



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY





**Department of Education  
Inclusive Education Policy**

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This Policy can be used by stakeholders, development partners, state actors, non-state actors, church education agencies, and private education agencies, public and private organizations and individuals to support the growth and expansion of inclusive education in Papua New Guinea.

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# MINISTER'S MESSAGE



I must admit that parents in Papua New Guinea hold their children with disabilities in a special place in our hearts. One thing that is common to us in our tribes, clans and family groupings is that we acknowledge these children as gifts from God. We build an exceptional relationship with this group of children.

Provision of inclusive educational services to these young people has been a challenge for us over many years. Despite our country signing international declarations on the right-based conventions to improve learning for our students with disabilities, general access to regular schools and Inclusive Education Resource Centres is still difficult. Of critical importance is the lack of Inclusive Education Resource Centres and lack of well-trained teachers. Currently, we have teachers with very limited experience and who have little understanding of how to support students with disabilities and additional learning needs within regular classrooms.

Considering these challenges we face, the aim of this Policy is to redefine and reorganise the delivery and management of educational services to respond to the diverse needs of students with disabilities and additional learning needs. The emphasis of this Policy is to build capacity at the national, provincial, districts and school levels to create system-wide procedures for enhancing disability-inclusive education.

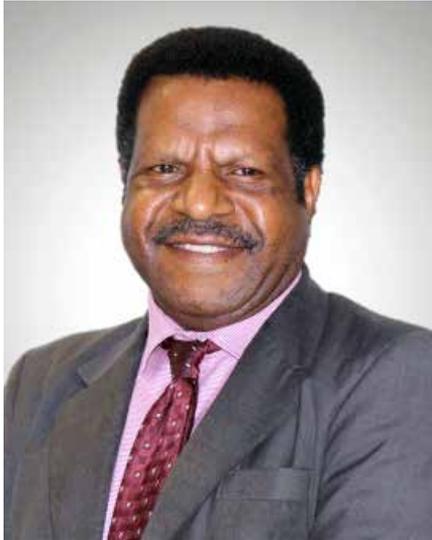
This Policy represents our country's commitment to the international declarations we made on promoting inclusive education in our National Education System. All schools operating in the National Education System as well as permitted schools and private schools must be guided by this Policy to cater for our students with disabilities and additional learning needs.

I request our development partners, stakeholders and other non-state actors to support the implementation of this Policy. Your support to this group of students can give them the opportunities to effectively participate meaningfully in their communities and their country's socioeconomic development.

**Hon. Lucas Dawa Dekena, MP**

Minister for Education

# SECRETARY'S MESSAGE



The Inclusive Education (IE) Policy defines the strategic path for the education of all students with disabilities and additional learning needs across Papua New Guinea. This policy builds upon principles and values in the 1975 Constitution, Vision 2050, Minimum Term Development Plan MTDP IV, Education Sector Plan 2024 - 2027, National Education Plan (NEP) 2020 - 2029, and the Department of Education Corporate Plan 2022 - 2024.

PNG made its declaration and commitment to International Treaties and Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which emphasise equal rights and a quality education for all, leaving no child behind, and creating an environment for addressing the diverse educational needs of all Papua New Guineans.

In the field of disabilities and additional learning needs, there are challenges that prevent many children from accessing the education services that we provide. These challenges include identification and screening, accessing schools, and receiving the right supports in the classroom. The Inclusive Education Policy is designed to support school systems to ensure the learning environment is conducive for all learners through the provision of appropriate teaching and learning resource materials, curriculum materials, and adaptive devices.

Inclusive education supports everyone to access quality educational opportunities, thereby fostering holistic development, and maximizing all students' potential for success. The Department of Education is leading in the provision of education services to our children with disabilities and additional needs through the development of this policy and related resources.

Every education provider, private or government, Provincial Education Division, District Education, different agencies, school governing bodies, teachers and parents MUST collaboratively ensure that students with disabilities and additional learning needs are enrolled and given their right to complete 13 years of schooling in the education system.

I thank every organisation, who has participated in the development and writing of the Inclusive Education Policy.

I recommend the Inclusive Education Policy to all the agencies, organisations, and schools so that children with disabilities and additional learning needs have the opportunity to complete a quality education.

**Dr. Uke Kombra, PhD. OBE.**

Secretary for Education

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Policy is developed with assistance and support from many individuals and organizations. They are acknowledged as:

## The Policy and Corporate Services Directorate

1. Policy and Corporate Services Directorate
  - 1.1 Research and Evaluation Division
2. Schools and Standards Directorate
  - 2.1 Teacher Registration and Professional Development Division
  - 2.3 Inclusive Education Institutions, governing bodies and stakeholders
3. Flexible Open Distance Education (FODE) and Inclusive Education Division
4. Policy and Planning Division
5. Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) Branch, Human Resource Management (HRM) Division

## Line Agencies and Non-State Actors

The National Department of Education acknowledges the support of the Australian Government and UNICEF for providing funding and technical support in reviewing the Policy. NDoE also acknowledges other line agencies including the Department of Health, Department of Community Development, Department of National Planning and Monitoring, Provincial Local Level Governments and other non-state agencies actors including PNG Callan Services, PNG Assembly of Disabled Persons, National Board of Disabled Persons (NBDP), churches, Cheshire Disability Services, and staff and parents of Inclusive Education Resource Centres in PNG for the participation in reviewing the Policy.

The following NDOE officers have vetted and validated the Inclusive Education Policy and Minimum Standards:

### Additional Input

Church Representative

People with Disability Representative



# ACRONYMS

<b>BMP</b>	Behaviour Management Policy
<b>CIEI</b>	Callan Inclusive Education Institute
<b>CBID</b>	Community Based Inclusive Development
<b>DHERST</b>	Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology
<b>DFAT</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
<b>DPO</b>	Disabled Persons Organizations
<b>ECE</b>	Early Childhood Education
<b>EMIS</b>	Education Management Information System
<b>FODE</b>	Flexible and Open Distance Education
<b>GTFS</b>	Government Tuition Fee Subsidy
<b>IEP</b>	Individual Education Plan
<b>IERC</b>	Inclusive Education Resource Centre
<b>ICT</b>	Information, Communication and Technology
<b>NES</b>	National Education System
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Government Organization
<b>NQSSF</b>	National Quality Schools Standards Framework
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SLIP</b>	School Learning Improvement Plan
<b>TSC</b>	Teaching Service Commission
<b>TVET</b>	Technical and Vocational Education & Training
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nation Education, Science, Culture and Communication Organization
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>WaSH</b>	Water Sanitation and Hygiene

# SECTION A: POLICY



# SECTION A: POLICY

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

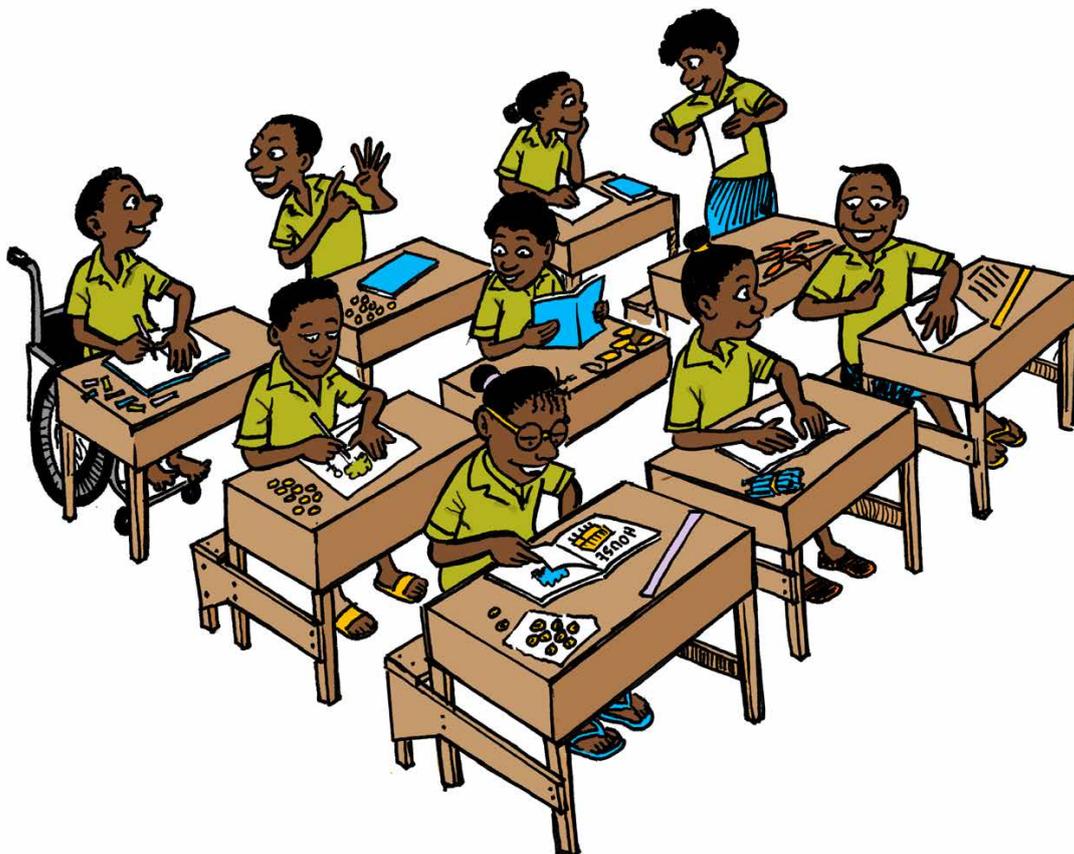
The Inclusive Education Policy ensures that all students with disabilities and additional learning needs in the Papua New Guinean National Education System have access to learning environments which promote full participation and equitable access to quality educational opportunities.



**All students with disabilities and additional learning needs can fully take part in lessons and access to quality educational opportunities.**

## 2. DOCUMENT AUTHORITY

This policy is developed based on relevant powers contained in the Education Act (1983), Section 29(c). This policy aligns with a number of International, Regional and National commitments (see Section 9: Related Documents).



### 3. INTENT

This policy supports support education stakeholders within the Papua New Guinea school system, at the school, provincial, district, and national level so that they can collectively work toward achievable outcomes that will support an inclusive education experience for all learners.

The policy intention is to provide a comprehensive framework promoting the full participation of learners with disabilities and additional learning needs in all aspects of school life, thereby ensuring equitable access to quality educational opportunities, fostering holistic development, and maximizing all students' potential for success.



**Supporting education stakeholders at all levels - school, provincial, district, and national - to work together to promote inclusive education.**



**Promote full participation of all students with disabilities and additional learning needs, to ensure fair access to quality education and maximise their full potential.**

## 4. POLICY INTENDED OUTCOMES

The intended outcomes of this policy are linked to the policy objectives for **Inclusive Learning Environments, Learning Support, Inclusive Educators, and Planning and Management**

### Objective 1: Inclusive Learning Environment

To create inclusive and child-friendly school environments that enrich the overall educational experience for every student, by enhancing the culture, structures, and programs within and outside the classroom.

- **Outcome 4.1.1:** Improved physical, social and enabling practices that support students with disabilities and additional learning needs in schools, local communities, and at home.
- **Outcome 4.1.2:** Improved inclusive school environment, structures and school programs both in and outside of the classroom to ensure an inclusive educational experience for all learners.
- **Outcome 4.1.3:** Established strong structural leadership practises of Inclusive Education as part of the mainstream education system.
- **Outcome 4.1.4:** Strengthened educational environments free from discrimination, stigma, and stereotypes associated with disabilities, while fostering a culture of acceptance and inclusion.
- **Outcome 4.1.5:** Strengthened parental and community engagement to achieve the best educational outcomes.
- **Outcome 4.1.6:** Increased number of students registered with the IERCs.

### Objective 2: Inclusive Learning Support

To ensure a holistic learning approach with inclusive teaching pedagogy, assessment and learning support.

- **Outcome 4.2.1:** Improved screening, registration and referral processes for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.
- **Outcome 4.2.2:** Strengthened partnerships with specialised support services including IERC support, specialised teacher support, therapy and counselling supports.
- **Outcome 4.2.3:** Improved capacity to implement tailored and flexible approaches to teaching pedagogy allowing for differentiation and adaptations to the needs of students with different learning needs, including the implementation of principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- **Outcome 4.2.4:** Improved methods of assessment and monitoring progress of all students, including students with disabilities and additional learning needs.
- **Outcome 4.2.5:** Improved needed for teaching, learning and assessment, and monitoring of students' performance.
- **Outcome 2.6:** Improved and strengthened inclusive education inspection system, capacity and training.

### Objective 3: Inclusive Educators

To cultivate knowledgeable and skilled educators capable of delivering high-quality inclusive education services across Papua New Guinea.

- **Outcome 4.3.1:** Improved pre-service training programs in inclusive education practices for educators.
- **Outcome 4.3.2:** Improved in-service training and professional development opportunities to support the growth of teachers' competencies in inclusive education practices.
- **Outcome 4.3.3:** Increased number of IERC specialist teachers through pre-service and in-service training within the school system.

## Objective 4: Inclusive Planning and Management

To ensure disability information is incorporated into education data systems to assess education performance, plan and monitor program implementation, and evaluate outcomes. To ensure effective delivery of inclusive education at national, sub-national and school levels.

- **Outcome 4.4.1:** Improved sustainable and effective leadership, management and coordination of inclusive programs in the school system.
- **Outcome 4.4.2:** Improved sustainability through effective management and coordination of the school system at the national and sub-national levels.
- **Outcome 4.4.3:** Improved collection, analysis, use and dissemination of disability-disaggregated data to improve planning, monitoring and service delivery.
- **Outcome 4.4.4:** Improved coordination and communication with partners, church agencies, Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs) and service providers.
- **Outcome 4.4.5:** Increased volume of domestic and development partner funding for inclusive education.
- **Outcome 4.4.6:** Achieved greater equity in the funding formula for the Government Tuition Fee Subsidy, benefiting students with disabilities and additional learning needs enrolled in the school.

## 5. POLICY RULES

- 1** The Inclusive Education Policy must be effectively implemented in the Papua New Guinea school system.
- 2** SLIPs must include activities to improve access and learning for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.
- 3** All stakeholders and partners must support the implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy through the fulfilment of their roles and responsibilities.
- 4** All stakeholders must collaborate to develop referral pathways, child-friendly services, and coordination mechanisms.
- 5** All students with disabilities and additional learning needs must have equal access to all sectors of education for quality teaching and learning in line with the National Education Plan (2020-2029).
- 6** Students with disabilities and additional learning needs should receive education services in their local school whenever possible with the IERC providing support to both the child's school, teacher and parent/s.
- 7** Some students with multiple disabilities and/or complex learning requirements to be enrolled at the IERC for support from a specialist teacher. Every effort must be made to transition these students into mainstream schools.
- 8** All students with disabilities or additional learning needs must receive an assessment screening using the "Whole Child Checklist" by specialist IERC teachers, or trained teachers in the school system.

**9**

All mainstream schools must register their students with disabilities and additional learning needs with the nearest IERC, maintain a record of screening assessments and Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and report disaggregated disability and additional learning needs data in the annual school census.

**10**

All schools and IERCs must develop, implement, and review an Individual Education Plan on an annual basis for all students with disabilities and additional learning needs in consultation with the child's parents

**11**

Equal access to the curriculum must be provided to all students through the provision of reasonable adjustments, as indicated with that student's IEP.

**12**

Leaders of schools must receive training in the Inclusive Education Policy and implementation procedures.

**13**

All teachers must receive quality and specialised training on inclusive education through pre- and in-service training.

**14**

School inspections will include an assessment of the school's inclusive education planning, practices, and records in line with the National Quality Schools Standards Framework (NQSSF) and the Inclusive Education Policy.

**15**

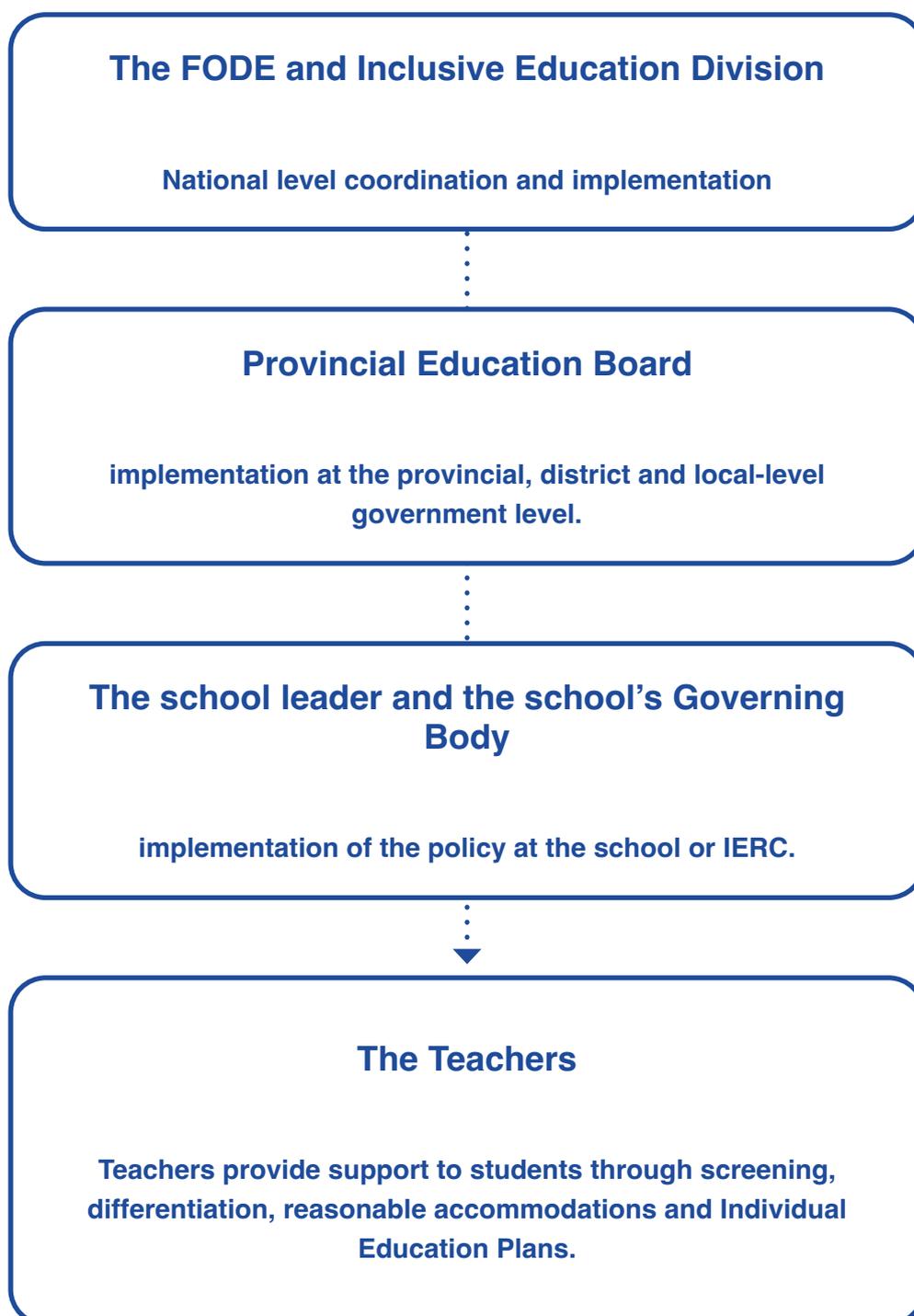
Teachers and students with disabilities should be supported with guidance and counselling services when needed.

