



## Swaziland

Themba Johan Msibi  
**Minister of Education**



*Themba Johan Msibi was born on December 11, 1955 at Ngudzeni area in the Eastern part of the Shiselweni region. He completed O'level in 1978. In 1982, he enrolled at Swaziland Institute of Management and Personnel Administration (SIMPA) to pursue a Certificate in Accounting. He was employed at the University of Swaziland as Assistant Accountant from 1991 to 2003. He studied a Diploma in Industrial Relations by correspondence at the University of South Africa from 1992 to 1995 while working for the University of Swaziland. He was appointed a member of the Board of Trustees for the University of Swaziland (UNISWA), Swaziland National Pensions Fund. He had been Chief negotiator of terms and conditions for UNISWA, Mananga College, Waterford ka-Mhlaba World College and Swaziland Examinations Council employees.*

*He held the following positions prior to his appointment as a Minister of Public Service and Information in November 28, 2003: Commissioner of the Constitutional Review Commission - 1996 to 2000; Vice President of the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU) - 1996 to 1997; SFTU Internal Auditor and member of Executive Committee - 1992 to 1996; President of Non Academic Staff Union (UNISWA-WU) at the University of Swaziland (UNISWA) - 1991 to 2000. He was appointed the Minister of Education on October 1, 2006 to date.*

### **No Child Excluded from Education**

The Government of Swaziland, like other country's, is already committed to inclusive education. In the 1999 Educational Policy Framework, the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland made a commitment of universal, high quality basic education which provides equal opportunities for all children and youth. The Swaziland National Constitution (2006) further made provisions for the development of policies and laws with regard to the right to education for all. Developing an inclusive education policy is one way of operationalising the country's constitution such that the needs of all children are addressed appropriately. A draft policy on Inclusive Education is already in place and consultation of key stakeholders and selected groups has already started. This policy sets out a road map for ensuring that support is provided for children who need it to enable them to learn effectively. It also ensures that the whole education sector is made more effective through the use of inclusive child-based teaching methods and through a more flexible approach to learning.

The National priority is to develop an inclusive education system and an environment free of any barriers for all learners with special education needs (LSEN) by 2015. Our short and medium term goals are to start identifying any barriers to education and learning and remove them. One challenge is the absence of a proper system for early detection of learners with special needs together with the necessary intervention. This has led to a high number of children lost in the system. It is for these reasons that a School Screening Programme was introduced in 2006/2007 where (9) nine primary schools were designated as models for inclusion. Four teachers were trained in each of the nine schools on how to screen learners for vision, hearing and learning disabilities, and how to support or refer learners who need further assessment. This program is



being rolled out to more primary schools and the plan is to have 608 primary schools screening children and supporting them by 2010. A total of 29 schools and 97 Resource Teachers have been trained so far. Involving the teachers has proved to be very effective because they are more than just a valuable resource but are the key players to supporting all aspects of the inclusion process.