



appear

University of Gondar

Faculty of Education

Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education

INEDIS Project

A Workshop Report on

Building the Capacity of Students with Disabilities

March 10-11, 2018

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1. Introduction

As it is well known, as a part of higher educational institutions of the Ministry of Education of Ethiopia, the University of Gondar has three major responsibilities. These are, teaching students to enhance the attitude, knowledge and skills of them, conduct research which is important for innovation and provide community services for the community to minimize and solve problems.

As part of this, the University of Gondar, Faculty of Education, Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education in collaboration with the University of Vienna as partner University in the INEDIS Project, developed different action plans which are implemented in three consecutive years. From different objectives of the project, one of our plans was providing capacity building trainings for students with disabilities.

To implement this plan, starting from March 10-11, 2018 a two-day training was given to teachers by the Faculty of Education, Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education to enhance the psychological, social, academic, and self-management skills of students with disabilities and to increase their awareness on gender-based violence against them. The participants were invited from different departments of the University of Gondar. 21 female students with disabilities and 39 male students with disabilities participated. From the Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education five trainers and from the Department of Gender and Development Studies one trainer were there. Based on the needs of students with disabilities, the training was conducted and covered four important areas that can support the capacities of students with disabilities. These are:

1. Psychosocial Skills and Students with Disabilities,
2. Academic Skills and Students with Disabilities,

3. Self-Management Skills and Students with Disabilities,
4. Gender-Based Violence against Female Students with Disabilities

2. Organization of the Workshop

Before the implementation of the workshop different activities took place. First, Mrs. Meseret Hassen, Dean of Faculty of Education and the chairwoman of the APPEAR project of the University of Gondar, distributed tasks to all members of the core team and from the Departments of the Special Needs and Inclusive Education and Gender and Development Studies five professionals were selected to develop the training manual. Hence, these professionals developed four types of training manuals. These are, Psychosocial Skills, Self-Management Skill, Academic Skills, and Gender-Based Violence against Female Students with Disabilities. Finally, the training manuals have been collected from the professionals to be used for the training. Additionally, in collaboration with the departments, the Disability Study and Support Center Directorate and the Association of Students with Disabilities of the University of Gondar, identified female and male students with disability for the training.

To conduct the training, the University of Gondar, Maraki Campus Aluminum Building Training Hall has been selected and at 8:30 AM all participants arrived at the hall and the seminar started exactly at 9:00 AM. In the following we present how the two-day seminar started, what points were collected and how it was closed.

Mr. Wondwosen Mitiku was chosen to facilitate the training. He then, greeted and welcomed all attendees. He then said, "I have to invite Mrs. Meseret Hassen who is the Dean of the

Faculty of Education and Chairperson of the core team members, to explain about the purpose of the training and to undertake the welcoming and opening speech”. Mrs. Meseret Hassen took the stage and sent a very warm welcome to all attendees of the capacity building workshop. She first thanked all the attendees that they have managed to attend the training by sacrificing their valuable time. Next, she explained about the project and the purpose of the seminar. She said, “The University of Gondar along with Dilla University, Addis Ababa University and University of Vienna from Austria was able to get funding from the Austrian Development Cooperation to create inclusive education and an inclusive society in Ethiopia where people with disabilities are included.” She said, “For this it is necessary to conduct training on capacity building for students with disabilities and it is one of the activities planned to be implemented in the first phase of the project.” She further explained that students with disabilities are facing many challenges starting from the physical inaccessibility, negative attitudes, lack of equipment, etc. As a consequence we (UoG) wanted to provide capacity building training for students with disabilities on some selected topics. The objectives as she explained are enhance academic achievement, equipping with social, communication, self-management, and other life skills which are necessary for people with disabilities to enhance the success in any way of life. However, the concept is so complex and difficult to address in these two days, it is necessary to provide you the basic concepts on the topics mentioned. She then finally said, “I ask you to humbly attend the training seriously and raise ideas and thoughts for further discussion.” And, she thanked the trainees in advance for their participation.



