

# **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & SPORTS**

## **EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND RESOURCE SERVICES/ SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION PROGRAM – (EARS/SNE)**

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## **EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND RESOURCE SERVICES/SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION -(EARS/SNE)**

### **Aim/objective:**

Activities of EARS/Special Needs Education programme are geared to providing a comprehensive programme of assistance to children between the ages of 0–18 years who have special educational needs.

The eventual objective is to equalise their educational opportunities and facilitate their inclusion into the school system and community.

### **Target group:**

The target group comprises all children with ‘barriers to learning and development’, for example;

- children with hearing impairment
- children with mental retardation
- children with physical (motor) difficulties
- children with specific learning difficulties
- autistic children
- children with visual impairment
- traumatised children
- gifted children
- children with behaviour problems
- street children
- children with health problems; e.g. *asthmatic, epilepsy, ciecle cell*

**NB:** (i) Gifted children are part of the target group as they too require among others things; specialist learning provisions, re-visited teaching strategies and appropriate modes and tools of assessment.

(ii) Street children are also part of this target group as most of them fall within school going age and deserve “education” as a right for all citizens in the country.

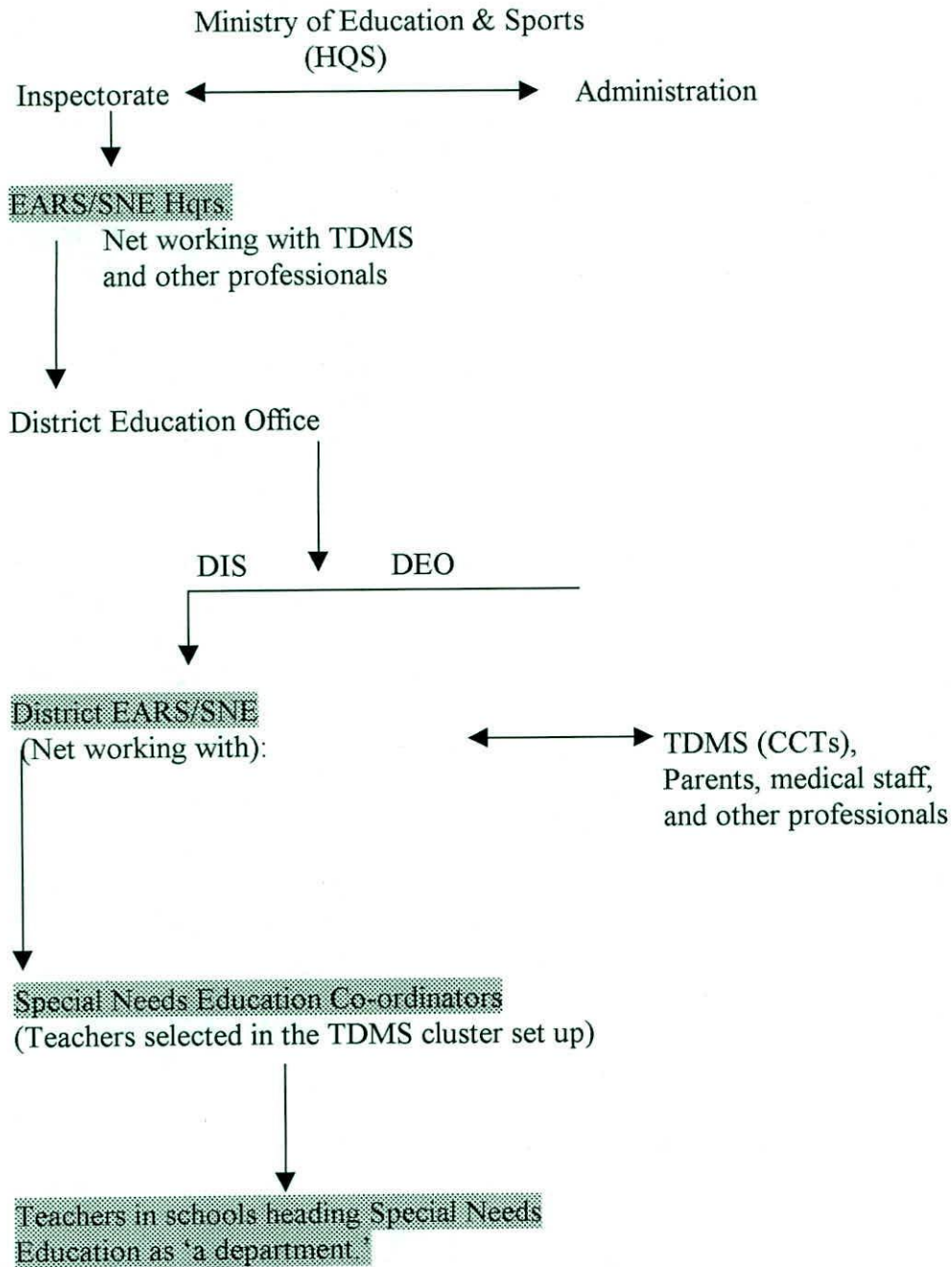
### **Justification:**

- The National and International laws/policies are in support of educating all children irrespective of their learning needs. e.g. The constitutional right of children in the Uganda Constitution that states, ‘A child is entitled to basic education which shall be the responsibility of the state and parents of the child’ (*Article 34*).

- Universal primary education (UPE) gives first priority to a child with a special need in a family to be enrolled in school.

## **How the Program Operates:**

### **MOE&S - EARS/SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION**



## **EARS/SNE - ACTIVITIES AT HEADQUATER LEVEL (MOE&S)**

As an Inspectorate program, the program staff carry out Inspectorate work.

### **1. Setting and Maintaining standards in schools;**

- Developing learning content
- Guide in the teaching/learning Methods and Approaches
- Training (e.g. in sign language, in reading, writing and teaching Braille.
- Guiding in curriculum issues
- Guiding teachers in classroom implications of any teaching/learning situation e.g. the 'inclusive class'

### **2. Additional provisions - as a program**

- Advising on making of ramps in schools
- Availing Braille books to schools
- Acquiring sports equipment for Visually impaired learners
- Acquisition of hearing aids for the hard of hearing
- Net working with other service providers as referral contacts.

## **EARS/SNE AT THE DISTRICTS**

At the districts, the program staff prepare work plans (short term, mid term & long term) to carry out activities leading to the following specific objectives;