## 6. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE

The FODE and Inclusive Education Division is responsible for the coordination and implementation of policy at the national level. The respective Education Board is responsible for implementation at the provincial, district and local-level government level. The school leader and the school's Governing Body will be responsible for implementing the policy at the school or IERC. The Division will maintain constant dialogue with Education Boards, Education Agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs), Development Partners and other Government Agencies to implement the policy.

## 7. POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to all schools in the National Education System and permitted schools.



## 8. DEFINITIONS

The below terms and definitions have been included to help create a common understanding of terms and concepts that are important in the field of inclusive education. The terms and definitions have been adapted from global guidance documents.

<b>Additional Learning Needs</b>	Students with additional learning needs may require additional support in areas including schoolwork, expressing themselves or understanding what other people are saying, making friends or relating to adults, behaving appropriately at school, or have medical, physical or sensory needs (long or short term). Additional learning needs include: dyslexia, attention deficit disorder/attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADD/ADHD), gifted students (students who give evidence of high performance capability), students with behavioural and emotional difficulties, students with speech and language difficulties.
<b>Child Safeguarding</b>	The responsibility that organisations have to make sure their staff, operations and program responses do not harm children. It includes policies, procedures and practices to prevent children from being harmed as well as steps to respond and investigate reports of harm when they happen.
<b>Differentiated Learning</b>	An approach where teachers adjust their curriculum and instruction to match the learning needs of all students.
<b>Disability</b>	Long-term physical, sensory, cognitive or social/emotional impairment that affects the functioning of a person and which interacts with environmental and social barriers that hinder the person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.
<b>Disaggregated Data</b>	Statistical information that is separated into parts. For example, enrolment data that can be analysed by sex, disability, age group and geographical area.
<b>Inclusive Education</b>	A process to ensure all students in the community, whatever their background, their ability or their disability, have equitable access to quality teaching and learning in education institutions which is adapted to their learning needs. All students are welcomed, valued and supported to reach their full potential.
<b>Individual Education Plan (IEP)</b>	A written plan that describes the adjustments, goals and strategies to meet a student's individual needs so they can reach their full potential.
<b>Individual Education Plan (IEP) Team</b>	An IEP is developed in collaboration with a team that includes the learner/student, their family, specialists, IERC staff, regular teachers, and CBID officers. It can also include peers, family friends, church representatives, community leader and interpreter as required.
<b>Inclusive Education Programs</b>	A comprehensive and organised set of strategies, policies, and practices implemented by educational institutions to ensure that all students, regardless of their diverse backgrounds, abilities, or needs, can access and participate in the same educational opportunities and environments.
<b>Inclusive Education Resource Centre (IERC)</b>	A learning institution that provides specialist support services and may enrol students with complex needs for specialist teaching.

<b>Learning Support</b>	Adjustments and supports made available to students with disabilities and additional learning needs to enable them to participate in learning and assessment. These supports include specialist services (such as physiotherapy, orientation and mobility, occupational therapy, speech therapy), the development of individual education plans, and the use of teacher aides in the classroom.
<b>Mainstream School</b>	An ECE, Pre-school, Primary, Secondary, Vocational and Permitted School which enrolls all students including those students with disabilities and additional learning needs
<b>Multiple Disabilities</b>	A combination of two or more disabilities.
<b>Permitted Schools</b>	Member schools in the National Education System.
<b>School System</b>	All education and learning environments in the pre-school, primary, secondary, FODE and TVET sectors.
<b>Reasonable Adjustments</b>	Measures or actions to enable learners with disabilities to participate in education on the same basis as learners without disabilities. Reasonable adjustments are mandated in the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Examples include classroom seating that supports a student's learning requirements, provision of learning and assessment materials in accessible formats such as braille and sign, assistance with note-taking and extended time for tests.
<b>Special Needs</b>	<p>Any of various difficulties (such as a physical, emotional, behavioural, or learning disability or impairment) that causes an individual to require additional or specialized services or accommodations (such as in education or recreation).</p> <p>In this document, the term 'students with disabilities and additional learning needs' has been used in place of 'students with special needs'.</p>
<b>Teacher Training Institutions</b>	Organisations registered under the National Department of Higher Education, Research and Technology that are mandated to train teachers to implement inclusive and special education.
<b>Universal Design for Learning (UDL)</b>	A framework which guides the design of instructional goals, assessments, methods, and materials that can be customized and adjusted to meet individual needs.

## 9. RELATED DOCUMENTS

This policy under the Education Act (1983) aligns with the documents below.

Date	DOCUMENTS
1983	Education Act
1985	Teaching Service Act (1985)
2010-2030	Education Sector Strategic Plan
2015	Papua New Guinea National Policy on Lukautim Pikinini (Child Protection)
2015	National School Health Policy
2015-2030	Sustainable Development Goals (SDG4)
2016	School Registration Policy and Procedures
2018	National Quality School Standards Framework (NQSSF)
2018	National Schools Minimum Standards (NSMS) Policy and Guidelines
2018-2023	WaSH in Schools Policy and Guidelines
2019	SLIP Policy and Guidelines
2019	Behaviour Management Policy (BMP)
2020	National Education Plan (2020-2029)
2021	Child Protection Policy
2023	Gender Equity Social Inclusion in School Policy (GESI)
2023 – 2027	Medium Term Development Plan (MTDP) IV

The policy also aligns to a number of International and National commitments.

International Commitments	
<b>United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</b>	<p>Article 7 affirms that all necessary measures be taken to ensure the full enjoyment by children with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.</p> <p>Article 24 affirms the right of persons with disabilities to an inclusive education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity.</p>
<b>UN Convention on the Rights of the Child</b>	<p>Article 23 affirms the right of children with disabilities to have effective access to, and to receive, education in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development.</p>
<b>Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2015-2030)</b>	<p>SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Specifically the following subgoals hold particular relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.</li> <li>• Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.</li> </ul>
Regional Commitments	

<b>The Action Plan for Pacific Education (2020-2030)</b>	The Plan has a vision that diverse Pacific learners and their families feel safe, valued and equipped to achieve their education aspirations. Confronting systemic racism and discrimination in education is one of five key focus areas.
<b>National Commitments</b>	
<b>PNG Vision 2050</b>	For the country to become a smart, fair and healthy and happy society by 2050.
<b>National Education Plan (2020-2029)</b>	Minor Outcome 3.5: That a collaborative approach is used to institutionalise inclusive education within the school system.
<b>Papua New Guinea National Policy on Disability (2015-2025)</b>	Addresses the rights and needs of people with disabilities to access appropriate education services.

## 10. CONTACT INFORMATION

National Department of Education  
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WAIGANI  
National Capital District  
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## 11. DOCUMENT HISTORY

<b>Effective Date</b>	<b>Authorized by</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Version number</b>	<b>Comments</b>
	Dr. Uke Kombra, PhD. OBE. Secretary for Education		Version 1.0	Revised Policy document





# **SECTION B: IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES**

# SECTION B:

## IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This section provides Inclusive Education Minimum Standards and Guidelines, which outlines the focus and direction for strengthening access, retention, transition and management and improving the provision of quality education to all school-aged children with disabilities in the country. Quality education refers to the essence of equity, inclusion, access, progress and achievement of educational outcomes that will guide and direct the journey of each person on the lifelong learning journey and the opportunity to enjoy higher standard of living.

The standards places special emphasis on the students who are the most vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion and identifies inclusive education as one of the key strategies to address the question of marginalisation and exclusion. The Department of Education recognises that Inclusive Education guarantees a learning environment that is barrier free and enables all learners including those with disabilities to move about safely and freely in the school campus, use facilities, participate positively in learning and partake in all aspects of school life.

The standards in all reflect the rights of children with disabilities according to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These rights include the right of persons with disabilities to education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity. In realizing this right, the Department of Education will ensure students with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system at any level, that schooling is accessible and affordable to people with disabilities, that reasonable accommodation is made for individuals who need it, that individual support is available to maximize academic and social development and that people with disabilities have access to different forms of communication where needed.

### 2. BACKGROUND

There are many challenges for students with disabilities or additional learning needs in Papua New Guinea. Accurate statistical data is not available, and there are challenges around:

1. Identification and assessment of disabilities and additional learning needs, which can be physical, sensory, cognitive, or social-emotional.
2. Limited availability of specialised assistance.
3. Accessing schools and qualified teachers in remote areas.
4. The diversity of people involved in the educational process, which includes students, teachers, special educators, school administrators, and other stakeholders.

The National Education Plan 2021-2029 (NEP) includes a focus on access and equity. The plan acknowledges that students with disabilities and additional learning needs have traditionally not been able to access education in the regular school system. The Inclusive Education Policy represents one of the initiatives undertaken by the Department of Education to redress this situation.

## BRIEF HISTORY

<p><b>1890 -1975</b></p>	<p>The Colonial Government and the Churches education played an indispensable role in educating the indigenous people but did very little or nothing to provide for those with disabilities and additional learning needs.</p>
<p><b>1978</b></p>	<p>Evolution of special/inclusive education began but was outside of the National Education System. Red Cross International began a project titled “Nason Paulias Project” in ENBP, targeting Persons With Disabilities (PWD) and this exposed the relevant Government’s negligence to the plight of PWD.</p> <p>In the 1970s a number of centres for persons with disabilities were established by different agencies. They are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morobe Handicapped Centre</li> <li>• Western Highlands Association for the Disabled</li> <li>• Mt. Zion Centre for the Blind</li> <li>• St. Johns Association for the Blind</li> <li>• Cheshire Disability Services Hohola ,NCD</li> <li>• Red Cross Association for Disabled Persons-Hohola, NCD</li> <li>• Creative Self Help Centre -Madang</li> <li>• Callan Services for the Disabled Persons -Wewak</li> </ul>
<p><b>1980</b></p>	<p>The Catholic Church was pivotal in establishing the Special School for Blind in Goroka and Lae.</p>
<p><b>1993</b></p>	<p>The Government realized the importance of special/inclusive education and approved the first Special/Inclusive Education Policy &amp; Guidelines. The NDoE established the National Special/Inclusive Education Unit to coordinate the development and growth of special and inclusive education throughout PNG.</p> <p>Through stakeholder partnerships, the Government established the Inclusive Education Resource Centre (IERC). There are 23 IERCs: 19 are operated by Callan Services under the diocese.</p>
<p><b>1996</b></p>	<p>The formal Special/Inclusive Teacher Education Programs began at St. Benedict’s Teachers’ College, Kaindi.</p>
<p><b>1999</b></p>	<p>The program was adopted in other Teachers’ Colleges.</p>
<p><b>2010</b></p>	<p>Callan Studies Institute (CSI), a teacher in-service training institute, was set up in East Sepik to provide in-depth knowledge with the pedagogies in Special/Inclusive Education for teachers in all sectors of education. The Diploma in Special Education program is delivered via a flexible mode.</p>
<p><b>2016</b></p>	<p>PNG Education Institute started its Diploma in Special Education.</p>

### 3. RATIONALE

The Inclusive Education Policy and Minimum Standards have been developed through a consultative process among focal points within key divisions: Provincial and District level consultations with education authorities; school level stakeholders, including head teachers and principals; IERC staff and Board of Governors; parents and students with disabilities; partner organisations; and Persons with Disability Organisations (PDOs).

This Policy is developed when there is considerable pressure in the areas of improving access, enrolment, infrastructure, teacher training, quality teaching and student learning, student transition into mainstream schools, strengthening vocational schools to be more inclusive, and securing adequate government support to grow and expand inclusive education at the provincial and district levels.

The crucial values, which have been followed to develop these Policy Standards and Guidelines, are based on the assurance that standards for safety, accessibility, participation and safeguarding of all learners is promoted and maintained.

The Standards and Guidelines are designed to support and guide schools to create and implement inclusive learning environments. They provide a foundation for assessing and measuring policy outcomes, to track progress and to provide continuous feedback for ongoing review and improvement.

### 4. PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

The policy shares core principles and values embedded within the 1975 Constitution and the Papua New Guinea Vision 2050, and also recognises and aligns with the principles set forth in the NDoE BMP and GESI in Schools Policy. The following core principles and values underpin this Inclusive Education policy:

1. All students can learn well in a friendly and caring school with accessible infrastructure, the right tools, knowledgeable teachers, and help from their parents.
2. Students with disabilities and additional learning needs have the right to education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity at all levels of the education system and throughout their life.
3. The National Education System can support all students, including students with disabilities and additional learning needs, to transition successfully through all levels of schooling and into adult life.
4. School structures, teaching and student learning systems, assessment and teaching methodologies can be flexible and designed to meet the needs of all students, including those with disabilities and additional learning needs.
5. School systems have a responsibility to ensure their policies, procedures and practices prevent students with disabilities and additional learning needs from being harmed as well as steps to respond and investigate reports of harm when they happen.
6. An inclusive education system is the foundation to building communities in which every child and adult experiences a sense of identity and belonging.

## 5. GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The guidelines for implementation provide a clear direction on how the Inclusive Education Policy will be implemented in all school systems across the country.

## 6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

<b>National Department of Education</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Administer and report on the implementation of the Inclusive Education policy and programs.</li><li>2. Strengthen pre-service, in-service and professional development teacher education in consultation with NDoE-regulated teacher training institutions, non-government training providers and other relevant stakeholders.</li><li>3. Oversee the policy and Standards implementation and periodically monitor and evaluate the policy achievements.</li><li>4. Lead in the submission of budget proposal for inclusive education financing.</li><li>5. Oversee the development of multi student assessment procedures and instruments to be established at all levels to meet the needs of all learners.</li></ol>
<b>FODE &amp; Inclusive Education (IE) Division</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Regularly report on inclusive education progress to relevant stakeholders.</li><li>2. Support training of teacher assistants with specialist skills in the school system.</li><li>3. Carry out school/IERC inspections on a regular basis using NDoE NQSSF.</li><li>4. Develop inclusive education Strategic Plans in collaboration with stakeholders and development partners.</li><li>5. Liaise directly with the Department of Health to ensure schools receive timely and appropriate support from local health services to conduct disability assessments for early learning and school-age students with disabilities.</li><li>6. Liaise directly with the Department of Health to ensure schools receive timely and appropriate support from local health services to conduct disability assessments for early learning and school-age students with disabilities.</li></ol>

<b>Inclusive Education Resource Centres (IERCs)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liaise with stakeholders for assessment, enrolment and registration of students with disabilities and additional learning needs.</li> <li>2. Ensure that screening assessment and IEPs are developed, implemented, monitored and reported to parents, guardians, teachers and stakeholders.</li> <li>3. Ensure accurate data is provided to NDOE Inclusive Education Unit and Education Management Information Service (EMIS).</li> <li>4. Work closely with community-based rehabilitation officers and community health workers to conduct disability assessment and support needs of students with disabilities and additional learning needs.</li> <li>5. Ensure schools are connected to IERC staff for outreach support services with qualified personnel.</li> <li>6. Collaborate with communities and schools to raise awareness on disability issues to foster attitude change.</li> <li>7. Ensure Safeguarding practices are maintained in the school and safeguarding concerns are reported to authorised certified agencies or Child protection officers.</li> <li>8. Provide training for stakeholders on their roles and responsibilities and information on programs.</li> </ol>
<b>Teacher Training Institutions (Pre-Service)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Incorporate information on the advantages of inclusive education into the curriculum of initial training programs for student teachers.</li> <li>2. Integrate awareness and knowledge about inclusive education in the regular professional development activities of schools.</li> <li>3. Develop and implement specialist units in inclusive education.</li> <li>4. Continue to expand offerings of inclusive education teacher training, such as associate diploma, degree courses, specialist disability training.</li> </ol>
<b>Teaching Service Commission</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create and fund teaching positions for IERCs.</li> <li>2. Incorporate inclusive education into the Performance-Based Duty Statements.</li> <li>3. Work with the Inclusive Education Unit to develop salary scales, entry requirements and Performance Based Duty Statements for Inclusive Education Teacher Aides.</li> <li>4. Ensure quality teacher training and staff professional development.</li> </ol>
<b>Callan Inclusive Education Institute (CIEI)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Deliver applied Diploma in Inclusive Education course to teachers.</li> <li>2. Develop and deliver specialised units in Inclusive Education for teachers.</li> <li>3. Encourage effective internal/external staff professional development programs.</li> </ol>
<b>Higher Education Institutes (HEI) and Teacher Training Institutions (with oversight from DHERST)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and deliver Inclusive Education course units as a compulsory component of Teacher Training.</li> <li>2. Ensure that there is quality inclusive teacher training and staff professional development.</li> <li>3. Develop and deliver higher qualification in Inclusive Education.</li> <li>4. Develop and deliver Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree qualifications.</li> </ol>

