

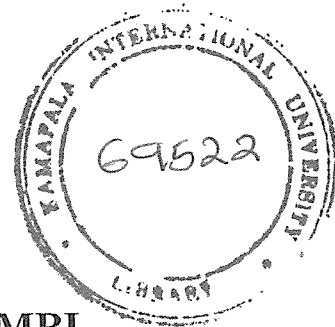
DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY TEACHERS

OF LEARNERS WITH LOW VISION IN

REGULAR PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN

KASARANI DIVISION

NAIROBI



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REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE IN

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KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

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Declaration

I, JANE CATHERINE A. MUTSEMBI REG NO. BED/13490/61/DF declare that the work presented here is my own work and has not been presented for award of a degree in any other college.

I also declare that all the materials cited in this paper which are not my own have been fully acknowledged.

Name of researcher:

JANE CATHERINE A. MUTSEMBI

Signature:

...Mutsembi...

Date:

...13/8/2008...

Name of supervisor:

TINDI SGGG

Signature:

...[Signature]...

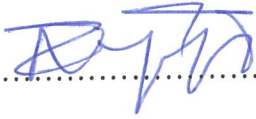
Date:

14th AUGUST 2008.

CERTIFICATION

This work has been submitted for examination with my approval

Signature:.....



TINDI

SUPERVISOR

Dedication

I dedicate this report to my dear husband Steve Spem Saba and my beloved children Eathern and Eathryn for their encouragement and love as I did these work.

Abstract

This study was carried out to establish the difficulties facing the teaching of learners with low vision in Kasarani division, Nairobi district. The quantitative approach and the survey strategy were used to collect the numerical data. A sample of 20 researchers responded to the questionnaires which were later analyzed using tables.

The probably sampling technique was employed to get the sample for the study revealed that there is great lack of materials and equipment in regular primary school .the study also revealed that there is lack of qualified personnel to teach learners with low vision. There is also poor parental involvement and collaboration with other stakeholders in the education of learners with low vision.

The recommendations made on the findings of the study were to train more personnel for teaching learners with low vision and equip the schools with material and equipments necessary for the education of learners with low vision. The learners with low vision should be taken regular schools in the name of inclusive education and this should be intensively carried out by the government.

Public awareness campaigns should be stepped up to sensitize the community about the educational efforts should be made to encourage and parental involvement as well as collaboration with other stakeholders in the education of the learners with low vision.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Rationale of the study

1.1 Background information

In one way or another, children experience special needs in their lives, such needs may occur as a result of lack of sight or having visual impairment.

Children with visual impairment are entitled to access full curriculum during their school year. The encouragement can help in overcoming difficulties in specific curricular areas especially those who have a high visual demand (Mason and mc call 2003).

In school it is demanding that teachers set the same goals for learners with low vision just like those with normal sight. The limitation of vision therefore necessitate special approaches, specialized methods and adapted resource so as to give the learners with low vision an equal opportunity in learning as his/her sighted counter parts. It also calls for extra efforts for all the stakeholders if the child with low vision would stand to benefit from education.

The teacher should be prepared to cope with the adaptive measures to suit the learning needs of those children with low vision.

Although the teacher may wish to put the effort required they may come across many drawbacks to effective learning of the children which may be within themselves and others beyond their control.

In Kenya since the introduction of free primary education by the government (2003), there has been an increase of learners with diverse needs in regular primary schools, low vision being one major need. This led to a step forward for inclusive education in which philosophy emphasizes

the need to modify educational instruction, learning environment and to have at least one teacher trained in special needs.

Although this was done, there were no prior preparations in admitting them though the government allocates some little funds for special needs since the introduction of free primary education.

This has led to dismal performance in academic work due to lack of skill by the teachers on how to access and provide educational service to them. There is also scarcity of learning resources; teacher's trained in the area of visual impairment.

Therefore the teacher is set to investigate the difficulties encountered by teachers of learners with low vision in regular primary schools and make appropriate recommendations. The implementation of the recommendation would facilitate to the smoother inclusion of learners with low vision in the regular primary school in Kasarani division.

