

48th International Conference on Education



WORKSHOP 1

Inclusive Education: The Right of All

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***Workshop 1D
Approaches, Scope, and Content***

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Excluded, Unreached Groups

- Ministries of Education are usually proud of net enrolment rates -- but rarely discuss net NON-enrollment rates.
- EFA Mid-Decade Assessment reports done in the past year specifically identify groups excluded from education.
- But most countries (and most schools and communities) do not have detailed data for these groups – they do not know who they are, where they are, and why they are excluded...



Who Are the Excluded?

- Learners from remote and rural communities (e.g., mountainous areas and islands)
- Learners from religious, linguistic and ethnic minorities; indigenous peoples; and members of lower castes
- Girls and women, especially from rural/ethnic minorities
- Learners from migrant families and refugees and stateless children



Who Are the Excluded?

- Learners with disabilities/special needs
- Street children and working children
- Children in difficult circumstances (e.g., affected by armed conflict or disaster)
- Orphans and abandoned children
- Learners from very poor families
- Children affected or infected by HIV and AIDS



So What is Inclusive Education?

- **Objective:** To support Education for All by removing barriers to enrolment and learning for:
 - The relatively small group of children with severe impairments who may need some form of additional support (e.g., special schools)
 - Those who are **excluded from schooling** – are not enrolled - but who could attend if schools were more flexible in their responses and welcoming in their approach
 - Those who are enrolled in school but **excluded from learning**



Inclusive Policies and Practice

- Experiences in many countries show that it is not sufficient to look at how to integrate one particular group of children.
- We must understand and respond to the needs of each category of exclusion
- The overall principle is the need to focus on how to develop **strategies to remove barriers to learning and participation** for all children.
- Only then do we achieve education, of good quality, for all.



A School of Good Quality...

- is a **child-friendly, rights-based** school
- is a **child-centred** school, acting in the best interests of the child, leading to the realisation of the child's full potential, and concerned about the "whole" child
- is a **child-seeking** school, actively identifying excluded children to get them enrolled in school and included in learning



A School of Good Quality... Inclusive of Children

- Does not exclude, discriminate against, or stereotype on the basis of difference
- Provides education that is free and compulsory, affordable and accessible, especially to families and children at risk
- Respects and welcomes diversity as an opportunity -- not as a problem
- Meets the differing needs of children (e.g., based on sex, social class, ethnicity, and ability level)



Government Obligations toward the Right to Education

- **Availability:** education must be available
 - guaranteeing the right to free and compulsory education to all school-age children up to the minimum age of employment

- **Accessibility:** education must be accessible
 - eliminating exclusion from education based on internationally prohibited grounds of discrimination
 - eliminating gender and racial/ethnic discrimination in education



Government Obligations toward the Right to Education

- **Acceptability:** education must be acceptable
 - establishing minimum standards for learning materials, methods of instruction, school health and safety, professional requirements for teachers, etc.

- **Adaptability:** education must be adaptable
 - where necessary, designing alternative education opportunities for children excluded from formal schooling
 - adapting the education system to the child, not the child to the education system



Policy-maker and Politician Commitments

- National policy-makers and politicians must become fully committed to inclusive education, despite the fact that:
 - identifying still-excluded groups is difficult
 - reaching the last of the excluded is expensive
 - admitting that excluded groups remain can be politically embarrassing
 - doing something about them can be politically sensitive – e.g., initial literacy in mother tongue



Inclusive Education is a Process

- Those excluded from education are often simply not seen.
- If seen, they are often not counted.
- If counted, they are often not served
- If served, they are often served badly.

Inclusive education means **making visible the invisible** and ensuring that all learners fulfill their right to an education of good quality.



Inclusive Education is a Process



Inclusive Education is a constant process of school improvement to ensure that Education for All really is for all

