

**INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN PRIMARY
SCHOOLS IN KYANGWALI REFUGEE SETTLEMENT**

BY

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DECLARATION

I **Ighangura Kantu Sedrack**, do solemnly declare that this research entitled “Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Primary Schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement” is my original work and has never been submitted to any academic or other institution before. I further affirm that all the information cited in this report which is not my own has been duly acknowledged.

Signature:..... Date:.....

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APPROVAL

I certify that this research entitled Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Primary Schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement was conducted under my supervision and submitted with my approval.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved mother, Late Hanah Kabatoro, my wife Ms. Kabugho Betty and children Seth, Seraiah, Stuart and Patience who faced unmentionable challenges during my long absence from them in an attempt to obtain a better education.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AEP	Accelerated Education Programme
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EFA	Education for all
HI	Humanity & Inclusion
IDC	Inclusive Development Consult
IE	Inclusive Education
NCDA	National Council on Disability Act
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SMC	School Management Committee
SNE	Special Needs Education
SS	South Sudan
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USDC	Uganda Society for Disabled Children

ABSTRACT

The inclusion of children with disabilities into primary schools within refugee settlements presents unique challenges and opportunities within the broader discourse of inclusive education. This research study delves into the dynamics of inclusive schooling for children with disabilities in refugee contexts, investigating the barriers to and facilitators of their participation in mainstream primary education. Drawing upon a comprehensive literature review and data analysis, this study examined the Intersectionality of disability and displacement, exploring how factors such as limited resources, cultural perceptions, and humanitarian aid frameworks impact the inclusion process. Moreover, it investigated the role of children, teachers, parents, and humanitarian aid organizations in promoting inclusive practices and supporting the diverse learning needs of children with disabilities. The study findings indicate that despite the existence of enabling environments such as the presence of humanitarian aid services, and government commitment to support refugees, there are many barriers hindering the realization of holistic disability inclusion in education. Conclusively, The research has established that the provision of disability inclusion in primary schools within the Kyangwali refugee settlement is influenced by a combination of systemic, institutional, and socio-cultural factors. Key among these are inadequate teachers trained in inclusive education, limited access to appropriate teaching and learning materials adapted for children with disabilities, infrastructural challenges such as lack of accessible classrooms and sanitation facilities, and negative community attitudes towards disability. Besides, the study revealed that while policies supporting inclusive education exist, there is a significant gap in their implementation due to lack of a specific Special Needs & Inclusive Education policy, limited funding and lack of stakeholder coordination. Cultural perceptions and stigma surrounding disability further hinder the full participation of children with disabilities in mainstream education. Some recommendations made are that there is need to train and up-skill teachers through regular workshops and in-service training focused on inclusive pedagogies and special needs education and provide adapted teaching and learning materials such as Braille books, large-print texts, hearing aids, and other assistive technologies. Upgrade school infrastructure to meet accessibility standards and encourage schools to develop and implement inclusive education plans while ensuring that national inclusive education policies are localized and enforced in refugee settlements like Kyangwali. Finally, Conduct community outreach programs through awareness raising campaigns, local media, and parent meetings to combat stigma and misconceptions about disability geared towards promoting the rights of children with disabilities to access quality education.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Historically, disability was perceived as a medical phenomenon, an impairment in the body system or function that was inherent and pathological (Olkin, 2002). This perception gave birth to communities looking at people with impairments as helpless and subjects of pity who deserve sympathy and kind treatment. Persons with disabilities were comparable with their able-bodied counterparts hence, the notion reinforced the belief that persons with disabilities were not as rights bearers in their own capacity but should rather derive their survival from dependence (Creamer, 2009). However, with the rise of activism for human rights in Europe from the 1940s onwards, the idea of inclusive development took root. Consequently, key to inclusive development was education which was identified as the principle to achieving the required development and in line with this, (Fredman & Campbell, 2018) observed that education is a fundamental human right which has a multiplier effect that enables people to exercise other human rights. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD) 2006, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) specifically Goal 4, the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995), the Persons with Disability Act (2020 as amended) and other policy documents do recommend inclusive education as the most suitable education system that can ably address the needs of children with different disabilities.

Theoretically, Inclusion of children with disabilities in formal education forms a cornerstone of this research. The theory is based on a belief that education systems

should accommodate all learners, regardless of any impairments or any other conditions they may be having (UNESCO, 2009). Inclusion in education is not only about right placement of children with disabilities in regular classrooms but also about modifying the education system to suit the diverse needs of all learners. This theory highlights the importance of restructuring school cultures, policies, and practices to accommodate all children including those with various impairments and ensure their achievement of meaningful education in mainstream settings. In the context of Kyangwali Refugee Settlement, this theory guides the analysis of whether and how primary schools have adapted their environments and teaching strategies to include children with disabilities.

Inclusive education theory is supported by the Disability Social Model, first articulated by Oliver (1996), which provides contrasting perspective to the traditional medical model of disability that focuses on a person's impairments. Instead, the social disability model perceives disability to be a result of the interaction between persons with impairments and environmental barriers that limit their full participation in society. This model is particularly relevant in educational settings, as it shifts the focus from what is "wrong" with the child to what can be changed in the environment to support learning. As Barnes (2003) notes, exclusion is not a consequence of impairments but of inaccessible systems and discriminatory attitudes. In the Kyangwali refugee context, the social model helps to uncover how school structures, teacher attitudes, curriculum rigidity, and lack of resources may create disabling conditions for learners with disabilities, regardless of their actual impairments.

Conceptually, two key aspects (disability and Inclusive education) are defined to put this research in perspective. According to the World Health Organization

(2001), disability is “an umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. It denotes the negative aspects of the interaction between an individual (with a health condition) and that individual’s contextual factors (environmental and personal factors)” (p. 3). Relatedly, “Persons with disabilities include 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.” (UNCRPD, 2006, Art. 1). Generally, inclusion in education is understood differently by different scholars. However, the following definitions stand out and are worth citing: According to UNESCO (2009, P. 126), “Inclusive Education is an ongoing process aimed at offering quality education for all while respecting diversity and different needs and abilities, characteristics and learning expectations of learners and communities, and eliminating all forms of discrimination”. Inclusive Education means all children in the same classrooms, in the same schools (ignatiuscollegeofeducation.com). According to international standards such as those set up by UNICEF (2014), as cited by (OECD, 2021: p. 12). “Inclusive education is a dynamic process that is constantly evolving according to the local culture and context, as it seeks to enable communities, systems and structures to combat discrimination, celebrate diversity, promote participation and overcome barriers to learning and participation for all people”. “Inclusion is the process that helps overcome barriers limiting the presence, participation and achievement of all learners. It is about changing the system to fit the student, not changing the student to fit the system, because the ‘problem’ of exclusion is firmly within the system, not the person or their characteristics” (UNICEF,2014: p.20).

Inclusive education in this research relates to the education services provision to children with disabilities in the mainstream setting. In essence, this study adopted Sarton's and Smith's (2018: p.2) with the understanding of disability as relating to how impairments interact with barriers in the environment and cause disruption in children's education by disabling them. Children who are likely to experience the environmental barriers according to Tyagi, (2016: p.115) include: children with sight problems (VI), hearing challenges (HI), and intellectual deficit (II), learning difficulties, speech difficulties and emotional disturbances that lead to behavioural problems.

Contextually, adaptation of inclusive education system in Uganda was conceived in the Education Review Commission of 1989 which resulted in a white paper entitled Kajubi Report which set precedence to the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE). Besides, Uganda being a member of United Nations signed and ratified the UNCRPD in 2008 (Oyaro 2014) and demonstrated its commitment to implement the CRPD by adopting laws that promote disability inclusion. Uganda's commitment to disability inclusion is demonstrated through enactment of a number of legislations such as article 32 of the constitution of Uganda (1995). Other policy documents include; Persons with Disabilities Act (2020), the National Council for Disability Act (2013 as amended), the Equal Opportunities Act (2008), the National Policy on Disability in Uganda (2006), to mention but a few.

Kyangwali refugee Settlement where the study was carried out lies in Kikuube district approximately 97 kilometers from Hoima city. (Kupfer (2016: p.2). Given its proximity to Eastern Congo which has experienced constant civil unrest, 96.7% of the population of roughly 129,142 refugees is Congolese by origin (UNHCR,

2023). The settlement is estimated to be 91 SqKm of land. Uganda’s refugee population primarily originate from neighboring countries as indicated in the table below which shows the break-down of population in Kyangwali by nationality, gender and age range.

Table 1: Breakdown of refugees in Kyangwali settlement by Nationality

Country of origin	0-4 years		5-11 years		12-17 years		18-59 years		60+ years		Total
	Female	male	Female	male	Female	male	Female	male	Female	male	
DRC	11,902	1,944	15,127	15,086	9,458	9,615	27,388	20,209	2,467	1,740	124,936
S. Sudan	208	225	311	314	275	334	935	777	54	27	3,459
Rwanda	42	34	59	60	62	56	131	130	11	21	606
Burundi	8	8	12	21	10	11	29	21	0	2	120
Kenya	0	1	0	0	0	3	3	4	0	0	11
Eritrea	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
Sudan	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	4
Ethiopia	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Somalia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total											129,142

Source: Government of Uganda Office of Prime Minister Jan 31st 2023.

In Kyangwali, there are 13 primary schools out of which 8 are government aided and 5 are community-based. The schools operate under a UPE system where no fees structures are levied on learners. The education system in the settlement is largely funded by Development partners who among others construct schools, employ teachers, provide scholastic materials, and build teachers’ and School Management Committees’ capacity. The schools in Kyangwali settlement are highly congested with a total population of 36,680 learners across the 13 primary schools (Windle International report, 2022, unpublished). The development partners providing education services either directly or indirectly include Windle

International, Save the Children, War Child Holland, Humanity & Inclusion (HI), AVSI, Cheshire services, Alight, Norwegian Refugee Council. Other partners are Catholic Relief Services, Finnish Refugee Council, International Aid Services, Lutheran Worldwide Foundation and AAR Japan. Basically, there are two educational programmes that lead to the award of Primary Leaving Examinations certificate at the lower level of education being run in Kyangwali: they are Primary Education and Accelerated Education Programme (AEP). AEP targets children who might have missed enrolling for primary education at an appropriate school going age of 6 years. The two programmes run concurrently in primary schools though with a compressed primary curriculum adapted to AEP primarily intended to benefit all children below the age of eighteen. It is believed that both AEP and primary education programmes are appropriate and open to all children though there are other factors at play which allow or deny accessibility by children with divergent abilities and/ or limitations. Such factors include but are not limited to the ones stated hereunder: family background, attitudes towards education, distance from home to school, teacher's training background, physical infrastructural designs, and assessment of children's achievements among others. The Intersectionality of disability, gender and refugee status makes it even harder for accessing education services (Besic et al., 2020). In this respect, the different social expectations associated to gender also influences the enrolment of girl-children with disabilities and exposes them to a higher risk of exclusion from social service provision including education (Besic et al., 2020).

According to Humanity & Inclusion (2020) Assessment Report (unpublished), 1,035 out of 65,191 children between 5 years and 17 years were identified to be having some form of disability but only 302 out of the aforementioned number

identified were attending school. However, there is no report on how many learners with disabilities who complete the primary education cycle. The report further indicated that children with relative or moderate disability attended school.

Despite the high numbers of refugee children registered in Kyangwali (64,983) as reported by UNHCR (2023) vis-a-vis children with disabilities identified (1,035, Humanity & Inclusion report, 2020 unpublished), the number of schools established cannot accommodate such number owing to other factors such as location of schools, negative attitudes towards disability and poverty among the refugee community . Besides, the few schools established have no considerations of accessibility to children with disabilities. Further still, there is scanty information in terms of research about the education provision that puts into consideration children of disabilities. The only research work established was in 2016 by Meital Kupfer which focused on accessibility and quality education for refugees. However, the study did not highlight salient issues critical to promoting inclusive education being offered in Kyangwali (Kupfer, 2016). To address this state of low enrolment of children presumed to have disabilities, there is need to study and establish the contributing factors through exploring the first hand views of key stakeholders.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream education is a fundamental human right, enshrined in international conventions such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). These instruments, along with Sustainable Development Goal 4, advocate for inclusive and equitable quality

education for all, including children with disabilities. Uganda has domesticated these commitments through its Education and Sports Sector Strategic Plan and National Inclusive Education Policy, yet implementation challenges persist especially in refugee-hosting contexts.

The Kyangwali Refugee Settlement, located in western Uganda, is home to 129,142 refugees (UNHCR, 2023), primarily from the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, and other neighboring countries. While Uganda has a progressive refugee policy that includes access to education, children with disabilities in Kyangwali face compounded vulnerabilities due to displacement, poverty, stigma, and insufficient support services. Preliminary observations and anecdotal evidence indicate that:

- Many primary schools lack the physical infrastructure (such as ramps, accessible toilets, and adapted classrooms) to accommodate learners with disabilities.
- Teachers often lack adequate training in special needs or inclusive pedagogies, limiting their ability to effectively teach in classes with learners of diverse backgrounds.
- There is a shortage of assistive devices (e.g., hearing aids, wheelchairs, Braille materials) and specialized learning resources.
- Social stigma and cultural beliefs within refugee communities which can result into exclusion or hidden status of children with disabilities.
- Data on children with disabilities in refugee settlements is scarce, making it difficult to plan and allocate resources effectively.

Despite these realities, there is a lack of empirical research examining how children with disabilities are integrated into the primary education system within the Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. Most existing studies on inclusive education in Uganda focus on urban or non-refugee populations, leaving a critical gap in understanding the unique challenges and potential solutions in refugee contexts.

These conditions require a study to investigate factors influencing inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream primary school in Kyangwali refugee settlement and suggest a framework of action.

1.3 Rationale of the Study

The inclusion of children with disabilities in education is a critical component of achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4, which emphasizes inclusion and equitable education for all. While global and national frameworks support inclusive education, the practical implementation of these policies remains a challenge, especially in vulnerable and marginalized contexts such as refugee settlements.

Kyangwali Refugee Settlement in Uganda hosts a diverse population of refugees from various countries, many of whom face significant barriers to accessing quality education. Among them, children with disabilities represent a particularly marginalized group. These children often experience multiple layers of exclusion due to stigma, inadequate infrastructure, inadequate trained teachers, and modified learning materials tailored to their needs.

Despite Uganda's progressive policies on inclusive education and refugee protection, there is limited empirical research examining how these policies are translated into practice within refugee settlements. There is also a significant gap

in understanding barriers faced by children with disabilities in such contexts and the effectiveness of current interventions.

The study seeks to address this gap by investigating the level at which primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement are inclusive of children with disabilities. It aims at exploring the current practices, attitudes, and opportunities for promoting education inclusion in the refugee setting. The study is expected to inform policy makers, educators, including humanitarian organizations on effective ways of promoting access and learning outcomes for children with learning challenges in refugee contexts.

By highlighting both the systemic and contextual factors influencing inclusive education in Kyangwali, this research contributes to the broader discourse on education in emergencies and disability-inclusive development. It supports endeavors to ensuring that no child is left behind, regardless of their ability or displacement status.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to explore the inclusion of children with disabilities in primary schools within Kyangwali Refugee Settlement in Uganda. It aims to identify the barriers, opportunities, and practices that influence inclusion in education for this marginalized group.

1.5 Research Objectives

- i. To examine the factors which influence the provision of disability inclusion in in primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement.

- ii. To explain the capacity primary schools have to effectively implement disability inclusion in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement.
- iii. To examine the school level interventions employed to promote inclusive education for children with disabilities in Kyangwali refugee settlement.

1.6 Study Questions

- i. Which factors influence disability inclusion in primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement?
- ii. How are primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement equipped to implement inclusion in primary education for children with disabilities?
- iii. What school level interventions exist that support inclusion of children with disabilities in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement?

