



CHAPTER 10

SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION IN ESWATINI: HISTORY AND ACHIEVEMENTS

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Introduction

Special needs education (also known as special education, aided education, exceptional education, special ed. or SPED) is the practice of educating students in a way that addresses their individual differences and needs. Special needs education is a modified programme which involves some unique tools, techniques, and research efforts in improving instructional arrangements to meet the needs of exceptional children. Special needs education is designed to facilitate the learning of individuals who, for a wide variety of reasons, require additional support, and/or adaptive pedagogical methods to participate and meet learning objectives in an educational program (UNESCO, 2011). According to the Ministry of Education Eswatini and Training (2018), learners with special education needs (SEN) are those who do not progress according to their potential because of barriers in their education, their homes, and their environment. However, all learners have special education needs but may only have such difficulties for limited periods of their education; thus, this group may be larger and harder to define than expected. This requires special attention to every learner's needs, as recommended by the inclusive education approach, and should encompass all those learners who require additional stimulation and resources. The concept of 'special needs' may therefore be somewhat redundant as every learner should in effect be mainstreamed into general education and training, as far as physically possible.

Hence, the Eswatini Ministry of Education and Training (2021), defined special needs education as one for learners who experience barriers to learning and fail to progress according to their potential because of barriers in their education, their homes, and their environment. The Ministry of Education and Training believes that all learners have special education needs but may only have such difficulties for limited periods of their education, making this group may be larger and harder to define than expected. This implies that SNE is not a totally different programme which is assigned to normal children, but it adds a sort of design proposed to assist the gifted children, physically and mentally handicapped and socially retarded children. As it is a planned and systematically mentioned arrangement, most average children are not grouped into this category of



education. It is also important to understand that a child can have a disability but not have any special educational needs arising from that disability which require additional support in school.

Special needs education can be provided in general schools with some special arrangement or in special schools. The early history of special education was largely that of separate schools; especially for children who were blind or deaf, whatever the problem, the solution was to put the child in a class with other children having similar problems. This was nothing but to exclude the handicapped from the mainstream of society. Thus separate, became only one of the meanings associated with special education. But as society's response to the handicapped began gradually to shift away from education, critics of began to express doubts and there came special education.

Special needs education aims to provide accommodations in the classroom for students with disabilities like learning disabilities, learning difficulties (like dyslexia and ADHD), communication disorders, emotional and behavioural disorders, physical disabilities (like osteogenesis imperfecta, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, spina bifida, and Friedreich's ataxia), developmental disabilities (like autism spectrum disorder and intellectual disabilities), and other disabilities (New Zealand's Ministry of Education, 2009). In most developed countries, educators modify teaching methods and environments so that the maximum number of students are served in general education environments (Stainback & Stainback, 1996). Integration or mainstreaming can reduce social stigmas and improve academic achievement for many special needs students.

Based on the relevance of SNE, many countries have established various levels of schools to rip the benefits to her citizenry. Schools for Special Needs Education are schools for children with comparatively severe disabilities. Those schools comprise four levels of departments, namely, kindergarten, elementary, lower secondary and upper secondary departments. Each level has specific objectives but the elementary and the lower secondary are compulsory education. Generally, the objective of Special Education in Eswatini are:

1. To develop motivational patterns in the handicapped that will produce achievement in school.
2. To develop a realistic self-concept in handicapped children.
3. To reach the maximum level of effectiveness in school subjects.
4. To pursue those curricular matters those strategically determine effective living or specific types of handicapped children.
5. To consider the mental as well as the physical hygiene of handicapped school children.
6. To produce in the handicapped a desire to participate in the activities of non-handicapped persons (Eswatini Ministry of Education and Training (2021).

In Schools for Special Needs Education, children learn by special curriculum, being surrounded by several teachers and various facilities and equipment which meet the needs of those children. Therefore, in many developed and developing



countries including Eswatini, the expense per student in Schools for Special Needs Education is about 10 times as that in regular schools (Japan Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2022).

Just like other developing countries, SNE has been practiced at all levels of education in Eswatini since 2005, that is, approximately 17 now, but the history of SNE, categories of disabilities in Eswatini, and the achievement are currently lacking in literature. Although several studies (Madlela, 2022; Matsenjwa et al., 2020; Nxumalo, 2020; Shongwe, 2022) have been conducted, none of them reveal any information on the above concerns.

