

Aims of Education and Curriculum Planning in Special Education Units and Schools
in Lusaka, Zambia. A Qualitative Study of Special Education Teachers' Views and
Classroom Practice.

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ABSTRACT

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This study seeks to give insight into practice in special education in Lusaka, Zambia. It aims at describing how special education teachers view the aims of education in their own units and schools, what kind of a curriculum they use and what challenges there are in moving towards the aims and implementing the curriculum.

I collected the data during July to September 2003 from 13 schools offering special education in Lusaka district. The approach of this study is qualitative and in addition to open-ended interviews of 14 special education teachers I observed in the classrooms. I organised the data first as cases according to the schools and then started looking for common themes throughout the data obtained. I examine the findings in the context of Zambian basic education and furthermore compare them to previous research in African countries and elsewhere.

Findings indicate that teachers have a rather clear idea of how they want to work but few resources for implementing a meaningful curriculum. Teachers consider gaining independence as the most important aim for their pupils, while simultaneously many teachers are concerned with further educational opportunities of their pupils as well as their placement in society. Teaching of practical skills is considered important but schools are equipped with few resources for it. Although teachers adapt teaching in a variety of ways to respond to the special needs of their pupils this study suggests that teaching methods and curriculum planning still need to be developed further. Apart from the curriculum and resources needed positive attitudes towards disability at schools and in the communities seem to be essential for providing meaningful special education. In order for many educational aims to be achieved teachers, school administration, parents and community members need to work together to build schools and communities that accommodate diversity.

Keywords: aims of special education, curriculum planning, special education, special schools, special education units, education for all, Zambia

TIIVISTELMÄ

Ojala, Paula. 2004. Opetuksen tavoitteet ja opetussuunnittelu erityisluokissa ja erityiskouluissa Lusakassa, Sambiassa. Laadullinen tutkimus erityisopettajien näkemyksistä ja käytänteistä. Jyväskylän yliopisto. Erityispedagogiikan laitos. Pro gradu –tutkielma. s. 142.

Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on lisätä ymmärrystä erityisopetuksen käytänteistä Lusakassa, Sambiassa. Tutkimustehtävänä on kuvata erityisopettajien näkemyksiä opetuksen tavoitteista heidän omissa luokissaan, minkälaista opetussuunnitelmaa he toteuttavat ja mitä haasteita tavoitteiden ja opetussuunnitelman toteuttamisessa on.

Keräsin aineiston heinä-elokuussa 2003 13:ssa erityisopetusta tarjoavassa koulussa Lusakan piirikunnassa. Tutkimus on laadullinen ja 14 erityisopettajan haastattelujen lisäksi havainnoin luokkahuoneissa. Aluksi järjestin aineiston tapauksittain ja sitten aloin etsiä kautta aineiston yhteneviä teemoja. Löydöksiä tarkastelen Sambian perusopetuksen kontekstissa verraten niitä myös aiempaan tutkimukseen Afrikassa ja muualla maailmassa.

Löydökset osoittavat että opettajilla on verrattain selkeä näkemys siitä miten he haluavat työskennellä mutta vähän resursseja käytettävissä mielekkään opetussuunnitelman toteuttamiseen. Opettajat mieltävät oppilaan itsenäisyyden lisäämisen tärkeimmäksi tavoitteeksi mutta samalla useat opettajat ovat huolissaan oppilaidensa jatkokoulutusmahdollisuuksista ja sijoittumisesta yhteiskuntaan. Käytännöllisten taitojen opettaminen koetaan tärkeänä mutta kouluilla on vain vähän resursseja näiden taitojen opettamiseen. Löydökset osoittavat että opettajat mukauttavat opetusta usein eri tavoin vastatakseen oppilaidensa tarpeisiin mutta siitä huolimatta opetusmenetelmiä ja opetussuunnitelmaa on syytä kehittää edelleen. Resurssien ja opetussuunnitelman lisäksi myönteinen suhtautuminen vammaisuuteen sekä koulussa että sitä ympäröivässä yhteisössä osoittautui merkittäviksi tekijöiksi mielekkään erityisopetuksen toteuttamisessa. Useiden kasvatuksellisten tavoitteiden toteuttaminen vaatii erilaisuutta hyväksyvien yhteisöjen luomista ja siten opettajien, koulun johdon, vanhempien ja yhteisön jäsenten yhteistyötä.

Avainsanat: erityisopetuksen tavoitteet, opetussuunnittelu, erityisopetus, erityiskoulu, erityisluokat, koulutus kaikille, Sambia

CONTENT

1	INTRODUCTION	7
2	ON THE WAY TO EDUCATION FOR ALL	10
2.1	Education in Zambia	10
2.2	Education, Disability and Special Needs	12
2.3	Special Education in Zambia	15
2.3.1	<i>Zambian Policy and Special Needs</i>	15
2.3.2	<i>Interventions for Meeting Special Needs</i>	18
2.3.3	<i>Enrolments in Special Education</i>	20
2.4	The Teaching Profession	23
2.5	Aims of Education	24
2.5.1	<i>Aims of Special Education</i>	24
2.5.2	<i>Aims of the Zambian Education System</i>	26
2.6	The Curriculum	27
2.6.1	<i>Curriculum and Special Education</i>	27
2.6.2	<i>The Zambian Curriculum</i>	28
3	CONDUCTING THE STUDY	31
3.1	The Research Problem	31
3.2	Methodological Framework	32
3.3	From Plans to Data Collection	34
3.4	Participating Schools and Teachers	41
3.5	Analysis, Interpretation and Report Writing	45
3.6	Trustworthiness and Ethical Concerns	47
4	“WE ALL AIM AT THE SAME GOALS”	54
4.1	Why Education for Children with Special Needs?	54
4.2	Teachers’ Views on the Aims of Special Education	55
4.2.1	<i>Survival Skills for Independence</i>	58

4.2.2	<i>Socialisation, Interaction and Self-Esteem</i>	59
4.2.3	<i>Learning Academic Skills and Proceeding in Education</i>	60
5	“IT NEEDS A LOT OF PLANNING AND ONGOING ASSESMENT”	63
5.1	Based on the Mainstream Curriculum	63
5.2	What Makes it Special?	69
5.2.1	<i>Pupils: “Ours are Very Special”</i>	69
5.2.2	<i>Methods: Individual Attention</i>	71
5.2.3	<i>Content: Reducing the Work</i>	75
5.3	Life in the Classrooms	78
5.3.1	<i>Instructing all, Individualising Exercises</i>	78
5.3.2	<i>Classroom Climate: Focus on Learning?</i>	81
5.3.3	<i>What is Learnt: Planned Objectives or a Hidden Curriculum?</i>	84
6	“THERE ARE ALWAYS CHALLENGES”	87
6.1	Working with Parents	87
6.2	Resources in the Units and Schools	89
6.3	Educational Administration	93
6.4	Attitudes and Sensitisation	96
6.5	Providing Education for All	99
7	SPECIAL EDUCATION IN CHANGE	104
7.1	Aims and the Society	104
7.1.1	<i>The Legitimisation of Special Education</i>	104
7.1.2	<i>Whose Aims?</i>	106
7.1.3	<i>How do the Aims and the Curriculum Relate?</i>	109
7.2	Curriculum and Schools	112
7.2.1	<i>Teachers Have the Responsibility</i>	112
7.2.3	<i>Quality Education and Ways for a Meaningful Curriculum</i>	115
7.3	New Policy and Meeting the Challenges	117
8	DISCUSSION	122

REFERENCES	127
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APPENDIX

Appendix 1:	Interview Form	134
Appendix 2:	Research Permission Request Letter	137
Appendix 3:	Introduction Letter for Participating Schools	138
Appendix 4:	Research Permission	139
Appendix 5:	Questions for Observations and the Evaluation of the Observations and Interview	140
Appendix 6:	Topics of Analysis	141
Appendix 7:	List of Tables and Figures	142

1 INTRODUCTION

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) states, that everyone has a right to education. Education is worldwide noticed as an aim of, but also as a solution to, national development. Education systems are constantly being developed and expanded. Still, equal educational opportunities are not available for all and in particular the development of special education has lagged behind in many countries. However, international guidelines out of which the most relevant are the Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Jomtien World Declaration on Education for All (1990) followed by the Dakar Framework for Action (2000), the Standard Rules for the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1994) and the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (1994), outline rights and purposes for the education of all children. Developing countries like Zambia are committed to these policies but considering the scarce resources and expected outcomes special education is often not included in the first priorities.

Research indicates that the legitimatisation of Special Education has historically developed from religious charity and society's responsibility for the poor, to the normalisation movement, and finally the ideology of inclusion and education for all (e.g. Coleridge 1993, Ihatsu 1995). Some recent studies on these historical developments of special education have been made in African countries like Ghana (Avoke 2001), and Nigeria (Obiakor 1998). Other studies concerning special education in developing countries have focused on current policies and provision. Eleweke & Rodda (2002), for example discuss the challenges of inclusive education in developing countries, Gwalla-Ogisi, Nkabinde & Rodriguez (1998) describe the provision and challenges of special education in the reforming South African society and Peresuh & Barcham (1998) outline the provision of special education in Zimbabwe. Few studies on special education provision, its aims and challenges in Africa have focused on the level of schools and communities. Examples of such studies are, however, a questionnaire survey of head-teachers of special schools and units in Kenya (Muuya 2002) and a baseline study of the special educational needs in the North-Western and Western provinces of Zambia (Kasonde & Moberg 2001).

Nevertheless, all studies I found had a quantitative approach or were reviews of policy documents and literature.

Qualitative information and studies conducted on the micro level would have more to add in order to understand the current questions and challenges of special education in Africa. Indeed, Vulliamy (1990) argues that the literature of education in developing countries has been concerned with policies and system wide features while the educational policies and innovations should be turned to the everyday realities of the classroom and the motivations and capabilities of ordinary teachers (Crossley and Vulliamy 1984, Vulliamy 1990). In his views, qualitative strategies would have potential in studies of schooling in developing countries. Fuller and Heynemann (1989) further suggest that research in developing countries should provide more textured portrait of life in classrooms, about how teachers interact with pupils, how exercises are structured and evaluated and what forms of knowledge are communicated.

The context and challenges in different countries are unique and in addition to the international arena, information from the local level in each country is needed. The idea of this study started developing in 2002 when I spent six months in Zambia teaching in local community schools in Lusaka. Special education in Zambia seemed uncoordinated, and the difficulty to access information as well as a lack of some basic information was evident. Resources were scarce and schools overcrowded. Nevertheless, many teachers were working hard and showed themselves to be innovative in the ways of teaching their pupils with special needs. I thought it would be worthwhile to document the views and efforts of these teachers. Simultaneously, a Zambian non-governmental organisation for parents of children with disabilities started planning a door-to-door survey on the number of children with disabilities in Lusaka. They also needed information on the educational provision available for children with special educational needs. In June 2003 I returned to Zambia for data collection. The idea of my research evolved to its final shape after determining what has been studied before and what information I could get from the District Education Office, through discussions with local teachers and members of the parents association.

This study aims to describe how special education teachers view the aims of education in their own units and schools, what kind of a curriculum they use and

what challenges there are in moving towards the aims and implementing the curriculum. A guiding line in this study is to document in a narrative way what teachers have to say, drawing a lively and accurate picture of the schools and units and the work of teachers. Therefore I collected also observational data to complement the picture. Nevertheless, this is a study that I conducted in a limited timeframe and without much previous research experience. I describe these limitations and their consequences in more detail in particular in the methods chapter and wish the reader will keep them in mind throughout the reading of this study.

However, conducting this study has been a process the value of which cannot be narrowed to a final written document. Collection of the data was an enriching experience to me and I hope to the teachers interviewed as well. Some of the findings could be immediately shared in discussions with local authorities, teachers and the parents' association. In addition, I wrote a case report for each school's use and furthermore made a list of schools offering special education in Lusaka. This process has hopefully made its contribution on the need for sharing information. Since Zambia is currently going through a reconstruction of its education system and the new system will have special education inspectors on the district levels, I hope those inspectors, in particular for Lusaka district, might find the findings of this study useful when starting their work.

Finally I want to thank all the special education teachers, pupils, head-teachers and assistant teachers as well as those officials at the Lusaka District Education Office, the Lusaka Provincial Education Office and the Ministry of Education who kindly assisted me by sharing their views and providing the information I needed. I also want to thank the Parents Partnership Association for Children with Special Needs for working together and letting me use their office for typing work.

2 ON THE WAY TO EDUCATION FOR ALL

2.1 Education in Zambia

Social and Political Overview. Zambia is a country in sub-Saharan Africa and its total population is 10.3 million as by the 2000 Census (MOE 2002a).

Administratively, it is divided into nine provinces and 72 districts. In Zambia, there are 73 ethnic groups with seven major languages, namely Bemba, Kaonde, Lozi, Lunda, Luvale, Nyanja and Tonga. The official language however is English, which is also the official language of instruction in schools. Zambia obtained independence in 1964 and was ruled by a single-party system until 1991, when it adopted a multi-party system. Simultaneously a structural adjustment programme transformed the economy into a liberalized one which resulted in reductions in the percentage of resources devoted to social services and education (CSO 1993, according to Kasonde and Moberg 2001, p.4). Currently 82% of Zambians live below the poverty line of one US dollar a day and Zambia is categorized as having one of the lowest levels of human development of all nations. 40% of Zambia's population live in urban areas with the capital Lusaka having an estimated population of approximately 1million (Human Development Report 2003, MOE 2002a). It is notable that children in the age group 0-14 comprise 46.5 % of Zambia's total population. Due to the HIV-AIDS pandemic it is estimated that Zambia has about 700 000 orphans, the life-expectancy rate is below 40 years and 2.5 % of all teachers are lost each year (MOE 2002a). Furthermore the Education in Zambia 2002 -report recognizes that the education sector is affected by poverty through low enrolment rates, low progression rates, high drop-out rates and poor performance. (MOE 2002a)

The Education System. The current policy on education in Zambia is defined in the national policy document of 1996 – Educating Our Future (MOE 1996). The policy recognises the basic right of every Zambian to good quality education. The document emphasises the importance of developing basic education and it is guided by a

holistic approach that sees education as a continuing life-long process. The policy is in line with the Education for All -goals as well as the Millennium Development Goals of the international community (Jomtien World Declaration on Education for All and Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs 1990, The Dakar Framework for Action 2000, United Nations Millennium Declaration 2000). A goal of the Zambian policy is that all children have access to seven years of primary education by 2005 and nine years of basic education by 2015. In 2002 the government declared that education would be free for all pupils in grades 1-7. However, the Education in Zambia 2002 -report recognises that gaps have been identified between policy and implementation (MOE 2002a).

In 2001 the Ministry of Education had 4800 educational institutions under its control and 4332 of them were basic schools with grades below nine, 133 were private and 63 were grand-aided schools. In the new structure of the education system, the grades 1-4 are referred as lower basic, the grades 5-7 as middle basic and the grades 8-9 as upper basic. The majority of basic schools offer currently education for grades 1-7 but there are plans to upgrade those schools to offer the grades 1-9. The schooling system has prepared pupils for the national examinations at the end of grades seven, nine and twelve. A pupil's performance in the grade seven examinations has been crucial for his or her enrolment in a secondary school (upper basic). In the new structure, it is planned that the grade seven examinations will lose their central status as soon as the number of upper basic classes expands. (MOE 2002a)

In addition to the government schools there were 1336 community schools in 2001 (MOE 2002a). The Orphans and Vulnerable Children –report defines community schools as schools typically run by non-governmental organisations and with the help of volunteers. Community schools were originally started to enable those children who had missed out on basic schooling to catch up with the government curriculum by the end of grade seven. Today however community schools have become a parallel school system for poor children. The Zambia community schools secretariat aims to monitor the quality of education provided but many of the community schools are running without much coordination from the central body (GRZ 1999). Government schools, especially in urban areas are unable to meet the demand for school places and therefore community schools are needed.

Many community schools currently participate in the grade seven examinations and some community schools offer also grades 8 and 9 (field notes, June 2003).

As the whole education system is going through a restructuring process also the management of the education system is currently being restructured into a more decentralised one. The process is guided by the Educating Our Future -document and it aims to improve the quality of teaching and learning as well as enhance efficiency of the management system (MOE 1996).

According to the Ministry of Education the number of pupils enrolled in grades 1-7 in government schools was 1.58 million in 2001. In addition, the Community Schools Secretariat listed an enrolment of 177,435 pupils in community schools in 2001 (MOE 2002a). In 2001 it is estimated that 620 000 of the school aged children were not in school. Out of children aged seven 55.6 % were not in school (MOE 2002a). In Lusaka province, the number of pupils enrolled in grades 1-7 in government schools in 1999 was approximately 200,000 (MOE Planning Unit 2001a in Kasonde and Moberg 2001, p.6). However, these numbers do not tell much about the quality of education or the actual attendance in class. In addition, it should be mentioned that Kasonde & Moberg (2001) identified that statistics compiled by the Ministry of Education concerning both ordinary and special needs children in and out of school are unreliable. Therefore, the above mentioned statistics should be considered only as suggestive. In general, this introduction to the Zambian education system is rather narrow and an interested reader should refer to the here as sources mentioned documents for a more complete picture.

2.2 Education, Disability and Special Needs

Disability. Two polarised models have tended to predominate theorising within special education and disability. An individualistic model attributes difficulties within child factors and has mainly been associated with medical and charity discourses (Allan, Brown & Riddell 1998). For example Jonsson (1993) defines disability as a loss or reduction of functional ability of an individual. A social model, on the contrary defines disability as being caused by issues outside the child,

including environmental factors, emphasising on the human rights perspective (Allan, Brown & Riddell 1998). The social model aims to discourage labelling or categorisation but it might be seen as denial of problems of disabled people as Soder (1989) mentions. In this study, it is purposeful to refer to some common categorisations as used in Zambia and thereby to the individual model of disability. However, I would not want to see the two models as complete opposites but as completing each other. In order to understand the consequences of disability on learning one needs to be aware of both perspectives.

Kasonde and Moberg (2001) note that Zambia, as a former British colony has been strongly influenced by the British education system. Therefore, a similar classification system than in the U.K. (DES 1944) has been commonly used for classifying children with disabilities as blind and partially sighted, deaf and hard of hearing, mentally retarded, multiple handicaps, children needing remedial education and the physically disabled. In Britain the classification was abolished following the recommendations of the Warnock Report (DES 1978, reprinted 1982) and replaced with the concept of children with special educational needs (special needs). In Zambia, there is a trend towards the use of the concept special needs but in practice four disability categories are commonly used; visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical disability and mental retardation (Kasonde & Moberg 2001). The term mental retardation however is often seen as negative because it might be confused with mental illness. Therefore, many teachers prefer to use the terms: pupils with learning difficulties, intellectual disability or pupils who are slow learners rather than pupils with mental retardation. Also other classifications like social maladjustment, emotional disturbance, speech impairment, autism, dyslexia and specific learning difficulties are mentioned in the Teacher's Curriculum Manual (MOE 2001b) and in Educating Our Future (MOE 1996) but due to lack of sufficient assessment services the previously mentioned four categories are commonly used.

Special Educational Needs. There are different definitions of the concept of special educational needs (special needs). In this study it is purposeful to refer to the British definition by the Warnock Report (DES 1978, reprinted 1982) and the definition by Brennan (1982) that both correspond to the Zambian situation. Brennan defines special educational needs as those which require more than the skill of the classroom

teacher. That is to say there is a need for supporting the teacher or creating an alternative learning situation for the pupil. In the *Warnock Report* special educational needs are defined to as requiring:

(i) the provision of special means of access to the curriculum through special equipment, facilities or resources, modification of the physical environment or special learning techniques;

(ii) the provision of special or modified curriculum;

(iii) particular attention to the social structure and emotional climate in which education takes place. (Warnock Report, reprinted 1982, p.41)

Brennan argues that the definition of the Warnock Report is educational for it centres on the curriculum. In addition it was fairly advanced for it emphasised on the facilities required (Brennan 1982). The Zambian policy document *Educating Our Future* furthermore defines pupils with special educational needs as differing from others in mental, physical or social characteristics to such extent that, for the full development of inherent potential, modification of school provision or practice or special educational services are needed (MOE 1996).

However, many current definitions reject the distinction between “normal” learners and those with special educational needs. Booth (1998) refers on the social model where the difficulty in learning arises out of a relationship between students, curricula, teachers and other resources available for learning. Mengeshna (2000) furthermore notes that there has been a shift from the narrow scope of “*special education for the disabled*” to “*the education of all children with diverse needs*”. For the purposes of this study, however, these definitions would be too broad. Following Booth’s definition, the majority of Zambian children could be seen as having difficulties in learning due to an unbalanced relationship between expectations for pupils’ performance, curricula and resources available.

Special Education. Hence special educational needs are defined special education can be defined as by Brennan (1985).

The combination of curriculum, teaching, support and learning conditions necessary in order to meet the pupil's special educational needs in an appropriate and effective manner. It may form all or part of the pupil's curriculum, may be delivered individually or in association with others, and may form all or part of his school career. (Brennan 1985 pp.30-31)

Kasonde and Moberg (2001) define special education simply as an individually planned, systematically implemented and carefully evaluated instruction to help learners who need extra support in learning.

2.3 Special Education in Zambia

2.3.1 Zambian Policy and Special Needs

Kasonde and Moberg (2001) note that the first major educational policy document in Zambia pertaining to special education (Educational Reform GRZ 1977: 23 according to Kasonde and Moberg 2001, p. 7) stated in relation to special education that all handicapped children like any other children are entitled to education and should receive basic and further education by full-time study. The second major educational policy document, Focus on Learning (MOE 1992 according to Kasonde and Moberg 2001, pp.7-8) corresponded to the World Declaration on Education for All. The 1992 document emphasised the mobilisation of resources for the development of school education for all children including children with special educational needs. (Kasonde and Moberg 2001) Kasonde and Moberg (2001) argue that the third policy document, Educating Our Future from 1996 is fairly advanced compared to the previous ones. In relation to pupils with special educational needs it states the following:

1. The Ministry of Education will ensure equality of educational opportunity for children with special educational needs.

2. The Ministry is committed to providing education of particularly good quality to pupils with special educational needs.

3. The Ministry will improve and strengthen the supervision and management of special education across the country. (Educating Our Future, MOE 1996, p.69)

In order to achieve the above mentioned goals the document outlines the following strategies:

1. Working closely with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education will decentralise services for the identification, assessment and placement of children with special educational needs.

2. To the greatest extent possible, the Ministry will integrate pupils with special educational needs into mainstream institutions and will provide them with necessary facilities. However, where need is established, the Ministry will participate in the provision of new special schools for the severely impaired.

3. The Ministry will cooperate with private, religious, community and philanthropic organisations in meeting the special educational needs of exceptional children and providing outreach services for children whose impairments prevent normal attendance in school.

4. Educational Boards will have the responsibility for ensuring that the special education needs of children within their jurisdiction are met, and will be evaluated on their discharge of this responsibility.

5. The Ministry will dispense with all direct educational costs for children with special educational needs and will provide bursaries for such individuals at tertiary level.

6. The Ministry will give attention to the educational needs of exceptional children by

- training an adequate number of teachers in special education;*
- designing appropriate curricula and teaching materials;*
- prescribing specifications for special furniture, equipment, aids and infrastructure provision;*
- developing appropriate support technology systems;*
- providing adequate supervision of special education programmes.*

7. The Ministry will enlarge and decentralise the special education inspectorate.

8. Planning for special education provision will be build into the Ministry's mainstream strategic planning, and in support of this the information system on special education and national needs in this area will be improved.

(Educating Our Future, MOE 1996 pp.69-70)

According to *Educating Our Future* (MOE 1996), children with special educational needs should be integrated into the normal life and activities of the community and into ordinary schools. Bennett & Cass (1989) argue an official policy of integration stated by educational authorities, in some case however only refers to the process of bringing children with disabilities from special into ordinary schools without consideration of the curriculum, organisation and required resources to meet their needs. Indeed, this might be the case in Zambia as Kasonde and Moberg (2001) suggest. Therefore, the quality of integration is another issue.

The Zambian policy is following the internationally accepted trend of inclusion. Inclusion, defined by Steinback & Steinback (1996) can be seen as a philosophy based on democracy, equality and human rights. In inclusive classrooms the philosophy is that all children can learn and belong into the mainstream school and community life. From the Zambian perspective, the challenge of inclusive education is not only to include the disabled but to better respond to the needs of all children including a large number of children who for one reason or another have not had access to, are in danger to drop out, or have dropped out of the schooling system.

The performance of pupils in ordinary schools is rather poor and it is recognized that the schools and the curriculum need to change in order to better respond to the needs of the pupils (MOE 2002a).

The Teacher's Curriculum Manual (MOE 2001b) and the Basic School Curriculum Framework (MOE 2000) note, that the regular class teacher should be able to adapt teaching methods according to pupils' unique needs. This position is incorporated into the new teachers education course ZATEC. Considering the current challenging situation in Zambian ordinary classrooms, full inclusion into an ordinary classroom might not be meaningful for a number of children with special needs. Therefore, the Ministry states that special education facilities (special education units) should be provided in the framework of the regular school (MOE 1996).

The current educational policy is ambitious compared to the actual provision of services for children with special educational needs at the moment. And in fact, as Kasonde and Moberg mention, there is no legal instrument for the protection of children with disabilities. Hence, appropriate legislation to clarify the educational policies is needed (Kasonde & Moberg 2001).

2.3.2 Interventions for Meeting Special Needs

Special Education Unit and Special School. According to the Ministry of Education some children need education provided by a specialist teacher and in a separate room furnished and equipped to meet the child's needs. The type of the special education facility should depend on the nature and severity of the exceptionality (MOE 1996). However there are no established standards for what a special education unit or a special school should provide for its pupils. In this study, a special education unit is simply referred to as a school class or a set of classes, which are meant for children with special educational needs. A special education unit is attached to a regular primary or basic school. A special school, is referred to as a school named a special school and in addition having an own block for the pupils with special educational needs as well as four special education classes or more. Some special schools fulfilling the above mentioned criteria however are attached to regular schools or cater also for mainstream pupils. On the other hand, some teachers participating in this study called their facility a special school but the facility was attached to a regular school,

did not have an own block and did have less than four classes. Therefore, I chose to categorise these facilities as special education units rather than special schools.

Government Schools. According to the Educating Our Future -document, in Zambia there were 28 special education institutions and 51 special education units at the primary level in 1995. The document recognizes that only a small percentage of the physically and mentally impaired children are catered for in schools (MOE 1996). The number of special education units might have increased from 1995 but I could not encounter with any new statistics on the numbers on special schools and units neither on the national nor Lusaka district level.

