Book 3:
Getting All Children In School and Learning

TOOL GUIDE

Booklet 3 will help you and your colleagues to understand some of the main barriers that keep children from coming to school, or makes them drop out of school, and how you can reduce or even remove these barriers completely. The Tools includes way of addressing the needs of (groups of) children who are often excluded from and within education. These Tools have been used widely and effectively by teachers throughout the world. After working through these Tools, you will be able to talk with other teachers, family and community members, and students about what conditions may be pushing children away from learning. You also will be able to identify where the children who are out of school live, why they are not coming to school, and what you can do to get them into school, and learning.

Tools

Tool 3.1
Who are Vulnerable to Exclusion From and Within Education?

One important step in creating an ILFE and involving families and communities in this process is to find those children in the community who are not going to school.

Did you ever stop to think that maybe one of your students has a brother, sister, or friend who cannot, or will not, come to school. If we are dedicated enough to want to get these children into our inclusive schools and classrooms, keep them there, and assist them in learning the knowledge and skills they need for life, then we need to understand why they do not come to school!

DISCOVERING BARRIERS TO INCLUSIVE LEARNING

Read the following case study:

"Fareed" is 9 years old. Early every morning, though burning summers and freezing winters, Fareed collects scrap paper which he sells for a few Afghanis. The rest of the day till late afternoon he sells water to the families living on the mountain, because they have no water in their houses. Fareed needs money for his family. Therefore the whole day he carries water from well in the valley up to the families living in small houses on the steep mountain side. Therefore, he has no time to go to school. The distance from the water well to his "customers" is more than one kilometre steep climb on narrow and slippery paths up the mountain side. He asks "So, when would I have time to go to school?"

Case study from the NEJAT Centre

Action Activity: Identifying Barriers to Inclusion
If you are working with your colleagues, organise yourselves into two or four groups. If you are working alone, try this activity by yourself.

- First, think quietly yourself about some of the reasons why Fareed may not be going to school. If it helps, write brief notes. This should take about 5 minutes.
- Children's learning environment includes their schools, families, and communities. It also includes the children "themselves," that is, whether they personally wants to go to school, or not. Next, assign each group a learning environment. One group is the SCHOOL. Another group is the FAMILY. Another group is the COMMUNITY. And the fourth group is the CHILD (Fareed). If you are working in two groups, each group can take two learning environments. If you are working alone, try to do all four of them.
- Give each group a large sheet of poster paper, and then ask them to write at the top of the sheet which learning environment they are working on. There should be one sheet per learning environment.
- Discuss in your groups what barriers may exist within your learning environment that may be causing a child like Fareed not to come to school. List these barriers on the poster paper for your learning environment, and then read the following section.

Some Reasons Why Children May NOT be In School

These are the 12 main groups of children who are vulnerable to exclusion from and within education in Afghanistan (listed alphabetically):[1]

- Children affected by Conflict, War and Emergencies, Internally Displaced Children, Refugees and Returnees
- Children affected by Drugs
- Children from Ethnic, Language, Social and Religious Minorities
- Children from Poor Economic Backgrounds
- Children in Conflict with the Law / Children in Incarceration
- Children living far away from School - in Villages where there are no Schools
- Children suffering from Neglect, Abandonment and/or Abuse – including Orphans
- Children with Disabilities
- Children who are over-aged
- Girls
- Nomadic (Kuchi) Children
- Street and Working Children

Below are some of the major reasons that affect whether children attend school or not (listed randomly):

Lack of security

Large parts of Afghanistan are still affected by conflict and war and schools are often targeted by militants. In 2007 and the first six months of 2008 at total of 254 teachers and pupils were murdered by terrorists, while 329 were injured. 220 schools were destroyed or burned down. Threats from insurgents have resulted in the closing of more than 700 schools depriving more than 300,000 students from access to schooling. In cooperation with local communities and security institutions, the Ministry of Education launched anti-terrorism and anti-insurgency programmes in 1386 (2007) and as a result 49 terrorist attacks on schools have been prevented.[2]

In addition to the destruction and closure of schools that directly prevents children from attending school, parents often keep their children, especially their daughters away from school in fear for their safety. Landmines and unexploded ordinances still litter large parts of Afghanistan. Every single day Afghan children are being killed or disabled on their way to school, or while they are playing or working in the fields.

Children are being recruited and abducted by terrorists and criminal groups, and then trained to fight and use arms and/or to become suicide bombers. Unfortunately there are no credible statistics on the number of child-soldiers in Afghanistan.

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[1] This is the list of children most vulnerable to exclusion from and within education according to key Afghan stakeholders (education planners, headmasters, teachers and education activists) when they were asked to identify which groups of children were most vulnerable in Afghanistan (2008)

[2] Ministry of Education (2008). "The Development of Education - National Report of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan."

Children in many parts of Afghanistan have lost and are still losing parents and siblings to conflict, war and terrorist attacks. The scars that have been left on the minds and in the hearts of the children of Afghanistan will undoubtedly affect their intellectual, social, emotional and physical development.[3] Inclusive education is one of the few programmes that address these issues effectively.

Gender discrimination[4]
Millions of girls have enrolled in primary and secondary schools when girl's education was reintroduced after the Taliban government was ousted, as girls were not permitted to go to school by the Taliban government that ruled most of Afghanistan in the years prior to 2001. Today more than 2 million girls are enrolled in primary and secondary schools throughout Afghanistan. However, the Ministry of Education estimates that at almost 50% of school aged girls remain out of school.[5]

The geographical distribution of female teachers and education services for girls is a formidable challenge, as:[6]
• 51% of all female primary school teachers and 70% of female secondary school teachers are working in five of the biggest cities;
• 90% of the districts in Afghanistan (328 out of 364) do not have upper secondary schools (high schools) for girls;
• 13% of the districts (48 out of 364) have no female teacher at all, while;
• 16% of the districts (58 out of 364) have one or two female teachers;

Without female teachers many girls are not allowed to go to school (men are in most cases not allowed to teach girls), especially in lower and upper secondary schools. Thousands of schools (for girls and boys) have been built or rehabilitated as school infrastructure was severely damaged by war and neglect.

