

Education for children with disabilities

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Question

Provide a rapid literature review of the evidence on what data and evidence exists, to identify, categorise and support children with disabilities to access education and achieve measurable learning outcomes in Tanzania and/or other similar resource-constrained LICs/ contexts. Particular attention should be paid to the debate between mainstream vs specialist education for children with disabilities.

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The K4D helpdesk service provides brief summaries of current research, evidence, and lessons learned. Helpdesk reports are not rigorous or systematic reviews; they are intended to provide an introduction to the most important evidence related to a research question. They draw on a rapid desk-based review of published literature and consultation with subject specialists.

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1. Overview

This report provides a rapid literature review of the evidence on what data and evidence exists, to identify, categorise and support children with disabilities to access education and achieve measurable learning outcomes in Tanzania and other similar resource-constrained contexts. Literature focused on the debate between mainstream and specialist education for children with disabilities is discussed.

Where possible, the report flags gender dimensions. While the scope of the report did not allow for complex judgements to be made about the quality of the body of evidence, or of the strength of individual pieces of evidence, details were included to enable the reader to undertake such analysis if needed in the future, using the DFID How to Note on Assessing the Strength of Evidence.¹ All the evidence included was in English, no more than 10 years old and from peer reviewed journals. A number of experts in the field were consulted.

This report was written in five days, with the intention of informing future programming. The author recognises that the theme of education and disability is broad and that the time assigned does not reflect the importance of the topic, nor the vast amount of evidence available. The author also recognises that disability, as described in the 2011 World Report on Disability, is complex, dynamic, multidimensional, and contested.² The report uses the definition of disability provided by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which describes persons with disabilities as those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.³

This report was designed to provide a brief overview of the key issues, and a summary of pertinent evidence found within the time permitted. The author recognises that the review process was non-systematic and non-exhaustive

If more time was available, evidence would also have been searched for that focuses on measurable learning outcomes for children with disabilities. In addition, time could have been spent to explore the evidence on short and longer term interventions in education for children with disabilities and the impact on the quality of education provision. These areas did not feature amongst the most readily available literature on the topic.

A large amount of grey literature from organisations working on this topic was found that relates directly to the query and sub-questions that this report addresses. The links to these have been included in the 'Other information' section towards the end of the report.

The main findings of the report are summarised as follows:

¹ DFID. 2014. How to Note - Assessing the Strength of Evidence
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-note-assessing-the-strength-of-evidence>

² WHO/World Bank. 2011. World Report on Disability -
http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/report.pdf

³ UNCRPD - Article 1 – Purpose –
<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/article-1-purpose.html>

Identifying children with disabilities

The Tanzanian Government is committed to working to identify the needs of each child with disabilities and to create an individualised education plan with appropriate accommodations and adaptations as necessary. This is made clear in Tanzania's 2002 National Policy on Disability (Aldersey and Turnbull 2011). The policy also advocates for the training of educators and other service providers to be comfortable and competent with the identification of children with disabilities. However, discrepancy remains between rhetoric and reality. Evidence of screenings for particular disabilities have presented some challenges. For example school eye health screening can identify children with un/undercorrected refractive error. However, low prevalence and poor uptake of services offered in response to disability have cast doubt on the usefulness of such screening (Wedner et al 2008). In terms of a theoretical approach, the capability approach, which positions the education of children with disabilities within the social justice debate, was found to be useful in supporting the identification of children with disabilities (Stone-MacDonald 2015).

Categorising children with disabilities

The Tanzanian Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) use a broad definition of children with disabilities (Grönlund, Lim and Larsson 2010). Categorisation at the community and individual level in Tanzania is often informed by cultural and religious beliefs about causes of disability. One study found that school staff have an important role to influencing beliefs about disability in the community (Stone-MacDonald 2012 a). Evidence from South Africa suggests that if categorisation of disabilities is necessary, it may be useful to categorise according to difficulty doing certain activities due to a condition rather than disability⁴. This may provide a more comprehensive and inclusive measure of disability with a clearer understanding of what is being measured (Schneider 2009).

Categorisation is not always regarded as a positive way to help children with disabilities to learn. A common assumption is that children with disabilities need special treatment, which are defined by categories of impairment. Categorisation may be useful if the position is taken that in addition to universal educational needs, children with disabilities have unique needs that are specific to them as members of sub-groups. However, children do not fall neatly into categories, which may not take into account children with multiple disabilities. The child's individual needs must be considered, in addition to the needs shared with any sub-group. If a position is taken that general quality improvement in education results in recognition and response to the diversity of learners, including children with disabilities, then categorisation is less useful (Croft 2013).

