REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN

The Ministry of General Education and Instruction

THE NATIONAL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY 2020

Developed by Ministry of General Education and Instruction and Light for the World with Supported from Save the Children International

"Achieving Education for all in South Sudan"

Foreword and Authorization

Dr. John Garang De Mabior, the founding father of South Sudan made “a call to South Sudanese to prepare themselves and take up leadership roles in all academic fields and build the nation.” These words emphatically echo the Government of the Republic of South Sudan’s belief that every child deserve quality education. As the Minister of General Education and Instruction, I am a passionate believer that it is our collective responsibility, to educate all our children and to educate them well. Although parents are the first and best teachers of their children, the Government, as mandated by the Transitional Constitution of South Sudan and in pursuit of aspiration envisaged in Vision 2040, cannot ignore the fact that it also has an obligation to ensure that all citizens and future leaders achieve their academic potential.

The Republic of South Sudan sees quality education, as that which is inclusive of all, and as a national endeavour that goes beyond the mandate of the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI) and individual schools. A successful and effective education system is dependent upon the involvement of parents, educators, support professionals, non-profit organisations, and the larger society. In addition, public education cannot be successful without the support of the larger government for the establishment of a strong infrastructure that includes legislation, financing, policies and strategies. This infrastructure helps to drive the quality and types of services and supports that are necessary to optimise learners’ achievements and outcomes. Examples of services and supports include access to basic healthcare (including rehabilitation, assistive technologies and mental health services), human rights legislation and enforcement, nutrition programmes, as well as social and financial assistance. Simply said – quality inclusive education is everyone’s business.

Critical to this, an inter-sectorial collaboration between government sectors, e.g. Ministry of Health, Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, Ministry of Physical Infrastructure, etc. Barriers to equitable access can only be removed by aligning budgets and sharing responsibilities, e.g. accessible school infrastructure, WASH, integrated school health services, etc. Inclusive education is the responsibility of every Directorate within the Ministry of General Education and Instruction, e.g. Planning, financial and sectorial planning, curriculum, teacher development, Education Management Information System (EMIS), etc., with the Directorate of Gender, Equity and Inclusive Education providing specific support services and technical support to the various units.

Therefore, I am delighted that the Ministry of General Education and Instruction has finalised the National Inclusive Education Policy, to achieve ‘Education for All’ in South Sudan by transforming our general education system. Making sure that every child is supported to achieve his or her potential should be every person’s concern and responsibility. I acknowledge that there are costs involved, but there will be higher costs if we do not purposefully work for all of our children. This policy is designed as the first step towards creating a society that respects and embraces diversity, uphold and ensures the right to education for everybody.

Hon. Awut Deng Acuil - Minister
The Ministry of General Education and Instruction
Republic of South Sudan

Date:

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The National Inclusive Education Policy Framework is a product of the experiences, practices and collaborative efforts of various stakeholders, including the officials of the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI).

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List of Acronyms

MoGEI	Ministry of General Education and Instruction
MGCSW	Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare
SMoE	State Ministry of Education
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
MoH	Ministry of Health
EMIS	Education Management Information System
PLLP	Person-centred Learning and Life Plan
OPD	Organisations of Persons with Disabilities
SSUPWD	South Sudan Union of People with Disabilities
EENET	Enabling Education Network
INEE	Inter-Agency Network on Education in Emergencies
ISRC	Inclusion Support and Resource Centres
GESP	General Education Strategic Plan
SEF	State Education Forum
CTWG	County level Thematic Working Group
CwD	Children with Disabilities
CBR	Community Based Rehabilitation
DIF	Disability Inclusion Facilitators
ASRH	Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health
GESS	Girls' Education South Sudan
LFtW	Light for the World
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
NEC	National Education Coalition
IEAC	Inclusive Education Advisory Committees
TC	Total Communication
SAGA	Semi-Autonomous Government Agencies
ECDE	Early Childhood and Development Education
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education & Training
AES	Alternative Education Systems
TTIs	Teacher Training Institutes
ALP	Accelerated Learning Program
PEP	Pastoral Education program
BALP	Basic Adult Literacy Programme
CGS	Community Girls' Schools
IELC	Intensive English Language Course
ASE	Accelerated Secondary Education
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
SMC	School Management Committee
PTA	Parents Teachers' Association
BoG	Board of Governors
DI&S	Directorate of Inspection and Supervision
WASH	Water and Sanitation Hygiene
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

Interpretation and definitions

These are agreed definitions for terms used in the policy:

Accommodations: (within inclusive education) allows all learners to learn and participate in the same curriculum as all other learners.

Additional support needs: Every learner needs support, but some learners, for whatever reason, may require additional support for learning. Additional support needs can arise from any factor that causes a barrier to learning, whether that factor relates to social, emotional, cognitive, linguistic, disability, or family and care circumstances. For instance, additional support may be required for a child or young person who has learning difficulties; is being bullied; has behavioural difficulties; is a parent; has a sensory or mobility impairment; is at risk of school drop-out or has been bereaved. There are many other examples besides these. Some additional support needs are long term while others are short term. The effect they have varies from learner to learner. In all cases it is how these factors impact on the individual child's learning that is important and the impact determines the level of support provision required.

Assistive devices: are materials and equipment designed to assist a learner in performing a particular educational task. It is intended to compensate for any form of functional limitation that makes it difficult for a learner with a disability to access the curriculum. Assistive devices and communication technologies, mobility aids, hearing aids and visual aids,

Barriers: These are things that prevents persons with disabilities/without disabilities from participating in doing things just like any other person.

Types of Barriers;
Attitudinal barriers*: This is when people within a society/community think negatively about persons with disabilities resulting into labelling, segregating, stigmatizing, discriminating, denying people with disabilities their dignity, potential to achieving equality of opportunity and social integration.*

I. ***Communication barriers****: This is experienced by people who have disabilities that affect hearing, speaking, reading, writing, and or understanding, and who use different ways to communicate than people who do not have these disabilities. Examples include: Written health promotion messages with barriers that prevent people with visual impairments from receiving the message, use of small print or no large-print versions of material, and no Braille or versions for people who use screen readers.*
II. ***Environmental/physical Barriers****: these limit or prevent a person with a disability from fully participating in social, occupational and recreational activities like in the natural or built environment. For a wheelchair-user, environmental barriers may include stairs, narrow **doorways**, heavy doors, or high counter tops.*
III. ***Institutional barriers****: These refer to institutional laws, policies, strategies and practices that discriminate against people with disabilities).*

Basic education
Basic education is the foundational education which every learner is entitled to. In South Sudan, 14 years of basic education is considered necessary, running from early childhood to upper secondary education.

