

### **What is “inclusive education”?**

According to UNESCO, inclusive education is seen as “a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion from education and from within education.” The goal is that the whole education system will facilitate learning environments where teachers and learners embrace and welcome the challenge and benefits of diversity. Within an inclusive education approach, learning environments are fostered where individual needs are met and every student has an opportunity to succeed.

### ***What is the relevance of the theme of the 48th ICE?***

The theme of this Conference, “*Inclusive Education: the Way of the Future*” is important equally for developing and developed countries today. Inclusive education is a real implementation of the basic human right to education. It is not only about attaining universal access to education, but universal access to meaningful and purposeful knowledge and learning for all. Although the context in every country and region is unique, we all share common concerns in education regarding justice, equity and peace. Students need to acquire the competencies and appropriate qualifications for life in an ever-changing and increasingly plural and interdependent political and economic landscape of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### ***Who is excluded from education?***

Exclusion does not only refer to the 75 million children for whom access to education is denied or those who drop out before completion. It also happens every day to those in schools who are segregated or discriminated against due to social condition, ethnic origin, cultural background, gender, sexual orientation, or other individual characteristics or capacities. If policies, contents and teaching approaches are not adapted to the diversity of the students, they will not have the conditions to learn effectively the skills that will allow them to be successful in work and life.

### ***Will the Conference highlight examples of effective practices and strategies regarding inclusive education?***

The aim of the 48<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Education is to provide an enriching platform for policy dialogue, exchange and collaboration among decision makers and stakeholders in education, in order to share experience, concerns and visions concerning inclusive education. However, the purpose is not to prescribe a model of inclusive education, since what works in one context cannot necessarily be transferred to another.

### ***What are the expected outcomes of the 48<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Education?***

Based on the dialogue and collaborations of the ministers and other educational officials throughout the 48<sup>th</sup> International Conference, we hope to create a common understanding of the important role that inclusive education can play in achieving quality education for all worldwide. The discussions will seek to clarify the problems and issues involved when a country decides to adopt an inclusive education approach. Conclusions and recommendations will be drawn regarding the introduction of equitable, effective and democratic educational policies of quality, at the heart of which will be values of inclusion.