

## **Statement regarding this document**

This document is the culmination of many previous documents which have resulted from the hard work and expertise of many people. The most significant of those documents are listed in Appendix 1. A policy should be a working document that is accessible to all and so in order to make this draft of the Inclusive Education Policy as clear and concise as possible, much of the content of those documents has not been replicated here. References have been made where appropriate but again have been kept to a minimum.



## Table of Contents

Foreword	.....	iv
Summary	.....	1
Section 1	Introduction .....	3
Section 2	Problem Statement .....	4
Section 3	Rationale .....	5
Section 4	Overall Policy Goal and Objectives .....	5
Section 5	Key issues and specific policy goals for the inclusion of disadvantaged and vulnerable learners with special educational needs. ....	6
Section 6	Key issues and specific policy goals for the education system with regard to the inclusion of learners with special educational needs. ....	9

## FOREWORD

The World Declaration on Education for All, observed with concern that a significant number of children and youth continued to be outside the education system. Thus with the adoption this Declaration in March 1990, the Government of Botswana has been committed to ensuring that every child has access to education, which serves as the Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MOESD) focus. The Salamanca Declaration of 1994 further observed that the greatest global challenge facing was the growing number of people excluded from meaningful participation in the socio economic activities as a result of non-inclusive education systems. In line with this, the Ministry adopted the Revised National Policy on Education, whose goal is to increase access and equity to quality education for all and that every child should attain 10 years of basic education. Consequently basic education is considered a basic right of every Mbotswana child. This falls within the realm of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the child, (Article 29).

The Ministry has since then witnessed some major achievements which have had significant impact on the quality of education in Botswana. This is demonstrated by the growing accessibility to services as well as participation of other stakeholders in the education and training of children including the vulnerable and disadvantaged. Nevertheless, it is evident that new strategies and methods should continue to be explored and adopted to improve current practices and reach out to those still missing in our education system. It is against this background that the Ministry/MOESD decided that an Inclusive Education Policy should be developed. The objective is to close the gaps that are still inherent in the education system in efforts to enhance equity.

Over the years the concept of inclusive education has developed from a narrow approach to address the special needs of a particular group of children to a wider focus. Inclusive education is a process that involves the reform of schools and other centres of learning to cater for all learners including (a) ethnic minorities, (b) rural populations, (c) those affected by HIV/AIDS and (d) those with learning disabilities/difficulties as well as serving the adults (UNESCO, 2008). Through the development of this policy, the Ministry intends to widen the understanding and scope of the definition of inclusive education as an effective way to respond to increasing learner diversity.

The Inclusive Education Policy spells out the expectations of Government in terms of professional development of teachers as lead agents. It promotes on-going training as a key component for effective response to diversity as well as improving teachers' status and working conditions. The Policy appreciates that schools can be more inclusive through community involvement and enhanced partnership; strengthening collaboration between schools and communities to enable families and communities to participate in and contribute to the educational process is invaluable. Also, this Policy promotes school cultures and environments that are child-friendly, conducive to effective learning and inclusive of all children.

I wish, on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Skills Development, to extend a token of appreciation for the generous contributions by the European Commission and to all the dedicated people who participated in the processes leading to the production of this policy document. We owe them a lot for accompanying us on this important journey.



**Patrick M.G. Masimolole**

**Assistant Minister of Education and Skills Development**

## Summary

The Inclusive Education Policy sets out an overall policy goal and five specific goals:

### The Overall Goal:

**Botswana will achieve an inclusive education system in which provides children, young people and adults with access to relevant, high quality education which enables them to learn effectively, whatever their gender, age, life circumstances, health, disability, stage of development, capacity to learn or socio-economic circumstances.**

- Policy Goal 1** All learners will complete basic education and progress where possible to senior secondary and/or tertiary education or to vocational training.
- Policy Goal 2** Teachers will have the skills and resources to enable children of different abilities to learn effectively.
- Policy Goal 3** Out-of-school education programmes will be further developed and strengthened to ensure the inclusion in education and skills development of those children, young people and adults whose needs cannot be met in the formal system.
- Policy Goal 4** Schools will be supportive and humane establishments which embrace and support all their learners and value their achievements so that children will attend school regularly, behave well and work hard at their studies.
- Policy Goal 5** All relevant Governmental, Non-Governmental and private organisations will work in harmony to develop and maintain an inclusive education system in Botswana.