Supporting children with disabilities

Evidence from a literature review reports that individuals with disabilities in East Africa lack the support they need. Children with disabilities continue to be excluded from education, as well as other aspects of society. The lack of support is likely to be exacerbated as the trend of rural to urban migration continues and education services are put under increased pressure. In order to support children with disabilities, the focus must focus on protecting their rights (Stone-MacDonald and Butera 2012). Contextually relevant knowledge is found to be critical to

⁴ This is reflected in the Washington Group Short Set of Questions on Disability - <http://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/The-Washington-Group-Short-Set-of-Questions-on-Disability.pdf>

overcoming attitudinal, environmental and institutional barriers to inclusion and to develop locally relevant and sustainable inclusive education (Miles 2011).

Evidence from within Tanzania suggests that support for educating children with disabilities is still being limited by a lack of knowledge about disability from communities. Families of children with disabilities receive limited support. Particularly in terms of mental and intellectual disabilities, community and family/home-based care must improve (Mbwilo, Smide, Aarts 2010). Although Tanzania has made great progress towards achieving its primary education targets and supporting students with disabilities, challenges remain. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are still weak, particularly in secondary education, resulting in some students not receiving the support they need. Not enough is known about how students with disabilities are accessing education. Further research is needed. Also, the specific vulnerability faced by many girls with disabilities are not given enough attention (Okkolin, Lehtomäki and Bhalalusesa 2010).

The number of persons with disability requiring support in Tanzania is disputed (Grönlund, Lim and Larsson 2010). The data that does exist indicates that enrolment of children with disabilities is much lower than general enrolment. There is also a gender dimension to this problem, as male attendance is higher than female attendance at all levels (Aldersey and Turnbull 2011).

The National Policy on Disability outlines the Tanzanian Government's commitment to those with disabilities. However, the actual process through which support is delivered is less clear. There are challenges to measuring how students with disabilities pursue and experience education. Infrastructural inadequacies continue to cause challenges for students with disabilities in higher education. Specific efforts to sensitise communities on the rights of people with disabilities to education would improve participation. Equitable resource allocation would support the learning environment. Further research on this topic is required (Mwaipopo, Lihamba, Njewe 2011). The National Disability Policy also fails to explicitly address inclusive education. No national guidelines exist on how to implement inclusive education (Grönlund, Lim and Larsson 2010).

Existing inclusive education and child protection programmes that increase access to education for children with disabilities

Evidence suggests some progress has been made towards inclusive, just and quality education in Tanzania but challenges remain. Numerous barriers to inclusive education remain at national, community and school levels (Polat 2011). Schools in mainland Tanzania remain ill-equipped for children with disabilities. Physical accessibility, as well as a lack of assistive technology remain challenges (Grönlund, Lim and Larsson 2010).

Contrary to evidence described above, other sources report that in terms of legislation, Tanzania is relatively developed on inclusive education. However, national level coordination is lacking. Inclusive education initiatives remain limited. The programmes that do exist are geographically uneven, with many focusing on Zanzibar. Despite this concentration, inclusive education in Zanzibar is not practiced on a large scale or to a substantial degree. Within the Tanzanian Government, a unit for Inclusive Education exists within the MoEVT. It has implemented a pilot inclusive education programme in primary schools, although it is not clear how successful the programme was (Grönlund, Lim and Larsson 2010).

A search of the grey literature for existing inclusive education programmes that increase access to education for children with disabilities may have produced more evidence.

Mainstream versus specialist education

The evidence suggests that currently children with disabilities in Tanzania receive education mainly through integration in mainstream classes. Through cooperation with various NGOs, MoEVT has promoted inclusive education in mainstream schools. However, their specific needs are not always catered for. Teachers in mainstream schools lack the training to cope with educating children with disabilities (Grönlund, Lim and Larsson 2010). One source reports that it is now accepted in the region that children with disabilities should be part of mainstream education, taking into account the specific cultural contexts of each country. However, for this approach to be effective, inclusive education must be implemented. The international organisations, NGOs and donors must assist with the development of national capacities for policy-making and system management. Resources must be available support inclusive education. This includes materials, equipment and technical advice (Charema 2007). For inclusive education to be effective, teachers must be trained and the necessary resources provided. There is also a role to play for parents and the wider community, who can advocate for education provision for their children (Stone-MacDonald 2015).