1.7 Scope of the Study

Geographically, the study was carried out in four primary schools (3 government aided and 1 community) in Kyangwali refugee settlement, Kikuube district. Four categories of population targeted include children with disabilities, parents, teachers, and development/ humanitarian organisations. The content scope was restricted to the factors that enable or hinder inclusive education, the capacity of primary schools to implement inclusion and the school-level intervention that support inclusion of children with disabilities in education. The study was conducted between 1st September and 11th October 2023.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The study is significant in different ways. Firstly, the study will contribute original data and insights to the limited body of literature on the inclusion of children with

disabilities in refugee settings. While Uganda is often cited as a model for refugee-hosting policies, specific studies addressing the disability intersectionality and displacement within the education sector are rare. This study will help close that gap by offering context-specific evidence from Kyangwali. The findings from this study will be vital for informing government agencies, humanitarian aid organizations, and NGOs working in refugee education. By identifying the barriers and opportunities for inclusion, the study can provide a clear guide to effective resource allocation, policy adjustments, and the development of inclusive teaching strategies tailored to refugee contexts. Although Uganda has inclusive education related policies in place, it lacks the specific one, “Special Needs & Inclusive Education policy” and this makes implementation remaining a challenge, especially in marginalized settings. This study will provide actionable recommendations that aim at bridging the gap between policy and practice, supporting government’s efforts to implement its inclusion in education agenda more effectively in refugee settlements. Children with disabilities in refugee settings are among the most marginalized and underserved populations. By highlighting their experiences, challenges, and needs, this study will amplify their voices and promote greater advocacy for their rights to equitable and quality education. The research intends to inform teacher training institutions, school administrators, and curriculum developers on how to better prepare and support teachers to meet the diverse learning needs of children with disabilities. Ultimately, the study contributes to broader global and national efforts to ensure inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (especially SDG 4), Uganda’s inclusive education strategy, and international human rights commitments.

1.9 A Conceptual Framework

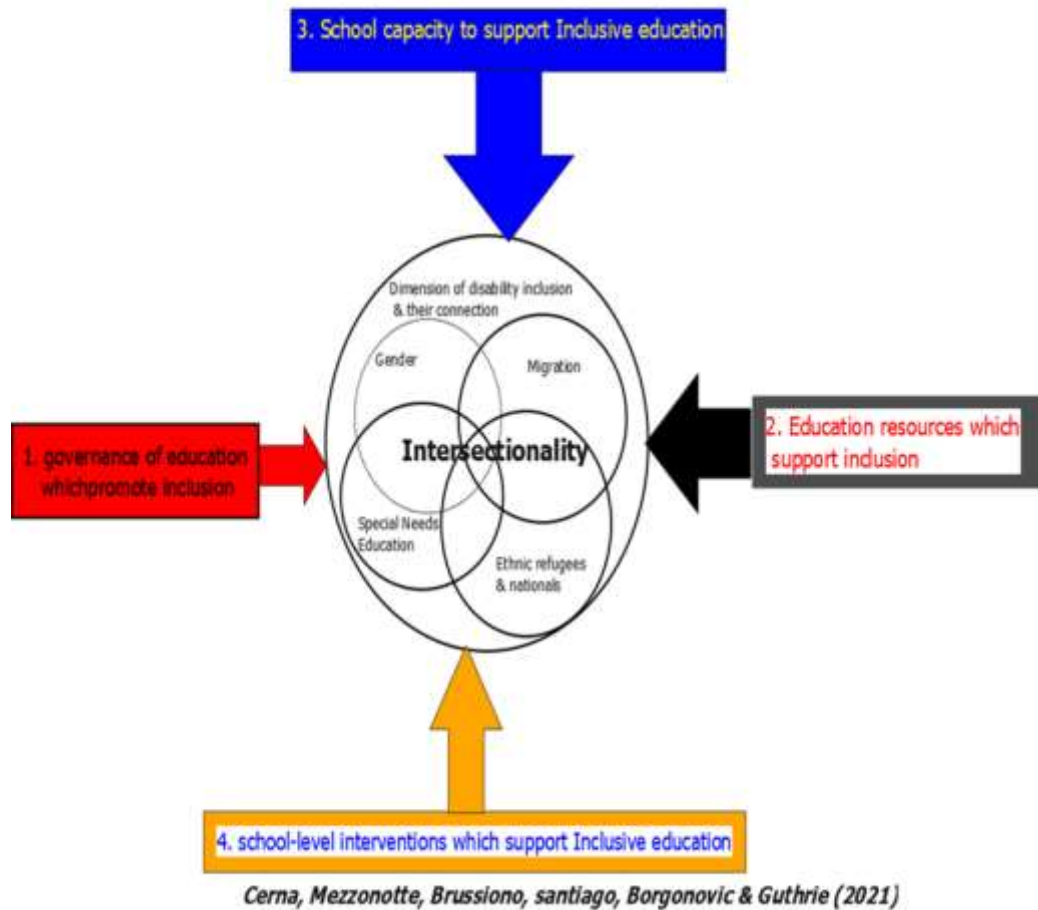
According to Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2021, schools and classrooms in most countries are becoming increasingly diverse alongside a combination of societal demographic characteristics such as peoples' lives and settlements. To navigate this diversity, an all-inclusive approach could be employed to support education systems that prepare all individuals so that they can engage with others in increasingly complex and diverse societies.

Dimensions of diversity like gender, special needs/disability, and ethnic refugees and nationals can intersect in many ways, along with factors such as socio-economic status and geographic location. It is therefore important to take into account diversity and inclusion in education policy.

To achieve disability inclusion, Cerna et al., (2021), as originating from (OECD Education Working Papers No. 260, propose a conceptual framework whose operational success is anchored on four major aspects outlined hereunder:

- Promoting inclusive education through governance;
- Education materials that support inclusion;
- Capacity of schools to support inclusive education and
- School-level interventions that support inclusive education.

Figure 1: A Conceptual Framework for Promoting Inclusive Education for Diverse Societies



Governance of education which promotes inclusion has two aspects. One aspect is about how disability inclusion is influenced by key foundations of education system. Key fundamental to the aforementioned foundations of education is the regulatory framework which influences the inclusion of children with disabilities in schools. At local level, schools formulate rules, regulations and guidelines that guide the inclusion criteria. Such rules and regulations or guidelines typically establish legislation to protect the rights of children with disabilities at school and could be at community level as well. Additionally, in recognition of educational disadvantage, schools regulate provisions for specific resources for a given pupils’

groups. The inclusive rules and regulations might encourage pupils with disabilities participation which is a fundamental right that is embedded in international human rights treaties and can substantially enhance learners' personal development, sense of belonging and self-worth as well as respect for others (Lansdown, Jimerson & Shahroozi, 2014). The second aspect relates to responsibilities for and governance of inclusion of children with disabilities in education. This involves a wide range of agents or stakeholders including school head teachers and development partners who have specific units to manage diversity and inclusion in education or develop policies targeting pupils with disabilities.

Inclusion in education requires the coordination of stakeholders such as parents, development partners, and communities to work cooperatively in order to achieve results. The approach of disability inclusion in education also combines central direction over policy development and standard setting with a measure of devolved responsibility for the implementation of inclusive policies at the local level (Cerna, 2021). To make disability inclusion a success, school administrators are required to apply approaches that engage stakeholders. Different stakeholders are engaged for their role in supporting disability inclusion. For example, parents are engaged with a view of enrolling their children in school and playing their parental roles while civil society organizations support in the provision of funds and other resources like education materials or specialized devices that support children with disabilities' participation in education programs.

Education resource in schools which support inclusion of diversity among learners involves examining the process of distribution of resources in relation to what pupils in schools need for example, funding. It is significant to allocate substantial

amount of funds to cater for the needs of children with disabilities in schools for example, purchase of assistive devices, specialized education materials among others (Grimes et al., 2023). The other aspect focuses on the process of distributing targeted resources including matching human resources according to each teacher's expertise to meet learning needs of specific learner groups (Cerna et al., 2021, p. 31-35). Besides fund distribution, the aspect covers the allocation of teaching and learning materials with particular emphasis to specific needs of learners with disabilities (Grimes et al., 2023).

Schools' capacity that support inclusive education has three areas including activities of creating awareness about education of children with disabilities in mainstream schools. Awareness raising covers activities like sensitizing communities on' roles of different stakeholders like parents, community members, teachers and development partners to ensure inclusion. Raising awareness can take place through information campaigns, which can help fight negative attitudes, stereotypes and prejudices that hinder inclusive approaches in education (Cerna et al., 2021). The second area concerns preparation of school staff (teaching and non-teaching) for disability inclusion. Inclusive education being a relatively new concept makes a number of people find themselves at crossroads to come to terms of its implementation (Wapling, 2016).

The fundamental requirement to disability inclusion in education is capacity building that requires teachers to be well-trained so as to improve the quality of teaching through proper identification and assessment of disability (Uganda society for disabled children, 2017). It is sufficing to say that capacity development also puts consideration of aspect relating to staff management, training and placement of school staff such as teachers, Head teachers and support personnel in

appropriation to their competences (Breyer et al., 2021). It also concerns professional learning and mentoring (Brussino, 2021). The third component concerns preparation of pupils with and without disabilities for the need to accommodate each other. Pupils need to be aware of the differences amongst learners and be prepared to support inclusiveness. Capacity development within education system not only involve skills development to school staffs but also recruitment practices that ensure the most competent candidates are given opportunity to contribute to the development of pupils' positive attitude towards disability and promote inclusion. Examples of these factors include dissemination of information about the needs of pupils with disabilities, opportunities for open discussions on disability and inclusion and curriculum-based learning on individual learning needs. In addition, schools can be proactive in developing a proper school climate, promoting positive relationships among pupils and providing a safe environment for all through the transmission of values of dignity, acceptance and diversity (OECD, 2018). This can involve mentoring among pupils for instance, between an older pupil and a younger one; or targeted at a pupil with a disability such as intellectual impairment (Cerna et al., 2021).

School-level intervention that support accommodation of diversity in education involves school's ability to match goods and services available in schools to boost individual learning needs of pupils (including proper allocation of teacher resources, and learning strategies aimed at meeting individual learner's needs. For example, assessment of children including functional assessment, individualized education plans, classroom management techniques and application of assistive technology. The other component relates to non-teaching support services and how other stakeholders such as parents and communities are prepared to get involved

in promoting disability inclusive education. Non-instructional support and services at school takes into account of pupils' individual education related needs such as rehabilitation and provision of assistive technologies. Non-instructional support services are necessary for pupils' wellbeing and adapting the learning environment to needs of children with disabilities (Cerna et al 2019 as cited in Cerna, 2021: p. 38).

1.10 Key operational definitions

1. Children with Disabilities

Definition: Learners aged 6–17 enrolled in primary schools who have physical, sensory, intellectual, or psychosocial impairments.

Measurement: Identified through school records, teacher reports, or assessments using Washington Group of Questions and aligned with Uganda's Ministry of Education guidelines or UNHCR disability criteria.

2. Inclusion

Definition: The extent to which children with disabilities participate in regular classroom activities alongside peers without disabilities.

Indicators:

- Enrollment in mainstream classes
- Access to learning materials and assistive devices
- Participation in school activities (e.g., sports, clubs)
- Teacher training in inclusive education
- Peer interaction and social integration

3. Primary Schools

Definition: Formal educational institutions offering grades P1–P7 within the Kyangwali refugee settlement.

Scope: Includes both government-supported and refugee-led schools operating under Uganda’s Universal Primary Education framework.

4. Kyangwali Refugee Settlement

Definition: A refugee-hosting area in Western Uganda, primarily accommodating Congolese refugees, with multiple education providers including None Government Organisations (NGOs)

Contextual Factors:

- Overcrowded classrooms
- Limited infrastructure and sanitation
- Language and cultural diversity
- Teacher-to-student ratios exceeding national standards

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, discussion is generated from the ideas developed by different scholars. The literature was reviewed in line with the set study objectives. For the attention of the reader, the objectives of the study are reproduced hereunder: factors which enable or hinder inclusion; schools' capacities to support inclusive education; and school level interventions which promote inclusive education. To generate valuable information for this research, different sources and authorities were consulted which included Textbooks, Articles, Journals Internet, Magazines, Project reports and Research reports among others.

2.2 Factors which influence the implementation of disability inclusion in primary schools

In this section, the reader's attention is drawn to the enablers or barriers to inclusive education. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, enablers are factors, resources, or conditions that contribute to the success or progress of a particular action, process, or endeavor. They provide support, assistance, or the necessary conditions for something to happen or develop. Barriers are obstacles, impediments, or factors that hinder or prevent progress, movement, communication, or the achievement of a goal. USDC (2017), views enablers or barriers to originate from historical, cultural material, and other related factors which together determine participation of children with disabilities and inclusion realization

2.2.1 Enablers of inclusion in education

Enablers in this study are factors that facilitate which support provision of inclusive education especially in a refugee setting. In this section, the following are opportunities and factors for enabling inclusive education provision.

Teacher-parental partnership: Hornby (2014) acknowledge the importance of effective communication between the teachers and parents and emphasises that for meaningful inclusion of children with disabilities in education be realized, there must be effective teacher-parental partnership. He argues that parents view teachers as the main source of information about their children's performance and achievement at school. Teachers can facilitate effective communication between school and parents by maintaining a regular contact with parents. This can be done through such means as phone calls, home visits, and by meeting with parents at school (Hornby, 2014).

Support services: According to Carr (2016), inclusion in education is fundamentally grounded on provision of education support services principle structured to supporting teachers in meeting the diversity of needs among learners in a common learning environment. To achieve this, Carr (2016) argues that there needs to be a collaborative relationship and understanding only achieved through effective communication between teachers and other support services as well as parents and community agencies.

Carr's assertion is corroborated with the fact that inclusive education can best be implemented through a multi-sectoral approach involving more professionals who provides different services such rehabilitation, treatment, mental health and

psycho-social support as well as teaching. Such approach thrives and works well when there is effective communication that warrants systematic service delivery.

Institutional adjustments: According to Mitchelle (2017), institutional adjustments simply put as permitting, supporting, promoting and normalizing inclusive education play a pivotal role for the inclusion of children with disabilities in education. Mitchelle stresses the need to move from fragmentary to holistic reforms that require minimal changes to existing provisions, for example, admission policies, seating arrangement and assessment procedure of learners' achievement.

Support of Civil Society: Civil society plays a significant role in the delivery of services to refugees. In regard to education, organisations such as Save the Children, Humanity & Inclusion, War Child Holland and many more others support the education of children with disabilities. Ahimbisibwe (2018), says that Non-Government Organisations have intervention programmes such as awareness raising, child protection initiatives and empowerment of households to enable support their families.

Progressive refugee legal and policy regimes: According to Ahimbisibwe (2018), Uganda has progressive refugee policies and laws that support integration and co-existence of refugees with the host community. Hicks (2018), supports Ahimbisibwe and notes that Ministry of Education & Sports adapted a policy that encourages integration of refugees into local schools without segregating them from local nationals or host communities. However, "given the high rate of refugee influx, it is not surprising that the capacity of many of the local schools has been exhausted" (Hicks, 2018, P. 12).

2.2.2 Barriers to inclusive education

This section focuses on the barriers or hindrances which must be brought to light for redress if inclusive education is to succeed.

Attitudinal barriers: According to Humanity & Inclusion (2022) and Masquillier et al., (2021), attitudinal barriers are negative attitudes people hold against people with disabilities and are expressed in words and exhibited in different situations or actions for example; words used to refer to persons with disabilities such as, 'kasiru' for a person with hearing & speech impairments in Buganda. Attitudinal barriers are also expressed in form of feelings and beliefs people hold against people with disabilities. For example, children born with disabilities are presumed to be as a result of wrong doing by either or both of their parents. The perceived wrong doing may be against the norms of the land and hence provoking the gods into anger that will manifest through the child being born thereof. (Rieser, 2008; Okech, 2021; Mitchell, 2009).

