

# 48th Session of the International Conference of Education (ICE)



**Inclusive Education : The Way of the Future**  
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**Geneva, Switzerland,**  
**UNESCO- IBE**



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



International Bureau  
of Education

Organised by:



With the participation of over 1600 people from all over the world

**153 countries officially represented**

**Ministers of Education**

**UN Organisations**



**Civil Society**

**NGOs**

# ICE 2008

Since 1934, the ICE has been a global forum for promoting policy dialogue among Ministers of Education and other stakeholders (researchers, experts, representatives of intergovernmental organizations and civil society).

From inclusive  
education to an  
inclusive society

Foster the discussion on the **concept of inclusive education**

Analyze **the role of governments** in developing inclusive education policies

Focus attention on educational systems that provide **lifelong learning opportunities**

**Role of teachers** in responding to different expectations and needs of learners



# Relevance of inclusive education in the world today

"To talk of inclusion, we must do much more to encourage children to be present in the classroom (...) we must marginalize marginalization"

Building a society  
with **equal  
opportunities and  
social cohesion**

Framework Action : Children **vulnerable to  
processes of exclusion**, or are at risk of  
being **marginalized in the school**

Education system which makes the  
**inclusion its central axis**, consistent with  
the **model of the desired society**


Going to school does not guarantee a **quality  
school**, we may still **exclude students from  
learning** within school



# Open Debates on Inclusive Education

As a **process** to address the various expectations and needs of all students

As identifying and removing **barriers** to learning



Four key elements for conceptualizing inclusive education

As **attendance, participation** and **quality results** achieved by ALL students

As an emphasis on those groups who are most at risk of **exclusion** and **marginalization**

*Guidelines for inclusion (UNESCO, 2006)*

# Theme 1 : Key Discussion Points

## Inclusive Education: Approaches, Scope and Content

- Inclusive education as a fundamental way towards the advancement of **Education For All (EFA)** and **life-long learning**. A transversal approach to the entire education system (from education policy to schools and classes) to energize and accelerate EFA efforts in order to help achieve a proper synthesis between equity and quality
- A comprehensive vision and approaches appropriate for **diversity and difference**
- **Target groups**: consensus about the need to better serve students with special educational needs, but no consensus on priority groups (long and varied agenda).
- Inclusion is an evolving concept. A lot has been established but there are gaps between what we know and what we implement.



# Theme 1 : Key Discussion Points

## Inclusive Education: Approaches, Scope and Content

- **Inclusion and excellence** are irreconcilable? Research and international assessments (such as PISA), show that inclusive practices do not impede excellence but rather strengthen it
- **The government's responsibility** to help enforce the right to education through:
  - Legal action and legislation
  - The provision of education and educational resources
  - Inter-sectoral approaches to engage multiple public and private institutions
  - The conceptual and operational coordination of social policies is a key factor to address diversity as well as to achieve social and educational inclusion
- **The necessary responses** to address the root causes of exclusion:
  - Strong political will
  - Appropriate training of teachers and flexible teaching approaches
  - Appropriate management structures, infrastructure, materials, assessment systems, among other things

# Theme 1 : Key Discussion Points

## Inclusive Education: Approaches, Scope and Content

- The differences and the confusion between **integration** (mainstreaming / incorporation of students with special needs in regular schools) and **inclusion** (essentially means that the school adapts to the child to facilitate personalized learning opportunities for all students)
- Adapt frameworks to various **excluded groups** (especially rural populations, girls, and students with special needs)
- **Language** as a factor related to the **lack of access** to education and to **dropouts** (lack of support for minority languages, indigenous and migrants).
- Two neglected issues:
  - **Early childhood care and education** (ECCE)
  - The use of **ICTs** in promoting the inclusion
- Consensus on the **importance of data** (about who is not at school, who is at home, why there is lack of access to school)



# Theme 2: Key Discussion Points

## Inclusive Education: Public Policies

- Inclusive education **alone** can not build an inclusive society
- Inclusive education refers to a **goal** as much as a **gradual process**, it serves as a gateway to the fulfillment and enjoyment of other rights
- Inclusive education viewed as a **moral issue** or a learning strategy?
- Policies must take a **rights-based approach**, supported by appropriate legislation
- There is no strong consensus on **how to implement inclusion** at the classroom level (differentiated teaching within a regular school or separation between regular and special schools)



# Theme 2: Key Points of Discussion

## Inclusive Education: Public Policies

- Policies should provide a basis for the **development of citizenship skills in students** and for **assuring quality**
- The need for extensive collaboration and support from **all sectors of society** to achieve a consensus through **participatory, multi-sectoral dialogue** between the multiple groups involved (stakeholders)
- The **financing** of inclusive education (issues relating to competition, privatization and decentralization) and the impacts of **market-based education**
- Debate about the contribution of **private institutions** to inclusive education

# Theme 2: Key Points of Discussion

## Inclusive Education: Public Policies

- Provide resources to **prepare and support** teachers and professional educators who play a fundamental role in achieving quality education
- The key role of the **state** in promoting inclusive education as a **public good**, which contrasts with the trend towards the privatization of educational services
- Multi-sectoral public policies on inclusive education must be **accompanied by and in accordance with** other social, cultural and language policies, etc.
- The wide **dissemination and sharing** of public policies on inclusive education as a way to strengthen a global partnership committed to inclusion

# Theme 3: Key Points of Discussion

## Inclusive Education : Systems, Links and Transitions



- Need for a holistic approach based on inclusive education that can be adapted to the complexities and specificities of national situations
- Interfaces between the formal and non-formal education and methods to assess competencies in both types of education
- Partnerships with families who play an active role in shaping positive attitudes towards inclusion

