

MALAWI GOVERNMENT

**IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR THE NATIONAL POLICY ON SPECIAL
NEEDS EDUCATION**

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

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FOREWORD

The Government of Malawi recognizes education as a basic human right. Over the years, Malawi has been striving to ensure that all citizens have access to high quality education. The Special Needs Education guidelines have been developed in light of government's commitment to allow all school aged learners with special educational needs to fully participate in education. Through these guidelines therefore, Malawi provides a guarantee to meeting its commitment to educate all its citizens.

The development of the guidelines hinges on the consideration that, for a long time, learners with special educational needs did not receive adequate service provision to satisfy their educational needs. This made it impossible for them to benefit fully from educational programmes. As a result, few or negligible numbers of learners with special educational needs achieved their full potential to participate in the economic development of the country.

The guidelines will empower providers of Special Needs Education to plan and implement programmes that are relevant to the Malawi context. Through these guidelines, the government will be able to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of Special Needs Education programmes. The government and other service providers will be able to provide appropriate resources for the running and management of Special Needs Education.

The guidelines provide a clear indication that Malawi is heading towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals and the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy. Successful implementation of the guidelines will ensure that all learners with special educational needs access and receive adequate quality Special Needs Education. It is therefore, the intention of government to encourage all providers of Special Needs Education to adhere to these guidelines.

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PREFACE

Special Needs Education guidelines intend to guide government and other stakeholders on how to include learners with special educational needs in education interventions and manage Special Needs Education programmes. In addition, they will raise awareness to different stakeholders about learners with special educational needs.

The guidelines include a detailed overarching statement on inclusion, which clarifies the principles that the education system at all levels must follow in accordance with National Education Sector Plan (NESP) and United Nations Conventions. They also give guidance on how to effectively provide for the management of Special Needs Education in the country. This is to ensure that all learners with special educational needs overcome their educational challenges.

The guidelines have been developed to promote the inclusion of learners with special educational needs as means towards attaining a more inclusive society, bearing in mind their existence in the schools and the demand for exclusive interventions.

The development of the guidelines underwent a series of consultations with different categories of stakeholders such as parents, students, government officials, and non-government organizations, members of the civil society, the media, local leaders, politicians, and development partners. A number of documents were also consulted for guidance and clarification on certain issues.

Therefore, it is hoped that the guidelines will enhance the successful implementation of Special Needs Education programmes.

B.H. Sande
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Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems
HIV	Human Immune Deficiency Virus
MACOHA	Malawi Council for the Handicapped
MANEB	Malawi National Examination Board
MDGS	Millennium Development Goals
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MIE	Malawi Institute of Education
MOE	Ministry of Education
MoEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
MSCE	Malawi School Certificate of Education
NESP	National Education Sector Plan
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NSO	National Statistics Office
PIF	Policy and Investment Framework
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSLCE	Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SNE	Special Needs Education
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SWAp	Sector Wide Approach
EFA	Education for All
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
UNISE	Uganda Institute of Special Education
VC	Vulnerable Children
VI	Visual Impairment/ Visually Impaired

Definition of Terms

Term	Definition
Assistive Devices	Appropriate aids, appliances, technologies and other support systems that facilitate effective learning of learners with special educational needs.
Augmentative Alternative Communication	A means of communication using pictures and symbols for learners with communication difficulties.
Braille	A person who transcribes print into Braille and Braille into print for learners with visual impairment to access instructions.
Impairment	Any loss or limitation of psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or function.
Inclusive Education	A learning environment that provides access, accommodates, and supports all learners.
Itinerant Specialist Teacher	Special Needs Education Teacher who moves from one school to another, providing additional support to learners with special educational needs and mainstream teachers.
Learners with special educational needs	Learners who require special service provision and support in order to access education and maximise the learning process. Learners with special educational needs as defined in this document refer to those children who fall into any of the following categories: sensory impairment which covers vision, hearing, deaf-blind; cognitive difficulties which include intellectual, specific disabilities and gifted and talented; socio- emotional and behavioural difficulties which includes autism and hyperactivity; physical and health impairments which include spina bifida, hydrocephalus, asthma and epilepsy.
Least Restrictive Environment	A supportive learning setting designed to meet individual learners' needs.
Learning Support Assistant	A person trained to assist a specialist teacher in the management of learners with special educational needs in the classroom setting..
Resource Centre	An institutional setting attached to a primary, secondary school or college to serve learners with special educational needs.
Sign Language Interpreter	A person specially trained to convert oral, written, standardised signs and or finger spelling for communication of learners with hearing impairment.
Special Needs Education	A system for providing a conducive learning environment for learners who may require extra support in order to achieve maximum potential.
Special School	A school that provides educational and other related services solely to learners with special educational needs and is staffed by specially trained teachers
Specialist Teacher	A teacher trained to assist learners with special educational needs.

