

Education
International
Toolkit

2026

TEACHING INCLUSION, BUILDING BELONGING

*A Toolkit for Educators and Education Unions to Promote
Inclusion and End Stigma Related to Leprosy (Hansen's Disease)*

MODULE 2

Classroom Guidance for Educators



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SASAKAWA
LEPROSY
HANSEN'S DISEASE
INITIATIVE



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Art for me is a way of observing the world, making sense of what I see, and sharing it with others. I am still finding and developing my voice as an artist, but I enjoy the process of experimenting, learning, and discovering where each artwork takes me."

About Education International:

Education International represents organisations of teachers and other education employees across the globe. It is the world's largest federation of unions and associations, representing thirty million education employees in about four hundred organisations in one hundred and seventy countries and territories, across the globe. Education International unites teachers and education employees.

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Published by Education International - September 2026
ISBN 978-92-9276-042-7 (PDF)

Acknowledgements:

Education International extends its sincere thanks to the member organisations, research consultants, and experts whose knowledge and experience contributed to the development of this toolkit. Their contributions have helped ensure that this toolkit reflects the realities of education workers and supports their efforts to advance quality, inclusive, and equitable public education. Developed as a follow up to the [2026 Global Appeal to End Stigma and Discrimination against Persons Affected by Leprosy](#), this toolkit reflects our shared commitment to harnessing the power of education to challenge stigma, advance inclusion, and uphold the dignity and rights of all.

Education International also gratefully acknowledges the technical and financial support of the Sasakawa Health Foundation, which made this work possible. This toolkit is the result of a collective effort and international solidarity. We hope it serves as a practical resource for education unions and educators seeking to create more inclusive learning and working environments, strengthen understanding of leprosy (Hansen's disease), and other health-related disabilities, and contribute to ending stigma and discrimination in education and society.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DI	differentiated instruction
SEL	social and emotional learning
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund



Module Overview

Module 2 equips educators and education unions to build truly inclusive, safe, and supportive schools. It explores how stigma, discrimination, and bullying impact marginalised learners, particularly those affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) or disabilities, highlighting how the combination of physical impairments and social stigma creates severe barriers to education. To overcome these barriers, the module offers a practical toolkit of classroom strategies, including Universal Design for Learning (UDL), reasonable accommodations, positive discipline, and social-emotional learning. Finally, it emphasises a "whole school approach," demonstrating how teachers can collaborate with families, community leaders, and education unions to sustain inclusion and permanently reduce stigma.

Module Learning Objectives

1. Understand inclusive education as a practical approach to addressing exclusion.
2. Describe the features of inclusive, supportive, and learner-centred learning environments.
3. Recognise stigma, discrimination, bullying, and violence in schools, including less visible warning signs and risk factors.
4. Respond to incidents of violence, bullying, and discrimination using safe, supportive, trauma-informed, and policy-guided approaches.
5. Apply inclusive teaching strategies, including UDL, reasonable accommodation, inclusive assessment, cooperative learning, and classroom routines that support participation and belonging.
6. Use social and emotional learning approaches to foster empathy, respect, collaboration, and positive relationships among learners.
7. Collaborate with learners, families, school leaders, communities, and education unions to strengthen whole school inclusion and address stigma.

Units in this Module

Unit 2.1 Inclusive Education Principles

Unit 2.2 Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environments

Unit 2.3 Recognising, Responding to, and Preventing Stigma, Discrimination, and Bullying

Unit 2.4 Learner-Centred Strategies

Unit 2.5 Collaborative Roles in Promoting Inclusion and Addressing Stigma



Unit 2.1. Inclusive Education Principles

Unit Overview

Unit 1 introduces inclusive education as a practical framework for creating respectful, participatory, and supportive learning environments for all learners. It connects inclusive education principles to addressing stigma related to leprosy (Hansen's disease) and other conditions.

Unit Learning Objectives

Explain key principles of inclusive education and how they help address stigma and exclusion in schools.

Unit Outline

2.1.1 What is inclusive education?

2.1.2 Inclusive education as a human right

2.1.3 Barriers to inclusion in education

2.1.4 Inclusive values



2.1.1 What is Inclusive Education?

Inclusive education is defined in several key international frameworks. Among the most widely cited are the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and UNESCO, both of which describe inclusive education as a rights-based approach that values diversity, removes barriers to participation, and ensures that all learners, including learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), can learn, belong, and thrive in ordinary education settings.