Child: A child any person under the age of eighteen (- 18 years) – according to the Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan, 2011

Children at risk of exclusion: Describes groups of children that are less likely to access education or are less likely to be retained in the education system on the basis of gender, disability, socio economic status, ethnicity, religion and other marginalising situations. Children at risk of exclusion include children with disabilities, children living on the streets, children in emergency situation, child soldiers, children of the army born in the barracks, children affected by HIV, girl child, orphans, pastoral children, child labourers, poverty stricken children, children of farmers, children of fishermen and those children born of mothers in the prisons.

Co –Teaching: This is a practice of pairing teachers together in a classroom to share the responsibilities of planning, instructing, and assessing learners. In a co-teaching setting, the teachers are considered equally responsible and accountable for the classroom.

Child-centred pedagogy: Is a learner-centred approach that holds at its foundation the need to put children at the centre of learning and development. Educators and parents take their cues from children, drawing upon their interests, needs and natural curiosities. In child-centred learning, a rich learning environment is created where children are viewed as strong, capable, independent, curious, and full of imagination. Children are empowered to think, question, investigate, and explore as a basis for learning. Child-centred learning views development as a holistic, complex and interrelated process that includes the domains of emotional, social, cognitive, communication, language and physical learning, growth and well-being.

Curriculum differentiation
The process of modifying, changing or adapting the curriculum according to the different ability levels, age appropriateness of the learners in the classroom. It is a strategy that teachers can use with a view to providing meaningful learning experiences for all learners. It takes into account learners' levels of functioning, interests and backgrounds. Curriculum differentiation can be done at the level of content, teaching methodologies, assessment and learning environment.

Development partners: Means any officially registered organisations that work in South Sudan in the context of development and humanitarian bases.

Disability is an evolving concept that results from the interaction between persons with impairments, attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Some types of **impairments** that can lead to disability are explained below:

I. ***Sensory impairment;*** *is when one of your* ***senses*** *such as sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste is no longer normal. Examples - If you wear glasses you have a sight* ***impairment*** *– (referred to visual impairment) and if you find it hard to hear or have a hearing aid then you have a hearing* ***impairment*** *– (referred to as hearing impairment)*
   a) ***Hearing impairment:*** *means complete or partial loss of the ability to hear from one or both ears; which is either mild or worse.*
   b) Visual impairment: *means complete loss of sight or inability to see, it also describe any kind of vision loss, whether it's someone who cannot see at all or someone who has partial vision loss.*

II. ***Physical impairments;*** *this refers to nerve, muscular or skeletal impairments e.g., quadriplegia, paraplegia, epilepsy, hemiplegia, polio, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, leprosy, osteogenesis imperfecta, amputation etc.*

III. ***Intellectual impairments****; refers to severe difficulties with intellectual function that results in the person requiring supervision in connection with daily life activities. That might begin early in life during the developmental period (before age 18), which may be due to alcohol consumption during pregnancy, iodine deficiency in pregnancy, injury to the brain at birth or later in the developmental period, genetic or metabolic disorders.*

IV. ***Specific learning impairments:*** *This describes specific kinds of learning difficulty which might cause a person of average or above average intelligence to have trouble in using certain learning-related skills like reading, writing, speaking and listening e.g. dyslexia.*

V. ***Mental impairments;*** *this includes a broad range of mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar mood disorders, borderline personality disorders, major depressive disorders, children with behavioural, emotional disorders, anxiety, and post- traumatic stress disorder.*

VI. ***Multiple impairments:*** *This is when a person has more than one disability e.g., deaf-blind, physical and speech impairments.*

Disability perspectives: is that the person with a disability is a survivor. The experience of being disabled - whether at birth, as a young person, after becoming an adult, or as an older person - is one which matures and gives a unique viewpoint upon society and the world.

Types of Disability Perspectives;

I. ***Charity perspective:*** *This is when a person with disabilities is to be pitied****,*** *need to be looked after, need charity, needs special services, cannot walk, talk and even see.*

II. ***Medical perspective****:*

III. *This is when the only intervention and support a person with disabilities require is either treatment and/or rehabilitation. The 'problem' is therefore with the person with a disability, and not with a society which has erected barriers that exclude that person.*

IV. ***Social perspective:*** *When a person with disabilities faces barriers and discrimination and can therefore not achieve his or her potential in society.*

Rights–Based perspective: Here the main problem is violation of rights of persons with disabilities (caused by exclusive and discriminating practices). It involves removal of barriers, modification and adjustment to ensure equal participation of persons with disabilities – (Universal design) and gives the rights holder legal recourse if his or her rights are violated.

Developmental disabilities are severe chronic disabilities occurring in early childhood, that can be cognitive (intellectual) or physical or both. Some developmental disabilities are largely physical issues, such as cerebral palsy or epilepsy. Some individuals may have a condition that includes physical and intellectual impairment, such as Down syndrome, nodding syndrome, foetal alcohol syndrome among others

Early intervention: prompt responses to issues emerging for children, young people and their families that would hinder their full development, participation and enjoyment of their rights.

Inclusion is regarded as a universal human right and aims at embracing the diversity of all people irrespective of race, gender, disability or any other differences. It is about equal access and opportunities and eliminating discrimination and intolerance for all. It is about a sense of belonging: feeling respected, valued for who you are; feeling a level of supportive energy and commitment from others so that you can best fully participate in society with no restrictions or limitations.

Inclusive education is a constantly evolving process of change and improvement within schools and the wider education system to make education more welcoming, learner-friendly, and beneficial for a wide range of people.[1] It involves changes and modifications in educational content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision that covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to create social cohesion in schools and in the society.

Sustainable Development Goal 4[2] commits aid recipient countries and donor governments to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." By 2030, the target is to "ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes."

Individual Education Support Plan: A plan designed for learners who need additional support or expanded opportunities, developed by teachers in consultation with the parents and the School-based Support Team.

[1] https://www.eenet.org.uk/what-is-inclusive-education/defining-inclusive-education/

[2] https://sdg4education2030.org/the-goal

(Wapling & Downie, 2012, p. 21; DFID, 2000, p. 8; WHO & World Bank, 2011, pp. 6, 262; Bruijn et al., 2012, p. 23

Individualised support: anyone at risk of exclusion receives the support required, within the general education system, to overcome problems which prevent them from taking part in education and learning, both academically and socially.