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These implementation guidelines for the National Policy on Special Needs Education were made possible through the integration of ideas from many treasured parents, learners with special educational needs and specialist teachers with experience in Special Needs Education.

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Part One

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

Special Needs Education in Malawi began in the early 1950's under the guidance of faith-based organisations. These were the missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church, South African Evangelical Church and the Roman Catholic Church. The Dutch Reformed Church established a school for learners with visual impairment at Chilanga in Kasungu in 1950. In the same year, the South African Evangelical Church opened Lulwe School for learners with visual impairment in Nsanje. The Roman Catholic Church, through the Brothers of Immaculate Conception, established Mary View School for the Deaf in Chiradzulu in 1968. In the same year, the Roman Catholic Church identified a need for specialist teachers for these schools hence opened a Specialist Teacher Training College at Montfort College campus. The Malawi Government officially began to provide funding for Special Needs Education programmes in 1967.

Malawi is a signatory to a number of universal agreements that advocate for the provision of adequate education opportunities for learners with special educational needs. From these agreements, Malawi has developed more comprehensive strategies to better respond to the educational needs of learners with special educational needs. The national special needs education policy provides a framework for Special Needs Education in Malawi . The implementation guidelines for the national policy on Special Needs Education therefore, provide a mechanism for the effective and standardized implementation of National Policy on Special Needs Education.

The national policy focuses on the three priority areas as stipulated in the National Educational Sector Plan (NESP). The priorities encompass components of Special Needs Education which include: early identification, assessment and intervention; advocacy, care and support; management, planning and financing; access, quality, equity and relevance. Each of these components has strategies to ensure their effective implementation.

The formulation of these implementation guidelines resulted from consultative meetings with various stakeholders, and a review of a cross-section of literature with specific consideration to the relevant educational targets set in the Education For All (EFA), Millennium Development Goals (MDG), United Nations Standard Rules for Equalization of Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities, Salamanca Statement on Special Needs Education, Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS), Policy Investment Framework (PIF), and the National Education Sector Plan .

The implementation guidelines spell out the background of Special Needs Education; rationale; linkages with other relevant policies; the challenges for its implementation; the vision, mission, goal, objectives, guiding principles and policy areas.

Currently, Malawi provides Special Needs Education services to the following types of special educational needs: visual impairment, hearing impairment, specific learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities, deaf-blind, physical and health impairment, emotional and behavioural difficulties and gifted and talented.

1.2 Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives

1.2.1 Vision

Realizing the potential in learners with special educational needs

1.2.2 Mission

Provide access to *quality and relevant* education to all learners with special educational needs in Malawi .

1.2.3 Goal

Develop the personal social and academic competences of learners with special educational needs.

1.2.4 Objectives

The objectives of National Policy on Special Needs Education are to:-

- i. Provide appropriate quality education and/or vocational training to all learners with SEN.
- ii. Ensure equitable access to all learners with SEN at all educational levels.
- iii. Provide education facilities with necessary provisions to support the education of learners with SEN.
- iv. Ensure that all education institutions create and provide supportive learning environments.
- v. Increase provision of SNE services by all education stakeholders.
- vi. Improve co-ordination and networking among SNE stakeholders.
- vii. Provide standards and ethical practices to be adhered to in the provision of SNE services.

1.3 Situation Analysis

1.3.1 Status of Special Needs Education

The Malawi Education For All document of 2002 states that of the school-going-age children between 0-15 years old with special educational needs, 66.2% have learning difficulties, 20.5% have visual impairments and 13.3% hearing impairments. According to statistics from EMIS

(2007), there are 69,943 learners with special educational needs enrolled in schools. These include low vision 18,328, complete blindness 366, partial deafness 17,344, complete deafness 1636, and physical impairment 7194. These statistics, however, do not take into account the number of learners enrolled in mainstream classes with an impairment or learning difficulty such as intellectual disability, emotional and behavioural difficulty, specific learning disability, health impairment, language and communication difficulty.

