



Gulu, Uganda / Zwolle, The Netherlands

E-mail: info@backupuganda.org

Web: www.backupuganda.org

Tel: UG +256 7 72630078

NL +31 38 4604615

Every Child Can Learn Podcast

Episode 18: Ignatius on training teachers

Intro: You are listening to the Every Child Can Learn podcast. The podcast is offered to you by Backup Uganda and Brainstud. You can listen to our podcasts online on our website, www.backupuganda.com. And if you are in Gulu, you can pick up the audios offline from Mega FM, Radio Rupiny, Divine Video and Music Library. Head teachers from the district's schools can pick this podcast from the District Education Office. And head teachers from city schools can pick theirs from the City Education Office. You can as well pick up the podcast episodes from the following schools Highland Primary School, Gulu Prison Primary School, Gulu Town Primary School, Mary Immaculate Primary School, St. Joseph Primary School, or Christ the King Demonstration Primary School. Do you like our podcast? Feel free to share it with your family, friends, or neighbors. The more people learn about learning difficulties, the better we can help our children.

Glades: Welcome to our 18th episode of Every Child Can Learn. My name is Lanyero Glades; I work at Backup Uganda as the lead trainer. Today, we are very happy to meet our guest, who is going to tell us his names, where he's from, and what he wants listeners know about him.

Mr. Ignatius: Thank you Glades, my name is Okurut Ignatius. I'm a tutor of Gulu Core primary teachers college, besides that, I also teach in KIU, sometimes in Mubende NTC, I facilitate some activities of the ministry in sports, I also facilitate some activities of NCDC concerning education. Thank you

Glades: Thank you very much for that introduction. You've just said you are a tutor at Gulu Core primary teachers college, what subjects do you teach? And maybe you could also explain to us what is your best or your favorite part of your job? Thank you.

Mr. Ignatius: Before I say anything about the teacher training, originally, I was a primary teacher, and my best subject that I liked most was science. When I went up grading I specialized in physical education and sports, and that's what I teach in the college as we talk

now. My favorite as part of my job, I like dealing with learners especially on career guidance is my best. Thank you.

Glades: Thank you so much. I would also want you to help us understand I know today the government is into inclusive education. What do you understand by that? Or what do you want listeners to know about inclusive education. And maybe you would also help us to understand how inclusive teaching looks like to you.

Mr. Ignatius: This is good. Inclusive education is all about a concept whereby if teaching and learning is taking place, it's for all, whereby you engage all learners irrespective of the lame, the young, the old, everybody is supposed to be learning, and this is the moment whereby you don't have segregation, all are involved in the learning.

Glades: Thank you so much. I don't know if you explained how inclusive teaching looks like to you, since you've just told us you're a teacher at one of the institutions. How does inclusive teaching look like to you?

Mr. Ignatius: In a nutshell, inclusive education teaching is the best in a way that when you use it in the teaching learning process, it means that everybody must at one time benefit, and inclusive education to me is the best way to go, because the truth is everybody is of value. And because everybody is of value, inclusive education now will have everybody engaged in the teaching learning activities. Thank you.

Glades: Thank you so much for clarifying that. To also add on inclusive education, I also want you to help the listeners as well understand what can you say about teacher training and inclusive education? I know you're a teacher or you're a tutor, could you also explain that to our listeners? Thank you.

Mr. Ignatius: It's a very important component that must be included in the teacher training. Because a teacher who qualifies and has the knowledge and has the concept of inclusive education will go to the ground, knowing that every child should be involved in the teaching learning process. So my thinking is, in the teacher training, inclusive education must be emphasized to all the teachers.

Glades: And maybe have you been doing that? Or do you think teacher educators or teacher trainers are doing that? Maybe could you give us an example within the college where you work?

Mr. Ignatius: Basically, in the college here, the element of inclusive education applies, especially, in sports; you'll find that when you're teaching they're not the same. You have to design activities that in a game everybody participates, you design activities that fit everybody if somebody is physically disabled, or is not able to use the brain well; you make sure that these activities are designed for all of them. Each one has something to do in the activity.

