



Ministry of Education and Sports

# Inclusive Education

Meeting Special and Diverse Educational Needs In an  
Inclusive School Setting



*Making Inclusive Education in Uganda A Reality*



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## Foreword

*The Government of Uganda is committed to providing basic education to all the school going age children under the UPE programme. An inclusive Education strategy has accordingly been adopted to cater for learners with special needs. This publication therefore is intended to enhance awareness among stakeholders of the various forms of special learning needs.*

*In the past learners with special learning needs were either left out or forced out of the education system. A number of factors including cultural practices, traditional methods of teaching and learning, poor attitudes towards learners and lack of specific educational policies accounted for this scenario. A significant 13 -18% of school going age children today for example still do remain out of school.*

*Government initiatives towards achievement of Education For All objectives include provision of Universal Primary Education, and the recently launched policy for the educationally disadvantaged children. The Inclusive Educational strategies, analysed and discussed in this publication is targeting all stakeholders in education especially those handling children with special learning needs to improve their access to education.*

*It should be noted however that there are many categories of learners with special learning needs addressed by the Inclusive Educational policy and strategies. Inclusive Education demands reorientation of the general perspectives on education service delivery at both community and school levels. Innovative changes must be made in the teaching and learning processes to achieve the goals and objectives of education for all learners.*

*With continued support from all educational partners and with meaningful use of this manual by educators and stakeholders, all children in Uganda should be able to enjoy their educational rights and to achieve their learning and educational goals.*



*Hon. Geraldine N. Bitamazire*

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION & SPORTS/ PRIMARY**

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# List of Abbreviations

ADD	Action on Disability and Development
AIS	Assistant Inspector of Schools
CCTs	Centre Co-ordinating Tutors
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DENIVA	Development Network of Indigenous Voluntary Associations
DEO	District Education Officer
DIS	District Inspector of Schools
EFA	Education For All
HIV/AIDS	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
MoE&S	Ministry of Education and Sports
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Centre
NUDIPU	National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda
NUFU	Norwegian Universities' Committee for Development Research and Education
PTAs	Parents-Teachers' Associations
PWDs	Persons with Disability
SNE	Special Needs Education
SNE/EARS	Special Needs Education/Educational Assessment and Resource Services
SNECOs	Special Needs Education Co-ordinators
UNAB	Uganda National Association of the Blind
UNAD	Uganda National Association of the Deaf
UNAPD	Uganda National Association of the Physically Disabled
UNEB	Uganda National Examinations Board
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Education Fund
UNISE	Uganda National Institute of Special Education
UPACLED	Uganda Parents Association of Children with Learning Disabilities
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USD	Uganda Society of the Deaf
USDC	Uganda Society for Disabled Children
USS	Uganda Spastic Society
WOSE	Women's Organisation for Special Education



# Basic Concepts

## Special education

In the past “special education” was referred to education that was provided in special settings such as special classes or units, special schools and special residential schools.

## Special needs education

Special needs education aims at providing adjusted quality education not only to children with visual, hearing, developmental (mental retardation) motor (physical) impairment, but to all children who may, for any reason, have temporary or permanent needs for adjusted education.

## Barriers to learning and development

Today it is realized that although learning will be influenced by impairment, other factors are even more important. Barriers to learning and development can occur as a result of environmental factors, factors within the child or a combination of the two.

General disadvantaging circumstances, language of instruction that differs from the mother tongue, malnutrition, absence from school because of health problems and the like can create barriers to learning and development.

Poor teaching approaches and methods will also cause barriers to learning and development.

### **For SNECOs and teachers in charge of special needs education**

This information booklet can be used by SNECOs and teachers in charge of special needs education when conducting workshops and information meetings

This document can be accessed from MOE&S website: [www.education.go.ug](http://www.education.go.ug)

# Inclusive Education

In the last years, attempts have been made by the Uganda Government to make education accessible to ALL learners.

It is universally recognised that the main objective of the education system is to provide quality education for ALL children. This is to enable them attain their full potential, and be able to meaningfully contribute to, and participate in society throughout their life.



“Jane, in all communities and schools we have children who are different. They are often isolated/ excluded from participating and sharing with others daily activities in the school and the community. Am I right?”



“Yes, it is right. They may be learners with special needs. We could also say they have barriers to learning and development.

These learners have the potential to participate in most activities, but you are right they are often excluded.

These learners are born into our communities, so we should ask ourselves why is it like this?”



“Who are the learners with special needs or barriers to learning and development?”



“They include:

- Learners with social and emotional problems
- Learners with autism
- Learners who are not fluent in the language the teacher uses for instruction and/or in the language they learn to read and write
- Children with difficulties to learn to read
- Children who have never been enrolled in school
- Children who have dropped out of school
- Street children, child soldiers
- Children who are abused
- Children heading families
- Children who are culturally and geographically isolated
- Children with disabilities (e.g. who do not see or hear well, who have limited movement possibility, developmental impairment)
- Learners with epilepsy
- Children who are suffering from HIV/AIDS and other illnesses
- Orphans.

Some learners have permanent difficulties, while others have only temporary needs for educational adjustments.”





"I hear that specially gifted children can develop problems. Is this true?"



"It is important that we also remember the needs of children who are specially gifted or who have special talents.

These children can at times become a behavioural challenge for themselves, the class and their teachers if they find schoolwork boring or not challenging enough. This can happen if the needs presented by their talents are not met.

It is important that these children get assignments interesting for them within the class context. These assignments can include opportunities to do art and culture related activities, reading of national and international literature and other extracurricular activities.

At times it is tempting to use these children to help other learners. This will increase their social awareness. However, one must NOT over do this because it can easily turn them into bullies and will not satisfy the needs presented by possible special talents."



"This is very interesting!

I often hear people talk about handicaps, disabilities as well as children with special needs and children with barrier to learning and development and I thought these all really mean disabled children. Is this not so?"



"No, it is not!

Today we try to use a more respectful and socially accepted language and emphasise that all these children are first and foremost children, not disabled. That they are children with learning potentials. So we talk about "a child with disability".

But it is also important to remember that many children who do not have a disability may have special needs. If one does not take considerations to such needs the child may develop barriers to learning and development.

Some children with barriers to learning and development drop out or are pushed out of school. Probably they would not have dropped out if teaching and school activities were adjusted to their needs."



"Tell me, why are these learners often excluded from daily mainstream activities?"



“Many of them are believed to be unable to participate in and contribute to the mainstream activities due to the difficulty they have in participating at the same pace with other learners.

They may do things in ways that are unusual. For example “see” with their hands, “speak” with their hands and body or speak unclearly, hold the pencil in a peculiar way, make funny movements, experience difficulty in remembering spellings of words etc.

There are also children whose behaviour may be disruptive, or those children who are extremely shy and therefore seem not to participate.

Children who became orphans because their parents died of AIDS, children whose parents may be labelled as drunkards or prostitutes, girls who gave birth while attending school, may be excluded by peers, teachers and their parents.”



“But I want to know what we can do to make them participate at the same pace in the school and community as other people?”



“First of all, I do not think we can MAKE any one participate or make any one accept others. What we must do is to make sure that we include every one in all activities taking place in schools, homes and the communities. And, we also must try to help people to change opinions based on misconceptions.

It is important to remember that it is NOT natural for all to learn and participate at the same pace and in the same way.”



“What about inclusive education. What is it?”



“This is the process of addressing all learners’ needs within the mainstream. We must use all available resources and creativity to find ways to create learning and development opportunities. We must also ensure that all learners experience a sense of belonging and that they are part of the group. In this way, we will help in preparing them for life and their future membership in the community.

Do you know that all children have the right to go to school?

It is the right of all children to attend school in their home community in an **ORDINARY CLASS**, with classmates of their own age. All children have also the right to participate in quality education meaningful to each child.



