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## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH-EAST AFRICA

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### STUDY ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION REPORT

Submission by:



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Pamodzi for Inclusive Education in South-East Africa (PIESEA) is a transnational alliance of four organizations based in Africa which is being funded by Education Out Loud (EOL), a grant fund supported by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) run by Oxfam IBIS. The consortium is led by Rays of Hope Ministries, an NGO based in Malawi, and its partners: Fount for Nations - Malawi, Kesho Kenya - Kenya, and Shule Direct - Tanzania. The project commissioned an inclusive study with the objective of determining the state of Inclusive Education in Malawi, Kenya, and Tanzania. This study adopted a mixed methods approach combining analysis of data derived from a desk study and that from Interviews of Key informants in three countries. It also incorporated findings and analysis from the best practices country studies conducted in Malawi, Tanzania, and Kenya. The causal analysis emphasizes four domains: the enabling environment; the supply-side conditions; the demand-side conditions; and the quality of provision. These four domains provided the theoretical framework.

**Findings:** An outline of key findings for the inclusive education analysis is presented below;

### *Political Commitment*

- i. All the three countries have signed and ratified the CRPD and its Optional Protocol on Communications.
- ii. In all three countries, the MoE (or equivalent) has some degree of responsibility for educating children with disabilities.
- iii. In all three countries, responsibility, whether it rests in part with the ministry responsible for education or not, is shared between more than one government department.

Overall, these are encouraging findings, but it is not always clear where central responsibility for the education of children with disabilities lies. Spreading the responsibility without clarity and accountability could result in a climate in which each ministry is unsure of its role and services are not delivered effectively.

### *Data collection and evidence base*

- i. Predominantly, the recognition of types of disabilities suggests that definitions are restricted to observable disabilities such as Hearing impairment, Speech Impairment, Vision impairment and Physical disability and do not recognize disabilities which impact a child's capacity to learn, including the fact that this impact may vary greatly between children such as comprehension- not understanding what others are saying and / or

understanding more abstract language. Expression – not being able to express thoughts and feelings, or not being verbal at all.

- ii. The most identified and recognized disabilities include visual, hearing, and physical impairments, severe or mild intellectual impairments, and multiple disabilities.
- iii. SEN and inclusive education are common terms used in the evidence.
- iv. It was hard to find evidence about formal systems of identifying and screening for disability. However, the evidence that was available from the country studies suggests that such systems can be improved. Systems of screening and identification would benefit from an interactionist approach to thinking about disability, including the impact of disability on a child's capacity to learn.
- v. In all countries, there is very little data on the numbers of children with disabilities and it is therefore not possible to understand the extent to which disability is a barrier to educational access. In Kenya, national disability surveys have been completed and data is improving.
- vi. There remain calls for improved data, but it is important to take stock of what is already known and consider advocating using small-scale approaches which might be more robust.
- vii. Disability prevalence is only one type of quantitative data needed to monitor implementation of article 24 (right to education) of the CRPD. There is also limited data on the numbers of children with disabilities in or out of school, their educational achievements, and the barriers to education they face.
- viii. Comparative statistics on, for example, the participation of children with and without disabilities in education can be useful to highlight disadvantage, advocate for greater educational inclusion, and monitor the implementation of the CRPD and the CRC. However, data that enables analysis of this nature is hard to locate.

### **Key points: supply-side conditions**

#### *Education system*

- i. An inclusive education approach is reported to be the dominant strategy for providing education to children with disabilities. However, there appears to be a rhetoric–reality gap, as no evidence was found that documents the commitment to implement such an approach – such as the provision of teacher training for inclusive education as a mainstream activity.
- ii. Information about specialist services was available down to school level and it is captured in EMIS.

- iii. Although important disability-specific teacher training programmes have taken shape in in the three countries, they have not yet been given the prominence and status required to ensure that teachers gain the skills needed to meet the needs of an inclusive education system. Furthermore, inclusive education practice is a small component of the training teachers receive and is often not assessed.
- iv. None of the countries appear to comprehensively address all the aspects of teacher education that the CRPD defines as important.
- v. Despite the challenges, the study findings also suggest there is good practice taking place across the three countries, with some innovative examples of state and non-state provision for children with disabilities, and teacher education programmes which specifically address support for children with disabilities. Providers can look to these examples to enhance the preconditions for the quality of provision.

The evidence from the country studies suggests that:

- Schools are not always willing to enrol pupils with disabilities and there are no incentives or penalties.
- Specialist provision is not always available locally.
- There is no system for placement of children with disabilities in appropriate schools.
- Transport to school is problematic.
- Assessment systems do not take into account the different needs of children with disabilities.
- There is inadequate specialist teacher support.

### **The role of non-state actors**

- i. This study found a complex and sometimes vibrant picture made up of a wide variety of organizations supporting education for children with disabilities. The three countries have national federations of Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) that have come together to lobby for their rights. Some DPOs are active in providing services for children with disabilities such as Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programmes. Non-state actors were often active in conducting surveys and awareness-raising campaigns, implementing projects and programmes, and offering legal aid and training.

**Key points: demand-side conditions**

- i. Poverty poses financial challenges to poor households and affects those with children with disabilities more acutely, as they cannot afford to pay the costs that are related to schooling even when the tuition is free.
- ii. Parents sometimes do not prioritise education for children with disabilities.
- iii. Negative attitudes of some parents in mainstream schools who do not want to accept that children with disabilities are in the same class with their child.
- iv. Parents can have difficulty in accepting they have a child with a disability and are often unwilling to engage the child in public and community life, given the associated stigma.
- v. Stigmatization of children with disabilities can be compounded by issues such as having no school uniform (due to poverty or discrimination by parents) and left handedness

## ACRONYMS

CBCC	Community Benefits Coordinating Committee
CFS	Child-Friendly School
CRC	Civil Rights Commission
CRPD	Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DIWA	Disabled Women in Africa
DPO	Disabled People's Organisation
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECDE	Early Childhood Development Education
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EOL	Education Out Loud
FEDOMA	Federation of Disability Organizations in Malawi
GCE	General Certificate of Education
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
H&HC	Hau & Hau Consulting
IE	Inclusive Education
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
KII	Key Informant Interviews
MOE	Ministry of Education
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSIE	National Strategy for Inclusive Education
NSO	National Statistics Office
PHC	Population and Housing Census
PIESEA	Pamodzi for Inclusive Education in South-East Africa
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
SAFOD	Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled
SNE	Special Needs Education
SWD	Students With Disabilities
UDPK	United Disabled Persons of Kenya
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
VIHEMA	Visual Hearing Membership Association

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Education is both a human right in itself and a requisite for realizing other rights. It has been duly recognized as a human right since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, and reaffirmed by a number of key international and regional conventions and agreements. This suggests that education has to be seen not as a privilege for the few but, as the right for all (UNESCO, 2001). Despite this, many children and youths of school going age, in Malawi, Tanzania and Kenya, are denied this fundamental right.

Education has expanded dramatically in Sub-Saharan Africa over the past half century. From 1970 to 2010, the percentage of children across the region, who complete primary school, rose by almost 50% (from 46% of children to 68%). The proportion of children completing lower secondary school nearly doubled (from 22% to 40%) within the same period. Despite these massive gains, nearly one in three children still does not complete primary school. Efforts to measure the quality of that schooling have revealed high numbers of students who have limited literacy or numeracy skills even after several years of school (Bold et al., 2017; Adeniran et al., 2020).

The international community has characterized this situation as a 'learning crisis' (World Bank, 2018a). The past two decades have seen a large rise in evidence on how to most effectively expand access and increase learning, but actual changes in access and learning in that period have not shown dramatic improvements.

Inclusive education starts from the belief that the right to education is a basic human right and the foundation of a more just society (ibid). It takes the Education for All agenda forward by finding ways of enabling schools to serve all children in their communities. Internationally, it is seen as a key strategy for achieving quality education for all (UNESCO, 2005). In the sections that follow, we discuss the concept of inclusive education and how it relates to the situation in Malawi, Tanzania and Kenya.

### **Definition of Inclusive Education**

There is no universal definition of inclusive education. One common definition of inclusive education is linked to learners with special educational needs. On the contrary, inclusive education has a broader meaning and does not only apply to a specific group. Rather, inclusive education is seen as an approach that supports and welcomes diversity among all learners (Ainscow, 1999). The lack of a common understanding around the concept of inclusive education may be a barrier to effective implementation. In its broadest sense, inclusive education concerns all learners, especially an approach that supports and welcomes diversity among all learners (Ainscow, 1999). It is a process of increasing the participation of all learners in school. It is about restructuring the cultures, policies and

practices in schools, so that they respond to the diversity of learners within their locality. Inclusive education has the following characteristics (Save the Children, 2002):

- Acknowledges that all children can learn.
- Acknowledges and respects differences in children: age, gender, ethnicity, culture, language, disability, and so on.
- Enables education structures, systems and methodologies to meet the needs of all children.
- Is part of a wider strategy to promote an inclusive society.
- Is a dynamic process that is constantly evolving.

This inclusive education study will be guided by the narrow definition of inclusive education which focuses on children with disabilities (children with special needs). According to UNICEF (2022), millions of children with disabilities around the globe continue to be left behind, despite the near-universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the call for action embedded in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the clear mandate set by the Sustainable Development Goals.

Using the latest available data, UNICEF shares the following key findings, that there are nearly 240 million children with disabilities in the world.

Compared with children without disabilities, children with disabilities are:

- 34 per cent more likely to be stunted
- 25 per cent more likely to be wasted
- 53 per cent more likely to have symptoms of acute respiratory infection
- 25 per cent less likely to receive early stimulation and responsive care
- 25 per cent less likely to attend early childhood education
- 16 per cent less likely to read or be read to at home
- 42 per cent less likely to have foundational reading and numeracy skills
- 49 per cent more likely to have never attended school
- 47 per cent more likely to be out of primary school
- 33 per cent more likely to be out of lower-secondary school
- 27 per cent more likely to be out of upper-secondary school
- 32 per cent more likely to experience severe corporal punishment
- 41 per cent more likely to feel discriminated against
- 51 per cent more likely to feel unhappy
- 20 per cent less likely to have expectations of a better life

The key issue is that inclusive education is based on a human rights and social perspectives; the system should adapt to the child, not the child to the system. Above all, it has been recognized as the key strategy for achieving Education for All (UNESCO, 2009) which is one of the greatest challenges to address in the three countries.

