

1.3.5 A comparison between the overall incidence of disabilities and the number of learners accommodated in school also reveals stark disparities, for example:

- 0.28% of learners in the Eastern Cape are enrolled in special schools, yet the overall incidence figure for the population of disabled persons (of all ages) is 17.39%.
- This pattern is repeated across provinces, indicating that significant numbers of learners who - based on the traditional model - should be receiving educational support in special schools are not getting any.
- While the national total incidence figure for disabilities (of all ages) is 6.55%, the total number of learners in special schools is 0.52%.

1.3.6 The data further demonstrates that learner expenditure on learners with disabilities also varies significantly across provinces, ranging from R11,049 in Gauteng to R28,635 in the Western Cape and R22,627 in the Free State. While this distribution of learner expenditure demonstrates inefficiency in the use of resources, it also demonstrates the absence of a uniform resourcing strategy and national provisioning norms for learners with disabilities.

1.3.7 In an inclusive education and training system, a wider spread of educational support services will be created in line with what learners with disabilities require. This means that learners who require low-intensive support will receive this in ordinary schools and those requiring moderate support will receive this in full-service schools. Learners who require high-intensive educational support will continue to receive such support in special schools.

<i>Population selected</i>	Total	<i>Using WHO min of 2.2%</i>	<i>Using WHO max of 2.6%</i>
A: Total population age 7 – 15 using Census '96 shows learners in compulsory age	8,291,000	182,000	216,000
B: Total population age 6 – 5 using Census '96 shows inclusion of Grade R	9,225,000	203,000	240,000
C: Total school population age 6 – 18 Using Census '96	11,734,000	258,000	305,000
D: Total population in public + independent ordinary + special schools, 1999, DoE figures	12,378,000	272,000	322,000
E: D + Grade R cohort from B	13,312,000	293,000	346,000

1.3.8 Based on the calculations in the table above and taking into account the number of learners who are currently accommodated in special schools, viz. 64,603, our estimate of a reasonable expectation, before adjustments for growth, of disabled learners who are out of school is 260,000. Our estimate of the upper limit of out-of-school disabled learners is 280,000.

1.4 What is Inclusive Education and Training?

1.4.1 In this White Paper inclusive education and training:

- Are about acknowledging that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support.
- Are accepting and respecting the fact that all learners are different in some way and have different learning needs which are equally valued and an ordinary part of our human experience.
- Are about 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 or HIV status.
- Are broader than formal schooling and acknowledge that learning also occurs in the home and community, and within formal and informal modes and structures.
- Are about changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methodologies, curricula and the environment to meet the needs of all learners.
- Are about maximising the participation of all learners in the culture and the curricula of educational institutions and uncovering and minimising barriers to learning.
- Are about empowering learners by developing their individual strengths and enabling them to participate critically in the process of learning.

1.4.2 It is clear that some learners may require more intensive and specialised forms of support to be able to develop to their full potential. An inclusive education and training system is organised so that it can provide various levels and kinds of support to learners and educators.

1.4.3 Believing in and supporting a policy of inclusive education are not enough to ensure that such a system will work in practice. Accordingly, we will evaluate carefully what resources we already have within the system and how these existing resources and capacities can be strengthened and transformed so that they can contribute to the building of an inclusive system. We will also decide on where the immediate priorities lie and put in place mechanisms to address these first.

1.4.4 In this White Paper we also distinguish between mainstreaming and inclusion as we describe below:

'Mainstreaming' or 'Integration'	'Inclusion'
Mainstreaming is about getting learners to 'fit into' a particular kind of system or integrating them into this existing system.	Inclusion is about recognising and respecting the differences among all learners and building on the similarities.
Mainstreaming is about giving some learners extra support so that they can 'fit in' or be integrated into the 'normal' classroom routine. Learners are assessed by specialists who diagnose and prescribe technical interventions, such as the placement of learners in programmes.	Inclusion is about supporting all learners, educators and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met. The focus is on teaching and learning actors, with the emphasis on the development of good teaching strategies that will be of benefit to all learners.
Mainstreaming and integration focus on changes that need to take place in learners so that they can 'fit in'. Here the focus is on the learner.	Inclusion focuses on overcoming barriers in the system that prevent it from meeting the full range of learning needs. The focus is on the adaptation of and support systems available in the classroom.

1.5 Building an Inclusive Education and Training System: The First Steps

1.5.1 The Ministry accepts that 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 the learning 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. Different learning needs may also arise because of:

- Negative attitudes to and stereotyping of differences.
- An inflexible curriculum.
- 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.

In accepting this approach, it is essential to acknowledge that the learners who are most vulnerable to barriers to learning and exclusion in South Africa are those who have historically been termed 'learners with special education needs', i.e. learners with disabilities and impairments. Their increased vulnerability has arisen largely because of the historical nature and extent of the educational support provided.