Key elements in the definitions of inclusive education

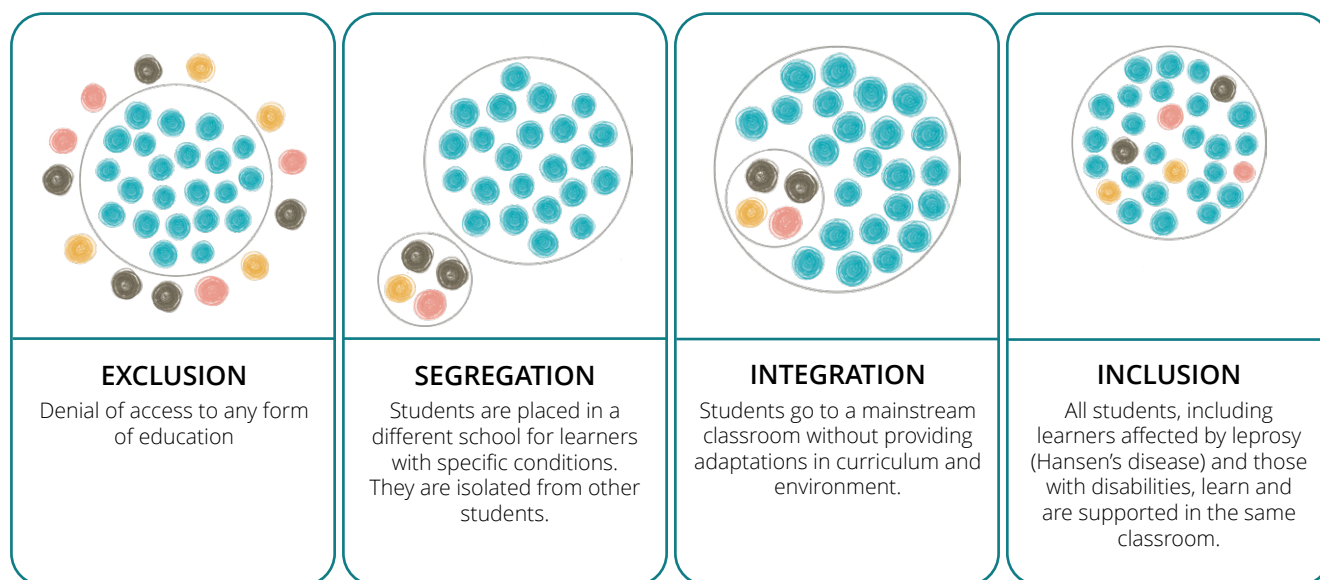
Definitions of inclusive education are not always interpreted in the same way. In some contexts, approaches that are separate, special, or segregated are still presented as inclusive, even though international human rights frameworks make a clearer distinction. It is therefore helpful to look closely at what inclusive education does and does not mean in practice.

The table below summarises key distinctions found in international definitions and shows the difference between approaches that support genuine inclusion and those that may appear inclusive but still leave barriers, exclusion, or segregation in place.

Inclusive education is...	Inclusive education is not
...an ongoing process of change, reflection, and improvement	...a one-time project that can be completed within a short period
...about transforming educational cultures, policies, and practices	...limited to improving mainstream education only for learners with disabilities
...about making the education system flexible enough to respond to the needs of every learner	...about expecting learners to change so they can fit into an unchanged system
...a continuous effort to identify and remove barriers to learning and participation	...a fixed set of actions that can be applied in exactly the same way in every context
...about removing barriers to access, participation, achievement, and belonging in education	...concerned only with getting learners into schools or classrooms
...a shared process that involves school administrators, teachers, education support personnel, learners, families, communities, policymakers, and other stakeholders	...something that can be delivered only by outside experts or education authorities
...something that can take place both within and beyond formal schooling, including non-formal, alternative, and community-based learning spaces, and across all stages of life	...something that happens only in formal school settings

From exclusion to full inclusion

The illustration below shows the progression of educational models. It shows that simply placing a child with a disability or a child affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) in a mainstream school (Integration) is not enough. True Inclusion means addressing barriers within the system so that all students learn together, fully participating in the same diverse community.



2.1.2 Inclusive Education is a Human Right

Rights-based inclusive education means ensuring that every child enjoys the right to quality education without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. In practice, this means all children and young people should be able to attend their local school, with the support they need provided in regular classrooms so they can participate fully and learn effectively.

Principles of rights-based education

A rights-based approach to education means that every learner is recognised as a rights-holder, and schools and education systems have a duty to respect, protect, and fulfil that right. The principles in the figure below remind us that education must be available to all, centred on learners' dignity and participation, fair and inclusive in practice, and supported by clear responsibilities for action when rights are not being met.

Universality and Inalienability

The right to education belongs to every child, without exception. It cannot be taken away, withheld, or made conditional.

Learner-Centred

Lessons and support are planned around how children learn, what they need, and what interests them. Inclusive education does not require children to be 'ready' for regular schools; instead, schools and education systems change so that every child can learn.