### **The benefits of inclusive education**

According to a post on ecole admin blog, (Mar 19, 2020), some benefits of inclusive education include the following:

#### **FOR STUDENTS**

- When students from different backgrounds and different abilities share a typical class, they learn how to deal with situations better and also understand the value of corporation and coordination. Many studies have proven that students with disabilities show better performance and improved skills through inclusive education.
- Students with disabilities (SWD), get a better academic influence, learn better social communication and interaction skills and develop a better stand in the society. They feel like a regular citizen of the community and are also treated as one. This makes them more efficient, and they become more adaptive in different situations. Teachers are also able to discover their potential and identify a unique learning style for them (Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic).
- The classmates of such students, who are without disabilities, also develop a positive and supportive attitude towards these children. Their perspective broadens, and they accept the differences with an open mind. By helping their classmates, a student improvises his/her skills and learn specific critical human values. They learn management, team-work, leadership and communication.

#### **FOR PARENTS**

- A parent's concern for their child with a disability is way more than for a healthy child. They fear that their child may face performance issues and have a hard time coping up in an inclusive classroom environment. Therefore, they are hesitant about the concept of inclusion. However, parents who have opted this type of education for their children generally had a positive review of this. Even the parents of regular children possessed a very positive outlook on the overall scenario.

- Such kind of acceptance and openness of the community acts in favour of Inclusive education and the people's preference for it also amplifies.

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

The Pamodzi for Inclusive Education in South-East Africa (PIESEA) is a transnational alliance of four organizations based in Africa which is being funded by Education Out Loud (EOL), a grant fund supported by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) run by Oxfam IBIS. The consortium is led by Rays of Hope Ministries, an NGO based in Malawi, and its partners: Fount for Nations - Malawi, Kesho Kenya - Kenya, and Shule Direct - Tanzania.

The project received funding under the Operational Component 3 of EOL whose aim is to create stronger global and transnational enabling environment for national civil society advocacy and transparency efforts. The Pamodzi for Inclusive Education in South-East Africa focuses on the awareness gap and the disconnect between inclusive education policies and implementation in Malawi, Tanzania and Kenya. The PIESEA consortium is cognizant of the existence of a strong global, regional, and national policy framework on inclusive education. In spite of this; Malawi, Kenya and Tanzania still score low on inclusive education policy awareness with a huge disconnect between the policy framework and subsequent implementation. In addition, several factors conspire making it difficult for inclusive education to become a reality. Data on Inclusive Education is often not readily available within the three countries of Malawi, Kenya and Tanzania coupled with budgetary constraints, technology and ICT challenges, economic barriers, and cultural and attitudinal barriers.

The PIESEA project is responding to the challenges mentioned above and it is intended to reduce the policy implementation and awareness gaps that exist between inclusive education policies and programming. The project objectives include: improving the use of evidence on inclusive and special needs education among policy makers and influencers within the region by the end of the project; developing a community driven economic and social rationale for investing in the implementation of inclusive and special needs education, and strengthening advocacy campaigns on key inclusive education investment areas within the region.

## **3.0 OVERALL GOAL, SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC OUTCOMES**

H&HC undertook the Inclusive Education study guided by the Terms of Reference provided by the Client:

### **3.1 OVERALL GOAL**

The objective of the consultancy was to determine the state of Inclusive Education in Malawi, Kenya and Tanzania

### **3.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

1. To provide an overall assessment detailing knowledge and practice regarding Inclusive Education in the 3 countries of Malawi, Kenya and Tanzania.
2. To assess gaps in the current approach and resources for inclusive education including personnel particularly teachers trained in inclusive education, infrastructure and equipment in the 3 countries.
3. To capture country level information for the 3 countries including social economic contexts of these countries e.g. Number of children with learning difficulties disaggregated by gender.
4. To assess the enabling and impeding factors to inclusive education in Malawi, Kenya and Tanzania
5. To undertake a desk review of any best practices pertaining to the provision and availability of inclusive education services that can be adopted in the 3 countries of Malawi, Kenya, and Tanzania.
6. To assess how advocacy and community mobilization on inclusive education are carried out in the 3 countries of Malawi, Kenya, and Tanzania.
7. To generate recommendations that enhance inclusive education subject to human rights-based principles and practices.

## **4.0 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This assignment was carried out in context of PIESEA's output area of establishing comprehensive knowledge and practice including detailed baseline data on inclusive education in Malawi, Kenya, and Tanzania. The study was conducted in selected Districts/Counties in Malawi, Kenya and Tanzania where PIESEA project is being implemented. The study based its findings from within the three countries and outside based on the literature review undertaken.

## **5.0 DESCRIPTION OF APPROACH, METHODOLOGY AND WORK PLAN**

### **5.1 GENERAL**

This chapter presents the study approach and describes the main methodology adopted in the execution of the assignment activities.

Through well-formulated description of objectives tasks and identified sub tasks listed in the Terms of Reference, the approach to the study was outlined in broad terms as indicated below. For each task the desired output was formulated based on the Consultant's understanding of the respective task/subtask and the professional experience and capabilities of the proposed team, who ensured the success of the assignment.

#### **5.1.1 Continuous Interaction with the Main Stakeholders during the Study**

Apart from consulting with the main implementers of the project in the 3 countries, the Consultant also maintained close interaction with all stakeholders in education sectors in the 3 countries. This helped to obtain technical information that users may not have and generally get professional views from the respective stakeholders. The interaction also helped the Consultant to understand the sort of information systems that already existed at district/county level.

#### **5.1.2 Close Liaison and Open Dialogue with the Client**

Experience has shown that this approach gives the best and most suitable results. The team's awareness of and focus on this issue was emphasized right from the assignment/study start-up. Such an approach ensured that the findings and recommendations of the study outputs presented in the reports and/or any output document were not new to the Client, thus avoiding misunderstandings and the need to extensively revise/review such output documents.

### **5.2 DETAILED APPROACH**

H&HC collected data from all the necessary study units as required to answer the different objectives in the Terms of Reference. Data gathered in this study was generated through a mixed methods

approach using both secondary and primary sources. In line with the TORs, the study implementation methodology was divided into five distinct phases: design, field implementation/data collection, data entry, data analysis, reporting and dissemination of findings. The study collected primary data using both qualitative and quantitative methods and used different approaches or instruments to gather education knowledge and practice information. It also involved a review and an analytical synthesis of existing information sources and consultations with stakeholders in various sectors including but not limited to government officials, human rights civil society organizations, Inclusive Education Institutions, university departments and government institutions.

As an entry point, the Consultants held a preparatory meeting with the PIESEA (herewith, the Client) to discuss, negotiate and finalize contract obligations. It is at this meeting where the Consultants presented the Inception report.

The study also collected qualitative primary data on other education qualitative aspects from stakeholders using designed tools, such as semi structured questionnaires which were carefully designed to ensure that they are inclusive. Data was collected from a cross section of all the targeted districts and counties (sample proportional to size) so as to have an overview perspective of the situation of children with disabilities.

The following are the specific methods that were used with some modifications to the already proposed approach by the Client:

#### 5.2.1 INCEPTION MEETING WITH PIESEA

An inception meeting with the Client was undertaken to kick-start this exercise. The Client briefed the Consultants on the various aspects of the study and how they expected it to be carried out. This was also used as an occasion to give some verbal background to the project and its objectives. The terms of reference of the assignment were also be clarified. This was an important step since it enabled the establishment of the expectations of the Client and to revisit the obligations of the Consultants. It also served to identify areas and places where the Consultants could find certain information and above all enabled the Consultants to officially hold discussions with the Client. Decisions on the sample of respondents to meet by category was also made at this briefing meeting and ensured that the Consultant got a clear understanding of the whole exercise and also seek clarification where necessary.

#### 5.2.2 REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS (LITERATURE REVIEW/DESK STUDY)

First and foremost, the Consultant reviewed a number of major documents even before designing the actual field methodologies and data collection tools. These included but not limited to the all

Project documents. This helped the Consultant to understand the background of the project in terms of the situation analysis, aims of the project and different activities suggested to be undertaken by the project.

Other relevant documents with regard to the education sector, included;

The Use of UIS Data and Education Management Information Systems to Monitor Inclusive Education

- i. The Bedrock of Inclusion: Why Investing in the education workforce is critical to the delivery of SGD 4
- ii. Situational Analysis of Inclusive Education in Kenya and Tanzania
- iii. Realising Quality and Inclusive education in Kenya through Financing
- iv. Review of Budget sector analysis Reports on Inclusive Education Malawi, Kenya and Tanzania
- v. Baseline Reports on Child Friendly Schools by UNICEF IN Malawi
- vi. Inclusive Education Strategy documents for 3 countries under study
- vii. Education Out Loud (EOL) Proposal
- viii. Pamodzi Detailed Implementation Plan
- ix. Pamodzi Project Proposal
- x. Pamodzi Narrative Program Reports
- xi. Malawi Education Budget Analysis 2022 and
- xii. Research papers on status of Inclusive Education in the three countries.

### 5.2.3 FIELD VISITS

Field visits were conducted to the selected and sampled units and stakeholders so that data required for the study was collected and compiled for use. The sampled visits enabled the Consultant to appreciate the existing education status and collected the study data. Some of the major stakeholders included; government officials, human rights civil society organizations, Inclusive Education Institutions, university departments and government institutions.

### 5.2.4 STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Meetings were arranged with various stakeholders in particular government officials, rights civil society organizations, Inclusive Education Institutions, university departments and government

institutions. These meetings helped the Consultant to get an insight into current education practices and issues in the area.

#### 5.2.5 ADMINISTRATION OF STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRES

As a triangulation technique, a sample of project beneficiaries were targeted for interviews to determine their status and data available as at the start of the project. The Consultant was specifically interested to find out how children with disabilities access education. Of particular interest to the Consultant there was an inquiry on participation of the disadvantaged children.

