



## TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSION

### Country Study Visit

Porto, Portugal 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> May 2010

#### Theme for the visit

Exploring how a profile of competencies can help support the development of the attitudes and values as well as knowledge and skills necessary for inclusive education.

#### Summary of discussions

The following provides a summary of the key points arising during discussions that took place across the three day study visit. More information about the discussion sessions can be found by following the link above.

- The school system and structure in any country will have an impact on teacher education. i.e. specialist training for some groups.
- We need clear definitions of inclusion and the underpinning philosophy, which may include:
  - An emphasis on learners' rights
  - Seeing the school as a microcosm of society and considering the type of society we want
  - Focusing on common needs – accepting and valuing differences.
- There is a need to keep vulnerable groups 'visible' while working towards integration of policy within a comprehensive framework and reducing categorisation of children.
- Political will, vision and commitment are needed with the involvement of all stakeholders.
- Quality education for all requires a balance between excellence and equity.
- Resources are 'necessary but not sufficient' - they are needed but positive 'can do' attitudes are also important.
- We need to break the cycle of 'educational experience' and move away from the transmission of information and homogenous groups..
- Teachers need to plan for individual needs not 'fix' learners or make them fit into an inflexible system
- Induction is very important – new teachers must continue to learn.
- School leadership plays a vital role in inclusion and the development of a whole school approach.
- Competences include:
  - o Reflection, research attitude
  - o Content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge
  - o Values to guide 'what we do'
  - o Developing teachers' ability to 'understand themselves'
  - o Taking responsibility for ALL learners'
  - o Partnerships, teamwork and good communication.