Consultative Paper No 1

on Special Education:

Building an Inclusive Education and Training System, First Steps

August 30, 1999

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PREFACE

I am pleased to release Consultative Paper No 1 on Special Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System, First Steps for public comments and information. In Education White Paper No 1 (1995), the Ministry acknowledged the importance of providing an effective response to the unsatisfactory educational experiences of learners with special education needs, including those within mainstream education whose educational needs were not adequately accommodated. As a result the Ministry of Education appointed a national commission to investigate all educational practices and policies, review international policies and best practices, seek public comment and advice and provide us with recommendations on how we can proceed to establish a seamless and inclusive education and training system that accommodates all learners.

The release of this Consultative Paper follows a period of extensive investigation, review and public comment and advice, and is based largely on the joint recommendations of the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training and the National Committee on Education Support Services. Its release also follows extensive consultations with provincial departments of education, endorsement by the Members of the Executive Councils responsible for Education and in principle support by the three national teacher unions and the organisations representing the interests of the disabled. This consultative paper therefore enjoys considerable support and approval. In spite of this degree of support, I have decided to make this Consultative Paper available for public comments and advice for a limited period of three weeks.

This extensive consultative process has resulted in considerable delay in the release of this Paper, and for this I wish to express my Department's regrets.

In this Consultative Paper we put forward a bold, yet realistic plan for the establishment of a seamless, inclusive education and training system. We embrace the call for establishing an inclusive education and training system that accommodates all learners. This approach gives effect to the first principle upon which our democracy is founded, namely, "human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms" (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, Section 1 (a)). Yet at the same time we acknowledge that establishing an inclusive education and training system cannot be achieved overnight but only through taking definitive and bold first steps. In this regard, if special schools and specialised institutions are failing our children now with poor quality of provision and if our public schools system is struggling to cope with its existing responsibilities, then we are obliged to proceed carefully as we take our first steps to giving effect to our collective responsibilities. These first steps are outlined in the Consultative Paper and I look forward to public comment and advice.

Let me also draw attention to an important principle that underlies this paper. We propose to review and improve all policies and legislation in line with the policies and their implementation as proposed here. To illustrate, our new curriculum policy, Curriculum 2005, provides the platform for this inclusive curriculum, assessment and qualification system. This is so since in its design we took into account the principle that learners, who have a diverse range of learning needs, should proceed with learning, teaching and assessment at their own pace, but within a common, not separate curriculum framework. Accordingly no separate and new curriculum framework would be put in place for learners with diverse learning needs. Rather, our challenge is to create the conditions of learning and teaching in all our learning institutions so that all learners can be fully accommodated, can flourish and contribute effectively to the regeneration of our society, our economy and our country.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Professor Kader Asmal, MP

Minister of Education

30 August 1999

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND THE NEED FOR TRANSFORMATION

This chapter explains the background to the development of the Green Paper and provides the context for the transformation process. It argues for a progressive programme to address learning difficulties that prevent effective learning, within an inclusive education and training system, which accommodates diversity. In recognising the nature and extent of the causes of severe learning difficulties in South Africa, it explains the need to focus on and prioritise those learners most profoundly affected.

1. Introduction

1.1 *The Constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996)* states clearly in (Section 29 (1)) that everyone has the right:

to a basic education, including adult basic education, and

to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

1.2 This fundamental right to basic education is further developed in the Constitution in Section 9 (2), which commits the state to the achievement of equality, and Section 9 (3), (4) and (5), which commits the state to non-discrimination. These clauses are particularly important for protecting all learners including those who are disabled and those who have special learning needs.

1.3 The government's obligation to provide basic education to all learners and its commitment to the central principles of the Constitution, is guided by the recognition that a new unified education and training system must be based on equity, on redressing past imbalances and on a progressive raising of the quality of education and training.

1.4 In line with its responsibility to develop policy to guide the transformation programme that is necessary to achieve these goals, the Ministry of Education has prepared this Green Paper as a discussion document for the information and comment of all stakeholders, role-players and the wider public. This policy framework outlines the Ministry's commitment to the provision of educational opportunities for those learners who experience or have experienced learning difficulties within the education and training system and those learners who continue to be most vulnerable to exclusion from it.

1.5 The Green Paper outlines how the education and training system must change to accommodate the full range of learning needs, including those previously categorised as 'special', and the mechanisms which will need to be put in place. Developing the capacity of the education and training system to respond to inclusion will primarily involve recognising, addressing and preventing learning difficulties and exclusion.

1.6 Particular attention should be paid to achieving these objectives through a realistic and effective implementation process that moves responsibly towards the development of a system which accommodates and respects diversity. This process will require a phasing in of strategies that are directed at departmental, institutional and curriculum transformation. It will also require the participation of our communities so that social exclusion and negative stereotyping can be eliminated.

2. The Green Paper process

2.1 This Green Paper arises out of the need for changes to be made to the provision of education and training so that it is responsive and sensitive to Learners with Special Education Needs. *Education White Paper No. 1, on Education and Training* (1995) identified the need for the transformation of 'Education Support Services' (ESS) and 'Education for Learners with Special Education Needs' (ELSEN).

2.2 In order to address this concern within its commitment to "an integrated and holistic" approach to all areas of education, the Ministry appointed a National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and a National Committee on Education Support Services (NCESS) in October 1996. A joint report on the findings of these two bodies was presented to the Minister in November 1997, and the final report was published in February 1998. The Green Paper is based to a large extent on the recommendations made to the Minister in this report.

2.3 One of the most important challenges that faced the NCSNET/NCESS and which is reflected in the Green Paper is the need for us to recognise that learning difficulties are experienced within all bands of education and training – general, further and higher education and training - and across the curriculum. Thus our policy framework should focus on the full range of diverse learning needs within all bands of the education and training system.

2.4 In addressing itself to these matters, the document builds upon those processes that are aimed at facilitating transformation at the critical points of the system. The Green Paper is released at a time when policy development is completed or at an advanced stage for all bands of education and training. The intention is therefore not to replace these policies with a new set such as those included here. Rather, it is to call for a revision of these since these policy development processes have not fully benefited from the ELSEN review and advisory process. Accordingly, this Green Paper extends, rather than replaces, critical projects such as Curriculum 2005, the Culture of Learning, Teaching and Service (COLTS) campaign, the development of new quality assurance policies, methods and instruments, norms and standards for teacher education, the higher education planning process and the development of effective education management and governance capacity.

3. Why learners experience learning difficulties and fail to learn effectively

3.1 The Ministry appreciates that a broad range of learning needs exist among the learner population at any point in time, and that where these are not met, learners may fail to learn effectively or be excluded from the learning system.

3.2 Different learning needs arise from a range of factors including physical, mental, sensory, neurological and developmental impairments, psychosocial disturbances, cognitive differences, particular life experiences or socio-economic deprivation. Different learning needs may also arise because of negative attitudes to and stereotyping of difference, an inflexible curriculum, inappropriate languages or medium of learning, inappropriate communication, inaccessible and unsafe built environments, inappropriate and inadequate support services, inadequate policies and legislation, the non-recognition and non-involvement of parents and inadequately and inappropriately trained education managers and educators.

3.2 Learning difficulties manifest themselves in different ways and only become apparent when learning is not effective and when learners 'drop out' or are 'pushed out' of the education and training system. As will be obvious from a reading of the factors contributing to the diversity of learning needs, it is possible to identify learning difficulties operative within the learner or the education and training system that can be addressed through a variety of mechanisms and processes. Learning difficulties may also arise during the learning process and be transitory. Under these circumstances different interventions or strategies will be essential to prevent them from causing learning to be ineffective or resulting in the exclusion of learners from the curriculum and/or from the education and training system.

3.3 Such an understanding of what causes learning difficulties and exclusion locates the problem within the education and training system – the teaching and learning strategy, the classroom, the school, the district, the provincial and national organisations and systems - and suggests that the education and training system should undergo change so that it can meet the full range of learning needs. This approach to addressing

learning difficulties and exclusion is consistent with a systemic and developmental approach to understanding problems and planning action. It is also consistent with new international approaches that focus on providing quality education for all learners.

3.4 This approach is also congruent with a learner-centred approach to teaching and learning. It recognises that developing learners' strengths, and empowering and enabling them to participate actively and critically in the learning process involves identifying and overcoming the causes of learning difficulties.

3.5 It follows therefore that to contribute to effective learning and to ensure the inclusion of all learners in the learning process, the education and training system should be structured and function in such a way that it is able to accommodate a diversity of learner needs.

4. Why change is essential

4.1 The current nature of ELSEN and ESS

4.1.1 The learners who are most vulnerable to severe learning difficulties and exclusion in South Africa are those who have historically been termed 'learners with special education needs'. Their increased vulnerability has arisen largely because of the historical nature and extent of the educational support provided.

4.1.2 Until now, the term 'education for learners with special education needs' referred to the provision of educational support services to learners in public 'specialised/special schools' and those who experience severe learning difficulties in ordinary public schools. The group of learners in ordinary public schools are usually placed in specialised classes which are most often referred to as remedial or 'special classes'. The few 'specialised/special' schools continue to be administered and evaluated through separate structures and procedures.

4.1.3 Until now the majority of education support services (ESS) have been earmarked for individual learners in both 'specialised/special' and ordinary public schools. In the case of ordinary school settings, such services have sought to address the needs of those learners who experience learning difficulties and those learners who were regarded as being at risk from emotional, social and medical problems. ESS has also included guidance and counselling services for the entire learner population. More recently, some support services in schools have included more preventative and promotive strategies to develop a supportive and effective teaching and learning environment.

4.1.4 While these broad categories of learners were the focal points of ESS, in reality few learners were the recipients of such services. Learners from disadvantaged communities, who require most support, have received little or no ESS. Until now ESS have by and large maintained a specialised, auxiliary location with few attempts being made to integrate the provision of such support into mainstream teaching and learning. The only exception to this is the provision of career guidance as a subject in ordinary public schools.

4.1.5 The limited nature of the existing ESS and ELSEN has meant that significant numbers of learners who are the intended recipients of these support services have not gained access of any kind and have thus experienced exclusion. At the same time, the manner in which ESS has been provided has separated these learners from the mainstream education and training system or has isolated them from other learners.

4.1.6 The Ministry acknowledges that until now the nature and organisation of the provision of ELSEN and ESS has had many negative consequences since those regarded as having 'special needs' have been stereotyped. The conceptualisation of 'special needs' which has informed the provision of ELSEN and ESS has also served to divide the learner population into those with 'special needs' who require specialised programs and/or support in order to participate in some form of learning process, and those who do not have 'special needs'. This conceptualisation has not only served to label learners but also to divide them into categories which are not always helpful for identifying and meeting their particular learning needs. In any

event, as we state repeatedly in this Green Paper, many learners in mainstream education and in 'ordinary' classes experience severe learning difficulties, yet are ignored or passed over by existing ESS.

4.2 The extent of the problem

4.2.1 As stated earlier, the learners who experience the most severe learning difficulties and exclusion have been learners with disabilities, particularly black disabled learners who live in rural areas. Until now, learners with disabilities, irrespective of the nature and extent of their disability, have only been able to gain access to education in 'specialised schools'. These schools have been able to provide only for a limited number of learners and in many cases these schools offered learners a curriculum which was inadequate in preparing them for life and participation in work. Few learners with disabilities were placed in ordinary public schools, and, in any event, these schools were often not accessible and were unable to provide the learner with unrestricted access to the curriculum.

4.2.2 The National Integrated Disability Strategy (1997) estimates that approximately 70% of learners with disabilities are presently outside of the school system. According to 1995/1996 figures, 41 221 learners were enrolled in 'special schools' catering for learners with disabilities. This represents 0,34% of the total school enrolments for this period, and should be compared to the estimated disability prevalence in South Africa which according to the *October Household Survey* (1996), was around 5%. Enrolment figures for learners with disabilities are therefore significantly below their expected enrolments.

4.2.3 Research undertaken by the NCSNET/NCESS indicates that few learners with disabilities are at present accommodated in ordinary public schools. Where they do find accommodation, access to the curriculum is constrained by a range of factors, including the inaccessibility of buildings, inadequate provision of necessary assistive devices and inflexible teaching and learning practices.

4.2.4 The *National Integrated Disability Strategy* (1997) also points out that the extent of exclusion experienced by learners with disabilities appears to be even higher in education provided within the ECD, adult education and further education and training sub-systems. And that, within these sub-systems of education and training, non-governmental organisations with inadequate funding and capacity have until now been the major providers of learning opportunities. Many learners with disabilities are also unable to gain access to higher education and training opportunities. Although some higher education institutions have established special units to support learners with disabilities, most of these have been constrained by many factors such as insufficient funding and the absence of a coherent, integrated policy and plan for learner support.

4.3 *First steps: The need for a focused approach*

4.3.1 It is clear from this description of the causes of learning difficulties and exclusion, that the current nature of provision of ELSEN and ESS, and the extent of the problem, that our education and training system will have to undergo significant change over the next number of years for us to realise the commitments of our Constitution to a basic education, including adult basic education and training for all on the basis of equality, human dignity and non-discrimination. It is also clear that our existing policies and legislation for schools, colleges, universities, technikons and the employment of educators provide a basic framework for the establishment of the inclusive and seamless education and training system that we envisage in this Green Paper.

4.3.2 In highlighting these matters, the Green Paper proposes a bold, yet realistic, progressive, yet responsible approach to change. In taking these first steps to building an inclusive education and training system, we must focus our efforts in the short to medium term on those learners - and their schools, colleges, early childhood and adult learning centres, universities and technikons, special and remedial - who experience learning difficulties and are vulnerable to exclusion. Notwithstanding this focus, the Green Paper also provides a framework within which we must develop the capacity of mainstream education to become more sensitive and responsive to the range of learning needs within them. As we suggest, this will require paradigmatic shifts at the level of policy and organisation, and at the level of understanding and developing responses to learning difficulties in 'ordinary' classes and lecture halls.

5. A note on terminology

5.1 The language of special education is notoriously slippery, in the view of many inadequate, and is complicated by differences in state, public and academic discourses. Moreover, as the NCSNET/NCESS argues, in a society where there is a history of discrimination, terminology can have the effect of labelling learners, discriminating against them, neglecting them, and ultimately creating a culture of non-acceptance of diversity. Also affected by this language are education managers, educators and communities, who should be the leaders and practitioners of change. Accordingly, the NCSNET/NCESS proposed the adoption of a new terminology that would be consistent with the recommendations contained in its report and those in this Green Paper.

5.2 In the opinion of the Ministry, the recommendation and efforts undertaken along these lines by the NCSNET/NCESS are laudable and important. However, the Ministry takes the view that the introduction of a new terminology, within the vehicle of this Green Paper, may complicate and obfuscate, rather than assist the participation of education managers, educators and the public in the discourses and processes of change.

5.3 Accordingly, we have retained, with some discomfort, much of the terminology within the special education field, but we clarify the emphasis and nuances of meaning that we attach to these.

5.4 *Education for learners with special education needs* (ELSEN) is used to designate all those forms of education, both in ordinary and special school or other settings, which are regarded by their practitioners as constituting explicit means of responding to learners 'special' characteristics and 'needs'. On the other hand, *learners with special education needs* is a contentious term. As we suggest earlier in this Chapter, learning difficulties manifest themselves in many ways, and may be operative within the learner or the education and training system. The use of the term learners with special education needs is therefore inadequate and it obfuscates the range of causes of learning difficulties and their resolution.

5.5 *Special education* is used to designate those forms of special needs education which are located in special schools and settings.

5.6 We prefer to use the term *mainstream education* to indicate those forms of education that are not regarded by their practitioners as 'special'. We prefer the term *ordinary schools* to the equally acceptable mainstream schools. Similarly for ease of writing about all bands of education, we have tended to use the term *learner* to refer to all learners in early childhood learning centres, schools, colleges, adult learning centres, universities and technikons. We also tend to use the term *sites of learning* or *learning settings*, rather than schools since we are concerned that our policy recommendations be considered by and applied to all places of learning.

5.7 This does mean that we have elected not to use some of the terms proposed by the NCSNET/NCESS such as *barriers to learning*, *barriers to learning and development* and *learning breakdown*. In these instances we have opted for simpler terminology such as the causes and effects of learning difficulties and effective learning, and their resolution.

5.8 We have opted for this approach since its terminology is still in common use and has currency. The challenge for us, as we take these first steps in building an inclusive education and training system, is to communicate effectively to education managers, educators and our communities so that we can together with them change the system and, in turn, change our languages of change.

6. What this Chapter means in practice

6.1 Recognising that until now the education and training system has failed to accommodate fully a diverse range of learning needs and that as a result, high levels of learning difficulties and exclusion continue to be experienced, the Ministry is deeply committed to establishing an inclusive education and training system as part of our Constitutional responsibility to building an inclusive society.

