



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY

2024 - 2028





**Department of Education
Inclusive Education Policy**

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This Policy can be used by stakeholders, development partners, state actors, non-state actors, church education agencies, and private education agencies, public and private organizations and individuals to support the growth and expansion of inclusive education in Papua New Guinea.

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MINISTER'S MESSAGE



I must admit that parents in Papua New Guinea hold their children with disabilities in a special place in our hearts. One thing that is common to us in our tribes, clans and family groupings is that we acknowledge these children as gifts from God. We build an exceptional relationship with this group of children.

Provision of inclusive educational services to these young people has been a challenge for us over many years. Despite our country signing international declarations on the right-based conventions to improve learning for our students with disabilities, general access to regular schools and Inclusive Education Resource Centres is still difficult. Of critical importance is the lack of Inclusive Education Resource Centres and lack of well-trained teachers. Currently, we have teachers with very limited experience and who have little understanding of how to support students with disabilities and additional learning needs within regular classrooms.

Considering these challenges we face, the aim of this Policy is to redefine and reorganise the delivery and management of educational services to respond to the diverse needs of students with disabilities and additional learning needs. The emphasis of this Policy is to build capacity at the national, provincial, districts and school levels to create system-wide procedures for enhancing disability-inclusive education.

This Policy represents our country's commitment to the international declarations we made on promoting inclusive education in our National Education System. All schools operating in the National Education System as well as permitted schools and private schools must be guided by this Policy to cater for our students with disabilities and additional learning needs.

I request our development partners, stakeholders and other non-state actors to support the implementation of this Policy. Your support to this group of students can give them the opportunities to effectively participate meaningfully in their communities and their country's socioeconomic development.

A handwritten signature in blue ink is positioned to the left of a circular official seal. The seal is red and white, featuring a central emblem of a rooster and a shield, surrounded by the text "MINISTER FOR EDUCATION" and "Papua New Guinea COMMON SEAL".

Hon. Lucas Dawa Dekena, MP
Minister for Education

SECRETARY'S MESSAGE



The Inclusive Education (IE) Policy defines the strategic path for the education of all students with disabilities and additional learning needs across Papua New Guinea. This policy builds upon principles and values in the 1975 Constitution, Vision 2050, Minimum Term Development Plan MTDP IV, Education Sector Plan 2024 - 2027, National Education Plan (NEP) 2020 - 2029, and the Department of Education Corporate Plan 2022 - 2024.

PNG made its declaration and commitment to International Treaties and Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which emphasise equal rights and a quality education for all, leaving no child behind, and creating an environment for addressing the diverse educational needs of all Papua New Guineans.


In the field of disabilities and additional learning needs, there are challenges that prevent many children from accessing the education services that we provide. These challenges include identification and screening, accessing schools, and receiving the right supports in the classroom. The Inclusive Education Policy is designed to support school systems to ensure the learning environment is conducive for all learners through the provision of appropriate teaching and learning resource materials, curriculum materials, and adaptive devices.

Inclusive education supports everyone to access quality educational opportunities, thereby fostering holistic development, and maximizing all students' potential for success. The Department of Education is leading in the provision of education services to our children with disabilities and additional needs through the development of this policy and related resources.

Every education provider, private or government, Provincial Education Division, District Education, different agencies, school governing bodies, teachers and parents MUST collaboratively ensure that students with disabilities and additional learning needs are enrolled and given their right to complete 13 years of schooling in the education system.

I thank every organisation, who has participated in the development and writing of the Inclusive Education Policy.

I recommend the Inclusive Education Policy to all the agencies, organisations, and schools so that children with disabilities and additional learning needs have the opportunity to complete a quality education.


Dr. Uke Kombra, PhD. OBE
Secretary for Education



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Policy is developed with assistance and support from many individuals and organizations. They are acknowledged as:

The Policy and Corporate Services Directorate

1. Policy and Corporate Services Directorate
 - 1.1 Research and Evaluation Division
2. Schools and Standards Directorate
 - 2.1 Teacher Registration and Professional Development Division
 - 2.3 Inclusive Education Institutions, governing bodies and stakeholders
3. Flexible Open Distance Education (FODE) and Inclusive Education Division
4. Policy and Planning Division
5. Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) Branch, Human Resource Management (HRM) Division

Line Agencies and Non-State Actors

The National Department of Education acknowledges the support of the Australian Government and UNICEF for providing funding and technical support in reviewing the Policy. NDoE also acknowledges other line agencies including the Department of Health, Department of Community Development, Department of National Planning and Monitoring, Provincial Local Level Governments and other non-state agencies actors including PNG Callan Services, PNG Assembly of Disabled Persons, National Board of Disabled Persons (NBDP), churches, Cheshire Disability Services, and staff and parents of Inclusive Education Resource Centres in PNG for the participation in reviewing the Policy.

The following NDOE officers have vetted and validated the Inclusive Education Policy and Minimum Standards:

Additional Input

Church Representative

People with Disability Representative



ACRONYMS

BMP	Behaviour Management Policy
CIEI	Callan Inclusive Education Institute
CBID	Community Based Inclusive Development
DHERST	Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DPO	Disabled Persons Organizations
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FODE	Flexible and Open Distance Education
GTFS	Government Tuition Fee Subsidy
IEP	Individual Education Plan
IERC	Inclusive Education Resource Centre
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
NES	National Education System
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NQSSF	National Quality Schools Standards Framework
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SLIP	School Learning Improvement Plan
TSC	Teaching Service Commission
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education & Training
UNESCO	United Nation Education, Science, Culture and Communication Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
WaSH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene

SECTION A: POLICY



SECTION A: POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

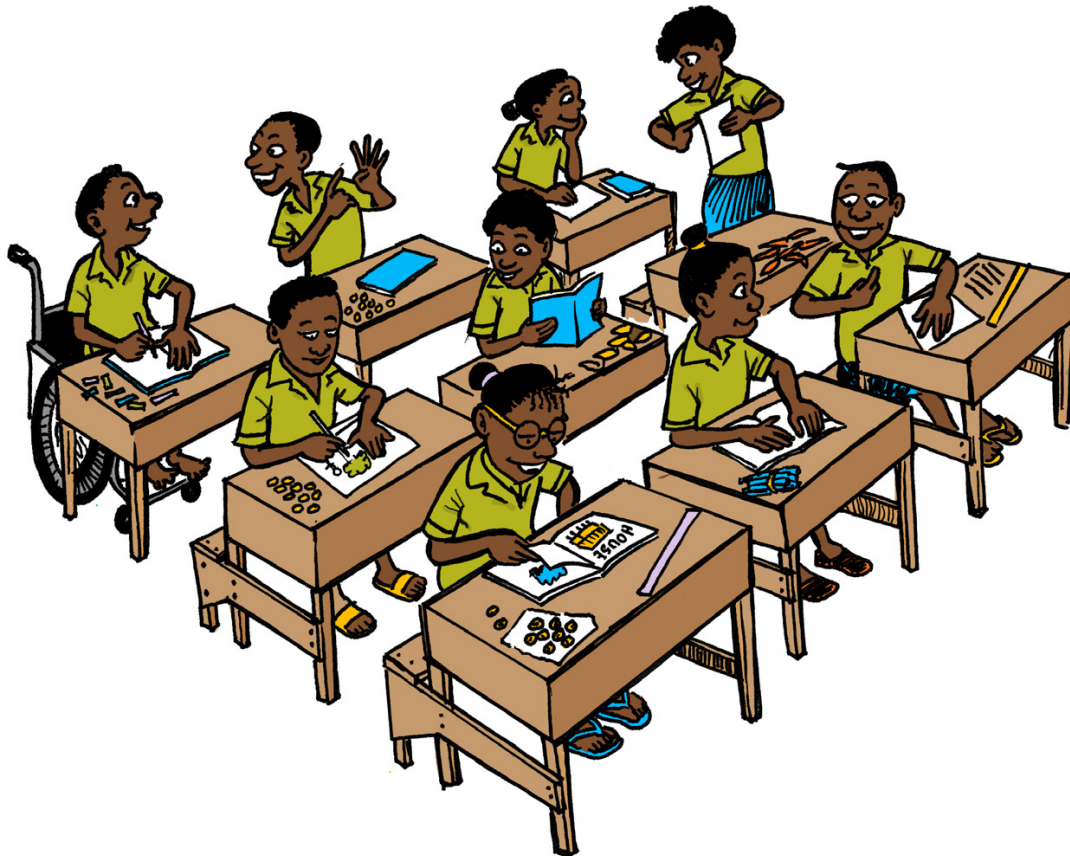
The Inclusive Education Policy ensures that all students with disabilities and additional learning needs in the Papua New Guinean National Education System have access to learning environments which promote full participation and equitable access to quality educational opportunities.



All students with disabilities and additional learning needs can fully take part in lessons and access to quality educational opportunities.

2. DOCUMENT AUTHORITY

This policy is developed based on relevant powers contained in the Education Act (1983), Section 29(c). This policy aligns with a number of International, Regional and National commitments (see Section 9: Related Documents).



3. INTENT

This policy supports support education stakeholders within the Papua New Guinea school system, at the school, provincial, district, and national level so that they can collectively work toward achievable outcomes that will support an inclusive education experience for all learners.

The policy intention is to provide a comprehensive framework promoting the full participation of learners with disabilities and additional learning needs in all aspects of school life, thereby ensuring equitable access to quality educational opportunities, fostering holistic development, and maximizing all students' potential for success.



Supporting education stakeholders at all levels - school, provincial, district, and national - to work together to promote inclusive education.



Promote full participation of all students with disabilities and additional learning needs, to ensure fair access to quality education and maximise their full potential.

4. POLICY INTENDED OUTCOMES

The intended outcomes of this policy are linked to the policy objectives for **Inclusive Learning Environments, Learning Support, Inclusive Educators, and Planning and Management**

Objective 1: Inclusive Learning Environment

To create inclusive and child-friendly school environments that enrich the overall educational experience for every student, by enhancing the culture, structures, and programs within and outside the classroom.

- **Outcome 4.1.1:** Improved physical, social and enabling practices that support students with disabilities and additional learning needs in schools, local communities, and at home.
- **Outcome 4.1.2:** Improved inclusive school environment, structures and school programs both in and outside of the classroom to ensure an inclusive educational experience for all learners.
- **Outcome 4.1.3:** Established strong structural leadership practises of Inclusive Education as part of the mainstream education system.
- **Outcome 4.1.4:** Strengthened educational environments free from discrimination, stigma, and stereotypes associated with disabilities, while fostering a culture of acceptance and inclusion.
- **Outcome 4.1.5:** Strengthened parental and community engagement to achieve the best educational outcomes.
- **Outcome 4.1.6:** Increased number of students registered with the IERCs.

Objective 2: Inclusive Learning Support

To ensure a holistic learning approach with inclusive teaching pedagogy, assessment and learning support.

- **Outcome 4.2.1:** Improved screening, registration and referral processes for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.
- **Outcome 4.2.2:** Strengthened partnerships with specialised support services including IERC support, specialised teacher support, therapy and counselling supports.
- **Outcome 4.2.3:** Improved capacity to implement tailored and flexible approaches to teaching pedagogy allowing for differentiation and adaptations to the needs of students with different learning needs, including the implementation of principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- **Outcome 4.2.4:** Improved methods of assessment and monitoring progress of all students, including students with disabilities and additional learning needs.
- **Outcome 4.2.5:** Improved needed for teaching, learning and assessment, and monitoring of students' performance.
- **Outcome 4.2.6:** Improved and strengthened inclusive education inspection system, capacity and training.

Objective 3: Inclusive Educators

To cultivate knowledgeable and skilled educators capable of delivering high-quality inclusive education services across Papua New Guinea.

- **Outcome 4.3.1:** Improved pre-service training programs in inclusive education practices for educators.
- **Outcome 4.3.2:** Improved in-service training and professional development opportunities to support the growth of teachers' competencies in inclusive education practices.
- **Outcome 4.3.3:** Increased number of IERC specialist teachers through pre-service and in-service training within the school system.

Objective 4: Inclusive Planning and Management

To ensure disability information is incorporated into education data systems to assess education performance, plan and monitor program implementation, and evaluate outcomes. To ensure effective delivery of inclusive education at national, sub-national and school levels.

- **Outcome 4.4.1:** Improved sustainable and effective leadership, management and coordination of inclusive programs in the school system.
- **Outcome 4.4.2:** Improved sustainability through effective management and coordination of the school system at the national and sub-national levels.
- **Outcome 4.4.3:** Improved collection, analysis, use and dissemination of disability-disaggregated data to improve planning, monitoring and service delivery.
- **Outcome 4.4.4:** Improved coordination and communication with partners, church agencies, Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs) and service providers.
- **Outcome 4.4.5:** Increased volume of domestic and development partner funding for inclusive education.
- **Outcome 4.4.6:** Achieved greater equity in the funding formula for the Government Tuition Fee Subsidy, benefiting students with disabilities and additional learning needs enrolled in the school.