Therefore, it is in a bid to cover the above existing gap in literature that this chapter deals with history of SNE in Eswatini, policy of SNE in Eswatini both internationally and nationally, achievements on SNE in Eswatini, and programme of actions to achieving special needs education (SNE) in Eswatini. The implications for this chapter and suggestions for better implementation of SNE in Eswatini were equally discussed.

History of Special Needs Education in Eswatini (Special Education Needs)

According to the Eswatini Constitution (2005), the Kingdom of Eswatini made a commitment to universal, high quality basic education—Education for All (EFA), which provides equal opportunities for all children and the youth. To promote Education for All (EFA) the Government of Eswatini then developed the Inclusive Education Policy (2005) which was later implemented in 2006. The policy sets out a road map to ensure that all children, youth, and adults get access to quality education.

The first schools for children with disabilities in Eswatini were introduced by Missionaries in the 1950s. These were St Joseph Integrated School; Ekwetsembeni Special School; and Siteki School for the deaf. Historically in Eswatini, many people with disabilities were exempted from participating in society due to discrimination (Eswatini National Development Strategy, 2016). At the time, these children were considered a curse caused by witchcraft, God's will, or a consequence of rejecting God's instructions or disobeying societal laws, as well as incest or adultery and disputing with elders (Abang 1985, Onwuegbu, 1977, Ozoji, 1990, and Eskay, 2009). As a result, many people with disabilities (PWDs) were hidden and exempted from participating in society (Sintef Report, 2011, cited in National Strategy, 2016). Early identification even resulted in the murder of children found to have disabilities. Blame was often ascribed to the mother. Due to this negative belief, people with disabilities have been discriminated against in Eswatini and other Southern African communities (ACPF, 2014). Consequently, parents could not enroll these children into the special needs schools as they were embarrassed by them. They also perceived such actions a waste of their resources, hence chose to hide them in their respective homesteads. Those who chose to enroll their disabled children, however, would use the schools as dumping sites where children would be taken to at the beginning of the year and only fetched at the end of the year.



The policies include the Swaziland National Children's Policy (2009), Poverty Reduction Strategy and Action Plan (2006), the Education for All Policy (2010) and the Draft Inclusive Education Policy (2005; 2008). Such policies brought a shift in education as they resulted in more learners attending school, especially at primary level where they would later proceed to secondary level (Khumalo, 2013). The implementation of the Education for All Policy (2010) spearheaded the introduction of inclusive education in mainstream schools. All teachers in the country's schools, therefore, were expected to be competent to teach learners with a wide range of educational needs. As a result, there have been significant increases in the level of resources in mainstream schools for learners with special educational needs in terms of discrete teachers for learning support, resource, and language support as well as special needs assistants. However, the assimilation of students with disabilities into the mainstream schools of the education system has not been fully achieved despite the effort to explicitly define and explain inclusive education in the policy frameworks by the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini (Draft Inclusive Education Policy, 2005; 2008). Most learners with disabilities sadly drop out of school after seven years of primary level schooling, and even those who make it to the secondary level do not last until the senior phase (Zwane, 2016).

Categories of Disabilities in Eswatini SNE

Learners with Special Education needs are defined as exceptional, dysfunctional, and disabled, at risk and handicapped (Eswatini Ministry of Education and Training, 2006). However, there are some common terms in Eswatini that are used in Special Education. These are:

- i. **Impairment:** Involves damage to, or poor functioning in, any part of the body or mind, such as loss of sight or limb due to disease, accident, violence, or aging (loss or abnormality of psychological structure of functions) (Swaziland. Ministry of Education, 2006).
- ii. **Disability:** Involves presence of any restriction or lack of ability resulting from impairment to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for human beings. For instance, incomplete use of arms may make it difficult to get dressed, inability to walk, talk or see peripherally (Swaziland. Ministry of Education, 2006).
- iii. **Handicap:** This is a disadvantage for an individual resulting from impairment or disability that limits or prevents the fulfilment of a role that is normal for that individual. This means that an individual may have difficulty performing one or more activities of daily living such as eating, showering, dressing, walking, and communicating with others (Swaziland. Ministry of Education, 2006).
- iv. **Exceptional children:** Children who differ from average or normal children in mental characteristics, sensory abilities, communication abilities, social behaviour, and physical characteristics. Such



deviation must be of such an extent that the child requires a modification of school practices, or special educational services to develop to maximum capacity (Swaziland Ministry of Education, 2006).