These goals will be achieved through ten statements of commitment:

- Commitment Statement 1** Action will be taken to include children of school age who have never been enrolled in school.
- Commitment Statement 2** Action will be taken to decrease the number of children of school age who drop out before completing their basic education.
- Commitment Statement 3** Action will be taken to change the education of children who are attending school, but not benefitting from what is currently provided, including children who are at significant risk of failing to complete their basic education or of failing to succeed in maximising their potential.
- Commitment Statement 4** Action will be taken to improve the skills development and vocational training for young people and adults for whom the current system of vocational training is unsuitable.
- Commitment Statement 5** Action will be taken to ensure that teachers will be more effective in enabling children to learn.
- Commitment Statement 6** Action will be taken to improve schools' access to a wide range of good quality teaching aides and learning resources, appropriate to the number of children being taught and to the specific needs of children with disabilities.

- Commitment Statement 7** Children, young people and adults who have never been to school or not completed their basic education will be encouraged to do so.
- Commitment Statement 8** Children, particularly those with special educational needs, will be encouraged and supported to attend school and benefit from their attendance.
- Commitment Statement 9** Actions will be taken to ensure that schools are supportive and humane establishments which embrace and support all their learners and value their achievements.
- Commitment Statement 10** Mechanisms will be put in place to harmonise relevant planning, policy-making, development and delivery of services so that the Government of Botswana can deliver an inclusive education service that meets national requirements and is in line with international best practices.

Each statement of commitment is backed by activities which set out what will be done to fulfil the statement of commitment, leading to the achievement of the goals. The list of activities is not exhaustive and others will be devised as the need for them becomes apparent.

## Section 1. Introduction

1.1 The Government of Botswana has been working hard to achieve universal education for over twenty years<sup>1</sup>. Despite significant progress made in this regard, this has yet to be accomplished. It is now committed to extending and developing education in Botswana through an inclusive education approach so that Education for All becomes a genuine reality. The need for such a policy is based on the Government's commitment to human and educational rights and on the country's need to maximize the full potential of its population to take its place in the modern world. Botswana, with its comparatively small population needs all the educated and skilled citizens that the education system can produce.

This policy is designed to enable the Government to achieve its aims of providing:

- a) access to high quality inclusive basic education for all children, particularly those from vulnerable and marginalized groups;
- b) opportunities for young people and adults from marginalized and vulnerable groups to complete their basic education if they have not done so;
- c) improved progression to high quality senior secondary and tertiary education for children from marginalized and vulnerable groups;
- d) access to appropriate vocational training for young people from marginalized and vulnerable groups, for whom this is more appropriate than the academic route.

1.2 By concentrating on the successful inclusion of those who are not currently receiving education, or not benefitting from education, this Inclusive Education Policy sets out a road map for ensuring that all Batswana, have access to a high quality education system. It sets out the support required to be provided for those who need it to enable them to learn effectively. The whole education sector is made more effective through the use of inclusive teaching methods and through a more flexible approach to learning.

1.3 Inclusive education requires the development of a flexible system that includes a range of different learning environments and different kinds of support so that all individuals can learn effectively according to their intellectual capacity, skills, talents and interests. Inclusive education benefits all learners but it is designed to be of particular benefit to disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals by finding ways of minimising the disadvantages which prevent them from accessing education or achieving their potential.

1.4 Inclusive education has a clear focus on the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups but also benefits all learners. This is because the overall inclusive education system, the ways in which inclusive schools are run and the ways in which teachers promote learning are more flexible and pay attention to how each individual can learn best.