In spite of impressive efforts by the government, with support of the international community, girls remain the single largest of the most vulnerable groups of children to exclusion from and within education in Afghanistan. In parts of the country girls are still in danger of physical attacks if they dare to go to school. There are numerous cases of female students and their teachers being maimed and killed for claiming their constitutional and moral right to education.

In Afghanistan, as in most other countries, girls with disabilities, girls who are working, girls who are living on the street, girls with minority backgrounds, girls who have suffered neglect, abandonment and abuse are often double or triple disadvantaged.[7]

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[3] Ministry of Education / UNESCO (2009). "Needs and Rights Assessment on Inclusive Education."
[4] Ministry of Education / UNESCO (2009). "Needs and Rights Assessment on Inclusive Education."
[5] Ministry of Education (2008). "The Development of Education - National Report of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan." p.37.
[6] Based on information received by email from the Ministry of Education [26.04.2009] based on the 1386 (2007) School Survey and on data from the Education Management Information System (EMIS)
[7] Ministry of Education (2008). "The Development of Education - National Report of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan." p.37.

Early marriage and pregnancy
The traditional practise, in parts of Afghanistan, of child and teenage marriages is a factor that prevents many girls from completing their primary and secondary education. 40% of women in Afghanistan are married before the age of 18, and one third of these women have children before reaching adulthood.[8]

Poor economic background (Working and Street Children)
Poverty often affects whether or not a child can attend school. Because of their financial burden, poor parents are often pressed to provide even the basic necessities of life. Hence, children like Fareed must help to earn the family's income at the expense of their education and future life. We see these children every day, especially if we live in cities, but we hardly ever notice them unless they are begging for money, selling us things or washing the windows of our cars. "The street" is their source of livelihood and sometimes even their home. The excitement and the hope of earning money may encourage a child to leave home and move to a big city rather than staying in school. There are about 100 million street children worldwide. A child in the street may be a working child, usually a school dropout, or simply a homeless girl or boy. Street children are at high risk of being exploited because they are no longer properly protected by their families, communities, and schools. Not all street children are without families, however. Some, like Fareed, may work on the street to earn money and then return to their families at night. Many street children have little or no contact with their families, and they are without adult supervision. Moreover, they may have been abused physically or sexually at home, thus causing them to run away and end up on the street where they are bound to face similar violence and abuse.

Relevance and the practical value of education
Many children are prevented from going to school because their parents and families do not feel that education is meaningful for their daily lives; thus, they do not understand why their children should attend school. Parents also may feel that their children will receive a poor quality education, and the skills their children will learn in certain jobs are more valuable than those they will learn in the classroom.

Malnutrition
Children do not learn well if they are hungry or malnourished. They are often absent from class and may be classified as "slow learners." If they do not receive the attention they need, they may feel that they are not valued as members of the class, and they may drop out of school. The effects of malnutrition may also have life-long consequences on children as it may impair (hinder) their physical, social, emotional and intellectual development.

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[8] UNICEF (2008). "UNICEF and partners come together to help reduce maternal mortality in Afghanistan." http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/afghanistan_39281.html (17. September 2008)

Disabilities and Special Educational Needs

Most children with disabilities or special educational needs are not in school, especially when our schools and education systems have no policies or programmes for including children with physical, emotional, or learning impairments. Parents and community members are often unaware that all these children can learn, and that they have the right to education and should attend school. Even a school's facilities (such as stairways) may block many of these children from entering school. They also are the ones who often drop out because class sizes are too large, and we cannot devote enough time to their "special needs". In addition, the curriculum content, our teaching methods, and even the "language" of instruction (spoken, visual) may not be appropriate for children with disabilities or other special needs - as some will need Braille for reading and writing or Sign language for communication.

Disabling health conditions

Children who are frequently ill (for example if they suffer from Malaria, Asthma, or Allergies) are also often absent from school, and will therefore have difficulties keeping up with the other children. If they do not receive the health care, or the educational support and attention they need they may end up dropping out of school. The effect of many health conditions can therefore be life-long as they may lead to physical, social, emotional and intellectual impairments (for example; untreated eye-infections may lead to blindness, and ear-infections may lead to deafness). In addition to the physical consequences of many health conditions they may also lead to stigma and discrimination as they may be thought to be "contagious," even if this is medically proven not to be so.

Children affected by HIV are especially vulnerable to stigmatisation and discrimination, whether the children are infected themselves or they are "merely" affected because one of their family members are HIV positive, or have died of AIDS. These children will often be excluded from school and shunned by the community, even if there is no risk for HIV to spread through playing, leaving and being together with other children. In Booklet 6 you can read more about how to create a health, safe and protective environment for children.

Illness affects children in many ways. Many children - especially girls are taken out of school to care for sick siblings, parents and grandparents, or to earn money for the family.

Neglect, violence and abuse

Fear of violence when coming to school, at school, or going home from school may frighten children away. While boys often experience beating, bullying and sexual abuse, girls are at risk of assaults or other forms of harassment that might endanger their future prospects of getting married. For victims, it takes a heavy toll on their self-esteem. The violence and abuse often continues at home. Most Afghan children are being punished physically (often quite harshly) if they do not behave or perform according

to quite stringent expectations. They are being pinched, slapped, and beaten. Sometimes the physical (corporal) punishment is so severe that it results in permanent damage to their hearing (slapping over the ear), their vision (slapping in face), their intellectual development (severe shaking and beatings to the head), and their physical development (hands, arms, and legs are broken). Physical punishment is accepted by Afghan parents, as they do not know of any "effective" alternatives, and do not realise how severe the consequences physical punishment can have on the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of their children. Maybe Fareed was a victim of violence and abuse and therefore no longer wants to go to school.