## More about inclusion

Inclusion refers to adjusting and changing the practice in the home, the school, and the society at large. It refers to making necessary changes and meeting the needs of all children. It is important that all individuals, regardless of their differences can have the opportunity to fully and equally participate in and contribute to what happens in their community. An inclusive society is, therefore, one in which individual differences among the members are respected and valued. Everyone can contribute in accordance with his/her potentials and gain respect for his or her contribution. A society that is welcoming all members is an inclusive society.

A group of children who are culturally and functionally different from each other is a diverse group providing its members with a variety of experiences. This diversity may also include different degrees of different kinds of disabilities and special needs that are the consequence of social, emotional, economical or cultural factors. When the members of such a group have an open mind and attitude of acceptance they will become enriched by such diversity. The members learn to appreciate diversity in their youth and adulthood.

It is important that members with barriers to learning and development experience the feeling of belonging and have the freedom to interact, play, learn and develop in accordance with their potentials and difficulties. Persons with special needs should be welcome as all other members of the group and fully involved in all aspects of life such as: leisure time, education, employment, health services, community and domestic activities, decision making processes and cultural activities.

Uganda has developed a good policy and infrastructure for inclusion. Note that policy and infrastructure alone will not bring about inclusion. However, a policy can be the start of a long lasting process towards inclusion. This process is the responsibility of all teachers, children and parents involved.



“People have for many years talked about integration. It seems to me as though integration and inclusion are more or less the same.”



“I understand it may be difficult for you to see the difference. But with integration, it is the learners with special needs who must fit in with the curriculum of the ordinary school and at times also accept little or no adjustments to the environment.

Inclusive schools are schools where all learners are welcome. Inclusive education is concerned with removing the barriers to learning and development (those that can be removed) or at least in improving the conditions for individual learners.

There are some barriers that cannot be removed or “repaired”. However, many conditions can at least be improved in order to reduce barriers or even remove them.”



What do you mean?





Let me first show you some of the differences between inclusive education and integration.

## Differences between inclusive education and integration

Inclusive Education	Integration
A learner goes to any school he/she chooses in his or her community/neighbourhood.	Learners with special needs may go to selected schools, "willing schools". At times these "willing schools" are far from the child's home. It would be natural for the child to attend school near his/her home.
The school system has to be adjusted to meet the learner's needs.	The learner is often first placed in a special class or school to "be made fit" for the ordinary class. When in ordinary class the learner has to adjust to what is offered.
Teachers are usually organised in relevant teams discussing, planning, evaluating and supporting each other in all academic, social and organisational matters.	Teachers are only concerned with the children they teach.
All teachers have the responsibility for supporting all learners, including those with special needs. They however receive special support from resource services.	Specially trained teachers are perceived to be the only people who can support the learners with special needs.
<p>The school and classroom environment is modified to meet the learner's needs. However, financial restraints may limit the adjustments.</p> <p>At times a class will be moved to a more accessible place in the compound when the need of a child calls for it.</p> <p>Peers may also be organised to help a learner to get to school and/or to class.</p> <p>The community may also make adjustments to the road or pass to school to make it possible for the child to get to school.</p>	Consideration to individual needs regarding adjustment of the environment may not be given high priority – at times nothing is done.
Efforts are made so that the learners with special needs have equal opportunities to participate in all school activities, including extra curricular activities.	No necessary adjustments may be made to make it possible for the learner with special needs to participate in all activities. Therefore the learner with special needs will participate only in some activities.
The learners will feel that they are all full members of the group or class.	The learners may often feel that though they may be welcome they are in the class as "guests" not as full members.



Inclusive Education	Integration
<p>There is openness about the needs children may have. Information is given to the children, teachers and parents about the causes and consequences of certain disabilities. They are also informed about causes other than disabilities that may result in special needs and the special attention and resources (human and material) that a child may need.</p>	<p>Little information is often given to the other learners (child-to-child assistance is not strongly emphasised).</p>

## Examples

### **If a child does not see well**

For example, in the case of visual impairment, information should among others be given about:

- How a child can lose vision
- How the loss of vision can influence emotional development and influence a child's concept of him/her self
- The importance of learning by touching for a blind child who must be able to touch things and persons to get to know them
- The capacity of children who are blind to learn to read braille using their fingers as well as seeing children reading print. The process of learning to read braille may take longer than it takes for seeing children to learn to read print
- The principles of Braille
- The need to support the child to move around premises, in order to make the child gradually become more independent
- All the above will require extra attention by the teacher or a resource teacher

### **If a child has social emotional difficulties**

There must be openness about special needs caused by emotional distress. However, discretion and sensitivity is required. It is important to keep in mind that emotional distress can for example be a result of:

- Severe illness or death of a close relative or other important person in a child's life
- Too many responsibilities
- Physical, sexual, or emotional abuse
- Pregnancy
- Consequences of experiences of war, accident.

### **Emotional difficulties may result in behaviour problems in the form of**

- Acting out
- Withdrawal and "day dreaming".
- Both situations are considered as behaviour difficulties that may cause barriers to learning and development and call for sensitive attention, not for punishment.



"Now, I understand the difference between integration and inclusion. But what is segregation?"



"The traditional special education system with special schools and units were basically a segregated system, with ordinary schools for ordinary children and special schools for "special" children.

Today, Uganda has approximately 17 special schools with a total number of 877 learners enrolled with different special needs and 118 schools with units/resource rooms.

The first special schools were started in Uganda in 1955"



"Tell me Jane. What is wrong with segregation?"



"First of all segregation is when we isolate or separate individual persons or groups from their natural surroundings during play, education, leisure activities, work, and any other social activities in the family, school and community.

It is when children go to a special school or class because of their disability rather than to a regular class. Some children do not get the opportunity to go to school. Many special schools were and are still boarding schools and often situated far from the child's family and community. These conditions have given many children an additional handicap or disadvantage. Most children visit their homes only a few times every year, some only once a year.

The children become strangers to their families. Many families have lost close emotional contact with their children whom they may not understand any longer. Neither do the children get the closeness and attention they need for their social and emotional development, nor do they get the necessary stimulation for good development. Therefore when they come home they are strangers in their families, homes and communities."



"I do understand that many parents choose to send their children to boarding schools, both to primary and to secondary schools. Why is it wrong to send children with disability to boarding schools?"



"Children with disabilities need special support from their families. They need both emotional encouragement and practical support. They need this support daily.

Some children may have difficulties in finding their way in their surroundings. They may develop special ways to communicate such as the use of simpler language, speaking in special ways and at times are unclear, because of articulation difficulties or using signs or sign language. The family, with some support, can become acquainted with their children's needs and ways of communication in a much better way than a staff working in a school dormitory.



It is not easy for the child to live in one surrounding during school days and another surrounding during holidays. It is also not easy for the family to know the child's needs when the child lives at home only during break and holiday time.

In addition we know that the dormitories in most boarding schools are understaffed and the staff are not well trained. This will make it difficult to meet the child's needs."



"The way you talk, it sounds as though we are going to close our special schools and units."



"John, you have to understand that we have limited resources to develop schools, which can include all learners. But we have even more limited funds to build enough special schools to cover the demands.

In addition, let us remember that we are not only talking about children with disabilities. We are also talking about children who are attending regular schools but are not doing well at school and are potential dropouts. These children must also receive support. In inclusive learning environments these children are also catered for.

We still have to teach some learners with profound disabilities, for example those who are profoundly deaf in special schools and units.

Ideally, we should support our special schools and units to become good resource centres emphasising outreach activities, in addition to providing education for a few learners with disabilities."



"Many primary schools have units, is this the same as resource rooms?"



"A unit is a class or group of classes where specially trained teachers teach children with disabilities. These children are most of the time in the unit. At times they may be integrated in a regular class. They share the same play ground.

A resource room is a place where special equipment and materials are kept. It is also used as a class for remedial work for learners who require extra support for short or longer periods. Ordinary teachers can also use the resource room to assess learners who may have difficulties in learning.

