

Volume 3

A Study of Education Opportunities for Disabled Children & Youth and Early Childhood Development in Iraq

Teachers for inclusive schools in Iraq.

A training model for primary teachers in Iraq to extend the educational opportunities of disabled children and young people.

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Rationale

This programme of professional learning¹ - *Inclusive Schools for Iraq* - is developed specifically for primary school teachers in schools across Iraq to equip them to become supportive and effective teachers for all students. Also, the three Modules (see Diagram 1) are designed for incorporation within initial teacher education qualifications to build the capacity of graduating teachers to develop greater opportunities for disabled children and young people in Iraq. Module 1: *An Inclusive Teacher?*, and Module 2: *A Primary School For All?*, present an important professional learning programme for community leaders, health workers, education administrators, teaching assistants, professionals working in special institutes and social workers who work with disabled children and their families. Module 3: *A Classroom For All?*, is specifically aimed at teachers and those training to become teachers.

Put simply a training model in inclusive education for primary teachers in Iraq must simultaneously frame an educational experience for teachers working in schools with limited and outdated knowledge about disability and inclusive education as well as students in their training to become teachers in inclusive schools. Modules in the programme will be of value to those who work in schools, in the Ministry of Education or other agencies and are not teachers.

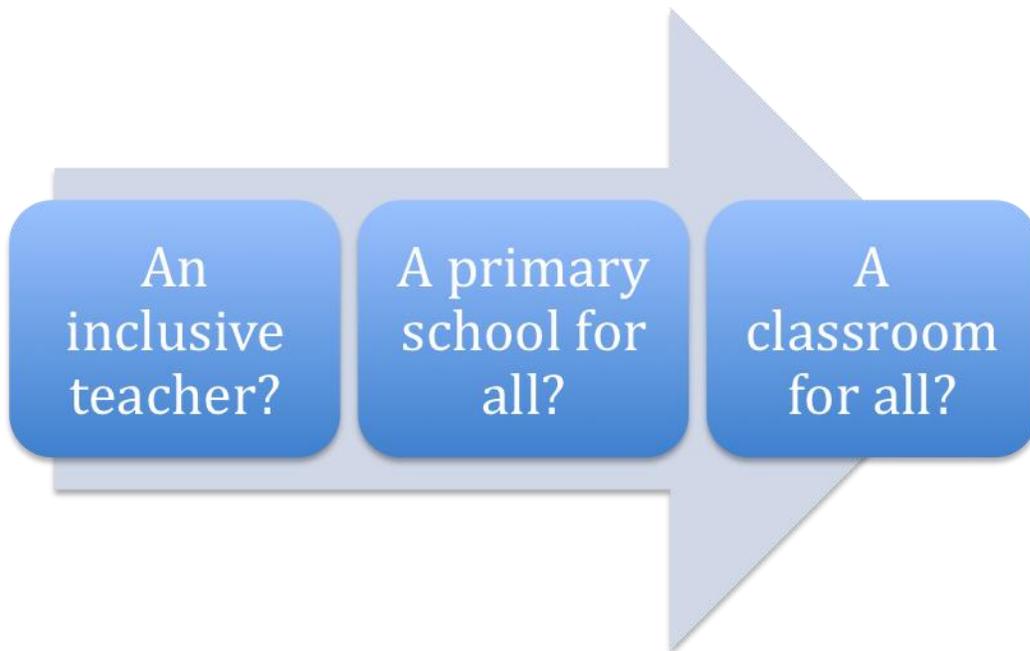


Diagram 1: Inclusive schools for Iraq - The Three professional Learning Modules

The professional learning programme, *Inclusive Schools for Iraq*, is linked to UNICEF

¹ Throughout this document we will use the terms professional learning or professional development instead of teacher training. This is consistent with current thinking on adult learning.

funded research that investigated the prevalence of childhood disability and the mainstream education opportunities for disabled children and young people. In the course of that research it became clear that mainstream education opportunities for disabled children and young people are severely restricted. Moreover, teachers and those working with disabled children and young people urgently require professional development that is consistent with recent developments in disability equality training, incorporating the social model of disability (see Inset 1), and inclusive education.

Inset 1: The Social Model of Disability

The originator of the term, the social model of disability, is Professor Michael Oliver (1990, 2009). He drew from a document published by the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS, 1976) to develop a tool for understanding disability and changing social responses to impairment.

The dominant view has been, and remains in many quarters, that disability refers to a personal defect or impairment within an individual person. This defect or disability creates many difficulties for this person and is seen as a personal tragedy. Disability is therefore seen to be an attribute of the individual and the cause of their struggles in life.

The social model turns this individual model for understanding disability on its head. For Oliver (2009, page 43), "*it was not the impairment that was the main cause of the social exclusion of disabled people but the way society responded to people with impairments*". The social model therefore became a tool for identifying and dismantling the social structures, practices and cultures that exclude people with impairments.

For those working in education the social model of disability urges us to reject special education thinking and practices that proceed from an understanding that the difficulties in schooling and learning experienced by children with impairments is a result of their impairment. According to the social model, they are disabled by the division of schools into special schools for so-called special (abnormal) children and regular schools for normal children. They are disabled by the inability of schools to ensure their access to and participation in their neighbourhood school because of disabling approaches to curriculum (what is taught), pedagogy (how we teach), and school organisation and ethos (the physical and cultural characteristics). How we organise our schools may either enable or disable children with impairments. The social model enables us to detect the ways society has chosen to disable children with impairments.

The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education (UNESCO, 2011), the recent Education For All Global Monitoring Report, establishes the devastating effects of armed conflict on

children and education. The impact of war is immediate, pervasive and enduring (Ghobarah et al, 2003). In situations of armed-conflict all children may suffer. However, some are more vulnerable than others. Gender disparities and the exclusion of disabled children are exacerbated. Disabled people's education and vocational opportunities evaporate. They are too often overlooked where resources are limited or the political will to make education a priority is absent. Their rights to access to education are not guaranteed.

Once considered a leader in education in the region, years of armed conflict and war, international sanctions and isolation, extreme poverty, assassinations and the forced departure of professional workers including teachers has devastated Iraq's educational infrastructure, programmes and outcomes. Teachers' working conditions are extremely poor. Recruitment suffers and the availability of pre-service teacher training is severely restricted. Academics working in the field of teacher education and education research are disconnected from professional colleagues elsewhere and struggle to keep up with developments in their profession. This applies to teachers who must also work in appalling conditions where the much-reduced number of schools are in disrepair and fail to meet international health and safety standards. Some schools operate up to 3 shifts a day to manage more students through the limited number of schools. Educational materials are scarce in a context where maintaining the basics of life such as electricity and clean water is a daily struggle.

Senior officers across government have developed draft legislation (2010 Disability & Special Needs Bill) to protect the rights of the disabled, but the legislation has yet to be passed into law by the Council of Ministers. Moreover, when considered in the context of similar disability legislation elsewhere, the provisions within the proposed Act for education are ambiguous and lack the detail required for extending inclusive education opportunities. Current legislations applying to disabled children and young people tend to create confusion and competition between MoLSA and MoE that compromise services and leads to children missing out on health care, early childhood supports and education opportunities.

While there is a national strategy for inclusive and special needs education, developed by the Ministry of Education in 2009, meeting targets is blocked by existing administrative structures and insufficient political backing (CARA, 2010). The question of resources is not just an issue of the absence of resources. It also demands prioritising resources for education and to disabled children and ensuring that they are not misdirected

Messages about inclusive education and special education are confused. The strategy reflects traditional approaches to the education of disabled children calling for the extension of parallel provision for students in special classes (see Chapter X of the Report). Building parallel systems of education is not a sound option, worse still when resources are not available, diverted or not seen to be a priority. This means that all teachers should receive support to be able to work competently and effectively with diverse school populations. Expertise and resources that do exist should be recognised and used as building blocks to expanding the pool of professional knowledge and skills. This programme of professional development, *Inclusive Schools for Iraq*, aims to build knowledge about inclusive education, provide disability equality training, and consider

the implications for increasing education opportunities for disabled children and young people. Inclusive rather than separate education for disabled children is supported around the world on the basis of growing evidence that both educational outcomes and transitions into paid work improve from an inclusive education (Rieser, 2008; Crawford, 2003; Slee, 2010).