Drugs[9]

Drug abuse is quite common in many parts of Afghanistan. Many parents, mostly fathers but also mothers are using drugs. Many are using drugs to be able to endure long and gruelling workdays, difficult living conditions, as well as to distract from hunger and cold. Infants and small children are sometimes given drugs to sleep, stay quiet, quench their hunger, and to distract them from the cold.

There is no reliable data on the number of children who are addicted to and/or affected by drugs. However it is estimated that more than 1.4% of the population age 15 to 64 are addicted to opiates or approximately 260,000 people. Another 3.6% or 670,000 people are addicted to Cannabis.[10] There are no statistics available on drug addiction among children age 0 to 14. Based on this data there are at least 1 million people in Afghanistan who are addicted to drugs, mainly Cannabis and Opiates.

If one million people are addicted to drugs many more will be affected. Most children of parents who are addicted to drugs will be severely affected. If the main breadwinner and/or caregiver of the family are addicted to drugs, it will affect the economic, social and emotional condition in the family and as a result especially the children will suffer. Maybe one of Fareed's parents is a drug addicts!
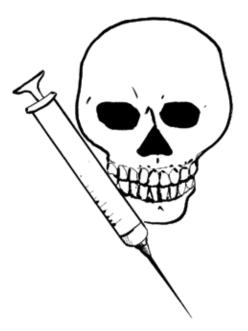
Drug consumption and abuse will severely affect the intellectual, social, emotional and physical development of children. Even if children who are consuming drugs are enrolled in school they will be less likely to attend school regularly, less likely to succeed in school, and therefore less likely to complete their education and make a successful transition to working life.

Minority backgrounds

Children who come from families that are different from the community at large in terms of language, ethnicity, religion, or other cultural features are especially at risk of being denied access to school. Sometimes, they are given access to substandard educational facilities, poorer quality instruction, and fewer teaching materials. They also have fewer opportunities for higher education than others. In some communities, moreover, there is

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[9] Ministry of Education / UNESCO (2009). "Needs and Rights Assessment on Inclusive Education."

[10] UN Office of Drugs and Crime (2007). "World Drug Report."

a local tradition of beginning one's working life in childhood, without the benefit of quality schooling. This tradition is passed on from one generation to the next, perpetuating the cycle of poverty and illiteracy. Fareed may be a member of one of these communities.

Negative attitudes

Negative attitudes towards children with diverse backgrounds and abilities are one of the biggest barriers to including these children in school. Negative attitudes can be found at all levels: parents, community members, schools and teachers, government officials, and among marginalized children themselves. Fears, taboos, shame, ignorance, and misinformation, amongst others, all encourage negative attitudes towards such children and their situations. These children - and even their families - may develop low self-esteem, hiding away and avoiding social interaction, and becoming invisible members of their communities. This can lead directly to their exclusion from school, even though they have the same rights and needs as other children. Fareed may also be a victim of negative attitudes.

School Environment

The mission of our schools is to effectively educate ALL children by giving them the skills they will need for life and life-long learning. Historically, our schools have not been equipped adequately to educate girls and boys with diverse backgrounds and abilities. While family and community circumstances may contribute to excluding children from school, making improvements in these conditions alone may not make our schools inclusive. Factors may exist within our schools that may actually discourage some children from coming to school, as well as contributing to poor attendance and early dropout. You and your colleagues have an important role to play. You can change your school into a place where every child can come to learn.

Below are some of the barriers to learning, development and participation created by schools, school policies, and school environment:

- **Costs (direct and hidden)** - For many poor families, school fees, examination fees, contributions to school, even the cost of books, pencils, school uniforms, or transportation can keep children like Fareed away from school.

- **Location** - In rural areas especially, if the school is located far away from the community, children like Fareed may be kept at home where they are safe. Particularly for girls, the distance from their homes to the school may discourage parents from sending their daughters to school out of fear for their safety. Children with disabilities also may not attend school if there is no suitable transportation for getting them to school.

- **Schedules** - Fareed may want to study but cannot learn during regular school hours. School timetables and calendars conflict with Fareed's work schedule so that Fareed cannot "learn as well as earn." Moreover, girls may drop out when going to school conflicts with their family responsibilities, such as domestic chores and caring for younger children or elderly family members.

- **Facilities** - If our schools do not have adequate facilities, this may be one reason why some children do not come to school. For instance, lack of boundary wall and proper latrines for girls may discourage them from coming to school. Inadequate facilities, also affect children with disabilities.

- **Preparedness** - One of the most common reasons why children with diverse backgrounds and abilities (especially children with disabilities) are excluded from school is that the schools and teachers are not educated or trained to teach them. Consequently, even if these children come to school, they may receive less attention and a poorer quality education than the other children in their class.

- **Class Sizes, resources and workload** - Large class sizes are common in Afghanistan and can be a barrier to the inclusion of children with diverse backgrounds and abilities. In wealthier countries, class sizes of 30 are considered too large, while in countries with limited resources class sizes of 60-100 are common. However, the size of the class is not necessarily a significant factor for successful inclusion, if attitudes are positive and welcoming. However, there are many examples of children with diverse backgrounds and abilities being successfully included in large classes. School with limited facilities often have to cater for thousands of children. Many schools therefore have two or three shifts per day. Afghan children therefore have very limited time in school where they have to learn all they need to pass the requirements of comprehensive curriculum. As a consequence, teachers are stretched and have little or no time to meet the needs of children who may require attention. As discussed above, attitudinal barriers to inclusion are often greater than barriers posed by inadequate material resources.

SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR INCLUSIVE LEARNING

What other barriers did you list on your poster sheets in the previous activity or discuss amongst each other?

