INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING ACCESS, EQUITY, QUALITY AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

Kenya Institute of Special Education.
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ABSTRACT

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006), Article 24 recognizes the right of persons with disabilities to education with a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity. Kenya is equally committed to ensuring an inclusive education system at all levels as reflected in the Constitution (2010) and the Basic Education Act (2013).

INTRODUCTION

The Government of Kenya (GoK) is working towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal No. 4 on Equitable, Inclusive Quality Education and Lifelong Learning for ALL. In this regard, GoK recognizes the importance of Inclusive Education by emphasizing on the need for all learners to learn together in an inclusive environment. Though much progress has been achieved in the education and training of learners with special needs and disabilities in the past years, there still exist gaps. It is in this respect the Ministry of Education is working on the Sector Policy for Learners and Trainees with Disabilities.

The policy would look into the importance of early identification, assessment and placement as a key component in the provision of quality and relevant education and training for learners and trainees with disabilities. Kenya Institute of Special Education organized the East Africa Inclusive Education conference (2018) that brought together over 400 delegates for a scholarly discourse on Inclusive Education.

The Conference Goal

The goal of the Conference was to strengthen collaboration between National and Regional partners working towards realization of Inclusive Education. The main theme of the Conference was "Inclusive Education: Strategies for Enhancing Access, Equity, Quality and Opportunity for ALL" with the following subthemes:

- Leadership and practices in Inclusive education
- Innovation and technology to achieve Inclusive Education
- Curriculum reforms and Inclusive Education
- Social justice and advocacy in Inclusive Education
- Students' voices in Inclusive Education practices
- Teacher education for Inclusive Education
- Role of media in promotion of Inclusive Education
- Policies and Legislation on Inclusive Education
- Collaborative Partnership and Financing for Inclusive education
- Inclusive Education and transition.

PLENARY SESSIONS 1: OPENING

The Director, Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE), welcomed all the participants to the East Africa Conference on Inclusive Education 2018. It was pointed out that the Conference was built on the National Conference on Inclusive Education, 2016. The Director stated that the participants would greatly help develop inclusion in their institutions as well as borrow a leave from the foreign participants to enrich the Conference and make inclusion a success. He emphasized the need for children with special needs and disabilities to be given opportunity and be accommodated in regular institutions of learning to ensure attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4. He further stressed that the key objective of the Conference was to make everyone understand and appreciate the concept and practice of Inclusive Education.

> *"... all students should attend and be welcomed by their neighbourhood schools in age-appropriate regular classes and supported to learn."*

Key Highlights

- The purpose of the Conference was to bring key stakeholders together to dialogue, create a debate on Inclusive Education and look into the gaps which were identified in the National Conference on Inclusive Education, 2016
- Collaboration with partners working to support Special Needs Educational Programmes to enhance relevant infrastructure.
- Kenya is one of the member States that are involved in ensuring the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 2030.
- Inclusion has been advocated as the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes in building an inclusive society and achieving Education for All.
- Kenya has made progress in providing barrier free infrastructure to attain Special Needs Education as stipulated in the Kenya Constitution (2010).

The Chairman of the KISE Council welcomed all the delegates and expressed his appreciation that the East Africa Conference had come into fruition. The chaiman recognized the presence of distinguished guests from the international community and the Cabinet Secretary for Education. The chairman brought the attention of the delegates to the key functions of the Institute among them assessment, training and research which are paramount to implementation and success of Inclusive Education.

The chairman noted that a lot of mileage has been gained since the launch of SDGs in 2015, but we are far from where we want to be.

> *"... If you want to walk far, you walk with others."*

To attain success in Inclusive Education, the chairman was of the view that attitude and policy changes must be affected.

Key Highlights

- The chairman raised concern over the big number of children with disabilities who were not accounted for in institutions of learning.
- The chairman called for action to accommodate learners with special needs and disabilities in all institutions of learning.
- The chairman expressed for the need for a national assessment and referral centre
- Ensure teachers are well trained and motivated
- The need for inclusion is enormous. It's a societal problem that requires everyone's participation

Opening Remarks

While inviting the Cabinet Secretary for Education to officially open the conference, the Principal Secretary Ministry of Education noted that children are a gift from God and they should all attain their full potential. The Principal Secretary added that there should be equity among all children. The Principal Secretary stressed that the issue of special education should be included in technical colleges and teachers should only go to KISE to upscale their knowledge. The Principal Secretary said the Ministry will continue to ensure that the institutions are suitable for all children, ensuring all facilities are within the specifications of the Basic Education Act. The Principal Secretary further pledged the government's support in establishing assessment centres in the Counties that would be aligned with the National Assessment Centre.

In the opening remarks the Cabinet Secretary for Education praised children, saying they were doing much more than adults to make the world more inclusive.

"The children have told us what we need to do to ensure their world is suitable for them,"

The Cabinet Secretary for Education urged the participants to share ideas on Inclusive Education, discuss strategies and offer proposals on the way forward. The Cabinet Secretary assured the organizers that opinions and views gathered at the Conference would be taken into consideration by the Ministry, saying that the government was committed to ensuring that the right to education was enjoyed by all children.

Key Highlights

- Strengthening collaboration between national and regional partners towards realization of Inclusive Education at all levels of education and training.
- Kenya values everyone present in the Conference with special welcome to all foreign delegates. The Cabinet Secretary urged all to interact and learn as much as possible from each other and share best practices in the provision of special needs education.
- The Cabinet Secretary urged all to exchange ideas on the current research activities on Inclusive Education, explore different approaches and practices on Inclusive Education and discuss strategies and benefits of enhancing education for all.

- The Cabinet Secretary emphasized the commitment of the Kenya Government to promote and support education of all children, and especially those with special needs and disabilities as has been demonstrated by increase in financial allocation in support of Inclusive education.
- Creation of Directorate of Special Needs Education in the Ministry of Education in an effort to strengthen coordination, enhance quality and relevance of education, and improve outcomes for learners and trainees with disabilities.
- Adaptations of the Curriculum to suit learners with special needs and disabilities in the competence based curriculum. Review of the Policy on Provision of Education and Training for Learners and Trainees with Disabilities together with its Implementation Guidelines.
- KISE's role in training specialized personnel, guiding and providing specialized services and modeling of inclusive education.
- Report of the National Survey on Children with Disabilities and Special Needs in Education conducted by KISE between September, 2016 and June, 2017 shall guide the Ministry of Education and other government departments in resource allocation and improved service provision.
- The Ministry of Education financial support to construct the National Educational Assessment and Referral center at KISE. The centre is intended to revolutionize assessment of children with special needs and disabilities and promote the Practice of Inclusive Education.
- The MOE shall support equipping the centre with modern and relevant equipment to ensure that it is functional. She appreciated the KISE Council and management for this foresight.
- The Cabinet Secretaty promised to support KISE Council and management in their endeavour to upgrade the model inclusive pre-school to a model comprehensive school.
- Her expectation at the end of the conference was to get a clear way forward on how best education for learners with special needs and disabilities can be supported to ensure the achievement of all ten (10) targets of SDG Goal 4.
- Ministry of Education acknowledged the key role played by the parallel Children's Conference whose theme was "My voice Counts".

Finally, the Cabinet Secretary for Education officially launched the East African Conference on Inclusive Education as well as the 2017 National Survey Report on Children with Disabilities and Special Needs in Education.

KEY NOTE ADDRESS

In the key note address entitled '**Challenging Notions of Inclusion in the African Context, for Sustainable Inclusive Education Policy and Practic**e', the presenter noted that inclusion has been slow in Africa. They said there was an entrenched belief that solution to Inclusive Education lies with the West and that all Africa has to do is follow what the West is doing.

They stressed that Africa must find her own solutions if Inclusive Education is to be successful in the region.

The presenter stated that there has been tremendous progress across the world since 2000 but despite all the efforts by governments, civil society and the international community, the world has not achieved education for ALL. Some of the efforts include:
- Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- Education for All Agenda (1990)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and Optional Protocol (2006).