Equity and Inclusion

Every child is unique, with different backgrounds, strengths, needs, interests, and ways of learning. Some learners may need additional support at different times, but all have the same right to quality education and to the support needed to participate and succeed.

Accountability

There is a shared responsibility in ensuring that all children attend school and learn. Governments, communities, families, educators, and all stakeholders have a role in supporting inclusion. Enrolment alone is not enough; what matters is whether children are able to participate, learn, and thrive.

Inclusive education is based on the fundamental right of all children and young people to participate in quality education. This is supported by international legal instruments, including the following:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education (1960)
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994)
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)
- Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action (2015)

These principles and legal frameworks make clear that inclusive education is not a matter of charity or choice, but a human right and a state obligation. It requires education systems to welcome every learner, remove barriers, and provide the support needed for all children and young people to learn on an equal basis with others. In this sense, inclusive education is both a legal commitment and a practical expression of equality, dignity, and justice in education.

Practice and Application

Defining Inclusive Education

Look at your country's education laws, policies, or guidance on inclusion. Focus on what they say about the right to education for children and young people with disabilities, and those affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) and other health conditions.

1. Choose one or two laws, policies, or official guidance documents.
2. Check if they explain what inclusion or inclusive education means.
3. Look at what they say about access, participation, support, reasonable accommodation, and protection from discrimination.
4. Compare what you find with the CRPD and UNESCO definitions in this unit ([See Annex 1: CRPD and UNESCO Definition of Inclusive Education](#)).
5. Write down one or two similarities and one or two differences.

Fill in the table below. Include **(a)** the law or policy you reviewed, **(b)** how it explains inclusion, and **(c)** how it is similar to or different from the CRPD and UNESCO definitions.

Item	Your Notes
Law or policy reviewed	
How inclusion is explained	
Similarities with CRPD and UNESCO	
Differences from CRPD and UNESCO	

2.1.3 Barriers to Inclusion

Inclusive education cannot be achieved simply by opening the school gate. Many learners still face barriers that prevent them from accessing school, participating fully, and learning well. These barriers can arise at the level of the child, family, school, community, or education system.

Examples of barriers to education





Attitudinal Barriers

- Assuming that a child or youth with leprosy (Hansen's disease) or disability is unable to learn or does not deserve a place in a regular classroom
- Avoiding or isolating a learner because of their appearance, visible impairment, or they or their family member are affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease)
- Holding lower academic expectations for girls, children affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), children with disabilities, or children from minority ethnic or religious groups
- Believing that a child's leprosy (Hansen's disease) diagnosis is the result of sin, curse, or poor character, and treating them accordingly
- Dismissing a parent's concern about their child's learning needs because of their social or economic background
- Assuming that all learners think, learn, and progress in the same way and at the same pace

Environmental Barriers

- Classrooms, corridors, or school buildings that are inaccessible to learners who use wheelchairs, crutches, or other mobility aids, including learners with leprosy (Hansen's disease)-related physical impairments
- Absence of accessible toilets or handwashing facilities, making it difficult for learners with physical disabilities to maintain hygiene and dignity at school
- Insufficient or poorly adapted learning materials and equipment that do not meet diverse learner needs
- Information and instruction presented only in one format or language, excluding learners who need:
 - Materials in a language they understand
 - Sign language interpretation
 - Braille, tactile graphics, large print, audio formats, or other accessible alternatives
- School locations that are far from home with no accessible or affordable transport, particularly affecting learners with mobility challenges and those living in remote communities
- Noisy, overcrowded, or poorly lit classrooms that create additional difficulties for learners with sensory or attention-related needs

Institutional Barriers

- Absence of an inclusive education policy that protects the right of all learners, including those affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) or disability, to attend and participate in regular schools
- Absence of school policies that prevent learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), including learners whose family member is affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), and learners with disability from being denied enrolment or being expelled from school
- Practices that segregate or isolate students based on their health condition, such as placing learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) in sanatoriums, separate schools, or dedicated institutions away from their families and communities



- Lack of trained school administrators, teachers, and education support personnel, with no investment in professional development on inclusive education, leprosy (Hansen's disease) awareness, or other health-related stigma
- Teacher performance indicators that reward traditional, teacher-centred methods and do not recognise or value differentiated or inclusive teaching practices
- Rigid curricula that do not allow for flexibility in pacing, content, or assessment to accommodate diverse learning needs
- Absence of support services within or linked to schools, such as access to medical care, physical or occupational therapy, counselling, social welfare assistance, or legal assistance
- Administrative requirements and processes that favour certain students over others, including:
 - Inflexible class schedules that cannot accommodate a student's medical appointments or treatment schedule
 - Admission tests that disadvantage learners with disabilities or those who have had interrupted schooling
 - Requirements for birth certificates or identity documents that many children do not have, particularly those from marginalised communities.

