

CASE STUDY 1

MALAWI (EY)

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1 Introduction

This school is located in the southern region of Malawi. It was established in the early 1960s by the Government. The school is accessible by a dusty road and is surrounded by a brick fence with a lockable metal gate. There are 7 classroom blocks, head teacher's office and a library, resource room, vocational training centre, toilets, and a network tower for one of the mobile phone companies. The language of instruction in the school is both English and Chichewa. Thus, Standards 1-4 are taught in Chichewa whilst Standards 5-8 are taught in English in all the subjects except for the Chichewa lesson which is supposed to be taught in Chichewa.

According to the records, the school has 2463 learners of which 1236 (50.2 per cent) are boys and 1227 (49.8 per cent) are girls. Of the 2463 learners, 67 (2.7 per cent) are learners with disabilities of which 21 are those with learning difficulties, 4 with hearing impairment and 10 with visual impairment. There are other vulnerable learners and these include 14 (0.6 per cent) orphans (This could be more orphans but this is the figure that was reported).

There are 33 teachers of which 3 are male teachers and 30 are female teachers. There is one specialist teacher. He spends 5 days a week in the school. The following tables show the number of teachers at the school by sex and academic qualification and number of teachers at the school by sex and professional qualification.

Table 1: Number of teachers at the school (by sex and academic qualification)

Academic qualification	Number of teachers		
	Male	Female	Total
Degree	0	0	0
Diploma	0	0	0
Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE)	3	25	28
Junior Certificate (JC)	0	5	5
Primary School Leaving Certificate (PSLC)	0	0	0
TOTAL	3	30	33

Table 2: Number of teachers at the school (by sex and professional qualification)

Professional qualification	Number of teachers		
	Male	Female	Total
P8	0	0	0
PT2	2	5	7
PT1	0	0	0
PT3	0	8	9
PT4	1	17	18
TOTAL	3	30	33

School Blocks

The school blocks (7 in total) are located within the same area and some of the blocks are new. There are clear paths between the buildings whilst some areas of the playgrounds are uneven. The school ground is bushy and not well swept. There are some ramps going to some of the classrooms. There is only one ramp that is at the entrance of the resource room. The toilets for male and female learners and teachers are all located in one direction close to each other at the back of the school premises close to the network tower. There are also pit latrines which produce a very bad stench. Toilet facilities seem adequate but not in good condition. The entrance of the toilets has a step making it difficult for those learners who use wheel chairs to have access. The head teacher's office is in one small buildings facing one of the classroom blocks. Inside the office, there are various notices, the organizational structure of the school, master school timetable, the structure of School Management committee and Mother Committee, PTA, duty roaster for the teachers.

2 Micro-Level

2.1. Concept of inclusive Education

Parents (SMC, PTA, Mother group, Special Needs Parents Support)

With regard to the concept of inclusion the parents illustrated a broad and differentiated perspective. On the one hand they refer to groups which should be addressed here. They refer to different vulnerable groups, like children with physical disabilities, with VI and HI as well as children who head households, and children facing poverty issues (13). Moreover they refer to all dimensions linked to inclusion not only access but also acceptance and participation very explicitly:

"The other important factors are that the learners must not be segregated, they should all learn together with the regular learners. Although they learn differently but they should be learning together, the other thing is that there is need to show them love, apart from avoiding segregation, the teachers and the parents should also show their love to these learners, because by doing that the learners will do well."

We are all one, so they should not be segregated, they would say we are segregated because of the way we are, we have physically challenged, or we have hearing impairment.” (26)

2.2. Access

2.2.1. Challenges

Parents (SMC, PTA, Mother group, Special Needs Parents Support)

With regard to access the parents name many challenges. On the one hand they refer to problems that result from the various challenging life circumstances different types of students face. Poverty is a reason that leads to various issues of inequality. In some case students are enforced to go working. In one case a child is working but also comes to school. The mother group explains that he comes from a poor family. In other cases students cannot afford material resources which hinder them to come to school. They also mention physical accessibility of the school that is a problem for students in wheel chairs that find no one to bring them to school (MW_EY_FG_SMC_EC_1.5_12.06.2014, 37, 71, 77). On the other hand they refer to material resources that also affect access negatively like the affordance of school uniforms (ibid., 124).

Head teacher

As already mentioned in the introductory words, the role of education can be regarded as an overall challenge for access to education. This means, working with attitudes, beliefs and traditional structures, which exist for all ages.

“Yea, sometimes it is the community, when you have the community that does not understand education, the importance of education or sometimes they might understand the importance of education and they are not interested or they interested with other things rather than education itself it becomes a challenge, whenever you have a problem with a learner and you ask the learner to call the parents, parents are resisting to come you find it as a challenge that you cannot achieve what you wanted to achieve.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 22)

Another aspect, which one can assume from the head teacher’s statement, is that parents seem to be preoccupied with other businesses, which keeps them busy and away from schools and cooperation with their children’s teachers.

“The first thing is to sensitise the community about education for all because there are some who think that there is a certain type of group which is supposed to be going to school others are not, for example in some households they are still keeping physically challenged people in homes instead of sending them to school or if they have somebody may be who cannot hear is deaf they do not send that child to school, they think that they cannot learn anything from school so it is a big challenge that needs sensitisation that all the community has to know that all are supposed to go to school.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 28)

Talking about sensitisation, which also can be seen as a specific measure for access, it is important to acknowledge the existing system and roles in society in order to implement a structure of education for all, without predetermining. In that case, it might be the most important aspect, that the community gains an awareness and understanding of the value of education of itself.

Another aspect, which can be seen as a challenge appears regarding the infrastructure. There are not enough classrooms and not enough teachers for too many learners.

“The challenge is that the classrooms, which we are having are not enough and the teachers are not enough and the place where this school was located is surrounded the houses built by the community it cannot expand, so has a very limited space to have playground for all these 2400 learners.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 104)

Another infrastructural aspect is the sanitation, which creates a problem especially for girls.

“Sometimes I do find problems with the sanitation which we have in the school, because we do not have good toilets that could keep children in the school more especially girls, they need to have a hand washing room, which we do not have at this school and these could keep children away from the school.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 38)

“I think there is need to have hand washing rooms whereby girl could be going and helping themselves there, in case of monthly periods and other things, and we also need to have good toilets even for the teachers because the toilets we are having at this school are not even good for the teachers.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 46)

Next to girls, who are facing challenges to attend classes are other groups such as orphans, street children, HIV/AIDS learners.

“There are also some other children who are disadvantaged like those orphans, those who have got parents who are not responsible, when I say who are not responsible I mean those who do not care about their children. We do have such type of children within our community, we find that a parent may be is a drunkard or does some kind of work that does not make him to remember that he has got a child who is supposed to go to school. I find that these are problems to the children because they will not go to school.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 30)

“Yea, the other group could be those who have got parents, who are very sick, may be due to HIV/AIDS and you find that they are caring for their parents at home instead of coming to school so they are disadvantaged, and we can also look at these child headed families whereby children are looking after themselves at home and coming to school; is becoming a problem.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 32)

“Yea, we have got some learners who are coming to school, may be they have been properly sent to school by their parents but once they have reached this school they might join bad companies and start smoking and doing other things and you find that they end up absenting themselves from school for unknown reasons.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 34)

Observations

The following quotation shows that the challenges of special needs learners might not always be a priority at school:

Toilets – special toilets built for those with SNs however the contractor has not yet handed in the keys. Deputy head teacher doesn’t know why (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC__2.1AB__9.06.2014, 68).

2.2.2 Specific measures

Students

[Beliefs and Attitudes]

There are some parents who encourage their children to get married, they value marriage more than the education of their children, therefore some drop out of school because of this.

“They say they want to marry, because their parents told them that education is not good.” (MW_EY_FGD_5&6Ls_ETK_2.1_10.06.2014, 41).

While some parents encourage their children to get married, there are others who assign their school going children tasks such as looking after young children or sending them to sell some commodities at markets during school time hence denying them the opportunity to access education.

"There are other who do not come to school because they take care of young children." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.3_10.06.2014, 99) "Some parents send them to the market to sell commodities." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.3_10.06.2014, 92)

Although some parents prevent their children from going to school, there are others who want their children to be educated, but some children have negative attitudes towards learning, instead of going to school to learn they are interested in doing other things during school time. These learners do the following things; gambling along the stream which is close to the school, smoking hemp, attending political meetings, doing piece works loading and offloading river sand into and from lorries, watching video shows and playing games on mobile play stations.

"Others do not come to school because they smoke hemp and they have gone astray, in various groups." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 98)

"Others come but they run away from school to play PS games." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 106)

"Others go to shows." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 107)

"There are others who leave their respective homes as if they are coming to school, so there are some lorries which fetch sand to the locations, they board these lorries to do piece works, yet their parents think that they are at school." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 118)

"There are some learners who are vagabonds, they do not come to class, but go gambling. Along the stream down there." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 49) "Even during campaign period, some learners were involved, they could not come to school, when they heard that there was a political meeting. They were going there for the money, the shadow members of parliament were distributing money so they were going for the money." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 119-121)

"Some learners in the school feel insecure because of the attitude and conduct of some learners. There are some learners who are fond of burning others with hot porridge, stealing, bullying and use of abusive language. They do not have right manners. Fighting, use of abusive language, beating fellow learner without provocation." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.3_10.06.2014, 132-134)

[Feeding programme]

There is school feeding programme whereby learners are provided with porridge during break time, especially the second break. There is an organisation called Mary's Meals from the United Kingdom which distributes flour for cooking porridge. The School Management Committee makes sure that there is human resources to cook the porridge, usually the people who cook the porridge at school are female parent volunteers, they take turns cooking porridge during the week. It is also the responsibility of the SMC to make sure that there is enough firewood for this activity. The learners are asked to bring their own cups from home as the school, the SMC or Mary's Meals do not provide the learners with cups and each learner is responsible for the cleanliness of his/her cup.

When it is time to receive porridge, the learners form queues, they go one by one from the queue to receive porridge. This porridge is for school going children, now those who dropped out of school,

devise strategies to partake in the meal. They stand outside the gate and ask the learners to go and collect porridge for them, if the learners refuse, the school drop outs beat the learners. This deter some learners from going to school as they fear the school drop outs would beat them. Some dropped out of school.

“They ask us to get them porridge and when we decline they beat us.” (MW_EY_FGD_5&6Ls_ETK_2.1_10.06.2014, 79)

Some school drop outs were caught and the head teacher punished them, to stop them from indulging in that behaviour.

“Yes and the head teacher gave them punishment.” (MW_EY_FGD_5&6Ls_ETK_2.1_10.06.2014, 84)

Parents (SMC, PTA, Mother group, Special Needs Parents Support)

They refer to strategies that are conducted by the parents that refer to issues of access like a ‘door to door back to school campaign’ that reached boys that dropped out of school due to drug abuse as well as girls that dropped out due to pregnancies (MW_EY_FG_SMC_EC_1.5_12.06.2014, 47). With this strategy sensitization and the growing acceptance of parents is addressed:

“We try hard to remind them the advantages of being educated because the advantages are that if a child is educated he or she becomes self-reliant in future. We advise them not to be lazy, even if we discover that our neighbour’s child is becoming lazy, we encourage him or her because education is vital. We advise them while citing examples, ‘You see that boss, for him or her to be a boss it’s because of education, so if you want to become a boss or a cabinet minister, nurse, pilot you must be educated.’ There are some boys who like football very much, so we tell them, ‘for that Kinnah Phiri [Former Malawi National Football Coach] to be there, it is because he got educated you too should be educated, football later, that is what we tell them, because education is very important” (ibid., 53).

They also speak about the feeding program at the school. They receive food from a NGO (Mary’s Meals) and cook the food and distribute it to the students.

The parents explain a specific measure to figure out the need of poor children. They try to identify poor students (on appearance) and give a list of them to the head teacher who organizes support for them. (ibid., 52/3).

Teachers

The school provide support to the disadvantaged learners like uniforms. This is done by going throughout classes to identify such kind of learners. The teachers explained:

“At first in our office, they make sure, they go round the classes to make sure those learners who are less privileged learners so they provide with school uniforms.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 78)

The teachers revealed that when the school discover that there are some learners who are absent for a couple of days, they make follow up the learner to find the reasons for absconding classes. In their own words the teachers explained:

“Follow up activities. When a learner is absent for two to. For example one week you are supposed to follow up and find out why – the reasons why that learners is absenting.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 80)

To sum up, teachers revealed that although the school has learners with different kinds of disadvantages, there are a lot of them who do not go to school especially children with disabilities, HIV affected and infected children, orphans and children from the streets. As a measure to support the disadvantaged groups of learners, the school provide school uniforms to them. Also when the learners are absent from classes for a week, the school follow it up by going to their home to find out about the reasons for not coming to school. The special needs teacher also pointed out that girls who once dropped out of school due pregnancies are also attending school.