Despite the rhetoric, the Tanzanian Government is reported to not currently have the resources to educate children with disabilities through the public system. Local community members and NGOs have stepped in to address this challenge by providing specialist education (Stone-MacDonald 2015). Evidence from one school in Tanzania for children with disabilities indicates the importance of being able to implement a specially designed curriculum that stresses skills important in family life and the rural economy. Knowledge of the local context was found to be critical for educating children with disabilities in a meaningful and useful way (Stone-MacDonald 2012 b). Special education schools using a contextually appropriate curriculum, were found to have helped children to learn. Such educational environments assist with skills transfer to multiple settings in the community in post school years (Stone-MacDonald 2012 c).

2. Evidence on approaches to identifying, categorising, and supporting children with disabilities

2.1 Evidence on approaches to identifying children with disabilities

Tanzania's 2002 National Policy on Disability makes clear that educators and other service providers should be trained to identify each student's unique learning and developmental needs and create an individualised education plan with appropriate accommodations and adaptations as necessary. The Policy indicates Tanzania is committed to providing individualised, appropriate education and supports to students and other citizens with disabilities. Tanzania is also committed to improving the skills trainings offered in vocational training centres so that they are more effective at preparing people with disabilities to work independently. However, while, the Policy has advanced the rights of people with disabilities in Tanzania, there remains a clear discrepancy between rhetoric and reality (Aldersey and Turnbull 2011).

The use of labels and terms about students with disabilities has been found to support or hinder identification and service delivery in different ways. A theoretical paper by Stone-MacDonald (2015) examines how the capability approach can support identification and education of young children in Tanzania with disabilities. A capability approach positions the education of children

with disabilities within the social justice debate as this diverse group has been excluded from other philosophical and political formulations of social justice.⁵ In this context, case studies are presented to develop a cultural and practical understanding of disability in Tanzania. Cultural beliefs and values about disability in Tanzania and East Africa are found to currently offer mixed messages. As a theoretical paper, under the DFID framework, this should not be referred to as evidence. However, as well as providing a theoretical analysis of the conceptual framework of the capabilities approach, it also presents case studies, which are highly relevant to the question in hand.

Focusing on screening for refractive error (RE), a cluster randomised trial undertaken in 37 secondary schools in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, discusses implications for screening programmes (Wedner et al 2008). The study concludes that the low prevalence of un/undercorrected RE and poor uptake of spectacles, even when provided free, raises doubts about the value of vision-screening programmes in Tanzanian secondary schools. The authors argue that policy decisions on school vision screening in middle- and low-income countries should take account of the cost-effectiveness as well as competing demands for scarce resources (Wedner et al 2008).

2.2 Evidence on approaches to categorising children with disabilities

The categorisation of children with disabilities adopted by MoEVT is found to be broad. The term includes “those with different kinds of disabilities, slow learners and those who are exceptionally gifted” (Grönlund, Lim and Larsson 2010).

An ethnographic study into cultural beliefs about disability in Tanzania found that beliefs were centred on the causes of disability. God’s plan or role in the community, and a mixture of Christian, Muslim, and traditional beliefs were important factors. Participants saw the school staff as integral to influencing beliefs about disability in the community through their presence and outreach efforts (Stone-MacDonald 2012 a).

A paper that appears to be a secondary study by Croft (2013) investigates whether a national survey of disability prevalence is the best starting point when promoting the educational inclusion of disabled children in low and middle-income countries. She asks which characteristics of children with disabilities tell us anything useful, when considering their educational needs. It is commonly assumed that children with disabilities need specific provision to learn, such as specific teaching approaches, different or additional curriculum content, particular facilities, materials or learning contexts. Further, it is often assumed that these approaches will be related to categories of impairment. Croft (2013) contends that there are two broad positions on whether such categorisation is useful. The first states that general quality improvement in education will recognise and respond to the diversity of learners and will by definition will include disabled

⁵ For more information on the capability approach, see: Mitra S. 2006. The Capability Approach and Disability. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*; 16 (4).

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/10442073060160040501?journalCode=dpsa>

NB. This article is falls outside the inclusion criteria for this report due to its year of publication.

children. In this instance, categorisation is less useful. The second position is that in addition to educational needs that are common to all children and young people, children with disabilities have unique needs, as well as needs that are specific to them as members of sub-groups. The section below on mainstream versus specialist education schools touches on this further. Croft (2013) argues that it should be noted that these sub-groups are not necessarily defined by medically inspired impairment categories. Whichever position is adopted, it must be recognised that children do not fall neatly into categories. By way of example, a child may have visual impairment as well as hearing impairment. The child's individual needs must be considered, in addition to the needs shared with any sub-group.