The presenter further highlighted some of the challenges hindering success of Inclusive Education which included:
- Teacher knowledge and skills
- Physical accessibility
- Resources and materials
- Assistive Devices
- Support personnel
- Government support, clear policy directives and guidelines
- Parental involvement
- Inflexible curriculum
- Transport
- Inflexible assessment to ascertain competencies for a diverse range of learning styles
- Insufficient funding

Way Forward
- Change of attitude towards people with special needs and disabilities
- There should be justice and fairness, social sharing of knowledge and resources and attending to the needs of all.
- Establish education institutions and systems where all children are included
- Demystify the term inclusion.

    'The common question by teachers is; 'How can I include all children in my class'. This is possible if teachers changed their attitude towards children with special needs by minimizing barriers to learning and participation".
- The number of children with special needs and disabilities in mainstream schools should be increased and improve access
- Have political will (development of policies),
- Establish resource centres
- Pay attention to education of girls, particularly those with disabilities
- Design non-formal education programmes
- Strengthen definition of IE. It has to be about all learners and not just about children with special needs.

- The policy model must focus on inclusion in local schools.
- There should be a community based model to address funding constraints
- Strengthen partnerships with government, NGOs and other stakeholders to make inclusion a reality.

In conclusion, the presenter said to truly realize Inclusive Education, African countries should apply Afrocentric theories (Africanisation, Ubuntu, African indigenous knowledge), embrace liberalization, creativity and social consciousness. It is important to place Inclusive Education as a priority for education reform to ensure an inclusive society.

Key Questions and Answers

Question: How do we manage the children with special needs and disabilities in an inclusive environment and get the county governments involved? Are mainstream schools inclusive?

Answer: There are immense resources at the local level. We need to start exploring local solutions and ensuring that everyone is involved in seeking solutions.

Question: Expound on the statement "Inclusion is equals to struggle for freedom". Answer: Africa is always viewed as an underdog by the developed economies, therefore the fight for inclusion in Africa is a fight for freedom.

Presentation Comments

We do not need to write new policies to realize inclusion. We have many of them already, for instance, Kenya's Sessional Paper No. 1, 2005, and various UN conventions as well as the Constitution, 2010. If we can implement these, then inclusion would be achieved.

PANEL I: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: LEADERSHIP AND PRACTICES

In a paper entitled **Access to Academic Information and Participation for Students with Physical Disabilities in Higher Learning Institutions'** the presenter noted that there was increased access to higher education. However, disadvantaged groups including those with disabilities have ineffective learning environments which do not nurture the students' desire to learn.

Presentation Highlights

- Studies have shown that students with disabilities complete university at a significant lower rate than able-bodied peers. Those who complete university have a lower rate of employment.
- If there are no inclusive systems at the lower level institutions, there will definitely be lower intake of learners with special needs and disabilities at the university level.
- Formulation of disability policy framework in higher education in 2009 is one of the milestones the government has achieved to enhance inclusive learning and effective access to university for students with disabilities.
- Institutional policies to create conducive learning environments for students with disabilities are not fully put into practice thereby hampering their participation.

- Environments in some institutions are not disability friendly

In conclusion, the presenter called for more barrier-free and disability friendly environment to enable students with disabilities to have access to buildings, academic information, materials, assistive devices and other equipment to promote their mobility as this would greatly increase their participation in learning activities.

Presentation Comments

A participant working in one of the universities expressed that staff would like to help students with special needs but they lack necessary communication skills. The participant recommended the need for a policy to make institutions inclusive.

Another participant observed that attitude is the biggest challenge, not funds. All teachers should be trained on teaching and supporting learners with special needs.

In a study **"Role of Inclusive Education Resource Centres in Ethiopia'** a participant noted that itinerant teachers, teachers of satellite schools, community and government representatives established the following:
- Out of the estimated 5 million children with special needs in Ethiopia, only four percent are enrolled in schools.
- Some of the achievements of the resource centres include raising awareness about education for all, Inclusive Education was gradually understood as childrens's right, school enrollment of children with special needs has been increasing, and schools have become more accessible.
- Overall, inclusive education resource centres played an important role in community mobilization and capacity building of teachers.

Presentation Challenges
- Absence of "hard law" on education
- Itinerant teachers were not included in the national career structure
- High turnover of teachers
- Sustainability of the projects

Way Forward
- Set up and maintain partnerships
- Build and keep strong and positive team spirit
- Align with other projects in the area to share good practice
- Use media to create awareness.

Presentation Comments

It is important to consider exit strategy at the beginning of the project to ensure that the projects are sustainable.

In the paper "**Prospects and Challenges of Inclusive Adult Education in Vihiga County: Challenges and Opportunities**", the presenter stated that according to a World Health Organisation (WHO) report released in 2001, about 785 million (15.6 %) of the world's population aged 15 years and older lives with some form of disability. The presenter stated that 90% of participants in the study had physical, hearing and visually impairments. Although there has been a lot of emphasis on inclusion for younger population with disability, there has been little done to address inclusion in adult population with disabilities. The presenter stated that age remains the most discriminatory factor in education where the right to education, and even learning, remains closely associated with children.

Presentation Highlights
- Data on adult learners is lacking in almost all the countries, Kenya included
- Adults with disabilities were unable to access second chance education
- Adult education instructors lack the requisite skills to support learners with disabilities
- More than half of the learners lacked assistive devices and the learning environment was not conducive
- Majority had to walk long distances to the learning centres

The presenter recommended provision of financial support and improvement of infrastructure for adult education. The presenter also called for more collaboration among various stakeholders to ensure that adult learners with disability benefit from inclusive education. The presenter further urged the media to promote adult education.

In the paper "**An Exploration of the Effectiveness of the Leadership Practices to Support Successful Inclusion of Children with Disability: Comparative Analysis of two English Schools**", the presenter observed that there was a deliberate move by the United Kingdom (UK) government to put in place policies to support special education needs. The presenter added that, every school had to change to make inclusion successful and Special Needs education is allocated resources in the UK.

The presenter noted that there was a close link between leadership practice and the implementation of successful inclusive provisions. However, the presenter argued that leadership and management are not synonymous. One can be a leader without being a manager and, fulfill many of the symbolic, inspirational, educational and non native function of a leader and thus represent What an organization stands for without carrying any of the burdens of management.

Leadership practices that foster inclusion
- Ethos and cultures have to be efficient and shared with teams

- Practice deployment of resources both human and capital
- Every school should have an inclusion policy

The presenter concluded that effective leadership practices make significant differences in making inclusion successful in institutions. The most important thing is that the society around the school has an acceptance culture and head teachers do not deny a special child access to their school. Further, in mainstream schools in the UK, all children admitted must be taken through formal assessment by the school to prove whether they have any form of disability so that they can get help.

PANEL 2: INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

In the paper **"ICT in Special Needs Education: A Case of Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE)"** The presenters illustrated to the participants the technology status at KISE in view to demonstrate the importance of ICT in special needs education. The presenters explained that technology was used to efficiently carry out the National Survey on Children with Disabilities 2018. The presenters noted that Information Communication Technology (ICT) presents the 21st century generation with new and improved choices, opportunities and challenges. Technology, has revolutionized many set ups including education. Despite major strides that have been made in ICT integration in education, accessibility to ICT has continued to be a challenge to learners with disabilities. KISE has stepped in the intervention by contributing in training and capacity building of teachers and other professionals in ICT for Special Need Education (SNE).

In embracing ICT, KISE has adopted the ABN Unisol, a Management Information System that the institution uses for managing its operations. This has greatly improved efficiency in both administration and management, especially in the admission and registration of students. The participants were informed that KISE is in the process of automating its students' class attendance and management of examinations. Indeed, ICT is changing the institution's, approach in teaching and learning by adding features of liveliness to learning environments. Anyone irrespective of location can access KISE online and get information about the institution. Registration of students can also be done online. Instruction content too, has been developed and integrated in teaching programmes.

