

Development of Inclusive Education in Zanzibar

Introduction

Inclusive Education (IE) in Zanzibar has undergone significant development since its official introduction in 2004. The following are the key milestones, challenges, and achievements in the implementation of IE in Zanzibar.

Historical Context

Before the 1964 Revolution, Zanzibar's education system was exclusive, with access limited based on race and socioeconomic status. The nationalisation of schools in July 1964 and the subsequent proclamation of free education for all in September 1964 marked a turning point, though with challenges in accommodating all learners.

The Emergence of Inclusive Education

- **Feasibility Study (2004):** A feasibility study conducted in 100 (60 in Unguja and 40 in Pemba) schools paved the way for the implementation of IE.
- **Establishment of Special Education Unit (1988):** This unit played a crucial role in promoting the integration of learners with disabilities into mainstream education.
- **Pilot Project (2004):** Funded by the Norwegian Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (NFU), this project provided a foundation for scaling up IE.

Key Strategies and Initiatives

- **Teacher Training:**
 - Certificate courses at the Teacher Training College (CCK in 2006).
 - Diploma courses at the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA) since 2014.
- **Sensitization and Awareness:**
 - Workshops and seminars for parents, teachers, colleges, universities and community members.
- **Committee Formation:**
 - IE Steering Committee: Oversees planning and multi-sectoral collaboration.
 - School Inclusive Education Committees: Promote IE at the school level.
- **Development of Training Materials:**
 - Training modules on IE concepts, disabilities, and instructional strategies.
- **Follow-up and monitoring visits**

Achievements

- Increased awareness of IE among parents and communities.
- Significant rise in the number of learners with disabilities enrolled in schools.
- Reduced stigma associated with disabilities.
- Promotion of peer tutoring and child-to-child approaches.
- Stronger parent-teacher relationships.
- Improved school environments.
- Identification of barriers to learning and development.
- Reintegration of previously excluded learners.

Ongoing Challenges

- Parental hesitation to send their children with disabilities to school.
- Lack of transportation facilities.
- Inequitable examination and grading systems.
- Limited capacity among education professionals in specialised areas.
- Insufficient resources and infrastructure.

Teacher Training for Inclusion

To address the capacity needs of teachers, the following were done:

Phase I (2004-2014): Cascade Model

- A limited number of teachers (7-10) were trained and expected to cascade their knowledge to colleagues.

Phase II (2014-2018): Whole School Approach

- Coordinated by MoEVT.
- All teachers in the 8 pilot schools were trained using the original 11 EENET modules. These were combined to create a final 7 modules. EENET advanced trainers were assisted by the SUZA facilitator.
- Principal trainers were selected from SUZA, IELS Unit, ZIE, DTE and MECP-Z.

Phase III (2020-2024): Whole School Approach and Curriculum Integration

- Coordinated by MECP-Z.
- Expanded rollout to 51 schools and integration of IE into teacher training institutions' curricula (SUZA; AL-SUMAIT; ZANZIBAR UNIVERSITY, etc).