1.5 Children, young people and adults are defined as having special educational needs if they need services which are over and above what is generally provided as standard in the education system. Most learners have special educational needs because they are members of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in society. Special educational needs may result from, for example:

- being from a very poor or deprived background or vulnerable or marginalised social group;
- living in isolated circumstances;
- not being fluent in the language of instruction in school;
- having a developmental delay;
- Having a disability;
- having emotional and behavioural difficulties; or from
- living a life that has been disrupted by distressing or tragic circumstances

---

<sup>1</sup> As shown by the adoption of the World Declaration on Education for All in March 1990 and the The Revised National Policy on Education, April 1994.

1.6 An Inclusive Education system is defined as one that includes, and meets the needs of all, including those with special educational needs, whatever their gender, life circumstances, health, disability, stage of development, capacity to learn, level of achievement, financial or any other circumstances. No one should be excluded from education. The Ministry of Education and Skills Development takes the lead in developing an inclusive education system but the proper development of such a system relies on high levels of coordination and cooperation with other Ministries, Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and private providers who will be responsible for their own services which form part of the inclusive education system.

1.7 An Inclusive Education system enables children, young people and adults to learn effectively because their special educational needs are met, wherever possible in mainstream pre-schools, primary and secondary schools, vocational training programmes, colleges and universities with appropriate teaching and support. The curriculum and teaching methods used in every class, in every service, take account of the different abilities of the learners, recognizing that learners, with or without any special educational needs, who are in the same class or group, have different levels of ability and different support needs. Individual learning plans and additional support are used for those who need them. Individual learning plans are documents which set out what a learner will learn. This may be in addition to the standard curriculum, less than the full standard curriculum or different from the standard curriculum. The plan also sets out how the learner can be helped to learn most effectively. Additional support is designed to help learners achieve their potential, whether or not they have individual learning plans.

1.8 For those learners whose needs cannot be properly met in a mainstream environment, the education system includes specialised provision so that they too can learn effectively. Whenever possible, learners in specialised provision are taught in a way that means that they will be able to move to mainstream educational provision, either on a part-time or full-time basis. If there are exceptional reasons why a child cannot attend school, such as long term illness, very severe disability or very remote living conditions, basic education is provided in other ways.

1.9 A comprehensive description of existing policies in Botswana and of the research carried out as a basis for the Inclusive Education Policy can be found in the Final Report prepared by Dr. Robert McBride, dated 15 February 2010 as Technical Assistance to The Special Education Division, Ministry of Education and Skills Development Botswana – Education And Training Policy Support Programme [Inclusive Education Policy].

## **Section 2. Problem Statement**

2.1 Botswana does not yet have an inclusive education system and is therefore losing the potential of many of its current and future citizens. Many school aged children are not receiving education. These are the children and youth in Botswana who experience significant difficulties which affect their enrolment and attendance in school and their capacity to learn when they are in school. Figures given in the McBride Report of 2010 suggest that of every 100 children who reach school age, at best 92 start school and 74 complete their primary education. The worst estimate is that of every 100 children who reach school age, 86 start school and 69 complete their primary education. Taking the best estimate, the country is losing the potential of about a quarter of its future citizens.

2.2 Many who are attending are not learning, or not learning as much as they could in a more flexible system, with improved teaching and more support for those who are either well ahead or well behind their classmates.<sup>2</sup>

2.3 There are young people and adults who cannot achieve their potential because of their lack of basic education or appropriate vocational training who could improve their own situation and contribute more to their country if they were able to benefit from services which could provide these.

---

<sup>2</sup> McBride Report 2010



## Section 3. Rationale

3.1 The rationale for this policy is the pressing need in Botswana to achieve full inclusion in education to both maximise the potential of its people for the future development of the country and to fully comply with the international requirements for human and educational rights to which the Government is committed.