Presentation Highlights
- Students and staff have access assistive technology
- Screen reading software such as Job Access with Speech (JAWs) and Non-visual Desktop Access (NVDA) are provided
- Note takers and smart Braille machines are available in KISE
- Embosser machines are used for mass production of Braille reading materials
- The institute has ICT facilities for rehabilitation programmes
- Currently, KISE partners with other organizations in training on ICT

- Focus is now on providing training in ICT and entrepreneurship to young persons with disabilities and youth from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Promote basic ICT literacy for persons with disabilities to avoid exclusion

Presentation Questions and answers

Question: What is the impact of technology in terms of numbers and improvement of learning for learners with special needs and disabilities?

Answer: Use of ICT reduces content delivery time, makes learning captivating and more real.

In the paper "**Effects of Geogebra Animated Geometry Concepts During Instruction on Secondary Students' Achievement by Gender in Kibwezi Sub-County, Kenya**" the presenter captured the attention of delegates with the dynamics of using animation as a component of teaching. The presenter explained that he used creativity to capture the dynamics of teaching with computer aided animation.

The paper was inspired by the hope that the use of ICT animations would improve achievement of students in mathematics. The theoretical framework that guided the study was based on Constructivist Theory of Learning where the students constructed new knowledge from real life experiences. In the presentation, the presenter used a bicycle to effectively teach geometry. When the presenter used a picture of a bicycle, ninety per cent of his students got it wrong. However, when the presenter animated the bicycle, the students were more alert, lively and understood the concept.

The presenter demonstrated how the students mark soared after he introduced animation in teaching. In the study, the presenter found out that the use of three dimension geometry (animated aids) across other subjects such as physics and chemistry could greatly improve students' learning.

Presentation Recommendations

- It was found out that Computer Animated Geogebra Technique was effective as a teaching strategy for geometry instruction in comparison to traditional method of instruction.
- The problem of dismal performance in Mathematics may be addressed by use of computer animations.
- Computer animations are more effective when they are used to supplement but not to entirely replace other methods of instruction.
- In-service course should incorporate computer animations in their teaching programmes.

Presentation Questions and Answers

Question: How can animation be used to aid learning for those with impaired vision?
Answer: There is need for more research and partnership to develop this idea further

In a paper **"Enhancing Access and Equity in Inclusive Education through Assistive Technology**" the presenters observed that assistive technologies broke the barriers to communication and access to information in education of learners with disabilities. In the introduction, the presenter stated that PWDs were limited with focus being on digital equality rather than equity. This study targeted persons with visual impairments who had graduated from Rehabilitation and Innovative Centre at KISE. It focused on experiences of persons with disabilities in using assistive technology.

Presentation Highlights

- Graduates Learnt to use the computer without the mouse, and they can make use of a smart phone
- They are able to use ICT to conduct research and interact online
- They can make their notes, save data on flash disks and CDs
- More than 60 per cent of the youth had limited access to computers and other assistive technologies in school and therefore could not practice their ICT skills
- Teacher capacity was an issue in regard to students with visual impairment as some teachers did not have knowledge in the use of special software

In conclusion, assistive technology can be used to make education more accessible to learners with disabilities and special needs in education.

The presenter also addressed affordability and availability of assistive technology and the capacity to use it.

Presentation Comment

In Swaziland, the Ministry of Education and Training has a fully established Technology Assistive Centre where high technology is used in tools such as one touch, tablets with Braille output. These are fully accessible to learners who use them to upload materials.

In the paper "**Using ICT to Build Capacity and Awareness about Sensory Impairments: An Innovation from NORHED-ENABLE Project**" the presenter gave an overview of the importance of ICT in Inclusive Education citing that it enhances information delivery and is cost effective. The presenter observed that in the case for PWDs whose population is estimated to be one billion globally, the use of ICT has challenges that affect their participation. Further, ICT is unaffordable to PWDs and institutions low and middle income countries. However, with the enhanced legislation and administrative measures that promote the rights of PWDs in accessing ICT and assistive technology, there has been marked increase in the use of ICT in service delivery for PWDs.

The NORHED ENABLE project partners with the University of Oslo, KISE, Kyambogo University and University of Dar es Salaam. The focus is on hearing, visual impairment and dual sensory loss. The overall goal of the project is to train teachers who will work in sensory impairment rehabilitation institutions and raise awareness on sensory impairments in East Africa.

Achievements of the Project
- Web portal developed
- Provision for selecting between Kiswahili and English versions in place
- A blend of text, videos and audio clips in place

Challenges faced by the project
- Audio text and Kiswahili interpretations were not validated across the three countries
- Technical solutions were not done in two partner institutions to determine what works
- Variations in ICT
- Provisions in the three countries for PWDs' may miss out in the final web portal

As a way forward, there is need to develop a web portal about other disability areas, such as intellectual and motor impairment and to expand the web portal to include other East African countries.

PANEL 3: ROLE OF MEDIA IN PROMOTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

In the paper, **"Role of Media in Promoting Inclusive Education: Through the Eye of my Brother"** the presenter illustrated the important role played by the media in covering and highlighting issues on Persons with Disabilities and other special needs. The presenter shared their story through their experience with their epileptic brother. The presenter narrated the stigmatization the family underwent as a result of the brother's condition, but this was not highlighted because the media coverage by then was not wide spread or the matter was not of significance. The presenter emphasized that, if this was to happen today, the story and their plight together with that of their brother would have hit the headlines in print, electronic and social media platforms. *"A young epileptic man together with his two sisters thrown out of a moving bus"*. Such is the importance of the media.

Presentation Highlight

• The presenter explained that communities dealt with discrimination at their own level of cultural and myth-associated understanding.
• The presenter observed that currently the media is driving the discussion of inclusive education and cited the case of Goldalyn whose story was mainly highlighted because of their exemplary performance in KCPE despite having albinism.
• The presenter stated the role of the media in the promotion of IE is to inform, educate and engage the government (county and national)and other stakeholders on implementation of IE

In her conclusion the presenter observed that media would enhance coverage of issues of disabilities in order to advance on the rights of children with disabilities in an inclusive society. "*... Education is not all about reading, writing and passing exams; it is about empowering all children including those with disabilities with relevant skills and enabling each child participate in the development of their community*".

In the presentation "**Role of Media in Promoting Inclusive Education in Kenya**" the presenter reiterated the importance of the mainstream media in influencing public opinion and attitudes. The choice of words, images and messages used in media determine perceptions, attitudes and behavior towards persons with disabilities. The presenter noted that research indicates that children who are educated in an inclusive classroom environment are more accepting of other children with disabilities. The presenter highlighted lack of partnership (financing and sponsorship), capacity, motivation, awareness and knowledge of IE as the main hindrances to effective coverage

In the recommendations the presenter called upon NCPWD and other stakeholder to build capacity of media practitioners on reporting disability matters and to amplify voices of persons with disability by encouraging inclusion.

PANEL 4: SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ADVOCACY

In the paper, "**The High Road to Inclusive Education in Kenya: Milestones, Challenges and Prospects**" The presenter defined Inclusive Education as "...education in which all children are welcome in the same classroom, provided with quality instructions, support tools needed to succeed and where schools and school systems adapt to accommodate them". The presenter noted that the inclusion journey in Kenya began in 1946 when schools began offering special education to learners with disabilities. In the 70's, integrated programmes were initiated while in the 90's various UN conventions were ratified to promote inclusion.

Key Highlights
- Acceptance of all children in the classroom
- Providing human and material resources that promote inclusive education
- Providing an appropriate and flexible curriculum
- Ensuring disability friendly learning environment
- Developing policies and implementation strategies that promote inclusion

In conclusion, the presenter noted that merely placing children with and without disabilities together does not produce positive results. Inclusive education comes about when there is progress, advocacy, planning, support and commitment.

In a study paper "**Adjustment of Persons with Acquired Disabilities and its Impact on Caregivers**" that sought to document the effects of acquired disability on caregivers, the presenters observed that the onset of the disability presents a confusing period for the family

members and the Person With Acquired Disability (PWADs). Many caregivers end up feeling helpless and not able to adequately support them. Adjusting to support, therefore, calls for psychological adaptation.