In addition to primary education, there are some secondary schools providing special education for pupils with visual, physical and hearing impairments. In addition, some schools offer skills training programmes for pupils with disabilities. Those programmes are referred to as 16+ programmes (field notes, July 2003 and UNZA 1.10.2003).

Assessment. Assessment services are provided at the University Teaching Hospital and the University of Zambia Assessment Centre. Children can be placed to special schools or units after an assessment made at one of the assessment centres. In addition, the Chershire Homes -rehabilitation programme assesses children in its target areas and provides rehabilitation services. Children can be referred to these assessment facilities through schools or local clinics. Previously, assessments were made also at the Chainama Hills mental hospital but currently there are no assessment services (field notes, September 2003). According to the Basic School Curriculum Framework (MOE 2000) the Ministry of Education will further develop assessment procedures and launch a national instrument for the identification and assessment of special educational needs.

Non -Governmental Provision. In addition to the government schools and facilities, there are some non-governmental organisations catering for children with special educational needs. There is probably few recorded data about those facilities but some of the services in Lusaka are the Chershire Homes- Rehabilitation programme, the Parents Partnership Association for Children with Special Needs (PPACSN) and

the Action for Disability and Development –programme (ADD). In addition, there are some special education units in community schools and some community special schools. Notably many non-governmental programmes cater also for children with severe disabilities who might be excluded from or poorly catered for in government schools. For example the ADD -programme runs a home-based education project and the PPACSN a school for children with severe mental disabilities. Non-governmental education providers are likely to be more flexible when enrolling pupils for they do not require the pupils to have gone through a formal assessment. Some community schools make their own assessments when accepting new pupils. Community schools however might work partly under the Ministry of Education and some community schools have their special education teachers on the government payroll. There are also some few non-government programmes for skills training of pupils with special educational needs. Furthermore in addition to the civil society and the government special education is provided by the private sector. However, most of the private schools are expensive and unattainable for the majority of children. (field notes June, July and September 2003)

2.3.3 Enrolments in Special Education

The Ministry of Education recognizes that only a small number of children with special educational needs are catered for in schools (MOE 1996). Kasonde and Moberg conducted a baseline study of special educational needs and investigated barriers to education in the North -Western and Western provinces of Zambia. They identified 6.8% of pupils enrolled in government schools in those provinces having special educational needs. Out of school were approximately one third of school aged children. Disability was mentioned as a main reason to being home for 23 % of the children out of school. Indeed, comparatively a larger number of children with special educational needs than their peers are outside of school (Kasonde & Moberg 2001). Kasonde and Moberg (2001) identified several reasons for exclusion such as poverty, illnesses and long distance from schools. The Parents Partnership Association for Children with Special Needs conducted a survey in nine wards in Lusaka and they identified 1334 children with disabilities in those wards. These wards encompass however only a small amount of the total population of Lusaka.

Out of the identified children 69.1 % were out of school. Some of the children were not yet school-aged but only 6.3% of the interviewees indicated that their child was still too young for schooling. The most often referred reasons for exclusion from school mentioned by the parents were their inability to meet the financial demand related to their child's schooling, a mobility problem or sicknesses of the child and no school available close to home. Two most important educational needs identified in the study were special schools with facilities within proximity and financial support (PPACSN, unpublished data obtained on 10.7.2003). Both the baseline study in the North -Western and Western provinces of Zambia and the survey in Lusaka show that many children with disabilities both in urban and rural communities are excluded from schooling (Kasonde and Moberg 2001 and PPACSN, unpublished data obtained on 10.7.2003).

As mentioned earlier on, the statistics from the Ministry of Education can be held as unreliable. Also the Ministry of Education Planning Unit recognizes that the data is incomplete. However, it is the only statistics available concerning the enrolments of pupils with disabilities. For pupils with visual, hearing and physical impairments the total national enrolment for grades 1-7 was 18,135 by the 2002 school census (MOE 2002c). For pupils with mental retardation, data was available for grades 1-9 including early childhood services and skills training whereby the total national enrolment was 3448 pupils (MOE 2002e).

Relevant to this study, the number of pupils with hearing, visual or physical impairments in primary schools (grades 1-7) in Lusaka district was 1,038 by 2002 out of which 481 were female and 557 male (TABLE 1: MOE 2002b).

TABLE 1: Pupils in Lusaka district with hearing, visual and physical impairments by gender and grade. (MOE Planning Unit 2002b)

Impairment	Gender	Grd 1	Grd 2	Grd 3	Grd 4	Grd 5	Grd 6	Grd 7	Total
Hearing	Male	26	29	19	27	24	38	64	227
	Female	15	31	16	25	22	26	60	195
	Total	41	60	35	52	46	64	124	422
Visual	Male	24	14	19	12	17	11	22	119
	Female	24	17	12	18	12	14	12	109
	Total	48	31	31	30	29	25	34	228
Physical	Male	25	19	17	18	22	48	62	211
	Female	17	19	14	14	27	39	47	177
	Total	42	38	31	32	49	87	109	388
Grand Total	Male	75	62	55	57	63	97	148	557
	Female	56	67	42	57	61	79	119	481
	Total	131	129	97	114	124	176	267	1,038

The total number of pupils with mental retardation in Lusaka district in basic education (grades 1-9) and skills training was 176 in 2002 out of which 89 were female and 87 male (TABLE 2: MOE 2002d). It is notable that the classifications early childhood, lower grade, middle grade and upper grade refer here to the severity of the disability of the child, not to his / her chronological age.

TABLE 2: Pupils in Lusaka district with mental retardation by level of severity and gender. (MOE Planning Unit 2002d)

Gender:	Early Childhood	Lower Grade	Middle Grade	Upper Grade	Skills Training	Total
Male	11	34	12	11	19	87
Female	16	40	5	9	19	89
Total	27	74	17	20	38	176

2.4 The Teaching Profession

Undoubtedly, teachers have a major role in the teaching and learning process. The Teacher's Curriculum Manual (MOE 2001b) recognizes that good quality learning depends primarily on the teacher, that is to say good teaching. The new role of the teacher illustrated in the manual emphasises on continuing professional development, interaction with the local community, interaction between teachers and a balance between attention to subject knowledge and teaching skills. In relation to special education the Ministry is committed to providing education of particularly good quality (MOE 1996). Teachers in regular school should be able to detect signs of special educational needs. Furthermore responsibility on ensuring that special educational needs of pupils are provided for in schools and in the classrooms is given to the head teacher. Good teaching however requires more than guidelines, theories and models of teaching and learning. Ainscow (1998) notes that teachers' methods are social constructions that might reflect taken-for granted assumptions. In the absence of firm theoretical basis teachers have to make decisions based on their own experience and intuition (Pijl and van den Bos 1998). Furthermore, Pijl and van den Bos (1998) note that teaching strategies are not implemented in a vacuum but they arise from perceptions about learning and learners. Ainscow (1998) argues that a process towards creation of schools that can foster learning of all children requires teachers to become reflective practitioners, capable of and empowered to investigate aspects of their practice with a view of making improvements. Pijl and van den Bos (1998) argue that decision-making takes often place in uncertainty and therefore it is crucial to write down goals, plans and evaluations of these educational decisions.

Special Education Teacher. A person responsible for teaching a group of children identified of having special educational needs is referred to in this study as a special education teacher. Some persons referred to as special education teachers in this study were not necessarily trained in special education. As earlier mentioned, in Zambia community schools do not have strict qualification requirements for teachers. Government schools, however require a qualification for teaching in special education. The Zambia Teacher Education Course (ZATEC) is a certificate level

course lasting two years and it qualifies for primary school teaching. Persons who have completed twelve years of education can apply for the course (MOE 2002a). Teachers holding a primary school teaching certificate can be trained for an additional year in special education at the Zambia Institute of Special Education (ZAMISE) to obtain a special education teacher's certificate. In addition ZAMISE offers a diploma course in special education. Finally a degree course in special education is available at the University of Zambia. Hence a minimum qualification for a special education teacher in schools under the Ministry of Education is a primary school teaching certificate and a special education certificate that is three years of training (field notes September 2003).

2.5 Aims of Education

2.5.1 Aims of Special Education

Historically, the educational services for the disabled have developed in Western countries in certain sequences following the ideologies of traditional beliefs, religious charity, societies responsibility for the poor, normalisation and finally inclusion (e.g. Ihatsu 1995, Coleridge 1993). During the ideology of traditional beliefs no purpose was seen for educating the disabled. The sequence of religious charity emphasised care for the helpless and a purpose was to make also the disabled economically productive citizens. During the ideology of the society's responsibility for the poor emphasis was still on care for the poor and helpless but now a purpose was to solve the social problem emerging from their existence. Furthermore, during the sequence of normalisation the aim was to target the individual needs of the exceptional children (Ihatsu 1995). Finally the ideology of inclusion aims at education for all children with demands for same basic human rights for all. The inclusion ideology emphasizes acceptance of disability in a normal setting and aims are set towards adapting the society to meet the exceptional (Ihatsu 1995). During the sequences distinctions can be made between individual and more collective purposes of education. It is notable, that the inclusion ideology acknowledges that not always

does the exceptional person have to be the target of change but also the society has to adapt. Aims can be set for the pupils but as well the teacher or the school organisation. Savolainen (1997) examines the development of these phases in Ethiopia. He argues that in the Ethiopian context, many different phases coexist on different stages in society. This might be applicable also to the Zambian context. Furthermore, Avoke (2001) examines the development of special education in Ghana and argues that the official government rhetoric supports inclusive practices while prevailing traditional structures in service delivery and administration prevent implementation of these practices.

More specifically, teachers' views on the aims of special education in an African context have been researched by Muuya (2002). Her questionnaire survey on head teachers' views on the aims of education in special education schools and units in Kenya suggests that the importance of traditional aims of special education in terms of control, containment and care still outweigh those of a broad and balanced educational provision. Muuya notes that relatively little emphasis was placed on the importance of preparation for employment. In addition, she argues that there is a gap between the ambitious national policy and the actual provision at school level.

In the UK White (1982) has questioned whether goals of education can be the same for all children when it is recognized that a small minority of pupils with severe disabilities may not attain such goals. Norwich (1990) refers to a distinction between long-term goals or aims, short-term goals and specific, concrete objectives. Aims can be then taken common for all as long as they are formulated in sufficient general terms. Norwich (1990) emphasizes that there must be a balance between the common aims for all and a content to be translatable into more specific goals and practicable objectives. White (1982) further distinguishes between intrinsic aims meaning aims valuable for their own sake such as being educated as opposed to aims related to gaining qualifications or vocational competence. Furthermore he distinguishes between aims for the good of the pupils and for the good of the society (White 1982). Again, some of the aims for the good of the pupil can relate to basic goods such as survival while others relate to intrinsic goods such as self-creation and happiness.

In my study aims are understood as ideological purposes of education and as long-term goals to be achieved at the end of schooling. Goals on the contrary are

more specific, concrete areas of fields of learning to be achieved. Objectives thus are short-term goals that can be set for example for a lesson.

2.5.2 Aims of the Zambian Education System

According to the Zambian educational policy the aim of the school system is to provide an education and learning environment that facilitates the cultivation of each pupil's full educational potential

The overarching aim of school education, therefore is to promote the full and well-rounded development of the physical, intellectual, social, affective, moral and spiritual qualities of all pupils so that each can develop into a complete person, for his or her own personal fulfilment and the good of society. (Educating Our Future, MOE 1996 p.29)

The policy continues:

Thus, basic education aims at providing each pupil with a solid academic and practical foundation that will serve as the basis for a fulfilling life and that will equip each one with the pre-requisites needed for a working life, various forms of training, or the continuation of school education. (Educating Our Future, MOE 1996 p.30)

Some more specified goals are set for the lower and middle basic education and out of those the three priorities are to:

- 1. master essential literacy and numeracy skills;*
- 2. acquire a set of life-skills, values and attitudes which will lay a solid foundation for school-leavers' ability later on in life to cater for themselves and their families and*
- 3. form essential life-protecting skills, values, attitudes and a behaviour pattern which will enable the learners to lead a healthy life and sustain their environment. (The Basic School Curriculum Framework, MOE 2000, p 12)*

The content to be taught and the goals to be achieved during different grades are specified in the Teacher's Curriculum Manual (MOE 2001b) and the Basic School Curriculum Framework (MOE 2000). Also the three priorities of lower and middle basic education are further clarified. In relation to special educational needs, the Teacher's Curriculum Manual (MOE 2000) notes that it is a teachers' responsibility to specify goals and learning outcomes for each child with special needs.

2.6 The Curriculum

2.6.1 Curriculum and Special Education

A curriculum can be regarded as a course of study to be followed in the process of acquiring education (Brennan 1985). In my study, I have defined the curriculum as a set of goals, content to be taught and teaching methods. Curriculum planning therefore can be defined as all planning of goals, assessment, teaching methods and the content to be taught. Brennan (1985) distinguishes between a *planned curriculum* and an actually *taught curriculum*. Everything that is planned is not taught or learned and everything that is taught or learnt is not planned. Issues learnt but not planned are referred to as the *hidden curriculum*. The hidden curriculum issues from the nature of the school as an institution and the way curriculum and learning are handled within it (Brennan 1985). Furthermore, Brennan mentions issues influencing the curriculum such as the organisation of education, examinations and relationships within the school. In addition the content of the curriculum is determined by ideology, the economy, democracy, time and the whole social context (Brennan 1985).

A curriculum in special education can be similar or differ from the mainstream curriculum. Norwich (1990) argues that a common educational framework does not mean that differentiation can only happen through different teaching methods. According to Norwich a curriculum can differ in its aims, goals, objectives and classroom methods. Curricular modification can happen in terms of adapting the environment to the child but Norwich argues that also additional specialised

programmes are needed to enable children to learn to use alternative ways of accessing the common curriculum. Therefore achieving a balance between a curriculum with common aims for all and specialised additional aims for some pupils remains challenging (Norwich 1990). Brennan (1985) argues that special educational needs have certain common implications for a curriculum:

- 1. Clear identification of special needs*
- 2. Extra-careful planning of curricula to meet them*
- 3. Continuous reassessment of need related to revision of curriculum*
- 4. Planning of interaction between normal and special curriculum where appropriate.*
- 5. Individualising of curriculum aims and teaching where necessary*
- 6. Careful preparation of the teachers with the sensitivity and insight required for the task. (Brennan 1985 p.45)*

These arguments are insightful in a sense that they set some minimum requirements for a specialised curriculum but are general enough to be applicable to the Zambian context.

2.6.2 The Zambian Curriculum

It has been recognized, that the curriculum used in Zambia until lately is compartmentalised, overloaded, and inflexible. It emphasises excessively on memorizing factual information and preparation for passing of examinations. The language of instruction is alien to the majority of pupils and school based assessment is used insufficiently as a tool for the improvement of learning and teaching (MOE 2000). Therefore, the curriculum is being reformed. Two core documents pertaining to the new Zambia Basic Education Course –curriculum (ZBEC) are the Teacher’s Curriculum Manual (MOE 2001b) and the Basic School Curriculum Framework (2000).

The curriculum is defined there as:

A specification of the desired knowledge, competencies, skills, values and attitudes which school children in Zambia need to achieve. The curriculum includes an overall plan of how the schools are to achieve these goals, detailing syllabuses, time tables, recommended text books, examination requirements, and other Ministry directives affecting teaching and learning. (The Basic School Curriculum Framework, MOE 2000 p.6)

Furthermore, the different aspects of the curriculum as a plan, as taught by teachers and as learnt by pupils are recognized and it is acknowledged that these aspects should correspond closely. That is a well designed curriculum is well taught and well learned. In addition to the goals for basic education, there are priorities and different goals for each grade. Furthermore the Zambia Basic Education Course -curriculum includes cross cutting themes of basic health, environment, living together and making a living. The curriculum documents also give suggestions on the language of instruction to be used, on teaching life-skills and on how the curriculum can be localized (MOE 2000 and 2001b).

In relation to special education, the curriculum documents mention that teachers are responsible for adapting the goals and the teaching methods in order to suit the pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Advice is given on how special educational needs can be detected in an ordinary classroom (MOE 2000, MOE 2001b). The Teacher's Curriculum Manual further states that in order for children with special educational needs to learn effectively the head teacher should ensure that: extra resources are available and school surroundings are modified to suit all learners; teachers specify individual goals and learning outcomes for each child with special needs as well as identify what most children should learn; teachers determine the need for extra sessions to identify and teach pre-concepts, skills and core vocabulary; teachers consider the use of collaborative group activities, leading questions, stimulating interaction and task analysis (breaking the task to be learnt in small steps); teachers work together with the parents or guardians of the child and teachers evaluate their work to determine whether each child has had equal access to learning opportunities. (MOE 2001b pp.55-56) However, these guidelines seem to

be designed for teaching pupils with learning difficulties in ordinary classrooms and it is further noted that if the special educational needs cannot be met in the mainstream the pupils should be referred to special education units and schools. Nevertheless, no specified guidelines for the curriculum at these units or schools are mentioned.

As summarised, the curriculum reform aims at more learning time, concentration on fewer subjects, basic literacy and numeracy, grouping of subjects into subject areas, a localized curriculum, HIV /AIDS awareness and protection and learning life skills. In general, the curriculum should be outcomes-based rather than content defined and it should be encompassed by continuous assessment (MOE 2000, MOE 2001b)

3 CONDUCTING THE STUDY

3.1 The Research Problem

The purpose of this study is to obtain qualitative information on how Zambian special education teachers view and implement their work. I thought it was necessary to investigate what beliefs and thoughts their actions are based on and to document the views and work of the teachers. Additionally I wanted to describe what special education in Lusaka has to offer and what its challenges are in order to provide information to stakeholders. Finally, the research questions evolved to the three main topics below specified with some further questions.

- How do special education teachers view the aims of education in their own units and schools?

- Why should pupils with special educational needs receive education?
- How do the aims relate to the curriculum?

- What kind of a curriculum is used in the special education units and schools?

- How is the curriculum planned?
- What makes the curriculum special?
- How is the curriculum implemented in a classroom situation?

- What challenges are there in moving towards the aims and implementing the curriculum?

- What resources are needed for providing meaningful education and implementing the curriculum?
- What are the issues related to providing quality special education?
- What kind of actions do teachers suggest that schools, communities and the government should take in order to tackle the challenges?

3.2 Methodological Framework

I chose a qualitative approach for this study, because it is suitable for documenting people's views, beliefs and interpretations of reality as well as their actions in that reality. As Bogdan & Biklen (1998) note a goal of qualitative research is to better understand human behaviour and experience. Qualitative researchers are interested in the meanings people have constructed and a key concern is to understand the phenomenon of interest from the participants' perspectives (Merriam 1998).

Some elements, tending to be typical for qualitative research, described by Patton (2002) are naturalistic inquiry, design flexibility, purposeful sampling, personal experience and engagement; empathic neutrality and mindfulness; unique case orientation, inductive analysis and creative synthesis; a holistic perspective and context sensitivity. These elements in relation to my study are further examined later in this chapter. However, it is worth considering that these elements are tendencies, not absolutes and not all of them can be found in all qualitative research (Patton 2002).

My study derives some elements from the traditions of phenomenology, ethnography and in particular ethnomethodology. Ethnomethodology refers to the study of how people create and understand their daily lives (Bogdan & Biklen 1998). According to Patton (2002), ethnomethodology gets at the norms, understandings and assumptions that are taken for granted by people in a setting because they are so deeply understood that people do not even think about why they do what they do. In educational research, ethnomethodology has tended to deal with micro-issues, with the specifics of conversation and vocabulary and with details of action and understanding. It has been associated with phrases such as common sense understanding, everyday life, practical accomplishments, routine grounds for social action and accounts (Bogdan & Biklen 1998). Patton (2002) describes how ethnomethodologists use a strategy of violating the scene by doing something out of the ordinary. My research, in some way could have "*violated*" the scene in the sense that it was unusual for most of the participating teachers that someone was interested about their views and they had an opportunity to think why they do what they do. Otherwise of the data collection methods typical for ethnomethodologist research

that is in-depth interviews and participant observation, (Patton 2002) I have used only the latter to some extent.

Although the aims of my research could be fitting into the ethnomethodological tradition, the strategy of adapted analytic induction as described by Bogdan and Biklen (1998) has been a helpful guide keeping some systematic order in collecting and analysing the data. Due to the relatively large number of schools and interviewed teachers this multi-site approach was insightful. The strategy of modified analytic induction can be summarised in figure 1 below.

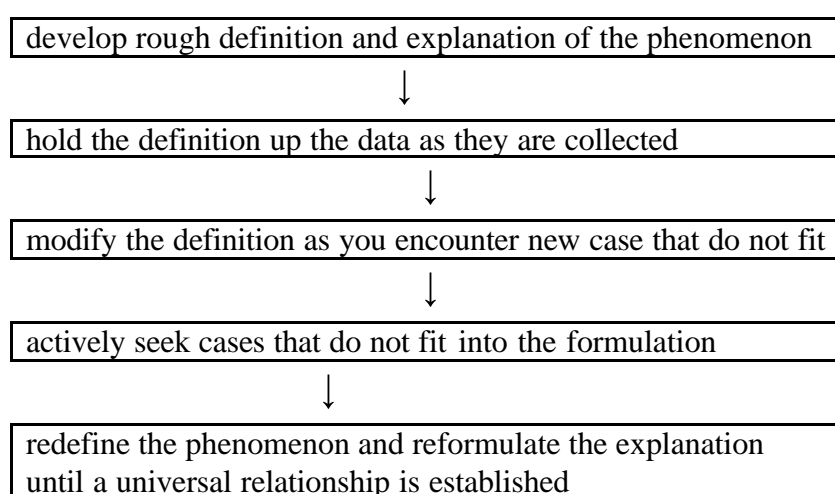


FIGURE 1: The strategy of analytic induction (summarised from: Robinson 1951, Bogdan & Biklen 1998)

Multi-site studies like analytic induction typically aim at developing a theory (Strauss & Corbin 1990). However, as Bogdan and Biklen (1998) note, this strategy is rather ambitious, and needs an experienced researcher to accomplish it. Because this is a study thesis conducted by a rather inexperienced researcher it should be noted that this study attempts at incorporating some elements of modified analytic induction without necessarily being a fully accomplished study of this approach. In addition as earlier noted the aim of my study is, rather than developing grounded theory, developing understanding of people's everyday thoughts and actions.

In addition to qualitative methods, some of the data was collected in a way rather typical for quantitative research like the first two pages of the interview form (appendix 1), that were to be filled in by the teacher and contained structured

questions. This was done for a few reasons: In order to understand the views of the interviewed teachers, I needed to know some information about their background and the setting in which they were teaching at. On the other hand due to lack of information on special education facilities in Lusaka it was useful for the participants and stakeholders to provide them with some demographic information about the facilities available. Indeed, like many writers have noted, qualitative and quantitative research should not be seen as total opposites or competing with each other, but rather complementing each other (e.g. Bogdan & Biklen 1998, Strauss & Corbin 1990).

3.3 From Plans to Data Collection

Developing the Research Problem. The idea of my research started evolving in 2002 when I spent six months in Zambia teaching in local community schools in the Lusaka. During this time, I got familiar with the every-day realities of being a teacher in Zambia. I worked together with special education teachers and we had inspiring discussions. I thought it would be worthwhile to document the views and efforts of these teachers. As Patton (2002) describes personal experience and engagement are important in qualitative research as the researcher gets close to the situation and people under study. Personal engagement and experience have been insightful not only when developing the research problem but throughout my study.

A concrete step towards realising this study was a meeting with some members of the Partnership Association for Children with Special Needs in 2002 at the end of my first visit to Zambia. The association was planning a door-to-door survey on the number of children with disabilities in Lusaka. Additionally, the PPACSN needed information on the educational provision available for children with special educational needs in support of their survey. During the 2002 to 2003 academic year I spent time reading literature about educational research in developing countries. Simultaneously, I started planning the research topics, having in mind the talks with Zambian special education teachers and the schools I had seen. I wrote several versions of research plans and considered different approaches of conducting the

study. It was by May 2003, when the idea of investigating teachers' views about the aims of education had been established as a research problem. When searching for literature about aims I could not pass over the topic of curriculum and I decided to include it as an additional research problem. I wrote mind-maps about different aspects of aims and the curriculum and constructed some plans of what I wanted to investigate. I decided to use a qualitative approach in my study, but much else could not be decided before going to the field.

In June 2003 I went to Zambia in order to spend there four months collecting my data and participating in the activities of the PPACSN. After talking with various people during the first few weeks on the field I decided to include the topic of challenges into my study, for it seemed that teachers and parents have several concerns related to the educational provision available. Including the aspect of challenges into my study would also make it more meaningful for the participants because the results could be used for clarifying what the current challenges and needs related to provision of special education are. From the PPACSN I obtained a list of schools in Lusaka offering special education which they had been given by the District Education Office. I chose to limit the number of participating schools to the maximum of 16 and decided to interview one special education teacher at each school. In addition, I wanted to collect some observational data to get a more complete picture of each case. I wrote drafts of the interview and observation forms that I revised after suggestions of my supervisor and staff of the PPACSN. Then I wrote a request letter (appendix 2) for the research permission from the Provincial Education office and an introduction letter for the participating schools and teachers (appendix 3). On the 10th July I obtained the research permission (appendix 4) from the Provincial Education Officer Mr. Bowasi. After testing the interview and observations at one school and making some additional changes to the interview and observation forms I was ready to start the data collection.

Observations. According to Patton (2002), qualitative observations can provide thick and detailed description on the phenomena studied. My aim was to collect data that would complement the data collected through interviews and add some lively and accurate description of life in the classroom. Using more than one method of data collection can enhance the credibility of the data (e.g. Bogdan & Biklen 1998). In

addition, a purpose of the observations was to get familiar with the class and the teacher in order to be able to ask essential questions during the interview. This purpose showed to be important during data collection. The observations provided new insights into the research problems and helped to direct the questions of the interviews meaningfully. The interviews became more concrete when there was some background on which to compare.

Observations were made at all 13 participating schools. In schools *A, C, D, F, H and K*, I spent the whole school day observing and in schools *B, E, I, J, M and L*, I observed teaching for one lesson or more. In school *G*, I made observations only about the school infrastructure. I planned the observations using the book *Curriculum Action Research* as a guide (McKernan 1996, pp. 59-122). The questions (appendix 5) concern observations about the classroom infrastructure and equipment, the lesson activity and interaction as well as some afterthoughts about my presence as an observer, about the curriculum and interaction of the teacher with the pupils. Especially the lesson observations were insightful providing additional data to the interviews.

