

## Awareness Raising Workshop on “*Inclusive Education*” for *Secondary School Teachers and School Principals*



Organized by Dilla University in collaboration with **APPEAR** Project

### **Workshop Agenda:**

- *The implementation of inclusive education*
- *International and national legal frameworks on disability*
- *Role of school principal on the implementation of inclusive education*
- *Identification, assessment and evaluation of children with special needs*

*A two days awareness raising workshop for secondary school principals and teachers*

**Dec 1-2/2018**

**Welcoming and opening speech by Dr Ababu Teshome**



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*(Picture. 1: Dr. Ababu Teshome, Director for SNEESC: Addressing welcoming and opening speech)*

The work shop was opened with the welcoming and opening speech of Dr. Ababu Teshome, Director for Special Needs Education Support Center of Dilla University. Dr. Ababu welcomed all the work shop participants and invited guests of the training. On his opening note, he addressed that a significant number of children with special needs today have no the access to education in the national and international arena. The issue is excessively severe in African countries due to a number of considerable factors like backwardness, poverty, and traditional and cultural outlooks of the society. Dr. Ababu showed the status of children with disabilities in the Ethiopian case. On this regard more than 95% of the Ethiopian children with disabilities are out of school because of one or more of the hindering factors shown.

Hence, this awareness raising workshop is devised for 54 (of which 50% were females) secondary school teachers and school principals to at least mitigate the problem through building up a common understanding on:

- The implementation of inclusive education
- International and national legal frameworks on disability
- Role of school principal on the implementation of inclusive education

- Identification, assessment and evaluation of children with special needs

He once again welcomed the participants and wished them the two days training be successful and fruitful.

## ***Agenda 1: The Concept and Implementation of Inclusive Education***

***By: Endashaw Getnet<sup>1</sup>***

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*(Pic. 2: Mr. Endashaw Getnet presenting)*

*(Pic.3: Participants attending)*

On the first day of the workshop, the trainer concentrated on clarifying the basic concept, purpose, challenges and strategies of implementing inclusive education in the secondary school context.

### **Main points addressed by the trainer**

- Clarification of the concept of inclusive education and confusing terms associated to inclusive education
- How the agenda of “**education for all**” in the light of inclusion must be addressed and conceived was elucidated well.

- The different groups of persons with special needs were made clear to participants and inclusive education is devised as a system to address the educational needs of these persons and means of welcoming of children all together.
- Attitudinal change must be fostered in the society to shift the existing reality on disability so that persons with disability can participate on all aspects of developmental activities.
- Explained that inclusive education is a 2030 development agenda (SDGs) of every nation.
- Inclusive education is not the responsibility of a single person, but everyone is a stakeholder in the process of putting it into practice.
- It has been indicated that inclusive education requires favorable and conducive learning environments. This can be manifested in terms of;
  - Positive school-community relationships
  - Parental awareness creation
  - Conscious and responsive school leadership
  - Welcoming school policies
  - Positive attitude of teachers to understand individual differences

Mr. Endashaw raised the following issues as challenges to the system of inclusion.

- ✓ **The existence of rigid (one size fit all) curriculum:** children with disability are forced today to learn without considering their educational needs and are required to go through the predesigned curriculum.
- ✓ **Nonexistence of conducive school environments:** it has been made clear to workshop participants that most secondary schools today in the Ethiopian context failed to accommodate students with special needs in general. It has been addressed that regular classes must be ready for the children, not the children must be ready for the regular classes.
- ✓ **Policy issues:** though different conventions and other policy related issues have been addressed in different laws of the nation, little attention has been paid to people with special needs and it seems the policies are impractical.

Furthermore, the trainer pinpointed the tremendous benefits of inclusion for students with no disabilities. This may take one or more of the following forms:

- Meaningful friendship
- Acceptance and appreciation of individual differences
- Respect for people

- Improvement of self-concept
- Understand that disability is an inevitable scenario so that can help preparation for inclusive adult life.

Lastly, getting ready for individualized educational plans, school based initiation to mobilize societal outlook, creation of positive attitude and open minded school-community have been made publicized as strategies to implement inclusive education and help to mitigate the existing reality on disability.

### **Major concerns raised by participants**



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*(Picture 4: partial view of participants of the workshop discussing inclusive education)*

After the tea break, a plenty of time for discussion on the issue of inclusive education was given to participants by dividing them into four groups. Meanwhile, they came up with the underneath core points.