1.2 Theory

According to Okot Daniel 1st edition 2002, education provision of children with visual impairment, the government has shown great concern in the provision of service to improve the welfare of the disabled persons. The working party on Kamunge report recommended that young visually handicapped children of pre-primary age are integrated in regular pre-primary schools.

The partially sighted (low vision) children can be integrated in regular primary schools and be provided with the necessary facilities and equipments for writing and magnifying glasses for reading.

Low vision is significantly reduced vision that visual acuity is less (worse) than 6/18 and 20/60 in the better eyes or visual fields or less than 20 degrees in diameter.

A person with low vision can use his reduced vision for learning about the world and for planning and doing tasks that need vision. These learners with low vision do not accurately reflect a child's ability to see or read print. One must consider the amount of visual acuity in worst eyes, the perception of light and movement in the field of vision. Person "blinded" by tunnel vision may have good visual acuity in very small field of vision and the efficiency with which a person uses any residual vision.

1.3 Statement of the problem

The education of learners with low vision in regular primary schools setting is a study concern in Kasarani division.

The children in this category have over many decades been referred to Thika School for the blind and forced to learn Braille which should otherwise have been enhanced to improve the vision for effective learning.

The introduction of inclusive education in primary schools has brought problems to both parents and the pupils themselves. The question of increasing number of negative attitude of teachers towards learners with low vision, lack of enough trained personnel in special needs education (SNE), inadequate education resources for learners with low vision and the degree level of collaboration and networking has remained a major challenge to date. As a result of these challenges, the learners have been experiencing a lot of problems leading to poor performance among those who make it through school.

It is with this regard that the researcher comes out to investigate the actual difficulties encountered by teachers and confirm the cause with an aim of giving recommendations towards problem solution.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The researcher aims at finding out the following:

- To establish the number of children with low vision who are currently accessing education in regular schools in Kasarani division.
- To investigate the level /degree of collaboration involved in the low vision services.
- To explain the availability of educational resource for learners with low vision.
- To establish the human and technical personnel trained in special education within the division.

1.5 Significance of the study

The finding of the study will enable teachers to identify some of the educational resource available for learners with low vision and lead them to maximize the use of available resources.

The findings will also enable the ministry of education, science and technology officials and other policy makers to plan well for education of learners with low vision.

The researcher would establish the human and technical personnel in special education need within the division-group of low vision that can be included in the regular school and have equal opportunity as a result of attitude

1.6 Limitations and Delimitations

Limited time- the research was conducted when the schools opened. Due to time limit, the researcher was not able to visit all the schools within the division.

Funds- the study involved a lot of traveling to get the teachers in order to get the data, which required money to be used as fare.

Financial factor required the researcher to photocopy type and print using the computer.

Good infrastructure- There was good transport system in most parts .This enabled the researcher to travel with ease as she was distributing and collecting the questionnaires.

Cooperation -The teachers were very cooperative and very willing to fill the questionnaires. All the same a lot of effort has been made by the researcher to succeed in the study under investigation.

1.7 Scope

Geographical barriers – The network of transport and communication system was greatly unreliable many geographical areas are not able to retain the teachers with knowledge of visual impairment children. Low vision learners are often un served or under served in the areas and may be placed in more restrictive environment.

Culture – All children bring their own language culture and customs which include different attitudes towards education and handicapping conditions.

These may have an impact on the child's learning behaviors as well as programs in the school.

Time – The teacher from geographically remote areas often must travel far from their homes to acquire preparations in teaching children with visual impairment. This factor can make it difficult to maintain strong pool or well prepared professional in rural or economically disadvantaged area.

1.8 Definition of terms

The following terms were used in this study.

- **Normal vision** – A person who is able to perform all close and distant visual tasks that are normally expected in the community.

