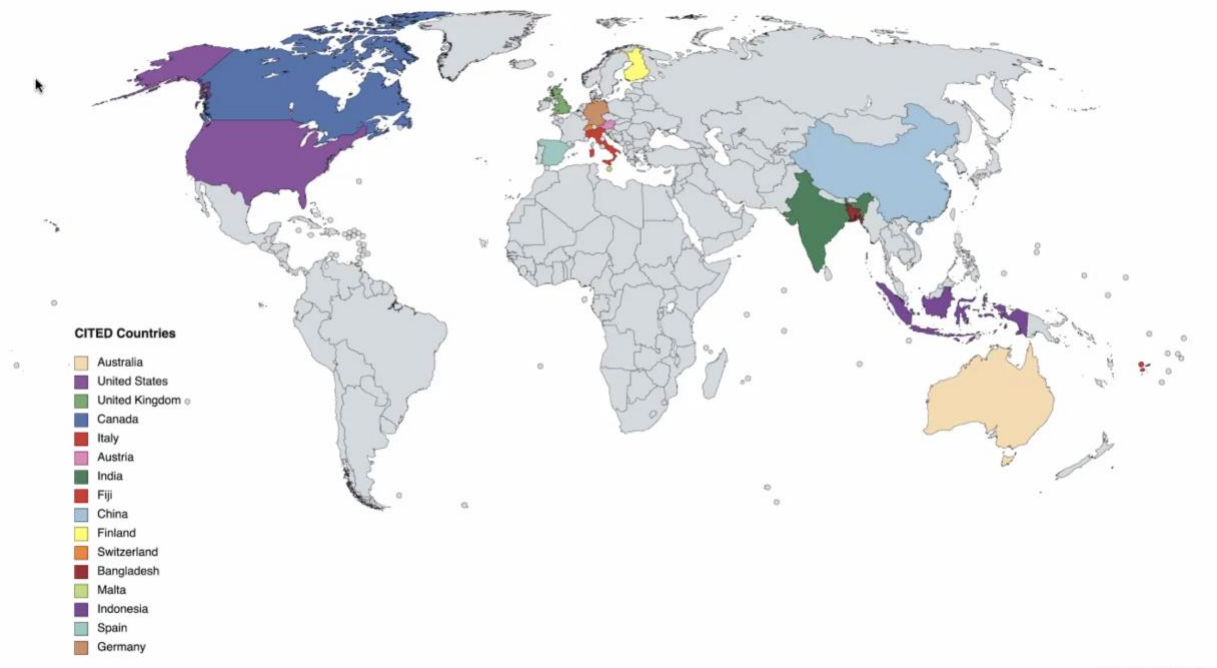


Third World Conference of the Consortium for Inclusive Teacher Education and Development

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In early July 2022, inclusive education scholars from around the world gathered to share their latest findings and reflections on inclusive education. The conference was hosted by the [Consortium for Inclusive Teacher Education and Development](#) (CITED), and its focus was *Co-creating an Inclusive Future*. Over two days, the conference was held at varying time periods to ensure that CITED members and their graduate students would be able to attend within their daytime hours.



The first day of the conference began with an insightful and engaging [keynote from Gordon Porter](#) of Canada. Central themes in Dr. Porter's presentation were the importance of innovation, laws and policies, and collaborations. Building on his own experiences in New Brunswick, in Canada, and as a consultant in inclusive education in many countries, Dr. Porter demonstrated the pragmatic importance of his key message on both a local and global scale.

Throughout the [subsequent presentations on day one](#), inclusive scholars added their own evidence while making frequent references to Dr. Porter's keynote messages. The nine presentations of day one of the CITED conference can be grouped into three themes: (1) innovation; (2) introspection; (3) collaboration.

The first theme of innovation was in evidence in two presentations from our colleagues that showcased the ways that teacher education is being reformed in Italy. Paola Aiello and Erika Marie Pace looked at a reform in the way Italy is educating its teachers for inclusion through the development of three regional centres for teaching and learning and three instructional technology hubs. Then, Ilaria Viola, Emanuela Zappalà, and Paolo Aeillo explained Italy's FIT-Choice program, which

examines the motivations of teachers to enroll in teacher education to become learning support teachers.