Misconceptions: Related to negative attitude is misconceptions which according to Masquillier et al., (2021) thrive in the context of a lack of knowledge and awareness about disability. For example, some communities in Uganda believe in superstitions and attribute a child born with disability as an acknowledgement of a curse or punishment in a home requiring arbitration with the offended party. Hunt (2021) believes children with disabilities may be discriminated against and denied opportunity to join institutions of learning due to the perceived cause of the impairment.

Physical Barriers, also known as environmental barriers: According to Humanity & Inclusion, (2022) and Ojok & Womneels, (2013), physical barriers

(environmental barriers) are hindrances in the environment that pose accessibility challenges to facilities where social services are provided. Mitchell (2016) as cited by USDC, (2017, p.21), report that there is a deliberate denial of accessibility to children with disabilities where schools are often designed without accessibility features adaptable to meet the requirements, for example, ramps for wheelchair users.

Inappropriate curriculum: Ugandan education system operates under a rigid curriculum which is theoretical and examination oriented. Assessment exams only test the cognitive domain, leaving out affective and psychomotor domains hence disadvantaging those learners who do not feature well cognitively (Okech, 2021; Kristensen et al. 2003). This is contrary to BMAU BRIEFING PAPER (13/ 18, (2018), whose emphasis is provision of a system of education which is flexible and operating a curriculum that responds to different needs among learners.

The study in agreement with the above revelation notes that the curriculum the Ugandan Ministry of Education & Sport operates currently, does not favour children who have learning difficulties and/ or various sensory impairments. This explains why the transition rate from one education level to another among children with disabilities is very low.

Inadequate funding: According to USDC (2017), in government aided (inclusive primary) schools, children with disabilities are treated like ordinary learners and benefit from the Universal Primary Education (UPE) grant budget which is always insufficient. However, it is interesting to note that even with this government grant, the funding remains inadequate to the extent that specific adaptations that require moderate costs to suit children with disabilities cannot be met. At household level,

parents live in abject poverty to the extent that they cannot afford a decent meal a day. Nabugoomu (2019), contends that there is high level of poverty to the extent that parents are incapacitated to support their children with basic scholastic necessities and hence keep them out of school.

In agreement with the authors above, I note that under the decentralization system, inclusive education programmes in most district local government budgets are treated under unfunded priorities. This explains why most of the Education Assessment Resource Services (EARS) offices are no longer in existence and if they do exist, are non-functional.

Lack of specially trained teachers: Inclusive education implementation requires teachers with special skills to review and adapt curriculum components to the learning needs learners experience yet this is not applicable and is unworkable in the education system of Uganda. The curriculum provided in teacher's training colleges is so generic in form to the extent that the graduates from such institutions cannot apply the acquired knowledge to develop a more-friendly curriculum that meets learners' specific needs. According to Okech (2021), Teachers with special skills training background lack the capacity and expertise of developing and modifying the school curriculum. "Majority teachers cannot sufficiently assist learners in an inclusive school due to limited training leave alone the inefficient supervision mechanism on how to develop a child-friendly class that can accommodate the diversity among learners" (BMAU, 13/18-2018: p.3).

The research acknowledges how important teachers are in shaping the system of education aimed at benefiting all learners; however, they need special skills and

training to achieve this and provide meaningful knowledge to all learners in an inclusive setting.

Negative influence of development partners: USDC (2017) acknowledges that as it were during colonialism, the Western countries continue influencing the education system by exercising an enduring effect on Ugandan education system. The authors urge that the colonial masters continue to dictate the type of education system suitable for disabled children. Due to this foreign influence, Ugandans are made to believe that institutionalization of disability is the best fit with charitable and religious Organizations at the centre of funding. According to USDC (2017), the trend has continued to influence the system hence hindering education inclusion implementation.

2.3 Capacity of primary schools to effectively implement disability inclusion

Kefallinou et al. (2020), hold the view that provision of education which is inclusive in nature requires a well- developed inclusive practice that is anchored on a number of interrelated factors. Such factors include policies, school organization and its leadership structure, classroom practice, and teacher training background. Relatedly, Tomusange et al. (2021), single out teaching/learning materials as an essential basic requirement to implementing curriculum. The authors suggest that schools need to acquire instructional materials and make use of them in teaching to make learning meaningful. Ssewamala, Wang et al. (2011) and Sarton & Smith (2018) in their observation, correlates the high positivity between teaching materials and academic achievement. They contend that use of appropriate teaching material translates into effective curriculum implementation. Cognizant of how instructional materials are important in education circles, Sarton

& Smith (2018: p.6), and Grimes et al (2023: p.69), contend, “teaching and learning process” is supported by ‘the use of’ appropriate instructional materials and enable learners to gain concrete understanding of concepts.

Both Ssewamala et al. and Grimes et al make very pertinent points. Their revelation has much to be learned about for a classroom teacher. Firstly, instructional materials aid the learning through the use of more than one sense. When a variety of instructional materials are employed during lesson delivery, learners are enabled to manipulate and explore the materials through visual, touch/feel, smell and taste. Secondly, when instructional materials are used in a lesson, they convey information more easily. The teacher thereby talks less and learners are more engaged.

According to Grimes et al (2023), building capacity of teachers is the most critical factor that translates into a sustainable education system that is inclusive in nature. Teachers must be grounded in upholding the principles of inclusive education, knowledge, attitudes and practices to meet diversities among learners. In essence, teachers need to be knowledgeable about the different learning traits that are prevalent amongst learners

In conformity with Grimes et al argument, Nel et al. (2012), acknowledges that, there are pedagogical barriers that come into play principally related with a number of factors which include insufficient support to children by teachers and inadequate support to teachers. Further still, Nel et al. (2012) add, rigid teaching and assessment approaches, modes of communication in teaching and learning which do not consider the preferred learning style needs of learners as pedagogical barriers.

Han, Han & Shin (2019: p.104) highlight the pedagogical approaches teachers need to employ to make their lessons inclusive. The authors envisage that good inclusion practices are synonymous to concise content delivery using clear instructions and, learner-centered methods that promote active participation of all learners.

This study concurs with Han, Han & Shin who believe that good teaching should be able to stimulate learners' interest through teaching concepts that are from known to unknown in a manner that makes the learning environment friendly and acceptable for all. To do this, teachers must be well grounded in good teaching practices and must exhibit competences in the knowledge areas that constitute practices which define a learning situation as being inclusive.

Walton (2012) suggests ways through which teachers can accommodate learning diversities among learners so as to provide support that is appropriate for individual needs. He suggests, teachers need to provide remedial lessons for learners experiencing difficulties and giving individual feedback. He also advises teachers to provide a variety of topics for learners to choose from and write projects or essays while employing learners-centred approaches which provide learning opportunities to learners who prefer individual and collaborative learning. Stubbs (2008), and Mitchell (2009), bring to light a resourcing aspect which concerns funding. In his view, Mitchell argues that inclusive education requires adequate levels of funding (p.57), on the other hand Stubbs emphasises the importance of domestic funding as one of the sources that can promote access to schooling for all children. Stubbs in his opinion observes that short of domestic funding amounts to increased pressure on parents who face financial constraints, a potential threat that

leads to choices which breed discrimination tendencies against children with disabilities.

Tomusange, Muweesi and Kyagaba (2021), argue that inclusive education requires teamwork where stakeholders perform their roles cooperatively. Tomusange et al. suggests that schools implementing inclusion of children with disabilities should as much as possible engage parents who are shareholders and problem-solving agents to be part of the decision making in their children's learning at school. Through active participation in school events such as speech and sports days, parents' and teachers' association meetings, parents provide moral support, advice and act as co-decision makers. Related to Tomusange et al., (Galvalda and Qinyi, 2012; Krestensen, 2006) opines that when parents get involved in school activities, its benefits learners and increases parental satisfaction. Masquillier et al., (2021) assert that parents of children with disabilities through parenting experience they go through, can become light-bearers and create awareness about disability hence dispelling stigmatization and discrimination faced by families with disabilities in school. Hanson, (2010) and Werner, (2011), view parents as potential sponsors for children's education amidst government's failure to sufficiently provide supplies to support education institutions

In view of the researcher, while parents' involvement in children's education is ideally important, it is easier for parents of children without disabilities to respond positively. However, a lot of sensitization is required to change the perception about disability. The negative attitude compounded with economic constraints faced by parents influences the support they offer for their children's education. No wonder, most disabled children who have succeeded in education in Uganda have been so through the support from charitable or Faith Based Organizations.

The study acknowledges the fact that government is constrained with financial resources and cannot in that effect adequately support inclusive education leave alone the high costs involved in acquiring the appropriate technologies to support inclusion.

Schools that have made strides in implementing inclusive education have exhibited high levels of resource mobilization and resource management skills. Molyneaux (2021), defines mobilization and resource management as ‘a process of acquiring, allocating, deploying, developing, maintaining, proper utilization and coordination of human, material, physical and financial resources needed to promote learning at different levels. In support of Molyneaux’s view, Chapman et al. (2010) contend that a well-structured mobilization and management of resources contribute a lot to the success of any school programs. The argument of authors is based on the premise that resources are usually scarce and highly demanded and as such they should be distributed appropriately to minimize disparities.

Pursuant to Molyneaux’s argument above, this study encourages schools in the settlement to endeavor and apply the author’s stated skills to source for necessary support given the fact that these schools administrators have access to many NGOs operating in the settlement.

2.4. School level interventions that support disability inclusion in education

Mitchell (2009), Han, Han& Shin, (2019) and Charema (2010) argue that effective implementation of IE requires schools to make considerable instructional adaptations that include but not limited to; modifications in the course content, teaching methods and techniques. Mitchell further suggests that schools implanting disability inclusion make adaptations in the teaching process, learning

environment, instructional materials, and assessment of learners' achievement levels.

Accordingly, Carr & Center (2019, p.18), argues that schools who practice inclusive education are characterized with positive school climate environment and treat all members of the school community with respect.

Kristensen, Omagol-Laican and Onen (2003), note that achieving inclusive education require support to teachers and learners alike. They argue that the inclusive education requires a collaborative support of different professionals and stakeholders beginning from the grassroots to national level.

In accordance with Kristensen et al., it's incumbent for teachers in schools to ensure that appropriate teaching methods suitable for IE are advocated for and applied in teaching-learning situations. Such methods should be learner-centered aiming at building learners' confidence and self-esteem. Relatedly, according to Wapling (2016), regular teachers in the mainstream settings who have not received training in Special Needs Education (SNE) cannot adequately meet the demands of children with impairments and/ or inclusive classes. However, as Nabugoomu (2019) observes, schools need to motivate teachers to make them work hard and give moral support to children.

The researcher in his view feels that regular teachers can equally handle inclusive classes if supported in terms of improving individual teaching skills through continuous professional development (CPDs).

According to Hunt (2021, p.98), in order for schools to advance inclusion in education, "it is imperative for them to adequately adapt education system with

support services that might be able to work, synergistically at the intersection of areas such as education and assistive technology”.

According to Hunt, education players are urged to support schools and make them adapt a multi-disciplinary approach where different professionals such as teachers, medical personnel, community workers, Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) officers and policy makers work collaboratively to support disability inclusion. Some children with disabilities require support services from different service-providers intended to mitigate, correct and/ or reduce the effects of impairments. Carr & Center (2016) strongly believe that collaboration among different professionals can only be achieved when there is mutual understanding and effective communication.

(Opertti & Duncombe, 2009: p.5). Wapling (2016), stress that to provide and achieve appropriate inclusive education in schools, school staffs (teaching and non-teaching) must exercise equity which according to him includes: exercising fair treatment to everyone; Minimizing differences across community groups by consolidating gains of the underprivileged at the same footing with those of the more privileged groups. Han, Han & Shin (2019) add that good teaching behaviours and characteristics such as kindness, seriousness, enthusiasm and appealing promote children’s learning and achievement. Teachers’ behaviour and characteristics influences their attitude to support IE and constrains them to deliver high quality teaching which benefits all children including those with disabilities (Sarton & Smith, 2018; Ojok & Wormnaels, 2013).

Webber and Lupart (2011), argue that school leadership is more than simply management. According to them, education managers’ role involves exploring

complex relationships among a wide range of pupils, teachers, system administrators and community members. Leaders have an ongoing responsibility to disrupt and adjust practices, an obligation that pervades intercultural inclusive learning communities. Similarly, Mentz & Barrett (2004), and Tulibaleka (2022), assert that leaders possess instructional leadership, a component of education leadership whose main focus is classroom business in the learning centre and is characterized by explaining and sharing the school vision and mission; proper management of teaching programmes establishing, and creating a positive learning environment for achieving academic standards. It also promotes good working climate through talking with the teachers; promoting teachers' professional growth and teacher leadership; and maintaining positive relationship among the staff, learners and parents/ caregivers.

The study, in agreement with the above submission argues that the success in providing education services which are inclusive in practice will depend on schools' administrators' willingness to embrace diversities in their schools. For instance, enrolling children with disabilities in schools largely depend on the head teachers' attitude and willingness to render required support to the learning process in an inclusive setting. Further still, it's in the administrators' mandate to enforce policies that encourage diversity and equity for inclusion to thrive in education institutions.

Sarton, et al., (2022), argue that head teachers in schools need to be aware of the best practices which motivate teachers and promote inclusive education. Sarton et al. say that the head teacher's role include monitoring lessons, incorporating IE activities in School Improvement Plans (SIPs); mobilization and allocation funds;

encouraging teachers to arrange home visits; and allocation of Continuous Professional Development (CPD)/ training time.

In view of the above observations, the study is cognizant of the fact that when stakeholders approach inclusive education with a positive attitude, they will equally rise their willingness for each to play their roles in the implementation process. In Kyangwali refugee settlement, it is a common practice to come across school budgets and SIPs which are compliant with IE provision but without a clear roadmap for implementation.

Having noted what is observed by different authors, it is important that at this opportunity moment, I dwell on the empirical/ practical part of the study, namely the research methods.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter (Methodology) unfolded in accordance with the following structure: research paradigm; approach and design; the research methods; participants of the study. Sampling procedure, and the methods that will be used to collect data and finally, data analysis.

3.2 Constructivist Paradigm

This study adopted the constructivist research paradigm to explore the inclusion of children with disabilities in primary schools within the Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. The constructivist paradigm was particularly suited to this research because it emphasizes the understanding of phenomena through the lived experiences and subjective meanings that individuals attach to them (Creswell & Creswell, 2018 in Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021: p.20). Constructivism also holds that knowledge is socially constructed through interaction with others and the world (Creswell, 2014; Guba& Lincoln, 1994). It emphasizes understanding how individuals interpret and make sense of their experiences, which aligns with the core objective of this study to explore diverse perceptions and meanings of inclusive education in a refugee context. The approach further-still is in line with the hermeneutical approach, which asserts that meaning is hidden and as such must be unearthed through deep reflection (Schwandt, 2000: Siarra, 1999 as cited in Ponterotto, 2005: p.129). This research paradigm aligns with the study's aim of exploring how various stakeholders; teachers, parents, learners, and school administrators perceive and experience inclusion in a complex and resource-

constrained refugee context. Any personal thoughts, biases and feelings of the researcher about the phenomenon under study are explicitly stated in the study report (Creswell, 1994 in Krauss,2005: p.764) Through an interactive engagement process with participants, the researcher dialogues, questions, listens, reads, writes and records information. This study believes that there are multiple realities and/or forces influencing the realization of inclusive education programs in a refugee setting and this need to be thoroughly explored so as to construct a framework of action. The constructivist worldview enables the researcher to investigate the phenomenon of inclusion not as a fixed or universal concept, but as one that is locally interpreted and enacted by teachers, learners, school administrators, and parents. As Stake (1995) notes, qualitative research within the constructivist paradigm allows for the study of “particularity and complexity” of a case, acknowledging that each participant brings a unique perspective shaped by their socio-cultural background. In the context of a refugee settlement characterized by displacement, multiculturalism, and resource limitations, these varying perspectives are crucial for understanding how inclusion is experienced and implemented. Finally, the constructivist paradigm enables the generation of practical and actionable insights. Rather than seeking to generalize findings statistically, the goal is to develop an in-depth understanding that can inform context-sensitive policies and practices (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The findings from this study aim to contribute to the development of inclusive strategies that are both relevant and feasible within the unique educational landscape of Kyangwali Refugee Settlement.

