



Taking a closer look at Inclusive Education Policy to Social Inclusion in Ghana

Ghana's Inclusive Education Policy is designed to ensure that all children, including those with developmental disabilities (CWDDs), receive high-quality education in regular schools. This policy is crucial in promoting social inclusion and alleviating the responsibilities of caregivers, who often have significant caregiving duties without formal support. The African Center for Democracy and Socio-economic Development (CDS Africa), with funding from International Development Research Centre (IDRC)'s Care Innovation Project, has launched a project titled "Promoting the Recognition of Unpaid Care Work for Carers of Children with Developmental Disabilities in Ghana," to explore the link between inclusive education and acknowledging unpaid care work among women and girls in Ghana.

Inclusive education has the advantage of relieving caregivers by providing structured educational environments where CWDDs receive academic and developmental support. This allows caregivers, who are often constrained, to have time for personal activities or work, reducing their caregiving burden. Furthermore, inclusive education promotes social inclusion by encouraging interactions between children of different abilities, breaking down stigma, and building a more accepting society.

This funded project will evaluate the effectiveness of the Inclusive Education Policy in reducing the burden on caregivers while promoting a more inclusive environment. One of the key outcomes of the project will be to advocate for the scaling up of the inclusive education policy to make it implementable in all public schools in Ghana. By helping CWDDs become more independent, being in the same school environment as children of other abilities will also enhance their cognitive and socio-emotional development, thereby further reducing the emotional strain on caregivers. We believe that having the opportunity to learn and interact with CWDDs will also break the myths surrounding developmental disabilities and general disabilities in children, as children will learn first-hand, that CWDDs are not cursed.

Through effective implementation, the policy will help alleviate caregiving burden, promote social acceptance, and empower caregivers, ultimately contributing to a more equitable and inclusive Ghana. Also, expanding inclusive education can advance gender equity and social justice by ensuring that caregivers receive the support they need while improving outcomes for CWDDs. Ultimately, the project aims to expand solutions that promote inclusive education as a means of reducing care work among women and girls. By translating research into actionable policy recommendations, it strives to create a more supportive environment for caregivers and foster gender equity and social inclusion in Ghana.

The work of SCIAAfrica, in conjunction with initiatives like this, emphasizes the importance of care work in development. By recognizing and addressing unpaid care work, we can establish more inclusive, equitable societies where caregivers and the people they support can thrive. In summary, this Care Innovations project has the potential to foster a more inclusive society by enhancing the lives of both CWDDs and their caregivers.

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