In South Africa, a qualitative study was undertaken to explore current efforts to measure disability in a comparable manner internationally (Schneider 2009). The results of a series of focus groups led the author to conclude that using questions that ask about 'difficulty doing certain activities' rather than 'disability' provides a more comprehensive and inclusive measure of disability with a clearer understanding of what is being measured. Asking about 'difficulty doing certain activities' provides an improved measure of disability status for effective data collection and analysis to promote development, implementation and monitoring of disability-inclusive policies. Although this paper did not focus on education, it provides information useful to the current report on categorisation of disability.

2.3 Evidence on approaches to supporting children with disabilities

The results of a literature review found compelling evidence that individuals with disabilities in East Africa continue to be excluded from various aspects of society, including schools. The secondary study by Stone-MacDonald and Butera (2012) focused on cultural beliefs and attitudes about disability in East Africa. An increase in rural to urban migration is putting considerable strain on educational services including public education. Efforts to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities may be even less likely to be prioritised. The focus on protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities in East Africa must be sustained to avoid a negative impact.

A community based qualitative study carried out in Temeke Municipality in Tanzania explored factors that influence family perspectives in the provision of care to children and adolescents with mental and/or intellectual disabilities. Results from interviews completed by 52 respondents indicate deficient knowledge from communities and families of children and adolescents with mental and intellectual disabilities. Families were not supported in the care of their children. Although the study focused in particular on health provision for persons with mental and/or intellectual disabilities, the findings were deemed relevant to the current investigation, as based on the evidence, the study recommends that community and family/home-based care in the study area must improve would benefit families of children and adolescents with mental and/or intellectual disabilities (Mbwilo, Smide, Aarts 2010).

An exploratory, small-scale study on 17 schools in Zambia and five schools in Tanzania explores understandings of inclusion in schools (Miles 2011). Reflective writing, photo elicitation and participatory photography were some of the methods used to generate locally relevant knowledge about marginalisation from the educational process. It is argued that accessing contextually relevant knowledge about how to overcome attitudinal, environmental and institutional barriers to inclusion is a key starting point for the development of locally relevant and

sustainable inclusive education. The article draws attention to ongoing attitudinal barriers to inclusive education and demonstrated possibilities and future potential in working with 'ordinary' classroom teachers to promote inclusion (Miles 2011).

A secondary study by Okkolin, Lehtomäki and Bhalalusesa (2010) discusses to what extent the international and national equality goals regarding gender balance and inclusive education have been reached in the education sector development in Tanzania. By describing recent education sector reforms and analysing previous studies on gender balance and inclusive education, the authors highlight the achievements regarding gender balance and inclusiveness. Their findings suggest that Tanzania is close to achieving its primary education targets. However, current monitoring and evaluation mechanisms were found to be too narrow to catch the critical factors regarding equality, particularly in secondary education. The analysis of reports on students with disabilities were found to make no reference to learning difficulties, connections to repetition and dropout, and schools as disabling environments. In addition, the significant vulnerability of girls and young women with disabilities was not mentioned. Recommended measures taken to increase their educational opportunities were found to be absent.

The number of persons with disability in Tanzania is disputed, according to a mixed methods paper by Grönlund, Lim and Larsson (2010). Also, Tanzania does not have any specific policy that explicitly expresses the government's standpoint for inclusive education, although the National Disability Policy states that inclusion in education is a goal, as is universal basic education. No guidelines were found to illustrate how inclusive education should be implemented in the country (Grönlund, Lim and Larsson 2010).

An analysis of Tanzania's national policies on disability reports that in comparison to general school enrolment numbers, the disability statistics indicate a major problem for the education of students with disabilities. Data from the National Bureau of Statistics from 2008 indicates that education attendance among children with disabilities to be much lower than the national school enrolment ratio of 57.3 for all children. More than half of persons with disabilities 15 years and above had attended primary schools and 44 percent had not attended school at all. Only five percent had attended secondary school and less than one percent had finished tertiary education. At all levels attendance of male is higher than female attendance (Aldersey and Turnbull 2011).