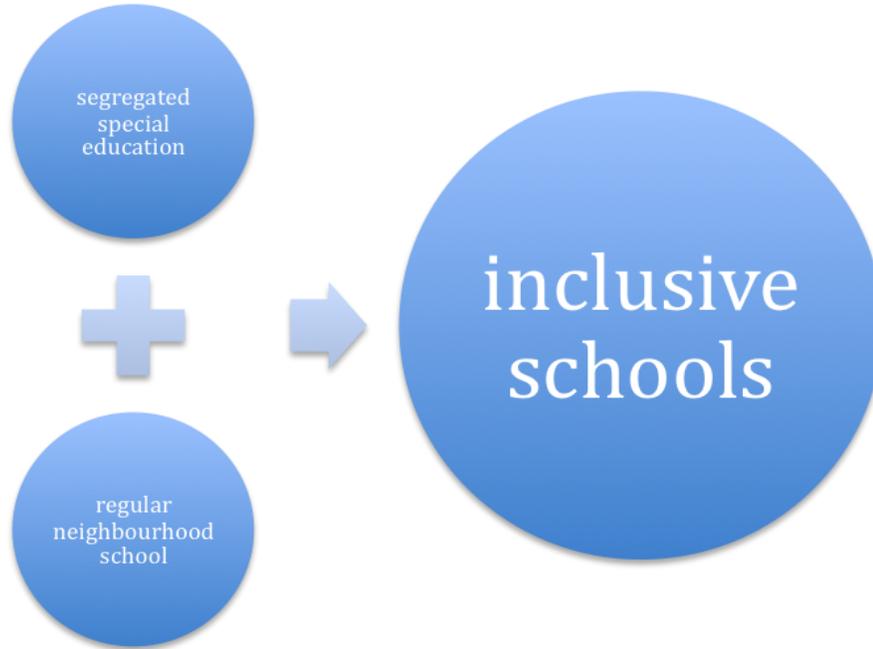


Diagram 2: Transitions to Inclusive Schools

Expanding education opportunities for disabled children and young people in Iraq will not be achieved by closing special institutes and moving children into neighbourhood schools. Inclusive schooling demands a systematic approach to building the capacity of neighbourhood schools to adapt their structures, policies and practices for diverse student populations (see Diagram 2). New and existing resources are required. Inclusive schooling is about changing cultures as well structures.

Programme Learning Objectives

The overall objectives of these three modules are to:

1. Raise teachers' awareness of disability issues and familiarise them with the social model of disability and its implications for schools and our work as teachers;
2. Examine student difference and identity and consider the implications for teaching and learning;
3. Introduce teachers to international developments in theories and practices of inclusive education;
4. Explore the relationship between inclusive education and curriculum, pedagogy and assessment in their classroom;
5. Consider the culture of schools as expressed through their policies, structures and practices;

6. Discover effective ways of making the classroom inclusive and improving the quality of education for all students.

Programme Structure

We believe that professional learning for teachers, no matter what stage they are at in their career, should be a life-long endeavour and that the quality of teaching is a central determinant of children's educational achievements. We understand that the conditions of teaching in Iraq are difficult and that flexibility is required in the structure of a model for training primary teachers. Educating teachers to engage in inclusive teaching will collapse unless the training model also reaches out to others who support education for disabled children and young people.

This structure recognises and responds to the many factors in Iraq that may impede teachers being able to undertake all of the modules. For that reason we have divided the programme into three interconnected modules that can also be offered as stand-alone professional development workshops. In other words the modules cover a programme of study, with each module also covering distinct topics. The topics should be designed for flexible delivery so that opportunities are increased for teachers and communities in remote locations.

These modules are presented in a format that would enable a university to accredit each module within the programme so that they cumulatively contribute to a recognised award or qualification for the participants (see Diagram 3). In this way the professional development activity encourages participants to avoid the tendency towards unplanned or ad hoc professional development activity. A more detailed reading guide together with details of the module presenters should be supplied in the accreditation process. Module 2 applies a more detailed framework for structuring the analysis of a school and its community.

By fusing theory and practice, the modules aim to:

- Expand participants' understanding of disability and disablement.
- Build confidence in being able to address the challenges of teaching disabled children with their peers.
- Build collaboration within and between schools.

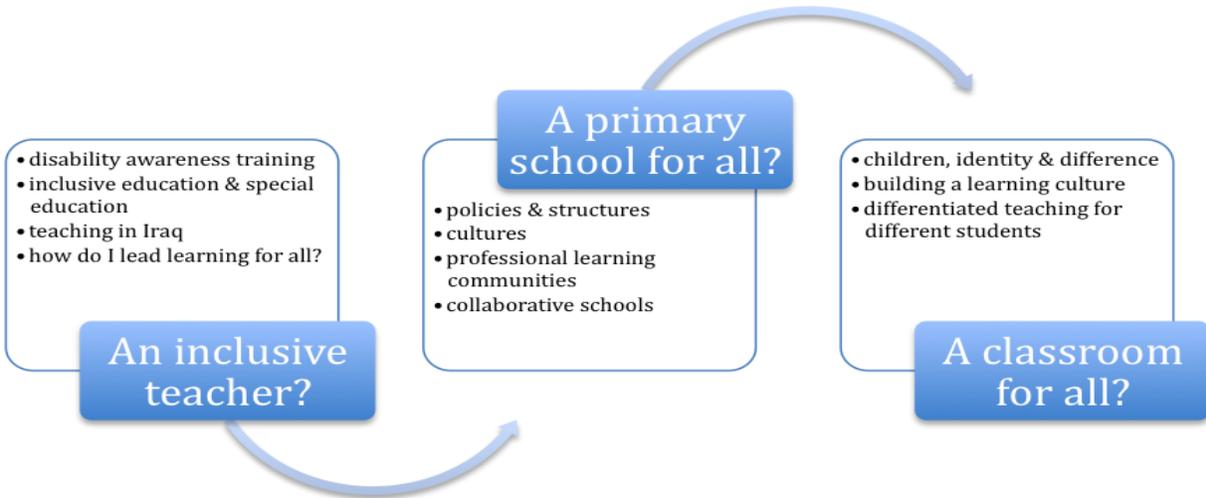


Diagram 3: The Programme - Inclusive Schools for Iraq.

The programme is not a special education course in the traditional sense. The modules embrace the UNESCO Education For All (EFA) commitment to the education of disabled children in the regular school (see Inset 2). According to research, educating children in the regular school rather than in segregated schools or institutes improves educational and social outcomes (Gabel, 2005; Booth and Ainscow, 2004; Titchkosky, 2003).

Inset 2: Salamanca Statement & Framework for Action on Special Needs Education

“Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.”

(Paris, UNESCO 1994)

The framework for this professional development model draws in part from the *Index for Inclusion* (Booth & Ainscow, 2004). The *Index for Inclusion* may be described as a guide for structuring questions about schooling, exclusion and inclusion.

The Modules

Although the modules may be taken as stand-alone professional development courses, there is logic to the sequence set out above and they are interconnected.

Module 1: An inclusive teacher?

OVERVIEW

The first module provides a background in disability studies and disability equality training and explores the implications for Iraq society in general, and Iraq's approach to education in particular. Participants should also be encouraged to consider their own feelings about shifting understandings of disability. Broader questions of inclusion and exclusion should be examined and participants should reflect upon the goals of Education For All for their own professional practices.

OBJECTIVES

This module aims to:

1. Introduce teachers and school communities to international developments in the field of disability studies and to the *Social Model of Disability* (see Inset 1);
2. Apply the social model and disability studies to a shared analysis of the status of disabled people in Iraq society;
3. Extend knowledge of the aims, structures, policies, protocols and culture of Iraqi education;
4. Build a picture of the condition of their working context and the available resources for teaching and learning;
5. Establish the points of convergence and difference between theories and practices of Iraqi education (special education and regular education);
6. Understand the characteristics of the inclusive teacher;
7. Reflect on the implications of inclusive education and the social model of disability for their professional knowledge and practice.

TOPICS

The module should be interactive and attempt to develop discussions around the context of the participants. The module is built around key topic areas. These include:

1. Changing understandings of disability and disablement;
2. The origins, development and application of the social model of disability;
3. Recent developments in disability studies and critiques from disabled researchers and activists of the social model;
4. International legislation and conventions to build disability awareness and protect the rights of access and participation in civil society;
5. Implications of the social model for education and the development of inclusive education;
6. Framing education in Iraq and implications of the social model for Iraqi schools, teachers and students;
7. The attributes of an inclusive educator.

RESOURCES

A module course book should be provided to each student that should contain reference materials. The selection of references should capture the international character and diversity of inclusive education to reinforce its commitment to the analysis of local contexts as a platform for applied learning and school improvement. In other words examples should be drawn from countries experiencing extreme difficulties to draw out practical steps appropriate for the complex challenges in Iraq.

Participants’ knowledge of their professional context is a resource for analysis and learning. Local education support, institute and community workers and disabled people should be invited to engage in the module discussions.

Four propositions and a matrix for building inclusive education (Slee, 2010) are used as a basis for developing understandings of inclusion and exclusion and planning interventions.

Four Propositions Underlying Inclusive Education and School Reform to Engage Disabled Children and Young People in Iraq:

- i. Inclusive education declares its commitment to identifying and dismantling educational exclusion.
- ii. Inclusive education recognises the importance and the power of language seeks to establish and embed a vocabulary of disability rights, consistent with international conventions, in Iraqi education.
- iv. Inclusive education provides an alternative education vision and practices to build sustainable communities.
- iii. Inclusive education utilises a number of research tools to analyse barriers to educational access, participation and success.

Exploring the Propositions:

The module presentations will explore the propositions through a series of themes and related discussion points.