The following box provide tips for removing barriers to learning, development, and participation.¹



TRY THIS!

Practical Tips for Removing Barriers to Learning, Development, and Participation

1. Overcoming Attitudinal and Social Barriers

- **Value every learner.** Show every child that you care about their individual needs and ensure they feel equally valued in your classroom.
- **Build confidence.** Ask struggling learners questions you know they can answer and consistently offer genuine praise to boost their self-esteem.
- **Celebrate strengths.** Make it a habit to identify and openly acknowledge at least one positive quality in every student.
- **Empower student voices.** Encourage learners to share their opinions and actively incorporate their suggestions into your teaching to show their voice matters.

2. Overcoming Learning and Pedagogical Barriers

- **Embrace first languages.** Encourage students to use their mother tongue or sign language. Partner with family or community members if you need translation support.
- **Give time to communicate.** Be patient and intentionally allow extra time for learners to process information and express their thoughts.
- **Focus on individual growth.** Measure success based on a child's personal progress and individual learning plan, rather than comparing them to their peers.

3. Overcoming Physical and Environmental Barriers

Optimise classroom layout. Arrange seating to maximise communication, physical accessibility, and peer interaction, especially for those with mobility or sensory barriers.

4. Overcoming Systemic and Institutional Barriers

- **Promote equal participation.** Ensure that all activities, both inside and outside the classroom (like sports or field trips), are designed to encourage participation across all genders, health conditions, and abilities.
- **Monitor well-being and safety.** Watch for sudden behavioural changes or frequent absences. If you suspect any form of abuse, neglect, or extreme poverty-related barriers, immediately seek help from local child protection services or organisations.
- **Work with your union to strengthen inclusion.** Share the barriers you encounter, and support its campaigns, advocacy, and collective bargaining for inclusive policies, adequate resources, professional support, and safe, accessible learning environments for all learners

Unit 2.2 Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environments and Unit 2.4. Learner-Centred Strategies provide detailed discussion and further tips on addressing barriers and improving participation in school.

Practice and Application

Sorting Inclusion

Identify whether the statements below describe inclusive education or not.

Statement	Inclusive Education (✓) or NOT Inclusive Education (✗)
...an ongoing effort to identify and remove barriers that exclude learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) or with disability from going to school and learning.	
...a one-off project, completed within a short timeframe.	
... a process of improving the school by ensuring they are learner-centred and welcoming to all learners.	
...focused only on placing students with disabilities and students affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) in mainstream schools.	
...about changing the way of teaching and our schools are organised, to ensure everyone can join and learn.	
...a process in which school administrators, teachers, education support personnel, learners, parents, and community members all participate.	
...a project that can be implemented by external experts or education officials alone.	
...about trying to change the learner so that they can fit better into an unchanged education system.	
...focused only on improving education for students with disabilities in regular schools	

2.1.4 Inclusive Values

Negative attitudes and beliefs are most often the root cause of stigma and discrimination, serving as critical barriers to inclusion. The CRPD emphasises that inclusion seeks to end this stigma and discrimination, and that achieving equity in education requires actively addressing barriers. Inclusive practice does exactly that.

Our values affect the education of our children

The values held by family, community members, school administrators, teachers, education support personnel, and policymakers profoundly affect learners and their education in both broad and specific ways. To improve education for all learners, it is crucial to first examine our own values.



In the Classroom

A teacher's values shape their interaction with learners, determine whether a learning environment feels welcoming or stressful, and directly impact the design of lesson plans and learning activities.