- **Low vision** – Low vision is significantly reduced vision, that is less worse than 6/18 (20/60) in the better eye or visual fields are less than 20 degree in diameter.
- **Total blindness** – The person is unable to see light
- **Functional vision** – This refers to the use of vision for a particular purpose.
- **Visual acuity**- It is a measure of the ability to the eye to see details.
- **Visual impairment** – It is reduced vision caused by eye disease or eye condition present from birth.
- **Learner with visual impairment** – Refers to learners who require special educational programme and services because of their visual limitation.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 Review of related literature

Historical background of the low vision

Before the 20th century distinction between the education experience of children who had low and those who were functionally blind did not exist. children with low vision were taught to read and write in Braille and to cover their face and arms or high collars, often fitted with aprons and read Braille with their eyes(burrit,1916) .in some cases ,teachers were told to dim the lights in the classroom to discourage their use when reading Braille. In the early 1900's Astute observers in Europe and United states recognized that children with low vision needed to be educated differently from children who were functionally blind (Hathaway, 1945 to 1959) James Kerr, the first medical director of the survey of the London (England) school board included a survey of the visual status of all children in the District in a general school health programme.

An ophthalmologist bishop Harman found that many of the children covered by this survey had high myopia (near rightness) and could see items that were eclipse their eyes. Kerr reported these results to the second international congress of the school hygiene in 1907 and proposed that children had educational needs that were different from those of children who were totally blind. In 1908, the London county council formed the first class in the world for children with low vision called myope school to differentiate them from the children who were blind.

In 1909 Edward E. Allen director of the Perkins institute in the united states visited the school to find ways to get rid of the problems facing education of the visually impairment alongside the functionally blind. Acting on his observation he was instrumental in starting a class of its kind in the US called 'defective eye sight class" and Perkins Institute supplied funds for the materials that were used (Hamaway 1943/1959, merry 1933)

In 1913 Robert b. Irwin, director of special classes for children who were blind in Cleveland suggested that children with low vision should be segregated from those with no vision and that special material should be developed for them. (Koestler 1976)

Therefore he established a “conservation of vision” class at Waverly school in Cleveland, the second programme for children with low vision in the United States whereby children with low vision were educated with children with normal vision as much as possible.

A school begun to question the inclusion of children with low vision in schools for blind, professional organization began to address the issue. Ohn Burnt attached the use of aprons and high collars to prevent children with low vision from using their eyes and stated that the children with low vision should be educated in local schools with special trained teachers .In 1945 the first textbook on children with low by Hathaway 1943 /1959 was published. In 1947 the American printing house for the blind (APN) began to publish textbooks in large print for school children. By the end of the 1940’s some 17 or 18 residential schools for the blind had been established with specially equipped classrooms for children with low vision (Koestler, 1976).

As a result of the increased attention to the individual needs of children with low vision services have evolved into discipline with strong focus on assessment and trained of visual function. Instead of sight saving, the emphasis is now on the optimum of function which has further been advanced by new optical devices and the application of video and computer technology.

The Kenya government recognized that education provision is a basic need that should not be denied to anyone.

It also recognized the need to provide education to all school going children in the least restrictive environment. It is with regard the Kenya government accepted the vision impairment in 1940’s, put a lot of effort in the training of highly qualified teachers for all levels of education

who can adopt the learning environment to suit individual educational needs of the learners with low vision. (Cumulus 1990).

Special need education (SNE) for the visually impaired in Kenya started during the Second World War in 1945. This was to cater for the soldiers blinded during the war. The first school in Kenya was started by the Salvation Army in Thika by major and Mrs. Osborne. In the year 1953, the school developed into primary school teaching the ordinary school curriculum (Kariuki 1980)

In 1958, St.Lucy school for the visually impairment was started at Egoji in Meru.

In 1960 St. Oda School for the visually handicapped was followed by Kibos which was established at Kibos in Kisumu district in 1964. It followed by Likoni School in 1960 by the Salvation Army Kariuki 1989.

In 1978 the Anglican church of Kenya helped to start St. Francis School for the visually impaired in Kapenguria. It was put to help in rehabilitation for the visually impaired. In 1980, it was turned into a school.

There were also various integrated programmes where the learners with visual impairment learn in their local environment along with their sighted peer. Many of these are there spread all over the country for instance there is integrated programme at Kajiado which was started in 1975 by Kenya society for the blind. Another programme which also caters for learner with visual impairments is located at Kilimani Primary School, Nairobi.