The study revealed that most people who experience disability later in their lives face a great challenge adapting to their new status. There is a need, therefore, for caregivers to walk with them in the journey of adjusting to the new status.

Presentation Findings

- The PWADs' need for more specialized attention and high financial expenditure for their special needs, is a challenge to most of the caregivers
- More experience and training of caregivers lead to better service to PWADs

In conclusion, the presenter noted that the caregiver is very important in the life of PWAD. The perceptions the caregivers hold regarding the PWADs highly influence their adjustment in the society. It would also be useful for policies and programmes to support caregivers to be put in place to help them gain knowledge and the psychosocial support that would enable them provide better care. She suggested that in the absence of trained caregivers, parents should be trained as well as other caregivers in their localities. It would also help to collaborate with other organisations for support.

PANEL 5: STUDENT VOICES IN EDUCATION PRACTICES

In the study paper **"Art Therapy for Self-Expression: Deaf Secondary School Students' Voice"** the presenter explored the benefits of Art Therapy to students with hearing impairments in communication for inclusion. In a study involving 35 students of which 23 were boys and 12 were girls, aged between 14 to 25 years, the presenter highlighted the benefits as self-expression, relaxation, processing of information, socialization, fun and enjoyment from self-report. According to the study, Art Therapy can be employed in promoting mainstreaming of learners with hearing impairments.

In conclusion the presenter recommended promotion of sign language, continuous professional development of personnel and establishment of Art therapy centres to prepare learners with hearing impairments for inclusion. The presenter also emphasized the importance of members of the society learning how to co-exist with persons with hearing impairment by being sensitive to their needs.

In the paper, "**Inclusive Education: Listening to Children's Voices**", the presenter defined inclusion as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all children, youth and adults through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, thereby, reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education. The presenter explained that inclusion is based on a value system that welcomes and celebrates diversity arising from gender, nationality, race, language, social background, level of educational

achievement, disability, etc. Inclusion also implies that all teachers are responsible for the education of all learners (UNESCO, 2009). The presenter emphasized that it is important that children with disabilities are enrolled in schools as stipulated in the Kenyan Constitution in Article 56(b) that provides for the provision of special opportunities in the field of education for minorities and marginalized groups.

The presenter highlighted the following challenges that children with disabilities encountered in school and at home:

- Inadequate preparedness of teachers, parents and other service providers that leads to no inclusivity in educational provision
- Lack of co-operation and open mindedness among teachers, parents and other care givers
- Inadequate involvement/participation for persons with disabilities in class activities hence limiting maximum benefits
- Teachers emphasizing on achievement of better grades instead of considering varied abilities and nurturing of talents
- Inadequate preparedness in case of emergencies and failure to observe safety standards

Presentation Recommendations

- Sensitize the community on how to interact with children with disabilities and special needs to eliminate stigmatization and improve on how we treat the persons with disabilities
- Involve children with disabilities in community activities
- Build capacity of parent, teachers and other service provider on supporting learners with disabilities
- Provision of assistive and adaptive devices to learners with special needs and disabilities
- Ensuring that learning environment is friendly and accessible to all.
- Involving children with special needs and disabilities in policy formulation and curriculum development process.

PANEL 6: TEACHER EDUCATION IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

In the study paper **"Teacher Education for Inclusive Education"** the presenter observed that education in any form, shapes the destiny of a society and is considered as the critical "software" for development. However, the presenter cautioned that if the "software" was to effectively make a difference in today's education system, there must be a cadre of competent teachers who are well versed with diverse changing trends in the society. The teachers' Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programmes are critical in order to support the learning needs of all students in every school, there are provisions to be met.

In the study, the presenter found out that a partnership committee can strengthen Inclusive Education system. Such a committee would provide information and advice to school administrators. Besides, it would also work to bring principles of Inclusive Education to life in the classrooms.

The presenter identified two main challenges of teacher education in Inclusive Education as:
- Laxity of leadership and management in educational institutions which has not been effective enough to include all the teachers in CPD programmes as advised by the designated capacity development agencies
- Stakeholders are neither fully informed nor involved in CPD programmes for teachers.

Presentation Recommendations

- That the three agencies: KEMI, CEMASTEA and KISE, be mandated with the responsibility of capacity building for teachers
- Management and leadership to collaboratively come up with a framework that is inclusive in all aspects to take care of the teachers of learners with diverse needs
- Establish a well-coordinated agreeable CPD framework for teachers to ensure that the concept of IE principles is adhered to.

In the study paper "**Using Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) to Educate Students with Autism in Inclusive Environments**" the presenter stated that Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) provides a framework for addressing needs of students with autism within inclusive settings. The presenter further said that ABA and inclusive practices are not only compatible methods and frameworks but also powerful methods of assuring progress for students with autism.

Presentation Highlights
- ABA principles are used to change and improve behaviour and that over 30 years, it has been established as a powerful source of intervention that allows students opportunity to achieve meaningful and non-trivial progress
- The field of ABA provides a powerful source of intervention design, monitoring and training to ensure that students with autism receive maximum benefit from their educational experience in a wide range of settings, including the general education environment.
- Behaviour Skills Training (BST) is another method which can be used to teach a new skill. It is a procedure consisting of instruction, modelling, behavioural rehearsal, and feedback that is used to teach new behaviour or skills
- Inclusive practices are best facilitated when services and support are well planned, person centred and student led

The presenter concluded by advising delegates to explore how to use Applied Behaviour Analysis to teach students with autism in inclusive environments.

PLENARY SESSION 2

In the address on **"Education Sector Policy for Learners and Trainees with Disabilities (2018)",** the presenter observed that over the years education policies have undergone continuous review. The review Special Needs Education framework (2009) was important in order to realign policy statements, strategies and implementation guidelines to the pieces of legislation that were in place such as the Kenya Constitution (2010) and Basic Education Act (2013) among others.

Policy shifts

- Scope on the policy: The 2009 policy only focused on basic education but the 2018 policies will be an education sector policy enabling special needs learning to be viewed as a pathway straight from early learning to university level
- The Education Sector Policy for Learners and Trainees with Disabilities (2018) focuses on Inclusive Education which was not in the Special Needs Education framework (2009).

Strategies for the implementation of The Education Sector Policy for Learners and Trainees with Disabilities (2018)

- Communication strategy to raise awareness on Inclusive Education
- To mainstream Inclusive Education and training across programmes related to education from early learning to university level
- Monitoring for quality assurance
- Piloting process of Inclusive Education
- Research and data to inform practice of Inclusive Education

Implementation/actualization of Policy

- Creating readiness in terms of attitude, quality to enable actualization
- Create mechanisms to identify schools to pilot the process
- Developing guidelines for the piloting process

The presenter emphasized that in the spirit of no child is left behind, there was need to work together as a global community to help the children realize their full potential.

In the study paper **"Financing Inclusive Education: Developing a Successful Grant Proposal"**, The presenter told the participants to be equipped with information when developing a grant proposal. This is because grant givers always have "strings" and conditions attached in awarding grants. Funds are granted by funding agencies when and if they understand the project, the project meets their funding priorities and believe that the project in question is achievable. The presenter said it was important to bring out these elements to donor satisfaction when writing a proposal.

The presenter noted that there is always fierce competition and so your proposal should stand out. It is important to have a strategy, a good support system, ample time and a final review/approval system in place before writing a grant. Equally of importance, to have a champion or a team leader who wants the project funded and who will likely lead the project if it is funded. The presenter stressed that the proposal should state with conviction why the grant is needed.

What you need to know about grants

- It is rare to find someone who will give you money to do what you are already doing and it is equally difficult to get money to do what you did with somebody else's money
- Remember that grant money has strings attached
- Grant money buys you flexibility and opportunities that you don't otherwise have
- You are competing with others for a fixed pool of funds
- Grant writing is an investment
- Grant writing is a discipline and deliberate process
- Grant writing is a competition.