Further analysis of the National Policy on Disability is provided by Mwaipopo, Lihamba, Njewe (2011). In terms of access to higher education, the policy outlines the government's commitment to people with disabilities. The authors report that the process through which this is achieved is, however, less explicit and is therefore difficult to measure in relation to what students with disabilities actually experience as they not only pursue, but also experience higher education. Both qualitative and quantitative data are used to assess equity and equality in access to higher education for students with disabilities in Tanzania. The authors report infrastructural inadequacies continuing to cause challenges for students with disabilities within higher education institutes. Action is required to facilitate the wider participation of students with disabilities in higher education in Tanzania. This includes not only making specific efforts to sensitise communities on the rights of people with disabilities to education, and equitable resource allocation to the different education levels to support the learning environment, but also decentralising the admission process to higher education as a deliberate attempt to ease the burden on students with disabilities in relation to these tasks. Further research on this topic is required (Mwaipopo, Lihamba, Njewe 2011).

3. Evidence of existing inclusive education and child protection programmes that increase access to education for children with disabilities

In an article that reflects on the theory of the capability approach and draws on findings of a participatory action research project involving eight primary schools in Tanzania, Polat (2011) reports numerous barriers to education inclusion at national, community and school levels. The existing literature and the emerging findings from primary research suggest some progress has been made towards inclusive, just and quality education in Tanzania but much work still needs to be done.

A mixed methods paper by Grönlund, Lim and Larsson (2010) focused on the use of assistive technologies for inclusive education. It presented a case study of the situation in Bangladesh and Tanzania, and reviewed existing inclusive education projects, as well as other relevant literature. The study found that literature on assistive technologies and inclusive education in developing countries was limited. Tanzania was found to have a relatively developed legislation on inclusive education, but national level coordination was found to be lacking. A relatively small number of non-government organisations are active (compared to Bangladesh), so inclusive education initiatives are limited. The programmes discovered in Tanzania were found to be geographically uneven. In particular one of the regions, Zanzibar, is way ahead of the rest of the country in inclusive education. Even in Zanzibar, inclusive education is not practiced on a large scale or to a substantial degree. In 2004 there were only seven schools with classes adapted to children with disabilities in Zanzibar, despite approximately 2,000 children were known to have disabilities. A unit for Inclusive Education exists within the MoEVT, which is responsible for implementing a pilot inclusive education program in primary schools. On the mainland, schools that are physically equipped for children with disabilities are even scarcer. Physical accessibility is still a challenge. Information and communication technologies (ICT) are used in some private schools but not in any government schools. Basic technologies or aids pertinent to supporting children with disabilities such as glasses, crutches, and Brailers are lacking. Access to special materials for education is insufficient.

4. Evidence on mainstream verses specialist education for children with disabilities

Currently children with disabilities in Tanzania receive education mainly through integration in mainstream classes. However, based on their research, Grönlund, Lim and Larsson (2010) argue that children with disabilities are currently integrated (rather than included) in mainstream education, as while children with disabilities attend ordinary classes, their special needs are not always catered for. Inclusive education is rarely covered in teacher training so teachers lack the skills to cope with educating children with disabilities. Despite the current situation, MoEVT aims to educate children with disabilities alongside their peers at the local schools. Through cooperation with various NGOs, the ministry has promoted inclusive education in mainstream schools. More than 1,500 children with disabilities have been registered in these projects. Communities are also involved in the implementation process, with forums on education for

children with disabilities being arranged with teachers, parents and community (Grönlund, Lim and Larsson 2010).

A primary study by Stone-MacDonald (2012 b) presents an ethnographic case study that focuses on the Irente Rainbow School (IRS) in Lushoto, Tanzania, which was the first school for children with developmental disabilities in the area. It describes how the school's curriculum stresses skills important in family life and the rural economy. The curriculum was based on the local community funds of knowledge, and the pedagogy on practices that were supported by the local culture. As special education evolves, programs will change to meet the needs of local populations. Knowledge of local context will be critical to give children with disabilities the best opportunity for an education and meaningful participation in their community. As part of the study, qualitative research techniques were used to ensure credibility and triangulation of data.

A different publication, by the same author reports that special education schools can help children to learn in natural settings using a functional curriculum that has been adapted to their local context (Stone-MacDonald 2012 c). Observational ethnographic research presents a case study of a special education school in Tanzania, where students with developmental disabilities learned vocational and daily life skills in a natural environment at their school and successfully transfer those skills to multiple settings in their community. The school was found to support students with disabilities to learn the skills they need for home, school, and job success Stone-MacDonald 2012 c).

