

Inclusive Education South Africa (IESA)

Organisational Profile



**Inclusive
Education**
SOUTH AFRICA

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1. IESA Overview & Objectives

Inclusive Education South Africa (IESA) is a registered NPO that has, since 1995, been committed to promoting and supporting positive models of Inclusive Education in schools, pre-schools and other centres of learning in South Africa.

To date, we are one of the only NPOs in South Africa that has the implementation of Inclusive Education as its primary objective. Our vision is of a fully inclusive society in which all people can participate to their fullest potential and where diversity is recognized, respected and promoted. We believe that this can best be achieved through **a fully inclusive education system** that meets the needs of all children in regular neighbourhood schools.

“Inclusive education is not something which has to happen in addition to education transformation in South Africa. It is the means through which education transformation will be achieved”

Tony Booth

Through collaboration with beneficiaries, donors, government and civil society, we aim to promote the goals and objectives of the National Development Plan 2030, specific to chapter 9.

Every child has the right participate in quality education and every child has the right to have access to the teaching and learning materials he/she needs in order to learn. For us to continue paving the way for the children of South Africa, we NEED your support.

Let’s create an environment where *every child is supported* to learn at their local neighbourhood school instead of traveling miles to meet their educational needs. No child should be discriminated against or excluded from education because of his / her learning ability/disability, socio economic background, gender, home language or cultural heritage.

Inclusive education South Africa provides information, advice and support to all education stakeholders on this journey to promote a common understanding of inclusive education. Our direct beneficiaries are our Educators in Pre and Primary schools willing and able to teach to the diverse learner population in their local schools and centres.

2. Statement of Need

Although we celebrated a 70.7% Matric pass rate in 2015 (a decrease on previous years), statistics have shown that nearly 70% of the learners who started Grade 1 in 2004 did not matriculate in 2015. With 2 out of 3 learners dropping out or lost in the system. From our vantage point, it is clear that our education system is failing in trying to educate our nation.

What we are facing as a nation in Early Childhood development and Education today:

- **Inadequate, poor quality early learning programmes.**
- **The inability of educators to Screen, Identify, Assess and Support the needs of diverse learners.**
- **The lack of parental involvement in education of their children.**

The Annual National Assessment results indicate that the South African learning environment is not conducive to optimal learning. Majority of learners in South African classrooms experience “barriers to learning” during the course of their Early Childhood Development and Primary School education.

Unless educators are equipped to identify and intervene at an early stage, Educational Outcomes will remain poor. Early intervention and identification of *barriers* significantly increases a child’s potential to achieve maximum learning potential. It takes a community to raise a child and it is the responsibility of all educators, principals, school governing bodies and district officials to strengthen support for learning, aid in the improvement of learner outcomes and impact future school dropout rates.

Our economy suffers because we are not educating our nation. Current statistics reveal that 500 000.00 disabled learners are currently NOT registered at schools. The future looks just as dim for learners with barriers currently lost in the system and have less chance of further education, tertiary study or entering the job market.

Barriers to learning are widespread in South Africa and are anything that stands in the way of a child being able to learn. These can be broadly categorised as follows:

- **Extrinsic barriers** (societal /environmental) such as extreme poverty, dysfunctional family units, community violence and high unemployment.
- **Intrinsic barriers** - Any specific learning barrier the child experiences within herself, such as a reading problem or cognitive impairment.
- **Systemic barriers** (caused by limitations in the education system itself) such as overcrowded classrooms, 2nd language teaching, inadequate facilities and a rigid curriculum.
- **Pedagogical Barriers** - Teachers do not have the highly differentiated skills needed for the diverse learning population.

Inclusive Education recognises the right of all children to feel welcomed into a supportive educational environment in their own community. It refers to the capacity of ordinary local schools to respond to the needs of all learners, including those requiring extra support because of social disadvantage, cultural difference, learning or physical disability or other barriers to learning.

Laetitia Brümmer – Senior Facilitator, IESA

ECD facilities and schools should be equipped with the necessary resources and skills to provide appropriate support to ALL learners.

3. IESA's Core Programmes

- **Government Capacity Development**

IESA collaborates with government departments (at national and provincial level) and district officials to build the capacity of government to achieve inclusive education goals. In support of the Department of Basic Education’s Action Plan 2014 towards the realization of Schooling 2030: Exposure to and support in implementing inclusive education policy, IESA shares successes, challenges and its inclusive education expertise with government to develop a common understanding and best practice model for systemic improvement in the implementation of inclusive education.

- **Teacher Capacity Development**

This programme has as its primary objective, the development of skills and the capacity of teachers, ECD practitioners, principals and management teams to create inclusive school environments that are responsive to the holistic needs of ALL learners.

Our programme currently covers ECD and Primary School education. Our hope is to be able to impact Secondary and tertiary education in the future.

Our schools programme aims to capacitate **a school community** to provide quality learning opportunities and a welcoming school environment for all learners. This programme runs over 15 months and facilitated to include the teacher, school management and governing body with skills. In parallel we offer parental empowerment workshops to encourage similar learning environments in the home. This programme focuses on alignment to school ethos, culture, policies and practice. Incorporating sound Inclusive principles within the context of our unique South African classroom environment is possible.

Our ECD programme aims at building the capacity of **ECD centres** to provide children with stimulating, quality early learning opportunities creating a strong foundation for entry into formal schooling. We focus on early identification of *barriers to learning* and development and introduce interventions aimed at addressing these. ECD Practitioners are equipped with the skills to make active referrals for support and to develop links with other service providers in the community.