3.2 Botswana has a small population and its government therefore needs to ensure that every citizen is able to make as significant a contribution as is possible to the future development of the country in the international arena. The development of an inclusive education system is vital to the achievement of the Ministry of Education and Skills Development's Mission Statement 'To provide efficient, quality and relevant education and training that is accessible to all', so that the Vision of an "Educated and globally competitive human resource by 2016" can be a reality. This will be achieved by removing or minimising any barrier which may prevent individuals or groups from receiving education, or from learning effectively and achieving their full potential. The implementation of the inclusive education policy will give reality to the will of the Government of Botswana regarding the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals<sup>3</sup> by 2015 and to all the other commitments to universal education and skills development which have been made over the years and specifically the first three main issues stated in the Revised National Policy on Education 1994:

### Access and Equity

- (i) Development of Training Responsive and Relevant to Needs of Economic Development
- (ii) Improvement and Maintenance of Quality of the Education System.
- (iii) Inclusive education benefits everyone but it is designed to bring particular benefits to disadvantaged and vulnerable children, young people, and adults who experience barriers to learning which currently prevent them from fulfilling their potential.
- (iv) The development of inclusive education will also benefit gifted and talented children who have educational needs that are different from, or in addition to, the general learning needs of children of a similar age.

## Section 4 Overall Policy Principles and Goal

### Overall Policy Principles

All individuals have the potential to learn and will be provided with educational services which enable them to learn as effectively as possible;

Every child has the right to 10 years of basic education. For most children this will be in the primary and junior secondary schools nearest to their homes. When regular schools and classes cannot meet children's needs, even with support, their basic education will take place in special units, special schools, through out-of-school programmes or at home. Provision for some learners will be made by agencies other than the Ministry of Education and Skills Development;

Learners with special educational needs who are able to progress to senior secondary and tertiary education should be able to do so. As many barriers as possible will be removed to enable access to senior secondary and tertiary education;

Children for whom school attendance is not viable, young people above school age and adults have the right to complete their basic education. The Department of Out-of School Education and Training (DOSET) will provide these opportunities through specially designed programmes and specifically trained staff.

---

<sup>3</sup> Millennium Development Goals Target Goal 'Ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

Vocational Training and skills development provision will take into account the needs of trainees with diverse educational needs. As many barriers as possible will be removed to enable access to vocational training.

## **Overall Policy Goal**

The overall goal is the achievement of an inclusive education system in Botswana which provides children, young people and adults with access to relevant, high quality education which will enable them to learn effectively, whatever their gender, age, life circumstances, health, disability, stage of development, capacity to learn or socio-economic status.

This overall policy goal builds on and supports the Revised National Policy on Education 1994 and supports Botswana's achievement of Education for All.

## **Section 5 Key issues and specific policy goals for the inclusion of disadvantaged and vulnerable learners with special educational needs.**

This section of the policy addresses the needs of educationally disadvantaged and vulnerable children, young people and adults who are in one of the following categories:

- (i) Children of school age who have never been enrolled in school;
- (ii) Children of school age who have dropped out before completing their basic education;
- (iii) Children of school age who are enrolled but not benefitting from what is currently provided;
- (iv) Children of school age who are at significant risk of failing to complete their basic education or of failing to succeed in maximising their potential;
- (v) Young people and adults who have not completed their basic education;
- (vi) Young people and adults for whom the current system of vocational training is inappropriate;
- (vii) There are many reasons why individuals fail to benefit from educational provision. These include:
  - poverty;
  - disability;
  - poor health,
  - lack of belief in the value of education,
  - living in an isolated rural area,
  - homelessness,
  - abuse or neglect,
  - employment or family responsibilities that limit school attendance,
  - being an orphan,
  - inadequate fluency in the language of instruction,
  - emotional, difficulties, including grieving, stress and isolation,
  - psychological or behavioural disorders,
  - being in prison or detention,
  - an inflexible school system,
  - an in appropriate curriculum,
  - Ineffective teaching methods.