The presenter added the following points as a guide to developing grant proposals:

- Nature and culture of collaboration
- Remember that no one writes a grant alone and that teamwork is the best approach
- The team leader should "leave their ego at the door"
- Support each other because everyone's effort is necessary
- Edit, edit, edit and do some more editing
- Involve multiple interactions, system support and do checks and balances

In conclusion, the presenter explained that a good grant proposal should be well-focused, understandable and not overly ambitious and should be written well to tell the funding agency how you will help **THEM** accomplish **THEIR** goals. Make sure that your proposal's purpose **DIRECTLY MATCHES** the purpose of the competition. Then tell the funding agency who is usually a reviewer exactly how it matches. The answer could be: "we don't have it but need it, we have it and it is not enough or we have it and it doesn't work."

Presentation Questions and Answers, Comments

Question: What are the challenges of project sustainability?

Answer: Sustainability is always difficult and cause gaps in an otherwise good project in continuity. Bringing in partners will ensure the sustainability of grants as they bring in their expertise. This ensures the grant seeker remains relevant through the incorporation of fresh innovations into the programmes. A follow-up with the beneficiaries of the project is recommended. Ensure that as a project implementer you offer guidance to ensure continuity. Who knows, you might get a new funder. Always have a Plan B even as you write your proposal on the direction to go after the donor has exited.

Question: Do children with special needs participate in grant proposal writing?

Answer: The staff involved in writing of grants for children with special needs and PWDs should work closely with them to ensure that they are well represented. This will also add value to their proposal as the donor would be more than willing to consider such a proposal that includes the very people that the funds are supposed to target. Also ensure continuous training of staff so that they are knowledgeable on the programmes being carried out by the organization and are able to offer solutions and bridge gaps that focus on working with the people that the project is targeting.

In the Key Note speech **"Policies and Legislation for Inclusive Education in Kenya",** the presenter addressed the conversation around policy legislation relevant to Inclusive education, the disconnect between policy provisions and implementation and measures to make legislation and policy effective. He focused on conversations around `Wanjiku '(used loosely by Kenyans to refer to the ordinary person). The presenter explained that while Inclusive Education is a much broader topic, the presentation would exclude other vulnerabilities and focus on disability. The presenter conversations were drawn from diverse stakeholders relevant to the education of learners with disabilities.

The presenter referred to Okot p'Bitek (1966), 'Song of Lawino ' to demonstrate the mighty strive of the minority, marginalized and underserved groups. This group was comprised of: nomadic and pastoral communities, refugees, street families, girls and sometimes boys, in certain disadvantaged situations, the gifted and talented and all children with disabilities.

Presentation Highlights

The presenter stated that the law was very clear as stated in the following legislations:

- Basic Education Act 2013: He observed that the Act had some glaring contradictions between it and the CRPD, 2006, which embodies the spirit of inclusion. While CRPD emphatically calls for Inclusive Education, the Act recognizes establishment and maintenance of special schools (Section 44).

- Constitution of Kenya, 2010: According to Haga, the supreme law of the land Article 54(b) states: "to access education institutions and facilities for persons with disabilities that are integrated into society to the extent compatible with the interests of the person". The challenge with the Act, he said, is in the use of the word "integrated into society" which he noted, opens it up for diverse interpretations and debates such that it is not clear whether it is about the "big picture" or semantics.

- The presenter noted that this Act had not achieved any meaningful gains, making the CRPD Committee of Experts in 2015 to revisit and call upon Kenya to establish a timeframe for the transition process from segregated to quality inclusive education.

- Further, the presenter observed that Persons with Disabilities Act 2003 (Section 18): The Act states "no person or learning institution shall deny admission to a person. with a disability to any course of study by reason only of such disability, if the person has the ability to acquire substantial learning in that course." The Act, however, does not explain what "substantial learning" means.

PLENARY SESSION 3: POLICY ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS

In Policy Round Table discussion, the presenter, emphasized that one of the KISE mandate is teacher training in the area of special needs education. However, there is a gap in the teacher training curriculum because it may not be adequate in terms of learning experiences, teaching experiences, content and skill provision in relation to inclusive education.

"...You can only create the future by looking at the present"

The presenter added that teachers who were already training on IE do not exactly popularize the policies of Inclusive Education. Teachers trained in IE face challenges when it comes to designing and scoring of examinations, hence there are several children with special needs who may never pass exams.

In the concluding remarks, the presenter noted the need for review of teacher training curriculum on inclusive education and to address policy issues.
Another participant explored the importance of looking into teacher competence and the number of qualified teachers available to facilitate achievement of inclusive education objectives. The participant suggested that in order to achieve the inclusive education objectives, the following should be put in place:
- Teacher's motivation
- Language and communication
- Curriculum adapted to suit the teacher training education on IE
- Learning environment conducive enough to facilitate the IE system
- Parent and community engagement on inclusion
- Learning materials and updated data of children with special needs and disabilities.

In the concluding remarks the participant expounding on policies as a key indicator of good Inclusive Education, the participant said professional policy makers should consider that both the teachers and the community should be aware of these policies and guidelines. It was necessary to understand the gaps and offer solutions.

A panellist applauded the presentation and thanked the government for giving the conference space to openly discuss issues pertaining to Inclusive Education. The panellist pointed out that children have different learning abilities and therefore teachers must always be prepared to support all types of diversity, especially on curriculum differentiation, communication modes and learning infrastructure.

"We are trying to change our minds to what we are used to and change is not an easy thing, people resist or accept change."

Without implementation strategies then policies will not work.

Another panellist emphasized the needs for a clear definition of Inclusive Education which would be agreed upon and embedded into the development framework. The panellist expounded on a policy framework that shall address the development of resource centres, addressing attitude issues and ambiguity in IE. Implementation of policies needs to be clear on strategies, funding, actors, timelines and evidence based research.

The round table discussion generated various questions focusing on digital training and Inclusive Education, role of media in promoting Inclusive Education, availability and competence of human resources for Inclusive Education.

In response the following answers and comments were given
- There is need to raise awareness to facilitate understanding on digital training. This awareness should involve communities, teachers and the media.
- The base of inclusive education is information technology; the media plays a role in pin pointing where we are not doing right, where services are not available and engagement of the multiple partners both private and public in service provision.
- Enhanced training for building capacity of the human resource in IE
- Implementation of Inclusive Education should be a gradual process
- There is need to have up to date data to help in a gainful sharing of resources evenly and equitably.
- The Ministry should have a way of finding out how far the implementation process is and at the same time create awareness to enable heads of educational institutions implement IE strategies.

PANEL 7: CURRICULUM REFORMS AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

In the paper **"Emerging Inclusive Learning Environments for Special Needs Education in the Context of Curriculum Reforms in Kenya: The Role of Language"** The presenter stated that education is a right to every child with special needs. The presenter noted that after the learning process, the individual is required to become self- reliant and at the same time contribute to the country's national development. Functional assessment determines the placement of the child and the kind of intervention measures that would meet the child's needs and abilities, subsequently, a child is placed in a special school, special unit, regular school with support or home and hospital-based programme.

Presentation Highlights
- The competency-based curriculum whose roll-out is on-going does not show clear pathways for the learners in home-based care
- Language development for learners under home-based and hospital-based care is also likely to hampered.
- In inclusive learning environments, SNE learners with learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral difficulties are likely disadvantaged

- Adaptation faces challenges arising from the environment under which inclusive learning is taking place and the curriculum itself.
- Adaptation and modification may be necessary and it may include the substitution of curriculum content, removal of some content area and the adaptation of teaching and learning strategies, resources and assessment.

The presenter further noted that language learning and language competency is realized through interaction, exposure, participation and imitation and therefore, SNE should be geared towards providing learning environments that cater for each group of disability.