#### 5.2.6 KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (KII) USING SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRES

The background information of the project indicated that the project involved two components and used several approaches (rights based, participatory and inclusive) hence a number of stakeholders and players were involved in implementation of the project. The study therefore endeavored to identify major players and beneficiaries from the project. These were deliberately targeted for a detailed discussion to get a picture of the project. Some of the stakeholders included the following;

- Representatives Ministry of Education-Directorate of Special Needs Education (MOE-DSNE) in Kenya
- Representatives from Kenya Institute of Special Needs Education
- Representatives from Ministry of Education
- Representatives from DPOs such as NCPWD, FEDOMA
- Representatives from Civil Society such as from Elimu Yetu Coalition, Haki Elimu
- Representatives from INGOs that support Inclusive Education/Education such as VSO
- Head Teachers/Deputy Teachers from Special Needs Schools such from Tom Mboya For Children With Cerebral Palsy/ Chilanga School for the Blind /Pwani School for the Mentally Challenged
- Representatives from the Universities such as Dar es Salaam University College of Education (DUCE)
- Representatives from District education offices such as Buhigwe District Council

### 5.3 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES

Multiple tools and techniques were used to gather specific information from the different target groups to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issues in question and for triangulation purposes.

Tools were developed and submitted for review by the Client (PIESEA) and various stakeholders. They were also pretested, then discussed and revised accordingly to sharpen their effectiveness.

Data collection instruments included an (i) interview guide for key informants and (ii) a questionnaire

#### **5.4 RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCH ASSISTANTS/ENUMERATORS**

The project recruited adequately qualified and experienced enumerators/research assistants for the inclusive education study. These enumerators were recruited in line with the languages that are prevalent in the study areas, although English and Swahili were the most commonly used languages in the study.

As part of their training, they were exposed to survey and objectives; various survey instruments and data collection methods. They were taken through interviewing techniques, complete with translation and proper recording of the responses. As part of the training, the Research Assistants were required to develop practical familiarity with the tools by carrying out pilot administration of the tools.

#### **5.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Participation during the study was strictly confidential and participants were given an opportunity to withdraw at any stage of the process if they felt like discontinuing. The Consultant also explained the study and the benefits of their participation, and confidentiality was strictly maintained.

## 6.0 MAIN FINDINGS

### 6.1 ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

The inclusive study solicited on the enabling conditions that support the fulfilment of the right to education for children with disabilities, including conventions, laws, and policies; data; coordination; and social norms.

#### Key points: enabling environment

##### *Political Commitment*

- iv. All the three countries have signed and ratified the CRPD and its Optional Protocol on Communications.
- v. In all three countries, the MoE (or equivalent) has some degree of responsibility for educating children with disabilities.
- vi. In all three countries, responsibility, whether it rests in part with the ministry responsible for education or not, is shared between more than one government departments.

##### *Data collection and evidence base*

- ix. Predominantly, the recognition of types of disabilities suggests that definitions are restricted to observable disabilities and do not recognize disabilities which impact a child's capacity to learn, including the fact that this impact may vary greatly between children.
- x. The most identified and recognized disabilities include visual, hearing, and physical impairments and multiple disabilities.
- xi. SEN and inclusive education are common terms used in the evidence.
- xii. It was hard to find evidence about formal systems of identifying and screening for disability. However, the evidence that was available from the country studies suggests that such systems can be improved. Systems of screening and identification would benefit from an interactionist approach to thinking about disability, including the impact of disability on a child's capacity to learn.
- xiii. In all countries, there is very little data on the numbers of children with disabilities and it is therefore not possible to understand the extent to which disability is a barrier to

educational access. In Kenya, national disability surveys have been completed and data is improving.

- xiv. There remain calls for improved data, but it is important to take stock of what is already known and consider advocating using small-scale approaches which might be more robust.
- xv. Disability prevalence is only one type of quantitative data needed to monitor implementation of article 24 (right to education) of the CRPD. There is also limited data on the numbers of children with disabilities in or out of school, their educational achievements, and the barriers to education they face.
- xvi. Comparative statistics on, for example, the participation of children with and without disabilities in education can be useful to highlight disadvantage, advocate for greater educational inclusion, and monitor the implementation of the CRPD and the CRC. However, data that enables analysis of this nature is hard to locate.

#### 6.1.1 INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL CONVENTIONS, LAWS AND POLICIES

The Rights of the Child (CRC) protects and promotes the child's rights to survive and thrive, to learn and grow, to make their voices heard, and to reach their full potential. It is in 1989, that world leaders made a historic commitment to the world's children by adopting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

All the three countries (Malawi in 1991, Kenya in 1990 and Tanzania in 1991) have signed and ratified the CRC. The CRC explicitly recognizes the rights of children with disabilities. 159 countries have ratified the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 13 December 2006. Kenya ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2008 while Malawi signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2007 and ratified on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2009 while Tanzania signed and ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on 29 September 2008 and 10 November 2009 respectively.

Figure 1: Commitments from the CRC



Figure 1 presents 42 guidelines on CRC. Out of a total of 42 guidelines, 2, 23 and 28, which are on no discrimination, children with disabilities and access to education, respectively, are directly linked to inclusive education.

These commitments are reflected in targets allied to the fourth SDG to provide 'inclusive and quality education for all'. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities affirms the recognition that disabled children are entitled to enjoy human rights such as primary education, including compulsory and free primary education, on an equal basis with others. Access to education in the three countries for children with disabilities remains a challenge. This situation is partly attributed to the failure by the governments to conceptualise and implement the right to primary education for children with disabilities as envisaged by the international conceptual approaches and legal standards of inclusive education

*Figure 2: SDG 4*



States that are parties to the CRPD that signed and ratified the optional protocol, give the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD committee) the right to receive complaints and investigate serious violations. States that have ratified the convention must report to the CRPD committee on how the rights enshrined within the convention are being implemented within two years of ratification and every four years thereafter.

#### 6.1.2 NATIONAL LEGISLATION TO SUPPORT THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

The research revealed evidence of the right to education for children with disabilities being included in a range of key pieces of national legislation, including constitutions of the three countries. Specific legislation was found in some countries including disability acts or laws. The United Republic of

Tanzania's 1977 constitution and its amendments prohibit discrimination against PWD; its 2009 Law of the Child effectively domesticates the CRC, as does the Zanzibar Children Act of 2011. In addition, the United Republic of Tanzania's Persons with Disabilities Act of 2010 is strongly supportive of a rights-based view of disability with an overt focus on equal participation. It establishes a National Fund and a National Advisory Council for PWD, as well as regional and village or mtaa (the urban equivalent of a village) disability committees to help realize the rights of PWD under this legislation. The United Republic of Tanzania's Education Act of 1969, reviewed in 1978, also refers specifically to children with disabilities – it was ahead of many countries in explicitly including children with disabilities in education in the post-independence push for universal primary education. Finally, the Education and Training Policy of 1995 which was reviewed in 2014.

Kenya's 2010 constitution 'for the first time provides explicit protection for vulnerable Kenyans including children, minorities and marginalized groups, and PWDs'. It protects 'PWDs against discrimination by providing that the state must not discriminate directly or indirectly against any person on the ground of disability under article 27(4). Similarly, under article 27(5), a person may not discriminate against another person merely on account of that other individual having a disability'. Furthermore, analysis from the African Disability Rights Yearbook 2013 highlights that:

*'Article 54 of the Constitution affirms the rights of PWDs in certain specific regards. These include the right to be treated with respect and dignity; to access education in an integrated setting, "to the extent compatible with the interest of the person"; to reasonable access to all places, public transport, and information; and to access materials and devices to overcome constraints arising from a person's disability. Article 54(2) requires the state to progressively ensure that at least 5 per cent of the members of the public in elective and appointive bodies are PWDs. The constitution makes provisions for ensuring the effective representation of PWDs within elective and appointive bodies.*

Kenya's 2003 Persons with Disabilities Act aims to protect the rights of PWD to rehabilitation and opportunities protected by a National Council for Persons with Disabilities, which is 'charged with formulating and developing measures and policies designed to enhance the welfare of PWDs. The Act also establishes the National Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities to provide monetary assistance to organisations and PWDs'. The Basic Education Act 14 of 2013 promotes Special Needs Education (SNE) for 'intellectually, mentally, physically, visually, emotionally challenged or hearing-impaired learners, pupils with multiple disabilities and specially gifted and talented pupils. Kenya's Cabinet Secretary of Education is required to ensure that every special school is provided with appropriately trained teachers and infrastructure for learners with disabilities.

During the study, the team reviewed the effectiveness of some of the policies. The Basic Education Act 14 of 2013 ensures the right of all children with disabilities to free and compulsory education for the first time in the history of Kenya. However, the Act continues to perpetuate discrimination against Kenyan children with disabilities. First, the law fails to provide reasonable accommodations in education, which amounts to disability discrimination. Second, the law fails to ensure an inclusive education system as required by article 24 of the CRPD. While there has been some debate as to whether article 24 bans all special schools, the Basic Education Act creates a system in which all children with disabilities are required to attend separate schools, solely based on their disability. Although an inclusive education system may not be possible to achieve in Kenya.

The Kenya Children's Act 8 of 2001 prohibits discrimination against a child on the ground of disability under Section 5. Section 107(2) of the act provides for the extension of guardianship when a child suffers from a mental or physical disability or illness rendering him or her incapable of maintaining himself or herself or managing his own affairs and property without a guardian's assistance. The survey respondents listed drafts of planning documents that were relevant to the fulfilment of the right to education, where these explicitly dealt with the education of children with disabilities.

The study noted that the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi (1995) provides for the right to education for all citizens. Chapter IV, Section 20 prohibits discrimination of any form. While the Child Care, Protection and Justice Act (2010) makes provision for childcare and protection and for child justice; and for matters of social development of the child and for connected matters. The Disability Act (2012) prohibits discrimination of persons with disabilities in education and training. It states that, "Government shall recognize the rights of persons with disabilities to education on the basis of equal opportunity and ensure an inclusive education system and lifelong learning".

The Education Act (2013) stipulates that education in Malawi, should be for all people irrespective of any discriminatory characteristics such as race, disability, ethnicity, or gender. It strives for accessible, equitable, relevant, and inclusive education. Vision 2020 represents Malawi's long term development strategy. Chapter 7, Section 7.2.2 of the vision makes a provision for inclusion of learners with disabilities at all levels of education. It sets strategic options with regard to the improvement of SNE and thus ensures appropriate designs to cater for people with disabilities. Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III provides priority areas and strategies for addressing prevailing development challenges. The document commits GoM to promoting an enabling environment for girls and learners with SEN. In addition, it acknowledges the challenges being faced in including children with SEN in mainstream schools.