This situation clearly demonstrates the need to conduct a national survey to identify the actual number of children with disabilities in order to compile a databank, which will inform future service provision.

1.3.2 Needs of Learners with Special Educational Needs

Although education is free at primary level, a few learners with special educational needs receive special needs educational services. Lack of adequate information by the communities on the needs of learners with special educational needs contribute to this problem. The following are some of the needs learners with special educational needs require to successfully enroll and participate in education:

1.3.2.1 Conducive learning environment: Learners with special educational needs require classrooms that are readily accessible, well ventilated, effectively maintained, are properly equipped with the relevant assistive devices, and where the learning process is positive and supportive.

1.3.2.2 Modified teaching, learning and assessment resources: The content, learning aids, instruction strategies and assessment must be either adapted or accommodative to meet the individual learners' needs.

1.3.2.3 Specialized assistive devices:

Some learners with special educational needs require pieces of equipment such as hearing aids, glasses, wheelchairs, talking machines or computers for them to access information and participate successfully in the learning process.

1.3.2.4 Regular medical checks-ups:

Some learners with special educational needs require medical attention to participate fully the learning process.

1.3.3 Challenges faced by Learners with Special Educational Needs

Learners with special educational needs are unable to attain their fullest educational potential because of various problems that hinder their participation in education. Some of the challenges include:

1.3.3.1 Stigma by the community: Attitude of the community towards the education of learners with special educational needs affect the delivery of special education needs services. Sometimes the community uses inappropriate language and behaviour towards these learners, which deters them from accessing education. Such negative attitude may lead to exclusion from some school activities, academic failure, low self-esteem, isolation, bullying, abuse, and school dropout.

1.3.3.2 Lack of specialist teachers and resource centers: There is an inadequate number of qualified specialist teachers leading to insufficient resource centres to service learners with special educational needs.

1.3.3.3 Shortage of specialized teaching, learning resources and assistive devices: Not all schools in Malawi are equipped with the instructional materials or assistive devices necessary to facilitate learning. This makes it difficult for learners with special educational needs in such schools to participate effectively in the learning process.

1.3.3.4 Inaccessible infrastructures and information: Some learners with special educational needs find it difficult to access some school buildings, playgrounds and amenities due to unavailability of ramps, rails, access to water points and toilets, wide and adapted classroom doors.

Other learners require information, which is accessible in appropriate formats to enhance their learning. For example, braille for learners with visual impairment, sign language for the hearing impaired and augmentative alternative communication for those with communication difficulties. Learners with specific learning disabilities or intellectual challenges require modifications and accommodations to the curriculum content. Due to lack of capacity to provide these support systems some learners are unable to attend school.

1.4 Rationale for the Implementation guidelines

These guidelines have been formulated with the aim of providing a universal framework that will assist all education implementers to effectively deliver Special Needs Education services in Malawi . The guidelines will, therefore:

- i. Provide procedures on how government and other stakeholders can effectively mainstream SNE issues.
- ii. Provide guidance and standardization in the implementation of SNE through a coordinated multi-sectoral response.
- iii. Enhance integration of holistic services focusing on all categories of SNE
- iv. Promote equitable allocation of resources towards the attainment of MDG number 2 (Achieve universal primary education) and number 3 (Promote gender equality and empower women).

1.5 Current Implementation Challenges

The implementation of Special Needs Education is facing a number of challenges. These include:

1.5.1 Financial constraints

Inadequate funds to implement SNE programmes and activities nationwide e.g. procurement of teaching, learning and assessment resources, assistive devices, construction, rehabilitation of resource centres, capacity building, and maintenance of plant and specialized equipment.

1.5.2 Environmental barriers

Inaccessible infrastructure such as classrooms, transport, long distances to schools, sports and recreation facilities, roads and public utilities are barriers for learners with special educational needs.

1.5.3 Attitudinal barriers

Negative attitude is a major barrier to the development of SNE in Malawi . Children and youths with special educational needs face discrimination, lack of parental responsibility, neglect, rejection, abuse, and overprotection by some parents. This could also be aggravated by lack of information, misinformation, cultural practices, beliefs and values.

