

## **Strengthening teaching for learners with severe to profound sensory or intellectual impairments**

While there is a strong policy framework within South Africa that supports the rights of learners with severe to profound sensory or intellectual impairment (SPSII), there are very few training opportunities for teachers that specifically address the needs of learners with SPSII. In light of this gap, the Teacher Empowerment for Disability Inclusion group (TEDI) conducted interviews with 39 teachers from eight schools (six special schools and two full service schools) to better understand what teacher education is needed to empower teachers to meet the needs to learners with SPSII. Findings showed that teachers are in need of training in the following areas: (1) The use of South African Sign Language, Braille and augmentative and alternative communication as well as assistive technology; (2) Impairment-specific training, including the nature of impairments and how this may impact learning; (3) Relationship and listening skill development and (4) Recognising disability as an issue of social justice.