**RADICAL INCLUSION POLICY SUMMARY**

Radical inclusion goes beyond traditional notions of inclusion by challenging and dismantling the systemic barriers that prevent certain individuals or groups from fully participating in education or society. It recognizes that exclusion and marginalization are not accidental or isolated incidents, but rather deeply rooted in social structures, norms, and attitudes.

In Sierra Leone, poverty poses a significant obstacle to education, disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, girls, boys, and women. Factors such as early marriage, teenage pregnancy, child labour, and other child protection issues further hinder the progress of child development and deny children their basic rights. Minors often find themselves assuming the role of breadwinners for their families, while young girls are forced into marriage to secure financial support.

To address these challenges, the National Policy on Radical Inclusion in Schools was formulated in **March 2021**. The policy aims to ensure that all children, particularly those who have traditionally been excluded due to their vulnerability, have access to education. It is grounded in the belief that education is crucial for breaking the cycle of poverty and dismantling stigmas related to disability, teenage pregnancy, and parental status. By fostering justice and equity, the policy seeks to create inclusive schools throughout Sierra Leone.

Additionally, the **Persons with Disability Act of 2011 (Act No. 3 of 2011)** was enacted to safeguard the rights of individuals with disabilities. The act prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities, promotes equal opportunities, establishes the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities, and addresses various related matters, including education. As per Section 14(1) of the act, every person with a disability has the right to free education in public universities across Sierra Leone that are accredited by the Tertiary Education Commission and approved by the Ministry responsible for education.

These initiatives reflect the commitment of Sierra Leone to tackle the barriers to education and promote inclusivity for all children. By addressing poverty, discrimination, and other challenges, the government endeavours to create an environment where education is accessible to everyone, regardless of their circumstances or abilities.

Sierra Leone has made efforts to implement a radical inclusion policy in recent years, aiming to address historical disadvantages and promote inclusivity across various sectors of society. While progress has been made, there are both successes and challenges associated with this policy. Let's explore them further:

**SUCCESSES OF THE RADICAL INCLUSION POLICY IN SIERRA LEONE**

**Increased Political Representation**: The radical inclusion policy has led to improved political representation for marginalized groups in Sierra Leone. Efforts have been made to ensure women, youth, and persons with disabilities have a voice in decision-making processes through quotas and affirmative action measures. This has resulted in more diverse and inclusive political institutions.

**Education Access**: The policy has helped expand access to education for traditionally marginalized groups. Programs and initiatives have been implemented to ensure that children from disadvantaged backgrounds, including girls and children with disabilities, have equal opportunities to attend school and access quality education.

**Poverty Reduction:** The radical inclusion policy has contributed to poverty reduction efforts in Sierra Leone. By focusing on marginalized groups, such as rural communities and vulnerable populations, the policy aims to uplift disadvantaged individuals and improve their socio-economic conditions. This includes providing targeted support, access to resources, and skills training to promote economic empowerment.

**CHALLENGES OF THE RADICAL INCLUSION POLICY IN SIERRA LEONE**

**Implementation Gaps:** Despite the policy's intentions, there are challenges related to implementation. Limited resources, capacity constraints, and bureaucratic inefficiencies can hinder the effective execution of inclusive policies. Ensuring proper coordination, adequate funding, and efficient implementation mechanisms is crucial for achieving desired outcomes.

**Sociocultural Barriers:** Sierra Leone's traditional sociocultural norms and practices can pose challenges to the radical inclusion policy. Deep-rooted gender inequalities, discrimination based on ethnicity, and social stigmas may impede the full participation and inclusion of marginalized groups. Addressing these barriers requires not only policy reforms but also societal awareness, sensitization, and attitudinal change.

**Infrastructure and Services:** Inadequate infrastructure and limited access to basic services in marginalized areas present obstacles to implementing the radical inclusion policy. Remote and underserved regions often lack essential facilities like schools, healthcare centers, and transportation networks. Bridging these gaps is essential to ensure equitable access to opportunities and services for all citizens.

**Sustainability and Long-term Impact**: Sustaining the gains achieved through the radical inclusion policy remains a challenge. Policies and initiatives need to be designed with long-term sustainability in mind to ensure lasting impact. This involves addressing underlying systemic issues, fostering institutional capacity, and promoting ownership and collaboration among stakeholders.

**PARENTS REACTION IN THE RADICAL INCLUSION POLICY**

A radical inclusion policy typically refers to an approach that aims to create an inclusive environment by actively incorporating and accommodating individuals from diverse backgrounds, including those who are typically marginalized or underrepresented. It often involves implementing measures to address systemic biases and provide equal opportunities for all individuals.