3.3 Research Approach and Design

The study adopted a qualitative approach which according to Mohajan (2018) in Kumatongo (2021: p.23), is “a form of social action focusing on how people interpret, and make sense of their experiences to understand the social reality of an individual”. The approach was employed to generate detailed and valid data which contributed to the depth understanding of the research problem.

Being a qualitative research approach the study adopted an explanatory case study design to investigate the inclusion of children with disabilities in primary schools in the Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. Although inclusive education policies exist in Uganda, there is limited empirical evidence on how these policies are implemented in refugee contexts, particularly with respect to children with disabilities. Priya (2020:97) asserts that explanatory case study is a research methodology that seeks to explain why certain conditions come into play, that is, why certain turn of events occur or do not occur. According to Yin (2014), explanatory case studies are appropriate when the researcher seeks to explore phenomena that are not yet well defined or documented. As Stake (1995) emphasizes, explanatory case studies are suited for understanding complex and context-specific cases, especially when there is a need to generate new insights. Given the nuanced intersection of displacement, disability, and education in Kyangwali, an explanatory approach allows for flexibility and depth in uncovering the challenges, perceptions, and practices surrounding inclusive education in this unique setting.

3.4 Area of Study

The research was carried out in Kyangwali refugee settlement. The Settlement lies in Kikuube district approximately 97 kilometers from Hoima city in South-western Uganda, near Lake Albert- the natural boundary between DRC and Uganda (Kupfer, 2016:7). The settlement measures approximately 90 square kilometers and divided into 6 administrative units called zones. (UNHCR,2022).

3.5 Population of the Study

This study targeted four groups of key stakeholders from 13 primary schools in Kyangwali refugee settlement. These stakeholder groups included: Pupils with disabilities (302), Teachers (506), Parents (302), and Development Partners (13).

3.6 Sample

Bhandari (2020) defines sample as a specific group that the researcher collects data from. A sample is a smaller representation of large whole (Rai, &Thapa, (2015). In this study, a total of 32 participants were engaged. The study drew its participants from four stakeholder groups whose perspectives were critical to the topic in question. Participants included teachers, parents, development partners and pupils with disabilities. The participants were drawn from four (4) Primary schools respectively.

Table 2: Sampling frame for the study

Category	Population	Sample size	Sampling technique
Pupils with disabilities	302	8	Purposive
Teachers	506	12	Purposive
Parents	302	8	Purposive
Development partners	82	4	Purposive
Total	1,179	32	

The twelve teachers were those who had at least a child with disability in their classes selected from four schools. The four schools included Kasonga P/S, Maratatu P/S, Kinakyeitaka P/S and Kavule AEP school. These schools were chosen because they belonged to the institutions in which Partners such as Save the Children, Humanity & Inclusion and War Child Holland were implementing inclusive education. The teachers were selected because they had received basic training on inclusive education best practices through workshops organized within the refugee settlement. Further still, the teachers had been taken through the process of how to conduct Barriers and Facilitators assessment.

The eight parents were either biological parents, guardians or caregivers of children with disabilities. Eight children with disabilities were the direct beneficiaries of education offered and were experiencing challenges in acquiring education due to their disabilities.

The four participants were employees of Non-government Organizations representing development partners who support education in the settlement. Particularly, partners supporting inclusive schools were selected.

3.6.1 Sampling

Sampling is a process by which a researcher systematically selects a reasonable number of individuals or items from a given population to serve as subjects (source of information) for a research study (Sharma, 2017). The Participants in the study were selected purposively. This according to Maxwell, (1996) in Taherdoost (2016: p.23) “is a strategy in which specific persons are deliberately” chosen to avail data that would rather not be accessed through other means. Selecting participants purposively was appropriate because the interest of study aimed at

focusing on particular attributes of a population of interest (Rai, &Thapa, 2015) or the people who know more about the subject of interest. It was important in this study that the participants were knowledgeable about and/ or had experience with the education programme in question.

Participants' eligibility in the study depended on meeting the following inclusion criteria:

Teachers

- Having knowledge about education systems/ approaches including Inclusive education being implemented in the country;
- Being involved in providing education services in the settlement;
- Having taught in any of the primary schools in refugee settlement for at least two years of service.

Development partners

- Willingness to participate in the study;
- Playing an implementation role at organisation level e.g. as a team leader, project officer or representative of administrative unit in the settlement;
- Being involved in providing education service in the settlement.

Parents

- Willingness to participate in the study;
- Being a refugee and/ or National living and benefiting from the services being provided for in the settlement;
- Being a person with and/ or caregiver of a person with some form of impairment/ disability.

Children with disabilities

- Willingness to participate in the study;
- Being a refugee or national living and benefiting from the services being provided for in the settlement;
- Being a person of school-going age with some form of Impairment/ disability.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

There are different methods recommended for carrying out research studies. However, this being qualitative research design, the most appropriate methods to use were interviews and observation. Primary data were generated through interview guides and observation checklist.

3.7.1 Interviews

An interview is a one-on-one interface with an aim of eliciting information using a series of predetermined questions (Paradis, 2016). The study adopted a semi-structured interview which involves a mixture of open-ended and close ended questions (Carter & Henderson, 2005: p.218). Adams (2015) contends that semi-structured interviews employ blended questions with specific and varied answers and most often followed by why or how phrases.

The study adopted the semi-structured interviews because of two major advantages. Firstly, semi-structured questions give room for flexibility on the side of the participant to centering their conversation on strengths and positives, and relevant experiences (Garcia, 2021). The second advantage is that participants taking part are allowed flexibility to focus the conversation on their strengths and positives as a result of relevant experiences. Open-ended questions allow one to

include as much context and detail as he/ she wants. There is also more opportunity of developing rapport between the interviewer and interviewee (Garcia, 2021).

3.7.2 Observation

In the study of the inclusion of children with disabilities in primary schools within the Kyangwali Refugee Settlement, on-the-spot observation (also referred to as direct or naturalistic observation) was adopted in the study and served as a vital method for gathering first-hand, naturalistic data on the day-to-day realities of classroom practices, school infrastructure, and teacher-pupil interactions. This method allowed the researcher to observe inclusive education efforts as they occurred in real-time, without prior arrangements or artificial settings, thus minimizing the Hawthorne effect and capturing authentic behavior (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). On-the-spot observation was particularly useful in refugee contexts, where unpredictable dynamics and limited resources were thought to affect both access and quality of education for children with disabilities. By immersing directly into school environments, the researcher was able to document physical accessibility, teaching strategies, peer interactions, and the presence or absence of support services factors critical to understanding the implementation of inclusive education (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). Moreover, this method was employed to complement interviews by offering contextual validation, ensuring that reported practices align with what actually transpires in the classroom setting. Given that inclusion involves more than policy compliance, it requires attitudinal shifts and practical adaptation. On-the-spot observation enables the researcher to critically assess both visible and subtle forms of exclusion or inclusion (Bryman, 2016). In the specific context of Kyangwali, this technique helped reveal the intersection of disability, displacement, and educational equity,

providing a grounded understanding of how inclusion is practiced in refugee primary schools.

3.7.3 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is a qualitative research method that involves a small group of people (typically 6–10 participants) discussing a specific topic under the guidance of a trained facilitator or moderator (Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2015).

Focus group discussion was employed because of its advantage as Morgan D. L. (1997), highlights that group interactions in FGDs often uncover diverse perspectives, which may not emerge in one-on-one interviews; Encourages diverse perspectives through group interaction; reveals how people influence and respond to each other's ideas and can quickly gather a large amount of qualitative data.

3.8 Rigor and Trustworthiness

To ensure methodological rigor and the trustworthiness of the findings, this study adheres to the criteria established by Lincoln and Guba (1985), namely: credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability. These criteria are widely recognized in qualitative research for enhancing the authenticity and validity of data and interpretations.

3.8.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to the confidence in the truth and accuracy of the research findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, credibility was established through prolonged engagement with the research site and persistent observation. The researcher immersed himself in the school environment within Kyangwali Refugee

Settlement to build trust with participants and gained a deeper understanding of the context and lived experiences of children with disabilities.

Furthermore, triangulation was used by collecting data from multiple sources (including teachers, children, parents, and school administrators) and through various methods (semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and Focus Group Discussions). To enhance the validity of interpretations, member checking was conducted by sharing summaries or themes with participants for their feedback and verification. In addition, peer debriefing sessions with academic supervisors and colleagues provided critical insights to minimize researcher bias and strengthen interpretive accuracy.

3.8.2 Dependability

Dependability concerns the consistency and reliability of the research process over time (Lincoln &Guba, 1985). To achieve dependability, a detailed audit trail was maintained, documenting every stage of the research from data collection procedures and coding decisions to theme development and final interpretations. A code-recode strategy was also employed, wherein the researcher revisited and re-coded portions of the data at different intervals to assess consistency. Detailed methodological documentation further ensured that the study's process is transparent and potentially replicable by other researchers.

3.8.3 Transferability

Although qualitative research does not seek statistical generalization, transferability allows readers to determine the extent to which findings may apply to other similar contexts (Lincoln &Guba, 1985). To facilitate this, the study provided thick description of the research context, including demographic,

cultural, and institutional factors within the Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. This level of contextual detail enables readers and future researchers to judge the applicability of findings to other refugee or low-resource educational settings.

3.8.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the degree to which research findings are shaped by the participants and not unduly influenced by the researcher's personal biases or motivations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To establish confirmability, the researcher engaged in continuous reflexivity, maintaining a reflective journal to critically examine personal assumptions, values, and reactions throughout the research process. The audit trail mentioned under dependability also contribute to confirmability by providing transparent documentation of how data were analyzed and interpreted. Triangulation and member checking further supported confirmability by ensuring the findings genuinely reflect participants' perspectives.

3.9 Procedure of Data collection

3.9.1 Protocol Approvals

The researcher got an introductory letter from the Directorate of Research and Graduate training, Kyambogo University to introduce him to the Office of the Prime Minister who issued him a permission document sanctioning the process of conducting research in Kyangwali Refugee settlement. On presenting the permission letter to the Refugee settlement authorities i.e. the Settlement Commandant and, Resident representative of UNHCR, the researcher unveiled the programme of meetings with the targeted participants.

3.9.2 Recruitment

The researcher made preliminary visits to each of the selected organizations and schools to seek permission. During the visits, the researcher explained to the administrators and leaders the objectives and scope of the study as well as the criteria used to select particular organizations and schools. The organization and schools after granting permission introduced the researcher to their employees for purposes of knowing one another and creating rapport. The researcher carried out formal interaction with each individual staff to build rapport and explained in details what was expected of them. Contacts of willing employees were obtained directly for those who were present. The researcher contacted individuals with the aim of establishing their willingness to participate in the study. He made follow-up calls to confirm willingness of individuals to take part in the study.

3.9.3 Obtaining Formal Consent

Only the willing and eligible individuals received the consent letters to fill and sign. The researcher contacted the potential participants by phone calls, email or in person and made appointment to obtain written consent. The consent form clearly explained the rights of participants, and privileges such as reasonable accommodation emoluments, the underlying risks related to their participation and all information that individuals needed to know about the study prior to granting their consent. The researcher reviewed the consent forms with each individual participant and clarified any questions that arose thereof. Issues requiring reasonable accommodation were taken care of and included transportation of participants with disabilities, interpreters and sitting arrangement.

3.10 Analysis of Data

Data analysis is the process that involves cleaning of raw data, changing and processing it and finally extracting of actionable and relevant information that facilitates making of informed decision (Kelley, 2022). In this study, data was analyzed using thematic analysis which according to Braun & Clarke (2006: p.87) takes a six-phases process. In line with six-phase process, data analysis involved collecting information which then was transcribed into written form. The data was read and thereafter, generated initial list of ideas that were translated into codes which the researcher sorted into themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes were reviewed and refined according to collated extracts for each theme to ensure formation of coherent patterns. The themes were defined and refined in a data thematic map that eventually aided meaning making. Finally, the researcher wrote the findings according to the themes emerging from the data analysis.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Ethics according to Merriam-Webster is a set of moral principles. The study took into account and adapted the following ethical considerations advanced by Arifin (2018: p.30).

Consent on recording interviews and voluntary participation

The researcher adequately explained to participants the purpose of this research for them to understand and consciously decide whether to participate or abstain. Each participant who chose to participate in the study signed a consent form which was provided by the researcher. Potential participants were approached individually and shared information about the process of data collection. Participants were given ample time to digest what had been shared and asked questions if any. Since

participation was voluntary, participants were at liberty to decline or withdraw from the study while it was in progress without any fear of any reparation.

Anonymity and confidentiality

The names and particulars of participants remained anonymous throughout the process of data collection up to the point of reporting the research findings. Interview sessions adhered to the principles of privacy and confidentiality. Telephone calls and any other forms of communication were conducted from a safe environment. Interviews were conducted on a one-on-one basis while in a private and quiet place where outsiders were not allowed access as was agreed upon by all parties.

Data analysis and dissemination of the findings

Transcription of data was conducted in a private location to prevent possibilities of recordings being heard by unauthorized persons. The particulars of participants were removed from interview transcripts during data transcription including their names, or any other identifiable aspects.

Confidentiality

Written consent and any other documents bearing identification marks of participants were kept under key-and-lock to prevent access to any unauthorized individuals. Personal details of participants were destroyed in accordance with the university standards governing research procedure.

Ethical approval and access to participants

The faculty research committee recommends the approval of the proposal after being satisfied that it met the research ethical standards. The process encompassed

subjecting the proposal to plagiarism tests to ascertain its conformability with the university's standard of the literature similarity not exceeding 20%.

3.12 Limitations

Kyangwali settlement being a heterogeneous community where people speak different languages making it difficult to translate certain concepts and words during the interview sessions. The speaking of many different languages necessitated the researcher to engage more than one language translators during data collection.

Findings from the Kyangwali Refugee Settlement may not be generalizable to all refugee settlements in Uganda or other countries due to context-specific differences in demographics, policies, infrastructure, or organizational support.

The study being a qualitative design, conducting one-on-one interviews to some participants categories especially the refugees were misconceived to be an investigative process of some kind of incrimination. This led to adopting Focus Group Discussions (FDGs) in order to get the desired information.

The area of study being a refugee settlement, it was very challenging to get access to participants especially the refugees. Besides, the government bureaucratic process that includes stringent conditions on how to interact with refugee population made it even harder to go through data collection within the anticipated time-frame. The researcher was conditioned to seek permission from the prime minister's office in Kampala which prolonged data collection exercise.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings from the field are presented. The study focused on the inclusion of children with disabilities in primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. The analysis of data in this chapter was guided by three research objectives which are reproduced here as follows: factors which enable or hinder disability inclusion in primary education; Schools capacities that support disability inclusion in education; and school level interventions which promote inclusive education.