The National Education Strategic Plan (NESP, 2008-2017) addresses the issue of both equity and access to education. NESP commits GoM to addressing most of the challenges relating to education, including those related to learners with SEN. Special Needs Education Implementation Guidelines (2008) recognizes education as a basic human right. It focuses on eight priority areas: early identification, assessment and intervention, advocacy, care and support, management, planning and financing, access, quality, equity and relevance. National Education Standards-Primary and Secondary Education (2015) specify expected outcomes for learners which should be delivered by all education providers in public and private institutions.

National Policy on the Equalization of Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities (2006) supports and encourages inclusive education, provision of assistive devices, adaptation of communication systems, training of specialist teachers, inclusion of SNE in teacher training curriculum and establishment of accessible resource rooms in schools. National Policy on Early Childhood Development (2006) has a number of guiding principles one of which is that “No child shall be discriminated on the basis of age, sex, race, health status, economics, religious or political affiliation in the provision of ECD services by any organization”. However, the policy lacks commitment to inclusive education by failing to provide implicit provisions for early intervention in ECD for children with diverse needs. This denies CBCCs the opportunity to contribute to inclusive education practices. National Youth Policy (2013) provides interventions for both in school and out of school youths.

### 6.1.3 CHALLENGES AND EFFORTS ON DATA COLLECTION ON DISABILITY

Where it is available, data on children with disabilities and PWDs in the three countries studied could be further improved. Overall, the data that were accessible, collectively presented divergent figures on disability, suggesting a lack of clarity over what is being measured, how to measure it and for what purposes. Due to the view that disability is not only about impairment but can be defined as an interaction between impairment, environment and personal factors, efforts have been made to assess impairment in relation to functioning and participation.

However, this has proved particularly difficult to implement in practice, and where information is given on the methodology used and the definition of disability, it appears that some such surveys are measuring only impairment. In the educational field further complexity is added if all children who are having difficulty learning are considered to have ‘special needs’ or ‘disabilities’. There remain calls for improved data, but it is important to take stock of what is already known and consider advocating using small-scale approaches which might be more robust. The study noted that disability prevalence is only one type of quantitative data needed to monitor implementation of article 24 (right to education) of the CRPD.

There is also limited data on the numbers of children with disabilities in or out of school, their educational achievements, and the barriers to education they face. Furthermore, even the data collected do not help provide refined indicators, meaning that some key data is not just available. Again, comparative statistics on inclusive education is lacking, for example, the participation of children with and without disabilities in education can be useful to highlight disadvantage, advocate for greater educational inclusion, and monitor the implementation of the CRPD and the CRC. However, data that enables analysis of this nature is hard to locate.

Detailed analysis of challenges of data on disability is presented per country as below;

### *Kenya*

Generating accurate statistics on disability can be challenging due to the lack of universally accepted standards for categorizing disabilities and methods for collecting data that navigate potential issues of stigma. Adopting one common system of data collection allows for accurate comparison of disability data over time and across locations; however, Kenya's past censuses and surveys have used a variety of data collection questions and methodologies. Development Initiatives' 2019 assessment of the quantity, quality, frequency, and availability of official disability data demonstrated Kenya's wide range of disability statistics, all of which record significantly lower disability prevalence compared with the global 15% prevalence rate estimated by the World Health Organization. The challenges of accurately measuring disability demographics have been long recognized in Kenya. Organisations of people with disabilities (DPOs) critique the census reports as significantly underrepresenting the number of people with disabilities.

The Government of Kenya, working with partners, made on a commitment that she will promote the collection of accurate data on Persons with Disability, disaggregated by gender, age, disability and geographic location for use in planning. The government remains committed to ensure the implementation of the Inclusive Data Charter to ensure that relevant surveys begin to mainstream data disaggregation. The government then made a commitment to sign up to the Inclusive Data Charter and subsequent development of an Action Plan for its implementation.

As of 2021, the Government of Kenya incorporated the Washington Group Short Set of Disability Questions in the National Population and Housing Census 2019, to capture information on the Persons with Disabilities. The government further developed, validated, and launched the Disability Inclusive Data Charter Action Plan that aims to engage Ministries, Counties, Departments and Agencies (MCDAs) and non-State actors to be coordinated in collection, analysis, and utilization of comprehensive disaggregated disability data.

It also aims to build the capacity of all implementers of national priorities and attainment of interventions as articulated in various protocols and conventions which Kenya has ratified. The study noted that in the preparatory stages of the 2019 census, DPOs, led by the United Disabled Persons of Kenya (UDPK), advocated for the use of UN-recommended standards to guide the collection of data on disability. These standards – the Washington Group Questions – were used in the 2019 census to identify people with disabilities. The Washington Group Short Set of Questions are designed to identify people who experience difficulties in doing six universal, basic actions – seeing, hearing, mobility, cognition, self-care, and communication. The questions ask respondents to choose from four levels of difficulty for each domain: 1) No, no difficulty 2) Yes, some difficulty 3) Yes, a lot of difficulty, 4) Cannot do it at all. In the census an option for ‘Don’t know’ was also included. This question framework captures both domain of functioning and severity of functioning across the population.

### *Malawi*

Most of the statistics about special needs education (SNE) in Malawi is from the National Statistics Office under *National Housing and Population Census*. The challenge with such data is that focus is not specifically on education, let alone on special education. Further, the data are too huge and sometimes not fully analyzed for one to decipher specific issues of SE. The report on the 2018 Population and Housing Census published by NSO does not include disability-disaggregated data, and thus there is no discussion of any methodology used (if at all there was any) to collect disability data during the 2018 Census.

The final report on the 2018 Population and Housing Census published by NSO indicates that during data collection a person was deemed to having a disability if they had difficulties or problems in one or all of the following areas: seeing, hearing, walking/climbing, speaking, intellectual, self-care, and other difficulties. NSO also collected data of persons with albinism and those with epilepsy. The NSO obtained the 2018 data on the prevalence of disability through the population and housing census survey (decennial).

Although the Washington Group Short Set of questions was not used, people were still asked if they had difficulties with walking/climbing, seeing, hearing, speaking or ‘any other problem’. Other data on SNE is from Government’s *Education Management Information System* (EMIS), which aggregates data from all schools across the country. The data seem to have the same stated challenge in addition to having an error of trying to create a positive impression of government and the ministry’s successes.

## *Tanzania*

Data on disability in Tanzania has been gathered through a number of surveys and censuses over the last three decades. Early efforts were based on a narrow 'category-based' definition of disability which required respondents to self-identify as 'disabled' and this resulted in very low prevalence figures. For example, in 1981 the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare conducted the 'Census of Disabled Persons' in mainland Tanzania and found that only 1% of the population were persons with disabilities; while the fourth national census on population and housing in 2002 estimated that 2.0% of the country's population lived with some form of disability (NBS, 2006:42).

In 2008, a more comprehensive survey on disability was carried out by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) to determine the prevalence of disability and the living conditions of persons with disabilities across the country. The survey used a set of questions developed by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics based on activity limitation rather than physical condition, and with this modified methodology found the prevalence of disability to be 7.8% for people aged 7 years and above. The 2012 census, which used the same methodology, found a slightly lower figure of 5.93% of the total population, but this still represents a significant increase in comparison with earlier surveys (NBS,2014).

The stakeholders interviewed in Tanzania explained that data on special needs is scanty and doesn't reflect the situation on the ground. The latest National Strategy for Inclusive Education (NSIE) 2018-2021 stated that data on vulnerable learners and those with disabilities is limited and is not regularly analyzed to provide evidence for decision makers and planners. It outlined plans to improve the quality of data by revising the Education Management Information System (EMIS) and making available data on special needs education teachers and learners with disabilities, disaggregated by sex, disability, and level of education. As a result, the quality of data regarding children with disabilities in Tanzania is improving. Majority of the stakeholders reported that availability and use of real time comprehensive data remains a challenge in Tanzania with only 1 of the 22 stakeholders interviewed reporting that access to data being academic, but indicated that use of real time data in decision making remains problematic in Tanzania.

### **6.1.4 DATA ON DISABILITY**

#### *Tanzania Disability Data*

Using indicators based on data from the Population and Housing Census (PHC), the Disability Monograph (2016) provides in-depth analysis of the level, trend, and pattern of disability in Tanzania.

**Table 1: Data on Disability in Tanzania**

Id. No	Data Id	2016 Data
1	PWD in Tanzania	93 out of every 1,000
2	Literacy rate among PWD	81.3 percent
3	CWD attending school	47.3 percent
4	Students without disability attending school	52.7 percent

It identified that at the national level 9.3 percent of the population aged 7 years and above had some type of disability. That is to say, for every 1,000 people in Tanzania in the year 2012, 93 are PWDs. Prevalence is higher on the Tanzania Mainland (9.3 percent) compared to Tanzania Zanzibar (7.3 percent) and is also higher in rural areas 9.9 percent than in urban areas 7.8 percent. Out of 3,450,986 persons with disability aged five years and above, 2,228,280 (64.6 percent) are literate. The literacy rate of persons with disability in urban areas (81.3 percent) is higher compared with that of rural areas (58.7 percent). In Tanzania, the literacy level among females without disability is 72.5 percent compared with that of females with disability at 60.9 percent. Literacy rate for males without disability is 83.2 percent compared with that of males with disability at 76.4 percent. Results indicate that 51.5 percent of children with disability were attending school compared to 52.7 percent of children without disability.<sup>54</sup> Data from the District Education officers indicated that of 676 children with disabilities enrolled in four district schools 374 (55.3%) were boys and 302 (44.67%) girls.

The data available is inconsistent and demonstrates the need for ensuring accurate data collection. There remain significant barriers to all CWD attempting to access education, from poor parental attitude to poor quality of education/skills on offer. About one quarter of persons with disability aged between 5 to 24 years have never attended school, compared to 21.8% of persons without disability. Low literacy rates amongst persons with disabilities emerging from the education system is a barrier to progression. This manifests in a rate of 47.6% illiteracy among pupils with disabilities compared to 25.3% among the general school population.

However, there is a gap on disability-disaggregated data which captures all disability types and their severity. Unavailability of reliable data on the number of disabled children is one of the factors affecting the enrolment of children with disabilities in primary schools. Furthermore, it has been indicated that children with disabilities of 0-7 years of age are not enumerated in the National Population and Housing Census. Such a finding potentially renders the above statistics redundant. Baseline data for the Girls Education Challenge (GEC) Transition Projects shows that girls with

disabilities in schools have lower levels of numeracy and literacy than their non-disabled peers. The projects concluded that for the majority of disabled girls who do not have profound impairments.

### *Kenya Disability Data*

The disability data in Kenya is presented in Table 2, below, and explained below the table.