Make a "Master List" of all the barriers that have been thought of or learned about from reading and discussing the information given above.

Action Activity: Barriers and Opportunities
- Everyone should imagine that they are Fareed or another child that is usually excluded from school. Decide for yourself what is your name, your age, your sex; where do you live, and with whom; what is the life situation in which you find yourself (such as with Fareed).
- Think about what **opportunities** you may have in enrolling in school (for instance, a school close to your home), and what **barriers** there might be. You can refer to the list above, your master list and your sheets from the first Tool in this Booklet on identifying barriers to inclusion.
- On a large sheet of poster paper, or any other writing surface, write down the different **barriers** you would face and **opportunities** you would have, everyone should plot their thoughts on the paper - and whether these barriers or opportunities related to "you" as a child, to "your" family, "your" community, or "your" school. Do this is together in a group, not individually.
- After everyone has finished, look at the chart you have made. Are there more barriers than opportunities? Are there more barriers than you ever expected? These barriers represent the challenges that must be overcome so that children like Fareed can come to school and that can be overcome with help from you.

- What are the most common opportunities? Are these "real" opportunities? Do they exist **now** for children with diverse backgrounds and abilities in your community, or are they opportunities we think **should be** there for ALL children? If they are opportunities we thing children should have, then they represent the vision of what you want to achieve in removing barriers and expanding opportunities for inclusion.
- The barriers that are commonly repeated by the members in you group, would be a good starting points for action!
- Are there many barriers that are related to children themselves, to their families, to communities and to schools, such as negative attitudes? These may need coordinated efforts to overcome!

Tool 3.2
Finding Children who are Not in School, and Why?

The previous Tool helped us to explore reasons why some children may not be in school. The question that needs to be answered now is, "Which of these barriers - or maybe others - exist in my school or community?" To answer this question, we first need to know which children in our community are not attending school and then investigate some of the reasons why this is happening. After we have this information, we can begin planning and implementing activities to get these children in school.

SCHOOL–COMMUNITY MAPPING

One effective tool that is widely used to identify children who are not in school is school-community mapping, which is also called school mapping or community based mapping. Like traditional maps, these maps show major community landmarks. More importantly, they also show each household in the community, the number of children and their ages in each household, and whether or not school-aged children in those households are attending school. You can create these maps by following the steps below.

1. Enlist the help of community committees, community and religious leaders, dedicated volunteers, your students as well as other teachers in your school. This step will actually help to build stronger links between your school and the community it serves. It also can help your school to obtain community resources for action programmes (especially important for schools with minimal resources), as well as to promote community ownership of the maps and the inclusive learning programmes that come out of the mapping and planning process.
2. Hold an orientation session for those who have volunteered to help with collecting information and creating the maps. Talk to them about why ALL children should be in school, the benefits of having a diverse range of students with different abilities and backgrounds in the school, and how the maps can be important tools for finding those children who are not in school and encouraging them to come to school and enjoy learning.
3. At the orientation session, or during a follow-up session, prepare a rough map of the community - this can also be done by your students in science or art classes. Some communities may already have maps, while others may not. Include major landmarks (roads, water sources, important places like the village health centre, places of worship, etc.) and all of the houses in that community.
4. Conduct a household survey (mapping) to determine how many members each household contains, their ages, and their levels of education. Information about the educational levels of children will help you to target those who are not in school, while information about adults may indicate which parents may benefit from activities like literacy programmes. The household survey can be done in several different ways, such as through home visits (which also can be used to encourage parents to send their children to school), interviews with knowledgeable persons (including children), or using existing records, if these exist. This information is then compared with school enrolment records to see which children are not in school.
5. Once the information is collected, prepare a final map of the community showing its households, their members, ages, and educational levels. Then share the map with community leaders to identify which children are not in school and discuss some of the reasons why these families may not be sending their children to school. With this information, we can begin constructing action plans.

CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN MAPPING

The school-community mapping process can be implemented as a "child-to-child" approach, one that can even be incorporated into your lesson plans. Children of all ages can make maps, and it can be an important activity in their learning.[11]

To teach children effectively about leadership (as children are future community leaders), responsibility, democracy and solidarity it is important that they are actively involved in school-community mapping projects. They take the lead in identifying children who are not coming to school and in influencing parents and community members to allow them to attend school. For example, in Tajikistan's Child Club project, girls and boys in grades 4-9 worked together to draw a map of the communities and houses surrounding the school. They identified the children that lived in each house, and then noted on the map whether or not these children were attending school, and some basic reasons why (lost interest in school, never enrolled because they had a disability, had to work, etc.).

One useful way to begin is by having children create their own personal map of their community, which will help them to decide what should be shown on the school-community map. The ability of children to draw accurate maps varies greatly according to the child's age. But if their very different styles and abilities are accepted, children of all ages will enjoy producing useful features for the collective school-community map.

If a community does not have a map already, a simple one can be prepared from scratch. Ideally, the school-community maps should be large enough for the children to locate their own homes and those of their friends. Creating the map goes like this.

1. Begin by gathering your children together and making a list of all of the important places in the community (such as the school, Mosque, homes, health centre, shops, etc.), any important physical features (like roads, rivers, mountains, etc.), and any other important locations where community members often meet (such as fields or even wells where they often go to collect water).
2. Cut out several pieces of cardboard and then draw pictures of these important places, physical features, and locations on them. You also might want to use a variety of items, such as cardboard squares to represent houses, pebbles to represent mountains, fabric to represent rivers and sticks to represent bridges. But be sure to help the children to remember what each symbol represents.
3. Ask the children to decide on the most important feature in their community, such as the school. Have them make a special symbol for it out of cardboard. It should be different from all of the other pieces so that it stands out. It will serve as the map's "reference point" (the place that everyone remembers and can relate to in locating other important places and features in the community).
4. Place a large piece of cloth, heavy paper, or other suitable writing material on the ground; gather the children around it; and ask them to decide where to put the '"reference point" (such as the school) so that all of their homes can be put around it. For example, if the school is located close to their homes or in the centre of the community, place it in the centre of the map. If it is located far away from their homes and other places they often visit in the community, place it off to the side of the map.