At most schools (*B, C, D, F, H, J, L, M*,) I engaged in some form of participant observation. Participation in the classroom activities seemed in some schools more natural than keeping a distance. Talking with pupils and helping the teacher to explain or mark the notebooks of the pupils contributed to developing a trustful and closer relationship to the teacher, which again, was helpful for the interviews. Pupils responded naturally and considered me as a teacher. In other schools (*A, E, I, and K*) it was more appropriate to be a complete observer. For example in schools *E and I*, I visited a classroom of another teacher than the one interviewed and got to the situation as a more distant person. At some schools I had time to write down some of the observations immediately during the lesson but mostly it was impossible. However, I wrote down the observations later on the same day. Sometimes this was done in the evening and it had the effect that some observations were not as descriptive and precise as could have been after recording them immediately. The observations in some schools were affected by a strike of government school teachers. In school *G*, I was not able to observe and in schools *K and L*, only a few pupils were present due to the strike. In school *I*, many pupils were absent due to problems with transport to school. In school *B*, the teacher was sick on the day the

observations were made and only the assistant teacher was teaching the pupils. However, these are some of the realities of schooling in Zambia and even if I did not get all information that I was looking for I gained additional insights into issues affecting the curriculum.

The Open-Ended Interview. The main data of my research consists of 13 interviews of special education teachers, one of which being a group interview with two teachers (*teachers 1&2*). Due to the relatively large number of cases I chose to conduct interviews with defined open-ended questions (appendix 1) rather than broad thematic interviews. However I wanted the interviews to remain flexible for change and I followed the interview guide approach described by Patton (2002, pp. 349) I thought this strategy would help to keep the data compact and comprehensible for the analysis.

The first two pages of the interview were to be filled in by the teachers and are relatively structured. Some questions are open-ended and some include options. The first page, PART ONE, consists of basic questions about the school and the special education provision at the school. This part of the interview is non-confidential data because I wanted to distribute this basic information about schools offering special education to participants of the study and other stakeholders. I collected this data also from other schools providing special education that did not participate in the study. The second page of the interview, PART TWO A, is an introductory part about the teacher's education, experience and the abilities of the pupils. I formulated the question on abilities of the pupils according to the abilities index used in the baseline study on the Special Educational Needs in the North-Western and Western Provinces of Zambia by Kasonde and Moberg (2001, pp. 112-114). In addition to the categories named on the abilities index, I explained to the teachers orally what was meant with each category. I decided that it was more purposeful to ask the questions of PART ONE and PART TWO A to be answered on a paper rather than orally. PART TWO of the interview is confidential information. When starting the interviews I orally explained to the teachers which piece of information was non-confidential and which confidential and to which purposes information was to be used. I also explained that the teachers could indicate if they wanted some questions of PART ONE to be kept

confidential. The issue of confidentiality is also explained on the interview form and in the introduction letter.

The questions of PART TWO B and PART TWO C concern the research problems. These questions are open-ended and were made to guide the interview rather than be strictly followed. I decided however, to plan the questions in forehand. I felt I could have missed some aspects of information that I was looking for if not specifying the questions. When conducting the interviews, in some cases this proved to be true since the answers of the teachers on some rather broad questions would have remained narrow if not specifically questioning about different aspects of the issue. In some cases the planned interview was followed more strictly than in others. The main idea was to get all topics discussed and also to further discuss new interesting aspects if such arose. Before starting the recording, I explained that the questions were about curriculum planning (PART TWO B), resources and challenges (PART TWO C). Curriculum planning was broadly defined as all planning, implementing of assessment, goals, teaching method and the content to be taught.

PART TWO B and PART TWO C were recorded on a tape. The interviews were conducted in empty classrooms, staff rooms or office rooms depending on what was available. Sometimes it was not possible to conduct the interview in a quiet space without other people present (*teachers 10 and 12*) and mostly there were some interruptions. I used a small tape recorder and one problem was that if the interview was taking place in a classroom the recording was partly incomprehensible. Because of the cement walls and a relatively big empty space the classrooms echoed and I could not later on understand some words from the tape. In addition, typing the tapes was difficult because English is a foreign language to me. However, I could mostly pick the idea of what the teacher had meant. In some cases (*teachers 1&2 and 12*) I had to leave out some answers, which could not be understood due to the quality of the recording.

During the interviews, problems with understanding could be solved immediately. I could ask the teachers to specify what they had said. Sometimes a teacher asked me to clarify what I meant with a question. In these cases, I might have revealed some of my own assumptions and lead the teacher to answer in a certain way. A restriction of the interviews is that I interviewed each teacher only once. A second interview after typing the record on a computer could have clarified some

answers. However, I did not have enough time to go back to all schools and meet the teachers. Due to these restrictions, particular answers of different teachers should be compared with caution. The findings of this study provide different insights into the issues of aims, curriculum planning and challenges but they do not reveal explicitly all thoughts and views of the teachers. In order to consider the credibility of each interview, I evaluated the interview using questions made for the purpose (appendix 5). I typed the recorded interviews on a computer in a few days after conducting the interview. This was time consuming work but doing the typing immediately helped to revise what the teacher had discussed about. In addition, it was easier to listen to the tapes when I still could still memorize what the teacher had said.

According to Patton (2002) qualitative interview data seeks to capture people's personal perspectives and experiences. I asked the pilot school teacher to comment on the interview and she mentioned that she liked the interview because she could express her own feelings and views. Patton (2002) mentions empathic neutrality and mindfulness as essential strategies in qualitative data collection. During the interviews I pursued to neutrally understand what teachers had to say, to be respectful, sensitive and aware. Before the interview I described the purposes of my study and explained in general what information I was looking for. I explained to the teachers that I have come to learn from their views and knowledge in order to treat the teachers as experts with valuable information. This approach is recommended by Bogdan and Biklen (1998). Being an outsider was helpful to establish the expert-learner relationship because I could ask the teachers questions about issues that could have been considered self-evident to insiders. But teachers patiently explained their views to me and were challenged to think about their practice and views in order to help me gain the information I was looking for. In addition I told about my experiences in Zambia and exhibited to the teachers that I understand their concerns.

Data Collection as a Process. Qualitative data collection, according to Patton is naturalistic inquiry, in which real world situations are studied as they unfold naturally. The researcher should be open for adapting inquiry as understanding deepens and situations change. New paths of discovery should be followed (Patton 2002). During the observations I engaged in informal discussions with most teachers. Some questions of the interviews were already discussed and I wrote information

obtained down on the observation forms. Some discussions helped me to formulate my questions in the interviews more meaningfully. The observations and informal discussions helped to reformulate my assumptions about the research problems and to test these new assumptions in the next interviews. During data collection I gained more knowledge of some aspects that I originally started looking for and therefore I did not have to question all teachers about those issues. It was encouraging to find some common patterns in the thoughts and actions of the teachers. However, each case challenged my perception of the phenomena and added something to the phenomena directing my observations and interview in the next case.

At one participating school I obtained a list of additional schools offering special education. Therefore I visited the District Education Office (12.8.2003) to confirm this list as well as my original list. Mrs. Monika Daka attended to me and gave me a list of schools which again differed from my original list. However Mrs. Monika Daka found in the files enrolment numbers for pupils with special educational needs also at those schools which were not on the new list of the District Education Office. Due to the confusion I decided to visit as many schools as possible to collect basic information and confirm whether those schools have special education units. From the basic information (interview PART ONE) collected at all schools I made a list of schools offering special education in Lusaka and distributed it to those schools that had been involved in my study and other stakeholders.

In addition to the data obtained from the participating schools my knowledge widened through discussions with a number of people. These discussions helped me to place my findings in a larger context and to critically examine them. For example I participated in a focus group discussion, concerning the study of the PPACSN, where some selected parents of children with special educational needs talked from their viewpoints (24.9.2003). In addition, I had talks with teachers, Cheshire Home Rehabilitation Programme workers and persons from the University of Zambia and the Zambia Institute for Special Education. Furthermore I went to the Curriculum Development Centre of the Ministry of Education and was given the documents: Basic School Curriculum Framework (MOE 2000), Educating Our Future (MOE 1996) and the Teacher's Curriculum Manual (MOE 2001b). In addition, I obtained a draft version of the document Education in Zambia 2002 (MOE 2002a) from the Ministry of Education headquarters. To get new data on primary school enrolments

of pupils with special educational needs I went to the Ministry of Education planning unit. However, I obtained the above mentioned information at the end of my data collection and could not use it formulating my interview questions.

At the end of the data collection, I examined each case, read through the interviews and observations and wrote a case report of 3-4 pages for each participating school. After writing the case reports, I looked at the data in general and underlined different answers that seemed to address certain themes with different colours. After this I wrote a preliminary report of the findings particularly concerning the last research question about challenges. This report was given to some stakeholders. Clearly, the data collection was a process during which my understanding widened, deepened and some of my assumptions had to change. The process was important for me but I hope that also the participants could benefit from the discussions and outcomes of it.

3.4 Participating Schools and Teachers

Participating Schools. 13 schools and 14 teachers, in addition to the pilot school, where I tested the data collection techniques, participated in the study. The interview and observations made at the pilot school are not included into the findings. The schools were purposefully chosen (Patton 2002) to include both special schools and mainstream schools with special education units as well as both government and community schools. Also the type of the residential area where the schools were situated differed from high density residential areas called compounds to middle or low density residential areas called townships. In addition some schools were situated in a hospital area. However, I decided to exclude private schools with special education provision from this study, because I wanted to research those facilities attainable to the majority of families who cannot afford to send their children to private schools. One issue limiting the choice of participating schools was that I did not know about some schools until later on. In addition, there was no systematically collected data on community schools offering special education and therefore, I relied on my previous knowledge and oral information from other people.

I went to the schools introducing myself to the head teacher and / or the special education teacher, showed them the research permission and gave them my introduction letter. I visited each school approximately three times: when introducing myself and agreeing about the interview date, when observing and conducting the interview and when coming back to hand out the list of schools providing special education and the case report about the particular school. All schools and teachers were willing to participate in the study but one school had closed its unit the previous year and therefore did not participate in the study. One problem intervening with my study was the strike that continued throughout the time I spent collecting data. Luckily, all teachers did not participate in the strike and some striking schools continued their schoolwork in term three. Therefore I was able to conduct the interviews as planned. However, the strike has undoubtedly affected the teaching motivation and planning from the teachers' side as well as participation of pupils. In some schools, part of the special education teachers were striking and therefore the number of children for one teacher was unusually large. Also some pupils got discouraged by the strike and were not attending even if a teacher was present. Finally I decided to stop investigating more cases when I had little time left and I felt there was enough data that I was looking for.

In order for the reader to get an overall picture of the 13 participating schools I have organised them in table 3 according to the dimensions they were chosen.

TABLE 3: Participating schools

	location in a compound	location in a township	location on a hospital area
government school special education unit	<i>school B, school J, school K, school L, school M</i>	<i>school C, school G</i>	-
community school special education unit	<i>school F, school H</i>	-	-
government special school	-	-	<i>school A, school I</i>
community special school	<i>school D, school E</i>	<i>(pilot school)</i>	-

The above mentioned table though, gives only a rough picture of the participating schools and demands some further explanation. First, I have divided the schools into government or community schools. In addition, the schools are divided into mainstream schools with special education units and special schools. I have decided to call a facility a special school if the teacher has named it a special school, the special education facility has its own block and at least four separate classes. Therefore, cases *A, D, E and I*, are special schools. However, out of those schools cases *A, D and E*, enrol also mainstream pupils or have a regular school attached to their immediate surroundings. Furthermore the schools are divided according to their location. It can be assumed, that the schools situated in a compound are likely to be closest to the majority of their target group. Out of the government schools, the schools situated in township areas however tend to have a better reputation than schools in compounds. This is partly because, before the government declared free primary education in 2002, the schools in townships were charging higher school fees and were able to maintain themselves better than the schools situated in compounds (field notes July 2003). I have summarised below some of the demographic information given by the teachers about their schools.

The number of pupils and special education staff at the schools differs. At some schools some special education teachers are assigned also to other duties and are not always teaching in special education. Only five schools have assistant teachers. In four schools pupils are studying together as one class and in five schools pupils are studying in two or three classes either simultaneously in different classrooms or in two shifts. In addition the four special schools have at least four classes. At some schools, one teacher was teaching the pupils in two shifts and the number of pupils in class at once could therefore be reduced. According to the teachers, out of the enrolled pupils at government schools on the average $\frac{3}{4}$ attend regularly while at community schools more than $\frac{4}{5}$ of the pupils attend regularly. School hours on the average tend to be around three hours daily. Only at three schools does time at school including breaks reach four hours. At two of these schools, meals are provided to pupils. School hours at seven schools are less than three hours 30minutes daily. Out of these schools at some, there is lack of classroom space and mainstream pupils are using the same classroom. The school hours indicate the time between starting and knocking off. Within the hours there is usually

one break. At most special education units the lessons start early in the morning and many pupils come late. Also teachers might come late and therefore learning time reduces even more. Learning time and number of pupils and staff in the participating schools is summarised in table 4. Particular concern is with the schools in the above left box (*F, K, J and M*) for at these schools learning time is less than 3h 30minutes while the number of pupils for one adult is more than eight. All of these schools are situated in compounds.

TABLE 4: Learning time and number of pupils and staff in the participating schools

number of pupils for one adult (teacher or assistant teacher) more than eight at once in class and school hours less than 3h 30min: <i>school F</i> <i>school J</i> <i>school K</i> <i>school M</i>	number of pupils for one adult (teacher or assistant teacher) less than eight at once in class and school hours 3h 30min or more: <i>school A</i> <i>school C</i> <i>school E</i> <i>school L</i>
number of pupils for one adult (teacher or assistant teacher) less than eight at once in class and school hours less than 3h 30min: <i>school B</i> <i>school D</i> <i>school G</i>	number of pupils for one adult (teacher or assistant teacher) more than eight at once in class and school hours 3h 30min or more: <i>school H</i>

Most schools enrol pupils with a variety of learning difficulties. Two units are meant especially for pupils with hearing impairment and the language of instruction is sign language. Most special schools enrol pupils with all types of disabilities. There are however few places for pupils with severe disabilities and severe mobility problems. Mainly no school fees are charged but at most schools pupils have to buy their own notebooks and pencils. At the government schools a school uniform is required. At some schools pupils are asked to bring tissues and sugar for tea on break time. At one community school financial contributions are asked from well-off parents outside the community who wish to send their children to the school and at one government school pupils brought to school by the school's car have to pay for their transport.

Participating Teachers. 14 teachers participated in the interviews. In schools with more than one special education teacher, I asked the senior teacher, the head teacher or a teacher with long work experience in the unit to participate in the interview. I

assumed that these teachers would be, as Patton (2002) calls them, inform-rich participants having useful insights into the research questions. One reason for choosing teachers as a primary source of data was that the need for a common language restricted the choice of participants. I assumed that, teachers who have studied their formal education in English could be able to express their thoughts about education in English and we would encounter with less problems in understanding than if interviewing parents, pupils or assistant teachers.

At one school both teachers wanted to participate in the interview and therefore I interviewed both teachers together in a group interview (*teachers 1&2*). Twelve of the interviewed teachers were female and two male. Of the participating teachers seven had been working five years or more as special education teachers and seven teachers had been working less than five years as special education teachers. In addition 13 teachers had also worked as regular primary school teachers. One teacher, who had not worked in a primary school, had an early childhood teacher's certificate as a background qualification before getting trained in special education. Twelve teachers had a special education qualification, either a certificate or diploma or both. No teacher had a degree in special education. One community school teacher had only a primary school teacher's certificate and one community school teacher had no teacher qualifications.

3.5 Analysis, Interpretation and Report Writing

Qualitative analysis, according to Patton (2002) tends to be inductive and holistic, context sensitive and reflexive. Inductive analysis means getting familiar with the details and specifics of the data to discover patterns, themes and interrelationships ending with a creative synthesis. The holistic perspective underlines understanding the phenomenon under study as a complex system that cannot be reduced to few discrete variables and linear relationships. I have pursued to use the strategy of analytic induction keeping in mind also the tendencies of qualitative analysis towards the holistic perspective and context sensitivity. Reflexivity is attended by describing accurately the process of analysis.

The analysis of data started already on the field as described in chapter 3.3. This analysis helped me to understand the phenomena under study. The analysis began with writing case reports of each school. Patton (2002) describes that the first level of analysis in a cross-case study should be to capture the details of the individual cases. Although my purpose is not to compare cases, looking at each case as a whole was necessary before examining patterns throughout the data. Some patterns were searched at the end of the data collection and documented in a preliminary report. This was not done as systematically as could have been possible. However, the benefit of the first stages of analysis was that I got familiar with the data and could identify some central themes arising from it.

When continuing with the analysis back in Finland, some time had been passed of data collection. Therefore, I read through again all information case by case underlining data that was relevant to my research questions and checking for controversial answers within each interview. I typed the data gained through observations and the parts of the interviews written down by the teachers on a computer so that it would be easier to analyse them. In addition I made quantitative summaries of the basic information data (interview PART ONE), for example of learning time and number of pupils in the classes. After reading through again all information I named some topics, which derived from the research questions, interview forms and data obtained (appendix 6). I marked data concerning each case with a different colour to be able to easily recognize where each piece of data was derived from. Then I used scissors cutting the data in pieces and placing the pieces under the different topics. I put the data under different topics into different pockets. So the data was organised in a comprehensible way. Then I started looking for answers to my research questions. For example, I picked the topic *aims of education* and coded all data in it under different concepts. I looked also in related topics to find information about aims. Then I made a mind-map of the coded data. After having a general idea about teachers' views on the aims I specified my search to the concrete aims about skills to be learned. In this search I used the data in the pockets *aims of education*, *what do pupils learn?*, *special subjects* and *subjects taught or prioritised*. When all topics related to the aims of education had been coded in this way I moved to the research question of curriculum and finally to the question of challenges. After this I started searching for relationships between the topics. I wrote down some of

my comments or interesting findings in a notebook. Then I looked at the coded data as a whole to understand what was essential. When this newly organised data was familiar to me I was ready to start reporting the findings.

The findings are reported in chapters four, five and six and further interpreted in chapter seven. Reporting the findings I used both illustrative explanation including direct quotations from interviews and field notes; and tables and figures where essential findings are summarised (appendix 7). Using direct quotations was purposeful for I wanted to raise teachers' voices and views about education and describe life in the classrooms. On the other hand, summaries help to grasp the essential information easily. In addition, throughout the report I have tried to organise the headings of the chapters in an informative way. In the report teachers answers are mainly kept separate from the field data from schools so that individual teachers and schools cannot be connected and recognized.

Interpretation of the data is based on the findings reported in the previous chapters. Chapter seven is however a combination of findings from the data, previous theory and own conclusions. In order for readers to make their own interpretations and assess whether my interpretations are truthful getting familiar with the chapters four, five and six is needed.

Writing of the report was challenging for me. Getting familiar with previous research and referring to it in the own study demands much work from an inexperienced researcher. While I have spent time searching for research and literature still more time should have been spent getting familiar with it. Furthermore writing the report in a foreign language was another challenge. Participating in an English academic writing course however hopefully helped me to improve my writing skills. In addition, the book Tutki ja Kirjoita [Research and Write] (2001) has been a helpful source when writing the report.

3.6 Trustworthiness and Ethical Concerns

Trustworthiness of the Study. Trustworthiness of an inquiry has been conventionally established considering the issues of truth value, applicability, consistency and

neutrality. In quantitative research, the criteria evolved in response to these issues are termed internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity. However, Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that the criteria are not applicable for qualitative research and suggest credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability to be used as alternative criteria.

In qualitative research reality is understood as a set of constructed realities and findings are representations of those realities. Therefore, truth value of the inquiry can be established by carrying out the inquiry in a way that credibility of the findings can be enhanced and by demonstrating the credibility of the findings having them approved by the constructors of the multiple realities being studied. Credibility of the findings can be enhanced by prolonged engagement on the field, persistent observation and triangulation (Lincoln & Guba 1985). During the data collection period, I spent a relatively long time on the field visiting the participating schools and other instances necessary. In addition I had already spent time on the field before data collection getting familiar with Zambian culture and the realities of teaching. This experience was necessary in order to conduct my study for it helped in developing the research questions, gaining access to the field and interacting with people.

The issues of language and being an outsider should be considered more specifically. Stephens (1990) argues that three problems emerge from using a bilingual database in Africa. First, there is a tendency for experiences codified in one language to be recalled in that language. Therefore, in order for this research to be meaningful it should be restricted to issues in which English predominated as the language of communication. I assumed that teachers would be able to express their views about issues related to education using the media English. However, it might be possible that some experiences or views could have been better recalled and explained using one of the Zambian local languages. A second linguistic issue is the culture of communication. Stephens (1990) gives an example of Kano in Northern Nigeria where people as a generalization are polite, courteous and reserved to reveal too much quickly to an outsider. In addition, expressing own opinions or critics might be considered inappropriate. As I have observed, in Zambia own views and critics might be expressed during unofficial talks but a respect of hierarchy is important and it could be considered inappropriate to express critical views to

someone above in the hierarchy. Therefore, I attempted to keep out of the hierarchy by introducing myself as a student coming from a non-governmental background. In addition I aimed at developing trust and encouraging teachers to express their own views even if critical. Acting in a non-formal way, using local jargon, expressing my own views and explaining the purposes of the study helped in overcoming this problem. However, many teachers were not used to being questioned about their views and it is possible that some teachers were answering as they thought would be the “*right answer*” or as I expected them to answer. This should be considered as a restriction of the study. A third consideration is the terminology and jargon used. Some of the terminology I implied might have been misunderstood by the teachers. For example regarding the question about abilities some teachers answered controversially compared to other data gained and it gave reason to believe that the question might have been wrongly understood. In addition English is a foreign language for me and I might have been unable to communicate all questions to the teachers so that they understood them as I originally meant. Also some terminology and jargon used in Zambia differs from standard English. Luckily, I was familiar with some of this Zambian jargon as well as school vocabulary used in Zambia. For example Zambians tend to confuse the English feminine and masculine pronouns *he* and *she* because the local languages do not differentiate between the sexes. Furthermore, Zambians might add some prefixes to English words such as *ka-* (meaning small or minor), *ma-* (plural) or *chi-* (meaning big).

According to Stephens (1990) being an outsider does not only be a disadvantage and in chapter 3.3 I describe how it might have benefited my study. However, Stephens (1990) adds that being an outsider in an African society might cause problems in gaining access to the field, lack of respect towards the researcher’s confidentiality or lack of attention needed. I experienced little such difficulties. Teachers were willing to participate in the study and they trusted me. Due to this trust to me as an outsider I felt I needed to be especially accountable to the participants to have a moral right to collect data from them. It was possible, that the first reactions in the schools were positive because people believed I had come to assist financially. However, even after explaining that I was only conducting a study, teachers were willing to participate. During the classroom observations my presence might have affected the lessons and interactions during them. It might be that some

few teachers had prepared their lessons more carefully because of a visitor coming. On the other hand, most of the observed situations seemed to unfold naturally. Furthermore, when analysing the findings I have attempted to understand them in a cultural context. However interpretation of the data would have been deeper if being an insider with wider knowledge of Zambian culture, for example traditional methods of child rearing. On the other hand, being an outsider I could be critical to certain actions without culture or traditions being an excuse.

I engaged in observations in the participating schools but observation periods in each school were short. However, due to being familiar with the field I could focus on some essential issues during the observations. On the other hand, this might have prematurely narrowed my observations and some important viewpoints might have been bypassed. I used both interviews and observations as data collection methods. I collected data also from different schools and teachers. In addition, I recorded information gained from other sources into my field diary. I have described in chapter 3.3 how this triangulation of sources and methods supported each other in gaining deeper understanding of the issues being studied.

In order to have the findings approved by the participating teachers, I should have used more effort. When going back to the schools handing out the case reports, I had little time to spend at each school and did not meet all teachers again. Therefore, I could not hear their immediate comments about the case reports from their schools. My address was given to all teachers and I encouraged them to comment on the reports if there was need for it but I did not receive any comments. In addition, all data obtained from the interviews and observations are not included in the case reports and therefore the participants did not have opportunity to approve it. However, when discussing some main findings that emerged from the data with some participating teachers they agreed on those issues. Other methods for establishing credibility described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) are peer debriefing, negative case-analysis and referential adequacy. Unfortunately I have not had time to get familiar with these methods.

Applicability of the findings into other contexts can be assessed through the criteria of transferability. In qualitative inquiry, findings relate to a particular time and context and cannot as such be transferred to different contexts. It is the responsibility of the reader to make judgments on the transferability of the findings.

Therefore, the researcher's task is to provide a data base that makes these judgements possible. This can be done by thick description of the findings and the methods used to produce those findings (Lincoln & Guba 1985). I have pursued to describe accurately how my study was conducted. In chapters four, five and six I have used description and direct quotations to illustrate the findings before making interpretations of them in order for the readers to be able to make their own interpretations if necessary.

Dependability of the study can be established through evaluation of the credibility of data. An auditor who determines the acceptability of the study through examining the process of data collection is likely to enhance dependability of the study (Lincoln & Guba 1985). In order for my supervisor to be able to examine the process of data collection I have tried to explain accurately the procedures and possible problems as well as the actions undertaken.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) add that also confirmability of the study can be established by the auditor now examining the product of the study that is whether the data, findings, interpretations and recommendations are internally coherent. Confirmability is likely to be established, when the process of conducting the study is easy to trace. This means keeping a record of the raw data, analysis products and the whole process of conducting the study. I have done this organising the raw data, field diary, analysed data and other essential material in one folder. In addition being in contact with the supervisor throughout the study is helpful for the audit process. However, I was in contact with my supervisor only a few times during the data collection process.

All of the above mentioned criteria should be analysed reflectively (Lincoln & Guba 1985). Patton (2002) explains that a qualitative analyst owns and is reflective about her own voice and perspective. This will help in conveying trustworthiness because complete objectivity is not possible. My personal experience of teaching in Zambia has undoubtedly affected the viewpoint taken in this study. I wish that I have accurately explained the chosen viewpoints and reflectively examined the process of inquiry and its outcomes. As described above, this study has its limitations. However, to my opinion the trustworthiness of the study is sufficient for a master thesis.

Ethical Concerns. In all research, ethical considerations should be taken in account. However, Lewin (1990) suggests that the moral and ethical dilemmas have a special character cross –culturally. Indeed, I felt I needed to be especially aware of the moral dilemmas concerning my research. Lewin (1990) asks the following questions, which also concerned my mind:

- *What business is it for the researcher to be there? – Curiosity? Self-development? Academic qualification? Assistance with a problem? Invitation to contribute to a policy debate?*
- *What defences are there to the charge that much research in developing countries on education is another kind of cultural imperialism where the spoils are the capture of data and the enhancement of status of the researcher in the world of international publication? Is the case any different for the outsider or insider with international career ambitions?*

Undoubtedly, I am the greatest beneficiary of this study. I cannot claim that I aim at assisting anyone else. However, I hope the participants and other stakeholders to special education in Lusaka could have some benefit of the study. Therefore I wanted to share some findings like the case reports, lists of schools and preliminary findings immediately with the participants. Sharing information in a non-academic form eased the access to it for many stakeholders. In order for the Zambian academic audience too to get access to the study I will send a copy of the thesis to the University of Zambia. Partly therefore, I chose to write the thesis in English.

