



## **PUBLIC POLICY BLOG**

### **Government needs to put more on inclusive education**

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The Government of Papua New Guinea (GoPNG) needs to give more attention to inclusive education (IE) to warrant Children With Disabilities (CWD) access in to mainstream schools.

IE focuses on equitable participation by all children regardless of any challenges they may have. The approach should focus on adaptive needs based learning measures for students.

Though there are a number of policies and practices in place to support IE in PNG), there is still no significant progress to show for it.

A report by the PNG National Research Institute (PNG NRI) revealed that “while the GoPNG ostensibly supports improved access to IE through its policies, and indeed has signed a number of human rights treaties to support these rights, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, these have not resulted in inclusion of CWDs in mainstream schools”.

The author, Universal Basic Education Program Research fellow Jeremy Goro, in a Spotlight Paper titled: *Status of inclusive education in Papua New Guinea*, highlighted that not much effort has been put into this area so that CWDs are included in the mainstream schools.

He stressed that Special Education Resource Centres (SERCs) are key to the delivery of education for CWDs, adding that, first and foremost, there should be a clear structure and proper management of these facilities.

At the moment, there is a lack of oversight, specialised teachers’ training, adaptive learning resources, proper infrastructure and budget allocation.

Most of the educational services provided to CWDs are carried out by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society organisations (CSOs)

The report emphasised that the Government through the National Department of Education review the current National Special Education Policy and Plan by using a collaborative and consultative process with NGOs, CSOs and other key stakeholders. There should be a “shift of emphasis to inclusion rather than special education across education policy and practices”

It is also necessary to develop an action plan, allocate resources to build inclusive infrastructure, and instigate regular reviews with accountability mechanisms. This should be in line with existing commitments to international human rights frameworks which PNG is already party to. This will improve the access of CWDs to education in the country.



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