As many of these factors are interlinked, many disadvantaged or vulnerable learners will have varied special educational needs, which require involvement of different stakeholders. Policy statements

are therefore made which apply to other ministries. While non-governmental (NGO) and private organisations are crucial to the implementation of inclusive education, no policy recommendations can be made on their behalf in a government policy document. Recommendations are made as to how they could be included. It is recommended that non-governmental and private organisations are encouraged to review their policies and practices in the light of the creation and implementation of the Government's Inclusive Education Policy.

**Policy Goal 1 All learners will complete their basic education and progress where possible to senior secondary or tertiary education or to vocational training.**

**Commitment Statement 1: Action will be taken to include children of school age who have never been enrolled in school.**

The actions to be taken to meet this commitment include the following:

- a) Studies will be carried out in carefully selected regions to establish how many children currently under the age of 18 have never been to school, the reasons for this and what would need to be in place for them to attend school. The data will then be used as a basis for planning to meet the needs of such children. Such studies will be carried out in collaboration with one or more NGOs, staff involved in health care and any other relevant staff who know families and are trusted by them;
- b) mobile school units will be created to reach children for whom enrolment in school is not feasible;
- c) the existing home education programmes for children with profound and multiple disabilities, provided by the Ministry of Health, will be strengthened with input and support from the Ministry of Education and Skills Development and from NGOs;
- d) An ongoing national media campaign will be developed and implemented to begin to change outdated public attitudes to disability and to promote the acceptance of children with disabilities in schools.
- e) Transport will be provided for children who would otherwise attend school successfully but are unable to walk the same distance as their peers or to use public transport because of their disability.

**Commitment Statement 2: Action will be taken to decrease the number of children of school age who drop out before completing their basic education.**

The actions to be taken to meet the commitment to improve the number of children completing their basic education include the following:

- a) Studies described in Commitment Statement 1 a) above will also establish how many children currently under the age of 18 have dropped out of school before completing their basic education, the reasons for this and what would need to be in place for them to return to school or complete their basic education in another way. The data will then be used as a basis for planning to meet the needs of such children, which may be different from the needs of those who have never been to school.
- b) School Heads will be required to take action to establish the reason for absence if a child is missing from school for 5 successive days and make all possible efforts to ensure that the child returns to school as soon as possible, as the longer the children are absent from school, the more likely that

they will not return. A record must be kept that shows the action taken for each child who is absent for more than five days and the outcome of the action taken;

- c) Regulations will be changed so that children's names will remain on roll for the whole of a school year, even if they are not attending, so that an accurate number of children who drop out can be seen.
- d) A permanent joint initiative will be set up for staff of the Ministries of Education and Skills Development, Health, and the Social Services Department of the Ministry of Local Government, parents, NGOs and others to identify children who have been out of school for less than a year, to address the reasons for the child's dropping out of school and to return them to school as quickly as possible;
- e) The programmes run by the Department for Out-of-School Education and Training (DOSET) for children will be expanded to provide basic education for children who have been out of school for more than a year and who are unlikely to be persuaded to return to school. An alternate curriculum will be developed to enable children to attain the goals of basic education through learning practical skills.
- f) The creation of mobile school units will also provide for children for whom a return in school is not feasible;
- g) The existing provision of early childhood care and education will continue to be strengthened by the Ministry of Education and Skills Development and expanded by NGOs and the private sector so that children are better prepared for school, more likely to succeed and therefore less likely to drop out.
- h) All pre-school age children will receive free early childhood care and education.
- i) The UNICEF's Child Friendly Schools Initiative and Manual will be used as a valuable resource to promote the development of more inclusive schools, from which children are less likely to drop out.
- j) The job of the trained remedial teacher recommended for each primary school by the RNPE (Rec. 21 c) will be redefined and renamed "Inclusive Educational Needs Coordinator" and will provide or recommend support for all children with special educational needs, including remedial teaching.