- *Whose side is the researcher on – who has the researcher’s sympathy? How far is the position taken really value free or value loaded? Which values?*

With a non-governmental background and personal experiences of teaching in community schools I had been exposed to critics towards the government schooling system. At the beginning therefore I was suspicious towards government schools and the government but during the research process I understood that things are more complex. However, I cannot claim that my personal opinions or experiences have not affected for example the setting of questions in the interviews. I hope I have

managed to analyse and report the findings without uneven bias towards any direction. On the other hand, my study has not been dependent on any funding or any institution directing it.

- Are there lies of familiarity and status which need to be guarded against – are we led to a problem by some informants to distract us from one of more significance to another group? Does the researcher’s status (high or low) prejudice their reception and the quality of the data collected? If so how? What safeguards can or should be employed? (Lewin 1990 pp. 191-214)

This problem about the researcher’s status affecting the information given is partly discussed when considering the trustworthiness of the study. In addition to the discussed, it is possible that teachers were directing the answers to the questions in a way that would benefit them. Teachers might want to change the truth if they have reason to doubt the confidentiality of the data. I assured to the teachers that their views and actions would remain confidential. There only few schools providing special education in Lusaka and in order to keep the teachers’ views confidential I had to consider carefully how to report the data. Therefore, I have separated the teachers’ views about most issues from the descriptions of the schools. A particular problem is with some few schools that differed from the others in an extent that they are easily recognizable.

Additionally, I kept asking myself who has the right to determine good education. Should the aims of education be universal values? Are the findings of my study suggesting a certain type of curriculum to be better than others? Is that curriculum culture-biased? Is there a right way to implement special education? Some questions remain unanswered but one solution is that I wanted to compare the findings with research conducted in an African context rather than comparing to research in industrialised countries. Another solution was to choose a qualitative approach, which would be less dependent on previous theory than a quantitative approach. In general, however I believe that some issues, values and topics in education and special education in particular can be discussed worldwide.

4 “WE ALL AIM AT THE SAME GOALS”

4.1 Why Education for Children with Special Needs?

Reasons for education of children with special educational needs conceived by special education teachers can be grouped in four categories: a right to education, pupils as educable, the need for pupils to become independent and the need for pupils to be part of the society. The answers grouped in the first two categories justify education referring to the pupils’ rights and abilities at the time being while the latter two categories justify education by its expected outcomes. The latter two categories also appear as central aims of special education in chapter 4.2.

Many teachers refer in their answers to education as a subjective right for all humans and mention that pupils with special educational needs need to be treated like anyone else. The right to education is considered to derive from being a human being, God’s creature, and also the Zambian educational policy is referred to entitling all pupils the right to education. *“–They are also human beings. And they need to be treated like any other child–.” (teacher 7)* *“They are also God’s creatures, so we need to teach them too—they need also to learn—to feel important--.”(teacher 1)* *“They should receive education because they are like any other children--.”(teacher 4)* *“I think it is important because education is a right. Like here in Zambia, Educating our Future indicates that all children should be educated.” (teacher 11)*

Some teachers refer to the ability of pupils with special needs to learn *“--I think they can still do something--.” (teacher 7)* *–We show them love and even them, they’ve got potential.” (teacher 1)* *“--But now these children they, they can perform wonders, there is no child who is uneducable. Every child can be educated and has a capacity to learn something--.” (teacher 5)*

Many teachers consider the expected outcomes of education, the ability of leading an independent life and being able to look after oneself in the future as important reasons for education. *“–They need to be independent in life. So without*

education they cannot go nowhere. So they need education to go on their life.” (teacher 13) “--They also need to be independent one time. So if we give them appropriate education, at least they will be able to look after themselves.” (teacher 4) Learning skills and learning and developing understanding are considered necessary in order to be independent. “--Understanding is poor and that is the first thing—“(teacher 3) “--So that they can learn some skills for their independence, as they need to be independent in life. So that they can grow some vegetables, they can even be doing some sweeping or making some mats--.” (teacher 5) These skills are not automatically learnt at home. “If they don’t receive education, others have already a problem, especially in their homes where they are coming from they won’t learn, they roam around--.”(teacher 14) Independence is considered important for survival because “-they [pupils] won’t stay with their parents forever-.”(teacher 8)

Some teachers refer to reasons related to interaction, socialisation, empowerment and citizenship, that is being part of the society. “--They’ll develop courage--.” (teacher 1) “--They will be able to socialise—.”(teacher 2) “--They will be like any other Zambian citizen--.” (teacher 4)

They have to receive education because of the society they are living in. For example, we teach them language and when it comes to interaction sometimes communication is dependent on what language the child knows. So if the child has been to school he will be able to fit to the rest of the society, because he will be able to interact--. (teacher 9)

4.2 Teachers’ Views on the Aims of Special Education

Teachers’ views on the aims of special education are wide-ranging and many issues are interconnected. For example a common aim mentioned is to learn skills and mostly those skills are learnt in order to lead an independent life. In addition, for example the issues of inclusion in the society, interaction with others and personal awareness are partly overlapping. The aim of proceeding in education was discussed as a separate issue with all but one teacher. Out of the other aims, the most often

referred to are leading an independent life in future (nine teachers), learning practical skills (nine teachers) and being included in the society (seven teachers). The additional aims of interacting with others, developing personal awareness and learning academic skills are mentioned in relation to these aims. In addition to the aims grouped in the categories below, teachers set also aims towards themselves. One teacher mentions that her aim is to provide quality education and another teacher says that his aim is to include his pupils in the society. Two teachers mention that the aim of education in their unit or school is to get the children educated in general. However, they further explain what being educated means and refer to some of the aims grouped in the categories below.

Teachers' views on the aims of special education are illustrated as a triangle in figure 2 so that the main aims are placed at each angle and the other aims in the middle of the triangle.

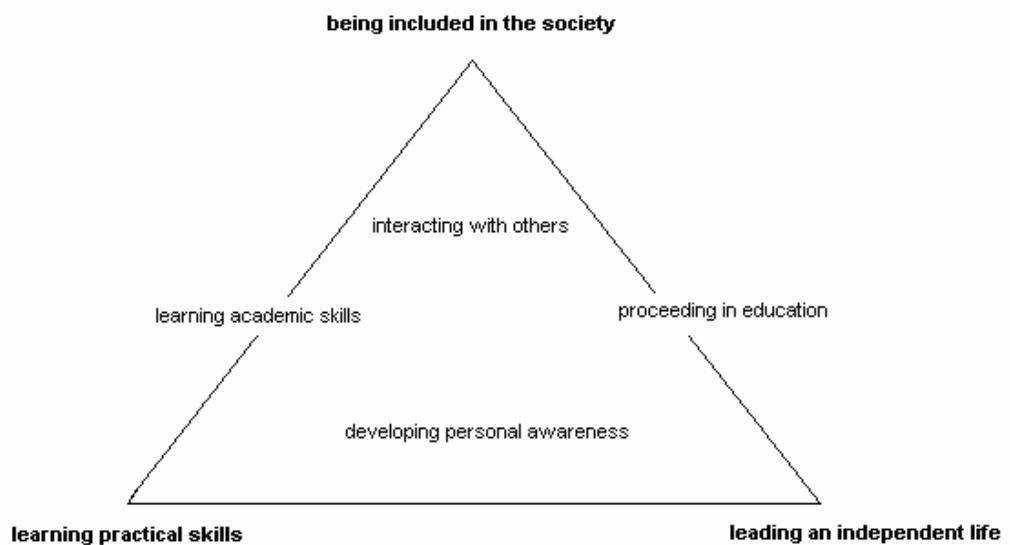


FIGURE 2: Teachers' views on the aims of special education

In general, teachers perceive the educational purposes for pupils with special educational needs to be rather similar compared to educational purposes for mainstream pupils. However there is some variation in the opinions of the teachers. Some teachers perceive the goals of the curriculum at their unit or school as similar to mainstream, some perceive the goals to be similar but lower and some teachers

think they that some goals are rather different. Teachers perceiving the educational purposes to be similar understand the aims and goals as broad enough to be appropriate for all pupils. *“They are almost the same because we all aim at the same goals, they are not different.” (teacher 7)* Two teachers perceiving the goals as similar teach pupils with hearing impairment and a goal is to proceed to secondary education. However, the other teacher argues that the goals, determined by the national grade seven examinations are not just for her pupils. She considers her hearing impaired pupils to be in a disadvantaged position having to master the same examinations as mainstream pupils. Some teachers perceive the goals of education in their unit as similar to mainstream but lower in order to respond to the needs of the pupils. *“They should be a bit lower, to make them understand.” (teacher 11)* One of these teachers however notes that goals should be lower only for pupils with problems in understanding. Some teachers consider the goals to be slightly different in their unit. Most of these teachers emphasize learning practical skills.

Only that in the ordinary session, they are aiming more at children learning academics whereby the child can even make it to the university but in our curriculum we focus so much on the skills because we want to make our children independent--.(teacher 5)

One teacher notes that pupils have different needs and therefore goals cannot be the same for all. The perceptions of teachers concerning the educational goals for their pupils with special educational needs are grouped in three categories in table 5.

TABLE 5: Goals of special education compared to mainstream education

Educational goals in special education compared to mainstream	Teachers perceptions of educational goals in their special education unit or school compared to mainstream
rather similar	<i>teachers 3, 6, 7 and 10</i>
similar but lower	<i>teachers 8, 11 and 12</i>
different to some extend	<i>teachers 4, 5, 9, 13 and 14</i>

4.2.1 Survival Skills for Independence

The aims of being able to lead an independent life in the future, of being self-reliant and of being able to look after oneself are mentioned by many teachers as the main aims of education in their school or unit. *“Our main aim for educating these children is really for independence—It is to prepare them for what they will be in future.”* (teacher 4) *“--At least to lead a self-reliant life in the future--.”* (teacher 7) *“--But if they now, they are educated they will be able to survive, to be independent, to stay on their own.”* (teacher 14) Interestingly, one teacher mentions that the purpose of special education is not only changing the pupil but also changing the society.

The main aim is to make the pupils independent. So that they can stand by themselves. And they are not supposed to be neglected, not to think that they cannot do anything. But even the society should see that these children are able to do something.(teacher 14)

Leading an independent life is related to learning practical skills. Sometimes survival might depend on those skills. *“Now maybe the parents who have been taking care of the child might die, but if the child has been taught a skill the child might use that skill and survive the rest of his life.”* (teacher 11) Some teachers perceive the necessary skills to be vocational. *“Life skills in order for the child to be self-reliant. Things like carpentry, home economics, basketry, tailoring and many, many other skills.”* (teacher 7) However, teacher seven continues that only some of these skills can be taught in her unit. Other teachers refer to activities for daily living such as washing clothes, polishing shoes and keeping clean as essential skills for independent life. Some teachers however note that the necessary skills to be learnt depend on the pupils and their individual abilities. Practical skills are learnt not only in order to lead an independent life in the future but *“children need survival skills in order to cooperate in the society-.”* (teacher 13) Teacher four explains the benefit of teaching practical skills for socialisation:

It is important because before this school started, all those children with special needs were just in the compounds, they were there given labels like

mad people, all sorts of labels they were given. But when we started this unit, what we looked for first of all was to teach them activities for daily living, those activities which would lead them, perhaps to look generally clean, to wash their clothes and so on. And then when we achieved that, we saw that, these labels they were no longer there. They were being treated like any other children, and then the community, also started involving them to all sorts of activities, which was not the case [before].(teacher 4)

More specifically the pre-vocational skills mentioned by the teachers are carpentry, sewing, weaving, gardening, tailoring, basketry, making doormats, making bricks and selling. Furthermore, skills referred to as activities for daily living include keeping oneself clean, washing clothes, washing dishes, toileting, dressing up, polishing shoes, cooking and sweeping. Many teachers emphasize that the need for teaching these skills must be considered individually. Teachers however continue that teaching of these skills requires resources and material that is lacking in their units or schools.

4.2.2 Socialisation, Interaction and Self-Esteem

Being included in the society and being able to socialise with others are aims mentioned by many teachers. Two teachers mention citizenship as an aim. *“Our unit prepares the pupils to go out in the community, to be responsible citizens.” (teacher 13)* Inclusion in the society is enhanced as previously mentioned by teaching children practical skills. In addition, attending school like anyone else is part of socialisation and it shows the community around that the disabled child is like others. The quotation below illustrates the interconnectedness of socialisation with other aims.

--The pupils should be able to socialise well with the rest of the society and to learn to care for themselves, to be independent. Training them for life skills. They also have to, communication also is the aim. They have to be able to communicate very well. Communication comes with socialisation.(teacher 9)

In order to be included in the society one needs to be able to interact with others. Learning to communicate and being able to interact are aims mentioned by five teachers. Teachers of pupils with hearing impairment consider the aim of learning to communicate especially important to their pupils. Also the ability to communicate in English is mentioned by some teachers.

Some teachers mention that, in order to be able to socialise well with others one needs to have some courage and self-esteem. Attending school, having the experience of being included and interacting with other pupils at school might develop self-esteem. *“--Sometimes they are treated differently than others, but also they have to go to school so that they feel they are as important--.”* (teacher 2) *“--As they mix with others they build their self-esteem. They value themselves. Like there was one girl in our class whom we let lead the others so by so doing she gained confidence.”* (teacher 5) One teacher mentions realistically that an aim of education possible to achieve in her unit is to develop personal awareness while pupils still need to go further in education in order to survive independently.

As we just teach the basics, like personal awareness, then after that the child needs to go out and learn skills like carpentry, cookery, tailoring. Where now he goes to the community he is able to stand on his own and survive. (teacher 11)

Another teacher mentions that the aim of education for some pupils with severe disabilities is to experience love and care.” *--Children like Chongo [name changed] they will be like this. To feel loved and cared for is important.”* (teacher 1)

4.2.3 Learning Academic Skills and Proceeding in Education

Some teachers refer to aims related to academic skills such as reading, writing or counting as important. One teacher who considers learning academic skills as important continues that it alone is not enough. *“Our main aim of education in our unit is well to make them literate is part of it but more, because they cannot work with that as such to have a skill so that they can sustain themselves.”* (teacher 13) Teacher eleven argues that knowing how to read, count and communicate in English

helps in socialisation. Teacher two on the other hand argues that reading and writing are important only when social skills such as interaction with others are mastered well enough in order for teaching academic skills to become meaningful. One teacher in a unit for pupils with hearing impairment considers learning academic skills together with learning communication as the most important aims for her pupils which is reasonable because the unit prepares pupils for secondary education.

All teachers however mention the issue of learning academic skills. When the aim is something else than proceeding to academic secondary education English, literacy and numeracy are learnt for practical purposes but also in order to have a basic knowledge.

Like for language we want them to have at least an idea of what is happening. Like if they finish school and go to skills and they might be taught in English they will be able to understand and do the work. For communication purposes- We instruct them so they will be able to add a few things. Like they are able to give out change, able to know. (teacher 14)

Some teachers mention that it has been possible for some of their pupils to be integrated into mainstream basic education. Half of the teachers mention that it might be possible for some of their pupils to proceed to secondary schools. At the moment proceeding to secondary education or upper basic education (education after grade seven) still requires passing the national grade seven examinations. Preparation for secondary education is considered to be a realisable aim especially for hearing impaired pupils and some teachers have experience of their pupils passing the grade seven examinations. *“Last year they were four of them and they passed all. Three of them have gone, they fourth one, the parents couldn’t afford.” (teacher 10)* Most teachers argue that some of their pupils can proceed to skills training programmes. However, there are not enough skills training programmes to cater for all pupils with special educational needs currently enrolled in basic education and usually the skills training schools are located far from the pupils’ homes. In addition, a barrier towards proceeding into secondary schools and skills training programmes are school fees charged as well as other costs associated with schooling such as transport or boarding. As discussed with one teacher few parents can afford sending their child

with a disability to further education. Having to make choices they are likely to invest in their most talented child's or few children's education. However, one community school participating in my study has its own skills training programme located in the community and free of charge for the underprivileged pupils attending the school.

5 “IT NEEDS A LOT OF PLANNING AND ONGOING ASSESMENT”

5.1 Based on the Mainstream Curriculum

The majority of schools are following the Zambia Basic Education Course - curriculum (ZBEC) but adapting it according to the pupils' needs. Teachers make decisions on what to include in their own unit's curriculum.

We are following the normal standard of curriculum, which is used even at the mainstream. The Zambia Basic Education Course. In that, we just modify a few things, we do them at their level. If anything we are using the same standard. Like that one they are using at the mainstream.(teacher 7)

We basically follow the Zambia Basic Education curriculum but basically we need to adapt it to the level of the child. We need to change for some of the pupils, the methodology is the same, but for some of the pupils we need to put the level lower. So you adapt it, a lot. (teacher 10)

One teacher argues that she follows a Zambian special education curriculum, which means using books designed for pupils with special educational needs. In some community schools where also the mainstream curriculum might differ to some extent from the Zambia Basic Education Course -curriculum the curriculum is adapted comparing to the mainstream curriculum of the community school. Some teachers mention that they use their common sense and experience designing the special education curriculum. In one community special school the curriculum differs from all other participating schools in the sense that it is following an individual approach and is more systematically planned and implemented. Therefore I chose to introduce this case separately and call it *the individual education plan-curriculum* to differentiate it from the *adapted curriculum* used in the other schools. However, also

the individual education plan curriculum is based on the Zambia Basic Education Course.

The Adapted Curriculum. Pupils at the government schools are assessed at an assessment centre before entering the special education units or schools. “*From what has been assessed at the assessment centre, that’s where we have the baseline where to start from with that child.*” (teacher 9) Also the special education teachers make some simple assessments and observations. “*First I’ll ask the parents to know about the life history of the child, after telling me that, I give them [the children] some simple work so that I can know which level I can put them--.*” (teacher 12) Common is to start teaching with pre-school material. “*Most of them who have just come in. I teach them pre-school material and it will help them out—.*” (teacher 6) Community schools make their own assessments and sometimes pupils have gone through also formal assessments. The purpose of the assessment in most schools seems to be placing the pupils to a level or grade.

Most teachers plan the goals and content to be taught for a term and depending on the teacher some make specified plans for a week and then most teachers are planning for day or lesson. Teachers plan some contents more specifically and some others more generally.

First of all, I have to write a termly plan, then I also write the daily plans. But some lessons are more like a focus. Some lessons we write, some others we write the focus.-- When you are planning every term you need to plan for the subjects and count the weeks in the term. So in one term, every subject has a section where you plan. (teacher 10)

The plans for a term are usually made for each level or grade and the closer to the actual teaching situation, the better are the individual needs considered. “*When we are planning for the whole term, we plan in general but in our lesson plans that’s when we have what we call IEP. For individual children. So we plan for each and every child.*” (teacher 13) This approach of setting plans for a term with the content of each subject specified and then making more specific weekly, daily and lesson

plans is here called a conventional approach for it is similar to the way the curriculum is planned at the mainstream.

In three schools the curriculum is planned slightly differently. At these schools too, termly and daily plans are made but in addition a two weeks plan centred on a single topic or objective is made. I decided to call this an interval topic approach.

Usually I plan for two weeks. Then within that lesson, like the long term objectives for that two weeks, I task analyse it. I teach one skill per day. I have a long term objective for two weeks. Within that long-term objective I break it in smaller academic tasks. Those I teach, I plan for the day. (teacher 9)

The approach allows focusing on one topic at a time and learning it throughout without having to rush. One teacher considers daily planning as difficult. “*We don’t have to rush, we can teach addition today, tomorrow, even the entire week in order for the children to understand. Maybe what we can only indicate is the objectives--.*” (teacher 8) In two schools following this interval topic approach pupils have more severe learning difficulties than in most participating schools.

More specific planning takes place in the daily and lesson plans. In those plans, teaching methods are specified and objectives set more individually. However, not all teachers set individual objectives but usually some of the content is individualised at least for some pupils.

Mostly we consider that if the children are on the same level, we have to plan on the same level. But if they are different, at least you have to make sure you plan for each and every individual child. (teacher 8)

I just involve my own materials, like I think like teaching these children I should do this. And those that have come, maybe educational aims like mathematics. Those that can do with their hands I plan that they should at least be able to do work with their hands, make doormats etc.(teacher 6)

Most teachers understood evaluation as meaning the assessment of the performance of the pupils. Only one teacher mentions that she evaluates also her teaching.

However, this might be due to the structure of the questions asked. Most teachers note that they are supposed to evaluate every lesson. Usually each pupil's performance is evaluated simply indicating how well the pupil has understood and mastered the topic.

At the end of each lesson, I have to evaluate. Like I see the level, level one: how many have done well? And what about those who did not do well? What could be the problem? So that I can build on their difficulties. (teacher 12)

We normally evaluate our work at each and every lesson. We see how each child really has performed. If she has performed badly or performed very well we conclude that the lesson has gone.—Just in our lesson plans, there is a column where we are supposed to do our evaluation on how the lesson has been taught, then how much participation of the children has been. (teacher 7)

In addition, evaluations are made at the end of the term. Some teachers assess the performance of each pupil during the term in general and write a report according to the conclusions they make. Other teachers conduct also simple tests.

--Sometimes we do some simple tests, which they write. Sometimes we just observe as they are doing their work. We observe during the lesson if they are able to do their work or then, not able to do their work.(teacher 14)

At the end of the term, we assess the performance, how the performance has been the whole term. We don't usually give them tests or what, we just evaluate the performance of each child during the term.(teacher 9)

The Individual Education Plan –Curriculum. The connections of assessment, curriculum planning and evaluation were explained thorough by one teacher and I chose to call the curriculum in the school where she teaches the individual education plan -curriculum. The curriculum in the school begins with determining individual developmental needs of the pupil. The teacher argues, that the curriculum must begin with teaching skills usually expected to be mastered by a pupil entering school. This

is because pupils with special educational needs do not learn some of these skills automatically at home.

For the general education, the beginning of the curriculum, it does not really help...you know children who are the so-called normal ones, they come from the home environment with a lot of skills. They would have learnt a lot, so much that those skills they have learned, they can help them when they come to school to read and to write. But for children with special needs, most of them they are just kept indoors. Yes they don't take them out to go and learn in new situations. They don't even give them things, perhaps to manipulate their fingers needful for them when they come to school to come and learn how to write. And as a result of that, children with special needs at this school, we teach them those skills before they actually come here, that is the difference between, the starting point of our curriculum.(interviewed teacher)

Teachers in the school are trained to conduct an assessment in the child's home environment assessing basic needs like love and security, need for new experience, need for responsibility and to be given responsibility. In addition, the parents are asked to select two or three things they wish their child to learn. After the assessment, a sheet of paper is made for the pupil with the skills he or she is expected to achieve. *"That sheet is written in such a way that the teacher will note down the date, when he or she has started teaching the particular skill and the date, when the child has achieved that skill."* (interviewed teacher) That is individual goals are set according to the assessment results. *"If there is a problem, let say in self-help skills then a goal in self help skills, like activities for daily living is set towards intervening the problem that child is having, yes."* (interviewed teacher) In addition to the individual education plans a general frame for the curriculum is planned for each level. Teachers use one week at the beginning of every term for planning together. They plan especially for independent learning activities and make teaching aids. In addition teaching methods and the classroom arrangement are planned. Theme teaching, which means repeating same themes across subjects is encouraged. Furthermore, teachers meet weekly planning and solving problems together.

Thursday afternoon it is a workshop for teachers and there we look at things that we are perhaps not doing properly or how we can improve the type of education which we are offering. So we have ongoing workshops and as a result our teachers they know what to do.(interviewed teacher)

Lessons are planned in a way considering all pupils' individual needs. Pupils within a class are divided into learning groups according to their abilities and different activities are planned for different groups. In addition issues like multi-sensory teaching, motivating pupils, independent learning activities and learning by doing are planned before each lesson. Teachers are responsible for evaluating the individual education plans and the performance of the pupils. Not only that but also the curriculum and the lessons are evaluated in order to develop them constantly. Parents are involved in evaluating the curriculum.

And since we allow our parents to evaluate our curriculum, they are happy to say ...to what ever is not good. What we want from our parents, after the evaluation of our curriculum. What is not good at this school so we try to improve our deficits.(interviewed teacher)

The lessons taught are evaluated regularly on a lesson evaluation sheet where every part of the lesson and the teachers' actions are evaluated. One teacher is responsible for evaluating the lessons of other teachers. When lessons are evaluated they are also likely to be better planned.

And it's not just that [having meetings] what we do but we do evaluate. And I think you found me this morning in one of the classes to see what the teacher is doing. We do evaluate, we go class by class to see what our teachers are doing. And as a result of that, they stand on their feet to say that they try, by all means to give a proper and meaningful education for these children. (interviewed teacher)

5.2 What Makes it Special?

5.2.1 Pupils: “Ours are Very Special”

The curriculum in the special education units and schools needs to be different from the mainstream curriculum to respond to the pupils’ special needs. Teachers were asked to indicate on a table in which abilities their pupils face difficulties at school and the answers given are combined in table 6 below. Column A means that only some pupils face mild or moderate difficulties in the ability. Column B means most pupils face mild or moderate difficulties in the ability. Finally column C means that, while some pupils might face mild or moderate difficulties in the ability, some pupils have severe lack of the ability. The number in each box indicates how many teachers placed their answer in that box. It should be noted that the two teachers from the same school interviewed together are here counted as one and therefore the total number on different answers to the question is 12.

TABLE 6: Abilities of the pupils

Ability	A	B	C
audition/hearing	5		4
behaviour/social skills	5	3	4
intellectual functioning (thinking and reasoning)	2	6	3
limbs (use of hands, arms and legs)	7	1	1
intentional communication (understanding and communicating with others)	9	1	2
tonicity (muscle tone)	10		1
overall health	9		
Eyes (vision)	8		
structural status (shape, body form and structure)	10		2

Four teachers have pupils with profound loss of hearing at their unit or school while five teachers have pupils with some difficulties in hearing. All teachers indicate that their pupils’ behaviour or social skills are exceptional. All but one teacher indicate that their pupils have difficulties in intellectual functioning. However, the teacher

indicating no difficulties in intellectual functioning answered on the basic information form that her pupils have overall learning difficulties which was controversial. Again all but one teacher indicate that their pupils have problems in intentional communication. A teacher for pupils with hearing impairment did not indicate any difficulties in this ability, which again is controversial. At all schools teachers indicate that some pupils have difficulties which refer to physical disabilities such as difficulties using their limbs, too tight or loose muscles or an abnormal body form, shape or structure. However, these difficulties tend to be mild or moderate and only some children experience them. Eight teachers indicate that some of their pupils have low vision and nine teachers indicate that some of their pupils have problems with overall health.