Head teacher

In order to raise attendance in classes teachers try different ways to have an overview of all learners. Firstly, they try to talk to the learners' parents and ask them about the learners' environment in order to get an idea of other possible problems. The teachers' motivation is to find out, how to support the learners and his/her family.

"What we do is to try to make sure that if we see a child is not coming to school regularly, we send messages to the parents to come and discuss to find out whether the child leaves home or does not leave home. If we find that the child leaves home but does not reach school then we try to investigate, where this child goes and we help each other to sort out the problem." (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 40)

Another specific measure taking place in the area of transition and vocational education is the Vocational Training Centre, which belongs to the school committee but is mostly funded through a Scottish organisation.

"The training is being provided by the school management committee, because these are the people who have hired the instructor for the learner, and it is an initiative for the friends of the school, who are from Scotland, those who built the vocational centre and provided us with the sewing machines, but the management of the vocational training centre is in the hands of the school management committee." (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 88)

"From the education structures there are just minimal services like paying the teachers, providing the teaching and learning materials and other things to the school and the other service providers, we have friends from Scotland whom, I have already mentioned those people are helping us by building classrooms, they built five classrooms and two blocks and these are the people who are helping the school because may be without these friends from Scotland we would not have had the resource centre at this school, we would not have had the vocational training centre. They built a block of three classrooms where the standard five are learning, and these are the people who are really helping us. The school is under The Ministry of Education they are the owners of the school so they also provide a lot of assistance to this school." (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 94)

Another important aspect for enabling access is strongly linked with parents' involvement and participation in school life. One important aspect of this participation is financial support, as this statement shows.

"Yea, participation for parents through their contributions towards school activities is a thing, which I can say as a positive development. The school is able to pay water bills, paying the security guards and everything from the money we get from parent contributions." (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 112)

Observations

The observations offered some examples that show how the school is trying to improve access for different groups of children. For children with disabilities and especially for those who use wheelchairs accessible infrastructure and toilets were created:

There are four ramps, one going to the resource room, and another one going to that vocational room, (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC__2.1AB__9.06.2014, 59).

One going to one class and one going to one of the offices. Children are included in mainstream classes on Monday, Wednesday and Friday (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC__2.1AB__9.06.2014, 60).

Toilets – special toilets built for those with SNs however the contractor has not yet handed in the keys. Deputy head teacher doesn't know why (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC__2.1AB__9.06.2014, 68).

2.2.3 Opportunities

Head teacher

This school seems to have a wide understanding of acceptance and the possibility or right of participation, because there seem to be less differentiation between learners. The attempt to create equity through measures like sensitisation is regarded as an opportunity by the school itself in order to improve their already running system.

“We had such problems at first, but after sensitisation, after talking to the learners more especially talking about special needs you will see that all learners at this school, they understand the problems their friends have and they are eager to assist every time when they have seen that a child has got a problem and they do not discriminate.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014)

“We allow all students to attend classes at this school and we make sure that be it poor or rich, physically challenged or not physically challenged, we provide same education to all and we are also trying as much as possible to assist those who are challenged in different ways to give them special lessons that could assist them to at least move. We have also discovered that some learners who are physically challenged have some other problems they could not precede with education and we have tried to introduce what we call vocational training centre at this school. We are trying to teach these learners tailoring so that when they grow up they have something to be doing since we have seen that there are really some who cannot go further with education.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014)

2.3 Acceptance

2.3.1 Challenges

Teachers

Teachers feel not confident to handle learners with disabilities¹ and deny them in class. The teachers expressed this:

¹ Terms vary due to participants using it. Despite common or diverse terms used overlapping as well as contrasts may be included that are not explained explicitly by the participants. Available information on how this term is

"I don't think all teachers will accept to have these kids in our classrooms that is denial. What am I going to do with this kid, how am I going to teach this one." (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 112)

Acceptance of learners with disabilities depends on the form of disability they have but the teachers accept them. Teachers revealed that albinos, those with running nose and mouths are the most discriminated against both at home and at school:

"We love these disabled, they are our children. Those who came with running mouths, some with running nose, they are discriminated against, even their communities do discriminate them. Some do not want to associate with albinos, they are discriminated against." (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 150)

SNE Teacher

Orphans and special needs learners are stigmatised at home by parents at home. They are not taken out by their parents. The special needs teacher revealed:

"Most of the times the orphans, the special needs etc are left home while the parents, guardians go out. Some even don't know the towns in which they are staying." (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 55)

However, the special needs teacher mentioned that some teachers and some learners have a negative attitude towards disadvantaged learners.

"The other challenge is that some teachers and some learners do have negative attitudes towards these learners." (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 22)

Head teacher

Although the observations revealed several examples of a positive and accepting attitude towards the children, some critical behaviour was observed as well:

The teacher hits one learner who has been making noise (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB4_10.06.2014_new, 30).

The teacher tells the learners to say those who are making noise have no knowledge and satan is snoring in their heart (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB2_10.06.2014_new, 81).

2.3.2 Specific measures

Students

There are some 'trouble making learners' in the school who fight other learners. There is a group called 'Yos' which is avoided by other learners because of the belligerent nature of the group. Some of the members of this group are not from the school. It was agreed that learners should report incidents involving these trouble makers, therefore some learners who were involved were suspended

"Our leaders tell us to report to teachers who then summon the boys. Some are not from this school so they run away." (MW_EY_FGD_5&6s_ETK_2.1_10.06.2014, 75)

understood is presented in the case study considering each of the perspectives. The study's underlying concept of inclusion includes all groups that has to be considered as disadvantaged in terms of inclusive education.

"Some of those fighting were suspended." (MW_EY_FGD_5&6Ls_ETK_2.1_10.06.2014, 84)

[Beliefs and Attitudes]

Judging from outcomes from all 3 focus group discussions it seems the major problem concerning acceptance in the school is when the learners' negative attitude towards education is translated into negative actions. Groups have been formed to perpetrate bad behaviour such as fighting, stealing, smoking and use of abusive language.

"Yes, some form a group which fight others. Some call themselves Yos."
(MW_EY_FGD_5&6Ls_ETK_2.1_10.06.2014, 66-68)

The learners who are from poor families are segregated because of their appearance. In this school there are learners from two different economic section of the community. Some learners' parents or guardian are either employed in the civil service commission or are successful business people while other learners who come to this school travel long distances from the city's squatter townships in the south east. Learners who come from rich families find it difficult to connect with those from poor families.

"Yes there are, because they put on rugs, so we should not be chatting with them."
(MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.3_10.06.2014)(120).

Parents (SMC, PTA, Mother group, Special Needs Parents Support)

They refer to the function of the resource room. They emphasize that the SNE learners are integrated in regular class rooms once a week. This leads to a growing acceptance among learners:

"The regular learners were told that the special needs learners were learners just like them, if they come to their classes they should be accepted, so the regular learners understood very well as a result if the special needs learners go to the main stream classes, their kind of disability does not matter, they all learn together even during break time since their break times coincide, they interact very well with each other." (MW_EY_FG_SMC_EC_1.5_12.06.2014, 84)

This they explain is also reinforced by sensitization of the regular learners as the quote shows. However, in terms of inclusion this kind of participation has to be discussed as there is only one day a week mentioned where learners who are placed in the resource room join regular classes. Moreover the concept that is described from stakeholder from the meso-level seems to be much broader.

Teachers

The teachers when teaching support all learners and some learners with for example disabilities are performing better than normal learners. The teacher confirmed:

"Most of the times, special needs learners may just copy what is on the board, for example, math, he can just copy without solving them brings his exercises to us and ask 'madam, what can I do here?' We tell them how to do it, if he has an interest, he goes solve the math and I mark him. Some have the courage to ask and they do well even better than the regular learners because they have an interest."
(MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2_11.06.2014, 118)

So-called 'special needs learners' take part in playground activities and sports and also like singing. The teachers said:

“They are supposed to be somewhere where their friends are playing football and just cheer them up, so they enjoy cheering up they are like they are in the ground playing football. You are not supposed to lock them up in the classroom but you are supposed to take them out to be with their friends or during the break time you have to find somebody to be with them outside so that they feel that we are also on break time. They also like class singing.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 90)

Teachers also are encouraged to communicate to the learners in a friendly language and not to be emotional when talking to the learners like referring to their situation. The teachers gave an example of children from the streets by not referring to where they sleep. The teachers explained:

“We as teachers we are told to use good language to them. For example we cannot say ‘you go back to your bridge, you sleep under a bridge!’ we are told to speak friendly to them. So that they are accommodated and feel good here at school.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 84)

SNE teacher

Once a week, the school gives time during assembly for the special needs specialist to advocate for acceptance of disadvantaged learners by the regular learners. Also during sports time they mix them together. He explained:

“Every Wednesday during assembly time I am given five minutes to talk more about inclusive education, so that when we receive such learners in our classrooms we should welcome them and accept them. As a result of this, we find that learners in mainstream do accept these special needs learners whether orphans, or those who dropped school, they are all mixing together and working together. When we are doing sports we also include them. We take those who claim to be normal those who claim to be with special needs we combine them they play together, that is unifying. They have a lot of games here.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 23)

“During assembly time we have been telling them that these learners are our friends, they are also provided with everything by their parents just the same as you so they also have to attain the education as you are doing. What comes does not beat a drum you may also find yourself in their condition, maybe ten years to come you may be involved in an accident and be like them, therefore let us love each other the same way God loves us.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 22)

On sports, the school have a Special Olympics event and this helps to unify the children. He continued to explain:

“We have Special Olympics here unifying the special needs learners and the regular ones. For example, nine pupils play in the other team and four of the other team maybe the disadvantaged in any form, they mix, they play together and they help each other. Here we have Special Olympics, fun, running, jumping castle, all these the learners do together. When playing games all learners come to cheer them, sometimes even TVM team takes photos of the games as a result they get excited.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 25)

Learners who are young mothers and who have re-enrolled are encouraged by the teachers although they feel isolated by themselves. The specialists teacher explained:

“Those who fell pregnant in the last school sessions, when they come back they feel isolated because their friends know their situation. Teachers do encourage them to work hard for them to achieve something in life, we tell them that this is not the end of the world but work hard.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 31)

The specialists teacher also emphasised that the disadvantaged learners are asked to contact their fellow learners who perform well in class. The teacher explains:

“We encourage them to contact those who do well to be assisted and as they are sharing, friendship develops which results in accepting each other and do assist each other with whatever problems the disadvantaged learners may face.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 49)

On acceptance, regular teachers and the special needs teacher agree that regular learners are friendly to so called special needs learners. The SNE teacher pointed out that some regular learners help disabled learners in pulling a wheel chair while the teachers said that regular learners act as interpreters in class, for example if the disabled learner want to go out and answer the call of nature, the regular learners are the ones who communicate to the teacher. The regular teachers revealed that acceptance of learners with disabilities depends on the kind of disability and as mentioned already albinos, those with running mouths and running noses are less accepted at the school by their peers. They continued to explain that some are not accepted by teachers as well because they feel they are not confident to handle their diverse learning needs.. However, the Special Needs teacher pointed out that some regular teachers as well as regular learners have a negative attitude towards the disadvantaged groups of learners. The special needs teacher also revealed that parents do not take children with disabilities for outing. On specific measures to improve acceptance, teachers are encouraged to use friendly language when teaching. The teachers and the special needs teacher revealed that the special needs learners are taken out during sports time to cheer their friends when playing. However, the special needs teachers added that the school participate in Special Olympics, so the learners with disabilities could participate. The special needs revealed that the teachers counsel and encourage girls who have children and are re-admitted into the school to work hard because they feel shy.

Head teacher

The SIG can be seen as a helpful measure for helping out on a financial level and buy materials, which create access and participation easily and directly through owning it.

“ (...) even buy uniforms for the OVCs, these are orphans and vulnerable children, we try to buy some uniforms so that they look the same with other learners and on governance and management we use these monies for stationery and other things for the school.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 106)

But after all, the basis for acceptance is, the sensitisation of parents, teachers and learners.

Observations

In all the observed lessons teachers tried to create a positive and pleasant learning atmosphere by motivating the children and encouraging them to participate at class:

Teacher praised the correct responses “very good” and asked the learners to clap for each other, saying “Jesus, Jesus, Amen.” (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_2.2_AB__10.06.2014, s. 58)

Furthermore the interaction between different groups of learners was promoted by using a lot of group work and encouraging the children to assist each other:

The teacher asks the leader to put their team in pairs then the teacher asks the leaders to pick up the sticks and put them in the middle. Then the leaders in the groups pick up the sticks when singing the song. (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB2_10.06.2014_new, 19)

Teachers monitored whether the learners were doing what they were asked to do. She encouraged them to assist each other. The teacher told the learners that everyone should learn. (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_2.2_AB__10.06.2014, 61)

Additionally the teacher discouraged the negative attitude and behaviour of some learners:

Teacher discourages the learners from laughing at one of the learners who cannot pronounce the words very well. (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB2_10.06.2014_new, 31)

2.2.3 Opportunities

Parents (SMC, PTA, Mother group, Special Needs Parents Support)

The parents do not perceive any challenges concerning acceptance and observe the situation at this particular school as very satisfying (MW_EY_FG_SMC_EC_1.5_12.06.2014, 82-6).