6.2 In establishing an inclusive education and training system, through a progressive and phased programme, the needs of learners who experience learning difficulties and who are most likely to experience learning which is not effective, will be prioritised.

CHAPTER 2

A NEW FRAMEWORK TO ADDRESS LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND TO PROMOTE EFFECTIVE LEARNING

This Chapter puts forward the Ministry's vision of an education and training system in which a diversity of learning needs is accommodated. It outlines the principles of and strategies to develop the capacity of the education and training system to meet these learning needs and to address the causes and effects of learning difficulties. The Chapter also provides a synopsis of the proposals that are contained in the rest of the document.

1. Inclusive education and training

1.1 What is inclusive education and training?

1.1.1 In this Green Paper, and in line with the recommendations of the NCSNET/NCESS, inclusion means the participation of people with disability in all daily activities – at school, at work, at home and in our communities. In education and training, this means the promotion of the equal participation of and non-discrimination against all learners in the learning processes, irrespective of their disabilities, within a single, seamless system, and a continuum of learning contexts and resources according to need.

1.1.2 This policy approach differs from whole school approaches that have sought to merge ordinary and special schools, and so, to accommodate all learners, irrespective of their disabilities, social difficulties or learning needs within ordinary schools or learning contexts. Whole school approaches, which carry some support locally, have been informed by strong value statements and commitments, but have shown to flounder at the stage of implementation. This has been so since both 'ordinary' and special schools and settings have resisted change given their historic practices. Group teaching, comprehensive education and the learning of academic knowledge and intermediate to high level skills has dominated the education practices of ordinary schools and settings, while individualised teaching, and the teaching of basic literacy and low level skills has dominated those of special schools and settings. The experience has been for special schools to simply be replicated as segregated units in 'ordinary' schools, thus defeating the purpose of whole school approaches.

1.1.3 Other policies, such as those in many of the provinces and states of Canada and the United States of America, take as their starting point the full inclusion of all learners in 'ordinary' classes, including those with the most severe disabilities. It is only when every effort has been made to make the 'ordinary' classroom situation feasible, and it is clear that alternatives are in the best interests of the learner, that the learner is placed in alternative accommodation. As a consequence, learners with special education needs or disabilities attend the school they would attend if they were not disabled and are placed with their age peers.

1.1.4 In South Africa we are faced with early childhood and adult education centres, schools, colleges, universities and technikons which vary greatly in terms of their resources and capacities and consequently show great variances in their capacities to cope with whole school approaches or full inclusion. In fact, many

of these learning settings are struggling to cope with the learning difficulties experienced by the vast majority of learners resulting in learning not being effective, in failure and exclusion. Furthermore, the past five years have also been marked by intense policy development and implementation of wide-ranging scope, scale and depth that have dramatic consequences for all educational institutions. Many policy analysts and educators are now arguing that early childhood learning centres, schools, colleges, adult learning centres and higher education institutions are experiencing severe policy 'overload' and even confusion.

1.1.5 Additionally, despite the excellent progress that we are making, education support services, which are so critical to ELSEN, continue to be provided on an unequal basis according to race and geographical location. As a consequence, many special schools and settings and special or remedial classes are under-resourced and/or under-utilised and/or ill prepared for their significant responsibilities, old and new. Mainstream dumping, in which many learners are accommodated within public ordinary schools, colleges, adult learning and early childhood education centres and higher education institutions experience learning difficulties and exclusion, occurs on a considerable scale and continue to disadvantage these learners. And, admission policies and practices do not address the situation of learners who should be accommodated outside of special schools and settings and special or remedial classes and inside ordinary schools and settings.

1.1.6 Given this situation, we have little choice but to pursue the establishment of an inclusive education and training system first by strengthening the capacities of ELSEN – within special and ordinary schools, colleges, adult and early childhood learning centres and higher education – so that we can provide an appropriate alternative for learners who are failing in ordinary classes. This we must do as we take definitive steps to strengthen all public educational institutions, progressively raise the quality of education and training that they offer and increase their sensitivity and capacity to accommodate a diversity of learning needs.

1.1.7 It is only in this manner that we will be able to create a seamless, inclusive education and training system that includes within it a range of learning contexts that accommodate different learning needs.

1.2 Why is inclusive education and training important?

1.2.1 Learners with disabilities have the same rights and capabilities of non-disabled learners to pursue their learning potential to the fullest. Most often being disabled means being excluded from educational opportunities. In the majority of cases, learners with disability are willing, are able and can participate effectively in learning with little need for special equipment or technology.

1.2.2 Inclusive education takes the view that children with disability should be educated with their non-disabled peers in an environment that is as un-restrictive as possible and facilitates mutual acceptance and respect.

1.2.3 Inclusive education is the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving true education for all (Salamanca Statement on Special Needs Education, 1994).

1.2.4 To this end, the Ministry believes that in future, education and training for the majority of learners in the general and further education and training bands, including most learners with disabilities, should be provided in ordinary public schools and FET institutions, and that educational institutions which offer learning within the higher education band should develop support mechanisms so that they can provide equal access for all learners. For now though, the challenge for us is to strengthen ELSEN in special schools and settings and in ordinary schools and settings so that it can provide a real and meaningful alternative for learners who are failing in ordinary classes.

1.2.5 Given our policy proposal on inclusion, the Ministry accepts the recommendations of the NCSNET/NCESS that schools which provide teaching and learning through the medium of SA Sign Language should not be considered to be specialised learning contexts as described here. Rather, these should be seen and recognised as sites of learning which are simply identified through its inclusive medium of teaching and learning.

1.2.6 We appreciate that the implementation of the policy proposal on inclusion will bring with it many challenges for education managers, educators, learners and our communities. These are elaborated upon in the Chapters that follow. Below we describe the essential first steps on the road to establishing an inclusive education and training system.

2. An inclusive education and training system: First steps

2.1 In this Green Paper the Ministry puts forward a framework for transformation and change which aims to ensure increased and improved access to the education and training system for those learners who experience the most severe forms of learning difficulties and are most vulnerable to exclusion.

2.2 This will of necessity require that we focus our attention on those learners in special schools and settings and those in remedial or special classes in ordinary schools and settings.

2.3 However, while we must focus our efforts on improving the capacity of the education and training system to accommodate learners who experience the most severe forms of learning difficulties, our focus will require transformation and change of the entire education and training system for us to be able to accomplish these objectives and to enable mainstream education and training to recognise and address the causes and effects of learning difficulties in 'ordinary' classes and lecture halls.

2.4 Transformation and change must therefore focus on the full range of education and training services: the organisations – national and provincial departments of education, and higher education institutions - which have different responsibilities for education and training; educational institutions - special and ordinary - education support services, curriculum and assessment, education managers and educators, and parents and communities. These are put forward in summary form below.

2.4.1 Review and align all education and training policies, legislation and advisory bodies

In order for us to establish an inclusive education and training system it shall be necessary to review all existing policies and legislation for general, further and higher education and training so that these would be consistent with the policy proposals put forward in this Green Paper. While the South African Schools Act, 1996, the Higher Education Act, 1997, and the Further Education and Training Act, 1998, and the accompanying White Papers already provide the basis for the establishment of an inclusive education and training system, the Ministry shall request all advisory bodies to provide it with advice on how to improve these in the light of the policy proposals contained in this Green Paper. It will also be essential to review the memberships of all advisory bodies to ensure that appropriate expertise and representation enables these bodies to advise the Ministry and MECs for Education on goals, priorities and targets for the successful establishment of the inclusive education and training system.

2.4.2 Establish cross-government and inter-departmental coherence

It will be essential to establish an effective and appropriate inter-sectoral approach to policy development and implementation in respect of addressing in a holistic manner the causes and effects of severe learning difficulties. The Ministry believes that the most effective structure to take on this task is the National Programme of Action for Children (NPAC), and it should include a specific focus on disability and on those who are older than 18 years.

2.4.3 Review and align all organisational arrangements, and establish an inclusive district-based education support system

2.4.3.1 In beginning to implement the policy proposals put forward in this Green Paper, it will be essential to match the capacity of government with the roles proposed for them. Professional development programmes should focus on the development of effective leadership in policy, administration and programme implementation, the establishment of management information systems, and the development of competencies necessary for addressing severe learning difficulties within all branches and sections of the national and provincial departments of education.

2.4.3.2 At the lowest level of management and administration of the education and training system – the district, area or circuit, hereinafter referred to as the "district" – the Ministry proposes, in line with the recommendation of the NCSNET/NCESS, the establishment of district support teams. The primary function of these district support teams will be to evaluate and, through supporting teaching, build the capacity of schools, early childhood and adult basic education and training centres and colleges to recognise and address severe learning difficulties and to accommodate a range of learning needs.

2.4.3.3 At institution level, in general, further and higher education, and in line with the recommendations of the NCSNET/NCESS, the Ministry proposes the establishment of institution-level support teams. The primary function of these teams will be to put in place properly co-ordinated learner and educator support services that support the learning and teaching process by identifying and addressing learner, educator and institutional needs. Where appropriate, these teams should be strengthened by expertise from the local community and district support teams.

2.4.3.4 It will be essential that revision and alignment is focused on establishing a single organisational system and support service along a continuum from national through to provincial departments of education, through to schools, colleges, adult and early childhood learning centres, and higher education, which is sensitive to and accommodates diversity, with appropriate capacities, policies and support services.

2.4.4 Strengthen special schools and settings, and remedial programmes in ordinary schools and settings, increase access to learners outside the system and ensure optimal use of limited resources

As described earlier, the prevailing situation in special schools and settings, and in remedial classes and programmes is inappropriate, and in general fails to provide a cost-effective and comprehensive learning experience for participating learners. In taking the first steps in building an inclusive education and training system, we must review, improve and expand participation in existing ELSEN programmes. The Ministry believes that these programmes should provide a comprehensive education, and should provide life skills and programme-to-work linkages. These programmes will also be required to provide their services to neighbourhood schools through 'twinning' and 'clustering' arrangements. Attention shall also be given to those programmes and settings that accommodate learners requiring secure care, specialised programmes and/or high levels of support to ensure that these are provided in an appropriate and cost-effective manner, and that they provide for the psychosocial needs of these learners.

2.4.5 Require higher education institutions to provide for ELSEN in institutional plans

The situation of ELSEN in higher education institutions is not significantly different from that in special schools and settings, and remedial or special classes in ordinary schools and settings. Access for disabled learners and other learners who experience severe learning difficulties can be achieved through properly co-ordinated learner support services, and the cost-effective provision of such support services can be made possible through regional collaboration. Institutional planning is now a critical part of national planning for higher education, and higher institutions should be required to plan the provision of ELSEN. The Ministry will request the advice of the Council on Higher Education on all of these and related matters.

2.4.6 Create a barrier-free learning environment

An aspect of the development of learning settings that requires urgent attention is the creation of barrier-free physical environments. The manner in which the physical environment such as buildings and grounds is developed and organised contributes to the level of independence and equality that learners with disability enjoy. The physical environment of most ordinary schools and learning settings are not barrier-free and even where they may be barrier-free, accessibility has often been achieved on an ad hoc basis. Accordingly, space and cost norms for buildings, including grounds, shall focus on the design and construction of new buildings, as well as the renovation of existing buildings.

2.4.7 Review and align curriculum, assessment and quality assurance initiatives to focus on inclusion and on meeting the full range of diverse learning needs

Central to the accommodation of diversity in our schools, colleges, adult and early childhood learning centres and higher education institutions, is a flexible curriculum and assessment policy that is accessible to all learners irrespective of the nature of their learning needs. Accordingly, new curriculum and assessment initiatives, in all bands of education and training shall be required to focus on the inclusion of the full range of diverse learning needs. Existing quality assurance arrangements at all bands of education and training shall facilitate the development of quality education for all learners.

2.4.8 Provide professional development of and support to education managers and educators

The Ministry recognises that the success of our approach to addressing the causes and effects of severe learning difficulties and the provision for the full range of diverse learning needs lies with our education managers and educator cadre. Accordingly, and in collaboration with our provincial departments of education, the Ministry will provide access for educators to appropriate pre-service and in-service education and training and professional support services. The Ministry will also ensure that the norms and standards for the education and training of teachers, trainers and other development practitioners will include competencies of addressing the causes of severe learning difficulties and provide for the development of specialised competencies such as life-skills, counselling and learning support.

2.4.9 Put in place a dedicated, support-driven funding strategy

The Ministry proposes that the change and transformation process which is outlined in this Green Paper be funded through a funding model which is directed towards the development and maintenance of effective support systems at all levels of the learning system. It is proposed that this funding model be operationalised through re-prioritisation within existing education and training budgets and through earmarked funding within the Medium Term Expenditure Framework of government.

2.4.10 Raise public awareness and establish partnerships with parents and communities: stereotyping and social inclusion

Public awareness and acceptance of inclusion will be essential for the establishment of an inclusive society and an inclusive education and training system. Accordingly, the Ministry will launch an information and advocacy campaign to communicate the policy proposals contained in this Green Paper, including the rights, responsibilities and obligations attached to these. The Ministry will also continue its discussions with national stakeholders and role-players to win their support for the policy of inclusion and to review rights; responsibilities and obligations attached to these.

2.5 In the Chapters that follow, we explore these first steps in more detail, and describe their consequences. In the final Chapter, we put forward a schedule for implementing these first steps.

3. The phasing-in process

3.1 The Ministry envisages that the implementation of the policies that are outlined in this Green Paper will occur in three phases. The first phase (1999/2000) will see the revision of all policies, legislation and structures that are necessary to facilitate the transformation process. This phase will also include a public awareness and advocacy campaign, the development of the appropriate and necessary capacities and competencies at all levels of the system and the rationalisation and efficient combination of limited resources. The second phase (2000-2005) will see the development of those mechanisms within the system which are central to increasing access, to accommodating diversity and to addressing the causes and effects of learning difficulties. This phase will also see the development of a district and learning institutional-based support system and the establishment of evaluation and monitoring measures. The third phase (2005 onwards) will see our focus shifting primarily to the raising of the quality of education and training support for all learners.

3. What this Chapter means in practice

4.1 The Ministry of Education is committed to developing an inclusive system of education and training which accommodates and respects diversity. An inclusive system can be achieved by developing the capacity of the current system to recognise and address severe learning difficulties. In this regard, our main concern as we take the first steps in building an inclusive education and training system, will be to strengthen the capacity of ELSEN programmes to meet their obligations to those learners who cannot be accommodated within ordinary classes. Even these first steps imply significant change over the many years ahead for the entire education and training system.

4.2 This will mean the revision of all education and training policies and legislation, and the strengthening of the ELSEN capabilities of all advisory bodies. It will require cross-governmental and inter-departmental policy coherence, the revision of all organisational arrangements, the strengthening of special schools/settings and remedial programmes in ordinary schools and settings, so that we can increase access to learners who remain outside of the education and training system, and can achieve the optimal use of limited resources. Higher education institutions should be required to plan coherently for the provision of ELSEN.

4.3 Establishing an inclusive education and training system will require the creation of barrier-free learning environments and a revision of all curriculum, assessment and quality assurance initiatives. To achieve this, adequate and appropriate professional development, training and support will be essential, and shall be provided to education managers, educators and support personnel.

4.4 An inclusive system will require a funding strategy that is directed towards the provision of support services for all. This will be operationalised through a funding model that is directed towards the development and maintenance of effective support systems at all levels of the learning system.

4.5 Since public awareness and support is vital for establishing an inclusive society and education and training system, we shall raise public awareness and establish partnerships with parents and communities, to advocate inclusion and to lay open negative stereotypes.

CHAPTER 3

POLICY, LEGISLATION, GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATION

This chapter acknowledges the contributions of existing policies and legislation to establishing inclusive education and training, and calls for their revision and strengthening. The chapter also calls for the development of governance and management structures consistent with addressing the causes and effects of learning difficulties within an inclusive education and training system. In this regard, the chapter calls for the development of structures and procedures to achieve greater inter-departmental and inter-sectoral collaboration. It calls for national and provincial departments, and institutional governance structures to develop the competencies necessary to address learning difficulties and exclusion, and for co-ordinated district support services.

1. Policy and legislation

1.1 The most significant changes in educational governance since 1994 have stemmed from our democratic Constitution, under which separate and ethnic departments of state, institutions and governance structures were outlawed.

1.2 In *Education White Paper 1(1995),* the Ministry acknowledged its responsibility to provide inclusive education support services which are aimed, in particular, at the most vulnerable learners. These learners include those who are traditionally categorised as learners with special education needs such as learners with disabilities, those who experience learning difficulties and those 'at risk' as a result of HIV/AIDS, violence and substance abuse. The Ministry also acknowledged the importance of early identification and intervention, in particular within early childhood development education (age group 0-9 years).