Learner with Disabilities: A person with one or more impairments, which may require education institutions to adapt or improve conditions of teaching and learning for them to take part.

Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) : Previously known as Disabled People Organisations (DPOs) are organisations which are owned and controlled by persons with disabilities and/or parents of children with disabilities themselves. They constitute the representative voice of persons with disabilities as envisaged in, among others, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the AU Protocol on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the South Sudan National Disability and Inclusion Policy.

Person-centred learning and life plan (PLLP) is a document that is used to identify the learner's impairment, reasonable accommodation, support and rehabilitation, medication they should receive, and their goals and how these will be achieved. Where used, it is drawn up and reviewed with the young person concerned, professionals who have worked with them and their families. It should be reviewed regularly, at least once a year.

Programme of support: Programmes of support refer to structured interventions delivered at schools and in classrooms within specific time frames. The following support programmes should be put in place to address barriers that prevent access to the curriculum:

a) Provision of specialist interventions by health or other specialised staff
b) Curriculum differentiation which includes adjustments and accommodations in assessment
c) Provision of specialised Learning and Teaching Support Material and assistive technology/devices
d) Training and mentoring of teachers, managers and support staff.

Reasonable accommodation: Means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure persons with disabilities enjoyment or exercise an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms (*(UNCRPD 2006)*

Referral pathway: the process of directing or redirecting a medical case or a patient to an appropriate specialist or agency for definitive treatment.

School and institution of learning: is defined as an educational institution where teaching and learning takes place recognised by the Ministry of General Education and Instruction and the relevant State Ministries of Education which have teachers, learners and learning space.

Twin-track approach to inclusive education involves two tracks of approaches that are equally important for ensuring the fulfilment of rights, participation and development of learners with disabilities or at risk of exclusion in an inclusive education system. The first track involves creating a child-centred barrier-free environment where all learners receive quality education regardless of their gender, social background, disability, ethnicity, linguistic diversity or other characteristics; and engage, benefit from learning by creating an ethos and practices that respect 'difference' and embrace diversity. Secondly, those with more severe or multiple disabilities should receive targeted adjustments and support needed to thrive for quality education.

Total communication (TC) means all forms of communication (other than oral speech) that are used to express thoughts, needs, wants and ideas. Facial expressions, gestures, symbols, pictures or written words are also forms of TC, and are used by all persons. Persons with severe speech or language difficulties rely on TC to supplement existing speech or replace speech that is not functional. Special augmentative aids, such as picture and symbol communication boards and electronic devices are available to help people express themselves. Picture and symbol communication boards could be made from locally available materials and customized for individuals. This may increase social interaction, school performance and feelings of self-worth.

Universal design: Means the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be used by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. "Universal design" shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.

Executive Summary

"We cherish education for all our people equally and aim to provide a lifelong education for all children and adults of South Sudan, an education that is relevant and based on the needs of the people, to enable them to be responsible and productive citizens". – This is the mission of the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI), Republic of South Sudan, and it exemplifies the need and timelines of the National Inclusive Education Policy.

Universal primary education is a global goal. Providing education as a right is an obligation of all governments and requires that they translate their national commitments into legislation. This goal will only be achieved when the universal right to education extends to individuals who were historically left out (particularly those with disabilities) because of stigma and negative cultural beliefs, or a lack of skills, remoteness and accessibility within the education system to provide additional supports and reasonable accommodation. The evidence shows that far fewer learners with disabilities attend school than their peers and other marginalized groups.

As echoed in the General Education Act 2012 and the Education Sector Strategic Plan (2012-2017), the long-term vision of the government of the Republic of South Sudan for the education sector is to build an educated and informed nation.

The mission is to introduce a series of reforms to improve quality, access to, and funding for general education, it also tackle the issue of illiteracy in the country and low institutional and human capacity in the general education sub-sector. And, in so doing, promote general education for all citizens of the Republic of South Sudan.

The global 'Education for All' movement, and approaches like child-friendly schools, have not always adequately addressed the specific access, learning and participation needs of all learners; for example, learners with disabilities and coverage for all Although such broad approaches bring about noticeable results in terms of improving the quality of general education, teaching practices and attitudes have demonstrated negligible adaptation and improvement. There are many barriers to education in a country such as South Sudan that leads to high school drop-out and low completion rates across the whole population. In addition some barriers, unique to children with disabilities, cannot always be resolved through general improvements alone[3].

For this reason, there is a need to develop an inclusive education policy framework for learners with and without disabilities that addresses the system at broad level and school-wide improvements required, while at the same time addresses the very specific needs of individual learners with disabilities learning in inclusive settings*. This 'twin-

[3] For a detailed critical look at these issues, see: Rieser, R (2013) 'Teacher Education for Children With Disabilities. Literature Review'. Prepared for UNICEF, New York. www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/Teacher_education_for_children_disabilities_litreview.pdf

track approach' is also in line with child-centred pedagogy, which is a key pillar of the overall education system.

Within a twin-track approach to inclusive education, the provision of targeted support for children with disabilities in and outside of the classroom context is often facilitated through inter-sectorial teams, inclusive of community based rehabilitation (CBR) workers and itinerant teachers who work directly with specific children and advise regular teachers. Similarly, Inclusive Education Resource Centres and multi-disciplinary teams serving few or more schools may support whole-school changes and address individual children's learning and participation needs. Whole-school improvement plans and other quality assurance and human resource development initiatives, therefore, need to integrate inclusive education principles pertaining to all learners, including learners with disabilities, in their criteria.