## PROVINCIAL AND DISTRICT LEVEL STAKEHOLDERS

<b>Provincial and District Education Advisors</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liaise with provincial and district administration to support the implementation of the policy.</li> <li>2. Make aware and promote students' access to and participation in education.</li> <li>3. Ensure public school environments are accessible and are inclusive.</li> <li>4. Provide regular monitoring, evaluation and review the delivery of educational services.</li> </ol>
<b>Guidance and Counselling Officers</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Perform roles and responsibilities as identified under the BMP.</li> <li>2. Strengthen school-based counselling and referral services for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.</li> <li>3. Provide teacher in-service training to improve inclusive education.</li> <li>4. Strengthen career pathways for secondary school students.</li> <li>5. Provide guidance and counselling to all staff and students.</li> </ol>
<b>School Inspections: Inclusive Education Inspectors</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liaise with other stakeholders to provide regular monitoring, evaluation and review and reporting on the delivery of educational services.</li> <li>2. Ensure that all IERCS develop annual activity plans including SLIP and budget and implementing plans.</li> <li>3. Provide regular inspections for teachers in IERCs.</li> <li>4. Ensure that students registration and enrolment data are updated regularly</li> <li>5. Liaise with Mainstream School Inspectors for inclusive inspection reports.</li> </ol>
<b>School Inspections: Mainstream School Inspectors</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that IEPs are developed and effectively implemented by mainstream classroom teachers.</li> <li>2. Liaise with other stakeholders to provide regular monitoring, evaluation and review and reporting on the delivery of educational services.</li> <li>3. Liaise with IERC Principals and Coordinators on students registration and data collection.</li> <li>4. Ensures that schools refer students with special needs/ disabilities to IERCs for registration.</li> <li>5. Ensure that inspection reports are inclusive.</li> <li>6. Liase with IERC School Inspectors for inclusive inspection reports.</li> </ol>

## SCHOOL LEVEL STAKEHOLDERS

<b>Students</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attend school every day.</li> <li>2. Treat fellow students with respect and understanding.</li> <li>3. Actively participate in IEP processes.</li> <li>4. Participate in all school program activities</li> <li>5. Be involved in implementing the school based Inclusive Education Policy.</li> <li>6. Be informed of the Inclusive Education Policy and its practices.</li> </ol>
<b>Teachers</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop, implement and manage IEPs for students in their class with the support of IERCs where required.</li> <li>2. Provide adapted teaching pedagogy, materials, activities and assessment.</li> <li>3. Attend professional development on inclusive education.</li> <li>4. Establish an effective, safe, calm and conducive learning environment.</li> <li>5. Ensure safeguarding practices are maintained in the school and safeguarding concerns are reported to authorised certified agencies or Child Protection officers.</li> <li>6. Communicate effectively with all members of the IEP team, and maintain accurate and proper written records of any learning and behaviour concerns for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.</li> <li>7. Provide regular updates to school administration, parents/guardians, including the student's IEP, screening assessment, and attendance records.</li> <li>8. Conduct formative and summative assessments of students according to their level of learning.</li> <li>9. Use language and behaviour that models respect for students with disabilities and additional learning needs both within and outside the classroom.</li> </ol>
<b>School Heads</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop School Learning Improvement Plans (SLIPs).</li> <li>2. Guide the implementation and ensure the efficient operation of the policy at the school.</li> <li>3. Provide leadership in the promotion of quality teaching and learning.</li> <li>4. Establish effective communication with parents/guardians regarding inclusive education practices.</li> <li>5. Support teachers to complete professional development in inclusive education practices.</li> <li>6. Ensure safeguarding practices are maintained in the school and safeguarding concerns are reported to authorised certified agencies or Child Protection officers.</li> <li>7. Refer students requiring additional support to the nearest IERC.</li> <li>8. Report the number of students with disabilities and additional needs enrolled and registered in the National School Census.</li> </ol>

<b>School Boards</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Endorse the School Learning Improvement Plans (SLIP) and provide quarterly reports.</li> <li>2. Ensure school facilities are accessible for students with disabilities.</li> <li>3. Provide sufficient budget for the development and implementation of inclusive education in institutions to be part of the education system.</li> <li>4. Help to communicate with parents.</li> <li>5. Advocate for students with disabilities and additional learning needs in the community.</li> <li>6. Ensure that all students with disabilities and additional learning needs in the community can come to school.</li> <li>7. Lobby the district and provincial government for funding support for inclusive child-friendly infrastructure.</li> </ol>
<b>Schools and Vocational Education</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Screen/assess all students for learning difficulties.</li> <li>2. Write an IEP for every student with disability and/or additional learning needs as identified by screening, with support from the IERCs where required.</li> <li>3. Register all students with disabilities with the nearest IERC.</li> <li>4. Ensure the school environment, including infrastructure and teaching pedagogy, is accessible for all students with disabilities and additional learning needs.</li> <li>5. Engage with local communities and promote awareness about students with disabilities to encourage shifts in attitudes and behaviours.</li> <li>6. Identify students with disabilities who are out of school or not attending regularly and refer these to the IERC.</li> <li>7. Collaborate with the IERC to access support services and facilitate the smooth transition of students into secondary and vocational schools.</li> </ol>
<b>Parents</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide correct information on their child/children's disabilities for proper assessment and referral.</li> <li>2. Enrol their child in the IERC or mainstream school.</li> <li>3. Provide full support to meet the needs of their children at home and at school by being involved in the development, implementation and review of their child's IEP.</li> <li>4. Take part in School Learning Improvement Plan (SLIP) process to set realistic goals for their children.</li> <li>5. Support home learning activities guided by the teacher.</li> </ol>

## ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

<p><b>Development partners, Non-Government Organisations, Disabled Persons Organisations, and private sectors</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support the implementation of the policy through funding, technical assistance, service provision, coordination, and communication.</li> <li>2. Align their inclusive education programs with the Inclusive Education Policy to ensure compliance with legal requirements for operation within the education system.</li> <li>3. Support in the design and development of adaptive curriculum, student textbooks and student learning and assessment programs.</li> <li>4. Assist in the provision of equipment such as basic screening materials and assistive devices.</li> <li>5. Assist and support human resources development at the national, provincial and school levels.</li> <li>6. Assist in monitoring, evaluating, and conducting research activities in partnership with the Department and other stakeholders.</li> <li>7. Promote collaboration and interaction to foster the sharing of knowledge and understanding regarding the progress and development of inclusive education in the country.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Church Education Agencies</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure agency school boards and school heads are implementing the policy.</li> <li>2. Promote improved church-state collaboration and accountability.</li> <li>3. Ensure ongoing and open consultation with the state in relation to Inclusive Education Policy and Standards challenges.</li> <li>4. Assist in the provision of social, spiritual and physical capacity building programs.</li> <li>5. Ensure the agency’s safeguarding procedures and principles are observed and promoted in the IERCs.</li> <li>6. Ensure safeguarding practices are maintained in the school and safeguarding concerns are reported to authorise certified agencies or Child protection officers.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Community</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support the IERC programs through advocacy for families to send their children to school.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Health Support Team</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct relevant medical and health assessments.</li> <li>2. Facilitate Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID) programs.</li> </ol>

# SECTION C: STANDARDS



# SECTION C: MINIMUM STANDARDS

This section provides minimum standards or benchmarks for all stakeholders to improve the provision of quality education for all students with disabilities and additional learning needs. The standards are aligned with the policy objectives of **Inclusive Learning Environments, Learning Support, Inclusive Educators, and Planning and Management**.

## Standard 1: Inclusive and Accessible Infrastructure

- 1.1 Schools have a programme and processes to ensure buildings and grounds are accessible to all students, constructed in line with the National Department of Education School Registration Policy; School Standard Infrastructure Policy; and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH).
- 1.2 Schools have a programme and processes to ensure digital infrastructure, materials, and online resources are accessible to all students as per the ICT Policy.

## Standard 2: Strong Leadership and Positive Attitudes

- 2.1 School leadership develops a positive school culture that values inclusion, diversity, the rights of students with disabilities and additional learning needs, and creates a safe and nurturing school environment that promotes acceptance and diversity among students and staff.
- 2.2 School leadership and other staff have processes to ensure that all students with disabilities and additional learning needs have access to, are included, and retained to complete their education.
- 2.3 School leadership promote and support the rights of students with disabilities and additional learning needs through inclusive education promotion and advocacy.

## Standard 3: Inclusive Communities

- 3.1 Schools have a programme and processes to ensure that students with disabilities and additional learning needs attend school regularly.
- 3.2 Schools implement a variety of strategies that build and maintain positive relationships and promote inclusive practice with the community.
- 3.3 Schools conduct termly parent, student and teacher meetings to inform parents of the progress students are making in learning different subjects and against the goals in the student's IEP.
- 3.4 The school is a safe and protective place for the school community to learn, work, live and visit.

## Standard 4: Inclusive Screening and Assessment Practices

- 4.1 Schools have processes in place to strengthen screening, registration, and referral processes, ensuring efficient identification and support for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.
- 4.2 Schools have processes to ensure specific equipment and support resources to screen and assess students with disabilities and additional learning needs are provided.

## **Standard 5: Inclusive Teaching Pedagogy and Assessment**

- 5.1** Schools have processes in place to ensure equitable evaluation of all students, including those with disabilities and additional learning needs, through assessment and progress monitoring, thereby promoting personalized learning pathways.
- 5.2** Schools and teachers collaborate with parents/caregivers and other relevant parties to develop Individual Education Plans (IEPs) collaboration with students, their families and the IEP team in order to discuss and report on students' academic performance, behaviour and progress in learning.
- 5.3** Schools are aware of and implement strategies that promote flexible approaches to curriculum design, incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, and enable tailored learning experiences for all students, including those with disabilities and additional learning needs.

## **Standard 6: Inclusive Learning Support**

- 6.1** Schools have processes to strengthen partnerships with specialized support services, including IERC support, specialized teacher support, therapy, and counselling services, fostering a network of comprehensive support for students with disability and additional learning needs.

## **Standard 7: Knowledgeable and Skilled Teacher Workforce**

- 7.1** School leaders support training programs in inclusive education practices, covering both pre-service and in-service training offered within schools and IERCs, ensuring educators are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively support diverse student needs.
- 7.2** Schools have a process for the provision of expanded and improved professional development opportunities to foster the continuous growth of teachers' competencies in inclusive education practices, enabling them to stay current and proficient in accommodating diverse student needs.

## **Standard 8: Strengthening Data and Evidence**

- 8.1** The National Department of Education collects data on students with disability and additional learning needs via the Annual School Census, Quarterly Returns, or at the request of the Department of Education in order to inform policy, planning and budgeting.
- 8.2** Disaggregated data and evidence on students with disabilities and additional learning needs is produced through the existing Education Management Information System (EMIS).
- 8.3** Individual and census level information on enrolment, retention and advancement of students with disabilities and additional learning needs in the school system collected through EMIS informs resource allocation and contributes to improvement in inclusive education.
- 8.4** Church agencies conduct regular data collection on respective agency schools in order to support school census data.

## **Standard 9: Management**

- 9.1** Schools successfully incorporate structural leadership practices of inclusive education, reflecting a commitment to inclusive principles and policies at all levels of their organisational structure.
- 9.2** Schools have a process that enables the effective monitoring, review and evaluation of strategic planning for inclusive education practices.
- 9.3** School management keep a record of each student's registration, enrolment, screening assessments, and provide quarterly annual reports to respective authorities.
- 9.4** Schools have processes to manage the procurement, cataloguing and storage of school teaching materials and resources and other school assets for students with a variety of disabilities and additional learning needs.

# SECTION D: MONITORING AND EVALUATION



## SECTION D: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The NDOE, Inclusive Education Unit will use the Inclusive Education Implementation Guidelines to monitor and evaluate the progress of the implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy and Minimum Standards. The Inclusive Education Unit will collect raw data on enrolment from the IERCs through the National School Census Forms, entered into the EMIS. EMIS would also have data on students with disabilities not registered with IERCs. Disability disaggregated data on enrolment; retention and completion shall be collected from the Research and Evaluation ED Division through the EMIS and disseminated to assess policy implementation progress and inform planning and program priorities.

At the provincial and district levels, school inspectors will support and monitor inclusive education in schools through SLIP processes and the NQSSF.

# SECTION E: POLICY REVIEW

## SECTION E: POLICY REVIEW

It is a requirement of the Department of Education that a policy be reviewed every three years. Therefore the Inclusive Education Policy and Minimum Standards will be reviewed after every three years from the date of the implementation.

## REFERENCES

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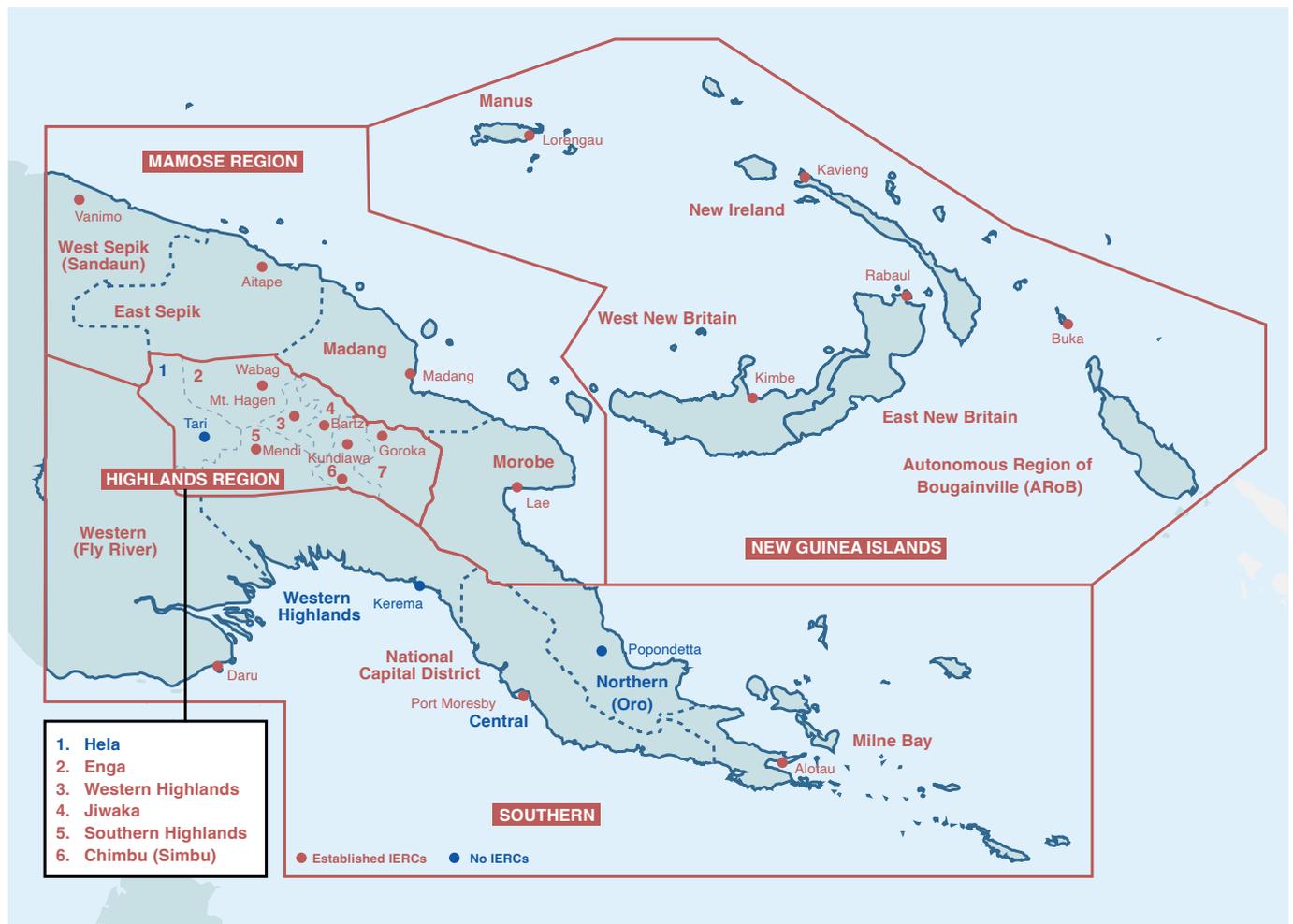
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# ANNEX

## ANNEX A:

### Location of IERCs and Current Numbers of Students Identified as Having Disabilities or Additional Learning Needs



## Locations of Inclusive Education Resource Centres (IERCs)

**Highlands Region:** Mt Sion, St. Therese Minigende, Simbu, Callan Mt Hagan, Mendi, ENGA

**MOMASE:** Vanimo, Aitape, Wewak, Madang, Morobe

**Islands Region:** Manus, Kimbe, Rabual, Kavieng, Buka

**Southern Region:** Kiunga, Daru, Alotau, Cheshire, St John, Red Cross, Gerehu

## Number of Students with Disability and Additional Learning Needs (2023)

(Source: Internal Inclusive Education Data)

Region	Intellectual: Mild/Mod	Intellectual: Severe	Physical: Mild/Mod	Physical: Severe	Learning Difficulties	Hearing Impairment	Deaf	Speech Impairment	Vision Impairment	Blind	Behavioural/Emotional Disorders	Gifted	Multiple Impairment	Total
<b>Highlands Region</b>	382	72	683	260	2084	596	597	342	530	313	475	40	250	<b>6624</b>
<b>MOMASE</b>	105	25	202	40	571	230	237	94	68	57	21	4	233	<b>1887</b>
<b>Islands Region</b>	426	41	649	87	844	1323	444	126	308	102	281	208	343	<b>5182</b>
<b>Southern Region</b>	33	3	217	45	2237	1353	65	95	89	34	21	14	73	<b>4279</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>1751</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>5765</b>	<b>3502</b>	<b>1343</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>995</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>798</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>899</b>	<b>17,972</b>



**PNGAus Partnership**



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS

2024 - 2028





## **Department of Education**

### **Inclusive Education Policy Implementation Guide for Schools**

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This Policy can be used by stakeholders, development partners, state actors, non-state actors, church education agencies, and private education agencies, public and private organizations and individuals to support the growth and expansion of inclusive education in Papua New Guinea.

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# INTRODUCTION

In order to support schools and Inclusive Education Resource Centres (IERCs) to implement the ***Inclusive Education Policy*** document, the National Department of Education (NDoE) is providing this guidance document.

This guide provides advice, strategies, and examples for implementing the ***Inclusive Education Policy***. It is designed for use by teachers, head teachers and school boards and can be used by other stakeholders who support schools in the national education system.

This guide recommends good practices that schools can use to support an inclusive education experience for all students, including learners with disabilities and additional learning needs. Inclusive education supports everyone to access quality educational opportunities, thereby fostering holistic development, and maximizing all students' potential for success.

The Inclusive Education Policy sits alongside the Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy, and the GESI in Schools Implementation Guide can also be used to support inclusive education in schools.

# WHAT IS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION?

**Policy Reference:** Section A: Policy, 8. Definitions

It is important to first be clear about what we mean by inclusive education. The following definitions explain some of the important terms.

