

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND THE GENERAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATE MODEL

**Every Learner Matters: All
Means All**

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PURPOSE

To present some key issues regarding the implementation of the policy on inclusive education and the implementation of the GEC model.

WHAT IS AN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SYSTEM?

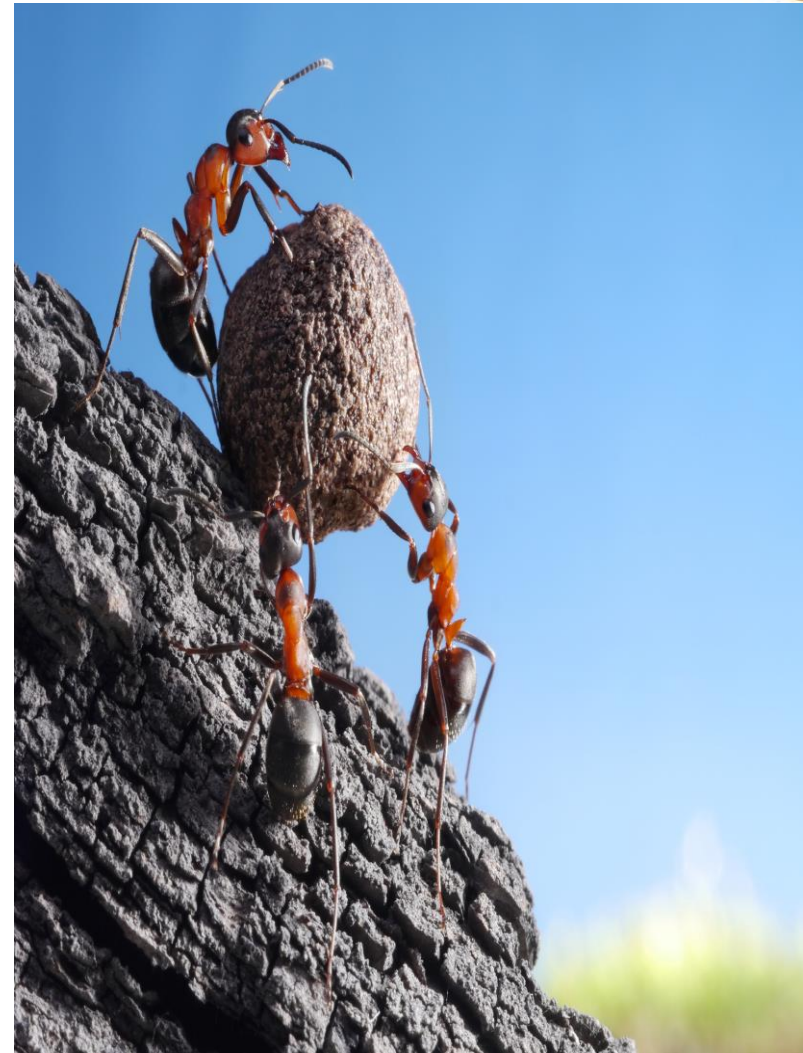
- Acknowledges that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support.
- Learners are different in some way and have different learning needs.
- Is about enabling education structures, changing attitudes, learning environments, systems, teaching, learning and assessment methodologies to meet the needs of all learners.

WHAT IS AN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SYSTEM?

- Maximising the participation of all learners in educational institutions, uncovering and minimising barriers to learning.
- Inclusive Education System is about empowering learners by developing their individual strengths and enabling them to participate critically in the process of learning (EWP6, p.16).

THE NATURE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

- Inclusive education is not a one-man show; it comes about as a result of **collaborative work** – **requires a ‘we are in this together’ attitude.**
- Individuals and organisations (often with **multiple interests**) **come together** and contribute their expertise for the benefit of a **shared objective, project, or mission.**
- This implies that, in order for GEC model to address needs of LESN, we need to **find ourselves in the chain and collaborate with one another.**
- The **quality and value of collective effort** will be measured and determined through **improvements at the level of the school and classroom.**



PROBLEM STATEMENT

- The **agenda** set by Education White Paper 6: on Building an Inclusive Education and Training System **emanates from the constitutional promise to improve the quality of life** of all citizens and free the potential of each person.
- Today, nationally and globally, **there has been significant progress** to ensure no child is left behind and that every learner matters.
- However, **challenges remain** in ensuring **educational access, meaningful participation, equal and personalised opportunities** for learning.
- **Persistent challenges** in the meaningful access to education as a social good for vulnerable groups **perpetrates stereotypical notions.**