It is, therefore, imperative to develop a national policy that comprehensively defines and identifies areas of need across the whole population and of additional needs. A comprehensive inclusive education policy framework is essential to guide the work of all actors involved in the provision of inclusive education to ensure consistency and a coordinated implementation. The policy is also important in the elimination of disparities and enhancement of equity and equality for all learners, especially inclusion of learners with additional needs, including learners with disabilities, in the education system. This policy aspires to:

1. Develop, review and improve inclusive legislative frameworks at the school, county, state and national levels, which is aligned with the aspirations of the current laws guiding the education system in South Sudan; and adopts regional and international guidelines that promote inclusive education. The proposed development of effective legislation, policies, standards and procedures would set higher aspirational standards and higher expectations for the minimum requirements for the appropriate provision of education to all learners, including those requiring additional supports
2. Set clear expectations and provide support for whole-system and whole-school approaches to maximise learners' achievements and support the development of the inclusive education process. The whole-system and whole-school approaches to inclusive education are aimed at ensuring that everyone involved with schools plays clearly understood and collaborative roles in the success of learners
3. Introduce a comprehensive multilevel (school, county, State and national) educational support framework that departs from the medical view of special needs education and embraces the social dimensions of disability, by putting the focus on the young person and their family through person-centred learning and life plans. The focus will be to develop reasonable accommodation, support and rehabilitation interventions once an impairment or developmental delay is identified in a child, as well as help with the transition into adult life. Such a support framework would sit within and be supported by the whole-school and whole-system approach to improve learners' achievements. Key support institutions (3-tier system of resource centres) and structures (a comprehensive education management information system) should be constituted.

4. Provide learners in need of additional support for effective learning in inclusive education settings, with the relevant services. Such services could include, for example, having access to adapted learning materials and/or programmes, as well as medical, rehabilitative and therapy support. For example, Deaf learners need access to sign language and blind learners need information / education in accessible formats (Braille, large prints). Other learners will require augmented and alternative communication, and many will require a new, more flexible approach to teaching. It is essential that schools and classroom teachers receive training and are supported to meet an increasing range of diverse needs. This requires large and ongoing training efforts that allow all learners to benefit from this improved pedagogy. While it is envisioned that a programme change of this nature will take time, it is a vital to initiate such task. In the meantime, it is pertinent that learners have, as much as possible, meaningful participation and be included with similar-aged peers in school.
5. Institute, as part of the existing education management, or a stand-alone multi-level and multi-sectorial advisory committee of the Ministry of General Education and Instruction, with an enhanced role and responsibility for the development of inclusive education to fill the gaps in the education programmes and service provision

The need to challenge negative attitudes towards children and persons with disabilities through awareness-raising campaigns on electronic media, and including a related module in the social studies part of the curriculum. This will be enhanced by setting up disability right clubs in schools, developing the capacity of local Organisations of persons' with disabilities (OPDs) to advocate for inclusion and work with parents to value their children with disabilities to bring about a seed change in the way children and adults with disabilities are viewed in educational institutions and society.

Part 1: Policy statement

1.0 Title and Commencement

This Policy shall be cited as the "National Inclusive Education Policy" and shall come into force on the date of its signature by the Honourable Minister, Ministry of General Education and Instruction, Republic of South Sudan.

1.1 Purpose

The policy provides the framework within which inclusive education programmes and practices in the learning institutions in the Republic of South Sudan will be developed, implemented and enforced.

1.2 Legal Authority

The General Education Act (2012), Section 50, page 21. (Regulations): The Ministry may make such rules, regulations and procedures as may be necessary for the effective and efficient implementation of the provisions of this Act.

While the policy derives its legal basis from the General Education Act 2012 of Ministry of General Education and Instruction, it is envisaged to operate within the framework of the other legislations and policies which are relevant in the development of the Education System in the Republic of South Sudan. These include the Ministerial Order No. 28/2017 dated 24 November 2017 on Inclusive Education. ***(RR/MoGEI/OM/J/33/3).***

We value and support all learners, regardless of any status which may lead to their exclusion from education, such as disability, health, gender, ethnicity, or poverty. This recognition in support of all children's gifts and talents affirms the 'right to education' as provided in Articles 29 and 30 of the Transitional Constitution of South Sudan, 2011, and the principles and goals of general education as exemplified in the General Education Act 2012.

1.3 Scope and application

The policy will apply to all educational, training, research activities and educational intervention programmes in South Sudan. The policy will apply to, but not limited to the following key stakeholders:

a. The Ministry of General Education and Instruction.
b. The Ministry of Gender Child and Social Welfare.
c. The Ministry of Health.
d. Ministry of Youth and Sport.
e. Public and private service providers, development partners, community-based organisations, non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations and faith-based organisations.

f. Learners, parents / guardians and the wider community; head teachers and managers of educational institutions.
g. Ministry of General Education and instruction and other line ministries/departments and Semi-Autonomous Government Agencies (SAGAs).
h. Other inclusive education service providers.

The policy applies to all types and levels of Education – formal and non-formal, from early childhood development to adult education – in the Republic of South Sudan.

This policy framework and associated Inclusive Education Strategy prioritise urgent actions to improve the inclusive education capacity of the basic education system, especially over the next five years. However, the standards and principles stated in this policy cover all areas of lifelong learning for adults as well as children.

Actions to implement this policy with regard to children are assumed to start in basic education, even if children are over-age when enrolling. This policy is applicable to learners with disabilities and those at risk of exclusion from education in the Republic of South Sudan.

1.4 The Policy Principles

In accordance with **The General Education Act, 2012**, the guiding principles of this Policy is as reflected in the National General Education Policy are as follows:

"The education system in the Republic of South Sudan shall be guided by the following principles:

(a) Primary education shall be free and accessible to all citizens in South Sudan without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, and ethnicity, health status including HIV/AIDS, gender or disability;

(b) Education shall foster the development of South Sudan through integration, peace, self-reliance, patriotism, respect and tolerance for other cultures, traditions, religions, opinions and beliefs;

(c) Education shall promote gender equity throughout the primary, secondary and other institutions of learning;

(d) Education shall inculcate in the individual awareness and respect for life, human dignity in general and human rights in particular, especially the child rights;

(e) Education shall promote the reduction of illiteracy;

(f) English shall be the language of instructions in schools;

(g) All indigenous languages of South Sudan are National languages and shall be respected, developed and promoted;

(h) The government shall promote the development of sign language and brail system for the benefit of people with special needs;

(i) Religious education in schools shall be in accordance with the curriculum prescribed by the Ministry of General Education;

(j) There shall be freedom of religious observance at schools;

(k) Education shall promote healthy living, community health awareness and environmental awareness; and

(l) To establish a globally accepted standard of education to promote skills and development.

1.5 Policy Vision

The Republic of South Sudan shall work towards improving an inclusive education system, with barrier-free access to quality education. This Policy will enable active participation of all learners in the same safe, enabling school and community environment, to foster the development of learners' full potential.