5. POLICY RULES

- 1** The Inclusive Education Policy must be effectively implemented in the Papua New Guinea school system.
- 2** SLIPs must include activities to improve access and learning for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.
- 3** All stakeholders and partners must support the implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy through the fulfilment of their roles and responsibilities.
- 4** All stakeholders must collaborate to develop referral pathways, child-friendly services, and coordination mechanisms.
- 5** All students with disabilities and additional learning needs must have equal access to all sectors of education for quality teaching and learning in line with the National Education Plan (2020-2029).
- 6** Students with disabilities and additional learning needs should receive education services in their local school whenever possible with the IERC providing support to both the child's school, teacher and parent/s.
- 7** Some students may experience barriers preventing them from accessing mainstream education and will require enrollment at the IERC for support from a specialist teacher. Every effort must be made to transition these students into mainstream schools.
- 8** All students with disabilities or additional learning needs must receive an assessment screening using the "Whole Child Checklist" by specialist IERC teachers, or trained teachers in the school system.

9

All mainstream schools must register their students with disabilities and additional learning needs with the nearest IERC, maintain a record of screening assessments and Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and report disaggregated disability and additional learning needs data in the annual school census.

10

All schools and IERCs must develop, implement, and review an Individual Education Plan on an annual basis for all students with disabilities and additional learning needs in consultation with the child's parents

11

Equal access to the curriculum must be provided to all students through the provision of reasonable adjustments, as indicated with that student's IEP.

12

Leaders of schools must receive training in the Inclusive Education Policy and implementation procedures.

13

All teachers must receive quality and specialised training on inclusive education through pre- and in-service training.

14

School inspections will include an assessment of the school's inclusive education planning, practices, and records in line with the National Quality Schools Standards Framework (NQSSF) and the Inclusive Education Policy.

15

Guidance officers must provide guidance and counselling for all teachers and students.

16

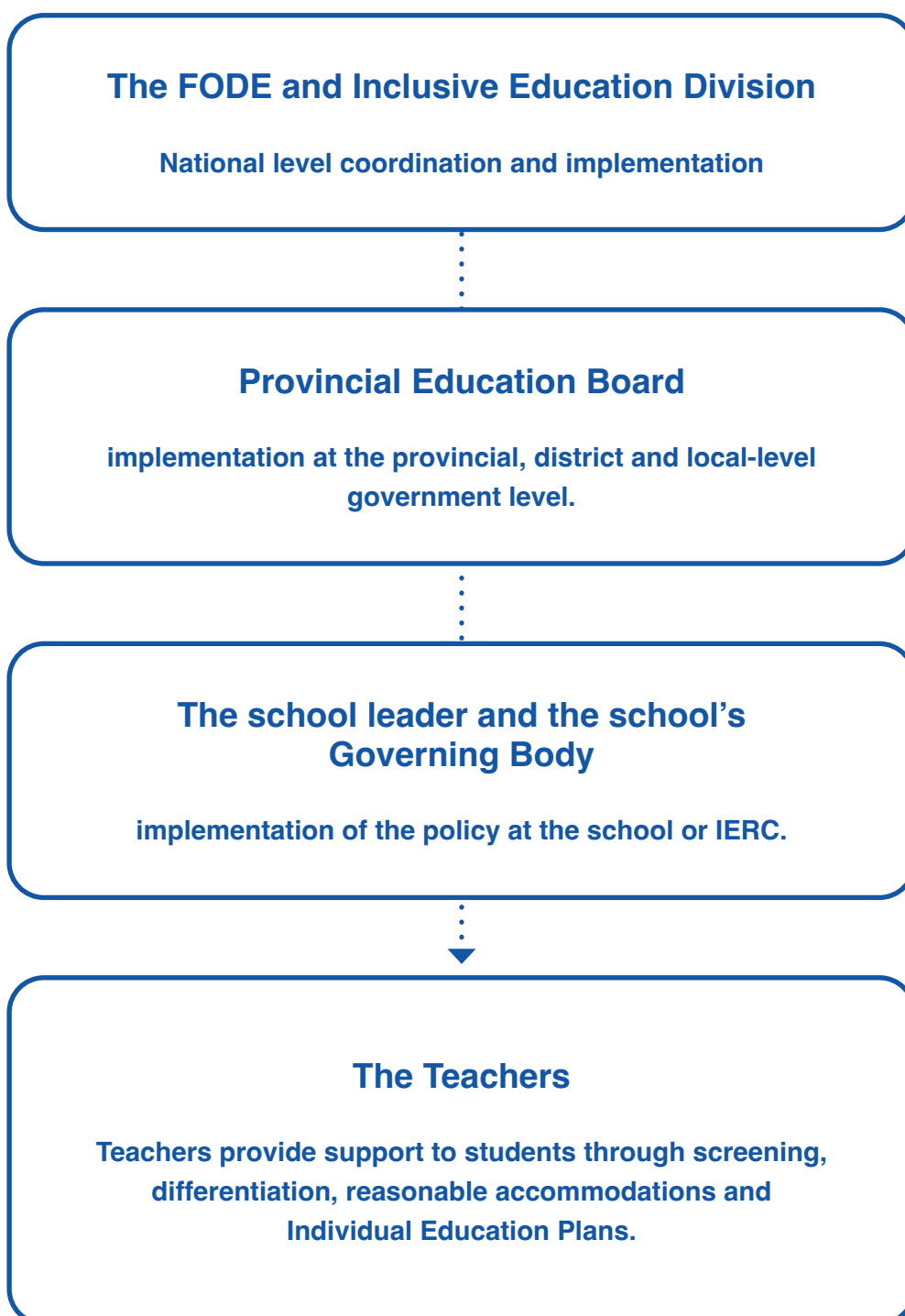
Transition pathways must be developed to make education accessible for all learners across all sectors of education.

6. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE

The FODE and Inclusive Education Division is responsible for the coordination and implementation of policy at the national level. The respective Education Board is responsible for implementation at the provincial, district and local-level government level. The school leader and the school's Governing Body will be responsible for implementing the policy at the school or IERC. The Division will maintain constant dialogue with Education Boards, Education Agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs), Development Partners and other Government Agencies to implement the policy.

7. POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to all schools in the National Education System and permitted schools.



8. DEFINITIONS

The below terms and definitions have been included to help create a common understanding of terms and concepts that are important in the field of inclusive education. The terms and definitions have been adapted from global guidance documents.