1.3 Education and training policies which have been developed since *Education White Paper 1* have highlighted the importance of education support services. However these policies have not adequately confronted and tackled the diversity of learning needs and the kind of education support services that are required to address the causes and effects of learning difficulties. For example, these policies have focused almost exclusively on one aspect of learning support such as the provision of academic development within higher education and career guidance and counselling services with further education and training. As a result, the potential for these services to play a more preventative role have been neglected and underestimated, and a limited view has emerged of mechanisms which are required to address the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

1.4 *Education White Papers 2* (on the organisation, governance and funding of schools), *3* (on higher education) and *4* (on further education and training) together with the *South African Schools Act (Act No 84 of 1996), the Higher Education Act (Act No 101 of 1997),* the *Further Education and Training Act (Act No 98 of 1998)* and the *Employment of Educators Act (Act No 76 of 1998)* provide for, among other:

National co-ordination and the promotion of a national common purpose that promotes co-operative governance in the public school, further education and training and higher education systems.

Redress of past injustices in educational provision, the extension of a high quality education on a progressive basis to all learners and the combating of racism, sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance.

Substantial powers for public schools, further education and training and higher education institutions with strong stakeholder representation and representation from the management, staff and learners at the institution of learning within legally constituted governing bodies and councils that shall determine their mission, ethos and institutional plans, manage their financial affairs, raise additional revenue, and improve efficiency in learning through the optimum use of public financial allocations.

Upholding of the rights of all learners, parents and educators, and the promotion of their acceptance of responsibility for the organisation, governance and funding of schools, further education and training and higher education institutions in partnership with the State, and

The employment of educators by the State at any public school, further education and training institution, departmental office or adult basic education centre with due regard to equality, equity and other democratic values and principles as enunciated in Section 195(1) of the Constitution, which include the ability of the candidate, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past in order to achieve broad representation.

1.5 Specifically, these policies and laws provide the basic framework for the establishment of an inclusive education and training system through the specific requirements which they place on the governance and management of public institutions on such matters as admission and language policies, the membership and expertise of governing bodies and councils, on the nature of learner support service and on the profile of the educator core.

1.6 Nonetheless, the Ministry acknowledges that the promotion of the social inclusion of marginalised learners such as learners with disabilities and those who experience serious social and emotional problems have not been addressed adequately in many of our new policies, legislation, regulations and norms and standards.

The South African Schools Act, Act No. 84 of 1996

1.7 The South African Schools Act, 1996 provided the first basic framework for an inclusive education and training system through its affirmation of the right of equal access to basic and quality education for all learners on a non-discriminatory basis. The Act provides for a public school to be an ordinary school or a school for learners with special education needs (Section 12(3)). The provision of education for learners with special education needs is therefore no longer contained in a separate piece of education legislation.

1.8 The Act requires the MEC for Education to provide, where reasonably practicable, education for learners with special education needs at ordinary public schools and to provide appropriate education support services for such learners (Section 12(4)). The MEC for Education is also required to take reasonable measures to ensure that the physical facilities at public schools are accessible to disabled persons (Section 12(5)).

1.9 The Act recognises Sign Language as an official language for the purposes of learning at a public school (Section 6(4)) and makes unlawful the administration of tests related to the admission of a learner to a public school (Section 5(2)).

1.10 The Act requires governing bodies of ordinary public schools which provide education to learners with special education needs, where reasonably practicable, to co-opt a person or persons with expertise regarding the special education needs of such learners (Section 23(5)). And, the Act also stipulates the membership of the governing bodies of public schools for learners with special education needs (Section 24).

1.11 In its review of the South African Schools Act, the NCSNET/NCESS conclude that the Act is not prescriptive enough in providing for the development of an inclusive, integrated education system, and that there is as yet nothing in the Act which indicates how the education system can contribute to overcoming the causes and effects of learning difficulties which have led to exclusion and the sustained marginalisation of significant sectors of our population.

1.12 As already stated earlier in this document, the Ministry believes that the starting point for the establishment of an inclusive education and training system is the evaluation and strengthening of special schools and settings and remedial and special classes in ordinary public learning settings. We will also have to strengthen the ability of the general educator staff cadre and education managers to recognise and address the causes and effects of learning difficulties, before we can take the next steps to a fully inclusive education and training system. We appreciate that existing legislation could be strengthened, such as admission policies that should provide greater clarity and guidance on the admission of learners who can be accommodated outside of special schools and settings and inside ordinary or special classes in mainstream schooling. We elaborate on some of these matters below. It is also the case that it is national and provincial

policies, regulations and annual and multi-year implementation plans which specify how the education and training system will be transformed so that we can address learning difficulties and exclusion.

Early identification and intervention

1.13 Our policies for early childhood development place emphasis on the importance of the early years of development.

1.14 The years of childhood development (0 – 9 years) constitute a crucial phase for preventing learning and development problems and preparing the child to participate in an inclusive society. It is widely acknowledged that many children in this age group are "at risk". The Ministry recognises that some learners in this age group with disabilities will require access to early education programmes such as those who require interventions to enable them to develop basic receptive and expressive communication competencies, mobility orientation, and other life skills competencies which are necessary for independent learning and living and participation in further, higher and lifelong learning.

1.15 The Ministry believes that there is a need for progressive, targeted provision which focuses on those learners in the age group 0-9 who are at risk and that in the short term a particular focus should be placed on those with disabilities such as learners who are deaf or blind and learners with multiple disabilities. At the same time the Ministry believes that there is a need to investigate these matters further in order to identify the extent of the need and the most appropriate response. Such an investigation and the development of an appropriate response will be undertaken by the Minister in collaboration with the Ministries of Health and Welfare, appropriate NGO's, parent organisations and specialised sites of learning.

Age requirements for admission and age-grade norms

1.16 The Ministry believes that flexibility should be exercised regarding age-grade norms for Grades R-12 of school education in order to accommodate those learners who require such deviation as a result of their particular learning needs. In this regard, age grade norms that were gazetted during 1998 provide for exceptions from the norm to be approved by the provincial heads of education departments.

1.17 The Ministry believes that learners with disabilities such as learners who are deaf, blind or multi-disabled require early education intervention so that they can develop appropriate competencies as described earlier. The age of admission for these learners should be three years in accommodation that is appropriate. The investigation referred to earlier should advise on how to accommodate these learners.

1.18 Learners who are two or more years older than the age-grade norm should be assisted through specialised programmes to catch up in order to be placed in the appropriate grade, while over-age learners, well outside of the compulsory age for school education, should be provided with access to adult basic and further education and training that are designated for such purposes.

Transport and boarding facilities

1.19 The absence of appropriate transport and boarding facilities constitute a significant obstacle to learning for those learners with disabilities. The *White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy* (1997) makes the point that the lack of accessible transport constitutes a serious obstacle to the full inclusion into society of people with disabilities. Accordingly the *White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy* aims to, "*develop an accessible, affordable multi-model public transport system that will meet the needs of*

the largest numbers of people at the lowest cost, while at the same time planning for those higher cost features which are essential to disabled people with greater mobility needs".

1.20 Within this context, the Ministry is committed to finding ways to address the needs of learners with disabilities who are excluded from the education and training system because of a lack of transport or hostel facilities. In *Education White Paper*, the Ministry notes that provision of transport is a costly item, especially for public schools for learners with special education needs, and that transport should be rationalised at district level. In this regard, districts should assist in determining local transport needs, develop solutions, promote community participation and promote the sharing of limited resources.

1.21 The Ministry takes the view that, within existing funding norms and standards, boarding facilities should be provided for those learners who require it. This is particularly important for learners with disabilities who may experience obstacles to gaining access to the education and training system. Accordingly, the development of policies and programmes on hostel accommodation should take into account the need of learners with disabilities. Notwithstanding this commitment, the Ministry believes that the local school should be promoted as the first choice should the necessary education support service be available.

Reform schools, schools of industry and places of safety (child and youth care system)

1.22 The situation of learners who are placed in custody because they are awaiting trial or have been convicted of criminal offences or require protection within places of safety have been a matter of deep concern to the Ministry of Education which has led to collaborative action with the Ministries of Welfare, Public Works, Justice, Safety and Security and Correctional Services.

1.23 As a consequence, an investigation was conducted during 1996 by the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on Young People at Risk into the condition of schools and residential centres, which provide accommodation and education and training for these learners. This investigation provided the following estimates regarding reform schools, schools of industry, and places of safety:

There are approximately 60 state residential care facilities such as reform schools, schools of industry and places of safety and approximately 200 NGO residential care facilities, and

There are approximately 20,000 learners in residential and youth care centres, with approximately 560 educators, 1700 child and youth care workers and 60 social workers working in these centres.

1.24 This investigation of the IMC and that conducted by the NCSNET/NCESS have together highlighted the following matters:

The placement of learners away from their own homes makes their re-unification, reintegration and the provision of after-care services very difficult.

There are no minimum standards regarding the provision of human resources, including educators and support personnel such as social workers and psychologists.

The training and qualification structure of educators for child and youth care workers is inadequate.

The cost of the current system is high and is estimated at R75 per learner per day.

There are many human rights abuses within the system.

There is inadequate provision of education and training support for children who are awaiting trial, awaiting completion of trial or designated for admission to reform schools.

Programmes offered to learners in these institutions are rarely evaluated.

Problems in the management of facilities include: lack of contact with the family and little parental involvement; delays and inappropriate placements and assessment practices; inability and/or unwillingness of ordinary public schools to admit these learners; and, arbitrary transfers of children and youth.

Community involvement to assist in integrating these institutions into the general community is limited or non-existent.

Facilities in most provinces are inadequate, and as a result some provinces house many of the learners from other provinces. An estimated 31% of these learners are placed in provinces other than their own.

There is fragmentation and there are problems in the management of the matter between the Ministries and Departments concerned, particularly the Ministries and Departments of Education and Welfare.

Appropriate therapeutic programmes to address the needs of learners are lacking and there is minimal contextual analysis of problems and limited preventative strategies, and

There are problems with the ethos of many of these institutions that are often referred to as 'prison camps' and rehabilitative programmes are largely non-existent.

1.25 In addition to those learners who find themselves in the institutions mentioned above, a large number of learners, especially in under-privileged communities and those in ordinary public schools identified as having 'special needs' are learners with emotional and behavioural problems and teachers generally do not feel equipped to cope with these challenges. This often results in inappropriate disciplinary measures, abuses of drugs such as Ritalin and inappropriate referrals to institutions as a way of getting rid of the problem. The lack of adequate support structures and services to assist teachers and parents to address these challenges is a matter that should be addressed.

1.26 It should be clear from this analysis that the child and youth care system should be transformed. The IMC on Young People at Risk has accordingly identified the following principles that should guide the transformation process:

Public accountability for services provided.

Full participation in all stages of intervention processes.

A continuum of care with a range of differentiated services and access to programmes which are responsive to needs.

Integration of services so that they offer an intersectoral and multi-disciplinary approach.

Continuity of care.

Normalisation to promote participation and development.

Effectiveness and efficiency of services.

A child-centred approach which provides regular guidance and support through regular assessment and action.

Respect for the rights of young people.

Restorative justice which assists young people to make amends.

Appropriateness of services.

Family empowerment and preservation, and permanency planning for young people with the family where possible.

A framework for services that include prevention, early identification, statutory processes and a continuum of care services, and

Transformation of institutions so that they can move towards a systemic and developmental approach.

1.27 The Ministry supports these principles since they constitute an important part of the foundation stone of this Green Paper. In addition, the general strategies, which are outlined in this Green Paper, should also be applied to learners who have been placed in these child and youth care centres.

1.28 In pursuit of these principles, the Ministry proposes the adoption of the following:

A range of differentiated programmes should be provided to address specific needs in ordinary public schools and residential care centres, such as bridging programmes, lifeskills education and vocational education and training.

Appropriate education and training should be provided for these learners irrespective of where they are located, including those awaiting trial, in prison or in secure care.

Collaboration with the Department of Welfare should facilitate the accommodation of children and youth who are awaiting trial in schools of industry and reform schools and should expedite designations and placement of children and youth in the most appropriate contexts.

The development of a supportive and effective teaching and learning environment should constitute the basis for the transformation of these schools and centres.

Appropriate assessment practices and clear criteria and guidelines for the placement of learners should be developed.

Support services should be provided within the range of child and youth care centres and ordinary public schools to ensure that the necessary psycho-social support to learners and assistance to institutions to accommodate their needs is available.

Educators should undergo professional development for them to address the challenges provided by social, emotional and behavioural problems in the classroom and school. At the same time appropriate specialised training should be provided for some educators and education support personnel including child and youth care workers.

Mobility within the system which would allow learners to enter and exit the formal schooling system without prejudice should be ensured.

The provincial capacity should be developed to meet these challenges, and

Co-ordination and collaboration between the Ministry and Department and the other Ministries and Departments concerned should be strengthened.

Further Education and Training Act, Act No. 98 of 1998

1.29 The Further Education and Training Act has, in its drafting process benefited, most from the advice of the NCSNET/NCESS. Accordingly, in its preamble and its specific provisions, it requires further education and training institutions to give attention to the rights and responsibilities of people and learners who are disabled. In this regard, the Act prefers the use of the somewhat outdated *disabled* rather than the more commonly understood *person or learner with special education needs*. While it does not provide a definition of a person or learner who is disabled, its intention is that the term applies to all persons or learners with special education needs.

1.30 The Act requires that access to further education and training be ensured for persons who have been marginalised in the past such as women, the disabled and the disadvantaged (Preamble to the Act), and requires the councils of public further education and training institutions – whose membership should be broadly representative of the communities they serve in respect of race, gender and disability (Section 9(8)) - to develop strategic plans which among others must address past imbalances in respect of race, gender and disability (Section 9(2)). It also requires councils to establish a suitable structure to advise on policy for student support services after consultation with the student representative council (Section 9(3)).

1.31 The Act requires that the admission policies of further education and training institutions not unfairly discriminate in any way and must provide appropriate measures for the redress of past inequalities (Section 17(3)). In particular, the Act requires councils, where reasonably practicable, to ensure the accessibility of institutions to disabled learners (Section 17(3)), for the appointment of staff to take into account, amongst others, the principles of equity, the need to redress past injustices and representivity (Section 14(6)), and for it to publish its language policies (Section 9(2)(b)).

1.32 With respect to private providers of further education and training, the Act requires the registration of these providers, subject to them complying with the basic conditions of registration in respect of financial viability, educational standards, quality assurance and any other reasonable requirements determined by the registrar (Section 26(1)(a) and (b)). The Act also requires that a private provider be registered only if the registrar has reason to believe that the applicant will not unfairly discriminate against any person on the grounds of race, gender or disability (Section 26(1)(c)).

1.33 The Act has gone further than the legislation for schools in providing the basic framework for the provision of an inclusive further education and training. However, as is the case with our policies and legislation for schools, the Ministry is publishing this Green Paper for public information and comment on how these policies and legislation could be improved in order for us to establish an inclusive education and training system.

Higher Education Act, Act No. 101 of 1997

1.34 The Higher Education Act requires that past discrimination in higher education be addressed, and that representivity and equal access be achieved (Preamble to the Act). These requirements provide the basic framework for the attainment of an inclusive and seamless higher education system.

1.35 In this regard, the Act requires the Council for Higher Education - which membership should be representative on such relevant grounds as race and disability - to advise the Minister of Education on how to promote the access of students to higher education (Section 5 (1) and (2)). The Act also requires the Council for Higher Education to provide the Minister with advice on the provision of student support services and on language policy in higher education (Section 27(2) and (3)).

1.36 The Act requires that admission policies of higher education institutions include appropriate measures for the redress of past inequalities and that these may not unfairly discriminate in any way (Section 37(3)).

1.37 In respect of private providers of higher education, the Act requires their registration, subject to them complying with the basic conditions of registration in respect of financial viability, educational standards, quality assurance and any other reasonable requirements determined by the registrar (Section 53(1)(b)). In this regard, the Ministry is calling for public comment and advice on what additional, reasonable, requirements the registrar of private providers of higher education may impose for the registration of private providers.

1.38 Priorities within higher education should include institutional and curriculum transformation to promote access and provide support to learners who experience learning difficulties and exclusion. Such support could include curative and preventative medical and counselling support, learning support through general academic development and specific forms of support for learners with disabilities where required. A major

challenge for the higher education band is for higher education institutions to develop a co-ordinated approach to academic development, student support services and disability programmes.

1.39 Accordingly, the Ministry will request the Council to advise it on how higher education policies, such as funding policies, and institutional policies, such as admission policies could be improved to open and promote the access of learners with special education needs, such as those who are blind and/or deaf, and the establishment and strengthening of education support services.