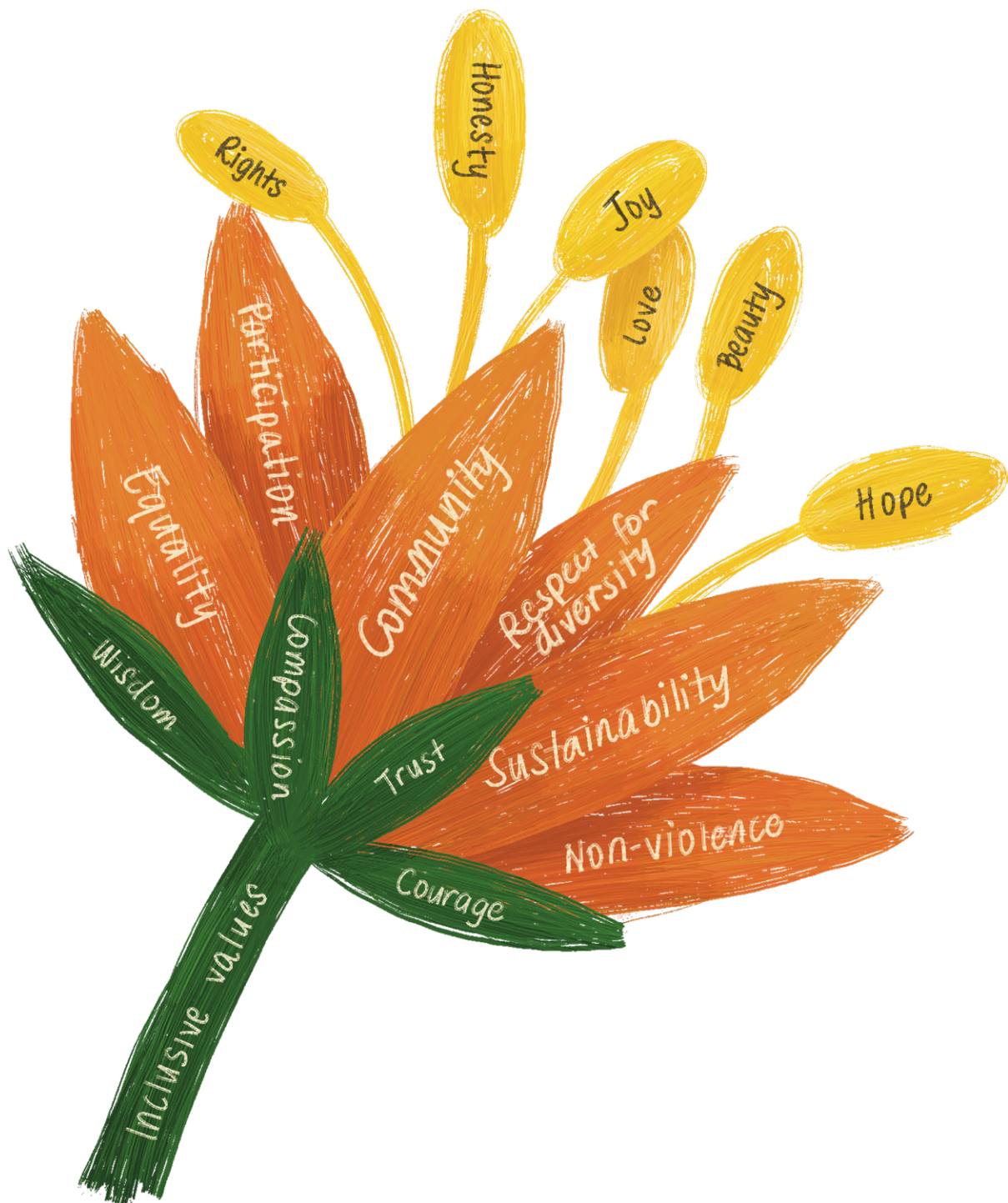


In the Education System

The values of education authorities guide the development of policies that affect the entire education system.

Inclusive education is often described as putting values into action. It is based on the belief that every child, including those affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), belongs in school and the community. Values such as respect, acceptance, equality, and appreciation of diversity shape how we treat others and make decisions. When these values guide our actions, inclusion can thrive; when we believe some children and young people are less capable or less deserving, barriers to participation and learning are created.²

The **Values Flower**³, shown in the figure, shows examples of inclusive values. How inclusive values are understood can vary across schools and communities. For inclusion to become a reality, it is important to have open discussions and build a shared understanding of what values such as equality, respect, participation, and belonging mean in practice. Engaging school administrators, teachers, education support personnel, students, parents, and community members in these conversations helps turn values into action and is an important first step in creating inclusive schools.



Practice and Application

Say Yes

Watch the video of a girl named Tima. After watching the video, reflect and answer the questions below.

Link to the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DZdliEhjkW>

- What kind of barrier/s did Tima experience at the beginning of the video?
- How did the school provide support for Tima to address the barriers she initially experienced?
- Based on the video, how can you enable or help the implementation of inclusive education?

Unit Summary

- * Inclusive education is an ongoing process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners by increasing participation in learning and reducing exclusion within and from education.
- * Inclusive education is not only about placing learners in mainstream schools; it also requires changing discriminatory attitudes, practices, and policies so all learners can participate and learn together.
- * Inclusive Education is based on the fundamental right of all children and young people to participate in quality education without discrimination and on an equal basis with others.
- * International frameworks supporting this right include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Salamanca Statement, the CRPD, and the Incheon Declaration.
- * Rights-based inclusive education means all children should be able to attend their local school, with the support they need provided in regular classrooms.
- * Barriers to inclusion can arise at the level of the child, family, school, community, or education system. These barriers may be attitudinal, environmental, or institutional.