Table 1: Exploring the Inclusive Education Propositions.

Proposition	Themes	Elements
Identifying and dismantling exclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing inclusion as a political project concerned with the examination of identity, difference, privilege, disadvantage and oppression; • Exposing the blockages within current education practices – globally and locally; • Engaging the constituents; • New research partnerships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new focus that challenges traditional notions of special education needs; • Segregation versus community; • Human value, interdependence and utility; • An Apprenticeship in Democracy; • Recognition, presentation & redistribution; • Collective responsibility; • Encouraging debate and accepting the need to confront and explore difficult and uncomfortable questions about impairment and disability.

<p>A new language for inclusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights, interests & needs; • Social models versus individual models of disability; • Who speaks for whom? • Problems with regular & special education thinking? • Acknowledging oppression and exclusion; • Detecting co-option and compromise; • Building communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeship in democracy; • Recognition, presentation & redistribution; • Confronting language – debunking notions of ‘choice’, ‘continuum of placement options’ based on disenfranchisement and the absence of real choices; • Building knowledge of anti-discrimination legislation and conventions.
<p>Researching and understanding the school and its community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking about the values that frame research; • Decoupling inclusive education research from special education research; • Forming trans-disciplinary and trans-identity research alliances to reflect the complexity of oppression; • Reconsidering the nature of validity and reliability in research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The link between ideology and research and the implications of this for rigour; • Acknowledging the importance of voice in research and the social relations and oppressive tendencies of research; • Broadening rather than narrowing our research questions.
<p>An alternative education vision and practices to build sustainable communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interrogating global trends in education and their implications for Iraq; • Education for democratic citizenship; • Curriculum, pedagogy and assessment for authentic learning; • Inclusion as an educational aspiration and strategy; • Educating teachers for community; • Engaging teachers & community in policy development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building curriculum from transparent principles and ethical values; • Establishing policy flows that enlist the constituents in development, implementation and review; • Building assessment literacy to distinguish between standards, tests, performance targets, compliance regimes and achievement tables for international comparison.

Source: Slee, R. (2010) *The Irregular School*. Abingdon, Routledge.

PARTICIPANT JOURNALS

Each participant should be provided with a suggested format for developing a learning journal. The journal should combine:

- A narrative built from personal reflection on the module materials and professional context and challenges;
- An annotated portfolio of professional resources;
- An action plan that shows evidence of strategies to build collaborative networks.

The journals should be made available as an educational resource for others to demonstrate the application of inclusive education reform in local conditions for the

extension of education opportunities of disabled children and young people. This will help to address resistance to inclusive education as irrelevant to Iraq.

Module 2: A primary school for all?

OVERVIEW

In this module teachers will be encouraged to critically examine the culture of school that is articulated through structures and policies in the school, and through the educational programme and through teaching practices employed. In this way questions may be raised about the differential impact of schools on different students and the implications of this for teaching and learning. These features of school organisations also affect teachers and the quality of their work. Attention is paid to building collaborative approaches to solving educational issues. Inclusive education is seen as a community endeavour, it is everybody's business.

OBJECTIVES

This module aims to:

1. Engage participants in a structured analysis of concepts of inclusion and exclusion in relation to school culture, policies and practices;
2. Promote rigour in the analysis by having participants address questions and provide indicators from which to build their school profile;
3. Build a risk assessment of their school for student learning;
4. Consider the challenges and attributes of disability and understand the differences between impairment, disability and disablement;
5. Familiarise students with developments in inclusive education and the implications of inclusive education for schools as 'living organisations'²;
6. Share developments in building professional learning networks across schools and their communities;
7. Consider approaches to school improvement and development that are responsive to challenging contexts.

TOPICS

² Referring to schools as "living organisations" acknowledges an appreciation of the fact that schools have the capacity to and do change in various ways. Choices can be made that impact on the experiences of students differentially and enhance or compromise learning.

The module will be interactive and attempt to develop discussions around the context of the participants. The module is built around key topic areas. These include:

1. Setting an educational vision and applying it in local context;
2. Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals;
3. School self-study;
4. Schools and community – schools as community;
5. School community development planning;
6. The collaborative school practitioner;
7. Making reform achievable – an international survey.

RESOURCES

A module course book will be provided to each student that will contain reference materials and a detailed approach to analysing school concepts, policies and structures and practices. The selection of references will capture the international character and diversity of inclusive education to reinforce its commitment to the analysis of local context as a platform for applied learning and change.

Participants' knowledge of their professional context is a resource for analysis and learning. Local education support, institute and community workers and disabled people will be invited to engage in the module discussions. The discussions in this module will be conducted according to a professional development framework designed to structure thinking about and reform of schools

This framework draws on extensive international research in inclusive education and the requirements for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All (Rieser, 2008). It also draws from the field of disability studies in education (Slee, 2010; Oliver, 2009; Gabel, 2005) since it provides alternative approaches to the traditional model of 'special educational needs'.

Education is a basic human right regardless of race, social class, ethnicity, religion, gender and ability. An inclusive approach to education can help to eliminate social exclusion and build a more just society. An equitable education system welcomes diversity. In some countries, inclusion is part of the school reform process, and ensures that diversity amongst all learners is welcomed. In many countries, inclusion is an approach to accommodating children with disabilities within general education settings.

All children matter equally, so inclusion is concerned with all learners. It is focused on ensuring that all children attend school (presence); all children take part in lessons and make friends (participation); and that all children make progress (achievement). The discussions in this module positions community members, family, students and education support workers as key resources in the development of inclusive practices. Community-based support is critical in the development of quality educational experiences and outcomes for all students, including disabled children and young people.

Developing a framework

Progress towards inclusive education is more likely to be successful in contexts where there is a culture of collaboration. It should involve all stakeholders – at governorate level, community level and school level. Barriers to education experienced by disabled learners can be addressed by stakeholders working together at school policy level, in the classroom and in the community. For such collaboration to be successful, a common language with which to discuss key concepts about disability and education is necessary.

The suggested framework for this model consists of four overlapping themes, as Diagram 4 shows:

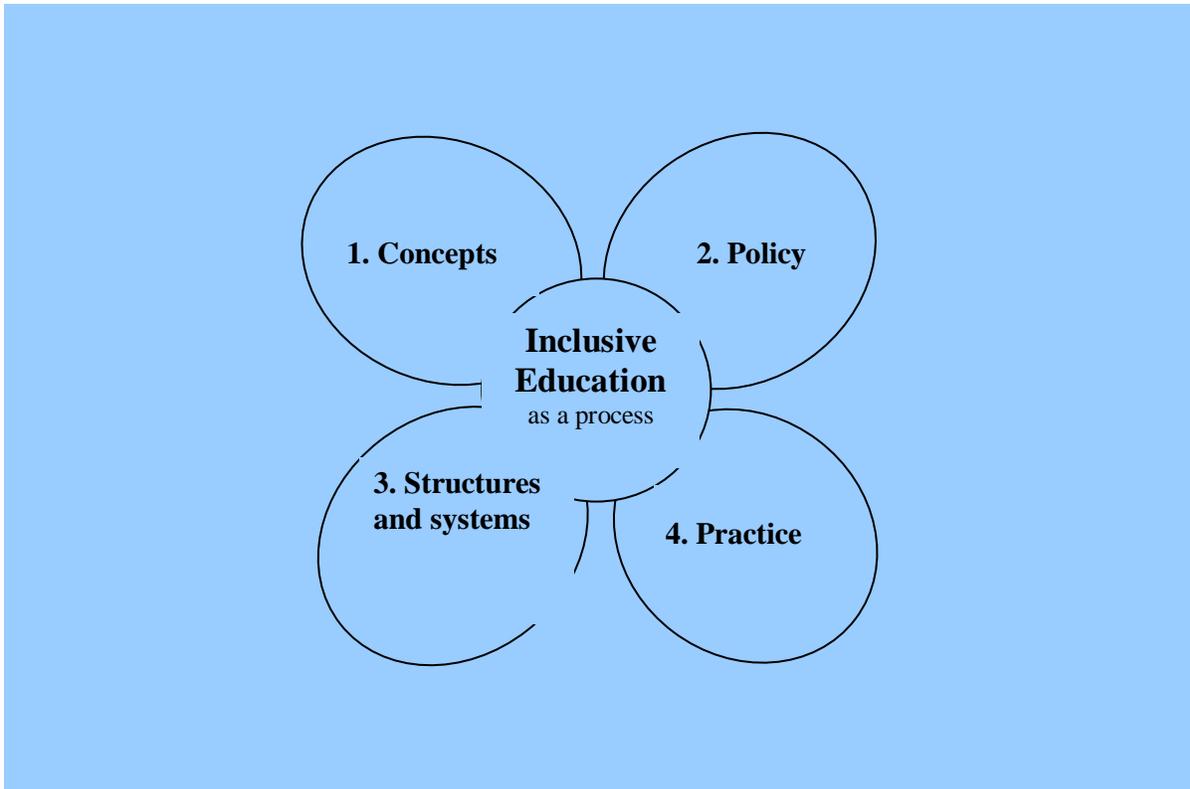


Diagram 4: A Framework for Analysing and Reforming Our Schools

The material in the next four sections examines each of these themes in more detail. This analysis points to a series of performance indicators that can be used to review the stage of development within an education system. This requires an engagement with statistical and qualitative data, and with the views of learners and their families. In this way, evidence can be used to continually evaluate the proposed training model, and so move policy and practice forward.

