

Theme: “Inclusive Education – Making the Future Accessible”

### Terms of Reference and call for abstracts

The disability movement in Zambia spearheaded by Disability Rights Watch (DRW) has been among other pertinent issues advocating for the revision of the National Policy on Education (Educating Our Future Policy), the Curriculum Development Framework, administration and marking of examination for children with disabilities especially those with hearing and visual impairments. This is in line with international human rights instruments to which Zambia is a signatory and some national laws and policies.

On the International level, the UN General Assembly to which Zambia is a member adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) on 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2006. Zambia went ahead and signed the convention in May 2008 and ratified it in February 2010. The Disability Policy was equally put in place in 2015 which acts as a workplan for the implementation of the Persons with Disabilities Act No 6 of 2012. The National Policy on Disability of 2015 provides for increased access to appropriate formal and non-formal education and skills training including life-long learning by putting in place an INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SYSTEM at all levels. This is equally the position in the National Policy on Education (Education our future). The Persons With Disabilities Act # 6 of 2012 equally highlights of free and compulsory primary, Secondary and Higher Education; Inclusive quality education; Reasonable accommodation; Consideration of additional needs.

Sustainable Development Goal No. 4 (Quality Inclusive Education) and the General Comment No. 4 on Inclusive Education among its reference documents is equally a guiding principle for ensuring equity within the education sector.

Disability Rights Watch recognises that there are many players in the field of IE in Zambia and has partnered with other disability Organizations which include: the Norwegian Disability Consortium, Cheshire Homes Society of Zambia, Mental Health Users Network of Zambia (MHUNZA), Zambia Association of Parents for Children with Disabilities (ZAPCD), University of Zambia (UNZA) and Archie Hinchcliffe Disability Intervention (AHDI) to host the 4th Inclusive Education Symposium.

Although DRW has a strong focus on strategic advocacy particularly for inclusive national policies and programmes it has a special interest in promoting the rights of children with



disabilities and persons with psycho-social and mental disabilities. The organisation recognizes the fact that the goal of IE is to reach out to ALL marginalized groups among them persons with albinism, orphaned and vulnerable children, street children, the terminally ill and the girl child. Concerted efforts towards harmonising and improving the delivery on IE practice and policy is therefore important if the goal of IE is to be realized. Thus it is important to bring together those working on IE to share experiences, hold open and honest discussions and seek to influence the strengthening of policy, legislative measures and their domestication in order to facilitate effective inclusion in the general education system.

The 2019 national inclusive education symposium draws its theme from the 2019 theme of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) **“The future is accessible”**. It hence shall focus on how this rich theme would be achieved through effective inclusive education. The Symposium shall give an highlight on milestones so far achieved on the on-going inclusive education Projects in Southern Eastern and Luapula Provinces by Norwegian Disability Consortium, Cheshire Homes Society of Zambia (CHSZ) and Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities (ZAPD) respectively.

### **Background to the 2019 Symposium on Inclusive Education**

Disability Rights Watch (DRW) engages community volunteers and paralegal caseworkers working within the partner DPOs and CBR communities. The partner DPOs identified IE as an advocacy theme in the past three years extending to the year 2019. In view of this, DRW has been actively involved in sensitizing partners on inclusive education. Some of the partners have gone further to engage DRW to train youths with disabilities on IE and strategic advocacy.

The ultimate position of the partners has been that, there is need to strengthen the National Policy on Education (Educating our Future) and to put in place a Directorate for Inclusive Education at the Ministry of Education, including speeding up domestication of international and national pieces of legislation bordering on inclusive education. DRW and its partners found it prudent to call like-minded stakeholders to brainstorm on roadmap for enhancing the agenda of enhanced advocacy and domestication of various pieces of national and international legislation of disability which border on inclusive education.

This process has been ongoing since 2016 and the symposium as a platform has been growing and each year focuses on a critical area of focus. Stakeholders in 2019 therefore thought it was necessary to unpack the principle of accessibility in so far as the provision of inclusive education was concerned.



## Goal

The goal of the symposium is to contribute towards enhanced advocacy for the realisation of Inclusive Education at all levels through a supportive policy environment for the purpose of sustainable budget allocation towards implementation and rolling out of quality IE.

