International Task force on Teachers for Education For All

INCLUSION IN TEACHER POLICIES AND PRACTICES:
Moving Towards Inclusion: Experiences from India

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The Cracked Pot, an Uplifting Story

☐ How can teachers think and plan for **all** children like the water bearer??**?**

Indian Educational Scenario: A Glimpse

7 million teachers working in 1.36 million schools, out of which 83% in rural areas

15,000 teacher education institutions

500+ universities.

135 million students at primary level

58 million students at upper primary level
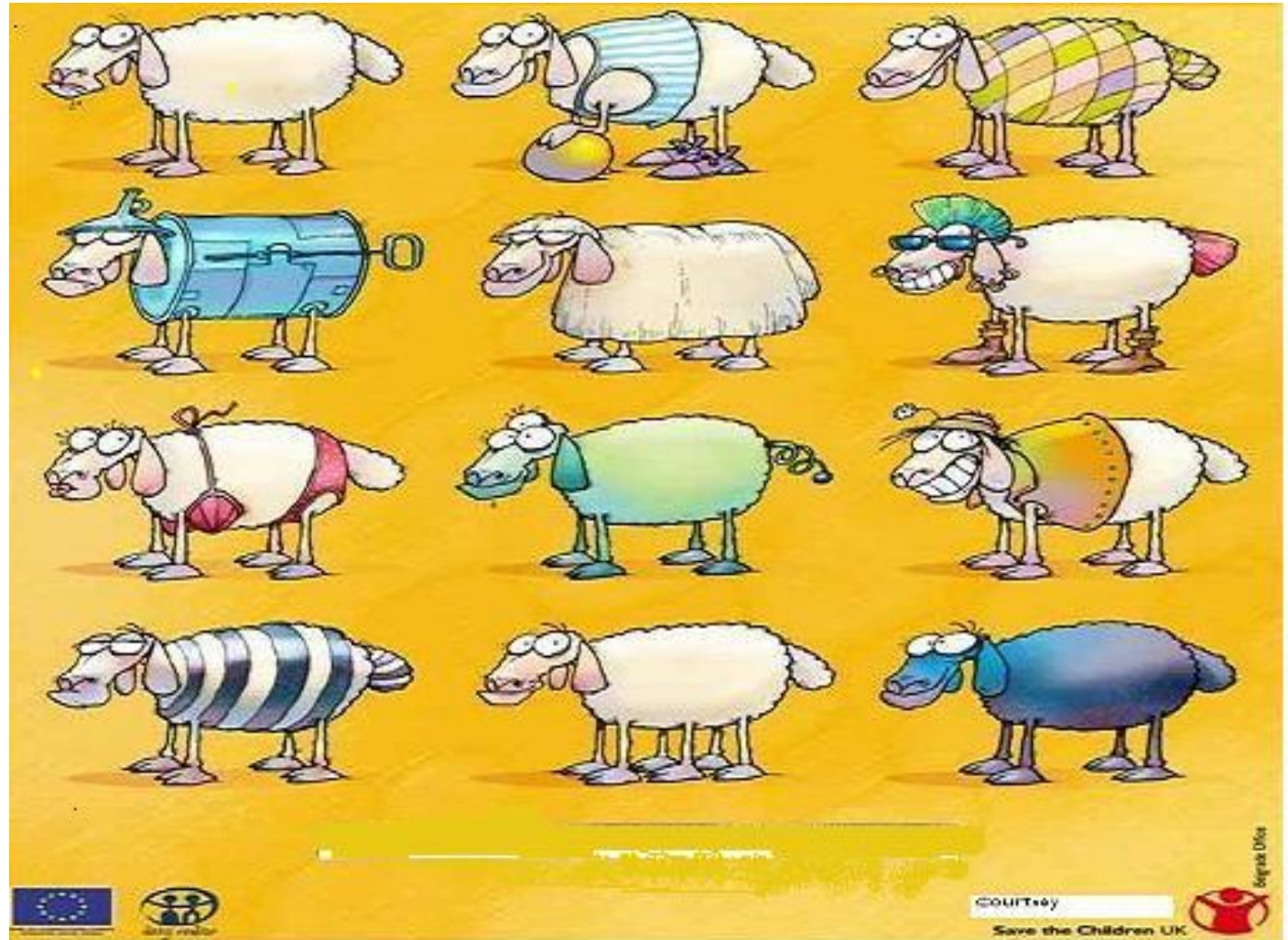
Improvements in access and retention

Large number of out of school children

Learning outcomes poor

Less than 1% of children with special needs to total enrolment in elementary classes

Do I really have the right to be different?