Teachers

Teachers revealed that regular learners at the school are able to interact with other learners properly and they assist in communication between those with disabilities and the teacher. In the words of the teachers:

“Also there is this. Other learners are able to interact with those children, the disabled learners are able to interact with them. Even sometimes they are the ones telling you ‘he is speaking this, ee madam, she says she wants to go to wee wee’ that means there is good relationship among themselves as children.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 49)

SNE teacher

The school accept all learners including those with different educational needs but they are initially placed in the resource centre and later are sent to participate in regular classes. The specialist teacher said:

“those who have got disability of some kind, they are also welcomed at this school but after welcoming them at this school they go into the resource centre whereby we train them to adapt to the other mainstream system. After adapting whatever we have been training them we post them into the main stream to mix with their friends and do all the activities with their friends.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 12)

Acceptance among all the learners seems to be good and the other learners even support a disabled learner who uses a wheel chair and are friends. The SNE teacher explained:

“They accept each other and most of the time these learners have friends in the main streams. For example, we have a learner who uses a wheel chair and he comes here with friends who assist him and when knocking off his friends from the mainstream go home with him. They learners from mainstream know that the disadvantaged children are their friends and they need to be loved.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 39)

The teacher added that regular learners even encourage their peers who are not doing well in class and those with learning difficulties are even able to acknowledge when they do not perform well:

“The disadvantaged learners still get encouragement from the regular learners and whenever they get the exercises wrong they say ‘today I have failed, tomorrow I will do better.’” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 49)

2.3 Participation

2.3.1 Challenges

Students [Challenges and Opportunities]

Some learners participate fully in class while other learner’s participation is affected by their peers’ negative attitudes towards learning, they do other things while the teachers are teaching. The learners play, eat and are arrogant making noise talking about movies and home issues, this is common among learners from rich families.

“In most cases, those who come from rich families those that put on shoes are the ones who do well, they respond to questions because those who put on rugs usually think of their homes problems and do not participate, they do not respond to questions, they isolate themselves they stay in the classes quietly up to the time we knock off.” (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 165).

There are other learners who do not participate, they feel inferior because of poverty, they also are not able to concentrate because they think of domestic problems.

“These are those who do not have confidence in themselves, they do not come with pocket money so they are kind of withdrawn.” (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 144).

The conduct of some learners too affect participation because whenever something happens in the school, they organise demonstrations, this is particularly common among learners from the senior sections

“There are some learners who once something happens at the school they organise demonstrations. Usually they are from Standard 7 and 8, because they are grown-ups, the others are from standard six.” (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 63-69)

The attitudes of some teachers also affect learners’ participation, they are distracted by fellow teachers up to the extent of forgetting their work.

“Some teachers are visited by fellow teachers who chat up to the extent that they forget teaching us.” (MW_EY_FGD_5&6Ls_ETK_2.1_10.06.2014, 119)

There are some learners who do not participate because of disabilities such as low vision and hearing impairment.

“There are some who have low vision, they are not able to see properly. Other have hearing impairment.” (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 173-175).

Parents (SMC, PTA, Mother group, Special Needs Parents Support)

Mainly this group refers to the lack of resources, most of all material for SNE learners like hearing aids, inadequate facilities but also the lack of additional SNE teachers. Moreover they refer to a high

student/teacher-ratio that challenges participation (MW_EY_FG_SMC_EC_1.5_12.06.2014, 108-119, 120-126).

Teachers

In terms of specific groups and the challenges they face teachers mention child headed families. They are disadvantaged because they lack some people to guide them. The teachers revealed:

“Those who lack parental guidance that is a big challenge. Those fend on their own like orphans they don’t have any guidance to guide them that this is good, this is bad.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 76)

Parents do not show so much interest on the education of the disabled children, they send them to the school for them to pass time. The teachers revealed:

“They are given yes but necessarily what we see on the ground is that parents they don’t follow up like they want to benefit their children. It is just a matter of giving away and passing time. So the community if can take that as their own challenge too together then it can be a goal achieved. I don’t know if I have answered.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 36)

Regular teachers complained that they do not have necessary skills to handle learners with severe disabilities and disabilities. In their own words the teachers said:

“Severe disabilities because we don’t have much experience on how to handle them. So even if they come what are we going to do with them. You give what you have so we don’t have much training for them, yes they are there but sometimes we don’t have something to give them/to do about them.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 63)

“Another problem is that we don’t have the skills on how to teach these children, therefore when their teachers are not around and they ask us to get these learners in our classrooms we just keep them while the special needs teacher knows how to handle them. The special needs teachers were trained and we did not undergo that training. We just keep them in our classes to pass time.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 113)

[Infrastructure]

Regular teachers complained that the school has a shortage of books and desks: *Shortage of textbooks.*

“We have no enough desks here, that is another challenge”. (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 61)

The teachers highlighted the problems the school is facing like shortage of textbooks and textbooks that all learners can use at the school:

“We need to provide the learners with enough learning materials. Like books, because we have shortages of books.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 42)

The teachers acknowledged that the school environment is not all that disability friendly. There are some buildings which are not disability friendly. The teachers revealed:

“We can say, environment. Environment to suit all learners like in the inclusive education. It says itself like we can take this school. Some of the classes are suitable for those learners, some are not. Even the toilet itself and specialized teachers.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 33)

Visually impaired learners find it difficult to access the school and is also not friendly to those who are using a wheel chair:

“It is not levelled well. It is supposed to be levelled well that those with visual impairment are supposed to memorise the map of the school well and they are supposed to go into each class without any guidance. But some of these infrastructures those learners cannot go well. Like those with wheel chairs, like that block, a person with wheel chair cannot go into that block. And maybe you can say the goodness about blind people is because they have that toilet there but it is very difficult for them.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 110)

Also they highlighted the situation of sanitary facilities that they say are not disability friendly. The teachers empathetically said:

“Also toilets ... Our toilets are pit latrines and someone who uses a wheelchair cannot use a pit latrine toilet is supposed to use a cistern toilet. And someone who crawls cannot use a pit latrine.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 42)

In addition to the identified lack of teaching and learning materials the teachers also expressed the opinion that they do not have the necessary skills to handle diverse learning needs however this contradicts other statements where teachers mentioned that they are able to handle the learners with special needs. The teachers also expressed concern that parents do not show much interest in the education of especially learners with disabilities and that they are sent to the school just to pass time. This is in contrast of what the special needs teacher mentioned as that parents are participating in the education of the children with disabilities. The teachers continued to express concern that the school environment is not disability friendly although there are some ramps. The teachers empathetically mentioned that the toilets are not conducive for a child using wheel chair and the ones who crawl and also the visually impaired. The special needs teacher pointed out that orphans are not treated well at their homes as such they come to school tired due to hard work they are given at home by their guardians. The teachers mentioned that one of the reasons that lead to discrimination of learners with disabilities is their misbehaviour at times.

SNE teacher

Orphans are not treated well at home by guardians, they come to school late and tired due to being overworked and spend little time to education. The SNE teacher revealed:

“Yes there are; especially those who have lost both parents. When they are in classroom, when you are trying to talk to them or try to talk to them, they have got the feeling, they think of their orphan situation they say, ‘I have lost my mother and have lost my father’ and sometimes they stay with relatives who as much as they want to help the orphans, do not give the best to the children, the learners may usually come late to school, being over worked, for example, selling pancakes etc as a result they have very little time to study. In these cases after probing the learner’s situation we request the guardians to give enough time to the learners to study so that they attain their education.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 29)

[Learner Behaviour]

Some ‘special needs learners’ tend to be stubborn and beat their peers, this result in regular learners not willing to associate with them. So discrimination is apparent as one of the teachers explained:

“Mostly it is the disabled and it depends on the disability. Some can associate with their friends but some beat their friends and the other children do not want to associate with those who beat them. They say if I associate with him, he may bite me, since some bite their friends. Therefore we can say discrimination

comes in this way, otherwise they do associate with each other.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 149)

Head teacher

One big issue in terms of participation are material resources such as classrooms, learning materials, but also the school’s infrastructure. It is also important to mention the role of teachers and their impact on the successful long-term participation for learners. Regarding this, the head teacher mentions teacher’s salaries.

“Firstly its classrooms we do not have adequate classrooms, we do not have adequate teaching and learning materials, I should also mention infrastructure sometimes we do have problems with pavements if we have some learners who are disabled and lack of teachers sometimes we do have a lot of learners in our schools but very few teachers, so if these resources are not enough it becomes a challenge to education for all.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 16)

“What I mean by teaching and learning materials more especially am talking about text books if they are not enough you have a problem but also when you are teaching, you do not just need text books you also need some other resources like exercise books if they are not there it is a challenge or if a teacher is teaching needs flip charts and writing materials on flip charts. Sometimes you have practical lessons you need some ingredients in doing that practical lesson and you do not have that is what I am talking about the teaching and learning materials.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 17)

“Currently at this school there are 33 teachers in total, that is including the teacher and there about 2400 leaners at this school, now looking at the ratio teacher pupil ratio, it is supposed to be 1 to 60 and if you divide that 2400 by 60, you find that we need a lot of teachers at this school about 40 plus. Having 33 teachers it means there is a shortage of teachers at this school.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 17)

The salary and promotion of teachers have also a high impact on their lessons’ quality and their own motivation:

“If there could be other obstacles then it could be regarding the welfare of the teachers. If the welfare of the teachers is not good you find that the teaching itself goes down and normally this comes when salaries for the teachers are late or when teachers are complaining about promotions and other things, this disturbs the whole programme at the school.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 26)

Observations

Besides these initiatives that promote participation, the general learning conditions are challenging. The teacher-student-ratio is very high, the state of the school and the classrooms is not always adequate, the school is lacking resources and learning materials and water is not always available. Considering these challenges it becomes apparent that it is difficult to include all learners equally:

The classroom has 160 learners on this day and two female teachers. (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB3_10.05.2014_new, 13)

Not clean – wees all over. Smells contaminate the air and this could be smelled in the HT’s office. (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_2.1AB_9.06.2014, 63)

There was no water. (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_2.1AB_9.06.2014, 64)

The learners start writing their compositions, some learners have text books while others do not have. (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB5_09.06.2014_new, 40)

It is clear that participation in the large groups is difficult. (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB5_09.06.2014_new, 30)

2.3.2 Specific measures

Students

The school head teacher punished some school drop outs who were causing problems at the school, such as beating learners who refused to get them porridge and these boys were also disturbing classes by throwing stones on the roofs of the school's classroom blocks. (MW_EY_FGD_5&6Ls_ETK_2.1_10.06.2014, 84)

[Pedagogics of Teachers]

The learners highly commended the teachers for carrying out their work very well. Listening to the learners speak, one would have a good picture of the teachers commitment to effective teaching. The learners gave examples of the teachers do when they are carrying out their lessons. The learners said that teachers teach well without favouring any learner, controlling the noise levels, speaking loudly and repeating so that all learners should understand. Teachers give examples and allow learners to ask questions if they do not understand.

"There are good teachers." (MW_EY_FGD_5&6Ls_ETK_2.1_10.06.2014, 21)

"The teachers from this school do not take sides when teaching, they teach the way the lessons are without any favours." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 15)

"They give us chances to ask where we did not understand. When they are teaching they give examples so that we should understand." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 154-156)

Parents (SMC, PTA, Mother group, Special Needs Parents Support)

The specific measure mentioned with regard to acceptance also refers to participation. Parents describe that learners from the resource room join the regular classes only once a week. As already mentioned this has to be discussed critically in terms of full participation in everyday classroom activities. Nevertheless, the parents group refers to this measure very positively (MW_EY_FG_SMC_EC_1.5_12.06.2014, 82-86).