The Employment of Educators Act, Act No. 76 of 1998

1.40 The Employment of Educators Act provides for the employment of educators by the State and for the regulation of their conditions of service, discipline, retirement and discharge. In this regard, educator means any person who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services, at any public school, further education and training institutions, departmental office, adult basic education centre, and who is appointed in a post on any educator establishment.

1.41 The Act requires that in the making of any appointment or the filling of a post on any educator establishment, due regard should be given to equality, equity and other democratic values and principles as enunciated in Section 195(1) of the Constitution, and which include the ability of the candidate, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past in order to achieve broad representation.

1.42 The Act thus requires that the educator core meet the test of representativity in all public educational institutions, ordinary and special.

1.43 Accordingly, it provides, alongside the South African Schools Act, the Further Education and Training Act and the Higher Education Act, the basic framework for the establishment of an inclusive education and training system. However, in respect of the Employment of Educators Act, the Ministry will, in addition to seeking public comment and advice, request the Education Labour Relations Council and the South African Council of Educators to consider and advise it on how the Act and relevant policy can be strengthened to open and promote the access of educators with special education needs in public schools, early childhood and adult education centres and further education and training institutions.

2. Governance within an inclusive education and training system

The successful establishment of the inclusive education and training system which we propose in this Green Paper will rely on the collective leadership, governance, management and advice of those with responsibility for the education and training system, including the Minister of Education, the Members of the Executive Council responsible for education, the national and provincial departments of education, including the district and institutional levels of management and governance, and national and provincial advisory bodies. We next put forward our view on the roles and responsibilities of each of these in relation to recognising and addressing the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

The Minister of Education

2.1 The Minister of Education is responsible for the determination of national policy for education and training in general, further and higher education. In the case of general and further education and training the Minister is also responsible for determining norms and standards, including funding norms, curriculum requirements and quality assurance mechanisms.

2.2 The Minister, accordingly, will, for general and further education and training, be required to:

Determine the broad goals and objectives for the transformation of the education and training system to ensure that the full range of diverse needs of the learner population are accommodated within a system that supports inclusion, and that the causes and effects of learning difficulties are recognised and addressed within all bands of the learning system.

Guide the development of the education and training system through the establishment and operation of effective policy, legislative, funding and regulatory frameworks to enable the achievement of the goals of accommodating diversity and addressing the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

Ensure that the education and training system, including education support services, becomes progressively accessible to all learners, particularly vulnerable learners who have been grossly disadvantaged in the past.

Ensure the progressive improvement of the quality of education and support services, and

Promote the development of a holistic and inclusive system of education and training that fosters the development of mutual respect for differences within the context of social inclusion.

2.3 In exercising these responsibilities the Minister, as provided for in the *National Education Policy Act, 1996,* will be required to consult with the Council of Education Ministers (CEM). The Minister will also be required to consult, where appropriate, with Ministers in other relevant ministries and will seek advice from the National Education and Training Council, the National Board for Further Education and Training, the Council for Higher Education and any other appropriate advisory body.

The Department of Education

2.4 The Department of Education will be required to:

Provide professional support to the Minister with regard to the development of the capacity of the education and training system to accommodate the full range of diverse learning needs of the learner population and to address the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

Maintain professional relations with other appropriate government departments in the development of a holistic and inclusive approach to addressing the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

Provide leadership and co-ordinate the implementation of policy.

Work towards the 'infusion' of capacity within all sections of the department to recognise and address the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

Support the provincial departments of education in their programmes to meet the policy challenges to accommodate the full range of diverse learning needs and to collaborate with other government departments, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders in addressing the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

Facilitate partnerships with relevant and key stakeholders.

Pursue relevant research through the National Institute for Lifelong Learning Development (NILLD), and

Monitor the implementation of policy.

2.5 In the interim period, the Department of Education will be required to establish an intra-departmental co-ordinating committee that shall take on these responsibilities listed in paragraph 2.4. In this regard, the existing 'ELSEN' sub-directorate will play a central role in facilitating the "infusion" of appropriate competencies in all sectors of the Department. Long-term organisational arrangements to achieve the most efficient and appropriate structure will be investigated.

National Advisory Bodies

2.6 In its report, the NCSNET/NCESS recommended that a national council be established to advise the Minister on the needs and to provide expertise to address the causes and effects of learning difficulties as they relate to the most vulnerable learners. The Ministry takes the view that these interests and expertise should be represented within all advisory bodies that advise on the development of our new education and training system. This is because the Ministry believes that the establishment of a separate advisory body for these purposes would not be consistent with the overall thrust of inclusion that is proposed in this Green Paper. The Ministry has found no compelling argument in support of the establishment of such an advisory body, and which, by implication, should have an identity, which is separate from the range of advisory bodies in general, further, and higher education and training.

2.7 The Ministry, therefore, takes the view that for the purposes of accommodating the full range of diverse needs of the learner population and for recognising and addressing severe learning difficulties, it will review all national advisory bodies within all bands of education and training so that these can have appropriate capacity and expertise in this regard. This could be achieved through the inclusion of relevant experts or representatives in their membership and/or through the establishment of committees to assist the advisory bodies concerned on these matters.

Inter-Ministerial and Inter-Departmental Committees

2.8 An inter-sectoral approach to policy development and implementation in respect of addressing the causes and effects of learning difficulties is essential for us to achieve a holistic and inclusive approach to learning and teaching.

2.9 There are currently many inter-ministerial committees (IMC's) and inter-departmental committees (IDC's) which deal with matters related to the recognition and addressing of the causes and effects of severe learning difficulties. It is also the case that duplication prevails in the representation and tasks addressed by these committees.

2.10 The Ministry believes that the most effective existing structure to take on the task of recognising and addressing severe learning difficulties at the inter-sectoral level is the National Programme of Action for Children (NPAC). The National Programme of Action already comprise of the relevant government partners and it could establish a committee to focus on recognising and addressing the causes of severe learning difficulties. Ideally it should expand its mandate to include a specific focus on disability and should include a focus on those who are older than 18 years.

2.11 It is recommended that this proposed committee of the NPA, be located within the Department of Education, and that its core members include the Departments of Education (as lead department), Health, Welfare, Labour and the Office of the Status of Disabled Persons.

2.12 While this Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) would be a national committee, linkages should be developed with provincial governments where and when appropriate. Other relevant government departments and stakeholders should be invited to participate in its deliberations and actions.

2.13 The Ministry believes that the following principles would be critical for the establishment of a successful inter-departmental relationship and function:

The IDC and other inter-departmental committees and structures should identify areas that require co-operation and collaboration for us to be able to address learning diversity and learning difficulties, and it should identify the key role-players who should be invited to participate in its deliberations.

Inter-departmental working agreements should be developed which provide clear operational guidelines, procedures and processes to achieve collective goals.

Structures such as teams, working groups, committees and forums should be established at appropriate levels to achieve the goals, and provided with clear plans of action and procedures.

Responsibilities and lines of accountability should be identified clearly in terms of planning, execution and funding, and

Funding mechanisms to support these initiatives should be developed and particular funding responsibilities should be articulated clearly.

Inter-governmental co-ordination

2.14 Co-ordination between the national and provincial education authorities is required by the provisions of the Constitution with respect to the control of education and training other than higher education, and by the provisions of the *National Education Policy Act, 1996*.

2.15 The Minister consults with the Council of Education Ministers (CEM) on national policy and norms and standards for education and training conducted at the provincial level. Members of the Executive Council (MECs) responsible for education, in turn, should be assisted by provincial advisory bodies who will advise the MEC on provincial policies, goals and priorities for general and further education and training in the province.

2.16 A further mechanism used for co-operative governance in general and further education and training is the Heads of Education Committee (HEDCOM).

Provincial MEC's and Departments of Education

2.17 The MEC for Education has constitutional responsibility for education and training at all levels of education except higher education. Accordingly, the MEC:

Determines provincial policy within the parameters of national policy, and province-specific policies.

Ensures that the state provides general education and training and through reasonable measures, makes further education and training progressively available and accessible.

Guides the development of the early childhood development, schooling, further education and training and adult basic education and training sectors to ensure that institutional policies and plans comply with the requirements as set out in this Green Paper.

Seeks and considers the advice of provincial advisory bodies on the recognition and addressing of severe learning difficulties, and the accommodation of the range of diverse learning needs.

Determines financial allocations which are guided by the proposals in this Green Paper for a dedicated, support-driven funding strategy to address the causes and effects of learning difficulties, and

Reports annually to the provincial legislature on the achievements attained in this regard.

2.18 The provincial department of education will be required to:

Provide professional support to the MEC with respect to the development of a provincial policy that accommodates the full range of diverse learning needs of the learner population and addresses the causes and effects of learning difficulties. In providing this support, a department will take into account the advice of provincial advisory bodies established for general and further education and training.

Allocate funding guided by the proposals in this Green Paper for a dedicated, support-driven funding approach that addresses the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

Administer learning sites within general and further education and training which are within its competence, in accordance with national and province-specific policies and legislative provisions, with the aim of progressively accommodating the full range of diverse learning needs of the learner population and addressing the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

Ensure that plans for general and further education and training within its competence are in accordance with the policy proposals put forward in this Green Paper.

Facilitate the successful phase-in of the implementation plan put forward in this Green Paper, within the context of local needs and conditions.

Conduct research to assess the needs relating to accommodating the full range of diversity of learning needs and addressing the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

Conduct management practices that optimally utilise all human resources in response to local needs.

Provide professional development and support to educators and education support personnel to enhance their capacity to meet the challenges outlined in this Green Paper.

Put in place a programme aimed at achieving the "infusion" of competencies relevant to addressing severe learning difficulties in all sections of the department.

Develop the necessary district support centres or teams as proposed in this Green Paper within the parameters of local conditions and needs.

Ensure that governance structures at all sites of learning progressively develop the competence to address learning difficulties and that institutional plans include measures to meet the goals of accessibility and inclusion.

Facilitate the development of site-based support teams to address the causes and effects of learning difficulties, and

Provide sites of learning which are especially responsible to accommodate groups of former special schools learners and provide a support service in neighbourhood schools.

Provincial Advisory Bodies

2.19 Provincial advisory bodies for general and further education and training should be constituted in such a way to include representation of the interests and expertise relating to diversity and addressing the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

2.20 Provincial advisory bodies for general and further education and training will be required to:

Advise the MEC on the implications of national policies, targets and priorities relating to accommodating the full range of diverse learner needs and on addressing the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

Advise the MEC on provincial policy, goals and priorities relating to accommodating the full range of diverse learning needs of the learner population and addressing the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

Monitor the performance of the provincial system in terms of policy, goals and priorities, and

Publish and distribute information about national and provincial policy, goals and priorities of performance.

District management

2.21 The Ministry concurs with the view of the NSCNET/NCESS that the establishment of district support teams is central to achieving the progressive shift to inclusion as proposed in this Green Paper. When functioning optimally, district support teams will work together with other arms of district governance and management to provide support to all public schools, early childhood and adult education centres and further education and training institutions within their areas of responsibility. These teams or centres should play a central role in facilitating inter-sectoral collaboration and in assessing goals and priorities.

2.22 District support teams would provide training and support and build the capacity of learning sites and educators to conduct assessment and to plan programmes to address learning difficulties. This could include:

Development of early identification and intervention programmes, particularly for children at risk.

Development of programmes aimed at attitude change and awareness raising relating to discrimination against learners with disabilities or who are perceived to be different.

Parent counselling and empowerment.

Provision of itinerant services to learners, teachers and sites.

Development of home- and community-based services for learners who cannot be accommodated within existing sites.

Facilitating strong home-school relations for the purposes of providing support.

Facilitating links between sites of learning for the purposes of sharing human and material resources and capacity building.

Training of teachers and parents.

Information development and dissemination.

Development of materials and assistive devices, and

Development of various preventative programmes aimed at issues such as AIDS/HIV, substance abuse and various forms of violence.

Identification of needs and co-ordination of support services within manageable geographical areas would also be a central function of this structure. The teams located at this level would have a central role in advising the provincial department on local needs, priorities and programmes.

2.23 Inter-departmental and inter-sectoral collaboration is often most successful closest to the institutions of learning. The Ministry therefore proposes the establishment of *District Intersectoral Committees* that are linked to the District Team or Support Centres. These could comprise: the co-ordinator of the District Support Team or Centre (as chairperson); representatives from relevant government departments (such as Health, Welfare, Labour, Public Works, Transport and Sport); local teacher, principal, learner, parent and governance body organisations; relevant NGO's, including Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPO's); members of the private sector and other relevant stakeholders or persons with expertise. In this regard the Ministry recognises that NGO's, DPO's and other relevant bodies can play a central role in assisting the district and province to identify needs and to develop community-based approaches to addressing those needs.

Institutional governance

Governance at All Sites of Learning

2.24 The *South African Schools Act, 1996* and the *Further Education and Training Act, 1998* is the basis for the governance of all public schools and public further education and training institutions. The Ministry intends to introduce to Parliament during 1999, following appropriate consultations and procedures, the *Adult Basic Education and Training Bill* which would provide the basis for the governance of all public adult learning centres which offer adult basic education and training.

2.25 In line with the recommendations of the NCSNET/NCESS, the Ministry believes that governance structures of all sites of learning should include representation from Disabled People's Organisations and expertise on how to accommodate a diversity of learning needs and to recognise and address the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

2.26 This inclusive approach, which is proposed, in this Green Paper could be pursued by governing bodies and councils through among others:

Inclusion of appropriate expertise to accommodate the diversity of learning needs and to recognise and address the causes and effects of learning difficulties in the membership of the governance structure through the creation of a dedicated portfolio.

The establishment of a sub-committee to assist the governing structure as it progressively phases in an inclusive approach.

Establishing an institutional philosophy and vision of equality and inclusion that is actively advocated.

Establishing a range of institution-based services that are co-ordinated across and among the district support team and the institution support team.

Establishing partnerships with parents in the planning and implementation of inclusive strategies.

Establishing an inclusion committee at the site of learning which collects information on inclusion, organises information sessions and establishes an institutional plan which sets goals for inclusion, and

Establishing a barrier-free site of learning that is accessible in terms of buildings, grounds, curricula, assessment, support systems and medium of instruction and communication.

Committee on ELSEN in ordinary public schools and further education and training institutions

2.27 The *South African Schools Act, 1996* states in Section 30 (1) that, *"a governing body may (a) establish committees, including an executive committee; and (b) appoint persons who are not members of the governing body to such committees on grounds of expertise, but a member of the governing body must chair each committee",* and in Section 30 (2), that, *"a governing body of an ordinary public school which provides education to learners with special education needs must establish a committee on special education needs".* The *South African Schools Act, 1996* also requires that, *"The governing body of an ordinary public school which provides education to learners with special needs must, where practically possible, co-opt a person or persons with expertise regarding the special education needs of such learners"* (23(5)).

2.28 The *Further Education and Training Act, 1998* requires that, subject to policy, and with the concurrence of the academic board, the council of a public FET institution develop a strategic plan for the institution which must, amongst others, address past imbalances, gender and disability matters, and should be approved by the MEC. The *Further Education and Training Act, 1998* also requires that the membership of the council of a public FET institution be broadly representative of the community served by the institution in respect of race, gender and disability.

2.29 Many of the most vulnerable learners who have historically been described as learners with 'special education needs' are to be found in virtually all sites of learning. It is likely that this situation would be exacerbated when those who are currently excluded from the system are fully accommodated. The progressive development of the capacity of all sites of learning to fully accommodate the diversity of learning needs and to address the causes and effects of learning difficulties will be critical for the success of the inclusive approach outlined in this Green Paper.

2.30 The implications of the governance provisions of the *South African Schools Act, 1996* and the *Further Education and Training Act, 1998* are that *all* governing bodies and councils should establish committees at the site of learning which would advise and monitor on learning difficulties. The main responsibilities of such committees would be to:

Advise on and monitor strategies to address the causes and effects of severe learning difficulties. Site of learning-based support teams should play a central role in enabling these committees to fulfil their responsibilities, and

Facilitate community participation in recognising and addressing the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

2.31 These committees should include relevant expertise and representation from organisations and people who can assist the governing body or council to accommodate diversity and to address the causes and effects of learning difficulties. People with disabilities who can assist the site of learning to address particular disability needs should be recruited to the committee.

Governance at public schools for learners with special education needs

2.32 The *South African Schools Act, 1996* specifies different requirements for governing bodies of *public schools for learners with special education needs.*

2.33 It requires that representation on the governing body of a public school for learners with special education needs, of a member or members of the following categories :- parents of learners at the school, if reasonably practicable; educators at the school; members of staff at the school who are not educators; learners attending the eighth grade or higher, if reasonably practicable; representatives of sponsoring bodies, if applicable; representatives of organisations of parents of learners with special education needs, if applicable; representatives of organisations of disabled persons, if applicable; disabled persons, if applicable; and; experts in appropriate fields of special needs education (Section 24(1)).