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[11] This section and the process of creating the map were adapted from "Children as Community Researchers," UNICEF Web site: Teachers Talking about Learning: www.unicef.org/teachers/researchers/basemap.htm. Readers are strongly encouraged to access this Web site, see examples of children's maps, and learn more!

5. Ask the children what other important places are located on the edge of their community. Place the symbols for these places on the map to establish its boundaries.

6. As a group, decide upon the community's major physical features (such as streets, fields, mountains, and rivers), and add these to the map. Make sure that all of the children agree on where their physical features should be located. You might want them to be free to carefully walk on or around the map to check this out. If they have already created "personal maps," have the children look at them again to make sure all of the features are on the large map.

7. When everyone agrees about where the important places, physical features, and other locations are located on the map, the children can draw them in with ink, paint, or felt pens to make them a permanent part of the map, instead of using cardboard or other non-permanent symbols.

8. The map belongs to the class so it needs to be dynamic, with new important features being added as the children think of them. To begin filling in the map and identifying children who are not in school, the children should begin by deciding on specific themes and then pinning small paper symbols on their map to represent these. Some of the most obvious themes to begin with are:

    •   the homes of ALL children in the community, the ages of the children, and whether or not they are in school;
    •   homes of people who are important to their daily lives;
    •   places children play or work;
    •   places children avoid, such as places of danger (violence);
    •   places children like and dislike;
    •   places where children go alone, with their parents, with other relatives, with friends, with other adults; and
    •   transportation routes (especially those they use to come to and return from school) and the means by which they do so (such as by foot, bicycle, motorcycle, automobile, etc.).

9. Walk with your children around the community to help them fill in the map with greater accuracy. During the walk, or even at a special meeting, invite adults from the community to talk with the children and make suggestions for additions to the map. This will start getting community members involved in identifying children who are not in school and create the support you need for action programmes.

After the maps are made, your students can identify which children in the community are not going to school and locate the families of these children. Your students - working with teachers, parents, and community leaders - can then help motivate parents to send their children to school.

The school-community maps need to be continually updated and used to identify children who may not be coming to school. Consequently, creating the maps can become a permanent part of the curriculum. Moreover, the community should easily see the map.

The main map should be in the community school, or on the outside of the school boundary wall, so that community members can comment on it. The map also can begin the community development process for getting all children in school.

DISCOVERING WHY CHILDREN MAY NOT BE COMING TO SCHOOL

You have now identified which children are not coming to school in your community, and perhaps you have found out some of the reasons why. The major question that needs to be answered now is: "What major factors characterise children who are being excluded from school, compared to those who are able to attend school?"

As we learned earlier, some factors may be visible, such as physical, sensory, or intellectual disabilities; more hidden, such as lack of care, malnutrition or abuse; or even accepted and largely unrealised factors, such as gender roles or the responsibilities of children in their families.

Action Activity: Creating Child Profiles and a questioner
The **Child Profile** is a tool to promote inclusive education and equity in the classroom. It is being used in many countries in Africa, Central America, as well as Central, South, and Southeast Asia. A child profile;

* helps community members and teachers to identify which children are not coming to school and why, as well as those who are at risk of dropping out;
* shows the diversity of children in the community in terms of their individual characteristics and those of their families, and;
* helps to plan programmes to overcome factors that exclude children from school.

They identify those children that should be (or soon will be) in school, and then they get them in school. This system, therefore, can identify out-of-school children as well as those who are in-school but who are learning poorly. To create a child profile, follow the steps below:

1. Based on your school-community map, make a list of all of the children who are not coming to school.
2. Discuss with your colleagues, your students, and those who helped to create the school-community map about what factors (barriers) may be causing children not to come to school. You can refer to the lists you made in the first Tool in this Booklet. These factors may not necessarily be the actual causes, but they are the ones that need to be investigated first for each child.
3. Next, using these factors create a list of questions that when answered may give you some insights into why a child is not coming to school. Below is an example of a list of questions that could be used. The questions were developed to uncover how the barriers discussed earlier affect the enrolment of children and their completion of primary (and secondary) education. **You can develop your own list of questions based on the barriers you feel are common in your community. Be sure to include children as well as community leaders in this process. They can help you to identify ALL of the children who are not in school.**

It is important that the questionnaire is not too complicated, and that you try to prevent asking sensitive or embarrassing questions. If you do, you will not always get the correct answers!

If possible try to interview both parents in a family (for quality assurance).

Ensure that cultural sensitivities are taken into account. In parts of Afghanistan it is seen as offensive for man to ask questions about female members of a household. In those areas, these questions should therefore better be asked by female teachers or students.

Here is an example of how a simple questionnaire can look like (if the children in the same household and with the same father have different mothers please fill in separate forms):