Theme 1: Concepts

This section looks in greater detail at the idea of inclusive education as a process. It examines the implications for the curriculum and associated assessment systems; the importance of collaboration amongst stakeholders; and the need to monitor progress within the education system.

1.1 Inclusion as a principle – guiding the process

Summary Inclusive education is often misunderstood and there are many different interpretations around the world. It is seen by some as a process of strengthening the capacity of an education system to reach out to all learners in the community. Starting from the belief that education is a basic human right and the foundation for a more just society it is, therefore, an overarching principle that must guide all educational policies and practices. Inclusive education takes the Education for All (EFA) agenda forward by finding ways of enabling schools to serve all children in their communities, with a particular focus on those who have traditionally been excluded from educational opportunities – such as children with special needs and disabilities, children from ethnic and linguistic minorities, and so on. Inclusive schools offer a more cost-effective means of achieving EFA.

An inclusive school is a dynamic school – one that is always changing. It is engaged in a process towards inclusion. Such schools are concerned that the curricula offered in the school is inclusive; that the culture of the school is welcoming of diversity; and the community created in the school is based on inclusive values, policies and practices. Inclusive schools welcome the participation of families and other community members in the education of children and young people.

Inclusive education can be seen as a process of strengthening the capacity of an education system to reach out to all learners in the community. It is an overall principle that should guide all educational policies and practice, starting from the belief that education is a basic human right and the foundation for a more just society.

In order to realise this right, the international Education for All (EFA) movement has worked to make quality basic education available to all learners. Inclusive education takes the EFA agenda forward by finding ways of enabling primary schools to serve all children in their communities. It focuses particularly on those who have traditionally been excluded from educational opportunities – such as children and young people with disabilities, children from ethnic and linguistic minorities, and so on.

The World Conference on Special Needs Education provided an international impetus for inclusive education. More than 300 participants representing 92 governments and 25 international organisations met in Salamanca, Spain, in June 1994 to further the objective of Education for All by considering the fundamental policy shifts required to promote the approach of inclusive education, namely enabling schools to serve all children, particularly those with special educational needs (UNESCO, 1994).

Although the immediate focus of the Salamanca Conference was on special needs education, its conclusion was that:

Special needs education – an issue of equal concern to countries of the North and of the South – cannot advance in isolation. It has to form part of an overall educational strategy and, indeed, of new social and economic policies. It calls for major reform of the ordinary school.

(UNESCO, 1994, p. iii-iv)

The move towards inclusive schools can be justified on a number of grounds. There is an *educational justification*: the requirement for inclusive schools to educate all children together means that they have to develop ways of teaching that respond to individual differences and that therefore benefit all children. There is a *social justification*: inclusive schools are able to change attitudes to difference by educating all children together, and form the basis for a just and non-discriminatory society. Third is an *economic justification*: it is likely to be less costly to establish and maintain schools which educate all children together than to set up a complex system of different types of school specialising in different groups of children.

1.2 A curriculum for all

Summary The curriculum is the central means through which the principle of inclusion is put into action within an education system. It therefore has to be flexible enough to respond to the diverse characteristics of learners and relevant to the context of the school if it is to engage children and young people. Consequently, the curriculum needs to be well structured while accommodating a range of learning styles; flexible for responding to the needs of particular learners and communities; and structured around varying levels of entry skills and so that all students experience success. Inclusive curricula will make greater demands on teachers who will need support in implementing them effectively. A key issue for policy-makers, then, is how they can enable schools to make adaptations for individual learners, while also allowing flexibility in assessment and accreditation.

The agenda of inclusive education presents a considerable challenge, not least in terms of the development of a curriculum and systems of assessment that take account of all learners. At the heart of the curriculum are planned teaching and learning opportunities available in ordinary classrooms – the ‘formal’ curriculum of schools. However, there are many other potential learning experiences that are more difficult to plan. These include: interactions amongst learners; interactions between students and teachers, both inside and outside the classroom; and learning experiences that occur within the community – in the family, for instance, or in other social or religious contexts.

The formal curriculum has to serve at least two purposes:

- i. It has to embody all the knowledge, skills and values which Iraq wishes its young people to acquire; and
- ii. It has to provide quality education for children and young people, both in terms of the level of engagement it generates and the outcomes it produces.

Above all, the curriculum has to achieve these purposes for all children equally. It therefore has to be flexible enough to respond to the very diverse characteristics of learners. Consequently, the curriculum needs to be:

- Structured and yet capable of being taught in such a way that all learners can participate.
- Underpinned by a model of learning which is itself inclusive - therefore, it needs to accommodate a range of learning styles and to emphasise skills and knowledge that are relevant to students.

- Sufficiently flexible for responding to the needs of particular learners, communities and religious, linguistic, ethnic or other groups - it cannot be rigidly prescribed at national or central level.
- Structured around varying levels of entry skills, so that progress can be assessed in ways that allow all learners to experience success.

More inclusive curricula will make greater demands on teachers and, therefore, they will need training and support in implementing them effectively. Developing a curriculum that is inclusive of all children may well involve broadening the definition of learning that is used by teachers and decision-makers in the education system. So long as learning is understood as the acquisition of bodies of knowledge presented by the teacher, schools are likely to be locked into rigidly organised curricula and teaching practices. Commonly, therefore, inclusive curricula are based on a view of learning as something that takes place when learners are actively involved in making sense of their experiences. Learners, in other words, cannot simply be told. Rather, they have to find things out and understand things for themselves.

Such a view emphasises the role of the teacher as facilitator, rather than as instructor. This makes it easier for a diverse group of children and young people to be educated together, since they do not all have to be at the same point in their learning, or receive the same instruction from their teacher. Instead, they can work at their own pace and in their own way within a common framework of activities and objectives.

A key issue for policy-makers, then, is how they can enable schools to make adaptations for individual children. At the same time, if strategies for curriculum flexibility are to be effective, they have to be accompanied by similar strategies for allowing flexibility in assessment and accreditation. Such strategies are essential for ensuring that learners progress through the curriculum, and that their individual needs and characteristics are understood and accommodated.

1.3 A multi-sector approach

Summary Although teacher educators will play a key role in delivering the teacher education on disability for primary school teachers, it is necessary to involve a wider range of stakeholders. All stakeholders who are involved in disabled children's lives need to be involved in shaping the new teacher education curriculum (e.g. health and social services). It is therefore important to mobilise opinion in favour of inclusion and to build consensus at an early stage. This can be done through:

- *Advocacy groups*, which often have a network of international contacts capable of introducing new ideas.
- *Professional organisations* – in the key sectors, health, social welfare, administration.
- *Researchers and research students* can help collect evidence, analyse existing systems and structures, and explore local solutions.
- *Key opinion-formers* include respected teacher leaders, religious leaders, and media personalities.
- *Specialists in disability* can play a role in breaking down the technical 'mystique' associated with special education.

- Education authorities and service-providers at local level are likely to be key players.
- *The media* should be involved in raising awareness of the right of disabled children and young people to be educated in their neighbourhood school. Professional journals, the Internet, conferences and organised events can be used to celebrate successes in inclusive education.

1.4 Monitoring the impact

Summary The starting point for making decisions about what to monitor should be an agreed definition of inclusion. There is a need to ‘measure what we value’, rather than ‘value what we can measure’. Evidence collected at the systems level needs to relate to the *presence, participation and achievement* of all learners, with an emphasis placed on those groups of children and young people regarded to be at risk of marginalisation, exclusion or underachievement – such as children with disabilities.

In most education systems, ‘what gets measured gets done’. Great care needs to be exercised in deciding what evidence is collected in the education system, and how it is used. An agreed definition of inclusion can help teachers and administrators to ‘measure what they value’, rather than ‘value what they can measure’. In line with the suggestions made earlier, then, the evidence collected at the systems level needs to relate to the ‘*presence, participation and achievement*’ of all learners, with an emphasis placed on learners with disabilities.

When establishing a definition of inclusive education in relation to the collection of evidence and the monitoring of impact, the following elements can be helpful:

- *Inclusion is a process.* That is to say, inclusion has to be seen as a never-ending search to find better ways of responding to diversity. It is about learning how to live with difference, and, learning how to learn from difference. In this way differences come to be seen more positively as a stimulus for fostering learning, amongst children and adults.
- *Inclusion is concerned with the identification and removal of barriers.* Consequently, it involves collecting, collating and evaluating information from a wide variety of sources in order to plan for improvements in policy and practice. It is about using evidence of various kinds to stimulate creativity and problem-solving,
- *Inclusion is about the presence, participation and achievement of all children.* Here ‘presence’ is concerned with where children are educated, and how reliably and punctually they attend; ‘participation’ relates to the quality of their experiences whilst they are there and, therefore, must incorporate the views of the learners themselves; and ‘achievement’ is about the outcomes of learning across the curriculum, not merely test or examination results.
- *Inclusion involves a particular emphasis on those groups of learners who may be at risk of marginalisation, exclusion or underachievement.* This indicates the moral responsibility to ensure that those groups that are statistically most at risk are carefully monitored, and that, where necessary, steps are taken to ensure their presence, participation and achievement within the education system.

