

# **Services for People with Autism in Tanzania**

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# History of Autism Support in Tanzania

- The Autism work in Tanzania started in 1992, with a pioneer US-Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist Dr. Martha Collins (PhD) who was volunteering employee at Muhimbili National Hospital – In Dar es Salaam
- She took initiatives in collaboration with parents, Muhimbili Psych staff, and few teachers to establish a National Association for Caring people with Autism in Tanzania (NACA) in 1994

# History of Autism Support in Tanzania

- NACA in collaboration with Ministry of Education was able to establish an autistic unit within a normal primary school in February 1997
- The establishment of the Autistic school was established under the multiple donor supports

# Schools of Autism in Tanzania

- Other two autistics schools were established in Arusha, and another one in Dar es salaam
- Few months later, additional autistic school was established in Morogoro
- Apart from the 4 government autistic schools in the country, there are 2 others which are privately owned by faith based organizations

# NAPA-T's support

- National Association for People with Autism in Tanzania (NAPA-T) was established and registered June, 2012
- NAPA –T was renamed from NACA as the later had element of stigma (i.e. care of Autistics)
- It is an NGO, charitable and non-profit making organization which involves all individuals of good will in helping people with Autism

# The Objectives of NAPA-T

- To bring together efforts of all parents/guardians in caring and training of people with Autism
- To act as a pressure group for the interests of people with Autism and
- Draw the attention of Local and Central Governments to the special needs of people with Autism in the society

# NAPA-T's support

- The association running costs are met by members' monthly subscriptions fees
- The government is supporting the association by paying teachers' salaries
- No additional support is available for the Association
- Occasionally some business companies like Vodacom would visit the school and offer support like meals, sheltering the school etc

# What needs to be done in Tanzania

- Raise awareness on the existence of Autism, availability of hospital services, schools & existence of NAPA-T
- To ensure the existing schools have enough qualified teachers, Occupational therapists, physiotherapist, speech therapists, clinical psychologists etc





# What needs to be done in Tanzania...2

- The Government should provide appropriate teaching and Learning materials in order to ease the work of teachers and other supporting groups



# What needs to be done in Tanzania ...3

- More schools should be built to cover the needs of people with Autism in the country



# What needs to be done in Tanzania...4

- NAPA-T has a plan of building a big centre for taking care of older children and Adults with autism once they are above 15 years olds
- This centre will include boarding schools, vocational skills centers, offices, play grounds, Health care facilities, Teachers' college and Houses etc.



# Thank you for Listening

