

Project summary

Refugees flee crisis situations, but then experience new crises in settlement contexts. This affects access to, and success in, education. Refugee populations include disabled people who have been 'invisible' in policy and service provision. Girls are the most vulnerable in this group. Little is known about the challenges and opportunities disabled refugee students face to be included in education, especially in the Global South, which hosts most of the world's refugees. This interdisciplinary project aims to understand the educational inclusion and exclusion of disabled refugee students, particularly girls, in South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe - countries with different approaches to settlement. Using quantitative and qualitative methods in a multiple case study we will deliver evidence that will impact policy and practice, such that these students become visible and included in education. This will benefit individuals, families and societies and contribute to ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all.

Project aims

With a focus on disabled refugee students, and with particular concern for girls and women in this group, we aim to uncover the impact of previous and current crisis situations on educational access and learning success in three African contexts – South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe. As we understand the challenges and opportunities faced by disabled refugee students in these contexts, we aim to make recommendations to drive policy and practice to realise quality inclusive education in the settlement contexts.

The project will provide policy and practical resources to all three countries that will enable them to progress their achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4, and specifically Target 4.5 which states “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”.

For more information, please email Professor Elizabeth Walton (PI) elizabeth.walton@nottingham.ac.uk OR see the project website: <https://includingdisabledrefugees.wordpress.com/>



Disabled Refugee students Included and Visible in Education: Challenges and opportunities in South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe

A project funded by The British Academy's Education and Learning in Crises Programme as part of the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF).

The project team

The education of disabled refugee students is a complex global challenge. It is also a challenge that has unique features in different countries. We need knowledge from different disciplines to understand the interplay of factors that create and sustain the exclusion of disabled refugee students, the effects of that exclusion, and then to advance proposals for their inclusion. The project has an interdisciplinary Investigator team within the social sciences that represent different areas of disciplinary strength and focus.



Principal investigator:
Professor Elizabeth Walton, School of Education, University of Nottingham. Her research is in the

field of inclusive education, emphasising access, participation and success for all.

Ugandan Co-Investigator:



Dr David Monk, Lecturer, Faculty of Education and Humanities, Gulu University. His research focuses on power, epistemic

justice and learning for decolonization and (human) rights.

South African Co-Investigator:



Dr. Nicole DeWet-Billings, Associate Professor, School of Demography and Population Studies, University of the Witwatersrand. Her research is in areas of youth and family demography, using population-based quantitative data.

Zimbabwean Co-Investigator:



Dr Chamunogwa Nyoni, Senior Lecturer, Department of Social Work, Bindura University of Science Education. He is a gender scholar and has expertise with gender mainstreaming and gender analysis.

Nottingham Co-Investigators:



Dr Roda Madziva, Associate Professor, School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Nottingham. Her research experience is

with migrant and refugee communities in the UK and Zimbabwe.

Stakeholder forums in each country support the project team and help to achieve the project aims.



Professor Joanna McIntyre, School of Education, University of Nottingham. Her research is in the field of refugee education and is interested in how education can improve the lives of those marginalized or disadvantaged by society.



Professor Juliet Thondhlana, School of Education, University of Nottingham. Her research is in the field of refugee education and the role of language as a tool for refugee integration and inclusion.

International project advisory board:

Imad Sabi, Senior Program Officer, Open Society Foundation (UK).
Ruksana Osman, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa).
Marie Schoeman, Programmes Technical Lead: Inclusive Education, Leonard Cheshire, Disability (UK).
Clara Joergensen, Research Fellow The Department of Disability, Inclusion and Special Needs, School of Education, University of Birmingham (UK).
Thabo Msibi, Dean of Education University of KwaZulu-Natal, (South Africa).