## Theme

“Inclusive Education – Making the Future Accessible”

## Objectives

- To raise public and stakeholder awareness on inclusive education principles and application.
- To put in place a proposed roadmap for the state and stakeholders for domestication of the various instruments on Education that reflect IE principles.
- Build momentum for scale up of ‘Inclusive Education pilots’ by government through documenting best practices through the symposium platform.
- To identify key issues of concern around the principle of accessibility and propose strategies for addressing identified barriers for as part of advocacy with government.
- Assess the effectiveness of current advocacy efforts for supportive inclusive education policy and legal framework and financing for I.E.

## Outputs of the Symposium

1. Inclusive education policy briefs. A couple of professional briefs will be published and shared with government and stakeholders arising from key issues identified by the symposium.
2. A proposed roadmap for the state and stakeholders for domestication of the various instruments on Education that reflect IE principles
3. Documentation of papers in a symposium annual book which will among other things outline the current situation of IE in Zambia with clear recommendations around principles, strategies and implementation focus of IE.
4. Reviewed advocacy strategy and joint action plan with clear roles for key stakeholders to influence government policy and implementation of key government instruments such as the National Development Plan and Education Policy for IE for all learners.

## Date of the Symposium

The set date for the symposium is Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2019.



## Participants

The participants of the symposium will be drawn from DRW partners directly involved in IE advocacy; DRW Southern Province Paralegals; Leonard Cheshire Disability IE programme in Eastern Province; Zambia Agency for Persons With Disabilities, Inclusive Education pilot programme in Luapula, Norwegian Disability Consortium (Southern Province), University of Zambia; Ministry of General Education (PEO – TESS); Zambia Federation of Disability Organisations. Special invitation will be made to the Office of the First Lady the Republic of Zambia. Also in attendance shall be Norwegian Disability Consortium (both at Norway and Zambia level), Leonard Cheshire Disability (LCD). ILO, UNICEF, European Union, British Council, World Vision, World Bank, CBM, Save the Children, Plan International, University of Zambia, Special Education Teachers Association of Zambia (SEAZ), Ministry of General Education, Cheshire Homes Society of Zambia, Mental Health Users Network of Zambia (MHUNZA), Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities (ZAPD), Zambia Association of Parents for Children with Disabilities (ZAPCD), University of Zambia (UNZA) and Archie Hinchcliffe Disability Intervention (AHDI), the media and other stakeholders.

## Call for abstracts

A call for papers is therefore made from different players in the inclusive education sector, civil society, academics, advocates, community leaders and activists. This call is deliberately targeted to a particular group of selected experts and implementers because the symposium is an advocacy oriented one.

An abstract of not more than 300 words may be submitted under each of the following themes:

*1. Access to the built environment.*

Presentations here will address barriers that exist in the natural built environment such as inaccessible school buildings, walkways, sanitation facilities etc and seek to provide innovative solutions.

*2. Accessible learning and teaching materials*

Presentations under this category will look at the history and future of publication of literature and other learning and teaching materials that can be used by various categories of persons with disabilities such as the blind/visually impaired.

*3. Information Communication Technology- opportunities for inclusive learning*

Papers are invited on the critical role that information communication technology plays in modern education and how it is opening opportunities for access to persons with disabilities to quality inclusive education.



4. *Innovation in reaching to out of school children with disabilities and other disadvantaged children.*

Papers are invited under this category from individuals and institutions to speak on strategies for reaching children who are out of school through innovative strategies such as Home Based Education.

### **Deadline for Abstracts**

The deadline for paper submissions is Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2019. Please send papers to [opportunityzambia2@yahoo.com](mailto:opportunityzambia2@yahoo.com) and [bruce@disabilityrightswatch.net](mailto:bruce@disabilityrightswatch.net). For clarifications and comments please call Bruce on +260977579205

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### **About Disability Rights Watch**

Disability Rights Watch is a duly registered Disability Service Organisation with the Patents and Company Registration Authority as a company by guarantee and the Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities. It is specialized in capacity building of organisations of and for persons with disabilities in the field of strategic advocacy, including strategic litigation; human rights with emphasis on the UNCRPD; resource mobilization and organisation development with emphasis on strategic management.

[www.disabilityrightswatch..net](http://www.disabilityrightswatch..net)

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