**Table 2: Data on Disability in Kenya**

<b>Id No</b>	<b>Disability Data ID</b>	<b>2019 Census Data</b>
<b>1</b>	% of population with some form of disability	2.2%
<b>2</b>	Disability prevalence rate	3.5%
<b>3</b>	% of population with Albinism	0.02%

According to the 2019 census, 2.2% (0.9 million people) of Kenyans live with some form of disability. Direct comparison of disability prevalence in 2009 and 2019 is problematic due to differences in data collection methodologies, ages covered and size of administrative units. The 2019 census appears to show a sharp drop in disability prevalence; the 2019 census states 3.5%, but when looking at the same age threshold (i.e., adults and children above five years of age) the 2009 disability prevalence rate was 3.8%. The 2019 census indicates that 1.9% of men have a disability compared with 2.5% of women. For comparison, the 2009 census reported 3.4% of men and 3.5% of women had a disability; again, when looking at the same age threshold (i.e., adults and children above five years of age), 3.7% of men and 3.9% of women had a disability in the 2019 census period.

There are more people with disabilities living in rural than urban areas. Analysis of prevalence rates by residence shows 2.6% (0.7 million) of people in rural areas and 1.4% (0.2 million) of people in urban areas have a disability. The 2009 census reports 3.8% of rural populations and 3.1% of urban populations had a disability. Analysis of disability by domain reveals that mobility is the most reported difficulty, experienced by 0.4 million Kenyans and representing 42% of people with disabilities. The other domains of disability – seeing, hearing, cognition, self-care, and communication – are experienced by between 36% and 12% of people with disabilities. Albinism is a condition experienced by 0.02% of Kenya’s population.

### *Disability data in Malawi*

According to the 2018 Population and Housing Census, there are 1,734,250 persons with disabilities in Malawi, representing about 11.6 percent of the total population aged above 5 years. Of the total

population of persons with disabilities, 134,636 are persons with albinism. The share of adults aged 15 and older with any functional difficulty stands at 10.7%. Separating by level of difficulty, the prevalence rates of some difficulty and at least a lot of difficulty are 9.3% and 1.4% respectively. The prevalence of functional difficulties is higher for women (12.4%) than for men (8.9%). Functional difficulties are more prevalent among older age groups, at 4.3% for ages 15 to 29, 7.9% for ages 30 to 44, 19.5% for ages 45 to 64, and 46.9% for ages 65 and over. Across the six functional domains considered, difficulties with seeing (5.9%) and mobility (4.3%) are most common.

About two in ten households have an adult with a functional difficulty: at the household level, the prevalence of any functional difficulty is at 21.5%, including 18.2% with some difficulty and 3.2% with at least a lot of difficulty. The prevalence of functional difficulties is higher in rural areas compared to urban areas: 11.3% vs. 8.1% among adults and 22.1% vs. 18% among households, for rural and urban areas, respectively. The share of adults who have less than primary school as their highest level of schooling attained is significantly higher among persons with at least a lot of functional difficulty (85%) and persons with some difficulty (74%) compared to persons with no difficulty (63%). This boils down to gaps of 11 percentage points (p.p.) between persons with some functional difficulty and persons with no difficulty and 22 p.p. between persons with at least a lot of functional difficulty and persons with no difficulty. See Table 3 below for summary on the data;

**Table 3: Disability Data in Malawi**

Id No	Disability Data ID	2019 Census Data
1	% of population with some form of disability	11.6%
2	Disability prevalence rate	21.5%

### 6.1.5 MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

The study investigated whether children with disabilities were included within the remit of each country’s MoE. In the three countries, responsibility for children with disabilities is partly held by the ministry responsible for education (this appears to be the case in the three countries). In the three countries, responsibility is shared between more than one government institutions. In these countries, there is evidence of a dedicated government department concerned with disability – for example a Directorate for Special Education Needs.

Overall, these are encouraging findings, as in many states around the world, some (if not all) children with disabilities were formerly considered ‘ineducable’ and were therefore not the responsibility of the MoE (O’Brien, 2014). Given that realizing the education right of some children with disabilities

relies at least partly on access to assistive devices such as mobility and communication aids (e.g., wheelchairs, magnifying glasses, hearing aids) and in some places the provision of cash transfers to encourage school attendance, it is common for other ministries apart from education to be involved. However, it is unclear from the countries surveyed whether shared responsibility creates a sustainable system of 'joined-up' provision or fractures and disperses the focus too widely. Spreading the responsibility without clarity and accountability could result in a climate in which each ministry is unsure of its role. It has also been suggested in the literature that responsibility alone is not enough to create action. Ministries must have the resources to take steps to ensure that the state's obligations, enshrined in the CRPD, are enacted. Secondly, clarity about where the responsibility lies differed widely between countries suggesting that in many places this could be improved.

#### 6.1.6 FUNDING FOR IE

The study established different practices and trends in the funding of Inclusive Education in the three countries of Tanzania, Malawi and Kenya. The following are the findings:

##### *6.1.6.1 FUNDING FOR INCLUSIVE AND SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION IN TANZANIA*

Upon conducting an analysis of funding of education in Tanzania, it is clear that the education sector budget experienced a declining share of the national budget between 2014 and 2018, from 20% down to 15%. In our view this is a cause for concern with regard to progress on inclusive education in Tanzania. The education sector was allocated 4.71 trillion Tanzanian shillings (TSh4.71 trillion) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017/2018. This marks a decline of TSh63.99 billion (1.3 per cent) compared to FY 2016/2017. The education sector accounts for 15 per cent of the total budget and 3.9 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This falls short of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) target, which encourages countries to commit at least 20 per cent of the national budget to education. It was established that Recurrent expenditures consume three-quarters of the entire education budget. The largest share goes towards wages of primary and secondary school teachers.

The budget for inclusive education remains unclear. The NSIE 2018-2021 included detailed costings for many of the areas required for inclusive education. These included allocations for training teacher trainers, teachers, volunteers, and community teachers and providing vital teaching and learning materials and equipment. The total strategy for 2018-21 was costed at US\$ 153.6 million (US\$ 38.4 million per year), although when approved only US\$ 61.2 million (i.e., 39% of the total budget) was reportedly available. In our analysis we noted that at least spending for children with disabilities has improved. By the end of 2021, the NSIE expected 8,000 schools to be receiving these grants, for which US\$ 1,280 000 was made available, working out at approximately US\$ 160 per school. This has strong potential to help to embed inclusive education, serving as an incentive for schools to enroll and cater

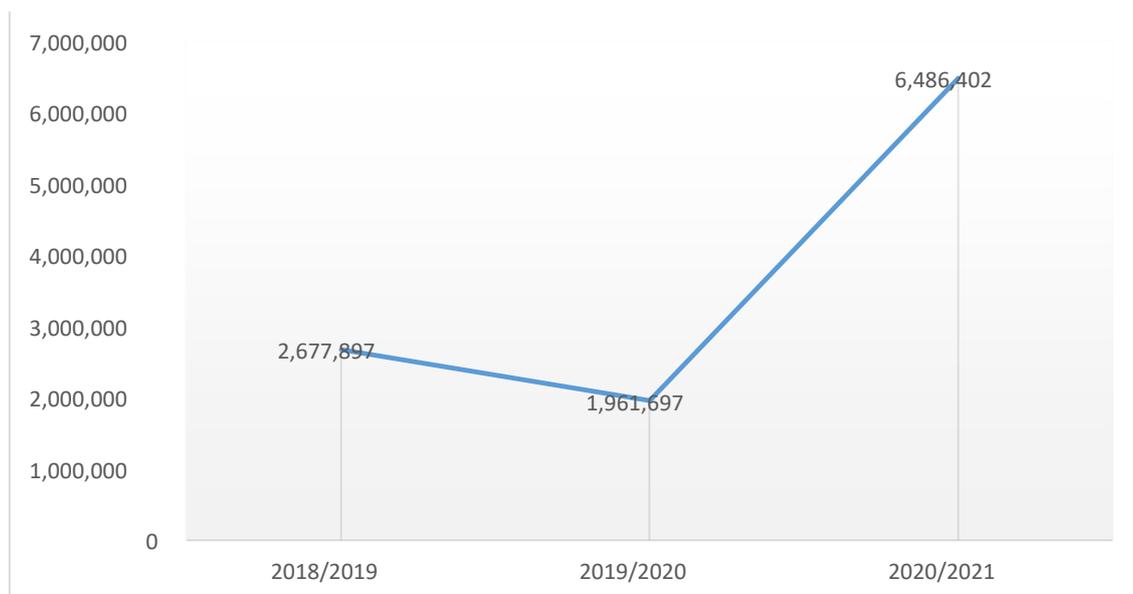
for children with special educational needs. Tanzania has made solid progress in implementing inclusive education in both mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. However, given that only around 15% of children with disabilities are currently enrolled in school, achieving SDG4 will inevitably require ongoing efforts and investments to recruit, train and motivate sufficient teachers and education support personnel.

#### *6.1.6.2 FUNDING FOR INCLUSIVE AND SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION IN MALAWI*

Our analysis was based on an in-depth review of available budget documents, especially the Detailed Budget Estimates and Program Based Budget (PBB). The analysis focused on the period from 2016/17 to 2020/2021. The analysis was complemented by available reports on education spending by government and partners. The study noted that Inclusive education in Malawi doesn't have special budget allocation in the national budget but falls under the education sector. Budget allocations to the education sector had minimal increase from MK238 Billion in 2016/17 to MK290 Billion in 2017/18 and MK300 Billion in 2018/19. The Government allocated a total of MK397 billion to the education sector in 2020/21, compared to MK385 billion in 2019/20. The education sector was allocated 18% of the 2020/21 total budget, as compared to the 21% of 2019/20. The allocation falls below the 20% Dakar Commitment on Education for All by the African Union. However, it must be stated that in the national budget, funds allocated to Inclusive Education were not available.

Despite the decline, the education sector continues to receive the highest share of the total budget compared to public debt charges (17%), agriculture (16%) and health (9.3%). From qualitative interviews, it was found that funding for inclusive education varies from district to district. Most of the districts reported that a percentage of the district's annual education budget is allocated to IE. Lilongwe district reported that 2% of the annual education budget is allocated to IE. Other districts mentioned less than 1% while a majority indicated between 1% to 2% of the annual budget. On average 1% of the education district budget is spent on inclusive education. This is made possible because of the districts' IE coordinating unit at division level. Though such is the case, as the chart below illustrates, Lilongwe district reported fluctuating figures over the last three years.

