REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Achieving education for all children in South Sudan

The National Inclusive Education Policy 2014

The Policy Position Paper

Contents

INVITATION TO SUBMIT YOUR VIEWS

Members of the public and all the stakeholders are encouraged to share their views on the National Inclusive Education Policy Position paper.

Written submissions can be emailed, mailed or delivered before 10th June 2014 by email or hand delivery to:

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Consultation questions are included near the end of the discussion paper as a guide for persons who wish to use them in developing their submission.

A summary of the consultation submissions will be provided to the public, following the conclusion of the consultation exercise in June 2014.

Glossary of terms (interpretation and definitions)

In this policy position paper, the following words and expressions shall have the meanings assigned to them respectively:

___Disability___ is an evolving concept that results from the interaction between persons with impairments, attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.[1]

___Inclusion___ is seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all children and youth, through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision that covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate **all** children.

___Inclusive education___ means that, "Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalised areas or groups." (The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, para 3)

___School and institution of learning___ are used interchangeably in this paper and is defined as an educational institution, public, assisted or private, recognised by the Ministry and the relevant State Ministry of Education which has teachers, learners and learning space.

___Accommodations___ (within inclusive education) are practices, measures and procedures that allow learners with disabilities to learn, have access to, and be tested on the same curriculum as learners without these needs. The table[2] below defines curriculum accomondation as discussed in this paper.

		Content Knowledge (input)	Conceptual Difficulty (input)	Intended Goals (output)	Methods of Instruction
Types of Modification	**Accommodation**	Same as general education curriculum	Same as general education curriculum	Same or modified	Modified
	Adaptation	Same as general education curriculum	Slightly modified	Modified	Modified
	Parallel Curriculum Outcomes	Same as general education curriculum	Significantly modified	Modified	Modified
	Overlapping	Different	Different	Modified	Different

___Learner___ means a female or a male of any age pursuing education in a formal, non-formal or informal, public or private education setting.

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[1] The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006 Article 1

[2] King-Sears, M. E. (2001). Three steps for gaining access to the general education curriculum for learners with disabilities.

Compulsory school age is the age range prescribed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Techonology during which learners are obliged to attend school.

Curriculum is the overall organised course of study for any level of education including the vision, goals and objectives for learning organised into a sequence of courses over a specified period of time guided by a syllabus. Inclusive classrooms have multiple levels of learning with appropriate learning tasks and materials

Development partners means any officially registered partner organisation that works in South Sudan in the context of development.

Ear-marked grants are the fiscal transfers to the States in accordance with the formula set by the Commission.

A policy position paper is a document that sets out proposals for new policy or changes in policy upon which the Government wishes to consult. Feedback and views of the public are invited and considered before the Government makes a final decision on the direction that it would like to take on a particular issue.

Early intervention means "intervening early and as soon as possible to tackle problems emerging for children, young people and their families or with a population most-at-risk of developing problems. Early intervention may occur at any point in a child or young person's life".

Individualised support Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education both academic and social. Effective individualised support measures are provided in environments that maximise academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.

Person-centred learning and life plan (PLLP) is a document that both identifies the learners impairment, the accommodations, support and rehabilitation, medication they should receive including and their goals and how these will be achieved. This is drawn up with the young person concerned, professionals who have worked with them and their families. It should b reviewed once a year.

Child-centred pedagogy is a philosophy that holds at its foundation the need to put children at the centre of learning and development: educators and parents take their cues from children, drawing upon their interests, needs and natural curiosities. In child-centred learning a rich learning environment is created where children are viewed as strong, capable, independent, curious, and full of imagination. Children are empowered to think, question, investigate, and explore as a basis for learning. Child-centred learning views development as a holistic, complex and interrelated process that includes the domains of emotional, social, cognitive, communication, language and physical learning, growth and well-being[3].

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[3]Best Start Expert Panel on Early Learning, 2007

Twin-track approach to inclusion Firstly, to create a child-centred, barrier-free environment where **all** learners receive quality education regardless of their gender, social background, disability, ethnicity, linguistic diversity or other characteristics; and engage and benefit from learning by creating an ethos and practices that respect 'difference' and welcomes diversity. And secondly, for those with various disabilities they receive impairment-specific adjustments, accommodations and support they need to thrive and receive quality education. Both of these tracks require teacher training for all in-service and pre-service teachers.

Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)[4] means all forms of communication (other than oral speech) that are used to express thoughts, needs, wants and ideas. Facial expressions, gestures, symbols, pictures or written words are also forms of AAC, and are used by all persons. Persons with severe speech or language difficulties rely on AAC to supplement existing speech or replace speech that is not functional. Special augmentative aids, such as picture and symbol communication boards and electronic devices are available to help people express themselves. Picture and symbol communication boards could be made from locally available materials and customized for individuals. This may increase social interaction, school performance and feelings of self-worth.

Developmental disabilities[5] are severe chronic disabilities that can the cognitive (intellectual) or physical or both. The disabilities appear before the age of 22 and are likely to be lifelong. Some developmental disabilities are largely physical issues, such as cerebral palsy or epilepsy. Some individuals may have a condition that includes a physical and intellectual disability e.g., Down syndrome or foetal alcohol syndrome.

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[4] American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (1997-2014). Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). Available from: http://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/AAC/
[5] American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (2013). Frequently asked questions on intellectual disability: is intellectual disability the same as developmental disabilities? Available from: http://aaidd.org/intellectual-disability/definition/faqs-on-intellectual-disability#.U30-_fmSzaU

Foreword

The inclusive education policy position paper is intended to engage education stakeholders and the general public in a honest discussion of issues and concerns regarding the development of inclusive education in South Sudan. The purpose of these proposals is to consult with the public to solicit your thoughts about the direction that the Republic of South Sudan (RSS) would like to take for our children. This effort is, but, one step in a longer process of change and eventual transformation. The technical committee highly values and appreciates your feedback and will review, analyse and develop a public response to comments. The feedback will be used to develop and implement realistic public policy and specific actions to enhance and support the development of an education system which is accessible to all.

The proposed National Inclusive Education Policy does not replace the education legal framework already established by the RSS, rather it provides a framework within which access to and equity in education is developed and promoted. Inclusive education examines how educational provisions can be modified / changed to make sure that education is relevant to the local context, that it includes all learners and that it is flexible so that all can participate. It is a transverse issue that cuts across all education initiatives – from early childhood education to primary education, vocational education, adult education, teacher education and curriculum development. It has implications for teacher training, curriculum development, capacity building and community involvement, and requires re-directing resources and inter-sectoral cooperation. It aims to enable both teachers and learners to feel comfortable with diversity, and to see it as a challenge and enrichment in the learning environment, rather than a problem.

Furthermore, the committee recognizes the valuable inputs and experiences of learners, parents, governments and local communities from all the States where data collection took place. Their contributions helped to shape the content of the discussion paper. And while it shines a light on much of what need to change, it is also important to recognise the many developments that are already taking place. The technical committee therefore asks that the discussion paper be scrutinised within this context.

Finally, the policy position paper would not have been possible without the hardwork of all the members of the technical committee, staff from different departments within the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, technical support from LIGHT FOR THE WORLD and financial support from the Strømme Foundation and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad). Richard Rieser and his team must be acknowledged for consolidating and drafting the paper. Thanks to the Minister and Undersecretary, MoEST for their political support in the policy development process.

Rev. Peter Adum Deng (MoEST)
Chairperson, the National Inclusive Education Policy Technical Committee

Executive Summary

This policy position paper proposes the framework of the envisioned 'National Inclusive Education Policy' in South Sudan. The Ministry of Eduation, Science and Technology (MoEST) believes that a fundamentally different approach is needed so that all children, regardless of race, gender, class, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, family background, upbringing, disability, aptitude and/or ability have the opportunity to achieve to their full potentials. As outlined in the constitution, the public education system must meet the educational and developmental needs of all learners, including those who are gifted and/or who experience barriers to learning. Therefore, a new direction for inclusive education is proposed; one that is fully inclusive, in name and in practice, and designed to meet the educational and related needs of all learners.

The proposed inclusive education policy generates broad consultations on the policy direction that the Republic of South Sudan and the MoEST would like to take to improve educational achievements for all learners. The need for broad consultations is premised on the fact that there is little or no shared educational philosophy and understanding about inclusion education within the public education system and; there are no comprehensive legislative or policy documents that set out the framework for inclusive education. These are concerns that have an impact on the quality of the education provided to learners by the MoEST and schools, and must be addressed to improve the education system.

Therefore, this policy position paper proposes a vision for inclusive education. This is because we must focus on the needs of all learners to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to achieve their potentials. Inclusive education cannot occur if it does not operate across the whole education system for all learners. Within an inclusive public education system, inclusive education is not a separate and parallel approach to education; it is a part of an inclusive framework, where all general education is inclusive and barriers to all learner's success are removed. This approach facilitates education that is appropriate for children with various interests, challenges and needs. It is, therefore, important that we adopt an inclusive philosophy and a policy statement on inclusion to frame and guide future practices in the education sector.

The technical committee proposed the following policy priority areas for consideration by stakeholders and the general public during the consultation process:

1. Develop and/or improve inclusive legislative frameworks at the school, county, State and national levels, which is alligned with the aspirations of the current legislations guiding the education system in South Sudan, and adopts regional and international guidelines that promote inclusive education. The proposed development of effective legislation, policies, standards and procedures would set higher aspirational standards and higher expectations for the minimum requirements for the appropriate provision of education to all learners, including those requiring additional supports
2. Set clear expectations and provide support for whole-school and whole-system approaches to maximise learners' achievements and support the development of the

inclusive education process. The whole-school and whole-system approaches to inclusive education are aimed at ensuring that everyone involved with schools plays clearly understood and collaborative roles in the success of learners

3. Introduce a comprehensive multilevel (school, county, State and national) educational support framework that departs from the medical view of special needs education and embraces the social dimensions of disability by putting the focus on the young person and their family through person-centred learning and life plans. The focus will be to identify impairments, but then to come up with accommodations, support and rehabilitation, as well as help transitions to adult life. Such a support framework would sit within and be supported by the whole-school and whole-system approach to improve learners' achievements. Key support institutions (3-tier system of resource centers) and structures (a comprehensive education management information system) should be constituted

4. Provide learners in need of additional supports with inclusive education programmes, services, placements and service delivery models. While MoEST is committed to the education of each child in the regular classroom setting, we want learners requiring additional supports to get this in the most appropriate manner. A starting point is that the learners attend their local schools, but then, their needs should be identified and met by a wide range of supports: itinerant and specialist teachers, resource bases which can provide advise and support on changing learning programmes so they succeed alongside medical and rehabiltative and therapy support. For example, Deaf learners need access to sign language and blind learners need information / education in Braille. Other learners will require augmented and alternative communication, and many will require a new more flexible approach to teaching. We want schools and classroom teachers to be trained and supported to meet an increasing range of diverse needs.This will require large and ongoing training efforts, but all learners will benefit from this improved pedagogy. We recognise this will take time which is why the introduction of such a programme of change is necessary. In the meantime, we want learners to have, as much as possible, meaningful participation and be included with similar-aged peers in school