In what appears to be a secondary analysis of existing literature, Charema (2007) discusses special schools versus inclusive education in Sub Saharan Africa. He argues that it is now widely accepted that children with disabilities should be educated alongside their age peers and be treated as full members of their community. He goes on to argue that if effective inclusive education is going to be implemented in this region, the international organisations, NGOs and donors have to direct their efforts towards the development of national capacities for policy-making and system management. Resources must be available to schools that run inclusive programs, particularly in rural areas. Materials, equipment and technical advice will help them in the delivery of inclusive education. The individual context of each country must be considered. Countries must train personnel to use locally available resources in order to improvise and sustain inclusive education. Co-operation between donor organisations and indigenous relevant personnel should be encouraged.

The theoretical study by Stone-MacDonald (2015) compares the experience of an inclusive public primary school and a segregated faith-based school for children with disabilities.⁶ The study found that the Tanzanian government does not have the resources to deliver their disability education goals through the public system. Local community members and non-governmental organisations have stepped in to create schools and provide accommodations for children with disabilities. Parents and local collaborators are bridging the gap between the local colloquial terms about disease and disability and people first language. Parents are acting as advocates in working for services and education for their children. Inclusive education can help combat negative attitudes and support community membership for children with disabilities. However,

⁶ Despite the theoretical nature of this paper, and what this means in terms of the DFID How to Note on Assessing the Strength of Evidence, it has been included, as the case studies are of direct relevance to this section.

well-trained teachers with the resources necessary to provide a quality education to all students are also needed.

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6. Other resources

This report on the right to education of children with disabilities in Africa was considered grey literature, so was not included in the body of the report. However, it is deemed extremely relevant.

Riggall A, Croft A. 2016. Eastern and Southern Africa regional study on the fulfilment of the right to education of children with disabilities. Education Development Trust/UNICEF

<https://www.educationdevelopmenttrust.com/~media/EDT/Reports/Research/2016/r-regional-children-with-disabilities-2016.pdf>

Between December 2014 and August 2015 the Education Development Trust and the UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) conducted this desk based study to investigate the extent of fulfilment of the right to education of children with disabilities in 21 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa. The report found there are mixed levels of political commitment throughout the region. The majority of Ministries of Education were found to have some degree of responsibility for educating children with disabilities, but it is not always clear where central responsibility for this lies. Also, often only observable disabilities are recognised in legislation. The report found that an inclusive education approach is the dominant strategy for providing education to children with disabilities. However, there is little evidence that documents political commitment to implement such approaches, such as provision of teacher training for inclusive education as a mainstream activity. Disability-specific teacher training programmes

were found in some countries. However, they were not given the prominence and status required to ensure that teachers gain the skills needed to meet the needs of an inclusive education system. Innovative examples of state and non-state provision for children with disabilities were reported. Also teacher education programmes which specifically address support for children with disabilities were found. A key recommendation is for teacher education and continuing professional development to be reviewed to ensure specialist and mainstream teachers are prepared to include children with disabilities in education. General improvements in teaching quality, such as a problem-solving attitude to children's difficulties at school and strategies for helping children when they find something hard to learn, will help all children. Poverty was found to pose demand side financial challenges to poor households. This was found to affect those with children with disabilities more acutely. Parents sometimes do not prioritise education for children with disabilities, with other parents in mainstream schools holding negative attitudes towards children with disabilities being in the same class as their child. Stigmatisation of disability can be compounded by issues such as having no school uniform, and being a girl often means facing a double sense of discrimination and marginalisation. Sensitisation of parents, caregivers and communities is vital in recognising the right to education for every child, including children with disabilities, given the stigma and cultural attitudes towards disability.

Education Development Trust also published a series of three case studies on the right to education of children with disabilities. These papers were not peer reviewed, so have not been included in the body of the report. However, they are deemed extremely relevant.