- 1.5.2 As will be obvious from a reading of the factors contributing to the diverse range of learning needs, it is possible to identify barriers to learning operative within the learner or the education and training system. These may also arise during the learning process and be temporary, and can be addressed through a variety of mechanisms and processes. Interventions or strategies at different levels, such as the classroom, the school, the district, the provincial and national departments and systems, will be essential to prevent them from causing learning to be ineffective. Interventions or strategies will also be essential to avoid barriers to learning from contributing to the exclusion of learners from the curriculum and/or from the education and training system.

Human resource development for classroom educators

Classroom educators will be our primary resource for achieving our goal of an inclusive education and training system. This means that educators will need to improve their skills and knowledge, and develop new ones. Staff development at the school and district level will be critical to putting in place successful integrated educational practices. Ongoing assessment of educators' needs through our developmental appraisal, followed by structured programmes to meet these needs, will make a critical contribution to inclusion.

1. In mainstream education, priorities will include multi-level classroom instruction so that educators can prepare main lessons with variations that are responsive to individual learner needs; co-operative learning; curriculum enrichment; and dealing with learners with behavioural problems.
2. In special schools/resource centres, priorities will include orientation to new roles within district support services of support to neighbourhood schools, and new approaches that focus on problem solving and the development of learners' strengths and competencies rather than focusing on their shortcomings only.

3. In full-service schools, priorities will include orientation to and training in new roles focusing on multi-level classroom instruction, co-operative learning, problem solving and the development of learners' strengths and competencies rather than focusing on their shortcomings only.
4. Education support personnel within district support services will be orientated to and trained in their new roles of providing support to all teachers and other educators. Training will focus on supporting all learners, educators and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met. The focus will be on teaching and learning factors, and emphasis will be placed on the development of good teaching strategies that will be of benefit to all learners; on overcoming barriers in the system that prevent it from meeting the full range of learning needs; and on adaptation of and support systems available in the classroom.
5. Management and governance development programmes will be revised to incorporate orientation to and training in the management and governance implications of each of the categories of institutions within the inclusive education and training system, viz. special, full-service and mainstream. Training will focus on how to identify and address barriers to learning.

1.5.3 This approach to addressing barriers to learning and exclusion is consistent with a learner-centred approach to learning and teaching. It recognises that developing learners' strengths and empowering and enabling them to participate actively and critically in the learning process involve identifying and overcoming the causes of learning difficulties. The approach is also consistent with a systemic and developmental approach to understanding problems and planning action. It is consistent with new international approaches that focus on providing quality education for all learners.

What are curriculum and institutional barriers to learning and how do we remove these?

One of the most significant barriers to learning for learners in special and 'ordinary' schools is the curriculum. In this case, barriers to learning arise from different aspects of the curriculum, such as:

- The content (i.e. what is taught).
- The language or medium of instruction.
- How the classroom or lecture is organised and managed.
- The methods and processes used in teaching.
- The pace of teaching and the time available to complete the curriculum.
- The learning materials and equipment that is used.
- How learning is assessed.

What can be done to overcome these barriers and who will assist institutions in doing it?

The most important way of addressing barriers arising from the curriculum is to make sure that the process of learning and teaching is flexible enough to accommodate different learning needs and styles. The curriculum must therefore be made more flexible across all bands of education so that it is accessible to all learners, irrespective of their learning needs. One of the tasks of the district support team will be to assist educators in institutions in creating greater flexibility in their teaching methods and in the assessment of learning. They will also provide illustrative learning programmes, learning support materials and assessment instruments.

- 1.5.4 Embracing this approach as the basis for establishing an inclusive education and training system does not mean that we should then proceed to declare it as policy and hope that its implementation will proceed smoothly within all provincial systems and all education and training institutions. Rather, the successful implementation of this policy will rely on a substantive understanding of the real experiences and capabilities of our provincial systems and education and training institutions, the setting of achievable policy objectives and priorities over time and regular reporting on these. Successful policy implementation will also rely on the identification of key levers for policy change and innovation within our provincial systems and our education and training institutions.
- 1.5.5 It is this approach that lies at the heart of this White Paper: a determination to establish an inclusive education and training system as our response to the call to action to establish a caring and humane society, and a recognition that within an education and training system that is engaging in multiple and simultaneous policy change under conditions of severe resource constraints, we must determine policy priorities, identify key levers for change and put in place successful South African models of inclusion.
- 1.5.6 Against this background, we identify within this White Paper the following six key strategies and levers for establishing our inclusive education and training system:
 - 1.5.6.1 The qualitative improvement of special schools and settings for the learners that they serve and their conversion to resource centres that are integrated into district-based support teams.

The place and role of special schools in an inclusive education system

As we described earlier, special schools currently provide, in a racially segregated manner, education services of varying quality.