5. Institute, as part of the existing education management, committee or a stand-alone multi-level and multi-sectoral advisory committee of the MoEST, with an enhanced role and responsibility for the development of inclusive education to fill the gaps in the education programmes and service provision. The committee should:
   a) Support change in beliefs and practices in teaching and learning processes to improve learners' achievements
   b) Make recommendations and decisions regarding the development and funding for inclusive education by the government and development partners
   c) Support development of schools and community-based structures and processes to improve transition preparation and planning for learners that require additional supports
   d) Instutionalize the development of the professional capacity and practices of all teachers to provide reasonable accommodations, individual and peer support and inclusive child-centred teaching

e) Encourage, facilitate and be responsive to increased parent, family and community involvement and advocacy including a national campaign to get all children to school
f) Measure value-added results to help improve investments in inclusive education;
g) Improve inter-ministerial co-ordination; increase knowledge, transparency and accountability for results in inclusiveeducation
h) Support the continuous improvement of inclusive education programmes and services supported by internal and external evaluation

6. The need to challenge negative attitudes towards children and persons with disabilities through awareness-raising campaigns on electronic media, and including a related module in the social studies part of the curriculum. This will be enhanced by setting up disability equality clubs in schools, developing the capacity of local Disabled Peoples Organisations to advocate inclusion and work with parents to value their children with disabilities to bring about a seed change in the way children and adults with disabilities are viewed in educational institutions and society.

The views of the stakeholders and public will be used to concretise the policy proposals into an overarching inclusive education policy paper. The policy should define, among other issues, policy and institutions frameworks; requirements and standards; inclusive education coordination mechanisms; tackling physical barriers in buildings and lack of transport, delivery of inclusive education and; financing and sustainability mechanisms for inclusive education programmes. Consultation will also continue along the way to provide increased value to the process and the final policy framework. To facilitate technical understanding of the issues discussed in this paper we have annexed as part of this paper the 'Why Inclusive Education' pamphlet , which gives the basic framework of inclusive education in South Sudan.

I look forward to your contributions and your futher involvemnet in rolling out the policy.

Richard Rieser, Lead Consultant
(www.worldofinclusion.com e-mail:rlrieser@gmail.com).

Section 1: Background – TORs and the MOU

The development of the National Policy on Inclusive Education for the Ministry of Education Science and Technology, Republic of South Sudan is an initiative between the MoEST, Strømme Foundation and LIGHT FOR THE WORLD and financed by Norad. The initiative is operationalized through terms of reference and the memorandum of understanding signed between the three parties. These documents are available on request. This section outlines the rationale, goal, objective(s), scope and principles of the policy as envisioned in the TORs and the MOU. The section also briefly outlines how the policy position paper was developed.

The Rationale for the National Inclusive Education Policy

"We cherish education for all our people equally and aim to provide a lifelong Education for all children and adults of South Sudan, an education that is relevant and based on the needs of the people, to enable them to be responsible and productive citizens". – This is the mission of the MoEST, Republic of South Sudan and it exemplifies the need and timelines of the proposed policy.

Universal primary education is a global goal. Providing education as a right is an obligation of all governments and requires that they translate their national commitments into legislation. This goal will only be achieved when the universal right to education especially extends to individuals requiring additional supports and accommodations, including learners with disabilities in the country, as the evidence are far that fewer of learners with disabilities attend school than their peers and other marginalized groups. As defined by the General Education Act 2012 and the Education Sector Strategic Plan (2012-2017), the long-term vision of the government of the Republic of South Sudan for the education sector is to build an educated and informed nation. The mission is to introduce a series of reforms to improve quality, access to, and funding for general education, as well as tackle the issue of illiteracy in the country and low institutional and human capacity in the general education sub-sector and, in so doing, promote general education for all citizens of the Republic of South Sudan.

The global 'Education for All' movement, and approaches like child-friendly schools, have not always adequately addressed the specific access, learning and participation needs of learners with disabilities. Even though such broad approaches bring about noticeable results in terms of improving general education quality, teaching practices and attitudes. However, there are many barriers to education in a country such as South Sudan which lead to high drop-out and low completion across the whole population. In addition some barriers, unique to children with disabilities, cannot always be resolved through general improvements alone[6]. For this reason, there is a need to develop an inclusive education policy framework for learners with and without disabilities that addresses the broad system and school-wide improvements required, at the same time as addressing the very specific needs of individual learners with disabilities. This 'twin-

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[6] For a detailed critical look at these issues, see: Rieser, R (2013) 'Teacher Education for Children With Disabilities. Literature Review'. Prepared for UNICEF, New York. www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/Teacher_education_for_children_disabilities_litreview.pdf

track approach' is also in line with child-centred pedagogy, which is a key approach to improving the overall quality of education.

Within a twin-track approach to inclusive education, the provision of targeted support for children with disabilities is often facilitated through community based rehabilitation (CBR) workers and itinerant teachers who work directly with specific children and advise regular teachers. Similarly, resource centres and multi-disciplinary teams serving one or more schools may support whole-school changes and address individual children's learning and participation needs. Whole-school improvement plans and other quality assurance and human resource development initiatives, therefore, need to integrate inclusive education principles pertaining to all learners and learners with disabilities in their criteria.

It is, therefore, imperative to develop a national policy that comprehensively defines and identifies areas of need across the whole population and of additional needs. A comprehensive inclusive education policy framework is essential to guide the work of all actors involved in provision of inclusive education to ensure consistency and a coordinated implementation. The policy is important in the elimination of disparities and enhancement of equity and equality for all learners, especially inclusion of learners with additional needs, including learners with disabilities in the education system.

The envisaged Goal and Objectives of the Inclusive Education Policy

The government's overall goal for education in South Sudan adopts the principles of inclusive education through this statement: "A Society in which ALL persons regardless of their disabilities and special needs achieve education to realize their full potential". The inclusive education policy, therefore, should facilitate the *'creation of positive and successful environment for all learners through the process of inclusive education and provides those for those with special needs and disabilities to have equal access to quality and relevant education and training.*'

The proposed national inclusive education policy framework will be hinged on, and will aim to achieve the following overarching objectives at all times:

1. Develop a process that identifies and challenges the barriers to ALL achieving quality educational outcomes
2. Enhances early identification, assessment of support needs for learners in pre-school and schools, intervention / rehabilitation to promote awareness on the educational needs and abilities of persons at the risk of exclusion within the education system and the wider community
3. Promote and facilitate inclusion of children at the risk of exclusion in formal and non-formal education and training
4. Promote barrier-free environment for learners requiring additional supports in ALL learning institutions
5. Provide, train and promote the use of specialized facilities, services, assistive devices and technology, equipment and teaching / learning materials

6. Develop capacity of teachers and head teachers, specialists and essential service providers to deliver quality services to learners requiring additional supports, including learners with disabilities
7. Enhance collaboration and networking, strategic partnerships and participation of stakeholders, including relevant ministries (e.g., health, social development), parents of children requiring additional supports, including children with disabilities, Disabled People's Organisations and organisations working in the field of disability and health
8. Support research and development on inclusive education for all learners (including those requiring additional supports), documentation and dissemination of relevant information
9. Promote effective management and coordination of services to support achievement of all learners and those requiring additional supports, including learners with disabilities

Scope of the Inclusive Education Policy

The policy will apply to all educational, training and research activities, educational intervention programmes in South Sudan. The policy will apply to (but not limited to) the following key stakeholders:

a. Public and private service providers, development partners, community-based organisations, non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations and faith-based organisations
b. Learners, parents / guardians and the wider community; headteachers and managers of educational institutions
c. Ministry of Education, other government ministries/departments and Semi Autonomous Government Agency (SAGAs)
d. Other inclusive education service providers

Thematically, the policy will cover the following sub-sectors:
- Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE)
- Primary, secondary, Adult and Continuing Education (ACE), Alternative and Non-formal Education
- Technical, Industrial and Vocational Entrepreneurship and Training (TIVET),
- Teacher education and training and all other tertiary institutions, including universities.

In line with the global and national trends, the policy will address issues of access, equity, retention, transition, relevance and quality in inclusive education. Application and implementation in relation to financing, management and coordination and governance of inclusive education at all levels will be covered within this policy.

Guiding Principles

In coming up with this policy document, the following guiding principles will be taken into consideration:

- The twin-track approach (mentioned earlier)
- Recognition that all children can learn and need support
- Identify, address and remove barriers within in the physical, social and learning environment e.g., negative attitudes, poor teaching strategies
- Effective equitable access to all educational institutions and services by all learners and those requiring additional supports and accommodations, including learners with disabilities
- Non-discrimination in enrolment and retention of learners requiring additional supports, including learners with disabilities, in any institution of learning
- Barrier-free transition of learners requiring additional supports, including learners with disabilities, through the various educational levels in accordance with their abilities
- Learner-centred curriculum and responsive learning systems and materials
- Holistic realization of the full potential of learners requiring additional supports, including learners with disabilities
- Protection of the human dignity and rights of learners requiring additional supports, including learners with disabilities
- Gender parity applying equally to men, women, boys and girls, including those requiring additional supports, including those with disabilities
- Active and proactive primary role of parents and families as caregivers and health providers of their children

How the Discussion Paper was developed

The development process of the discussion paper began in earnest, and included consolidating the outcome of the technical committee workshop in Nairobi (the report is available on request) and the data collection process in six States (the data collection report is available on request). The technical committee workshop aimed at building the shared understanding on the general principles and practices on inclusive education among the members. Based on the need to further build social consensus on inclusive education, the 'Why Inclusive Education in South Sudan'pamphlet was developed, and it is also annexed to this paper.

The Nairobi workshop was followed by data collection process in Eastern, Western and Central Equatoria States, Lakes, Northern Bahr-el Ghazal and Western Bahr-el Ghazal States. The data collection targeted children with disabilities and their families, teachers in 48 primary and secondary schools, opinion leaders in the community, County Education Officials. Disabled People's Organizations were also consulted in the process of the data collection to sample their opinions on inclusive education. The participants engaged the opportunity to be heard, and contributed to change for children, their families and the larger society. The exercise provided a better overall view of what the policy priorities should look like, and also provided insight into historical and current challenges with inclusion, as outlined later in the policy position paper.