- Early Identification of children with special educational needs (SEN)
- Assessment and subsequent placement of children into learning environments appropriate to their respective educational needs.
- Educational Intervention of children with SEN.
- Co-ordinating service delivery with other service providers e.g. medical staff.

### **NB:**

While district EARS/SNE staffs receive technical guidance from EARS/SNE Hqrs through a number of seminars/workshops and supervision, they are the practical implementers of special needs education programme at grass root levels.

Notwithstanding some loopholes (at this stage) in the implementation of SNE programme activities at the districts, it should be appreciated that the challenges encountered in the

process require that EARS/SNE staff be accorded; adequate working resources, moral support and moral certainty.

Districts EARS/SNE staff therefore need to be supported both nationally and locally in all related issues to special needs education in districts.

It is the major reason they can not work in isolation but net work with other service providers. The broadening target group (aforelisted) calls for their much co-ordination.

Presently, this net working is differently practised in different districts depending on; kinds of other relevant services available, the degree of ownership (response to and support) for the programme by a district, active participation of the district EARS/SNE staff, plus other issues within a district e.g. working relationship, attitude and others.

It is useful to observe that, where there is limited or no support for the SNE programme by a district, field challenges out-weigh efforts of EARS/SNE staff who endeavour to guide teachers and parents in meeting the learning needs of children with barriers to learning and development. (See some of the specific activities of EARS/SNE district staff outlined below):

**Activities, partners in implementation, method of implementation and indicators of achievement of District EARS/SNE staff**

<b>Dist. EARS/SNE Activities</b>	<b>Partners/Supporters in Implementation</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Indicators of achievement</b>
1. Planning, implementing & co-ordinating of SNE in the districts including establishment of a cluster model like (TDMS)	DEO's DIS's  EARS Management Committee	Meetings Seminars	Children with special learning needs in districts get education and training
2. Guiding parents of children with special learning needs e.g. in forming parent groups to address learning needs and welfare of their children while at school and at home.	NGO'S,  DEO's DIS's  Staff from other programme, projects and departments.	Home visits, Seminars, meetings	Parents of children with special learning needs are reached
3. Training of cluster co-ordinators and preparing information for teachers especially on teaching of children with SNE	PTC's  DEO's  DIS's	Seminars  meetings  Distribution of information	Formation of a net work of co-ordinating teachers at different levels (e.g. TDMS cluster set up)
4. Training of local	DEO's,	Meetings	Key people in the