Survey carried out by Kenya institute of education, K.I.E in 1980, Miss Fitcher in 1984 and Christoffel blinded mission in 1994 showed that greater percentage of learners in the schools for the visually impaired is low vision.

Many of them could be able to read and write if they were given necessary support. This revealed that many of the learners with low vision were in the school for the visually impaired taking up facilities and provision for children with total blindness, while there were also no appropriate programmes offered to cater for their diverse needs.

Background information of low vision project (Kenya)

The Kenyan government has been in the forefront in providing education for the learners who are handicapped in our society. It has greatly put a lot of effort in training the necessary manpower to meet the challenges facing the education of learners who are handicapped and in particular learners with visual impairment. It is stated in the article 26 of United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights that the right to education should be granted to all irrespective of creed, color, race or tribe whether one is handicapped or not.

Low vision project (Kenya)

In 1994, the Kenya government in conjunction with the Christoffel Blinden mission CBM launched the low vision project attached to Kikuyu eye hospital. The services were to enable the children with low vision use vision in the most effective way to execute visual tasks. As a result they are able to live as independent as possible in school and afterward. Low vision curriculum started in 1999. The project offers various services to achieve their objectives. They include identification and assessment of persons with visual impairment in the low vision clinic in Kikuyu during their outreach work. The project also organizes both medical and optical care for those in need. They provide low vision devices to learners both in special and integrated programmes; guidance and counseling are also offered to those who are in need and early



intervention and visual stimulation services to children with low vision (Verwayen and Rukwaro 1999)

The success of this provision of low vision services depends not only on the level and effectiveness of the support available but on the personality of the learners and actually the attitude of family and the staff at school. (Mason and McCall 2003)

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The researcher used survey as the strategy to collect data. This is the strategy whereby researchers collected the information in a standard form questionnaires from groups of people. The researcher first selected sample of individuals from the population and then prepared questionnaires for collecting the data from the respondent.

3.2 Environments

The research was conducted in Nairobi District in Kasarani division in regular primary school who are teachers.

3.3 Research Instruments

Respondents / subject / participants

Target population

The population comprised of only teachers. The researcher used the above population since they are directly involved in the education of learners with low vision.

Sample size

In this study the sample comprised of teachers mainly teaching learners with visual impairment in regular schools in Nairobi district, Kasarani division.

Sampling method

The researcher used probability sampling. This is because the researcher wished to involve randomly the respondent in order to avoid biased data.

Subjects

This study includes teachers from the regular primary school either male or female.

The researcher used random sampling to select the respondents. She used questionnaires as instrument to collect the data which were to be completed by filling in the blank spaces by the teachers (respondent).

The researcher prepared the questionnaire using both open and closed ended question.

3.4 Data collection procedures

I. Administration of the questionnaires

The researcher prepared the questionnaire. This was carried out basing on the research objective and questions ensuring that they were detailed and defined.

Many copies of questionnaires were produced as per the number of the respondents who were teachers. Efforts were made to ensure that the distributions to the teachers were done in good time by delivering by hand.

II. Getting permission to conduct research

The researcher asked permission first from the institution to carry out the research using the teachers as the respondents

III. Collecting data

After permission was granted the questionnaires were distributed to the respondent that is the teachers sampled. The respondents were required to fill them and were later collected by the researcher.

IV. Analysis of the data

The researcher analyzed the data according to the research questions systematically from the first question to the last. Considerations to other factors that may have influenced the participants to respond the ways they have done were taken into account.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 Data Analysis and Representation

4.1 Statistical treatment of data

The data used in this study was collected from teachers in regular primary schools. It has been analyzed according to the items in the questionnaires given the researcher was able to collect data from twelve teachers. This has been in a view to realize the achievements of the stated objectives.

4.2 Presentation and analysis

Table 1: Teachers training level

Response	Frequency	Percentage
P1	4	33 %
ATS IV	12	60%
ATS III	2	10%
ATS II	2	10%
Graduate	2	10%
Others	2	10%
Total	20	100%

The table implies that the most teachers (60%) are trained P1 level and ATS IV. others are 10 % respectively teaching in regular primary schools.