**Commitment Statement 3: Changes will be made regarding the education of children of school age who are attending school but not benefitting from what is currently provided, including children of school age who are at significant risk of failing to complete their basic education or of failing to succeed in maximising their potential.**

The actions to be taken to meet the commitment to improve the achievements of all children, and particularly those with special educational needs include the following:

- a) The development of the provision of Learning Support Workers (LSWs) (now called Teacher Aides)<sup>4</sup> so that their numbers are increased and their training formalized to provide a support service for children who are not succeeding in school or who achieve more with some additional support. This will include training of locally based LSWs to support teachers of ethnic minority group learners. The LSW role will be developed as a priority in the achievement of inclusive education.

---

<sup>4</sup> Teacher aides are renamed 'Learning support staff' to focus on their work in enabling children with special educational needs to learn more effectively, whether their problems are caused by disability or one of the many other causes of difficulty in learning, including lack of fluency in the language of instruction.

- b) Alternative curricula will be developed as part of the provision of a flexible, relevant curriculum framework. These curricula will be designed to cater for slow learners, significant intellectual impairments, talented and gifted children.
- c) A rolling programme of in-service teacher training, delivered through the existing structure, will be developed and implemented to give teachers improved skills in teaching the full range of children in their classes and the skills to use Learning Support Workers effectively;
- d) A series of “learner-friendly” workbooks will be designed to be used by children who need additional practice in Setswana, English and mathematics, to reinforce their learning in lesson time and enable them to gain the skills they need.

**Commitment Statement 4: Action will be taken to improve skills development and vocational training for young people and adults for whom the current system of vocational training is inappropriate.**

Actions to be taken to meet the commitment to develop a vocational training provision that meets the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable young people and adults include the following:

- a) the review of the National Vocational Framework will take particular account of the needs of potential trainees with disabilities or other difficulties;
- b) Entrepreneurship education programmes will be developed for young people and adults with disabilities who are unlikely to find employment in other ways, or would prefer to be self-employed;
- c) Vocational training opportunities for people with physical and sensory impairments will focus primarily on the use of modern technology to enable them to enter employment or self employment;
- d) Special practical vocational training programmes will be developed to prepare young people and adults with intellectual impairments for routine jobs and they will be supported in finding employment.

**Section 6 Key issues and specific policy goals for the education system with regard to the inclusion of learners with special educational needs.**

In a fully developed inclusive education system all aspects of the education system contribute to the highest possible levels of achievement for every learner. This section sets out a wider set of policy goals which benefit all learners, but especially those with special educational needs.

**Policy Goal 2 Teachers will have the skills and resources to enable children of different abilities to learn effectively**

**Commitment Statement 5 Action will be taken to ensure that teachers will be more effective in enabling children to learn.**

Actions to be taken to meet the commitment to enable teachers to teach more effectively include the following:

- a) They will be equipped, through pre-service and in-service training, with skills to develop the understanding of all their learners and maximise their learning at a reasonable pace;

- b) An advisory service will be created, using skilled and experienced officers to serve as advisory resource, to support teachers in developing their skills. The advisory service will develop a monitoring and evaluation guide to appraise the work of teachers and equip them to use different methods;
- c) The skills of Education Inspectors will be developed so that they can make sound judgements about the degree to which schools are enabling the whole range of their pupils to learn;
- d) Alternative and Augmentative Communication modes such as Braille, Sign Language and others will be used to facilitate teaching and learning when necessary and that a specialist resource team will be developed to support mainstream teachers who have learners who require such alternative communication strategies.
- e) They will receive improved training in subject content knowledge, through both pre-service and in-service training, to enable them to teach more effectively. The subject knowledge training also includes strategies for teaching different subjects effectively to learners with a wide range of different abilities.
- f) All pre-service and in-service professional development in special needs will be evaluated, expanded and improved to align it with Inclusive Education principles.
- g) Distance learning programmes will be expanded to support professional development activities in Inclusive Education.
- h) In setting class sizes, consideration will be given to the number of learners with special educational needs and the degree and nature of their difficulties.
- i) Consideration will be given to increasing the number of teachers who speak ethnic minority languages who can provide effective teaching to learners who are not yet fluent in the language of instruction.