Additional Learning Needs	Students with additional learning needs may require additional support in areas including schoolwork, expressing themselves or understanding what other people are saying, making friends or relating to adults, behaving appropriately at school, or have medical, physical or sensory needs (long or short term). Additional learning needs include: dyslexia, attention deficit disorder/attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADD/ADHD), gifted students (students who give evidence of high performance capability), students with behavioural and emotional difficulties, students with speech and language difficulties.
Child Safeguarding	The responsibility that organisations have to make sure their staff, operations and program responses do not harm children. It includes policies, procedures and practices to prevent children from being harmed as well as steps to respond and investigate reports of harm when they happen.
Differentiated Learning	An approach where teachers adjust their curriculum and instruction to match the learning needs of all students.
Disability	Long-term physical, sensory, cognitive or social/emotional impairment that affects the functioning of a person and which interacts with environmental and social barriers that hinder the person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.
Disaggregated Data	Statistical information that is separated into parts. For example, enrolment data that can be analysed by sex, disability, age group and geographical area.
Inclusive Education	A process to ensure all students in the community, whatever their background, their ability or their disability, have equitable access to quality teaching and learning in education institutions which is adapted to their learning needs. All students are welcomed, valued and supported to reach their full potential.
Individual Education Plan (IEP)	A written plan that describes the adjustments, goals and strategies to meet a student's individual needs so they can reach their full potential.
Individual Education Plan (IEP) Team	An IEP is developed in collaboration with a team that includes the learner/student, their family, specialists, IERC staff, regular teachers, and CBID officers. It can also include peers, family friends, church representatives, community leader and interpreter as required.
Inclusive Education Programs	A comprehensive and organised set of strategies, policies, and practices implemented by educational institutions to ensure that all students, regardless of their diverse backgrounds, abilities, or needs, can access and participate in the same educational opportunities and environments.
Inclusive Education Resource Centre (IERC)	A learning institution that provides specialist support services and may enrol students with complex needs for specialist teaching.

Learning Support	Adjustments and supports made available to students with disabilities and additional learning needs to enable them to participate in learning and assessment. These supports include specialist services (such as physiotherapy, orientation and mobility, occupational therapy, speech therapy), the development of individual education plans, and the use of teacher aides in the classroom.
Mainstream School	An ECE, Pre-school, Primary, Secondary, Vocational and Permitted School which enrolls all students including those students with disabilities and additional learning needs
Multiple Disabilities	A combination of two or more disabilities.
Permitted Schools	Member schools in the National Education System.
School System	All education and learning environments in the pre-school, primary, secondary, FODE and TVET sectors.
Reasonable Adjustments	Measures or actions to enable learners with disabilities to participate in education on the same basis as learners without disabilities. Reasonable adjustments are mandated in the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Examples include classroom seating that supports a student's learning requirements, provision of learning and assessment materials in accessible formats such as braille and sign, assistance with note-taking and extended time for tests.
Special Needs	<p>Any of various difficulties (such as a physical, emotional, behavioural, or learning disability or impairment) that causes an individual to require additional or specialized services or accommodations (such as in education or recreation).</p> <p>In this document, the term 'students with disabilities and additional learning needs' has been used in place of 'students with special needs'.</p>
Teacher Training Institutions	Organisations registered under the National Department of Higher Education, Research and Technology that are mandated to train teachers to implement inclusive and special education.
Universal Design for Learning (UDL)	A framework which guides the design of instructional goals, assessments, methods, and materials that can be customized and adjusted to meet individual needs.

9. RELATED DOCUMENTS

This policy under the Education Act (1983) aligns with the documents below.

Date	DOCUMENTS
1983	Education Act
1985	Teaching Service Act (1985)
2010-2030	Education Sector Strategic Plan
2015	Papua New Guinea National Policy on Lukautim Pikinini (Child Protection)
2015	National School Health Policy
2015-2030	Sustainable Development Goals (SDG4)
2016	School Registration Policy and Procedures
2018	National Quality School Standards Framework (NQSSF)
2018	National Schools Minimum Standards (NSMS) Policy and Guidelines
2018-2023	WaSH in Schools Policy and Guidelines
2019	SLIP Policy and Guidelines
2019	Behaviour Management Policy (BMP)
2020	National Education Plan (2020-2029)
2021	Child Protection Policy
2023	Gender Equity Social Inclusion in School Policy (GESI)
2023 – 2027	Medium Term Development Plan (MTDP) IV

The policy also aligns to a number of International and National commitments.

International Commitments	
United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	<p>Article 7 affirms that all necessary measures be taken to ensure the full enjoyment by children with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.</p> <p>Article 24 affirms the right of persons with disabilities to an inclusive education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity.</p>
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	<p>Article 23 affirms the right of children with disabilities to have effective access to, and to receive, education in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development.</p>
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2015-2030)	<p>SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Specifically the following subgoals hold particular relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations. • Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

Regional Commitments	
The Action Plan for Pacific Education (2020-2030)	The Plan has a vision that diverse Pacific learners and their families feel safe, valued and equipped to achieve their education aspirations. Confronting systemic racism and discrimination in education is one of five key focus areas.
National Commitments	
PNG Vision 2050	For the country to become a smart, fair and healthy and happy society by 2050.
National Education Plan (2020-2029)	Minor Outcome 3.5: That a collaborative approach is used to institutionalise inclusive education within the school system.
Papua New Guinea National Policy on Disability (2015-2025)	Addresses the rights and needs of people with disabilities to access appropriate education services.


10. CONTACT INFORMATION

National Department of Education
P.O. Box 446
WAIGANI
National Capital District
Papua New Guinea

www.education.gov.pg

11. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Effective Date	Authorized by	Signature	Version number	Comments
	Dr. Uke Kombra, PhD. OBE. Secretary for Education		Version 1.0	Revised Policy document

The image features a dark blue background with intricate, lighter blue decorative patterns. In the top right corner, there is a curved, dotted line that transitions into a series of parallel lines, resembling a stylized path or a decorative flourish. In the bottom corner, there are large, swirling, organic shapes that look like stylized leaves or abstract forms. The text is centered in the middle of the page.

SECTION B: IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

SECTION B:

IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

1. INTRODUCTION

This section provides Inclusive Education Minimum Standards and Guidelines, which outlines the focus and direction for strengthening access, retention, transition and management and improving the provision of quality education to all school-aged children with disabilities in the country. Quality education refers to the essence of equity, inclusion, access, progress and achievement of educational outcomes that will guide and direct the journey of each person on the lifelong learning journey and the opportunity to enjoy higher standard of living.