Table 2: Designation of teachers

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Assistant teacher	19	95%
Senior teacher	1	5%
Head teacher	0	0%
Deputy head teacher	0	0%
Total	20	100%

The figure shows that most teachers are the assistant teachers in the classroom.(95%)

Therefore it shows that the administration should be involved in their provision.

Table 3: Teachers training/course in special education needs

Response	Frequency	Percentage
YES	17	75%
NO	3	25%
TOTAL	20	100%

The table shows that most teachers (75%) have been trained or attended a course in special education needs. Very few teachers 25% have not.

Table 4: Level of teachers trained

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Diploma in SNE	16	80%
None of the above	3	15%
Degree in special needs	1	5%
Three months certificate course	0	0%
Vision supporting centre	0	0%
Awareness seminar	0	0%
Total	20	100%

From the findings there is awareness of training in special education need (80%). The few teachers not yet trained needs to acquire training in SNE (15% and 5%)

Table 5: Period of teaching with special needs

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all	12	60%
0-5	4	20%
6-12	4	20%
Total	20	100%

According to the above response a good number of teachers (60%) are not teaching learners with special need.

Table 6: Learners with visual problem

Do you have a child with visual problem?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
YES	12	60%
NO	8	40%
Total	20	100%

The above response shows that there are good numbers of learners with visual problems in regular primary school (60%).

Table 7: Type of visual problems

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Low vision	15	75%
No response	5	25%
Totally blind	0	0%
Total	20	100%

The table implies that there are some learners (75 %) with low vision learning with other pupils in the regular schools.

Table 8: Problems encountered by teachers teaching learners with low vision in regular primary schools

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of equipment and material	10	50%
Congested classroom	4	20%
Discriminated by others	2	10%
Perform poorly	2	10%
Absenteeism	2	10%
Total	20	100%

The finding indicated that the most of the teachers (50%) experience lack of materials and equipment for teaching and learning of learners with low vision.

There is need therefore to take note on the other factors to cater for the diversified needs of the learners with low vision.

Table 9: Availability of educational resources

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Not available	18	90%
Inadequate	2	10%
Adequate	0	0%
Don't know	0	0
Total	20	100%

From the above findings it is true that the regular primary schools teacher lack facilities used in teaching learners with low vision (90%).

Table10: Inclusion of learners with low vision in regular classes

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	19	95%
No	1	5%
Total	20	100%

From the above table learners with low vision should be included in the regular classes.(95%)

Table 11: Reasons for inclusion

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Be taught in regular classes	19	95%
Special units	1	5%
Total	20	100%

Most teachers have to be trained to handle learners with low vision in regular classes(95%).Special schools can only handle 5%

Table 12: support needed to help learners with low vision

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Government provide resources	14	70%
Sensitizing the community	2	10%
Diagnosis and treatment	2	10%
Involve the stake holders	2	10%
Total	20	100%

From the table above the government should put an effort in providing learners with resources (70%) and sensitizing the community and treatment, diagnose the treatment and involve the stake holders (10%).

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 Summery, Discussion and Recommendations

5.1 Summery

In regard to the objectives of the study, the result of the study can be summarized

- 5.1.1 Majority of schools are regular primary schools. There are good numbers of learners with low vision 95% in regular schools.
- 5.1.2 There is lack of enough education programmes. The findings have indicated that there is only one unit which caters for all categories of visual handicap in Kasarani division where learners with low vision attend. There is lack of materials and equipment which are resources specifically designed to be used by learners with low vision.
- 5.1.3 There is lack of networking system. The various stakeholders do not actively participate in their roles in the education of learners with low vision .this lack of coordination may hinder learners being placed in the appropriate classroom placed.
- 5.1.4 Majority of teachers, 75% have been trained in special needs education. For learners with low vision these can be beneficial to effective teaching as well as learning in the division if the teachers get the facilities.

5.2 Discussion

The study was carried out to establish difficulties encountered by learners with teaching learners with low vision in regular primary schools in kasarani division in Nairobi district.

