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Special needs education now free

• **Government allocates
GH¢100m for implementation**

By **Severious Kale-Dery**

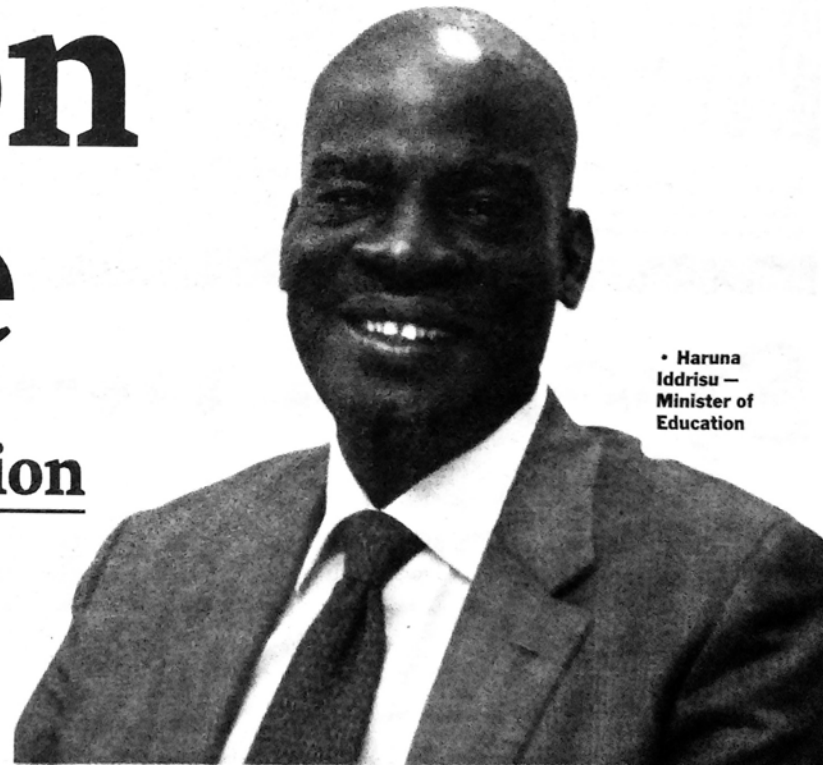
SPECIAL needs education for persons with disability in the country is now free, the Minister of Education, Haruna

Iddrisu, has announced.

The initiative forms part of the government's journey towards the provision of inclusive, quality and equitable education in the country.

Subsequent to the

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• Haruna
Iddrisu —
Minister of
Education

News



• Haruna Iddrisu (arrowed), Minister of Education, assisted by Dr. Clement Apaak (behind), Deputy Minister of Education, with some heads of Special Schools and some members of the disability community

Special needs education now free

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amendment of the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund) Act by Parliament, Mr Iddrisu gave an assurance that it would be funded adequately by the GETFund.

Free education for persons with disability will cover tuition, accommodation and assistive devices even at the tertiary level, with the cost of basic and secondary education already covered by the state.

"In the 2026 budget of the GETFund formula, an amount of GH¢100 million was allocated for the implementation of free special needs education for persons with disability.

"The GETFund Act 581 thus gives me the power and mandate as minister to issue policy directives," Mr Iddrisu announced at a press conference to officially launch the free special education in Ghana.

The policy is one of the enduring legacies of President John Dramani Mahama and a social intervention initiative targeted towards the vulnerable.

Ghana currently has about 39 public

special and integrated schools across the country, made up of 29 special boarding schools, seven integrated schools for the visually impaired, and three integrated schools for the hearing impaired.

Implementation

In all, approximately 9,000 learners, comprising 8,800 boarders and 200 day students, are in these schools.

"I have accordingly and will further direct GETFund to make sure that for 2027 into 2028 and for (every year of) the tenure of President Mahama, this GH¢100 million is allocated to support special needs education.

"This is to allow for effective implementation and to reach out to persons with special needs," the minister further stated.

Mr Iddrisu said special needs and disability never meant limited opportunity, and that the promise of education must reach every child in

every community, regardless of ability, background, gender and circumstance.

He said children with special needs had dreams and remained children with talents and potential, and that "we have a compelling moral duty to give them an opportunity to develop those talents.

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"So, under the initiative, GETFund is absorbing the cost of feeding for all learners in public special integrated schools through the GETFund GH¢100 million support.

"Those of you who are heads of those institutions, you no longer will hold your calabash waiting for the Minister of Finance as to whether warrants are ready or not," he assured the heads of special schools.

He announced that, among other interventions, the government of President John Mahama had further increased the feeding fee from GH¢8 to GH¢15, with the implementation effective immediately.

The National President of the Ghana

Federation of Disability Organisations, Joseph Atsu Homadzi, on behalf of the disability community, thanked President Mahama through the Education Minister for putting in place interventions for the disability community in the country.

He said since he had been a teacher for over 30 years, "this is the first time that a system has been deliberately put in place to promote special needs education in Ghana".

He appealed to parents of children with disability to take advantage of the opportunity of free education to send their children to school, "because there is no more barrier for them to access education".

"Children with disabilities have no reason now to stay out of school because this government has opened the doors widely for children with disabilities," he said.

Mr Homadzi said no nation could develop if it failed to carry along all its citizens, including persons with disability.