Sample of a simple Child Profile Questionnaire

1	Name of father:		Date/Year of birth:	
	Name of male guardian in case the father is deceased:			
	Highest level of education (if any):			
2	Name of the mother:		Date/Year of birth:	
	Name of female guardian in case the mother is deceased:			
	Highest level of education (if any):			
3	Address			
4	Ethnic affiliation:			
5	Language spoken at home (mother tongue):			
6	Religious affiliation:			
7	Number of children (age 0 to 18):			
	1)	Name:	Sex:	Date/Year of birth:
		In School: Yes ____ No ____ (check)	Name of school:	
		If she/he is school age and not in school why?		
		Did she/her ever go to school? Yes____ No____ (check)		
		If she/he completed school, how many grades did she/he complete?		
		If she/he dropped out why?		
		Does she/he work outside the home? Yes ____ No ____ (check)		
	2)	Name:	Sex:	Date/Year of birth:
		In School: Yes ____ No ____ (check)	Name of school:	
		If she/he is school age and not in school why?		
		Did she/her ever go to school? Yes____ No____ (check)		
		If she/he completed school, how many grades did she/he complete?		
		If she/he dropped out why?		
		Does she/he work outside the home? Yes ____ No ____ (check)		
	3)	.... same as above ... should leave room for 8 children per questionnaire as large families are quite common in Afghanistan		
8	List of all the other family members who live in the same household:			
	1)	Name:	Date/Year of birth:	Education level:	Relation to the children:
	2)	Name:	Date/Year of birth:	Education level:	Relation to the children:
	3)	.... same as above ... should leave room for 6 persons per questionnaire as extended families quite often live together in Afghanistan		
9	Distance from house to school:		Means of transportation:	
	How much time does it take for the children to come to school:			
10	Other comments and important information about the family:			

After the questionnaires for the entire school-community are completed;

- look at them closely to see what factors affect children's ability to attend and/or complete school;
- compare the lists of factors between children, and see which factors (that keep children out of school) are most common in your community, and;
- use the list of these factors as a starting point to develop action plans to address the causes of children not completing school or not coming to school at all.

The next Tool in this Booklet presents ways to create these plans.

Tool 3.3
Actions for Getting All Children in School

Now that we have identified which children are not coming to school and some of the reasons why, we can now start planning how to get them enrolled in school. This section begins by describing the action planning process (also called micro-planning), followed by some ideas of actions that you might try, or adapt, for your school and community.

ACTION PLANNING

In the previous Tool, we used school-community mapping to locate children who are not in school. We created a map and collected information about each child who is not in school, created family and child profiles, and identified some of the barriers that are keeping them out of school. Now, we need to take action to reduce or if possible remove these barriers. To do this, you can follow the steps below to and create an effective action plan.[12] The following tool has been adapted for you to start working to remove barriers to inclusion and get all children in school:

1. Form a team of persons who will help you to evaluate the information collected through the school-community mapping process, as well as to plan suitable actions. These may be the same persons who are members of the ILFE Team and ILFE Coordination Group described in Booklet 1 (Tool 1.3), the ones who were specifically involved in the mapping exercise, or both.

2. Divide this team into groups according to their roles or interests, for instance, school teachers, community group members, women's group members, community leaders, school children, persons from the private sector, etc.

3. Next, each group should discuss and come up with a list of actions that they can take - as a group - to get all children in school and learning. Each group should consider the challenges in implementing each action. What is the likelihood of success? What are the obstacles to implementing each action? How can these obstacles be avoided? In order to avoid designing action plans that fail, it is important to consider all the potential obstacles.

4. Once each group has decided on some possible actions for getting these children in school, bring all of the teams back together to share their ideas. Working together, identifying which actions can be realistically undertaken by considering the following issues and any others that you think are appropriate.
    a. Which actions can have the greatest impact on the most children?
    b. Which actions should be given the highest priority in your particular situation?
    c. Which potential actions show the greatest likelihood of success and should be started first? The best strategy is to start simple, to achieve success, and then to go on to a more difficult action. In short, build on success!
    d. Which actions can you take using existing resources?
    e. Which actions will require outside help? To get those outside resources, oftentimes it is necessary to show potential donors that you are working successfully with the resources you already have. Therefore, start with what you can do now! While waiting for others to help with later actions.

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[12] Adapted from: *Toolkit for Assessing and Promoting Equity in the Classroom*, produced by Wendy Rimer et al. Edited by Marta S. Maldonado and Angela Aldave. Creative Associates International Inc., USAID/EGAT/WID, Washington DC. 2003.

5. Next, everyone should work together to develop plans for the actions that were decided on above. These action plans should contain the following elements.
    a. The objectives that you want to accomplish; for instance, to increase access to school by children with diverse backgrounds and abilities.
    b. The strategies or methods that are needed to implement activities; for instance, meetings with parents of children with diverse backgrounds and abilities to find out the children's needs; followed by meetings with school administrators and teachers to assess school facilities and what activities should be undertaken to make them more accessible and learning-friendly.
    c. The specific activities and their timing (schedules).
    d. Deciding on who you want to reach (for example, parents of children with diverse backgrounds and abilities, and the children themselves)
    e. Who should be responsible for which activities and actions (who should do what)?
    f. What resources you will need and how can you get them?
    g. What can you do while waiting for additional resources?
    h. What criteria will be used to evaluate the success of your action plan (for instance, all children in school)?

6. If several teams will be working on different actions, make sure that they have regular opportunities to share their experiences, and coordinate their actions better.

7. Provide opportunities for all teams to step back and observe (self-evaluate) what they are doing; to reflect on what is being done, or what has been done; and to assess their level of success (what's working, what's not). Use this information to decide whether to continue an activity as planned or to change it, and then apply that decision (implementing it!).

IDEAS FOR ACTION

This section is an **"idea generator."** It briefly looks at some of the major barriers to inclusive learning that we discussed earlier, and then presents ideas of how they can be reduced or even removed, based on the experiences of schools and communities who are working to promote inclusive learning. These are ideas that you should consider, and expand upon, based on your own situation. They also can be used as a starting point for action planning.

Lack of security
What actions can we take to improve the security for students, teachers and schools?
✓ Work with community leaders and parents to establish "school watch" activities, where responsible teachers, parents, or other community members watch over the school. This may include escorting children to safe areas when needed.
✓ Create stronger links between schools and communities, as communities are more likely to protect the school if they feel it is "their" school.

Gender discrimination
What can we do to encourage equal access to schooling for girls and boys?
✓ Monitor attendance and collect information on girls and boys who are not in school (for example, through child profiles).
✓ Mobilise community and religious leaders to encourage both girls and boys to attend and complete their education.