- Mattingly J, Suubi P. 2016. A study on children with disabilities and their right to education: Republic of Rwanda. Education Development Trust
<https://www.educationdevelopmenttrust.com/~media/EDT/Reports/Research/2016/r-disabilities-rwanda-report.pdf>

Between December 2014 and August 2015 the Education Development Trust and UNICEF conducted a research programme to investigate the extent of fulfilment of the right to education of children with disabilities in Rwanda. This report was conducted with the assistance of the Ministry of Education in Rwanda (MINEDUC). The key recommendations were as follows:

1. Review data collection on children with disabilities, moving away from focusing on visible impairments to provide information that is more useful in planning responses to the educational needs of children in schools.
2. Expedite the implementation of the strategic plan for the revised Policy for Inclusive and Special Needs Education and establish a desk responsible for inclusive and special needs education in the Rwanda Education Board (REB).
3. Ensure the accessibility building code is applied to all new school construction, and allocate resources for modifications to be made to existing buildings on a needs basis.
4. Ensure all children can access national exams, and provide clear guidelines regarding entitlements to support (readers, sign interpreters, Braille translation, computers, etc.) and any additional time allowances.
5. Develop a simple toolkit for all teachers to provide an interim measure of support and guidance on how to make their classrooms more inclusive and child friendly, together with a checklist for assessment or simple strategies to identify children experiencing difficulties in learning, and practical initiatives that can be applied in the classroom to overcome these.

- Mattingly J, Ratisifandrihamanana L. 2016. A study on children with disabilities and their right to education: Madagascar. Education Development Trust
<https://www.educationdevelopmenttrust.com/~media/EDT/Reports/Research/2016/r-Madagascar-children-with-disabilities-2016.pdf>

While Madagascar made significant progress towards achieving universal education over the past decade, the country has been significantly impacted since 2009 by a period of political unrest which resulted in falling financial support from donors. Net enrolment rate at primary level decreased from 96.8% in 2005 to 69.4% in 2012. 1.5 million children of primary school age remain currently out of school. The financial cost of schooling represents one of the main barriers to enrolment in school. Schools work under difficult circumstances with a severe lack of resources and the majority of teachers are untrained and appointed by the community. Education for children with disabilities has historically been provided through specialist centres organised by the churches, and this continues to be the case, particularly for children with sensory impairments. There is one government school providing for children with intellectual impairments, many of whom also have physical disabilities and an increasing number of private providers offering placements for children with intellectual impairments. With the adoption of the 2009 Decree on inclusive education guaranteeing the right for all children with disabilities to be enrolled in ordinary schools, there have been a variety of both government and non-government organisation initiatives piloting inclusive education programmes and integrated classes over the past few years, but these have suffered from the curtailment of donor funds during the crisis.

- Mattingly J, Said Abdullah L. 2016. A study on children with disabilities and their right to education: the Union of Comoros. Education Development Trust
<https://www.educationdevelopmenttrust.com/~media/EDT/Reports/Research/2016/r-Comoros-children-with-disabilities-2016.pdf>

One of the priority areas for the government of Comoros is to increase access to basic education for vulnerable children, including children with disabilities, and this is reflected in the Interim Education Plan 2013–15. Education is compulsory between the ages of 6 and 12 but, as in other places in the region, both access and quality remain challenges. The evidence suggests that a comprehensive and multidimensional approach is required which acknowledges the multiple barriers to the education of children with disabilities as well as the multiple bridges that can help overcome these barriers. The difficulty of implementing wide-scale system reform are recognised.

The following report was developed by the International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC) and led by Light for the World. It did not appear in a peer reviewed journal, but was deemed relevant to include here:

Myers J, Pinnock H, Baboo N, Lewis I. #CostingEquity - The case for disability-responsive education financing. IDDC)/LIGHT FOR THE WORLD

https://www.light-for-the-world.org/sites/lfdw_org/files/download_files/costingequity-the_case_for_disability-responsive_education_financing_15032017_acs_pdf.pdf

This report contributes to the global discourse on education finance by providing a disability perspective on donor and government investment into inclusive education. The report looks at the benefits of financing disability - inclusive education, the current state of education financing with regard to inclusion, and what needs to change in order for education financing to effectively support the realisation of Sustainable Development Goal 4 and Article 24 of the United Nations

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), which focus on education. The report finds that increasing domestic financing is vital to achieve disability-inclusive education. Also, the decline in aid needs to be reversed. In addition, pooled and blended financing mechanisms and debt relief linked to improved inclusive education spending are options that need to be further investigated, while better harmonisation of aid with national inclusive education plans is vital. Private development assistance is growing faster than overseas development assistance, and with appropriate guidance could play a catalytic role in the provision of disability inclusive education.

The following book could not be accessed, but is believed to be directly relevant.

Stone-MacDonald A. 2014. Community-based education for students with developmental disabilities in Tanzania. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.
<http://www.springer.com/gp/book/9789400773196>

This year-long ethnographic study presented as an ebook, details the experience of a special education school for students with developmental disabilities in Lushoto, Tanzania. It examines the use of local context, community funds of knowledge, culturally relevant pedagogy, and community support to teach students with disabilities important life skills, independence, self-advocacy and to fight for their human rights.