The second theme was the importance of attention to person-specific internal variables that predict inclusive teaching actions. Three presentations demonstrated that we need to pay strong attention to what happens internally in teachers and teacher candidates if we want to foster inclusion as behavior. First, Arianna Manning, Elizabeth Hitches, and Stuart Woodcock of Australia looked at definitions of inclusion and found few differences, however the intentions of the primary teachers they studied varied based on their strengths and weaknesses in enacting this shared definition not only with groups of students but also between specific teacher/student dyads. Likewise, Tim Loreman, Brent Bradford, and Jason Daniels of Canada addressed the complex factors that affect teachers' intentions to include in schools in their ongoing research project in Canada. Finally, Hannu Savolainen of Finland and Susanne Schwab of Austria explored self-efficacy as a predictor of attitudes toward inclusion, expanding the focus to the order of effects of internal factors that affect inclusive teaching behaviour.



The third theme takes the opposite approach. Rather than exploring individual, internal factors that predict inclusive practices, these four presentations explored inclusion as a collective endeavor related to context. First, Lesley Eblie Trudel and Laura Sokal of Canada presented their research on changes in teacher capacity that resulted from job demands and resources within the varying teaching contexts of a pandemic. Emma Wray of Australia looked at how attitudes, self-efficacy, and collective efficacy influenced the behavioural intentions of educators within whole school inclusive practices. Reema Alpana of Fiji looked at how policy adherence is

affected by parents and teachers understanding of and beliefs about inclusion. Reema emphasised the need to take context into consideration when undertaking research in the Pacific and highlighted the push for disability inclusion rather than just inclusion in the region. Finally, Claire Jackson of Australia shared a new scale developed to measure teachers' self-efficacy when they work with a teacher assistant within professional partnership. The usefulness of the scale was highlighted during the presentation in equipping teachers with skills and knowledge so that they feel confident in working with teacher assistants.

Collectively the presentations on day one demonstrated that our understanding of the importance of heads, hearts, and hands to inclusion (Sharma et al, 2019) is on point. However, these presentations as well as the collaborations of the CITED members at the conference, also demonstrated the importance of joining hands to work together toward the education for all students. A recent publication by some of our colleagues who presented at the CITED conference has shown the importance of individual accountability, collective efficacy, and has supported the belief that it really does 'take a village' to support inclusion (Subban et al., 2022). This same message about individual teacher development and broader, collective collaboration was introduced beginning with our keynote speaker on day one and was threaded throughout the subsequent presentations from around the world.

Day two of the conference was launched by two keynote speakers: Michael Giangreco of the USA who presented on *Persistent Issues in Inclusive Education: Possible Paths Forward* and Setareki Macanawai of Fiji, who asked, *Where is my voice in your inclusive education research?*

Michael Giangreco's keynote address was illustrated with the use eye-opening cartoons. Within his speech it was emphasized that it is not the kids but the adults (e.g., parents, teachers, etc.) who need to do it better. For instance, "deficit thinking" was addressed as a key barrier of inclusion. Students' diversity has not changed because of the introduction of inclusive education – students have always been different from each other. However, we have found new barriers to inclusion of learners in regular classrooms. And if we improve learning conditions for students with SENs, all students will profit.

The second keynote of Setareki Macanawai focused on the link between research and practice. His keynote reminded us that we need to listen to the voices of people with disabilities when becoming more inclusive. Setareki's session reminded us of the value of "nothing about us, without us". He emphasised the need to work *alongside* marginalised people rather than work *on* marginalised people. We need to learn from self-advocates what is really wanted and needed to increase the inclusion of people with disabilities. Therefore, more action research and participatory research projects need to be implemented so that people with disabilities are not just subjects of research but become true partners in the pathway to inclusion.

Collaborative Teamwork & Creative Problem-Solving

ANATOMY OF AN EFFECTIVE TEAM MEMBER

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AFTER SEVERAL ATTEMPTS, FRED BEGINS TO REALIZE THAT COOKBOOK RECIPES FOR INCLUSION JUST DON'T WORK.

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Setareki Macanawai asked delegated to consider some timely questions which remind us the importance of 'person first approach' in understanding inclusion, and designing and implementing educational interventions. These, in turn, could also be linked with the key messages conveyed by Michael Giangreco in three persistent and interrelated areas: Teacher engagement, curricular conceptualization, and rethinking service delivery models.

#1: Teacher Ownership & Engagement

- Engaged Teachers (+)
- Less or Disengaged (-)
 - ✓ Don't want to
 - ✓ Don't think they are supposed to
 - ✓ Don't know how to

SO I DON'T FEEL PREPARED TO TEACH A CHILD WITH DISABILITIES

DESPITE HAVING A MASTER'S AND 18 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE, MRS. SNIPPETT TRIES TO CONVINCE MR. MOODY THAT THE STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES IN HER CLASS WOULD BE BETTER SERVED BY AN ASSISTANT WITH NO EXPERIENCE.