**Inclusive Education:** A process to ensure all students in the community, whatever their background, their ability or their disability, have equitable access to quality teaching and learning in education institutions which is adapted to their learning needs. All students are welcomed, valued and supported to reach their full potential.

**Disability:** Long-term physical, sensory, cognitive or social/emotional impairment that affects the functioning of a person and which interacts with environmental and social barriers that hinder the person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

**Additional Learning Needs:** Students with additional learning needs may require additional support in areas including schoolwork, expressing themselves or understanding what other people are saying, making friends or relating to adults, behaving appropriately at school, or have medical, physical or sensory needs (long or short term). Additional learning needs include: dyslexia, attention deficit disorder/attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADD/ADHD), gifted students (students who give evidence of high performance capability), students with behavioural and emotional difficulties, students with speech and language difficulties.

**Special Needs:** Any of various difficulties (such as a physical, emotional, behavioural, or learning disability or impairment) that causes an individual to require additional or specialised services or accommodations (such as in education or recreation). In the Inclusive Education Policy, the more inclusive term 'students with disabilities and additional learning needs' has been used in place of 'students with special needs'.

**Individual Education Plan:** A written plan that describes the adjustments, goals and strategies to meet a student's individual needs so they can reach their full potential.

**Differentiated Learning:** An approach where teachers adjust their curriculum and instruction to match the learning needs of all students.

# PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

**Policy Pointers:** Section B: Implementation Procedures, 4. Principles and Values

The Inclusive Education Policy shares core principles and values embedded within the 1975 Constitution and the Papua New Guinea Vision 2050, and also recognises and aligns with the principles in the **National Department of Education, Behavior Management Policy** and **Gender Equity and Social Inclusion in Schools Policy**. The following core principles and values underpin the Inclusive Education Policy:

- 1.** All students can learn well in a friendly and caring school with accessible infrastructure, the right tools, knowledgeable teachers, and help from their parents.
- 2.** Students with disabilities and additional learning needs have the right to education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity at all levels of the education system and throughout their life.
- 3.** The National Education System can support all students, including students with disabilities and additional learning needs, to transition successfully through all levels of schooling and into adult life.
- 4.** School structures, teaching and student learning systems, assessment and teaching methodologies can be flexible and designed to meet the needs of all students, including those with disabilities and additional learning needs.
- 5.** School systems have a responsibility to ensure their policies, procedures and practices prevent students with disabilities and additional learning needs from being harmed as well as steps to respond and investigate reports of harm when they happen.
- 6.** An inclusive education system is the foundation to building communities in which every child and adult experiences a sense of identity and belonging.

# INCLUSIVE EDUCATION (IE) POLICY RULES

**Policy Pointers:** Section A: Policy, 5: Policy Rules

The IE Policy has rules that all stakeholders must follow.

- 1.** The Inclusive Education (IE) Policy must be effectively implemented in the Papua New Guinea school system.
- 2.** SLIPs must include activities to improve access and learning for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.
- 3.** All stakeholders and partners must support the implementation of the IE Policy through the fulfilment of their roles and responsibilities.
- 4.** All stakeholders must collaborate to develop referral pathways, child-friendly services, and coordination mechanisms.
- 5.** All students with disabilities and additional learning needs must have equal access to all sectors of education for quality teaching and learning in line with the National Education Plan (2020-2029).
- 6.** Students with disabilities and additional learning needs should receive education services in their local school whenever possible with the IERC providing support to both the child's school, teacher and parent/s.
- 7.** Some students may experience barriers preventing them from accessing mainstream education and will require enrollment at the IERC for support from a specialist teacher. Every effort must be made to transition these students into mainstream schools.
- 8.** All students with disabilities or additional learning needs must receive an assessment screening using the "Whole Child Checklist" by specialist IERC teachers, or trained teachers in the school system.
- 9.** All mainstream schools must register their students with disabilities and additional learning needs with the nearest IERC, maintain a record of screening assessments and Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and report disaggregated disability and additional learning needs data in the annual school census.
- 10.** All schools and IERCs must develop, implement, and review Individual Education Plans (IEP) on an annual basis for all students with disabilities and additional learning needs in consultation with the child's parents.
- 11.** Equal access to the curriculum must be provided to all students through the provision of reasonable adjustments and adjustments, as indicated with that student's IEP.
- 12.** Leaders of schools must receive training in the IE Policy and implementation procedures.
- 13.** All teachers must receive quality and specialised training on inclusive education through pre- and in-service training.
- 14.** School inspections will include an assessment of the school's inclusive education planning, practices, and records in line with the National Quality Schools Standards Framework (NQSSF) and the IE Policy.
- 15.** Guidance officers must provide guidance and counselling for all teachers and students
- 16.** Transition pathways must be developed to make education accessible for all learners across all sectors of education.

# HOW TO USE THE GUIDE

**Section 1** of the guide contains information to support the implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy. It recommends good practice that schools can use to improve access, participation, and learning for students with disabilities and additional learning needs. There are policy references which highlight the most relevant part of the IE Policy, and examples to illustrate how the good practices described can be put into action.

Under the policy rules, schools have a responsibility to include activities to improve access and learning for students with disabilities and additional learning needs in the School Learning Improvement Plan (SLIP).

**Section 2** provides guidance on how to develop a School Learning Improvement Plan IE Policy action plan. IE Policy action plans must be included under the relevant focus areas of the School Learning Improvement Plan.

## Working with the Inclusive Education Resource Centres (IERCs)

To help schools develop an inclusive approach, the Department of Education has a network of Inclusive Education Resource Centres (IERCs). The IE Policy emphasises the central role of IERCs in ensuring children with disabilities and additional learning needs can participate and learn in schools alongside their peers. IERCs support schools and communities to assess and enrol students with disabilities, develop individual education plans (IEPs), improve inclusive teaching practices, and raise awareness and understanding about disabilities. The IE Policy also identifies the importance of connecting schools with outreach programs conducted by many IERCs to help schools to screen, identify and support children with disabilities.

In each section of this guide, you will find tips on how to work with your local IERC.

## **SECTION 1:**

# **SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS TO ACCESS EDUCATION**



# SECTION 1: SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS TO ACCESS EDUCATION

## Inclusive Learning Environments

**Policy Reference:** Section A: Policy, 4: Policy Intended Outcomes, Objective 1: Inclusive Learning Environments

### Policy Standards:

Standard 1: Inclusive and Accessible Infrastructure

Standard 2: Strong Leadership and Positive Attitudes

Standard 3: Inclusive Communities

In this section, you will learn about actions a school can take to support children with a disability or additional learning need to access school.

Accessing school begins by ensuring that school premises are inclusive and child-friendly environments. This means thinking about **school infrastructure, leadership, attitudes, and partnerships with family and community.**

Here are some ways to support students with disabilities and additional learning needs to feel included at school.

What to do	How – Good Practices	Who should do it
Make sure school buildings and grounds are accessible to all students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the checklist in Annex A to identify any accessibility issues within the school.</li> <li>• Make a plan and address the issues identified. For example, corridors or pathways should be kept free of obstacles or protruding objects that could make it hard for people with mobility impairments to move through them.</li> <li>• Include activities to improve access in the SLIP (See Section 2)</li> </ul>	<p>School Boards of Management</p> <p>Head Teachers, Consult with IERC Staff</p> <p>Local Organisation of People with Disabilities (OPD) where possible</p>
Be a strong leader who supports inclusion and equitable educational practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome and value all students.</li> <li>• Model positive language and attitudes towards students with disabilities and additional learning needs</li> <li>• Use ‘person first’ language - ‘student with disability’ rather than ‘disabled student’.</li> <li>• Have high expectations for all students.</li> </ul>	<p>Head Teachers</p> <p>Teachers</p>

Develop a 'whole school approach' to inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organise a school-wide education session on the Inclusive Education Policy.</li> <li>• Provide professional development to support all staff to understand disability and additional learning needs.</li> <li>• Share teaching strategies and resources.</li> <li>• Work collaboratively with other teachers, parents, and support services.</li> </ul>	Head Teachers Teachers Children / Students
Promote inclusive practice in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite families to share their knowledge and perspectives on their child's learning.</li> <li>• Celebrate the achievements of all students.</li> </ul>	Head Teachers Teachers Parents Students

### Examples of actions you can take

Develop a school culture and community that values inclusion. You can do this by:

1. Having regular meetings with parents and students to discuss their progress.
2. Screening students in your school for disabilities and additional learning difficulties to see what areas they might need help with.
3. Make sure staff have opportunities for professional development so they know how to help all the students in their class.

### Working with the IERC on developing Inclusive Learning Environments

The IERC can help your school by:

1. Showing you how to conduct a simple accessibility check of the school environment, and providing guidance on low resources modifications that can be made to address common issues.
2. Conducting disability awareness sessions for the school (staff and students) and community.
3. Providing teachers with guidance and support to strengthen their disability inclusive teaching practices in their classrooms.

## Learning Support

**Policy Reference:** Section A: Policy, 4: Policy Intended Outcomes, Objective 2: Learning Support

### Policy Standards:

Standard 4: Inclusive Screening and Assessment Practices

Standard 5: Inclusive Teaching Pedagogy and Assessment

Standard 6: Inclusive Learning Support

Successful inclusive education needs a holistic approach to learning support. This involves developing better processes for screening, registration and referral of students with disabilities and additional learning needs to specialised support services such as the IERCs. Schools can help meet the individual learning needs of their students by understanding how to write individual education plans (IEPs). Flexible approaches to teaching pedagogy using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) can help to support all learners in the classroom in the areas of assessment, teaching, and monitoring progress.

Here are some ways to strengthen learning support at your school.

What to do	How – Good Practices	Who should do it
Develop a clear process to identify and support students with disabilities and additional learning needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any students you are concerned about should be screened using the Whole Child Checklist (follow the process in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) Teacher’s Guide).</li> <li>Ensure all students with disabilities and additional learning needs are referred to and registered with your local Inclusive Education Resource Centre (IERC).</li> <li>Build relationships with and access support from the IERC.</li> </ul>	Head Teachers/ Teachers IERC - staff
Develop Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow the process in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) Guide.</li> <li>Schedule time for IEP meetings and regular follow-ups.</li> </ul>	Head teachers/ Teachers/Families/ Students / Family members
Develop lessons that encourage the participation of all students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)</li> <li>Connect curriculum content to student’s personal experiences.</li> <li>Use both large and small groups when you are teaching.</li> <li>Let students write down or verbally answer questions.</li> <li>Include activities to support inclusive learning in the SLIP.</li> </ul>	Head teachers/ Teachers IERC - staff
Create a ‘Learning Support Team’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build a team to support students with disabilities and additional learning needs in your school.</li> </ul>	Head teachers Teachers

## Example of an action you can take.

As a teacher, think about how you can be flexible in lesson design. This can help all students to participate more fully in class. For example,

- 1.** When teachers are writing on the board, they can also talk about what they are writing. This helps students who might not be able to see or read the board clearly.
- 2.** Teachers can provide a visual schedule of the day so students know what is coming next. This helps students feel calm and understand the daily routine.
- 3.** Teachers can find out about what the children in their class are interested in, and design lessons around those interests. This helps students to engage and want to learn.

## Working with the IERC on Learning Support

The IERC can help your school by:

- 1.** Helping teachers to understand and feel confident in using the Whole Child Checklist to screen students in their class.
- 2.** Working with teachers to develop and regularly review Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.
- 3.** Providing assistive devices to help students with disabilities to access learning, such as mobility aids or learning materials in alternative formats (e.g. braille).

## Inclusive Educators

**Policy Reference:** Section A: Policy, 4: Policy Intended Outcomes, Objective 3: Inclusive Educators

### Policy Standards:

Standard 7: Knowledgeable and Skilled Teacher Workforce

It is important for teachers to have the knowledge and skills to create inclusive classrooms.

Research has shown that well trained teachers feel more positively about inclusion. Building a knowledgeable and skilled teacher workforce means making sure teachers have opportunities **for both pre-service and in-service training** that develops their knowledge and confidence around inclusive education. It's also important that teachers have opportunities to learn about the students in their school who have disabilities or additional learning needs through **ongoing professional development**.

What to do	How – Good Practices	Who should do it
Provide teachers with professional development opportunities to build their inclusive teaching practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify priority training areas in the SLIP.</li><li>• Provide school based in-service inclusive education training opportunities.</li></ul>	Head Teachers
Communicate within the school and keep records about any learning and/or behavioural concerns for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talk to the Head Teacher about organising professional development about areas you are concerned about.</li></ul>	Teachers

### Examples of actions you can take.

The 'whole school approach' to inclusive education is very important. Teachers in schools will have different knowledge and experience, and can support each other to learn about how best to support students with disabilities and additional learning needs:

1. Create a resource hub in your school with materials and information about disabilities and additional learning needs.
2. Conduct a regular discussion group where teachers can share experiences, ideas, and strategies.
3. Develop and share within the school real-life case studies of successful programs that include students with disabilities and additional learning needs in the classroom.

### Working with the IERC on developing Inclusive Educators

The IERC can help your school by:

1. Ensuring specialist teacher support is available for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.
2. Running in-service and professional development sessions in the school on topics that teachers would like more information on.
3. Conducting disability awareness sessions for the whole school during school outreach visits.

## Planning and Management

**Policy Reference:** Section A: Policy, 4: Policy Intended Outcomes, Objective 4: Planning and Management

### Policy Standards:

Standard 8: Strengthening Data and Evidence

Standard 9: Management

Good planning and management at the school level helps make sure that inclusive education programs can be successfully implemented and evaluated. It's important that detailed records are kept so that enough funding is provided to support students with disabilities and additional learning needs.

What to do	How – Good Practices	Who should do it
Keep accurate and detailed records.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collect and record information on enrolment, retention and progress of students with disabilities and additional learning needs.</li><li>• Break down student data into specific details such as type of disability, age, gender etc.</li></ul>	School Management Head Teachers Teachers
Make specific recommendations for inclusive education practices to be implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Include these recommendations in the SLIP.</li></ul>	School Boards Head Teachers

### Example of an action you can take.

Set up a clear record keeping system within your classroom or school. This could be a digital or manual keeping record system.

1. Check with school management what data and information needs to be collected.
2. Ask for training on how to keep the right types of records for students with disabilities and additional learning needs in your class/school.

### Working with the IERC on Planning and Management

Ask your IERC for advice on what forms you can use to collect and retain information. For example:

1. The Whole Child Checklist for screening of students.
2. The Individual Education Plan (IEP) document.
3. Forms to help you record the progress students are making toward their goals.

## **SECTION 2:**

# **DEVELOPING AN INCLUSIVE SLIP ACTION PLAN**



## SECTION 2: DEVELOPING AN INCLUSIVE (iSLIP) ACTION PLAN

Rule 2 of the IE Policy states “iSLIPs must include activities to improve access and learning for students with disabilities and additional learning needs”. This section will help you include priorities for implementing inclusive education (IE) at your school.

The SLIP IE action plan should address key issues identified through consultation meetings with students, teachers, the BOM, parents, and community.

### Step 1: Form the iSLIP Committee

Head teachers have a responsibility to form a iSLIP Committee in cooperation with the BoM and to lead the development and implementation of the iSLIP. The iSLIP Committee should include students, teachers, BOM members, parents and community representatives.

### Step 2: Include IE in SLIP planning meetings.

The specifics of every iSLIP action plan will be different, depending on the issues that have been chosen and the school context. Therefore, it is not possible to provide in-depth guidance on exactly what your action plan should include. The good practices described in Section 1 can help address issues you may have identified, or you can develop your own.

At the iSLIP planning meeting, review the issues and problems that were raised during the consultation meetings and prioritise them using the below criteria.

#### Criteria for choosing an issue.

- How does this issue impact on student learning outcomes?
- Will addressing the issue result in real improvement?
- Is addressing the issue possible?

### Step 3: Include IE action plans in the SLIP.

Once you have prioritised the issues, select at least the top 3 issues to include in your SLIP annual action plan. IE issues and actions should be included under the relevant SLIP focus areas. Below are some examples of SLIP focus area IE action plans.

SLIP Focus Area	Specific Outcome	Strategy	Timeframe	Resources	Person/s responsible	Indicators of success	Review
	What is the activity or outcome to be achieved?	How - or way in which it will be done.	When will it be done – start and finish date.	What resources will be used – kina, people etc.	Name of Person/s	Observable or measurable indicator	Process to gather data to make the judgement and decisions
<b>Curriculum student learning and assessment</b>	Students with disabilities and additional learning needs can access the curriculum.	Teachers receive in-service training on differentiated learning and Universal Design for Learning (UDL)	Term 1	IERC staff	Head teacher Teachers	PIST Records	Annually
<b>Student needs and welfare</b>	Students with disabilities and additional learning needs are not bullied at school.	Teacher roster to monitor the playground during lunch time and breaks.	Daily	Nil	Head teacher / teachers	Teacher roster	Quarterly
<b>Staff professional development and training</b>	Teachers complete inclusive education in-service training	PIST on inclusive education	Term 1	IERC staff	Head teacher Teachers	PIST records	End of Term 1
<b>Good governance and community relationships</b>	Students with disabilities and additional learning needs are attending school regularly.	School to work with IERC to support students to attend school, and keep daily attendance record.	Daily	IERC staff	Head teacher Teachers	Students with disabilities and additional learning needs are attending consistently.	Quarterly
<b>Infrastructure maintenance and development</b>	School premises are accessible for students with disabilities.	Pathways in the school are kept clear of obstacles so they accessible to all students.	Daily	Nil	Headteacher	100% of pathways provide clear access.	Quarterly

#### A note on budget

Not all actions will require a budget. If a budget is needed, it is important that it is realistic and that it is allocated according to school budget processes. Budget for IE priorities can be:

- Applied for using an AQEFA Grant (See “AQEFA Grant Guidelines for Schools” booklet).
- Allocated in the school budget using GTSF funding.
- Sourced through advocating to your District Development Authority.
- Raised through P&C fundraising activities.

## Step 4: Review

The SLIP IE action plan should be reviewed as part of the annual SLIP internal review process. The review will assess the level of success and achievement measured against the intended outcomes. This will help inform the need for further improvement in the next plan.

Schools should follow the internal review process outlined in the SLIP policy guidance and provided below.

**Review period:** The internal review for the school is conducted in a week during the last quarter of each year with ample time for follow up activities.

**Review team:** The internal review team will be from the school. It will comprise of the school's head teacher, Chairperson of the BOM and one person each from P&C, teachers, students.