1.5.4 Limited Capacity to train specialist personnel

Effective delivery of Special Needs Education is negatively impacted by an acute shortage of specialist personnel at all levels within the education system. There is limited capacity to provide training to SNE specialists at secondary and university levels. This problem is further compounded by retirements, HIV/AIDS, deaths, and brain drain.

1.5.5 Curriculum

Teaching and learning should be made least restrictive to all learners with special educational needs. Teaching methods and content shall be accessible to all learners.

1.5.6 Institutional Structure

There is need to develop administrative and supervisory structures that link schools, zone/ clusters, districts, and education divisions to the SNE Directorate at the ministry headquarters.

1.5.7 Co-ordination and Partnership

There is little co-ordination among stakeholders on issues of SNE. This can impede the effective policy implementation since key players operate in isolation. Lack of co-ordination among stakeholders results in duplication of efforts, dilution of ethics and standards, and focus on one area of SNE at the expense of others.

1.6 Guiding Principles

The following shall be the guiding principles in the implementation of SNE. Milestones towards the achievement of global and national targets for SNE implementation will be guided by the MDGs and the human rights based approach to programming:

- i. SNE will be implemented in the context of the EFA, NESP and Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) to financing educational programmes.
- ii. Operational decision-making process of SNE services will be decentralized to local assemblies to ensure acceleration of universal coverage.
- iii. The implementation of SNE shall take into consideration the multiplicity of partners involved in the delivery of SNE services.
- iv. There shall be transparency, accountability and good governance in the provision of SNE goods and services by all stakeholders.
- v. The family is the primary institution for supporting the holistic growth and development of children with disabilities.
- vi. No learner with SEN shall be discriminated or segregated against in the provision of education services on the basis of age, gender, race, tribe, health status, disability, HIV sero-status, economic status, religion, political affiliation and so on.
- vii. Education provision for children with SNE shall be integrated and harmonized with other interventions and services relating to the care and welfare of children.

Part Two

2.0 Special Needs Education Thematic Areas

The policy guidelines cover three thematic areas of Special Needs Education as stipulated in the National Education Sector Policy Statement. The areas are:

2.1 Priority 1 - Access and Equity

The education system should provide guidelines for advocacy, early identification, assessment, appropriate intervention, care and support for learners with special educational needs to access equitable education at all levels.

2.1.1 Policy Statements

MoE shall:

- i. promote easy access to education at all levels for learners with special educational needs.
- ii. Eliminate the imbalances between learners with special educational needs and those without.
- iii. Put systems in place for early identification, assessment and placement of individuals requiring Special Needs Education.
- iv. Bring awareness to the public about individuals with disabilities and their right to education.
- v. Ensure that learners with special educational needs receive adequate care and support services.

2.1.2 Objectives

The objectives are to:

- i. Create a positive, supportive and least restrictive learning environment for individuals with special educational needs to easily access educational services.
- ii. Close the gaps between learners with special education needs and those without.
- iii. Ensure that effective and efficient systems are in place for identification, assessment and placement of individuals with special educational needs.
- iv. Change the mindset of the public on Special Needs Education and encourage children with disabilities to attend school.
- v. Provide care and support to learners with special educational needs in order to facilitate their effective teaching and learning process.

2.1.3 Strategies:

The MoE will:

- i. Develop and utilize national Sign Language for learners with hearing impairment, tactile language for learners with deaf-blind, augmentative alternative communication for learners with communication difficulties and Braille for the visually impaired.
- ii. Provide adequate and well qualified Specialist Teachers, Sign Language Interpreters, Learning Support Assistants (Teacher Aides), and Braillists for learners with special educational needs.
- iii. Ensure that criteria for award of bursaries will include learners with special educational needs.
- iv. Build more resource centres and special schools to promote enabling environment for all categories of learners with special educational needs.
- v. Equip Special Needs Education units with adequate staff and assistive devices.
- vi. Encourage public and private institutions to establish libraries with instructional materials accessible by learners with special educational needs.
- vii. Include a mandatory SNE component in the primary and secondary teacher training courses.
- viii. Ensure that HIV and AIDS information is available in accessible formats.
- ix. Equip them with the necessary and relevant skills, knowledge, values and attitudes to make them responsible and productive citizens.
- x. Ensure equitable distribution of relevant teaching, learning and assessment resources in Special Needs Education institutions.
- xi. Strengthen the SNE support system by providing Braillists, Sign Language Interpreters and Learning Support Assistants to all resource centres and special schools.
- xii. Construct and maintain resource centres and special schools equitably throughout the country.
- xiii. Develop guidelines for identification, assessment and placement of individuals with special educational needs.
- xiv. Develop and implement appropriate screening tools for identification and assessment of individuals with special educational needs.
- xv. Provide adequate educational psychologists, counselors, and allied health professionals for the delivery of psychological services.
- xvi. Establish educational assessment and resource service centres.
- xvii. Strengthen collaboration, coordination and communication amongst various professionals' i.e. social workers, audiologists, ophthalmologists, specialist teachers and other professionals.
- xviii. Promote participation of media in carrying awareness campaigns on rights of individuals with special educational needs.
- xix. collaborate with stakeholders in encouraging parents of children with SEN to send their children to school.