The researcher collected data from the teachers teaching learners with low vision in regular schools. The study was mainly carried out to establish the numbers of children with low vision in Kasarani division. It also aimed at establishing the availability of educational resource for the vision. Another aim was to investigate the collaboration of the personnel involved in the teaching of teachers with low vision.

5.3 Recommendations

After carrying out the study and analyzing the researcher makes the following recommendations.

- 5.3.1 Public education should be enhanced. This will help educate learners with low vision who have faced public indifference. The attitude that promotes negativism in the low vision should be eradicated.
- 5.3.2 The ministry of education, science and technology should encourage regular schools to have learners with low vision learn in the schools near their home. The ministry should also post specially trained teachers to the programme to assist the teachers.
- 5.3.3 The government should step up in equipping the schools with relevant materials and equipments for learners with low vision. Parents should be encouraged to supplement what the school receives from the government.
- 5.3.4 The various stakeholders in Special Needs Education should carry out continuous sensitization of the parents and guide communities to participate in the planning of the child's school program and discuss the problems with teachers and other personnel.

5.3.5 Education of learners with low vision requires teachers with training in special education need.

、 5.3.6 The learners with low vision require special facilities and equipment.

5.3.7 Inclusion of learners with low vision can be achieved in regular classrooms as a good number of learners are found in regular schools.

5.3.8 There is also need for effective involvement of stakeholders and adequate trained human resource to handle learners with low vision in regular classroom situation.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TRANSMITAL LETTER FOR THE HEADTEACHER MAY 2008

The Head teacher,
Baba Dogo Primary School,
P.o.Box 10347-00100
Nairobi
Kenya

Dear Madam,

I am a student from the institute of continuity education at Kampala international university.

My research entails “difficulties encountered by the teachers of learners with low vision in regular primary schools” in Kasarani division in Nairobi district. It will involve interviewing your staff members using questionnaires

It is mainly for academic process and the information given will be treated confidentially.

Kindly allow me to conduct this research.

Yours faithfully,



JANECATHERINE .A. MUTSEMBI.

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE ON LOW VISION

Dear respondent,

Kindly give the required information on this questionnaire. All the information will be treated with confidentiality.

Thank you in advance.

PART ONE

1. What is your qualification?

P1 ☐ ATS IV ☐ ATS III ☐

ATSII ☐ Graduate ☐ others -----

2. What is your designation?

Head teacher ☐

Deputy Head teacher ☐

Senior teacher ☐

Assistant teacher ☐

3. Have you had any training / course in special education needs?

YES

NO

4. At what level did you train or attended a course. Tick one

Awareness seminar ☐

Vision supporting course ☐

Three months certificate course ☐

Diploma in SNE ☐

Degree in SNE ☐

NONE of the above ☐

5. For how long have you been teaching learners with special needs?

0-5 years not at all

6-12 years others specify

PART B

6. Do you have a child in your class with visual problem?

YES NO

7. If “yes” what type of visual problem?

Totally blind

Low vision

Partially sighted

8. What problems do you encounter while teaching learners with low vision in regular schools?

1.

2.

3.

9. Are there educational resources available to enable you instruct learners with low vision?

Not available ☐

Adequate ☐

Inadequate ☐

Don't know ☐

10. In your opinion would it be possible to include children with low vision in regular classes
in primary schools

YES ☐ NO ☐

11. If 'NO' give reasons

1.

2.

3.

