LCD Promoting Inclusive Primary Education In Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe

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Over 30% of children with disabilities across Zimbabwe are not in school.

Prior to the intervention, Mashonaland West province had one of the lowest rates of enrolment of children with disabilities, with only 1,480 enrolled in school out of a total of at least 16,000 in the four districts that this project operated.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, the programme aimed at facilitating the increased enrolment of learners with disabilities in mainstream primary schools in Mhondoro Ngezi, Sanyati, Hurungwe and Kariba Districts of Mashonaland West Province, using funding from DFID.

Central to this project was the use of a Cluster Model Approach, where one school was developed in order to influence the surrounding schools within the cluster. In total, there are 30 model schools in the province.
UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

- All learners can learn together
- All learners are different
- Diversity or differences should be valued
- All learners have a right to education
- As a result, all stakeholders, including people with disabilities were involved at all stages in the shaping and monitoring of the project, including community awareness-raising, infrastructural adaptation, transport solutions, assistive devices, as well as in the monitoring of school attendance of enrolled children with disabilities.
INTervention Strategies

- Improving quality & accessibility of primary education.
- Supporting children with disabilities and their families to access assistive devices/technologies.
- Providing transport solutions to children with mobility challenges.
- Facilitating adaptations to school buildings and provide inclusive materials.
- Establishing and equipping resource centres with learning materials, including children’s intelligent computers.
- Training teachers in inclusive, gender-sensitive, and child-centred teaching methods.
Training teachers, education officials, and parents in Sign Language and Braille.

Organizing learning workshops and school exchanges to share learning and enhance delivery.

Sensitizing parents and community members on the rights and potential of children with disabilities.

Establishing and support parents’ groups, including training on advocacy and lobbying for implementation of legislation.

Establishing small income-generation projects to support the enrolment and retention of children with disabilities in schools.

Training local NGOs and organizations of disabled persons for improved institutional commitment to education.
Drama by a parents’ club is testimony that the community is part and parcel of the advocacy work on inclusive education at Neuso Primary School in Sanyati District.

A community sensitisation march by children on inclusive education

A local music band at Shingirirai Primary School in Sanyati district singing and dancing to its composed song in recognition of the good work LCDZT has done at the school.
Below - Training of teachers in Hurungwe Districts by lecturers from Seke Teacher’s College and United College of Education on inclusive education.

Above - A lecturer from Zimbabwe Open University training teachers on inclusive education.
Below – A learner provided with a wheelchair to enable her to go to school. Her friends find joy in wheeling him to and from school.

Above – Sample of a tricycle provided to 29 schools and one mini-bus provided to an urban school for transporting children with disabilities from and back to their homes.
IMPACT OF THE PROJECT

- 1,089 children with disabilities (model schools) and 1,843 (cluster schools), totalling to 2,932 children with disabilities, accessed mainstream primary school education in Mashonaland Province.

- 951 teachers received training on how to handle learners with diverse needs;

- The practice can be adopted or adapted by other organizations and government departments as it is run on the lines of CBR programmes;

- It is also cost effective as it is community driven [community engagement]. Parents and children were empowered in self-advocacy.

- The project is expanding as Save the Children International has engaged Leonard Cheshire Zimbabwe Trust in implementing the programme on their behalf in eight districts of Zimbabwe;

- As a result of the collaboration with the government, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education is becoming more responsive to the education of learners with disabilities.

- Its power of large scale replicability and the importance of community engagement, are key learning points.
Sustainability & Contact Details

Sustainability

Below – learners and parents engaging in a poultry project for income generation to sustain the inclusive education programme – each school received US$300.00

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Promoting Inclusion!