# Theme 3: Key Points of Discussion

## Inclusive Education : Systems, Links and Transitions

- Importance of access to **early childhood education**
- **Partnerships** between various actors and institutions (stakeholders, collaboration of civil society and international organizations with national governments)
- Transitions **within** the school system and between the education system and work
- The challenges of **designing curriculum** to include all students and ensure equal access to all levels of education and all types of schools (including access, processes and results)



## Theme 4: Key Points of Discussion

### Inclusive Education: Learners and Teachers

- There is a need to strengthen teachers' **competencies / skills in inclusive education**, and to reform **teacher training** in its form and content
- Teacher training alone is not sufficient as inclusive education begins with the **attitude** of a teacher
- The status of students with special educational needs: from a clinical approach to a **rights-based approach**





# Theme 4: Key Points of Discussion

## Inclusive Education: Learners and Teachers

- The challenge of **inequality** and discrimination among students **based on socio-economic, ethnic and cultural profiles** (e.g. the competencies and learning outcomes achieved)
- What is expected of students: the relevance of having high expectations about their performance
- The need to build **networks and communities of practice** for teachers and strengthen partnerships between **the parents and the school**
- The use of **ICTs** to support the development of a culture of achievement and to promote the principles of equity and inclusion
- Increased opportunities to learn and **share best practices**, research and pilot projects

# Theme 4: Key Points of Discussion

## Inclusive Education: Learners and Teachers

- The **dialogue** between learners and teachers and the importance of **listening to students**
- Recognizing that teachers are **strengthened and empowered** through practical support in schools and classrooms and through the engagement of families and communities
- Disagreements **over how to deal** with specific issues such as religious instruction in the classroom
- Schools as the places to protect and take care of children in **conflict situations**

# Conclusions and Recommendations

## Representatives of 153 Member States

- “... governments [...] should recognize the importance of a broadened concept of inclusive education”
- “we reaffirm the importance of inclusive education for reducing poverty and improving health, incomes and livelihood. Therefore, despite the current global financial crisis, we emphasize that funding for education should be a top priority [...] ”
- “ ... we call upon Member States to adopt an inclusive education approach [...] as a way to further accelerate the attainment of EFA goals as well as to contribute to building more inclusive societies”

# Conclusions and Recommendations

## Approaches, Scope and Content

1. “Acknowledge that inclusive education is an ongoing process aimed at offering quality education for all while respecting diversity [...]”
2. “Address social inequity and poverty levels as priorities [...] within a framework of intersectoral policies”
3. “Promote school culture and environments that are child-friendly, conducive to effective learning [...]”

# Conclusions and Recommendations

## Public Policies

4. “Collect and use relevant data on all categories of the excluded [...]”
5. “Consider as appropriate the ratification of [...] the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [...]”
6. “Pursue education in the public interest [...] in close partnership with civil society and the private sector”
7. “Develop policies that provide educational support for different categories of learner [...]”
8. “View linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom as a valuable resource [...]”
9. “Design effective curricular frameworks [...] adopting a flexible approach”

# Conclusions and Recommendations

## Systems, Links and Transitions

10. “Provide for the participation and consultation of all stakeholders in decision-making processes [...] with the government playing a leading and regulatory role [...]”
11. “Strengthen the links between school and society [...]”
12. “Develop early childhood care and education (ECCE) programmes that promote inclusion [...]”
13. “Strengthen the use of ICT’s in order to ensure greater access to learning opportunities [...]”
14. “Provide high-quality, non-formal educational opportunities [...]”
15. “Enhance efforts to reduce illiteracy as a mechanism of inclusion [...]”



# Conclusions and Recommendations

## Learners and Teachers

16. “Working to improve their [teachers] status and their working conditions, [...] recruiting suitable candidates, and retain qualified teachers [...]”
17. “Train teachers by equipping them with the appropriate skills and materials to teach diverse student populations [...]”
18. “Support the strategic role of tertiary education in the [...] training of teachers on inclusive education practices [...]”
19. “Encourage innovative research in teaching and learning processes related to inclusive education”
20. “Equip school administrators with the skills to [...] promote inclusive education”
21. “Take into consideration the protection of learners, teachers and schools in times of conflict”

# Conclusions and Recommendations

## International Cooperation

22. “Recognize UNESCO’s leading role with regard to IE through :

- Promoting the exchange and dissemination of best practices;
- [...] advice to countries [...]
- Encouraging South-South and South-South-North cooperation [...]
- Encouraging efforts to increase resources for education
- [...] assist the LDC and countries affected by conflict ”

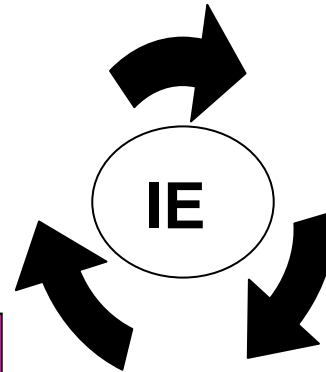
23. “Request other international organizations also to support Member States in the implementation of those recommendations [...]”

24. “Disseminate the Conclusions and Recommendations, [...] among the actors and partners of the international educational community [...]”

# Proposals for Action

## Proposals for schools

Strategies for collaboration  
between teachers and families  
Innovation processes in schools



## Proposals for UNESCO-IBE

Strategies for policy dialogue  
External advice  
Development of culture,  
policies and practices of  
inclusion  
Observatory of Inclusive  
Education  
International Studies

## Proposals for governments

Information Systems  
Public expenditure on education  
Measures for inclusion  
Legislation  
Exchange of good practices  
Support networks of teachers  
Private sector engagement  
Inter-sectoral policies



# **An inclusive society welcoming diversity**

Renato Opertti - [r.opertti@unesco.org](mailto:r.opertti@unesco.org)