2.34 This Green Paper proposes the continued existence of public schools for learners with special education needs within the inclusion approach it advocates. As stated in Chapter 1 of this Green Paper, learners who are at risk of exclusion or learning difficulties as a result of severe social, emotional, psychological and

medical problems which require ongoing and intensive support and intervention should be a priority, and they may require accommodation in sites of learning which are resourced for such purposes. This approach should in no way be seen as a continuation of past discriminatory practices of the exclusion and marginalisation of learners with "special education needs". Rather, this approach should be understood as a recognition that these learners are part of an inclusive learning system yet require ongoing and intensive support and intervention in special schools or settings that have the resources for such purposes.

2.35 This approach also recognises that most learners who were previously classified as having "special needs" are being accommodated in significant matters within ordinary public schools and FET institutions and that special schools or specialised settings within the inclusion approach shall have a responsibility to provide as part of the district support team or service, a support service to ordinary public schools and FET institutions.

Student Representative Councils

2.36 In its report, the NCSNET/NCESS recommended that representative councils of learners be established at **all** sites of learning, enrolling learners in the eighth grade and higher and that these should include public schools for learners with special education needs. The NCSNET/NCESS also recommended that learners with severe intellectual disabilities should be represented through advocates where appropriate. These recommendations are in line with the inclusive education that is advocated in this Green Paper, and carries the full support of the Ministry.

Institution-based support teams

2.37 In line with the recommendations of the NCSNET/NCESS, the Ministry proposes that a core component of the support system should be situated within each institution of learning. An institution-based support team established for the particular purpose of providing support within a particular learning context is a method that has proved to be successful within many countries, including many parts of South Africa. A variety of models have already been developed in this context. Below are some of the functions and participants of such teams:

The primary *function* of this site-based team would be to support the teaching and learning process at the site of learning by identifying and addressing learning difficulties through gathering information and organising information sessions on inclusion, putting in place a plan that sets objectives for inclusion, and establishing partnerships with parents.

The team could include representatives of educators, teaching assistants, parents and learners, with educators, given their responsibilities to provide effective support, constituting the majority of its membership. Educators with specialised competencies in the areas of life skills education, counselling and/or learning support could play a central role in the establishment of these teams. Itinerant specialist services such as education support personnel and others, and other community resources could be drawn into the team when necessary, and

The success of these teams will depend on the assignment of a dedicated person or a portfolio responsible for the development and management of the team at the sites of learning. The co-ordinating function should ideally be undertaken by a person who has developed specialised competencies in the areas concerned.

3. What this Chapter means in practice

3.1 Under the leadership and direction of the Minister and where appropriate, the provincial MECs for Education, and with the advice of advisory bodies established for general, further and higher education and

training, the inclusive approach outlined in this Green Paper will be implemented in a progressive and managed manner.

3.2 The Department of Education and its provincial counterparts will work towards the 'infusion' of appropriate management and leadership competencies in all sections of the departments so that they can accommodate the full range of diverse learner needs, and recognise and address the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

3.3 Structures to facilitate inter-departmental and inter-sectoral collaboration and co-operation shall be established at all levels of the system national, provincial, district, and institution - to develop an inclusive and community-based approach to recognising and addressing the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

3.4 District Support Teams will provide a co-ordinated district support service on an inter-sectoral basis.

3.5 Institutional governance structures, within all bands of general, further and higher education and training, will be required to develop their competence to recognise and address the full range of diverse needs of learners and to address the causes and effects of learning difficulties.

3.6 Institution-based support teams, which will be the most important mechanisms for identifying and addressing learning difficulties within the institutional context, will be established.

3.7 Special schools or specialised settings will accommodate learners who are at risk of exclusion or learning breakdown as a result of severe social, emotional, psychological and medical problems which require ongoing and intensive support and intervention. Such institutions will also, within the district support team or service, provide a support service to ordinary public schools, FET institutions and other sites of learning.

CHAPTER 4

CURRICULUM AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This chapter focuses on the changes needed to increase the flexibility of the curriculum to accommodate a diversity of learner needs and what is required to enable educational institutions to become supportive and inclusive teaching and learning environments.

Introduction

1.1 Curricula are the most important contribution to learning difficulties and exclusion for many learners, whether they are in special schools or settings, or 'ordinary' schools and settings. These learning difficulties arise from within the various interlocking parts of the curriculum, such as the content of learning programmes, the language and medium of teaching and learning, the management and organisation of classrooms, teaching style and pace, time-frames for completion of curricula, the materials and equipment which have been available, and assessment methods and techniques. Learning difficulties and exclusion of this kind also arise from the physical and psychosocial environment within which learning occurs.

1.2 For learners in special schools and settings, and in special or remedial classes, adaptations to the curriculum have been made but learning programmes have been of variable quality across the different provincial education departments and institutions of learning.

1.3 The curriculum applicable at 'ordinary' public schools and settings, has until now not been accessible to all learners, in particular for those regarded as having 'special needs'. The diversity of needs in the learner population and the need for diverse educational strategies have not been acknowledged and addressed in mainstream education, and when learning has failed to be effective and resulted in exclusion, learners were usually forced to repeat, drop out on their own or were referred to specialists outside of the context in which the learning difficulties occurred.

1.4 Many public schools and other institutions of learning currently reveal a breakdown in the culture of learning, teaching and service or an ethos or culture that supports the teaching and learning process. Additionally, the learning environment of these institutions has not promoted a respect for either diversity or social inclusion.

1.5 The challenge therefore faced by the Ministry and the provincial departments of education is to develop a teaching and learning environment that accommodates diversity within the context of social inclusion and addresses the full range of diverse needs of the learner population within all aspects of the curriculum, in special schools and settings, and in 'ordinary' schools and settings.

1.6 Below we comment on the following matters: the physical and psychosocial environment of learning and teaching, learning programmes, media of learning and teaching, classroom management and teaching practices, materials and equipment, assessment and quality assurance. While below we provide a framework for educational practices which are consistent with the establishment of an inclusive education and training system, we need to focus on and prioritise those institutions, classes and programmes that provide education services to learners most profoundly affected by learning difficulties and exclusion.

2. The physical and psychosocial environment

2.1 The Ministry is committed to the goal of the holistic development of all sites of learning to ensure that an inclusive and supportive learning environment is developed. Public educational institutions should develop a vision of equality and inclusion and should accommodate a diversity of learners and promote social inclusion, and strategies should be pursued to achieve this goal. These should include the transformation of the physical environment such as buildings and grounds, the creation of an inclusive psychosocial philosophy and culture, the transformation of organisational structures and procedures, the development of technical support systems, and the development of all human resources including learners, staff, parents, management and governing bodies.

Creating an inclusive psychosocial philosophy and culture

2.2 The Culture of Learning, Teaching and Service (COLTS) Campaign was launched by the Ministry in 1996 to win the commitment of all South Africans behind building a just, equitable and high quality education and training system for all our people and to establish our education and training system on the basis of a culture of disciplined commitment to learning, teaching and service. The Ministry proposes to expand the COLTS campaign to include the development and articulation of a culture of learning, teaching and service which respects diversity and promotes social inclusion. Such a campaign would include promotional and programmatic aspects and would assist all sites of learning to become aware of and respond to their obligation to create inclusive environments that accommodate the diverse needs of the learner population.

2.3 Education support services at district and site level would assist in achieving the aims of an expanded COLTS. Innovative practices in overcoming barriers to learning and development would be included in COLTS 'best practice' publications as a way of demonstrating how inclusive environments which provide quality education for a diversity of learners can be created.

Barrier-free access to the physical environment

2.4 One particular aspect of the development of sites of learning that needs urgent attention is the creation of barrier-free physical environments. It is obvious that the manner in which the physical environment such as buildings and grounds is developed and organised contribute to the level of independence and equality that people with disabilities enjoy. The physical environment of most ordinary public sites of learning are not barrier free and even where they may be barrier-free accessibility has often been achieved on an ad hoc basis.

2.5 The *White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy* (1997) recommends mechanisms that can be put in place to create a barrier free society. The White Paper also recognises the central role of the National Environmental Accessibility Programme (NEAP) in addressing physical barriers to learning. The *National Building Regulations* of 1986 set out requirements for barrier-free access, but according to the White Paper, these regulations have not been well monitored. The result is that schools, clinics and other public buildings continue to be built without proper regard to these barrier-free requirements. The cost of accessibility is often cited as a reason for the lack of a barrier-free environment, yet the NEAP has calculated that it generally does not add more than 0,2% to the overall cost of development if accessibility is incorporated into regional, town and building design.

2.6 Space and costs norms for buildings, including grounds should focus on the design and construction of new education buildings as well as the renovation of existing buildings. In this regard, the Ministry will consult with the NEAP and other relevant stakeholders and role-players to develop national norms and minimum standards for barrier-free access. To facilitate this process, a representative from NEAP will be invited to participate in the Committee for Space and Cost Norms for Education Buildings of the Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM).

Health promoting sites of learning

2.7 The Health Promoting Schools concept is a global World Health Organisation initiative that offers a holistic, preventative and promotive approach to addressing learning difficulties. In this regard the concept of health is understood in its broadest sense and includes our physical, psychological, social, spiritual and environmental well being. This approach encourages multi-sectoral co-operation to address the full spectrum of health needs.

2.8 The health promoting initiative includes a range of strategies which focus on the development of health promoting policies such as:

Developing safe and supportive learning and teaching environments.

Building partnerships with local communities.

Developing comprehensive health and life skills education programmes, and

Establishing support services which provide preventative, curative and rehabilitative interventions to achieve well being.

2.9 Learners are the keys in health promotion initiatives through the support which learners provide each other and through dissemination of knowledge, attitudes and skills regarding health and development.

2.10 The health promoting schools approach has been introduced and developed in South Africa. National and provincial Ministries and Departments, in particular Health and Education, have formulated various forms of health promoting school network initiatives and individual school development projects. Provincial initiatives have revealed the value of such an approach for institutional development and the provision of support services within a community-based approach. This approach has also brought together various role-players and stakeholders to promote development.z

2.11 While the health promoting initiative has been primarily limited to schools, the Ministry believes that it should be expanded to other learning contexts since all sites of learning could benefit from it. The Ministry

will therefore continue its collaboration with the Ministry of Health with a particular focus on extending this approach beyond schools.

3. Learning programmes

The National Qualifications Framework

3.1 The National Qualifications Framework is designed to promote the equivalence and articulation of education and training programmes. It is the framework that is approved by the Minister of Education in consultation with the Minister of Labour for the registration, accreditation and quality assurance of national standards and qualifications. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is also designed to offer multiple entry and exit points to all learners and to ensure learner mobility and the accumulation and portability of learning credits at the pace set by learners themselves. The NQF therefore provides the framework within which the curricula and qualifications for general, further and higher education will be developed and introduced at all education and training institutions.

3.2 New and integrated curricula which will offer a flexible mix of learning programmes should meet the needs and requirements of **all** learners, employers and further and higher education and training institutions.

3.3 In its report, the NCSNET/NCESS took the view that the new *National Curriculum Statement for General Education and Training, including ABET*, provide an enabling framework within which learning difficulties and exclusion could be addressed. They have also made some recommendations which are aimed at ensuring that these curriculum statements, and those to be developed for further education and training, accommodate the full range of diverse needs of the learner population such as those of learners with disabilities.

Curriculum 2005

3.4 The new outcomes-based curriculum adopted and which is now being phased in for general and further education and training, brand named Curriculum 2005, reflects a learner-centred approach. This has many advantages for learners who experience learning difficulties and exclusion. The principle of flexibility within the curriculum also contributes to meeting a diverse range of needs.

This approach:

Allows learners to make progress through the learning programmes at their own pace and style.

Credits learners' achievements at every level, irrespective of the pathway they follow and the rate at which they may acquire the necessary competence.

Allows learners to demonstrate their competence in the manner that is most appropriate to their abilities.

Allows multi-dimensional assessment methods to be used.

Measures progress against previous achievements and not against those of other learners, and

Places emphasis on learners progressing and experiencing success.

All of these accommodate learners who may be making progress at a slower (e.g. owing to a disability) or faster (e.g. 'highly abled' or 'gifted' learners) rate.

3.5 Within this context, the Ministry has taken the view that separate curricula should not be developed for learners who experience learning difficulties and exclusion. Learning outcome statements such as those for Grades R – 9 will therefore have application to all learning and all learners. However, the Ministry recognises that learning programmes and materials should be customised to accommodate differences in sensory modalities, learning styles and rates of learning. Outcomes and range statements should also be adapted and refined to accommodate the needs of some learners with severe intellectual disabilities. This will require further investigation within the context of the curriculum development processes.

3.6 Educator training and orientation to Curriculum 2005 should emphasise that all educators should take responsibility to provide for the full range of diversity in the learner population and provide educators with programmes to increase their confidence and competencies to offer inclusive education and training. In this regard expertise available in public schools for learners with special education needs, among education support personnel and within other education and training institutions should be drawn upon and be used optimally.

Life skills education

3.7 Until now the subject area Guidance has included some aspects of life skills education that relate in particular to personal, interpersonal, vocational and educational development. Guidance teachers have been primarily responsible for developing and offering these learning programmes.

3.8 The Ministry appreciates the importance of life skills education and accepts that it should be infused across the curriculum in all learning areas. This means that all educators should develop the competencies to offer life skills education.

3.9 In addition to this 'infusion' of life skills education across the curriculum, local and international experience have drawn attention to the need for a dedicated learning programme on life skills education. This approach of infusion and separation is considered to be necessary to ensure that life skills education is adequately accommodated in the curriculum in the face of many other competing pressures.

3.10 Life skills education should include education about disabilities and other matters relating to diverse learning needs. The development of positive attitudes and accepting and valuing diversity should be another important part of life skills education.

3.11 In the light of these observations the Ministry takes the view that the development of learning programmes and materials for life skills education should be undertaken by appropriately trained personnel. Educators who have been trained in Guidance should undergo appropriate orientation and training to ensure a more comprehensive approach to life skills education. The training of educators with specialised competencies in life skills education will also require our attention, so that, over time, every site of learning is able to offer appropriate programmes in life skills education. The long-term goal should be to train all educators to facilitate life skills education. Norms and Standards for Teacher Development that will be released during 1999 will take this into account.

3.12 Furthermore, to ensure a holistic, integrated, and comprehensive approach which involves education support personnel and relevant NGOs such as the Disabled People's Organisation (DPO), a multi-disciplinary and intersectoral approach should be taken.

Human movement

3.13 Human movement and development is one of the important specific outcomes described in the learning area of Life Orientation in the *National Curriculum Statement for Grade R – 9.* The Ministry expects that a similar requirement would be extended to the national curriculum statement for further education and training. In this respect 'ordinary' sites of learning must take cognisance of the rights of learners with disabilities and appropriate provision should be made for their human movement and development needs. They should be given the opportunity to participate in sport and leisure activities.

Transition to work

3.14 The *National Curriculum Statement for Grade R – 9* provides for the link of education to work. This is a critical matter for learners who experience learning difficulties and exclusion such as disabled learners. Like all other learners these learners also need to be prepared for inclusion within working communities. Specifically, the Ministry believes that the learnerships described in the *Skills Development Act, 1998* will provide an important avenue for linking structured learning to a structured work environment, and for providing access routes from learning to work for all learners including these who experience learning difficulties and exclusion. The Ministry will work closely with the Ministries of Labour and Welfare and Population Development to develop programmes to create pathways from learning to work.

3.15 In this regard, educators of life skills education can and should play a central role in developing mechanisms and programmes to facilitate the transition of all learners from school and further education and training institutions to work.

4. Medium of teaching and learning

4.1 The Ministry acknowledges that the medium of learning and teaching contribute significantly to learning difficulties and exclusion, and that this affects the access to and success within learning of many learners, including the deaf and blind and those who learn through a language which is not their home language(s).

South African Sign Language

4.2 Our Constitution determines that the Pan South African Language Board, "*must promote and create conditions for the development and use of sign language*"(Section 6(5) (a) (iii)). The *Language in Education Policy* (1997) also affirms the individual's right to be educated in the official language of his or her choice, including sign language, where this is reasonably practicable. The policy also recognises that the use of home languages or for learning and teaching is critical for acquisition of additional languages.

4.3 In its report, the NCSNET/NCESS show that the majority of members of the deaf community do not gain access to the curriculum at school and other institutions of learning through their first language, Sign Language. This is so despite many of them learning at schools for deaf learners. This is mainly because most of the educators have not been equipped to adequately facilitate learning through the medium of Sign Language. Some of the educators are able to use Signed Exact English that is not Sign Language.