Key Interfaces

The Republicof South Sudan sees high quality public education, as inclusive education, and as a national endeavour that goes beyond the walls of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and individual schools. A successful and effective education system is dependent upon the involvement of parents, educators, support professionals, non-profit organisations, and the larger society. In addition, public education cannot be successful without the support of the larger government for the establishment of a strong infrastructure that includes legislation, financing, policies and strategies. This infrastructure helps to drive the quality and types of services and supports that are necessary to optimise learners' achievements and outcomes. Examples of services and supports include access to basic healthcare (including mental health services), human rights legislation and enforcement, feeding programmes, social and financial assistance, occupational and physical therapy and speech and language therapy.

Section 2: Contextual Overview of the Policy Issues

Country Context

Emerging from decades of conflict, the new Republic of South Sudan (RSS) is focused on the tasks of nation-building, state-building and peace-building to provide the basis for national development[7]. The challenges facing the country are daunting - there is continued political conflicts, insecurity, widespread poverty, limited economic opportunities, poor infrastructure and limited basic services delivery. South Sudan is a vast country with a relatively small, but rapidly growing population (estimated between 11 and 13 million)[4] –.The country consists of 63 ethnic groups, some of which fall into broader tribal families, speaking around 50 indigenous languages.

The bulk of the population is rural (83%), and largely dependent on subsistence agriculture. Despite the presence of significant natural resources, 51% of the population in South Sudan lives below the national consumption poverty line. The country's development indicators are some of the lowest in the world: only 8% of women are literate; one in three children are moderately or severely stunted from malnutrition[5]; and maternal mortality rates are amongst the highest in the world at 2,054 per 100,000 live births. Additionally, South Sudan is in the bottom five countries for 11 of the 22 Millennium Development Goal indicators for which there is data[8].

Economically, South Sudan is heavily dependent on oil, which accounted for 98% of total government revenue in the 2011 national budget. The South Sudan Development Plan 2011-2013 provides the framework for addressing these issues based on four core areas: improving governance; achieving rapid rural transformation to improve livelihoods and expand employment opportunities; improving and expanding health and education services and; deepening peace-building and improving security.

General Education Context[9]

Prospects for progress in education are inevitably influenced by the wider state of human development. South Sudan is one of the world's least-developed countries, with widespread poverty and food insecurity. About half of South Sudan's population lives below the national poverty line (using the $1.25 a day threshold)[10]. The country has one of the world's highest levels of maternal mortality, with fewer than one in five births attended by skilled personnel (DFID2011).

With over 50% of the population of South Sudan under 18 years old, an adult literacy rate of 27%, and a primary net enrolment rate of 43%, there is a huge need and demand for education at all levels. Enrolment has risen rapidly since the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, but primary net enrolment remains the second lowest of 123

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[7]Government of South Sudan (2011), South Sudan Development Plan 2011-2013: Realizing freedom, equality, justice, peace and prosperity for all
[8]Government of South Sudan (2011), South Sudan Development Plan 2011-2013
[9]For in-depth discussion see Working paper April 2013 on EFA Global report- Accelerating Progress to 2015 South Sudan- Report published by The Good Planet Foundation © 2013-
[10]South Sudan National Bureau of Statistics 2012

countries, at 46%.The high drop-out rate means that fewer than half of these children complete even four years of primary schooling, and only one in ten children finish primary grade 8: girls are half as likely to complete as boys[11].At secondary school levels gross enrolment is 4%, with girls making up only a third of the learners.

Despite significant school construction programmes, educational infrastructure remains limited with permanent structures making up a third of primary classrooms and over a third are open air, 'under a tree', classrooms. Reported textbook ratios are around one textbook per four learners for Mathematics and English, with far higher ratios for other subjects. At least, 36% of primary school teachers are untrained, and the qualified teacher: pupil ratio is 1:117. In all of these national statistics, there are significant variations across and within the regions and states. For example, in Jonglei and Unity States the textbook: pupil ratio for primary Mathematics and English is over 1:10.

The Education Sector Strategic Paper (ESSP 2012-2017) and its accompanying Action Plan, provide the framework for the development of the education sector over the next five years. It lays out ambitious targets for the sector, with a focus to improve quality, as well as access, and to strengthen the resource-base of the sector through an increase of government budget allocations to education from the current 7% to 27%.This is a challenging target in the time period, given the 43% budget allocation to security in the draft2012/2013 budget[12]. Data from the Education Management Information System – EMIS -(2012/2013) indicate that there are 1,551 pre-primary teachers (56.2% paid, 29.9% volunteer and 14% unknown), 27,709 primary school teachers (87.4% male, 35.5% are untrained, 23.7% are in-service, 12.8% are pre-service, 7.2% with diploma and 20.8% unknown).

There are 2,723 secondary school teachers (56;6% trained, 19% untrained and 24.4% unknown). Majority (87%) of teachers are male (EMIS,2012), and no data is available on how many teachers with disabilities there arein South Sudan. Set against the very real achievements and progress made therefore, the education situation in South Sudan can only be described as dire. The country is a long way from achieving the 2015 EFA goals. Today, South Sudan is in a catch-up phase; but it is starting from a low base and moving relatively slowly. But this very dire situation, if peace and reconciliation can be achieved could be the well spring for mobilising large numbers into developing RSS biggest assest all its people and inclusive education is the way to achieve this.

Disability and learners with disabilities in South Sudan

The South Sudan Annual School Census (ASC) in 2012 identified 18,687 primary pupils with special educational needs[13] or 1.37% of all enrolled pupils[14]. Table 6 shows the geographic spread which is between 0.9% in Lakes State and 2.3% in Eastern Equatoria. Nevertheless, the variations in numbers are important in planning inclusive

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[11]EFA (2011), Building a better future: Education for an independent South Sudan
[12]Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (2012), 'Republic of South Sudan Draft Budget 2012/13: Draft to National Legislative Assembly (June 2012)'
[13] See further analysis on the context of special need education on the report based on the data analysis attached.
[14]MoGEI EMIS 2012 Education Statistics for GOSS p47

provision and support. There are also big variations between schools within the 10 States. The low numbers recorded will probably represent the absence of children with disabilities from school. If the number were in line with the latest WHO estimates of 15% worldwide we would expect at least 322,311[15]. Given high prevalence of impairment causing diseases, stunting through hunger and the impact of conflict, it is likely the figure for South Sudan is higher.

Table 1 Numbers of primary pupils identified with special educational needs 2012 ASC.

State	Number	Percent	State	Number	Percent
CE	2,701	1.8%	UN	1,997	1.1%
EE	2,385	2.3%	Unity	1,665	1.3%
Jonglei	2,960	1.2%	Warrap	1,630	1.0%
Lakes	930	0.9%	WBG	755	1.1%
NBG	2,337	1.6%	WE	1,337	1.7%

Some doubt must be cast on this data from an EU funded study in Yei (Central Equatoria) and Mundri (Western Equatoria) counties in 2011 that found in the 41 school visited. "Most of the information was recorded in schools indicating children with special needs with a variation in the classifications of the children in most of the schools visited."[16] This household survey of 563 families with children with disabilities is stratified and then random. The wide variance and ranked position of the various groups of impairing conditions is interesting, with two of their top 4 rankings not even being recorded in the Government school survey. Following the MICs/Washington Group[17] classification methods, they identify those with mild, moderate and severe impairments and found 700 children with disabilities, 28% severe and 72% moderate or mild. Most significant impairments in the sample were epilepsy (39.4%), physical impairment (18.3%), hearing impairment (12.9%) and nodding syndrome (10.6%), a mysterious condition spreading at alarming speed and whose cause is not known.

Given that families in the sample had an average of 6 children, this would mean approximately a child population with impairment of **20.7%.** 40% of children in the sample were not in school because of epilepsy and 26.3% not in school because of disabilities. In the five schools in Yei and thirty schools in Mundri where staff had received training on inclusive education more children with disabilities were enrolled. (See Table 2). Recent work through UN Statistics in selected countries puts children with disabilities at 14%-20% of the total. [18]We know proportions of children with

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[15]Being the potential primary school population aged 6-13 of 2,148,74569 (p43 ASC) divided by 15. However given the many children over 13 attending primary schools and a likely higher level of impairment this could be as many as 500,000. WHO 2011 World Report on Disability, Washington

[16]Sserunkuma et al (2012) Baseline study on the situation of inclusive education in Yei and Mundri counties of South Sudan, Juba, Light for the World

[17]Washington Group on Disability Statistics: *Understanding and interpreting disability as measured using the WG Short Set of Questions*. : Washington Group on Disability Statistics (WG); 2009.
[http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/washington_group/meeting8/interpreting_disability.pdfwebcite]

[18] A recent study in Bhutan of children aged 2-9 years identified 21% with some impairment in a functional area National Statistics Bureau, Bhutan, 2012,(pp1-2). A similar study carried out in Cambodia [18] found impairment levels at 15.6%; 10% had a disability and 3.2% had moderate, severe or profound levels of disability. UNICEF Cambodia Country Office (2011) Cambodia Childhood Disability Survey. Provided by Peter De Vries, UNICEF Cambodia. A study by the Vietnamese Census analysing out-of-school children[18] showed that 85% of children with

disabilities can increase with poverty and environmental factors such as land mines, malaria or river blindness.

Table 2 Number of primary pupils with inclusive education needs by type and gender 2012

Type of Impairment	ASC 2012		Random Sample of 563 families with CWD In Yei, Mundri counties[19]
Poor Vision	5916 (31.65%)	1	60 (7.5%) includes Blind 5
Learning disability	5391(28.84%)	2	60 (7.5%) 5
Partial deafness	3818(20.43%)	3	103 (12.9%) includes 3 deafness
Physical Impairment	2594 (13.88%)	4	143 (18.3%) 2
Complete deafness	633 (3.38%)	5	See poor vision
Complete Blindness	335 (1.79%)	6	See partial deafness
Nodding Disease *	Not recorded		85(10.6) 4
Epilepsy*	Not recorded		315 (39%) 1
Other*	Not recorded		17-(2.2%) 7

*Not recorded in Annual School Census by EMIS as seen as sickness

In South Sudan the 5th Census in 2008[20] showed a prevalence rate of disability at 5.1% (424,000 persons out of 8.28 million-the population at the time) with a variation from 3.1% to 8.1% per State, 5.1% for male and 5.0% for female, and evenly spread across age groups, 85% of persons with disabilities live in rural areas, 15% in urban areas. This compares to 83% of the general population living in rural. A recent study in 4 South Sudan states found higher levels of disability amongst over 18 year olds, a cross-sectional community based study of the four Greater Bahr-el Ghazal States, South Sudan (n = 1200). The Harvard Trauma Questionnaire (HTQ) was applied to investigate exposure to trauma events. Disability was measured using the Washington Group Short Measurement Set on Disability, which is an activity-based scale derived from the WHO's International Classification of Disability, Functioning and Health. The estimated prevalence of disability (with severe difficulty) was 3.6% and 13.4% for disability with moderate difficulties and mild difficulties were 40%. No gender differences were found in

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disabilities did not finish school; 33% had never attended school; and 45% of persons with disabilities were illiterate. This is in contrast to completion rates of well over 90% for those without disabilities. UNICEF EAPRO Viet Nam 2010 Census as cited in the "Out-of-School Children Initiative, Viet Nam Country Study 2012"

[19]Sserunkuma et al (2012) Baseline study on the situation of inclusive education in Yei and Mundri counties of South Sudan, Juba, Light for the World Table 6b

[20] 5th Sudan Population and Housing Census – 2008, Priority results, technical working group (central Bureau of Statistics), Apr. 2009. However, this figure can be estimated to be a minimum figure given the questionnaire utilized and the change in population structure and set up since 2009

disability prevalence. Almost all participants reported exposure to at least one war-related traumatic event[21]. Such results would be likely to be replicated for children.