**Figure 3: Trends in financing of inclusive education over the past 3 years in Lilongwe**



**Note:** The figures are in Malawi Kwacha

There was a sudden jump in funding allocation between 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 which can be attributed to orientation by different education stakeholders on the importance of inclusive education. Mostly, the funding was used for construction of ramps in order to create an enabling environment for learners with mobility challenges. At school level, funding mechanisms are also different, largely in proportionate figures to the budget as well. Most schools reported an allocation of 40% of their funding to learning, access and equity, which may indirectly speak to IE as part of it is used to construction of ramps to improve access for the learners with mobility difficulties. It was also reported that some School Improvement Grant funds are allocated to IE activities. The study found that SMCs played a pivotal role in ensuring that there is an allocation to IE from SIG.

One of the SMC members stated “The head teacher calls us and asks the members to help in deciding what type of materials we should prioritize in purchasing in order to serve the learners with special needs”.

#### **6.1.6.3 FUNDING FOR INCLUSIVE AND SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION IN KENYA**

The study did an analysis of government budget allocations to educational programmes that support persons with disabilities in Kenya over the period of financial year 2016/17 (FY2016/17) to financial year 2020/21 (FY2020/21) basing on data from Development Initiatives based on national government budget documents for FY2016/17 to FY2020/21. The State Department for Early Learning and Basic Education facilitates access to special needs education at primary and secondary levels, whereas the State Department for Vocational and Technical Training is responsible for special

needs education at tertiary level. The aim of special needs education is to ensure all Kenyans have access to education regardless of their special needs or disabilities. The national government allocated a total of KES 6.7 billion to facilitate the implementation of education programmes that target persons with disabilities between FY2016/17 and FY2020/21. In FY2016/2017, the total allocated budget was KES 1.362 Billion, FY2017/2018, allocated budget was KES 1.391 Billion, FY2018/2019 allocated budget was KES 1.423 Billion, FY2019/2020 total allocated budget was KES1.304 Billion and in FY2020/2021 the total budget was KES 1.231 Billion. While budget allocations for special needs education increased by 2% in both FY2017/18 and FY2018/19, they reduced by 8% and 6% in FY2019/20 and FY2020/21 respectively. Allocations for special needs education as a percentage of GDP has been reducing over time. The bulk of the budget allocations (71%) went to primary special needs education, which accounted for just under three quarters of the total special needs education budget for the period FY2016/17 to FY2020/21.

A total of KES 4.7 billion was earmarked for special needs education at primary level between FY2016/17 and FY2020/21. Budget increased KES 949 Million in FY2016/17 to KES 978 Million in FY2017/18 to KES 1.009 Billion in FY2018/19 then decreased to KES 943 in FY2019/20 and decreased further to KES 871 Million in FY2020/21. This shows that Funding to primary special needs education increased by 3% in both FY2017/18 and FY2018/19. However, funding reduced by 6.5% and 7.7% in FY2019/20 and FY2020/21 respectively due to a reduction in the budget allocation for the construction of the National Psycho-Education Assessment Centre and a cut in the budget for Education Assessment and Resource Centers (EARC). EARCs play a key role in access to education through the assessment of children with disabilities and their placement in education services. Access to the services provided by EARCs may be negatively affected by the significant reduction of their allocation from KES 71.5 million in FY2018/19 to KES 18.1 million in FY2020/21.

The bulk of the allocation went to special needs education primary schools (integrated and special schools) and the Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE), which accounted for 33.5% and 28.3% of the primary special needs education budget respectively between FY2018/19 and FY2020/21. The funds allocated to KISE facilitates training teachers of students with special needs, conducting research on special needs education and development of learning materials. While special primary schools promote access to education, they lead to segregation of students with disabilities. Accordingly, budget allocations to such schools may not be compliant with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which requires governments to provide education to children with disabilities on an equal basis with other children and to provide education within an inclusive system.

## 6.2 SUPPLY SIDE CONDITIONS

The study looked for evidence that commented on the supply-side conditions that can support the fulfilment of the right to education for children with disabilities.

### **Key points: supply-side conditions**

#### *Education system*

- vi. An inclusive education approach is reported to be the dominant strategy for providing education to children with disabilities. However, there appears to be a rhetoric–reality gap, as no evidence was found that documents the commitment to implement such an approach – such as the provision of teacher training for inclusive education as a mainstream activity.
- vii. Information about specialist services or provision for children with disabilities is available at the school level up to national levels (EMIS).
- viii. Although important disability-specific teacher training programmes have taken shape in in the three countries, they have not yet been given the prominence and status required to ensure that teachers gain the skills needed to meet the needs of an inclusive education system. Furthermore, inclusive education practice is a small component of the training teachers receive and is often not assessed.
- ix. None of the countries appear to comprehensively address all the aspects of teacher education that the CRPD defines as important.
- x. Despite the challenges, the study findings also suggest there is good practice taking place across the three countries, with some innovative examples of state and non-state provision for children with disabilities, and teacher education programmes which specifically address support for children with disabilities. Providers can look to these examples to enhance the preconditions for the quality of provision;
  - The evidence from the country studies suggests that:
  - Schools are not always willing to enrol pupils with disabilities and there are no incentives or penalties.
  - Specialist provision is not always available locally.
  - There is no system for placement of children with disabilities in appropriate schools.
  - Transport to school is problematic.

- Assessment systems do not take into account the different needs of children with disabilities.
- There is inadequate specialist teacher support.

### **The role of non-state actors**

- ii. This study found a complex and sometimes vibrant picture made up of a wide variety of organizations supporting education for children with disabilities. The three countries have national federations of Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) that have come together to lobby for their rights. Some DPOs are active in providing services for children with disabilities such as Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programmes. Non-state actors were often active in conducting surveys and awareness-raising campaigns, implementing projects and programmes, and offering legal aid and training.

#### **6.2.1 THE STRUCTURE OF DISABILITY SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL PROVISION**

The study investigated the governmental or state structure of special and/or inclusive schools and often found evidence of both state-run special schools as well as a wider inclusive approach in the mainstream system. The study also found that all three countries have a relatively small number of special schools that often operate to varying degrees outside the state system. For example, some are owned and sometimes maintained by religious organizations but are run by the state (which pays teachers' salaries). These are often the oldest special schools, while others established more recently by small local NGOs are sometimes partly supported by local businesses and/or international agencies.

There are various innovative developments and partnerships such as intensive sign language teaching for young deaf children in an NGO-run class focusing on early literacy and numeracy for the first two years of primary school, followed by NGO-supported access to mainstream state primary classes in the higher grades. For example, In the United Republic of Tanzania the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training Special Needs Education Unit provides 29 special schools, 239 units at mainstream schools and specialized teachers working with children with disabilities in mainstream schools. These cater for children with hearing and/or visual impairment, learning difficulties, motor or other physical impairments, autism, and albinism. (Source: United Republic of Tanzania, Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training (2015a).

#### **6.2.2 MAINSTREAM TEACHERS' INTERPRETATION OF IE STRATEGIES AND POLICIES**

From the study, findings are that many mainstream teachers are aware of the practice of IE. However, as it is the case in scholarly arguments (see Schuelka et al., 2020), the teachers did not give an

absolute definition of IE. This is understandable because there is not a definitive one. All countries and individuals, generally speaking, have their definition of IE. From a consolidated point, the teachers understood IE as a learning initiative whereby learners mix regardless of disabilities. Literature seems to note many variations on the understanding of IE as opposed to one absolute definition (see Schuelka et al., 2019; Choi et al., 2020; Hallahan et al., 2020; Palmer & Williams-Diehm, 2020; Mitchell & Sutherland, 2020). It is therefore understandable that teachers provided various understandings of IE. The teachers' current understanding of IE has a direct reference to disability, it was not associated with any other factor such as race, gender, and age. Participant QN-C1 from School C in Nsanje district responded in the questionnaire that IE is when *"all learners are placed in a general education classroom [...] regardless of their disabilities with the support of teachers"*.

Nonetheless, the study's findings suggest that, in terms of teaching strategies, most mainstream teachers regard IE as a broad teaching method with activities ranging from group discussions to peer learning. Findings revealed that through IE, teachers have embarked on a quest of ensuring that every learner, regardless of their physical disability challenges, reaches their maximum educational abilities. Most of the participants reported that they are aware of policies and strategies regarding IE. However, when asked to name some of the policies and strategies, many of the teachers listed teaching methods rather than policies. Seemingly, the teachers, are not aware of the policies or do not have access to them or misconstrue policy with teaching strategy. As such, the teachers may tend to be hostile to IE practices. No participant explicitly seemed to be erudite about the policies and strategies. However, these two documents are crucial in the implementation of IE. The prominent awareness is that the government wants all learners to receive education within mainstream schools. At School B in Chikwawa district, more participants managed to list IE policies and strategies such as Agenda 2063, National Education Standard Policy Number 13 and the Disability Act.

Yet, the three documents are not prominent IE stipulations the teacher exists in his or her microsystem with its own influencing factors (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Such factors include all learners, e.g., the teacher's encounters with learners form a mesosystem such as a class. It also includes policy documents. For the teacher to be well oriented in terms of policies and strategies, there is a need for in-service training such as workshops on IE. When a teacher attends a workshop on IE policy or strategy, it would eventually form an exosystem. Thus, the teacher and the policy come in contact without the presence of learners (with physical disabilities).

Whatever the workshops focus on, the aim is to enhance the learning experiences of the learner. The teacher becomes the conduit for the information received in the various workshops to the learner. The policy is a blueprint for IE implementation (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). The theoretical underpinning

of my study argument is that since the government forwards a policy as a blueprint, the teachers receive the policy and its stipulated practices adversely. During one of the interviews, participant INT-A4 noted that:

*One of my roles as a teacher, government instructs me to treat students equally so there is that equity in terms of us that should be handled. Another thing is provision of infrastructure, government makes sure that those that have problems they are assisted according to the problems. If it is mobility, they are deliberate structures that are constructed to make sure that students that have problems with movement, maybe they use wheelchairs they should be able to move from class to another. Those that have problems with sight they are given sometimes braille machines so they can write. I look at it as a very good initiative and effort which government is offering.*

From what Participant INT-A4 noted, teachers implement IE practices, not as a necessary philosophical shifting of education, but as a response to the government's demands for inclusion rather than what is necessary for the best interests of the learner. The policies on IE are usually a political response to exclusion (Clough & Corbett, 2000). Concerning the roles of mainstream teachers, as suggested in the Strategies and policies, it is justified that IE in the three countries is a political response. Since the exclusion of Learners with Disabilities from mainstream education received international condemnation, the governments made a determined effort to respond.