- ✓ Tendency of parents to consider a child with disability as if unable
- ✓ A number of natural and manmade causes for disability like accidents, war, shocks, and medical mistakes and so on... have been forwarded from the side of participants
- ✓ Despite the fact that different workshops have been organized and delivered on inclusion in general and inclusive education in particular, many stakeholders have not the right

understanding and awareness on this regard. This in turn calls for intensive work in the future concerning inclusion.

- ✓ Unsupportive school environment for students with special needs
- ✓ Lack and in some scenario, absence of instructional materials in schools
- ✓ Fear of blaming from the side of students without disability as if s/he is being favored
- ✓ Little or no effort to individualized educational plan
- ✓ Large class size
- ✓ Incompetency of teachers to identify, assess and evaluate a student with special needs

Moreover, the participants forwarded the following possible suggestions to lessen the problems mentioned above.

- ✚ Policy must be strictly formulated to the extent that the educational, economical, technological and social needs of people with disabilities must be satisfied.
- ✚ Even though, the issue of disability must be a concern for everyone, the responsible body, which is directly accountable for the acts of such group, must be assigned at each echelon and administrative hierarchy of the nation.
- ✚ Resource centers must be established at least at cluster center schools.
- ✚ Continuous and periodic trainings must be provided for the practitioners so that new strategies and procedures can be introduced.
- ✚ Incentive trainings on vocational and technical and awareness rising like this one must be continued.

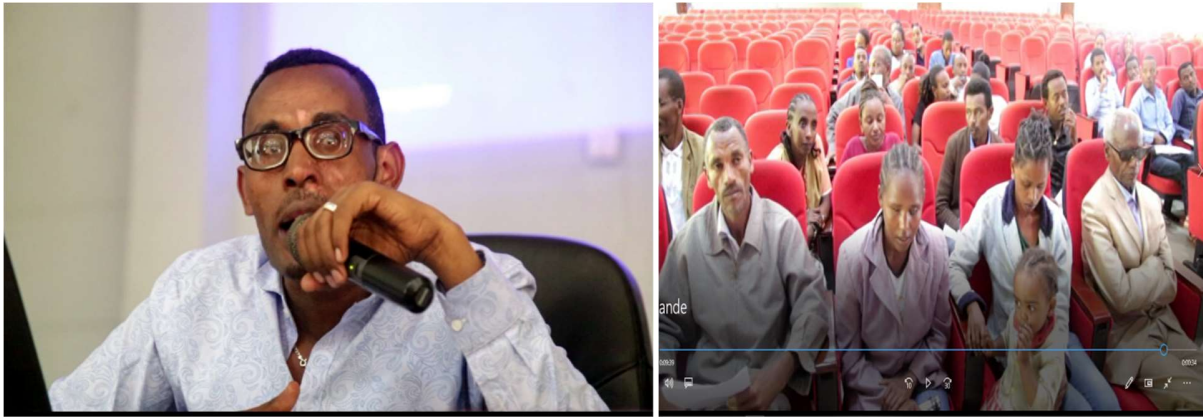
In sum, Mr. Endashaw finalized the session and informed the participants of the workshop to do their best in effort being made to implement inclusive education. Especially, he concluded his speech by declaring to “walk the talk.”



## *Agenda 2: International and national legal frameworks on disability*

*By: Getachew Tadesse<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer, School of law, Dilla University



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*(Pic.5: Mr. Getachew Tadesse, addressing main points on legal frameworks and participants from left to right)*

In the afternoon of the first day, the training continued with a new topic focusing on international and national legal frameworks on disability. This topic was considered the next tremendous issue that has to be discussed in order to raise awareness on side of the workshop participants. The session has been introduced with allowing trainees to brainstorm concerning traditional and cultural proverbs that have positive and negative implications to disability. Trainees list out as many traditional proverbs as possible, but most of them were found to have negative connotations. Stemming from this, Mr. Getachew, wrapped up the brainstorming session as it is understood that the society in which we grew up mold, sharpen and inherited the generation to develop a negative attitude towards disability. During the session, the trainer dealt with the following main points.