In addition, some teachers describe their pupils also during the recorded interviews. It is mentioned that many pupils enrolled in special education might be just slow learners. *“Yes, most of them were slow learners and given much attention they are able to improve.”* (teacher 5) In addition, teachers note that their pupils’ understanding is concrete. *“Our children they don’t understand abstract things, so we need to teach concrete--.”* (teacher 10) Some teachers are concerned with the behaviour problems of their pupils’. *“Especially those with behaviour problems. It really comes difficult now with so many children. Now to handle everybody is not easy.”* (teacher 6). However, the behaviour of a child changes at school. *“Behaviour, yes. After the child stays at school one year, now the child will be changed. Not from community to school, they come like every day fighting, sometimes crying because of hunger.”* (teacher 3) Many teachers mention that they are concerned for some of their pupils are brought to school at an age past ten years. *“Yes, too late and those with behaviour problems, they get even worse than when they were still young. Because some of the children come to school even when they are 15 years old.”* (teacher 4) Some pupils who come to the special education units or schools have previously attended regular education.

Ok, ours are were special because, the others, for example I tell you about some children, because some children have been in the normal class and they needed special education and no-one is out there to identify them—Like in one class there was a girl, she was in grade six. No-one knew she needed special

education until someone who had an interest saw her. Then they brought her to my class. (teacher 6)

5.2.2 Methods: Individual Attention

Most teachers argue that they are not using any special teaching methods. From the methods used, only sign language and communication with the help of pictures are considered to be special methods.

–We can show pictures. If a child cannot pronounce a word, like we have a child called Gift [name changed], she has a problem pronouncing any words. She can easily point at the picture for us to understand what she is talking about-. (teacher 13)

However, teaching in the special education units and schools differs from the mainstream. *“They are the same methods, only as I have said there is a lot of modification. We have to be at the level of the child. So it is almost the same process only that we bring things to the level of the child here.”* (teacher 5) Special education requires extra resources, more time and careful planning. *“They need a lot of resources and a lot of time to make them understand—it needs a lot of planning.”* (teacher 4) The majority of teachers argue that their pupils need individual attention and receive more attention compared to mainstream.

We use what we call individual education programme. One to one. The teacher and the child, they have to be at the same time, in contact with the child. Rather than in the mainstream, the teachers are using lecturing methods. But in the special needs unit we don’t learn in lecturing methods. (teacher 11)

Individual attention can be given because the number of pupils is less than in the mainstream. *“In the normal class there are too many children but at a special unit, there is one teacher attending only for a few children. Which will be very helpful to sort the problem at hand.”*(teacher 11) Proceeding according to the abilities of the pupils allows more flexibility. *“We don’t necessarily have to start from where the*

lesson starts in the book.”(teacher 9) Most teachers mention that their pupils need more repetition than mainstream pupils and that their pupils should be allowed to learn at their own pace.

The advantage is that they learn at their own pace at this unit while there [mainstream] they don't learn at their own pace. And here we look at every individual while there the teacher concentrates mainly on the brighter pupils. When they finish they are not helping the slow learners. Because individual attention is paid, the advantage is huge.(teacher 13)

Most commonly used ways to individualise teaching observed during the lessons are giving individual exercises (8 schools), giving individual instructions (5 schools) and questioning individual pupils during the lesson (7 schools). Also teachers mention that they give their pupils individual work.

I can introduce a topic, say in language, say like the one I have taught on classroom items. But when it comes to giving them work I cannot say that the whole group should write the names of the objects drawn on the board. No, others will match, others will just colour the objects. We give them work according to the child's ability. (teacher 9)

In some schools some pupils were using teaching aids like bottle tops as counters during the lessons observed. Indeed, many teachers mention the need for concrete material and concrete teaching. “*You have to show them the real things, like a picture of the bus. You cannot just talk to them about a bus and then they will know but you have to show them what the bus is.*” (teacher 2) Concrete teaching aids can be self-made.

In my experience, I think ordinary manila-paper is a useful resource because the teacher can make a lot of teaching and learning aids from it. It is not necessarily buying—If we make something it will be tailored to these individual children. (teacher 4).

Also the environment can be a useful teaching aid. *“Like when teaching about trees we just go out. The importance of trees we just went outside to look at different trees.”*(teacher 6) Crayons, blocks and toys are used in those units or schools, which have them. However, when used daily the material breaks easily. *“The toys are not enough. Like the legos finished. And if you give them daily the toys will break soon.”* (teacher 1) Most teachers use charts and the board and chalk for illustrating the topics. *“Wall charts , books, that’s all. And the chalk and the board. And we have toys. There are these blocks”*.(teacher 11) Work and text -books are used daily in most schools. Some teachers use books for the mainstream while others have books for special education. However mainstream books made by private publishers are updated more often illustrated better and seem to be clearer than most books for special education. The units and schools do not have comprehensively all needed books, sometimes there is only one book for each subject for the teacher to use and books for some subjects might be lacking at all.

Teachers emphasize that instructions must be clear *“--You have to be giving them lots of examples that they are able to get what you are teaching.”* (teacher 1). *“Like if you are teaching a concept you can use a diagram. So if you see they cannot get anything you need to change the method like bring them concrete things-- .”*(teacher 12) Some teachers gave multi- sensory instructions during the observed lessons. In three schools an assistant teacher was helping some individual pupils. One teacher seems to believe that pupils understand simply when the teacher will repeat the instructions. *“We have to instruct them so that they understand—maybe by repeating the same instructions--.”* (teacher 8) In those schools where the lesson was taught in English local language was however used instructing individual pupils if they had not understood the English instructions. Teaching in English is also considered important by many teachers.

What we do, we use both, yes, English and Nyanja to make them understand. But if you would teach one subject in Nyanja only then they would not know English. Then they will have a problem in communication. Using English again without Nyanja they would not understand a word. So we teach in both languages. (teacher 13)

In one school, pupils with low vision are placed in front and at one school the classroom is arranged into independent learning corners.

All our classrooms are arranged in such a way that there is also corners that enable the children to go there and learn freely. Yes, for example after teaching a maths lesson, those children who finish first they can go to other corners, to the handwriting corner, to the socialisation corner where they learn independently without the teacher being there. And they are taught that way that they should do that without disturbing the rest of the class. (teacher 4)

Teachers set also various expectations towards themselves. They argue that a special education teacher should be committed, creative and caring. *“For these children you have to be very creative. (teacher 1)* Some teachers mention the importance of Christian values and others argue that being a special education teacher demands a calling. Some teachers seem to be especially compassionate and interested about their pupils’ thoughts and feelings.

--I think to be a Christian, yes because you have to love the children and we have to be interested in the job, because if you are not interested you cannot teach a child with special needs. Its not just the training but the interest.(teacher 4)

Handling special education children is a call for the teacher. Each child is putting a challenge so you really have to start reading books so that you can help them, to handle such children. (teacher 5)

You show them compassion, you show them love. They do something wrong and you can show that you haven’t liked it but you still love that child. Like when they have experienced love they will be able, wherever they go to at least do something. (teacher 1)

However in addition to personal qualities teachers seem to put high value on their formal training. Most teachers mention training as a source of acquiring skills to

work as a special education teacher. Some other sources for acquiring skills are through experience in teaching, through workshops and through working with disabled people. One teacher mentions additionally that she is a mother of a child with special educational needs and one teacher mentions that empathy has helped her to become a skilled special education teacher.

Summary of Teaching Methods. Teaching methods used by the special education teachers can be summarised in figure 3.

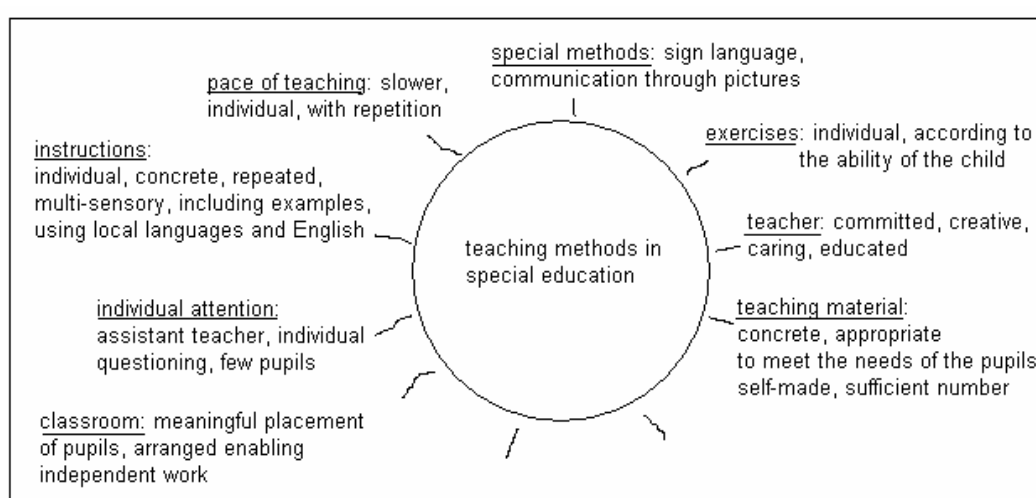


FIGURE 3: Teaching methods in special education

5.2.3 Content: Reducing the Work

The content to be taught differs from the mainstream in that work is usually reduced to the level of the pupils and simplified. *“The subjects are similar, they are the same. For example mathematics, we can even use the same book. Ourselves, we just reduce the work so that the child can handle it.”* (teacher 13) *“Actually it [the content] is similar, it is just that we have to simplify.”* (teacher 11) Additional subjects not taught in the mainstream are sign language and speech correction mentioned by the teachers of pupils with hearing impairment.

While subjects are similar instead of social studies and science activities for daily living or pre-vocational skills are taught at most units and schools. *“Like at the*

mainstream, we give social studies, here we give them activities for daily living which is more or less like social studies--.” (teacher 7) The core subjects of the special education curriculum are mathematics, English, literacy and activities for daily living or pre-vocational skills. “*We emphasize more on practical skills than in the normal ones.*” (teacher 8) “*We put more emphasis on mathematics, English because these are the basics.*” (teacher 11) Nevertheless, many teachers note that they are unable to teach activities for daily living or pre-vocational skills due to lack of concrete teaching material.

They should be there but now we haven't used. Because of lack of facilities. Like when you are teaching ADL you are supposed to show certain things.— You need to have a toothbrush, Colgate.—So it is very difficult to lead the lessons how it is supposed to be. (teacher 11)

In the academic subjects only essential contents are included in the curriculum and some contents might be taught orally.

—Like maths, we teach only addition and subtraction. We have to start from learning the numbers. And it takes time. And like social studies we just teach them orally, they don't write—and for English we try to teach them a bit of spoken language. (teacher 2)

Some teachers receive a master's timetable from the administration while others plan the timetable themselves. At government schools in the mainstream grades 1-4 called lower basic pupils are taught commonly for 3 hours daily and four to six subjects are to be covered during that time. Pupils with special educational needs are considered to belong to lower basic and school hours are usually the same than in the mainstream lower basic grades. While mainstream teachers struggle to follow the timetable pupils with special educational needs require even more time for learning. Therefore the special education teachers mention they have to reduce the number of subjects or topics taught during a day.

It's very difficult for us to cope up with time. So you may find that two subjects are taught, or you may find three. And you may not find to teach two.

Depending on how you have prepared yourself and the number of children you have.(teacher 13)

However, reducing the number of subjects taught in a day is sometimes a planned decision “-We don't plan it like we have to cover four subjects in a day. Maybe we say we just cover two subjects in a day—They[pupils] are very slow so I cannot say I'm going to teach four subjects today--.” (teacher 7)

The Zambian curriculum reform will add more learning time and reduce the number of subjects but the effects of it have not yet reached all schools. I discussed the issue of school hours with four teachers in units with less than 3h 15 minutes time for teaching the pupils daily. Surprisingly, three of these teachers consider learning time in their unit to be long enough. This is controversial because all of these teachers argue that pupils with special educational needs learn slowly and should be allowed to learn in their pace. It might be that these teachers are ready to accept lower goals for their pupils with special needs compared to mainstream pupils. One teacher admits that following the timetable is difficult. The teachers argue that their pupils would be unable to concentrate for a longer time. Reasons for the short learning time are not only educational but also social problems such as hunger are mentioned. “*Because if you keep the child from morning to—sometimes they will be tired, sometimes they started crying because of hunger. There is no food here. Better, two hours, is enough.*”(teacher 3) One teacher however demands for four hours of learning time.

Summary of methods and content. Now the figure of teaching methods in special education can be extended with the content and subjects. This new figure 5 summarises what is done implementing the special education curriculum. However, the classroom situation is more complex and what actually happens in the classrooms can not all be planned. The next chapter gives insight to the actual lessons and life in the classrooms.

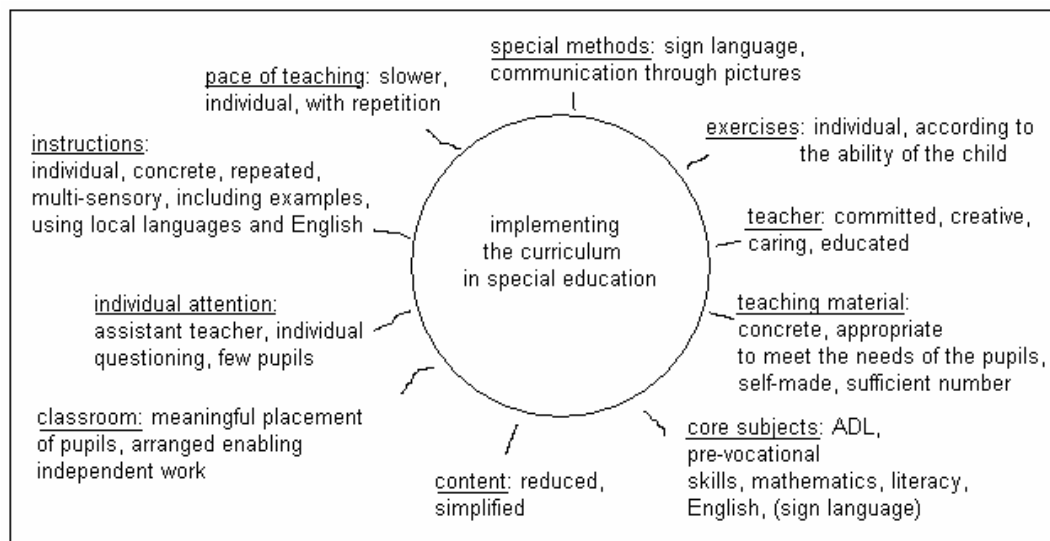


FIGURE 5: Implementing the curriculum in special education

5.3 Life in the Classrooms

5.3.1 Instructing all, Individualising Exercises

At nine schools lessons were observed from the beginning to the end. Four of the lessons observed went on beginning with a teacher lead-activity for the whole group and then giving individual exercises or work according to levels for the pupils.

The lesson I observed was about Nyanja vowels. The objective seems to be learning basic vowels and connecting them to letter b (ba,be,bi,bo,bu), practicing handwriting. The introduction of the lesson is given together for all

children and afterwards they are given individual exercises. In the introduction children are asked to participate by coming in front and showing from the board. Also repeating and reading in a chorus is used. Children are questioned to evaluate learning. Most children are able to follow the lesson but some have a very short attention span. Some children have to wait before they get their exercise but in general waiting time is not too long. Some children are let to play around and move. Most children are given individual instructions and help in carrying out their work. After finishing the exercise, the children start playing in the classroom. The climate in the class is warm and caring. It seems that the teacher takes seriously each individual child and his/her feelings. Local language is spoken together with English, both are encouraged. The teacher does not keep a respective distance to the pupils but wants to capture the trust of each child. Children seem to enjoy attending school and they have developed trust to the teacher. In class, they are free to interact with each other.(field notes 17.7.2003)

In addition, during two lessons the structure was similar but after the teacher-lead activity the teacher called one group in front to teach them while others were doing exercises. Furthermore one lesson went on instructing the whole group and giving everyone the same work. Finally one teacher instructed each group (grade) in the classroom separately and then gave the group the exercises to be done before attending to the next group. This teacher was teaching alone more than 25 pupils.

Lesson activity mathematics, different objectives and tasks for each grade. During the lesson, the teacher is all the time busy giving children some work since the classroom has pupils from pre-school to grade seven. The approach is that the teacher goes to each grade and teaches them giving them their work, then she continues to the next grade. So there is no time for supervising the work and helping individual children if they have difficulties. Individualisation is only through giving different work for different grades. Instruction time is short. Some pupils have to wait for a long time after finishing with their work or while waiting for work. The language of instruction is sign language. The desks are organised to groups according to the grades. Only evaluation is

marking but no time to explain to children what went wrong. Students attend differently: some write, some fight, some discuss. Small ones are really small and start fighting about too few lego blocks. (field notes 18.8.2003)

Common for all these lessons is that the pupils' activity required using a pencil sometimes crayons and a notebook. The activity could be counting, drawing, matching or writing. In addition, common was that all were lessons on academic subjects: mathematics, literacy, English or Nyanja.

One sign language lesson was teacher-lead from the beginning to the end. However, the teacher-lead activity involved continuing participation of pupils. The lesson had a clear structure with an opening and an end.

The lesson I observed in the beginner's shift starts by a prayer and instructions for doing some exercises (teacher told to jump up-down). The lesson activity is finger spelling and different words are given to different children according to the level of understanding. The objective seems to be learning concrete signs. In the beginner's class, the skills of the children differ a lot since some of them are in pre-class, some in grade one, two or three. The climate in the class is happy and the pupils seem to have fun while learning. The teacher jokes and laughs a lot and uses facial expressions. Everyone has to pay attention and everyone is questioned on his/her turn. One small girl who is sad gets a fritter from the teacher and the teacher gives her time to get relaxed and attend the activities. The activity, which is lead by the teacher, takes the whole lesson but all students can participate signing all the time. The lesson finishes by a prayer. Children do not have to wait much during the lesson, everyone is supposed to concentrate. But before the lesson they waited because the teacher is not very strict with the beginning times. Most children are able to concentrate and participate to the lesson but the small girl is unhappy and does not sign (teacher thought she is too hungry). The class activity in general was well organised and there was a clear opening and ending. (field notes 18.7.2003)

The different variations in the structure of the lessons observed are summarised below in table 7. Naturally there were some differences between and within the same structures in how the lessons proceeded during the different phases and how the teacher attended to the pupils.

TABLE 7: Observed lesson structures

Teacher-lead activity → pupils' activity: same for all
Teacher-lead activity → pupils' activity: individual
Teacher-lead activity → pupils' activity: individual / teacher-lead activity for a group of pupils
Routine opening → teacher-lead activity → pupils' activity: individual
Routine opening → teacher-lead activity → routine ending

In addition the objective of one lesson was to make a test and therefore the structure was different from a typical lesson. Furthermore at two schools the observations were too brief to capture the structure of the lesson. At one of these schools the activity was writing and in the other singing and playing traditional songs and games.

5.3.2 Classroom Climate: Focus on Learning?

The teachers' interaction with the pupils and the participation of the pupils differed in the classrooms. In most classrooms the climate and interactions were predominantly positive. In some classrooms the interaction seemed to be especially warm, caring and friendly. *The climate in the class is happy and the pupils seem to have fun while learning. (field notes 18.7.2003) The atmosphere in the unit is warm and local language is used with the children. (field notes 12.8.2003) It seems the teacher takes seriously each individual child and his feelings—children seem to enjoy attending school and they have developed trust to the teacher. In class they are free to interact with each other. (field notes 17.7.2003).*

In some classrooms the climate was predominantly learning-focused.

The climate of the class is full of learning, children have continuing tasks to do and the activities seem to be developmentally appropriate and concrete enough to keep the children concentrated on their tasks. (field notes 22.7.2003)

The teacher puts much emphasis on repetition and makes sure that everyone participates and understands. The lesson is well planned and the teacher has a written lesson-plan she showed to me. The atmosphere in the classroom is peaceful, motivational and learning-oriented. (field notes 14.8.2003)

A way of motivating pupils or getting their attention was singing or doing a physical activity. *The teacher started the lesson with some physical exercise to get the pupils' attention and stretch their fingers for the writing activities. (15.9.2003)* In the learning-focused classrooms the lessons tended to be especially motivating, well structured and in general well planned.

I observed a lesson for level one. The lesson follows the BTL-programme [Breakthrough through literacy programme for learning essential literacy in a local Zambian language]. The first activity is to learn to recognize and draw letter c. During all parts of the lesson, all children are made to participate and the teacher follows that everyone understands. Different senses are used for concretising the issue (hearing: speech, visual: signs and showing pictures, tactile: drawing letters with fingers in air). The lesson is very well structured and children know how to go about it. After the introduction for all the pupils are divided into groups for independent pupil work or instructions given by the teacher. The assistant is helping the pupils with the independent activities.-- Teaching takes place in local language (Nyanja). (field notes 22.7.2003)

In most classrooms the teachers put effort to ensure that all pupils can participate and were actively involved during every part of the lesson helping the pupils. *In the introduction of the lesson children are asked to participate by coming in front and showing from the board. (17.7.2003)* The teacher puts much emphasis on repetition

and makes sure that everyone participates and understands. (field notes 14.8.2003)
While pupils are doing their exercises, the teacher goes round in the class helping.
(field notes 15.9) In most classrooms children were also able to play with some few toys while waiting for an activity or after finishing the activity.

Children play with blocks before starting and are allowed to play with the blocks during the teachers' instructions.— After finishing with the individual work the teacher marks the books, explains if something went wrong and the children can continue building with the blocks.(field notes 31.7.2003)

However, during three observed lessons the teacher seemed not to be attending with full interest, interaction with pupils was rather negative, all pupils did not participate at all or their individual needs were not really provided for.

Most children are attending the activity but some are just sitting around. Some children seem to have severe difficulties in understanding, behaviour and communication. I don't think the activity was anyhow planned and it seems to have no objectives. Children's individual needs are not really provided for. Some children are not attending the activity and the teacher doesn't mind. Some children are just running around. No evaluation and after finishing children do nothing. (field notes 12.8.2003)

The teacher comes an hour late! Only three pupils are present. Teacher does not really seem to be concentrating on the children [talking with me]. (field notes 20.8.2003)

The teacher is questioning pupils about opposites and they are asked to write them on the board. All pupils have to stand up and after they are able to answer correctly they can sit down. The teacher seems to be authoritative, strict and angry. Somehow I feel standing up is humiliating. Most pupils do not know the spellings for the words so the teacher is helping. But pupils are not really helped in their thinking -> how to solve the issue. After that, pupils have to copy the words written on the board. After finishing the teacher marks

the books. Some pupils do not finish in time before the break. Individual needs are not really well provided at. Some pupils probably did not understand anything. Teaching methods like in the mainstream. (field notes 17.9.2003)

Interesting is that in two of these classrooms where the teacher seemed to provide little individual help for the pupils there were only pupils with mental retardation.

5.3.3 What is Learnt: Planned Objectives or a Hidden Curriculum?

The objective seems to be learning basic vowels and connecting them to letter b (ba, be, bi, bo, bu) and practicing handwriting. (field notes 17.7.2003) To learn concrete signs. (field notes 18.8.2003) Learn to name colours, recognize them in the classroom environment and to learn to match the word of the colour with the colour [for some children](field notes 31.7.2003) Addition from 1-10. (field notes 12.8). In many schools, the writing activities were predominating and much time was used for work done in the notebooks. Although teachers argue that central aims for their pupils are learning practical skills, independence or socialisation, most observed lessons were aiming at learning academic skills. I observed only one sign language lesson where the purpose was to learn communication. In addition, at one participating school pupils started to make doormats and needle work after the lesson I observed.

On the other hand also teaching basic literacy, numeracy and language are considered important by the teachers. Teaching academic subjects does not necessarily mean ignoring for example social aims. At many schools the academic lessons seemed to be developmentally appropriate and targeting the objectives. These lessons were seemingly well planned. The lesson plan below (figure 6) illustrates a well-prepared lesson that also proceeded according to the plan. It also illustrates that the teacher has considered the particular lesson belonging to a larger topic.

<i>Lesson plan: class LD (learning difficulties)</i>	<i>Level: 3 (moderate)</i>
<i>Subject: Language</i>	<i>Topic: identity</i>
	<i>Subtopic: classroom items</i>
<i>Reference: speech and language programme for learners with special needs</i>	
<i>Learning and teaching aids: classroom items, word cards</i>	
<i>Behavioural objective: having taught the lesson on classroom items</i>	
<i>a) identify classroom items</i>	
<i>b) name things found in the classroom</i>	
<i>c) read and write the name of the things found in class</i>	
<i>- pre-test: shapes</i>	
<i>-lesson development:</i>	
<i>step 1: Teacher will ask the pupils to name the things found in the classroom</i>	
<i>step 2: Teacher will read the words on the word cards and the pupils will repeat after that (4 words)</i>	
<i>step 3: Pupils will be asked to read individually</i>	
<i>step 4: Pupils will be asked to match the words with the objects (taking right word card to corresponding object)</i>	
<i>-learner activities:</i>	
<i>pupils S & D: write the right word for each object drawn on the board</i>	
<i>pupils G & D: will match the words with the objects</i>	
<i>- evaluation</i>	

FIGURE 6: Lesson plan

At many schools however, I observed children engaged in mechanic work like copying words from the board without necessarily understanding. *Children start with writing too small letters and therefore fail often. (field notes 17.7.2003) Emphasis on mechanical work, copying without necessarily understanding. (field notes 15.9.2003) Teaching methods are similar to mainstream, teacher is marking the notebooks and therefore own thinking is not that much encouraged-- but on the other hand teacher is making efforts to plan concrete materials too. (field notes 31.7.2003)* However, while pupils engaged in mechanic work for parts of the lessons it does not mean they did not learn anything or enjoy learning. Many lessons were well planned, they had

strengths as previously illustrated and pupils had a chance for playing and other child-centred activities during the school day. On the other hand the observations suggest, that planned activities at most schools include only academic tasks while playing, creative activities and other independent learning activities are not planned for. In the only school where I observed pupils practising some pre-vocational skills this was done without the teacher helping the pupils. The school following the individual education plan curriculum however was an exception, because in that school the whole school day is planned comprehensively including also interaction with other pupils, play, creative activities and independent learning activities. The findings suggest that many goals of the curriculum could be realised better if planning was comprehensive and would include all activities during the school day.

6 “THERE ARE ALWAYS CHALLENGES”

A variety of societal issues affect implementing the curriculum. Those issues concern parents, resources at school, educational administration, community attitudes and educational provision available. Teachers identified many societal challenges affecting meaningful special education provision. However, they also illustrated examples of meeting challenges successfully and made suggestions on how to solve some challenges.