The standards places special emphasis on the students who are the most vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion and identifies inclusive education as one of the key strategies to address the question of marginalisation and exclusion. The Department of Education recognises that Inclusive Education guarantees a learning environment that is barrier free and enables all learners including those with disabilities to move about safely and freely in the school campus, use facilities, participate positively in learning and partake in all aspects of school life.

The standards in all reflect the rights of children with disabilities according to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These rights include the right of persons with disabilities to education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity. In realizing this right, the Department of Education will ensure students with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system at any level, that schooling is accessible and affordable to people with disabilities, that reasonable accommodation is made for individuals who need it, that individual support is available to maximize academic and social development and that people with disabilities have access to different forms of communication where needed.

2. BACKGROUND

There are many challenges for students with disabilities or additional learning needs in Papua New Guinea. Accurate statistical data is not available, and there are challenges around:

1. Identification and assessment of disabilities and additional learning needs, which can be physical, sensory, cognitive, or social-emotional.
2. Limited availability of specialised assistance.
3. Accessing schools and qualified teachers in remote areas.
4. The diversity of people involved in the educational process, which includes students, teachers, special educators, school administrators, and other stakeholders.

The National Education Plan 2021-2029 (NEP) includes a focus on access and equity. The plan acknowledges that students with disabilities and additional learning needs have traditionally not been able to access education in the regular school system. The Inclusive Education Policy represents one of the initiatives undertaken by the Department of Education to redress this situation.

BRIEF HISTORY

<p>1890 -1975</p>	<p>The Colonial Government and the Churches education played an indispensable role in educating the indigenous people but did very little or nothing to provide for those with disabilities and additional learning needs.</p>
<p>1978</p>	<p>Evolution of special/inclusive education began but was outside of the National Education System. Red Cross International began a project titled “Nason Paulias Project” in ENBP, targeting Persons With Disabilities (PWD) and this exposed the relevant Government’s negligence to the plight of PWD.</p> <p>In the 1970s a number of centres for persons with disabilities were established by different agencies. They are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morobe Handicapped Centre • Western Highlands Association for the Disabled • Mt. Zion Centre for the Blind • St. Johns Association for the Blind • Cheshire Disability Services Hohola ,NCD • Red Cross Association for Disabled Persons-Hohola, NCD • Creative Self Help Centre -Madang • Callan Services for the Disabled Persons -Wewak
<p>1980</p>	<p>The Catholic Church was pivotal in establishing the Special School for Blind in Goroka and Lae.</p>
<p>1993</p>	<p>The Government realized the importance of special/inclusive education and approved the first Special/Inclusive Education Policy & Guidelines. The NDoE established the National Special/Inclusive Education Unit to coordinate the development and growth of special and inclusive education throughout PNG.</p> <p>Through stakeholder partnerships, the Government established the Inclusive Education Resource Centre (IERC). There are 23 IERCs: 19 are operated by Callan Services under the diocese.</p>
<p>1996</p>	<p>The formal Special/Inclusive Teacher Education Programs began at St. Benedict’s Teachers’ College, Kaindi.</p>
<p>1999</p>	<p>The program was adopted in other Teachers’ Colleges.</p>
<p>2010</p>	<p>Callan Studies Institute (CSI), a teacher in-service training institute, was set up in East Sepik to provide in-depth knowledge with the pedagogies in Special/Inclusive Education for teachers in all sectors of education. The Diploma in Special Education program is delivered via a flexible mode.</p>
<p>2016</p>	<p>PNG Education Institute started its Diploma in Special Education.</p>

3. RATIONALE

The Inclusive Education Policy has been developed through a consultative process among focal points within key divisions: Provincial and District level consultations with education authorities; school level stakeholders, including head teachers and principals; IERC staff and Board of Governors; parents and students with disabilities; partner organisations; and Persons with Disability Organisations (PDOs).

This Policy is developed when there is considerable pressure in the areas of improving access, enrolment, infrastructure, teacher training, quality teaching and student learning, student transition into mainstream schools, strengthening vocational schools to be more inclusive, and securing adequate government support to grow and expand inclusive education at the provincial and district levels.

The crucial values, which have been followed to develop these Policy Standards and Guidelines, are based on the assurance that standards for safety, accessibility, participation and safeguarding of all learners is promoted and maintained.

The Standards and Guidelines are designed to support and guide schools to create and implement inclusive learning environments. They provide a foundation for assessing and measuring policy outcomes, to track progress and to provide continuous feedback for ongoing review and improvement.

4. PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

The policy shares core principles and values embedded within the 1975 Constitution and the Papua New Guinea Vision 2050, and also recognises and aligns with the principles set forth in the NDoE BMP and GESI in Schools Policy. The following core principles and values underpin this Inclusive Education policy:

1. All students can learn well in a friendly and caring school with accessible infrastructure, the right tools, knowledgeable teachers, and help from their parents.
2. Students with disabilities and additional learning needs have the right to education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity at all levels of the education system and throughout their life.
3. The National Education System can support all students, including students with disabilities and additional learning needs, to transition successfully through all levels of schooling and into adult life.
4. School structures, teaching and student learning systems, assessment and teaching methodologies can be flexible and designed to meet the needs of all students, including those with disabilities and additional learning needs.
5. School systems have a responsibility to ensure their policies, procedures and practices prevent students with disabilities and additional learning needs from being harmed as well as steps to respond and investigate reports of harm when they happen.
6. An inclusive education system is the foundation to building communities in which every child and adult experiences a sense of identity and belonging.

5. GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The guidelines for implementation provide a clear direction on how the Inclusive Education Policy will be implemented in all school systems across the country.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