✓ Establish community education committees who are responsible for promoting education among parents and children in the community.

✓ Provide information materials for household distribution showing the value of education for girls and boys.

✓ Relate what is being taught in the classroom to the daily lives of the children and their families to encourage parents to send their daughters and sons to school.

✓ Talk with parents to see if household tasks can be rearranged so that girls and boys can attend school regularly.

✓ See if a flexible school timetables are possible for girls or boys who have many other responsibilities.

✓ Identify and support local solutions, such as organising alternative schooling of good quality like home-based and community-based schooling for girls or boys who cannot attend formal schools.

✓ Encourage the establishment of incentive programmes for girls and boys, such as small scholarships, subsidies, school feeding programmes, and donations of school supplies and uniforms.

Early marriage and pregnancy

What can we do to help these young girls and her family?

✓ Encourage young families to wait having children until both the mother and father have completed their primary and secondary education.

✓ Establish school health policies that guarantee the right of pregnant schoolgirls and young mothers to continue their education after giving birth. Steps in the policy making process are discussed in Booklet 6.

Poor economic background (Working and Street Children)

What can we do to help these children?

✓ Talk with local charitable organisations to see if learning programmes already exist for children who need to work or live on the streets, or if these programmes can be established; for instance, after-school or weekend programmes whereby school children "teach" their out-of-school peers.

✓ These children should be given priority for livelihood skills training in such areas as; sewing, woodworking, agricultural production, typing, computer training, and the like. This training increases family income while the children are in school, and it provides the children with skills that they can use throughout their lives.

Relevance and the practical value of education

What are some of the things that can be done to help these children (discussed in more detail in the Booklet 4)?

✓ Incorporate "community walks" into lesson plans, where children visit the community to learn how certain lessons are important for their daily activities.

✓ Encourage parents and other community members to be "assistant teachers" in the classroom who share their local wisdom, explain its importance to life, and discuss its relevance to what is being learned in class.

Malnutrition

What are some of the actions we can take to help these children (additional actions are discussed in the Booklet 6)?

✓ Work with local charitable organisations to establish school feeding for learning programmes that provide regular, nutritious lunches or snacks. These programmes should benefit ALL malnourished children, however, girls are more vulnerable, and should therefore be prioritised.

Disabilities and Special Educational Needs

What can you do to increase the access to school and learning potential of these children?[13]

✓ Children with disabilities sometimes find it difficult to get to school. Try to organise transportation to school and make school accessible by ramps, and other resources that respond to specific needs.

✓ When a child with a disability first comes to your school, talk with the family member who is with the child. Find out what the child's disabilities are and what he or she can do despite the disability. Ask about any problems and difficulties that the child may have.

✓ When the child starts school, visit the parents from time to time to discuss with them what they are doing to facilitate the child's learning. Ask about plans for the child's future. Find out how you can best work with the family.

✓ Ask if the child needs to take any medicines while in school.

✓ If you do not have enough time to give the child all the attention he or she needs, ask the school or community to find a helper for you. The helper could give the children the extra help needed during school hours.

✓ Make sure that the children can see and hear you when you teach. Write clearly so that they can read what you are saying.

✓ If the child has a hearing or visual impairment let him or her sit in the front of the classroom so they can see and hear better.

✓ Find out if the child and the parents have problems about schooling. Ask if the family thinks that other school children are helpful to the child and whether the child gets on well at school.

Disabling health conditions

What can we do to help (discussed in more detail in the Booklet 6)?

✓ Work with local health service providers to establish regular health, dental, and nutrition screening and treatment programmes.

✓ If you notice that one of your students are ill and do not get treatment, please talk with the student and her or his parents, and try to find ways that you and your school can help.

✓ Work with local organisations to conduct information meetings about Epilepsy to reduce the stigma and to help your teachers to act correctly in case any of their students have seizures.

✓ Work with local organisations to conduct sensitisation workshops in your school and community to raise awareness and increase knowledge about HIV, Hepatitis B and C, and other disabling health conditions.

✓ Discuss the needs and concerns of parents whose children are not HIV affected (they have rights too!), and how these can be accommodated when HIV affected children come to school.

✓ Establish peer counselling clubs.

Neglect, violence and abuse

What can we do to help and protect these children?

✓ Work with children and community members to map where violence occurs on school grounds, or on the way to and from school (discussed in more detail in the Booklet 6 on creating a healthy and protective ILFE).

✓ Work with community leaders and parents to establish "child watch" activities, where responsible teachers, parents, or other community members watch over areas of potential or high violence within and outside of school. This may include escorting children to safe areas when needed.

✓ Inform parents about the consequences of physical punishment on the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development of children.

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[13] Adapted from UNICEF. http://www.unicef.org/teachers/protection/access.htm

✓ Present alternatives to physical punishment (positive discipline) to parents during teacher-parent meetings.
✓ If the abuse continues discuss the matter with religious and community leaders.

Drugs

What can we do to protect our students from drugs?
✓ Start with drug-prevention education in primary school - as many children start with drugs at an early age or never make the transition into secondary school it is important to start drug-prevention education during primary school.
✓ Inform parents about the dangers of drugs during parent-teacher meetings.
✓ Incorporate drug-prevention education into different subject matters, like social studies, language, science, etc.

Minority backgrounds

For children who may speak another language or have another cultural, ethnic or religious background than the majority of the children in school, we need to put special emphasis on the following:
✓ Work with parents and community members to modify class lessons and materials to represent the diverse cultures and languages of the community. This will help ensure that the community will find the materials authentic and useful, and it will encourage them to send their children to school. Ways for doing this are presented in Booklet 4 of this Toolkit.
✓ Use local stories, oral histories, legends, songs, and poems in developing class lessons.
✓ For children who do not speak the language of instruction in your classroom, work with bilingual teachers or others who speak the child's language (even family and community members) to develop an appropriate language-training curriculum for the classroom.