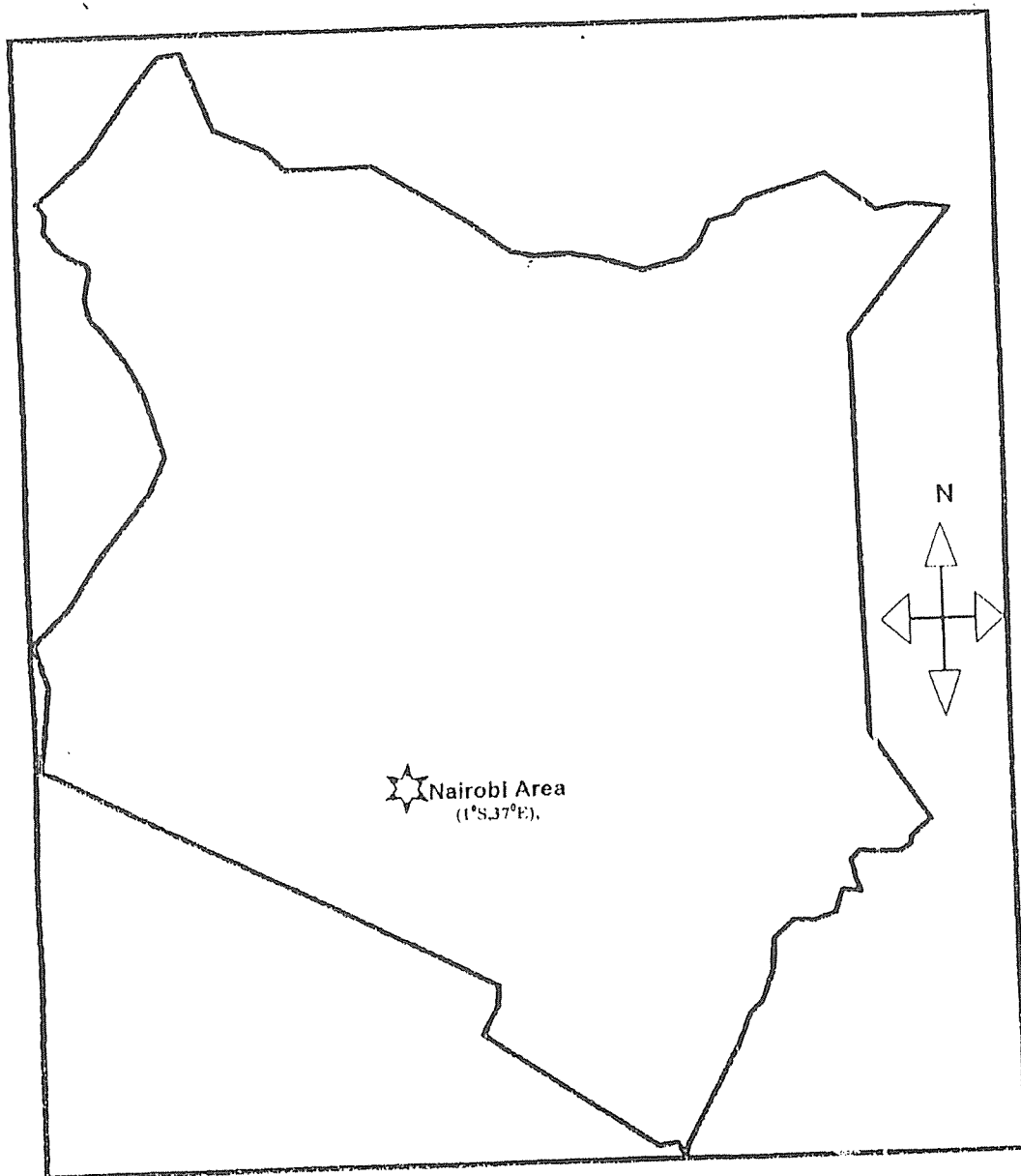
12. Give suggestions for any support needed to help learners with low vision

1.