**Methodology:** To be fair and accurate, the review should be based on interviews with relevant stakeholders (e.g., students, teachers, parents etc.) and spot checks and class visitations if relevant.

**Documents:** The internal review team should document findings from the review and include evidence and photos where relevant. Recommendations for improvement should be included to help inform the next plan.

## ANNEX A: BASIC ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST FOR TEACHERS

Use this checklist to look at the school environment and see if any changes need to be made.

If you identify changes to be made, the school inspectors (mainstream and IERC) and school administration are responsible.

Environment	Questions to ask	YES	NO	Not sure	Any improvement plans?
<b>Entrance and Exits</b>	Are there ramps or elevators available for children with mobility challenges?				
	Are doorways wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs or other mobility aids?				
<b>Hallways and Corridors</b>	Are pathways clear of obstacles for children with visual impairments or mobility issues?				
	Are there handrails or support bars along hallways for children who may need assistance?				
<b>Classrooms</b>	Is the classroom layout flexible to accommodate different learning needs and mobility aids?				
	Are desks and chairs adjustable to suit children of varying heights and physical abilities?				
<b>Toilets</b>	Are there accessible toilets equipped with grab bars, raised toilet seats, and adequate space for manoeuvring?				
<b>Playgrounds and Outdoor Areas</b>	Are outdoor play areas accessible with ramps, soft surfaces, and inclusive play equipment?				
	Are there designated spaces for children with sensory sensitivities or disabilities?				
<b>Emergency Procedures</b>	Are emergency evacuation plans inclusive of children with disabilities?				
	Are staff trained in assisting children with disabilities during emergency situations?				

This checklist can help teachers assess the accessibility of their school premises and ensure a more inclusive learning environment.





**PNGAus Partnership**



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTRES





## **Department of Education**

### **Inclusive Education Policy Implementation Guide for Inclusive Education Resource Centres**

Issued free by the National Department of Education, Papua New Guinea

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This Policy can be used by stakeholders, development partners, state actors, non-state actors, church education agencies, and private education agencies, public and private organizations and individuals to support the growth and expansion of inclusive education in Papua New Guinea.

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# INTRODUCTION

In order to support schools and Inclusive Education Resource Centres (IERCs) to implement the ***Inclusive Education (IE) Policy*** document, the National Department of Education (NDoE) is providing this guidance document. This guide provides advice, strategies, and examples for implementing the ***Inclusive Education Policy***.

This guide recommends good practices that Inclusive Education Resource Centres (IERCs) can use to support an inclusive education experience for all students, including learners with disabilities and additional learning needs. Inclusive education supports everyone to access quality educational opportunities, thereby fostering holistic development, and maximizing all students' potential for success.

The Inclusive Education Policy sits alongside the Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy, and the GESI in Schools Implementation Guide can also be used to support inclusive education in schools.

# WHAT IS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION?

**Policy Pointers:** Section A: Policy, 8. Definitions

It is important to first be clear about what we mean by inclusive education. The following definitions explain some of the important terms.

**Inclusive Education:** A process to ensure all students in the community, whatever their background, their ability or their disability, have equitable access to quality teaching and learning in education institutions which is adapted to their learning needs. All students are welcomed, valued and supported to reach their full potential.

**Disability:** Long-term physical, sensory, cognitive or social/emotional impairment that affects the functioning of a person and which interacts with environmental and social barriers that hinder the person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

**Additional Learning Needs:** Students with additional learning needs may require additional support in areas including schoolwork, expressing themselves or understanding what other people are saying, making friends or relating to adults, behaving appropriately at school, or have medical, physical or sensory needs (long or short term). Additional learning needs include: dyslexia, attention deficit disorder/attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADD/ADHD), gifted students (students who give evidence of high performance capability), students with behavioural and emotional difficulties, students with speech and language difficulties.

**Special Needs:** Any of various difficulties (such as a physical, emotional, behavioural, or learning disability or impairment) that causes an individual to require additional or specialised services or accommodations (such as in education or recreation). In the IE Policy, the more inclusive term 'students with disabilities and additional learning needs' has been used in place of 'students with special needs'.

**Individual Education Plan:** A written plan that describes the adjustments, goals and strategies to meet a student's individual needs so they can reach their full potential.

**Differentiated Learning:** An approach where teachers adjust their curriculum and instruction to match the learning needs of all students.

# PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

**Policy Pointers:** Section B: Implementation Procedures, 4. Principles and Values

The Inclusive Education Policy shares core principles and values embedded within the 1975 Constitution and the Papua New Guinea Vision 2050, and also recognises and aligns with the principles in the **National Department of Education, Behavior Management Policy** and **Gender Equity and Social Inclusion in Schools Policy**. The following core principles and values underpin the IEPS policy:

1. All students can learn well in a friendly and caring school with accessible infrastructure, the right tools, knowledgeable teachers, and help from their parents.
2. Students with disabilities and additional learning needs have the right to education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity at all levels of the education system and throughout their life.
3. The National Education System can support all students, including students with disabilities and additional learning needs, to transition successfully through all levels of schooling and into adult life.
4. School structures, teaching and student learning systems, assessment and teaching methodologies can be flexible and designed to meet the needs of all students, including those with disabilities and additional learning needs.
5. School systems have a responsibility to ensure their policies, procedures and practices prevent students with disabilities and additional learning needs from being harmed as well as steps to respond and investigate reports of harm when they happen.
6. An inclusive education system is the foundation to building communities in which every child and adult experiences a sense of identity and belonging.

# INCLUSIVE EDUCATION (IE) POLICY RULES

**Policy Pointers:** Section A: Policy, 5: Policy Rules

The IE Policy has rules that all stakeholders must follow.

- 1.** The Inclusive Education (IE) Policy must be effectively implemented in the Papua New Guinea school system.
- 2.** SLIPs must include activities to improve access and learning for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.
- 3.** All stakeholders and partners must support the implementation of the IEPS through the fulfilment of their roles and responsibilities.
- 4.** All stakeholders must collaborate to develop referral pathways, child-friendly services, and coordination mechanisms.
- 5.** All students with disabilities and additional learning needs must have equal access to all sectors of education for quality teaching and learning in line with the National Education Plan (2020-2029).
- 6.** Students with disabilities and additional learning needs should receive education services in their local school whenever possible with the IERC providing support to both the child's school, teacher and parent/s.
- 7.** Some students may experience barriers preventing them from accessing mainstream education and will require enrollment at the IERC for support from a specialist teacher. Every effort must be made to transition these students into mainstream schools.
- 8.** All students with disabilities or additional learning needs must receive an assessment screening using the "Whole Child Checklist" by specialist IERC teachers, or trained teachers in the school system.
- 9.** All mainstream schools must register their students with disabilities and additional learning needs with the nearest IERC, maintain a record of screening assessments and Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and report disaggregated disability and additional learning needs data in the annual school census.
- 10.** All schools and IERCs must develop, implement, and review Individual Education Plans for all students with disabilities and additional learning needs in consultation with the child's parents.
- 11.** Equal access to the curriculum must be provided to all students through the provision of reasonable adjustments and adjustments, as indicated with that student's IEP.
- 12.** Leaders of schools must receive training in the IE Policy and implementation procedures.
- 13.** All teachers must receive quality and specialised training on inclusive education through pre- and in-service training.
- 14.** School inspections will include an assessment of the school's inclusive education planning, practices, and records in line with the National Quality Schools Standards Framework (NQSSF) and the IE Policy.
- 15.** Guidance officers must provide guidance and counselling for all teachers and students.
- 16.** Transition pathways must be developed to make education accessible for all learners across all sectors of education.

# HOW TO USE THE GUIDE

**Section 1** of the guide contains information to support the implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy. It recommends good practice that IERCs can use to improve access, participation, and learning for students with disabilities and additional learning needs. There are policy references which highlight the most relevant part of the IE Policy, and examples to illustrate how the good practices described can be put into action.

Under the policy rules, IERCs have a responsibility to support students with disabilities and additional learning needs to receive education services in their local school whenever possible, and to support schools, students, and families with this process.

IERCs also have a responsibility to include activities to improve access and learning for students with disabilities and additional learning needs in the School Learning Improvement Plan (SLIP). **Section 2** provides guidance on how to develop a SLIP IEPS action plan. The IE Policy action plans must be included under the relevant focus areas of the School Learning Improvement Plan (SLIP).

## Working with Schools

To help schools develop an inclusive approach, the Department of Education has a network of Inclusive Education Resource Centres (IERCs). The IE Policy emphasises the central role of IERCs in ensuring children with disabilities and additional learning needs can participate and learn in schools alongside their peers. IERCs support schools and communities to assess and enrol students with disabilities, develop individual education plans (IEPs), improve inclusive teaching practices, and raise awareness and understanding about disabilities. The IE Policy also identifies the importance of connecting schools with outreach programs conducted by many IERCs to help schools to screen, identify and support children with disabilities.

In each section of this guide, you will find tips on how the IERC and work with schools.

## **SECTION 1:**

# **SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS TO ACCESS EDUCATION**



# SECTION 1: SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS TO ACCESS EDUCATION

## Inclusive Learning Environments

**Policy Reference:** Section A: Policy, 4: Policy Intended Outcomes, Objective 1: Inclusive Learning Environments

### Policy Standards:

Standard 1: Inclusive and Accessible Infrastructure

Standard 2: Strong Leadership and Positive Attitudes

Standard 3: Inclusive Communities

In this section, you will learn about actions a school can take to support children with a disability or additional learning need to access school.

Accessing school begins by ensuring that school premises are inclusive and child-friendly environments. This means thinking about school infrastructure, leadership, attitudes, and partnerships with family and community.

Here are some ways to support students with disabilities and additional learning needs to feel included at school.

What to do	How – Good Practices	Who should do it
Promote parent and community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with school leaders to develop outreach programs that involve parents and the community in discussions about inclusion.</li> <li>Develop partnerships with Church agencies and NGOs.</li> <li>Foster a collaborative relationship between school leaders, teachers, and parents to create a supportive network for students with disabilities.</li> </ul>	IERC Staff IERC Boards of Governors Head Teachers Ward members Principals, Coordinators and Teachers Consult with Schools
Embed inclusion in school culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage schools to incorporate IE practices into their school policy.</li> <li>Collaborate with school leaders to integrate inclusion and equity into the school's mission and values.</li> <li>Encourage leaders to celebrate diversity and promote a culture that embraces the uniqueness of all students.</li> </ul>	ERC Boards of Governors IERC Staff Head Teachers Teachers

Celebrate inclusive practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with school leaders to recognize and celebrate inclusive practices within the school community.</li> <li>• Use newsletters, social media, or school events to highlight success stories and positive outcomes related to inclusive education.</li> <li>• Create events to recognise important days such as 29<sup>th</sup> March (National Day of People With Disability) and 3<sup>rd</sup> December (International Day of People With Disability)</li> </ul>	<p>IERC Coordinators &amp; Staff          Inclusive Education Outreach Officer          Head Teachers          Teachers          Ward          Community</p>
Promote inclusive practice in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize workshops or training sessions for community members, parents, and local leaders to educate them about inclusive education.</li> <li>• Provide information on the benefits of inclusion, different learning needs, and practical strategies for supporting students with disabilities.</li> <li>• Connect with local media outlets, such as newspapers, radio stations, or community newsletters, to share success stories, challenges, and the importance of inclusive education.</li> <li>• Use these platforms to showcase the achievements of students with disabilities and highlight the positive impact of inclusive practices</li> </ul>	<p>IERC Outreach Officer</p> <p>Community members</p> <p>Local leaders</p> <p>Parents</p> <p>Students</p>
Create IE Units in mainstream schools (model schools)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model inclusive practices and teaching.</li> <li>• Provide access to teachers who are skilled in sign language and braille.</li> </ul>	<p>NDoE FIE Division / IE Unit</p> <p>Head Teachers</p> <p>IERC Coordinator</p> <p>IERC Outreach Officer</p>

## Scenario

Your school district, located in a rural and isolated mountainous region, has been facing challenges in promoting inclusion and equitable educational practices for students with disabilities. The school district is characterized by a close-knit community with limited resources and a population that values tradition and community involvement.

The school district identified a need to enhance parent and community engagement to create a more inclusive environment for students with disabilities.

### Examples of actions you can take

- 1. Organise community workshops.** Partner with school leaders to organize a series of community workshops held in local community centres. These workshops can focus on educating parents, caregivers, and community members about the benefits of inclusive education and understanding the diverse learning needs of students with disabilities.
- 2. Set up parent support groups.** Facilitate the creation of parent support groups who can meet regularly to share experiences, discuss challenges, and provide emotional support. The meetings can be a platform for you to introduce inclusive education concepts and address specific concerns raised by parents.
- 3. Develop local partnerships.** Strengthen community involvement by collaborating with local businesses and organizations. Could a local business sponsor a community workshop by providing refreshments and a welcoming space for attendees?
- 4. Conduct parent education sessions.** Conduct regular parent education sessions at the school, covering topics such as inclusive teaching strategies, understanding individualized education plans (IEPs), and available support services. Make these interactive, allowing parents to ask questions and share their perspectives.

## Learning Support

**Policy Reference:** Section A: Policy, 4: Policy Intended Outcomes, Objective 2: Learning Support

### Policy Standards:

Standard 4: Inclusive Screening and Assessment Practices

Standard 5: Inclusive Teaching Pedagogy and Assessment

Standard 6: Inclusive Learning Support

Successful inclusive education needs a holistic approach to learning support. IERCs can work with schools to develop better processes for screening, registration and referral of students with disabilities and additional learning needs. Schools will also need IERC support to meet the individual learning needs of their students by understanding how to write individual education plans (IEPs). IERC Outreach Officers and specialist teachers can work with schools on flexible approaches to teaching pedagogy. This might mean helping teachers understand differentiated learning or using principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) can help to support all learners in the classroom in the areas of assessment, teaching, and monitoring progress.

Here are some ways to strengthen learning support at the schools you visit.

What to do	How – Good Practices	Who should do it
Develop a clear process to identify and support students with disabilities and additional learning needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish standardized screening protocols to ensure consistency across schools in identifying students with disabilities or additional learning needs.</li> <li>Provide training for school staff on the effective implementation of screening.</li> </ul>	NDoE FIE Division IERC Staff Head Teachers Teachers
Establish timely referral procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop clear and efficient referral procedures to promptly connect identified students with the necessary support services.</li> <li>Establish a communication system between schools and support services to streamline the referral process.</li> </ul>	IERC Staff Head Teachers Teachers
Develop Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support schools to understand and follow the process in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) Teacher’s Guide.</li> <li>Build confidence in teachers so they can write and implement ‘easy IEPs’.</li> <li>Work with schools to help develop and implement in-depth IEPs.</li> <li>Schedule time for IEP meetings and regular follow-ups.</li> </ul>	IERC Staff Head Teachers Teachers Students Families

Develop lessons that encourage the participation of all students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct workshops on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, guiding teachers in creating inclusive lesson plans and materials accessible to all students (see the advice in the IEP Teacher’s Guide Additional Guidelines and Resources).</li> <li>• Encourage the use of technology and adaptive tools to support UDL implementation</li> <li>• Offer training sessions on differentiated learning strategies, emphasizing the importance of tailoring instruction to meet the diverse needs of students in the classroom.</li> <li>• Provide resources and examples to help teachers implement differentiated learning effectively.</li> </ul>	IERC Staff Head Teachers Teachers
Create a collaborative ‘Learning Support Team’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish collaborative teams that include teachers, IERC Outreach Officers, specialist teachers, and administrators to facilitate open communication and shared decision-making.</li> <li>• Conduct regular team meetings to discuss student progress, address challenges, and share insights.</li> </ul>	IERC Staff Head Teachers Teachers Parents
Create IE Units in mainstream schools (model schools)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model inclusive practices and teaching.</li> <li>• Provide access to teachers who are skilled in sign language and braille.</li> </ul>	NDoE FIE Division IERC Coordinator IERC Outreach Officer

## Scenario

A school you visit has identified some challenges in implementing learning support to students with disabilities and additional learning needs. They have identified the following challenges and asked you for advice:

- 1. Screening and Referral Process:** Inconsistencies in the screening and referral processes result in delayed identification and support for students with disabilities.
- 2. IEP Development:** Teachers need support in understanding and creating effective Individual Education Plans tailored to the unique needs of each student.
- 3. Teaching Pedagogy:** There is a need for teachers to adopt flexible teaching approaches to accommodate diverse learning styles and abilities in the classroom.

### Example of actions you can take.

- 1. Collaborate** closely with schools to streamline the screening, registration, and referral processes. Conduct workshops for school staff and provide resources to ensure a consistent and efficient system.
- 2. Professional Development on IEPs:** Offer professional development sessions for teachers on understanding and writing effective Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Run workshops covering the individualized needs of students, goal-setting, and monitoring progress.
- 3. Flexible Teaching Approaches:** IERC Outreach Officers and specialist teachers conduct workshops on flexible teaching pedagogy. This includes training on differentiated learning and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, emphasizing inclusive practices for all students.

## Inclusive Educators

**Policy Reference:** Section A: Policy, 4: Policy Intended Outcomes, Objective 3: Inclusive Educators

### Policy Standards:

Standard 7: Knowledgeable and Skilled Teacher Workforce

It is important for teachers to have the knowledge and skills to create inclusive classrooms. Research has shown that well trained teachers feel more positively about inclusion. Building a knowledgeable and skilled teacher workforce means making sure teachers have opportunities for both pre-service and in-service training that develops their knowledge and confidence around inclusive education. It's also important that teachers have opportunities to learn about the students in their school who have disabilities or additional learning needs through ongoing professional development.

Here are some ways to strengthen teacher's knowledge at the schools you visit.

