, parents and children's leaders. Conversely, introduce SN and inclusive education as a core and examinable subject under PTCs to have all teachers able to handle mainstream subjects.
- Research: Carry out research to attain disaggregated data on CWSN in the country.
- Penalties: Amend the existing laws to include penalties for the violation of the law accordingly. Other international laws can be adopted to support PWD in attaining justice and their rights to access to social services in the country.
- Affirmative action on the inclusion of an assistance person in the academic structure. This person's role is to offer assistance to CWSN.
- After the dialogue, visit the schools and other special needs institutions to assess their needs.
- Budget: Make considerations to allocate minimum budget in the education sector to address the declining performances in the education outcomes. Increase education financing to support inclusive curriculum. CSOs to develop a strong case for the increase in education financing. The case should include cost effective approaches and statistics. Partners to increase lobby and advocacy initiatives that demand for increase in budget to support implementation of the NIEP.

- Continuous assessment: MoES to find a way of enforcing continuous assessment, which can be used to assess and award students. Give certificate of attendance to children with disabilities that have achieved the 7 years in primary school. This will encourage the parents and children to continue in school.
- UNEB and curriculum developers to put in place a mechanism that supports children with intellectual disabilities, in order for them to compete favorably with those who do not have this disability.
- On 29th July, there will be a scrutiny for the draft NIEP document to drive this before it is shared and forwarded to higher levels in the MoES for approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Move towards the domestication of the UNCRPD article 24;
- Incentives for teachers, especially the SNE teachers
- Consider posting an SNE teacher in every school;
- Strengthen research, supervision and monitoring of progress based on the set targets
- Increase education financing and resourcing at all levels of education;
- Put in place a mechanism for capturing comprehensive and relevant data on inclusive education variables and linking them with EMIS;
- Adhere to national (20% of education sector budget) and international (4% of GDP) funding targets for the government's investment in education;
- Promote the adaptation of national curricula to reflect the diversity of learning needs of all learners.



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