Reactions from parents to a radical inclusion policy can vary significantly depending on their personal beliefs, values, and experiences. Here are a few possible reactions:

**Supportive:** Some parents may embrace the idea of a radical inclusion policy and view it as a positive step toward creating a more equal and inclusive society. They may appreciate the efforts made to ensure that their children are exposed to diverse perspectives and experiences.

**Concerned**: Other parents might have concerns about the implementation of a radical inclusion policy. They may worry about potential changes to existing programs or curricula, or they may be uncertain about how their children's educational experiences will be affected. Some parents might fear that their children's needs or individual identities could be overlooked in an attempt to accommodate everyone.

**Indifferent**: Not all parents may have a strong reaction to a radical inclusion policy. They may not see it as directly affecting their children or may not fully understand the implications of such a policy.

**Opposition:** A small minority of parents may strongly oppose a radical inclusion policy. Their opposition could stem from various reasons, such as ideological differences, concerns about prioritizing certain groups over others, or a belief that it may undermine traditional values or educational standards.

**ANALYSIS OF THE DUTY BEARERS, SERVICE PROVIDERS AND PRIMARY ACTORS**

In the context of Sierra Leone's radical inclusion policy, duty bearers, service providers, and primary actors play significant roles in promoting and implementing inclusive practices. Let's analyse each of these roles:

**DUTY BEARERS:**

Duty bearers in Sierra Leone refer to the individuals or institutions responsible for upholding and implementing human rights, including the rights of marginalized and vulnerable groups. This can include government officials, policymakers, legislators, and public servants. In the context of radical inclusion, duty bearers are expected to create an enabling legal and policy framework that supports inclusion and ensures the protection of the rights of all citizens, regardless of their backgrounds or identities. They have a responsibility to develop and enforce laws, regulations, and policies that promote equal access to services, opportunities, and resources for all individuals in Sierra Leone.

**SERVICE PROVIDERS:**

Service providers are organizations or entities that deliver essential services to the population. In the context of radical inclusion, service providers include government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations, and private sector entities. Their role is to ensure that services such as healthcare, education, social welfare, employment, and infrastructure development are accessible and inclusive for all individuals, including marginalized and vulnerable groups. Service providers are responsible for eliminating barriers and discrimination in service delivery, designing inclusive programs, and providing support that meets the diverse needs of the population.

**PRIMARY ACTORS:**

Primary actors refer to the individuals or groups directly affected by the radical inclusion policy and initiatives. They include marginalized and vulnerable populations such as persons with disabilities, women, children, ethnic and religious minorities, and other disadvantaged groups. In the context of radical inclusion, primary actors are not passive recipients of services but active participants in decision-making processes. They have a voice in shaping policies and programs that affect their lives, and their perspectives and experiences should be taken into account. Primary actors are crucial in holding duty bearers and service providers accountable for their commitments to inclusion and ensuring that their rights are respected and upheld.

The collaboration and interaction between duty bearers, service providers, and primary actors are essential for the successful implementation of Sierra Leone's radical inclusion policy. Duty bearers must create an enabling environment through policies and legislation, while service providers must design and deliver inclusive services. At the same time, primary actors must actively engage in the decision-making processes and advocate for their rights and needs. By working together, these stakeholders can contribute to building an inclusive society where all individuals can fully participate and enjoy their rights

**FINDINGS ON RADICAL INCLUSION POLICY INDICATORS FOR ALL CATEGORIES**

1. OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN-PDWs
2. OUT OF SCHOOL PARENTS-PWDs
3. IN SCHOOL PARENTS-PWDs
4. PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN-PWDs
5. JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL CHILDREN-PWDs
6. SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS-PWDs
7. UNIVERSITY STUDENTS-PWDs
8. BLIND SCHOOL TEACHERS-PWDs
9. DEAF SCHOOL TEACHERS-PWDs

* SERVICE PROVIDERS FINDINGS ON RADICAL INCLUSION POLICY INDICATORS
* DUTY BEARES FINDING ON RADICAL INCLUSION POLICY INDICATORS

**RANGE OF IMAIREMENT COVERED ARE**

POLIO

VISUALY IMPAIRED

DEAF

UNIVERSITY PWDS

PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS

SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

**FINDINGS ON RADICAL INCLUSION POLICY INDICATORS FOR ALL CATEGORIES**

For this section we conducted the interviews on the service users, duty bearers and service providers where we ended each segment with a score on each indicator during the interview session. The score was what the respondents said and not what the researchers said. The score was from 1 to 5 which translate as follows:

**1** being **‘very poor’**

**2** being **‘poor’**

**3** being **‘fairly good’**

**4** being **‘good’**

**5** being **‘excellent’**

* **OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY**

For this session of our focus group discussion with out of school children with disability, we looked at the various indicators under the Radical Inclusion Policy on Education which includes;

* + **The legislation**

The Out of school children with disability indicated that they are unaware about the Radical Inclusion Policy on Education and the Persons with Disability Act of 2011 Act No. 3 of 2011 or any other laws governing persons with disability.