These resource rooms are often vacant and could, if really necessary, be utilised for teaching when a child or a group of children need special follow up. The teachers responsible should therefore be upgraded through short courses or distance-learning programme in special needs education at UNISE, Kyambogo University."



“Did you say assess? Is assessment not a task for a psychologist?”



“Well, psychologists do assess, but so do teachers. It is of great importance that teachers observe learners’ progress. Teachers can observe children informally during class and break time. They can also talk informally with the children. In this way, teachers can learn about challenges the children are facing. This may help teachers to understand why children are not performing in accordance with the expectations.

Teachers must learn about signs, which can indicate that a child may not hear or see well or have another barrier to learning and development of a more practical, social or emotional nature. Teachers can do informal observations as well as more formal observations.



“But tell me Jane, what is in place to make sure that inclusive education is implemented?”



“There are both national and international policies that support the implementation of inclusive education in Uganda. So there is no lack of policies. The greatest obstacles are:

- Allocation of funds
- Attitudes (of learners, parents, teachers, the community, politicians and other stakeholders)
- Teachers’ needs for reorientation, upgrading and basic training.

Therefore we must work towards change of attitudes and improvement of teacher education as well as teachers’ working conditions.

Let me now tell you about the relevant policies.

Uganda’s national policies as all other countries’ policies are based on or adjusted to international policies. I will therefore introduce you first to some relevant international and then national policies”



## International policies

The International policies supporting Inclusive Education are:

- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)**

**Article 26** establishes that every person has a right to education. Basic education should be free and compulsory.

- **The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)**

The two main articles discussing education are articles 28 and 29:

**Article 28** establishes the rights of every child to get education and suggests that primary school be compulsory for all children, and that higher education be made accessible for all. It also states that discipline in schools should be administered in accordance to the child's human dignity and in conformity with the convention (no corporal punishment and other humiliations). Finally it encourages international cooperation on matters related to education.

**Article 29** emphasises that education should contribute to children's development of personality and their respect to human rights. It emphasises the importance of respect for children's parents and that children should develop understanding of responsibility for a free and tolerant society. Finally it states that education should develop children's respect of nature.

- **World Declaration on Education for All and Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs, (Jomtien, 1990)**

It states that every person, child, youth, and adult shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs.

- **The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (Salamanca, 1994)**

The Salamanca Statement emphasises among other things:

- The right of all children, including those with temporary and permanent needs for educational adjustments to attend school;
- The right of all children to attend school in their home communities in inclusive classes;
- The right of all children to participate in a child-centred education meeting individual needs; and
- The right of all children to participate in quality education that is meaningful for each individual

- **The Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2000)**

According to the Dakar Framework, the following were set:

- Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality
- Ensuring that learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes
- Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for adults

- Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achieving in basic education of good quality
- Improving all aspects of the quality of education, and ensuring excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

## National policies

The National Policies that support inclusive education are:

- **Government White Paper on Education (1992)**  
The White Paper spelt out Government's commitment to provide primary school education to all irrespective of origin, social groups or gender. It also emphasizes among other things, integration of persons with disabilities into ordinary schools.
- **The Constitution of Republic of Uganda (1995)**  
Article 30 states that: All persons have a right to education.
- **Children's Statute (1996)**  
The Children's Statute outlines the role of Government and other stakeholders in supporting all children including those with special needs.
- **Universal Primary Education (UPE), (1997)**  
The idea behind UPE policy was that the disadvantaged families benefited first, and it states that "Children with disabilities (special needs) have a priority over normal children"  
To day all children have free access to education.
- **Local Government Act (1997)** recognises the participation of persons with disabilities.  
Article 11 (d) states that "two Councillors with disabilities one of whom shall be a female, representing persons with disabilities".



# Implementation of Inclusive Education

It is important that everyone understands:

- The need for continuous review of the school and its system and change them in accordance to newly acquired knowledge and the needs of all learners
- That the system must change rather than trying to change the learner
- The need to change the negative attitudes of teachers, other adults, and learners. Negative attitudes are the major barrier to inclusion of learners with special educational needs into ordinary schools. Learners are not prejudiced unless influenced by adults



"It seems to me that this new idea of inclusive education will demand a lot of new thinking, and we have to change many things in our schools and to fully understand what inclusive education is and how to implement it. Can you tell me more about it?"



"Of course! It is very important for you to know more. Not only you, but also all involved in teaching should know what inclusive education is and how to implement it.

Parents and learners, with and without special needs as well as members of the community and their leaders will also need a lot of information about inclusive education."

## The principles of inclusion

Inclusive education is about changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methods, curriculum, environment and allocation of human and financial resources to meet the needs of ALL learners. A real re-orientation is needed.

It is important to understand that all children can learn, and all need some form of support in learning. However, some may need more support than others. While some may be able to give help, some may not.

The principles of inclusive education among others are:

- Respect and care for all learners no matter what potentials and social and cultural background
- Equal opportunities for all learners to experience and participate in ordinary school activities
- Flexibility of the curriculum and of class and school management
- Child-centred curriculum, which will include characteristics such as:
  - Flexibility so that teaching can easily be adjusted to individual needs in the class
  - Consideration of the knowledge that children learn best when they are active using:
    - Play
    - Dialogue between children and teachers and among children
    - Group discussions and group work
    - Provoking thinking and problem solving by asking children to search for solutions or answers instead of the teacher giving answers and children repeating after the teacher. This can be done through reasoning – thinking individually, reading, talking to other children and adults (e.g. home work to discuss the matter with siblings, parents or other adults) etc.

- Giving children the opportunity to do their work in a pace that is right for them
- Exemplifying teaching with examples that are relevant and meaningful in relation to the children's experiences
- Praising the children when they are doing well rather than scold them when they are not doing well.
- A school setting that accommodates all learners from the surrounding community
- Accessibility to the learning process and the curriculum by all learners through:
  - Differentiation of the level of performance: depending upon learners' individual needs, some learners may do more exercises, read more lines or pages, write longer parts than the average of the class, some may do less, some may draw instead of write
  - Modification of content in accordance with each learner's needs. It is important that all learners deal with the same content. However, it may be necessary to simplify the content for some learners and elaborate it for others
  - Differentiation of approach and methods in accordance with each learner's needs, learning styles and the nature of educational goals.
- Recognition of individual differences. Differences are seen as challenges rather than problems and are perceived as enrichment for all involved.
- Support to learners with special needs is planned as an integral part of the ordinary school.

In other words, the school with its administration, teachers and curriculum are for the learners and must be adjusted according to their reality, interests and needs. We are talking of the right of all learners to good quality education.



“Why is it so important for parents and learners to know about Inclusive Education?”



“John, you have to understand that education does not only take place in school. It also takes place at home and the community. In fact, wherever the child is.

We have to sensitise and make the whole community inclusive. This will not be easy as old beliefs about the cause of disabilities makes it difficult to change attitude and thereby habits.

We must however start the process towards inclusion. We must do it whenever we get the opportunity to do so, when we meet friends, in meetings, in religious meetings, in health clinics and during teachers' and parents' meetings.

Most important, we must talk and discuss with children in school and ask them to spread in their families and neighbourhood the knowledge they gather about causes of disabilities, children's rights, living in a diverse community and other related subjects. The children are our future, they must be active in such changes.”



“But how will we find time in school when the timetable is already overloaded?”





“Yes, the timetable is overloaded and the pressure is big to prepare children for national examinations.

The Ministry is at the moment trying to introduce a new curriculum. A curriculum that is more child-friendly and flexible and less examination oriented. We can only hope that teachers will be willing to change their teaching approaches accordingly.

Subjects related to causes of disabilities, children's rights, living in a diverse community can be integrated in both natural and social science.”



“It is a big change you are talking about. How is the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoE & S) prepared to carry out inclusive education?”



“John, you are right, it is a big change. But the Ministry is prepared to include all learners into ordinary school settings. Except for a few learners with profound disabilities. I will say more about this later. Now I will first explain how the Ministry has prepared the framework to meet the process towards inclusion.