4.4 International trends and developments in deaf education in our country support the achievement of bilingualism and bi-culturalism. In this approach deaf learners are taught South African Sign Language (SASL) as a first language which is the basis for the acquisition of a second spoken or written language. Bilingualism is also seen as important for the promotion of equality and the social inclusion of the deaf in our society.

4.5 The *Language in Education Policy (1997)* includes SASL as a medium of instruction. In this regard the Ministry accepts that Sign Language medium learning sites should have the same standing as other medium educational institutions such as Afrikaans or Zulu medium institutions. The Ministry recognises that while Sign Language is a first language to the deaf, the hearing community should also have access to it as a second or additional language so that sign language can become part of the language repertoire of our multilingual society. The Ministry will also give attention to how Sign Language can become part of all teacher training. In this regard, the Ministry is working closely with the DEAFSA to develop and phase-in national curricula for SASL in general and further education and training.

4.6 The Ministry acknowledges that the availability of SASL interpreters and the development of SASL competence at all levels of education must be addressed, and we will together with the provincial departments of education and relevant role-players and stakeholders explore various partnerships to build our capacity to offer learning programmes for the deaf and hearing community.

4.7 The Ministry believes that all educators and service providers, including hostel staff and house parents at SASL bilingual sites of learning, should receive training which will enable them to become proficient in SASL. Parents and the wider community should also have access to such training.

4.8 The Ministry is aware that there are hard-of-hearing learners who may have chosen to be instructed through aural-oral learning and teaching methods. In these circumstances aural-oral interpreters and note-takers may be required to provide assistance to learners.

Braille

4.9 Braille is not a spoken 'language', but it is the primary means for the blind and some partially sighted learners to gain access to the written word. Braille is also the basic means for a learner who is blind or who has very low vision to acquire literacy skills. It is the means by which such learners can read their own work as well as access general literature. Braille enhances the understanding of the use of punctuation, spelling and the construction of sentences in a way that oral work is unable to do.

4.10 Learners who are blind or have very low vision should achieve full access to the curriculum. This can be achieved through teaching literacy through Braille and making available Braille equipment and Braille learning materials. Public schools for learners who are blind and other relevant community organisations and institutions can play a central role in assisting the Ministry and the provincial departments of education to develop our capacity to address these challenges.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Methods

4.11 Various augmentative and alternative communication methods are used by those learners who have limited or no functional speech. Strategies employed to support such learners include the use of aided systems such as electronic speech output devices and unaided systems such as gestural systems. Learners requiring alternative and augmentative methods of communication should have access to equipment and facilitators skilled in the appropriate methods required and support should be provided by institution-based support teams.

Learning through a second language

4.12 Many learners are educated through the medium of a language that is not one of their home languages. This is often out of choice but in many instances because no other alternative is available. In this

situation learning difficulties are created which are rooted in the curriculum and the philosophy and culture of the institution. These learning difficulties are often not seen as system related, but as learner related, and such learners are often, erroneously, labelled as 'slow' or are referred to special classes or public schools for learners with special education needs.

4.13 The Ministry has noted the many efforts to address these challenges. Every effort should be made to ensure that language support is available to those learners who require it so that they too can gain proficiency in the medium of learning and teaching of the institution. This could best be facilitated and co-ordinated by institution-based support teams such as academic development programmes within higher education institutions.

5. Classroom management and teaching practices

5.1 Facilitating full participation in the curriculum, assessing learner progress and managing learning and the classroom are central to any educator's role and responsibilities. This Green Paper, with its focus on inclusion, opens up an entirely new set of challenges for all educators. In this respect, educators will be required to provide quality education that acknowledges and accommodates diversity and promotes social inclusion. The different needs of learners, such as their learning style and pace should be acknowledged and accommodated. Educators should be flexible in terms of their teaching approaches and should pursue various strategies to meet the different learning needs within their classrooms, lecture halls and other learning sites.

5.2 There are a variety of teaching strategies that can make full use of diversity to strengthen the teaching and learning process. A departure from traditional instructional arrangements towards for example small group or peer-mediated learning can draw on different skills within groups and facilitate inclusion and participation by all.

5.3 Negative stereotypes of learners with disabilities or learners who are 'different' from the norm in the classroom are highly prevalent in South African society and classrooms. A major challenge in the management of 'ordinary' classes and lecture halls is therefore to address discriminatory attitudes and facilitate mutual respect for differences.

5.4 The Ministry believes that there is an urgent need for provincial education departments to provide, through district-based support teams and educational institutions, educator development programmes which will equip our educators with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to increase their repertoire of teaching practices and their ability to develop a supportive learning environment. Organisational arrangements at educational institutions should also be adapted to promote and support flexible and innovative teaching and learning practices. Timetables could be arranged in such a way as to maximise opportunities for learners with diverse needs to be accommodated. Class timetables should enable learners to work at their own pace and keep them fully engaged in the learning process.

6. Material and equipment

6.1 Access to appropriate materials and equipment is essential for facilitating full access for all learners to the learning process. In this regard teaching and learning materials and assistive devices are required by some learners with disabilities (e.g. Braille) and are essential for their full participation in the curriculum. On

the other hand, the availability of teaching and learning materials is no guarantee of the participation of all learners in learning.

Teaching and learning materials

6.2 Teaching and learning materials for classroom use should be evaluated to ensure that the full range of diverse learning needs of all learners are accommodated. For example, the reliance of many learning materials on diagrams and graphics to explain concepts may make them unsuitable for use with visually impaired learners. In addition, teaching and classroom practices will require modification. This could include direct touching of concepts, use of items for illustration and extra time given to such learners to complete work. The use of modern information and communication technologies is also becoming increasingly important for facilitating inclusion. Materials may have to be modified or substituted for certain learners such as visually impaired learners. In this regard the national guidelines on learner support material should be reviewed and amended.

6.3 Partnerships could be established with public schools for learners with education needs and other institutions with appropriate expertise and relevant services to share experiences and services with 'ordinary' public schools and institutions.

Assistive Devices

6.4 Assistive devices and appropriate technology refer to equipment or adaptations to equipment that facilitate learning and the independence of learners. Such services and technology include mobility devices, hearing aids, Braillewriters, adapted access computers, magnifying glasses and voice synthesisers. Some of these devices relate to functional independence while others are directly learning-related.

6.5 The *White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy* (1997) has stressed that access to appropriate and affordable assistive devices is essential for people with disabilities to exercise their rights and responsibilities and to participate as equal citizens in society and learning. Without access to these services, people with disabilities will continue to experience great difficulties in securing their rights to education, employment and to participation in other social and cultural activities. At the same time though, access to assistive devices must be supported by the availability of necessary accompanying human skills such as teaching and support skills.

6.6 The Department of Health has developed and published national norms and standards for assistive devices which relate to functional independence which should be provided with primary health care. Arising from this, a list of essential assistive devices for functional independence was developed. The Ministry of Education proposes the development of a similar list of essential learning-related assistive devices for learning sites and will initiate the necessary investigations in this regard.

6.7 The use of modern information and communication technology in facilitating curriculum access has opened new and exciting possibilities for inclusion, at a distance and on-site, but was not investigated by the NCSNET/NCESS. The National Centre for Educational Technology and Distance Education within the Department of Education has since initiated an investigation into this matter.

7. Assessment to address learning difficulties and exclusion

7.1 Assessment procedures have until now been determined by the nature and availability of education support services. Where services were staffed by highly qualified, multi-disciplinary specialist teams,

assessment of and provision for those experiencing learning difficulties and exclusion have generally been based on complex, individualised and expensive delivery modes. While this delivery mode was freely available to those advantaged under apartheid, the majority of learners in disadvantaged communities, in 'ordinary' or special public schools and settings, have had limited or no access to this assessment service.

7.2 The earliest efforts to provide specialised education have established a close link between assessment and placement of learners. Recently, a strong global movement has emerged which supports the view that the main purpose of assessment should be to inform and facilitate effective and efficient teaching and learning and to identify types of support, which are required by learners. The Ministry supports this view and believes that guidelines for assessment and support should be developed within this approach.

Early identification and intervention

7.3 The Ministry fully appreciates the importance of assessment and interventions during the early phase of life. It is during the pre-schooling years that learning difficulties such as severe disabilities are most likely to be identified. Community-based clinics are in the best position to conduct an initial assessment and plan a suitable course of action in conjunction with parents and personnel from various social services such as education. In order to ensure the continuity of such services throughout learning, the Ministry recognises that it is essential that links be established between community-based clinics and other service providers and the education and training system. Once learners have entered the formal education system, school-based support teams should be involved centrally in identifying 'at risk' learners and addressing learning difficulties.

Continuous institution-based assessment

7.4 In the new curriculum policy for general education and training, assessment is described as a continuous and flexible process that provides support to the learner and feedback into teaching and learning. The _Assessment Policy in General Education and Training, Grade R to 9 and ABET_ requires that a variety of assessment methods be employed to measure the progress learners are making and that performance or achievement be measured against the specific outcomes. It recommends that such methods include informal monitoring by observation, formal use of appropriate and approved standardised tests, oral questions and answers, conferencing, interviewing, self-assessment, self-reporting and peer assessment.

7.5 The new assessment policy also requires that continuous assessment be undertaken with a variety of suitable assessment tools and techniques. It requires, in this regard, that "_all educators should have a sound knowledge of what each technique offers. These include portfolio assessment, observation sheets, journals, tests, project work and assignments. A balanced combination of these techniques should be employed to ascertain achievement of learners as fairly and transparently as possible._"

7.6 All assessment policies for general and further education and training should incorporate the identification of learning difficulties. In this regard the new assessment policy will require further and ongoing review. The role of institution-based support teams will be central in the development and delivery of appropriate assessment methods, tools and techniques.

Role of educators

7.7 Any assumption that education support personnel will in future be able to continue a primary focus on individual assessments of learners experiencing learning difficulties is unrealistic. Rather than perpetuating an expectation that assessment of learning difficulties is a referral-driven process that is the responsibility of education support personnel, assessment should be conceptualised as the central responsibility of educators with the support of institution-based support teams. Where appropriate and necessary, assessment should be conducted by specialist education support personnel in a manner that places the educator at the centre of the process.

Educator support

7.8 The central role that educators shall play in assessing and addressing learning difficulties will require that they be provided with guidelines and ongoing training. Such support should be provided by education support personnel. The Ministry recognises the need for and will, together with the provincial departments of education, facilitate a programme for the training and orientation of educators and education support personnel to their new roles and responsibilities.

Role of education support personnel in assessment

7.9 As discussed earlier, education support personnel should provide educators and institution-based support teams with appropriate guidelines, training and support so that educators can respond to the particular needs of learners and address learning difficulties. Specialised interventions which institution-based teams cannot provide should be made available by education support personnel. By reducing the traditional involvement of support personnel in time-consuming 'testing' or specialist assessment functions, support personnel and psychologists employed by education departments can in this manner use their expertise to address other needs which can positively impact on the learning experiences of many more learners.

Parent and learner involvement in assessment

7.10 The Ministry accepts that parents and learners should become an integral part of all assessment processes. In this regard parents should have full access to records of their children and not be denied access on the grounds that the reports are intended only for other professionals. Parents and learners should understand their rights in respect of assessment procedures, should be able to make informed decisions and should be empowered to play a more active role in the process of assessment.

Standardised tests

7.11 It is the responsibility of the Ministry to develop policy on edumetric and psychometric testing. The recommendations made by the NCSNET/NCESS will contribute to this process, as will further investigations which will be undertaken by the Department of Education.

7.12 The Ministry concurs with the view of NCSNET/NCESS that policies which require the administration of standardised tests can be justified only if there is a reasonable guarantee that no learners participating in the assessment will be disadvantaged in any way and if the results will contribute to a better understanding of the learner's needs in relation to the curriculum.

7.13 The validity of many tests used for placement is now being questioned seriously. It is the Ministry's view that urgent attention should be given to the re-evaluation of all standardised tests prescribed by the provincial departments of education. Only tests which have proven usefulness in identifying learning difficulties and exclusion should become part of the assessment process. In this regard the routine administration of group tests of intelligence should be discontinued.

8. Promoting and assuring quality

8.1 Quality assurance is important for the development of a responsive curriculum and responsive institutions that provide accessible and supportive learning. The primary responsibility for quality assurance rests with educational institutions and international and local experience show that quality is driven primarily from within organisations and institutions.

8.2 The management of quality is multi-faceted, involving the setting and management of standards with respect to qualifications, learning, teaching and training, assessment, management and leadership, and educational resourcing. An important aspect of the management of quality is continuous improvement which should be internalised by staff and institutionalised through institutional strategic planning and policy-making processes.

8.3 Quality assurance also requires external validation, in accordance with the requirements of the *South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995 (Act No 58 of 1995).*

8.4 The aim of quality assurance is to achieve quality education. This Green Paper has as its overarching aim the furthering of the agenda to provide quality education for **all** learners in South Africa, including those learners who are most vulnerable and who have been identified as a priority within this policy. It is imperative that all mechanisms developed by the national and provincial departments of education, and educational institutions should take into account the challenges to quality, which are highlighted in this Green Paper. In particular, monitoring and evaluation of curriculum and assessment and institutional development - which are essential elements of effective quality management systems - should focus on the extent to which the full range of diverse needs of the learner population are being acknowledged and accommodated, and learning difficulties and exclusion addressed.

9. What this chapter means in practice

9.1 Institutional development highlighted in this Green Paper will focus on developing the capacity of education institutions to recognise and address diversity within the context of social inclusion. While we provide a framework for educational practices that are consistent with the establishment of an inclusive education and training system, we will focus on and prioritise those institutions, classes and programmes that provide education services to learners most profoundly affected by learning difficulties and exclusion.

9.2 Special efforts will be focused on developing inclusive sites of learning which provide access to most learners – physically in terms of buildings and grounds, and educationally in terms of curriculum and support systems.

9.3 New curriculum initiatives, at all levels of education and training will focus on the inclusion of the full range of diverse needs of the learner population.

9.4 Materials and equipment, in particular assistive devices, will be made progressively accessible and available to those learners who cannot gain access to learning because of a lack of appropriate resources.

9.5 Assessment processes will address barriers to learning and development, and new policies and practices will be reviewed and revised to ensure that the needs of all learners are acknowledged and addressed.

9.6 Existing quality assurance mechanisms at all levels of education and training, and at all sites of learning, will facilitate the development of quality education for **all** learners including those who are disabled.

CHAPTER 5

UTILISATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

This chapter focuses on the utilisation and training of educators and support personnel, both pre- and in-service, which will be central to the success of an inclusive education and training system. It explains the competencies required by educators and the personnel responsible for the provision of appropriate support at all levels of an inclusive, community-based support system and how support teams should be organised and function at district and site level. It also describes the training needs of all personnel in the education system and the community who will need to play a role in addressing learning difficulties and exclusion.

1. Introduction

1.1 In their report, the NCSNET/NCESS found that many educators who work at all levels of the education and training system are ill-equipped and lack the confidence to address diversity in their classrooms and lecture halls. The report cites inadequate pre- and in-service training as the central explanation for educators having difficulty in responding to and addressing diverse learning needs and learning difficulties and exclusion.

1.2 For the education and training system to meet the learning needs of all learners and to assure their right to quality education, transformation should take place at all its levels and functions, including its human resources. In this chapter, the Ministry identifies the implications of this transformation process for our education human resources and puts forward the competencies it considers essential for them to fulfil new responsibilities. The chapter also outlines the key functions, responsibilities and training requirements of personnel within a team approach and describes the essential competencies that will be required to provide an efficient and effective support service. Central to the training strategies outlined here is the development and strengthening of partnerships with other key role-players such as parents and the optimal use of community resources.

1.3 As we have stated earlier, the Ministry takes the view that maximum use should be made of available specialist support and that the model of individualised support which places its focus on remedying deficits within learners and sites of learning is not appropriate in the new educational paradigm. This is so since learner and educator self-sufficiency should be optimised by building capacities at the institution where teaching and learning actually occurs. Our focus on establishing institution- or community-based support systems is an acknowledgement that there are skills and expertise to be found, utilised and developed amongst our educators and within our communities.

2. Provision and utilisation of human resources

The development of a flexible and integrated support system

2.1 The inclusive education and training system will require that the organisation of support services be based on a flexible network of service providers. In such a system, networking and co-ordination of available services, rather than reliance on a pre-determined core of specialist service providers is what becomes important.

2.2 This conceptualisation of education support services means that in the future our focus should be on the identification of a pool of accessible service providers and the fostering of service delivery partnerships at all levels of the education and training system. In addition, the concepts of community responsibility, teamwork and inter-sectoral collaboration should be developed among all service providers and role players, including those who have until now been ignored or under-utilised like NGOs and parents.