Hence in special Education, LSEN can be classified into three main categories namely, *Visual Impairment (VI)*, *Hearing Impairment (HI)* and *Learning Disabilities (LD)*.

The Ministry of Education (Swaziland Ministry of Education, 1998) defines *Visual Impairment (VI)* as significantly reduced vision or total loss of eyesight, reduced visual acuity and/ or reduced visual field even after standard corrective measures have been taken. Low vision, partial sight, hyperopic and blindness are all symptoms for the same state (Ministry of Education, 1998).

For education purposes, *Visual Impairment (VI)* is classified into: i. Blind (those who are unable to see light, but only have light perception and must learn Braille and other related media without the use of vision); and ii. Partially sighted (those that have poor vision as they have major limitations in distance vision but can learn to read print and can be educated to use their eyes if corrective measures have been taken. Corrective measures may include cataract surgery, spectacles, contact lenses and magnifying glasses to mention a few).

The Ministry of Education and Training (1998) defines *Hearing Impairment (HI)* as when an individual's hearing has been reduced through interference either in the outer, middle cochlea or auditory nerve resulting in either conductive hearing loss or sensori neural hearing loss. Children with hearing loss fall into two major categories and these are i. hard of hearing (those who have reduced hearing and receive instruction by amplification through the hearing organs); and ii. deaf (those who do not acquire language through a sense of hearing but through sign language).

The Ministry of Education and Training (1998) defines *Learning Disabilities (LD)* as a variety of disorders that affect the acquisition, retention, understanding, organization, or use of verbal and non-verbal information. This term describes a heterogeneous group of children who are not developing or learning normally, but who do not fit into traditional categories of physically handicapped children. These children are often noted to be slower to attain the developmental milestones in walking and talking and can fall behind with writing. The label incorporates terms for conditions like Down Syndrome, Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Dyslexia, Epilepsy and Hydrocephalus to mention a few. Children with LD have difficulty in reading, speaking, listening, writing and mathematical skills. Since many aspects of speaking, listening, writing and mathematics overlap and build on the brain's capabilities, it is not surprising that learners can be diagnosed as having difficulties in more than one area. For instance, the ability to understand language underlies learning to speak. Therefore, any disorder that interferes with the ability to understand language will also interfere with the development of speech, which in



turn gets in the way of learning to read and write. A single gap in the brain's operation can disrupt many types of activity.

Policy of Special Education in Eswatini

Several legal frameworks were constituted to help frame the importance of Special Education in Eswatini. These are discussed in this section from international to local frameworks as follows:

a) International instruments

The Kingdom of Eswatini is a signatory to a few other United Nations and African Union instruments and associated initiatives that have important implications for children with disabilities and their right to education. In September 2009, Eswatini ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and the Optional Protocol attached to the UNCRPD. By ratifying the Convention and the Protocol the Government of Eswatini is required to not only promote, protect, and ensure the full enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities, but to also recognise the authority of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to receive individual complaints around any perceived violations of the provisions of the UNCRPD and investigate these under circumstances.

b) Local Instruments

There are several policy frameworks which the government of Eswatini has put in place to address disability and they are:

- i. National Development Strategy (NDS) August 1999;
- ii. National population policy framework for Swaziland 2002;
- iii. National Education Policy 1999; and
- iv. National Disability Policy June 2013.

i. National Development Strategy (NDS)

Section 4.8.2.1 of the National Development Strategy (NDS) includes persons with disabilities amongst the disadvantaged groups and the government of Eswatini has adopted strategies in addressing issues of persons of disabilities (PWDs) in Eswatini. The strategy recommends measures to improve the situation of persons of disabilities in Eswatini as follows:

- *Integration and Awareness:* The policy aims to integrate PWDs into economic and social activities; ensure the integration of programmes for persons with disabilities into mainstream education; provide infrastructure for rehabilitation for those who cannot be integrated. Institutions catering for disabled people (for example, school for the blind, deaf and vocational training) must be expanded to cater for the existing and expected demand; create institutional and policy mechanisms through which persons with disabilities can be rehabilitated



and integrated effectively with the rest of society; and raise awareness on how to prevent the various forms of disabilities.

- *Equity*: The NDS further calls for the enactment of legislation to protect the disadvantaged groups from abuse and discrimination; ensuring that all infra-structural designs are inclusive of the needs of persons with disabilities; introducing measures that will support the operations of NGOs to help specific groups; and enacting legislation to ensure equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.