The policy recognises that achieving inclusive education is a progressive process without a fixed end point its associated implementation strategy outlines the changes needed to make strong progress towards inclusive education in South Sudan.

Progressive implementation of this policy is expected to significantly improve the capacity of The Republic of South Sudan to sign and ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

1.6 The Policy Philosophy

The Government believes that inclusive education is a public good. It is about ensuring that all children, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, health status, family background/upbringing, disability or ability are given education and support to achieve their potentials.

The Government believes that education in South Sudan must be truly inclusive, universal and comprehensive. Inclusion must be the educational philosophy of the public and private education system and the framework in which the public and private education system operates and continues to be transformed.

The policy herein articulates references to various policies at National, regional and international legal instruments that support the policy like;

- The South Sudan Transitional Constitution, 2011
- The South Sudan Education Act , 2012

- The Local Government Act, 2008
- The South Sudan National Disability and Inclusion Policy, (2017)
- The Child Act 2008 – (South Sudan)
- Maternal and reproductive health policy for Southern Sudan, Final Draft, Min. of Health, Jan. 2007
- The African Charter on Human and People's Rights (1981)
- Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)
- The Alma Ata Declaration of 1978, which emphasizes inclusion of the rehabilitation approach into the primary health care system;
- The World Declaration on Education for All, 1990
- The UNESCO Salamanca Framework of Action on Special Needs Education 1994.
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – UNCRPD (2006)
- The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa (2019)
- The South Sudan Social Protection Policy – 2017
- The Djibouti Declaration on National Education Response Plan, 2017
- The Education 2030 Agenda.

1.7 Policy Objectives

The government's overall goal for education in South Sudan adopts the principles of inclusive education through this statement: "***A Society in which ALL persons regardless of their disabilities*** achieve education to realize their full potential". The inclusive education policy, therefore, should facilitate the ***'creation of an inclusive education system with a conducive, enabling environment for those at risk of exclusion, particularly learners with impairments to have equal access to quality and relevant education and training"***

The national inclusive education policy framework is hinged on, and aims at achieving, the following specific objectives at all times:

1. Develop a process that identifies and addresses the barriers of achieving quality educational outcomes for ALL learners.
2. Enhances early identification, assessment and earlier interventions for all learners affected by impairment
3. Raise awareness on the educational needs and abilities of learners at the risk of exclusion within the education system and the wider community.
4. Promote and facilitate inclusion of learners at the risk of exclusion in formal, on-formal education and training.
5. Promote barrier-free environment for learners requiring additional supports in ALL learning institutions.
6. Provide, train and promote the use of assistive devices and technology equipment and teaching / learning materials like adaptive learning devices like Braille and audio visual aids

7. Enhance teacher education for pre-service and in-service through strengthening teacher training institutions in inclusive education and disability specific issues
8. Develop capacity of teachers and head teachers, specialists and essential service providers to deliver quality services to learners requiring additional supports, including learners with disabilities.
9. Ensuring comprehensive support by enhancing collaboration and networking, strategic partnerships and participation of stakeholders, including relevant ministries for instance, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Gender Child and social welfare, Ministry of Youth and Sports among others.
10. Support research innovation and development on inclusive education for all learners, including those requiring additional supports, documentation and dissemination of relevant information.
11. Promote effective management and coordination of services to support achievement of all learners and those requiring additional supports, including learners with disabilities.

1.5.1. What these principles mean for the education system

1. The education system must be flexible, to help all learners with different learning abilities achieve their potential over their lifetime.
2. The process of change towards such a system must be reflective and responsive, modelling support and accountability for improved learners achievements and outcomes, especially for children who are currently most excluded from success in education.
3. Participation and collaboration of all stakeholders is pivotal in the realization of this inclusive education system.
4. No child should be expected to wait for education until more resources become available. Learners with disabilities, or those at other risk of exclusion, must be accommodated into schools and related services from the same ages as other learners.

1.5.2. First steps in implementing Inclusive Education in South Sudan

1. No parallel schooling structures will be set up or approved for learners with disabilities or those requiring additional support.
2. Rather a system of resource institutions will be developed to support regular schools to include learners with disabilities and others at risk of exclusion.
3. The Ministry of General Education and Instruction will work to ensure that teachers in South Sudan – in pre-service, in-service, Teacher Training Institutions, University and educators - are trained in inclusive education and its implementation.
4. While the process of building the capacity of educators and other key stakeholders is taking place, schools must accept and welcome children with disabilities and other children at risk of exclusion, from the beginning of this policy being approved and communicated.

5. The tasks and responsibilities in this policy document will be communicated to all key stakeholders in education, from local to national levels, in partnership with media agencies, community leadership, and development partners.
6. This policy requires a range of people and agencies involved in improving public service delivery to support and progressively adopt the changes laid out in this policy document and associated Inclusive Education Strategy. This will require changes to annual Ministerial plans and budgets, and to programme plans and budgets supported by development partners.

1.7. Key responsibilities of stakeholders in delivering inclusive education

1. Accommodating persons with disabilities into schools

Learners with disabilities should continue to access and be accommodated in all schools and all learning Institutions. Encouraging enrolment, retention and completion of learners and adults with disabilities into their local schools, is the first and most essential step towards building an inclusive education system.

2. Developing, delivering, accessing and providing capacity building for people involved in delivering educational services

- This means adding the principles and basic practice of inclusive education into existing training and continuous professional development for teachers, school leadership, school committees, curriculum, material developers and examiners.
- It also means developing additional training to support the development of resource centres and other sources of expertise.

3. Improving services to support persons with disabilities, and other people at risk of exclusion, to have access and participate in education.

This includes:

- making education infrastructure available and accessible to learners with disabilities
- adapting examination processes to accommodate learners with disabilities or with extra support needs to receive certification for their learning achievements, against the same curriculum standards as the rest of the learners;
- Providing screening, health, rehabilitation and early childhood development services to improve the ability of learners with disabilities, and other extra support needs, to have access and participate in education.
- Disaggregating enrolment data to be disability inclusive, using the Washington Group of Questions (WGQ) for targeted support services provisioning.