A well-orchestrated community debate about these elements can lead to a wider understanding of the principle of inclusion. Such a debate can encourage schools to move in a more inclusive direction.

Performance indicators

The arguments summarised in relation to 'concepts' suggest that in an education system that is becoming inclusive:

- 1.1 Inclusion is seen as an overall principle that guides all educational policies and practices.
- 1.2 The curriculum and its associated assessment systems are designed to take account of all learners.
- 1.3 All agencies that work with children, including the health and social services, understand and support the policy aspirations for promoting inclusive education.
- 1.4 Systems are in place to monitor the presence, participation and achievement of all learners.

Theme 2: Policy

This section examines the role of inclusive education in school policy development – supported by appropriate policies at national and governorate level. This discussion has major implications for tasks of leadership at all levels of the education system.

2.1 Unified and inclusive national policies

Summary The EFA agenda rests on a belief that public policy can radically transform education systems, given adequate political will and resources. The development of inclusive education demands wide-ranging changes involving the whole of the education system. It is important, therefore, that the move towards inclusive education is not undertaken in isolation. It needs to be seen as a means of improving the quality of education for all learners - not just those with disabilities or special educational needs - in order to avoid the danger of inclusion being seen as something that does not concern the wider education system. Legislation is important in the development of a more inclusive education system. The administration of special and regular education should, ideally, move towards a common administrative and legislative framework.

There are a number of ways in which the development of inclusive education can become part of wider changes in the education system or in society as a whole. This is important in order to avoid the danger of inclusion being seen as something that does not concern the wider education system and that does not, therefore, merit national resources. Inclusive education can also be part of more fundamental democratic reforms. The development of inclusive education demands wide-ranging changes involving the whole education system. This is important for two reasons in particular:

- Inclusive education is difficult to realise where other aspects of the educational and social systems remain unreformed and exclusive in their effects;
- In terms of generating a momentum behind the inclusive education movement, it is easier to build consensus where inclusion can be seen as part of a wider attempt to create a more effective education system, or a more inclusive society.

2.2 Changing cultures through strong leadership

Summary The transition to inclusive education is not simply a technical or organisational change - it is a movement in a clear philosophical direction. This rights-based philosophy is outlined in international declarations, conventions and reports relevant to inclusive education. The identification of barriers to inclusion, as well as the resources available for inclusion is a critical part of this transition process. School leaders need to think through the principles that will guide the process of change.

Moving to more inclusive ways of working involves changes in cultures across the education system, most significantly within schools. Cultures are about the deeper levels of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organisation, operating unconsciously to define how they view themselves and their working contexts.

The presence of children whose needs are not being met can stimulate the development of a more collaborative culture within which teachers support one another in experimenting with new ways of teaching. The participation of children in the process of becoming more inclusive is critical to its success.

Becoming more inclusive is a matter of thinking and talking, reviewing and refining practice, and making attempts to develop a more inclusive culture. This involves developing the capacity of those within schools to reveal and challenge deeply entrenched deficit views of 'difference', which define certain types of learners as 'lacking something'.

There is a need for shared leadership, with the principal seen as a leader of leaders. Hierarchical structures have to be replaced by shared responsibility in a community that becomes characterised by agreed values and hopes.

School leaders need to attend to three broad tasks:

- Developing new meanings about diversity;
- Promoting inclusive practices within schools; and
- Building connections between schools and communities.

2.3 A common language

Summary Teachers, school leaders and teacher educators need to develop a common language with which they can discuss their practice. Engaging with various types of evidence can be helpful in encouraging such dialogue. This can help to create space for interrupting and rethinking existing discourses. It can also focus attention on possibilities for making practices more inclusive – possibilities, which may have been overlooked.

The development of a common language. This enables colleagues to talk to one another, and to themselves, about detailed aspects of their practice. Without such a language, teachers find it difficult to experiment with new possibilities.

Building on teachers' knowledge. Much of what teachers do in a typical lesson is carried out at an automatic, intuitive level. They use tacit knowledge – knowledge they often do not realise they have. This is because there is little time to stop and think in a

busy classroom. Yet this knowledge is valuable and can form the starting point for a more inclusive way of working. Keeping a diary of practice can help teachers' to reflect on their practice.

Teachers observing teachers. Having the opportunity to see colleagues teaching is crucial to the development of more inclusive practices. It is through such shared experiences that colleagues can help one another to articulate what they currently do and define what they might like to do. Audio and video recording of lesson observations and subsequent discussions can help to promote such discussion. Challenging and discussing taken-for-granted assumptions about particular groups of learners, such as those with disabilities is central to the teacher education process.

2.4 Challenging non-inclusive practice

Summary In order to become more inclusive, schools should pay attention to the development of 'inclusive cultures'. This involves building consensus around inclusive values within learning communities. Leaders should be selected and trained in the light of their commitment to inclusive values and their capacity to lead in a participatory manner. Learners who cannot easily be educated should not be seen as 'having problems'. Instead the difficulties they face should be seen as challenges that lead educators to re-examine their practices in order to make them more flexible and responsive.

Collaboration. The sharing of professional expertise through collaborative ways of working is a key characteristic of an inclusive school. The development of 'inclusive cultures' and consensus around inclusive values within school communities are central to inclusive education. School leaders should be selected and trained in the light of their commitment to inclusive values and their capacity to lead in a participatory manner.

Schools with an 'inclusive culture' have:

- A degree of consensus amongst teachers. This includes respect for difference and disability. It also involves a commitment to offering all pupils access to learning opportunities – and ensuring their participation in all aspects of school life.
- Good links with parents and with their communities.
- A high level of staff collaboration. This can include teachers, students, parents and other community stakeholders.
- Leaders who are committed to inclusive values and shared leadership.

Performance indicators

The arguments summarised in relation to 'concepts' suggest that in an education system that is becoming inclusive:

- The promotion of inclusive education is strongly featured in important national policy documents and EFA strategies.
- Senior staff at the national and governorate levels provide clear leadership on inclusive education.
- Leaders at all levels, including civil society and other social sectors, develop a common language that guides the development of inclusive practices in schools.

Theme 3: Structures and Systems

This section examines the way available resources can be re-structured and mobilised in order to support inclusion in education. Consideration is also given to the implications for the role of specialist provision.

3.1 Support for vulnerable learners

Summary The goal must be to create systems that enable partnerships to be formed between key stakeholders. These include: parents/carers; teachers and other education professionals; those in other services who will be affected by the move to inclusion (e.g. Health, Social Services); teacher trainers and researchers; national, local and school-level administrators and managers; civic groups in the community; and members of minority groups at risk of exclusion. The involvement of families is particularly crucial.

Mobilising human and intellectual resources. All available resources need to become involved in developing a more inclusive education system - including families. Parents and the organisations that represent them can be invited into the policy-formulation process. They might be involved simply in negotiating provision for their child, or in becoming part of school governing bodies, or in joining local or national policy-review groups.

Parent involvement. Where parents lack the confidence and skills to participate in such development, it might be necessary to undertake some developmental activities with them. This might mean creating networks of parents who can act as mutual support groups, or training parents in skills to work with their own children, or acting as parental advocates in their dealings with schools and authorities.

In thinking about the roles of families and communities the following points need to be kept in mind:

- Families and communities have rights to involvement and can make a range of contributions. In particular, they have knowledge of their children which professionals do not have.
- Building family and community involvement is a step-by-step process based on trust. Particular efforts are needed to promote the involvement of marginalised groups.
- Families and community groups can sometimes take a lead role as activists for inclusive education.
- Families' rights to involvement can be built into legislation or into the system of school governance.
- Communities can also be involved successfully in the governance of schools or of the education system as a whole.
- Schools can act as a resource for the community by offering services or becoming the base for other agencies.

3.2 Coordinating services and institutions

Summary Inclusive administrative processes in education are essential. The coordinated administration of special and mainstream education is an essential first step towards inclusive education. Civil society and international organisations can play a

role in supporting the transition to inclusion. The move to more inclusive education should be accompanied by a move towards devolved management structures. This devolution can encourage flexibility and risk-taking.

Two levels of devolution tend to be used:

Decentralisation to the local level (e.g. the governorate). Local administrations, managing both the ordinary and special schools in a given area, are able to respond flexibly to local circumstances and to take into account the needs of particular groups or even individual learners. They are capable of being more responsive than national or regional governments to the needs of their communities.