The participants who provided information for this study were categorized into four groups who include: teachers; parents; learners; and development partners. The study engaged the aforementioned participants to give their views on different aspects concerning disability inclusion in education.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics

32 people took part in the study, with a fairly distribution across the participants' groups. Their (participants) demographic characteristics are tabulated below in terms of age, gender, nationality, disability type, education level and employment status.

a) Children with disabilities

Children with disabilities of ages ranging from 11 to 17 years participated. Of the eight, 7 were males and 1 female, 6 children had physical disabilities and 1 each with intellectual and multiple disabilities respectively. Their nationalities

comprised of 6 Congolese, 1 South Sudanese and 1 Rwandese; they were school-going children in classes P. 2 to P. 4.

b) Teachers

The teachers involved in the research had varied age ranges: 1 teacher was in the age range between 20- 25, 7 in the age range of 25 – 30, 2 their ages were between 30 -35, and 1 each between 35- 40 and 40- 45 years respectively. Seven teachers were males and five females; all were Ugandan nationals. Their educational level ranged from certificate to degree where 8 were Grade III certificate holders, 2 diploma holders and 2 graduates with Bachelor in education.

c) Parents

Out of the eight parents taking part in this study, all were females, in the age range of 30 – 50. By nationality; 6 parents were Congolese, 1 Rwandese and 1 south Sudanese. Their educational level was below p.7 and per their disability status, 1 parent had physical disability while 7 did not have any disability.

d) Development partners

This category of participants composed of 2 males and 2 females with the age range varying from between 25 -30 (1), 30 – 40 (2) and 40 – 45 (1). By nationality, all (4) were Ugandans with education level of degree.

Summary

The study sample appears to be representative of the target population in terms of age and gender, but highly variant in as far as education background and disability status are concerned. The demographic composition of nationality status is well balanced, allowing room for generalization of the study findings.

4.3 Factors that influence implementation of inclusive education

In this study, during the researcher's interrogation of participants' views on factors influencing inclusion of children with disabilities in education services, the responses focused on the barriers rather than enablers. A number of factors hindering inclusion of children with disabilities in primary schools were reported as follows: low capacity of teachers to manage inclusive classes; inappropriate learning materials/ aids; inaccessible learning environment; lack of awareness; and low funding in government aided schools.

4.3.1 Lack of specialised teachers to manage inclusive classes

It was observed that most teachers in the settlement have Grade III certificates attained from well-established primary teacher's training colleges. However, their teaching skills did not reflect their competence to address the diversity in learning needs created by the presence of learners with divergent learning abilities. Nearly all respondents stated that the available teachers have limited skills to meet different learning needs of children experiencing difficulties in an inclusive setting. One of the teachers said;

“Teachers lack skills to handle children with disabilities. Some teachers have never accessed any information on inclusive education.”

In a like manner, participants believed that because teachers do not have enough capacity to handle inclusive classes, they were bound to leave or neglect children with disabilities unattended to if such children were to be admitted in the mainstream schools. This is backed by the response of Partner 3

At school level, because of limited knowledge about inclusion of children with disabilities, Teachers tend to neglect learners especially those perceived to be slow/time-takers as they occasionally refer to them.

In their opinion, the parents believed that children with disabilities perform poorly in school because teachers do not commit enough time to attend to their individual learning needs which resulted in multiple repetitions of same class year in, year out. To concretize their assertion, a parent in the parents' FGD rhetorically stated:

“When teaching is going on, my child does not understand may be because teachers do not give him enough time”. The child keeps on repeating same classes. (Parent 1/ FGD)

However much it was suggested that teachers do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to promote inclusive education, their inability to promote inclusive education were partly influenced by low motivation. It was established that the teachers' salaries and other emoluments were very low when compared with other employees of other fields in the settlement.

“We need to address issues below critically; Teachers' welfare is another area that needs serious consideration. First, their remuneration [(monthly salary (Net) of approximately Ugx: 420,000)], and secondly, their accommodation. At present, teachers' accommodation stands at 1:4.” (One room accommodating 4 teachers) (Partner 4)

From the above statements, it is inferred that teachers were poorly paid despite of the fact that they worked in a harsh environment. The above statements also revealed that teachers live in physical conditions that were not good. Further still,

teachers continually lived in conditions that were full of restrictions infringing on their freedom to private life.

4.3.2 Inadequate and inappropriate education materials and Assistive Devices (ADs)

The other factor at-play against inclusive education as identified by participants was inadequate and inappropriate education materials. Participants noted with concern that most education materials used to facilitate learning in schools are not appropriate to the learning needs and do not favor different learning abilities exhibited by learners.

Lack of instructional materials; the available materials are not appropriately in line with the needs of learners with disabilities. Besides, the available materials are not enough compared to the number of learners in class. (Teacher 3)

Relatedly, some participants observed that some children's impairments limit their ability to perform certain actions such as reading, writing, listening, sitting or navigating around the classrooms. The limitation in performing such actions by children with impairments would be addressed by the application of Assistive technology devices such as CCTVs, reading glasses, to mention but a few. The challenge is that these devices are not readily available nor are they affordable. Even in rare cases where lucky ones get them, they do not know where these devices can be taken for servicing in case of breakdown.

One of the major challenges is that we lack special materials to meet the needs of children with disabilities e.g. Reading glasses, seats for children with physical disabilities etc. (Teacher 2)

My child received two wheel-chairs from LWF and HI. But the one from HI got spoilt and he now uses the one given by LWF. The challenge is that we don't know where these wheel chairs can be taken for repair incase the break down. (Parent/FGD)

In the perspective of participants, the high costs associated with the purchase of assistive devices in Uganda is a major hindrance towards achieving inclusive education services by all children irrespective of their limitations as explained by one of the partners.

Most children with disabilities who require AD do not have access to them because these devices are unavailable or are expensive that parents cannot afford procuring them. We need also empowerment of the local artisans as far as maintenance of assistive devices is concerned. When Devices like wheel chairs break down, where are they taken for repair? Who meets the expenses for their maintenance? (Partner 4)

As observed above, some participants attributed the lack and use of assistive technology in primary schools due to poverty. Participants opined that parents live in poverty with little or no source of income at all; as a consequence, they cannot afford to provide their families with basic needs such as food. Participants indicated that parents who are poor are highly likely to prioritize other basic needs for survival such as food rather than education.

We have done a lot in encouraging parents to have their children enrolled in school. However, the financial status of many families doesn't seem to enable them support children's education. Parents cannot provide for their children's basic needs like dressing. (Partner 2)

We have a challenge; parents do not have money and therefore cannot provide us with school uniforms and other basic scholastic needs. (Child in FGD)

Although, the opinion of participants is more concerned with the lack and affordability of assistive devices, it was also critically noted that most primary schools have inadequate teaching/ learning resources such as reference books, charts or play materials.

4.3.3 Inaccessible Learning Environments

This study understands learning environment to constitute all aspect that facilitate access to learning centres by pupils. In this case, the learning environment includes school infrastructures such as buildings (classrooms, washrooms, source of water, kitchen etc.), instructional materials including those prepared by teachers and schools' proximity. During the interface with participants, accessibility of the learning environment was brought into scrutiny. Participants pointed out a number of impediments that describe characteristics of the existing learning environments which make them inaccessible to children with disabilities and hence perpetuate exclusion. Observations revealed that most school building do not have ramps or have them but they don't measure to standards. In addition, buildings including classrooms are poorly ventilated and compounds had a lot of potholes, stones and tree-stumps that endanger safety of pupils especially those with motor difficulties.

Some structures are not accessible. Some have no ramps; the lighting system is not good in some classes. Windows are placed at a higher level that limits enough light to enter the rooms. (Head teacher 4)

A partner affirmed that the absence of appropriate ramps and other provisions such as walk ways potentially prevent easy access to education by all children.

He pointed out the fact that besides inaccessible learning environment; the few available facilities meant to benefit children with disabilities in schools were being misused. Learners with disabilities were particularly critical on the misuse and maintenance of facilities such as modified latrines meant to facilitate their stay in school.

The school compound and other facilities are not good for us to use. The latrine designed for us is never cleaned; other children use it badly so that you cannot sit on it. [(Child in a wheelchair, FGD)]

According to some teachers and parents alike, inaccessible learning environment was associated with the distance between schools and homes where children come from. It was reported that Kyangwali settlement has very few schools compared to its size. Schools are scattered apart characterized by long distances which make them inaccessible to some learners especially the ones with disabilities. The worst part of it all is the recklessness of other road users notably, the boda-boda riders who sometimes have no respect for pedestrians. In certain instances, school children have been soft targets for road accidents resulting from reckless road users. This compels some parents to withdraw their children from schools as a preventive measure and ensure safety of their vulnerability.

The distance children cover from home to school is long. This makes attendance of children with disabilities especially those physical disabilities irregular. (Interview – Teacher 6)

I have a child with paralysis of the lower limbs and so she cannot walk. The road to school is risky with speeding motor cycles. I fear she can be knocked.

(Parent in FGD)

It was observed that children were at high risk of suffering traffic accidents and other associated challenges due to moving long distances in order to acquire education. A partner observed that children were bound to dropping out of school when they find themselves in situations of moving long distances to access education.

Children move long distances to reach schools visa-Vis the mobility challenges they have. This affects their attendance and stay in school. Many of the children affected end up dropping-out of school. (Partner 4)

The study registered yet another factor, overcrowded classrooms which make the learning environment less accessible to children with disabilities. Participants observed that the existing schools available in Kyangwali settlement are few compared to the population of school-going children. The high numbers of learners in the available classrooms compounded by limited capacity of teachers to handle inclusive classroom settings make it harder for learners with disabilities to comfortably continue with education. Overcrowding of classes limit children's interaction in class as there is no space for pupils' internal movements to facilitate peer-to-peer learning. The study learned that sometimes the teacher: pupil ratio in these schools doubles the recommended government ration of 1:53.

Classroom environment; Classes are highly populated with a teacher: pupil ratio of 1:173 against the recommended 1:53. With such a population, it's

not possible for a teacher to provide for individual learner's needs. (Partner
4)

In order to realize inclusion in education, accessibility of facilities where education is offered is paramount. Buildings should have the necessary features such as ramps and rails to facilitate movement of children with mobility challenges. Adequate lighting system for those with visual limitations and enough spaces between desks for all children to navigate around the classrooms. Children with limitations caused by various impairments should be provided with the necessary compensatory equipment, for example, reading glasses for children with low vision, wheelchairs or crutches for children with mobility limitations, and hearing aids to cater for children with hard of hearing among others.

4.3.4 Lack of awareness

To be aware is having knowledge and understanding of what exists and is happening. During interviews with participants, it was established that parents, teachers as well as the community lack awareness about disability. Some believe that disability is as a result of wrong doing on the side of parents and this influences the way of association and interaction between a person with disability and those without:

At community level, children with disabilities are always discriminated. They are perceived or associated with the presence of misfortunes and hence people don't want to associate with neither them nor their parents. As a result, they (children with disabilities) are disempowered to live in communities. Sometimes there is a feeling that disability situations are contagious e.g. Children with epilepsy can easily infect if in contact with

others. Children with dripping mouths are always isolated because other children look at them as misfits. (Partner 4)

It can be argued that lack of awareness about issues relating to disability can breed negative attitude and influence service provision to people with disabilities. This study understands attitudes to be feelings, perceptions or behaviour towards something or someone, either positively or negatively. The study established a general occurrence of negative attitude towards disability within the settlement and this influences their inclusion in primary schools.

My child has eye problems; they (eyes) itch her and are always red so she cannot attend school regularly as I have to take her for medical treatment. She has problems reading on the blackboard. Sometimes, other children abuse and label her with funny names. They say “your eyes are bad as if you are a drunkard.” (FGD with Parent 2)

Participants observed that sometimes there is discrimination and denial of accessibility to education of children who appear to look different from others due to negative attitude. Negative attitude is also exhibited in the failure to adopt education practices that support inclusion especially where contractors continuously build school structures which lack accessible features such as ramps. At community level, children with disabilities are viewed as ‘misfortune’, at school level they are treated with contempt. All this has a negative bearing to these children in terms of service provision as reported below:

My child uses crutches and sometimes he falls down on the way. Even at school, some children keep pushing him when he comes near to them forcing him to get injuries (FGD with Parent 3). For me, teachers need to improve

on the way they treat and attend to our children with disabilities..., sometimes I get hurt when our children with disabilities are called “Kirema”. I feel, they are being abused and lament why God created them that way. (FGD with Parent 1)

In the opinion of some participants, there were wide spread cases of discrimination practiced against children with disabilities which resulted into marginalization. The victims of discrimination sometimes felt that special schools would be the ideal education centres for children with disabilities.

If it is possible, a special school can be better. Sometimes in an inclusive school, we (children with disabilities) are discriminated...., some teachers in inclusive schools are good but others are not. They don't mind about children with disabilities (FGD with Learner with disability 1).

Given the above response, education stakeholders have the responsibility to explicitly explain to the community members like parents the benefits of impressing the programme (IE). This will require development partners to adequately budget for such activities that aim at crating awareness and change people's perception about inclusion.

4.3.5 Low funding

This study established that most primary schools in the settlement are supported by development partners who provide support in form of scholastic materials, constructions, and recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staffs but not providing funds. Other schools that are government aided receive funds in form of UPE grant, however, one of the participants observed that the funds received are inadequate and limited to buying basic school utilities such as chalk, prep books and teaching/

learning aids. The money provided by government is very little compared to the populations of schools visa-vis the costs of necessities required such as ADs.

The funds received from government (UPE) are meager compared to the population of the school besides adapted materials that meet the needs of learners with SN being far expensive. (Interview with Head teacher 4)

Despite of the fact that Non-Government Organisations are the major funders of education programmes in the settlement, their policy of providing cash directly to parents as non-conditional jeopardizes and deprives schools of the opportunity to purchase necessary scholastic materials that are relevant to the learners' learning needs.

What we are doing is that we have cash for education purposively targeting vulnerable children including those with disabilities. However, cash for education is non-conditional grant given to children through their parents. Parents can sometimes spend it contrary to its intended purpose. (Interview with Partner 1)

The importance of funding to foster education services provision cannot be underestimated and this should be emphasized more profoundly when talking about disability inclusion. To achieve education inclusion, major structural adjustments in schools have to be made and this requires funding. There is need for both government and private sector to consider providing enough funds to furnish schools with the necessary facilities.

4.4 The schools' capacities to support Inclusive education

The theme developing capacity to support education in this study encompasses how resources in schools are suited for all children with different learning abilities in schools. The theme explores the preparedness of all stakeholders in providing inclusive education; teachers, school administrators, partners, pupils and parents are charged with the responsibility to promote inclusion. Aspects identified under the theme to be explored include understanding of inclusive education, competences teachers have in order to implement IE, policy statements promoting IE and activities in school that promote inclusion.

4.4.1 Knowledge of inclusive education

To be able to implement IE, one needs to ably understand it is and what it's not, its components as opposed to other forms of education. This study interested itself in establishing the understanding of IE by stakeholders who are responsible to enforce its success. The baseline of this aspect centered on the meaning of inclusive educations depicted in the expressions of participants below.

IE is the involvement of every learner to take part in the learning process.

The learning takes consideration of methods like grouping. (Interview with Teacher 6)

IE is a system which embraces enrollment of children regardless of their disabilities or gender. (Interview with Teacher7) IE is the education for all without discrimination. IE is synonymous to UPE. (Teacher 8)

According to me, IE is the same as Universal Primary Education because UPE emphasises all learners to be in the school. (Interview with Head teacher 1).

Given the fact that some people understand inclusive education to mean Universal Primary Education explains why most schools have not adopted any modifications to make education equitable to all school-going children. It's worthwhile to note that UPE focuses on enrolment of all learners without considering the aspect of accessibility in terms of modifications of facilities. It is worthwhile noting that if people' perception about an aspect is contrary to what it actually is; a wrong approach will be employed in the quest of addressing its relevance. However, some participants have the knowledge of what inclusive education is all about as evidenced in the responses below.