What to do	How – Good Practices	Who should do it
Develop comprehensive in-service training programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify priority training areas in the SLIP.</li> <li>Design and implement in-service training programs that cover a range of topics related to inclusive education, such as understanding diverse learning needs, creating accessible curricula, and implementing inclusive teaching strategies.</li> </ul>	IERC Staff Head Teachers Teachers
Provide basic training on screening and awareness for teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct trainings on specific disabilities.</li> <li>Train teachers on identification of children with disabilities and additional learning needs.</li> </ul>	Outreach Officers IERC Officers Teachers
Develop customized professional development workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer customized workshops based on the specific needs of each school. This could include tailored sessions on inclusive practices, differentiated instruction, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) based on the school's context and student population.</li> </ul>	IERC Staff Head Teachers Teachers
Set up a system for resource sharing and a library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a resource centre or library with a collection of books, articles, and materials related to inclusive education. Ensure that teachers have easy access to these resources for self-directed learning.</li> </ul>	IERC Staff Head Teachers Teachers
Provide training for stakeholders, church community leaders etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate people in the community about disability and inclusion.</li> <li>Teach people in the community how to identify children with disabilities and additional learning needs, and make referrals.</li> </ul>	Outreach Officers IERCs

## Scenario

A small school in a remote mountainous area is facing challenges in empowering teachers to implement inclusive practices. The school serves a diverse student population, including those with varying abilities and learning needs. The geographical isolation poses unique difficulties, making it challenging for teachers to access professional development and resources related to inclusive education.

The school has asked the IERC for help in the following areas:

- 1. Access to Professional Development:** Teachers struggle to access regular professional development opportunities due to the remote location. Traveling to training centres or attending workshops is logistically challenging and often requires significant time and resources.
- 2. Resource Scarcity:** The school lacks updated resources and materials catering to inclusive education. Limited availability of teaching aids, technology, and specialized tools hinders teachers in implementing diverse and inclusive teaching strategies.
- 3. Isolation and Limited Networking:** Teachers in the remote school feel isolated from the broader education community. The lack of networking opportunities makes it challenging to share experiences, seek advice, and stay informed about inclusive practices.

## Examples of actions you can take.

- 1. Provide professional development workshops during school outreach visits:** Include time during school outreach visits to provide professional development workshops tailored to the needs of the school.
- 2. Distribute resource kits:** Create and distribute resource kits containing printed materials, inclusive teaching guides, and low-tech learning aids. These kits can be designed to address the specific challenges faced by teachers in the remote location and promote inclusive practices.
- 3. Set up a peer mentorship program:** Initiate a peer mentorship program where experienced inclusive education specialists create printed guides or manuals for remote mentoring. Regular communication can occur through letters, phone calls, or in-person visits.

## Planning and Management

**Policy Reference:** Section A: Policy, 4: Policy Intended Outcomes, Objective 4: Planning and Management

### Policy Standards:

Standard 8: Strengthening Data and Evidence

Standard 9: Management

Good planning and management at the school level helps make sure that inclusive education programs can be successfully implemented and evaluated. It's important that detailed records are kept so that schools receive enough funding to support students with disabilities and additional learning needs.

What to do	How - Good Practices	Who should do it
Keep accurate and detailed records.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect and record information on enrolment, retention and progress of students with disabilities and additional learning needs.</li> <li>• Maintain detailed records of students with disabilities, including their individual needs, progress, and any adjustments made to the learning environment.</li> <li>• Develop and regularly update Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for students with disabilities.</li> <li>• Ensure that IEPs are based on accurate and up-to-date assessments, outlining specific goals, accommodations, and support services needed.</li> </ul>	IERC Staff School Management Head Teachers Teachers
Make specific recommendations for inclusive education practices to be implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a system for regular monitoring and evaluation of inclusive education programs.</li> <li>• Use data to assess the effectiveness of interventions, identify areas for improvement, and make informed decisions regarding resource allocation.</li> <li>• Include these recommendations in the SLIP.</li> </ul>	IERC Staff School Management Head Teachers Teachers

### Scenario

You are working with a remote school who serves a diverse student population, including those with disabilities and additional learning needs. They have asked for assistance in keeping accurate records.

#### Example of actions you can take.

1. **Conduct on-site data management workshops:** During school outreach visits, arrange on-site workshops for school staff on effective manual data management and record-keeping practices. Provide guidance on creating and maintaining paper-based records in a systematic and organized manner.
2. **Distribute Resource Kits:** Develop resource kits containing templates, forms, and guidelines for manual data collection and record-keeping. Distribute these during workshops and school outreach visits.

## **SECTION 2:**

# **DEVELOPING AN INCLUSIVE SLIP ACTION PLAN**



## SECTION 2: DEVELOPING AN INCLUSIVE SLIP ACTION PLAN

Rule 2 of the IEPS states “SLIPs must include activities to improve access and learning for students with disabilities and additional learning needs”. This section will help you include priorities for implementing inclusive education (IE) at your school.

The SLIP IE action plan should address key issues identified through consultation meetings with students, teachers, the BOM, parents, and community.

### Step 1: Form the inclusive SLIP (iSLIP) Committee

Head teachers have a responsibility to form a SLIP Committee in cooperation with the BoM and to lead the development and implementation of the SLIP. The SLIP Committee should include students, teachers, BOM members, parents and community representatives.

### Step 2: Include IE in SLIP planning meetings.

The specifics of every iSLIP action plan will be different, depending on the issues that have been chosen and the school context. Therefore, it is not possible to provide in-depth guidance on exactly what your action plan should include. The good practices described in Section 1 can help address issues you may have identified, or you can develop your own.

At the iSLIP planning meeting, review the issues and problems that were raised during the consultation meetings and prioritise them using the below criteria.

#### Criteria for choosing an issue.

- How does this issue impact on student learning outcomes?
- Will addressing the issue result in real improvement?
- Is addressing the issue possible?

### Step 3: Include IE action plans in the SLIP.

Once you have prioritised the issues, select at least the top 3 issues to include in your SLIP annual action plan. IE issues and actions should be included under the relevant SLIP focus areas. Below are some examples of SLIP focus area IE action plans.

SLIP Focus Area	Specific Outcome	Strategy	Timeframe	Resources	Person/s responsible	Indicators of success	Review
	What is the activity or outcome to be achieved?	How - or way in which it will be done	When will it be done – start and finish date	What resources will be used – kina, people etc.	Name of Person/s	Observable or measurable indicator	Process to gather data to make the judgement and decisions
<b>Curriculum and student learning</b>	Students with disabilities and additional learning needs can access the curriculum	Assistive devices are provided to relevant students	Term 1	xx Kina for Assistive Devices	IERC Coordinator/ IERC Outreach Officer	Assistive Device register	Annually
<b>Student needs and welfare</b>	Students are screened for disabilities and additional learning needs	Organise school outreach visits	Term 1	xx Kina for school outreach visits	IERC Coordinator/ IERC Outreach Officer	Outreach quarterly report	Quarterly
<b>Staff professional development and training</b>	School staff improve understanding on how to support students with specific disabilities	Provide trainings on disability awareness for teachers	Throughout the year	xx Kina for school outreach visits	IERC staff/ IERC Outreach Officer	PIST records	End of Term 1
<b>Good governance and community relationships</b>	Communities understand and implement inclusive practices	Run awareness activities on inclusive practice in local communities	Annually	xx kina for school outreach/ community visits	IERC staff/ IERC Outreach Officer	Students with disabilities and additional learning needs are attending consistently	Quarterly
<b>Infrastructure maintenance and development</b>	School premises are accessible for students with disabilities	Support schools to conduct an environmental access check	Term 1	Budget for school outreach visits	Headteacher IERC staff/ IERC Outreach Officer	100% of pathways provide clear access	Annually

### A note on budget

Not all actions will require a budget. If a budget is needed, it is important that it is realistic and that it is allocated according to school budget processes. Budget for IE priorities can be:

- Applied for using an AQEFA Grant (See “AQEFA Grant Guidelines for Schools” booklet).
- Allocated in the school budget using GTSF funding.
- Sourced through advocating to your District Development Authority.
- Raised through P&C fundraising activities.

## Step 4: Review

The SLIP IE action plan should be reviewed as part of the annual SLIP internal review process. The review will assess the level of success and achievement measured against the intended outcomes. This will help inform the need for further improvement in the next plan.

Schools should follow the internal review process outlined in the SLIP policy guidance and provided below.

**Review period:** The internal review for the school is conducted in a week during the last quarter of each year with ample time for follow up activities.

**Review team:** The internal review team will be from the school. It will comprise of the school's head teacher, Chairperson of the BOM and one person each from P&C, teachers, students.

**Methodology:** To be fair and accurate, the review should be based on interviews with relevant stakeholders (e.g., students, teachers, parents etc.) and spot checks and class visitations if relevant.

**Documents:** The internal review team should document findings from the review and include evidence and photos where relevant. Recommendations for improvement should be included to help inform the next plan.



**PNGAus Partnership**



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# IERC SCHOOL OUTREACH GUIDELINES





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# PART A: INTRODUCTION TO THE PART SCHOOL OUTREACH PROCESS



# INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education supports all students, including students with disabilities and additional learning needs, to access quality education and to reach their full potential. The right of all children to an education is embedded in the Inclusive Education (IE) Policy and the National Education Plan (NEP) 2020-2029.

To help schools develop an inclusive approach, the National Department of Education (NDoE) has a network of Inclusive Education Resource Centres (IERCs). The IE Policy emphasises the central role of IERCs in ensuring children with disabilities and additional learning needs can participate and learn in schools alongside their peers. IERCs support schools and communities to assess and enrol students with disabilities, develop Individual Education Plans (IEPs), improve inclusive teaching practices, and raise awareness and understanding about disabilities. The IE Policy also identifies the importance of connecting schools with outreach programs conducted by many IERCs to help schools to screen, identify and support children with disabilities. However, IERCs have limited resources, and this impacts their ability to conduct school outreach activities, leaving many children with disabilities unsupported.

The IERC School Outreach Guidelines are designed to support all IERC staff who are involved in school outreach activities.

## Why are school outreach visits important?

Even though there are national commitments supporting inclusive education, many children with disabilities struggle to access, fully participate, and learn in schools. There are many reasons for this. It could be because of negative cultural beliefs and attitudes which means children with disabilities or additional learning needs are kept at home. It could be because the school grounds are not accessible for some children with disabilities. School leadership and teachers may not understand how best to support children with disabilities and additional learning difficulties in their schools and classrooms. Whatever the reason, we know that without the proper support, children with disabilities and additional learning needs will struggle to fully participate and learn, leading to high rates of absenteeism and early drop out from school.

The IE Policy recognises that one of the primary roles of the IERCs is to ensure that schools are connected to IERC staff for outreach support. The goal of this support is to help teachers feel confident in conducting initial screening and identification of students with disabilities and additional learning needs, to be able to write simple IEPs for some students, and to know how and when to refer students to the IERCs for more in-depth IEPs and/or specialist support. All information, forms and resources relating to IEPs can be found in the IEP Teacher's Guide and IEP Additional Guidelines and Resources.



## Who is in the School Outreach Team?

The School Outreach Team may consist of the following people:

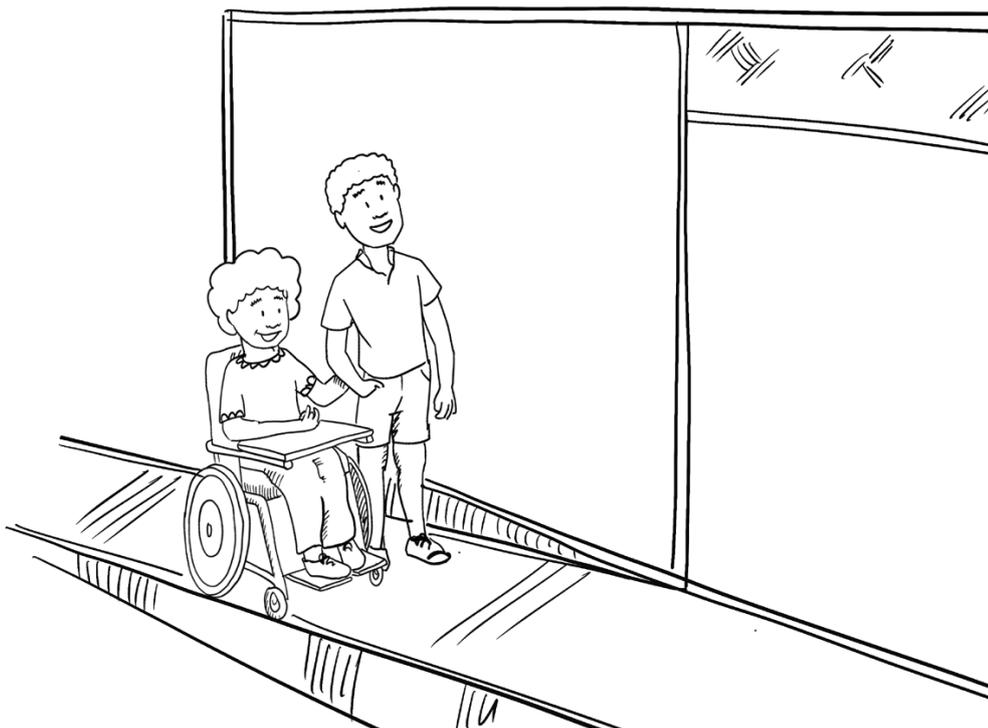
- Inclusive Education Outreach Officer (where relevant).
- IERC Specialist Teacher/s.
- Community-based Inclusive Development (CBID) staff (previously known as Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR)).
- A certified health worker.

It is important to make the most of the time available during school outreach visits. The number of staff in each IERC varies, so each team will look different.

## What Does School Outreach involve?

IERC School Outreach Activities include:

- School and community engagement and awareness raising on the inclusion of students with disabilities and additional learning needs.
- Identifying and providing support to children with disabilities and additional learning needs - this can include helping teachers to understand when and how to refer a student to the IERC, connecting with health and specialist services, and how to obtain assistive devices.
- Training school heads and teachers to improve inclusive teaching practices, conduct initial screening of students who they are concerned about, and write, implement and review Individual Education Plans (IEPs).



# PART B: KEY STEPS TO PLANNING SCHOOL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES



# 1. DEVELOP AN ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

- IERCs should include outreach activities in their SLIP Annual Action Plan.
- In deciding when and which schools to visit, think about the following:



## The Education Calendar:

Don't plan visits during holiday times.



## Weather conditions and transport routes:

Plan rural and remote school visits during dry periods of the year and when transport routes are safest. Visit clusters of schools to reduce transport times.



## Community factors:

Are there times of the year when some communities are engaged in livelihood activities that might impact school attendance, such as agricultural harvest times or times when families travel to urban markets? Your province may have other local factors to be aware of.



## Cost sharing:

Can the IERC conduct joint visits with the School Inspectors, Guidance Officer, Education Agency, or Provincial Health Authority?

## 2. DEVELOP A DETAILED QUARTERLY WORK PLAN

This should include:

- Schools
- The activities that need to be done.
- Who will be responsibility for leading the task/activity.
- Who will be involved in the activity.
- When the activity will be completed.
- Budget



Template 1 provides a workplan template you can use.

### Sample Quarterly Work Plan

Activity / Task	Person(s) Responsible	Person(s) involved	Completed by
<b>School selection and coordination</b>			
Draft list of schools and date for school visits.	IE Outreach Officer	IERC Principal/ Coordinator	Week 1
Contact the School Inspector/s to coordinate and confirm date/s of visits. School Inspectors will then advise the PEA, DEA, and church agencies.	IE Outreach Officer	School Inspectors	Week 1
Meet or call school School Heads to coordinate and confirm date of school visit and provide guidance on preparations.	IE Outreach Officer	School Heads	Week 1
Final confirmed list of schools and date for school visits.	IE Outreach Officer	IERC Principal/ Coordinator	Week 2
Visit logistics (travel, per diem, accommodation, equipment, and materials)	IE Outreach Officer	IERC Principal/ Coordinator	Week 2

## Template 1: School Outreach Quarterly Workplan Template

Activity / Task	Person(s) Responsible	Person(s) involved	Completed by (date)
<b>School Selection and coordination</b>			
<b>School Outreach preparations</b>			
<b>School Outreach Visits</b>			
<b>Referrals and follow up</b>			
<b>Assistive Devices – procurement and distribution</b>			
<b>Reporting</b>			

### 3. COORDINATE WITH SCHOOL INSPECTORS

The first people you should contact are the School Inspectors. Primary School Inspectors are also responsible for current Elementary schools. Secondary School Inspectors are responsible for Junior High Schools. This is to avoid any clash with their inspection visits to schools, or any other programs such as professional development, meetings, remedial classes, mock examination week, or any other planned activities.

The School Inspector will then advise the Provincial Education Advisor (PEA), District Education Advisor (DEA), and church agencies of your visit.

### 4. COORDINATE WITH SCHOOLS

The IE Outreach Officer or Specialist Teacher should contact the schools that the School Outreach Team intend to visit. In-person visits can be made to schools located close to the IERC or phone calls can be made to the school head at schools that are located a long distance from the IERC. Confirm the date/s and provide guidance on preparations that the school should undertake prior to the day.

Some schools will be aware of the IERC and their role in supporting children with disabilities in schools. Teachers in some schools may have been provided with training in inclusive education and may have already pre-screened children in their class using the Whole Child Checklist. They may have been able to develop and implement a Quick IEP, or be using more detailed IEPs for students with disabilities and additional learning needs in their class. (Information and guidance on this process is available in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) Teacher's Guide.)

Some schools, especially in remote areas located far away from the IERC, may not have had an IERC outreach before and some teachers may never have received training in inclusive education. Therefore, it is important to take time during this initial visit or phone call to get to know the school and understand their teacher's prior knowledge of and experience with the IERC and inclusive education.

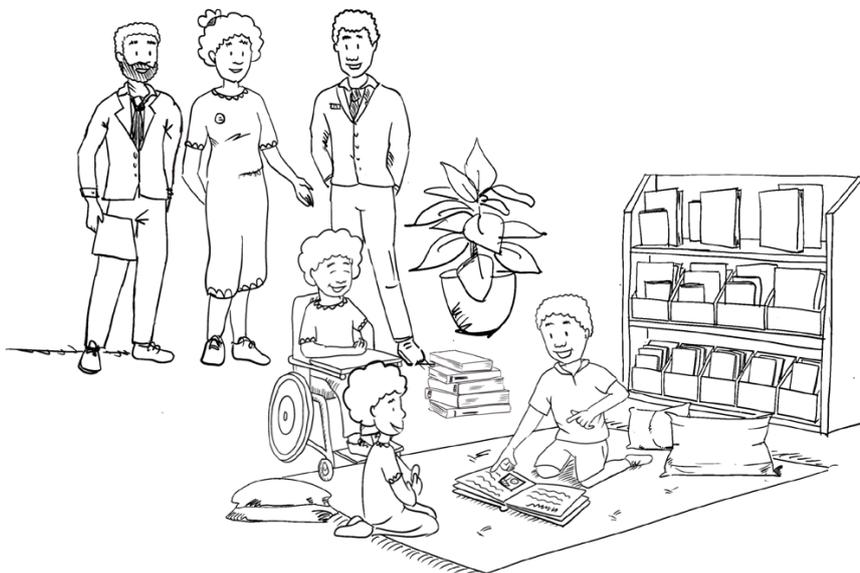
During the initial school visit / phone call with the school head, you should:

-  Share the purpose and benefits of IERC school outreach. Annex A provides key messages on the purpose and benefits of IERC school outreach.
-  Confirm the date/s and time for the school outreach visit.
-  Provide an overview of the school outreach activities and guidance on what they should do to prepare for the school outreach visit (see below).
-  Confirm the list of students who are already registered with the IERC and/or already have an IEP.
-  Remind the school head that you will visit or call again three weeks before the planned school outreach visit to confirm arrangements, inquire about preparations and provide further guidance or support if needed.
-  Provide the school head with your phone number and contact details and let them know that they can call you to ask further questions or seek advice prior to the school outreach visit.