The themes presented by our two keynote speakers on the second day were echoed in six presentations by CITED members:

The first presentation on *Gender and Inclusive Pedagogy (GIP)* presented by M. Tariq Ahsan and Md. Saiful Malak of the University of Dhaka shared a multi-national and evidence based co-designed inclusive education model in five countries-- Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Vietnam and Timor-Leste. The remarkable feature of their model was the use of a strength-based approach to identify inclusive pedagogy from the participating countries. They value the existing work in each country and integrated positive practices from the countries in building their new pedagogical model. The process of generating evidence and the co-designed GIP model itself significantly showcased the emphasis on the areas of student-centred pedagogy, curriculum adaptation, and multi-stakeholders' collaboration including teachers, students, local education officers, parents, and policy makers.

The second presentation by Pearl Subban followed an appreciative inquiry to identify inclusive educators' characteristics. In her presentation, she highlighted how important it is for educators to be aware of the characteristics of learners in various stages of their preparatory journey to ensure better inclusive practices. She used an excellent example of educators as drivers of vehicles where students are passengers, and it is the responsibility of the educators to find the right destination. Of course, it requires drivers to learn a number of skills to ensure that everyone reaches the destination safely and, if possible, enjoy the ride.

Next, Elizabeth Hitches of University of Queensland, and Stuart Woodcock of Griffith University presented diverse students' voices in high school and university levels in Australia. The perspectives revealed from their preliminary findings include lack of access to support, little differentiation of accommodation, and difficult processes for accessing support. These scholars suggested co-collaboration as a means of fostering inclusion.

The fourth paper talked about the effects of a diversity awareness program on children's inclusive attitudes in Switzerland. Caroline Sahli Lozano and Sergej Wüthrich presented their evidence on how a multi-pronged approach to supporting inclusive attitudes in all children—including an [award-winning, free video game](#)-- were effective in creating willingness in the typically developed students to interact with peers with disabilities. The intervention seems to have a promising future scaling up to enhancing

social inclusion in other contexts. This presentation showed how effectively the research team has used a highly multidisciplinary and innovative approach to solve an educational problem.

In his inspiring presentation, Jahirul Mullick shared the development of an intervention called *The implementation of Inclusive School Improvement Model (ISIM)* for Chinese elementary and secondary schools. He presented the potential of the ISIM model to improve the core components of the school system including leadership and management, policy and procedure, teaching and capacity building, and partnership and collaboration.

Finally, utilizing a global social justice lens to explore indicators of inclusive education, Umesh Sharma and Pearl Subban's presentation shed light on the debate of using global measurement indicators to inform program development for students with disabilities in local contexts. Instead of using isolated indicators of inclusion, their presentation called for a useful framework for international contexts to using the measurement indicators effectively. They emphasised the need to build upon the strengths of the local system when developing indicators. They shared their findings and presented a number of indicators that could be used in economically emerging countries.

In summary, day two offered three presentations about innovative interventions for better practice inclusion, one presentation on diverse student voices for improving inclusion, one presentation on identifying educators' characteristics for improving classroom practice, and one presentation on global framework for measuring progress of inclusion. The core of each of the presentations is linked with our day two keynote speakers who highlighted person-centric approaches, and teacher engagement, curricular conceptualization, and suitable service delivery models for an improved inclusion context. Furthermore, collaboration with heterogeneous stakeholders was embedded as one of the key solutions for making inclusion happened, which aligned with the key message of Gordon Porter on day one of the conference.

CITED is one of the influential groups that can take the lead of intercontinental collaboration for one step further in accessible inclusion of all. The group continues to identify barriers that learners, their carers, and educators face in terms of providing high quality education to disadvantaged youth and adults. They are conducting several multi-national projects to identify and test innovative solutions co-designed with the end-users. The work of the members could be accessed at <https://www.monash.edu/cited> The issues that resonated throughout the two-day conference are relevant to the members of Inclusive Education Canada and to stakeholders in inclusive education around the world.

Sharma, U., Grové, C., Laletas, S., Rangarajan, R., & Finkelstein, S. (2021). Bridging gaps between theory and practice of inclusion through an innovative partnership between university academics and school educators in Australia. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2021.1882052>

Subban, P., Bradford, B., Sharma, U., Loreman, T., Avramidis, E., Kullmann, H., Sahli Lozano, C., Romano, A., & Woodcock, S. (2022). Does it really take a village to raise a child? reflections on the need for collective responsibility in inclusive education. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 1-12, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2022.2059632>