The partial National Disability Assessment (2012)[22] indicates that, the main self-reported causes of impairment among the surveyed population with severe disability are:- eye disease (23.5%), war/conflict (21%), poliomyelitis (21%), mental illness (14.1%), acquired at birth (12.2%), road accident (10.6%), animal/snake bite (10%), physical violence and abuse (8.8%), burns (6.7%), hypertension (3.8%) and HIV/AIDS (0.9%). This gives a more realistic estimate of children with disabilities and means only 1 in 12 children with disabilities are likely to be in school or in school and correctly identified. All the above suggests there is an urgent need to identify the potential number of people with disabilities who may need to access education, so their needs and reasonable adjustments can be planned for. The MGCSW paper suggests higher attendance of children and learners with disabilities but does not quote a source.

> "In South Sudan, school attendance of persons with disabilities varies from 21.9% to 24.3% according to surveys. The ratio drops to 17.6% for female in all surveyed locations, and to only 10.5% in Warrap state. It shows large discrepancies between male and female and between states. There is no available data on succession and completion of education rate of children with disabilities. The drop-out ratio stands at 48% but there is no data available on the out of school children with disabilities and adult learners with disabilities. Children with sensory and intellectual impairment are less likely to attend schools".[23]

In analysing the context, there are four key emerging conclusions. Firstly, undoubtedly, the numbers with disabilities in school is only a small proportion of the children with disabilities in the community. There are many factors that lead to the barriers to their placement in school poverty, large classes, lack of transport and access to buildings, lack of trained teachers, sanitation, rehabilitative equipment and a rigid curriculum and assessment. Second, change is required at both an institutional and individual level to bring about inclusive policy and practice. To ensure the consistent uptake of inclusive practice across the institution, it is necessary to modify institutional policy and processes, and work with individuals to promote positive attitudes and changes to practice. To embed widening participation and equality could arguably be not about doing different things, rather it involves doing things differently.

Third, it is essential to build an evidence base and models of good practice that can be replicated, from which to bring about change. Evidence plays a significant role in the process of change, providing the means to demonstrate an imperative to change and

[21]**Ayazi' T,Lien,LHenning, A.Jenkins,R.AmokAlbino,R andHauff.E (2013) Disability associated with exposure to traumatic events: results fro**m a cross-sectional community survey in South Sudan**' http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2458/13/469
[22]National Disability Assessment: Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei, & Western Bahr el-Ghazal States, Forcier consulting for MGCSW, Sept 2012
[23]MGCSW(2013) South Sudan National Disability and Inclusion Policy p29

the benefits or impact of change, as well as identify priorities for action. It is necessary to generate and draw on robust evidence that is pertinent and tailored to the particular institutional context and stakeholder groups. Finally, to engage all stakeholders in the learning establishment (learners, teachers, managers, parents and community) to tackle their prejudices and create a welcoming presence, support and participation for those who are currently excluded so they can thrive. The best way to do this will be though whole-school change and development lead by headteachers, the community and with the support of local inclusion coordinators.

Section 3: Conclusion Drawn from Survey Data Analysis

In order to establish the knowledge and views of various stakeholders to incclusive education and the main barriers to its development in March 2014 field work was carried out in 54 schools. Interviews were held with the headtechers and focus groups were held with teachers, parents and learners and with local county education officers and inspectors. Because of ongoing conflict this could only be carried out with respondents in 6 States and 9 counties. In each county, one secondary and five primary schools were involved.

Diagram 1 Aggregated barriers from respondents across all counties.

Summary of barriers

| Barrier	Value
Lack of motivation	~1
Lack of meals	~2
Orphans	~3
Gender issues	~4
Lack of awareness	~5
Inflexible curriculum	~7
Lack of support	~12
Lack of communication (e.g. Braille, Sign…	~19
Lack of resources / materials	~29
Lack of expertise / Teacher training	~43
Accessibility / long distance	~84
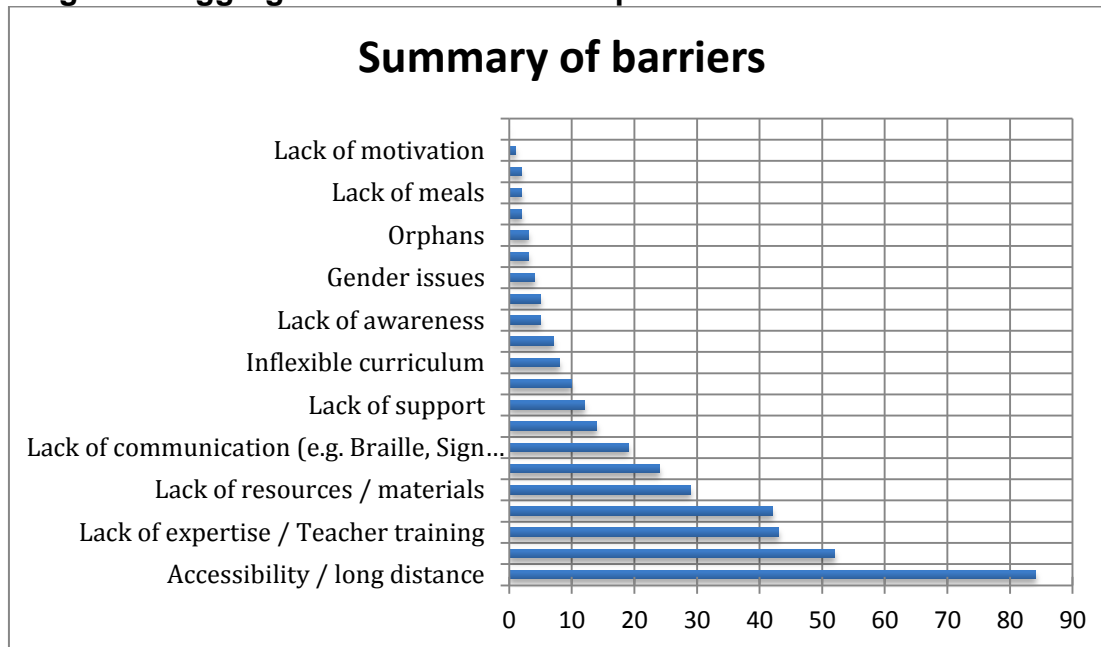
There was some variation across the counties. In poorer areas poverty and inability to pay school costs were a big barrier. In less densley populated areas transport to school was a bigger factor prejudice was also a factor here.. This combined with lack of access to school buildings was prioritised by the largest number of respondents, followed by lack of expertise and teacher training and then lack of resources and poverty. This was followed by lack of appropriate communication system such as Braille and sign language and lack of support and inflexible curriculum.

Once the different possible forms of educational provision for children with disabilities had been explained to all respondents. As Figure 2 shows, there was a very strong preference for the inclusion of all learners together in one inclusive mainstream school where all their needs could be met was way ahead of other options.For all groups of respondents it was the strong choice. A long way behind was resourced classes, where an extra teacher with training would work with the class teacher to meet the needs of the children with disabilities and special needs. A dose of reality for eight repondents, recognising what is currently happening for most children with disabilities, chose

integration where theyhave to just manage with things as they are without accommodations or much support. Quite a few children suggested boarding attached to the school because of difficulties with travel. However the children were very strongly in favour of including their peers with disabilities and helping them.

Figure 2: The preference for the type of educational provision of respondents to the survey. Respondents from Aweil, Yei, Mundri East, Mundri West,Wau,Torit counties
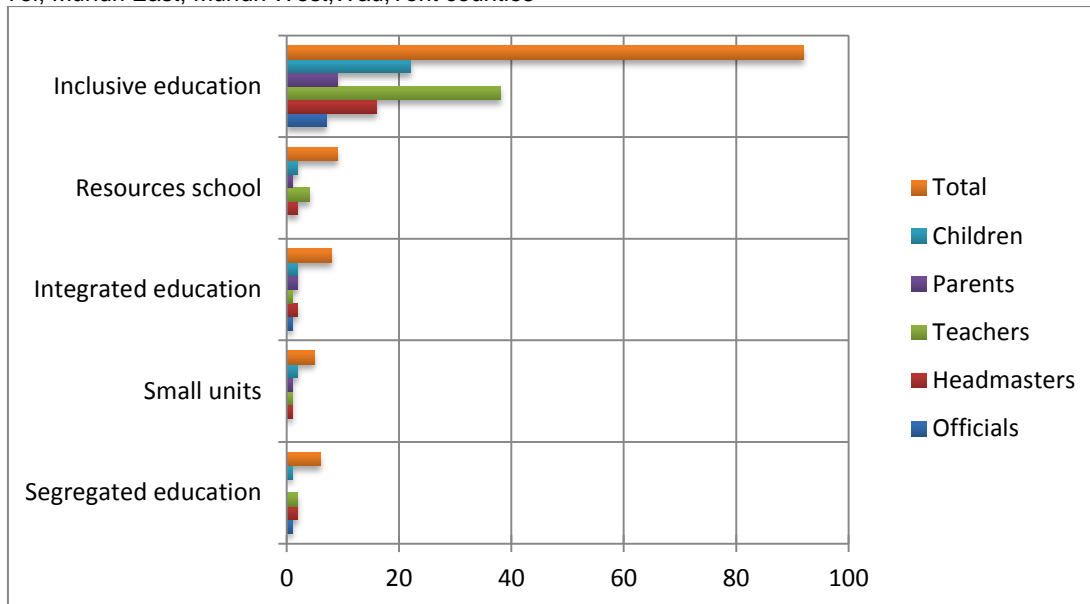
The children's views were most informative and it appeared for the 1-3% of children attending school there was a lot of unplanned good inclusive practicegoing on.