- **Advocacy Programme**

Our organisation's advocacy objective is for the effective implementation of the Inclusive Education policies and guidelines in South Africa and to raise awareness about the basic right to education and support for all learners.

Our 2019-2020 strategy seeks to move us closer to this goal by focusing on the following goals:

- Educating rights holders about Inclusive Education and empowering learners and parents to make their voice heard.
- Influencing the oversight of parliament to ensure that the DBE is held to account for the lack of effort and budget required to achieve Inclusive education targets
- Facilitating and promoting the effective implementation of the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support Policy (SIAS)
- Lobbying for comment of the *Norms and Standards for the Resourcing of Inclusive Education (NNRIE)* to be gazette.
- Advocating for improved initial teacher education and induction. For continuous professional development of the models which IESA produce in order to empower educators to respond to the diverse needs of their learners.

- **Information and Support Services**

This core programme (the only one of its kind in South Africa) provides free information, support and advice, to families and professionals working with children experiencing *barriers to learning*. The objective is to facilitate inclusion and support for learning in all local neighbourhood schools. Included in this programme are workshops for parents, educators and other stakeholders / professionals to develop understanding of *barriers to learning* and their role in supporting learners. Included in this offering are our Open Educational Resources (Visual aids) specifically relevant to Inclusive Education within a South African context. These have been developed by IESA as part of the information database and are accessible from our website to anybody subscribing to Inclusivity in education.

4. Impact

Training over 2,000 educators on various aspects of Inclusive Education, including Differentiated Teaching, Positive Behaviour Management, Individual Support Planning, Identifying Barriers to Learning, and Accessing Support and Community Mapping.

Providing information and support to 1,500 parents and professionals working with children experiencing barriers to learning and facing educational exclusion.

IESA has partnered with The Department of Social Development over the past 4 years to capacitate over 2,000 ECD practitioners and 300 ECD assistants. Our main focus is to aid in identification and support of children experiencing barriers to learning and development.

IESA is part of a consortium of organisations working in partnership with the Vestas Empowerment Trust to improve learning outcomes across 19 schools in the Eastern Cape (2018-2020).

The expansion of our inclusive schools programme to the Northern Cape where we have partnered with the NCED Namaqua District to develop a uniquely inclusive school in Kleinsee, as well as the strengthening of 4 newly appointed Full Service Schools. This includes upskilling educators to manage diversity and provide support for all learners.

Expansion of our Inclusive ECD programme into KZN via a pilot programme to establish a model for inclusive ECD service provision by capacitating ECD centres as hubs of support. This was made possible through collaboration with local partners.

IESA has made submissions, both oral and written, to the National Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Basic Education and to the Western Cape Standing Committee on Education. Submissions have been made to the Department of Social Development regarding inclusion at ECD level and the amendments to the Children's Act, the National ECD Policy et al.

Supporting Diversity in Education projects in schools nationally, we introduce innovative learner interventions aimed at creating a *space* for learners to have a voice and encouraging learners to take ownership of addressing their role in the behavioural management of the school.

Department of Education's National Education Evaluation Development Unit (NEEDU) - IESA was awarded the contract to develop evaluation instruments and a handbook for the evaluation of the quality of education services in special schools in South Africa

Monitoring and Evaluation

All our projects are closely monitored for the duration of the project and post project completion. Evaluation and review are crucial components of our service delivery. We receive regular feedback on all training, casework, referrals, workshops, meetings and presentations from our project facilitators. Post project monitoring is costed into projects to ensure sustainability, smooth running and implementation. Evaluations are conducted periodically throughout our projects. These can include:

- Baseline Assessments
- Educator and Parent Questionnaires, Training Evaluation Forms and requests for feedback from beneficiaries, focus groups and mid-project reviews

5. Sustainability

Our resource mobilisation strategy involves accessing donor funding from charitable trusts and foundations, corporate social investment partners and individual donations. We believe in working collaboratively with partners from diverse income sources to achieve goals and sustainable outcomes. Other own fundraising initiatives include memberships, My School Card, Open Training Workshops and our own fundraising campaigns.

NGO interventions focus on empowering communities to make long term change. IESA's intervention model is based on best practice gained from extensive experience and project fieldwork. Our approach is to develop the skills and capacity of the educators and practitioners to respond to the support needs of each child and learner. The practical on-site support given to practitioners and teachers by IESA trainers promotes implementation of the training. Our holistic approach addresses educational challenges at school and community level by engaging parents and a wide range of services and stakeholders.

5.1 Current Funders

HCI Foundation / Anglo American's Chairman's Fund / Old Mutual Insure / Vestas Empowerment Trust / / Department of Social Development (WC) / Webber Wentzel / Grandlots and First Rand Foundation.

6. Beneficiaries:

DIRECT: ECD Practitioners / ECD Assistants / ECD Principals / School Educators / School Governing Bodies / School Management Teams / District and Provincial officials from the Department of Education / Parents / Caregivers and Professionals working with children / Other NGO's (approximately 6,000 per annum)

INDIRECT: Children in ECD centres and Learners at Primary and High schools (approximately 17, 000 per annum)

7. Organizational Contact & Registration Details

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IESA is a registered Non-Profit Organisation and Public Benefit Organisation:

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