2.3 In practice, this will mean that at any point in time the composition of a support team, particularly at district level, will vary according to the availability of service providers, the availability and capacity of community resources and the specific learning difficulties that need to be overcome. A new flexible system will also enable those who plan and co-ordinate the utilisation of human resources to direct their efforts at the development and appropriate utilisation of expertise rather than be hamstrung by shortages of specialist personnel.

Providing support at national and provincial levels

2.4 The inclusive education and training system will require that all personnel in every division of the national and provincial departments of education have the competence and an awareness of matters which relate to recognising and addressing learning difficulties and exclusion.

2.5 In this regard, the Ministry endorses the recommendations of the NCSNET/NCESS on the key competencies that would be essential for each division in national and provincial departments of education to fulfil their responsibilities. These competencies are:

Knowledge of the full range of needs which can be found in any learning context and the nature and extent of the prevailing obstacles or obstacles which may arise and could lead to learning difficulties and exclusion.

Knowledge and expertise on how to facilitate the development of effective learning and teaching for specific learning needs such as those of learners with disabilities. This would include knowledge about the provision of appropriate assistive devices and materials and the allocation of resources according to the key areas of need.

Knowledge on how to develop the capacity of all levels of the education and training system to address diversity and overcome learning difficulties and exclusion.

Knowledge of the full range of support services and enabling mechanisms that could be accessed to provide support to learners and the system.

The ability to facilitate inter-sectoral collaboration with other government departments and to establish constructive partnerships and working relationships with stakeholders and role players such as community-based organisations and non-governmental organisations, and

Capacity to monitor and report on developments to ensure that learners are not marginalised or excluded because of differences or difficult circumstances, in particular those learners who are most vulnerable.

District pools of service providers

2.6 The present support system allows for education support personnel who are employed by education departments to be appointed at both district and institution level (such as special schools). In this situation a large section of our personnel provide support only to selected schools and settings and their skills are not available to the vast majority of schools and the broader learner community. Education support personnel who are appointed at institution level may also have different and more favourable conditions of service than those who are appointed at district level. In the light of this the Ministry supports the recommendation of the NCSNET/NCESS that in future all education support personnel be supplied by provincial education departments at district level as part of the district-based support team and under equitable conditions of service. Such an approach would ensure that support services are available for the entire learning system and to all learners who may experience learning difficulties and exclusion rather than only to a minority of public sites of learning.

2.7 This approach, of establishing a district pool of service providers, can best be operationalised through two kinds of organisational frameworks. In this regard, provincial departments of education are best able to determine the organisational framework best suited to them. However, the approach that is adopted should ensure the optimal and efficient utilisation of personnel, while, as far as is possible, retaining the services of specialist personnel such as therapists and psychologists. The two options which could be considered for implementation by provincial departments of education are the following:

Option 1: All personnel who provide support could be based at and operate from a district office. Work performed at the institution level will be according to needs identified and personnel will maintain a flexible, district focus ensuring that all institutions and all learners within the district are provided with support where appropriate.

Option 2: All personnel could still be employed at the district level. However, where provision of on-site services by education support personnel is essential within institutions, such personnel could be assigned to such institutions by the district office in consultation with the provincial department and with the principal of the institution. Education support personnel could then fall under the jurisdiction of and be accountable to the principal of the institution.

2.8 In the approach outlined here, the mode of service delivery of the district support team would be indirect and consultative, and would focus on providing support to the teaching and learning process and to the institution as a whole. The provision of support by individual members of the team to individual learners will be the exception rather than the rule and will only occur when other institution-based interventions have not proved effective. In operationalising this framework it will be essential for provincial departments of education to conduct appropriate field-tests prior to implementation at scale.

Competencies of the district support team

2.9 An effective and efficient community-based model of support can best be operationalised by the inclusion of a range of competencies and experiences, such as specialised skills practised by persons with specialist training and other more generally orientated competencies which are relevant to addressing learning difficulties and exclusion.

2.10 The Ministry appreciates that the reorganisation of support personnel within the model outlined here may influence the conditions of service of some support personnel. The Ministry will investigate this matter and will make proposals to the Education Labour Relations Council.

These proposals shall take into account the following matters:

Equity in working conditions and remuneration.

Flexibility in conditions of service including hours of work, leave and benefits.

Access to appropriate career development paths for all support personnel.

Accreditation and minimum qualifications for support personnel, including those support personnel who because of their specialised skills require accreditation from professional councils and associations, and

Clarification of areas and guidelines for support interventions governed by professional councils and associations.

Support Provision at Site-of-Learning Level

2.11 The Ministry believes that each educational institution should select a model of service delivery that will enable it to respond to its unique circumstances. Such a model should also take into account the level of its need and the availability of expertise within the community, the district and the province.

2.12 As we described earlier, the primary functions of the institution-based support teams shall be to support the learning and development process by addressing individual learner and institution needs. In this manner they shall contribute to identifying, minimising, addressing and preventing learning difficulties and exclusion.

2.13 In its report, the NCSNET/NCESS, recommended that each institution-based support team should be co-ordinated by a member of staff through a dedicated post or portfolio for this purpose at the institution, and that co-ordinators should be equipped with diverse competencies, such as facilitation skills, promotion of respect for diversity, co-ordinating and networking skills, knowledge of learning difficulties and strategies to address these. The Ministry believes this recommendation is critical to achieving inclusion and will investigate its practical application.

Teaching assistants

2.14 Institutions that accommodate learners who are most vulnerable to learning difficulties and exclusion may require additional support to enable learners to gain access to the curriculum. The Ministry will investigate the use of teaching assistants who could be able, under the direction of the teacher or education support personnel, to provide additional assistance and strengthen the learning and teaching environment.

2.15 In this regard, the Ministry has taken note that some specialised schools employ teaching assistants such as nurse aides and teacher aides, but that there has until now been no clear role definition for them. Furthermore, the vast majority of ordinary public schools have not considered or utilised such support.

3. Training, development and support of personnel

General Guidelines

3.1 An inclusive education and training system which is responsive to diversity will require that considerable resources be directed at the orientation and training of all personnel, especially educators. Personnel who form part of the education support services of provincial departments of education and other personnel with relevant competencies will be important participants in this re-orientation and training programme.

3.2 In this regard, personnel development programmes should form an integral component of institutional development.

3.3 For the change processes which are outlined in this policy document to be effectively implemented and adequately supported, all personnel within national and provincial head offices should be provided with orientation and training programmes.

3.4 The following guidelines should be taken into account in the development of training programmes:

Partnerships and networks which are aimed at the optimal use of limited resources should be established between training institutions, educational institutions that are organised into clusters, individual educational institutions and non-governmental agencies who work with teachers and districts.

Personnel development programmes should target the redress of historic imbalances with respect to race, gender and disability.

Training programmes should facilitate the acquisitions of portable skills, multi-skilling and lifelong learning.

Training programmes should be undertaken within existing initiatives at all levels of the education and training system so that the recognition and addressing of learning difficulties and exclusion form an integral part of such initiatives, and

Training programmes and courses are accredited on the National Qualifications Framework and are recognised by the South African Council of Educators (SACE).

Orientation and professional development of educators

3.5 The Ministry takes the view that equipping educators with the knowledge and skills to recognise and respond appropriately to the full range of learning needs and to address learning difficulties and exclusion should be central to all aspects of their training and professional development. These considerations have been central to be development of the *Norms and Standards for Teacher Development* that will be published during 1999. These norms and standards stipulate the critical and developmental outcomes which will form the basis of learning programmes which will equip our educators with the skills, knowledge and values to be able to cope with diverse learning needs and to address learning difficulties and exclusion. The norms and standards also include the specialised competencies that will be essential for some educators to meet the full range of diverse learning needs. In this regard, electives could include life skills education, counselling and learning support. The Ministry recognises that until now little attention has been given to the development of disability studies as a focus of learning in teacher training. Special attention would be given to this matter through work with appropriate institutions and bodies.

3.6 The following critical and developmental outcomes shall be considered for inclusion in all learning programmes for the training of educators.

The ability to understand the nature and extent of learning difficulties and to recognise their impact on the learning and teaching process.

A critical and informed understanding of the nature of diversity in society and the ability to contribute to a health-promoting ethos within the institution.

The ability to work in and establish teams and networks and other effective support systems.

The ability to facilitate anti-bias and respect for one another in the classroom, lecture halls and other places of learning.

The ability to utilise conflict management and mediation, and

The ability to organise and manage classrooms, lecture halls and other places of learning in a way which enables different learning needs to be met optimally.

3.7 Training and professional development of educators should also enable educators to identify and address learning difficulties and exclusion that are critical to the particular phase of learning and the institution.

3.8 Institutions that provide educator training have a critical role to play in the professional development of educators through in-service and pre-service training. The Ministry appreciates that many non-governmental organisations are well placed to provide education and training programmes that offer the competencies that are essential for our special learning needs. Accordingly, the Ministry will encourage the formation of partnerships with non-governmental organisations and training institutions to provide appropriate training and professional development.

Orientation and professional development of support personnel

3.9 In line with the inclusion approach that is outlined in this Green Paper, the roles and responsibilities of support personnel should undergo transformation. These new roles and responsibilities would include:

The providing of support to all institutions through facilitating institutional and curriculum development.

The providing of support to educators and parents in assessment.

The providing of appropriate support and programmes.

The development of preventative and promotive programmes such as health promoting strategies, and

The overcoming of learning difficulties and exclusion through appropriate interventions where the institution-based teams are unable to provide solutions.

3.10 Education support personnel should have access to Sign Language interpreter training. In this regard the Ministry will support sign-language interpreter initiatives which can be registered on the National Qualifications Framework.

3.11 To facilitate and achieve a shift to these new roles and responsibilities, education support personnel should be provided with the necessary orientation and professional development. Furthermore, all pre-service and in-service training courses for education support personnel should be revised to accommodate their programmes, roles and responsibilities.

3.12 The Ministry believes that a community partnership approach – which involve higher education institutions, governments and community-based organisations is appropriate for the training and professional development of education support personnel.

3.13 Education support personnel should provide services that focus on and involve the 'whole school' or place of learning and the community. In this regard training and professional development programmes should shift their focus away from a 'deficit', problem orientated philosophy of intervention, towards one within which support services focus on strengths, competencies and development. Courses should also offer an interpretive approach to inter-sectoral work, empowerment, capacity building, diversity, human rights, community development and institution-based team building and support.

3.14 In-service courses should be developed in a collaborative manner between those institutions and organisations who are responsible for training and professional development of educators and education support personnel teams such as therapists, social workers, nurses and psychologists. Such courses should contribute to the development of appropriate education support services rather than specific expertise. These should also focus on the sharing of critical skills, knowledge and values between team members and the utilisation of community resources such as parents and community-based organisations such as those of disabled people.

Education management development

3.15 Effective organisation, management and leadership are central to developing educational institutions that are able to accommodate a diverse range of learning needs. In this regard the abilities of education managers to manage and provide appropriate support services to address learning difficulties and exclusion should be greatly enhanced.

3.16 Accordingly, education managers should participate in ongoing professional development programmes which will assist them to develop the management and leadership skills which are essential to accommodating diversity and addressing learning difficulties and exclusion. Such programmes should in future be integrated into pre-service and in-service training programmes that focus on education management and leadership.

Partnership with parents

3.17 The establishment of partnerships with parents is essential for the success of the inclusive approach to learning and development outlined in this Green Paper. Such partnerships should enable parents to participate in the planning and implementation of inclusion activities.

3.18 The development and strengthening of parent organisations as recommended in the National Programme of Action for Children is essential for building partnerships. In this regard NGOs, organisations of disabled people and parents groups who have the relevant experience and expertise can play an important role in the provision of training and professional development programmes for educators, education support personnel, education managers and parents. They can also play an important role in the development and conduct of public awareness campaigns.

3.19 Partnerships should also prioritise the provision of support to parents of learners who experience learning difficulties and exclusion with special attention being given to single mothers and those parents who live in rural areas.

Community resources and NGOs

3.20 The development of a community-based support system will rely on the development and utilisation of all community resources such as community-based organisations, NGOs, organisations of the disabled and individuals such as health professionals and ordinary members of the community.

3.21 Such organisations and individuals should also have access to courses that can assist them to contribute to the development of an inclusive community-based support system.

3.22 Training courses should be developed to build a cadre of peer counsellors, to empower community leaders and to utilise community-resources most effectively.

4. What this chapter means in practice

4.1 A community-based support system which draws on the support and commitment of all education and training role-players and stakeholders shall be established as a basis for the development of an inclusive education and training system which accommodates diversity.

4.2 Priority attention shall be given to establishing district support teams that through partnerships draw on their community resources for inclusion.

4.3 New norms and standards for teacher education will include the development of competencies to address learning difficulties and exclusion and provide for a diversity of learning needs. Conditions of service and provision of education support personnel shall be reviewed to accommodate an approach that addresses learning difficulties and exclusion while retaining, as far as is possible, the services of specialist personnel.

4.4 Personnel at all levels of the system, especially educators shall be equipped with the capacity and the competencies to provide for the development of an inclusive education and training system which accommodates diversity. Institution-based teams shall be established to support learning by focusing on institution and learner needs.

4.5 Partnerships shall be established with parents so that they can participate in the planning and implementation of inclusion activities.

4.6 Community-based organisations, NGOs, organisations of the disabled, health professionals and ordinary members of the community will play a central role in building a new inclusive, community-based support system.

CHAPTER 6

A FUNDING FRAMEWORK TO SUPPORT INCLUSION

This chapter provides an overview of the key principles and strategies that should guide the development of funding policies for general, further and higher education and training. The chapter proposes and explains the strategic focus of the funding framework and provides guidelines for operationalising it through the existing funding policies of each band of education and training.

1. Introduction

1.1 We observed in the Green Paper on Further Education and Training (1998), that a funding framework involves the determination of national policies, objectives, targets and plans, requires the definition of quality, promotes equity, efficiency gains and value for money, and responsiveness and accountability of providers. A funding framework may also embody a set of incentives that encourage certain types of responses and discourage others.

1.2 Since this Green Paper strongly advocates inclusion in society and in education and training, the funding framework which is proposed seeks to promote this policy vision within the existing or emerging policy frameworks for higher education, further education and training, school education, early childhood development and adult basic education and training.

2. The present funding system

2.1 Until now, funding of 'special needs' has in the main been focused on the specialised or special schools. Funding has also, in the main, been directed towards the provision of highly specialised and cost intensive services. As a result, funding of 'special needs' has catered for a limited number of learners who are categorised as having 'special needs'.

2.2 Since funding is narrowly focused on 'special needs', little funding or support is offered to 'ordinary' schools and settings and educators who daily have to cope with learners experiencing learning difficulties and exclusion.

2.3 Funding of 'special needs' has also lacked coherence because of the absence of a comprehensive policy framework that includes all bands of education and training. Coherence across government ministries and departments has also been limited. As a result, available funds have not always been used to best effect.

2.4 Financial planning and accountability are weak and the dearth of published information means that learners are unable to make informed choices regarding programmes or providers.

2.5 Funding has until now been extremely unequal, with most historically black educational institutions receiving poor levels of funding. It has also been skewed, with most funding going to 'special schools', and little to early childhood development, adult basic education and training and further education and training. There is also very little training of the unemployed despite the availability of incentives for the disabled for this purpose with the Department of Labour.

2.6 Rates of return on a high per capita investment of public resources in 'special or specialised schools' are low, and few disabled learners are able to secure jobs on completion of learning. This is so since learning has until now not imparted the generic competencies that allow for transferable skills and lifelong learning, and few employers have taken the employment of the disabled as their responsibility.

2.7 The current deployment of education support personnel with the focus on the provision of support services to individual learners and the use of the resources of 'special schools or institutions' for a limited number of learners is inefficient.

2.8 Funding has until now followed providers, rather than learners and have not encouraged 'special schools or institutions' to become responsive to learners and their needs.

2.9 Notwithstanding these weaknesses of present funding arrangements for 'special education needs', there are some significant positive features such as the significant physical, material and human resources which are dedicated to 'special education needs', significant private sector contributions and the growing evidence that schools and settings for 'special education needs' are pursuing income generation activities.

3. Future challenges

3.1 The most immediate challenge facing a new funding framework is to redress the legacy of apartheid of backlogs and inequities. However, this should be achieved within the policy of inclusion, and a commitment to the accommodation of the full diversity of learning needs and the addressing of learning difficulties.

3.2 Accordingly, a new funding framework will have to cater for the expansion of provision as learning difficulties and exclusion are addressed and the full diversity of learning needs are accommodated within a single learning system. These will place further pressure on current levels funding of education and training.