- * Attitudinal barriers include stigma, low expectations, fear, stereotypes, and beliefs that some learners do not belong in regular schools.
- * Environmental barriers include inaccessible buildings, lack of accessible learning materials, inaccessible information, and poor transport.
- * Institutional barriers include rigid curricula, segregated practices, lack of teacher training, lack of support services, and administrative requirements that exclude learners.
- * Inclusive education is grounded in values such as respect, acceptance, equality, and appreciation of diversity. These values influence how people treat learners and make decisions in schools, communities, and the education system.
- * Building a shared understanding of inclusive values is an important step in creating inclusive schools.

Additional Resources

1. **Inclusion and Education: All Means All, by UNESCO:** <https://youtu.be/kEyjlqixq9c?si=PkJVNzxVs5nzFE7k>
2. **Index for Inclusion**
 - Recent version (Recommended): Booth, T., & Ainscow, M. (2016). The Index for Inclusion. A Guide to School Development Led by Inclusive Values. 4th Edition. Cambridge: Index for Inclusion Network.
 - Old version: <https://www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/Index%20English.pdf>
 - Translation in several languages available here: <https://csie.org.uk/index-for-inclusion/>
3. **Webinar 1, Conceptualizing Inclusive Education and Contextualizing It Within the UNICEF Mission.** Companion Technical Booklet: https://www.unicef.org/eca/sites/unicef.org/eca/files/IE_Webinar_Booklet_1_0.pdf
4. This online article is about a student experiencing barriers to learning and how these barriers were addressed. **“Breaking down barriers to learning among children with disabilities”** - <https://www.un.org/en/transforming-education-summit/learning-among-children-disabilities-unicef-ghana> –
5. **What Inclusive Education Is and Why It Is Important for All Children:** https://www.unicef.org/eca/sites/unicef.org/eca/files/IE_summary_accessible_220917_brief.pdf



Unit 2.2. Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environments

Unit Overview

This unit introduces inclusive and supportive learning environments as safe, accessible, and learner-centred spaces where all learners can participate meaningfully. It examines the key characteristics of inclusive classrooms, compares traditional teacher-centred pedagogy with inclusive learner-centred approaches, and explores the shifting roles of teachers as facilitators, observers, managers, and learners. Through reflection, educators consider how their classroom practices can strengthen participation, belonging, and support for diverse learners, including learners with disabilities, health conditions, or experiences of stigma and exclusion.

Unit Learning Objectives

1. Describe the key characteristics of an inclusive and supportive learning environment.
2. Compare traditional teacher-centred pedagogy with inclusive learner-centred pedagogy.
3. Explain how learner-centred teaching supports participation, access, and belonging for diverse learners.
4. Reflect on the teacher's roles in creating classroom conditions that help all learners feel safe, respected, and able to contribute.

Unit Outline

2.2.1 What makes inclusive learning environments

2.2.2 Key differences between traditional teacher-centred and inclusive learner-centred pedagogies

2.2.3 Role of teachers in a learner-centred classroom



2.2.1 What Makes Inclusive Learning Environments

Inclusive education is not only about bringing all children and young people into school, but also ensuring that every learner has a safe, accessible, supportive, and high-quality learning experience. Learning environments include physical spaces, school culture, teaching practices, materials, family support, and online or remote learning conditions, all of which can either enable or hinder inclusive participation. Children and young people may be at risk of exclusion for many reasons, including gender, disability, leprosy (Hansen's disease) and other health conditions, race, poverty, language barriers, discrimination, conflict, or limited access to resources.⁴

An inclusive learning environment supports both learners and teachers. It is a space where teachers continuously develop new ways to support their students, while also learning from their students and from one another.⁵

Characteristics of an inclusive learning environment

Below are some characteristics of an inclusive learning environment. See also *Figure 1*.

- **Shared values and commitment to inclusion:** The whole school community promotes respect, equity, non-discrimination, and appreciation of diversity.
- **Learner-centred teaching:** Teaching responds to learners' strengths, needs, interests, and voices, so every child can participate meaningfully.
- **Safe and protective spaces:** Learners are protected from violence, corporal punishment, bullying, cyberbullying, and other forms of harm.
- **Active learner participation:** Children and young people take part in their own learning, connect lessons to daily life, and build aspirations for the future.
- **Support for teachers:** Teachers, administrators, and education support personnel have opportunities, resources, and recognition to keep improving inclusive teaching practice.
- **Whole school approach:** Families, communities, school leaders, education support personnel, and education unions work together to remove barriers and support all learners.