I would like to present to you the most central posts on national, district and county levels.”

## The structural framework

### Special Needs Education Division

As indicated in this overview, the MoE&S has a Department of Special Needs Education, Career Guidance and Counselling headed by a Commissioner. It is divided into two divisions these being, Special Needs Education and Career Guidance & Counselling.

The role of the division of Special Needs Education is to advise the Ministry and the Government on policy issues concerning special needs education, and to monitor and report with recommendations on the implementation of the policy in place.

### District Education Officer and the District Inspector of Schools

The division also coordinates special needs education activities at district level.

The District Education Officer and the District Inspector of Schools are directly concerned with special needs education activities at the district level through the Assistant Inspector of Schools in charge of special needs education activities at district level.

### Special Needs Education Coordinators (SNECOs)

The Assistant Inspector of Schools in charge of special needs education activities at district level monitors the implementation of special needs education activities by SNECOs who are responsible for a cluster of schools in a sub-county.

Each school has a teacher directly responsible for learners with special needs in the school. These are the SNECOs.

## Primary Teachers' Colleges (PTCs)

At Core PTCs, Centre Coordinating Tutors (CCTs) have been trained by the MoE&S all over the country. They work hand in hand with SNECOs in their clusters of schools, and Assistant Inspectors of Schools in charge of special needs education at the district level.



"You have talked about CCTs, SNECOs, and teachers in charge of special needs education at school level. What is the role of all these people?"



"The role of all these personnel is to ensure that all learners who are enrolled in schools have an appropriate learning environment.

A learning environment includes:

- A physical environment that makes accessibility possible for learner with movement difficulties and/or difficulties in finding their way
- A welcoming social environment
- A welcoming and motivating learning environment includes welcoming teachers that use teaching methods that meet learners' needs with requirements adjusted to the learners' potentials and possibilities.

So, all these personnel have a rather challenging job. It must be realised that changes will come gradually - step by step, not over night."



"How will this be done?"



"This among others should be done through:

- Advising teachers on training opportunities
- Advising teachers on availability of other service providers
- Awareness rising to members of the school committees
- Encouraging teachers to:
  - apply appropriate teaching methods
  - work in teams
- Solicitation for appropriate materials and equipment required by the learners"



"How will the MoE& S give all these teachers knowledge about inclusive education?"



There will be plenty of help.

- UNISE, Kyambogo University offers conventional and distance training for teachers and other personnel working with learners with special educational needs at all levels
- The MoE&S is conducting massive in-service short-term training at district level.



- The district based in-service training programmes are carried out in close collaboration with UNISE, Kyambogo University and CCTs.

And the regular teacher training will be upgraded to adjust the curricula and methods accordingly.

## Training by UNISE, Kyambogo University

Much as UNISE, Kyambogo University runs training programmes for teachers, it also conducts short courses on special needs education for teachers and other professionals in the field of special needs education. UNISE, Kyambogo University is developing a component of special needs education in the Primary Teachers' Colleges curriculum so that all teachers will have basic knowledge about special needs education

## Accessibility



"I would think that learners using wheel chairs or those who are blind might have difficulties in getting to school and moving around in the schools. What can the MoE&S do with this?"



"You are talking about lack of accessibility. The MoE&S has already started to take care of this, together with the local community and the PTAs. The MoE&S has sent guidelines on accessibility to all districts.

However, it is very important that schools do not wait but start together with the learners, parents and community to gather for activity days, where they make the school compound more accessible and safe.

It is important that such activities are well planned and organised.

- First of all, plans must be in place
- One class at a time could be gathered (depending on the number of children in a class) with their parents. At the end a meal could be prepared by some few parents on cost sharing basis
- At school the children can for example make a report of what was done (describe the activities, calculate the quantity of material used etc.)."



"The Ministry of Education and Sports has recently developed a new curriculum. Does this include the new ideas on inclusive education?"



"You are right. For inclusive education to succeed, it is necessary, as I have mentioned before, to have a relevant and flexible curriculum.

The new curriculum gives openings for such flexibility. However, teachers must:

- learn to use it properly
- learn to observe, not only to assess the children, in order to be able to determine their needs
- dare to use the flexibility that the curriculum offers them.

It is the children's needs that will influence how the curriculum is implemented.

I would also like to point out to you that in the new curriculum there is more space to give learners the opportunity to develop the ability to express their own ideas and feelings rather than only to repeat what is in books or on the chalkboard.

Teachers must grab the opportunity for example by giving free writing assignments ("Write about what you have experienced during ....., or "What do you think about the newspaper article I read for you in class?")



"Jane, I have a problem. When we talk about inclusive education, it means that the schools should be able to accommodate all learners, including those with learning difficulties (learners who are slow in learning). But these learners will not do well when they sit for examinations?"



"It is true that the present methods of examining learners with barriers to learning and development are not realistic. However, discussions and consultations with Uganda National Examination Board and National Curriculum Development Centre are going on (2003) to devise appropriate means of assessing the progress of these learners.

Some ideas are that:

- Emphasis should be on the progress of the learner in relation to a previous assessment rather than in relation to a national achievement average
- Assessment does not have to be based on written examinations. The learner's oral and written presentation over a longer time can be continuously evaluated



"What about children with behaviour problems, who act out, have abusive language, come to school when ever they feel like and make it difficult for the other children and the teachers?"



"Well, first you must remember that such behaviours do not come without a cause. As mentioned earlier, behaviour problems can be the result of circumstances such as:

- poor communication resulting from poor understanding of language of instruction and other cultural diversities
- little relevant content of learning material
- child abuse
- use of abusive language
- low self esteem (which may develop needs for attention, a child will usually receive attention when misbehaving)



However, it must be remembered that some children may have neurological disorders resulting in restlessness and lack of control.

In addition, it is important to remember that some children will react by withdrawal instead of acting out. These children are 'disappearing' because they do not call for attention, but may need it as much if not more than those who are acting out."



"How can a teacher help children with behaviour difficulties?"



"This is difficult; these children have developed their behaviour patterns over a long time and will take even longer to unlearn such pattern. However, the following can be done:

- Focus on and praise the positive behaviour a child shows (ignoring the negative behaviour)
- Make few rules the child has to keep and if possible explain a relevant consequence when the rule is broken – praise when the rule is kept
- Praise the child whenever s/he is performing well
- Give the child tasks you can expect him/her to master
- Help the child to focus on the work s/he is supposed to do"



"It is difficult to understand that our schools in Uganda can include all learners. Is it possible?"



"Inclusion of all learners is the goal we are aiming at in Uganda. But we also know that Uganda today does not have the resources to include all learners into ordinary classes. We can however, include nearly all, if we have the WILL to do it.

However, will is not enough. Many children, parents and teachers must change their attitude and we must show flexibility and develop insight and understanding.

More resources should be allocated so that classes can become smaller, more teachers colleges as well as teachers in the field can be upgraded.

The best way to change attitudes is to start the process towards inclusion. Good experiences will encourage continuation of the process and change of attitudes."



"I want to know how the teachers will go about including all children into ordinary classes, yet we still have classes with many learners."



"John, if you think about the old type of teaching, I can understand that you have problems. In modern teaching, you will not see what we call one-way teaching. The teachers will use many different methods and will make all the learners active. They will let the learners assist each other."

# Differentiated Educational Management in Classrooms



“How can teachers accommodate this diversity of learners in the same class- room? Could you give me some examples on how to do it?”



“I will tell you about what the teachers can do to make sure that they take care of the diversity among the learners. The teachers have always to remember the fact that all learners (not only those without disability), have unique and specific educational needs.”

## Teachers' role as facilitators

Preparation of teachers is one of the first steps in the process of ensuring the success of education for all in inclusive settings. When a teacher is given an early awareness and preparation, s/he will have developed a positive feeling towards inclusion, increasing his or her professional competence and thereby satisfaction.