The strategy has addressed the needs of people with disabilities and provides a framework for equalizing opportunities.

ii. National Education Policy

The 1999 National Education Policy is the official policy of the Ministry of Education and is based on the overall objective of the provision of opportunities for all pupils of school-going age and adults to develop themselves to improve the quality of their own lives and the standard of living of their communities. Section 5 of the Education Policy specifically addresses special needs. The policy aims at including children with disabilities in the mainstream school system.

iii. The National Constitution Framework of Eswatini (2005)

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Eswatini (2005) provides for the protection and promotion of the fundamental rights and freedoms of all citizens. It states that a person of whatever gender, race, place of origin, political opinion, colour, religion, creed, age, or disability shall be entitled to the fundamental human rights. Section 20 of the document also states that no state legislation can be discriminatory and that protection from discrimination does not prevent the state from implementing measures to redress inequalities that have existed in the past, such as the marginalisation and exclusion of people with disabilities.

iv. Education policy framework

The Kingdom of Eswatini is a signatory to international and national policies on universal education rights that safeguard high quality basic education for all. It has committed itself to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. These include Goal 4 '*Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*'. The Kingdom of Eswatini has committed to integrating its plans for education with those of the African Union's Agenda 2063 for Africa's socio-economic transformation. The agreement is in line with developments in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and in the rest of Africa (Eswatini Inclusive Education Standards Report, 2019).

The Kingdom of Eswatini developed its own policies which acted as a guide for other countries to implement inclusive education (Ministry of Education & Training in Swaziland 2012). The Education and Training Sector Policy for Eswatini was developed in 2011 and updated in 2018 (EDSEC, 2018). The policy aims at providing access to relevant quality education at all levels for learners in the



country. It considers all issues of efficacy, equity, and special needs. The policy goal is:

“The provision of an equitable and inclusive education and training system that affords all learners access to free and compulsory basic education and senior secondary education of high quality, followed by the opportunity to continue with life-long education and training, so enhancing their personal development and contributing to Eswatini’s cultural development, socioeconomic growth and global competitiveness”.

The policy was developed to help realise the country’s national, regional, and international obligation and operates within the socio-legal frameworks provided by Eswatini’s current Education Act and its Poverty Reduction Strategy Action Plan (PRASP). What is especially important for children with disabilities is that the EDSEC also informs the country’s approach to education for children with disabilities.

The framework argues strongly for a ‘mainstreaming’ approach that recognises that “a number of important cross-cutting issues must be effectively integrated, or mainstreamed, into the body of this EDSEC Policy to ensure they are comprehensively addressed, monitored and reported”. It argues further that this approach “eliminates the need for separate, free-standing policies for such issues as HIV and AIDS, Schools as Centres of Care and Support (SCCS), or Inclusive Education. In principle, this means that attention to these issues, and the management of response to them, will be a routine function of the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) at every level including all departments of the Ministry. It is important to recognise therefore that the EDSEC signals the government’s commitment to inclusive education as an integral part of its education and training objectives for the country. In Section 6.3 of the framework the state’s understanding and approach to inclusive education is explained (Government of Swaziland, 2011). It states that:

Inclusive Education (IE) is a policy approach that includes and meets the needs of all learners –whatever their gender, life circumstances, state of health, disability, stage of development, capacity to learn, level of achievement, financial or any other circumstance. It enables schools to serve and welcome all learners.

The policy therefore commits the state to:

To mainstream relevant, quality education for every learner, irrespective of gender, life circumstances, health status, disability, impairment, capacity to learn, level of achievement, financial status, or any other limiting circumstance.

v. Inclusive Education Policy

The Inclusive Education Policy was developed by the Eswatini Government in 2005 in efforts to promote Education for All (EFA) and a draft policy is in place. The draft policy was implemented in 2006. To ensure consistency and the continuous quality improvement of the programme, an Inclusive Education Unit



was formed by the Ministry of Education to monitor the draft policy. The policy emphasizes that all primary schools must be sensitive to issues of inclusion when developing their School Development Plan. The School Development Plan has an Inclusive Education section with stringent requirements for record keeping and for making improvements in providing education for every child. Each school submits an annual report based on this section, to the Regional Educational Officer (REO). Each REO submits a regional IE report to the Inclusive Education Unit which in turn submits the annual report to the Minister. The policy sets out the key issues to be addressed to achieve universal Inclusive Education and when implemented, it ensures the creation and maintenance of an effective Inclusive Education system.