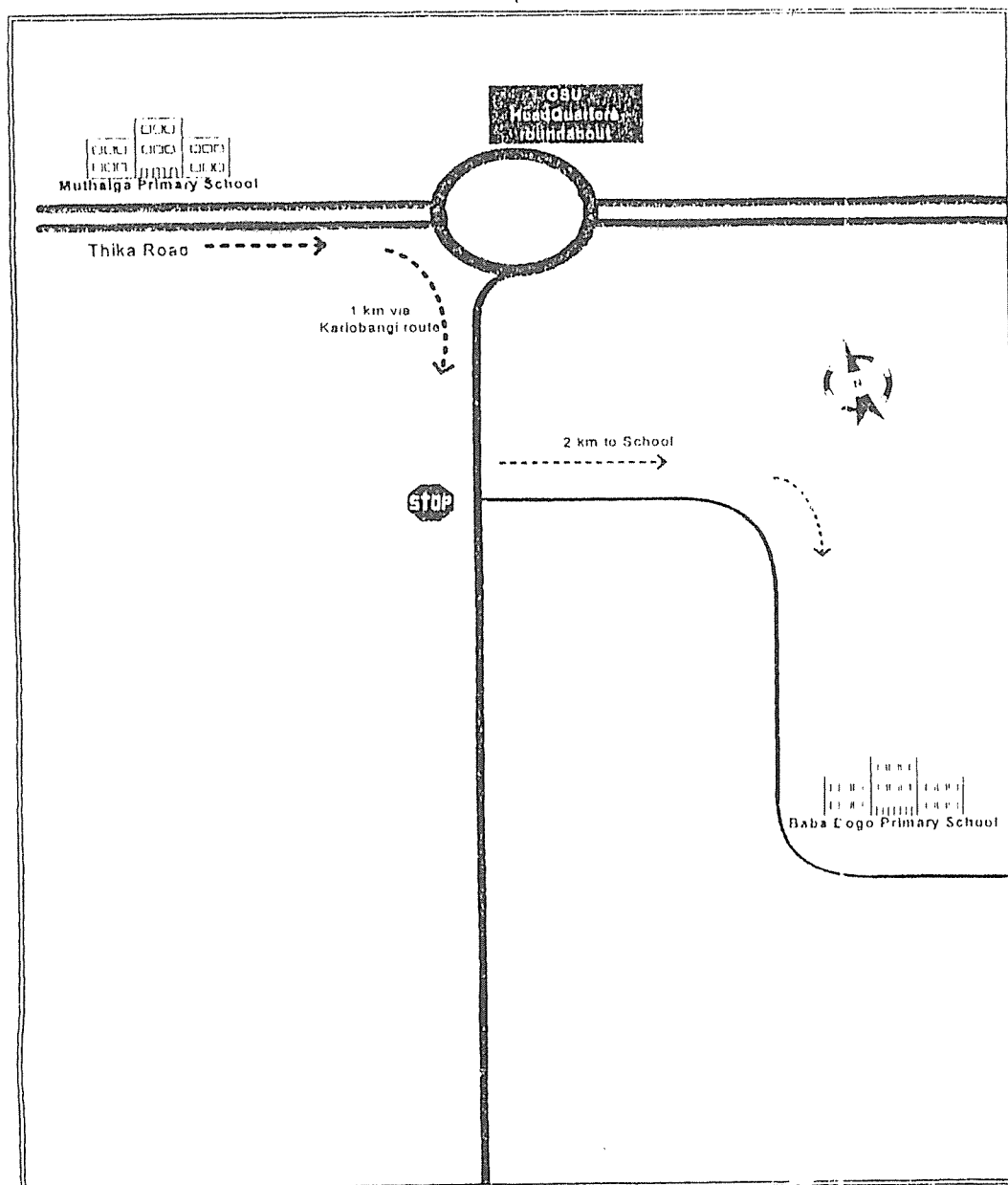
2.

3.

APPENDIX C: MAP SHOWING NAIROBI AREA



**APPENDIX D: MAP SHOWING DIRECTION OF BABA DOGO PRIMARY SCHOOL
NAIROBI CITY CENTRE**



CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL BACKGROUND

NAME : JANE CATHRINE .A. MUTSEMBI

REG : NO. BED/SNE/13490/61/DF

AGE : 34

GENDER : FEMALE

CIVIC STATUS : KENYAN

ADDRESS : MUMIAS C.T.C BOX 75, MUMIAS

DATE OF BIRTH : 1974

CONTACT : NO. 0727918686

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

TERTIARY : KENYA INSTITUTE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

COLLEGE : MERU TEACHERS TRAINING COLLEGE

SECONDARY : EREGI GIRLS SECONDARY SCHOOL

ELEMENTARY : EREGI GIRLS PRIMARY BOARDING

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

COURSE : DIPLOMA LEVEL

RESEARCH TITLE : ATTITUDE OF TEACHERS TOWARDS
INCLUSION EDUCATION IN MUMIAS DIVISION,
BUTERE – MUMIAS DISTRICT KENYA

