

## Promoting inclusive education in Kenya

This case illustrates how inclusion of students with disabilities in schools has been achieved. Leonard Cheshire Disability put emphasis on participatory methods for integrating all the stakeholders including students, parents, teachers and school staff in the identification and formulation of the interventions.

**Area:** Africa

**Sector:** Education

**Phase of PCM illustrated:** Identification and formulation

**Degree of relevance:** Degree 3 – Disability highly relevant projects

**Implementing organisation:** NGO

### The context

Few children with physical disabilities from neighboring districts residing in a Cheshire home were attending Oriang primary school. The needs of these children were not being met in an environment where:

- (i) teachers lacked the skills to support children with special needs
- (ii) peers were not prepared to work with children who looked different
- (iii) a hostile physical environment not adapted to suit their mobility needs
- (iv) lack of adaptive aids,
- (v) general inadequate learning materials to enhance quality education for all the children.

The entire community lacked awareness on disability issues compounded with negative cultural beliefs that blames causes of disabilities to ancestral sins and other misdeeds.

### To enhance learning environments through participation of teachers and children

Mainly funded by Comic Relief from 2002 to 2007, this five-year project has been carried out in five neighboring primary schools, in partnership between Leonard Cheshire Disability, Cheshire Homes Kenya, the Ministry of Education and the local catholic diocese. The project has strived to bring about change in culture, policy and practices in order to support all children to gain quality education.

Through the use of participatory strategies the project's stakeholders have with the technical support of LCD worked to enhance learning environments. Several capacity building events have empowered the teachers and the community, enhancing skills in resource mobilization; the dilapidated buildings in schools have been turned into new permanent classrooms. Teachers have also changed to learner-centered approaches, incorporating child-to-child

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activities, enabling children's voices to be heard and also to actively participate in their learning. Community Based Rehabilitation has been a complimentary component of Inclusive Education, where trained community health workers administer and train parents in basic physical therapy activities and primary health care initiatives such as epilepsy management. Schools have strived to adapt the physical environment to make it accessible and more conducive for learning.

### **An increased enrollment of children with disabilities**

As a result, the general school enrollment, and particularly the enrollment of children with disabilities and others with special needs, has increased considerably from 225 (2003) to 564 (2007). Forums such as inclusive education and child to child days have brought community and other stake holders together with each group using performing arts to create awareness on disability issues. The disability resource centre strategy has been used to enable community members and schools to access reading materials, such as books on health issues and magazines.

### **Lessons learned and how this is an example for disability inclusion**

- The inclusion of children with disabilities in the education system has been achieved through advocating at schools and education agencies to take these children into account.
- Through participatory approaches, all stakeholders involved in the education process (from the children to the teachers) have been integrated in the identification and formulation process which led to adequate and sustainable interventions
- The success of the project has necessitated the need to replicate it at the provincial level, which is envisaged to build the capacity of different partners to engage in the implementation of Inclusive Education program at a wider level.

*This case study has been adapted from a text written by LCD East and North African Region*

### **For further information please contact:**

Regional Representative, Leonard  
Cheshire Disability  
International  
East and North African Region

Oloitoktok Road, off Ole Odume Road  
PO Box 38748-00600 Nairobi.  
[www.lcint.org](http://www.lcint.org)