As a result of these policies, many changes were to be affected which included the development of infrastructure in schools, in-service and pre-service training for teachers and all stakeholders involved (Ministry of Education and Training in Swaziland, SEN 2012). Other policies and programmes in Eswatini indirectly address disability and these include the following:

v. The National Youth Policy

This policy serves as a guideline for government's engagement with the youth in the country and one of its objectives is to provide an enabling environment for the youths' development to enhance sustainable development by ensuring that young people have access to adequate and appropriate programmes and services regardless of their geographic location, race, gender, level of disability and social, religious, and economic circumstances.

vi. The Swaziland National Sports Policy

This policy provides for the promotion and identification of persons with disabilities in sports, 'all sports and recreational facilities shall ensure that they meet disability standards' and 'all sports associations must have disability sections within each of their sporting codes'. Other national policy documents alluding to the rights and recognition of persons with disabilities include the National Social Development Policy, the National Children's policy.

Achievements on Special Needs Education (SNE) in Eswatini

Several achievements have been made on special needs education (SNE) in Eswatini. These achievements are seen in policy formulation, implementation, and project developments.

Policy Formulation

The new Eswatini Educational Sector Policy (EDSEC) aims to move away from the separation of special education and inclusive education. It seeks to involve learners, parents, and communities in the education of all children and youth. This approach is recognised to be a whole school approach and encourages schools to set up school-based teams to drive the concept of inclusion. In pursuit of these



strategic intentions the following initiatives have been undertaken toward implementing the policy goals:

- i. In 2006, nine mainstream schools were designated pilot schools to help develop models of inclusive education. Four teachers were trained in special and inclusive education and were identified as key support personnel for other teachers.
- ii. During 2009 and 2010 a course in special and inclusive education was introduced in the foundation course of the formal teacher training programme in teaching training colleges.
- iii. In 2010 resource centres were established in two of the country's four regions to support teachers who have already been trained in special and inclusive education. They also provide awareness and training workshops for all other school staff members; and
- iv. In 2010, three regional Inspectors were appointed and deployed to three regions, to help identify and provide support to learners with special education needs.

According to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) report for 2011, inclusive education is being mainstreamed across the country through the implementation of a universal basic education policy. Gaps have been made in introducing and supporting special schools for children with hearing impairments and in the provision of learning texts in Braille for pupils with visual impairments (Ministry of Education, 2011).

Policy Implementation

a). Learners with special needs are all learners who experience barriers to learning and do not progress according to their potential because of them. The call for Education for All and introduction of Free Primary Education has provided more opportunities for learners with different needs to access school in Swaziland. An increase in admission of learners with special needs has been observed since 2010.

b) Recruitment of three SEN Regional Inspectors: For the first time since its inception in 1998, the department has recruited three inspectors who are in three regions namely, Lubombo, Hhohho (Piggs Peak) and Manzini.

c) **Pre-service Training:** Special Needs and Inclusive Education has been introduced in the three Teacher Training Colleges in Swaziland, namely, Ngwane, Nazarene and William Pitcher Teachers College. All graduates from the three colleges will have skills to identify and support learners with special needs in mainstream schools. Plans to also set up a specialized programme in Special and Inclusive Education are also underway. The Unit has also developed an in-service training programme for both primary school teachers and the plan is to have the programme accredited by one of the institutions. A few teachers have already benefited from the in-service programme.

Projects Development



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- a) **Procurement of Teaching and Learning Material:** The Government of Swaziland has a project which aims to provide specialized teaching and learning material for learners with special needs.
 - b) **Modification of Infrastructure:** The Government of Swaziland also has a project to modify infrastructure in schools to increase physical access for children with special needs.

Programme of Actions to Achieving Special Needs Education (SNE) in Eswatini

The Population Policy in thematic area six and eight adopts strategies for the addressing issues of People with Disabilities in Eswatini. The Policy stated thus:

- The establishment of a National Unit/framework to deal with issues of persons with disabilities.
- Strengthening and expansion of activities to integrate persons with disabilities into mainstream society.
- Developing a national programme to deal with issues of disability, including improving the capacity for testing and early detection of disabilities and the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.
- Improving the enforcement of laws and regulations on safety standards.
- Discouraging cultural practices that discriminate against persons with disabilities.
- Improving access to social and public services including transport for persons with disabilities.
- Sensitizing the public on issues concerning persons with disabilities; and empowering communities and extended families to care for persons with disabilities.