Mrs. Meseret Hassen (chairwoman of the INEDIS project of the University of Gondar)

And then, Mr. Wondwosen Mitiku invited Mr. Ashenafi Mihiret from the Department of Educational Planning and Management to chair the first training and Mr. Simachew Tafere from the Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education of University of Gondar as the trainer of the first day of the work shop consecutively.

3. Contents of the Training

3.1. Academic Skills and Students with Disabilities

The trainers for this topic were Mr. Simachew Tafere and Ms. Bezawite Awoke from the Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education. The training was started by the history and success of Stephen Hawking (documentary film) by Mr. Simachew Tafere, from the

Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education and the main issues in the training were the following:

Students with disabilities got an overview about academic skills, goal setting skills, note taking skills, study skills, exam taking skills, with regard to student's success during their stay within the university.



Mr. Simachew and Mr. Ashenafi, with public relation camera man

3. 2. Self-Management Skills and Students with Disabilities

The trainer of this topic was Mr. Kasahun Anteneh from the Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education and the main issues in the training were the following:

The general objective of the training was making students with disabilities confident and independent and more specifically improving the self-esteem skills, stress management skills, anger management skills and decision making skills. Increasing the awareness of students with disabilities regarding substance abuse was another objective of the training.

It was during this time that an incidental thing happened. Famous Ethiopian artists who came to University of Gondar for another job visited the students together with the President of the University of Gondar to have a motivational speech. One of the famous artist, Ygerem Dejen, made a speech saying “it is not the physical wellbeing of a person that shapes the personality but the intellectual makeup. So, you can do everything because disability by itself is not inability.” Another famous artist, Tsertse Firesibhat, made a speech identifying famous Ethiopian people with disabilities who made lots of contributions for the country. Finally, Dr. Dessalegn, President of the university made a speech about the commitment of the university to make the compound accessible for students with disabilities.



Dr. Dessalegn, President of the University and famous Ethiopian Artists

3. 3. Social Skills and Students with Disabilities

The trainer of this topic was Mr. Tarekegn Asinake from the Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education and the main issues in the training were the following:

Psychosocial skills allow us to interact with, perceive influence and relate to others. This also includes our ability to appropriately experience, display and perceive emotional states and to relate these to the events and environments where they occur. Psychosocial skills must work together with our communication skills, negotiation skills and conflict management skill to enable us to interact appropriately with other individuals and function within a socially meaningful context. If a person has trouble recognizing when another person is happy, irritated, angry, sad, etc. or has trouble experiencing these feelings then their interaction with others is likely to be poor and sometimes inappropriate.

The general objective of the training was making students with disabilities confident and interact properly with others and more specifically improving the friendship skills, communication skills, assertiveness skills, conflict resolution skills, negative peer pressure resistance skills, negotiation skills and tolerance skills of students with disabilities.



Mr. Tarekegn and Mr. Getu

3. 4. Gender-Based Violence against Female Students with Disabilities

The trainer of this topic was Mr. Tewelde from the Department of Gender Studies and HIV/AIDS and the main issues in the training were the following:

The main topics raised in the training were equipping students with disabilities with the basic concepts of gender and sex and describe common terminologies in relation to gender and sex, gender-based violence, common types of gender-based violence, magnitude of gender-based violence, economic, social and health consequences of gender-based violence, multi-sectoral response/approach to gender-based violence and legal context and professional ethics in response to gender-based violence.



The Disability Study and Support Center Directorate Mrs. Hiowte Abebe responding to students question about UoG service for students with disability

Finally, Mr. Wondwosen, the facilitator summarized all the discussions held with all the trainees and expressed the whole objective of the training was met adequately. He then, invited Mrs. Meseret Hassen to give a closing speech. She thanked all the attendees for sharing their valuable time to participate in the training and discuss the major problems faced by students with disabilities in the campus. She has explained and promised for the attendees the issues observed as a gap especially, providing awareness raising programs for the university

community in order to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and alleviate the attitudinal challenges of the university community. This closing was done right at 06:00 PM.