**In the end they score the awareness of the legislation at 1.**

* + **Discrimination**

They further intimated that they face discrimination in their various schools from classmates and schoolmates alike which sometimes makes them discouraged to go to school.

**In the end they score the discrimination at 2.**

* + **Lack of finance**

On this indicator they responded that lack of financial support was the reason why they dropped out of school at some point. They further said that if only they had support financially they

would have continued schooling. The wished that the government of Sierra Leone would come to their aid.

**In the end they score the lack of finance at 1.**

* + **Learning environment 1**

They said that the learning environment was neither conducive nor friendly while they were schooling. They reported that they faced various forms of discrimination and expressed their dissatisfaction in relation to learning materials to aid their respective disabilities while at school.

**In the end they score learning environment at 1.**

* **OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY PARENTS**

We further engaged parents of the above out of school children to ascertain what the issues were for their children being out of school under the following indicators under the Radical Inclusion Policy on Education.

* **The legislations**

The out of school children with disability indicated that they are unaware about the Radical Inclusion Policy on Education and the Persons with Disability Act of 2011 Act No. 3 of 2011 or any other laws governing persons with disability.

**In the end they score the awareness of the legislation at 1.**

* **Discrimination**

They further intimated that they face discrimination in their various schools from classmates and schoolmates alike which sometimes makes them discouraged to go to school.

**In the end they score the discrimination 2**.

* **Migration**

The parents added that migration has been a key factor in their kids dropping out of school as it becomes so difficult for them to find schools in the new environment they migrated into for their

Children and so they may tend to become dropouts in the process as in most cases the schools in these communities will not be able to admit their children.

In the end they score migration at 1.

* Lack of support

The parents of the out of school children responded that the lack of support in relation to finances serves as the main reason for their children to be dropped out of school. They said that they have not been getting the required support from the government for example in order for them to be financially empowered so that they could in turn support their children schooling and other needs as 4 out of five of the respondents are single mothers.

In the end they score the lack of support at 1.

* Conducive learning environment

They said that while their children were in school they would regularly visit the school’s premises to check on the progress of their children. Each time they would visit it is evident that these schools lacked the requisite learning equipment to aid the learning of their children. Also they responded that the schools structures were not friendly for their kids.

In the end they score conducive learning environment at 1..

* **PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY**
* The legislations

Awareness

The Primary school children with disability indicated that they are unaware about the Radical Inclusion Policy on Education and the Persons with Disability Act of 2011 Act No. 3 of 2011 or any other laws governing persons with disability.

In the end they score the awareness of the legislation at 1.

* Discrimination

They further intimated that they face discrimination in their various schools from classmates and schoolmates alike which sometimes makes them discouraged to go to school.

In the end they score the discrimination 2.

* Lack of learning materials
* Learning environment
* **JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY**
* The legislations

Awareness

The Junior Secondary school children with disability indicated that they are unaware about the Radical Inclusion Policy on Education and the Persons with Disability Act of 2011 Act No. 3 of 2011 or any other laws governing persons with disability.

In the end they score the awareness of the legislation at 1.

* Discrimination

They further intimated that they face discrimination in their various schools from classmates and schoolmates alike which sometimes makes them discouraged to go to school.

In the end they score the discrimination 2.

* Lack of learning materials : 1
* Learning environment : 1
* **SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY**
* The legislations

Awareness

The Senior Secondary school children with disability indicated that they are unaware about the Radical Inclusion Policy on Education and the Persons with Disability Act of 2011 Act No. 3 of 2011 or any other laws governing persons with disability.

In the end they score the awareness of the legislation at 1.

* Discrimination

They further intimated that they face discrimination in their various schools from classmates and schoolmates alike which sometimes makes them discouraged to go to school.

In the end they score the discrimination 2.

* Lack of learning materials 2
* Learning environment 1

**IN SCHOOL PARENTS WITH CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY**

After all the aforementioned focus group interviews on the primary, junior secondary school and senior secondary school pupils with disability the following is what we gathered from the parents with children with disability.

