

Busia District Local Government – Uganda

Inclusive Education activities

*Fuli
CBB*

Introduction:

Busia District was created in July 1997. The District has an area of 743 sq km with a projected population of 250,000 people. The 2002 National Population and housing census figure was 228,181 (109,924 males and 118,257 females). Dominant languages spoken include Lusamia – Lugwe, Ateso, Kiswahili and Luganda. The district is located 200km from Kampala, the capital city.

Administratively the district has got one county (Samia – Bugwe) and two parliamentary constituencies i.e. Samia-Bugwe North and Samia – Bugwe South. It has nine sub-counties and one town council. It has 58 parishes and 526 villages.

The district mission is ***"To Serve the Community through a coordinated delivery of services which focus on national priorities and significant local needs in order to promote sustainable development of the district"***.

All National and International conventions that Uganda has accented to attest to the fact that all human beings are equal and are entitled to basic education as a right. Uganda is a signatory to the universal declaration on education for all which emphasizes provision of quality education for all children including those that are disadvantaged. This provision enables the children to attain their full potential so as to meaningfully participate in community activities throughout their lives.

Inclusion

This is the process of making necessary changes and meeting the needs of all children by adjusting and changing the practice in the home, the school and the society at large. All individuals regardless of differences can have the opportunity to fully and equally participate in and contribute to what happens in their community.

Inclusive Education

Inclusive Education refers to addressing all learners needs. All members with barriers to learning and development should experience a feeling of belonging and have the freedom to interact or play, learn and develop in accordance with their potential and difficulties.

Since November 2005 the Norwegian Association of the Disabled (NAD) has supported Community Based Rehabilitation and Inclusive Education in Busia District.

Achievements

1. Collection of data on children with disabilities in all primary schools, (8093). This has formed the basis for planning for the betterment of delivery of services.
2. Sensitisation of school management committees, parents of children with disabilities, headteachers, teachers, Local Council leaders on the plight of disadvantaged members of society particularly the school going children.
3. Live talk shows on the local radio stations to cover a wider audience. The radio talk show on open gate radio on inclusive education attracted a huge response even from as far as Iganga and yet the audience planned for had been Busia since the talk show was in the local language. The discussion involved lecturers from Kyambogo University with vast knowledge on Inclusive Education.
4. Held various meetings with CCTs, Headteachers, and SNE on IE to draw a plans of action and to identify the pilot schools where the meager resources should be concentrated.
5. Organised 3 day educational tour to Rachuonyo District in Kenya for 10 Headteachers to specifically visit 3 schools that were practicing inclusive education. The skills benefited on this tour are already being practiced in Dabani Girls P/S, Busikho P/S, Busitema College etc.
6. Two learners with disabilities from Busia District participated in the United Nations convention on the protection of the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities at Butiru Mission in Butiru, Manafa District on 12th April, 2006. The child from Busia Inter P/S performed well and is to benefit from a future international conference.
7. Workshops have also been held to help and train teachers, parents, health workers and other service providers on the use of sign language as a means of communication.
8. Training of teachers on use and production of local educational materials is on going and is evident in Busikho, Bulekei, Budecho, Busia Inter, and Bujwanga Primary Schools.
9. The department is actively collaborating with the CBR Programme to carryout home based interventions in order to assist parents who have children with disabilities by referring them for further management.
10. Training disadvantaged children in sports and games for the visually impaired learners in an inclusive setting.

Special Needs enrolment per year since 1997 to date.

Types of impairment	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Visual impairment	21	47	215	342	281	342	634	607	503	126
Hearing impairment	17	101	360	514	466	514	743	716	632	35
Mental Retardation	35	52	107	206	209	206	819	754	680	53
Physical Impairment	13	42	71	93	145	93	532	460	457	145
Other								104	158	36
Total	86	242	743		1101	1155	2728	2731	2430	

Challenges

- Inadequate to inclusive education activities funding because of low priority given to the plight of disadvantaged members of our society.
- Insufficient facilities provided for games for disabled children.
- Inadequate assistive devices for CWDs in all primary schools.
- Prohibitive prices of some useful and relevant equipment like the Braille machine.

Way forward

1. Lobby for increasing funding to activities of inclusive education.
2. Sensitise all relevant stakeholders on inclusive education.

Thanks

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