The actions required to deliver Points 2 and 3 will be delivered progressively in partnership with all available sources of support, recognising that the resources available to upgrade educational and health facilities and processes are currently limited. However, educational institutions shall not be able to deny enrolment for learners with disabilities on the basis of limited capacity

Part 2. Summary of Actions to Implement the Inclusive Education Policy

2.1. The **Ministry of General Education and Instruction** shall:

1. Communicate the vision, principles and urgent actions in this policy (particularly from Section 1) to head teachers, local education authorities, teacher professional development providers and national and local media.
2. Disseminate guidelines to all education providers (public and private) that no segregated schools will be permitted for children with disabilities or children at risk of exclusion.
3. Draw up an Inclusive Education Action Plan and associated budget, for the first two years of implementing the inclusive education policy, prioritising the actions in the Inclusive education strategy linked to this policy.
4. Include these actions in any revisions and new versions of the national education strategic plan and annual Ministry of General Education and Instruction work plans.
5. Arrange dialogues with other Ministries to develop joint strategies with Ministry of General Education and Instruction for delivering the most urgent actions required by the inclusive education policy.
6. The Ministry of General Education and Instruction shall allocate 5% from its budget for initial support for transforming the current system into a more inclusive education system.
7. Request the Parliament and Ministry of Finance to allocate and release budget to implement the inclusive education policy.
8. The Ministry of General Education and Instruction shall liaise with other stake holders and civil societies to identify the resources that will be used to implement the inclusive education policy.
9. Request support for implementing the inclusive education policy in all partnership agreements and policy initiatives with international, National and local partner agencies.
10. Review achievements against the first two-year plan, and develop a plan for the next three years of the inclusive education policy.

11. Review achievements against the inclusive education policy after five years.
12. Ministry of General Education and Instruction will work closely with Ministry of Health and other stakeholders to develop a referral pathway.

2.2. **Other national ministries and local government authorities** shall:

1. Engage senior staff to dialogue with Ministry of General Education and Instruction to develop joint strategies in delivering the most urgent actions in the inclusive education policy. For example, Ministry of Health action may be needed to improve assessment, treatment of health challenges as well as rehabilitation and assistive technology for learners with disabilities so that they can attend school regularly.
2. Ensure that relevant Ministries actions from these joint strategies are included in the annual and strategic plans, and are reported in monitoring against these plans.
3. Where relevant, request support for implementing joint IE strategy action in partnership agreements and policy initiatives with international partner agencies.
4. The State Ministry of Education shall allocate 5% of its budget towards inclusive education.
5. The National Bureau of Statistics to collect disability inclusion disaggregated data using the Washington Group of questions (WGQ)[4] listed below – in their survey tools.

2.3. **Each teacher training or professional development agency,** whether public, University, private, PRESET or INSET shall:

1. Review teacher training curricula and develop strategies to ensure inclusive education principles and practices are included in general teacher training.
2. Develop or adapt focused inclusive education training courses to provide more in-depth practical strategies.
3. Collaborate with other training organisations, NGOs and other partners to share and adopt good practice from previous and current efforts to train teachers in inclusive education and learner-centred pedagogy.
4. In consultation with local organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) review the accessibility of their institutions for learners with disabilities and those at risk of exclusion. Based on this review, develop budgeted plans or proposals to increase the number of learners with disabilities and other excluded persons who qualify as teachers and tutors.
5. Promote teacher education and personnel development in inclusive education including provisions of scholarship to increase capacity and human resource needed to achieve inclusive education agenda.
6. Establishment of institute of inclusive education at Public/Private Universities and to provide teacher training programme on inclusive Education.

[4] https://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/question-sets/

2.4. **Each school head teacher (public/private/Faith base/Community/NGO)** shall:

1. Accommodate all children from the local community into their schools.
2. Consult with parents/guardians, school governing bodies, teachers and other stakeholders, on ways to overcome barriers to educational presence, participation and achievement faced by learners with disabilities, and by others at risk of exclusion.
3. Ensure that all teachers are well trained on inclusive education, and/or learner-centred pedagogy with a strong inclusive education component.
4. Observe and advise all teachers to make sure they understand inclusive education principles, welcome and support all children, and apply inclusive education training.

2.5. **Each teacher in school (public/private/NGO/Faith Based)** should:

1. Welcome each child assigned to their class and be a model of inclusive behaviour for children.
2. Ensure that new learners with disabilities are not bullied. Encourage learners to use terminologies for disability and difference that are rights-based and non-discriminatory.
3. Apply any training received in inclusive education and/or child-centred pedagogy in the context of their school and learners.
4. Ask for advice from colleagues and head teachers on how to help learners with disabilities, and others at risk of exclusion, participate and achieve in teaching and learning.
5. Share information with parents, school governing bodies and other relevant stakeholders, on the barriers children face to attending, participating and achieving in education.
6. Ensure that all learners peacefully interact and cooperate in the classroom activities and encourage working in pairs/groups.
7. Promote assessment of learners with functional difficulties through referral systems.
8. Promote use of adapted curriculum and assessment, teaching/learning methods that respond to individual needs of the child.
9. Where possible, use individual education support plan (IEPs) to record the progress of learners who will need significant educational adaptation or support.
10. Where possible, teachers promote use of inclusive/adapted play materials so that learners with disabilities are not excluded from participating in play.
11. Incorporate parents/caregivers of children with disabilities in school governing bodies – (SMC/BOG/PTA)
12. Encourage peer mentorship among learners.

2.6. **Parents of children with disabilities or any other child at risk of exclusion** should:

1. Enrol their children in their local school on time, and send them safely to school every day, to the greatest of their ability.
2. Ask head teachers, teachers, school governing bodies, and community leaders and organisations, for advice and help in overcoming barriers their child faces to attending, taking part and achieving in education.

2.7. **Community organisations, local NGOs or CBOs, as well as Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs)** engaged in education or disability work should:

1. Raise awareness throughout the community of the right of all children to attend their local school, participate and learn; and the need for children who have been excluded to now be brought into education.
2. Encourage parents to enrol their children/learners with disabilities on time and keep them attending school regularly.
3. Monitor and advocate for the needs of children who need extra support to take part in education (such as health support, financial support, transport assistance, mobility or educational aids, or changes in teaching and school management methods).

2.8. **Leaders in every community** should:

1. Raise awareness throughout the community on the rights of all children to attend their local school, participate and learn, regardless of disability or any other characteristic; and the need for children who have been excluded to now be brought into education.
2. Encourage and support parents/caregivers to enrol all their children on time and keep them attending school regularly throughout basic education.
3. Parents/caregivers should actively participate in screening of the children during screening process in schools.
4. Request assistance from government, parents, community and other stake holders where available to overcome barriers to learners taking part in education.
5. Intervene when they are made aware of discriminatory practices against children with disabilities.