There is a need for learners, especially those without special needs, to know about the nature of the difficulties of their peers with special needs. It is however also important for learners with special needs to be aware of the needs and challenges they have as well as constantly being reassured about their abilities and strength.

When implementing inclusive education, which can meet ALL learners' special and diverse educational needs, the teachers should become facilitators rather than transmitters of information. This means that teachers provide guidance to the learners so that every child can learn in accordance with his or her speed. This requires different approaches, methods and class management than when transmitting information to 60, 100 or 150 individuals as if they were one learner.

Teachers will need to use a variety of methods as well as organise the learners in a variety of ways to help each child to learn. This will not only benefit children with special needs, but also benefit ALL children in the class. Academic learning will go hand in hand with social interaction and sharing and children will gradually learn to be responsible for their own learning. It will call for involvement on part of teachers, but it also provide them with greater success and satisfaction.

## Class and group work

Learning and teaching should alternate between class instruction, group work and individual work. Some general and important approaches and methods common for class and group work include:

- Motivation and encouragement is important for all learners
- Teaching should be adjusted to fit different learning ways (styles) and needs
- Integration of different school subjects and organising them into topics can provide good possibilities for all learners. A variety of tasks will make it easier to give children tasks adjusted to their potentials, needs and interests



- Whether children are organised in groups or as a whole class, it is important to involve the learners actively in the lesson through dialogues and activities. Learners with special needs should particularly be encouraged and involved
- Let learners learn through activities – learning by doing
- Introduce games that learners can play together and that will promote experiences and learning – play and games provide good opportunities for learning and improving skills
- Use a variety of activities which learners can use both in and out of class
- When giving instructions to the whole class, some learners with special needs will specially benefit from sitting close to the teacher and the chalkboard.
- When using charts and posters display them at the level of learners eyes (remember especially those who sit in a wheel chair and cannot get up)
- Include all learners in all school activities, (also extra curricular activities) and adjust the activities in accordance to individual needs
- When planning lessons, think of the outcomes you are setting for the class as a whole and then for certain individual learners.
- Divide tasks according to learner's abilities including academic, motor and social behavioural potentials.

## Specifically important for group work

Where possible, let the class do activities in groups so that all learners can contribute to the completion of a task and gain credit for achieving it.

The following are especially important when children are working in groups:

- It is very important that the groups are NOT organised in accordance with children's achievement and potentials. Organising groups according to levels of achievement creates segregation in the classroom and increases the possibility for children to fail. (Remember, some children may do poorly only in one area such as reading. Being placed in a poor performing group will be of little motivation)
- Children learn well from other children if given the opportunity and if they are not bullied
- Place and involve a child with behaviour difficulties with children who may have a relaxing influence
- Encourage as much as possible child-to-child interaction such as:
  - Two or more children discussing an assignment
  - Two or more children preparing one common assignment for example: written assignment, art assignment, music and/or drama assignment
  - One child silently reading a part in a book and sharing the content with group members, then allowing another child to read the next part
  - Reading aloud for each other (for practice, NOT for poor readers, and if a child in the group does not see well)

- Helping each other in practical matters including helping when a child has movement difficulties
- Explaining something that one member of the group did not hear or understand
- Playing games for learning, variety and relaxation
- The principles behind a child-to-child approach are that learners learn by helping and supporting each other. They learn better and more both through expressing their knowledge and through listening. They learn more when they cooperate than when they only work alone. They learn more when they share than when they compete.
- Through a child-to-child approach learners can influence each other.
- Through a child-to-child approach learners' own ideas on how to overcome barriers to inclusion can be respected and acted upon.
- All learners should take responsibility for their learning and for inclusion in the classroom and the society.
- Within a class, develop opportunities for peer tutoring. More able learners can assist those who need some extra help. However, be careful not to over do this. All children need time for themselves and some children, if not watched can become bullies.
- When children are divided into mixed groups you get a better overview of their progress and needs
- Give individual help to learners with special needs either when they sit in their groups or make a routine of speaking with individual children while sitting in a quiet place
- You will get better time to help individual learners if the class is entrusted with responsibility for their group assignments

## Learners with disruptive behaviour

Some learners can be disruptive in class. Disruptive behaviour will usually have a cause. The causes can be related to emotional distress including low self esteem, difficulties in concentration because of poor nutrition, neurological causes, not having learned how to behave in an acceptable manner or a combination of the above.

Learners have to learn to behave in a socially acceptable way. How to deal with disruptive behaviour will depend upon the causes for such behaviour. However, no cause will justify humiliating and pain inflicting punishments. All teachers involved with the learners at school should agree on common approaches of how to respond to learner's behaviour.



"Talking of barriers to learning and development, I have the impression that many children in Uganda do not read well and are not too good in mathematics, why is that?"



"An aspect that is of great concern for all educators is the poor reading ability of many children. Too many children are not developing proper reading skills, they have or are developing reading and writing difficulties.

The same is true in relation to mathematics.

There can be many reasons for this. Let me give some explanations."



## Why children develop reading difficulties

Skills in reading and writing as well as in mathematics are based on the understanding of language and basic concepts, and the ability to use oral language as a means for thinking, reasoning and communicating.

The main reasons why children may develop difficulties in learning to read and write and in mathematics can be:

- They do not understand enough or are not fluent in the language of instruction
- They have little, if any, experience handling and looking at children books, neither have they seen their parents read – so reading is foreign to them. They need motivation for wanting to read
- They have no or little experience in playing with and handling numbers and concepts that are basic for being able to handle numbers
- Teachers in P1 may use too little time in working with pre-reading/writing and calculating activities. (For some activities see below)
- Teachers have not been upgraded in using a combination of methods for learning to read (the method they are using is not always the best one)
- The large number of children in a class – especially when children start learning to read may hinder the teachers from seeing the needs of each child
- Lack of a variety of reading material prevents the children from getting enough reading practice

## Activities related to oral language

Activating the children in listening, understanding and using oral language in the language they are learning to read. This can be done through:

- Having easy dialogues with them. Give the children the lead by asking them what they saw on their way to school, what they did after school, what the weather is, what they like to eat, any experience they would like to share, etc. You can then elaborate and explain concepts in relation to what the children have told you
- Putting emphasis on individual answers and not on class repetition
- Telling stories. A short story every day or read for the class a little part from a book every day
- Identifying the first, and later, the last **sound** (not letter) of ones own name and other words (Milk, Meat, Mother; ca**T**, pa**T**, tha**T**) Use the sign for a letter, if there is a child in the class using sign language
- Finding different words that start with a given **sound (sign)** or end with a certain **sound (sign)**. A game: we are going on a trip and we take with us only things or persons with a name that starts with the sound (sign) **B**
- Comparing words that have one sound (sign) that is the same (h**At**, c**At**, p**At**)
- Finding words that rhyme
- Singing songs
- Learning riddles and rhymes and making them with the class or in groups

## Activities related to the skills of reading and writing

### Preparatory activities for reading and writing

- Free drawing
- Drawing including lines and circles
- Movement activities including changes of directions, circular and straight movements
- Activities including eye-hand coordination

### Reading and writing activities

- Show that each sound is written with a certain symbol
- When learning English make sure the children learn that:
  - The same sound can be written differently (e; ee; ea)
  - Some sound are written with two letters that each alone have their own sound (sh: ch;)
- Find letters that represent a certain sound (sign) using old newspapers
- Find one syllable words with the same vowel sound

### Reading material

- Let children from higher classes write reading material for lower classes
- Find words that sound the same but that is spelled differently (meet, meat)

## Preparatory activities for mathematics

- Experience concepts related to numbers. Children can use each other organising themselves in accordance with:
  - Quantity: some, few, fewest, many, more, most
  - Size: large, larger than, largest, small etc.
  - Under, over (use desks in the classroom)
  - Before, after, in the middle, in front, behind (children use each other: John stands in front of Betty, Betty stands behind John, etc.)