### **Main points addressed by the trainer**

- **International convention on the right of persons with disabilities (ICRPD):** the UN has declared the convention on the right of persons with disabilities and it was signed by the member countries so that can be counted as part of law of the land. It is evident that the convention is pioneering by spelling out the human and democratic rights of people with disabilities. Moreover,

it states that all people, regardless of their disabilities are equal before the law. On this regard, the trainer added his own experience and the experiences of famous peoples with disability. To mention some;

“The only disability is a bad attitude”

“My ability is stronger than my disability”

“Born without limps but without limits”

- Ethiopia also signed and accepted the international convention on education, social and cultural rights (ICESCR) affirmed by UN to care for the civil and political rights of persons with disability. It was practically clarified that the convention mainly gives a due attention to justices and equity matters, medical service and quality life among others
- The FDRE constitution Article 4(5) is dealing with persons with disability, but not forcing the executive to help people with disabilities as compulsory. On this regard, the trainer interjected his own belief to make the provision that the executive must do what they need to do for people with disabilities. Moreover, several proclamations and regulations decreed by the HPR and the council of ministries of Ethiopia have been discussed as important legal frameworks regardless of their implementation. Among others;
  - Proclamation No 1064/2010 of FDRE, provides for special preference in the recruitment, selection and deployment of persons with disabilities. However, this proclamation is applicable in government offices only.
  - Proclamation No 69/2010 E.C Art 10, regarding power, duties and responsibilities of the executive organ of the government grants equal opportunities for PWD and HIV/ AIDS.
  - Proclamation No 624/2009 referred to as building proclamation of Art 36 provides consideration of accessibilities in the design and construction of any building to ensure sustainability of physically challenged people.
  - Proclamation No 676/2010, ratification of UN conventions on the rights of people with disabilities to make an integral part of the law of the land.

Nonetheless of the aforementioned officially authorized and legal frameworks on the right of people with disabilities, a number of people with disabilities are not being benefitted due to the fact of the impracticality of these frameworks. Many of the employers including government organizations are not helpful to hire and deployed such group of people, most of the construction



buildings even after the regulation do rarely consider the needs of physically challenged people. Honestly speaking, in reality, these parts of the society are neglected from the larger socio-economic development dimensions of the nation.

Coming back from the health break beginning from 3:30PM, participants were organized into small groups and got the chance to raise their likely concerns. Accordingly, the following important issues haven forwarded and clarified.



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*(Picture 6: participants reflecting on international and national legal issues on disability)*

- They much worried about the level of awareness on the presence of such legal frameworks by the society and how these legal frameworks can be made accessible?
- The absence of comfortable buildings for learning, assessment and lack of inputs for learning
- The impracticality of laws adversely affects the current status on disability related matters and so on were among the most important ones. Finally, Mr. Getachew made an effort to reflect on the concerns raised by the workshop participants and forwarded some suggestions for improvement to the current scenario, and winded up the daily meeting at 5:30 PM.

### ***Agenda 3: Roles of school principals on the implementation of inclusive education***

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*(Picture. 7: left; Mr Giorgis Addressing main points, right: participants attending the workshop*

On the second day, the training continued with the third agenda on principals' role to implement inclusive education. Concerning this headline, terrific ideas had been addressed by the trainer, Mr. Giorgis.

**The concept and basic understanding leadership:** to make the concept clear to the trainees, Mr. Giorgis on this regard underlined leadership as influencing, inspiring and/or motivating others behavior. Furthermore, the use of power in leadership got a focus while briefing the concept.

**School principals' competences and domains:** as of the explanation provided, school principals are supposed to be competent in one or more of the below given domains.

- Drafting School vision and community leadership
- Instructional leadership
- Administrative leadership

The roles and responsibilities of education management at different levels of the administrative structure has been mentioned. Ultimately, school principals are expected to take the responsibility

and facilitating role of creating conducive learning environments to support inclusive education. At the top of this, it has been kept in mind that inclusive leadership is a precondition for inclusive education as long as leadership has both direct and indirect impact on students' performance and learning achievement. Besides, leadership has a role of building positive relationships in between and among students and teachers and helps to build a social capital. As accustomed, participants were given the possibility to raise and mention their practical experiences with regard to principal's roles in the implementation of inclusive education. An emphasis was made on the major challenges faced by principals. They spelt out these problems as:

- Building construction problems which hinder school principals not to exert their potential of supporting students with physical challenges
- Insufficient instructional materials to intervene and regard the educational needs of students with disabilities
- Failure to develop positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and exert minimum endeavors to support them and
- Lack of competencies are among others.