- xx. Involve individuals with disabilities in advocacy as role models.
- xxi. Equip parents and guardians with necessary knowledge and skills for caring and supporting learners with special educational needs.
- xxii. Provide persons with special educational needs psycho-social care to promote mental and social development in collaboration with other ministries.
- xxiii. Enhance sporting and recreational activities for learners with special educational needs in all learning institutions.
- xxiv. Enforce rules governing the protection of learners with special educational needs.
- xxv. Facilitate the use of counseling and guidance, dietary supplements and different therapies to improve the learning process.

2.2 Priority 2 - Quality and Relevance

Learners with special educational needs should be provided with relevant quality education which will equip them with necessary skills, knowledge, values, and attitudes to make them productive and responsible citizens.

2.2.1 Policy Statements

The MoE shall:

- i. Establish and maintain agreed minimum standards for the provision of quality education for learners with special educational needs at all education levels.
- ii. Ensure that national curricula respond to the needs of learners with special educational needs at all times.

2.2.2 Objectives

The objectives are to:

- i. Ensure that learners with special educational needs access quality education.
- ii. Equip learners with special educational needs with relevant knowledge and skills for their active participation in socio-economic development activities.

2.2.3 Strategies

The MoE will:

- i. Put in place logistics on the supply and distribution of specialized teaching, learning and assessment resources.
- ii. Develop and implement SNE supervisory, inspection and advisory mechanisms.
- iii. Conduct continuous professional development for teachers on Special Needs Education.
- iv. Ensure that all special needs teacher trainers have a minimum requirement of a postgraduate qualification in Special Needs Education

- v. improve qualified specialist teacher-pupil ratio to between 1:15 and 1:5 depending on severity of impairment.
- vi. Implement SNE following the national curriculum. However, special systems will be put in place to accommodate the specific needs of learner with SEN to access the curriculum.
- vii. Undertake inspection and supervision of SNE delivery in divisions and districts, with advisors and inspectors well trained or inducted in SNE. Some EMAS positions will specifically be for SNE after induction or training.
- viii. Train inspectors on Special Needs Education
- ix. Develop inspection and supervisory guidelines on SNE
- x. Continue to adapt mainstream curriculum to accommodate all learners with special educational needs.
- xi. Administer national examinations that are adapted to the needs of learners with special educational needs.
- xii. Provide relevant teaching, learning and assessment resources for learners and teachers with special educational needs.
- xiii. Actively encourage disability friendly sporting activities in all institutions
- xiv. Conduct research on issues in SNE to maintain relevance.
- xv. Provide programmes at all educational levels for learners with special educational needs that will facilitate their entry into the labour market e.g. school to work programmes.
- xvi. Provide technical and vocational education for learners with special education needs who cannot progress in academic work.

2.3 Priority 3 - Governance and Management

For effective and efficient delivery of SNE, there is need for establishing and implementing proper systems of governance and management.

2.3.1 Policy Statement

MoE shall:

- i. Ensure that Special Needs Education has a proper governance and management structure.

2.3.2 Objective

The objective is to:

- i. Improve and expand education governance, management, planning and financing to ensure proper delivery of the SNE at all levels.

2.3.3 Strategies

- i. Specialist teachers reporting mechanism should follow the existing management structure.