The following paper was funded by the Australian Government and commissioned as part of a joint call for systematic reviews with the Department for International Development (DFID) and the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie):

Bakshi P, Kett M, Oliver K. 2013. What are the impacts of approaches to increase the accessibility to education for people with a disability across developed and developing countries and what is known about the cost-effectiveness of different approaches? EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.

<https://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/Portals/0/PDF%20reviews%20and%20summaries/Education%20approaches%202013%20Bakhshi%20report.pdf?ver=2013-09-03-150231-427>

This report attempts to map existing evidence that provides information about the impact of initiatives that provide education for children with disabilities. It also identifies any studies that provide an analysis about the cost-effectiveness of existing initiatives. The majority of studies included were found to focus on higher-income countries (mostly North America and the UK). A large proportion of the studies focused on intellectual disabilities and autism. The nature of the studies was often based on testing of cognitive/metacognitive techniques that aimed to improve classroom outcomes (especially related to reading skills). The study found that the geography of policy and programming dynamics are extremely different in high, middle- or low-income countries. Also, the results indicate that the typology of disability needs to be determined in order to define appropriate interventions. Mechanisms for evaluating impact of interventions beyond the achievement of learning outcomes must be developed.

The following systematic literature review of education systems in low-and middle income countries was commissioned by CBM and is deemed highly relevant:

Wapling L. 2016. Inclusive Education and Children with Disabilities: Quality Education for All in Low and Middle Income Countries. CBM.

http://www.cbm.org/article/downloads/54741/Quality_Education_for_All_LMIC_Evidence_Review_CBM_2016_Full_Report.pdf

This systematic literature review was commissioned by CBM focuses inclusive education and children with disabilities in low and middle income countries. The review found that much of the literature focused on the extent to which inclusive education policies were being effectively resourced and implemented for children with disabilities, both by the governments and by the international development sector. Concerns were raised around the lack of clarity over the meaning of inclusive education, over the preparedness of teachers to include children with disabilities and over the availability and supply of specialist support and technology. Despite the challenges, from the literature reviewed it is clear that there is an increase in general understanding and acceptance of education as a right for children with disabilities. Teachers are more open to including children with disabilities in their classrooms and when supported, can come up with innovative ways to accommodate their needs. For inclusive education to become effective as a system however, much closer scrutiny is needed over how it is being implemented in relation to children with disabilities and what this is doing to improve their overall outcomes.

This reading list provided by the Kilimanjaro Centre for Community Ophthalmology focuses on articles relating to eye health in Tanzania. The majority focus on health, rather than education, but are relevant for context:

http://www.kcco.net/uploads/2/5/5/3/25532706/articles_on_eye_care_tanzania__2015_.pdf

Although it is non-systematic and not published in a peer review journal, this topic guide on inclusive learning is useful for context. It states that the evidence underpinning inclusive learning in low and middle income countries is weak and fragmented:

Howgego C, Miles S, Myers J. 2014. Inclusive learning – children with disabilities and difficulties in learning. HEART topic guide.

<http://www.heart-resources.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Inclusive-Learning-Topic-Guide.pdf>

Despite not being published in a peer-reviewed journal, this report was deemed relevant as it draws on experiences in Africa, including a focus on Tanzania, to highlight issues that need to be considered when it comes to implementing inclusive strategies:

Mariga L, McConkey R, Myezwa H. 2014. Inclusive Education in Low-Income Countries. Atlas Alliance and Disability Innovations Africa

http://www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/Inclusive_Education_in_Low_Income_Countries.pdf

This grey literature research report uses both quantitative and qualitative research approaches to examine the challenges and opportunities concerning access to education for children with disabilities:

Mkumbo, K. 2008. Do children with disabilities have equal access to education? A research report on accessibility to education for children with disabilities in Tanzanian schools. HakiElimu

http://hakielimu.org/files/publications/document133Children_disabilities.pdf

This book chapter is relevant to the question on measuring learning outcomes

Barrett A. 2016. Measuring Learning Outcomes and Education for Sustainable Development: The new Education Development Goal. In: Smith W (ed) The Global Testing Culture: Shaping

About this report

This report is based on five days of desk-based research. The K4D research helpdesk provides rapid syntheses of a selection of recent relevant literature and international expert thinking in response to specific questions relating to international development. For any enquiries, contact helpdesk@k4d.info.

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