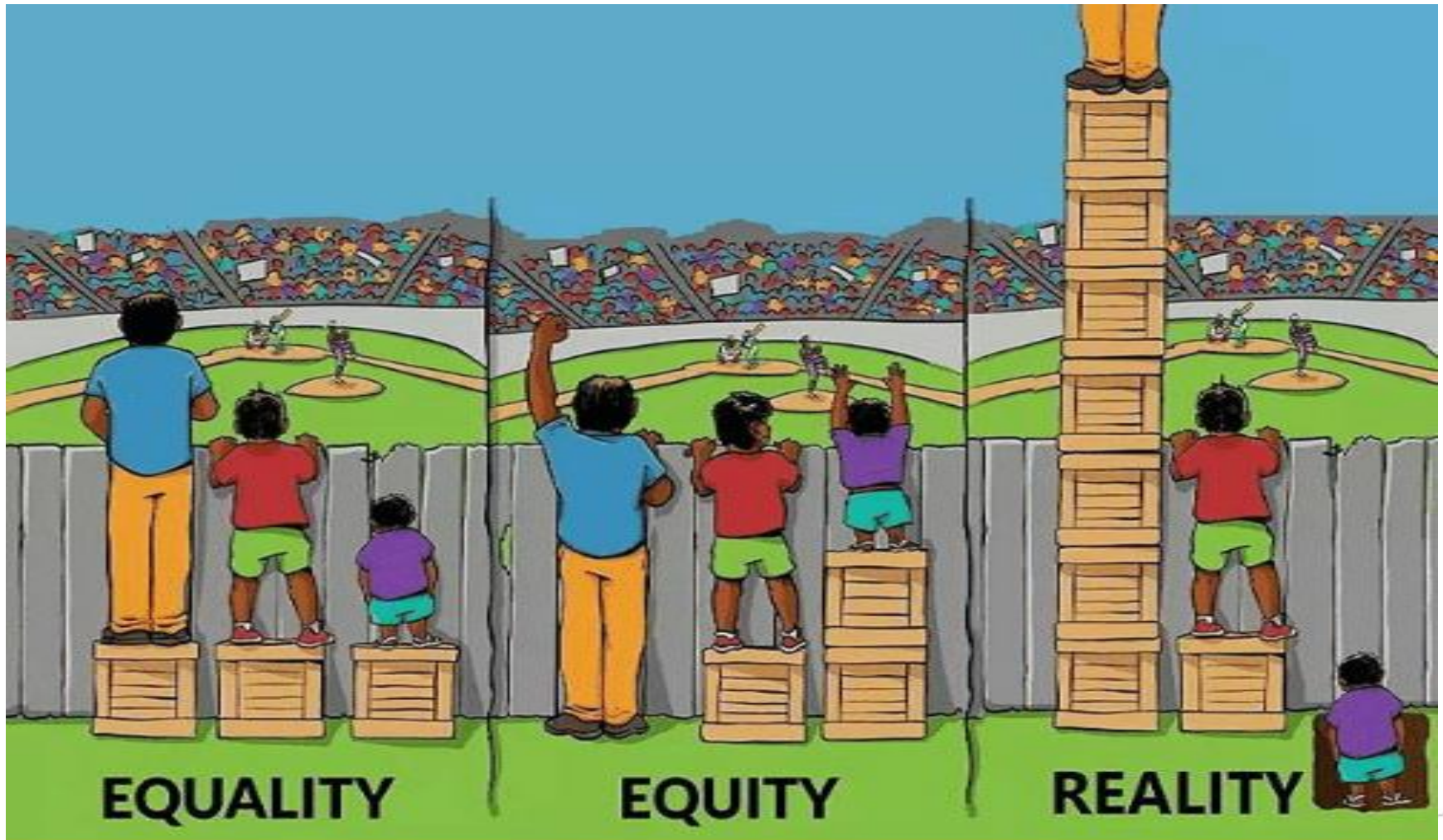
KEY CHALLENGES

- **Incoherent understanding of the notion of inclusive education**, resulting in persistent dependencies with special education.
- There is a perception that **inclusive education is for special schools** and, in some cases, full-service schools – which are **untouchable or no-go areas** for some functions.
- The **function of inclusive education is expected to be a system on its own**, with capacity to provide all the functions that are provided in the mainstream part of the system: **“Special schools are your thing and my responsibility is mainstream schools”**.
- There is a **conceptual disjuncture between basic education and inclusive education**, resulting in split ownership of responsibility.