* **The legislation**

The in school parents with disability indicated that they are unaware about the Radical Inclusion Policy on Education and the Persons with Disability Act of 2011 Act No. 3 of 2011 or any other laws governing persons with disability.

In the end they score the awareness of the legislation at 1.

* **Discrimination**

They further intimated that they face discrimination in their various schools from classmates and schoolmates alike which sometimes makes them discouraged to go to school.

In the end they score the discrimination 2.

* Conducive learning environment : 2
* Lack of finance: 1

**UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY**

**Legislation**

The University students with disability indicated that they are aware about the Radical Inclusion Policy on Education and the Persons with Disability Act of 2011 Act No. 3 of 2011 or any other laws governing persons with disability.

**In the end they score the awareness of the legislation at 2.**

**Transportation**

The university students indicated that they are facing many constrains in transportation. And there no privilege for them in the transportation.

**In the end they score the transportation at 1.**

**Discrimination**

They further intimated that they face discrimination in their various universities from classmates and universities mates alike which sometimes makes them feel shy and not mingle with most of them.

**In the end they score the discrimination 3.**

**Conducive learning: 1**

Learning materials

Assistive devices

**The conducive learning materials**

**Accessibility of structures 1**

* **BLIND SCHOOL TEACHERS**
* The legislations: 2
* Discrimination: 3
* Conducive learning environment :1
* Learning materials:1
* Transportation: 4

**DEAF SCHOOL TEACHERS**

* The legislations: 2
* Discrimination: 2
* Conducive learning environment:1
* Learning materials:1
* Transportation:2

**SERVICE PROVIDERS FINDINGS ON RADICAL INCLUSION POLICY INDICATORS**

* **WAEC CHIEF EXAMINER**
* Policy making/legislation: 4
* Awareness/Information: 3
* Structure/Building: 2
* **UNIVERSITY LECTURER**
* Legislature policy: 3
* Transportation: 1
* Learning Tools: 1
* Building Structure/ classes friendly: 3
* **BLIND SCHOOL TEACHERS**
* Legislature policy: 3
* Transportation: 2
* Learning Tools: 2
* Building Structure/ classes friendly: 2
* **DEAF SCHOOL TEACHERS**
* Legislature policy: 3
* Transportation: 2
* Learning Tools: 2
* Building Structure/ classes friendly: 1
* **FREETOWN CITY COUNCIL- FCC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**
* Learning institution: 4
* Learning Materials : 4
* Sign language instructors: 2
* Legislation :4
* **SLUDI PRESIDENT**
* Learning Materials: 3
* Transportation: 4
* Awareness; 3
* Assisting Devices: 2
* Psycho Social support: 4
* Learning institution Friendly: 2
* **DUTY BEARERS FINDINGS ON RADICAL INCLUSION POLICY INDICATORS**

**Duty Bearers** in this research means the policy makers that formulate the policies and laws of the land.

**MBSEE- DIRECTORATE CURRICULUM**

Discrimination: 4

Legislature: 4

Learning Environment: 3

Personnel training of Teachers: 3

**THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS ARE MADE**

1. To Strengthening the disability act policy through awareness raising programs throughout the country.
2. To set strong and effective monitoring system in all schools and Learning institutions.
3. To set vocational training centres in the western areas and implement new modern ideas/skills.
4. To get sign language interpreters as a subject/module.
5. To provide learning materials and assisting devices tools for all pwds in schools and universities
6. To provide entrepreneurship and ICT training for universities students.
7. To popularize the radical inclusion policy, and also monitor the implementation of the radical inclusion policy in remote areas and slums communities.
8. To provide livelihood support for parents.
9. Create awareness/sensitization in community levels, engaged community leaders/stakeholders and education actors.
10. Implement by laws, norms, and customs in community levels for any parents who fail to send his/her kids/children in school.
11. Create sensitization awareness for local authorities, teachers, parents, schools and youth groups or organizations within the communities.

**NOTE:** THIS RESEARCH WAS DONE BY YOUTH ENGAGEMENT NETWORK SIERRA LEONE (YEN-SL)

SPONSORED BY: VOLUNTARY SERVICE OVERSEAS (VSO) SIERRA LEONE.

Gibrilla Kargbo-Youth Champion

**NOTE: This is not the real survey document but just a summary on our findings**

I GIVE CONSENT FOR MY OWN PICTURES ONLY SINCE AM ALREADY A MEMBER OF THE COMMON WEALTH DISABLED PEOPLES FORUM.

**SOME OF MY PICTURES DURING THE SURVEY**





 