There is a relation between quantity and size. There is little use in being able to count, if the child does not understand that five sticks of the same size put after each other are five times longer than one stick.



“It still seems to me that some learners will need special education/training in some areas, e.g. learners who are blind, deaf or those with severe learning difficulties?”



“You are right. Specially trained teachers from the districts’ Special Needs Education/ Educational Assessment and Resource Services (SNE/EARS) Centres, SNECOs or teachers in charge of special needs education at the school level, or other stakeholders will assist these learners.”





"I know it is difficult today to provide learners with the educational materials they need. They still do share books."



"You are right, but remember even those without barriers to learning and development do not have enough educational materials."



"I am sure it will be even more difficult to provide sufficient educational materials and special materials to learners with special needs."



"Yes, something must be done to improve the availability of reading materials. Teachers can with the help of learners from upper classes be able to prepare reading materials for the youngest learners."

Learners with barriers to learning and development will benefit from having their own materials so that they can use them in accordance with their own pace.

Some learners with special needs, especially those with disabilities may need special materials. This requires resources, which are not sufficient for the moment. But, in the meantime teachers must continue to use their creativity.

The MoE&S procures Braille books. Teachers have also been trained to use available local materials to make appropriate low or non-cost educational material.

Even when not all requirements are in place, the process towards inclusion, which is included under the UPE, must continue."



"Do you think inclusion can benefit all learners, even those without special educational needs?"



"Yes, John. Children must from early childhood experience a society where people have different potentials, abilities, needs, hopes, and dreams. In such a society, members will enrich each other. A society that gives freedom to be different becomes a rich society."

I have already told you about the different methods that the teachers have to use in an inclusive class. Good teaching methods, in a relaxed and accepting environment where sharing rather than competition is the rule will of course benefit all learners. Praising rather than scolding will also benefit all learners.

I can also repeat here that a learner will never learn more than when he or she is explaining a topic to his/her peers. I am sure you know it from your own experience.

An inclusive school will be a welcoming school for all."

## Team work for teachers

In inclusive education, all learners learn to grow in the environment that they will eventually live and work in. Participation of those with special needs should take root from early childhood. All learners and teachers gain from being accommodating, accepting, patient and co-operative.

Inclusive schools call for teachers to work in teams. Teachers get to share ideas and knowledge with each other, with parents and others, thus making education a meaningful aspect of everyday life.



“Did you say that teachers should work in teams? Can you please explain more?”



“Yes. We think that a teacher who works alone in a class has a big responsibility. This is especially true when we consider the size of classes and the diversity we will always find in any class, particularly in an inclusive class.

Therefore teamwork will help share this responsibility teachers have in providing quality education to all children.

Sharing ideas, planning and evaluation in cooperation with other team members is enriching in comparison to doing the job alone. They also develop their skills and abilities when working as a team.

Team members can support each other with the academic, social and other aspects of a holistic child centred education.

By holistic education we mean an education that aims to take care of the whole child, the physical, academic, social and emotional needs the child may have.”



“Please explain a little more about how such teams work.”



“Teams can be organised in different ways. If a class has two or more streams, all the teachers involved in this class could be organised into one team or teams could be organised for example for P1 and P2, for P3 and P4 and so on.

You must see what is best in your school. Teams should not be too big. More than 5 or 6 members will make the work difficult.

The team members can do the following:

- Plan how to implement the curriculum
- Share ideas for activities
- Share information related to the curriculum that is not in text books
- Divide preparation of material among team members
- Substitute for each other when necessary
- Advise each other in difficult situations and in regard to children who do not show progress



- Share evaluation of learners
- Evaluate own work and adjust plans
- Encourage each other.

Teams must be allowed to allocate time for teamwork.”

## Assistance and collaboration

Inclusive education creates a school for all where all benefit, where every one gives what they can and receive what they need. This will prepare the children and all the adults involved to join the process of developing an inclusive society.

The teachers will of course need to discuss with others how to cope with an inclusive class. They can get assistance from each other and the head teachers. In the future they will also be able to get assistance from teachers trained in SNE, SNECOs, staff from the MoE&S – Special Needs Education Division, Assistant Inspectors of Schools in charge of special needs education at district level, and the parents. In the meantime they must seek assistance where it is available.



“Did you say parents? I have always heard that many parents do not care and do not really support their children.”



“Well, what you are saying is true. However some parents seem not to care. Most parents care for the welfare of their children. But, they think that schools are the concern of teachers and headmasters while home is the concern of the family.

Many parents, for different reasons, feel they are not good enough and therefore behave as if they do not care. Parents must be empowered and teachers must learn to consult parents instead of telling them what to do and scolding them for not doing enough.

A reorientation for parents and teachers is necessary so that teachers and parents can learn to share with each other and advise each other on the education and development of the children.”



“Why is it so important that teachers and parents should cooperate?”



“It is important that children feel and experience that their welfare is taken care of by both teachers and parents and that they care and cooperate.

Children may often feel split in their loyalty between home and school – this can harm children’s development of self-esteem. Through cooperation teachers will learn to respect the parents so that children can feel proud of their families.”



“How can teachers and parents get interested in cooperating with each other?”



“Cooperation can develop if both teachers and parents can develop a feeling of respect and partnership. This will not happen by itself. It must be planned.

Time must be allocated for regular and varied parents-teachers interaction (not celebrations for the whole school, but for each single class or for parts of the class when they are very large).

Doing something practical together is always a good “icebreaker”.

- Teachers, parents and learners can together renovate the school and school environment
- Teachers, parents and learners can have other social activities related to relevant events in school or the community

I think to begin with this will be difficult. But after a while, this will work for the majority of parents and teachers.”



“But, I remember that I did not like it when the teacher contacted my parents.”



“All adults remember with an uncomfortable feeling that when the teacher contacted their parents, this meant trouble.

No one likes to hear only unpleasant things about ones child, so why attend teacher-parents’ meetings?

Teachers must always have some positive information and encouraging message for the parents and the learners. Teachers must give support to the parents so that they develop the feeling that they are capable to help their children.”

## Parents and inclusive education

The most important aspects for parents, learners and teachers to know about inclusive education are:

- Education in inclusive settings will provide opportunities to develop good attitudes in individuals towards themselves, the community they live in, and the different situations, which occur in the community
- Education in inclusive settings stimulates the development of skills, values, acceptable social behaviour, and the spirit of involvement and participation in community affairs.



“You have talked about a welcoming school, how can we make the schools welcoming for all?”



“Yes this is right. One of the most important things with inclusive education is to make the school welcoming for all. We have to see how the school can develop a welcoming environment for all learners, regardless of difficulties the learners might have.

We also have to discuss how all the people involved in the school can assist and work together in developing a welcoming school for all.



I will tell you more about how we can develop a welcoming school for all."



"I have one more question. What should we do when children start school when they are for example 10 or 12 years old. Should they start in P1 together with children who are 6 or 7 years old?"



"As a main policy, children should go to school with others who are the same age. When children do not start school at the age of 6 or 7, the teacher could try to provide them with an intensified programme so that they can join their age group as soon as possible."



"Is age difference relevant when the child has a disability? Especially when s/he has a developmental disability?"



"It is destructive for a child's self esteem when learning with children who are much younger than him/ herself, it can be de-motivating.

The best solution of course demands resources. So in the meantime the headteachers must try their best, considering the bad effects this can have on the child. It might be possible to get extra resources from organisations outside the school."

# Welcoming Schools

How can schools develop a welcoming environment for all learners regardless of difficulties the learners might have?

It is important that all schools are open for all learners. This must be expressed through the atmosphere in school, the attitude of the head teacher, teachers and other staff. This includes attitude towards children with special needs no matter their social and cultural background, disability or achievements. Children with disruptive behaviour provide a special challenge. It will be important for the teachers and headteacher to “discover” these children’s positive characteristics and as mentioned above highlight them. Make a few clear rules that the child can keep rather than give them harsh punishment. Humiliating a child presents a poor example for this child and the rest of the class.