Presentation Challenges

- Inclusion remains a controversial concept in education with some scholars arguing that the policy on inclusion is unrealistic, coercive and discriminatory. On the other hand, inclusion comes with many challenges to a teacher who is expected to cater for individual differences regardless of what the learners' needs may be.
- The learner does not benefit fully from the services since the other learners may ridicule him or her, hindering the realization of targeted competencies in learning

The learner with special needs in education may affect learning outcomes for other learners in the regular classroom on one hand and the teacher's effectiveness on the other

Presentation Recommendations

- There is need to carry out a survey to find out best practices in inclusive learning within competence-based curriculum while at the same time continue in-service programmes for teachers
- The competence-based curriculum should be further tailored to meet the needs of individual learners in the home-based programme and be made available for use
- The home-based care tool should include creating home(s) for children in every county or at regional level to provide artificial homes i.e. home away from home
- Teachers in charge of curriculum implementation should be in-serviced and have INSETs organized from time to time
- Computer-Mediated Communication tool (CMC) should be developed and tailor-made to meet learners with special needs in order to enhance language for learners.

In their presentation **"Curriculum Reforms and Inclusive Education"** the presenters observed that prior to the famous Dr. Fred Matiang'i's crackdown on examinations cheating, schools had been using unorthodox means to ensure that they produced the best students in the country. The presenter noted that weak students were forced to repeat classes and were registered for examinations in other schools and teachers were threatened with transfers if the schools produced "bad" results. Further Parents would storm schools to eject the teachers if the schools produced "bad" results and Education Officers were known to invade such schools thereby intimidating teachers and school managers.

Effects of all these were:
- Low self-esteem on low achievers

- Transition rate dropped
- Lack of continuity in the mainstream education with some giving up schooling
- Some students committed suicide due to pressure.

The presenter underscored the importance of Inclusive Education whose objectives include: to identify, encourage and recognize children's abilities in order to raise their self-esteem regardless of their academic performance and to help learners explore their talents. However, the presenter lamented that national and county schools were only selecting students based on academic performance leaving out those who were weak in academics but talented in other areas.

Presentation Challenges
- Lack of enough testing tools to identify children who have talents in different fields
- The new curriculum will be expensive to implement and sustain
- Shortage of qualified and competent personnel

Way Forward
- Rewarding best school performances in co-curricular activities
- National and county schools should not only be for those who excel in academics
- Act on recommendations made in MDGs, SDGs, Vision 2030 and the Medium Term Plan II (2013-2018) strategies
- Elimination of summative evaluation
- Assessment should be based on learner's competencies, appreciating their ability to apply knowledge and skills in performing various tasks within specific settings

Clear policy framework to guide and regulate various players in the sub-sector

Comment
The onset of the new curriculum gives hope to special needs education as the talented and gifted will be identified and attended to.

In the paper **"Curriculum Reforms in Kenya - No Learner will be Left Behind in the New Curriculum"** the presenter told the participants that early years' education is crucial to adaptation for learners with visual, hearing and physical impairment. The presenter emphasized the importance of curriculum design at the foundation level to ensure that learners who may have challenges in following the regular curriculum benefit. The presenter further noted the crucial role played by teachers in their positive reflections of the new curriculum which is flexible and learner centered, has varied activities for the learners who can use it to explore their abilities, is easy to implement and instills values and has minimised the burden of marking homework. It helps to identify learners' abilities, focus on outcomes and use of inquiries and questions and enhances interactions between the teachers and learners.

PANEL 8: POLICIES AND LEGISLATION ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

In the paper **"Head Teacher-Parent Collaboration Policies' Usefulness for the Improvement of Inclusive Education in Public Primary Schools in Meru County, Kenya"** the presenter observed that in Meru County, there appears to have ineffective head teacher-parent collaboration informal policies, which is linked to poor status of IE in public primary schools. The presenter was of the opinion that though most of the policies were informal, they were useful if put in place because they enhanced head teacher-parent collaboration for the improvement of IE.

Recommendations

- The presenter emphasized the need to take policy issues seriously in schools which would lead to improvement of head teacher-parent collaboration.
- The presenter also recommended that the government should formulate clear IE policies, with implementation support systems, and induct all the school stakeholders in their implementation.
- Capacity building of all the actors involved especially the parent, creates a bigimpact on IE. This is because when the parents are aware of their roles, they will then bring out their children for assessment.

- The parent is the first teacher of the child with special needs. It is important to work with all stakeholders to make remarkable gains in IE.

In the paper **"Inclusive Education, Implementation in Regular Primary Schools in Siaya County: Policy and Practice"** the presenters noted that the Kenya government has domesticated various policies from international conventions. In their case study, they observed that despite the availability of 216 teachers with background training in Inclusive Education and who are teaching in 72 regular primary schools in Siaya County, the implementation of IE in the county is at 12%. They noted that the trend could be as a result of poor motivation of teachers with SNE background from the government, lack of funds for implementation of Inclusive Education practices in the schools, negative attitude from teachers towards learners with disabilities and rigid regular curriculum.

Presentation Recommendations

- Schools' administration should strive to have required policy and legal documents in their schools
- Teachers should be encouraged to access information from the policy documents related to Inclusive Education to enhance their understanding and subsequent implementation process
- Education officers should enforce implementation of Inclusive Education related policies in regular primary schools

- The government should motivate teachers with Inclusive Education training background to boost their morale
- More teachers with Inclusive Education training should be posted in regular schools to enhance implementation of IE practices in line with the policies.
- The government should come up with clear IE policy implementation procedures for schools
- Further, research should be conducted on the role of the Ministry of Education in enforcing implementation of policies related to IE in regular schools.
-

In the presentation **"Facilitating Inter-Agency Partnerships to Develop the Early Intervention Framework for All"** the presenter observed that Children with Disabilities (CWDs), who receive good care and developmental opportunities during early childhood are more likely to become healthy and productive adults. This can potentially reduce the future costs of education, medical care and other social spending.

The presenter highlighted the following as challenges facing implementation of early intervention for children with special needs and disabilities.
- Inadequate and compelling policy provisions on early intervention and inclusive ECDE
- Poor data management systems for children with disabilities aged 0-6 years
- Ineffective inter-agency/multidisciplinary partnerships in health, social services and ECDE departments • Inadequate special education human resource,
- Inaccessible ECDE centers and unfriendlyphysical environment,
- Inadequate adapted learning and teaching materials.
- In her key highlights, she recommended
- Development and maintenance of consensus amongst early intervention stakeholders
- Create an early intervention policy framework that will facilitate transition from home to school and inclusive early childhood education
- Develop implementation guidelines for the Early Intervention Framework
- Carrying out a baseline survey on the state of provision of health, social services and early education for children with disabilities aged 0-6 years

In Conclusion the presenter emphasized the need for all children (with disabilities) between ages 3 and 4 years to be enrolled in their neighborhood or preferred choice of school under home-based or center- based programmes.

In the **paper "Exclusive Education towards Inclusion after 2015: The Lessons and Opportunities in Policy Implementation for Developing Society in Kenya"** the presenter explained that exclusion has its origin in special education. Special educationvhas been provided for as a supplement to general education provision; in other cases it has been entirely separate.

The presenter's study identified the following as challenges facing inclusive education:

- Mainstreaming had not been accompanied by changes in the organization of the regular school, its curriculum and teaching and learning strategies
- Lack of organizational change for implementation of inclusive education policies.
- Social exclusion of children with special needs and disabilities

Presentation Highlights

- Social policy should describe the problem, identity social values to the problem and recommend intervention.
- Incorporate best practices in addressing the problem of exclusion
- In his conclusion he called upon the adoption of the strategies that contribute to thinking policies for inclusion and should incorporate social equality. Measures to promote inclusion should be nationally undertaken by governments to ensure provision of early childhood care and education programmes

In the presentation **"Marrakesh Treaty: Education Gateway for the Visually Impaired Students in Kenya"** the presenter explained the Marrakesh Treaty as a multilateral treaty that was passed in 2013. However, in Kenya it was not ratified until 17th June 2017. Its objective is to facilitate access to published works for persons who are blind, visually impaired, or otherwise.