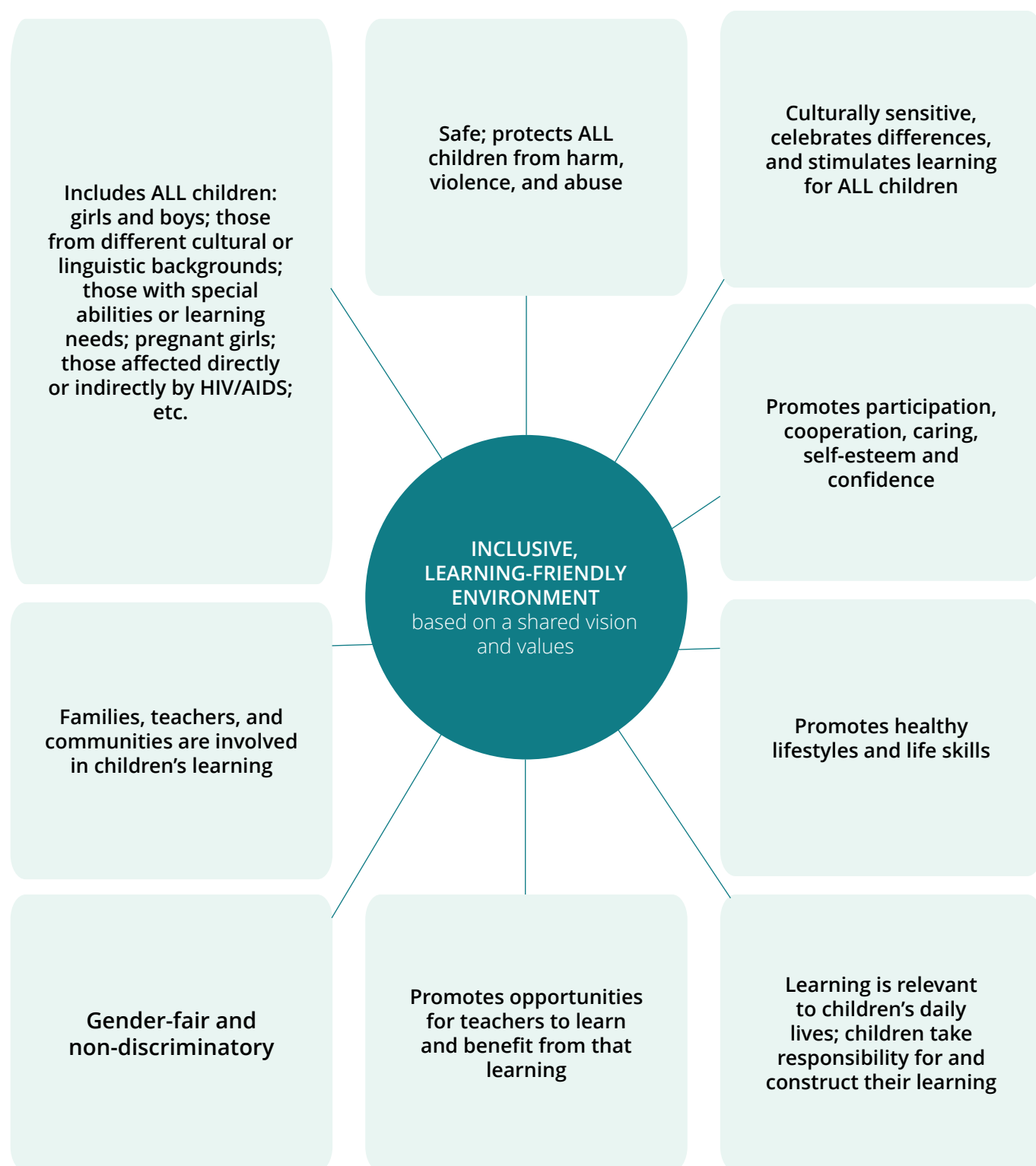


FIGURE 1. Characteristics of an inclusive learning environment (Source: UNESCO, 2015, “Toolkit for Creating Inclusive Learning Environments”).

2.2.2 Key Differences Between Traditional Teacher-Centred and Inclusive Learner-Centred Pedagogies⁶

Teacher-centred pedagogy considers learners mainly as recipients of knowledge. In a teacher-centred class, the teacher leads lessons, provides instruction, and decides whether answers are right or wrong. Learners are expected to receive information and follow instructions, without contributing ideas themselves.

Learner-centred pedagogy sees all learners, including learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) and learners with disabilities, as active participants in their own learning. Learners bring their own experiences, ideas, and ways of understanding to the classroom. Teachers support this by getting to know learners' strengths, backgrounds, and interests through student observation, everyday conversations, and collaboration with other teachers.