The following counties participated in the survey: Juba, Morobo and Yei in Central Equatoria; Torit in Eastern Equatoria; Rumbek Centre in Lakes State; Aweil Centre in Northern Bahr el Ghazal State; Wau in Western Bahr el Ghazal State and Mundi East and Mundri West in Western Equatoria State. Counties and States were selected by MoEST and LIGHT FOR THE based on security and presence of local contacts.

All children and many teachers knew of children with disabilities who did not go to school and where they lived. A number of the children's focus groups wanted to campaign for the children with disabilities to come to school. Often the negative attitude of parents was given as a reason why children with disability were not in school.

Children's views of support for CWD

We give individual help

Group discussions

We help them get to their seat

The teacher often has them at the front

They get extra help at break

We explain what they do not understand

We talk using gestures

There is some teasing and bullying

We have an after school counseling club

We all learn together

Write in bold on blackboard

Parents need to be persuaded to bring them to school

Parents give advice to the teacher

We encourage them to attend

Section 4: The Proposed National Inclusive Education Policy Framework

1.0 Title and Commencement

This Policy shall be cited as the "National Inclusive Education Policy" and shall come into force on the date of its signatory by the Honourable Minister, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Republic of South Sudan.

2.0 Purpose

This policy provides the framework within which inclusive education programmes and practices in the learning institutions in the Republic of South Sudan will be developed, implemented and enforced.

3.0 Application

The policy applies to all levels of education – formal, non-formal and alternative education in the Republic of South Sudan. While the policy has the legal basis on the General Education Act 2012 of MoEST, it seeks to reach out to the other legislations and policies which are relevant in the development of education system in the Republic of South Sudan.

4.0 Legal Authorities

- The Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan (2011) – The Article 29 on Right to Education and Artcile 30 on Rights of Persons with Special Needs and the Elderly.
- The General Education Act (2012) – Part 50. Regulations – The Ministry may make such rules, regulations and procedures as may be necessary for the effective and efficient implementation of the provisions of this Act .
- The Education Sector Strategic Plan (2012-2017) – Strategic Goal (1): To increase access to general education and promote equity. Objective (2): To facilitate access to learning for pupils with inclusive educational needs. (b) National policy on special needs education is developed by 2012.

5.0 Goals and Principles

The Policy Philosophy – We believe that inclusive education is a public good, which is all about the kind of society that we want to have. It is about ensuring that all children, regardless of race, gender, class, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, family background, upbringing, disability and/or ability are given education and support to achieve their potentials. The recognition that we value and support all learners, regardless of their disabilities and in support of all of their gifts and talents affirms the 'right to education' as provided in Articles 29 and 30 of the South Sudan Transtional Constitution 2011, and the principles and goals of general education as exmplified in the General Education Act 2012.

The Policy Statement – We believe that education in South Sudan must be truly inclusive, universal and comprehensive. Inclusion must be the educational philosophy of the public education system and the framework in which the public education system operates and continues to be transformed.

The Policy Guiding Principles **–** Based on the articultaion of our belief, we state and acknowldge that:

1. The public education system must be inclusive; where all children have the right to quality education, which means the right to enroll, access, participate and achieve their potentials in quality education that meets their need
2. No parrallel schooling structures will be set up for learners with disabilities and those requiring additional supports, rather a system of resource institutions will be developed to support regular schools to include children with disabilities and those at risk of exclusion
3. All children can and will learn, if given time and the proper supports
4. All children should learn together, regardless of their diversity in terms of gender, ethnicity, disability and other human diversity issues
5. The education system must be flexible to accommodate all learners with different learning abilities to achieve their potentials
6. The need for change must be reflective, responsive and model support and accountability for improved student achievements and student outcomes
7. Participation and collaboration of all stakeholders is pivotal in the realization of the inclusive education system
8. All teachers in South Sudan need to be trained in inclusive education and its implementation

The Policy Vision- This policy affirms the vision envisaged in the South Sudan 2040 strategy; that is to build an educated and informed nation by 2040. To realise this vision, the public education system and its approach to inclusion and inclusive education must be truly learner-centred and inclusive, in belief and in practice. Appropriately qualified, trained and suitable staff must understand their roles and responsibilities, work within a clear framework of expectations, and be supported by a strong infrastructure.

6.0 Policy and Institutional Framework

The section outlines the proposed responsibility of the MoEST in the implementation of inclusive education across the country. Ultimately, inclusive education shall be implemented through the Directorate of Gender Equity and Social Change as outlined below.

National Level

The MoEST is the ultimate body responsible for the general education sytem in South Sudan. Consequently, inclusive education will be integral to the functions of the Director General, Directorate of Gender Equity and Social Change. As such, and for the purpose of consistency, the Department of Special Needs Education within the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare shall hencewith be shifted to the MoEST and merged

with the current Department of Special Needs Education (under the MoEST's Directorate of Gender Equity and Social Change). The department will renamed the 'Department of Inclusive Education', and will be headed by the Director of Inclusive Education.

State Level
Subsequently, there will be a Unit of Inclusive Education in all the 10 States. The unit will be headed by 'Deputy Director (Grade 4) for Inclusive Education', who will report directly to the Director of Basic Education at the State level.

County Level
Each county will have an 'Inclusive Education Officer', who will work under the Department of Education and will report to the head of department. The county officer shall be of rank equivalent to that of Inspector of Schools.

School Level
Inclusive education teachers are appointed as a 'Resource Teachers'. They are attached to cluster of schools (mainstream) in an inclusive setting. They become members of staff of the schools and work under the heads of schools. The Resource Teachers' work shall be, among others, to identify all pupils experiencing difficulties in the classroom and plan strategies for intervention. They support pupils and teachers for quality teaching and learning, and collaborate with parents, staff of health services and social welfare. The county 'Inclusive Education Officer' supervises and monitors the activities of 'Resource Teachers'.

Community Level
There will be an 'Inclusive Education Facilitator' appointed in each community, selected from parents or local community based rehabilitation (CBR) workers; whose job is to work with parents to get out-of-school children into school and minimise drop-outs. They will be trained at the county level and be line-managed by the 'Inclusive Education Officer'.

3-Tier Inclusion Resource Centres (IRC)
Headed by the Director, Inclusion Resource Centre, the IRC will be established as the State or semi-autonomous agency linked to the MoEST for the purposes of developing inclusive practices and resources, educational functional assessment, referral, placement and support to the learning institutions. A 3-tier system (National, State and County levels) is suggested. The following are proposed functions of the different tiers:

At the National level, the IRC shall act as the:

- National Referral Centre
- Centre for Policy Development and Quality Assurance Standard
- Research Centre
- Production of teaching and assessment materials

At the State level, the IRC shall act as the:

- Referral centre to the counties
- Centre for programme development and human resource development
- Center for developing guidelines, tools, process and procedures for the comprehensive educational functional assessment and data collection involving learmers with disabilities
- Provider of advisory services to all agencies on issues of educational functional assessment, adapted learning devices and curriculum adjustments

At the County level, the IRC shall act as the:

- Screening, identification and assessment center
- Providing a framework and monitoring of person-centred learning and life plans
- Advise for placement, coordinating CBR services and community mobilising (stakeholders)
- Coordinating provison of assitive devices and other learning materials
- Support schools
- Center for in-service training on inclusive education for teachers

7.0 Policy Requirements and Standards

7.1 Collaborations

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST)

The implementation of inclusive education is the responsibility of the Directorate of Gender Equity and Social Change; through its Department of Inclusive Education, headed by a Director. The Directorate of Gender Equity and Social Change shall deploy relevant infrastructure and logistics for the implementation of inclusive education, including the IRC, and provide personnel and resources for general coordination and monitoring.

Inter-Directorate collaboration within MoEST

The Department of Special Needs Eduation (the proposed Department of Inclusive Education) shall collaborate with all Directorates, Departments and Coordinating units (whatever the case may be) within the MoEST to achieve the goal of inclusion. This inter-directorate collaboration, will extend to the State and County levels. The inter-directorate collaboration shall be operationalized through a Ministerial Directive as provided for in the General Education Act 2012.

Inter-Ministerial collaboration

With the Directorate of Gender Equity and Social Change taking the lead role, inclusive education will be implemented as an inter-ministerial collaborative initiative. To that effect, the proposed Director of Inclusive Education shall collaborate with relevant directors in all areas of programme planning, implementation and monitoring. This function, in the first instance, shall be extended through an inter-ministerial directive to the Directorate of External Relation and Training within the Minstry of Higher Education

and the Directorate of Vocational Training within the Ministry of Labour, Public Service and Human Resource. And as such, mainstreaming practices and principles of inclusive education within higher education and vocational training becomes an integral function of relevant Directors General within the two Ministries. Further and in accordance to already set our procedures for inter-ministerial collaboration, the Department of Special Needs Education (the proposed Department of Inclusive Education) shall explore to identify inclusive education issues in the mandates of the relevant Ministries and collaborate accordingly.

7.2 Roles of key Minsitries

The MoEST shall have the lead role in all aspects of inclusive education activities and programmes. In addition, and as proposed above and within the aspiration of the Republic of South Sudan to provide a holistic eduction for all, implementation of inclusive education shall be a shared responsibility operationalized through inter-ministerial, inter-directorate and inter-departmental procedures already set out at the national, State and county levels, as the case may be. The proposed Director of Inclusive Education, working together with the relevant proposed officers at State and county levels, will take the lead role. Below are suggested key supportive functions of the different Ministries.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST)

The MoEST shall be the lead agency in the development, review and implementation of inclusive education policy (and the programmes, guidelines and activities therein) to ensure that philosphies, principles, practices and activities of inclusive education are effectively aligned with overall national vision, goals and action plans. Consequently, and as provided in the General Education Act 2012, The Directorate of Gender Equity and Social Change, as well as the Department of Special Needs Education (the proposed Department of Inclusive Education) and national, State and county levels shall oversee the implementation process. Working together with the Directorate of External Relation and Training within the Ministry of Higher Education and the Directorate of Vocational Training within the Ministry of Labour, Public Service and Human Resource, the Directorate of Gender Equity and Social Change shall be responsible for:

a) General and policy level coordination
b) Formulation, review and dissemination of programme policies;
c) Planning and budgeting;
d) Provision and/or mobilization of logistics, equipment, human resources and funds
e) Facilitation and mobilization of expert supports and other resources in the:
   I. Development of the guidelines (at the three levels) on the establishment of Inclusion Resource Centres (IRC)
   II. Development, standardisation and use of Braille and sign language as a language of instruction as provided for in the General Education Act 2012 and the Mother Tongue Policy 2012
   III. Develop flexible approaches to the curriculum and assessments to be used with different groups of learners

IV. Adaptation and realignment of Education Management Information System (EMIS) to inclusive education
V. Developmet of School Positive Learning and Working Environment guidelines
VI. Teachers Education, National Education, Higher Education and Vocational Trainings Curriculars
VII. Examination and Assesment procedures
VIII. Learning materials, including textbooks; procurement; dissemination and maintenance
IX. Teaching and learning practises in all learning (formal and non-formal) institutions at all levels
X. Adaptation of social and physical learning spaces to meet the needs of children with disabilities and other marginalized groups targeted by the programme in line with the set-out guidelines and procedures.

f) Facilitating intra-ministerial collaborations towards effective implementation of inclusive education

The Ministry of Health (MoH)

The MoH within its overall framework for health services delivery, will mobilize the requisite resource personnel at all levels and provide requisite technical initiatives and supports in the relevant areas for implementation of inclusive education. Among others, it shall:

a) Provide technical assistance for the production of materials for creating awareness
b) Provide outreach services to schools, including screening and immunization services
c) Facilitate the capacity building of relevant stakeholders at the grassroot level
d) Mobilize material and financial resources for health-related activities
e) Provide relevant life-saving medications and medications that improve the quality of life to children of school-going age, to facilitate their access to education, as well as their participation and achievement in educational activities
f) Play the lead role in the development and review of nutrition and health-related documents, including School HIV and AIDS Policy, and guidelines for school health
g) Facilitate the provision of child-friendly health services, including Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) and Counselling.

Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare

In collaboration with allied Ministries and agencies (Ministry of Local Government, Environment, Justice, Lands, Housing and Physical Planning and other State and non-State agencies), and within its mandate to promote gender equality, social justice, and safeguard the rights and welfare of women, children, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, the Ministry shall:

a) Facilitate the development and standandization of the South Sudan sign language and Braille
b) Facilitate the development of a comprehensive 'National Strategy on Community Based Rehabilitation' with a clear emphasis on its roles in the education sector
c) Provide national guidelines on the development, procurement, maintenance and distribution of assistive devices and adapted learning materials for children with disabilities
d) Ensuring the provision and maintenance of safe accessible school structures and other health-promoting facilities, including ventilation, lighting, toilets, safe water, safe play and recreational grounds and security
e) Enacting relevant bye-laws to promote safety and health standards for schools
f) Inspecting regularly to ensure compliance with safety standards for schools
g) Liasing with the Minsitry of Local Government to regulate and coordinate school health activities of NGOs and other organizations
h) Take the lead and support advocacy on the right to education, in particular, and other rights as stipulated in the constitutioins and other legislation for children with disabilities, the girl child and other marginalized children

7.3 Other proposed policy requirements and standards

Common Learning Environment

It is the responsibility of all the Heads of Learning Institutions and their management Committees, through the support of the proposed Resource Teachers and the County Inclusive Education Officer to ensure that the common learning environment:

a) Is enabling each student to participate fully in a common environment that is designed for all learners
b) Provides opportunities for children to get necessary supports from each other
c) Discourages the culture of labelling based on disability, 'difference' and any other discriminatory attitudes
d) Is a common environment where learner-centered learning principles are applied (e.g., universal design for learning, learning outcomes, instruction, assessment, interventions, supports, accommodations, adaptations and resources)
e) Is giving consideration to accommodations and implements them in a timely manner

Supports for Inclusion

The County Education Department and the School Management Committee, in line with estbalished procedures by the State and National Ministry of Education, must establish and maintain systemic supports for public education that make inclusion of all learners a practical reality. These supports include personnel, as well as policy, funding and

capacity-building strategies. They need to be systemic and ongoing. To achieve this outcome, the following expectations for school personnel are defined:

1. In providing leadership for inclusive schools, Heads of Learning Institutions shall:
   a) Allocate available resources to maximize assistance to classroom teachers to enable them to support the learning of all their learners. This includes professional learning opportunities, support from resource teachers and other local agencies, including NGOs
   b) Ensure that school-wide academic and behaviour interventions are based on data analysis and evidence-based practices, and used systemically to respond to varied student needs
   c) Ensure that a student's instructions is primarily provided by the classroom/subject teacher, with the support of the resource teacher
   d) Ensure hetrogeneous groupings of learners are primarily developed. These should be dealt with in a flexible way, such that their learning is differentiated for their needs, and that collaborative and peer learning is encouraged. Where it is found necessary for imparting certain skills such as Braille or sign language, homogeneous groups are formed; their utilization is time limited and based on the presumption that all learners will return to their heterogeneous mainstream classes
   e) Ensure the assignment of resource teachers to support classroom teachers is done in an effort to achieve a balance between the needs of learners in a classroom (or learning space) and the needs of a teacher for support
   f) Ensure that all learners have access to cross-curricula, extra-curricula, and school-sponsored activities
   g) Ensure that community-based learning opportunities meet the personal growth goals identified for individual learners, and for those learners who have an individual support needs; and that all learners will be based on the register of a local school and be part of a class while undertaking such activities and have a person-centred learning and life plan (PLLP)
   h) Monitor and communicate to the County Department of Education and/or other relevant institutions, as the case may be, the current and future needs regarding the provision of accessible physical environments, in order that inclusive practices are supported
   i) Coordinate with county education assessmnet centres and community based rehabilitation centres for assessment, placement, provision of assistive devices, specific skill training and other supports

2. In providing classroom instructions, the teachers and the resource teachers shall:
   a) Base the reasonable accommodations and individual support on the prescribed curriculum to the greatest extent appropriate for the student
   b) Develop, implement and update the PLLP (whenever significant modifications are required) in collaboration with parents, the student, teachers, relevant educational assistants, professionals and representatives from community agencies as required

c) Ensure lesson plans and instructional strategies reflect the requirements of the PLLP

d) Monitor and evaluate, on an on-going basis, the effectiveness of the instructional strategies identified in the PLLP, as well as the appropriateness of the identified goals and outcomes

e) Provide formal progress reports for learners with a PLLP on the same document (report card), and at the same time as this is done for all other learners, as well as providing documentation of progress on the PLLP to parents or independent learners

f) Convene a meeting of the student, their family and inclusion support teacher and class teacher to review and update the PLLP

3. In responding to behaviour crisis, the head of learning institution shall:
    a) Ensure that the proposed School Positive Learning and Working Environment plan is in place to effectively manage any behaviour crisis within the learning environment
    b) Establish practices that create a welcoming and supportive learning environment and promote, recognize and reinforce appropriate student behaviour and involve learners themselves in strategies to manage their own behaviour with their peers. Involving peer support, in circle time, circles of friends and buddy systems and other child-to-child methods are some of the practices that have proved to be the most effective ways of dealing with behaviour crisis

8.0 Co-ordination Mechanisms

To support the coordination, the MoEST shall within the Department of Development Partners Coordination establish the four level (National, State, County and School based) Inclusive Education Advisory Committees (IEAC). These committees shall be established as part of a working group within the already established National Education Cluster. The Committee, which shall not be more than fifteen (15) members, will have the following representatives at the four levels:

A. National Level IEAC:

Composition

I. The Director General, Directorate of Gender Equity and Social Change
II. The Director, Department of Special Needs Education (the proposed Department of Inclusive Education) – Chair
III. One representative of the Development Partners Coordination Unit
IV. One representative of the Department of Curriculum Development
V. Representatives of the Inclusion Resource Centers
VI. Representatives from the Allied Ministries (see above)
VII. Lead and Co-Lead National Education Cluster (as the case may apply)
VIII. A Social Worker
IX. One representative of the umbrella Disabled People's Organisation
X. One representative of private schools
XI. One representative representing Teachers Associations

XII.   Representatives of parents of children with disabilities and other excluded groups

The team shall invite relevant development partners and other stakeholders to the meeting as co-opted members, depending on the agenda to be discussed.

Functions

The functions of the National Inclusive Education Advisory Committee will be, among others, to:

I.   Address issues related to the relevance, implementation, effectiveness and review of the national inclusive education policy
II.   Advise on the   implementation of inclusive education in Emergency and Humanitarian Response
III.   Ensure effective planning and co-ordination of efforts among implementing stakeholders, including NGOs
IV.   Undertake advocacy for inclusive education
V.   Mobilize funds and other resources for inclusive education implementation
VI.   Monitor and evaluate inclusive education activities
VII.   Seek material and human resources to support inclusive education implementation
VIII.   To challenge misconceptions about children and persons with disabilities, and develop awareness-raising activities to change public attitudes towards disability
IX.   Establish sub-committees to look at specific programme issues

The Development Partners Coordination Unit shall be the secretariat of the Committee, which is headed by the Director, Development Partner Coordination. Working closely with the Department of Special Needs Education (the proposed Department of Inclusive Education), the Development Partners Coordination Unit shall:

I.   Be the secretary to the National Inclusive Education Advisory Committee
II.   Arrange and convene meetings
III.   Make available relevant secretarial services
IV.   Liaise with relevant Ministries and agencies to ensure effective execution of decisions
V.   Present a comprehensive status report on the programme to each of the meetings, which shall include progress reviews and action plans for the months ahead
VI.   Develop indicators at the four levels and set targets
VII.   Prepare annual report on inclusive education

B. State Level IEAC

Composition

    I.   The representatives of related ministries and departments
   II.   The lead and co-lead, State Education Cluster Committee
 III.   Representatives cutting across gender, community leaders, and marginalized groups
 IV.   Representatives of the various relevant state and non-state service providers
  V.   Development Partners Coordination office
 VI.   Coordinator, Educational Funtional Assessment and Resource Center

Function

The State level Inclusive Education Advisory Committee will be chaired by the Coordinator, Inclusive Education. The functions of the committee, among others, shall be to:

    I.   Advocate for inclusive education at the State level
   II.   Coordinate and collaborate with relevant stakeholders on inclusive education implementation
 III.   Provide technical and support services
 IV.   Supervise and monitor programme implementation

C. The County Level IEAC

The County level Inclusive Education Advisory Committee will be established nationwide within each county education development committee, as a working group. The committee shall be coordinated by the county Inclusive Education Officer. The county IEAC shall work closely with communities, families and organizations of and/or working for persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups. Specifically, the committees shall undertake to:

    I.   Provide implementation of policy direction, monitoring and linkages for inclusive education within the county
   II.   Advocate for inclusive education within the county
 III.   Mobilize schools and communities for inclusive education activities
 IV.   Mobilize funds for inclusive education activities
  V.   Provide oversight responsibility for inclusive education activities
 VI.   Support capacity building of relevant stakeholders
VII.   Monitor PLLPs for their areas

D. School Level IEAC

At the school level, there shall be the school-based Inclusive Education Support Team, established as part of the school management committtee to provide systemic support to classroom teachers. The team shall operate under the leadership of the resource teacher and consist of head of subjects and/or class teachers. Other groups to be co-opted into the team include: representatives of student associations, Parents Teachers Associations, local associations of/for persons with disabilities, local Inclusion

Facilitators (where appointed) and other appropriate local agencies. The team must meet on a regular basis, to develop strategies to support teachers in meeting learners' needs and to reduce barriers to learners' success in learning; solve specific problems; address systemic issues, as well as those issues that are teacher- or student-specific; and maintain written records of their meetings. Professionals from other government departments should participate, as needed.