6.1 Working with Parents

According to the teachers, parents have various expectations towards the school and their children. Parents demand every child to have education as well as to be taught effectively. Some teachers mention that parents require their children to be treated like others, to improve and progress, to learn academic skills and “*make something in life*”. Sometimes teachers perceive parental expectations as too ambitious but however, teachers also note that the expectations differ depending on the parents and on the child’s disability. Five teachers mention the need to encourage and counsel the parents.

*So what happens, if you have a severely disabled child, a multiply handicapped child, so severe that that child cannot really learn how to read and write then we counsel and guide our parents. Yes, we want to teach this child how to read and write, but look at these areas: this child cannot go to the toilet independently, cannot feed himself independently. So what if we start teaching that child. So what if we start teaching that child the activities for daily living. Perhaps they can be much [more] helpful than what we expect that child to learn. So, we should agree between as teachers and the parents themselves.
(teacher 4)*

Five teachers mention that parents should be involved in the education of their children and that education should be continuous from school to home.

We really consider the parents needs because what we believe in that the child can work better with continued education. From school to home. So we always talk to our parents and work hand in hand to show where the child, where we are. So if we are teaching a child how to dress up we are expecting the mother to continue at home. Instead of the mother dressing the child the mother should just supervise the child so that he is able to do it on his own. (teacher 5)

Teachers meet with parents a few times in a year during open days, at the end of a term or when a problem emerges. *“Aah no, unless there is a serious problem that needs to be discussed. But sometimes, yes they come like the end of the term just to hear the progress of the child—.”(teacher 14)* Mostly parents seem to have a passive, receiving role. On the other hand, three teachers acknowledge that the experience of the parents can be helpful when planning the curriculum. *“It would be important to talk with the parents because most of the children, we have been just a short time with them but the parents have a long experience.” (teacher 1)* However, only at one school parents are involved in planning and evaluating the curriculum. Sometimes meeting with parents is difficult. *“A few parents are responding, maybe because of people having negative attitudes towards the disabled.” (teacher 11)*

Teachers feel that most parents appreciate the work of the teachers. *“Exactly, some parents really appreciate our work. Because we have those children who maybe may come to school without proper speech but later they will find that their child is really communicating with others.” (teacher 8)* *“Yes they are appreciating, like if I tell them bring tissues everybody brings.” (teacher 12)* However, few teachers note that some parents have also negative attitudes. *“Some they don’t even see the need of their child to come to school.—They bring them here so that they are relieved at home. But there are some who are appreciating and see the need of their child to come here and learn.” (teacher 5)*

Some challenges affecting the families’ potential to assist in their child’s education are related to poverty. *“Parents can, we can tell them assist your child, buy some crayons, but they can’t afford.” (teacher 10)* *“The biggest challenges are, one*

we have a problem I think on poverty, yes. If you gather these children mostly they come with an empty belly so they don't concentrate.” (teacher 14) At one community school daily porridge meals are provided to the pupils. In addition, wheat, rice, soya flour or mealie-meal (maize-meal) sacks are given monthly to the families. This support is an important factor motivating families and pupils to participate in education. *“Especially at porridge time, it gives them motivation to come to school every day.” (teacher 1)*

6.2 Resources in the Units and Schools

Material Resources and Infrastructure. Most schools have an ordinary-sized classroom for their use with desks, a board and a teacher's table. The equipment in the classrooms differs and some classrooms have electricity, a water tap, a cooker, a mattress or a carpet. Some classrooms are used only by the special education unit while at some schools the classroom has to be shared with mainstream pupils. At community schools the equipment varies a lot. At one school there is lack of stationary like pens and pencils and one school has windows without glass whereby the classroom gets cold during the cold season. However two community schools receiving more funding are well equipped.

The school is well planned to cater for a wheelchair. The special education classes have an own block with a slope for the wheelchair and own toilets. One teacher uses a wheelchair and even boards are made so that you can move writing space up and down. Classrooms are equipped with enough tables, desks and chairs for all pupils. The classrooms are decorated with children's paintings and self-made charts and teaching aids are hanging on the walls. Counters, crayons, brushes and toys are there. In the staff-room, there is a corner with a mattress, cushions, a sandbox and some toys for stimulation of children with more severe disabilities. For playing outside the school has some play-cars and a playground with a swing, a climbing castle and a slide. (field notes 12.8.2003)

At these schools the teachers appreciate the resources they have but mention that still more toys and materials for pre-vocational skills are needed. One teacher notes that having any material is not enough but the material should be developmentally appropriate for the level of the pupils. For example too difficult books or puzzles are not useful. The teacher mentions also a need for hearing aids and wheelchairs.

Common for all government schools is that the classrooms have enough desks, chairs and windows with glass.

The classroom is an ordinary-sized classroom with a lot of desks and enough light. It has a board at both ends, some charts and a teacher's table. Because of shortage of classroom space a mainstream class studies in the same room afterwards and so the special need unit pupils have to knock off after only two hours learning time. The unit has some toys, (legos), crayons etc. donated but otherwise there are few available materials. The Ministry of Education has provided only books to the unit. (field notes 20.8.2003)

At most schools, there are only a few toys, books and material for creative activities and most teachers are concerned with the lack of toys, materials for creative activities and materials for teaching pre-vocational skills and activities for daily living. “We need a lot of teaching material, especially toys.” (teacher 11) “Crayons are there but not many for each child. Just a few. Blocks are only one set.” (teacher 14) “Sometimes you have to just teach them some traditional games. The legos are the only ones [toys] we managed to buy and they are a few.” (teacher 10) Only some schools have materials for teaching pre-vocational skills and activities for daily living. “We have soap, we have things like polish where children can polish these shoes, maybe Boom [washing powder], toothbrush.” (teacher 8). However also at those schools materials are not enough for teaching those skills meaningfully. “They need to have more knitting but now there is not much wool for knitting.” (teacher 14). Other schools do not have any material for teaching pre-vocational skills or activities for daily living. “There is need for material for skills training because most of our children are able to do work with their hands and they need some material for that.” (teacher 6) Other materials needed are stationary, workbooks, manila-paper and markers for making teaching aids and charts. Two teachers for

pupils with hearing impairment mention the need for a Zambian sign language dictionary.

Most teachers are satisfied with classroom space but three teachers note that their classrooms are too small and therefore it is impossible to enrol more pupils at the moment. However, teachers argue that an ordinary-sized classroom is not always conducive but space should be divided so that pupils can learn without being disrupted by others.

We have only one classroom and four groups, we have level one, two, three and four. When it comes to teaching, first you start with level one, then you go to level two. In the same room. Now when you are teaching level two the level ones, those you have given the work will be disrupted, they will start listening what you teach to the level twos. No it's not conducive. Rather, maybe if it was divided. (teacher 9)

Some teachers who teach children with physical disabilities note that ergonomic special chairs and tables are needed. *"The biggest concern is with the chairs, we need them to be comfortable for children with physical disabilities."* (teacher 1) Teachers in schools having a carpet consider it as necessary in order for pupils to play and learn in different positions. A teacher for hearing impaired pupils wishes the room to be acoustically treated. *"It is supposed to be acoustically treated- Yes, they [pupils] can get the environmental sounds but this class is just too noisy, they can't even get anything."* (teacher 10) Only those two community schools that are better equipped have larger special toilets for the pupils with special educational needs. Other teachers with pupils with physical disabilities argue that regular toilets are too small and not conducive for their pupils.

Interestingly, the government special schools are not better equipped than the other schools. In fact, at one special school the teacher notes that they are unable to enrol pupils with physical disabilities due to inappropriate infrastructure. Pupils with physical disabilities are enrolled to the other special school, wheelchairs and some mattresses are there but the rooms and the toilet are small. In particular there is lack of toys at those special schools. *Material to be seen is counters, boxes and some books. (field notes 17.9.2003) Materials for learning and instruction include only*

books and some few charts. Toys for children apart from a ball are not to be seen. (field notes 12.8.2003)

Human Resources. The majority of teachers agree that an ideal number of pupils with special educational needs for one adult, that is a teacher or assistant teacher would be five. For example a unit with 15 pupils should then have at least one teacher and two assistants. One teacher notes that the number of pupils and staff depends on the severity of the disabilities of the pupils.

It depends on what type of pupils you have in the class, like in our severely disabled class, it has got ten pupils and then there is one teacher and three assistant teachers. But with these others classes, we have a maximum of 16 children and then there should be one trained teacher and one assistant teacher.(teacher 4)

Two teachers who are currently teaching alone more than 30 pupils would be satisfied with having ten pupils for one teacher. The number of pupils, teachers and assistant staff is unequally distributed between the different schools. Some few schools have an ideal number of staff while other schools experience serious understaffing. On the other hand, some schools have special education teachers, who are assigned for other duties than teaching at the special education unit. Furthermore one teacher notes that teacher trainees should be assigned to all schools equally.

The government has employed assistant teachers to some schools while in other schools there are no assistants. While the government has declared free education it is not anymore hiring assistant teachers to the special education units.

We were told that we can hire a house-parent if we pay from the school but the government is not paying. Now at the school we don't have money. In the past the pupils contributed something. Now the government has said they shouldn't contribute anything.—(teacher 12)

Assistant teachers however would be needed in order to deal with pupils with severe disabilities.

The Ministry of Education does not provide the assistant teachers. The school has to pay wages for the assistant teachers and we don't have a lot of money for that. And those children again they need a lot of materials and its really expensive to have a class for severely disabled children. (teacher 4)

Teachers consider also their own education as important. Nine teachers are interested in further formal studies in special education (certificate, diploma, first degree). Six teachers are interested in getting more training in some particular skill area or attending workshops. Only one teacher did not mention any plans or interest in further formally educating herself but also she considers studying important. In addition to training, teachers mention the importance of meeting other special education teachers and people with knowledge of special education. At those schools which have many special education teachers concerns can be discussed together and advice can be given by a colleague. Additionally teachers mention that they get advice from the school administration, some meet their colleagues from other schools and some get advice from non governmental organisations with knowledge of special education. Three special education teachers without colleagues at their schools would like to get in contact with other special education teachers. “--And for teachers we need to meet more people who can tell us some skills. And we should see other special needs teachers. At least that you meet and sit together.” (teacher 1)

Some teachers were not aware of all other special education units in the same area and therefore could not get in contact with teachers at those units.

6.3 Educational Administration

Many government school teachers are rather critical towards the actions of the Ministry of Education. “Yes the government really expects us to do well, do wonders. But at the same time, the government is not doing much. They should at least come

and see how we are working with the children. They don't find time to do that.” (teacher 5) *“The government does not expect much because, because they don't even have interest. They think, maybe these children cannot do anything--.”* (teacher 6) *“They expect us to do well although in planning they don't involve special children. They don't include them.”* (teacher 11) Teachers are unsatisfied because little support is given to the special education schools and units. One teacher notes that little of the money a school receives from the Ministry of Education is given to the special education unit. The teacher further argues that a school with a special education unit does not receive more money than a school without the unit. Many special education units have received only books and teachers directly from the Ministry of Education but other resources like materials and assistant teachers have to be provided by the schools. However, schools have little money because they had to dispense with collecting schools fees from the pupils. Especially schools, which used a large amount of money obtained through school fees maintaining infrastructure are now struggling to pay their expenses. For example electricity bills and salaries for cleaning staff and guards have to be paid from the money a school receives from the government. One teacher tells that charts from her classroom were stolen because the school could not afford paying for a guard anymore. Another teacher admits that the school has to ask parents to contribute money but wants to keep the information confidential. Furthermore one teacher who however did not participate in the study but with whom I engaged in an informal talk argues that his school's administration is misusing money given by the government. One teacher argues that a part of the money a school receives should be given directly to the special education unit.

If help was given separated, straight specifically for the special needs. Like when they declared that now, it is free education, what they do is each term they give about 3million [Zambian Kwacha, equivalent to approximately 512€ according to the exchange rate of 5.7.2004] to each school and it has to be used as a school. Which means the special needs unit does not get much.(teacher 5)

How money is being used and what happens in the classrooms should be monitored. While teaching standards are not monitored some teachers can, as observed use their working time having long breaks, coming late or otherwise not being totally committed. Also teachers argue that the educational administration does not make effort to investigate the units and schools. Teachers feel that their units' or schools' needs are not taken in account because inspectors are not visiting their schools. Other schools have been visited a long time ago while some teachers say they have never had an inspector visit their school or unit. *"There should be support from the Ministry of Education like there should be properly trained inspectors to come and help the teachers to do their work."* (teacher 4) *"If there would be someone from the Ministry coming to see how we operate here. Like we are supposed to have inspectors. I think they should improve on that one so that we would be able to pull out to them what our needs are."* (teacher 5) Communication between educational administration and the schools could be enhanced. While the Ministry of Education has made policies and plans teachers do not have their own copies of them. Even if teachers are aware of the policy they might be unwilling to implement it if they feel that the Ministry of Education in response is not proving to be committed to translate the policy to the school level. On the other hand the Lusaka District Education Office does not have updated information about the special education provision available. At my visit to the District Education Office (12.8.2003) I was told that the office has asked head teachers of schools to indicate the number of pupils with special educational needs in their schools. However, this information for term one of 2003 concerning some schools markedly differed compared to the information I obtained directly from the special education teachers concerning term two. In addition, whether any interventions have been made to meet the special educational needs has not been asked.

One factor enhancing meaningful teaching in the special education units and schools seems to be an interested and supportive administration with some special education knowledge. Four teachers mention that their school's administration is supportive and understands the concerns of the teachers. Some of these teachers mention, that the school head or deputy head teacher is also trained in special education. *"Especially I get more encouragement from the headmaster. Whatever problem I have at the unit, he can at least assist me."* (teacher 12) *"There was a big*

problem but now its gone because we have new administration” (teacher 5). Two teachers argue that they have difficulties working with the administration. “They think there is nothing we are doing. That’s what they think. And sometimes they are saying: “How come you are three of you in one class, and those pupils you are teaching, where are they going to go?” (teacher 9) “So far they don’t consider our difficulties.”(teacher 11)

While the Ministry of Education has its responsibility in providing funds to the schools some teachers suggest that also the school and community should participate in raising money for the special education unit.

6.4 Attitudes and Sensitisation

Teachers have noticed that attitudes towards the disabled are changing towards better. Still, many people in the communities have negative attitudes. In addition, even teachers and other pupils in schools might have negative attitudes. Five teachers refer to negative attitudes in the communities which might cause parents to keep their disabled children at home.

I think the community has a negative attitude towards these children. So you may find that you try to encourage them here but when they go back in the community, they are discouraged. So no wonder their learning is being hindered--How the child is the parent is able to know. But then you find she does not open up because she is maybe afraid of being laughed at and all those. And a lot don’t accept that their child has got a problem. If you tell them their child needs extra attention, she needs special education they say “No, my child is normal”. That again is another problem.(teacher 13)

Some teachers argue that mainstream teachers at their school have had negative attitudes towards the disabled while four teachers have noticed negative attitudes of other pupils.

Most of them when they came here their friends used to laugh at them. So I sensitised the school. So even if they are disabled it is not their fault that they are like that- Like even the teachers, they had a problem if they see them: "These children of Mrs. Phiri [name changed], they cannot do anything." So even the teachers, I had to sensitise them. (teacher 12)

One teacher told of a case of abuse of her pupil during way to school. Children with disabilities are vulnerable and in might be in particular danger for abuse.

Many teachers mention that they have had to sensitise other teachers and pupils at their school, parents of the pupils with special educational needs and other parents. One teacher suggests that the negative attitudes are mainly due to lack of knowledge. *"Maybe I can say they are lacking this special education knowledge. So that's why they are not considering these learning difficulties children."*(teacher 8). After sensitising pupils and teachers attitudes have changed towards more positive. Teachers argue that they experienced more difficulties when the unit was newly opened but attitudes have changed while working and learning in the same environment.

To tell you the truth, Paula, as I noticed things are changing a bit as we are getting civilized. Because the time I came here it was horrible. Those children from the ordinary they couldn't come here, they said those are abnormal, we cannot mix with them. But it is not the case now. Because even our children go and cooperate so we do interact, even those they can come here. (teacher 5)

Nevertheless, teachers suggest that sensitisation is still needed within the school and in the communities.

In the community, I think I'm suggesting again sensitisation. If the community is sensitised, then it means learning can be effective. So like if they are not free to come in, I try to sensitise the parents and the community as a whole in order to have that. (teacher 13)

At schools the attitudes of the pupils change if there are possibilities to get in contact with each other. One teacher notes that toys at the special education unit interest also other pupils who then during breaks interact with the pupils from the special education unit. *“In the lower grades there are not much difficulties because you find that they play together. Especially when you give them toys, even the children from the mainstream want to play.” (teacher 11)* One teacher for pupils with hearing impairment suggests that pupils could learn together and that mainstream pupils should be taught some sign language. At a second visit to the school I actually found the teacher teaching science to a group of mainstream pupils and pupils with hearing impairment. Furthermore, one teacher says mainstream pupils at her school are helping pupils with severe disabilities during feeding time. At the same school pupils with special educational needs participate in common clubs with mainstream pupils. Many teachers at special education units or schools attached to mainstream schools mention that being physically integrated into a mainstream school is an advantage because it helps changing people’s attitudes towards disabled people towards more positive. In addition pupils with special educational needs gain courage to interact with others.

As the unit is, right here at this school, it’s integrated. It helps these children to learn how to interact with other pupils. Children with disabilities. The way they are looked at. By other pupils. They think that those children are, cannot do anything in society like that. Now, the way they are here, we try to educate even the other pupils in the mainstream. (teacher 9)

Some teachers mention as an advantage that their unit is placed in the community where the pupils live. However, building an inclusive school where all pupils can learn freely and interact together requires more than just physical integration, it requires effort and planning. Thus, as noted before having an inclusive school is not enough of the community is not inclusive. The teacher at the community special school referred to as using the individual education plan -curriculum argues her school to be inclusive and illustrates what inclusiveness means at the school and in the surrounding community.

Inclusive means that whatever activities the so-called normal children are doing, even our children at the special needs, they participate. And because of having an inclusive school, it enables the community also to be inclusive, we have inclusive home and inclusive community and also inclusive school. This was done through sensitising the community and they are aware of children with special needs and they even include them to all sorts of community activities of which is not the case in other communities, in other compounds. And then we have stakeholders, and because we have stakeholders, we have a good reference system whereby any child identified within our locality, those children are referred here. And because of that, we don't have children with special needs just in the compound without any form of education given to them. And because of that we have a lot of children in the home-based and the school-based programme. In other compounds it is not like that. You find that there is no good reference system and as a result of that, you'll find that some children are still being locked in houses. But in this compound, you never find a child like that. (teacher at the community special school using the individual education plan -curriculum)

In addition, regular education teachers at the school participate in workshops on special education and pupils with special educational needs are integrated into the mainstream if their progress allows it.

6.5 Providing Education for All

Barriers to providing education for pupils with special educational needs seem to be insufficient identification services and provision of special education. In particular children with severe disabilities and mobility problems seem to be excluded from schooling. Furthermore, in addition to basic education, affordable skill training facilities are needed.

Teachers are concerned because pupils with special educational needs are identified late. Without knowledge of special education regular education teachers

might not be able to identify pupils in need of special education. In addition, one teacher suggests that some regular education teachers remain silent on difficulties for they fear that their teaching methods might be criticised. Most teachers argue that regular education teachers need to have more knowledge of special education. One teacher argues additionally that the current special education teacher training is not practical enough. She demands longer periods of practicum at schools. She further continues that teachers should be taught how to make an educational assessment which could be directly applicable for planning of the curriculum. Furthermore, some teachers note that early identification of children with disabilities in the communities is important. Working together with health care centres and other stakeholders in the communities is necessary.

Then we have cases of children who come in too late. Those who have problems to help them to catch up. I think it's the problem with identification. They identify late. And if parents open up early enough to bring these children so that we can start our interventions early. (teacher 13)

The majority of teachers argue that the current special education provision cannot cater for all children in need of special education in their schools area but they demand for more units. Most teachers consider providing special education at units attached to mainstream as the best solution. *"We need more units, at least 3-4 units in this area. Because the unit here is overloaded. And some children come from very far distances."*(teacher 10) Some teachers argue that there should be special education provision at all schools.

I think in each government school there should be a special needs unit and that unit should have its own block. Because sometimes we fail to enrol some other pupils like with physical disabilities or mental retardation because we don't have the facilities in place. I would really love to see where they introduce special needs units in all schools. (teacher 9)

One teacher illustrates why integration of pupils with special educational needs into regular classes at his school is not meaningful at the moment.

That cannot be possible meanwhile, because not all teachers are trained in special education, they don't have the methodology to use. But again if we look at the classrooms, they are quite, there are a lot of children in class when again these children will be neglected. Although we say inclusive education is alright, yes it is but the government needs first to train all the teachers so that they can be in class, the teacher will know what to do with that child. Unlike in the past when the child could be caught and then the teacher would tell the child you are dull. They are not dull, they just need to be helped.(teacher 13)

Although most teachers suggest that the special education provision should be expanded one teacher reminds that more units should not be opened if the government is unable to maintain quality at the existing units.

Only three special schools enrol pupils with severe or multiple physical disabilities. In addition, during my observations I saw pupils with obvious mental disabilities like Down's syndrome only at two special schools. Most teachers consider that they could enrol pupils with more severe disabilities than the current pupils if they had the facilities needed. Teachers note that additional resources like materials and staff are needed to cater for pupils with severe disabilities. Some teachers argue that even if the school could take pupils with physical disabilities a barrier to education is that pupils with mobility problems face difficulties accessing the schools. Many teachers mention that they have identified pupils with severe disabilities in the communities but are unable to enrol those children. Only two teachers at special education units suggest that pupils with severe disabilities are better catered for at special schools. Also a teacher at the separate special school argues that pupils with multiple disabilities still need special schools. However, the government special schools seem to be no better equipped than special education units. The teacher at the separate special school says that the school is willing to take all pupils and it is possible that the attitudes towards pupils with severe disabilities are more welcoming at a special school.

A parent participating in a focus group discussion (24.9.2003) concerning the survey of persons with disabilities and mental challenges in Lusaka, conducted by the Parents Partnership Association for Children with Special Needs argues that her two disabled children are excluded from school because the children are not toilet

trained. Only a special school would be willing to take the children but the school is too far and the parent does not want her children to go to the school. However, one solution for teaching children with severe disabilities is the home-based education programme co-ordinated by a non governmental organisation, Action on Disability and Development. In the programme, voluntary special education teachers go to teach disabled children in their homes. However, all schools have not adapted the programme and, according to the mother of the disabled children the home-based education teacher visited only a few times in a month which she argues is not enough. One teacher argues that the Ministry of Education should put more effort encouraging programmes like the home-based education programme.

Additionally, teachers are concerned with further educational opportunities of their pupils. Some teachers suggest that skills training programmes should be brought to communities close to the pupils' homes. Some teachers are concerned with the costs associated with skills training colleges. One teacher notes that skills training centres in the communities would be necessary not only for pupils with special educational needs but also for those mainstream pupils who drop out of formal schooling before completing their basic education.

And to put in a lot, what we call community centres. Where these children who have completed grade seven, or their level here they can go to those centres where they can learn skills. We don't have any centre. So when these children go up to grade seven, for example they drop off and that will be the end. No follow up has been made whatsoever. (teacher 13)

Two teachers demand the government to ensure employment opportunities to persons with disabilities.

In terms of education of children with special needs, those who are going to skills training. The government should find ways to employ them. Because most of them, after finishing skills training they still go home and don't find employment. (teacher 14)

One community school has its own skills training programme that offers tailoring, needling using machines, catering or agriculture. At this school, plans are there for starting a sheltered employment project. It has been realised that even after skill training disabled people are not easily employed in the communities. The teacher argues that people still look at a persons' disability, not on his or her abilities.

Summary of Challenges. Figure 7 below summarises some challenges of special education identified during this study and some suggested and implemented actions to meet these challenges. The challenge of poverty is acknowledged but a solution cannot be only educational. However, one solution to the poverty of families causing some children to be hungry and unable to concentrate at school would be providing school meals for pupils. Regardless of the importance of concrete learning materials or human resources are it might be more meaningful to invest in food. If pupils are undernourished even the most effective and well planned learning cannot be meaningful. However, malnutrition is not the case at all schools or with all pupils.

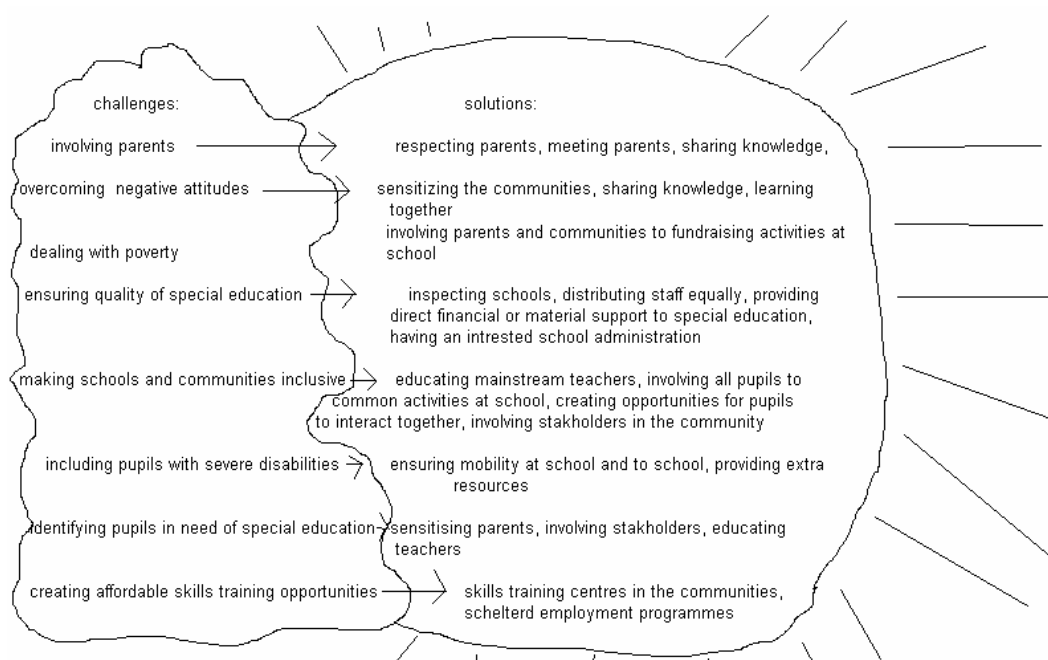


FIGURE 7: Summary of challenges and suggested solutions

7 SPECIAL EDUCATION IN CHANGE

7.1 Aims and the Society

7.1.1 The Legitimisation of Special Education

Reasons for educating pupils with special educational needs conceived by special education teachers and identified in this study are grouped in the categories: a right to education, pupils as educable, a need for pupils to become independent and a need for pupils to be part of the society. The legitimisation of special education has in Western countries proceeded following sequences from traditional beliefs, religious charity and the society's responsibility for the poor through the normalisation movement finally to the inclusion ideology (e.g. Ihatsu 1995, Coleridge 1993). Some thinking in these different sequences can be recognized in the answers of the Zambian teachers. Savolainen (1997) argues that thinking in different sequences coexists in Ethiopia. This study suggests that this might be true as well in the Zambian context. However, rather than setting the answers into any sequences it might be insightful to notice that all reasons reflect the state of being of the society now.