IE is education for every child and involves systematic changes that observe rights of children in mainstream school/ classrooms. IE is allowing all children in mainstream and follows removing all barriers. (Interview with Partner 4) IE is ensuring access to education for all school age going children regardless of their status; IE is ensuring access to education by removing barriers that hinder persons with disabilities access education. (Partner 2)

The responses of the participants given above indicate that development partners understand the concept of inclusive education better than other stakeholder groups. This is most significant in the implementation of the programme given the fact that they (partners) are the major providers of social services in the settlement.

4.4.2 Competences/ skills and knowledge areas required of a teacher

This study interested itself in establishing the kind of competences or skills and knowledge areas that stakeholders thought were important characteristics of an ideal inclusive education teacher. Responses were from particular participant

categories especially teachers (including head teachers) and partners because of their various roles in providing quality education.

Planning- we look at materials to use and ask, are they matching with content, are they enough? (Interview with Teacher 7); I use various teaching methods e.g. Group work, for those with hearing challenges, we group them with those who can communicate with them. (Interview with Teacher 5)

Besides planning and use of various teaching methods, participants highlighted other competences and or knowledge areas that as significant to supporting education which is all inclusive. As reported, during the process of recruiting teachers, it was important for teachers to demonstrate the competences necessary for inclusion as demonstrated in the responses below.

During teacher's recruitment process, we look at one who has the ability to handle children with disabilities e.g. One with classroom management skills, developing a lesson plan that is all inclusive. We ensure interviews have items that test inclusiveness. (Interview with Partner 2) Teachers should be able to identify and understand the specific needs of individual children. Use disability friendly language, teachers should be sensitive and conscious of disability and use appropriate words that do not seem to sound discriminative. Be able to identify and assess educational needs and where possible refer to other professionals for appropriate service provision. (Interview with Partner 4)

4.4.3 School Activities that promote inclusion

According to studies, inclusive education thrives in welcoming schools which promote a positive learning climate, positive relationships among pupils and environments characterized by a variety of learning centers. This study ventured

into what activities stakeholders engage in that promotes inclusive education. Many participants when asked of activities that promote IE in school mentioned activities like parents' meetings, games and sports, and mobilization of communities to take children to school. Some responses of participants are cited below.

Co-curricular activities; We have different clubs e.g. Peer learning, Health & Sanitation supported by Oxfam who provide materials that encourage all children to stay in school. (Interview with Teacher 5)

Sometimes we call our friends and work/ play together. I move in a wheel chair but I also participate in playing volley ball. (FGD with Learner 1)

It was reported that there has been a deliberate move by a number of development partners to enrich the curriculum with activities that promote learning through play such as Team-up. It was interesting to learn that children with disabilities are always involved in such activities.

Team-up-which is learning through play, we talk to children in class to raise awareness on the kind of support children with disabilities need. We link them to service providers e.g. to HI for assistive devices. (Interview with Partner 3)

Further reports indicated that parents and other community members are encouraged to enroll their children into school irrespective of their (children's) ability. The report shows a great deal of NGOs conduct sensitization campaigns targeting community members.

We conduct meetings with School administrations and parents to create community awareness and mobilize parents to take their children to school. (Partner 2)

The responses advanced above affirm to the value of community participation in education children with particular focus on go back to school campaigns. The gist of the matter is to have increased enrollment of all children. Regardless of ability.

4.4.4 Policies on inclusion

One of the purposes of the study was to seek views from stakeholders on the form of policy guidelines that support the IE in public education institutions. The interaction also was interested in establishing knowledge of any government policy statements which guide implementation of inclusive education. The responses gathered suggest limited knowledge of such policy guidelines by the participants.

Policies are in existence. The school rules and regulations support IE e.g. the rules which protect children with special needs referred to as vulnerable children. (Interview with Head teacher2)

In regard to policies that support inclusive education, the report revealed that most stakeholders lack a clear understanding of what policies are and how they apply to education.

I am not sure of any policy or rules and regulations in schools that promote IE though the ministry's guidelines mandates schools to implement IE by enrolling children with disabilities. (Interview with Partner 2)

It can be summed up that most participants are not aware of any policies whether at national or local levels which support inclusive education. This has lack of knowledge about policies by the general public influences their obligations to support inclusion.

4.5 School-level interventions which support inclusive education

School-level interventions as a theme includes aspects such as what resources are available and how are they allocated to address individual educational needs. It involves classroom organisations which support inclusion and also how school-level interventions are governed including engagement with parents and communities.

4.5.1 Teachers' application of teaching strategies that foster inclusion

The study was interested in establishing how teachers adapted different teaching strategies in an inclusive setting. The strategies the study targeted included aspects such as curriculum (methods, time, content and instructional materials), teaching/learning space, assessment etc. However, responses revealed that teachers to a greater extent lacked knowledge about the competences of adapting teaching strategies to suit inclusive classes.

The strategies include: active participation of all learners, methods of teaching e.g. beginning a lesson with a song related to the content to be taught; assessment of learners to find out their needs and also assessing achievement in the lessons. (Interview with Teacher 5)

From the responses by some participants, it was brought out clearly that teachers were not aware of any specific strategies that support IE but rather, their role was teaching all children. Participants couldn't report any strategies like making necessary modifications on learning aids, teaching methods or means of assessment of achievements.

Teachers make T/L materials and display children's work. Creating groups of learners Use methods such as SAU, I do, you do, we, do (Interview with Teacher 6).

We have only two, one is display of materials and the second one is sitting arrangement. We advocate for workshop kind of sitting arrangement but are hampered by the high population of children in classes. (Interview with Partner 1)

The results from other participants seem to reveal that the strategies being applied by teachers are not to all learners. The responses indicate a lack of inclusivity, some children especially those with disabilities do not fully benefiting.

As a parent, I have always complained at school about the learning of my child but teachers have not changed. Our children are not benefiting at school... my child doesn't see properly, she needs to sit in front, but all this has not improved my child's performance in the class. (FGD with Parent 5)

The responses from participants revealed that some teachers either because the overwhelming work before them or lack of charisma to handle inclusive classes end up neglecting some children perceived to be divergent from others.

One teacher behaves like a volunteer who doesn't care! For me, I normally visit the school to see how my child learns. I sometimes get surprised, when I went to school, Madam who teaches the class of my child did not know him neither did she have him in her records/register meaning the teacher never bothered about my child. (FGD with Parent 4)

In the opinion of the parent, some teachers mind less about children with disabilities to the extent of not counting them as part of the class members. In the opinion of some parents, teachers exercise partial treatment to children basing on their (children's) appearance to them in their classes which is a clear sign of negative attitude towards disability.

4.5.2 Availability of resources that support inclusion of learners with disabilities

The study wanted to establish what instructional resources are available in schools and how appropriate are they to meeting the learning needs of all children. The study also was interested in establishing how teachers adopted the existing resources to make them universally accessible to learners irrespective of diversities. Participants demonstrated through their responses what is at stake as reported below.

Currently, we give materials to children but may not meet the needs of children with impairments such as VI, HI and severe cerebral palsy. We have identified children with disabilities in schools and those who cannot manage to learn in inclusive schools, are taken to a special school in Masindi. (Interview with Partner 2)

As reported, schools lack appropriate materials to facilitate the learning needs of different learners. The available materials are not adapted to address learning gaps among learners especially those with impairments such as Visual impairment.

Materials used by teachers are not inclusive; the school has no materials adapted to cater for children with disabilities (Interview with Teacher 1). With material resources, most of them are not accessible to supporting the education of children with disabilities e.g. textbooks are not adapted to the needs of children with visual impairment; there are no Sign Language interpreters to cater for children with Hearing impairment etc. (Interview with Teacher 7)

The report revealed the general lack of resources by primary schools to implement inclusion in education. Information evident show that there are no teachers trained in special needs education, adapted learning materials were unavailable and

schools had no resource rooms where learners with disability would converge for remedial work.

4.5.3 Parental involvement in education of children

The contribution of parents in the education of children is vital and ranges from provision of basic needs, financial support to instilling moral conduct. The success of a child in education to a greater extent will depend on the level of parental involvement. As such the study wanted to ascertain how education players in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement corroborate this aspect of parental involvement.

Parents attend meetings where they get encouraged to provide for their children's learning needs. (Interview with Head teacher 4)

Parents are invited in meetings at school where issues of disability are included on the agenda. The School organizes awareness raising campaigns about sending children to school. (Teacher 7)

The responses indicated that parents' involvement in their children's education is limited to attending schools' meetings; however, it is important to report that parents' involvement go beyond that. They are source of information about their children, provide material support to children, carry out awareness raising among others.

Parents work with teachers through reporting on the learning progress, attendance etc. (Teacher 7)

From the presentation of different views provided by participants, it can be concluded that inclusion of children with disabilities in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement faces many challenges despite of an advantage of the presence of different development partners providing support. It is believed that if the services

of NGOs were properly aligned with the principles of Universal Design (Carr, 1998), mainstreaming of disability would be achieved.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In chapter four, presentation of findings was navigated. It provides the summary of findings, discussion, conclusions and recommendations.

5.2. Summary Findings

The findings revealed that IE in primary schools in Kyangwali refugee settlement still wanting. The low enrolment was attributed to barriers related to: physical; attitudinal; institutional and information factors. Further revelation is that teachers lacked enough competences, skills and knowledge of disability which influenced their ability to handle inclusive classes. Relatedly, most education materials used to facilitate learning were found not so inclusive in nature; and are unsuitable for use by children with learning disabilities.

The study again revealed that, regarding the schools' capacity to support inclusion, the concept of inclusive education was misconstrued where to some people, it meant education for all while to others denotes to universal primary education. In any case, this resulted into laxity on the part of education implementers to make necessary adjustments and adaptations on the resources to accommodate learning diversities among learners. Further still, there are no deliberate guidelines and regulations that support enrolment of children with disabilities. A state attributed to lack of government will to implement inclusion in education through enacting and operationalizing the national policy on inclusive education.

The study also established that schools did not have the capacity to support inclusion in terms of human, financial and material resources. It was established that primary schools depend on development partners for resource supplies and yet partners operate budgets which are donor funded with stringent conditions. The reports indicated that it's not uncommon for schools to receive materials with minimal demand while touchy issues affecting school's performance are neglected.

It was noted that classrooms are ever congested with poor ventilation which reduce air aeration and lighting system. The teachers' motivation was low accounting to high teacher turn-over where experienced teachers were being replaced by less experienced ones. One other finding concerned the sustainability of programmes introduced by development partners. It was reported that sometimes programmes targeting vulnerable children especially those with disabilities have sometimes been withdrawn abruptly at infancy stage. This trend means lack of commitment to provide services including inclusive education to children at risk of exclusion.

Finally, one other important revelation concerns parental involvement. It was observed that though parental involvement is significant to facilitate access, presence, participation and achievement in education by children, the involvement of parents in activities that promote inclusion is low. The low involvement was attributed to loss of hope in these children to due cross-cutting issues such as poverty levels, disability types, gender, and refugee status.

5.3 Discussion of Findings

The discussion here is guided by the three research objectives reproduced hereunder: Factors which influence provision of disability inclusion in primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement; Capacity of primary schools to

effectively implement disability inclusion; and School level interventions employed to promote inclusive education for children with disabilities.

5.3.1 Factors that affect inclusive education implementation

The findings have revealed quite a number of factors which significantly influence enrolment, retention and completion of primary education cycle by children with disabilities in Kyangwali refugee settlement. One of the findings indicates that although the teachers who are at the centre of system implementation are qualified with a minimum of Grade III certificate; they lack the capacity to handle inclusive classes. This revelation is in agreement with Hornby (2014) whose analysis indicates that the teacher training institutions operate under the curriculum with insufficient input on methodologies of teaching inclusive classes. This means that the teacher training colleges produce graduates who do not have the relevant tools to facilitate learning of pupils with diverse abilities in inclusive settings. This phenomenon is contrary to the recommendation of Charema, (2010, p.89) who implores teachers to be professionally developed and prepared psychologically, socially with positive attitude as they face the task of supporting inclusion. The study further reveals that in addition to insufficient competences for teachers, they (teachers) are demotivated with low pay. This finding is in line with the revelation by Nabugoomu (2019) whose research on school dropout in Uganda established causes which included poor remuneration of teachers that demoralise them to the extent that they lose interest in work and give limited support to children in school. The poor remuneration compounded by poor standards of living (cf: accommodation of teachers in Kyangwali refugee settlement is 1 room: 4 teachers) explains the high turnover of teachers. This study also observed that teachers implemented a rigid curriculum whose emphasis is on academic achievement as

their assessment records were based on cognitive achievement (Hunt, 2021, Grimes et al. 2023). This revelation contravenes one of the four main interventions government proposed and was geared towards inclusive education. This intervention advocates for a more friendly curriculum which responds to divergent needs among learners [(BMAUBRIEFING PAPER 13/18 (2018))].

Another finding shows that primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee settlement are in short supply of relevant and appropriate teaching/ education materials. As revealed, the government majorly plays a supervisory role while leaving development partners` take centre stage of supplying education resources. These partners operate on donor conditioned budgets which dictate their implementation operation that to a greater extent is foreign oriented and doesn't benefit the intended beneficiaries. To put this point into perspective, the education materials such as text books, are not adapted to needs of learners with limitations in learning. It should be noted that instructional materials are vital in conveying and aiding learning through different senses. As noted, "Access to a variety of learning resources promotes the participation of children with disabilities in the classroom and allows equitable opportunities to access lessons and learn alongside their peers" (Grimes et al., 2023). In addition, the lack of appropriate education materials, some children with impairments need assistive devices to facilitate their competences to learn. Hunt (2021, p.95) notes that the use of devices and technologies enhances 'access, presence, participation and success' in education for children with disabilities. Hunt postulates that assistive technologies allow children to engage with the world around them and develop their independence and wellbeing. However, this study reveals the inadequate supply and application of assistive technologies for children with impairments benefit. The lack of assistive

technologies is associated with a number of factors including poverty amongst parents, availability plus affordability of the devices and lack of information on where the devices can be taken for repair in case they break down.

One other revelation in the study is the participation of parents in the education of children which is so limited to the extent that learners cannot be provided with the basic scholastic materials unless the development partners intervene. This is evident in all schools where almost 99% of children cannot afford to buy school uniforms. The revelation is contrary to Hornby (2014) who envisages the importance of parental involvement as a major contributor to promoting positive attitudes, acceptable behaviour and school attendance of children as well as increased parental confidence and satisfaction in the education provided to children.

For inclusion of children with disabilities in education to be beneficial, they should be accepted as part of the system. The ability of school and community acceptance depends on the awareness level and knowledge about disability. This study however, established that limited awareness and knowledge about disability contributes a lot in limiting inclusion of children with disabilities (Rieser 2012). Majority parents involved in the research showed reservations towards inclusion citing bullying and unfair treatment meted against their children. This analysis is reinforced by the observation advanced by Hunt (2021) and USDC (2017) who reported that children with disabilities were being excluded from benefiting from inclusive education due to stigma and discrimination. The study postulates that stigma and discrimination to some extent originates from the negative attitude people hold towards persons with disabilities. Such attitude is portrayed by

people's perception that people with disabilities bring bad luck due to the curse they carry by witchcraft (Rieser, 2012: p.13; Mitchell, 2017).

Another finding of this study concerns inadequate learning space in terms of classrooms. The study established with evidence that the number of schools within the settlement is low compared to the population. This meant that the available classrooms are congested to a tune of 1: 173 in terms of teacher to pupil ratio (Windle International, 2023). The settlement continues receiving new arrivals as a result of instability in the neighboring country majority of them being children. This state of affair exerts pressure on existing schools that cannot reject these children but end up being overcrowded. Contrary the high numbers in classes, inclusive education calls for the application of child-centered approaches/ methods which call for a limited numbers of learners per class if learning is to be realized.