The presenter explained that in Kenya, a legal framework has been put in place to enhance the treaty. This includes the Copyright Act of 2001 which:

- Gives Copyright owner a bundle of rights that include the rights to copy, sell, distribute, publish and make other versions of the work in different media
- Gives Copyright protection and grants authors and owners a bundle of exclusive rights which are both economic as well as moral.

The presenter also cited other treaties that work alongside Marrakesh Treaty. They include: Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), WIPO Copyright Treaty, UNESCO's Universal Copyright Convention and Trade Related Aspects of International Property Rights, among others.

Presentation Highlights

In conclusion, the presenter pointed out the following for review of law and policies relating to audio-visual sector in Kenya:

- The country should create awareness on the proposed Copyright (Amendment) Bill The owners of copyrightable works should also be sensitized on the proposed laws Extend a form of compensation for the owners of copyright through the registered Collective Management Organization (CMO)
- The government should allocate in its annual education budget adequate funds to take • Care of the production of reading materials in 'special format' as per the requirements of the Marrakesh Treaty • Government should offer tax incentives as well as tax breaks for importers of materials for the blind.

In the paper **"Inclusive Education in East Africa: Rhetoric, Practice and Emergent Issues"** the presenter sought to outline the present status of inclusive education in relation to policies, the gaps and the way forward. The presenter emphasized the importance of the East Africa Community integration in identifying these challenges in order to develop a common approach towards marginalized groups. This shall ensure common commitment under the UNCRPD and the Sustainable Development Goals, a cross-national or sub-regional research focusing on IE, foster transfer of knowledge and share best practices.

Presentation Highlights
The following issues should be addressed:
- Definitional contradictions in law in relation to special needs, special needs education and inclusive education
- Omission of reasonable accommodation in educational institutions
- Promotion of special schools over Inclusive Education system.
- Absence of a regional model of Inclusive Education

Presentation Recommendations
- Harmonize the definition of disability to adopt the provisions of the Convention, which removes the focus on the person or on the disability
- Focus on the various barriers that hinder full and effective participation of PWDs on an equal basis with others.
- Amend and/or repeal laws with derogatory terminologies.

PANEL 9: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP AND FINANCE FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

In the paper **"Preparing In-service Tutors for Inclusion in Uganda through Partnerships between University and Development Partners"** the presenter stated that Inclusive Education has been adopted worldwide as the best strategy to ensure that all children access quality and equitable education. In Uganda the commitment is demonstrated by the legal and non-legal frameworks on education and establishment of educational infrastructure aimed at mainstreaming disability.

The presenter noted that despite advancements made in Uganda, there are still challenges such as lack of capacity and commitment of teachers, inadequate infrastructure, negative social attitudes, overcrowded classrooms and shortage of teaching and learning resources in schools. In addressing these challenges the presenter stated that there should be a consideration on capacity in place for pre-service and in-service training of teachers in SNE, support to promote learning, participation as a means of reducing drop out of students with disabilities and other special needs and identify modifications needed to promote Inclusive Education practices.

In providing solutions, the presenter cited Kyambogo University Model and reported that the tutor development programme, a partnership between the University and Sight Savers Uganda Country Office was to among other things:

- Increase capacity and commitment of primary school teachers to offer Inclusive Education
- Increase capacity and commitment of newly-trained primary school teachers nationwide to include children with disability in their classes
- Ensure that children with disability and their families across Uganda benefited from Inclusive Education in mainstream schools
- Develop a e-based resource center
- Embrace the role laved by other partners such as the Ministry of Education and Sports, National Union of Disabled People of Uganda and Uganda Society of Disabled Children.

Success Stories from the Model

- Modifications made in brailing for learners who are blind
- Provision of sign language interpreter for the deaf learners
- Provision of audio-visual materials
- Placing of learners with low vision and hearing impairment on front seats to help them follow instructions

Provision of extra time in designated "resource rooms" to provide extra support to learners with special needs after lessons.

Presentation Recommendations

- Create awareness to raise the bar in understanding of what disability, inclusion and exclusion mean
- Encourage more learners with disability to join teacher education
- Encourage classroom organization in line with accessibility standards as provided for in the Disability Act
- Put in place policy directives to adopt reasonable accommodation and other equality opportunities measures for learners with disability
- Identify gaps to help guide where finances should be focused
- Advocate for college institutional policy on Inclusive Education practice
- Put in place a well-structured teacher development programme towards inclusion
- Establish joint monitoring and mentorship strategies in teacher training colleges
- Develop functional assessment, curriculum and environmental modification to mainstreaming Inclusive Education

In the paper **"Male Involvement in the Education of Girls with Disabilities: Leonard Cheshire Experience in the Lake Region of Kenya"** the presenter highlighted in-accessible school environment, in-adequate teacher skills on Inclusive Education in public schools, negative attitudes towards disability, stigma, isolation, abuse from family and weak policies to address disability in education planning as some of the barriers that girls with disabilities face.

These led to many girls with disability not completing primary school while very few transited to secondary school.

Changing Male Attitudes

In the Leonard Cheshire project (Kenya), 250 male mentors were trained on a range of issues including parenting, dealing with adolescent girls from a male perspective, reducing stigma and discrimination and supporting girls with disabilities in community participation.   A follow up with 100 of the 250 trained male mentors revealed that the training had improved the caregivers' basic understanding of girls with disabilities, meaning that the girls received more support. This support was extending to creating awareness across communities.

Results from the project showed that the impact of gender goes beyond the girls themselves and has implication on their education. The presenter noted that gender-focused initiatives were needed to ensure that they targeted inclusion of girls with disabilities in order to increase the number on enrolment and reduce drop-out rate. There was need for men to be more engaged in girls' education, training and mentorship. There was also need to manage expectations that education can open up possibilities and opportunities for girls, more so those with disabilities.

Presentation Highlights
- Identifying the most effective male mentor programme
- Compare the initial male mentor training to the new one
- Need to systematize and strengthen the programme to ensure its sustainability
- Cross-ministry links are essential to support children with disabilities
- Policies should be effectively monitored and enforced
- There should be more consideration of how Inclusive Education will be financed
- Social protection mechanisms should be expanded to take into account the intersection of poverty, gender and disability
- Parents and caregivers of children with disabilities need to be aware and informed of their rights and entitlements

In the paper **"Developing Sustainable Collaborative Partnerships in Kenya as an Alternative Means of Achieving Inclusive Education"** the presenter in reference to the 2017 National Survey on Children with Disabilities and Special Needs in Education (KISE 2018) defined Inclusive Education as bringing learners together in one classroom regardless of their background, weaknesses , strengths or disability. The paper explored collaborative partnership as an alternative and feasible implementation model for Inclusive Education in Kenya. The presenter further noted that for Inclusive Education to succeed there is need to form collaborative partnerships. The presenter identified teachers, learners, parents, policy makers and community leaders as key players in the creation of better and sustainable inclusive learning environments.

Presentation Recommendations

- Establish collaborative partnership rather than ratification of legal formalities
- Focus should be on targeted advocacy at the household level
- Embrace the learner, not the system
- Device mechanisms to support teachers trained in SNE in regular schools to champion the agenda of inclusion
- Put in place mechanisms that support teachers as agents of change

In the paper **"Funding for Inclusive Education: Need for Multi-Sectorial Approach in Kenya"** the presenter noted that although SDG 4 stressed the importance of implementing Inclusive Education, nothing much has been achieved. Challenges such as lack of consensus on valid economical approach whether segregated or inclusive, low budget and increased funding on special education, which has not yielded meaningful achievement are to blame. The presenter explored funding frameworks and their impact on Inclusive Education. The presenter further identified enabling factors and their contribution to Inclusive Education.

Funding Models

Resource based models: These have funding differentiated based on the services needed by the respective disabilities prevailing in an institution

The Per-Capita model: Assumes that all disabilities require similar funding. Its major challenge is in data accuracy and tendency to inflate numbers. It also hampers identification of special learners in view of a voiding the growing burden of supporting many learners.

The Output based model: This focuses on learners set milestones with focus on rewarding achievement and penalizing underachievement. This model requires highly motivated staff to stop it from being punitive for the learners where staff fails to deliver.

