**Transcript: Inclusive education works because it is a team effort.**

**Sharon Handongwe, an observer from Holy Family Rehabilitation Centre in Monze.**

Is inclusive education achievable? Yes. Why do I say so? We’ve done it, we’ve seen it work. Anyone you say, anyone you tell them, they will definitely close their minds off and say it can’t work because they look at it from a level of children with learning disabilities who can’t, or who will be slow in catching up with the children, those that are learning well. But why do I say it works; because this is a team effort and when I say team effort you are bring different experts with different levels of learning and energies that they can bring to the table and they all bring in something that is workable. For instance, if you are talking about children with different learning levels inclusive education will teach you about how to handle children with different learning levels. If this one is exceptional, they learn fast; they have their own activities. If this one is a slow learner, they have their own activities and I’ve seen it work. The other reason why it works is because when a teacher is enlightened, or has more information on what inclusive education is, believe you me they will be able to put interventions in place that are going to help the child. Do I believe in inclusive education? You bet I do, because I’ve seen what it does.

**Deputy Head Teacher – Riverview School**

What I can say is that actually inclusive education can never be possible where teachers work alone, where parents fail to come on board. It is a matter of teamwork. As a school we’ve worked with parents; we did appreciate their support, the community at large have supported us. We’ve also been working with people from Ministry of Health; those are the people who have been so helpful when it comes to assisting our learners with disabilities. They have also been helpful when it comes to planning for these learners, when it comes to writing their IEP we all have been sitting as a team, we have been working as a team. We were not going to have this success story had it not been for the team we had.

**Head Teacher – Shungu School**

Now, neighbouring the school are 2 other schools, one is just about 100 metres away and the other about 200 metres away from our school. The school next to the gate has se unit, but for us we are running an inclusive education program so we collaborate very well that learners who graduate from there are taken up in this school and then are able to continue learning with the other children.

The wall on the other side separates us and the next school is Christ the King, in that school that is where there is an inclusive education unit, we collaborate very well. Interestingly sometimes we even chat over the wall and discuss our learners.

**Head Teacher – Lubaya School**

The same learners, we are teaching them on the skills on how to be a self-reliant person and how to work doing brick laying and all those. So, these children were also involved with their parents as I said we’re supposed to collaborate; we’re supposed to work with our parents so that we can have some structures. This structure that we have, it is a science lab, it is a need for the school. Since it is a secondary school, now we want to have a science lab, we want to have practical in here so we have worked. We have built this structure without any money from any donor we are doing it with the parents. They bring the up-front material, they are also helping with the constructing of this very big block. If they are well mannered, they can participate. They have seen that inclusion is working.

We are working hand-in-hand with the chief who is helping also to sensitise the Headmen; Headmen are going out there to tell everyone to say there is a need to put up our inclusive school. So, this school is developing because of collaboration, working hand-in-hand with business men, the churches, the other NGO’s like Social Welfare. We have CBR, they have been working. What we have are saying is as Luyaba, the school can still be self-reliant, we should not say that all the time we need money from donors. The donors will get out at one point so there’s need for us to be self-reliant; to be doing some projects so that we are able to sustain our school.

As an inclusive education school, ladies and gentlemen, we find that there’s a lot of collaboration and people around have come to understand about it. They know that we are networking, we are working together as a team. Without teamwork you cannot embrace inclusion. We are working with the hospital; when we have our learners who are not feeling well, those who are tired or maybe epileptic, you’ll find that we take them to the hospital and they’re helping us. When it comes to screening, we just inform the hospital and work hand-in-hand with the parents, the teachers, the hospital, we’re working hand-in-hand. When it comes to accommodation, because we used to have a shortage of accommodation for teachers, the community came in and then we had that initiative because of the same program of inclusion they understood that it was important that we should have many teachers to avoid over crowding classes. They have built nice houses for the teachers because of that. Again, in the same community we have business men, we have some learners who are staying very far, those who are not able to walk long distances, they built a boarding which is really a plus on our side. There was community initiative after having discussion with the school and getting ideas on our modules. So now we have somewhere where our girls are staying and then distance has been solved.

We are also doing the projects. We should not rely on the projects because the projects are bringing a lot of money, a lot of income in the school to help us help the learners to achieve their goals.

And then we have this group which is very very important in the school, the SIT. The SIT is working hard, you have seen the infrastructure we have builders in there. We have taken other people there to help and the MoE, they usually send the Buildings Officer to be with us as well in these projects. So, the Ministry should also be embraced, the people in the community and the Chief as well to help that the members can bring the up-front materials and also to participate in the construction of these structures that you have seen around. So, working as a team, and people seeing what you are doing is very important. When monies are there, public monies are there for the PTA, they are seeing where their money is going you will find that work is easy and everybody is supporting. We are very grateful to the sponsors, those who helped us to train us in the modules, we are now able to run these schools.

As a Head Teacher as well I have changed, even the attitude from the time I was not trained, now I am a very good Head that can collaborate, that can work and have links anywhere and everybody’s understanding. Once they see what we are doing as a school, now everybody their eyes are at Luyaba to see what is an inclusive school. So, us at Luyaba are saying inclusive education is the way to go for all schools, where ever we are; in town, in the village, inclusive education can work, it worked for us.

Thank you very much.

**Olive Samukolo – Principal Trainer**

**Victoria Falls University.**

My last words is I appreciate and give thanks to the Government of the Republic of Zambia for giving the chance, especially to the MoGE through CBR and NAD, for actually coming up with the ie. It has helped many young children to come to school, and as I said, Zambia is in a hurry to achieve the global goal by 2030.

Thank you very much.