Decentralisation to the school level. This means that many decision-making powers and substantial amounts of the education budget are devolved to individual schools. This frees schools up to manage their own resources in order to meet the needs of learners in their communities, to take risks in developing inclusive education programmes and to be proactive in co-ordinating other services and mobilising community resources in the interests of their students.

Decentralisation to both of these levels carries with it risks as well as opportunities. For example:

- Schools and local authorities can be resisters of change as well as leaders of change.
- Devolving power to schools and local administrations invites them to pursue their own self-interest rather than the implementation of national policy. This is a particular problem if national policy itself is ambiguous or has multiple, conflicting aims.

School-to-school collaboration. This can strengthen the capacity of individual organisations to respond to learner diversity. There is also evidence that when schools seek to develop more collaborative ways of working, this can have an impact on how teachers perceive themselves and their work. Comparisons of practices can lead teachers to view underachieving students in a new light.

Civil society and international organisations. These organisations can play a range of roles in the transition to inclusion. They can:

- Help align national developments with current international thinking;
- Provide access to international expertise and experience;
- Work at national level with ministries in formulating inclusive education policies;
- Support inclusive education projects with advice and resources in order to catalyse national developments; and
- Support the implementation of national inclusive education policy with advice and resources.

There are, however, some problems that may arise in working with these organisations. For example:

- International agendas may be imported without sufficient thought as to how they need to be reinterpreted in the light of the Iraqi context;

- Demonstration projects and other initiatives may be dependent on a level of resourcing which is not sustainable so that they cannot be 'rolled out' throughout the national system;
- Excellent initiatives may take place in isolation and so may never be fully incorporated into national policy and practice.

3.3 Resources

Summary The use of resources, particularly human resources, is a vital factor in the development of inclusive provision. This does not necessarily require large amounts of new money and other resources. The important thing is that: existing funding is redirected towards moving policy and practice in a more inclusive direction; and that incentives are built into resourcing mechanisms for schools, local authorities and others to involve themselves in inclusive developments. Inclusive financing systems should be developed. Efforts need to be made to ensure that primary school teachers encourage learner participation by making good use of available resources, and particularly human resources – including learners themselves.

The careful use of available resources is an overarching theme in this document. The way resources are managed affects policy and practice; structures and systems; and practice.

Inclusive financing. It is important to find ways of meeting all learners' needs which do not necessarily call for extra funds and other resources. A unified approach to the funding of special and mainstream educational provision is an important step forward. It may also be necessary to fund programmes that aim to overcome disadvantage and promote a more equitable education system for all. It may be necessary to set up monitoring systems to ensure that funding and other resources are used appropriately and effectively.

Seeing learners as a resource. Providing resources that support all learners is another overarching theme in our approach to teacher education and professional development. This includes those resources that supplement what the ordinary class teacher can provide. However the most important form of support is that which is provided from the resources which are at the disposal of every school – that is children supporting children, teachers supporting teachers, parents as partners in the education of their children and communities as supporters of primary schools. This involves efforts to ensure that teaching encourages learner participation by making good use of available resources, and particularly human resources.

3.4 The role of specialist provision

Summary The specialist Institutes will continue to make a contribution to the education of learners with disabilities, but their role will change over time. As ordinary schools become more inclusive, the evidence is that the need for separate special schools diminishes and changes. Efforts are needed, therefore, to explore how the expertise and resources within the special Institutes can be re-directed in ways that will add support to the changes taking place in mainstream schools. The Institutes can play a vital part in supporting ordinary schools as they become more inclusive, possibly by becoming resource centres that enable clusters of schools to become more inclusive.

Changing roles for special educationalists. The Salamanca Conference concluded that countries would be advised to concentrate their resources on developing inclusive ordinary schools. As ordinary schools become more inclusive, moreover, the evidence is that the need for separate special schools is diminishing. Such moves open up new opportunities for special school staff to continue their historical task of providing support for the most vulnerable learners in the education system.

One school for all. It is useful, here, to emphasise the distinction between *needs, rights* and *opportunities*. All children have needs (e.g. for appropriate teaching), but they also have the right to participate fully in a common social institution (a local mainstream school) that offers a range of opportunities for them. Too often parents are forced to choose between ensuring that their child's needs are met (which sometimes implies special school placement) and ensuring that they have the same rights and opportunities as other children (which, according to the Salamanca Statement, implies mainstream school placement). The aim therefore should be to create a system where these choices become unnecessary.

This is why it is important to stress that inclusion is about the development of mainstream schools, rather than the reorganisation of special schooling. The aim has to be to increase the capacity of all mainstream schools, so that they can meet the needs of all children, whilst offering them similar rights and opportunities. This has implications for a changed role for the Institutes in the medium term and their possible disappearance in the longer term. However, it is vital to note that while the buildings that house specialist skills may disappear, the skills, attitudes, values and resources that those buildings contain can continue.

Performance indicators

The arguments summarised in this section regarding *structures and systems* suggest that in an education system that is becoming inclusive:

- 3.1 There is high quality support for vulnerable groups of learners.
- 3.2 All services and institutions involved with children work together in coordinating inclusive policies and practices.
- 3.3 Resources, both human and financial, are distributed in ways that benefit vulnerable groups of learners.
- 3.4 There is a clear role for specialist provision, such as special schools or Institutes, in promoting inclusive education within an understanding of education as a right.

Theme 4: Practice

This section examines the types of school and classroom practices that are needed in order to foster greater inclusion within education systems. Attention is also given to the implications for initial and continuing teacher education provision.

4.1 Developing schools for all

Summary It has been argued that inclusive schools will not be achieved by transplanting special education thinking and practice into mainstream contexts. This

opens up new possibilities, many of which relate to the need to move from individual responses to a perspective that seeks to *personalise* learning through an engagement with the whole class. A careful use of human resources is essential in the personalisation of education for all children. There is considerable evidence that child-to-child strategies, such as cooperative learning, can be particularly powerful in creating inclusive learning contexts. Where necessary, there should be 'reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements', as recommended in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol (United Nations, 2006).

Individualised teaching. A preoccupation with individualised responses to disabled children is a feature of special education. This sort of response can make it difficult to develop more creative forms of teaching for the benefit of all children. Importing practices from special education can lead to segregated teaching within mainstream settings. In many countries teaching assistants work alongside class teachers in order to facilitate the presence of those learners categorised as having special educational needs or disabilities. There is a danger that teachers come to rely on this support. Individualised education plans are used in some countries, but they have can put a strain on resources, as more and more learners are identified as needing such a plan.

Danger of discrimination. There is a danger that the category 'special educational needs' can become a repository for various groups who are discriminated against in education and society as a whole. In this way special education can be a way of hiding discrimination, and justifying low attainment and the need for separate educational arrangements.

Personalising learning. Inclusive schools will not be achieved by transplanting special education thinking and practice into mainstream contexts. Instead, there is a need to move from an individualised approach to educational planning to a perspective that seeks to *personalise* learning. This opens up new possibilities for the whole education system.

Child-to-child approaches. A key feature of inclusive schools is the creation of teaching and learning conditions that encourage cooperation between students - to maximise participation and achieve high standards. This is an effective means of supporting the involvement of 'exceptional pupils'. For example, those who are new to a class; children from different cultural and language backgrounds; and those with disabilities. However, it is important to stress the need for skill in orchestrating this type of classroom practice. Poorly managed group approaches can waste time and, lead to disruption in learning.

Children as a resource. Children are, arguably, the most under-used resource in education. Yet they can be mobilised to overcome barriers to participation in lessons and contribute to improved learning opportunities for all learners. The essential resources for child-to-child initiatives to take place are already present in any learning environment. In fact, the larger the class, the more potential resources are available. This is not an argument for large classes, but an acknowledgement of the resources they contain. The key factor is the teacher's ability to mobilise this largely untapped resource.

4.2 Support for learning

Summary In an effective education system, all learners are assessed on an on-going basis in terms of their progress through the curriculum. The aim is to make it possible for teachers to provide support to all of their students, as needed. This means that teachers and other professionals have to have good information on their students' characteristics and attainments. Assessment systems work best where there is a basic system which applies to all children, but which can become more intensive and specialised in individual cases. Such systems make it more likely that particular difficulties will be identified. They also make it more likely that assessment will remain focused on supporting the child's progress and development rather than simply on labelling and categorising learners.

Curriculum-based assessment. Teachers in inclusive systems need to know how effective their teaching is for different learners and what they need to do to enable each one to learn as well as possible. It is not enough simply to be able to identify the level at which each student is performing, or to be able to list their particular difficulties or disabilities. Assessment, therefore, should not focus only on the characteristics and attainments of the students. It also has to focus on the curriculum and how each student can learn within that curriculum.

Assessment in context. This means that the most useful forms of assessment take place in the ordinary primary school. Primary school teachers need to have the skills to carry out assessments. However, they will also need to find ways of working with special educators, psychologists, social workers and medical professionals so that they can use their specialist assessments for educational purposes. The most important partners of all will be colleagues, parents and students themselves.