### 6.2.3 THE ROLE OF INGOS, NGOS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The study examined the activity of INGOS, NGOs, DPOs, CSOs, and organisations of parents of children with disabilities across the region, such as NGOs, DPOs and church bodies involved in providing educational opportunities or running schools for children with disabilities. In particular, the research looked for examples of good practice of either programme implementation or partnership between organisations. The research questions the extent to which non-state provision is evaluated or documented, and to what extent it is in line with the state's obligations under the CRPD and is recognized and supported by the state. Likewise, it is important to understand the level of non-state actors' support of state schools (at various levels and geographic settings). Similarly, there is a need to understand the differences between the educational opportunities provided in different kinds of educational structures, such as special schools, units within mainstream schools, the role of itinerant specialist teachers and mainstream classes.

Again, a complex and sometimes vibrant picture emerges, of a wide variety of organisations supporting education for children with disabilities. In many (but not all) cases the desk review was able to establish the details of organisations or projects; some DPOs, for example, appeared to have

little online presence and were only listed as members of national federations of DPOs. DPOs in the three countries are also members of regional and international bodies, such as the Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled (SAFOD) and Disabled People’s International (DPI). Some DPO reports could not be accessed online, such as some well-known studies of the living conditions of PWD produced by SAFOD.

In general, all countries have national federations of DPOs that had come together to lobby for the rights of PWD. Some DPOs were also active in providing services for children with disabilities such as CBR programmes. Approaches to disability varied widely from the sympathetic charity model of disability displayed on the fundraising pages of many organizations to the politically aware rights-based approaches evident on many DPO websites.

#### 6.2.4 SUPPORT IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

According to the survey respondents, children with disabilities who attend a mainstream school typically get little support. Where support is forthcoming it is usually in the form of differentiated materials and/or assessments, classroom assistants, specialist teachers, and the provision of assistive devices and extra lessons after school or during daytime breaks. It was not possible to establish with any confidence that special assistance for children with disabilities in mainstream school is provided free of charge. It appears that in some places more informal after-school support for children having trouble with part of the curriculum may be charged for as after-school tutoring.

*Figure 4: A learner with disability using special learning equipment in Malawi*



### 6.2.5 SUPPORT OF SPECIALIST TEACHERS

Study participants responded that there is considerable physical disability support in the schools in general and in their classrooms in particular and this seems a common practice in the three countries. The supporting systems that exist in the schools portray a nested system of IE implementation (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Swartz, 2015). Naturally, a mainstream teacher is a microsystem, and so is a specialist teacher. The participants reported that teaching all learners together, regardless of disabilities, is not an easy task (see the previous chapter). From the study findings, IE was a misunderstood concept in the early years of its inception. It is now established among mainstream teachers although the practice has political connotations (Clough & Corbett, 2000). One significant finding from the study is that most of the LPD tend to learn at a slow pace. The situation may not, as the findings confirm, necessarily be because of the actual physical disability factor, but rather the learning barriers which ensue because of the physical disability. Thus, the support of specialist teachers remains crucial in IE. However, it seems there are no policy directions on the coordination between mainstream and specialist teachers. The roles in the policies and strategies assigned to specialist teachers are in the context of special schools rather than mainstream schools.

In addition, information is available from school level up to the national level (EMIS) about specialist services or about provision for children with disabilities who are educated within the mainstream – for example examination requirements and arrangements. There were also statements regarding the provision of extra time for examinations. For example:

*‘The Kenya National Examination Council allows learners with disabilities slightly more time when sitting for examinations and the Joint Admissions Board has put in place affirmative action programmes on university admission where learners with disabilities secure admission with one point less than that of other candidates.*

Examination access needs to be carefully considered, as without this some children with disabilities will be unnecessarily disadvantaged. Any entitlements, such as extra time, need to be stated clearly – including how to determine who is entitled to the benefits. In addition, wider examination issues also need to be considered: the current documentation does not adequately address how the papers will be marked, how the involvement of specialists, such as Braille markers, can be best accessed and used, and how the examination systems might need to adapt to the specific requirements of children with different impairments. At a deeper level it is necessary to consider exactly what is being tested in the examinations and the extent to which examinations serve to measure and verify what has been learned and what children can do, as opposed to limiting access to the next level of education. This is an issue for some children with general learning difficulties whose progress, albeit at times limited,

deserves to be recognized in fine-tuned assessment instruments, and also for other children who might, due to their impairment, struggle with a particular aspect of the curriculum. For example, deaf learners designated local language was previously Kiswahili in the Kenyan primary school leaving examination. Few students knew this language and so many failed the whole examination regardless of their performance in other areas. When they were allowed to designate Kenyan Sign Language as their local language this barrier to school success began to be removed.

### **6.3 DEMAND SIDE FACTORS**

The study looked for evidence that commented on the demand-side conditions that can support the fulfilment of the right to education for children with disabilities. Demand-side conditions include social norms, stakeholder attitudes, encouragement for families to engage with educational opportunities for children with disabilities,

#### **Key points: demand-side conditions**

- vi. Poverty poses financial challenges to poor households and affects those with children with disabilities more acutely, as they cannot afford to pay the costs that are related to schooling even when the tuition is free.
- vii. Parents sometimes do not prioritise education for children with disabilities.
- viii. Negative attitudes of some parents in mainstream schools who do not want to accept that children with disabilities are in the same class with their child.
- ix. Parents can have difficulty in accepting they have a child with a disability and are often unwilling to engage the child in public and community life, given the associated stigma.
- x. Stigmatization of children with disabilities can be compounded by issues such as having no school uniform (due to poverty or discrimination by parents) and left handedness

#### **6.3.1 COMMUNITY PERCEPTION AS BARRIER TO EDUCATION FOR CWDS**

In the three countries, primary education is free and is increasingly becoming compulsory. There are nevertheless various barriers to school attendance for children with disabilities related to both the demand and the supply of education. In many cases barriers also apply to children without disabilities but may affect children with disabilities disproportionately. During the study it was noted that poverty remains a barrier that prevents all children, and particularly children with disabilities, from accessing education. The costs, such as for stationery, uniform, and unofficial school charges, can challenge the resources of poor families.

Social factors such as stigma around disability also create barriers. The education of children with disabilities is challenged by the lack of understanding of all teachers about the principles of inclusive education, and a culture of inclusion within schools is not always well established despite political intent and commitment. The study reveals that it is generally accepted that many children with disabilities do not attend school. Parents report that even when barriers to enrolling their children with disabilities were overcome, they face considerable difficulties in bringing their children to school. The respondents all refer to strong cultural attitudes that prevent many parents from admitting they have a child with disabilities. The stigma and taboo surrounding disability means parents are ashamed and try to hide their child. There is a widespread belief that any type of disability equates with a diminished intellectual capacity.

The study respondents highlighted that many in society perceive disability as evil, bad fate or the result of witchcraft, and children with disabilities are often hidden in the home by their parents. It is felt that many parents continue to be reluctant to enroll children with disabilities in a mainstream school as they fear the child will be rejected. Many parents of children in special placements do not want their children to be mainstreamed.

The respondents indicated that cultural attitudes are also cited as impediments to the inclusion and enrolment of children with disabilities and this was mentioned in all the three countries. It was revealed that attitudes are embedded in cultural and religious beliefs, and stakeholders at all levels say it remains culturally difficult for a parent to admit they have a child with disabilities, for example because disability is seen as a curse from God. Officials in Malawi for example mentioned that there is no incentive for schools to accept children with disabilities, or any penalty if they do not. A respondent in Kenya revealed that the problem of stigmatization is internalized by children with disabilities, manifesting itself as a lack of self-belief and hope in terms of the future. This first arises from the negative attitudes of parents towards their children: "Children are stigmatized from deep inside their families". As one schoolteacher noted "I tell children off for name calling a pupil with disabilities and they answer by saying that the child's parents call them the same thing, so it must be OK." The power of parental advocacy was noted as significant; "children are literally moved into the home from living in pig sheds".

### 6.3.2 AN ENGAGING EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Often, the three countries adopt a policy or a strategy that in one way or the other addresses the issue of inclusion in greater society as well as in education. However, according to the study findings little is done on the ground to educate all learners successfully together. Much as class performance would determine whether IE implementation is occurring, the shortfalls faced may originate from

outside the classroom environment (Majoko,2019). The outside classroom context would include the teachers' interface with IE policies and strategies. Thus, it is imperative to focus on the outside classroom environment when implementing IE policies and practices. This will ensure that the mainstream teachers have a point of reference or evidence for diversity and inclusivity when they come to the actual teaching in an inclusive classroom. The evidence-based approach to IE policy implementation would also call for policy formulation to rethink the practicalities of mainstream education and assign explicit roles to mainstream teachers. This speaks to the resonance of the mesosystem (policy implementation) with the macrosystem (policy formulation). It further speaks to the political influences that the macrosystem has on the mesosystem and the microsystem (Clough & Corbett, 2000). The thrust is that the influence of the macrosystem on either microsystem or mesosystem should be less political and more evidence based. The journey towards IE is somehow dependent on sound government policies and strategies (Slee, 2013). This is even more true about the teachers' attitudes toward diversity. The attitudes of a mainstream teacher before LPD enter his or her classroom should be equally important as the accommodations a mainstream teacher provides to LWD during the learning processes. In essence, a holistic approach is needed for IE policy implementation to achieve parity between policy and practice. The proposed approach would also require collaboration for IE to be enhanced. Majoko (2019) observed that "the competency of teachers to collaborate with community stakeholders, government ministries, and professionals to garner their support in facilitating the holistic development of children is fundamental for inclusive education" (p. 11).