## Guidance to school heads on preparing for the IERC school outreach

To prepare for the school outreach day, ask the school head to:

- Inform teachers, parents, and students about the IERC school outreach visit through school assembly announcements, staff meetings, Parent & Citizen (P&C) meetings and during Toksave sessions after church services. Share the key messages on the purpose and benefits of IERC school outreach.
- Provide the teachers with an overview of the school outreach day schedule and plan time in the school day for each activity. (See Part C for information about this process).
- Identify any training, guidance and support needs of teachers. Ask the Head Teacher if teachers at their school are trained in the use of the Whole Child Checklist and how to develop a quick IEP. Are there teachers with students with disabilities in their class that require individual guidance and support on how to adjust or adapt lessons to meet the child's learning needs? Based on the needs of teachers at the school, you can talk to the Head Teacher about allocating time to provide guidance and support to a small group or individual teachers.
- Encourage teachers to use the Whole Child Checklist with students they have concerns about in their class. By pre-screening students, teacher can help ensure that children that may have a disability or additional learning need are prioritised for assessment on the day of the IERC school outreach visit.
- Encourage parents of children who have been pre-screened by their teacher or parents who have concerns about their child/ren to attend on the day of the IERC school outreach visit.
- Identify children with disabilities in the community that are not enrolled school. It is important to ask the Head Teacher if they are aware of or if they can inquire with the BOM, P&C, church and community leaders etc. about children with disabilities in the community that are not enrolled in school. This is so you can plan a home visit during your time in the community to support children with disabilities to enrol in school through the Road to School. I



## 5. COORDINATE WITH THE PROVINCIAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

The National Department of Health (NDoH) has a National School Health Policy (2015) that provides the basis for cooperation between the NDoE and NDoH on school health checks. A health worker should be part of the School Outreach Team so that they can provide point-of-care treatment to students at the school on the day. This will help avoid having to refer students with basic health issues for follow up treatment – ensuring that students get the treatment that they need as soon as possible and saving students and their parents/caregiver’s time. This is particularly important because:

- Basic health issues, such as eye or ear infections, can become more serious if left untreated and can lead to permanent disability.
- It can save time and money for students and their families, particularly in rural and remote areas, where health services are often far away or where visits from health workers are irregular.
- For some students, an IEP may no longer be required once basic health issues have been treated.

In some cases, an IERC staff member may be a qualified health worker and can join the school outreach team. If the IERC does not have a member of staff who is a health worker, the IE Outreach Officer should seek support from the NDoE IE Branch to coordinate with the PHA for a certified health worker to join the school outreach team.

Annex B provides key sections of the National School Health Policy that can be used to help ensure cooperation between national and provincial education and health authorities in support of IERC school outreach activities.

## 6. COORDINATE WITH RELEVANT NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS (NGOS)

The majority of IERCs are part of the Callan Services IERC network and there are other NGOs, such as the Fred Hollows Foundation, that provide health and/or disability and additional learning needs support services throughout PNG. Each IERC will have different services working in their regions – if an existing list of local NGO contacts is not available, IERC Outreach Officers should map their area for local services and contacts.

# PART C: THE SCHOOL OUTREACH VISIT



The school outreach visit is an important opportunity for the IERC to undertake several activities to support children with disabilities, their teachers and their caregivers.

## 1. CHILD SAFEGUARDING

The IERC school outreach team must abide by the national Behaviour Management Policy and PNGTA Code of Ethics. IERC staff funded by AQEFA need to follow the Abt Associates PSEAH policies.

Abuse, harassment and violence against students and staff must be reported to the provincial Guidance and Counselling Officer and School Inspector. Schools may also report incidents directly to the Police or Child Protection/Welfare Officer.

Schools may also report safeguarding incidents directly to the Program on [png.safeguarding@abtassoc.com.au](mailto:png.safeguarding@abtassoc.com.au)

During screening, IERC staff will need to touch children. It is important to remember that physical contact during screenings can confuse or make some children uncomfortable. It is important that you take the time to explain what you will do and why you will do it before you touch a child. You should always explain and ask permission before touching a child. You can say things like 'I am now going to touch your face so that I can check your ears – is this, ok?'

You must never be alone with a child in a secluded place (e.g. in a room with a closed door).

## 2. SCHEDULE

### Activities to conduct include:

1. Awareness raising sessions to promote the rights of children with disabilities and health and hygiene promotion so that children learn how to better take care for themselves.
2. Screening and identifying children with disabilities and undertaking point of care treatment or making a referral to health and specialist services where relevant.
3. Undertaking accessibility checks and providing guidance to Head Teachers on modifications to improve the accessibility of the school environment.
4. Providing training, guidance and support to teachers to improve their inclusive teaching practices.
5. Conducting home visits to out of school children with disabilities while in the community in order to support them to enrol in school through 'Road to School' activities.

## School Outreach Visit Schedule

Below is a sample schedule for a typical school outreach visit. Depending upon location, school outreach may take 2 or 3 days per cluster, so you can adjust your schedule as needed.

Time	Activities
8:00am	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arrive at the school.</li> <li>2. Meet with the school head.</li> <li>3. Identify and set up screening location.</li> <li>4. Obtain list of students for screening from school head and teachers. If teachers have used the whole child checklist to pre-screen children, a copy of the completed whole child checklist should be obtained. If students already have an IEP or are registered with the school, record this data.</li> </ol>
8:30am	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Morning Awareness Session (e.g. for teachers, students, caregivers)</li> </ol>
9:30am	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Student screening (by grade)</li> <li>2. Point of care treatment</li> <li>3. Referrals and registration of students with the IERC</li> </ol>
12:30pm	<b>Lunch Break</b>
13:00pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. IE Support and guidance to teachers (see the IEP Teacher's Guide and Additional Guidelines and Resources documents)/IEP writing and review</li> <li>2. School accessibility check</li> </ol>
15:30pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Home visits - the Road to School.</li> </ol>
17:30pm	<b>End of day</b>

At the end of your visit, make sure to complete the Outreach Visit Report.

### 3. EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES

<p><b>Awareness Sessions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability and Additional Learning Needs Inclusion, Health and Hygiene Information, Communication and Education materials (e.g. handouts, posters, pamphlets)</li> <li>• IEP Teacher’s Guide</li> <li>• Road to School</li> <li>• Examples of accessible materials (braille), assistive devices (e.g. white cane, hearing aid)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Screening</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Otoscope</li> <li>• Tri-lens</li> <li>• Printed Screening Forms from the IEP Additional Guidelines and Resources</li> </ul>
<p><b>Point of care treatment</b></p>	<p><b>Medical/basic first aid kit including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panadol</li> <li>• Bandages</li> <li>• Gauze</li> <li>• Ear drops</li> <li>• Eye drops</li> <li>• Cotton wool</li> <li>• Tweezers</li> <li>• Scissors</li> <li>• Syringes</li> <li>• Iodine</li> <li>• Stainless steel small bowls</li> <li>• Antibiotics (for use by a qualified health worker)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Referrals</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Printed IERC referral form (IEP Additional Guidelines and Resources)</li> <li>• Parent consent form (IEP Additional Guidelines and Resources)</li> <li>• Road to School documentation (IEP Additional Guidelines and Resources)</li> <li>• Parent interview form (IEP Additional Guidelines and Resources)</li> </ul>
<p><b>School Accessibility</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Printed accessibility checklist (IEP Additional Guidelines and Resources)</li> </ul>

## 4. SETTING UP ON THE DAY

You will need to choose a location in the school for screening students. The location should be safe, convenient, and accessible for all students. The location can be in a room, under a tree, or in an open space within the school. The location should be discussed with the school head during planning and confirmed when you arrive at the school. Talk about these questions with the school head so you can find an appropriate screening location.

Are there areas in the school that are:



Close to most of the students' classes.



Easy for students to come to.



Quiet (e.g. away from the playground or sports field).



Protected from weather (shady, sheltered).



Accessible for students with disabilities.

Also consider:



Is there a clean water source and toilet facilities that students can use whilst they are waiting?



Is there an area that students can sit comfortably whilst they are waiting?

## 5. SCREENING

Screening involves a set of simple assessments to investigate and identify whether a child has health, disability or learning needs. All students at the school should be screened. If teachers have used the Whole Child Checklist to pre-screen children, you should prioritise these children for screening as there is already some concern about their health, disability status or learning needs.

There are a range of screening forms available in the IEP Additional Guidelines and Resources documents.

Information about how to write and review IEPs, and how to register students with the IERC can be found in the IEP Teacher's Guide.

## 6. POINT-OF-CARE TREATMENT

If a qualified health worker is part of the School Outreach Team, point-of-care treatment can be provided to students with basic health issues such as a build-up of ear wax, ear or eye or skin infections and other treatable illnesses. These can all be treated on the day.

In some cases, a follow up health check or further treatment will be needed. In such cases, a health referral should be made following point-of-care treatment (See Part D below).

## 7. PROVIDING TRAINING, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT TO TEACHERS

After students have been screened, the School Outreach Team should take the opportunity to provide teachers with training, guidance and support to strengthen their inclusive teaching practices. Teachers can include most children with disabilities in their classroom with simple easy adaptations to their teaching, the classroom, and the curriculum. The type of guidance and support teachers need will vary depending on their needs and should be identified in your discussions with the school head prior to the school outreach visit.

Depending on the needs identified, guidance and support could include:

- How to use the Whole Child Checklist to identify children with disabilities and learning needs.
- How to develop a quick IEP and use simple strategies to remove barriers to learning.
- How to develop a more detailed IEP.
- Adapting their classroom.
- Adapting their curriculum and using accessible materials.

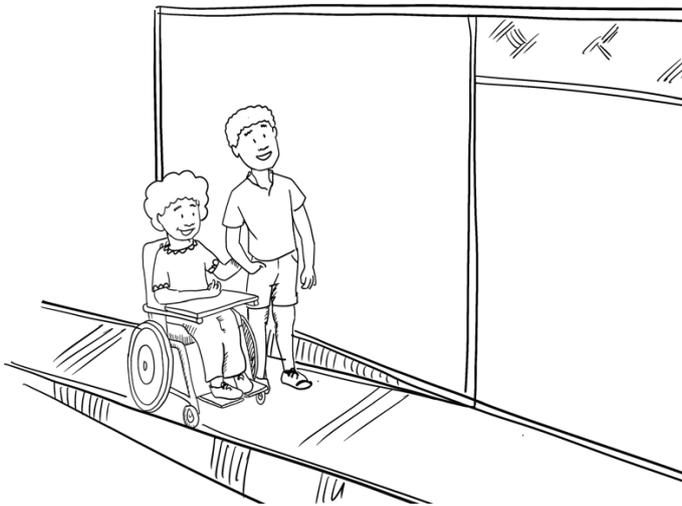
The IEP Teacher's Guide and Additional Guidelines and Resources should be used to provide guidance and support to teachers.

## 8. SCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY CHECK

Whilst you are at the school, a member of the School Outreach Team should conduct an accessibility check. An accessibility check involves walking around the school with the school head and undertaking a survey of the school environment and facilities. This is so you can point things out areas which need improvement and provide guidance on low-cost modifications that will make the school more accessible. You can use the Accessibility Checklist in the IEP Additional Guidelines and Resources.

You should encourage the school head to include the changes in the SLIP. The table below provides the relevant SLIP focus areas.

SLIP Focus Area	Priority Area
<b>4. Student Needs and Welfare</b>	4.2.3 Provision of relevant teaching aids and resources and technical/special staff for various disabilities, including WASH facilities for all students.
<b>5. Infrastructure, Equipment and Transport</b>	Basic maintenance works following standards requirements of WASH and infrastructure policies.



## 9. CONDUCTING AWARENESS SESSIONS

Providing disability and additional learning needs inclusion, and health and hygiene awareness during school outreach is a key activity. There are 2 reasons for this:

1. It is important to challenge negative attitudes about disability and additional learning needs by promoting and reinforcing the education rights of children with disabilities.
2. Good health and hygiene practices can help prevent children from becoming sick and this can help prevent some children from developing a disability.

Awareness sessions can take place with different groups:

1. Awareness for teachers (e.g., on the new IE Policy, understanding the IEP Teacher's Guide, Adapting their classroom, curriculum, or teaching).
2. Awareness for P&C (e.g., on school attendance and students' rights to education).
3. Awareness for the governing body (e.g., on the IE Policy, NQSFF and infrastructure standards).
4. Awareness for students (e.g., on healthy practices and looking after their peers).

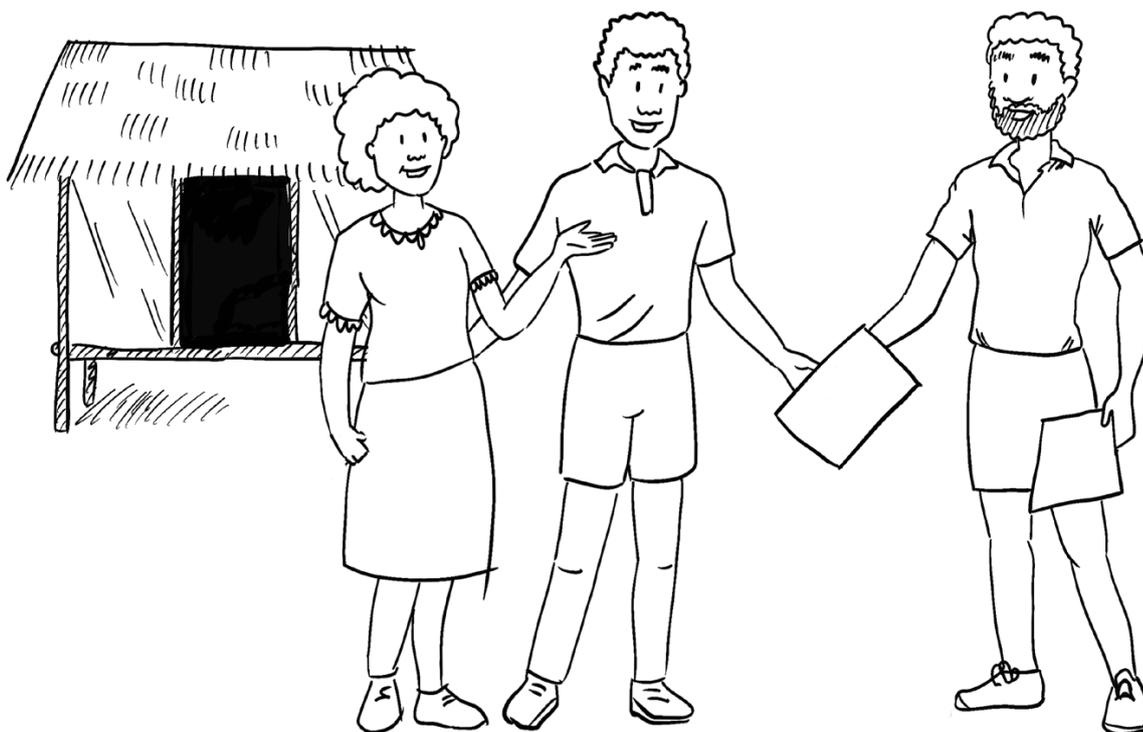


## 10. HOME VISITS - ROAD TO SCHOOL

It is important to maximise your time, particularly in rural and remote communities that you do not visit often. Therefore, after you have completed the school outreach activities, the team should take the opportunity to conduct home visits to students with disabilities in the community who are not attending school regularly. This can be done in the afternoon following the end of the school day or on a separate day.

In some cases, the IERC may already have a list of children with disabilities in the community that are not attending school. In other cases, the school head may have notified you of children with disabilities in the community as part of your coordination and planning prior to your visit.

During a home visit, you should use the Road to School materials developed by Callan Services to help children with disabilities enrol and attend school for the first time. This involves interviewing the parents and child, assessing the child, and preparing the school, family, and the child for transition to school, including developing an IEP and providing any assistive devices and materials needed. The IEP Teacher's Guide provides information on the Road to School that you should use during home visits.



**PART D:  
REFERRING AND REGISTERING  
STUDENTS WITH THE IERC AND  
SPECIALIST HEALTH SERVICES**



# 1. REFERRING STUDENTS TO HEALTH AND SPECIALIST SERVICES

Where possible, referrals should be made to available health or specialist services as close to the child's home as possible. However, given the lack of services in many areas, it may be necessary to refer a child to a health or specialist service some distance away. The IEP Additional Guidelines and Resources provides a health/specialist services referral form.

Referrals should be given to the child's parent /caregiver if they are present on the day of the screening or to the child's teachers. In making a referral, you should:

- Explain the outcome of the screening to the child and their parent/caregiver or teacher.
- Complete and give them the referral form: If the referral is given to the child's teacher, ask them to meet and discuss the outcome of the screening with the child's parent/caregiver and provide the referral to the teacher.
- Talk to the child's parent/caregiver or the teacher about making a plan to bring their child to the IERC, health or specialist service and the support that the IERC can provide if needed.
- Provide your contact details if the caregivers or teachers have any questions.

## 2. IERC REFERRAL

Some students will require specialist teaching which is not available in their home school (for example, students with hearing or vision impairments). Some students may experience barriers preventing them from accessing mainstream education and may also need to enrol and attend the IERC for specialist teaching. However, the aim should be to transition these students into mainstream schools if possible.

The Whole Child Checklist includes a section to indicate that a referral to the IERC is needed. This means a more detailed screening is required. Schools will also need to be supported in developing and implementing a detailed Individual Education Plan (IEP).

The IEP Teacher's Guide and Additional Guidelines and Resources includes all the relevant information and documents for this process.