Teachers

Teachers explained that they have different kinds of methods which they use when teaching and that it has to be flexible to meet all different groups of learners. They also use different methods in assessment of the learners. The teachers explained:

"You have to vary the method of teaching for all the learners to adopt it even infants when teaching because those learners are different in learning. Some of them they are talented, some of them are gifted, and some of them they are not. So the method of teaching itself should vary to suit all the students. Even because of the challenges they go through so varying the methods help them to interact

freely with all other learners. Yes for example as we have said, some are poor, some are physically challenged, some are HIV positive, so many reasons so when we vary methods of teaching for example group work helps them to interact freely so that that issue of stigmatizing by and by slowing, yes. We also assess the learners. We know that to assess them we want to know the performance of the learners so we use different methods of assessment.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 18)

They continued to emphasise that their methods are learner centred and also they assist those learners with so-called special needs:

“We do assess them, mainly we do continuous assessment. So our teaching is based on learner centred. And we also help learners with disabilities.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 25)

Another method used by the teachers is a strategy called ‘Joy framing’ by including songs and role play in the lesson:

“We use Joy framing is that we need to consider all learners when doing activities and need to add some varieties when teaching as we add to food to make it so in teaching we need to add those things such as singing.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 29)

“When demonstrating we need to use learners ... they also do role play activity.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 91)

“By using group work, pair work, roleplaying, brainstorming, discussions or give them the case study. They will be attentive to listen to that story.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 101)

Teachers assist learners with learning difficulties when they are approached by the learners. The teacher explained:

“Most of the times, special needs learners may just copy what is on the board, for example, math, he can just copy without solving them brings his exercises to us and ask ‘madam, what can I do here’? We tell them how to do it, if he has an interest, he goes solve the math and I mark him. Some have the courage to ask and they do well even better than the regular learners because they have an interest.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 118)

SNE Teacher

All learners participate but it is regular learners who participate and do better than the other groups of learners at the school. Participation depends on the skills of the teacher delivering the lesson. So participation and performance of learners varies with the skills of teachers and the teaching methods. They use the special needs teacher explained:

“All learners do participate fully depending on how the teacher delivers the lesson. Regular students do participate more and do well than the other learners.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 49)

The special needs teacher monitor the learner’s participation by visiting them in class when regular teachers are conducting lessons. The specialist teacher emphasised:

“Here when I am visiting the main streams, I just go there and sit at the back, watching all those learners; the special needs, those who have problems, the orphans, the HIV positive, I observe that they do participate. Sometimes they raise their hands even though they don’t know the answer because they know that a teacher may ask them to give an answer and they enjoy it. When I tell them to go back to the resource room they refuse and tell me that ‘let me first finish doing whatever we were learning here’ and I give in.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 45)

Head teacher

According to the description of opportunities one of the specific measures underlines the meaning of resource rooms.

“We do not normally have such kind of children, but we might have small cases whereby you find that there are those who are in the special needs may not want to join those in the other classes because they feel that when they are in the special needs classroom in the resource centre, they are treated there in the special way which might not be the case in the mainstream classroom, so they prefer to be in the resource centre than going in the classes. We have seen this by trying to take some of these learners to regular classes they refuse to say, “no this is my class,” meaning the resource centre, but in the resource centre we just try to rehabilitate them and send them to other classes.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 52)

Observations

Although the general learning conditions at school can impede the equal participation of all learners, the teachers tried to deal with the difficult circumstances by providing several measures with the aim of promoting participation. It was shown that teachers try to respond to the individual needs of the children, for example by directly addressing learners who are not participating and encouraging them to contribute to the lessons:

T – Asking one student why she didn’t write the given exercise (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_2.1AB_9.06.2014, s. 39).

Teacher encouraged the learners to speak loudly and that everyone should respond to the question (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_2.2_AB_10.06.2014, s. 51).

In addition the teachers provide specific assistance during group work, to make sure, that all learners understand:

Teacher going around to mark the work of each learner and assisting those who had problems in solving the problems. Teacher was assisted by another teacher (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_2.2_AB_10.06.2014, s. 110).

The teachers made use of visual demonstrations and equipment to cope with the difficult circumstances and to promote understanding:

For those who cannot count, we will write on the board. Teacher writes the circles in numbers of 7 and 3. Teacher asks the learner where four can be placed. The circles were cancelled to remain with 4 (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_2.2_AB_10.06.2014, s. 101).

Teacher draws a picture of clock on blackboard (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB4_10.06.2014_new, s. 15).

The teacher asks the leader to put their team in pairs then the teacher asks the leaders to pick up the sticks and put them in the middle. Then the leaders in the groups pick up the sticks when singing the song (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB2_10.06.2014_new, s. 19).

Although the teacher-student-ratio is still very high most of the classes are led by two teachers to assist each other which can promote participation of individual children as well:

Teacher goes around to mark the work of each learner and assists those who have problems in solving the problems. Teacher is assisted by another teacher (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB2_10.06.2014_new, s. 70).

2.3.3 Opportunities

Parents (SMC, PTA, Mother group, Special Needs Parents Support)

As already mentioned this group refers to the strategies on how to deal with learners of the resource room in a very positive manner. Advantages include the possibilities with regard to diagnostics because of the intensity of contact between teacher and students (MW_EY_FG_SMC_EC_1.5_12.06.2014, 88). However, they refer to the successful educational career of a single learner with a hearing impairment that made it to go to secondary school:

“He came from this school, in the beginning he was learning at the resource centre and would come to the main stream classes, as we are talking now he is in secondary school, and he is doing very fine.” (MW_EY_FG_SMC_EC_1.5_12.06.2014, 85)

Teachers

Teachers explained that the establishment of the resource centre is another positive development the school has achieved because learners in the centre are acquiring skills:

“The establishment of the resource centre which now they have provided with sewing machines. At least some of them who cannot do anything, they can be able to have a skills of a certain thing which can make them earn a living.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 48)

The introduction of the school feeding program is another success the school has managed to achieve. This has improved attendance of many learners at the school. The teachers mentioned during the discussion:

“As I have said that with the introduction of porridge in our government schools we have large numbers of entries.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 74)

“Because of the introduction of porridge, we have many learners because of that porridge.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 66)

The school work hand in hand with parents by counselling them on the importance of sending their children to school. In their own words, the teachers said:

“The parents are being consulted and counselling them about the importance of education so they send their children to school.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 82)

“Teachers also know how to handle the behaviour of the Special Needs learners. One of teacher teaching standard two explained: In standard 2 we have some who have just come from there and they are doing well. We now know what to do with them; from this stage to the next. We can tell that today things are not okay.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 119)

“The teachers also mentioned that they conduct Continuous Professional Developments which they discuss various teaching methods for subjects. They explained: We conduct CPD meetings...We discuss the various methods of teaching some subjects.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 135)

The teachers mentioned that the introduction of life skills has helped learners to know some issues which are happening like issues concerning the situation of orphans, people living with HIV/AIDS as

well as child headed families and has helped in accepting vulnerable children by working together in groups. The teachers explained:

“Also the introduction of life skills. That lesson also helps since as we teach them finally they are already aware of some of the issues on the ground. So it helps.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 138)

“Issues of life. For example, the other learners know that there are some of our friends who are vulnerable, they are heading their families, some are HIV positive, some are poor, they are coming from poor families, they don’t have somebody to support them so with that subject they can easily accommodate their friends, they don’t laugh at them. In the past we used to separate, to ignore others, that group is not our group. So with the introduction of life skills then we come with group work, they easily accept to be in groups with those with other challenges.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 138)

The language of instruction to be in local vernacular in the early grades was mentioned as another positive development in the education system. The teachers mentioned:

“The use of mother language from standard one to standard three it is a development.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 67)

The teachers also revealed that one boy who is among the disadvantaged got selected to secondary school. They said:

“Yes. Those on bursary, like the previous year one boy was selected to [name of secondary school].” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 164)

There is proper interaction between all learners. The teachers pointed out:

“You will see that just some by being admitted into this school, has just come but during break time on the same day you find somebody has already befriended him, and are of same level.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 156)

SNE Teacher

The Scottish project supported the school by building the resource centre and also plans to establish a vocational centre at the school. The teacher explained:

“Yes, these are the Scottish people. So we asked them to build two blocks whereby one will be teaching those learners with special needs and the other one, the one you have visited are most of the learners who are with learning difficulties. They don’t go ahead with their education, so we thought that we should at least provide a vocation skills like tailoring as you have seen them there because they have just attended standard eight but haven’t got selected so that is another development that is happening here. We are also getting them from their homes. They should be here and learn these skills but we agreed with the whites, the Scottish that maybe we should have a variety of skills so that they should know knitting, they should also know cooking and whenever they would be going in their places they should serve themselves, their parents and serve the community as well.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 18)

The special needs teacher pointed out the ramps at the schools as a positive development:

“Here in most of the schools, they don’t have the ramps for the wheelchairs but here we are lucky because they have given us that block whereby they have also put some ramps for these learners.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 20)

The school also has a resource room for special needs learners where they are assessed before they are taken into the mainstream classes.

“there is in this room the learners we do plan individual education plan and after doing that we make a follow up and see how they are progressing and when we see that they are progressing we take them into main stream where we advise teachers to put those with visual impairment in front and teach the basic sign language so that they at least communicate. We do advise them also to encourage them in cases where they don’t understand what is being taught Individual Education Plan is faring well. This is an education programme composed of a teacher, parents, the learner and the head teacher whereby the learners’ progress is monitored, where things were not okay, the specialist teacher assists to correct the situation.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 27)

The school help learners who are HIV/AIDS positive by making a follow up on their health to their homes and sometimes escort them to their homes as well as the teacher’s liaise with their parents.. He continued to state that the statuses of the learners who are HIV/AIDS positive are confidential and that other learners should not know about it. The SNE teacher illustrates:

“Especially those who are HIV infected, we know they are on medication and sometimes have side effects. These learners may come to school while so weak, you find them dozing and sometimes they tell the teacher that they are not feeling well and go home. When they say they are not feeling well we take them to hospital then to their homes. This is a secret thing; we don’t want the other children to know it. Sometimes we note that the learner is not feeling well because did not take the medication we remind the parents about this. Sometimes we ask parents to request doctors that maybe they change the time for taking the medication so that the learner takes the medication after classes so that he attends classes in the morning while fresh.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 33)

The school has managed to change its negative attitude towards orphans, those with HIV/AIDS, as well as learners with disabilities and learning difficulties. This is a result of meetings with parents on how they can handle disabled children. Also the school received support from the Scottish people which was used to construct an additional school block and there is also planning for the construction of a library at the school by the Scottish project. He said:

“I have been here for almost 8 years but when I was posted at this school the environment had a negative attitude towards these learners; the orphans, the HIV, the special needs learners so after staying here for almost 2 years we had a lot of meetings, talking to the parents how to handle the disabled and how one becomes disabled. Disability can come anytime in one’s life, whether born with it, or it can come later in life. After sensitizing the community, they contributed towards the building of that block. After that, it is when we had this one. The Scottish assisted us with an additional block to cater for those learners learning under a tree and built us that one. This time around they are having plans to build us a library for the learners to access books here at school to improve learners’ vocabulary.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 37)

The teacher acknowledged that the numbers of the vulnerable children accessing education at the school has increased as compared with the past. There are now orphans, children from the streets and learners with disabilities due to intervention of the NGOs. The specialist teacher explained:

“Not clear. Nowadays it is a high percentage because most of the learners we teach in class are orphans, street kids and some with disabilities. You should have come long time ago those with disabilities were not there and orphans were not there. Now it is a high percentage because we can say these NGOs, some of the groups in the villages they are the ones patrolling the villages and bring those kids to schools. Maybe we can say their performance, some of them perform high, some low according to the environment in which they are.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 71)

Key issues mentioned as positive developments at the school are: both the regular teachers and the special needs teacher pointed to the establishment of the resource centre and the involvement of parents in the affairs of learners with disabilities. Teachers mentioned the introduction of the school feeding programme, Life skills subject, holding of continuous professional development workshops, home language of instruction in the lower standards. The teachers also revealed that they are able to handle and control behaviour of learners with behavioural problems. The special needs teacher revealed that the school follows up learners especially those that are on HIV treatment and there has been an increase in the number of children that are accessing education especially from disadvantaged groups. Lastly, the head teacher acknowledged the assistance of Non-governmental organisations as well as the Scottish donors to have helped the school in the construction of the resource centre.

Head teacher

Seeing the learners as one group in class without labelling them might also be seen as a strategy to enforce participation and sensitisation in classes.

“Aa, those ones, we do not normally have that type of groups because we discourage labelling those people so, when they are in class we take the class as one group and we have never had problems with orphans and the disadvantaged people in the classes behaving in the abnormal way because of their status, we haven’t had any problems with that one.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 72)

The resource centre, which also might be seen as a specific measure also might be depicted as an opportunity in that context.

“Those learners in the resource centre, of course they are in different classes, but we just look at learning areas, which they need to improve, these are the areas they do in the resource centre but sometimes they are taken out from the resource centre to regular classes, where they are supposed to be.” (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 76)

This statement also shows, how the head teacher does not think in categories and labels, but sees such institutions as a helpful measure in order to rehabilitate children into regular classes back again, without giving them a stigma or category they cannot leave any more.

Observations

In general the observations provided various examples of how teachers try to cope with the difficult learning conditions and the lack of resources at school (for examples see above). Sometimes they developed creative solutions, like writing in the air, when notebooks and pens were not available for all learners. It is shown that teachers take over responsibility and leadership to deal with the challenging situation and to promote the idea of inclusive education.