- EXCLUSION HAS OFTEN A SOCIAL, LINGUAL, FINANCIAL BASE

Ministry of Human Resource Development
Department of School Education & Literacy, Government of india

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
a programme for the universalization of elementary education

RIGHT TO EDUCATION
SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN
EDUCATION FOR ALL

Covers the entire country , 192 million children in 1.1 million habitations- A zero rejection policy

Active participation of the community in the management of schools

Special focus on girl's education and children with special needs

Bridging social, regional and gender gaps

Enhancing learning levels of children

Open new schools and strengthen existing school

Extensive training at different levels

Strengthening of the academic support structure at cluster, block and district levels

Computer education to bridge the digital divide.

Three level monitoring-Local community level, State level and national Level

Provisions for CWSN under SSA

❑**The interventions for promoting inclusive education include:**

- ✓ identification,
- ✓ functional and formal assessment,
- ✓ appropriate educational placement,
- ✓ provision of aids and appliances,
- ✓ resource support,
- ✓ removal of architectural barriers,
- ✓ research, monitoring, evaluation and
- ✓ provision up to Rs.3000/- (approx. USD 60) per child per year

Some existing realities of teaching learning process, teachers and children

□ **Teachers work with children who** may :
  ➢ face obstacles due to economic and social conditions
  ➢ be burdened with responsibilities
  ➢ attend school with little exposure to formal learning
  ➢ come to school accompanied by their younger siblings
  ➢ lack an effective learning environment at home

□ **Teachers themselves:**
  ➢ have limited educational and training background
  ➢ face harsh living and work conditions
  ➢ lack support and encouragement from the administration to try out new methods of teaching and learning

Student teachers and children are often exposed to traditional frontal teaching, rote learning, rigid examination, meticulous following of text books, copying, discouraged to ask questions and engage in forms of active learning

Professional Development for Reforms

- **Teachers need:**
  - Training on inclusive approaches to replace existing segregated forms of education
- **Special Educators: focus of work changes**
  - Need new range of skills in consultancy,: transacting the mainstream curriculum, promoting inclusive classroom practice etc.
  - Work with parents and specialists outside the school
- **Teacher trainers:**
  - Need to understand and develop greater knowledge about inclusive practices.
- **Administrators need to:**
  - Encourage and support teachers to try out new methods of teaching and learning.
  - Involve other educationists
- **Allied Professionals (Social workers, Health workers, Psychologists etc)**
  - Joint trainings to understand each others role and competencies
  - Build appropriate attitudes towards IE

In-service Training the key to reform: Some Emerging Learning's

- **The formal education system accommodates special education, integrated as well as IE practices**
- **Concept of IE not fully understood**
  - Pedagogical knowledge and skills
  - Sets of attitudes and values
  - Reflection and Debate
- **Focus needs to be on:**
  - Acknowledging teachers skills and work conditions for building practice and changing attitudes
  - Starting from felt needs of teachers
  - Realities and practicalities of inclusive classrooms
  - Pedagogical issues that student diversity poses
  - Providing opportunities for reflection
  - Helping break the "isolation barrier" among teachers
  - Emphasizing teacher collaboration and establishing school based teams
- **Sensitivity to social cultural customs and beliefs**
- **Demystify IE**
  - No recipes exist for becoming an inclusive teacher or an inclusive school
  - All kinds of practices that are ultimately practices of "good teaching" lead to IE