The National Policy of Education, 1986 has given emphasis on the education of the handicapped children. The following steps for the education of the handicapped are suggested in the POA.

Establishment of special schools: Special schools will be established at the district and sub-district levels. The composite special schools may be established to start with. In a particular district if the number of children with a particular disability becomes large enough (60-70), separate special schools for that area of handicap can be established. In the five-year plan, 5000 special schools at sub-district level will be opened to bring the total number of these schools to about 7500.

Vocational training centre: Vocational training will be provided to students from special schools and other severely handicapped persons. The emphasis will be on training craftsmen for locally available jobs. In each of the districts where a special school is set up, a vocational training centre will also be set up. Separate hostels will be provided for boys and girls with capacity for 40 and 20 respectively.

Training of teachers: During the current plan, training of special teachers for students with disability must take place immediately if the proposed special schools at district headquarters are to go functional at the suggested speed. This task of



training teachers is in addition to clearing the backlog of untrained teachers in special schools.

Training of Professionals: At least 400 teachers will be needed in each district as well as support staff like physiatrists, occupational therapists, speech therapists be specially oriented to assessment and rehabilitation of the handicapped children.

Training of vocational teachers: Orientation training for the vocational teachers may be organised by the National institutes and Regional College of Education on regional basis 3000-4000 teachers will have to be orientated during the current plan period. The orientation training will be two weeks' duration.

Modification of curriculum: The curriculum of these schools should be modified, considering the specific learning problems arising out of a particular handicap. For instance, limitation of blind children for science practical and limitation of the deaf child to study more than one language needs to be adjusted in the curriculum. Caution should however be exercised that these children should not miss the curriculum component that they can.

Flexibility in examinations: Flexibility in Examinations of most severely disabled children, Evolution guides and tools for educational assessment should be made available to these schools. NCERT which has the expertise in the technology of development of such tools and the National Institutes which have the expertise in disability may collaborate to produce this material.

Use of technology: The use of technology in special education should receive attention. It involves unification, adjustment and modification of the equipment and material and programmes so that handicapped persons also use the opportunities available for other children.

Strengthening of existing special school: The existing special schools will be strengthened for increasing enrolment (wherever possible) and for improving effectiveness (8001000) Grants to special schools should be given on the same basis as to regular schools with adequate provision to meet with adequate provision to meet special needs of the disabled children.

Ensuing effective supervision: The weakest link is the lack of supervision due to the absence of infrastructure for maintenance of standards of special education in the institutions. A panel of supervision may be introduced. The members of the staff at district level may be provided the knowledge and competence for carrying out such supervision.

Implications

National statistics revealed that the complete education system must be inclusive and, in the process, take care of all learners that include those with special needs. It is also evident that special needs education can play an essential role in meeting various needs of learners. The kingdom of Eswatini has a substantial number of disabled persons who are poor and marginalized thus the need for effective special needs education. This demands intensive efforts to attend to



learners with special needs which should be in response to national and global educational policies. International and national policies such as those contained in the constitution of the country should not only intend to attend to challenges faced by disabled children but should implement, monitor, and evaluate programs and policies.

The government of Eswatini alone cannot effectively implement and address the challenges that come with special needs education. The community should assist government initiatives by moving away from primitive beliefs that side-lined children born and living with disabilities. Curriculum in teacher training institutions should ensure that educators are equipped with skills and knowledge on the importance and implementation of special education.

Conclusion

The educational needs of Eswatini can only be adequately addressed if sufficient attention is paid to special needs education. The country's constitution, national policies, and strategies have all taken recommendable strides toward meeting special education goals. A couple of schools were put in place to cater for disabled learners with special needs. Though the issue of learners with special needs remains a challenge despite the numerous programs, strategies and policies put in place to address this challenge. A lot of effort should be directed towards inclusive education whereby all schools are able to effectively teach and meet the needs of both disabled and able-bodied learners.

Suggestions

1. More studies should be carried out to ascertain the number of disabled schools going children in each of the four regions in Eswatini to adequately put in place to offer special education.
2. Every teacher training institution must infuse curriculum on special education. Furthermore, in-service training should be provided for educators that are already in the field.
3. There is need for unification of several policies, strategies, and programs in place not only in Eswatini but also in other African countries to effectively address special needs education.

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