A welcoming school will call for flexibility in the application of the curriculum and variety of methods used to meet the needs of all children.

A welcoming school depends upon the attitude of peers, teachers and the parents.



“Do you know what teachers may think about inclusion and welcoming school?”



“Well, I know something about it. Teachers have shared their ideas in workshops. Some of their ideas about welcoming schools and welcoming teachers are presented below”

## Teachers’ opinion about welcoming schools

*When some teachers in Uganda were asked to describe what they thought a welcoming school is, they said that the school should provide:*

- *A secure, protective and comfortable environment*
- *An atmosphere that is friendly, caring, loving, accommodative, encouraging, helpful, supportive, cooperative, conducive and an atmosphere of freedom and guidance*
- *Accessibility, space and necessary equipments*
- *A good organisation*
- *Healthy surroundings*
- *Culture and good social atmosphere*



## Teachers' opinion about welcoming teachers

*A welcoming teacher should:*

- *Show interest in the children*
- *Be creative, good listener, jolly and friendly*
- *Interact with the children*
- *Appreciative of children's work and motivate them*
- *Be tolerant, caring considerate and show empathy*
- *Be committed and honest*
- *Be knowledgeable, innovative and prepared*
- *Serve as a model for the children*
- *Be good in managing the classroom*
- *Show positive feelings - show that you care about each child in the class. You will show the child that it gives you joy when he/she does the work asked for, is polite etc (you should not embarrass the child in front of the others)*
- *Adjust to the level of the child when he or she shows initiative to tell or ask something. Bring the idea or suggestion to the attention of the class and elaborate on the initiative. In this way you follow children's lead.*
- *Give praise and affirmation for what the child manages to do, even if it is not up to the requirements or your expectations – these may be too high*
- *Help the child to focus its attention. You do this through assignments that will be motivating and not too big. Reminding the child nicely of what is to be done*
- *Make sense of the child's experience of the outside world and show feelings and enthusiasm when children share their experiences*
- *Expand or give explanations beyond what the child expresses in class in order to enrich the child's understanding. You do this by relating the child's past experiences with new information and thereby assisting the child to develop new understanding of the matter*
- *Help the child to control itself by setting boundaries in a positive way by:*
  - *Guiding*
  - *Showing positive alternatives*
  - *Planning things together*
  - *Praising good behavior is much more effective than scolding for bad behavior*

## More about welcoming schools and welcoming teachers

A welcoming school will depend upon every single teacher and how s/he relates to the children. We still meet many teachers who think that imposing discipline is the most important thing. However, motivation for learning is promoted through praise and encouragement rather than through strict discipline. Therefore, we are not only talking about the welcoming school but also the welcoming teacher.

### What can class teachers do to meet the diverse needs of all children in their large classes?

- Create an environment in which all learners are equally valued
- Put emphasis on social relations in the class including group work and other activities that promote interaction and give positive feedback to children's work and behaviour
- Create lessons with differentiated assignments and activities in order to meet all learners' diversity
- Ask learners' opinion whenever possible and use their suggestions
- Create a child-centred education which will benefit all learners in the class
- Observe children's academic progress and social participation and be observant to possible learning barriers
- Use various approaches to classroom management in order to fulfil the needs as presented by diversity among the learners e.g.
  - Organise the class into small non-homogeneous groups so that learners can help each other
  - Child to child approach
  - Individual teaching
  - Group work related to topics
  - Use adequate teaching/learning materials
  - Modify the curriculum
  - Create positive attitude among the learners, among others by being a good example and
    - Praise children's achievement
    - Not embarrass children when their answers are wrong, they do not have necessary material with them from home and alike
  - Guide the learners – all learners
  - Involve the parents
  - Sensitise all learners in the class about diversity among learners
  - Observe, as much as possible, each learner's individual needs and modify and adjust teaching according to their needs
  - Work closely with the other teachers, the head teacher, the parents and the teacher in-charge of special needs education in the school.
- Inform and empower parents



## What can learners do to assist each other?

- Respect diversity among children in the class
- Avoid teasing other learners or calling them names
- Assist other learners if they need assistance e.g. in the class, in moving around in the school compound and between home and school
- Include learners with special needs in their activities during break and leisure time
- Learners can also be good agents of change in the community – they should be encouraged to inform their parents and other adults about special needs, disability and inclusion.

## What can parents do?

- Respect children's right to education, and recognise that children with special educational needs in the family have the same right to care and education as all other children
- Understand that some children need more time to learn than other children
- Develop sincere interest in their children's school activities
- Observe if their children enjoy school and if they thrive socially
- Support and encourage all children.

## What can the school management committee and the head teacher do to make sure the school is able to accommodate all learners from the community?

- Inform the community that all children are welcome to school because all children can learn
- Develop an understanding that in today's school, the role of the teacher is changing from being purely a deliverer of information to a person who will promote the learner's overall development and serve as guide for the learners
- Develop an understanding that in today's school children should be taking responsibility for their learning supported by teachers, parents and others involved
- Ensure that expenses related to the education of learners with special educational needs is included in the schools' budget and make sure the teacher in-charge of special needs education is a member of the school finance committee
- Recognise the diversity of learners and their achievement within the community and school
- Develop a clear understanding about all learners' right to education in an inclusive school setting and in their home communities (including children with disabilities)
- Promote collaboration, good working relations, understanding and acceptance between teachers, learners, parents and the community;
- Ensure that the school has at least one teacher in-charge of special needs education to assist teachers and parents in their effort in working with learners with special educational needs
- The teacher should be given the opportunity to participate in training on inclusive education

- The teacher should be given the opportunity to participate in training related to relevant disabilities and the educational consequences of such disabilities
- The teachers should be given sufficient time to carry out their duties in accordance to their expected role
- Organise the teachers into relevant working teams
- All teachers involved should be allocated time for team work which includes:
  - Planning and coordinating all activities
  - Coordinating the approaches of the different teachers involved in a given class
  - Evaluating and monitoring
- Promote respectful attitude among office staff and all other staff at the school through information meetings about special needs, disability, UPE and inclusion
- Ensure barrier free environment within the school and its immediate surroundings.

**What can the teacher in charge of special needs education at school do to assist in creating a good school environment for all learners?**

- Sensitise the school community about the right for all learners to be taught together in an ordinary school
- Help to develop a clear understanding about the rights and responsibilities of the learners, parents, and teachers
- Assist in creating a learner friendly school
- Assist other teachers and learners in welcoming learners with special educational needs
- Guide other teachers in helping learners with special needs in the classroom
- Assist other teachers in acquiring skills required for teaching children with impairments such as visual or hearing impairment, skills in assisting children with severe movement impairments
- Carry out simple assessment of learners with special educational needs within the school
- Guide teachers in how to observe the children's participation and progress in class
- Help the learners with special educational needs to feel that they are included as members of the school community
- Guide other teachers in teaching classes with learners with diverse educational needs
- Inform and sensitise parents and the community about inclusive education
- Ensure that the school is accessible for all learners
- Assist in identifying learners with special educational needs within and outside the school
- Get professional assistance from the Special Needs Education Co-coordinators (SNECOs) or the Districts SNE/EARS staff, if needed.



UNAB has branches in the following districts:

**Central:** Wakiso, Luweero, Mukono, Masaka, Mubende, Mpigi, Kayunga, Rakai, Sembabule, Kiboga, **North:** Apac Lira, Gulu, Nebbi, Arua, **West:** Mbarara, Bushenyi, Kabale, Kasese, Masindi, Hoima, Kabarole, Kyenjojo, Kisoro, Kibaale.

