

NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION

WE BRING
THE WORLD
TO YOUR
CLASSROOM



FROM STIGMA TO STRENGTH

BY RITAH MUKASA

Children with disabilities can excel in school and many activities, but they need love and support. Rachael Kalinaki, a doctor in Iganga district, almost dropped out of school due to stigma. While in Primary One, her classmates discriminated against her. They did not want to share a desk with her. They imitated the way she walked. She lost her confidence and self-esteem. Dr Kalinaki has a disability in one leg.

One day, she wetted herself in class because she feared to walk out. She hated school.

"I felt isolated and lonely. My performance also declined," she says.

During the physical education sessions, Kalinaki remained alone in class while others went to the field. But after a while, she learnt to ignore the negative comments and concentrated on her studies until she graduated.

"Learners with disabilities need your love and support," she says.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Help children with disability to move to school and back home. Collect



Dr Kalinaki



Children with visual impairments playing instruments at CEVIC School in Mpigi district. Children with disability should feel valued and motivated to learn and remain in school. PHOTOS BY RITAH MUKASA



Pupils of Seeta CU Primary School in Mukono district support children with disabilities in their school to learn

food for them if they cannot stand in a queue.

Even in class, these children need your support in many ways. Some cannot write well or take a long time to understand. Others cannot see or hear well. They need help to understand what is being taught.

Don't call them bad names or segregate against them. Instead, be empathetic and kind to them.

You can revise together, help them to copy notes or explain what they have not understood.

Last year, Kalinaki visited an inclusive school in Mukono district and she says she was amazed by how children with disabilities are treated with love. She saw how learners were supporting those with disabilities to get lunch.

In the classrooms, those with

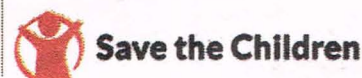
wheelchairs sat in front, and, in the kitchen, children with disabilities got food first. They do not have to make queues. Besides, all children play together.

"Every learner should be an advocate for children living with disabilities," Kalinaki says. "Spread awareness and report those who mistreat these children."

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

The school environment should also be safe and accessible for these children.

Isaac Muhumuza, a disability inclusion advocate, says obstacles that prevent a learner from moving and playing should be removed. The classroom should be clean and spacious enough for them to move freely. These children should feel valued, respected, and motivated to learn, participate, and remain in school without fear and discrimination.



Children's Platform

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

How to support children with disability to learn



Views from Achere Community School, Nakapiripirit Mary, 9, P3: We discourage children who segregate against those with disability.



Joseph, 14, P5: Learners with special needs should be given enough scholastic materials.



Vivian, 10, P4: Those who require wheelchairs should be given so that they do not miss school.



Deborah, 14, P4: Learners with disability should be given enough food and any extra help that they need.

SAVE OUR PLANET

New Vision, in partnership with Save the Children, is running a campaign to sensitise the public on the causes of climate change and the measures for mitigation and adaptation. All children in primary school are invited to participate in a writing and drawing/painting competition. Prizes to win include school backpacks, readers and textbooks. Send your poem or drawing to nie@newvision.co.ug or by WhatsApp to 0782769574/0705407920.



For newspaper bookings, call 0782 800840

Next week's question: Why is child labour bad for you?



Send us your views & photo on nie@newvision.co.ug