National Department of Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Administer and report on the implementation of the Inclusive Education policy and programs. 2. Strengthen pre-service, in-service and professional development teacher education in consultation with NDoE-regulated teacher training institutions, non-government training providers and other relevant stakeholders. 3. Oversee the policy and Standards implementation and periodically monitor and evaluate the policy achievements. 4. Lead in the submission of budget proposal for inclusive education financing. 5. Oversee the development of multi student assessment procedures and instruments to be established at all levels to meet the needs of all learners.
FODE & Inclusive Education (IE) Division	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regularly report on inclusive education progress to relevant stakeholders. 2. Support training of teacher assistants with specialist skills in the school system. 3. Carry out school/IERC inspections on a regular basis using NDoE NQSSF. 4. Develop inclusive education Strategic Plans in collaboration with stakeholders and development partners. 5. Liaise directly with the Department of Health to ensure schools receive timely and appropriate support from local health services to conduct disability assessments for early learning and school-age students with disabilities. 6. Liaise directly with the Department of Health to ensure schools receive timely and appropriate support from local health services to conduct disability assessments for early learning and school-age students with disabilities.
Inclusive Education Resource Centres (IERCs)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Liaise with stakeholders for assessment, enrolment and registration of students with disabilities and additional learning needs. 2. Ensure that screening assessment and IEPs are developed, implemented, monitored and reported to parents, guardians, teachers and stakeholders. 3. Ensure accurate data is provided to NDOE Inclusive Education Unit and Education Management Information Service (EMIS). 4. Work closely with community-based rehabilitation officers and community health workers to conduct disability assessment and support needs of students with disabilities and additional learning needs. 5. Ensure schools are connected to IERC staff for outreach support services with qualified personnel. 6. Collaborate with communities and schools to raise awareness on disability issues to foster attitude change. 7. Ensure Safeguarding practices are maintained in the school and safeguarding concerns are reported to authorised certified agencies or Child protection officers. 8. Provide training for stakeholders on their roles and responsibilities and information on programs.

Teacher Training Institutions (Pre-Service)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incorporate information on the advantages of inclusive education into the curriculum of initial training programs for student teachers. 2. Integrate awareness and knowledge about inclusive education in the regular professional development activities of schools. 3. Develop and implement specialist units in inclusive education. 4. Continue to expand offerings of inclusive education teacher training, such as associate diploma, degree courses, specialist disability training.
Teaching Service Commission	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create and fund teaching positions for IERCs. 2. Incorporate inclusive education into the Performance-Based Duty Statements. 3. Work with the Inclusive Education Unit to develop salary scales, entry requirements and Performance Based Duty Statements for Inclusive Education Teacher Aides. 4. Ensure quality teacher training and staff professional development.
Callan Inclusive Education Institute (CIEI)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deliver applied Diploma in Inclusive Education course to teachers. 2. Develop and deliver specialised units in Inclusive Education for teachers. 3. Encourage effective internal/external staff professional development programs.
Higher Education Institutes (HEI) and Teacher Training Institutions (with oversight from DHERST)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and deliver Inclusive Education course units as a compulsory component of Teacher Training. 2. Ensure that there is quality inclusive teacher training and staff professional development. 3. Develop and deliver higher qualification in Inclusive Education. 4. Develop and deliver Bachelor’s Degree and Master’s Degree qualifications.

PROVINCIAL AND DISTRICT LEVEL STAKEHOLDERS

Provincial and District Education Advisors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Liaise with provincial and district administration to support the implementation of the policy. 2. Make aware and promote students' access to and participation in education. 3. Ensure public school environments are accessible and are inclusive. 4. Provide regular monitoring, evaluation and review the delivery of educational services.
Guidance and Counselling Officers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perform roles and responsibilities as identified under the BMP. 2. Strengthen school-based counselling and referral services for students with disabilities and additional learning needs. 3. Provide teacher in-service training to improve inclusive education. 4. Strengthen career pathways for secondary school students. 5. Provide guidance and counselling to all staff and students.
School Inspections: Inclusive Education Inspectors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Liaise with other stakeholders to provide regular monitoring, evaluation and review and reporting on the delivery of educational services. 2. Ensure that all IERCS develop annual activity plans including SLIP and budget and implementing plans. 3. Provide regular inspections for teachers in IERCs. 4. Ensure that students registration and enrolment data are updated regularly 5. Liaise with Mainstream School Inspectors for inclusive inspection reports.
School Inspections: Mainstream School Inspectors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that IEPs are developed and effectively implemented by mainstream classroom teachers. 2. Liaise with other stakeholders to provide regular monitoring, evaluation and review and reporting on the delivery of educational services. 3. Liaise with IERC Principals and Coordinators on students registration and data collection. 4. Ensures that schools refer students with special needs/ disabilities to IERCs for registration. 5. Ensure that inspection reports are inclusive. 6. Liase with IERC School Inspectors for inclusive inspection reports.

SCHOOL LEVEL STAKEHOLDERS

Students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attend school every day. 2. Treat fellow students with respect and understanding. 3. Actively participate in IEP processes. 4. Participate in all school program activities 5. Be involved in implementing the school based Inclusive Education Policy. 6. Be informed of the Inclusive Education Policy and its practices.
Teachers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop, implement and manage IEPs for students in their class with the support of IERCs where required. 2. Provide adapted teaching pedagogy, materials, activities and assessment. 3. Attend professional development on inclusive education. 4. Establish an effective, safe, calm and conducive learning environment. 5. Ensure safeguarding practices are maintained in the school and safeguarding concerns are reported to authorised certified agencies or Child Protection officers. 6. Communicate effectively with all members of the IEP team, and maintain accurate and proper written records of any learning and behaviour concerns for students with disabilities and additional learning needs. 7. Provide regular updates to school administration, parents/guardians, including the student's IEP, screening assessment, and attendance records. 8. Conduct formative and summative assessments of students according to their level of learning. 9. Use language and behaviour that models respect for students with disabilities and additional learning needs both within and outside the classroom.
School Heads	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop School Learning Improvement Plans (SLIPs). 2. Guide the implementation and ensure the efficient operation of the policy at the school. 3. Provide leadership in the promotion of quality teaching and learning. 4. Establish effective communication with parents/guardians regarding inclusive education practices. 5. Support teachers to complete professional development in inclusive education practices. 6. Ensure safeguarding practices are maintained in the school and safeguarding concerns are reported to authorised certified agencies or Child Protection officers. 7. Refer students requiring additional support to the nearest IERC. 8. Report the number of students with disabilities and additional needs enrolled and registered in the National School Census.

School Boards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Endorse the School Learning Improvement Plans (SLIP) and provide quarterly reports. 2. Ensure school facilities are accessible for students with disabilities. 3. Provide sufficient budget for the development and implementation of inclusive education in institutions to be part of the education system. 4. Help to communicate with parents. 5. Advocate for students with disabilities and additional learning needs in the community. 6. Ensure that all students with disabilities and additional learning needs in the community can come to school. 7. Lobby the district and provincial government for funding support for inclusive child-friendly infrastructure.
Schools and Vocational Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Screen/assess all students for learning difficulties. 2. Write an IEP for every student with disability and/or additional learning needs as identified by screening, with support from the IERCs where required. 3. Register all students with disabilities with the nearest IERC. 4. Ensure the school environment, including infrastructure and teaching pedagogy, is accessible for all students with disabilities and additional learning needs. 5. Engage with local communities and promote awareness about students with disabilities to encourage shifts in attitudes and behaviours. 6. Identify students with disabilities who are out of school or not attending regularly and refer these to the IERC. 7. Collaborate with the IERC to access support services and facilitate the smooth transition of students into secondary and vocational schools.
Parents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide correct information on their child/children's disabilities for proper assessment and referral. 2. Enrol their child in the IERC or mainstream school. 3. Provide full support to meet the needs of their children at home and at school by being involved in the development, implementation and review of their child's IEP. 4. Take part in School Learning Improvement Plan (SLIP) process to set realistic goals for their children. 5. Support home learning activities guided by the teacher.

ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

<p>Development partners, Non-Government Organisations, Disabled Persons Organisations, and private sectors</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support the implementation of the policy through funding, technical assistance, service provision, coordination, and communication. 2. Align their inclusive education programs with the Inclusive Education Policy to ensure compliance with legal requirements for operation within the education system. 3. Support in the design and development of adaptive curriculum, student textbooks and student learning and assessment programs. 4. Assist in the provision of equipment such as basic screening materials and assistive devices. 5. Assist and support human resources development at the national, provincial and school levels. 6. Assist in monitoring, evaluating, and conducting research activities in partnership with the Department and other stakeholders. 7. Promote collaboration and interaction to foster the sharing of knowledge and understanding regarding the progress and development of inclusive education in the country.
<p>Church Education Agencies</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure agency school boards and school heads are implementing the policy. 2. Promote improved church-state collaboration and accountability. 3. Ensure ongoing and open consultation with the state in relation to Inclusive Education Policy and Standards challenges. 4. Assist in the provision of social, spiritual and physical capacity building programs. 5. Ensure the agency’s safeguarding procedures and principles are observed and promoted in the IERCs. 6. Ensure safeguarding practices are maintained in the school and safeguarding concerns are reported to authorise certified agencies or Child protection officers.
<p>Community</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support the IERC programs through advocacy for families to send their children to school.
<p>Health Support Team</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct relevant medical and health assessments. 2. Facilitate Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID) programs.

SECTION C: STANDARDS



SECTION C: MINIMUM STANDARDS

This section provides minimum standards or benchmarks for all stakeholders to improve the provision of quality education for all students with disabilities and additional learning needs. The standards are aligned with the policy objectives of **Inclusive Learning Environments, Learning Support, Inclusive Educators, and Planning and Management**.

Standard 1: Inclusive and Accessible Infrastructure

- 1.1 Schools have a programme and processes to ensure buildings and grounds are accessible to all students, constructed in line with the National Department of Education School Registration Policy; School Standard Infrastructure Policy; and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH).
- 1.2 Schools have a programme and processes to ensure digital infrastructure, materials, and online resources are accessible to all students as per the ICT Policy.

Standard 2: Strong Leadership and Positive Attitudes

- 2.1 School leadership develops a positive school culture that values inclusion, diversity, the rights of students with disabilities and additional learning needs, and creates a safe and nurturing school environment that promotes acceptance and diversity among students and staff.
- 2.2 School leadership and other staff have processes to ensure that all students with disabilities and additional learning needs have access to, are included, and retained to complete their education.
- 2.3 School leadership promote and support the rights of students with disabilities and additional learning needs through inclusive education promotion and advocacy.

Standard 3: Inclusive Communities

- 3.1 Schools have a programme and processes to ensure that students with disabilities and additional learning needs attend school regularly.
- 3.2 Schools implement a variety of strategies that build and maintain positive relationships and promote inclusive practice with the community.
- 3.3 Schools conduct termly parent, student and teacher meetings to inform parents of the progress students are making in learning different subjects and against the goals in the student's IEP.
- 3.4 The school is a safe and protective place for the school community to learn, work, live and visit.

Standard 4: Inclusive Screening and Assessment Practices

- 4.1 Schools have processes in place to strengthen screening, registration, and referral processes, ensuring efficient identification and support for students with disabilities and additional learning needs.
- 4.2 Schools have processes to ensure specific equipment and support resources to screen and assess students with disabilities and additional learning needs are provided.

Standard 5: Inclusive Teaching Pedagogy and Assessment

- 5.1** Schools have processes in place to ensure equitable evaluation of all students, including those with disabilities and additional learning needs, through assessment and progress monitoring, thereby promoting personalized learning pathways.
- 5.2** Schools and teachers collaborate with parents/caregivers and other relevant parties to develop Individual Education Plans (IEPs) collaboration with students, their families and the IEP team in order to discuss and report on students' academic performance, behaviour and progress in learning.
- 5.3** Schools are aware of and implement strategies that promote flexible approaches to curriculum design, incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, and enable tailored learning experiences for all students, including those with disabilities and additional learning needs.

Standard 6: Inclusive Learning Support

- 6.1** Schools have processes to strengthen partnerships with specialized support services, including IERC support, specialized teacher support, therapy, and counselling services, fostering a network of comprehensive support for students with disability and additional learning needs.

Standard 7: Knowledgeable and Skilled Teacher Workforce

- 7.1** School leaders support training programs in inclusive education practices, covering both pre-service and in-service training offered within schools and IERCs, ensuring educators are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively support diverse student needs.
- 7.2** Schools have a process for the provision of expanded and improved professional development opportunities to foster the continuous growth of teachers' competencies in inclusive education practices, enabling them to stay current and proficient in accommodating diverse student needs.


Standard 8: Strengthening Data and Evidence

- 8.1** The National Department of Education collects data on students with disability and additional learning needs via the Annual School Census, Quarterly Returns, or at the request of the Department of Education in order to inform policy, planning and budgeting.
- 8.2** Disaggregated data and evidence on students with disabilities and additional learning needs is produced through the existing Education Management Information System (EMIS).
- 8.3** Individual and census level information on enrolment, retention and advancement of students with disabilities and additional learning needs in the school system collected through EMIS informs resource allocation and contributes to improvement in inclusive education.
- 8.4** Church agencies conduct regular data collection on respective agency schools in order to support school census data.

Standard 9: Management

- 9.1** Schools successfully incorporate structural leadership practices of inclusive education, reflecting a commitment to inclusive principles and policies at all levels of their organisational structure.
- 9.2** Schools have a process that enables the effective monitoring, review and evaluation of strategic planning for inclusive education practices.
- 9.3** School management keep a record of each student's registration, enrolment, screening assessments, and provide quarterly annual reports to respective authorities.
- 9.4** Schools have processes to manage the procurement, cataloguing and storage of school teaching materials and resources and other school assets for students with a variety of disabilities and additional learning needs.