The Reimbursement funding model: This is effective in terms of implementation of Special Needs Education programmes. It cuts on competition between regular and special needs programmes on funds available.

However, the presenter noted that all these available models were not able to adapt to real time variances. The presenter observed that Kenya's current policy on funding addresses infrastructure and capitation grants for learners with disabilities to special schools and special units only, yet same needs exist in inclusive schools. This deters regular schools from admitting learners with disabilities due to lack of support.

Further, the presenter noted that though teachers in regular schools enhance preparedness for Inclusive Education, no special allowance is given to them neither are they recognized as special needs education professionals. There is also the issue of training and change of management in respect to education systems which only focuses on special schools and units.

All these factors contributed to lowering of the willingness to admit learners with disabilities in regular schools, thereby leading to segregation.

Presentation Recommendations
- National Education Management Information System (NEMIS) should actively capture data on variables necessary for management and funding of Inclusive Education
- Differentiated Unit Cost system of funding should be enhanced to contain additional valuable to encourage Inclusive Education
- Enhance and advocate for community collaborations for a more effective and efficient Inclusive Education system Establish workable remunerative funding modes to eliminate the skew against Inclusive Education
- Enhance pool of Special Needs Education teachers and trainers to support Inclusion

In conclusion, the presenter noted that incorporation of Inclusive Education in learning institutions would strengthen retention, catalyse transition and realize full potential of all learners regardless of disability.

PANEL 10: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND TRANSITION

In the **paper "An Assessment on the Implementation of Inclusive Education in Public Primary Schools— Kinango Sub-County, Kwale County, Kenya"** the presenter analysed the existing gaps in implementation of Inclusive Education. He outlined the following as the gaps:
- Inadequate and inaccessible facilities and materials
- Unfriendly learning environment
- Negative attitude by fellow students due to lack of awareness Management gap and differences between special unit and the host school. The community serves persons with disabilities from a medical model approach instead of rights based.

Presentation Highlights
- School and classroom schedules should be flexible and responsive to students' learning needs and preferences
- Embrace diversity in order to enrich the school environment
- Staff, students and parents should share a commitment to creating inclusive learning experiences for all students
- Learning institutions should be disability friendly
- Encourage more teachers to train in Special Needs Education (SNE).
- The Government should embark on massive public sensitization on matters of disability and particularly IE
- The current Education Assessment and Resources Centers should be strengthened through funding and resource allocation by the government and more centers should be opened closer to the community

In a paper **"The Relationship between Conceptual Competencies and Entrepreneurial Performance of Graduates with Physical Challenges in Kenya"** the presenter observed that graduates with physical challenges were the major decision makers in their enterprises. These decisionsincluded decisions on opening business, consultative forums, delivery of quality goods, stock taking, handling challenges and monitoring progress. Innovativeness in products and services was evident, for example, using their tri-cycles as display surfaces. Majority had set goals for stipulated period of time. A few respondents were averse to risks as they feared it could be costly.

Presentation Recommendations
- Provide an enabling environment to access financial resources
- Provide training models to enhance financial, business skills, goal setting agenda and capabilities for the entrepreneurs with special needs and disabilities
- Creation of an environment that embraces diversity in products and services that enables the entrepreneurs with physical needs to be creative and innovative.
- Provide a platform in the mass media for marketing for persons with disabilities
- Mainstreaming disability in respective government departments and institutions

In the presentation, **"Employment of PWDs in the Open Labor Market: Challenges and Opportunities in Kenya"** The presenter noted with great concern that the challenge of youth employment is real in Sub-Saharan Africa, and Kenya is not an exception. The presenter observed that Youths With Disabilities (YWDs) faced challenges in many areas such as employment where they faced stiff competition from their non-disabled peers. The presenter further noted that YWDs employment falls below the constitutional threshold of 5%.

The presenter highlighted other challenges related to employment of PWDs as:
- Limited networks as a result of retaining the circle of friends that have similar disability and experience similar challenges.
- Inadequate skills in teamwork, leadership, organizational, negotiations, assertiveness, conflict resolution and communication.
- Lack of confidence due to overprotection by parents and caregivers.
- Misconceptions on productivity levels of YWDs as well as an unfounded believe that PWDs are not flexible and when there is need to put in long hours they will not cope.
- Identification of avenues for skills upgrade, translating to job stagnation, boredom at work and a lack of motivation for the YWDs
- Ignorance of existence of Government subsidies for employers of PWDs,
- Fear of transport logistics to and from work by YWDs and caregivers;
- Lack of a national disability mainstreaming strategy.

In conclusion, the presenter pointed that more often than not the primary caregiver becomes a barrier. This is because they are the ones who arrange for interviews, accompany the YWDs to interviews; perpetuating a dependency mentality. There is also lack of opportunities for internship, attachment and apprenticeship yet it is a fact that experience makes a candidate

more desirable to an employer. There is also the issue whereby employers fear in engaging YWDs due to ignorance

CHILDREN'S CONFERENCE

The Children's Conference themed **"Inclusive Education: My voice counts"** was devoted to school going children as a way of ensuring that their voices were heard and captured. This is because the discourse of the conference touched on them. Child delegates were drawn from Thika School for the Blind, Mpesa Foundation Academy, Mirema School, Kasarani Primary School, John Njoroge Secondary Secondry, St. Dominic Primary school and Kenya Community Centre of Learning (KCCL).

Opening Remarks by Student Leader

The opening speech was given by a student leader from Kasarani Primary School, Nairobi. The leader acknowledged that there are many children and persons with disability in Kenya and added that her school has a Special Unit for children with disability.

Speech Highlight
Children with and without disability in the school engage in activities together such as assembly, playing and singing. Those without disabilities assist their counterparts with disabilities
- Children without disabilities treat those with disabilities well
- Children with disabilities are respectful and kind. They are also respected

Fun Time! Learning Time!
It was time to learn and have fun.
The children were taken through the importance of interacting with children with special needs and disabilities and how to take care of each other at their respective school environments. It was an insightful session as children put in their lively thoughts on a variety of topics. When asked why they loved children with special needs, these were some of their responses:

Child one: They are very kind.

Child two: They are funny; they make us laugh at school.

Child three: We play together during breaks.

The children were asked to state why sometimes they do not like the children with special needs. They responded thus:

Child one: They are difficult at times to help.

Child two: Some of them think you pity them when you help them.

Child three: Sometimes they decline association and help.
When asked how best they could make children with special needs feel more comfortable in school, they responded:

Child one: By making more inclusive activities so that they do not feel left out.
Child two: By always helping them whenever they need our help at school and not ignoring them.
Child three: By not pitying them but loving and empathizing without making them feel sorry for themselves.
The discussion was concluded by advising all children to always work together and help each other. The children were asked to always strive to make children with special needs feel comfortable and loved.

Special Guests from the United States
Guests from Minot State University shared light conversations with the children. The duo expressed their love and passion for children with special needs adding that they always wanted to do more for their benefit.
The guests engaged the children at the conference

Way Forward and Resolutions
- KISE to improve on the model Inclusive school so that other institutions across East Africa can learn from it.
- Work out a plan to ensure that the deliberations of the conference could be advanced in Parliament for Members of Parliament to deliberate on them and where possible, ensure that they are enacted into law.
- KISE to partner with media houses for dissemination of information on Special Needs and Inclusive Education

Closing Remarks

The Dean Faculty of Special Needs Education and Rehabilitation, Kyambogo University, Uganda while making the closing remarks at the end of Conference acknowledged that the deliberations of the Conference had highlighted success stories, challenges and limitations, lessons learnt and brought out the best practices. The dean noted that the presence of the Cabinet Secretary who officially opened the conference, was a testimony of the support and goodwill from the Kenya government.

"Now that we have come to the end of our deliberations on this great Conference — the East African Conference on Inclusive Education, 2018, our take home is that we should not wait for anyone to act on our behalf but we should act ourselves. It is only then that others can notice and act as advocates for IE in Kenya, and indeed for East Africa.".