Negative attitudes

What can we do to reduce stigma and discrimination towards groups of children vulnerable to exclusion from and within education?
✓ Create awareness among parents and other community members about the benefits of an ILFE for ALL children.
✓ Create awareness about disabilities among parents and community members.
✓ Distribute information about disabling health conditions to reduce the fear among parents and community members and stigma towards those affected.
✓ Distribute information about how HIV is transmitted to prevent children infected or affected by HIV to be excluded from school and communities.

School Environment

These are some of the barriers directly related to school environments and policies, and that you can find solutions to as long as you have support from your headmaster:

• **Costs (direct and hidden)**
  What are some of the things that can be done to help these children?
  ✓ Discuss with school administrators, parents, and community members about what direct and indirect costs may be keeping children away from school.
  ✓ Identify ways to reduce (or waive) these costs; for example, through incentive programmes - like small scholarships, subsidies, food, school supplies, and uniforms - possibly coordinated through local charitable organisations.

- **Location**

    What are some of the actions that can be started to help these children?
    - ✓ Find out which children are located the furthest away from school through school-community mapping programmes.
    - ✓ Work with parents and community members to identify ways to get these children to school and then home again safely.
    - ✓ Assist communities far away from your school in setting up community based classes for the youngest children.
    - ✓ See if flexible school attendance (timetable) is possible for children who live far away from your school.

- **Schedules**

    What are some of the things that can be done to help children who want to study and go to school, but who also need to work to support their families?
    - ✓ See if a flexible school timetable is possible for children who need to work.

- **Facilities**

    What are some of the actions that can be done to improve access to schools and classrooms, sanitation facilities and school grounds for ALL children?
    - ✓ Work with families and community leaders to construct safe water supplies and proper sanitation (latrine) facilities for ALL children, especially for girls (see also Booklets 4, 5 and 6).
    - ✓ Create flexible and attractive learning spaces for ALL children in our schools, using local and low cost materials.
    - ✓ Insulate school building to enable schools to provide education for children also during the winter months.
    - ✓ Provide alternative and sustainable energy sources for schools and classrooms to ensure stable energy supplies, for example; solar energy, wind power, and local production of briquettes[14] made by organic waste materials to replace wood and coal.
    - ✓ Design new school building based on universal design principles, to ensure that ALL children have equal access to all school facilities, including; classrooms, sanitation facilities, and school grounds.

- **Preparedness**

    What can be done to help these teachers and children?
    - ✓ Find out what types of backgrounds and abilities do they possess.
    - ✓ Find out what their individual learning needs are.
    - ✓ Contact government education agencies, local non-governmental organisations, teacher training institutions, local charities, foundations, or even international agencies working on improving children's education in your country. Ask them if they know of any teachers, or other experts, who are already teaching children with diverse backgrounds and abilities like your children.
    - ✓ Contact these teachers and ask if you and maybe some of your colleagues can visit their school to learn how to teach children with individual learning needs. If you cannot visit these schools because it is too expensive, ask if they can send you any resources that you can use in your classroom, such as sample lesson plans, descriptions of teaching methods, or samples of instructional materials that you can easily reproduce.

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[14] These are being produced with great success by community based organisations among others in Nepal and Tajikistan with support from the Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature (Naturvernforbundet).

- ✓ If the resources are available, ask them also to visit your school to get their advice, as well as to talk with school administrators and other teachers about the value of teaching children with diverse backgrounds and abilities.
- ✓ When working with children, focus on what the child CAN do, rather than on what he or she can NOT do. This applies for all children, not simply those with diverse backgrounds and abilities.
- ✓ Above all. Don't lose courage. Build networks and a good relationship with those who know how to teach children with diverse backgrounds and abilities, and keep in contact with them.

Tool 3.4
What Have We Learned?

Barriers to inclusive learning may be visible, such as a physical disability; more hidden, such as violence, abuse and neglect, or malnutrition. Other barriers are seen as part of life, without parents and community members realising their damaging effects on learning, development and participation, such as traditional attitudes, gender roles, or the customary roles and responsibilities of children in their families, that often prevent children from succeeding in education.

Children can be excluded from school for many inter-related reasons, not just one, and we may never have thought that these reasons existed. For instance, cultural traditions may dictate that children living in rural communities are expected to begin their working lives in childhood and not attend school. This may be particularly the case if families are poor, they cannot afford the cost of schooling, and they do not value education for the children's future.

Barriers to inclusion may exist at several levels and must be addressed at several levels. For example, when our schools do not provide a rewarding, quality education to meet the felt needs of a child and his or her family, the child may drop out, especially if he or she is from a minority culture and teachers and other community members do not want to be bothered with having to deal with him or her.

In all of these cases, special efforts are needed to identify these children, and several actions may need to be taken simultaneously to help get these children in school.

The first step in making our schools more inclusive is to find out which children are not coming to school. School-community mapping is a valuable tool for finding these children, and it can be done either as a school-community activity (community-to-child) or a classroom activity (child-to-child).

To understand why children are not coming to school, we need to learn what individual (child), family, community, and school factors most commonly stop children from coming to school. These factors are the starting points for change and building inclusive schools.

The Tools in this Booklet also have taken you to the point of drawing up a plan of action for reducing barriers to inclusive learning in your school and community. To start this process, consider the following questions and agree on practical actions that you and your colleagues can take in your context.
- What have you learned from the Tools thus far?
- What are the key lessons for your context?
- What might be the main obstacles to inclusive learning and getting all children in school in your context?
- What are the main challenges facing you and your team?
- What steps are you going to take?
- What will be your indicators of performance or success?
- What specific activities could you plan for the next (school) year?
- When and how will you evaluate the progress that has been made?

These plans and actions also may help you to make your classrooms more inclusive, a topic that is discussed in Booklets 4 and 5.