2.4 Most disadvantaged groups

Students

According to the learners there are several disadvantaged learners in and outside the school. Some disadvantages are more severe than others including girls, learners with physical disabilities, learners with low vision, learners in the resource room, learners who do not perform, learners with hearing impairment, learners from poor families, orphans and teenage mothers.

In terms of access to education, the girls are at a disadvantage because there are some parents who send the girls to markets to sell commodities while others assign them household chores especially looking after young children.

“Some are prevented by their parents so that they should be selling commodities at the market.” (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.3_10.06.2014, 95).

Learners with physical disabilities require other people to take them to school, so if they do not have this kind of support then it means they would not be able to go to school. Learners from poor families and orphans lack resources like clothes and uniform and have difficulty paying school fund which is at k300 per learner, and finally teen mothers find it very difficult to go back to school after giving birth because they are usually laughed at by other learners.

“Some say poverty, they cannot afford school requirements. Some are orphans so they fail to come to school some lack assistance, they cannot have money to come to school. Some are teenage mothers so they are afraid of being laughed at.” (MW_EY_FGD_5&6Ls_ETK_2.1_10.06.2014, 45-50)

Learners from poor families and orphans are discriminated against because they lack many things and they do not bring money to school, learners who do not perform are also discriminated against by their peers as well as those from the resource room, read section on acceptance. The teen mother also seems not accepted because she is laughed at in the school and she does not feel comfortable with this.

When it comes to participation, some groups participate when they have gained access, but it is still difficult for the learners from poor families and orphans. The learners with in the resource centre are usually confined to their centre to such an extent that the regular learners say that these learners should have their own class.

“Learners from the resource centre are segregated. Some learners do not want to chat with them, not even to touch them.” (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 126).

Those with hearing impairment and low vision also have problems participating.

Listening to what the learners said about access, acceptance and participation, one can say that learners in the resource room, the learners from poor families and orphans are the ones who are at a higher disadvantage than the others.

Parents (SMC, PTA, Mother group, Special Needs Parents Support)

The concept of inclusion this group describes shows that they refer to very diverse students that should be addressed in inclusive education. Moreover they explain various kinds of disadvantages with specific regard to various groups, namely poor children that have to earn money and often go to beg,

children with HIV/AIDS that could lack acceptance and face discrimination at school, girls (one particular girl is mentioned here) that have problems of readmission due to lack of acceptance (MW_EY_FG_SMC_EC_1.5_12.06.2014, 38-43).

The observations revealed that children with disabilities are the most disadvantaged group at school. Furthermore orphans were mentioned as another group of learners that are confronted with several challenges concerning education.

Children with various kinds of special needs were named as attending the school: Types of disability: HI, PI, VI, EBD, ID, Down syndrome (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC__2.1AB__9.06.2014, 58).

Some initiatives that aim at promoting the participation of children with disabilities could be observed, for instance children with visual impairments were sitting in the front row and a specialist teacher was supporting them and other teachers at school. The precise function of the specialist teacher could not be identified other than his role in the resource center through the observations.

Two learners with bad vision sat in front. (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC__2.1AB__9.06.2014, 18)

One specialist teacher for those with ID but able to handle others with HI, PD very few toys (blocks). (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC__2.1AB__9.06.2014, s. 53)

On the other hand it was shown that children with disabilities are not included in the regular lessons continuously:

There are no learners with disability in this classroom at this time, the learners with disability are confined to the resource room. (MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB4_10.06.2014_new, 33)

2.5 Transition

2.5.1 Transition to Secondary School

Teachers

Some children from the streets have managed to be selected to secondary school. This has been done with assistance of the Samaritan Trust. The teachers revealed:

“The Samaritan groups, we have one in [name of place]. They are looking after those kids and providing them with necessities. And I remember sometime I had one and now he is at a secondary school. He was a street kid.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 73)

SNE Teacher

He and the head teacher explained that some students are not expected to go on with their education career. It is worth noting that it seems as though they ‘give up’ on some students – and it has to be asked if they think of alternative ways to an alternative to ease the transition to work [see transition school – work]

2.5.2 Transition School to Work

The preparation of students for after-school-life is mentioned by Head teacher and SNE teacher. This is funded by the friends of Scotland. The establishment was further supported by the SMC (Head teacher/MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014, 94). The head teacher also explains why he/she sees a need

for this centre. This is supposed to prepare students that are not expected to go any further in their educational career:

"We allow all students to attend classes at this school and we make sure that be it poor or rich, physically challenged or not physically challenged, we provide same education to all and we are also trying as much as possible to assist those who are challenged in different ways to give them special lessons that could assist them to at least move. We have also discovered that some learners who are physically challenged have some other problems they could not precede with education and we have tried to introduce what we call vocational training centre at this school. We are trying to teach these learners tailoring so that when they grow up they have something to be doing since we have seen that there are really some who cannot go further with education." (MW_EY_I_EC_1.6_12.06.2014)

This is confirmed by the SNE teacher as an alternative to secondary school.

2.6 Positive Developments

Students

The school has a resource room for learners with disabilities which was constructed by friends from Scotland. These friends also constructed a vocational centre and toilet for children with disabilities, a three classroom school block and a kitchen for the school feeding programme.

"We are happy because our school receives visitors from Scotland. They construct different school blocks like the resource centre. In standard 5 they did maintenance work. Even where we eat porridge." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 37-43).

"Some learners from the resource room get promoted to the main stream classes if they do fine If there are doing fine in the resource room they are taken to the mainstream classes." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 163).

"The school has good classroom blocks, there is no class which conducts its lesson outside." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.3_10.06.2014, 29-32)

Another positive development is that the school has qualified and hardworking teachers according to the learners views. The teachers make sure that the learners learn effectively, by teaching the learners whole heartedly, without favour and some learners said that some teachers come to teach even if they are ill.

"The teachers from this school do not take sides when teaching, they teach the way the lessons are without any favours." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 15)

"They come to teach even if they fall ill." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.3_10.06.2014, 146)

"There are sporting activities at the school, boys play football while girls play netball. We like sporting activities like netball and football." (MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014, 18)

2.7 Recommendations to improve participation

Teachers

Teachers made some recommendation in order to improve the participation of all learners especially the disabled through use of the resource person:

"We can use resource person because some learners can be accepted by that resource person so they can be attentive to listen to that person." (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 95)

They also request to go for professional training in order to learn new methods of teaching because things are changing:

"Mine is a request. We teachers we need refresher course because the world is changing." (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 104)

On participation regular teachers emphasise using different kinds of teaching methods in order to reach out to different kinds of learners who are found in a classroom. Several methods like role play, brainstorming, discussions and 'joy framing' have been mentioned as teaching strategies in this regard. They also revealed that when learners with learning difficulties approach them for assistance, the teachers offer help. However, classroom observations revealed that the participation of learners with disabilities depends on the skills the teachers have.

3 Meso-Level

3.1 Concept of inclusive education

The respondents explain that they understand inclusive education as enabling different kind of learners not only to attend school but also to participate in school. So they refer to different kind of learners though they concentrate on SNE learners. They differentiate mostly regarding physical difficulties (VI, HI) and mental challenges. Nevertheless, during the interview they refer also to other group of vulnerable children like albinos, orphans, children from the streets (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 33-36). As it shows in the following they refer to various specific measures that refer not only to access, but acceptance and participation (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 203-208). Moreover in one segment the Desk Officer refers to

"so-called normal learners" (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 70)

which points out to a constructivist perspective on disability.

3.2 Access

3.2.1 Challenges

Primary Education Advisor (PEA) and Desk Officer

First of all they refer to a challenging situation with regard to access. However, because of many interventions that will be explained in more depth this situation has changed. With regard to the

challenging past the PEA and the Desk Officer refer mainly to children with 'disability'. In the following the Desk Officer explains the challenge children with disabilities were faced with in the past:

"We also use the structure that exist at school level, as some of the stake holders, we have got Mother groups, we have the School Management Committee, the PTA (Parents Teachers' Association) body, we also interact with these in terms of Inclusive Education and they appreciate the intervention, because some parents used to lock up the kids." (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 68, see also 76)

Moreover they refer to other vulnerable groups that are challenged in terms of access, namely children from the streets and orphans. Other groups mentioned they see at risk of being faced with lacking acceptance or participation, e.g. girls, albinos (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 131, 141, 191).

District Education Manager (DEM)

According to the DEM the most challenging factors that prevent children from having access to education are inaccessible infrastructures, the inadequate state of schools in general, classrooms as well as sanitary facilities, overcrowded classes and the lack of basic learning and teaching resources. All these aspects finally contribute to the high dropout rates.

District Social Welfare Office

At meso level, the Office of Social Welfare does not receive sufficient funds to pay fees for all the learners who seek support, as a result some learners finish primary school but do not progress to secondary school.

"The challenges that we face are like what we are saying about educational support. You will find out that the children that we need to support are many but the help we have is not enough. For example, I will be giving the examples that are happening here at the office, the educational support given by NACC this year, we had deEY, outstanding balance (1.2 million), because the money was not enough, it was discovered that some schools were not paid for last academic year, this year when we received the money, we didn't take any new applicant not that there is none, we have so many but we were saying that we need to clear the outstanding balance and pay for those we have." (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.4_24.04.2014, 48)

The national government has not been able to construct sufficient boarding facilities leading to the girls living in self boarding facilities in some secondary schools, where they are vulnerable to different kinds of abuse.

3.2.2 Specific measures

PEA and Desk Officer

As already mentioned with regard to opportunities the PEA and Desk Officer emphasize the importance of cooperating with other associations. They name parents, mother groups, SMC, PTA, as well as MACOHA and the Samaritan Trust (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 58, 71-77, 276).

Together with these groups one important focus is on access of all learners. They discuss this issue as problematic regarding children with disabilities as well as orphans. The main strategy they refer to is sensitization

"This becomes also important with regard to the other dimensions of inclusive education." (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 68-70, 71-77)

They also refer to working intensively together with parents in diverse ways to improve access. They cooperate with the mother groups especially to use their connection to the community. They do sensitization regarding the parents to bring their children to school. Moreover they cooperate with the PTA and SMC to improve access within the school. To explain it they refer to one particular case in which building a special toilet was essential for a specific child in terms of school attendance (ibid., 71-77).

District Education Manager (DEM)

The District Education Manager (DEM) provides several examples for specific measures that are aiming at promoting access to education within her work, as for example the construction of accessible infrastructure, sensitization meetings before every new school year or providing necessary material resources for orphans. As all these activities refer to specific groups of learners see the chapter on most disadvantaged groups for more detailed explanations and examples.

3.2.3 Opportunities and positive developments

PEA and Desk Officer

Both refer particularly to sensitization as a specific measure that has broad positive development opportunities. In terms of access this means due to sensitization of the public parents have already started to change their mind-sets. What is striking about it is that the Desk Officer explains it is also as a positive development for the life perspective of the parents since they do not have to experience their children (with disability) as a burden any longer. Moreover this means they develop new perspectives about what the children can build up regarding their future life. This all starts with the parents' support of their children's school attendance:

“The impact has been tremendous, because we are getting positive comments from the parents ,the guardians, they thought these children were hopeless they could not do anything, but, with the sensitisation meetings that the desk has been conducting with those stakeholders, they have come to appreciate that they should not neglect these children. So children are now brought forward, they are brought into the open so that they mingle with the other learners and the so called normal learners are also sensitised to considers the other groups of learners as human beings. So that has brought a significant impact to the children themselves and even to the parents, yea they are no longer a burden, I mean the learners with disabilities are no longer a burden to the guardians of the community.”
(MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 70)

In this respect they refer to the importance to network with different actors, especially with NGOs and parents (see especially specific measures).

District Education Manager

In the interview the DEM emphasized the importance of sensitization and the mobilization of financial support in order to improve the access to education for all different groups of learners:

“For example, before we open an academic year, normally we hold sensitization meetings through our desk in the zones yah, and the stakeholders that are invited are the same PTAs and mother groups where we highlight to them the importance of letting the communities to release learners with disabilities into the schools. That's how far we can go, yea, when they come into the schools we also receive them just like any other student. We don't turn them away. We enroll them and they start attending the classes.”
(MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_25_04_2014_- _Converted, 28)

“Well, in terms of support, I think the major support that we get is from the Ministry of Education in terms of funding and may be suffice to say the most recent stride which the ministry has taken whereby they devolved some of the funds direct to the schools. I think that is the biggest stride I have seen so far because like for [name of district] for this year alone we have transferred MK 67,000,000.00 direct to the schools and I believe that it is definitely going to help in terms of increasing access to education for all the learners.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 50)

3.3 Acceptance

3.3.1 Challenges

District Education Manager (DEM)

The DEM explained that although she believes that in general all groups of children are well accepted at school, the fact that they do not always get the support they need, might contribute to feeling less accepted:

No, no, but may be, I cannot call it unaccepted but they would not get the ultimate support that they expect, so may be within themselves yah, they would just think that they are not accepted but with a lot of sensitization that has happened, you will see that even issues like HIV/AIDs, you will see that no one is not accepted. But maybe if you have a learner who needs to be carried around and that learner is put into school, yah, for sure the teacher may not be able to support that learner full time. At the end of the day the learner may think that she or he is not accepted.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 85)

Additionally this example shows the limitations of sensitization and raising awareness, since the feeling of not being accepted can be strengthened by missing supportive actions and support interventions so finally that can contribute to dropouts as well.