KEY CHALLENGES

- Unfortunately, even questions from **civil society organisations rarely operate outside of this dominant paradigm**. In other words, the questions asked and issues raised **emphasise the split, making it difficult to build a single inclusive education system**.

DEVASTATING CONSEQUENCES



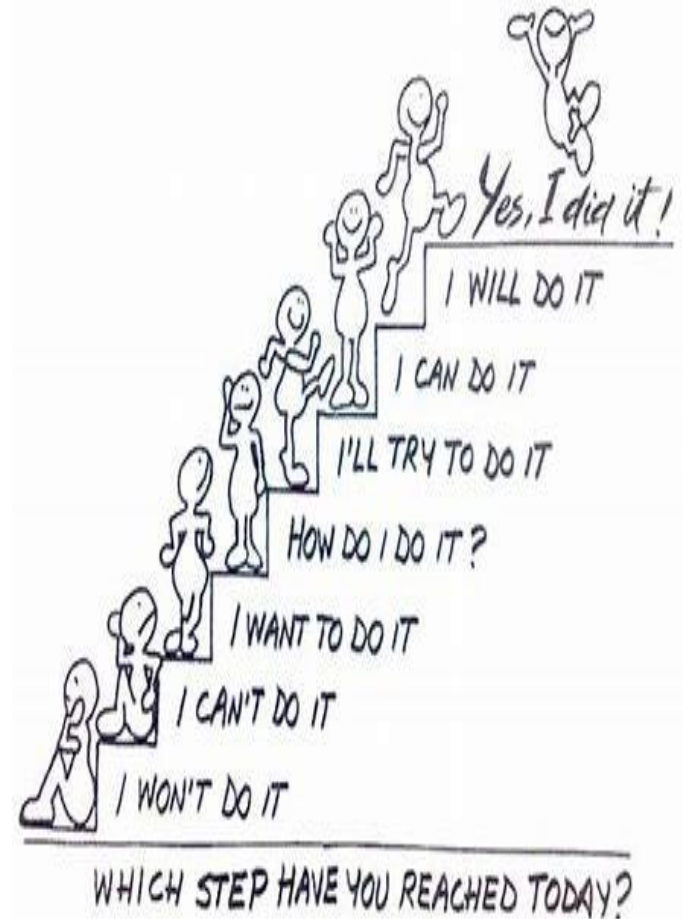
THE DOMINANT VIEW

- Teachers often **believe** in and/or are **compelled** to adopt **one size fits all – one way is suitable for and benefits all learners.**
- Learners are often expected to continue even if they are still uncertain about what has been covered, resulting in the **accumulation of learning deficits.**
- The cost of the **accumulation of learning deficits** is devastating for both learners and the **sector.**



TEACHER AGENCY AND RESILIENCE

- The current situation requires teachers who can **act purposefully, constructively and professionally under difficult circumstances.**
- These are teachers with a **solutionist disposition**, who will not give up on a learner.
- These are teachers who will **pick up their learners a thousand times, who want to get it right for every child** and never even once think to themselves: “maybe this child was not made for it”.



CONCEPTUAL SHIFT FROM THE POLICY

- A **broad range of learning needs exists** among the learner population at any point in time, and that, **where these are not met, learners may fail to learn effectively** or be **excluded** from or **drop out** of the education system.
- In this regard, **different learning needs arise from a range of factors**, including physical, mental, sensory, neurological and developmental impairments, psycho-social disturbances, differences in intellectual ability, particular life experiences or socio-economic deprivation.
- If this is not diligently attended to, it affects not only the nation, but human development itself, **devastating socio-economic consequences**.



FROM SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS TO BARRIERS TO LEARNING

- **Negative attitudes** to and **stereotyping** of **differences**.
- An **inflexible curricula**.
- Inappropriate languages or **language** of **learning and teaching**.
- Inappropriate **communication**.
- Inaccessible and unsafe **built environments**.
- Inappropriate and inadequate **support services**.
- Inadequate **policies and legislation**.
- The **non-recognition** and **non-involvement** of **parents**.
- Inadequately and inappropriately **trained education managers and educators**.

CURRENT INCUMBENT

- The Minister, in the policy, acknowledges the **fears and challenges that come with this necessary paradigm shift:**

*“I am also deeply aware of the **anxieties** that many educators, officials, lecturers, parents and learners hold about our inclusion proposals for learners with special education needs. They **fear the many challenges** that may come with inclusion - of teaching, communication, costs, stereotyping and the safety of learners - that **can be righted only by further professional and physical resources development, information dissemination and advocacy**” (DoE, 2001:3).*



WHAT MUST WE DO?

