taste the food and fruits from Uganda. beans, jackfruit as well as snacks such commission in the UK.

Policy for inclusive education for PWDs underway

By Evaline Namuwaya

The chief executive director of the Uganda Society for Disabled Children, Dolorence Were, has decried the slow pace at which the policy for inclusive education is being implemented by the education ministry.

Speaking during the launch of a book titled *Inside Our Dark World* in Kampala last week, Were said: "We have waited for so long for the implementation of this policy. Our children don't have materials to use.

"For instance, the disabled children are being left behind when it comes to information technology. That is why we are trying to create awareness in schools," she added.

The book was intended to fundraise for the on-going project for information communication technology (ICT) for persons with disabilities (PWDs).

Were added that there were no teachers for children with special needs in most of the schools. This particular project is training both the children and the teachers in three schools in the districts of Kampala, Soroti and Luwero on how to use ICT for PWDs.

Martin Sebalu, who is visually impaired, is one of the few educated PWDs but said a lot ought to be done to achieve inclusive education in Uganda.

"I was given a book to read but I thought how could I have read it without being trained. Because I have been trained to read soft copies from my computer, I was able to read. I believe if this is given to many others it will make an impact on our world," he added.

The director for basic and secondary education, Robinson Nsumba-Lyazi, said the education ministry is developing a coherent framework to guide the country on the implementation of inclusive education in which all children can participate in the system, irrespective of their sex, ability or disability and other social-economic factors.

Challenges in society

"In many societies, PWDs face a lot of challenges such as intimidation and stigma and the resultant effect is unfair planning. With such negative perception and attitude about PWDs, even to have a thought to attend school is really admirable," he added.

Nsumba-Lyazi said the ministry had started the procurement of specialised materials, training teachers and other interventions through its emancipation programmes to ensure that there is a conducive environment for children with disabilities.

John Eldred Kato, the author of *Inside Our Dark World*, said PWDs have been sidelined in many ways because most people do not understand their interests.

"In this book I try to explain what happens to people with disabilities and the hardships they go through. It is my prayer that Ugandans develop a reading culture to understand what is entailed in this book," he said.

According to Were, many schools in Uganda do not have smooth pathways and ramps to enable children with disabilities - access facilities such as classrooms and toilets.



Robinson Nsumba-Lyazi, the director for basic education