5.3.2 How schools' capacities support inclusive education

The study ventured into establishing the readiness and ability of primary schools in Kyangwali to support and implement inclusive education. This was dependent on aspects like people's understanding of inclusive education, preparedness (competences, skills or knowledge level) and accommodations being adapted. The study's assumption was that the implementation of inclusion depended upon people's understanding of what it is all about.

One of the findings of this study reveals that the concepts which explains inclusion in education are always misconstrued in different ways: some people take it to mean Universal Primary Education (UPE) while others understand it to mean Education for All (EFA). In any of the cases, when inclusive education is equated to either UPE or EFA, a number of necessary considerations that would account

for inclusion of children with disabilities will be neglected. For example, UPE is an approach aiming at increasing school enrolment of all children without addressing accessibility concerns of children with educational barriers, or making adaptations on education materials to address the educational needs of those learners with various learning challenges. While IE advocates for quality and equitable education, UPE's emphasis is on quantity education focusing on literacy achievement. In a nutshell, as noted by Ejuu (2016), the concept of inclusion in education means education that allows children with disabilities getting education alongside the 'normal' children in the same class. This kind of understanding misses salient characteristics of a true inclusion education approach. This study contends with Stubbs (2008) that due to misconceptions of people about inclusive education, many schools may in the event of trying to implement inclusive education practice some other approach for example integration.

The other finding in the study is the limited acclamation of teachers' competences/ skills and knowledge areas which accounts for the low productivity of teachers who are charged with the responsibility to implement inclusion. For the teachers to ably play the role of educator and facilitator under the inclusive setting, they should be grounded with knowledge areas which Han et al. (2019) categorize as: "content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge". It was evident that teachers have limited knowledge on how education materials, methods, curriculum and assessment should have adaptation that address learning needs of children with disabilities. Teachers and other stakeholders need of knowledge what is necessary and what is not in terms of content appropriateness to an inclusive setting (cf: USDC 2017, P.110: of teacher's training is fundamental to improving the development of inclusive education). As observed by Ejuu

(2016), in classroom situations, teachers must learn how to adopt an inflexible curriculum to respond to diverse needs which is overloaded with academic content. Until schools are relieved from coercive demands of academic curriculum whose emphasis is on cognitive assessment characterized by exams to determine achievement level of learners, Inclusion will never receive due support.

One other finding of this study reveals absence of clear policies which according to Hornby (2014) guide the provision of inclusion to learners with diverse learning needs. In this study, it became evident that schools do not have clear guidelines on the enrolment retention and completion of primary education cycle by children with disabilities. The revelation is in line with the observation made by Stubbs (2008) who describes the existing policies on which education institutions implement inclusive education as weak and illogical. The study established that most stakeholders take the UPE policy to operationalize inclusion. It is sufficing to say that the absence of inclusive education guidelines is attributed to lack of government will to scale up this education approach (IE). According to Hornby (2014), every country needs to have its coherent policy on inclusive education stipulating key priorities and features of national concern. A coherent curriculum in this sense should be in line with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) which Grimes et al. (2023) describe as one that is flexible and accessible to all learners. However, as reported by Ejjuu (2016), Uganda's policy on Inclusive education is still in a draft form, meaning that officially, inclusive education approach has never been operationalized and hence cannot be solely held responsible for not enrolling and effectively catering for children with disabilities.

5.3.3 School-level interventions which support inclusive education

The study was interested in establishing how schools involve parents in the education of children with disabilities, availability of resources and how (resources) were maintained for use, partnerships among stakeholders and management of referral systems.

One of the findings of this study indicates that, parental involvement has been identified as one of the core pillars to children's education. The findings agree with Grimes, (2023); Kefallinous, (2020); Hornby, (2014) and who emphasize the importance of involving parents in creating a conducive environment of Inclusive education. Hornby however adds that schools should essentially formulate policies and practices to guide parental involvement. It was revealed in this study that most schools do not have clear guidelines to parental involvement nor do they have a system in place of ensuring parental compliance. However, in the settlement schools, parents are encouraged to attend sports days or visit school on invitation by the school authorities. The study findings revealed that parents were mostly active to participate in school activities and programs where development partners are involved because they are assured of facilitation.

Further still, the findings suggest that schools are supported by development partners whose support range from providing human resource like teachers; education resources including education materials to infrastructural resources such as school building. It was also revealed that partners provide specialised services specifically targeting persons with disabilities. Specialised services as revealed in this study include rehabilitation and provision of assistive devices such as wheelchairs, reading glasses, hearing aids among others. This provision of specialized services is in line with the argument advanced by Hunt (2021) who

advocates for the provision and use of assistive technologies. In his submission, Hunt believes that providing assistive devices to children with disabilities will open their opportunities for access, participation and success in education as the devices will support them in overcoming the barriers that act as disabling conditions.

As aforementioned, the provision of specialized services follows a well-established referral system among the different partners. When children with disabilities are identified, they are assessed medically to determine whether the child requires a device or rehabilitation through surgical means. The study though established gaps related with the aforementioned intervention measures. One is that partners provide assistive devices but lack sustainability modality in that, they do not involve the user and local artisan in the process of purchasing, and maintenance of the devices. The study found out that when the devices break or develop mechanical faults, beneficiaries get stranded with no idea of where to take them for repair or maintenance. As a result, the device(s) is/ are damaged yet the supplier sometimes may not be traced for more support. Another gap is inadequate information given to the beneficiaries. In this case, the potential beneficiaries (children/ parents) are not enabled to decide whether to use the device or not. In a long run some of the donated devices have been abandoned owing to the inconveniences they create to the user.

The study also discovered that schools are capacitated and provided with a variety of resources such as teachers, education materials among others. The findings however, reveal that the users are never involved in the process of procurement. As a consequence, needs of children with educational needs such as low vision is not put into account. Text books are donated but with small font which makes them inaccessible to learners with sight problems besides the poor storage system in

most of the schools where materials are not easily accessible to users. At school level, the storage system makes the materials even more inaccessible to all children in that there are no libraries so where children could make use of them. When schools receive the education materials the best, they do is to store them in over-congested storage facilities where even teachers have limited access and yet they are the channels through which the information therein can reach children.

5.4 Conclusion

The research has established that the provision of disability inclusion in the Kyangwali refugee settlement is influenced by a combination of systemic, institutional, and socio-cultural factors. Key among these are inadequate teacher training in inclusive education, limited access to teaching and appropriate learning materials adapted address learning of children with disabilities, infrastructural challenges such as lack of accessible classrooms and sanitation facilities, and negative community attitudes towards disability. Additionally, the study revealed that while policies supporting inclusive education exist, there is a significant gap in their implementation facilitated by limited funding, insufficient monitoring, and lack of stakeholder coordination. Cultural perceptions and stigma surrounding disability further hinder full participation and mainstreaming education. The study found that the capacity of primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement to effectively implement disability inclusion remains significantly limited. Despite of a growing awareness about inclusive education, most education institutions lack the essential resources including human, financial and material to support inclusion adequately. Findings also reveal that school-level interventions necessary for promoting inclusive education in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement are present but limited in scope, scale, and consistency. Some schools have made commendable

efforts to foster inclusion through initiatives such as the formation of inclusive education committees, engagement with stakeholders, and occasional in-service training for teachers on classroom inclusion practices. Occasionally, schools have adapted classroom practices to accommodate learners with diverse needs, including peer support strategies and individualized learning approaches. Additionally, collaboration with NGOs and humanitarian organizations has enabled the provision of some assistive devices and basic adapted learning materials to match learning needs of children with disabilities. However, these interventions are often reactive rather than strategic, fragmented rather than systemic, and largely dependent on external support. There is a lack of structured, school-wide inclusive education plans, and many interventions are not adequately monitored or sustained over time. Schools also face challenges such as insufficient funding, lack of technical expertise, and limited capacity to maintain disability-friendly infrastructure.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the objectives for which the study was conducted and the findings generated, the following recommendations are made:

Strengthen Teacher Capacity in Inclusive Education by training and up skilling them through regular workshops and in-service training focused on inclusive pedagogies and special needs education. Integrate inclusive education modules into teacher training colleges and encourage continuous professional development.

Improve Inclusive School Infrastructure and Learning Materials through upgrading school infrastructure to meet accessibility standards—this includes building ramps, disability-friendly toilets, and accessible classrooms. Also provide

adapted teaching and learning materials such as Braille books, large-print texts, hearing aids, and other assistive technologies.

Enhance School-Level Planning and Intervention Strategies by encouraging schools to develop and implement inclusive education plans with clear objectives, timelines, and resource requirements, while Establishing inclusive education committees within schools to monitor progress and address challenges at the grassroots level.

Increase Financial and Policy Support by advocating for increased government and donor funding specifically earmarked for inclusive education in refugee settings. Also, ensure that national inclusive education policies are localized and enforced in refugee settlements, with appropriate monitoring mechanisms.

Strengthen Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration through fostering stronger partnerships between schools, NGOs, humanitarian agencies, and government bodies to provide technical, material, and financial support. Involve parents, caregivers, and community leaders in sensitization and decision-making processes to reduce stigma and promote inclusive attitudes.

Raise Community Awareness and Sensitization by conducting community outreach programs to combat stigma and misconceptions about disability. Promote the rights of children with disabilities to quality education through awareness campaigns, local media, and parent meetings.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

Dear participant,

My name is Ighangura Kantu Sedrack, a master student in Disability Studies & Inclusive Development at Kyambogo University. I am undertaking a study entitled *'Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Primary Schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement'*. The overall objective of the study is to explore the status of disability inclusion in primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. Kindly give your honest opinion without reservation on the topic under study. The information provided is for learning purpose and it will be treated with confidentiality and professionalism. I thank you for being part of this study. I would also like you to consent to my recording this interview.

1. Demographic characteristics

- a. Age
- b. Type of disability and severity
- c. Gender
- d. Education
- e. Nationality

2. Factors that facilitate or hinder implementation of Inclusive education

- a. What is your view on enrolling children with disabilities in mainstream school?
- b. What are the major factors affecting the implementation of Inclusive Education in your school?

- c. Would you mention any existing policies that promote Inclusive education in your school or classroom?

PROBE: Think of the school/ classroom rules and regulations, how do they promote inclusion?

- d. How are the school physical infrastructural designs appropriate to the education of all children including children with disabilities?

PROBE: are the latrines, water sources, chalk boards, classrooms etc. easily accessible to children with disabilities?

3. How Capacity for Managing Inclusive Education is Developed in Schools

- a. As a teacher, how do you understand Inclusive Education (IE)?
- b. How do you implement inclusive education in the school?
- c. In which ways does this school promote a positive learning climate, positive relationships among pupils and provide a safe environment for all learners?

Probe: How are children with disabilities and those without disabilities prepared for Inclusive education?

4. How School-level Interventions Promote Inclusion in Education

- a. What resources are available in school to aid learning and how appropriate are they supporting inclusion?
- b. How do parents/ communities get involved in the school-level interventions that promote inclusive education?

PROBE: Think about the roles of parents/ community members and how they can be involved in educating children.

- c. How are the school level-interventions that support inclusion governed?

PROBE: Think about how resources are matched with individual learner's learning needs and how learning strategies are aligned to individual learner's needs. Also, how are non-instructional support and services sourced to benefit children with disabilities?

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX II: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

Dear participant,

My name is Ighangura Kantu Sedrack, a master student in Disability Studies & Inclusive Development at Kyambogo University. I am undertaking a study entitled 'Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Primary Schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement'. The overall objective of the study is to explore the status of disability inclusion in primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. Kindly give your honest opinion without reservation on the topic under study. The information provided is for learning purpose and it will be treated with confidentiality and professionalism. I thank you for being part of this study. I would also like you to consent to my recording this interview.

1. Demographic characteristics

- a. Age*
- b. Type of disability and severity*
- c. Gender*
- d. Education*
- e. Nationality*

2. Factors that facilitate or hinder implementation of Inclusive education

- a. What are the major factors affecting Inclusion of children with disabilities in your class?*
- b. What is your opinion of having children with disabilities enrolled in your class?*
- c. Are there any existing policies in place that promote Inclusive education in your class? If yes, what are they, and if no, why?*

PROBE: What school rules and guidelines are available that address gender issues, disability and tribe/ ethnicity?

d. To what extent are the school physical infrastructural designs appropriate to the education of all children including children with disabilities?

3. *How Capacity for Managing Inclusive Education is Developed in Schools*

a. As a teacher, how do you understand Inclusive Education (IE)?

b. What special skills and/ or knowledge areas do you have as a teacher to address/ meet needs of learners with different learning abilities in your class?

c. In which ways do schools promote a positive learning climate, positive relationships among pupils and provide a safe environment for all learners?

PROBE: How are children with disabilities and those without disabilities prepared for Inclusive education?

d. How do parents/ communities get involved in the education process so as to include children with disabilities in your school?

PROBE: Think about the roles of parents/ community members and how they get involved in educating children.

4. *How School-level Interventions Promote Inclusion in Education*

a. Describe the role you play as a teacher in implementing Inclusive education in the school.

b. What resources are available in your school and how appropriate are they supporting inclusion?

- c. In which ways do teachers promote a positive learning climate, positive relationships among pupils and provide a safe environment for all learners?
- d. What teaching/ learning strategies are in place to support inclusive education?

PROBE: Think about making adaptations to curriculum, materials and environment. Also, consider engagement with parents/ community and Development partners.

- e. How are school level-interventions that support inclusion governed?

PROBE: Think about how resources are matched with individual learner's learning needs and how learning strategies are aligned to individual learner's needs. Also, how are non-instructional support and services sourced to benefit children with disabilities?

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX III: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Dear participant,

*My name is Ighangura Kantu Sedrack, a master student in Disability Studies & Inclusive Development at Kyambogo University. I am undertaking a study entitled **'Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Primary Schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement'**. The overall objective of the study is to explore the status of disability inclusion in primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. Kindly give your honest opinion without reservation on the topic under study. The information provided is for learning purpose and it will be treated with confidentiality and professionalism. I thank you for being part of this study. I would also like you to consent to my recording this interview.*

1. Demographic characteristics

- a. Age*
- b. Type of disability and severity*
- c. Gender*
- d. Education*
- e. Nationality*

2. Factors that facilitate or hinder implementation of Inclusive education

- a. What are the major factors affecting Inclusion of children with disabilities in the schools you support?
- b. What is your opinion of having children with disabilities enrolled in the schools you support?
- c. Are there any existing school-based policies in place that promote Inclusive education in schools? If yes, what are they, and if no, why?

PROBE: consider child protection policies, how are they promoting inclusive education?

- d. How are your activities in schools supporting Inclusive education programme?

3. How Capacity for Managing Inclusive Education is Developed in Schools

- a. As a staff of NGO, how do you understand Inclusive Education (IE)?
- b. What competences/ skills and knowledge areas do you consider in a teacher during recruitment process that suits implementation of Inclusive education?
- c. In which ways do your activities in schools promote a positive learning climate, positive relationships among pupils and provide a safe environment for all learners?
- d. What resources do you provide to schools and how appropriate are they in supporting inclusion of children with disabilities?

4. How School-level Interventions Promote Inclusion in Education

- a. Elaborate on how appropriate the resources (be it financial, human or material resources) you provide are to address the diversity among learners in your school?
- b. What classroom organizational strategies do you encourage teachers to employ in their teaching in order to benefit all learners during teaching/ learning process?

PROBE: Think about making adaptations to curriculum, materials and sitting arrangement. Also, consider engagement with parents/ community and Development partners.

Thank you for your time.