9.0 Delivery and Accommadation

9.1 Screening, Identification and Person-Centred Planning

The need for early identification and detection of impairments – hearing, intellectual, vision, communication and other invisible impairments are important and cannot be over-emphasized. Early identification, prompt referral and management critical, and need to be combined with a positive person-centred planning approach. Interventions in that direction are required to be integrative in terms of the preventative, promotional, curative, rehabilitative and regenerative aspects of health. This will involve regular school assessments and collaborative community and home screening programmes, as well as equipping the learners with basic life skills for independent living.

The screening, identification and person-centred planning shall be the responsibility of the Child Welfare Officers at the county level, in collaboration with county Inclusive Education Officer, community based rehabilitation agencies, early childhood development programmes, health centers and other relevant local agencies. The generally accepted tools, protocols and procedures within the community based rehabilitation framework for screening, identification and evaluation shall be used. Children identified and evaluated shall be referred for the purposes of education to the schools' Inclusive Education Advisory Committee for action. In addition and where the case applies, the outcome of the evaluation process may be used to determine a learner's eligibility for support programmes established by national and state regulations.

9.2 Comprehensive Person-Centred Planning

Within the framework of this policy, 'Education Function' shall refer to the learner's ability to perform important functional activities that support or enable participation in the academic (classroom and homework assignments) and related social (skills to use the learning and teaching space) aspects of an educational program at the appropriate level. The assessment will be based on inclusion principles and involve the learners, their families and friends and teachers or community health workers. The purpose will be to develop a person-centred plan which will include the nature of their impairment, their strengths and weaknesses and what they want to achieve and how that will be facilitated.

Education inclusion and planning shall be the joint responsibility of County Education and Resource Center, County Inclusive Education Officer and the resource teacher. The assessment team shall, at all time, involves the parents and other service providers

during the assessment for the purposes of having a comprehensive understanding of the learner's capability.

9.3 Parents' participation in decision-making

The role of parents shall include the following:
- Promote non-discriminative attitudes and behavior change at home
- Involve the child in activities at home, that contribute to an overall development process
- Participate in school-related decisions (e.g., collaborating with teachers and administrators to set realistic goals for learners)
- Participate in all school activities, not only the ones their child is involved in
- Promote inclusion at the school board, county, State and national levels
- Act as facilitator between child and school staff
- To attend annual PLLP meetings, and actively contribute
- To form collective organizations to represent parental views and advocacy

9.4 Accommodation – Curriculum, Assessment and other Education activities

In an inclusive education setting, learners with disabilities are educated in the general education environment alongside their peers who have no disabilities. However, when learners are not able to learn at the same rate and with the same teaching and learning materials, changes need to be made to the teaching styles/methods to allow for all children to learn as their peers in the regular classrooms. As such, teachers shall be required to accommodate, modify and adapt curriculum and instruction process to meet the needs of the learners. To this end, the Department of Special Needs Education (the proposed Department of Inclusive Education), the Department of Quality Assurance and the National Examination Council shall provide the framework that allows teachers the flexibility to meet all learners' needs.

In addition, through the leadership of relevant partners[24], and in collaboration with other state and non-state agency, the Department of Special Needs Education (the proposed Department of Inclusive Education) shall roll out a whole school training led by the headteacher and principals on 'Inclusive, Child-Friendly Schools'. The use of key existing and future resources[25] and techniques is encouraged.

9.7 Service Delivery and Linkages

Linkages and networks will be established with relevant public and private institutions and service providers, including NGOs. Community efforts will be utilized at the school level to maximize the objectives of inclusive education. Community participation will also be employed in resource mobilization. Local level support will be utilized through voluntary donations, as well as philanthropists from the area. Families and communities

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[24] UNESCO South Sudan, UNICEF South Sudan and LIGHT FOR THE WORLD
[25] Resource Book on Inclusive Education in South Sudan (currently being developed), Toolkit for Creating Inclusive Learning-Friendly Environments (including the 4 specialized books) by UNESCO, the UNICEF Framework on the Child-Friendly School

will also be encouraged to contribute to inclusive education financing through contribution of labour to build facilities, as well as provision of some equipment.

To build up synergy and maximize the objectives of inclusive education, programme implementation will be linked to relevant national programmes and policies whose goals and objectives are directly complementary to those of inclusive education, or indirectly contribute to removing the obstacles/barriers to inclusive education implementation. Noting that the programmes are focused, and personnel implementing them have relatively more expertise in providing technical supports, the inclusive education system will collaborate with relevant personnel on these programmes to provide the requisite technical supports for effective inclusive education delivery.

10. Financing and Sustainability

10.1 Financing
A multi-dimensional approach will be adopted to secure sustainable financing for inclusive education. Financing will be through various supports from the national and state governments; donors and development partners; and the private sector.

Budgetary Allocation
The MoEST will ensure adequate provision for inclusive education activities in the annual budget allocation to cover such costs as:
- Regular administrative costs
- Activities of the committees and departments established
- Training cost for key staff and other key national stakeholders
- Procurement of equipment for schools
- Procurement of relevant instructional materials
- Physical and environmental accessibility of educational facilities (existing and new facilities)
- Scholarships / supports to learners at the risk of exclusion
- Supervision, monitoring and evaluation
- Data collection, management and analysis

To this end the current education budgetary allocation process by the government of South Sudan shall be used.

Development Partners and Donors
The National Inclusive Education Advisory Committee, in collaboration with other agencies, will undertake vigorous advocacy to source funding from relevant development partners to support specific interventions on:
- Research
- Adapted teaching/learning materials and resources
- Assistive devices

- Capacity building
- Policy and strategy development

Private Sector
The private sector shall play the following financial roles to support inclusive education:
- Scholarships / supports to learners at the risk of exclusion
- Provision of assistive devices
- Provision of adapted teaching / learning materials
- Capacity building of teachers on inclusive education
- Construction of physically and environmentally accessible schools, as well as modifications of existing schools to make them accessible
- Research

10.2 General Strategies for Sustainability
To ensure sustainability of inclusive education implementation, the following strategies will be pursued to operationalize the policy document:

Policy Dissemination Seminars
Series of relevant seminars through the States and counties will be conducted to ensure adequate stakeholders' understanding of the policy on approval

Development of a Strategic Framework for Effective Inclusive Education Delivery
A strategic framework to ensure effective service delivery, over a specified period of time, will be developed to give effect to policy implementation

Review and Development of Specific Guidelines for Policy Implementation
The Directorate of Gender Equity and Social Change, through its Department of Special Needs Education (the proposed Department of Inclusive Education), will initiate appropriate action to develop relevant guidelines for policy implementation. Such guidelines will include:
- The establishment and operations of Advisory Committees and other proposed structures at all levels
- Guidelines for capacity building of stakeholders.

Instructional Materials Development
Instructional materials and assistive devices for the teaching and implementation of inclusive education in schools will be periodically reviewed to keep abreast of current trends; and new ones developed, printed and made available to schools as appropriate. These will include books, manuals and all other inclusive education materials.

Networking and Partnership-Building

The implementation of this policy will involve all relevant stakeholders, and it will be implemented with the spirit of collective ownership and responsibility. In that direction, key persons will be identified in all the relevant stakeholder ministries and institutions, as well as in NGOs to facilitate programme implementation.

Development of Monitoring and Evaluation Instruments

The Directorate of Gender Equity and Social Change, through its Department of Special Needs Education (the proposed Department of Inclusive Education), will facilitate the development of a comprehensive framework for programme monitoring and evaluation, with appropriate indicators, as part of the Education Management Information System (EMIS). It will be done at two levels: a database to monitor programme delivery which will effectively feed into the overall Ministerial monitoring and evaluation system; and a field monitoring and evaluation toolkit to control effectiveness of programme delivery.

Research, Documentation and Knowledge Management

The Department of Special Needs Education (the proposed Department of Inclusive Education) will initiate actions to ensure effective feedback and replication of good practices in programme delivery. In that direction, the department, in collaboration with relevant institutions, will undertake research into inclusive education system/structures and initiatives/activities to establish lessons learnt and good practices for inclusive education delivery. Such lessons learnt and good practices will be documented and widely disseminated to relevant international, national and local stakeholders, using state and non-state channels within the education sector and all relevant sectors.

Review of Policy Document

To bring policy priorities in line with current trends, this policy document will be reviewed periodically; notably on the expiration of various strategic frameworks that will be developed for its implementation.

Education and Professional Development of Teachers, Tutors and other Staff

Currently, the Unified Teachers Training Curriculum is being reviewed to incorporate principles and practices of inclusive education, in general, and to specifically enhance the Special Needs Education (as it is currently being referred to in the curriculum; henceforth to be changed to 'Inclusive Education') component. In addition, a resource book is being developed to support capacity development of teachers. As such, both the curriculum and the resource book shall be used to support the professional development of teachers, tutors and other relevant staff.

Related Services

The Directorate of Gender Equity and Social Change, through its Department of Special Needs Education (the proposed Department of Inclusive Education), shall ensure consistent training and development of staff for relevant related services for all schools:

- Language and speech therapy
- Physiotherapy
- School social work
- Orientation and mobility
- Braille and speech recording
- Sign language
- Alternative and augmentative communication
- Guidance and counseling services
- Family support services

10.3 Other policy and programme strategies for sustainability

This policy further proposes the following.

1. ***Integrating practices of Inclusive education in the New National School Curriculum***

The South Sudan Curriculum Framework is a clear and synthetic document developing the country ambition for future challenges of the 21st century. It does echo the inclusive principles in the General Education Act (2012), by stating that goals include "the promotion of long life learning for all citizens and an equitable access to learning opportunities for all citizen". The MoEST's Departments of Curriuclum Development, Quality Assurance and Special Needs Education (the proposed Department of Inclusive Education) shall take lead in developing curriculum adaptation guidelines for all teachers. The mentioned departments will enlist the support of other National Education Working Groups, as appropriate.