3.3.2 Specific measures

PEA and Desk Officer

With regard to acceptance the PEA and Desk Officer mainly refer to specific measures and resulting positive developments. They refer to the specific measure of sensitization but also to workshops they do for children with HIV/AIDS. This sensitization they refer to addressed parents (as explained with the consequence of students' access), fellow students and teachers (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 178/9). With regard to fellow learners they did sensitization by explaining to them the needs of some students but also the equality of human beings.

Moreover they explain that teachers involve students in the classroom to let them feel accepted. This can also be discussed more critically as the teachers do not really expect some special students to give the correct answers but nominate them only that they get the feeling they are participating (ibd., 213, see also participation). However, they also refer to other strategies that seriously address SNE learners.

3.3.3 Opportunities and positive developments

PEA and Desk Officer

They underline positive outcomes by referring to specific learners, e.g. one albino in the school that is well accepted by his fellow learners due to this strategy:

“no, but, with the sensitisation, I have a vivid example of a learner I was told about at Namatapa, he was an albino so there was a lot of sensitisation that was done so the learners were told if at all they would see the learner in long pairs of trousers, they should not get surprised because that’s the requirement for such a learner to learn comfortably even wearing the hat, you find a learner looking quite unique to the other learners because of the nature of the disability, he or she has. So with that sensitisation this albino learner was well accepted both by the teachers and the learners themselves.” (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 191, see also for a girl 189)

District Education Manager (DEM)

In spite of the limitations that were just explained, the DEM underlined the importance of sensitization as a significant foundation to raise the acceptance for all groups of children:

“No, no, but may be, I cannot call it unaccepted but they would not get the ultimate support that they expect, so may be within themselves yah, they would just think that they are not accepted but with a lot of sensitization that has happened, you will see that even issues like HIV/AIDs, you will see that no one is not accepted.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_25_04_2014 - Converted, 85)

3.4 Participation

3.4.1 Challenges

PEA and Desk Officer

“Challenges with regard to participation are first of all material resources, especially expensive learning material for the children with disabilities at the schools, as well as lacking budget in general.” (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 91-96, 97-104, 107, 163-174)

Additionally they mention the need for well-trained SNE teachers because the human resources they have are not enough. In this regard they also mention that the SNE teachers they have are not specialized (ibid., 240):

“Interviewer 2: So the curriculum in college, in teacher training college doesn’t include specialisation of such teachers?”

Respondent 1: No, no, it doesn’t include specialisation.” (241/2)

Moreover they point out to the difficulty regarding distances to various educational institutions for SNE learners. That’s why they also see a need for more SNE teachers. (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 78-90, 105, 79). Furthermore they point out to the high student/teacher-ratios:

“Respondent 2: Boys (she giggles) -silence- boys are just too many in one room under one teacher compared to teacher learner ratio for example in [name of district] we have teacher to 193,almost 200 learners. Two hundred learners per teacher.

Respondent 1: Almost two hundred.

Respondent 2: Two hundred learners per teacher.” (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 143-146)

“Moreover they point out to the resource centre that is not well equipped.” (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 255)

District Education Manager (DEM)

Challenges due to participation that were mentioned by the DEM are especially the high student-teacher-ratio and the inadequate resources:

“Though we are saying the enrolment is increasing every year but the number of teachers that we have in [name of district] are decreasing like, for example, at the moment pupil teacher ratio is 1:93 simply because I think the ministry in 2007 adopted deployment policy whereby they are no longer deploying teachers in urban centers and we are relying on transfers from other districts like those that are following spouses so if we don’t have transfers in we don’t have many teachers.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25._04_.2014_-_Converted, 79)

“The other issue is on the part of resources, yes we have resources being procured by the district, those that are being procured by the schools through school improvement grants, those that are being supplied through the ministry of education but still they are not adequate.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25._04_.2014_-_Converted, 79)

3.4.2 Specific measures

PEA and Desk Officer

Two important aspects are mentioned. On the one hand they touch on the aspect of screening and diagnostics that are linked on the other hand to teaching methods but also the professional training of teachers in general:

Screening: They refer to organizing screening of children with visual impairment in a hospital. This leads to the provision of assistive devices (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 38). With regard to a SNE learner he mentions that a screening is done at the several schools of the district. So obviously a screening is done also for children with other disabilities. It seems that they refer not only to disabilities like VI and HI but also learning disabilities (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 57).

Separation and inclusion/function of resource room: In this regard the PEA explains that they have two categories of usage of the resource room and consequently of learners. On the one hand they have learners that are prepared to join the lesson, “they do go into the resource room, by the end of the day they end up in a classroom” (ibd., 240). On the other hand there are learners that stay exclusively in the resource room, “those who are full time at resource room those need a specialist teacher, well equipped” (ibd., 240). In this regard they mention the need they still have regarding specialist teachers (see challenges). For this reason they organize workshops for teachers where teachers from Montfort College are invited to share they knowledge with SNE teachers of the schools in the district (ibd., 246).

Vocational/in-service training: They also refer to various efforts with regard to vocational training for teachers in terms of innovative teaching methods and networking of teachers to increase special skills and knowledge:

Workshops take place that focus on “various methods of teaching inclusive learners” (MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014, 228). In concrete they mention “individualistic teaching” (ibd.). He explains this method and emphasizes that the teacher should not only focus on the whole group but on every child in particular, “to say ok such such learners need special attention” (ibd.) and to serve

this particular need noticed, “coaching them on the area that they are not doing well [...]. So it’s called individualistic teaching. Taking a learner as an individual” (ibd.).

In this regard they additionally mention structures to get the teachers in touch and exchange their ideas and experiences. In concrete they mention

“several forums [for itinerant teachers] to share good ways and means of improving the status of learners with disability.” (ibd., 38)

With regard to lacking resources, especially in terms of human resources, they refer to specific measures that take this in account by creative solutions. The Desk Officer explains that they also use **“multiplier” strategies**:

“The teachers get the skills and then teachers with same skills for the learners to benefit, she mentioned of Sight Savers [as an organization that is active and present at the schools of the district, it was mentioned that they deliver e.g. glasses to some learner/196] as an eminent stakeholder, those have got their own specific skills. The teachers that we have, not all of them went for special training in terms of special needs education, but with the experts that may come and join us they can also boost our capacity so that using the skills the knowledge that we can acquire from them, that can be transferred to the teachers and later on be transferred farther to the learners.” (ibd., 239)

Moreover they also explain that they do **“refresher courses”** for teachers, “to update them with their knowledge and skills, part of the money would be used towards this.” (ibd., 271)

Pedagogics: Besides the teaching methods that are the focus of various workshops concrete actions also take place in schools. They mention actions that aim at considering different tasks for learners dependent on their diverse abilities. In the following quote this is explained with regard to physical education. It also refers to the positive developments that have taken place in this respect:

“Yea, mmm, in the past the learners with disabilities were excluded from taking part in physical education as lesson, they used to be told that you will remain here you will watch over your friends’ properties, something like that, but not today, yea, they are given relevant exercises for them to do, so that’s another level of acceptance apart from sensitisation.” (ibd., 205)

Another activity in this respect the PEA adds is the Special Olympics that has taken place (ibd., 208).

They also mention various strategies to get students involved. As already mentioned with regard to acceptance they let the students feel accepted and actively involved by asking them questions that they do not expect to be answered correctly. This strategy is to discuss critically in terms of ethics but it also does not work if students should really participate. However, they also mention strategies that are innovate and interesting. On the one hand they mention *“different methods approaches of teaching learners so that the learners can be identified at an earlier stage about their level of disability by using diagnostic assessment, so the teacher should be able to know if this is visually impaired or hearing impairment and be assisted”* (ibd., 214). The diagnostic strategy seems to be involved in the teaching method so that the teacher can teach but also assess and monitor the learners’ ability at the same time. It is not clear if this concept exclusively refers to learners with VI and HI or if also more complex difficulties like learning disabilities.

Role models: They also refer to role models for SNE learners that are discussed as lacking and in this regard as a challenge in the other case studies: *“On personal perceptive I feel it is, since the children live here in town, we MACOHA [Malawi Council for the Handicapped] as an institution, there also ladies who are working though having disabilities, I feel that has been as a model to such kind of girl children*

saying “ah, look at that lady she is working with MACOHA ,She is well paid but she has disabilities, it is through education, may be if I do the same, I can also be as good as that one is” (ibid., 222).

DFL: Moreover with regard to school development in terms of building facilities they explain about the local development (DFL) and how this is used. This seems to result from the decentralisation strategy. The usage of this DFL is under the DEM. In this regard orientation meetings take place to monitor the needs (ibid., 147-162).

Monitoring: Finally they also explain that they monitor diverse aspects with regard to implementation and quality of school development:

“How the learners are doing, how the teachers are teaching, what is the impact of the learners, those from the street, we monitor, are they still going to school, maybe they have again dropped out of school.” (ibid., 270)

In this regard it also becomes apparent that various strategies and specific measures depend on cooperation between different stakeholders, organizations and institutions.

District Education Manager (DEM)

In the interview the DEM named some specific measures that are created to promote the equal participation of all learners through her own work, such as continuous professional development of teachers, the support of schools through teaching and learning materials, providing specialist teachers and assisting with the enhancement of resource centers. Furthermore the cooperation between specialist teachers and regular teachers is supported:

“Every holiday we conduct continuous professional development for our teachers, that is zonal based as well as school based. I think you are aware that the Ministry of Education is now providing grants to schools, zones and districts and we are making use of those grants to conduct some trainings in the schools. So we pick an area where we feel may be the teachers are not doing well or the learners are not doing well and then we conduct trainings in those particular areas.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 18)

“In terms of teaching and learning materials, we also provide some teaching and learning materials through our ORT I think for the past two years the ministry has devolved the funds for teaching and learning materials for the councils to procure some basic materials like note books, pencils, pens, yeah, but there are still others that are centrally procured.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 22)

“Second thing we are making sure that we have specialist teachers in all the zones, of course they are not enough. When the ministry deploys them, they make sure that they are equitably distributed to the zones and we also look at the issues specifically for special needs education, we have a desk which looks at what requirements are there in the school resource centers. We have resource centers but they are not resource centers per se but we just set aside a classroom to be a resource center where a specialist will be there and the special needs learners after attending the mainstream education they also go to the resource center to be assisted in a special way by a specialist teacher. We also provide resources to those resource centers.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 24)

“Not the regular teachers. Basically due to limited resources, we normally gather the specialist teachers almost every day where they would meet and share the knowledge and experiences and we entrust them to go and sensitize regular teachers in their respective schools. Once every term we meet with these specialist teachers to look at a specific area in terms of sensitization or a CPD and then we entrust them

that they should also do the same when they go to their schools.”
(MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 26)

3.4.3 Opportunities

PEA and Desk Officer

As already mentioned the PEA and Desk Officer refer to cooperative actions that enable them to organize workshops for teachers mainly to help them to improve and refresh their knowledge and skills but also to get in touch with and have occasions to share experiences other teachers. They both refer to this inter-sectorial cooperation as an opportunity for themselves: “we do work hand in hand with different stakeholders” (ibd., 57). As already mentioned with regard to access they also cooperate with parents.

Especially in terms of acceptance and participation they refer to various positive examples as a result from the interventions mentioned above, e.g. the example already mentioned of the Special Olympics and physical education.

