



VOICE GHANA

Voice of People with Disability Ghana

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MEMORANDUM

From: Director, VOICE GHANA, Ho
To: Municipal Chief Executive, HMA, Ho
Thru: Chairperson, Education Oversight Committee, HMA, Ho
Date: 5th September 2012
Info: Presiding Member, HMA, Ho;
Chairperson, Social Service Sub Committee, HMA, Ho
Chairperson, Disability Fund Management Committee, HMA, Ho;
Regional Director, GES, Ho;
Municipal Director of Education, Ho;
Regional Coordinator, SpED, Ho.

Subject: Waiver of PTA Dues and other Levies for Children with Disability

Children with disability continue to face multiple-discrimination and are more vulnerable than other children. Majority of disabled children are not recognized, protected and cared for adequately by their family members. Even most parents discriminate against their disabled children especially in the area of formal education because to them it is a waste of resources. So, most children with disability do not get a chance to be formally educated and this reduces their chances of gaining meaningful employment and to be self-informed about human rights and health issues to live descent lives.

Systemic change to remove this and other barriers and provide reasonable accommodation and support services is required to ensure that children with disabilities are not excluded from mainstream educational opportunities. Article 25 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana; Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD); Sections 16-22 of the Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715) of Ghana; Sections 6 & 8 of the Children Act, 1998 of Ghana; National Disability Policy Document 2000; and Section 2.3.4 of the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2010-2020 of the Ghana Education Service recognize the right of all children with disabilities both to be included in the general education systems and to receive the individual support they require.

Ghana's concept of Inclusive Education is aligned with her Free Compulsory Basic Universal Education (FCUBE) Policy - increasing access, retention and participation of all students of school going age in education. The inclusion of children with disabilities in education is important for four main reasons.

1. Education contributes to human capital establishment and is thus a key determinant of personal well-being and welfare.
2. Excluding children with disabilities from educational and employment opportunities has high social and economic costs. For example, adults with disabilities tend to be poorer than those without disabilities, but education changes this status.
3. Countries cannot achieve Education for All or the Millennium Development Goal of universal completion of primary education without ensuring access to education for children with disabilities.
4. Countries that are signatories to the CRPD cannot fulfill their responsibilities under Article 24.

VOICE GHANA, which is a registered non-governmental organization, managed for and by people with disabilities in collaboration with Special Education Division of the Ho Municipal Education Directorate is undertaking a vigorous advocacy with funding support from STAR Ghana – Strengthening Transparency, Accountability and Responsiveness in Ghana (www.star-ghana.org) and its donor partners (DFID, EU, DANIDA, and USAID) to ensure children with disabilities receive good quality education in an inclusive environment.

This memo is developed as part of our advocacy to urge the Ho Municipal Assembly to consider enacting a bye-law to waive the payment of levies including PTA dues for children with disabilities at the basic school level in the Municipality. We also propose that the bye-law should make room for basic schools that have enrolment of four (4) or more children with disabilities to access the 2% District Assembly Common Fund, earmarked for persons with disability, as incentive package to augment the payment of their PTA dues and other levies.

This intervention will invariably lessen financial burden on many parents/guardians/caregivers of children with disabilities who are already overburden with several financial commitments in supporting their disabled children to live a life as close to normal life as possible. It will also become an incentive for many parents/guardians/caregivers to commit to educating their children with disabilities in the Municipality.

On the other hand, this will position the Ho Municipal Assembly as the flagship Municipal Assembly, which has fulfilled its statutory responsibility by making education totally free for children with disabilities in line with Section 18(1) of the Persons with Disability Act, 2006 and other legislative framework.

Francis Asong
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