Glades: Okay, thank you. I am still going to ask you a similar question, I know I asked you an example of how the games or inclusive teacher training has been showed, but at the same time, I want you to share some examples of how inclusive, you have been teaching, and maybe what you've learnt about inclusive teaching. Thank you.

Mr. Ignatius: What have learnt is, in the process of inclusiveness, there is an element of motivation, it motivates even the person who had no hope, because you have included that person, that person gets motivated, okay. And then the person will feel belonging, belonging to the group, belonging to the class, because it's inclusive, all of us, all of us matter. So, this is what I have seen, when you have inclusive education in place.

Glades: And is that what you have been doing?

Mr. Ignatius: This is what I do, especially even as my department of Deputy Principal, I encourage my colleagues to do the same, even they integrate, they borrow concepts from other subjects, and they bring in their subjects, so that inclusive education is advocated for.

Glades: Thank you very much I believe our listeners are picking the message, and please, if you're planning to bring your children to the PTCs, this is what is done, inclusive teaching is everywhere. What do you think is the biggest myth that people say about disability?

Mr. Ignatius: I don't know whether it's traditional, but it's big. It's an issue of concern, especially where people think that people with these have no value, they're useless, you know, there is nothing that can be got in them shouldn't be taken to school, they will do nothing. It's the biggest thing, maybe today, what we want to do is probably to turn around the other side

of the coin. But the biggest myth is that if you're that category, you have no value, you're useless, it's a waste of resource, you cannot do anything. So is the biggest thing. Unless otherwise.

Glades: Thank you very much, this is what we are fighting for, and as Backup Uganda, we are trying to make sure that the parents, the teachers in all schools or institutions start fighting against this myth that our guest has just said that a lot of parents think these children with disabilities cannot do anything, they're useless, just like he said, and these are some of the words we really try to avoid. These children are very important, they could be gifted in different areas. Thank you, once again, our guest. What do you think parents, teachers, and other people listening, would want to know to support their children or to support their child best if they are dealing with any disability?

Mr. Ignatius: Thank you so much Glades. The first of its kind is you should be able to identify the problem in the child, identify that disability, and go ahead to listen to these children, Listen to them. They have ideas, talk to them, give them hope, because there is something that they can do, find out where they can fit best. What can they do to survive, give them education, right from home, I'm sure there are schools where these children can go to study, let them go to school and let them study, okay. So basically check for their potential, what they're able to do, and use your resources to support this child for the success of that child. Thank you.

Glades: Thank you very much for those beautiful words, just to add on what our guest has said, it all zeroes down to acceptance. Once we accept our children, then whatever our guest has mentioned will really be possible to take place, once you accept your child you will do whatever it takes to help your child, take them to a school that caters for them, buy for them materials that are needed. But all in all, we are looking at inclusiveness of these children, we shouldn't throw them away, we shouldn't keep them in the house, we shouldn't avoid them from playing, ask them, talk to them, what can they do? Sometimes there disabilities that you involve these children and find out what best they can do, and then they will share to you. Thank you very much once again; our guest, related to the question that I just asked, can you

share a success story of working with children with different disabilities that you have never forgotten? Thank you.

Mr. Ignatius: Thank you so much Glades again, I have a grandchild, a child of my sister's son, whom I saw from birth, when he was born, he was taken to school, eventually to nursery. When he went those levels of nursery, the mother gives birth to another baby. But what we discovered was, this boy was not able to read. And even things like addition, he would forget quickly, you give him something to do after a while, he forgets, the second born grows up, he was taken to nursery, who catches up quickly, was able to read quickly, he was able to add, and this would annoy this boy. So what we did, we saw that he needed help. So we accepted him, we tried here and there, visited here and there, treated here and there, but in the long run, we were able to see what he was interested in, you would find him collecting metals, you know, bring a whole kavera of metals, screwdrivers, screws, name them, pours them in the sitting room, then he begins he wants to assemble these, is more of mechanical, when we would drive with him out, you find him interested in things like a packed wagon of a train where the mechanics are working on the vehicles, because we would take the car for service he would want to go where the mechanics to see and you see him concentrating. So we discovered that as he went on class after class, we would not see him read well, he would not remember he would forget, but we kept on pushing him, encouraging him, but we also kept on learning that there is something he could do so eventually, we visited some of the institutions and they took him and still he could not do much. So we got one that was a vocational institution, we took him to that institution where he seemed to be having his dream. And that's where he is now. Whenever he would come back home, he would tell us what they have done, we have done this, we have made pavers, I'm going to build this, am going to build this big houses, and he is doing very well, he's a big boy now, he speaks very good English. But he cannot write very well. He cannot add very well. But if you see him speak English, you will not know that he doesn't know how to read. Thank you.