The first argument, a right to education for all is following internationally recognized policies such the Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989), the Jomtien World Declaration on Education for All (1990) followed by the Dakar Framework for Action (2000), the Standard Rules for the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1994) and the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (1994) as well as the Zambian Policy (Educating Our Future MOE, 1996). This argument is eligible for all pupils disregarding of their disability. The second argument, pupils are educable might reflect an opposition to thinking that disabled people are not believed to be able to take part in formal education. This argument is an argument clearly used for distinctively justifying education of the disabled or special education. The first two arguments seem to reflect attitudes in the

society and at the policy level while the latter two, the need for independence and socialisation seem to reflect issues central to participation in the society. Additionally, the first two arguments seem to refer to intrinsic purposes of education as argued by White, while the last two refer to purposes related to educational outcomes such as the basic good of the pupil (White 1982) Independence is considered important for survival; for example being able to engage in simple informal economic activity. Independence might be of particular importance in an urban community where family ties might be weaker than in rural communities. Socialisation on the other hand is necessary for interacting in the society. The needs for independence and socialisation are arguments that could justify education of all pupils but the relative emphasis teachers put on them suggests that they are of particular importance to pupils with disabilities. For example teachers argue that pupils with disabilities do not learn these skills unintended at home but they need schooling in order to learn. Teachers' thinking seems to reflect international policies but also the state of being of the Zambian society. Figure 8 summarises the different reasons special education teachers use legitimising the education of their pupils.

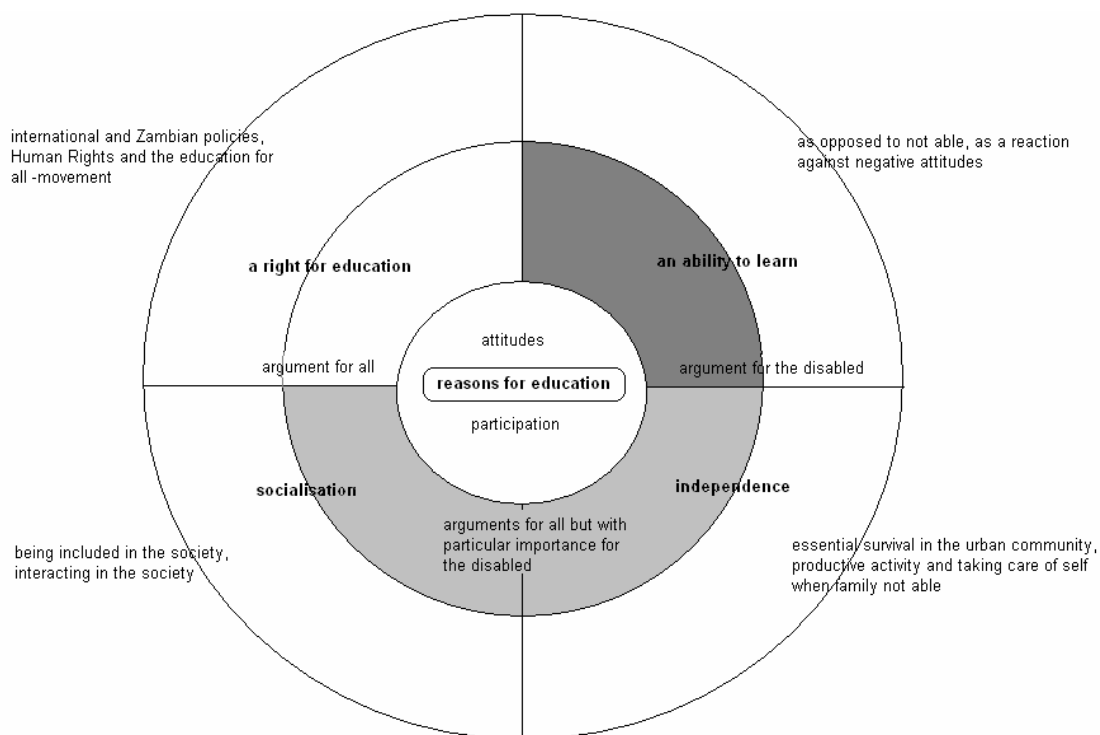


FIGURE 8: Reasons for special education conceived by special education teachers

7.1.2 Whose Aims?

The aims of special education stated by the teachers are grouped in the categories: leading an independent life in future, learning survival skills, being included in the society, interacting with others, developing personal awareness, learning academic skills and proceeding in education. Clearly, the aim of being included in the society is set not only towards the pupils with special educational needs but also towards the society to accept and include them. As teachers note while teaching pupils with special educational needs they are also educating other pupils, the school and the community. Teachers notice that also the community around has to change and is changing when pupils with special educational needs are included in schools within the community. However, although the aim of inclusion in the society is set towards the society, it might be considered to be important for the good of the pupil with special educational needs rather than the good of the society (see White 1982). Some aims such as responsible citizenship relate also to the good of the society but it seems that teachers are mostly concerned with the personal well-being and survival of their pupils rather than with the good of the society as a whole. On the other hand, teachers acknowledge that personal well-being and independent survival of their pupils would benefit at least the families and relatives of the pupil in the sense that they would be relieved from looking after the pupil and could engage in productive activity.

The aims stated by the teachers mainly correspond to the aims of the Zambian educational policy but with some differences. The teachers did not mention any aims related to physical, moral or spiritual development or the development of each pupil's imaginative, affective and creative qualities. This might be due to considering other aims as more important or these aims might have been included into other aims such as developing personal awareness. According to White's categorisation it could be assumed that the aims related to realising the basic good of the pupils outweigh those aims associated with rather intrinsic purposes (White 1982) The ability to interact with others seems to be a distinctive aim not mentioned in the Zambian policy. However the ability to communicate is mentioned in the policy as a specified goal. When looking at teachers' views on special education it is meaningful to compare them with the aims of lower and middle basic education rather than comparing with specified goals for different grades. This is done in table 8.

TABLE 8: Aims of lower and middle basic education and how they relate to teachers' views on the aims of special education (Educating Our Future. MOE 1996 p. 30)

Aims of lower and middle basic education outlined by the Ministry of Education	How the aims relate to teachers' views on aims of special education
1. To ensure that pupils acquire essential literacy, numeracy and communication skills.	→ <i>these skills are central according to teachers, who however note that goals in these skills might have to be set lower</i>
2. To enable pupils to develop practical skills in one or more relevant areas.	→ <i>very important according to teachers</i>
3. To nurture a ability, appropriate to the pupil's stage of development, to think reflectively, logically, scientifically and critically.	→ <i>an ability of thinking was not mentioned and also not really nurtured for in the observed classroom situations</i>
4. To foster healthy living, physical co-ordination and growth.	→ <i>healthy living is emphasised as part of independence skills, however physical co-ordination and growth are not mentioned</i>
5. To promote positive social behaviour and skills for coping with negative pressure.	→ <i>these aims are mentioned as part of socialisation and interacting with others</i>
6. To encourage the formation of socially desirable attitudes.	→ <i>this aim is partly included in the aims of developing personal awareness</i>
7. To shape the development of a personally held set of civic, moral and spiritual values.	→ <i>some teachers mention the aim of responsible citizenship, however little emphasis on moral or spiritual values</i>
8. To further the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of Zambia's democratic and cultural institutions.	→ <i>not mentioned but could be included in the aim of citizenship</i>
9. to facilitate the development of each pupil's imaginative, affective and creative qualities.	→ <i>little emphasis on this aim</i>

While some of these aims receive little attention from the special education teachers they put more emphasis on the three priorities set for lower and middle basic education. These priorities are to master essential literacy and numeracy skills; to acquire a set of life-skills, values and attitudes which will lay a solid foundation for school-leavers' ability later on in life to cater for themselves and their families and to

form essential life-protecting skills, values, attitudes and a behaviour pattern which will enable the learners to lead a healthy life and sustain their environment (MOE 2000). Out of these priorities life-skills seem to be of particular importance to pupils with special educational needs. Essential literacy and numeracy are also considered important by the teachers. What essential includes might however have to be determined differently for some pupils. Life-protecting skills such as taking care of self in terms of hygiene and nutrition are as well considered important by special education teachers.

Interestingly, in a study on aims of education in special schools and units in Kenya Muuya (2002) has identified traditional aims of special education in terms of control, containment and care as outweighing a broad and balanced educational provision. She argues further that relatively little emphasis was placed on preparation for employment. My study however suggests that many Zambian special education teachers are aiming at a relatively broad and balanced educational provision for their pupils and that most aims relate to preparation for life, survival, interaction and self sustaining productive activity in the society. The aims of special education are, as teachers note rather similar to mainstream educational aims. Only what is emphasised and which specific goals the aims include might be different. Although all pupils with special educational needs might not become economically productive citizens relative independence and self care skills would undoubtedly benefit the pupils and their families. However, teachers acknowledge that some pupils can become economically productive citizens. It should be also noted that, the aims set by the Ministry of Education might be different than aims perceived by mainstream education teachers. Whether teachers' views on aims in special education differ from views of teachers in mainstream education should be studied further. Muuya (2002) notes that in Kenya, a gap remains between the ambitions of the national policy and actual provision at school level. Also my study suggests that the Zambian national policy has not reached implementation at school level. However Zambian teachers seem to be aware of the national policy and its ambitions but are unable to implement all desired aims due to lack of support and resources.

7.1.3 How Do the Aims and the Curriculum Relate?

Brennan argues that a distinction should be made between the *planned* and actually *taught curriculum* (Brennan 1985). In fact, comparing the aims with the curriculum different tendencies can be found. Some aims seem to be expected to be achieved with little relation to the curriculum but rather by attending school in general, some aims are included in the planned curriculum but are not transferred to the implemented curriculum and finally some aims are also transferred to the actually implemented curriculum. In addition, the curriculum might foster some issues not mentioned as aims and not necessary planned. Finally although some issues are implemented in the curriculum they might still not be learnt. However all these are only tendencies and some aims might be partly but not very systematically included and implemented in the curriculum. Also some variation between schools takes place. Table 9 below suggest a relation of the aims to the curriculum.

TABLE 9: Aims of special education and their relation to the curriculum

Aims of special education	Relation to the curriculum
Leading an independent life	→ <i>planned curriculum but not always implemented</i>
Learning survival skills	→ <i>planned curriculum but not always implemented</i>
Being included in the society	→ <i>some relation to the curriculum, relation to attending school</i> → <i>an aim also for the society</i>
Interacting with others	→ <i>little relation to the curriculum, relation to attending school</i>
Developing personal awareness	→ <i>some relation to the implemented curriculum, relation to attending school</i>
Learning academic skills	→ <i>planned and implemented curriculum</i>
Proceeding in education	→ <i>planned and implemented curriculum</i>

The aims of leading an independent life in future and learning survival skills are included in the planned curriculum at most schools. Planned activities for achieving these aims include teaching of pre-vocational skills, teaching activities for daily

living and also teaching basic literacy, communication skills and numeracy. However these activities are often not taught due to lack of resources. In addition, self-reliance and independence, according to teachers are likely to be achieved when, by attending school, pupils gain courage and self-esteem. The aim of developing personal awareness including good self-esteem and courage to act is also included in the implemented curriculum at some schools. For example, pupils who need more courage are given special tasks and responsibilities. On the other hand interventions for developing personal awareness might not be very systematically planned at most schools.

The aims of being included in the society and interacting with others are considered important but included in the curriculum only partly. Some teachers acknowledge that when self-care skills are taught pupils are likely to be better included in the society. Also learning to communicate in English, learning basic skills and knowledge are included in the planned and implemented curriculum. Common experiences, knowledge and skills of communication might help pupils to socialise with others. Nabuzoka and Ronning examined in their study the social acceptance of children with intellectual disabilities in an integrated school setting in Zambia (1997). Their study suggests that peer attitudes towards children with disabilities can be improved through structured exposure to them. However, only some schools participating in my study had planned interventions for interaction of pupils with disabilities with their non-disabled peers. Learning to interact with others and learning to communicate seem to be expected to be achieved with little intervention.

Learning academic skills and proceeding in education are aims planned for in the curriculum. The implemented curriculum also pursues to achieve these aims. A foundation of basic skills and knowledge is taught to the pupils. Some pupils have actually achieved the aim of proceeding in education. Indeed, aims related to academic skills seem to dominate the implemented curriculum.

Aims that are more directly planned for in the curriculum such as learning life skills and academic skills might be only partly achieved. Some aims might not be transferred to the implemented curriculum due to lack of resources while some skills which are taught might not be learnt as effectively as possible. Learning to communicate is considered important but apart from teaching sign language in units

with pupils with hearing impairment few systematic interventions are taking place in order to achieve the aim. Some teachers use simple methods like communication through pictures while others expect their pupils with speech problems to learn communication in natural situations engaged with others. One problem mentioned by a teacher is the absence of training on speech therapy or augmentative and alternative communication methods in Zambia.

In addition to the aims mentioned teachers consider creative activities and play as important for their pupils but direct connection of these activities to the aims was not mentioned. However, it can be assumed that these activities relate to the aims of learning to socialise, learning to interact and developing personal awareness.

This study suggests that many aims have to do with the learning environment at school. These aims include being able to socialise, being able to interact with others and developing personal awareness. Few teachers have planned systematic interventions in order to achieve these aims. However, teachers act in ways that might enhance achieving these aims. On the other hand factors in the learning environment in some schools support achieving these aims. Indeed, White (1982) argues that the curriculum is only one means of achieving educational aims. Other means are associated with the ethos of the school and the community. White suggests that teaching staff at schools should achieve a consensus on the educational aims at their schools in order to foster realisation of the aims (White 1982). Indeed, it seems that aims such as enhancing interaction of disabled pupils with their peers might be better and more systematically realised if all teachers at the school would agree on the importance of the aims and be committed on achieving them. Additionally, teachers and parents should not see their work as self-contained but as part of the wider life of society. Educational aims are likely to be achieved if they relate to the community and if also the community fosters positive attitudes towards achieving those aims (White 1982). Also African writers like Serpell suggest that traditional educational resources in the communities should be used and might be more relevant for much of the learning than a Western system of formal schooling (Serpell 1996). While communities and their potential in the realisation of educational aims is acknowledged, schools have a responsibility in working together with communities.

7.2 Curriculum and Schools

7.2.1 Teachers Have the Responsibility

In this study the following issues required of a special education curriculum were identified; it needs careful planning, assessment and evaluation, teaching methods need to be individualised, the content might have to be modified or reduced and teaching material must be concrete. Teachers seem to have a major responsibility in adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils. Also the Basic School Curriculum Framework (MOE 2000) and the Teacher's Curriculum Manual (MOE 2001b) place the responsibility for adapting the goals and the teaching methods in order to suit the pupils' strengths and weaknesses on the teacher.

This study suggests that at schools following the adapted curriculum approach individual needs or special educational needs are considered most systematically in the actual teaching situation or planning directly relevant to the teaching situation while long term planning is made at a more general level.

According to Brennan (1985) special educational needs have certain common implications for a curriculum, that is; clear identification of special educational needs, extra-careful planning of curricula to meet them, continuous reassessment of need related to revision of curriculum, planning of interaction between normal and special curriculum where appropriate, individualising of curriculum aims and teaching where necessary and careful preparation of the teachers with the sensitivity and insight required for the task. These implications were considered especially well in the individual education-plan curriculum used at one school. The major differences of the approach compared to the adapted curriculum approach are that the curriculum is systematically planned and evaluated and individual education plans are made for the pupils after assessing their educational needs. However, the approach requires having continuous staff training and meetings so that teachers become confident in their actions and committed to their work.

The figures below summarise how the adapted curriculum, and the individual education plan –curriculum, are planned. Figure 9 illustrates that many issues are considered when planning the adapted curriculum but planning might not be very cohesive and systematic. Figure 10 on the contrary illustrates the continuity and systematic planning of the individual education plan –curriculum.

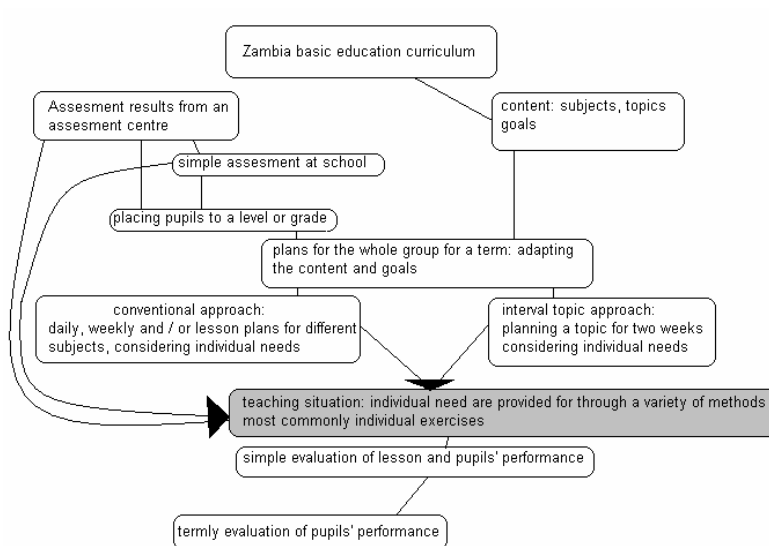


FIGURE 9: Planning the adapted curriculum

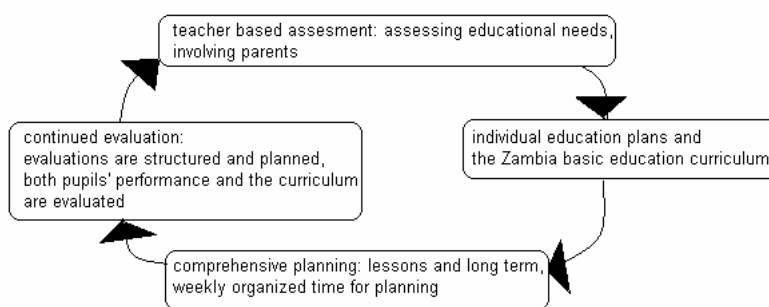


FIGURE 10: The individual education plan-curriculum

While individual needs were provided for in the teaching situations through a variety of ways the majority of lessons observed involved writing or copying from the board without necessary understanding. Copying into the notebooks seems to be a predominating way of teaching any issue in Zambian classrooms also at the mainstream (field notes, i.e. June 2003). This approach might not always be meaningful in particular in special education. It seems that the principles of the new curriculum have not fully reached implementation at school level and that the methods at many schools would still have to be developed further to include more developmentally appropriate, child-centred activities and methods that help children in their thinking. This would require teachers to get appropriately orientated to the new Zambian Basic Education Course -curriculum, its aims which acknowledge critical, reflective and scientific thinking and methods that encourage learning by doing. On the other hand also resources are needed in order to implement the new curriculum.

In two classrooms where the teacher seemed to provide little individual help for the pupils there were pupils with mental retardation. It is possible that teaching methods in particular when teaching pupils with mental retardation would have to be developed. A reason for poorly accommodating pupils with mental retardation might be a lack of knowledge and understanding on mental retardation. On the other hand it might be that the teachers are not fully committed to their teaching or that their attitudes towards mentally retarded pupils are negative. The other teacher observed was one of the interviewed teachers. In the interview however she did not show negative attitudes towards her pupils but she was rather frustrated towards her present working conditions.

It might also be that teachers consider it difficult to plan a developmentally appropriate curriculum for pupils with severe disabilities. Often, the curriculum is based on subjects when it should rather be based on individual abilities and needs of the pupils. Teachers are likely to need additional training in order to make and implement individual education plans appropriate also for pupils with severe disabilities.

7.2.3 Quality Education and Ways for a Meaningful Curriculum

While challenges exist and the curriculum could still be revised this study showed that all schools have their strengths and many teachers are innovative in their teaching methods. In order to develop a meaningful curriculum at all schools sharing experiences and working together between schools could be solutions. Quality education seems to be about more than only the curriculum but issues at the schools' learning environment seem to be important. One issue that was discussed with the teachers is inclusive schooling. In this study an inclusive school is referred to as a school where pupils can interact together and where special educational needs are provided for. This study suggests that in order for special educational needs to be provided for separate special education classrooms are still needed. From actually implemented and suggested organisational issues it can be concluded that the following are significant when considering quality education, inclusive schools and a meaningful curriculum.

- Committed teachers and administration, having knowledge of special educational needs and special education
- Possibilities for staff development and orientation to the new Zambian curriculum
- Parents, community and teachers having ownership of the school and decision making at the school level
- Involved and inclusive community
- Time for planning and staff meetings
- Planned interaction opportunities between pupils with special educational needs and their peers at the mainstream
- Identification of special educational needs when problems are still small
- A systematically planned and evaluated curriculum
- Accessible school environment and infrastructure
- Possibilities for skills training for all pupils
- Enough classrooms
- School meals

The following issues at classroom level in the special education classrooms seem to be significant for a meaningful curriculum.

- Creative, committed and caring teachers and assistant staff
- Considering a variety of issues such as giving instructions, individualising exercises, arranging the classrooms and modifying the pace of teaching in order to meet individual needs
- A meaningful staff pupil ratio
- Sufficient school hours in order to be able to teach meaningfully
- Enough appropriate teaching material
- Suitable classrooms with possibly special chairs, desks, carpet or mattress
- Involved parents

It is notable, that many of these issues have to do with human resources and using them effectively. If staff is committed and has an opportunity for training much could be done enhancing the quality of education. All issues related to quality schools and meaningful curricula do not demand high financial inputs but rather good planning. Some material resources like teaching aids can be self made if manila-paper, glue and markers are available and teachers have enough ideas for making meaningful teaching aids. A meaningful staff pupil ratio at some schools could be achieved by assigning special education teachers to really teach in special education and to divide pupils for each teacher into two shifts. Teachers, parents and community members could plan and implement fundraising and sensitisation activities in the community. However, also financial resources are needed. Maintaining current and building new infrastructure, ensuring enough appropriate teaching material and having possibilities for staff development demand financial investments. Teachers again are not likely to be committed if their working conditions are not improved.

Interestingly, many of the same issues related to quality education, inclusive schools and a meaningful curriculum have been identified also during studies in other countries. Eleweke and Rodda (2002) discuss the challenge of inclusive education in developing countries. They suggest that inclusion is not about much equipment and facilities but rather important are communities that recognize

differences and support learning. Educational authorities should develop policies that focus on meeting the needs of learners with special educational needs not only at regular schools but also in the community. The importance of educational policies and local educational authorities in supporting inclusive learning practices is recognized also by other writers (Ainscow, M, Farrell, P, Tweddle, D & Malki, G. 1999). Ainscow et al. argue that among others also funding strategies have to be revised to support the inclusive policies. Furthermore, Ainscow recognizes that inclusive schools require improvements in school administration and management. For example existing practices and knowledge should be fully utilized and available resources should be used more effectively (Ainscow 2000) Mäkihonko (2002) suggests that collaboration between different actors is needed and that the role of communities is vital in building inclusive schools. She further argues that teacher training modules should be revised in order to respond to the demands of inclusive education. Booth (2000) notes that developing human resources is central when developing inclusive learning centres while also the conditions for learning must be improved and inclusive policies, teaching and learning practices should be developed. Eklinth (2000) calls for ongoing evaluation, cooperation with parents, revising teaching materials and getting familiar with each pupil and his or her personality.

7.3 New Policy and Meeting the Challenges

Comparing my findings with the study of Special Educational Needs in the North-Western and Western provinces of Zambia (Kasonde and Moberg 2001) suggests that challenges are similar across the country. Kasonde and Moberg claim that statistics and available information are unreliable, many pupils are excluded from schools, attitudes towards inclusive education are rather negative and many pedagogical barriers exist. Reasons for exclusion from school are poverty, long distance from schools and the society's negative attitudes towards children with special educational needs. Pedagogical barriers identified by Kasonde and Moberg include lack or shortage of appropriate teaching and learning material and

equipment, lack of parental sensitisation and poor training of teachers for inclusive education and teaching practices. Most of these challenges were identified also in this study concerning Lusaka. The data on the Survey of Disabilities and Mental challenges in Lusaka (PPACSN, unpublished data obtained on 10.7.2003) also supports the findings made by Kasonde and Moberg in that poverty and long distance from schools offering appropriate special education are reasons for exclusion from school. Teachers interviewed in my study argue that parent might have negative attitudes and therefore not bring their disabled children to school. Also Kasonde and Moberg suggest sensitisation of parents. On the contrary the data on the Survey of Disabilities and Mental challenges in Lusaka suggests that a barrier to education rather than negative attitudes of parents is inadequate educational provision in their neighbourhood. For example 87.1 % of the interviewed parents rated the access to special education in their community as none on a five point scale from very good to none. It might be that some parents are unaware of all available special education facilities. On the other hand all special education facilities might not be appropriate or accessible to all pupils with special educational needs.

Kasonde and Moberg suggest that the flow of information should be enhanced, parents and communities should be sensitised, non-governmental organisations should be involved in sensitisation, more schools should be build, children with special educational needs should be assisted materially and financially, schools should be appropriately funded and all teachers should be trained in inclusive education. Similar suggestions can be concluded from this study. Additionally Kasonde and Moberg (2001) argue that the Education Act of 1966 should be amended, the education system should be decentralised and collaboration and coordination between the Ministry of Education and other instances should be strengthened. The parents interviewed in the Survey on Disabilities and Mental Challenges in Lusaka suggest that the government should build special schools with adequate facilities, health care institutions and skills training centres within the communities (PPACSN, unpublished data obtained on 10.7.2003).

Many of the challenges identified in this study as well as the study by Kasonde and Moberg have been recognized earlier by the Ministry of Education. (MOE 1996) In order to meet the challenges the education system of Zambia is undergoing a restructuring process. Also the curriculum is being revised and the curriculum

documents referred to in this study are part of the new curriculum (Basic School Curriculum Framework MOE, 2000, Teacher's Curriculum Manual MOE, 2001b). Many challenges identified in this study seem to be common for educating all pupils, not only those with special educational needs. The Ministry of Education recognizes that all pupils do not have access to education, that infrastructure and material resources at many schools are inadequate, class-size is too big and many pupils drop out of the education system before completing basic education. More teachers, schools and skills training opportunities are needed and the curriculum must be reformed. In addition, the Ministry recognizes the need for staff development and improving working conditions of the teachers. Furthermore, involving the communities and parents is considered important and in particular, needs of vulnerable and poor children ought to be considered. In the educational administration, many improvements are planned.