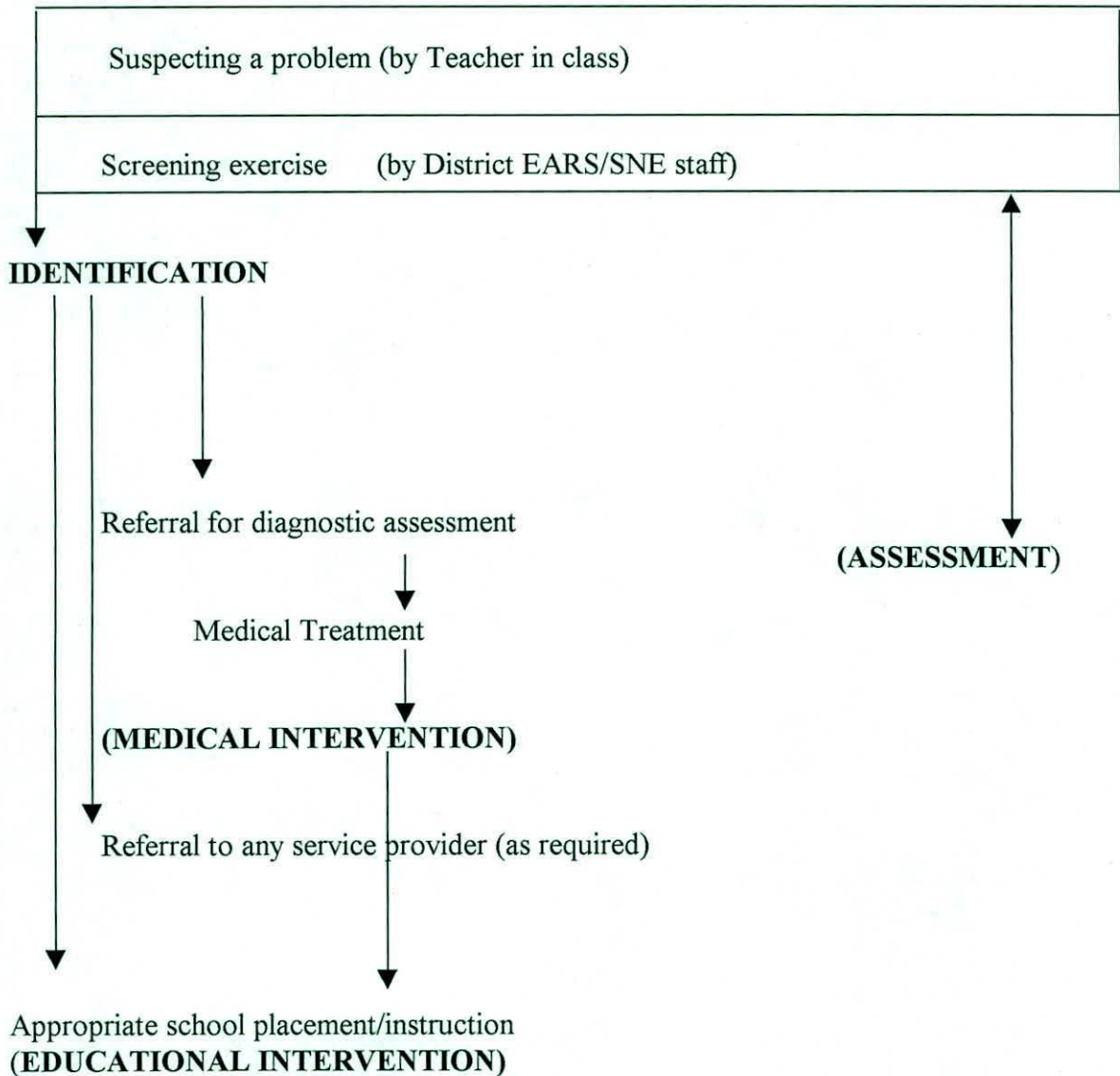
administrators, politicians and others in understanding people with special learning needs	DIS's CAO LC V chairperson Educ. committee	Workshops/ Seminars	districts get sensitised on SNE.  Incorporation of SNE into the district development plan and budgets.
5. In some cases training students at Primary Teachers' Colleges in SNE	DIS's, DEO's  PTC administration	Formal class instruction, Programmed seminars/ workshops	Students in PTC's acquire basic knowledge on special needs education
6 (i) Accounting to EARS/SNE Hqrs on: funds, activities carried out, transport (bicycles and vehicles) and other office assets.	DIS's DEO's	Writing and submitting reports to EARS/SNE Hqrs. (general & financial reports)	Reports are received at the Hqr. office. Copies of reports are available at the EARS/SNE centres.
(ii) Accounting to district authorities; expenditures on district funds, activities carried out, use of assets etc.		Submitting reports to the Chief Admin. officer (CAO) thru: the DEO	Reports received in CAO's office  Copies of reports with DEO, DIS and at the EARS/SNE centre.
7. Carrying out peripatetic services	Teachers oriented in peripatetic activities e.g. itinerant teachers (IT's)	School/Class visits and meetings with teachers Home visits	Educational support to all children with special needs Itinerant teachers in districts (IT's)
8. Identification, Assessment and appropriate school placement or referrals of children with special educational needs to	Ministry of Health CBR workers, Schools, Parent groups, Associations of persons with disabilities	Awareness dissemination.  Appropriate use of assessment tools	Data of children available in EARS/SNE centres,  Support to children