- needs
 - ii. School returns should be include learner with special educational
- Special Needs Education and financing of SNE activities at school level.
 - iii. Education Division and District Education Budgets should include
- Education.
 - iv. The MoE will create and maintain a databank for Special Needs
- Needs Education.
 - v. The MoE will develop and implement a Strategic Plan for Special

Part Three

3.0 Implementation Arrangements

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The following are the responsible institutions and their roles:

Institution	Roles
Ministry of Education Headquarters	i. Coordinate SNE at national level
	ii. Provide strategic leadership, and action planning for SNE
	iii. Mobilise resources for SNE
	iv. Provide policy guidance to all stakeholders on SNE
	v. Promote professional development for Managers and SNE teachers
	vi. Facilitate the provision of better working conditions
	vii. Select learners with SEN to secondary schools
	viii. Monitor and supervise SNE activities
	ix. Provide backstopping services to districts e.g. school screening
	x. Procure and supply teaching, learning and assessment resources for SNE
Education Division Offices	i. Coordinate SNE activities in the division.
	ii. Report on SNE issues to MoE
	iii. Allocate SNE learners to appropriate secondary schools
	iv. Monitor SNE activities in the division
	v. Allocate specialist teachers to secondary schools
	vi. Establish resource centres in the division
	vii. Mobilise resources for SNE
	viii. Provide user friendly infrastructure to SNE learners
District Education Manager	i) Include SNE activities in the district budget and District Education Plan (DEP).
	ii) Provide transport to IT for SNE activities.
	iii) Allocate SNE teachers equitably in the zone/ clusters.
	iv) Mobilise resources for SNE.
	v) Sensitise the Assembly on issues pertaining to Special Needs Education.
	vi) Ensure that the district has an SNE desk officer.
	vii) Advise EDM on SNE needs in the district.
	viii) Provide support to PEAs and Head Teachers in supervision of SNE teachers.
	ix) Interpret policies on SNE.

	<p>x) Communicate circulars and adverts to teachers concerning SNE.</p> <p>ix. Safeguard the welfare of teachers undergoing special needs training.</p> <p>x. Implement recommendations made by PEAs on SNE</p> <p>xi. Procure and distribute special needs education materials.</p> <p>xii. Monitor and evaluate SNE activities in the district.</p> <p>xiii. Provide educational support to learners with SEN e.g. bursaries.</p> <p>xiv. Involve SNE teachers in all activities in the district e.g. National examination exercises, insets and other workshops.</p>
Primary Education Advisors	<p>i. Provide supervisory and advisory services to both regular and specialist teachers in the zone and cluster.</p> <p>ii. Monitor activities of Special Needs Education in the zone and cluster.</p> <p>iii. Ensure that learners with special educational needs are educated in accordance with ministry policy.</p> <p>iv. Advise other stakeholders in the zone and cluster about inclusive education.</p> <p>v. Maintain data about SNE in the zone and cluster.</p> <p>vi. Involve specialist teachers in all activities of the teaching profession in the zone and cluster.</p> <p>vii. Guide head teachers on how they can identify learners with SEN in their schools.</p> <p>viii. Update head teachers and other authorities on matters pertaining to SNE in schools.</p> <p>ix. Ensure equitable distribution of specialist teachers.</p> <p>x. Encourage specialist teachers to take advantage of the already scheduled zonal meetings and insets at the TDC.</p> <p>xi. Assist in distribution of specialised materials to specialist teachers.</p> <p>xii. Interpret Ministry of Education policy on SNE to stakeholders.</p> <p>xiii. Encourage class teachers to support learners with special educational needs in the schools.</p> <p>xiv. Conduct regular meetings with specialist teachers in the zone and cluster.</p>
Specialist Teachers	<p>i. Identify learners with special educational needs.</p> <p>ii. Teach learners with special educational needs using the individualized education plans.</p> <p>iii. Advise the head teachers in all matters pertaining to Special Needs Education.</p> <p>iv. Prepare lesson plans, schemes and records of work.</p> <p>v. Screen and refer learners with SEN to concerned</p>