Glades: Thank you very much Mr. Ignatius. The story is very interesting, and very touching. But maybe before I say anything, did you do any assessment? I know someone listening is wondering, you've done amazing things, but what did you find?

Mr. Ignatius: The first thing that we did, I set questions, simple questions; I set questions in English simple words. And then I set some numbers in mathematics. When I gave him to do he could not even read a single word, I set about five words, then about four numbers, he could not add any. But when I gave his younger brother who was a class before him, he could calculate quickly and read fluently. That is how we assessed him. So but we could also go ahead to take him out to swim, you find him wanting to swim the whole day. But before he swims, I would always prepare work for him, for him to do some exercise, maybe compare matching and so on. After some time when you give him again, he forgets. So those are the few ways we could try to assess him.

Glades: All right, thank you so much. From what you've just narrated to us about that child, it seems the child was struggling with reading and writing and mathematics. And as Backup Uganda we always named or call that disability dyslexia. Challenges in reading and writing and maybe difficulties with mathematics, we usually call that as dyscalculia. So thank you very much I believe, with the parents listening to this, or the teachers listening to this, have really understood what our guest did to help the child. A lot of times let's also pick the interest of these children and focus on what they like, because first of all, we already know when it comes to academics, they may not do much. But can we also look at the talents they have, and focus there. Now, we are coming to the end of this. But before that, I want our guest to also help us advise the parents and the teachers who are listening to this. I know a lot of teachers could be having similar children in their classroom, just like you've narrated to us those that you give them simple work, someone in lower class does better, or someone who is bigger or older does better. What do you think teachers can do to help these children and the parents in their homes? Thank you.

Mr. Ignatius: What I know is, this conditions much outside there, it could be there, even in every home or in every class, what I want to suggest to us the parents, that we must believe in all these children, and we have to give them the opportunity, we have to identify these children, let us be close to them, give them more contact hours, learn your child, because when you do that, then you'll be able to get a strategy to help this child out. For example, the boy have just been giving a story for him we watched him at home, you'll find he wants channels that are all about technology, making cars, you know, those are the things if you



Gulu, Uganda / Zwolle, The Netherlands

E-mail: info@backupuganda.org

Web: www.backupuganda.org

Tel: UG +256 7 72630078

NL +31 38 4604615

don't give him that channel, you take him to other things of academics, he quarrels quickly. So parents and the teachers is our role to be part of the conditions of these children, these children are very useful, let us be for them, let us support them, let us pave way for their future. Thank you.

Glades: Oh, thank you very much. You have really said beautiful words to the parents and to the teachers. And from what he has said, If we identify these children, from the beginning, it is going to be very easy to help these kids and parents out there who are listening to this can we work hand in hand with the teachers, it is going to be very easy for you as a parent to first identify your child and know the struggles of this child. As you bring this child to school. Please let the school get to know what your child is struggling with. And that is going to help even the teachers on how they can support your child. Thank you once again very much our guest thank you for accepting to give us this information. I know it's going to help the teachers it's going to help whoever guardian out there and the parents to these children who are struggling. And as backup Uganda we always say every child can learn. Thank you.

Outro: Thank you for listening to Every Chance Can Learn. Please share your thoughts with us. Join the conversation on Facebook, or send your questions to 0772630078. Do you want to learn more about Backup Uganda and stay updated about our activities? Check our website on www.backupuganda.org and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.