**APPENDIX IV: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR
PARENTS**

Dear participant,

*My name is Ighangura Kantu Sedrack, a master student in Disability Studies & Inclusive Development at Kyambogo University. I am undertaking a study entitled **'Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Primary Schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement'**. The overall objective of the study is to explore the status of disability inclusion in primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. Kindly give your honest opinion without reservation on the topic under study. The information provided is for learning purpose and it will be treated with confidentiality and professionalism. I thank you for being part of this study. I would also like you to consent to my recording this interview.*

1. Demographic characteristics

- a. Age*
- b. Type of disability and severity*
- c. Gender*
- d. Education*
- e. Nationality*

2. Factors that facilitate or hinder implementation of Inclusive education

- a. What are the major factors affecting the smooth learning of your child with a disability in the school?*
- b. What is your opinion of having children with disabilities enrolled in ordinary school?*
- c. Describe the role you play as a parent in supporting the learning of your child with disability.*

3. *How Capacity for Managing Inclusive Education is Developed in Schools*

- a. What resources do you provide to your child and how appropriate are they in supporting his/ her learning at school?
- b. Does your child use any assistive devices? If yes, how did you acquire them?
- c. How do you share financial resources among your children at home to address their learning needs at school?

4. *How School-level Interventions Promote Inclusion in Education*

- a. How do you and the community get involved in the education process and inclusion of children with disabilities in the school?
- b. In your own view, how is the school's physical environment appropriate to the education of all children including children with disabilities?

Thank you for your time.

**APPENDIX V: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR
CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

Dear participant,

*My name is Ighangura Kantu Sedrack, a master student in Disability Studies & Inclusive Development at Kyambogo University. I am undertaking a study entitled **'Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Primary Schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement'**. The overall objective of the study is to explore the status of disability inclusion in primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement. Kindly give your honest opinion without reservation on the topic under study. The information provided is for learning purpose and it will be treated with confidentiality and professionalism. I thank you for being part of this study. I would also like you to consent to my recording this interview.*

1. Demographic characteristics

- a. Age*
- b. Type of disability and severity*
- c. Gender*
- d. Education*
- e. Nationality*

2. Factors that facilitate or hinder implementation of Inclusive education

- a. Describe the role you play as a learner with a disability in fitting in this Inclusive school setting.*
- b. How do you feel being in the school where you learn together with other children without disabilities?*
- c. What are the major factors affecting your smooth learning in this inclusive school?*

3. *How Capacity for Managing Inclusive Education is Developed in Schools*

- a. In which way does the school promote a positive learning climate, positive relationships among pupils and provide you a safe environment?

PROBE: How are children with disabilities and those without disabilities prepared for Inclusive education?

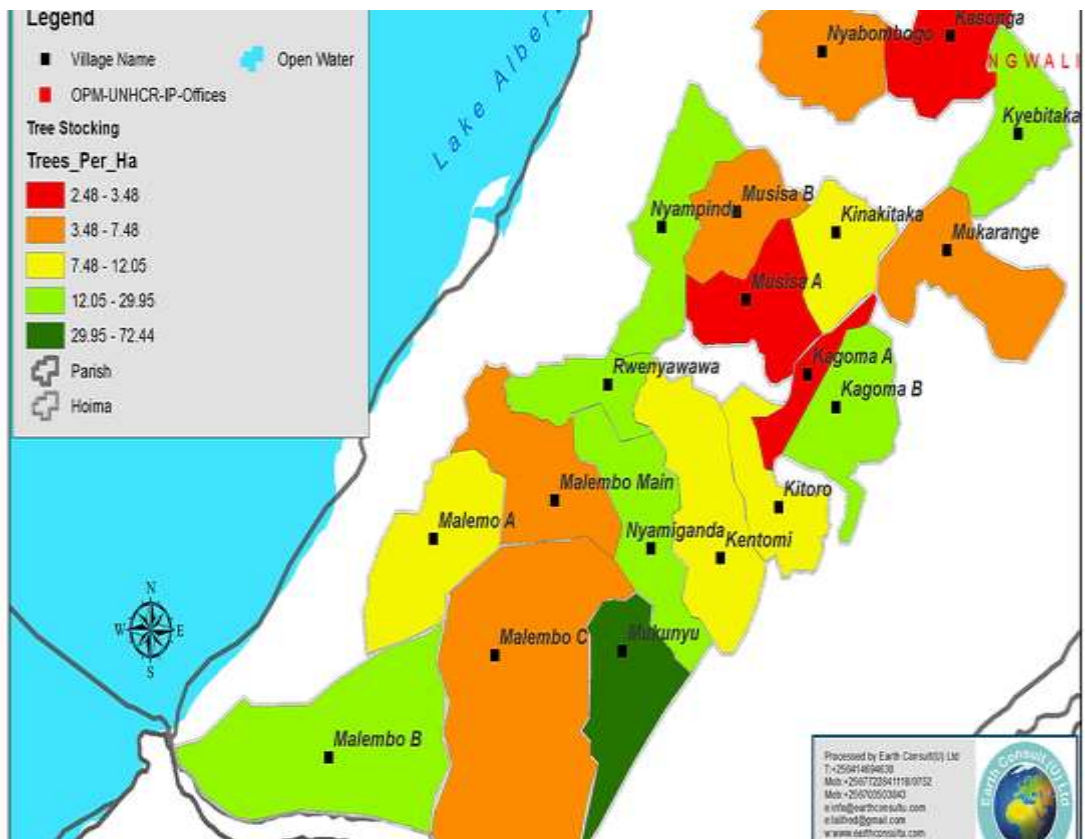
- b. How are you involved in school activities including co-curricular activities?

4. *How School-level Interventions Promote Inclusion in Education*

- a. How available are resources needed by you to stay in school and how appropriate are they to support your education?
- b. What assistive devices do you use and how did you acquire them?
- c. How do you is the school physical infrastructural designs appropriate to your education/ learning?
- d. How are financial and material resources distributed amongst you and your siblings without disabilities at home to support learning?

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX VI: A MAP SHOWING KYANGWALI REFUGEE SETTLEMENT



**APPENDIX VII: CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN AN
EXPLORATORY CASE STUDY**

Research Project: Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Primary Schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement

Dates: September to October 2023

Principal Investigator: Ighangura Kantu Sedrack

Introduction: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research. The purpose of this study is to explore the status of disability inclusion in primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement, identify gaps and suggest a framework of action.

Potential risks and benefits from involvement in this research: there are minimal known risks of participation in this research, including potential discomfort with some of the questions asked. Also, there is a risk of breach of privacy (others may find out that a subject is participating in the research) and/ or confidentiality (others may find out identifiable information about a subject disclosed or collected during the research). Participants will be free to not answer any questions they may feel uncomfortable answering. There are no direct benefits from participating in this project, but the research may benefit individuals in the future.

Privacy and confidentiality of records: your identity will remain anonymous and particulars will be treated with professional standards of confidentiality. All information will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Immediately after every interview session, interview recordings will be transferred to an encrypted, password-locked personal laptop computer, only accessible by the investigator.

Withdrawal: participation is voluntary. The investigator will answer any questions you may have about the study. You are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue your participation at any time. If you decide to withdraw from the study, you will still receive any credit for participating that was promised.

Estimated participation time: the semi-structured interview will take about 40 minutes to 60 minutes or one hour.

Compensation for participation in this study: No compensation will be provided for your participation in this study.

Participant's Rights: If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you will contact the Directorate of Research and Graduate Training, Office of the Director on 041-4286792 or on email: drgt@kyu.ac.ug

Consent Statement: I have read the above statement, understand the nature of my participation in the research, and freely agree to participate. I recognize my right to withdraw my consent and discontinue participation in the study without fear of any prejudice, and recognize that my activities and data generated by my participation will remain strictly confidential. I also understand that at the conclusion of the study I can choose to destroy any records of my participation, and that if I desire, I can request a copy of the final report describing the research's conclusion.

.....
Participant's signature
.....
.....
Printed name of participant
.....
Date

.....
Researcher's Signature
.....
Printed name of Researcher
.....
Date

**APPENDIX VIII: INITIAL CONTACT EMAIL RECRUITMENT SCRIPT
FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS**

**REALIZATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION BY CHILDREN WITH
DISABILITIES IN KYANGWALI REFUGEE SETTLEMENT**

Initial contact script

Email Recruitment script for semi-structured interviews

I am a Master of Disability studies and Inclusive Development student and researcher from the Department of Disability studies and Community Rehabilitation, Kyambogo University. I am looking for people to participate in semi-structured interviews about Inclusion of children with disabilities in primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee settlement. This research was approved by the Directorate of Research and Graduate Training of Kyambogo University.

To be eligible to participate in this study, you need to meet one or more of the following criteria: (a) having knowledge about education systems in Uganda including Inclusive education; (b) involved in the implementation of education services in the refugee Settlement of Kyangwali; (c) being a refugee and/ or national living and benefiting from the services being provided for in the settlement; (d) being a person with and/ or a caregiver of a person with some form of impairment or disability; and (e) willingness to participate in the study.

If you accept to participate in the study, you will be requested to grant consent on a day, time and place of your choice. In addition, an appointment will be made with you for the actual interview under the conditions that will be agreed upon.

If you feel you meet the criteria and would be willing to participate, please reply to this email address: ighangurakantu@gmail.com or contact me by telephone call or SMS on mobile telephone number: +256787673362 or +256705773608. The interview will take place at a place, time and date agreed upon and convenient to you. All information gathered from you will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Interviews will last for about one hour.

Thank you for your support

IGHANGURA Kantu Sedrack

**APPENDIX IX: IN-PERSON RECRUITMENT SCRIPT FOR SEMI-
STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS**

Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee
Settlement

Initial contact script

In-person Recruitment script for semi-structured interviews

Hello [says the title and name]

My name is Sedrack Kantu Ighangura. I am a Master of Disability studies and Inclusive Development student and researcher from the Department of Disability studies and Community Rehabilitation, Kyambogo University. I am currently in Kyangwali refugee settlement to collect data for my dissertation research. The purpose of this study is to explore the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding the factors affecting the implementation of Inclusive education in Kyangwali refugee settlement. I am looking for people to participate in face-to-face semi-structured interviews Inclusion of children with disabilities in primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee settlement. This research was approved by the Directorate of Research and Graduate Training of Kyambogo University.

To be eligible to participate in this study, you need to meet one or more of the following criteria: (a) having knowledge about education systems in Uganda including Inclusive education; (b) involved in the implementation of education services in the refugee Settlement of Kyangwali; (c) being a refugee and/ or national living and benefiting from the services being provided for in the settlement; (d) being a person with and/ or a caregiver of a person with some form of impairment or disability; and (e) willingness to participate in the study.

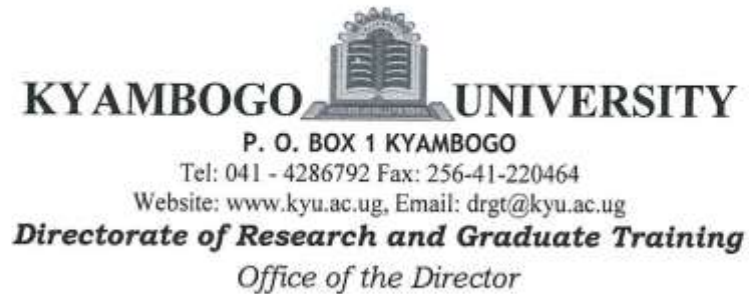
If you accept to participate in the study, you will be requested to voluntarily grant a written consent on a day, time and place of your choice. When you have granted consent, another appointment will be made with you for the actual interview on a day, time and place of your convenience. All information gathered from you will be handled with utmost confidentiality. Your identity and particulars will also remain confidential. Interviews will last for about 60 minutes or one hour.

If you feel you meet the aforementioned conditions and would like to participate in this study, let me know either in person or contact me at your convenience by telephone call or SMS on the Mobile numbers: +256787673362 or +256705773608 and/ or by email address: ighangurakantu@gmail.com

Thank you for your positive consideration

IGHANGURA Kantu Sedrack

APPENDIX X: INTRODUCTORY LETTER



Date: September 18, 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: Ighangura Kantu Sedrack

Dear Sir/Madam,

This is to introduce to you the above named student Reg: No **21/U/GMDS/14164/PE** pursuing **Master of Disability Studies and Inclusive Development**, Department of Community & Disability Studies, Kyambogo University

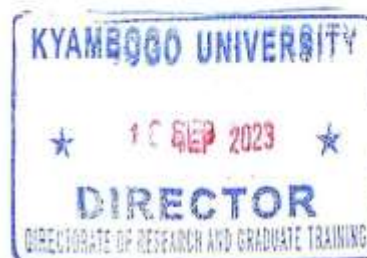
He intends to carry out research on **Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Primary Schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of a Degree of Master of Disability Studies and Inclusive Development

The purpose of this letter therefore is to request you to grant him permission to carry out his study in your institution

Any assistance rendered to him will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Bosco Bua
AG. DIRECTOR



APPENDIX XI: LETTER TO OPM-KAMPALA

C/O MUBENDE DISTRICT LOCAL GOVERNMENT,

P.O BOX 93, MUBENDE

DATE: SEPTEMBER 27, 2023

THE COMMISSIONER,
DEPARTMENT OF REFUGEES,
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE
KAMPALA-UGANDA

**Re: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY IN
KYANGWALI REFUGEE SETTLEMENT**

I **Ighangura Kantu Sedrack**, a student of Kyambogo University I am pursuing a master's degree of **Disability Studies & Inclusive Development**. I am currently carrying out research on the **'Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement.'** During this study I intend to interact with the children with disabilities and their parents in the stated refugee Settlement.

The purpose of this communication is therefore requesting your office to allow me access the intended population for the purpose of collecting data to inform this study. If permitted, I plan to start this exercise of data collection on **October 3, 2023** and end on **October 17, 2023**.

I hope my request will meet your positive consideration for which I shall be most grateful.

I remain yours faithfully,

IGHANGURA KANTU SEDRACK

**APPENDIX XII: IN-PERSON PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT SCRIPT
FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS**

Participant recruitment request

Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Primary schools in Kyangwali

Refugee Settlement

Initial contact script

In-person Recruitment script for semi-structured interviews

Hello

.....

My name is **Sedrack Kantu Ighangura**. I am a Master of Disability studies and Inclusive Development student and researcher from the Department of Disability studies and Community Rehabilitation, Kyambogo University. I am currently in Kyangwali refugee settlement to collect data for my dissertation research. The purpose of this study is to explore the perspectives of key stakeholders regarding the factors affecting the implementation of Inclusive education in Kyangwali refugee settlement. I am looking for people to participate in face-to-face semi-structured interviews on the topic **“Inclusion of children with disabilities in primary schools in Kyangwali Refugee settlement.”** This research was approved by the Directorate of Research and Graduate Training of Kyambogo University.

To be eligible to participate in this study, you need to meet one or more of the following criteria: (a) having knowledge about education systems in Uganda including Inclusive education; (b) involved in the implementation of education services in the refugee Settlement of Kyangwali; (c) being a refugee and/ or national living and benefiting from the services being provided for in the

settlement; (d) being a person with and/ or a caregiver of a person with some form of impairment or disability; and (e) willingness to participate in the study.

If you accept to participate in the study, you will be requested to voluntarily grant a written consent. When you have granted consent, another appointment will be made with you for the actual interview on a day, time and place of your convenience. All information gathered from you will be handled with utmost confidentiality. Your identity and particulars will also remain confidential. Interviews will last for about 40 minutes.

If you feel you meet the aforementioned conditions and would like to participate in this study, let me know either in person or contact me at your convenience by telephone call or SMS on the Mobile numbers: **+256787673362** or **+256705773608** and/ or by email address: ighangurakantu@gmail.com

Thank you for your positive consideration

IGHANGURA Kantu Sedrack