



The role of inclusive education systems in empowering girls and boys with disabilities

Many international frameworks and conventions protect the right for education for all. Inclusive education -and more specifically disability-inclusive education-is a human right. According to global estimates, persons with disabilities comprise approximately 15% of the world's population. In most developing countries, out of school rates for children with disabilities are still extremely high: 9 out of 10 do not go to school. The West and Central African region has the highest number of out-of-school children in the world. The majority of these children are from marginalized or disadvantaged groups with one in three out-of-school children estimated to have a disability, subject to learn less while in school and more likely to drop out.

The SDGs recognize the crucial role of inclusive and equitable quality education in building a better, more equal world. SDG4 specifically in its target 4.5 aims to eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and children in vulnerable situations by 2030. Four years after adoption of SDGs goals, a quick analysis of education policy implementation frameworks in Africa shows that very little progress has been made to ensure inclusion and equity in and through education systems and programs. Many countries are still in the early stages of aligning their plan. **Governments should honour their commitment to leaving no-one behind by investing more resources to address the diverse inequities and multiple disadvantages faced by girls and boys with disabilities.** If the SDGs are to be attained by 2030, urgent progress needs to be made on the inclusion of children with disabilities in existing education systems in West-Africa and beyond.

As recommended in the SDG17, the **Africa Network Campaign on Education For All (ANCEFA), West Africa Federation of the Disabled (WAFOD) and Humanity & Inclusion** entered in a strong partnership and are working together in advocating, collecting data, strengthening capacity of various stakeholders and monitoring implementation of SGD4 with a special focus on Children with disability.

Objective of the side-event: **To discuss how effective implementation of disability inclusive education sector plan can contribute to the full realisation of the rights of boys and girls by 2030**

Format: The side event will have a total duration of one hour and thirty minutes (1h30).

1. Introductory film presenting inclusive education

Will put forward the key elements of inclusive education (such as teacher training, school accessibility community awareness raising, adapted teaching and learning materials etc.) using images of West Africa; then moving to a small review of the situation in West Africa.

2. Presentation of the WAFOD report on the progress made by Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger on the implementation of SDG4.

3. 20min: Panel debate on education frameworks, policies and budgets in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger.

a. **The Ministry of Education** from Burkina Faso, Mali or Niger (TBC)

b. **WAFOD** will share insight on the reality for people with disabilities in accessing education and the importance to include disabled people organisations in all actions towards inclusion '**nothing about us without us**'.

c. **ANCEFA** will focus on the role of civil society in the monitoring of SDG4 and the need to increase domestic financing to achieve SDG4

d. **Humanity & Inclusion** will share current experiences from inclusive education projects in those three countries

4. Short film with testimonies from children, adolescents and adults with disabilities, teachers and other people working to implement disability inclusive education.

5. Interaction with the audience

Q&A: the audience will be asked to reflect upon the situation in their own country in light of the discussion.

6. Closing remarks

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