The culture of attributing learners' difficulties to learners themselves remains strong in many countries. Primary school teachers need to gain skills in contextual assessment as part of the development of more inclusive forms of education. In this context, *support for learning* must be a key strategy. Support includes:

- Children supporting children, teachers supporting teachers, parents as partners in the education of their children and communities as supporters of primary schools.
- Everything that enables learners to learn.
- Teachers with specialist knowledge, resource centres, and professionals from other sectors. This support may need to be reoriented towards inclusive approach.
- Services and agencies working together - this may require the creation of local management structures for services, which are ideally the same as those for managing schools.

In general, assessment systems work best where there is a basic system which applies to all children, but which can become more intensive and specialised in individual cases. Such universal systems make it more likely that particular difficulties will be identified. They also make it more likely that assessment will remain focused on supporting the child's progress and development rather than simply on labelling and categorising learners.

4.3 Preparing teachers

Summary: In an inclusive education system all teachers need to have positive attitudes towards learner diversity. They also need an understanding of inclusive practices, developed through initial teacher training and ongoing processes of professional development. In addition, a few teachers will need to develop a higher level of specialist expertise. Much of the training teachers require in relation to inclusive practice can take place in their initial training, or through professional development workshops.

A basic training curriculum for teachers would include advice about how to:

- Assess the progress of all students through the curriculum. This includes how to assess students whose attainments are low and whose progress is slow;
- Use assessments as a planning tool for the class as a whole, and for drawing up individual plans for students;
- Observe students in learning situations, including the use of simple checklists and observation schedules;
- Relate the behaviours of particular learners to normal patterns of development (particularly important for teachers of young children);
- Involve parents and pupils in the assessment process; and
- Work with other professionals – and know when to call on their specialist expertise and how to use their assessments for educational purposes.

A phased approach to the development of specialist expertise. Given the diversity of difficulties with which all teachers are confronted, separate pre-service training tracks (special and mainstream), are unhelpful. It is a better use of resources for teachers to develop skills and experience as mainstream educators first, and to specialise later in their teaching career. Specialist expertise should not to be too narrowly defined, but could be built on a broad base of expertise at lower levels of training. Mainstream teachers can acquire specialist skills if they are given the opportunity to collaborate with special education teachers, or in multi-disciplinary teams.

Multi-disciplinary teams. The progression from less to more specialist assessment is most straightforward where the school has access to a multi-disciplinary team. Establishing such teams involves bringing together specialists - such as social workers, health workers and educational psychologists. This may involve some reorganisation at ministry level to enable them to work across professional boundaries. Where such specialists are scarce, professionals need to work flexibly. This may involve developing specialist teachers who can undertake some aspects of, for instance, psychological assessment, and who can relate the assessment process to the needs of teachers in ordinary schools.

4.4 Continuing professional development

Summary Teachers are the most costly - and the most powerful - resource in any education system. As systems become more inclusive, professional development is particularly important because of the major new challenges that face both ordinary schoolteachers (who have to respond to a greater diversity of student needs) and special educators (who find the context and focus of their work changing in major ways). Professional development needs to be seen as part of a whole-system approach to change. Teacher trainers may need opportunities for reorienting their role, where

mainstream and special education training have traditionally been separate from each other.

As systems become more inclusive, professional development is particularly important because of the new challenges that face both teachers in regular schools (who have to respond to a greater diversity of student needs) and special educators (who find the context and focus of their work changing in major ways).

The key issues for professional development are as follows:

- Primary teacher training programmes need to be organised on inclusive lines. The rigid separation between mainstream education and special education programmes has to be replaced by more integrated programmes or more flexible pathways.
- Primary teacher trainers have to understand inclusive practice. They have to develop a greater knowledge of mainstream education and, in particular, of the sorts of practices that are appropriate in inclusive classrooms.
- Initial and in-service training have to provide opportunities for reflection and debate on inclusive approaches. These approaches are based on attitudes and values as well as on pedagogical knowledge and skills.
- Special educators need to develop a new range of skills in consultancy, the mainstream curriculum, inclusive classroom practices, and so on. In an inclusive approach, they will spend more of their time working in ordinary schools and supporting teachers.

In terms of the format of continuing professional development programmes, the following issues need to be taken into account:

- Professional development needs to be seen as part of a whole-system approach to change.
- School-based staff development, aimed at supporting school development, can be particularly powerful in the early stages of the move towards more inclusive education.
- Cascade models can help to disseminate training.
- Distance learning can be important where there are logistical challenges.
- The structures of primary teacher education need to be reviewed. It will be necessary to set up a 'hierarchy' of training opportunities, so that all teachers know something about barriers to learning and some teachers have the opportunity to develop specialist expertise.
- It will be necessary to give special educators access to training which helps them reorient their roles towards working in inclusive settings.
- Teacher trainers also may need opportunities for reorienting their role, particularly where mainstream and special education training have traditionally been organised separately.
- Training efforts need to be planned, systematic, and sustained over time.

Performance indicators

The arguments summarised in this section regarding *practice* suggest that in an education system that is becoming inclusive:

- 4.1 Primary schools have strategies for encouraging the presence, participation and achievement of all learners from their local communities.
- 4.2 Primary schools provide support for learners who are vulnerable to marginalisation, exclusion and underachievement.
- 4.3 Trainee teachers are prepared for dealing with learner diversity.
- 4.4 Teachers have opportunities to take part in continuing professional development regarding inclusive practices.

The Inclusive Education Review Framework

This final section provides a framework for reviewing progress regarding inclusive education within education systems. The framework consists of performance indicators and related questions that are intended to guide the collection of evidence in order to make informed judgements.

The conceptual framework developed in this document can be used to review progress within the whole of Iraq, or at governorate level. This is based on a definition of inclusive education as being:

- The process of increasing the participation of learners in, and reducing their exclusion from, the curricula, cultures and communities of primary schools;
- Restructuring the cultures, policies and practices in primary schools so that they respond to the diversity of learners in their locality;
- The presence, participation and achievement of all learners vulnerable to exclusionary pressures.

Informed by the research summarised in the four preceding sections of this document, the items in the Framework should be seen as ideals, i.e. *aspirations against which existing arrangements can be compared in order to pinpoint areas for development.*

The Inclusive Education Review Framework

The Framework consists of 16 performance indicators organised around the four overlapping themes, as shown in Diagram 2 in Appendix 1. For each indicator a set of questions is posed. These indicate the types of evidence that will be needed in order to make informed judgements as to the current situation with regard to the particular indicator. Some of these data will be in the form of statistics. However, qualitative evidence of various kinds will also be essential, not least the views of learners themselves and their families. The indicators and questions are as follows:

Theme 1: Concepts

In a national education system that is becoming inclusive:

1.1 Inclusion is seen as an overall principle that guides all educational policies and practices.

- Is inclusive education regarded as a principle by policy makers?
- Does the idea of inclusive education inform all national policies?
- How far is inclusion informing educational practices?

1.2 The national curriculum and its associated assessment systems are designed to take account of all learners.

- Is the national curriculum based on the principle of inclusion?
- Does the national curriculum have the flexibility to suit all learners?
- Do assessment systems celebrate different levels of achievement?

1.3 All agencies that work with children, including the health and social services, understand and support the national policy aspirations for promoting inclusive education.

- Is there widespread commitment to the idea of inclusive education amongst professionals who work with children?
- Do professionals who work with children understand the implications of the principle of inclusion for their roles?

1.4 Systems are in place to monitor the presence, participation and achievement of all learners within the education system.

- Are there effective systems for collecting data regarding the presence, participation and achievement of all learners?
- Are data analysed in order to determine the impact of efforts to foster greater inclusion?
- Are actions taken in the light of data analysis to strengthen inclusive practices?

Theme 2: Policy

In a national education system that is becoming inclusive:

2.1 The promotion of inclusive education is strongly featured in important national policy documents and EFA strategies.

- Do all major educational policy documents make reference to the principle of inclusion?
- Are all policy priorities informed by the principle of inclusion?

2.2 Senior staff at the national and governorate levels provide clear leadership on inclusive education.

- Do national policy makers stress the importance of inclusion as a principle?
- Do local governorate administrators provide clear leadership regarding inclusive education?
- Do primary school principals encourage the development of inclusive cultures in their schools?

2.3 Leaders at all levels, including civil society and other social sectors, articulate consistent policy aspirations for the development of inclusive practices in schools.

- Are national policy makers seen to encourage the development of inclusive practices?
- Do local governorate administrators take action to encourage the development of inclusive practices?
- Do school principals take action to encourage the development of inclusive practices?

2.4 Leaders at all levels, including civil society and other social sectors, challenge non-inclusive practices in schools

- Are there systems for inspecting primary schools that identify and challenge non-inclusive practices?
- Where non-inclusive practices are found to exist, are they challenged by senior staff in schools?

Theme 3: Structures and systems

In a national education system that is becoming inclusive:

3.1 *There is high quality support for vulnerable groups of learners*

- Are there effective systems for identifying vulnerable groups of learners?
- Are there flexible arrangements for ensuring that support is available to individuals as and when necessary?
- Are families seen as partners in supporting their children's education?