Majoko's observation does not only entail that teachers are critical in IE, but that their attitudes and knowledge ensure a successful implementation of IE. Majoko's research, which "examined key competencies teachers need for inclusive education", acknowledged that "other variables, including attitudes and the availability of support, could also be influential" (Majoko, 2019, p. 12).Majoko's research, which may be relevant in the context of the Malawian secondary education, recommended that "future research could explore the influence of preservice and in-service training content, process, environment, and assessment on the competencies of teachers in inclusive education" (Majoko, 2019, p. 12). Malawi's IE could put a particular interest in the environment (for IE policy interpretation and transition to practice) as proposed by Majoko (2019). The environment for policy interpretation and understanding could equally be an essential aspect in the successful implementation of IE. Seemingly, a viable solution rests in the mainstream teachers' practices yet is overshadowed by policy and the cascading of knowledge and practices as stipulated in the policy. The policies should firmly adopt acceptable and evidence-based school practices and incorporate them

into their stipulations. In doing so, the problem of mismatches between policy and practice may be mitigated.

### 6.3.3 ADVOCACY FOR SUPPORT ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Support by non-governmental actors in particular UNICEF at the ministerial level to develop policies was mentioned by survey respondents and indicated that UNICEF had played an active role in the development of policies relevant to the provision of education for children with disabilities. In some cases, the support was targeted at the development or revision of sector policy to better reflect the rights of children with disabilities, while in other cases the policies were more targeted to particular barriers preventing access to education such as the physical environments of schools. Respondents mentioned advocacy to promote inclusive education and assistance with its development (such as through teacher training) six times.

For example, UNICEF Tanzania was supporting a special education teacher training college to conduct training in three regions, which will further support the mission to have one trained teacher in each school in the UNICEF-supported regions. In other countries, initiatives and programmes focus more on advocacy for inclusive education. Supporting surveys and other research or monitoring and evaluation work was mentioned by respondents. For example, the Malawi and Kenya UNICEF country offices supported national disability surveys. Offering support at the ministerial level to develop appropriate data and EMISs was also mentioned. For example, UNICEF introduced questions on disability into the EMIS and school census, and UNICEF Tanzania was working with UNICEF headquarters to improve the disability data in the EMIS. This is also true in other two countries where the EMIS includes modules of disability following technical support.

*Figure 5: UNICEF's School-in-box presentation at Bangula Primary School, Nsanje, Malawi*



Advocacy is mainly Disabled Person's Organizations (DPOs) in the three countries have been advocating for inclusive education, not only for children with disabilities generally but specifically for the most marginalized children with disabilities, such as those with Deaf Blindness and those with Albinism. As a result of these advocacy initiatives, For example in Malawi During the 2018 U.K. Global Disability Summit (GDS18), the Government committed to improve early identification assessment and interventions for children with disabilities by 2021; to undertake capacity building of teachers on how to manage learners with disabilities at all levels by 2022; and to train caregivers in inclusive early childhood development by 2022. To make sure these commitments are translated into practice and felt in the lives of persons with disabilities, DPOs are working alongside government to provide support and hold it accountable. Malawian DPO, Visual Hearing Membership Association (VIHEMA) worked on a project supported by the Disability Rights Fund (DRF) in which the main goal was to advocate for the development of an early identification and intervention program for children with Deaf Blindness in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) Articles 24 (Education) and 25 (Health). The project aimed to ensure that the Malawi National Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) Policy of 2017 takes these concerns into consideration. To this end, an assessment was done to review the ECDE Policy to identify gaps for children with Deaf Blindness and to draft a report of the findings with clear recommendations. VIHEMA presented the

report at a National Symposium co-organized with the national umbrella DPO – the Federation of Disability Organizations in Malawi (FEDOMA). The goal was to convince policymakers of the need to develop early identification programs and to amend the ECDE Policy to make sure it is inclusive of children with Deaf Blindness. Another DRF grantee, Disabled Women in Africa (DIWA), is working to improve data collection tools in schools and to advocate for improved budget allocation to support children with disabilities in the three countries. DIWA has engaged selected schools in three countries to pilot the Washington Group Short Set of questions on disability. In addition to ensuring that data collection correctly captures the number of children with disabilities, DIWA has drafted a set of guidelines that provides teaching guidelines for different impairment groups.

#### 6.3.4 COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION FOR IE

##### *6.3.4.1 Community support for education of children with disabilities*

The stakeholders interviewed for the study indicated that community gave little or no support to children with disabilities to receive an education. They indicated that there are a number of factors including socio-cultural factors, poverty, lack of awareness, stigmatization and negative attitudes. The stakeholders noted their children still face discrimination from both their families and their community. The stakeholders noted that the situation might have been worse before and believe that community perception about children with disabilities is changing. Support for SNE in schools remain low, one stakeholder representing PWDs summarized it below

“I have never community help a community lobbying funding for SNE, this is nonexistent.”

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

The PIESEA Inclusive Education Study noted that there is political commitment and will in all the three countries in as far as inclusive education is concerned. It was noted, in all the three countries have signed and ratified the CRPD and its Optional Protocol on Communications. It was further noted that in all three countries, the MoE (or equivalent) has some degree of responsibility for educating children with disabilities and that in all three countries, responsibility, whether it rests in part with the ministry responsible for education or not, is shared between more than one government departments.

It was evident from the study that predominantly, the recognition of types of disabilities suggests that definitions are restricted to observable disabilities and do not recognize disabilities which impact a child's capacity to learn, including the fact that this impact may vary greatly between children. The most identified and recognized disabilities include visual, hearing, and physical impairments, severe or mild intellectual impairments, and multiple disabilities.

The study revealed that it was hard to find evidence about formal systems of identifying and screening for disability. However, the evidence that was available from the country studies suggests that such systems can be improved. Systems of screening and identification would benefit from an interactionist approach to thinking about disability, including the impact of disability on a child's capacity to learn.

Further, the study noted that in all three countries, there is very little data on the numbers of children with disabilities and it is therefore not possible to understand the extent to which disability is a barrier to educational access. The data challenge was observed in all three countries, although, it was noted that in Kenya, national disability surveys have been completed and data is improving.

The above calls for improved disability data management in all three countries, but it is also important to take stock of what is already known and consider advocating using small-scale approaches which might be more robust for an improved disability data management system in all three countries.

Thorough observation on the available information and data indicated that disability prevalence is only one type of quantitative data needed to monitor implementation of article 24 (right to education) of the CRPD. There is also limited data on the numbers of children with disabilities in or out of school, their educational achievements, and the barriers to education they face. This needs to be improved if inclusive education is to be achieved in line with SDG 4.

Comparative statistics on, for example, the participation of children with and without disabilities in education can be useful to highlight disadvantage, advocate for greater educational inclusion, and monitor the implementation of the CRPD and the CRC. However, data that enables analysis of this nature is hard to locate, hence the need to improve, as stated above.

Despite the challenges, the study findings also suggests there is good practice taking place across the three countries, with some innovative examples of state and non-state provision for children with disabilities, and teacher education programmes which specifically address support for children with disabilities. Providers can look to these examples to enhance the preconditions for the quality of provision. The evidence from the country studies suggests that:

- Schools are not always willing to enrol pupils with disabilities and there are no incentives or penalties.
- Specialist provision is not always available locally.
- There is no system for placement of children with disabilities in appropriate schools.
- Transport to school is problematic.
- Assessment systems do not take into account the different needs of children with disabilities.
- There is inadequate specialist teacher support.

In conclusion, although there are limits, challenges and gaps in promoting inclusive education in the three study countries, there is political will and commitment for the onward development of inclusive education in the countries. This gives a platform from which the inclusive education drive can ride on for the betterment of education for CWD.

## 8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

### Enabling environment

- i. Lobby governments to continue to develop and implement national policies to support the right of children with disabilities to access education and succeed in school.
- ii. Lobby governments to ensure that legislation and policies should be reviewed to check for consistency with the CRPD for states that have ratified the convention, and advocacy conducted to encourage non-signatory states to ratify the CRPD and protocol.
- iii. Lobby governments to ensure that Legislation and policies in the field of education and disability should be easily accessible online with stable web addresses to enable organizations to hold governments to account. Legislation and policies should be made widely available to stakeholders at all levels.
- iv. Lobby governments to ensure that robust collection and sharing of data about children with disabilities at the national level and in the education system, particularly the use of EMIS. Based on the creation and use of clear and pragmatic categorizations (and their associated definitions) of disability.

### Supply-side conditions

- i. Lobby for provision of disability-friendly school facilities that are close to the community.
- ii. Lobby for provision of teaching and learning materials that are adapted or appropriate for different types of disabilities.
- iii. Lobby and advocate for to ensure that there are adequate training teachers to ensure that schools offer inclusive education.
- iv. Initial teacher education and continuing professional development should be reviewed to ensure specialist and mainstream teachers are prepared to include children with disabilities in education. General improvements in teaching quality, such as a problem-solving attitude to children's difficulties at school and strategies for helping children when they find something hard to learn, will help all children.
- v. Simply putting learners with physical disabilities in a mainstream classroom does not equate to inclusive education. Malawi's IE continues to face difficulties due to the unpreparedness of mainstream teachers on interaction with national IE policies and strategies. The study strongly recommended that IE for Learners with disabilities should be initiated from outside the classroom. Thus, headteachers, mainstream teachers and specialist teachers should prepare supportive systems in tandem with national IE policies and strategies.

- vi. Explore the mainstreaming of inclusion into initial and in-service teacher education within the context of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). The teachers complained about the lack of teaching and learning materials. Practically, the government may not meet the demands of all the schools. Apart from specialized resources such as braille machines, teachers may think of recycling waste to prepare instruction media. Thus, research in this area may be a step towards a sustainable IE.
- vii. All mainstream teachers should have some specific knowledge about disability awareness, identification of signs of probable hearing and visual impairments, and how to obtain further knowledge as required to teach a particular child with a disability in their class.
- viii. It is important that specialist SEN teachers are trained, as it is not feasible to train all mainstream teachers to be sufficiently fluent in Braille, national sign language, and augmentative and alternative communication modes to fulfil the communication requirements of article 24 of the CRPD.
- ix. Lobby and advocate for Evaluations of the programmes of non-state actors to ascertain the effectiveness of support so that good practice can be identified and transferred.
- x. Lobby and advocate that the activities and efforts of INGOs, NGOs, CSO and DPOs are coordinated and used strategically to achieve national objectives related to the fulfilment of the right to education for children with disabilities.

#### **Demand-side conditions**

- i. There is a need to address the stigma associated with disability through education programmes
- ii. Challenging systemic and compounded social issues resulting from poverty, gender and stigma.
- iii. On the demand side, good data could support understanding of the relationships between disability and poverty, gender and security. This could enable analysis of the ways in which these factors affect children with disabilities, and the extent to which they further reduce the demand for education from children with disabilities

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