schools and other services respectively.			referred and/or placed in schools
<b>9.</b> Developing and promoting appropriate assessment tools and educational materials for children with special needs	Teachers in schools	Making of assessment tools,  Making of educational materials	Variety of assessment tools developed Effectiveness of EARS/SNE staff in using information materials available
<b>10.</b> Acting as resource centre for all those working in the fields of special needs education and rehabilitation, by providing informational materials and resource persons	NUDIPU	Providing information to relevant persons and to interested persons	Existence of a simple library in EARS/SNE centres
<b>11.</b> Working in close collaboration with other service providers in educational, medical and social habilitation and rehabilitation to provide an efficient, complete range of services to children with disabilities	Collaborators in different projects and programmes as available and linked up in respective districts	Field visits Joint planning	Shared programming/net working with collaborators/other service providers
<b>12.</b> Working alongside non governmental organisations; (NUDIPU) in particular.	NGO's	-do-	-do-
<b>13.</b> Carrying out other general duties as assigned by district authorities e.g. distributing and supervising exams, General Inspection of	DEO's DIS's	As required of the activity assigned	EARS/SNE staff involved in general district activities like general school inspection, distribution and supervision of

schools			exams, etc.
<p><b>14.</b> Make follow ups of activities they carry out.</p>	<p>Co-ordinating teachers at different levels in the district.</p>	<p>Field visits to the co-ordinating teachers. Discussions in schools and at homes</p>	<p>Presence of Itinerant teachers (IT's), special needs education co-ordinators (SNECO's) and centre co-ordinating tutors (CCTs') at relevant levels.</p> <p>Follow ups carried out.</p>
<p><b>15.</b> Implementing new strategies/ approaches as advised by EARS/SNE Hqr office especially with regards to the changing concepts in special needs education e.g. "inclusive learning" as related to UPE.</p>	<p>Hqr. staff DEO's DIS's</p>	<p>Meetings Seminars communication</p>	<p>Dissemination of basic teaching skills by the EARS/SNE centre staff to other teachers in mainstream schools.</p>
<p><b>16.</b> Identify and guide parents on sources and procedures of acquiring 'assistive devices' (appliances) for children with special educational needs e.g. wheelchairs, Hearing aids, eye glasses etc.</p>	<p>Ministry of Health NGO's</p>	<p>Communication</p>	<p>Children (who deserve) acquire appliances</p>



## EARS/SNE - ASSESSMENT PROCESS



### Other Developments of the program

- Transport- The program has facilitated the districts by giving cars so far covering the former 38 of the old districts. The rest are in plan.
- Bicycles have been distributed to the districts following the TDMS cluster set up.

- Imprest (money for some running costs for the districts is sent in supplement of the district contribution to the program.
- Construction of offices plus staff houses has taken place in all the former 39 districts.
- New districts under plan.

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