



Marie Schoeman

Curriculum Vitae

2016

Marie Schoeman is Chief Education Specialist for Inclusive Education in the National Department of Basic Education of South Africa. In this capacity she has been responsible over the past 15 years for policy development and implementation of Inclusive Education in line with Education White Paper 6: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System and Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. She was previously employed in the Gauteng Department of Education as Inclusion Coordinator in District Tshwane South, as Executive Director of Down Syndrome South Africa, Lecturer at the Universities of Pretoria and South Africa.

In 1996 she was appointed by President Mandela as a Commissioner on the National Commission for Special Needs in Education and Training to develop a new policy for South Africa in recognition of her pioneering work as a parent and disability rights activist. She is also an honorary executive committee member of Down Syndrome South Africa. In 1995 she coordinated the Education Task Team of the SA Federal Council on Disability which drafted a first joint position paper of the disability sector in South Africa on inclusive education. She has been involved in many actions around inclusive education and the promotion of disability rights, amongst other as member of the Drafting Committee of the South African White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2015) which domesticates the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

She has also participated in several international and UNESCO funded research projects on inclusive education and has published widely in the field. As a parent of a 29 year old son with Down Syndrome, she has been involved in several initiatives of Inclusion International since 1994. She has served as Chairperson of the Jury for the UNESCO/ Emir Jaber al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah Prize to promote Quality Education for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities since 2009. The Ntiro Project for inclusive education and employment, initiated by her and some colleagues in Gauteng, became the first recipient of this prize in 2006.

In her position as senior official in the Department of Basic Education she has been responsible for the following policy and programme initiatives:

- The development of the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support which directs how learners with additional support needs (including all vulnerable children and children with disabilities) should be supported within the education system;
- The development of norms for funding and post provisioning within an inclusive education system;
- The development of norms and standards for the use and integration of assistive technology and innovative use of ICT to make the curriculum accessible for learners who experience barriers to learning, especially learners with disabilities in disadvantaged and rural areas;
- The development of the Policy for the Provision of Access to Education for Children with Severe to Profound Intellectual Disability;
- Project Management of the introduction of the technical occupational stream into basic education, including the development of 46 skills and vocational subjects that will benefit learners who have a technological and vocational aptitude;
- Development of the Policy on Accommodations in Exams and Assessment, including the use of technology to provide equal access to learners with disabilities and learning difficulties;
- The development of a Strategy for Teacher Development in Inclusive Education looking at new modalities of Continued Teacher Professional Development, such as broadcast and online learning;
- Management of the Online Education Portal for Inclusive Education; and
- The transformation of education for learners with visual impairment, including the production of Braille and innovative use of assistive technology.

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