District Education Manager (DEM)

Concerning opportunities the DEM emphasized the significance of sensitization and community support for example through mother groups:

“In the area of community participation, first of all, in all our schools we ensure that we have school management committees, PTAs that assist in the running of the schools. We also have mother groups which are there to specifically woo girls into schools. So during these trainings we carry our sensitizations with the mother groups, the PTAs regarding their roles and in case of the mother groups how they can woo girls into schools.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 20)

In addition the cooperation between the school and external organizations as for instance hospitals was named as an opportunity to receive specific professional support:

“Specifically for those with visual impairment, after we have assessed that they have visual impairment, we normally take them for clinics at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital. We have a special arrangement with some doctors at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital where these learners are screened and then they would give us recommendations whether they need assistive devices or maybe they just need to use large prints and where they just need to use large prints, when procuring our teaching and learning resources we make sure that we also include those large prints exercises for them, I mean to assist them.”
(MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 30)

It was also mentioned that providing counseling and support for children with any kind of difficulties (like family problems) can encourage them to participate at school:

“Yah, sure, there could be. However, in the schools we have what we call counselling and guidance committees which are responsible for that. If they discover that the learner is a regular learner but may be they are not performing well because of one reason or another, or may be problems at home and the like, that is their responsibility to provide counselling and guidance. But how vibrant they are in the schools, varies from one school to another, you know what I mean.”
(MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 42)

Finally the DEM referred to the opportunity of mobilizing financial support through funds instead of demanding financial contributions from the learners:

“May be the provision of resources to the schools, you know until may be three years ago when USAID piloted a project on education decentralization and support activity, we never used to have any resources going directly to the schools. Yah, we were mainly depending on the Ministry of Education some of which would come late, others would not be relevant needs of the schools but after the successful piloting by USAID, the Ministry of Education now has institutionalized the support to the schools in form of primary school improvement programme. So that too, I feel it is a positive development because previously schools used to depend on whatever resources they would collect from the learners, the rental of the buildings and the like. They never used to be any funds going into schools but since then for a third year now, we have funds going directly to the schools and we feel that that is helping a lot because the schools are now able to meet their needs, plan on their own and be able to implement their own activities within the schools.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 69)

3.5 Most disadvantaged groups

PEA and Desk Officer

They mainly refer to learners with disabilities. There seems to be many such learners in this district but also with a variety of forms and intensity. So this explains this special focus. They also refer to children from the streets, orphans and girls that also are challenged. Considerations with regard to special measures are mentioned mainly for learners with disabilities.

District Education Manager

In the interview the DEM referred to children with disabilities, girls, children affected by HIV/AIDS, orphans and children from the streets as the most disadvantaged groups of learners at school.

Children with disabilities:

Before the start of every school year sensitization meetings are organized, to promote access for children with disabilities:

“For example, before we open an academic year, normally we hold sensitization meetings through our desk in the zones yah, and the stakeholders that are invited are the same PTAs and mother groups where we highlight to them the importance of letting the communities to release learners with disabilities into the schools. That’s how far we can go, yea, when they come into the schools we also receive them just like any other student. We don’t turn them away. We enroll them and they start attending the classes.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 28)

Concerning children with disabilities she explained that accessible infrastructure, the lack of adequate resources and resource centers as well as specialist teachers are the most common challenges at school, but she also mentioned that the available resources are used to create change on these issues:

“In terms of learner with disabilities in our schools, first of all, for example, when we are constructing infrastructure, like at the moment we are doing that through local development funds. We are making sure that the structures that we are constructing are disability friendly. That is the first thing. Second thing we are making sure that we have specialist teachers in all the zones, of course they are not enough. When the ministry deploys them, they make sure that they are equitably distributed to the zones and we also look at the issues specifically for special needs education, we have a desk which looks at what requirements are there in the school resource centers. We have resource centers but they are not resource centers per se but we just set aside a classroom to be a resource center where a specialist will

be there and the special needs learners after attending the mainstream education they also go to the resource center to be assisted in a special way by a specialist teacher. We also provide resources to those resource centers.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, s. 24)

Furthermore she elaborated that children with disabilities are disadvantaged during assessments, since they do not receive any additional support:

“It is medium because of the issue of resources. Because I will cite an example of the learner who was in [name of school], very brilliant but is got serious learning difficulties, yah, asking questions, she response very quickly, yah, but then for him to write, she shivers. So like right now we are worried as to what is going to happen during MANEB’s Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination, because we know that this learner if there was another way of assisting this learner, definitely sitting for the exam, she would pass if we could allow her to dictate while someone is writing for him. That will be a way of helping this learner. So we have requested MANEB to come and specifically assess this learner to see how the learner can be assisted otherwise that child is very brilliant that if she was able to write properly and she was stable definitely she can be selected to a secondary school. When this learner writes, you cannot see what she has written.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 101)

It was explained that in the beginning of the school year children are assessed at school in order to discover any special needs and provide specific assistance to these learners. Through these screening activities the schools also have the opportunity to collect data on children with special needs. In some cases, as for example children with visual impairments, screenings are performed in cooperation with hospitals to get additional professional support:

“The first weeks of being in schools, the regular teachers are the ones who assess the learning needs of the learners so when they discover that there is a learner with special kind of disability, it could visually impaired learner, it could be a learner with learning difficulties, it could be somebody with hearing problem, then they would inform the specialist teacher in that area so that they should be given special attention. So it is a kind of screening but otherwise when they come into the schools, we just enroll them just like anybody else. We don’t say this is a learner with a specific disability and return them, no we just enroll them.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 28)

“Yah, sure. For the disabilities we normally collect it [referring to data].” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 60)

“Specifically for those with visual impairment, after we have assessed that they have visual impairment, we normally take them for clinics at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital. We have a special arrangement with some doctors at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital where these learners are screened and then they would give us recommendations whether they need assistive devices or maybe they just need to use large prints and where they just need to use large prints, when procuring our teaching and learning resources we make sure that we also include those large prints exercises for them, I mean to assist them.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 30)

Finally she noticed that there is a strong focus on children with visual impairments and that learner with other kinds of disabilities might be disadvantaged as a consequence:

“Respondent: Those with hearing impairment, in that area we haven’t done much. We have concentrated more on those with visual impairment.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 32)

Girls:

Considering girls especially inadequate sanitary facilities and infrastructure prevent them from attending school:

"In terms of the gender issues, may be on the part of girls, the major issue is may be access to sanitary facilities. You know, especially for adolescent girls, some of our infrastructure do not make a provision to take care of those adolescent girls so may be that will be one major challenge. The other issue is the issue of desks, aah, most of our schools do not have desks if you go in the classrooms the way they are seated, I wish you could visit one school where they are overloaded like [name of school], you will find out that they are packed like no body's business yah, at the end of the day teachers would like the learners to raise their hands and standing up as they participating and the like yah, you will find out that the girl especially the adolescent girl will not be willing to stand up, sitting down, unlike if we had provided enough desks for them, it is easier for them to participate. I think that too affects them in terms of participation, of course it affects both boys and girls but it affects the girls more." (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 83)

In the interview the DEM explained how orphans are disadvantaged and how they are supported at school:

"In terms of orphans, sure, for example, them too they lack resources, when it comes to school resources may be the teacher may identify this is a needy student let us assist and put that pupil on the list for grant. There might be other needs that the school may not be able to meet, for example, their basic requirements like food, we provide the porridge in the school but when they go home they still want to eat, when they go home they need a shelter, yah, those are the things that we cannot do. We are like restricting ourselves within the education institution to see 'what is it that this learner needs in the schools?' But I think we have not gone as far as out of the school, 'what is it that the learner will need?' So even if we do as educationist, I don't think we can reach out to that extent so it's like maybe they would only be referred to PTAs and some groups in the community to assist them but it also depends on the communities where they are willing to take up that kind of challenges to assist them. So that affects the attendance in school despite the fact that they would give them whatever needs they have in schools, they would give them note books, but I think some basic needs at home are not met then it will be difficult for them to attend school." (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 81)

Children from the streets/vulnerable children:

When referring to children from the streets and vulnerable children in general the DEM explains that some of them do not attend school due to a lack of family support and resources. Additionally only very little data on children who are not at school exists:

"Could be may be some of them we could not know. I think may be like the case of the city we would cite some of the children, you would find out that if you go out during this time of the day if will find some of them begging in the street like myself when I stop, the first question I ask is 'why are you not in school?' because they would rush to the window and say 'can you give me K10' then I would say, why are you not in school. May be that is one of the group that is not able to access education. So they would say, 'no, I don't have a mother, I don't have support'. That's what they would say." (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 46)

"Yes we have but not covered by my office, yah, because we are limited to collect data within our school, yah, but I think may be in our template we did not include that element of street children because we believe those who are in school are in school. The data that we use only have that categories like the orphans, the learners with disabilities and the like but data for street children we got it from the Samaritans [name of town] because this was not long ago. Without that, we would not have any data, yah, for sure." (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 56)

Children affected by HIV/AIDS:

Speaking about children that are affected by HIV/AIDS the DEM concludes that they only receive little specific support at school due to the lack of resources:

“Similarly in that area, they are also being catered for under access and equity under the development funds, forty per cent which I talked about, yah we are supposed to give support to those with HIV/AIDS though it is limited support but somehow it is some kind of support. Yah, those that declare they are given support in terms of transportation to the hospital, the head teachers are support to organize everything.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3_____25_04_2014_-_Converted, 77)

3.6 Transition

DEM

With regard to the examination or screening with regard to secondary school they refer to the conditions of the examination and the assistance one learner with a disability needs to do this exam (ibid, 79).

“Yea, we have some challenges, whereby we don’t have enough specialist teachers and even the resource rooms, the materials that they use, they are just very expensive, for example when we talk of the hearing impairment, thee those who are total blind, the brail papers are very expensive, so we have those, some challenges to buy those ones. We also have some challenges whereby we only rely upon the DEM’s car when we go for screening, to screen all the learners from [name of district], when it comes to screening and the mocking exercise, you find that may be the DEM’s is busy with the vehicle, so the screening sometimes it is not done in good time, some challenges are; the learners for example this years we have a candidate in standard 8, who will need assistance from somebody to assist him to hold him so that she should write well, otherwise if she is left alone she does shiver, she doesn’t know, she doesn’t hold a pen on her own.”

District Social Welfare Office

The Office of District Welfare is interested in the welfare of the child among other things. It is not very much interested in issues of primary school education but rather early childhood education, transition to primary school and access of secondary education.

The Social Welfare Office works with other stakeholders to monitor and assist children’s transition from conception to primary school and pay school fees at secondary school as well as solve children’s problems. The office works with UNICEF, [name of town] Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), Save Our Souls (SOS), Beehive, Open Hands, National Aids Commission and The Samaritan Trust. Their biggest partner is UNICEF.

The office conducts its work through child protection workers. It encourages pregnant mothers to go to anti-natal clinics in good time and make sure they adhere to advice provided at the clinic so that they give birth to healthy babies. When a child is born, the office takes part in assisting the mothers to take care of the health of the babies by encouraging them to take the babies to under five clinics (Under five clinics are clinics for all children aged below five where babies receive vaccinations and other treatments).

When the children reach the age of 3, the office encourages the mothers to send them to early childhood development centres which were established in the communities in the district. To enforce compliance, the office works with traditional leaders. Fines have been instituted for those who defy the order to send their children to an ECD institution.

"I think this is one of the ways in which is bearing fruits because we are encouraging parents to send their children to ECD centre and in those areas, there are people who are supposed to be the eyes, who are supposed to see whether the things are being done. There are also by-laws which encourage the parents to send their children to school and people fear those by-laws. This is forcing the parents to send the children to school fearing that they will pay a fine to the chief." (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.4_24.04.2014, 32).

The fines vary from one ECD institution to another, the fines range from a chicken to k1000. These ECD centres were at group village headman level but now the office is discussing with village headmen to have the ECD centres established at village level.

When a child is discovered to have some disability, the child referred to working partners depending on the problem

"There are also other children that we refer to the other organisation that work in the area where the children are, for example if [name of town] Synod is working at [name of region] area and they are also providing educational support, sometimes we refer these children to them but there are very few organisations who are doing these things." (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.4_24.04.2014 48).

At the age of 6 the children are enrolled in nearby primary schools and the office of Social Welfare will be interested in the welfare of the child should there be cases of abuse, the office will not follow the child at primary school to find out what goes on there but may support him/her in other ways,

"Social welfare office deals a lot with ECD and for primary it is the Ministry of Education that deals with that." (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.4_24.04.2014, 32)

but the office monitors attendance through the child protection officers and the traditional leaders

"We have the Child Protection Workers who are like the eye for this office, so when they are in those areas, when they see that a child is being abused, and that some children are enclosed in the houses and do not go to school, those officers are the first people to see those things. Then the officer is supposed to discuss the issues with the chief and if the officer sees that the chief is not doing anything, our office intervenes in the sense that we go and meet with the chief so that the child should go back to school." (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.4_24.04.2014, 48)

When the child leaves primary school and goes to secondary school, the office looks at the well-fare of the needy in terms of payment of school fees. Through the grants that it receives from UNICEF, it is able to pay school fees for some students.

The most vulnerable of all the learners it pays fees for is the girl child. Some schools to which these learners are selected to study do not have boarding facilities so girls rent houses near the schools, this is called self-boarding. These girls are vulnerable since men tend to take advantage and start propositioning them, eventually most of the girls drop out of school because of pregnancies. The girls lack security and are prone to all sorts of abuse, for example some girls got raped when they were staying in a self-boarding facility at a secondary school.

"I wanted to talk about is called [name of place], between [name of place] and [name of place], it was discovered that when thieves were running away they ended up into a houses where the girls were and raped them. So two girls stopped going to school they were traumatised that they could not learn and face their friends again. And one who had the courage remained at the school but her performance is just going down because it still concerns her up to now." (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.4_24.04.2014, 78)

ECD

Some communities have not understood the concept of early childhood development and are reluctant to put resources together for example for cooking porridge for these young children.

