

Inclusive quality education - to end exclusion

Features of quality inclusive education for all

Teachers

- Sufficient numbers
- Well-trained and motivated
- Adequate qualifications and experience
- Gender-sensitive
- Disability-aware
- Conscious of varied language and communication needs
- Participate in ongoing professional development
- Receive fair and regular salaries - including those in remote rural areas

Locally relevant and accessible curriculum

- Flexible to meet the needs of diverse learners
- Broad to promote relevant knowledge and competencies
- Democratic to encourage a culture of rights, respect and equality

Early childhood care and education

- Equips young children with cognitive, behavioural and social skills
- Improves access to primary school, progression through school, and learning outcomes
- Recognises importance of links between good access to basic primary health services and early childhood care and education
- Enables children from disadvantaged groups (especially those with disabilities) to participate in primary education

Language

- Mother tongue teaching
- Gradual transition to second or foreign language
- Sign language access for deaf learners

Inclusive learning environment

- Safe, accessible, child-friendly schools
- All learners are welcomed
- Free from harassment and abuse
- Accessible classrooms and curriculum
- Access to adequate sanitation

Healthy and well nourished students

- School meals
- Clean water
- School health programmes
- Health education

Learning materials

- Textbooks with unbiased content
- Positive role models for marginalised groups
- Available in a variety of formats (Braille, other languages)
- Free distribution of learning resources to rural areas

Assessment of students

- Frequent and accurate assessments and feedback
- Assessment methods appropriate to a range of learning styles
- Formal and self/peer assessment

Resources

- Teachers' resource books distributed equitably to urban and rural areas
- Investment in school buildings and furniture
- Positive teacher attitudes
- Parent and community involvement in education

Finance

- UNESCO recommends countries spend a minimum of 6% of GNP on education
- Additional financing can provide:
 - Accessible classrooms – furniture, curricula and classroom materials
 - Supportive and equitable learning environments for learners marginalised by poverty, gender, disability and other barriers



National policy and local governance

- Leadership and commitment to inclusion by national and local government
- Coordination of efforts and interventions between government, development partners and NGOs
- Participation by teachers, school administration, and representatives of excluded groups (such as disabled people's organisations) in policy making and monitoring

Parent and community engagement in school governance

- Strengthens learners' presence, participation and achievement
- Tackles prejudice and discriminatory language and behaviour
- Involves parents of children at risk of exclusion (e.g. children with disabilities)
- Combines community awareness, analysis of causes of exclusion and right of all children to education
- Lessens isolation of individuals with disabilities and their families
- Enables specific interventions, such as communication techniques for children with autism
- Promotes inclusion beyond the classroom
- Supports the development of locally relevant curricula

Quality in international conventions

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989

- **Article 2:** children should be protected from discrimination on the grounds of race, language, disability, etc
- **Article 28:** primary education should be free and compulsory
- **Article 29:** education should develop the child's personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to the fullest extent

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006 Article 24

- Children with disabilities must be able to access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live.
- There must be reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements and provision of the support required to facilitate their effective education
- Governments must facilitate the learning of Braille and other relevant communication formats; orientation and mobility skills; and peer support and mentoring;
- Governments must ensure that education for children who are blind, deaf or deafblind is delivered in the most appropriate languages and means of communication for the individual and in environments which maximize academic and social development.
- Governments must employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or Braille, and train education professionals in disability awareness and use of relevant communication formats, educational techniques and materials to support people with disabilities.

Challenges to quality inclusive education

- Teacher recruitment and retention crisis
- Large class sizes
- Lack of availability of textbooks including Braille
- Corporal punishment
- Early marriage
- Main focus on academic achievement
- Grade repetition
- Negative perceptions of individual learning potential
- Scarce specialist equipment (eg magnifiers)
- Weak capacity of government departments responsible for inclusion
- All these issues represent greater challenges in emergency and conflict situations