3.3 Funding frameworks for general, further and higher education and training will have to cater for expansion of provision to disabled learners and other target groups who experience severe learning difficulties and who have been excluded from learning.

3.4 In line with the policy proposals contained in this Green Paper, funding policies would also have to cater for new modes of learning, barrier-free access, learner support, curriculum and assessment development, independent learning, personal fulfilment and holistic development, the development of pathways to sustainable employment and capacity development among all sites of learning, educators, education support personnel and education managers, in special schools and settings and 'ordinary' schools and settings.

3.5 Funding frameworks for general, further and higher education and training should be informed by the necessity of early identification and intervention and preventative programmes.

3.6 In addition to these challenges, general, further and higher education and training funding policies will have to cater for a range of national development needs, from establishing an inclusive society to consolidating democracy, reducing poverty among the disabled and those experiencing learning difficulties and exclusion, supporting community development and promoting a more equitable distribution of wealth.

3.7 The diversity of needs and challenges listed above translates into growing demands on the resources available for general, further and higher education and training. Although government expenditure on education and training is likely to grow somewhat as indicated in the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, other sources of funding will become even more essential and efficiency gains critical. Consequently, the central issues for financing the policy proposals that are contained in this Green Paper are how to promote efficiency and optimise the contributions of government, organised business and labour, other civil society-based organisations and households. While government will prioritise the provision of general education and training, it should be clear that it alone cannot meet the full spectrum of demands for further and higher education and training. Consequently, we will require the assistance of other sectors of our society to fulfil our promise of an inclusive democracy and improve the quality of life of all our people.

4. The division of financial responsibility

4.1 In terms of our Constitution, the provincial departments of education have responsibility for running and disbursing funds for general and further education and training. In this regard, the Ministry and provincial departments of education are bound by the Constitutional provisions that everyone has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education, and to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

4.2 In addition, the Departments of Labour, Welfare and Health also have responsibility for the provision of training, welfare and health programmes for the disabled.

4.3 While the bulk of funding for public providers comes from the national and provincial departments of education, institutions should obtain funding from other government departments, employers and households.

5. Funding policy and principles

5.1 The deficiencies in existing funding frameworks and the scale and complexities of the challenges of the policy proposals contained in this Green Paper requires the review and improvement of existing and new funding policies for general, further and higher education and training.

5.2 In 1997 government developed the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) as a three-year rolling plan for advancing its policy objectives through the national budget. The MTEF and the accompanying Medium-Term Policy Statement provide the wider funding policy context for the funding of general, further and higher education and training and the policy proposals contained in this Green Paper.

5.3 The following principles provide the basis for reviewing and improving the funding policies for early childhood development, school education, adult basic education and training, further education and training and higher education so that these policies could be responsive to the need to accommodate the diversity of learning needs and address learning difficulties and exclusion:

Departments of education should be enabled to fulfil their constitutional obligations to make basic education, including adult basic education available and accessible, and further education and training progressively available and accessible.

Funding should focus on the prevention of learning difficulties and exclusion which include early identification and intervention, addressing 'at risk' factors, developing the resilience of learners and others, and developing a safe and supportive environment for learners and other members of the learning community.

Funding policy should facilitate the creation of barrier-free learning in terms of transport and boarding facilities, buildings and grounds, curricula, support systems and medium of communication.

All resources in our institutions and communities should be used optimally and in a structured manner.

Government Ministries and Departments who have responsibilities which impact upon learning and development such as Education, Labour, Welfare, Health, Transport and Environment should work together and with civil society-based organisations to provide a comprehensive support network to all learners.

Funding should prioritise the professional development of educators, educator support service personnel and education managers.

Funding policies should enable institutions to cope with the learning needs of disabled learners and those experiencing learning difficulties and exclusion.

Funding policies should facilitate linkages and the sharing of resources between special schools and settings and 'ordinary' schools and settings.

Funding policies should be informed by and address the needs of young people at risk such as those who are awaiting trial or have been convicted and those who require placement in places of safety. In this regard, not every province has secure facilities thus placing the burden to provide such facilities on a few provinces. An investigation should be conducted on how we can alleviate this burden while we create similar capacities in the other provinces.

Funding policies should provide for the creation of partnerships with parents that enable them to participate in the planning and implementation of institution-based inclusion activities.

Funding policies should provide for research and development into the applicability and roles of the proposed teaching assistants and the field-testing of recommendations.

Funding policies should also provide for research and development on the creation of a list of essential learning-related assistive devices for learning sites, and

Funding policies should be informed by reliable management, planning and information systems at national, provincial and institutional levels.

6. What this chapter means in practice

6.1 In recognising the challenges and inequalities in the present funding provision within general, further and higher education and training in respect of the needs of those learners most vulnerable to learning breakdown and exclusion, all existing funding policies would be reviewed and improved to address learning difficulties and exclusion. New funding policies would be developed in relation to the general policies and funding principles put forward in this Green Paper.

CHAPTER 7

IMPLEMENTING THE GREEN PAPER

The Ministry is well aware that the proposals put forward in this Green Paper are ambitious and groundbreaking. At the same time, our Constitutional obligations, to ensure that general education and training, including adult basic education is accessible and available to all, and that further education and training is made progressively available and accessible to all, make change inescapable. Our Constitution also commits all of us to the establishment of an inclusive society and, in this regard, it is the responsibility of the Ministry to establish an inclusive education and training system. This chapter describes the structures and activities that will be necessary to establish an inclusive education and training system. They include proposals of application in the immediate-, short- and medium-term. Priorities and a plan of action for Phase One (1999-2000), Phase Two (2001-2005) and Three (2006+) are provided. The strategic implementation plan is characterised by a developmental, phased-in approach, optimal use of existing resources, the provision of professional development and support to all bands of the learning system, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

1. Introduction

The establishment of an inclusive learning system which accommodates the full diversity of learning needs and addresses learning difficulties and exclusion will not take place overnight. The challenges and needs are enormous and our resources limited. Yet we face immediate and urgent needs. We have a Constitutional obligation to establish an inclusive society and to make general education and training available to **all** and further education and training progressively available and accessible to **all**. Hundreds of thousands of learners who are currently within the learning system are experiencing learning difficulties but have little support. Educators faced with these challenges are intimidated, feel insecure, and believe that they lack the competencies that are necessary to provide appropriate professional support, and themselves receive little support from our education support services. In line with our collective Constitutional obligation to establish an inclusive society, new labour and public sector legislation require the employment of disabled citizens, and building regulations require obstacle-free access to facilities such as places of learning. In this regard, the education and training system must face up to its responsibilities and these challenges.

2. Phase One: 1999-2000

Building capacity and revising policies, legislation, and the competencies of advisory bodies

2.1 In beginning to implement the proposals put forward in this Green Paper, it will be important to match the capacity of government and the general, further and higher education and training bands to the roles proposed for them. In this regard, professional development programmes should focus on leadership and management development, the establishment of management information systems, and the 'infusion' of competencies necessary for addressing learning difficulties and exclusion within all branches and sections of the national and provincial departments of education.

2.2 Second, it will be important to review all existing policies and legislation for general, further and higher education and training to bring these in line with the proposals put forward in this Green Paper. Where policies and legislation are developed, such as for ABET and provincial education and training by provincial departments of education, these would be developed within the framework put forward in this Green Paper.

2.3 Third, it will be essential to review the membership of all existing advisory bodies to ensure that the appropriate expertise and representation enables these bodies to advise the Ministry and MECs for Education on the goals, priorities and targets for the successful establishment of an inclusive education and training system.

Establishing inter-governmental and inter-departmental coherence

2.4 As proposed in this Green Paper, the Ministry will initiate discussions with relevant departments to establish an inter-departmental committee that would deal with matters relating to the recognition and addressing of learning difficulties and exclusion.

2.5 Such a committee should be part of the National Programme of Action for Children, be under the leadership of the Department of Education, and include core departments such as Health, Welfare, Labour, Transport and the Office of the Status of Disabled Persons.

Raising public awareness

2.6 Public awareness, acceptance and promotion of inclusion will be essential for the establishment of an inclusive society and an inclusive education and training system. Accordingly, the Ministry will launch an information and advocacy campaign to communicate the policy proposals contained in this Green Paper, including the rights, responsibilities and obligations attached to these.

2.7 The Ministry will also continue its discussions with national stakeholders and role-players, in particular our national teacher organisations, to consolidate their support for the policy of inclusion and to review the rights, responsibilities and obligations attached to these.

Professional development and support of human resources

2.8 The Department of Education will, in collaboration with the provincial departments of education, develop an educator, education manager and education support personnel professional development and training strategy.

2.9 The Ministry will also require that all education and training institutions and programmes develop their capacity to incorporate matters relating to the accommodation of diversity and the recognition and addressing of learning difficulties and exclusion, especially within the following programmes:

Existing formal and non-formal education management development programmes.

Pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes, for all phases and bands of education provision, including core educator training programmes and programmes focused on the development of specialised competencies as outlined in this Green Paper.

Education support personnel development programmes.

Programmes focusing on the development of specialist education support personnel conducted by relevant professional bodies and associations, and

Existing programmes aimed at developing the capacity of parents.

Optimal utilisation of resources

2.10 As we described in Chapter 6, the diversity of needs and challenges outlined in this Green Paper translate into growing demands on the resources available for general, further and higher education and training. We also observed that, although government expenditure on education is likely to grow somewhat as indicated in the MTEF, other sources of funding will become even more essential and efficiency gains more critical. Consequently, the central issue facing the funding of the policy proposals is how to promote efficiency and optimise the contributions of government, organised business and labour and other civil society-based organisations and households. In this regard, the Ministry will, with the collaboration of provincial departments education, investigate the following strategies through appropriate field-tests:

Integrating existing education support personnel into district support teams with deployment to places of learning where most required.

'Twinning' and 'clustering' of places of learning to facilitate sharing of material and human resources.

Optimal use of existing human resources, including existing guidance teachers and learning support teachers, existing expertise in and outside of existing specialised schools and district support facilities, and relevant community groupings and people, especially people with disabilities and their organisations, and

Review and strengthen the capacities of special schools and settings and special and remedial classes in 'ordinary' schools and settings to fulfill their responsibilities.

Accommodating learners requiring secure care

2.11 With the support of the Ministry, and within the inter-governmental forums of the CEM and HEDCOM, provincial departments of education will review and develop their capacity to provide education and training for all their learners, including those requiring secure care or requiring specialised programmes and/or high levels of support. In the interim inter-provincial arrangements should be made to ensure that existing

facilities are optimally utilised so that learners currently in these learning contexts are not excluded from the education and training system.

2.12 The *Criminal Procedure Act* requires that children and youth in secure care have access to appropriate education. While it is the responsibility of the Department of Welfare to provide for these secure care facilities in each province, the Ministry of Education, together with the provincial departments of education, accepts that it has the responsibility to provide education and training to these children and youth who are placed in different forms of secure care. In the short- to medium-term, as the Department of Welfare develops its capacity to provide provincial secure care facilities within the context of their programmes, provincial departments of education will provide education and training opportunities to learners placed in these institutions or programmes. Provincial departments of education will also ensure that adequate support is provided to address the psycho-social needs of these learners and will assist institutions in transforming their teaching and learning environments. Support will also be provided to 'ordinary' schools to assist them in meeting the challenges of accommodating learners experiencing moderate to severe social, emotional and behavioural problems.

Accommodating learners outside the system

2.13 In order to open access to education and training opportunities for those learners who experience learning difficulties and exclusion, the Department of Education, in consultation with the provincial departments of education, will conduct an audit of these needs in the context of existing education and support provision. Then, national and provincial action plans will be developed to facilitate access for these learners.

3. Phase Two (2001 - 2005)

While Phase One focused on preparing our people, and in particular our educators, education managers, education support personnel, parents and places of learning for the establishment of an inclusive education and training system, Phase Two will see the focus shift to increasing the access of learners experiencing learning difficulties and exclusion.

Increasing access to an inclusive learning system

3.1 During Phase Two, all branches and sections of the national and the provincial departments of education will be required to have the capacity to understand and address diversity and learning difficulties so that they can now plan for and implement the progressive inclusion of learners who experience learning difficulties and exclusion.

3.2 In this regard, vulnerable learners of compulsory school-going age who are currently outside the education and training system will be prioritised for inclusion. Programmes to accommodate these learners, where appropriate, within adult, further and higher education and training will be encouraged. In addition, further and higher education and training institutions will be required to include in their institutional plans goals, priorities and targets for the addressing of learning difficulties and exclusion, and the accommodation of disabled learners and others who experience such learning difficulties and exclusion.

3.3 Since the Ministry is concerned not to exacerbate current 'mainstream dumping', it will, in collaboration with the provincial departments of education, develop appropriate mechanisms and support services to promote the access of, and accommodate prioritised learners.

3.4 During this phase, it is expected that the strengthened special schools and settings will begin to accommodate only learners who require high levels of specialised support to gain access to the curriculum or

learners who are placed in secure care by an order of a court of law. At the same time, these special schools and settings will begin to offer their services and programmes to 'ordinary' places of learning as part of district- and/or institution-learning-based support teams.

3.5 Provinces will also progressively develop and expand their capacities to address the needs of a variety of learners, such as those who require secure care by order of a court of law, so that inter-provincial movement of learners for these purposes is reduced and eliminated.

3.6 During this period the Ministry will require that all new schools and other places of learning comply with the relevant building standards to ensure obstacle-free access to buildings and grounds, and that existing buildings be progressively renovated to comply with these standards.

3.7 Access to assistive devices and materials, coupled with appropriate educator support, to facilitate access to the curriculum will be made progressively available.

Developing the inclusive community-based support system

3.8 During Phase Two, the national and provincial departments of education will be required to develop all levels of the inclusive community-based education support system which will comprise of:

National policies, legislation, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and the appropriate competencies among education managers, education specialists and administrative and support personnel to address learning difficulties and exclusion.

An inclusive provincial education support service, including provincial policies, legislation, goals, priorities and targets, within national policy and legislation, appropriate competencies among education managers, education specialists and administrative and support personnel, and appropriate programmes, resourcing mechanisms and structures to address learning difficulties and exclusion.

An inclusive and co-ordinated district-based support service, which uses optimally all resources available from 'ordinary' and special public schools and settings and provincial department offices, within provincial policies and legislation, and

An inclusive institution-based support team in which all staff share in making a contribution to the learning and development of all learners with the support of district-based support teams.

3.9 During this period, inter-departmental and inter-sectoral co-operation and collaboration within all bands of the learning system will promote a holistic and integrated approach to the provision of support to the education and training system and learners.

Ongoing human resource development

3.10 During Phase Two, all pre- and in-service educator and education support personnel development institutions and programmes will be required to provide core and specialised training in line with the proposals outlined in this Green Paper.

Partnerships with parents

3.11 Partnership programmes with parents will be put in place, initially on an experimental basis, so that they can play a significant role in governance and the development of goals, priorities and targets for institution-based service delivery.

Developing and piloting appropriate funding strategies

3.12 At the beginning of Phase Two, the review and the improvement of all funding policies for all bands of the education and training system in line with the proposals put forward in this Green Paper will be completed, and the Ministry will accordingly now phase in appropriate funding measures.

4. Phase Three (2005++)

4.1 The Ministry expects that Phase Three will see us continuing to expand access to education and training and education support services for learners who fail to learn effectively and who experience learning difficulties and exclusion.

4.2 However, this phase will see us focusing primarily on the quality improvement of education and training provision through the attainment of agreed quality benchmarks.

What this chapter means in practice

5.1 During Phase One, 1999-2000, we will review and improve all policies and legislation for all bands of education and training in line with the policy proposals forward in this Green Paper. We will build the capacities of our national and provincial departments of education, of our educators, education support personnel and education managers, and of our places of learning, especially those in general education and training, so that our capabilities match the policy proposals put forward here. We will review the competencies of all advisory bodies so that they can provide appropriate advice on the goals, priorities and targets for establishing an inclusive education and training system. We will establish an inter-departmental committee within the National Programme of Action for Children to promote a coherent national policy and to provide appropriate inter-sectoral services. We will raise public awareness and support for inclusion, and we will initiate steps to achieve the optimal use of all our existing human, physical and material resources. We will conduct an audit of all learners who fail to learn effectively and who experience learning difficulties and exclusion so that we can plan the expansion of their access to the education and training system.

5.2 During Phase Two, 2001-2005, we will expand access for vulnerable learners in line with the results of our audit of needs and plans. We will establish an inclusive community-based system, especially at district and institutional levels, to accommodate diversity and address learning difficulties and exclusion, and we will continue our human resource development initiatives.

5.3 During Phase Three, 2005+, we will place emphasis upon the improvement and quality assurance of the education and training services for all learners who fail to learn effectively and who experience learning difficulties and exclusion.