2.9. **Development partners and Civil Society Organizations;** supporting educational programmes or policy change in South Sudan should:

1. Identify ways to assist the Ministry of General Education and Instruction and other line ministries in implementing inclusive education.
2. Regularly take part in dialogue with Ministry of General Education and Instruction, NGOs, OPDs and other development partners to promote IE in South Sudan
3. Include Ministry of General Education and Instruction s inclusive education strategies and priorities in their programme development and resource allocation.
4. Mobilize funds and resources towards achievement of inclusive education.

Part 3: Policy Standards

This section outlines how inclusive education should be provided in South Sudan, and what standards of delivery service providers should work towards.

3.1 Common Learning Environment

When learners with disabilities and other learners at risk of exclusion take part in education, the environment must;

a) Enable each learner to participate fully in a common environment that is accessible for all learners.
b) Provide opportunities for learners to get necessary support from each other
c) Discourage the culture of labelling based on disability, 'difference' and any other discriminatory attitudes.
d) Promote child-cantered teaching and learning principles.
e) Prioritise problem-solving for challenges affecting learners' ability to attend, participate and achieve in education, and implements solutions in a timely manner.

It is the responsibility of all the heads of learning institutions and their management committees, supported by Resource Teachers and the county Inclusive Education Inspectors, to ensure this common inclusive and equitable learning environment.

3.2 Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment

a) In an inclusive education setting, learners with disabilities are educated in the general education environment alongside other learners.
b) However, when learners are not able to learn at the same pace and with the same teaching and learning materials, changes will need to be made to teaching methodologies to allow for all learners to learn with their peers and achieve the greatest progress possible.
c) Schools should be encouraged to practise co- teaching, to increase sharing of inclusive teaching strategies and support Resource Teachers' collaboration with other teachers (see 3.4.1 below).
d) As such, teachers shall be required to accommodate, modify and adapt curriculum, instruction and assessment processes to meet the needs of the learners. To this end, the Department of Inclusive Education, the Department of Quality Assurance and the National Examination Council shall provide the framework and capacity development that allows teachers the flexibility to meet all learners' needs.
e) If conditions in a school make it unsafe for a child to attend their local school, the local school and/or resource centre should provide accessible materials and/or advice for home based learning, with advice from Ministry of General Education and Instruction.
f) At the same time, local education, community, and/or health authorities must take steps to improve the unsafe conditions concerned.

3.3 Inclusive school leadership

In providing leadership for inclusive schools, heads of learning institutions/implementing partners shall:

a) Allocate available resources to maximize assistance to classroom teachers to enable them to support the learning of all their learners. This includes professional learning opportunities, support from resource teachers and other local agencies, including NGOs, NNGOs and other stake holders.
b) Ensure that school-wide academic and behaviour interventions are based on data analysis and evidence-based practices are used systemically to respond to the variety of learners' needs.
c) Ensure that a learner's instruction is primarily provided by the classroom/subject teacher, with the support of the resource teacher or employing co-teaching in a class.
d) Ensure heterogeneous (mixed) groupings of learners are primarily developed, to avoid segregating disabled and non-disabled children. These should be dealt with in a flexible way, such that their learning is differentiated for their needs, and that collaborative and peer learning is encouraged. Where it is found necessary for imparting certain skills such as braille or sign language, homogeneous groups are formed; their utilization is time limited and based on the presumption that all learners will return to their heterogeneous mainstream classes.
e) Ensure that all learners have access to extra-curricular, and school-sponsored activities.
f) Where learners have a PLLP based on person centred development approach, ensure that community-based learning opportunities meet the personal growth goals identified for them.
g) Ensure that all learners with disabilities or those facing exclusion in community-based learning are included in the register of a local school and are part of a class.
h) Monitor and communicate to the County Department of Education and/or other relevant institutions, as the case may be, the current and future needs regarding the provision of accessible physical environments, in order that inclusive practices are supported.
i) Support proper functional screening of all learners using the UNICEF Module[5] at the school level in coordination with County education assessment centres and community based rehabilitation centres for assessment, placement, provision of assistive devices, adaptive devices specific skill training and other supports.
j) Discourage corporal punishment and bullying at all levels.

In responding to behaviour crisis, the head of a learning institution shall:

k) Ensure that the School Positive Learning and Working Environment plan is in place to effectively manage any behaviour crisis within the learning environment.
l) Establish practices that create a welcoming and supportive learning environment and promote, recognize and reinforce appropriate learner behaviour.

[5] https://data.unicef.org/resources/module-child-functioning/

m) Involve learners in strategies to manage their own behaviour with their peers. (Peer support, in-circle time, circles of friends and other child-to-child methods, are some practices that have proved to be effective for behaviour crisis).

n) When Resource Teachers become available, head teachers should ensure the assignment of Resource Teachers to support classroom teachers, and make an effort to balance the needs of learners in a classroom (or learning space) and teachers' support needs.
o) Ensure that their education institutions have access to the inclusive education policy and use it as a working document, implement the policy and advocate for it to be clearly reflected in the Teachers' Education Policy.

3.4 Supports for Inclusive Education in Educational and Community structures

The Directorate of Gender, Equity and Inclusive Education, County Education Department and the School Management Committee (SMC), in line with established procedures by the State and National Ministry of General Education and Instruction/ Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare must establish and maintain systemic supports for public/private education that make inclusion of all learners a practical reality. These supports include personnel, as well as policy, funding and capacity-building strategies. These need to be systemic and ongoing.

3.4.1 Resource Teachers

Members of the first groups of teachers trained on Inclusive Education in South Sudan will become 'Resource Teachers'. They will operate within the functional cluster of local mainstream schools, working within their school and other schools in their cluster, in inclusive settings. The post of Resource Teacher will be a standard staff position, and will work under the heads of schools.

The Resource Teachers' work shall be, among others, to offer advice to teachers on all learners experiencing difficulties in the classroom, and help teachers meet their needs for participation and learning. They will support learners and teachers for quality teaching and learning, and collaborate with parents, community, and staff of health services, social welfare and other stake holders.

In providing classroom instructions, teachers and Resource Teachers shall:

a) Base individual support on the prescribed curriculum to the greatest extent appropriate for the learners.
b) Monitor and evaluate, on an on-going basis, the effectiveness of the instructional strategies identified for the learner, as well as the appropriateness of the identified goals and outcomes.
c) Develop, implement and update learners' plans, records, or PLLPs, whenever significant modifications are required. This should be done with input from the parents, learners, teachers, relevant educational assistants, professionals and representatives from community agencies as required.