1. While special schools provide critical education services to learners who require intense levels of support, they also accommodate learners who require much less support and should ideally be in mainstream schools.
2. When implementing our policy on inclusion we will pay particular attention to raising the overall quality of education services that special schools provide.
3. We will also ensure that learners who require intense levels of support receive these services since mainstream schools will be unable to provide them.
4. In addition to these roles, special schools will have a very important role to play in an inclusive system. The new roles for these schools will include providing particular expertise and support, especially professional support in curriculum, assessment and instruction, as part of the district support team to neighbourhood schools, especially 'full-service' schools. This role also includes providing appropriate and quality educational provision for those learners who are already in these settings or who may require accommodation in settings requiring secure care or specialised programmes with high levels of support.
5. Improved quality of special schools will also include the provision of comprehensive education programmes that provide life-skills training and programme-to-work linkages. Here is an example of how a special school can operate a resource centre in its district.

A special school has specialised skills available among its staff and has developed learning materials to specifically assist learners with visual impairments. There may also be facilities for Braille available at the school. The professional staff at this school, as part of their role in the district support team, could run a training workshop in their district for other educators on how to provide additional support in the classroom to visually-impaired learners. The special school could produce learning materials in Braille and make them available through a lending system to other schools in the district. The school could also set up a 'helpline' for educators or parents to telephone in with queries.

6. But what will be done to help special schools take on this additional role? The White Paper explains that, to assist special schools in functioning as resource centres in the district support system, there will be a qualitative upgrading of their services.
7. We will focus especially on the training of their staff for their new roles. This process of upgrading will take place once we have completed our audit of the programmes, services and facilities in all 378 special schools and independent special schools.

1.5.6.2 The mobilisation of the approximately 280,000 disabled children and youth outside of the school system.

1.5.6.3 Within mainstream schooling, the designation and conversion of approximately 500 out of 20,000 primary schools to full-service schools, beginning with the 30 school districts that are part of the national District Development Programme. Similarly, within adult basic, further and higher education, the designation and establishment of full-service educational institutions. The eventual number of full-service institutions (beyond the target of 500) will be governed by our needs and available resources.

What are full-service schools and colleges and how do we intend establishing them?

Full-service schools and colleges are schools and colleges that will be equipped and supported to provide for the full range of learning needs among all our learners.

1. It will be impossible in the medium term to convert all 28,000 schools and colleges to provide the full range of learning needs. Notwithstanding this, it will be important to pursue our policy goal of inclusion through the development of models of inclusion that can later be considered for system-wide application.
2. Full-service schools and colleges will be assisted to develop their capacity to provide for the full range of learning needs and to address barriers to learning.
3. Special attention will be paid to developing flexibility in teaching practices and styles through training, capacity building and the provision of support to learners and educators in these schools.

But how will this be done?

4. The Ministry, in collaboration with the provincial departments of education, will designate and then convert a number of primary schools throughout the country into what are called 'full-service' schools.
5. These are schools that will be equipped and supported to provide for a greater range of learning needs.
6. The programmes that are developed in the 'full-service' schools will be carefully monitored and evaluated. The lessons learnt from this process will be used to guide the extension of this model to other primary schools, as well as other high schools and colleges.

What kind of support will these schools receive?

7. The support they will receive will include physical and material resources, as well as professional development for staff.

8. They will also receive special attention from the district support teams so that they can become beacons of our evolving inclusive education system.

Which schools will become 'full-service' schools?

9. Initially, we will select at least one primary school in a selection of 30 school districts. Based on lessons learnt from this sample, 500 primary schools will later be selected for conversion into 'full-service' schools. When identifying the 500 schools, particular attention will be paid to the mobilisation of community and parent participation so that all social partners and role players can become part of the process of developing these schools.

- 1.5.6.4 Within mainstream education, the general orientation and introduction of management, governing bodies and professional staff to the inclusion model, and the targeting of early identification of disabilities and intervention in the Foundation Phase.
- 1.5.6.5 The establishment of district-based support teams to provide a co-ordinated professional support service that draws on expertise in further and higher education and local communities, targeting special schools and specialised settings, designated full-service and other primary schools and educational institutions, beginning with 30 school districts.
- 1.5.6.6 Finally, we will prioritise the implementation of a national advocacy and information programme in support of the inclusion model focusing on the roles, responsibilities and rights of all learning institutions, educators, parents and local communities and highlighting the focal programmes and reporting on their progress.

1.6 HIV/AIDS and Other Infectious Diseases

- 1.6.1 The development of an inclusive education and training system must take into account the incidence and the impact of the spread of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases.
- 1.6.2 For planning purposes, the Ministry will need to ascertain, in particular, the consequences for the curriculum, the expected enrolment and drop-out rates and the funding implications in both the short and long terms.
- 1.6.3 The Ministry will attempt to gather this information from an internally commissioned study, as well as from other research being conducted in this area.

In the next chapter we elaborate on these six strategies and levers for change that constitute the core of our policy framework for establishing an inclusive education and training system.