2. ***Adaptation of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLM)***

The Textbook Policy (2012), developed by the MoEST, provides the framework within which textbooks and other learning resources will be procured and provided to the learners. The policy exemplifies issues of coverage (including book:pupil ratio), publishing, authorship, supply, planning and distribution, information, books utilization and provision in Alternative Education System. The policy, however, fails to give consideration to the needs of learners with disabilities. Provision of textbooks in alternative formats accessible to learners with different types of disabilities such as Braille, large prints, audiotaped instructions, visual, aural and tactile demonstrations, pictorial and easy-to-read, is also necessary. In addition, the roles of parents, schools, counties, States and national institutions in the procurement and utilization of alternative materials is not discussed. The Department of Special Needs Education (the proposed Department of Inclusive Education) of the Directorate of Gender Equity and Social Change shall take lead in developing guidelines for adapting TLM. This department shall enlist the support of manufacturers and suppliers of TLM and Education Working Group.

In the current financial situation, they should also produce guidance for schools and teachers to develop their own accessible resources from locally available materials.

3. *The Sign Language as the language of instruction for Deaf learners*

While the sign language is recognized as one of the national languages and a language of instruction in the General Education Act 2012, South Sudan does not have a standandized sign language. There is the need to further describe and empower the MoEST and other allied Ministries and stakeholders to describe, standardize, and integrate sign language in the education system at all levels. However, there is a current initiative by the Ministry of Gender, Social and Child Welfare to develop a unified sign language dictionary for South Sudan. The MoEST's Directorate of Gender Equity and Social Change, through its Department of Special Needs Education, shall form a committee under its leadership to develop guidelines and the process of integrating sign language as a language of instruction.

4. *Provision of Augmentative and Alternative Communication Methods*

The education system would put plans in place to mobilize necessary resources and develop expertise to facilitate augmentative and alternative communication for learners with such needs.

5. *Education Management Information System (EMIS)*

The current EMIS platform does provide for collection and aggregation of information relating to learners with disabilities. The system collects data related to the enrolment of the three main categories of disability (physical, vision, and hearing). The system also does give enrolment information of other categories of learners excluded and / or those at risk of exclusion such as orphans and children in difficult circumstances. However, the system fails to clearly articulate the effectiveness and the efficency of the education system to support learners with diverse needs, including those with disabilities. Adequate information on retention, transition, teachers and schools' capabilities to support learning for these learners is not provided. This policy, therefore, recommends the review of the data collection tools to take into account these dimensions, as well as to capture developmental disabilities, for example, intellectual disabilities, autism and epilepsy / nodding disease.

6. *Guidelines for physically / environmentally accessible learning facilities*

The Education Sector Strategic Plan (2012-2017) identifies the need for an architectural design and planning developed for the purpose of supporting learners with different disabilities to attend school, and guarantees their right to equal educational opportunities. It ensures that schools can enhance the proper environment to facilitate and support the education of learners with disabilities, together with their co-learners

without disabilities, in the same classrooms. Accessible designs[26] need to be embedded in other existing designs within the Ministry of Labour and Public Service. Guidelines, kits and plans should be developed to enhance physical / environmental accessibility of school structures.

7. *Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR)*

The Ministry of Health and other rehabilitation pogrammes developed and managed by non-state agencies are responsible for providing social, occupational and physical rehabilitation for learners with disablties, and those at risk of exclusion. Within these rehabilitation programmes, the medical aspects of disability are highly emphasized, with very minimal attention to the social aspect of disability. The current policy, therefore, stresses the need to develop a national CBR strategy to support development of comprehensive CBR programmes, resource centers and lifelong learning programmes. The World Health Organisation (2010) guidance on CBR is based on inclusive social model principles. The desirable outcomes of such a strategy would be to ensure that local mainstream schools:

- Take in all children, including children with disabilities so they can learn and play alongside their peers
- Are accessible and welcoming
- Adopt flexible curriculum
- Have teachers who are trained and supported to teach children with different learning needs
- Have good links with families and the community
- Have adequate and inclusive water and sanitation facilities
- Showcase persons with disabilities as role models, decision-makers and contributors in the school school system

Additionally, CBR strategy will ensure that:

- Home environments encourage and support learning
- Communities are aware that persons with disabilities can learn, and provide support and encouragement
- There are good collaborations between the health, education, social and other sectors
- There is systematic advocacy at all levels to make national policies comprehensive, in order to facilitate inclusive education.

CBR has been proven to be crucial in educating parents about their children with disabilities, and convincing them to take their children to school.

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[26] MoEST and LIGHT FOR THE WORLD are currently finalizing the design for accessible schools, financed by the European Commission, through an Inclusive Education Project.

8. *Inclusive Education in Conflict Situation*

Given that educational activities in crisis situations are means of child protection, as well as social interaction, learning and psychosocial support, these activities must include all children, and particularly reach out to those who are most-at-risk. The policy, therefore, recommends further contextuliazing of the Inter-agency Network on Education in Emergencies (INEE) guidelines, including those on inclusion, for South Sudan and embed those guidelines in and as part of this policy.

9. *Continuous Professional Development for Teachers and Teacher Tutors*

It is important for teacher tutors to ensure that their interactions with student teachers do not give the impression that there is one 'proper' way to think about inclusion. They need to build trust and encourage learners to challenge prior assumptions, misconceptions and beliefs. Student teachers must not be led to believe that there is a single answer, or a single strategy, for supporting learners; and need to understand that no single model of education can ever truly make a classroom inclusive. Rather, student teachers should be sensitized to adopt a 'problem-solving approach' and to be creative. To this end, teachers' continuous professional development in the area of inclusive education should be included in the National Professional Standards for Teachers, and to further develop similar standards for teacher tutors.

10. *School-based Child Protection Policy*

Children with disabilities and other children at risk of exclusion are vulnerable to abuse and negligence. The Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare and UNICEF should:

I.   Review and map existing systems, procedures and processes, including those of government, stakeholders, and civil society, in relation to child protection in educational settings
II. Analyze mapping findings to identify formal and informal linkages, recognize good practices, challenges and opportunities, and propose recommendations for strengthening child protection in educational settings
III. Based on the analysis, develop guidelines and tools to support development of a school-based child protection policy, which should be part of the inclusive education framework.

11. *National Integrated Plan for Early Childhood Development*

Global evidence shows that quality early childhood development (ECD) is essential to bridge equity gaps and overcome inter-generational poverty. The Republic of South Sudan, in collaboration with UNICEF South Sudan, would develop a National Integrated Plan for Inclusive Early Childhood Development.

12.*Disability equality training*

Disability is not primarily about impairments, although health support; rehabilitation and access to relevant aids and assistive devices is essential, it is an oppression that permeates all parts of life and is directed at people who have a long-term sensory, physical, developmental and mental impairments. In Juba County, an interviewer of inclusive education survey summarised parental views as follows:

> "Some parents end up leaving their children at home without taking them to school. They mistreat the children, beating, tying, abusing/insulting their children with disabilities, some say a child with a disability cannot do anything and that they are useless...maybe if the awareness is raised they will change their attitude"[27].

Other African beliefs on the causes of impairments include witchcraft, curse from God, and punishment for parents' sins.

Disability Equality Training is an essential part of challenging and changing misconceptions and negative attitudes, as well as the resulting discriminatory practices. In a country with a constitution guaranteeing equal value and human rights for all, it is essential to develop the capacity of persons with disabilities and Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs), in order to improve their understanding of their position in society. Disability Equality Training is based on three key ideas:

i)   The social model / human rights model, which is at the heart of United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)
ii)   That disability is an historic oppression that can be changed by equality measures and training
iii)   That persons with disabilities must play a leading role in delivering the training and the change we want to see in society - 'Nothing about us without us'.

The UNCRPD (Articles 4.3 and 33), requires the full involvement of DPOs. In many parts of South Sudan, they do not exist or do not have the capacity for the above three tasks. The Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare and other interested actors / organisations should investigate and support their development. This will then lead to the much needed shift in attitudes towards disability and persons with disabilities.

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[27] Mary Siamah Jackson (2014). Interviewer in the nine counties data collection towards inclusive education policy development, reporting on her experience in Juba County, Facilitators Report.

Section 5: Timing of the Policy Development Process

The process of developing this national inclusive education policy started in January 2014 with a national stakeholders' workshop in Nairobi. To date this process has involved consultations with various stakeholders, as well as data collection from a wider audience from six States. The provisions of this policy can only be effective through full implementation. Therefore, the following implementation plan is suggested:

Stage 1: Developing the Foundation for Transformation — by June 2015

- Conduct further detailed research on the areas proposed by the policy to enrich the draft policy and inform the implementation plan
- Consult and propose scenarios for the policy implementation based on the realistic projection
- The finalized draft policy will be submitted to the Minister of Education for endorsement
- Conduct audits of the existing programmes and services and begin to make necessary changes
- Develop the inclusive education strategic plan, with measurable indicators that will serve as benchmarks for monitoring and evaluation of the progress made towards the achievement of inclusive education. These indicators will be publicly available and reported regularly

Stage 2: Building on Change for Transformation — by December 2015

- Develop and agree with all the strakeholders and development partners on a clear roadmap for implementing the policy
- Introduce amendments in the clause on 'Special Needs Education' in the General Education Act 2012
- Continue to engage the public education system and its partners for the purposes of improved inclusive education.
- Develop guidelines, local education ordinances and issue ministerial directives to guide the development of programmes and support structures for inclusive education

Stage 3: Transformation and Continuous Improvement — 2016- 2020

- Align the implementation of the policy with the new Education Sector Development Plan
- Start full implement the inclusive education policy
- Conduct on-going evaluation of the progress of implementation of the inclusive education policy
- Conduct an impact analysis on the inclusive education policy to determine progress towards transformation and impacts on student outcomes
- Use the results of the evaluation and impact analysis processes to continually improve the inclusive education policy and its implementation

Section 6: Consultation Questions

The views of the public and the stakeholders will be used to enhance the proposed policy framework. The consultation questions provided is to guide you to provide relevant feedback. Please feel free to provide any other relevant information that will be useful in the development of the policy. Once the policy proposals are further developed, a system plan must be established, implemented, monitored and evaluated for progress and impact, and will be part of the inclusive education policy framework.

1. Is the proposed policy on inclusive education in general, and different aspects as discussed in particular, appropriate in terms of:
   - The timing, given the political conflict the country is facing?
   - Being comprehensive in addressing the needs of excluded and / or children at risk of exclusion in education?
   - Being compatible with existing education policies, programmes and / or guidelines currently in your organization?
2. Do the policy priorities address the concerns that you may have about the current provision of inclusive education and / or related services? If so, how?
3. What is your opinion on the various proposed areas in the policy?
4. How do you think that you can contribute positively to the policy proposals?
5. What types of performance indicators or measures would you like to see regarding inclusive education?
6. What types of non-personal information would you like the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to make public regarding inclusive education?
7. Do you have any specific recommendations on how the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology can collaborate with the public regarding the development of the inclusive education policy framework?

Annex

1. The 'Why Inclusive Education Pamphlet'