**Transcription**

**Attitudes**

**Changing attitudes in Shungu School**

**Head teacher, Shungu school**

The next barrier that has really been of great interest in this school, is that of attitude. Before we went into the inclusion programs, before we had this series of training by CBR And the in service training within the school, we had a huge challenge of attitude. The language that was used sometimes to teachers was disparaging, sometimes to pupils was disparaging but after we went through the training and people understood what it was that needed to be done in order to enhance the inclusion. There was a lot of change in language, using the language that was ideal while becoming more positive to just give hope to everybody in the school. We had teachers that were a little bit behind and those which were doing ok but by now you’d be amazed by what language the teachers use to each other. Even when we had groups, pockets of teachers isolated before but this time we everyone getting on board meaning that there could be just this positive change in the way we perceive learners.

Now when it comes to learners, the learners themselves could use language that was not good, that would not associate with the other children, would maybe laugh at a child that fails to respond to what maybe a teacher is asking. That was then. But this time you see the children struggling, trying to help each other. If you’ve found them in groups then you’d sometimes think that these children don’t need a teacher because they’re always on task, they’re helping themselves, they’re helping each other, and the concept of child to child has just improved. We have children that are disabled that move on wheelchairs but you’ll find the friends pushing the wheelchairs in school. You’ll find the children escorting their friends to the toilets, we have an issue with the toilets that we’re a little bit stuck on and it just became an issue in this school, and the children themselves a lot have been complaining, they’ll go to the toilet in groups. So for us it was all looking at attitude and I will confess as a school administrator that teachers become a lot easier to manage this school as everyone knows what is happening, and they know what their input should be, and when a friend is slackening, is not doing well, they’ll quickly come in and cover up their colleagues. Sometimes I’ll be away from the school for a week or more and it’ll be very difficult for someone to know I am out of the school because the system itself was just, come in and everyone has this positive attitude to help the children, to help administration, to help the teachers and to help the parents coming into school and going out of school. So, it is more home and we feel as a school that we have brought the community into the school and that we’ve taken the school back to the community.

Now this is a very important part of our school, the gates. Everything that starts in our school starts here. Every morning between 6:30 and 7 hours children enter this gate from all directions. On the gate here, we used to have people from the community that would sometimes stay over at break time and ask children to pay a certain amount of money to buy their freedom because of the rough ride life that is around here. Now for us that became a barrier to learning in the school because some children would not come to school because they didn’t have money to pay, and they could not tell their parents they were having such encounters in school and they could also not tell us as administration that there was such a thing. Some children has resorted to getting coins from their parents without them knowing, just to come and buy their freedom, and for us, we felt that was a very serious barrier in terms of their learning.S o, what did we do? We engaged a security firm and we have a man here who is responsible for the gate, who can also give you narrations of life around here.

**Security guard, Shungu school**

I always come around break usually 6 hours and I stand at the gate to make sure that the pupils at this school are well protected. And at the time, when I sit, I make sure that no people are entering the gate to disrupt the pupils.

**Changing attitudes in Riverview School**

**Deputy head teacher, Riverview school**

The community equally had negative attitudes, or rather lacked a positive attitude towards their own children, their own neighbours’ children. As a result, parents were hiding these children in their homes. They didn’t want the public to see these children because of the tags that are associated, that are given to parents and children with disabilities. A lot of people have [word unclear] about disabilities, they think that actually when someone is born with a disability the mother or father is kissed by God, or maybe the mother slept with a different man. There are a lot of different issues around disability. So because of that even parents of children with disabilities never wanted their children to be seen in public. But after raising awareness these parents have changed their attitudes. They now bring their children to school, and one of the accesses we have made at this school is that actually these children are now mingling with peers, they are now accepted by their peers in school, and they are accepted by the teachers and even the community out there. Everyone has learnt that actually, these children are just like any other human being, accept they’re different. So what I would say is attitude change is one of the major issues surrounding the issue of inclusive education. That is one of the most important things we needed to change before we could start sending messages out there to say that parents could start bringing their children to school.

**Changing attitudes in Luyaba School**

**Deputy head teacher, Luyaba secondary school**

We’ve also worked to change the mind-set of our learners as well as our teachers because, before the inclusion, our teachers had a negative towards children that had disabilities, they were not well received. The children themselves at first, from what we observed at least, were not ready to learn with children that had disabilities. So what we did was to change their minds along with their teachers, through a series of training the school underwent. We have also sensitised our learners the importance of inclusion that everyone was created in the image of God, we are all equal. I wish also that we should all receive the same kind of education. So we, having looked at that, changed even the seating arrangements in our classes. We now study the seating, the arrangements, in our classes, we study the desks, the chairs in an inclusive manner in a group so even those who have disabilities have access to learning. It’s also important to mention that even our teachers (at first) had a negative attitude but later on they started changing through the changing and the education they received they really changed and they did accept disability wholeheartedly, and we could even see how they started preparing their lessons in a manner which was inclusive.

We also changed the name, it used to be Luyaba Primary and Secondary, but now since this is an inclusive school (there is inclusion taking place in the school) we have this poster so that everyone else able to see and is able to know that this school nowadays is inclusion. No-one is segregated, everyone is brought on board so we have put that poster so that everyone can know that they can bring any type of child and that they’re welcome here at this school. And then we have even put still more we have stressed that motto to say that disability is not inability. Even those who are disabled, they are together, included we are using the social motto where everyone is included so that’s why we have that motto.

So for the whole world at last, what I can say is inclusion is real. Inclusion can work anywhere. It all depends on attitude. Once you want to do something, you have a focus, you want inclusion to take place in that particular place, it can happen. Without donor funding we can do it the way we are doing it here, we are using local materials here, and we have not spent a lot of funding here. The children are making the bricks, they are also helping to construct their learning. We just need some of the parents to teach them. So we can do it, let us not say that inclusion can’t work. We are about 57 kilometres away from the tarmac its right in the village but we are managing. So let us all embrace this idea of inclusion because you do not leave anyone behind. So inclusive education is real and it should be encouraged by all.