	stakeholders.
	vi. Update data on SNE.
	vii. Provide information and data about SNE to the Head teacher and PEA.
	viii. Provide guidance and counseling to learners, mainstream teachers and parents.
Mainstream Teachers	i. Teach learners with special educational needs in an inclusive setting.
	ii. Identify learners with special educational needs.
	iii. Inform the head teacher and specialist teacher about learners with special educational needs at the school.
Special Needs Education College (s)	i. Train specialist teachers, learning support assistants, braillists, sign language interpreters.
	ii. Conduct continuing professional development on SNE.
	iii. Provide backstopping services on SNE in the districts through the DEMs/EDMs.
	iv. Develop and review SNE curriculum in conjunction with MIE and MoE.
	v. Conduct research on SNE.
Ministry of Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly	i. Advocate for equalization of opportunities and rights of PWDs.
	ii. Support learners with special educational needs.
	iii. Facilitate out of school programmes for learners with disabilities.
Ministry of Health	i. Responsible for prevention, detection and interventions.
Ministry of Information	i. Initiating awareness raising on issues of SNE.
Ministry of Youth and Sports Development	i. Promotion of sporting activities and recreation.
	ii. Provision of sporting equipment/facilities.
Ministry of Women Child Development	i. Strengthening protection and safeguarding of children with special educational needs.
	ii. Provide early childhood Special Needs Education programmes.
	iii. Providing psychosocial support.
Ministry of Finance	i. Funding Special Needs Education programmes and related services.
Ministry of Local Government	i. Integrating Special Needs Education activities into District Development Plans.
Ministry of Development cooperation	i. Provide technical advice on Special Needs Education.
	ii. Facilitate investment programmes for Special Needs Education.

Ministry of Physical Planning (Transport and Public Works)	i. Provide advice on infrastructure design to be disability-friendly.
Universities and Colleges	i. Conduct selection of students with SEN with affirmative action.
	ii. Conduct research on SNE.
	iii. Introduce SNE programmes in tertiary institutions.
	iv. Ensure accessibility to university education facilities by students with disabilities.
	v. Initiate innovations on assistive technologies for students with SEN.
Communities, Families and Parents	i. Promote care and support services.
	ii. Mobilise resources.
	iii. Assist in identification of learners with SEN.
	iv. Protect learners with SEN from abuse and violence.
	v. Provide learners with food and other amenities.
Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA)	i. Provide learners with SEN with bursaries.
	ii. Provide rehabilitation services, vocational guidance and counselling, skills and training.
	iii. Facilitate the provision of assistive devices.
	iv. Advocate for employment of out of school persons with disabilities.
Private Secondary Schools Association of Malawi	i. Complement government efforts in providing special needs education services.
Disabled Peoples Organisations	i. Undertake awareness campaigns and advocacy.
	ii. Lobby for the rights of learners with special educational needs.
	iii. Provide peer counseling.
Non-Governmental Organisations and Development Partners	i. Provide education to children with special educational needs to compliment government efforts.
	ii. Provide physio-therapy and occupational therapy services to children, youths and adults with special educational needs.
	iii. Provide medicines to children and youths with health impairments e.g. epilepsy.
	iv. Construct disability friendly school structures e.g. large

	class doors, ramps, well ventilated and partially transpired roofing for low vision.
	v. Promote and protect the rights of children with special educational needs.
	vi. Provide bursaries, teaching and learning resources, food stuffs to learners with SEN.
	vii. Fund SNE programmes through provision of teaching learning resources and assistive devices.
	viii. Conduct awareness on Special Needs Education.

Note: All institutions should be involved in SNE research activities

4.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of the policy and its implementation will be continuously monitored and evaluated. The policy and its implementation will be subject to both internal and external reviews involving all stakeholders. The MoE will, from time to time maintain a data base on SNE. This data base will be an integral part of the MoE information systems. Due to the multiplicity of partners involved in SNE, feedback on the implementation of the policy will be actualized through a Ministry of Education Partner Network. This network is envisaged to form a basis of dialogue and communication on issues of SNE in the country.

4.1 Policy Guidelines Review

Annual reviews will be carried out with all coordinators and stakeholders to share information on guidelines implementation. Lessons learnt from these reviews will form the basis for planning the following year. The Ministry of Education and partners will be supported to assess and document their experiences and use the lessons during re-planning and for advocacy purpose. As a routine, the Ministry of Education will prepare progress reports on a quarterly and annual basis.

4.2 Operational Research

The directorate of Special Needs Education will coordinate the research agenda for Special Needs Education. The directorate will collate potential areas for research in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders or partners. The research agenda should be based on analysis of situation, monitoring, supervision and evaluations, taking advantage of the ministry's databank.