**Commitment Statement 6: Action will be taken to improve schools' access to a wide range of good quality teaching and learning resources appropriate to the number of children being taught and to the specific needs of children with disabilities.**

Actions to be taken to meet the commitment that schools will have wide range of appropriate, good quality teaching and learning resources include the following:

- a) A range of basic teaching and learning resources and advice kits will be developed for children with specific disabilities or difficulties, such as hearing impairment, visual impairment, intellectual impairment, physical impairment, language difficulties or emotional and behavioural difficulties, and that these are made available to all schools who are educating such children;
- b) A wider range of good quality teaching aids and learning resources will be developed and made available to schools to support all teaching and learning. Pre-service and in-service training of teachers will include the development of teaching and learning resources so that teachers will be able to create their own additional resources to meet the needs of the children they are teaching.
- c) Effective use of teaching and learning resources, including the use of the kits for learners with disabilities and difficulties, is included in all pre-service and in-service training for teachers.

**Policy Goal 3 Out-of-school education programmes will be further developed and strengthened to ensure the inclusion in education and skills development of those children, young people and adults whose needs cannot be met in the formal system.**

**Commitment Statement 7 Children, young people and adults who have never been to school or not completed their basic education will be encouraged to do so.**

The actions to be taken to meet the commitment to increase the education levels of older learners include the following:

- a) Children for whom regular school attendance is not feasible, and young people and adults who have not completed their basic education will be given a free entitlement to complete their basic education through a higher status and more comprehensive Out-of-School service, or through distance learning, and encouraged to take up the opportunity;
- b) School buildings and other government infrastructure will be used when they are available to provide accommodation for such classes;
- c) Opportunities will be developed for adults to complete their senior secondary education and to enter tertiary education as mature students.
- d) A specialized qualification will be developed for teachers of basic education to out-of-school children and adults which recognizes the different approaches needed and the range of skills required when enabling them to learn.

**Policy Goal 4 Schools will be supportive and humane establishments which embrace and support all their learners and value their achievements, so that children will attend school regularly and work hard at their studies.**

**Commitment Statement 8 Actions will be taken to ensure that schools are supportive and humane establishments which embrace and support all their learners and value their achievements.**

Actions to be taken to meet the commitment to ensure that schools are supportive and humane establishments which embrace and support all their learners and value their achievements include the following:

- a) A code of conduct for teachers will be developed to ensure that teachers are aware of the standards of conduct that are expected of them, including their conduct towards children with special educational needs. Action will be taken if teachers do not comply with the code of conduct
- b) School Heads will ensure the development and management of the pastoral programme in their schools and ensure that learners with special educational needs receive adequate pastoral support.
- c) All school buildings should be welcoming and accessible to all. Where necessary access for those with disabilities, such as provision of ramps for those with mobility difficulties; high visibility strips for those with visual impairments; and picture signs for those with intellectual disabilities, will be provided.

- d) An assessment system will be developed to identify learners' needs and record what each learner has achieved, including non-academic achievements, so that these are recognised and celebrated, particularly for those children whose academic achievements will be limited.
- e) All children beginning school or transferring to another school or college will receive a substantial orientation to the school, its expectations and the support it offers.
- f) The role of schools in reducing the spread of HIV and AIDS will be increased with existing HIV and AIDS awareness and prevention campaign strengthened and awareness materials made accessible to all learners, including those with disabilities.