At last, the trainer appreciated the participants for their commitment, active participation and unreserved efforts made during the group discussion session. He reflected on some aspects of the concerns raised, wrapped the session up with additional insights drawn from the discussion and reflection and came to an end at 12:30 in the morning.

## ***Agenda 4: Identification, Assessment and Evaluation of Children with Special Needs***

***By: Dejene Tefera<sup>1</sup>(PhD)***

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*(Picture 8: Dr. Dejene Tefera, allowing participants brainstorming addressing significant points on identification, assessment and evaluation of SWSN)*

The training continued in the afternoon of the second day with the fourth training theme on ***“Identification, Assessment and Evaluation of Children with Special Needs.”*** On this regard, workshop participants were given the opportunity to come up with diverse ideas about the scenario of children with disabilities. They raised some of their understandings and problems that they are facing in teaching in relation with such children. The session was very warm and evident that how far the participants were very much concerned about students with disabilities. Following that, the trainer forwarded the forth mentioned significant points.

### **A. General overview on students with special needs**

1. Clarification has been made on special needs education: it includes not only students with disability, but also students with intellectual limitations and gifted and talented.
2. **The relationship between poverty and disability:** he made clear that according to many research findings, many of people with disabilities, probably more than 80%, are living in developing nations. Comparably, the situation is harsher in sub Saharan countries.
3. **An illustration was made on the state affair of disability in the Ethiopian context:** as on among the sub Saharan nations, the matter remains sever due to varieties of hindering

factors like the problem in maternal delivery, pre and postnatal conditions, harmful traditional practices and absence of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention mechanisms are among the prominent ones.

4. Moreover, the purpose of identification and assessment, strategies to be employed in assessment, the areas and the major challenges faced by teachers during identification and assessment of students with special needs have been made clear for participants of the workshop.

#### **B. Purpose of Assessment and Evaluation of Children with Special Needs**

The trainer was also in a position to clarify why assessment and evaluation is important. On this regard, he tried to interject what is written in the literature with personal experience and current practices. To this end, the following points were considered to the rationales behind assessment and evolution of students with SN.

- i. Screening: to identify who is who.
- ii. Description of current skills
- iii. Curriculum planning. To get ready for an individualized education plan (IEP)
- iv. Decision about placement; to decide either of the placement options are appropriate or not.
- v. Classification: to indicate degree of classification
- vi. Monitoring student's progress.

It has been made clear that teachers of secondary schools are highly required to take in to consideration as many personal and environmental factors as possible while assessing students with special needs. Furthermore, Dr. Dejene spelled out about the models that were and still being used models of assessment.

#### **C. Areas of Assessment**

At last, Dr. Dejene, the trainer, emphasized that assessment has to be carried out not only for academic achievements of students with special needs but also it must cover the areas of cognitive development, behavioral, social and emotional development, communication and language development, motor domains, perceptual abilities and adaptive domains are among others. Besides, it has been underscored that teachers and educators of students with special needs should make use of different data collecting instruments like; observation, interview, testing, records review and ecological assessment. Meanwhile, the participants of the workshop were allowed to raise their concern, their personal

view and special experience on the condition of students with special needs after the session has been broken for refreshment. Consequently, after they made a detailed discussion with their colleagues, they have raised issues like: how identification is difficult to secondary school teachers and also lack of adequate instructional materials to support students with special needs in fact remains a big challenge.

Participants of the workshop forwarded their suggestions about the two days training and it is possible to conclude that they find it useful and a means for their future job. They commented that the sessions were very organized, worthy and indispensable. On top of this, they strictly recommended the center such wonderful kinds of workshops shouldn't be a one time off session, it should rather be continued so that the condition of special needs and disability can be internalized well. As a concluding remark, the dean of the institute of education and behavioral science of Dilla University has made a closing speech of the workshop and declared to every one of them and all stakeholders to work together with the university collaboratively and take part in any event related with the issue of disability and inclusive education so that the existing attitudinal problem can be changed. Finally, he wished the participants of the training to get back home safely.

In summing up, the workshop has been evaluated as it was worthy and fruitful in terms of meeting its objectives and in a long term, this type of workshop is assumed to bear an impact in developing an inclusive society.

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*(Picture 9: Memorial photo with participants)*