SECTION D: MONITORING AND EVALUATION



SECTION D: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The NDOE, Inclusive Education Unit will use the Inclusive Education Implementation Guidelines to monitor and evaluate the progress of the implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy and Minimum Standards. The Inclusive Education Unit will collect raw data on enrolment from the IERCs through the National School Census Forms, entered into the EMIS. EMIS would also have data on students with disabilities not registered with IERCs. Disability disaggregated data on enrolment; retention and completion shall be collected from the Research and Evaluation ED Division through the EMIS and disseminated to assess policy implementation progress and inform planning and program priorities.

At the provincial and district levels, school inspectors will support and monitor inclusive education in schools through SLIP processes and the NQSSF.

SECTION E: POLICY REVIEW



SECTION E: POLICY REVIEW

It is a requirement of the Department of Education that a policy be reviewed every three years. Therefore the Inclusive Education Policy will be reviewed after every three years from the date of the implementation.

REFERENCES

Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). (2023, September). Disability-Inclusive Education: Policy Guidance. DFAT.gov.au

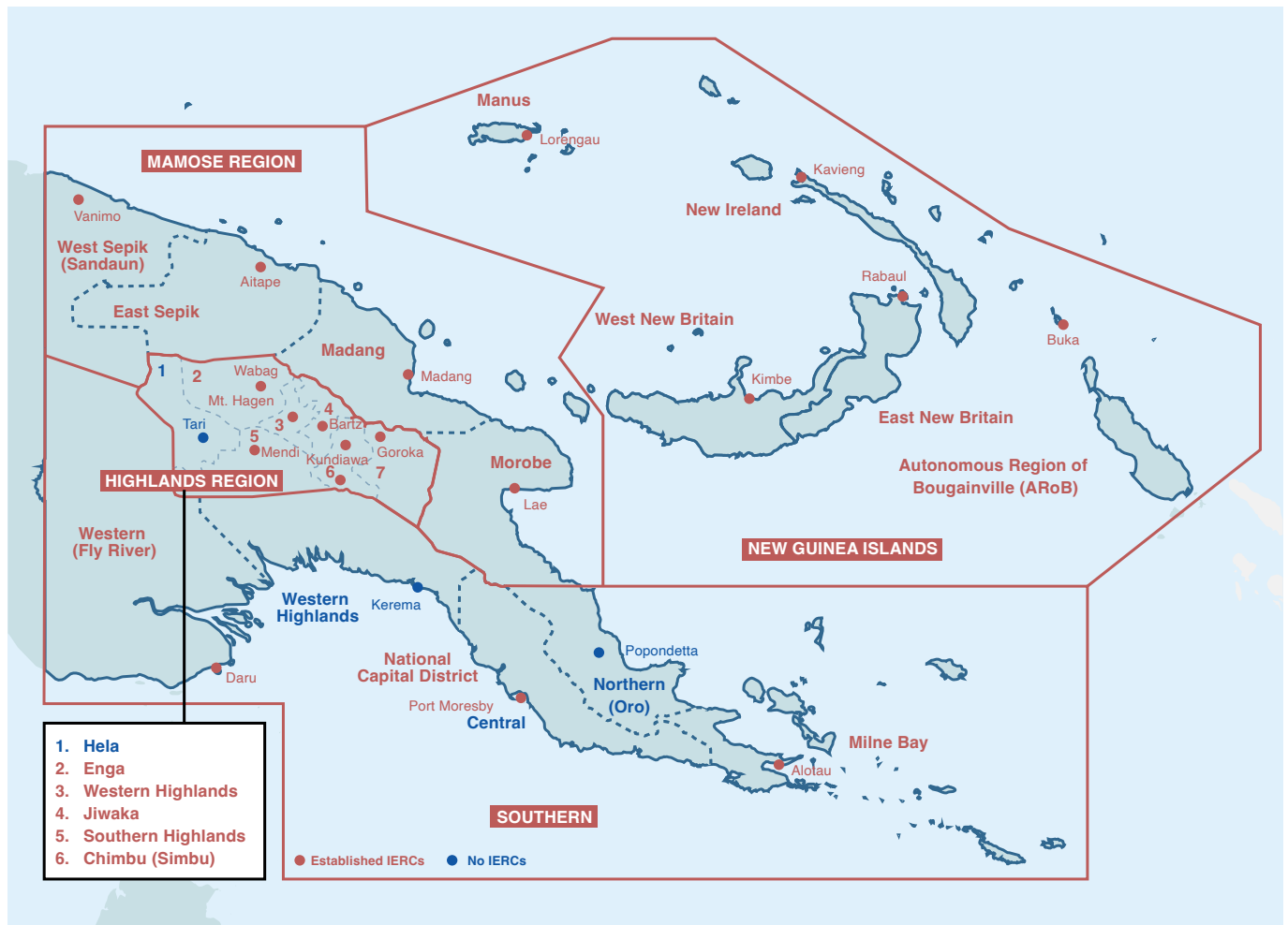
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ANNEX

ANNEX A:

Location of IERCs and Current Numbers of Students Identified as Having Disabilities or Additional Learning Needs



Locations of Inclusive Education Resource Centres (IERCs)

Highlands Region: Mt Sion, St. Therese Minigende, Simbu, Callan Mt Hagan, Mendi, ENGA

MOMASE: Vanimo, Aitape, Wewak, Madang, Morobe

Islands Region: Manus, Kimbe, Rabual, Kavieng, Buka

Southern Region: Kiunga, Daru, Alotau, Cheshire, St John, Red Cross, Gerehu

Number of Students with Disability and Additional Learning Needs (2023)

(Source: Internal Inclusive Education Data)

Region	Intellectual: Mild/Mod	Intellectual: Severe	Physical: Mild/Mod	Physical: Severe	Learning Difficulties	Hearing Impairment	Deaf	Speech Impairment	Vision Impairment	Blind	Behavioural/Emotional Disorders	Gifted	Multiple Impairment	Total
Highlands Region	382	72	683	260	2084	596	597	342	530	313	475	40	250	6624
MOMASE	105	25	202	40	571	230	237	94	68	57	21	4	233	1887
Islands Region	426	41	649	87	844	1323	444	126	308	102	281	208	343	5182
Southern Region	33	3	217	45	2237	1353	65	95	89	34	21	14	73	4279
TOTAL	946	141	1751	432	5765	3502	1343	657	995	506	798	266	899	17,972



PNGAus Partnership