## 3. REGISTERING STUDENTS WITH THE IERC

All students with disabilities and additional learning needs must be referred to and registered with their nearest IERC. Some students will require specialist teaching or access to assistive devices. These students will also require a more detailed Individual Education Plan (IEP) to be developed to support their learning.

If a student needs to be registered with the IERC, complete the IERC referral form in the IERC Additional Guidelines and Resources documents.

# **PART E: SPECIALIST IERC SUPPORT**



# 1. ASSISTIVE DEVICES

An assistive device is any tool, piece of equipment, or technology designed to help a person with a disability or additional learning need function and perform daily tasks and activities. For children with disabilities, having an assistive device can make a major difference to their ability to access, participate and learn in schools alongside their peers.

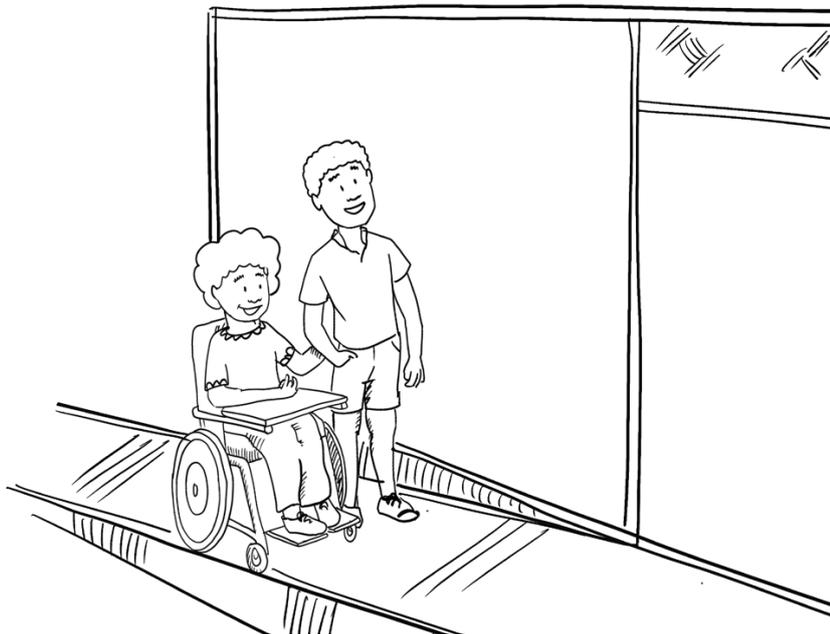
The type of assistive device depends on the type of disability. Below is a list of some of the available assistive devices for different disabilities and additional learning needs:

## Difficulty hearing

- Hearing aids, which make sounds louder and help reduce background noise.
- Cochlear implants, which are surgically implanted devices that deliver auditory (hearing-related) information to the brain.
- You can find signed and audio versions of the NDoE's ECE, primary and secondary reading books at <https://bloomlibrary.org/PNG-EERRP>

## Difficulty with mobility

- Canes or walking sticks that help with walking.
- Crutches.
- Walkers, which are aids that have four points of contact with the ground.
- Wheelchairs, which may or may not have a motor.
- Prosthetics, or artificial limbs for walking.
- Orthotic devices and shoes, which support the limbs and provide additional support to the feet.



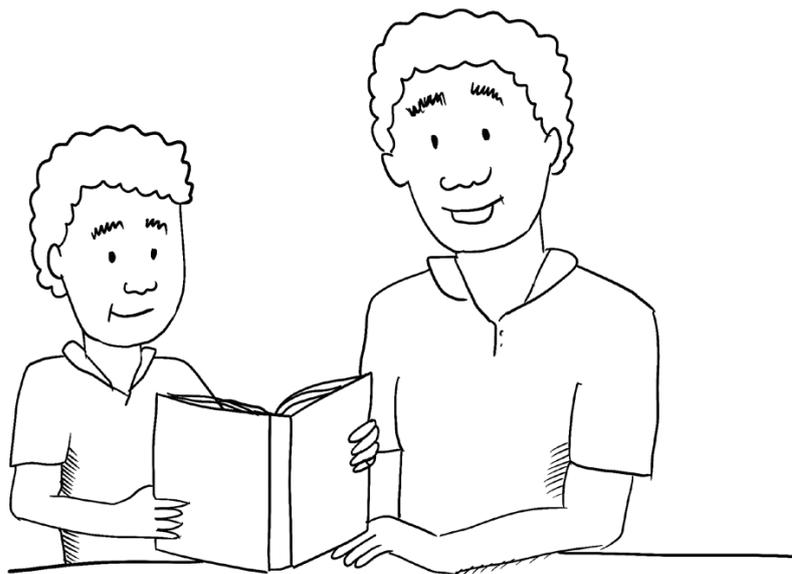
## Difficulty with vision

- Eyeglasses to improve sight for short sightedness and long sightedness.
- Braille books that use printed or raised dots to translate the text.
- Large print books that use bigger font size.
- Magnifying glasses for enlargement print text.
- Audio versions of teaching and learning materials (textbooks, reading books, etc.). You can find audio versions of the NDoE's primary reading books at <https://bloomlibrary.org/PNG-EERRP>
- White cane.



## Difficulty with communication or being understood

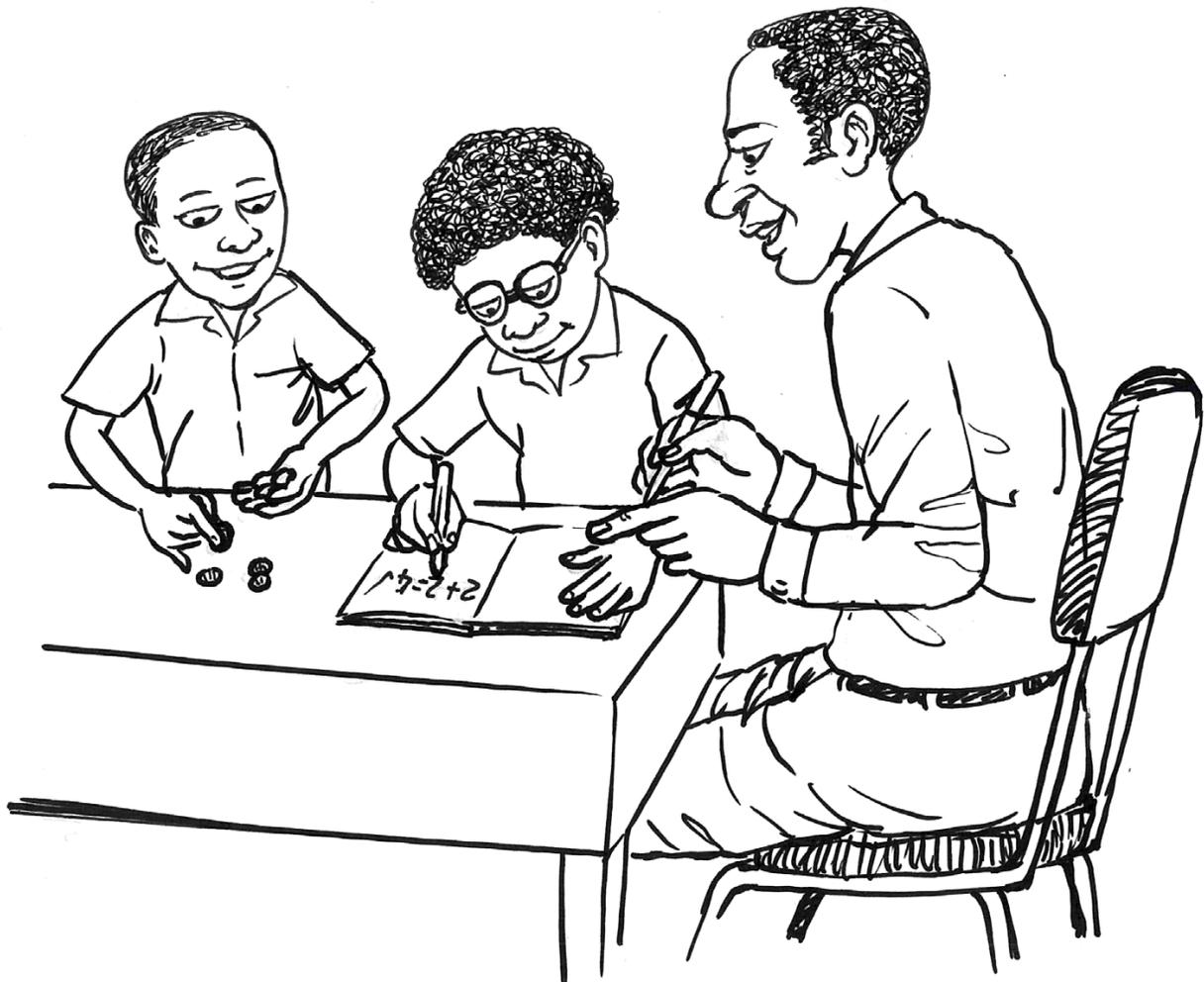
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication devices (AAC) (e.g., Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)).



## Providing Assistive Devices

Providing a child with an assistive device will depend on the availability and cost of the device. Below is a summary of where and how to procure assistive devices.

Assistive Devices	Description	Procurement forms
In stock at the IERC	Some assistive devices, such as eyeglasses, have been pre purchased and are in stock at the IERC.	Assistive device register
Locally available in the province /country	Some assistive devices will be available for purchase within the province/country.	Low-cost assistive devices (\$) – procurement form High-cost assistive device (\$) – request form
Unavailable locally	Some assistive devices may only be available in Port Moresby or internationally.	High-cost assistive device (\$) – request form



## 2. INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEPS)

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a written plan which determines a student's strengths as well as their learning goal, strategies, and assessment plans. A student's IEP describes the adjustments to meet their individual learning goals so that they can reach their full potential. It helps teachers to plan and monitor a student's unique learning needs and is a collaborative process where everyone works together to identify what the student needs to learn. The IEP drives the child's education, guiding all partners in their roles in supporting the student's learning.

There are two kinds of IEPs that schools can use. For some students, a few simple adjustments to teaching strategies or to the classroom may be enough. The IEP Teacher's Guide provides a Quick IEP that schools can use immediately to support the child.

Other students will need more support and a more detailed IEP. The IERC should always be involved in developing detailed IEPs for students who have been referred for more support. Encourage schools and teachers to become comfortable in using the Whole Child Checklist as a starting point in this process.

The IEP Teacher Guide provides detailed guidance on the process for developing and reviewing/updating an IEP.

# ANNEXES



# ANNEX A: GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS: PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF SCHOOL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

This guide is intended to familiarize schools with the concept of inclusive education and the supportive role of Inclusive Education Resource Centres (IERCs). It highlights the purpose of school outreach activities in overcoming challenges to the inclusion of students with disabilities and additional learning needs, ensuring every child has the opportunity to thrive in the educational environment.

## UNDERSTANDING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive education means that all students, including those with disabilities and additional learning needs, can go to the same school and learn together. It's about making sure every student feels welcome and gets the support they need to do their best in school.

In inclusive schools:

- Students with disabilities and additional learning needs learn in the same classrooms as other students.
- Teachers and staff work together to help all students, no matter their abilities.
- Everyone is treated with respect and kindness, and differences are celebrated.

The goal is to create a school where every student, regardless of their abilities, feels included, valued, and has the chance to learn and grow with their peers. This goal is a priority in the National Education Plan (NEP) 2020-2029, and the Inclusive Education Policy and Minimum Standards (2024).

## How IERCs Support Schools

The National Department of Education supports and regulates Inclusive Education Resource Centres (IERCs) to help schools develop inclusive practices.

IERCs:

- provide outreach support to schools.
- train teachers to screen and identify students with disabilities and additional learning needs.
- supporting students with disabilities who are not at school to attend school.
- train teachers write and review Individual Education Plans (IEPs).
- promote inclusive teaching practices.
- coach teachers on how to adapt their classroom, curriculum, and teaching.
- register all students with an IEP with the IERC.
- help schools refer students for specialist teaching and health services.
- conduct awareness about disabilities and additional learning needs to students, teachers, parents/ caregivers, and communities.
- assess and provide advice to schools on accessibility.
- help students access assistive devices and accessible teaching and learning materials.
- provide specialist teaching at the IERC to children who need it.

## Why School Outreach Matters

- Despite national commitments, children with disabilities and additional learning needs face obstacles due to cultural beliefs, physical barriers, and lack of understanding. Without proper support, these children may experience high rates of absenteeism and early dropout.

## Resources for Schools

- Schools can refer to the Inclusive Education Policy Implementation Guide for ideas on how to implement inclusive education in their schools and how to work with their local IERC.
- All necessary resources for Individual Education Plans (IEPs) can be found in the IEP Teacher's Guide.

## Who is in the School Outreach Team?

- Inclusive Education Outreach Officer
- IERC Specialist Teacher/s
- Community-based Inclusive Development (CBID) staff
- Certified health worker
- Organisation of People with Disabilities (OPD) where possible.

The composition may vary based on the resources available in each IERC.

## What kind of activities happened during School Outreach visits?

- Engagement: Raising awareness in schools and communities about including students with disabilities and additional learning needs.
- Identification: Help identify and support children with disabilities and additional learning needs, including connecting with health and specialist services.
- Teacher Support: Aiding schools and teachers in developing inclusive teaching practices, initial screening, and implementing Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

# ANNEX B: KEY POLICY POINTS

## KEY SECTIONS OF THE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY AND MINIMUM STANDARDS (2024)

Background: The National Education Plan 2021-2029 (NEP) includes a focus on access and equity. The plan acknowledges that students with disabilities and additional learning needs have traditionally not been able to access education in the regular school system. The Inclusive Education Policy and Minimum Standards represents one of the initiatives undertaken by the National Department of Education to redress this situation.

Policy Goal: To provide a comprehensive framework promoting the full participation of learners with disabilities and additional learning needs in all aspects of school life, thereby ensuring equitable access to quality educational opportunities, fostering holistic development, and maximising all students' potential for success.

## POLICY OBJECTIVES AND STANDARDS

### Objective 1:

To create inclusive and child-friendly school environments that enrich the overall educational experience for every student, by enhancing the culture, structures and programs within and outside the classroom.

#### What does this mean?

Accessing school begins by ensuring that school premises are inclusive and child-friendly environments. This means thinking about school infrastructure, leadership, attitudes, and partnerships with family and community.

This is reflected in:

**Standard 1: Inclusive and Accessible Infrastructure**

**Standard 2: Strong Leadership and Positive Attitudes**

**Standard 3: Inclusive Communities**

### Objective 2:

To ensure a holistic learning approach with inclusive teaching pedagogy, assessment and learning support.

#### What does this mean?

Successful inclusive education needs a holistic approach to learning support. IERCs can work with schools to develop better processes for screening, registration and referral of students with disabilities and additional learning needs. Schools will also need IERC support to meet the individual learning needs of

their students by understanding how to write individual education plans (IEPs). IERC Outreach Officers and specialist teachers can work with schools on flexible approaches to teaching pedagogy. This might mean helping teachers understand differentiated learning or using principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) can help to support all learners in the classroom in the areas of assessment, teaching, and monitoring progress.

This is reflected in:

#### **Standard 4: Inclusive Screening and Assessment Practices**

#### **Standard 5: Inclusive Teaching Pedagogy and Assessment**

#### **Standard 6: Inclusive Learning Support**

### **Objective 3:**

To cultivate knowledgeable and skilled educators capable of delivering high quality inclusive education services across Papua New Guinea.

#### **What does this mean?**

It is important for teachers to have the knowledge and skills to create inclusive classrooms. Research has shown that well trained teachers feel more positively about inclusion. Building a knowledgeable and skilled teacher workforce means making sure teachers have opportunities for both pre-service and in-service training that develops their knowledge and confidence around inclusive education. It's also important that teachers have opportunities to learn about the students in their school who have disabilities or additional learning needs through ongoing professional development.

This is reflected in:

#### **Standard 7: Knowledgeable and Skilled Teacher Workforce**

### **Objective 4:**

To ensure disability information is incorporated into education data systems to assess education performance, plan and monitor program implementation, and evaluate outcomes. To ensure effective delivery of inclusive education and national, sub-national and school levels.

#### **What does this mean?**

Good planning and management at the school level helps make sure that inclusive education programs can be successfully implemented and evaluated. It's important that detailed records are kept so that schools receive enough funding to support students with disabilities and additional learning needs.

This is reflected in:

#### **Standard 8: Strengthening Data and Evidence**

#### **Standard 9: Management**

# KEY SECTIONS OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL HEALTH POLICY (2015)

## Background:

The policy was developed following the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement between the secretaries of the National Departments of Education and Health on 2 June 2014.

## Policy Goal:

To provide school health services in partnership with the NDoE and other organisations to strengthen the overall wellbeing of PNG children using a school focused approach that is responsive to evolving children's needs.

## Policy Objectives:

- a. To ensure the school health service is delivered to students, teachers and the surrounding community.
- b. To protect and promote the health and wellbeing of school children through school health services and health education.
- c. To ensure active collaboration and partnership between the NDoE, NDoH and other stakeholders in school health services.

Analysis of Issues Includes: Many schools do not provide an enabling environment for children with disabilities, who are often ignored, disrespected, uncared for and left to cope by themselves. This leads to lack of active and meaningful participation in educational, social and physical activities. Accepting children with all forms of disabilities and respecting the nature of the child should be encouraged and child friendly environments promoted.

Access to health checks and information on diagnosis, and treatment of disabilities must be made available to schools, teachers and school children living with disabilities.

## Policy Statement Two: School Health Services

- Every school shall be visited once a year to conduct school health services.

### Strategies include:

1. Rural outreach programs shall include school medicals as part of their annual activities.
2. Mobilise resources to support school medicals in rural and urban settings of PNG.
3. Coordination of School Health Services will be led by NDoH in cooperation with NDoE.

## Policy Statement Seven: Partnerships

- Effective partnerships between stakeholders in school health will be encouraged at all levels to better coordinate and implement school health programs.

## Policy Statement Ten: Disability

- Disabled children shall be given an equal opportunity to be education with access to health services without any fear of discrimination.

### Strategies include:

- 1.** Advocate for and support the rights to education for disabled children.
- 2.** Educate schools on the needs of school children with disabilities.
- 3.** Educate parents, teachers and the school communities on rights of disabled students to have access to school health services.
- 4.** Develop standard guidelines for schools and teachers on how to provide education to disabled school children with care and understanding.





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