**East:** Iganga, Jinja, Kamuli, Tororo, Mbale, Kumi, Soroti, Katakwi, Moroto, Moyo, Kotido,

## Uganda Parents of Children with Learning Disabilities (UPACLED)

Address: P.O. Box 191, Entebbe

Tel: 041 320 374, 077 473 606

Fax: 041 322 532

Email: [upacted@infocom.co.ug](mailto:upacted@infocom.co.ug)

UPACLED organizes and mobilizes parents of children with learning disabilities, mental retardation, autism etc.

UPACLED has branches in the following districts:

**Central:** Kiboga, Masaka, Mpigi, Wakiso, Luwero **North:** Arua, **West:** Hoima, Masindi, Kyenjojo, Kabarole, Kamwenge, Mbarara **East:** Jinja, Iganga, Kamuli, Mayuge, Pallisa and Mbale.

## Mental Health Uganda (MHU)

c/o USDC Building

Plot 1, Kanjokya St.

P.O. Box 16346

Kampala

Tel: 031 262 062

Fax: 542 598

Mobile: 077 462 373

E-mail: [kayiiral@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kayiiral@yahoo.co.uk)

MHU organizes and mobilizes persons with mental illness and their relatives.

MHU has branches in the following districts:

**Central:** Mpigi, Wakiso, Masaka, **North:** Arua **West:** Kabale, Rukungiri, Mbarara, **East:** Mbale, Soroti, Tororo, Pallisa, Sironko.

## Epilepsy Support Association (ESAU)

c/o USDC Building

Plot 1, Kanjokya St.

P.O. Box 16260

Kampala

Tel: 031 262 062

Fax: 532 598

Mobile: 077 450 383

E-mail: [amugarura@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:amugarura@yahoo.co.uk)

ESAU organizes and mobilizes persons with epilepsy and their relatives.

ESAU has branches in the following districts:

**Central:** Luweero, **North:** Arua **West:** Masindi, Kabale, Ntungamo, Bushenyi, Mbarara **East:** Soroti, Tororo, Jinja

## National Union of Women With Disabilities (NUWODU)

E-mail: [nuwodu@infocom.co.ug](mailto:nuwodu@infocom.co.ug)

NUWODU is an umbrella organization of disabled women.

NUWODU has branches in the following districts:

**Central:** Mukono, Kalangala **North:** Apac, Gulu, Lira **West:** Kamwenge, Kanungu, Rukungiri, **East:** Tororo, Pallisa, Kamuli,

## Deaf-Blind Coming Together.

c/o Uganda National Association of the Deaf

P.O. Box 7339

Kampala Uganda

Mobile: 077 85 66 05

Deaf-blind Coming Together's aim is to identify and mobilize deaf-blind person. The organization has no branches but use Ntinda School for the Deaf (Kampala), Ngora School for the Deaf (Kumi) and Tukore Invalid Salvation Stream (Mbarara) as focal points.

## Uganda Society for Disabled Children (USDC)

P.O. Box 16346

Kampala

Tel: 041 530 864

Fax: 041 532 589

E-mail: [usdc@ugasoe.org](mailto:usdc@ugasoe.org)

USDC has branches in the following districts:

**Central:** Luweero, Masaka, Nakasongola, Sembabule, **North:** Adjumani, Apac, Arua, Lira, Moyo, Nebbi, Yumbe **West:** Masindi, Hoima

## Action on Disability and Development (ADD Uganda)

Plot 887, Bukoto St., Kamwokya

P.O. Box 9658

Kampala

Tel: 041 531 446

Fax: 041 531 447

E-mail: [adduga@spacenet.co.ug](mailto:adduga@spacenet.co.ug)



## Uganda Nation Action on Physical Disability (UNAPD)

Gayaza Rd. off Nansole Rd. (Kanyanya Police Post)

P.O. Box 959

Kampala

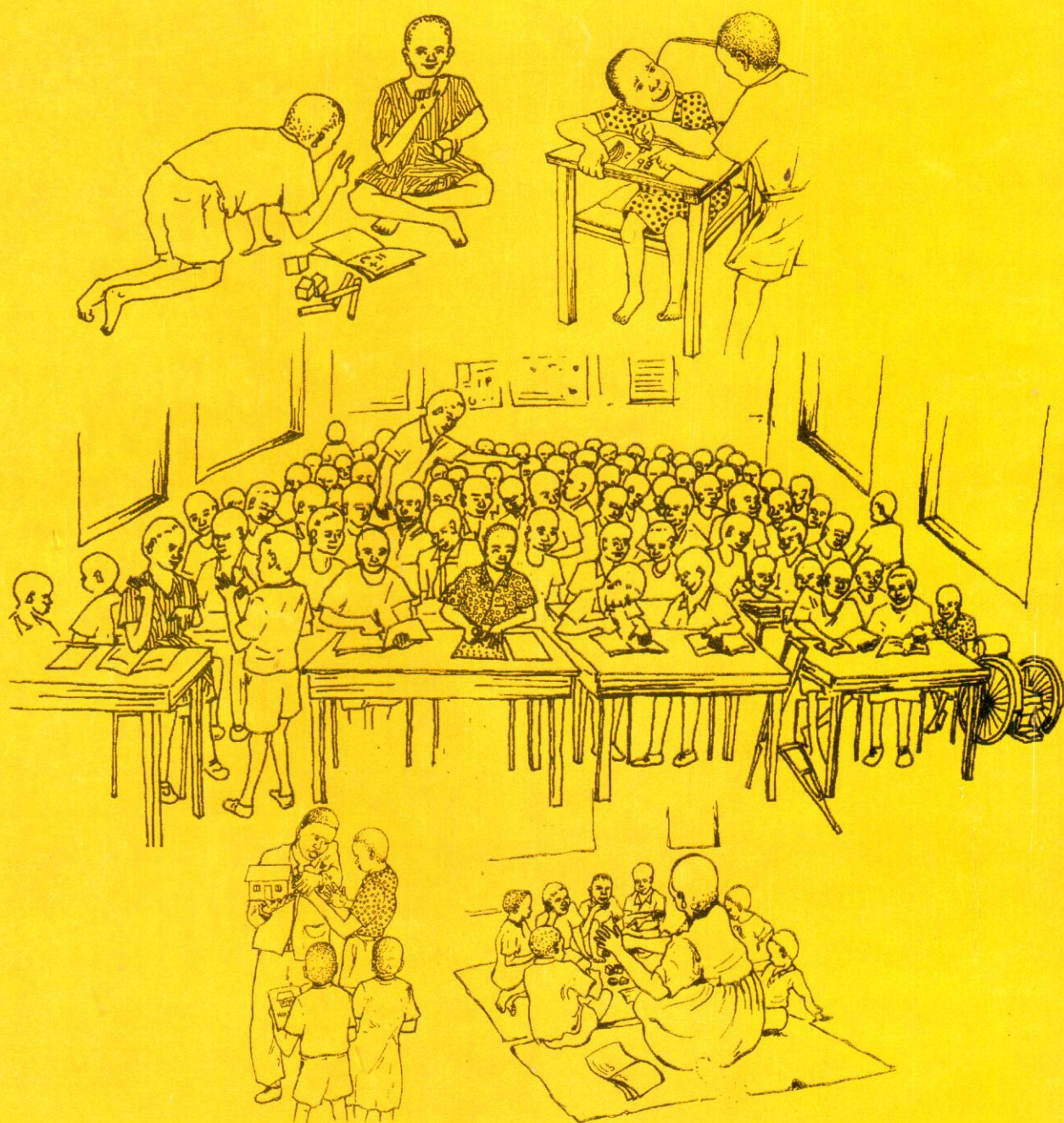
Mob: 077 500 714 or 077 448 572

E-mail: unapd98@yahoo.co.uk

### Remember:

- **All Children have the right to quality education in inclusive schools in their home environment**
- **Inclusive education must be child-centred, flexible and creative**
- **Children have the right to communicate in the way that is most natural for them which usually will be their mother tongue or sign language**
- **All children are educatable**
- **Diversity brings enrichment to all**
- **The process towards inclusion takes time**





# Inclusive Education