“There are some communities that have not yet understood early childhood development and it is difficult for them to put resources together so that they can take care of the children, some say that in primary schools, they give porridge, here they do not give porridge so that means it is not necessary to provide porridge.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.4_24.04.2014, 48)

The frontline workers do not have the capacity to effectively carry out their duties. There are very few child protection workers and care givers. They have not been trained sufficiently and both have a low level of education so it is difficult for them to understand some laws and policies. They also fail to make the children accept one another if there are some with disadvantages

“When the child’s friends are not sensitised they also laugh at them, for example those with albinism because their skin is strange, if the care givers are not trained you will find that the child’s friends are laughing at her.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.4_24.04.2014, 58).

The vast areas child protection officers have to cover are made worse by the fact that they do not have any means of transport and are working as volunteers, they are not rewarded for the work that they do. An ECD institution is expected to have 100 children against 5 care givers if the children are aged 4, but if they are aged less than 4 there should be 15 children to a care giver, but due to the fact that there are very few care givers, one care givers may have more than 20.

“In every centre, we expect hundred children but among those children, there is a need that for twenty children, there should be one care giver, and that is from four years onwards. But if they are less than four years, then it means five-teen children against one care giver. This is also a challenge.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.4_24.04.2014, 50).

“Unfortunately the front line workers like child protection officer, child care officers are very few. The challenge is that one person is expected to cover a wide area and on top of that the worker has no mobility to do that.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.4_24.04.2014, 48)

Some ECD centres are in temporary structures which are not conducive to accommodating children with physical disabilities in wheel chairs.

Most of the ECD institutions do not have children playing materials:

“Sometimes you will find that in the centres there are no proper toys for the children with disabilities.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.4_24.04.2014, 58)

Secondary Education

There are several problems at secondary school level, almost all problems are concerned with lack of financial resources. This lack of financial resources is at different levels these are; household, meso (Social Welfare Office) and macro level.

At household level if there is lack of financial resource to take care of the girl child’s education, she is encouraged to drop out of school and get married. Parents are encouraging their girl children to get married at the ages of 14, as a way of reducing financial burden in the household. In other households or both the girls are asked to do piece work in order to put food on the table.

“In [name of town] the issues are early marriages for the girls. For example, if the girl is 14-15 years, the parents just feel that she should get married. Like at [name of area] we had a meeting those issues came out.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.4_24.04.2014, 28)

“Even those who are regular and happen to be a girl who went to stay with some relatives, she is sometimes told that school has no benefits for you, you are just finishing the money here and just get married.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.4_24.04.2014, 72)

“They leave schools because they have been told that they should get married, these are the issues. Even poverty, they are told to go and do piece work so that we should eat when the child has just come from school.” (MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.4_24.04.2014, 28)

3.7 General recommendation

Teachers

For the success of education for all, the teachers propose that there is need for collaboration between all stakeholders. Teachers and the community need to come together and sensitize one another on the challenges learners with disabilities and other vulnerable children are going through and find solutions for them. Also the teachers emphasise the need for corporation with the community:

“That is why we repeatedly say that there is need for whether government or NGOs to bring teachers, community together and sensitize each other on the challenges the disabled face and find ways of resolving these problems. There is need for the community to work hand in hand with the teachers so that we achieve education for all.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 156)

“This is a thinking underground in a community. Nowadays at least we can accommodate each other among us, for example, we have learnt that I can associate with an HIV infected person. What parents say at home shape the character of the children, they can easily pick things more than us so what they hear in the homes do shape their lives.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 156)

Teachers recommend that teachers should have the skills to teach learners with diverse educational needs because most schools have only one specialist teacher. The teachers explained:

“We have only one teacher here. So I think the government can empower some of the teachers to go and train so that we can be able to teach these learners with special needs.” (MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2 11.06.2014, 33)

SNE teachers

The Specialist teacher emphasise for the need for government to intensify the programme of Inclusive education:

“I would very much like government to intensify inclusive education and encourage those who assist us to continue doing so.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 51)

Despite that Special Needs learners have access to Primary School, there are some who do not go further to Secondary School. So the special needs teacher suggests that the learners be equipped with Vocational skills like tailoring, welding and cookery. In his own words, the specialist teacher said:

“The other thing is that those who cannot get selected to secondary schools, my plan is to have a vocational training school if we get assistance from government. We want to sharpen their various skills, they cannot not all be tailors, some would like to specialize in cookery, etc so that when they go back home they make use of these trainings. I am not an expert in all these skills, so I need also to consult some stakeholders to help us. For example, we employed a full time tailor, who instructs them and we

would like also to have a welder who can be repairing the broken desks here. We want these learners to use the knowledge gained here to help them earn a living.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 35)

The specialist teacher emphasised that disadvantaged learners should not be spending so much time in the resource centre. They should participate in the regular classes so that Inclusive education be achieved. He said:

“I have got a lot of measures which I am thinking and proposing for the whole education system at this school. I don’t want to be with the learners full time in the resource room, my plan is just a matter of training them just for a month. After a month then they should be in the mainstreams whereby should be monitoring their progress in the mainstream.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 35)

“I also suggest that disadvantaged learners should not spend all their time in the resource room but they should be there for a short time and be taken to the main stream, so I would have loved it if the resource centres just to be an entry point, just for us to find out the learner’s problem and take him or her to the mainstream. I feel when they are kept here full time inclusive education will not be achieved. We need them be mixed with the regular learners, play together and specialist teachers help them while in the mainstream.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 51)

The need to have specialist teachers of different impairments was also emphasised by the specialist teacher. He said:

“I would also like to suggest that the government should provide three specialist teachers at each and every school; a specialist teacher in learning difficulty, a specialist teacher in hearing impairment and a specialist in visual impairment. This will cater for every type of these impairments which can be met in classrooms hence achieving inclusive education.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 52)

When asked on what can be the priority if the school got sufficient funding for his work use, the specialist teacher pointed out that they would buy materials to use for all groups and materials for the hearing impaired learners:

“We will buy the materials which are necessary for all groups of learners, the regular learners, the learning difficulty learners, those who have hearing impairment, and those who are visual impaired learners. We would like to buy materials which even the regular teachers would use, using the knowledge which we imparted on the regular teachers.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 54)

The specialist teacher went on to express his desire that the learners with disabilities should be exposed and money willing, her will take them to the National Park in order they actually see wild animals and take them to the Lake Malawi and Mvuu camp:

“I want them to be exposed; take them to Lengwe National Park and some have never seen Lake Malawi and don’t know the lake is here in Malawi. They just see pictures of rhino but never seen it so we need to take them to Mvuu Camp, so we need to expose them to whatsoever that is in Malawi.” (MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1 10.06.2014, 55)

Teachers suggest that the community and teachers should meet and discuss the problems learners with diverse educational needs are facing and try to find possible solutions. While the special needs teacher of the school suggests that government should intensify programmes of Inclusive Education and also revealed that the learners with disabilities do not go further with education as most of them do stop at standard eight, there is need to empower them with vocational skills like tailoring, welding and cookery. He emphasised that these learners should not be spending so much time in the resource

rooms but rather be assisted while they spend much time in the mainstream classes as possible in order to achieve inclusive education.

Common views among respondents related to the themes that is being analyzed

The common views among respondents refer to resources related to both capacity development, teaching and learning materials, parental support and the need for support from parents and government and other stakeholders to take strong responsibility by equipping teachers with necessary skills and all resources needed.

With regard to lacking resources all participants refer to lack of learning materials and an inadequate infrastructure at the school. In terms of the value of formal education participants discussed the main reason as lacking acceptance by parents and in the community in general. Most of all the community regards orphans, street children, learners with disabilities as not eligible to access education. Children living and affected with HIV/AIDS were also highly stigmatized. The head teacher discusses this aspect as a big obstacle that still is apparent in the society. Students refer to it with regard to their peers and the specific problems they face. They explain for instance that girls still are challenged by traditions because their parents force them to marry at a young age. They also speak about children at their school who do not attend school regularly because they have to take care of their siblings or have to earn money for their families. Additionally most of the participants on both micro and meso levels emphasise the importance of an effective strategy of sensitization to address these challenges. Moreover with regard to transition to work there are various perspectives by parents, teachers and head teacher and also a strong reference to training students' vocational skills at a specific centre.

Finally positive developments can be identified: There is a main emphasis on sensitization in terms of educational access and acceptance. Moreover the case study school is supported by the community mobilizing themselves and this later led to the construction of the resource center at the school and enrolment of children with disabilities. Teachers also revealed that despite all the challenges the face, they regard the disadvantaged children as their children. Moreover strategies can be identified that mainly aim to support teachers to deal with challenging learning situations in the classrooms adequately.

Contrasts/differences regarding perspectives

Teachers differ amongst themselves when they acknowledged that they handle all learners properly and later are saying they do not have the necessary skills to do so and that some teachers do not accept these learners in their classes. It has been identified that although learners with different disadvantages are enrolled at the school, some groups face discrimination especially the albinos and those with speech and running noses. So this is in contrast with the view that all groups of learners participate and are accepted by their peers. The special needs teacher mentioned that the school has ramps and is somehow disability friendly but the teachers observed that the school environment is not friendly enough to learners with disabilities. Whereas similar challenges are mentioned by all participants in terms of specific measures to improve the situation it is the parent groups and the desk officer of the district education office who point to the strategies needed to support teachers regarding their teaching methods and to establish collaboration among teachers.

With regard to acceptance participants refer to different aspects. Parents point out that there is a need for acceptance among learners thereby focussing on disabled learners in particular. In contrast, students refer to negative situations that illustrate lacking acceptance in general. Moreover, teachers and head teachers discuss difficulties dealing with provoking behaviour shown by students.

4 Discussion

Barriers to inclusive education are mentioned with regard to access, acceptance and participation. With regard to educational access the general lack of acceptance of formal education by parents and the community in general is mentioned by various participants. An emphasis on how to address such barriers is on sensitization and has already caused positive developments.

Further strategies have addressed the dimensions of acceptance and participation. For instance with regard to participation efforts focus on in-service-teacher training as well as enhancing collaboration among teachers to support them with regard to overwhelming learning situations. It is striking that such strategies are innovative and creative that also taking the lack of adequate resources into account. For instance ‘multiplier techniques’ are used that take lacking human resources into consideration but also address teachers’ need for support.

A special focus in this district seems to be on ‘disabled learners’. In this respect ‘individual education plans’ are mentioned to address such learners adequately. These are mentioned by the SNE teachers. Also the resource centres are mentioned to support not only those but also all children that need help in certain learning areas as the head teacher points out. Moreover it is stated by various groups that the resource room is used to aim at ‘mainstreaming’ children in regular classes. Nevertheless it shows that there is still a great emphasis on the resource centre to deal with those who are regarded to have special needs in a separate way. So it shows that despite of all the innovative strategies that can be identified there still seems to be a great emphasis on a deficit concept of special education rather than on inclusive education. This also becomes apparent with regard to the terms used, e.g. ‘mainstream’.

5 Data Base

Micro-Level

Kind of Data Collection (Interview/FGD/Observation)	Participants of FGD and Position	Name of Transcript/Audio File
Interview	Head teacher	MW_EY_I_HT_EC_1.6_12.06.2014
Interview	SNE teacher	MW_EY_DI_SNET_ETK_1.1_10.06.2014
FGD	SMC/PTA/Mother group/Special Needs Support Group	MW_EY_FG_SMC_EC_1.5_12.06.2014
FGD	Teachers	MW_EY_FGD_Ts_ETK_1.2_11.06.2014
FGD	STD 3 and 4 learners	MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.3_10.06.2014

FGD	STD 5 and 6	MW_EY_FGD_5&6Ls_ETK_2.1 10.06.2014
FGD	STD 7 learners	MW_EY_FG_STU_EC_1.4_10.06.2014
Lesson Observation	STD Literacy and Numeracy: English, Maths, Chichewa	MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_2.2 AB 10.06.2014 MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB2 10.06.2014
Lesson Observation	STD 7a Numeracy	MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB6_10.06.2014
Lesson Observation	STD 7c Literacy	MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB5_09.06.2014
Lesson Observation	STD 4 Numeracy and Literacy	MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB4_10.06.2014
Lesson Observation	STD 4 Literacy Chichewa	MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC__2.1AB 9.06.2014 MW_EY_OB_LES_ETK_EC_AB3_10.05.2014

Meso-Level

Kind of Data Collection (Interview/FGD/Observation)	Participants of FGD and Position	Name of Transcript/Audio File
Interview	SHN Coordinator	MW_EY_EI_EX_EC_1.3_24.04.2014
FGD	Desk Officer for Primary Specialist PEA	MW_EY_FG_EX_EC_1.2_24.04.2014
Interview	District Social Welfare Officer	MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.4 24.04.2014
Interview	District Education Manager	MW_EY_EI_EX_ETK_1.3 25.04.2014