Ghana’s Journey Towards Inclusive Education

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The population is approximately 27 million, spanning a variety of ethnic, linguistic and religious groups.

About 737,743 (3%) of Ghana's Population are living with Disability (PwD).

Traditionally, children without disabilities were enrolled in regular schools, whilst their counterparts with disabilities enrolled in segregated boarding schools.

By 2013, over 16,500 pupils with mild disabilities were enrolled in mainstream schools, whilst about 6,385 children with severe disabilities were enrolled in 39 special schools.

However, 16,288, representing 20% of children age 6-14 with disability are still out of school.

[Ghana's Disability Background]
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- Traditionally, children without disabilities were enrolled in regular schools, whilst their counterparts with disabilities enrolled in segregated boarding schools.
- By 2013, over 16,500 pupils with mild disabilities were enrolled in mainstream schools, whilst about 6,385 children with severe disabilities were enrolled in 39 special schools.
- However, 16,288, representing 20% of children age 6-14 with disability are still out of school.

[GDHS 2014]
Some of the Worrying Trends in Ghana’s Education System

Girls highly intelligent are labelled as witches and shunned

Children with Epilepsy do not mingle with other children for fear of infecting others

This causes parents to hide such children. Also, society tends to either ignore, bully or shun them

- Some groups of children continue to be left behind and do not go to school, especially children with disabilities.

- CwD are often seen as ‘ineducable’ and ‘not worth wasting resources on’.

- Special schools and special educators are often considered to be the ones only responsible for the education of learners with special needs – rather than developing capacity in communities.
IE Pilot Phase from Year 2003-2009

The implementation of the IE Pilot Phase in these regions was guided by few fragmented and scattered policy, local and international legislations and practices.

- By 2010 - 479 schools were practicing IE in 29 districts
- By 2011 – 529 schools in 34 districts
- Since June 2012 to date UNICEF has provided huge financial, logistical and technical support to GES/SPED for 20 districts.
- More than 6500 teachers and school administrators in 998 basic schools have been trained and are implementing IE.
- Over 3400 parents/key stakeholders benefited from sensitization workshops.

Between 2003 and 2013 (10 years) when Ghana piloted IE, it learnt from what works and does not, before accepting to design the policy direction of IE and implement it on a full scale.
The Policy and its Development Process

• Ghana’s IE Policy is a framework that contains a more harmonized and strategic approach to planning, implementing and monitoring IE activities on a wider scale to reach all learners with SEN in the country.

• The policy development process recognized the multi-sectoral nature of education and so engaged all stakeholder groups in public institutions, universities, civil society, private sector and the community.

• It also gained the support and committed involvement of the political, administrative and traditional leaders.

• The object of the policy is to redefine and recast the delivery and management of educational services to respond to the diverse needs of all learners within the framework of UDL and CFS Concept.
The IE Policy Objectives & Strategies looked at issues at 3 levels:

**Policy Level**
- Financing
- Social Protection
- Community Engagement

**Systemic Level**
- Inclusive Curriculum
- Capacity Building (Pre-service and In-service)
- Assessment and Examination
- Physical Infrastructure

**Classroom Level**
- Education Materials
  - Additional support

The diagram illustrates the three levels of policy objectives and strategies, with specific initiatives and strategies outlined for each level.
Policy Objective and Supporting Strategies to Achieve them

**PO1: Improve and adapt education and related systems and structures**

- Transform special schools to serve as resource centers
- Ensure school infrastructure design are accessible
- Mobilize funding (national budgets & requests for development assistance)
- Initiate & facilitate consultative processes to develop National Standards for IE
- Develop M&E system to track progress of IE

**PO2: Promote a UDL/learner friendly school environment**

- Review, revise & adapt the National curricula
- Review & align assessment processes, benchmarks and methods to ensure equity
- Ensure availability of relevant equipment and assistive devices
- Equip teachers in early detection techniques and to adequately deal with needs of diverse learners
- Promote deployment of SEN coordinators
- Encouragement and support parents and communities in changing detrimental attitudes
- health & social protection
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<th>Policy Objective and Supporting Strategies to Achieve them</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PO3: Develop trained human resources</strong></td>
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<td>Pre-service teacher training</td>
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<td>In-service training modules on inclusive education</td>
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<td>Sensitize all staff</td>
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<td>Engage community &amp; media</td>
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<td>Build capacity of support services</td>
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<td>Train &amp; deploy more SEN resource teachers</td>
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<td><strong>PO4: Ensure sustainability of Inclusive Education Implementation.</strong></td>
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<td>Review instructional materials &amp; assistive devices</td>
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<td>Develop guidelines for policy implementation</td>
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<td>Ensure child protection programs &amp; services are inclusive</td>
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<td>Evaluate and document IE delivery</td>
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The IE Policy Implementation

- The IE policy does not only consider PWDs, but also other categories of persons which include:

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<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>Street Children</td>
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<td>Nomadic children (shepherd boys, fisher-folks’ children and domestic child workers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persons with other health impairment and chronic diseases such as Rheumatism, Epilepsy, Asthma, Spina Bifida and Sickle Cell Anaemia</td>
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<td>Children living with HIV/AIDS</td>
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<td>Children exploited for financial purposes</td>
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<td>Children displaced by Natural Catastrophes and Social Conflicts</td>
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<td>Gifted and Talented Persons</td>
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- The policy is complemented by a comprehensive 5 yr period (2015-19) implementation plan that comprises for each activity to be undertaken indicators, stakeholders, budget, timeframe, actor and collaborating ministries or agencies.

- The Standards & Guidelines document provides guidance to educational institutions in their provision of minimum access required in various types of school buildings, learning equipment and materials, as well as curriculum and pedagogy for the practice of IE.
Inclusive Education Implementation Materials

Promotion of IE Sensitive Materials

Key messages and lessons from the stories

 With support from adults and children in the neighbourhood, persons with disabilities and other learners with SEN can have a renewed self esteem.

 Come to terms with one's own disability and be resilient in the face of difficulties.

 Everyone in the community can contribute something to an activity and hence should not be excluded.

 Superstition and fear should not be attached to conditions such as epilepsy, they are not of supernatural causes.

 Females are capable of being at the forefront of a group...
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Inclusive Education in Action