However, there are also some particular challenges facing special education. In regard to special education, the Ministry (MOE 1996) recognizes that only a small percentage of physically and mentally impaired children are catered for in schools. The lack of sufficient educational provision for pupils with severe disabilities, inadequate identification and negative attitudes in families are stated as reasons. The management and supervision of special education is over-centralized and understaffed and therefore there is lack of information on needs and how they are being met which again results in poor planning. The policy of the Ministry of Education regarding special educational needs is to ensure equality of educational opportunity for children with special educational needs, to be committed to providing education of particularly good quality to pupils with special educational needs and to improve and strengthen the supervision and management of special education across the country (MOE 1996). In table 10 issues recognized in this study, related to improving the special education provision are compared with strategies of the Ministry of Education regarding special education.

TABLE 10: Issues related to improving the special educational provision in Lusaka and the Ministry's strategy concerning special education. (Educating Our Future, MOE 1996 pp. 69-70)

Issues recognized in this study	The Ministry's strategy concerning special education
Inspectors for special education: monitoring and assessing needs of the units and schools	→ <i>providing adequate supervision of special education programmes</i> → <i>the Ministry will enlarge and decentralise the special education inspectorate</i>
School staff educated to understand special educational needs	-
Sensitised community and families	-
Provision for pupils with severe disabilities	→ <i>where need is established the Ministry will participate in provision of new special schools for the severely impaired</i> → <i>provide outreach for children whose impairments prevent normal attendance at school</i>
Early identification of children with special educational needs	→ <i>decentralise services for identification, assessment and placement of children with special educational needs working closely with the Ministry of Health</i>
Appropriate infrastructure at schools	→ <i>the Ministry will integrate pupils with special educational needs into mainstream institutions and will provide them with necessary facilities</i> → <i>prescribing specifications for special furniture, equipment, aids and infrastructure provision</i>
Appropriate teaching material	→ <i>designing appropriate curricula and teaching materials</i>
Financial help straight to the special education unit	→ <i>will dispense with all direct educational costs for children with special educational needs and will provide bursaries for such individual at tertiary level</i>
Distributing teachers and staff resources equally, providing assistant teachers	→ <i>training an adequate number of teachers in special education</i>
Further educational opportunities	-
Distributing information	→ <i>the information system on special education and national needs in this area will be improved</i>

Many necessary improvements are included in the strategy such as enlarging the inspectorate and improving the information system. Some issues recognized as needs in this study were however not included in the Ministry's strategy concerning pupils with special educational needs. For example, no notion on assistant teachers was made and no plans for expanding further educational opportunities exist. On the other hand, some strategies such as dispensing with all direct cost for children with special educational needs sound ambitious while at the moment many special education schools and units had received nothing else than books from the Ministry of Education.

The policy was introduced in 1996 and at the moment, many teachers feel that the Ministry has high expectations but nothing to give. Good policies and plans do not help if teachers feel that their schools' needs are not considered. Both this study and the study by Kasonde and Moberg (2001) suggest that implementation of the new policy has not reached the level of schools. Again it is controversial from the government to declare free primary education if schools are left with little financial assistance to meet the expenses needed for appropriate educational provision.

While the policy is promising much attention must be now paid on translating it on the school level. More specified plans and actions are needed to develop equal educational opportunities for all.

8 DISCUSSION

When deciding to conduct this study I engaged in an ambitious project. I was going to conduct a study in a foreign country and in a foreign language to me. In addition, little research on the specific subject was available, particularly derived from and African context. Furthermore, conducting the study in a Zambian context where accessing information is rather difficult would be another challenge. However, I was ready to tackle the challenges and enthusiastic about my study.

The purpose of this study was to describe how special education teachers view the aims of education in their own units and schools, what kind of a curriculum they use and what challenges there are in moving towards the aims and implementing the curriculum. I wanted to document in a narrative way what teachers have to say, drawing a lively and accurate picture of the schools and units and the work of teachers. Basically, the research problems are all addressed in this study. However, the research problems were broad, the number of participating schools and teachers was relatively big and I obtained much data. Keeping the data compact proved to be challenging. Concentrating on fewer cases would have probably brought up deeper information and understanding on the research problems. Now many issues are dealt at a rather cursory level. Description would have been more illustrative if answers of teachers and their actions in the classrooms would have been tightly connected. This however would have required longer observation periods at each school and further interviews of the same teachers. The interviews in my study were relatively structured although I did not strictly follow the structure. However, presenting the data derived from relatively structured interviews in a qualitative way was challenging. Therefore, the aim of narrative thick description did not realise as well as possible. Another problem was confidentiality due to which I decided not to compare different cases. Therefore, most of the data is presented in general without much reference to the context where it derived from. This clearly is a restriction of the study. Furthermore, I should have spent more time reading literature. Simply finding right literature and relevant studies proved to be time consuming and some references to other studies remain at a rather cursory level. Again, some information

related to education in Zambia could not be traced back to the original source (CSO 1993, GRZ 1977, MOE 1992 and MOE 2001a) and I had to refer to them through a second hand source, the study of Kasonde and Moberg (2001).

Although there are a number of restrictions, the data I collected and documented about special education classrooms and teachers' views on a broad range of issues is unique and valuable as such. Little documented information is available on life in the Zambian special education classrooms and views of special education teachers. Although the analysis might have been deeper with concentration on fewer cases this data revealed many interesting insights. The interviews and observations supported each other and additional interviews and observations provided constantly a better understanding on the research problems. Considering the broad research topics and the amount of data I have however, been able to present the data in a relatively concise way especially due to the figures and tables summarising the main findings. To my opinion, in particular *chapter seven* where the main findings are interpreted and discussed comparing them to previous research and Zambian policy is a worthwhile summation of the answers to the research problems.

Teachers mention a variety of educational aims for their pupils with special educational needs. Independent survival in the society seems to be a central aim to which all other aims relate. Teachers emphasise learning practical skills and argue that also academic skills are learnt for practical purposes. Interestingly, some aims seem to be set towards the society. The aims as well as the reasons for education of pupils with special educational needs seem to reflect the Zambian society and needs emerging from it. However, teachers seem to be aware also of international policies and trends in education. The aims correspond to the Zambian policy but little emphasis is on the development of pupils' imaginative and creative abilities or moral and spiritual development. This might be due to considering other aims, directly related to basic goods of the pupils as outweighing those related to more intrinsic aims. However, regarding some aims there are little or no systematic planning and actions in order to achieve them. On the other hand, not only the curriculum but the whole school ethos and the community around can foster achievement of the aims. Nevertheless, more resources and more systematic planning would be needed in order for the aims to be realised. In particular teaching of practical skills is often impossible due to absence or lack of material.

The curriculum at the special education units and schools is mainly following the Zambia Basic Education Course –curriculum. Teachers are responsible for planning the curriculum and adapting it to meet the needs of their pupils. Planning at most schools is based on subjects and levels of pupils. More systematic planning takes place at one school where individual education plans are made for each pupil and where the curriculum is evaluated constantly. It seems that a major strength at this school is that teachers are not only given the responsibility for planning but they are provided with workshops and opportunities for staff development. However, at most schools individual needs of pupils are considered in a variety of ways in the actual teaching situations and planning related to the daily lessons. Due to a smaller number of pupils compared to mainstream classrooms, clear and concrete instructions, individual exercises and individual attention pupils at the special education units and schools are allowed to proceed in an individualised pace according to their abilities. However, findings suggest that teaching methods would still need to be further developed to include more child-centred learning and methods that encourage pupils' own thinking and reasoning. Furthermore, appropriate methods for teaching pupils with severe disabilities would have to be developed. This study suggest that teachers need additional training on conducting educational assessments, making individual education plans and implementing the new Zambian Basic Education Course -curriculum.

There are many challenges that affect implementation of the curriculum and provision of meaningful education. These challenges relate to working with parents, resources at school, educational administration, attitudes in the schools and communities and providing education for all. This study revealed that especially pupils with severe disabilities tend to be poorly catered for through the current special education provision. Another challenge is the provision of skills training and further educational opportunities. Also more schools with basic education provision for pupils with special educational needs are needed. Nevertheless, services should not be expanded without ensuring quality. There seems to be inconsistency in the government's actions and policies in terms of special education. There is need for monitoring schools, allocating funds and resources equally and sharing information. This study however suggests that meaningful education does not only demand more resources but rather good planning and committed actors. It seems that meaningful

education for many pupils with special educational needs in Zambia demands provision of special education in separate classrooms. However this is not enough but in order for all pupils to learn well teachers at the schools should share an ideology of inclusion and be educated in order to meet diverse needs of all pupils. Inclusive schools then are schools where all pupils are able to learn and interact together and are provided meaningful education regardless of the classroom where they study, that is a mainstream or special education classroom. Inclusive schools however are not enough but an involved and inclusive community is important. It is recognized that sensitisation in the community is necessary. Finally parents, teachers and community members should work together to create schools and communities that accommodate diversity.

Conducting this study has been a process the value of which cannot be narrowed only to the written thesis. Collection of the data was an enriching experience to me and I hope to the teachers interviewed as well. Hopefully teachers, by being challenged to examine their thoughts and practise, have had a chance to reflect on their practice and will continue their thinking process in order to develop their work. During this study, my understanding of many issues related to disability, education and development deepened. The restrictions of this study can be held as a learning experience on the way to becoming a better researcher. If having a possibility to be engaged in research in the future, I will have more knowledge and experience to use. In addition, this study developed my interest in research and many issues that should be further studied concern my mind.

I hope the findings of this study provide information and insights that can be found useful in the Zambian context. Therefore, I will distribute an article on this study to relevant instances in Zambia and a copy of this thesis to the University of Zambia. Additionally some findings could be shared during discussions with local authorities and teachers during data collection and some information about the special education provision was disseminated immediately to a number of stakeholders. However, there is need for more research in Zambia. There is need for case studies that would provide deeper understanding of life in the classrooms and for case studies in which teachers' actions and thoughts could be compared. Especially insightful could be a case study about a succeeded programme or a school that had developed inclusive practices which then might be transferable to other

schools. In addition, it would be interesting to study teachers' views and actions in mainstream classrooms and compare them with findings from special education. Furthermore there is constant need for reliable and updated quantitative information on the special education provision and resources available at different schools. In particular there is little information on non-governmental schools and facilities. On the other hand, there is need for research from the perspective of parents and pupils. Finally, there is need for research in other parts of Zambia than Lusaka.

In addition to the Zambian context, this study has hopefully brought some insights into the provision of special education in developing countries in general. Comparing the findings of this study with research in other countries suggests that similar challenges related to providing education for all exist, and that solutions also could be similar. The issue of providing education for all is actual for the United Nations is committed to achieving universal primary education by 2015 (The Dakar Framework for Action 2000). If not directly applicable to other contexts, the findings of this study however suggest issues which could be studied further in other countries. Comparative research between different countries worldwide and in Africa could provide insightful information on the similarities and differences in school organisation, the curriculum and other issues affecting meaningful provision of special education. Comparing this study to the study conducted by Muuya (2001) suggest that there are some differences in the views of teachers on aims of special education between Kenya and Zambia. For example, this issue could be studied further. In addition the challenge of providing meaningful education for pupils with severe disabilities in schools for all should be studied. Finally, while there is need for research on special education this study revealed many challenges that seem to be of relevance also to mainstream education in developing countries. For example systematic planning, more resources, staff development and teaching methods that accommodate differences would undoubtedly be needed also in the mainstream classrooms. Although pupils with special educational needs should not be ignored in research and planning it might be insightful to focus on issues common to the education of all pupils rather than unnecessarily narrowing the viewpoint on special education and the disabled. Building inclusive schools is not only a project for accommodating disabled pupils but a process that aims to better respond to the diverse needs of all pupils.

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Appendix 1: Interview form (1/3)

Interview of special need unit teacher	date of interview: _____
<p>PART ONE: basic information (mark: X over number of question if you don't want the information to be given further to other schools, NGO's and ministry of education / secretariat of community schools etc.) If there are options, please circle the letter/letters of the chosen option.</p>	
1. Full name of school: _____	
Specify if it is a	a) community b) government or c) private school
2. Describe location: _____	
Name the	a) constituency _____ b) ward _____
3. School's address:	
	a) residential _____ b) P.O.Box _____
4. Phone number if available. _____	
5. Names of special education teachers in the school. _____	
6. Is there any other support staff (helping with the children)? If, then specify what he/she is responsible for. _____	
7. How many students are enrolled to your unit? _____	
8. How many of them attend the unit frequently? _____	
9. How many students are you ready to enrol? _____	
10. How many special education classes (learning groups) does your unit consist of? _____	
11. What time do the classes start and finish? _____	
12. How (according to which criteria) are new students chosen? _____	
13. What does the student /his family need to provide to attend the unit? (uniform, fees, books etc.) _____	
14. What kinds of disabilities does the unit provide for?	
	a) physical b) mental c) hearing d) visual e) overall learning difficulties
15. What is the age range of the students? _____	
16. How long has your unit been operating? _____	

Appendix 1: Interview form (2/3)

Study about special educational services at schools within Lusaka

Interview of special need unit teacher date of interview: _____

Name of interviewee (for case of contacting if further questions on the interview): _____

PART TWO: Confidential information: This information will be treated with strict confidentiality and reported in a way that answers and opinions of individual teachers cannot be recognised and traced back. Apart from questions 1 and 2, I hope you answer according to your opinions and observations. In some questions there are suggested options but please, don't let them lead you too much. Be honest and answer straight about how you see things. I hope you use detailed descriptions and examples to illustrate your statements. Thank You for your co-operation!

PART TWO A: Introduction Note that this is **confidential information**

1. What is your Qualification?

- a) certificate (PSTC) d) diploma g) none
 b) certificate (early childhood teacher's) e) 1st degree
 c) special education certificate f) 2nd degree

2. How much work experience do you have

- a) as a teacher?
 b) as a teacher for special needs?
 c) working in this particular unit?

3. How have you acquired your skills to work as a special education teacher ? (you can mention several issues which you consider important) _____

4. Have you attended any workshops or supplementary courses to get more knowledge and skills for teaching in general or about teaching children with special needs? please specify. _____

5. Are you interested in educating yourself more about teaching / children with special needs? Specify what course you would like or are planning to go to. _____

6. In what kind of abilities do your pupils face difficulties? Think of the children's school performance and mark yes, if the option is suitable for your unit's situation.

Ability	Some children have mild or moderate lack of this ability	Most children have mild or moderate lack of this ability	Some children have severe lack of this ability
audition/hearing			
behaviour/social skills			
intellectual functioning (thinking and reasoning)			
limbs (use of hands, arms and legs)			
intentional communication (understanding and communicatin g with others)			
tonicity (muscle tone)			
overall health			
eyes (vision)			
structural status (shape, body form and structure)			

Appendix 1: Interview form (3/3)

PART TWO B: Curriculum planning. Note that this is **confidential information**.

1. Why do you think that children with special needs should receive education?
2. Is there any standard curriculum used in your unit and if, do you have to adapt it? Or is it your responsibility to decide what to include in the curriculum?
3. Are your pupils (sometimes or all of the time) divided to groups (according to age, grade, disability or something else, what)?
4. Can you describe how you plan your lessons. (How often do you need to change plans?) Do you make daily, weekly and/or termly plans?
5. What do you plan in forehand? (goals, what to teach, how, other activities?)
6. Do you set daily, weekly, monthly, termly, yearly or lifelong goals? Give examples
7. When planning the curriculum what do you decide first?
8. If compared to general education, what differences/ similarities are there in the curriculum?
9. (If the curriculum differs from general education), Why is the curriculum different from general education?
10. Looking at the general education grades, which grade is your unit's curriculum closest from?
11. What kind of methods of instruction do you use that could be considered special or specially targeted to the disabilities and learning difficulties that your pupils face? (Methods you would most likely not use or have to use in general education classes)
12. Do you implement the same curriculum for all your pupils or do you plan the goals, teaching methods and/or skills and subjects taught individually for some or all pupils? How and why?
13. When setting goals for your class, how important do you consider the: individual children's needs; parents needs; communities needs and expectations; school's expectations; governments expectations; subjects to be taught?
14. Do you discuss issues concerning the curriculum with the parents / guardians of the pupil? What do they expect from the school? What do they expect their children to learn?
15. How do you assess or decide what kind of goals are appropriate for the individual pupils?
16. How do you follow up/know if your pupils have achieved any goals, made progress & learned?
17. What does your unit prepare the pupils for?
18. What are the main aims of education in your unit? Why are those aims important?

PART TWO C: Resources, needs and challenges. Note that this is **confidential information**.

1. What are the main advantages for your pupils of attending the special needs unit at your school? (compared to other units, general education or being at home)
2. What materials do you use to illustrate the teaching and to help the children to learn?
3. Are there materials for playing and recreation? Materials for independent pupil work (like reading books, drawing, toys, blocks etc.?)
4. Do you think your unit is equipped (with sufficient staff, material etc.) to face the special needs of the pupils you have? (If not, what kinds of resources is there need of? How many children/class or teacher would be ideal for teaching meaningfully in your unit?)
5. Is the learning time long enough?
6. Could you consider taking pupils with more severe disabilities than the current ones in your unit?
7. Is it possible in the classroom / the rooms provided to: individualise teaching / divide pupils to groups so that they can study without being disrupted by others; have enough space for all the activities; accommodate pupils with physical disabilities; to enter by wheelchair; to study and play in different positions (floor, benches, desks)?
8. What suggestions do you have for improving the school's learning environment?
9. What are the biggest challenges working with your pupils?
10. With whom do you discuss if you have concerns about your pupils, teaching methods, special needs / disabilities etc. concerning your unit? Do you feel you get advice and how often is it possible?
11. Do you feel your work is appreciated by? (your pupils, parents and guardians, other teachers, school management / employer, community)
12. What suggestions do you have for improving the situation of children with special needs in your schools area?

Appendix 2: Research Permission Request Letter

Lusaka, 7th July, 2003

To Mr Bowasi, Provincial education officer,

I am asking for permission to conduct a study about special educational services at schools within Lusaka. The study will be part of a research project conducted by the Parents Partnership Association For Children With Special Needs. PPACSN has already collected information doing a survey on persons with disabilities and mental challenges. The data has been collected from parents and guardians doing door-to door interviews in seven constituencies and there were over 1300 respondents. The research project aims to identify the number of children with special needs in selected areas of Lusaka, establish a database, find out how to help the parents, find out how parents have coped with their children and identify the needs of children with disabilities (physical, mental, hearing, visual).

Data about available educational services could be helpful in planning services with and according to the key stakeholders (community's, parents, teachers, children's) needs. It would also provide scientific information for the government and donor community about current services and needs for service. Hopefully the data could be useful especially for curriculum development.

I am a master's degree student with special education as a major from the university of Jyväskylä in Finland. I plan to write my masters thesis using data collected in this study. The study would include, if possible all special needs units at government and community schools in Lusaka. I will make a visit in each unit, observe briefly and interview the teacher. Data will be collected during July, August and September 2003. I assure that all information given will be treated with strict confidentiality. The participating units will receive a copy of the parts of the information that is concerning their unit. At least one copy of the finished thesis will be kept at PPACSN's files and three copies at the university of Jyväskylä.

The research questions might change or get specified during data collection in collaboration with the participants but my initial purpose is to find out

- Teacher's views about the aims of education in their own units in particular.
- What kind of a curriculum is used in the unit?
- What challenges there are in moving towards the aims and implementing the curriculum?

I kindly ask you for permission to conduct the study at special needs units in government and community schools within Lusaka. If you wish to have more information, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned or Mrs. Alice Kaunda from the Parents Partnership Association For Children With Special Needs.

You can contact us by visiting PPACSN's office at the Hidden voice school, Mwambeshi road plot no 5, Northmead Lusaka, or calling Mrs. Kaunda 097-761118 or Ms. Ojala 097-875528.

Yours faithfully,

Paula Ojala, visiting student

Appendix:

- list of schools planned to visit
- interview schedule

Appendix 3: Introduction Letter for Participating Schools

Dear teacher,

Lusaka 7th July, 2003

I am conducting a master's thesis study in special educational units within Lusaka. I am a student of special education from the University of Jyväskylä in Finland. I am visiting the Parents Partnership Association For Children With Special Needs and the study is part of PPACSN's research project which aims to promote the rights of children with special needs for services like education. PPACSN has already collected information doing a survey on persons with disabilities and mental challenges.

The purpose of the study is to find out

- Teacher's views about the aims of education in their own units in particular.
- What kind of a curriculum is used in the unit?
- What challenges there are in moving towards the aims and implementing the curriculum?

I assure that all information given will be treated with strict confidentiality.

The participating units will receive a copy of the parts of the report that are concerning their unit. One copy of the finished report will be kept at PPACSN's files and three copies at the university of Jyväskylä.

For the study, I need to interview one teacher in your unit, preferably the one with the longest work experience in the unit. I would also need to observe some classroom activities so that I can have a picture of what kind of pupils you have and how you work with them.

For any further questions, please do not hesitate to ask!

You can contact me by visiting the office of the Parents Partnership Association For Children With Special Needs at the Hidden Voice school, plot no 5 Mwambeshi road, Northmead Or call p 097-875528.

Thank You for Your co-operation!

Yours faithfully,

Paula Ojala, visiting student

Name of school: _____

Name of teacher: _____

I am willing to participate in the above mentioned study. _____

I wish to have a list with basic information of schools in Lusaka providing special needs education. _____

I wish to have a case report concerning the interview and observations made at my unit _____

I wish to be contacted by the PPACSN if they are organizing workshops about teaching children with special needs. _____

The case report about your unit will only be given to you (not any other person at your school or anywhere else). The final report will be written in a way that opinions and statements of individual teacher's cannot be recognized.


date and signature

Appendix 4: Research Permission

*All correspondence should be addressed
to the Provincial Education Officer*

Telephone: 250655

In reply quote
No


REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

**PROVINCIAL EDUCATION OFFICER
LUSAKA REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS
P/B RW 21E
LUSAKA**


10th July, 2003

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE : PAULA OJALA: VISITING STUDENT

The above mentioned is a visiting student who is planning to do a study in special education units at schools within Lusaka.

Permission to conduct a study in the above mentioned schools have been granted. Please co-operate with Paula and help her get the information she is looking for.



D. S. BOWASI
PROVINCIAL EDUCATION OFFICER
LUSKA PROVINCE

/epmm

Appendix 5: Questions for Observations and the Evaluation of the Observations and Interview

Classroom ethos

1. Does the room have lightning, windows?
2. How much space is there? Is the space in one or several rooms?
3. How is the classroom organised? (desks, tables, chairs, benches, carpets, boards etc.)

4. What materials are to be seen?

Teaching and learning

1. What is the lesson activity and teacher's strategy in opening the lesson?
2. What seems to be the objective?
3. How does the teacher provide for individual needs?
4. Do the students have to wait before activity starts?
5. How is the climate in the class?
6. To what extent do students participate?
7. Did the teacher make efforts to evaluate learning through questioning, pupil work etc.?
8. What do the children do when finished with their tasks?

Afterthoughts, observations

1. Did students react to my presence as an observer, how?
2. What problems does this school have that I observed?
3. What are some of the strengths of the unit and its curriculum?
4. What values are celebrated in the hidden curriculum?

Afterthoughts, interview

1. How was the teacher's response at first?
2. How was the climate of the interview? (Did the teacher seem to have enough time or be in a hurry, sure about her answers or insecure about his/herself, answering honest or trying to prove something?)
3. Did I lead the teacher to answer in a certain way for any questions? Did I express my opinions?
4. What kind of a place did the interview take place at? Where there disruptions?
5. Was there any talk besides the questions of the interview?
6. How did this interview go compared to the previous interviews?
7. How did the interviewee react to me as an interviewer?
8. Were there any language / understanding difficulties between us?
9. Any other problems that might have affected the interviews?

Appendix 6: Topics of Analysis

Aims of education / goals: teacher	Timetable / learning time
Aims of education / goals: parent	Poverty related problems
Expectations, government	Materials:
What kind of a curriculum?	Furniture:
Planning, decision making	Classroom organisation
Planning of goals	Staff-pupil ratio, ideal
Assessment at school and before	Local language vs. English
Evaluation	Severe pupils
Lesson structure	Sensitisation
Teachers' profile	Community
Type of individualised teaching	Future skills, employment
methods	School management
Staff development	Government action, suggested
Grouping of pupils	Pupils' motivation for school
Teacher development /support	What do pupils learn?
Working with parents	School infrastructure
Learning environment / attitudes at	Observed lessons
school	Hidden curriculum (appropriateness of
Teachers' interaction with pupils	curriculum)
Special subjects	How are special pupils like?
Subjects taught, prioritised	Comparison with mainstream
Materials used for instruction	Schools, pupils: demographic facts

Appendix 7: List of Tables and Figures

TABLES

TABLE 1:	Pupils in Lusaka district with hearing, visual and physical impairments by gender and grade. (MOE Planning Unit 2002b)	22
TABLE 2:	Pupils in Lusaka district with mental retardation by level of severity and gender. (MOE Planning Unit 2002d)	22
TABLE 3:	Participating schools	42
TABLE 4:	Learning time and number of pupils and staff in the participating schools	44
TABLE 5:	Goals of special education compared to mainstream education	57
TABLE 6:	Abilities of the pupils	69
TABLE 7:	Observed lesson structures	81
TABLE 8:	Aims of lower and middle basic education and how they relate to teachers' views on the aims of special education (Educating Our Future. MOE 1996 p. 30)	107
TABLE 9:	Aims of special education and their relation to the curriculum	109
TABLE 10:	Issues related to improving the special educational provision in Lusaka and the Ministry's strategy concerning special education. (Educating Our Future, MOE 1996 pp. 69-70)	120

FIGURES

FIGURE 1:	The strategy of analytic induction (summarised from: Robinson 1951, Bogdan & Biklen 1998)	33
FIGURE 2:	Teachers' views on the aims of special education	56
FIGURE 3:	Teaching methods in special education	75
FIGURE 5:	Implementing the curriculum in special education	78
FIGURE 6:	Lesson plan	85
FIGURE 7:	Summary of challenges and suggested solutions	103
FIGURE 8:	Reasons for special education conceived by special education teachers	105
FIGURE 9:	Planning the adapted curriculum	113
FIGURE 10:	The individual education plan-curriculum	113