**Commitment Statement 9      Children, particularly those with special educational needs, will be encouraged and supported to attend school and benefit from their attendance.**

Actions to meet the commitment that children will want to attend school regularly and that their hard work will be appreciated whatever their abilities include the following:

- a) All schools will establish systems of awards that encourage learners. These will include both academic and non-academic achievement awards, including certificates for regular attendance, awards for endeavour and awards for good behaviour, so that children who will never achieve academic excellence can have their achievements acknowledged as well as those who are academically able.
- b) A 'Buddy System' will be developed. Children with special educational needs who do not already have their own friends will be paired with a 'buddy' in their class who lives near them and will travel to school with them and ensure that they are included in play or other informal activities. Buddies will be carefully selected and their role promoted as one they should be proud of.
- c) Schools will develop anti-bullying policies and practices to ensure that children with special educational needs are safe and happy in the school environment.
- d) Learning Support Workers will ensure that children are safe and happy in school during break times so that children with special educational needs and other children who are not as robust as their peers are not intimidated.
- e) Teachers will liaise with the children's parents and carers regularly and encourage them to send their children to school regularly, praise them for good behaviour and for working hard, whatever the level of their achievements.

**Policy Goal 5      All relevant Governmental, Non-Governmental and private organisations will work in harmony to develop and maintain an inclusive education system in Botswana**

**Commitment Statement 10      Mechanisms will be put in place to harmonise relevant planning, policy-making, development and delivery of services so that the Government of Botswana can deliver an inclusive education service that meets national requirements and is in line with international best practice.**

Actions to be taken to meet the commitment to cooperation and collaboration in the development of the inclusive education system include the following:



- a) A structure will be developed for the implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy.
- b) All Government Ministries will continuously review their policies and practices to ensure that they are contributing to an inclusive education system.
- c) All NGOs will be encouraged to continuously review their policies and practices to ensure that they are contributing to an inclusive education system. They will also be encouraged to put forward suggestions as to how they could contribute further.
- d) All relevant private providers of educational and education-related services will be encouraged to avoid discrimination and exclusionary practices.

## **1.1 Section 7 Guidelines for Implementation**

- a) Once the Inclusive Education Policy has been approved, a national action plan needs to be drawn up by all stake holders at a senior level which sets overall priorities for the activities which will fulfil the Statements of Commitment and achieve the Policy Goals, so that the overall goal of an inclusive education system is achieved. Individual ministries, departments and other organisations should then plan their own activities to meet the requirements of the overall action plan. The activities should be prioritized as:
  - those to be carried out in the current school year 2011
  - those to be carried out in the next school year 2012
  - those to be carried out in the subsequent five years 2013 – 2017
  - those to be carried out in the subsequent three years 2018 -2020
- b) When the priorities have been set, responsibilities should be allocated, so that an identified individual has responsibility for leading the designated activity, with a time frame set within which the activity will be started and completed. The responsible individuals should be officers of the relevant Ministry or Department or Division to which the activity relates. Some activities will take more than a year to complete and should have interim target dates to demonstrate ongoing achievement.
- c) Some activities can be carried out with little or no additional cost, others require a budget allocation which needs to be included in the annual budget in the year before the activity is due to take place. Therefore activities which require little or no additional cost should be carried out in 2011 as the budget for this year will already have been set.
- d) The coordination and oversight of the activities should be allocated to a senior level officer of the Ministry of Education and Skills Development.
- e) Annual reports should be made to the Minister of Education and Skills Development on progress towards the implementation of the inclusive education system.
- f) In the long term the whole education system of Botswana will become fully inclusive and a separate inclusive education policy will no longer be needed

## **Reference Documents for this Policy**

**The Revised National Policy on Education, April 1994.** Government Paper No 2 of 1994

**Final Report** prepared by Dr. Robert McBride 15 February 2010. Technical Assistance to the Special Education Division, Ministry of Education and Skills Development Botswana – Education and Training Policy Support Programme [Inclusive Education Policy]

**Inclusive Education Draft Policy 2010.** Ministry of Skills and Education

**The Children’s Bill 2008, Part 3, 18 Right to Education**

**Child Friendly Schools Manual** UNICEF

**Equal Opportunities Policy and Practice.** Department of Vocational Education and Training 1997

**Open File on Inclusive Education** UNESCO

**Draft Report of the Stakeholder Survey for the National Vocational Framework Feasibility Study.** 2003

**A Report on School health Services in Botswana,** Ministry of Health 1992