3.2 *All services and institutions involved with children work together in coordinating inclusive policies and practices.*

- Is there cooperation between primary schools?
- Do institutions and services within governorates work together?

3.3 *Resources, both human and financial, are distributed in ways that benefit vulnerable groups of learners*

- Are all children seen as being of equal importance educationally?
- Are available resources used flexibly to support participation and learning?

3.4 *There is a clear role for specialist provision, such as the Institutes, in promoting inclusive education within the understanding of education as a right.*

- Do special schools have working links with mainstream schools?
- Do students from special schools have opportunities to take part in activities within mainstream schools?

Theme 4: Practice

In a national education system that is becoming inclusive:

4.1 *Primary schools have strategies for encouraging the presence, participation and achievement of all learners from their local communities*

- Do teachers use a range of teaching techniques to cater for learner differences?
- Are there effective procedures for taking account of the views of students regarding school practices?

4.2 *Primary schools provide support for learners who are vulnerable to marginalisation, exclusion and underachievement.*

- Are teachers skilled in assessing the learning needs of individual students?
- Do teachers (and other school staff) cooperate in supporting individual students?
- Do staff in primary schools work closely with families in ensuring support for students?

4.3 *Trainee teachers are prepared for dealing with learner diversity*

- Are trainee teachers helped to develop positive attitudes towards student diversity?
- Does the teacher education curriculum emphasise the principle of inclusive education?

4.4 Teachers have opportunities to take part in continuing professional development regarding inclusive practices

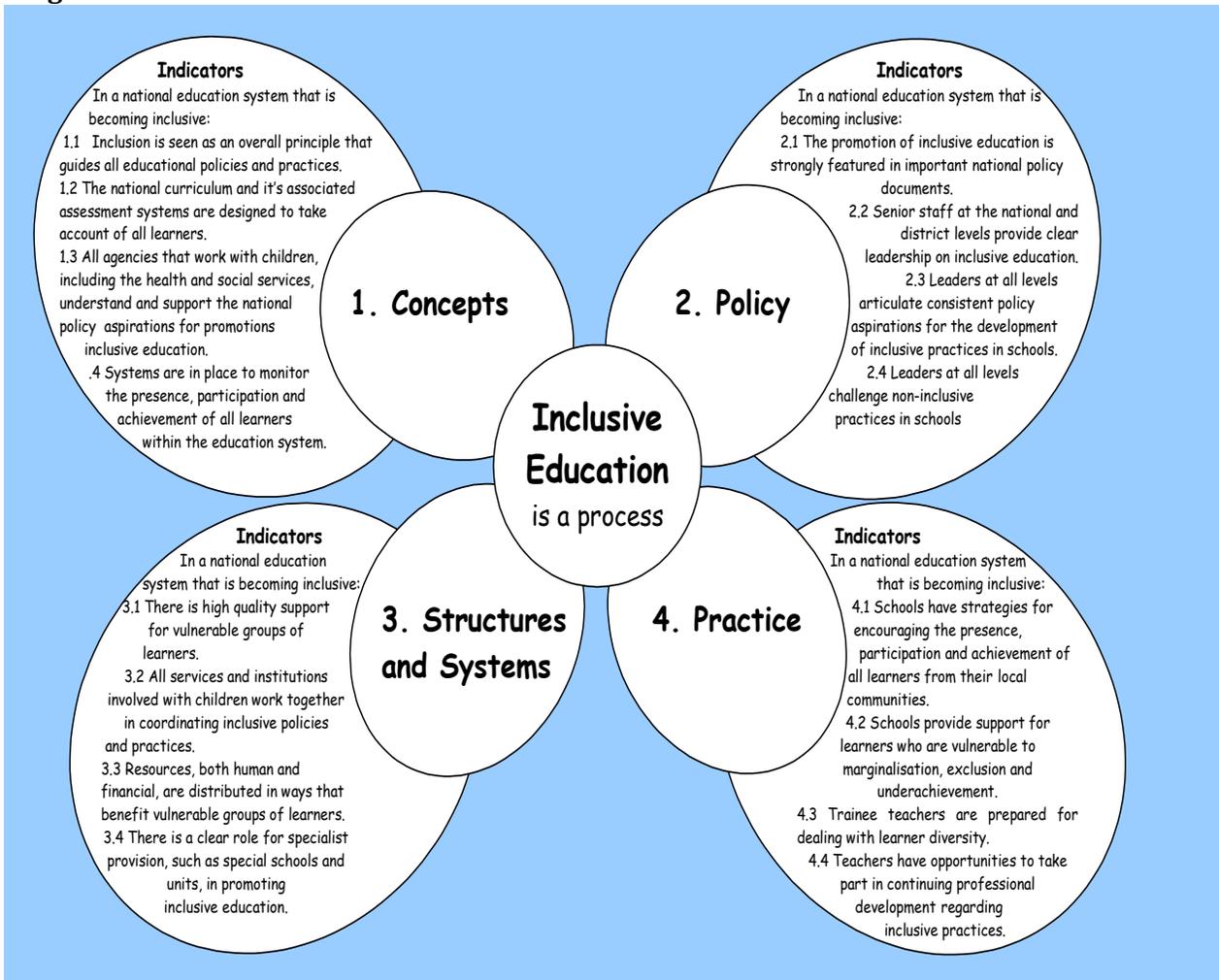
- Do primary schools have effective staff development programmes in relation to inclusive practices?
- Are there opportunities for teachers to attend in-service courses regarding the development of inclusive practices?

Rating Performance

The Inclusion Review Framework can be used to assess progress towards inclusive education across Iraq, or at governorate level. Individual items are rated by stakeholders on a four-point scale and then an assessment is made regarding progress on each theme. In this way, it will possible to determine areas for further development, as follows:

1. The system is working well. There are several significant strengths and no obvious weaknesses.
2. The system is performing quite well. On balance, strengths outweigh weaknesses.
3. The system is not performing well. On balance, weaknesses outweigh strengths.
4. The system is performing badly. There are no obvious strengths and several weaknesses.

Diagram 5: The Inclusive Education Framework.



PARTICIPANT JOURNALS

Each participant will be provided with a suggested format for developing a learning journal. The journal will combine:

- A narrative built from personal reflection on the module materials and professional context and challenges;
 - An annotated portfolio of professional resources;
 - An action plan that shows evidence of strategies to enhance school culture through reforming and or refining school policies, structures and practices;
 - An inventory of school and community resources to build collaborative networks.
-

Module 3: A classroom for all?

OVERVIEW

A classroom for all is organised as an action research programme that focuses upon the classroom, the attributes of students in the classroom and the efficacy of teaching. Differentiated teaching is explored as a means for engaging students in learning and as a strategy for improving our work in a classroom of diverse learners.

OBJECTIVES

This module aims to:

1. Introduce a range of theories about student identity and difference;
2. Examine the implications of student difference for teaching and learning in Iraqi classrooms;
3. Consider developments in learning theories and practices as a tool for examining the capacity of the participants' classrooms;
4. Build skills in curriculum development;
5. Familiarise students with differentiated learning and its capacity for student engagement and academic attainment;
6. Apply the lessons from differentiated learning to ordinary classrooms;
7. Implement a learning plan for a range of students.

TOPICS

The module will be interactive and attempt to develop discussions around the context of the participants. The module is built around key topic areas. These include:

1. Students and diversity – disability and learning;
2. Applied learning theory;
3. Curriculum planning;
4. Community resources for teaching and learning;
5. Differentiated learning;
6. Building a teaching plan in a learning culture.

RESOURCES

A module course book will be provided to each student that will contain reference materials. The selection of reference will capture the international character and diversity of inclusive education to reinforce its commitment to the analysis of local context as a platform for applied learning and change.

Participants' knowledge of their professional context is a resource for analysis and learning. Local education support, institute and community workers and disabled people will be invited to engage in the module discussions.

PARTICIPANT JOURNALS

Each participant will be provided with a suggested format for developing a learning journal. The journal will combine:

- A narrative built from personal reflection on the module materials and professional context and challenges;
- An annotated inclusive teaching portfolio.

Programme Delivery This model for professional learning is designed to build local capacity through establishing a partnership with Iraqi academics and experienced teachers to build regional cells of professional development cadres. The three modules will be delivered firstly to the partner academics and teachers. These sessions will be constructed as a training process where the local partners are guided through content and instructional approaches. The partners will be encouraged to build local content and resources into the modules. In this way the programme is generative and will, over time become, self-sufficient and localised. It will also add to the stock of local expert inclusive education facilitators and school mentors. The flexibility of the model means that it will progress according to its level of funding and not be overstretched and diluted. It recognises that cultural change across large education organisations must be approached with the big picture in mind.

Diagram 6: Inducting local professional development leaders describes a process whereby the core training team of international and local educators work with groups of identified local educators to familiarise them with the professional development content and process. The programme builds capacity as reaches out to schools, ministry personnel, social workers, community leaders, health workers and parents.



Diagram 6: Inducting local professional development leaders.

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