Pre-service Teacher Education: Some Learnings for Reforms

- **Content and methodology**
  - ✓ "Packages" of specific knowledge not sufficient.
  - ✓ Link training to development of schools/centers of learning
  - ✓ Focus on realities of classrooms and practical implications of student diversity (linking theory with practice)
  - ✓ Encourage student teachers to work alongside experienced teachers
  - ✓ Opportunities for reflection facilitated by tutor
  - ✓ Involve experienced school teachers in teacher training institutes
- **Review structural barriers**
  - ✓ Selection criteria for student teachers
  - ✓ Encourage student teachers from marginalized groups

# Common Learnings : Emerging from Reflections on Practice

- Not to rely too heavily on short training inputs as the only vehicle of change

- Adopt a whole system approach and plan training programmes as a part of wider programme of change on an ongoing basis

- Cascade Models
  - Suitable for wide spread change
  - Large number of teachers can be reached quickly

- Distance learning
  - Combine distance models with Onsite/digital support
  - Can reach remote schools
  - Collaborative teamwork and Opportunities for interaction

CAUTION FOR REFORMS : AVOID WATERED DOWN MESSAGES

Avoid Reinventing the Wheel

- **Identify and use existing Resource Materials**
- **Some effective UNESCO training materials include :**
  - ✓ Teacher Education Resource Pack: Special Needs in the Classroom
  - ✓ Embracing Diversity: The Toolkit for Creating Inclusive Learning Friendly Environments
  - ✓ Toolkit for Promoting Gender Equality In Education
  - ✓ Open File on Inclusive Education: Support material for Managers and Administrators
  - ✓ Changing Teaching Practices: Using Curriculum Differentiation to Respond to Students Diversity
  - ✓ EENET(Enabling Education Network), Global (www.eenet.org.uk), EENET Asia (www.idp-europe.org/eenet, asia@eenet.org.uk) and other regional networks
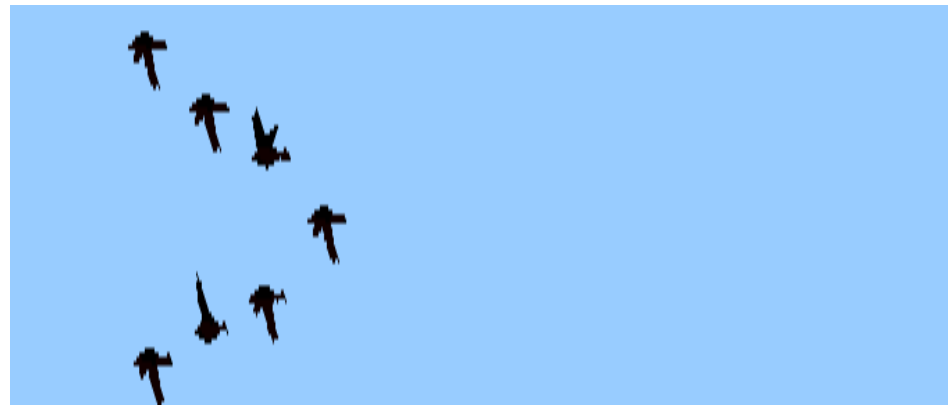
Move towards inclusion….
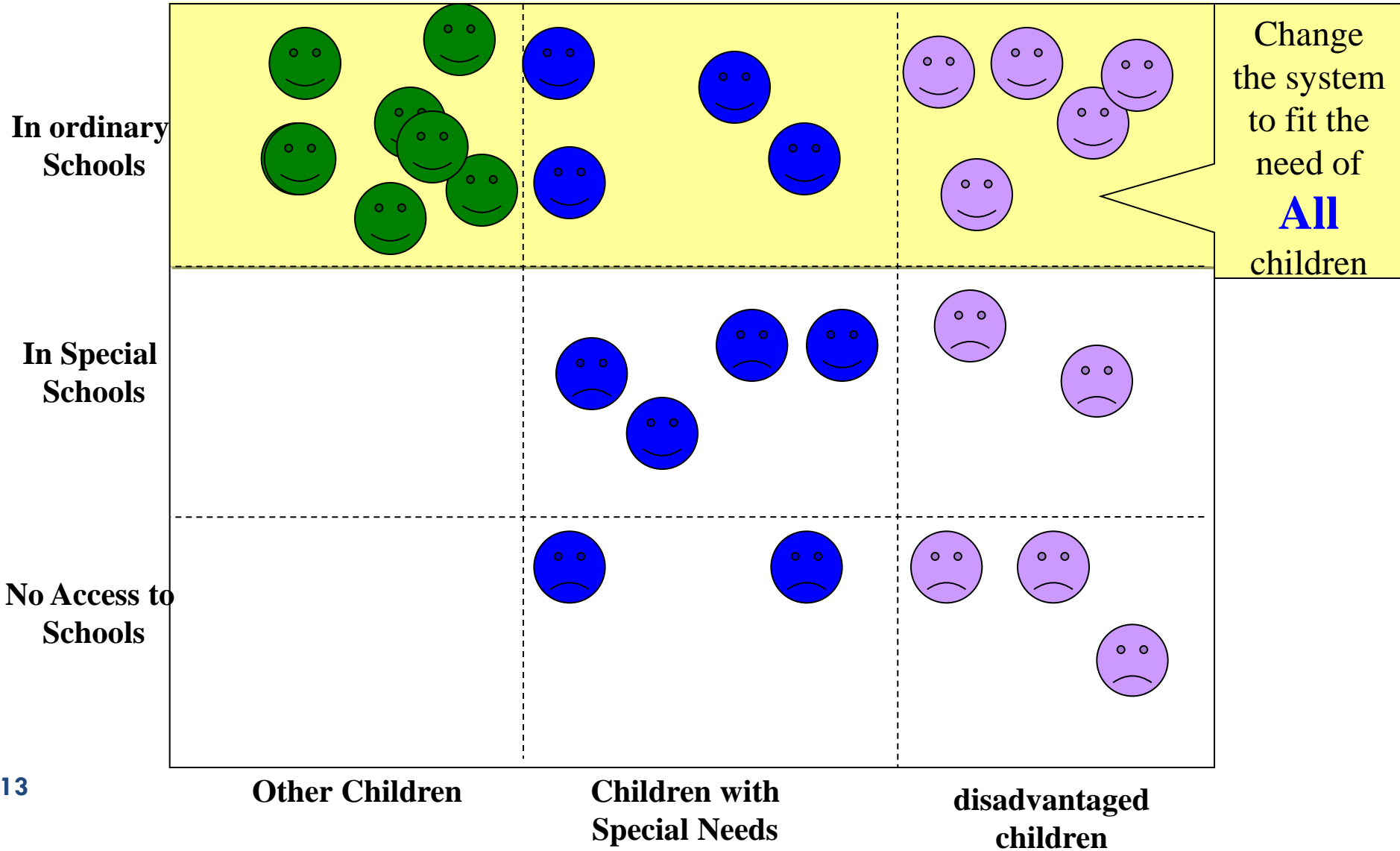
Long Journey Ahead…..