- Acknowledge that **all children and learners, in all types of our schools, can learn and need support.**
- **Create enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies** to meet the needs of all learners.
- **Acknowledge and respect differences in learners,** whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability and impediments.
- **Change negative attitudes, behaviours, teaching methods, curricula, and environments** to meet the needs of all learners.
- **Maximise participation of all learners** in the teaching and learning culture, and the curriculum of educational institutions, **uncovering and addressing barriers to learning.**
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HOW MUST WE DO THIS?

- **Expand access and provision** to those of **compulsory school-going age who are not accommodated** within the education and training system.
- **Revisit human rights, social justice and educational policies, legislation and structures** that are necessary to facilitate the transformation process.
- Develop mechanisms within the system that are central to **increasing access, accommodating diversity and addressing barriers to learning**.
- Raise **public awareness and advocacy, development of appropriate and necessary capacities and competencies at all levels of the system**.
- Develop an **effective management, policy, planning and monitoring capacity in the sector, under senior departmental leadership**, to guide and support the development of the inclusive education and training system.

HOW MUST WE DO THIS?

- Assist each other in developing effective management systems and capacity in respect of strategic planning, management information systems, and curriculum management and assessment.
- Develop the professional capacity of all educators in inclusive teaching, learning and assessment.
- Strengthen norms and standards for teacher education to include the development of competencies to recognise and address barriers to learning and to accommodate the diverse range of learning needs.

HOW MUST WE DO THIS?

- **Focus on the Foundation Phase** in order to strengthen **early identification and intervention mechanisms**.
- Teacher training on **alternative teaching and assessment methodology** in the GEC model



SCREENING IDENTIFICATION ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT (SIAS)

- SIAS provides a policy framework for the standardisation of the procedures to identify, assess and provide programmes for all learners who require additional support to enhance their participation in schools.
- The SIAS policy aims at improving access to quality education for vulnerable learners and those who experience barriers to learning (**learners in ordinary and special schools who are failing to learn due to barriers of whatever nature, compulsory school-going age who may be out of school or have never enrolled in a school due to their disability or other barriers**).

SCREENING IDENTIFICATION ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT (SIAS)

- The main focus of the policy is to manage and support teaching and learning processes for learners who experience barriers to learning.
- The policy provides guidelines on enrolling learners in special schools and those who need additional support in mainstream schools.
- The policy aims to facilitate the shift from individual learner disability as the driving organiser for support provision to that of the range, nature and level of support programmes, services, personnel and resources available for special and ordinary schools to increase learner participation in the learning process (SIAS policy, p.11)

ACCOMMODATION AND ASSESSMENT

- **Accommodation** - (Reasonable accommodation) refers to necessary and appropriate modification of, and adjustments to the environment, assessment format and/or curriculum format, as well as allowing the use of assistive devices and technology, where needed in a particular case...
- **Concession** – Concessions refer to permission given to candidates who experience barriers related to deafness, aphasia, dyslexia and a mathematical disorder, such as dyscalculia as set out in *Regulation 16 of the Regulations pertaining to the conduct, administration and management of the National Senior Certificate examination*, to be exempted from certain subjects or sections of the curriculum content.



GEC MODEL IMPLICATIONS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

- GEC assessment model should address the learning needs of all learners
- Factor in alternative teaching and assessment methodology for learning
- Attends to curriculum differentiation
- SBA for all learners
- Reporting format for LSEN should indicate what the learner knows and can do.

GEC MODEL IMPLICATIONS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

- Use of technology and assistive devices for teaching, learning and assessment.
- Understand implementation of assessment of learners who experience barriers to learning and development, LSEN in Special Schools/ Schools of Skills (SOS) across the three GEC assessment components.
- Collaboration at all levels of the Department very vital in the implementation of the GEC model for learners who experience barriers to learning and development.

CONCLUSION

- Inclusive Education policy embraces the implementation of the GEC model which caters for all learners, all means.
- Inclusive education and the implementation of the GEC model are complementary in their aim to create an inclusive, equitable, and quality education system. By embracing inclusive education principles and ensuring fair and accessible assessment processes through the GEC model, educational institutions can contribute to the empowerment and success of all students, regardless of their backgrounds or individual needs.
- Alternative teaching, learning and assessment is what the sector needs to vigorously emphasize.



Every child is a National Asset

Thank you!

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