Inclusion Committees and Strategies for Inclusive Education in the Global South

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Introduction

- Public school teacher
- PhD Syracuse University
- Fulbright in Kenya
- Professor Rowan University
- Community-based research
- Inclusive education
Agenda

● Western Kenya Example
  1) Community-based approaches and strategies
  2) School-based approaches and strategies

AIM: Move from “Can we?” to “How can we?”
Rationale for Inclusive Education

- Segregating people based on disability justifies substandard education practices and other realities including:
  - Negative views on disability
  - Infanticide
  - Disability as a burden

“Blind beggar, that was my name in the village, a blind beggar and I felt very bad.” (Community member with a disability, 2018)
Western Kenya: Context
One Model of Inclusive Education

1) Community-based (“ecosystems”)

2) Income Generating Activities (IGAs)

3) Ongoing teacher training (co-teaching)
A Community-Based Approach to Inclusion

- Schools don’t exist in a vacuum
- Leverage existing community resources
- Inclusion committees:
  - Students with and without disabilities
  - Parents of children with and without disabilities
  - Teachers at special and primary schools
  - Administrators from special and primary schools
  - Community members with and without disabilities
  - Ministry of Education- local and national
School Sites

1) School for students with physical disabilities neighboring a primary school
2) School for students who are deaf neighboring a primary school

AIM: Dissolving the barriers between the schools
“The project has been kept sustained by funds that we get from an income generating activity.” (Parent of a child with a disability, 2018)
Teacher Trainings on Inclusive Education

“We need to make changes in regards to teacher training. We don’t do anything like this. We have trainings where people talk and talk. There is no interaction. Nothing ever happens. Teachers go back to their schools. We also need to think about how to provide this type of trainings to all teachers.” (Primary school teacher, 2015)
## Community Building and Inclusive Education

(Elder, Damiani, & Oswago, 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Building Strategies</th>
<th>Instructional Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home groups</td>
<td>Turn and Talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning meeting</td>
<td>Think-Pair-Share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner-outer circle</td>
<td>Give one, get one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class rules</td>
<td>Movement and talking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New and goods</td>
<td>Loop around</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Outcomes- Changing Perceptions

“Through this project now the community and the parents are coming to actually learn that it is important to bring people with disability on board...So it’s like coexistence.” (Parent of a child with a disability, 2018).
Unintended Consequences of Inclusion

1) Overcrowding “inclusive” schools
2) Strain on existing resources
3) Students not living at home
4) Increased vulnerability
The South Informing the North

1) Doing more with less
2) Centering lived experience with disability
3) Applying lessons from Kenya in the U.S./Western contexts
References