- Inclusion is not a utopian dream, which leads to inclusive societies overnight

- Conflicting views, contradictions, war, inequality will perhaps stay

- The challenge is to work collectively and find contextual options to address exclusion

A lesson from nature….
Migrating birds:
- Follow strategies
- Defined roles and ethics
- Flexible leadership
- Never tire & move on and on to greater heights together…..

‘All for the children,
for All the children’

15   AINSCOW, M.(1999) Understanding the Development of Inclusive Schools, London: Falmer Press.

Inclusive education is a constant process...of system transformation and whole school improvement to ensure that Education for All really is for ALL!

Group Work: Thinking Caps

- How can the school, teacher, family and community take the primary responsibility for facilitating learning - **NOT JUST THE CHILD**?

- How can I value differences and believe it is normal and enriches society?

- How do I believe everyone has a right to education and that All children can learn?

- How do I perceive Inclusive education? What are my own values and beliefs about Inclusion/ Exclusion ?

- How can the meaning and scope of the term "special needs" be extended?

- Is "Special needs" not another demeaning label leading to social exclusion?

- Does "labeling children" help teachers to teach children effectively?

- How can work collectively to :
  - ✓ Make learning more meaningful and content linked to the learner's life situation?
  - ✓ Create more teaching and learning friendly environments?
  - ✓ Build more effective support mechanisms and mobilize local resources?
  - ✓ Create more space for community participation and ownership?

Thank you