The county Inclusive Education Inspector will supervise and monitor the activities of Resource Teachers in conjunction with their school director.

3.4.2 School Level Inclusive Education Advisory Committee (IEAC)

At the school level, there shall be the school-based Inclusive Education Advisory Committee, established as part of the school management committee to help school leadership and teachers make adaptations and improvements to include learners with disabilities and other learners at risk of exclusion.

Composition

- Three representative of Parents Teachers Association – One will be the Chair
- One Head teacher representative – Secretary
- Payam Supervisor – Member
- Two representatives of inclusive education school clubs - members
- One representative of resource teachers - member
- Class teachers
- One representative of parents/caregivers of children with disabilities.
- One representative of Disability Inclusion Facilitators – (DIFs) (where appointed)
- Other relevant local agencies
- One representative from Boma
- One professionals from other government departments should participate, as needed.

Functions

The team shall meet at least twice every term, to:

a) Develop strategies to support teachers in meeting learners' needs and to reduce barriers to learners' success in learning
b) Mobilise learners from within the community to be enrolled in mainstream schools including learners with disabilities
c) Ensure that safety measures are taken within the school premises in order to reduce risk/accident
d) Develop an inclusive education component of any school improvement/development plan
e) Solve specific learners problems, as necessary
f) Produce a report of the capacity, infrastructure and institutional gaps, they have identified in schools and local education authorities – (County, Payam and Bomas) ability to include learners with disabilities and other excluded learners. Maintain written records of their meetings.
g) Submit at least a termly report to the relevant education authorities at county level.

3.4.3 Inclusion Support and Resource Centres (ISRC)

A network of inclusion Support and Resource Centres shall be established by the Department of Inclusive Education in the Teachers Training Colleges, National Teacher Training Institutions – (NTTI), TVET, County Education Centres – (CEC), Universities and the National and State Ministries of General Education and Instruction offices as well as in the counties, Payams and schools.

The ISRC shall provide relevant coordination, mobilisation, advice and expertise for teacher professional development, as well as providing support in educational functional assessment.

The Department of Inclusive Education in collaboration with line Ministries and stake holders shall develop guidelines, draw strategies and support the establishment of these ISRC.

3.4.4 Community Level support

State Ministry of Education in collaboration with State Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, an 'Inclusive Education Facilitator or Disability inclusion Facilitator' shall be appointed in each Boma. They shall be selected from parents, organisations of persons with disabilities social workers and/or community based rehabilitation (CBR) workers. Their task is to work with parents to get out-of-school children with disabilities into school and minimise drop-outs.

These facilitators will be trained at the county level and be line-managed by the 'Inclusive Education supervisor at the Payam level.

3.4.5 County Level support

Planning for Inclusive Education shall be the responsibility of the County Education Director, County Inclusive Education Inspector, Payam Inclusive education supervisor and the Inclusive Resource teacher.

3.4.6 Support from parents

The roles of parents of learners with disabilities shall include the following:

a) Act as the main link between child and school staff
b) To attend PLLP or review meetings for their children
c) Actively contribute in promoting non-discriminatory attitudes and behavioural change at home
d) Participate in the assessment of the learners and provide information about the children out of school
e) Safeguard and protect their children from abuse and exploitation
f) Involve the child in activities at home that contribute to overall development processes as advised
g) Participate in school-related decisions such as collaborating with teachers and administrators to set realistic goals for learners
h) Where possible, take part in collective organizations to represent parental views and advocacy.

3.5 Screening, Identification and Person-Centred Planning.

There shall be a need for early identification and detection of impairments (hearing, intellectual, visual, communication and other invisible impairments) are important and cannot be over-emphasized. Teachers must be encouraged by trainers, head teachers and the IEAC to use disability-inclusive methods based on their own observation of learners without waiting for formal assessment to take action.

Early identification, prompt referral and management are critical, and need to be combined with a positive person-cantered planning approach. Interventions in that direction are required to be integrative in terms of the preventative, promotional, curative, rehabilitative and regenerative aspects of health. This will involve regular school assessments and collaborative community and home screening programmes, as well as equipping learners with basic life skills for independent living.

Screening and identification and assessment shall be the responsibility of the teachers at school level using child functioning set in collaboration with the parents/caregivers, working with the county Inclusive Education Inspector, community based rehabilitation agencies, early childhood development programmes, health centres and other relevant local agencies. The health sector is responsible for medical diagnosis determination. Internationally recognized tools, protocols and procedures for community based rehabilitation shall be used for screening, identification and evaluation respectively.

Within the framework of this policy, 'Education Function' evaluated in such assessments shall refer to the learner's ability to perform important functional activities that support or enable participation in the academic (classroom and homework assignments) and related social cohesion (skills and attitude used in learning and teaching environment) aspects of an educational programme at the appropriate level. Assessment of children's function will be based on inclusion principles and involve the learners, their families and friends, and teachers or community health workers. These assessments will take place for the purpose of improving teachers' and caregivers' understanding of how impairment affects a learner, and what likely support needs they are likely to have, in order to participate and learn in all levels of education. Tools such as the UNICEF/Washington Group Modules[6] for screening may be used.

Children identified as having impairment which affects their education support needs shall be referred for the purposes of education to the schools' Inclusive Education Advisory Committee for action to support and assess the child's education function. While waiting for any fuller evaluation, the IEAC should initiate any practical support possible, based on initial understanding of the child's needs. Where possible, after assessment, the Child Welfare Inspector will work with the IEAC to develop a person-centred learning and life plan (PLLP)which will include the nature of a child's impairment, their strengths and weaknesses, what they want to achieve and how that will be facilitated.

[6] proper functional screening of all learners using the UNICEF Module[6]

Clear referral pathways will be created and where possible synergies developed between Ministry of General Education and Instruction, Ministry of Health and other partners. Where possible a card will be introduced for usage of referral and follow up.

In addition and where the case applies, the outcome of the assessment process may be used to determine a learner's eligibility for support programmes established by national and state regulations. Pilot programmes and review of identification, screening and development of PLLPs will be conducted during the first five years of this policy to determine how assessment and person centred planning should best be scaled up and institutionalized within South Sudan.

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