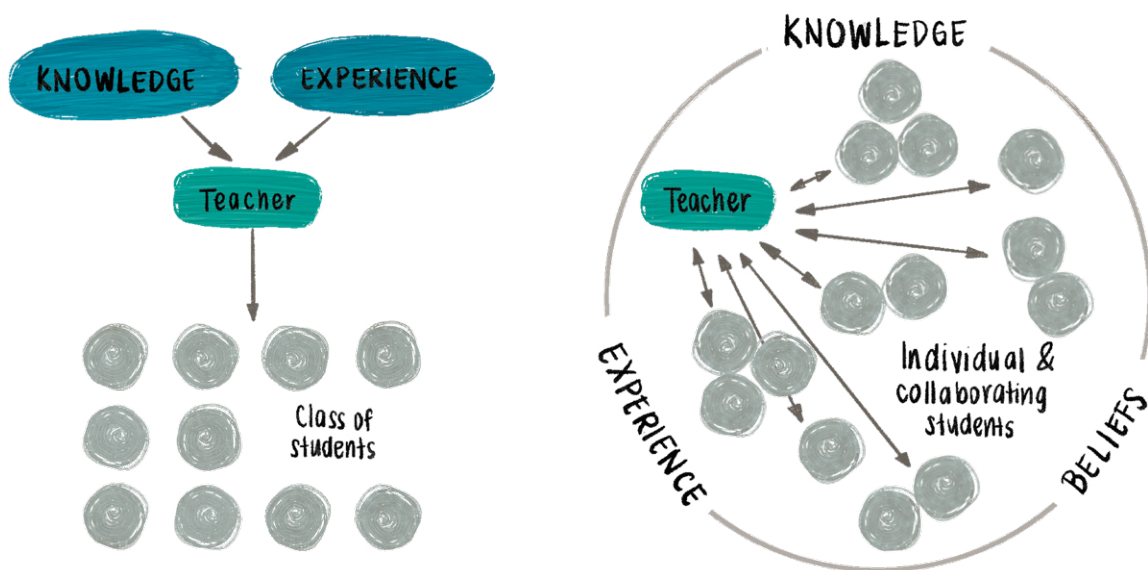


FIGURE 2. Teacher-centred and learner-centred pedagogy (Image Source: <https://lo.unisa.edu.au/mod/book/view.php?id=610988&chapterid=102030>)

The table below outlines the key differences between traditional classrooms where teacher-centred pedagogy is commonly applied and inclusive classrooms where learner-centred pedagogy is often used.

Feature	Traditional Classroom (Teacher-centred)	Inclusive Classroom (Learner-centred)
Source of knowledge and information	All knowledge and information come from the teacher through direct instruction such as lectures. Teachers are the ones mostly talking and leading class discussions.	Knowledge comes from both teachers and students. Students are seen as having their own experiences and thoughts and able to have their own input in their learn. This contribution of students improves the learning process. Both teachers and students can start class discussions on a certain topic or concept. Teachers facilitate and manage discussions.
Engagement of learners	Students passively receive knowledge and information. They have few contributions in discussions and activities.	Students are actively engaged in their own learning. They create knowledge by analysing information gathered from individual experience and research, peer/class discussion, and peer collaboration.
Position of the teacher	The teacher is usually in front of the class giving information and telling students what to do.	The teacher moves around the class to guide discussions, oversee activities, provide direct support to students who need it.
Collaborative learning	Students mainly work individually.	Students often work with others in pairs or groups.
Accessibility of content and activities	The teacher assigns tasks or activities to the whole class, based on the observed skill and difficulty of the learner. Adjustments can be made (for example: lecture for the whole class and follow-up group discussion for a group of students who the teacher thinks are having difficulties to understand the lecture).	The teacher presents information in different ways (for example: lecture followed by a video presentation and a group activity for the whole class). This allows students, with different learning styles and support needs, to understand the information. The teacher provides multiple options for students to show how they understand the topic.
Focus on the lesson	There is emphasis on the graded tests. These can be answers to a question, completed worksheets, submitted projects. Only the correct answer gets a point.	The entire learning process is valued. Both correct and wrong answers matter. Learners examine their learning process and become aware of how they arrived at their answers and where they can improve.



Feature	Traditional Classroom (Teacher-centred)	Inclusive Classroom (Learner-centred)
Representation of student work	Only “the best” and completed student work is displayed in class.	All student work is displayed, including incomplete or imperfect outputs. This allows learners to acknowledge their progress.
Assessment	Assessment is used to grade students. The assessment techniques are usually the same for all students.	Assessment is used to analyse the needs of students and to help teacher to develop lessons. The goal is to better support the learner. Assessment (such as self-assessment, peer feedback, reflection) are used to help learners monitor their own learning and set their own learning goals. Learners can choose from a range of activities to show what they have learned.

Unit 2.4 further explores learner-centred pedagogy and how it is applied in an inclusive classroom.

2.2.3 Role of Teachers in a Learner-Centred Classroom⁷

Teaching in a learner-centred classroom requires us to rethink the role of teachers and how we see learners. They often have multiple roles in the classroom. Some of these are presented in [Figure 3](#). Teachers may find performing all roles and move from one to another as they respond to different situations and needs of learners.

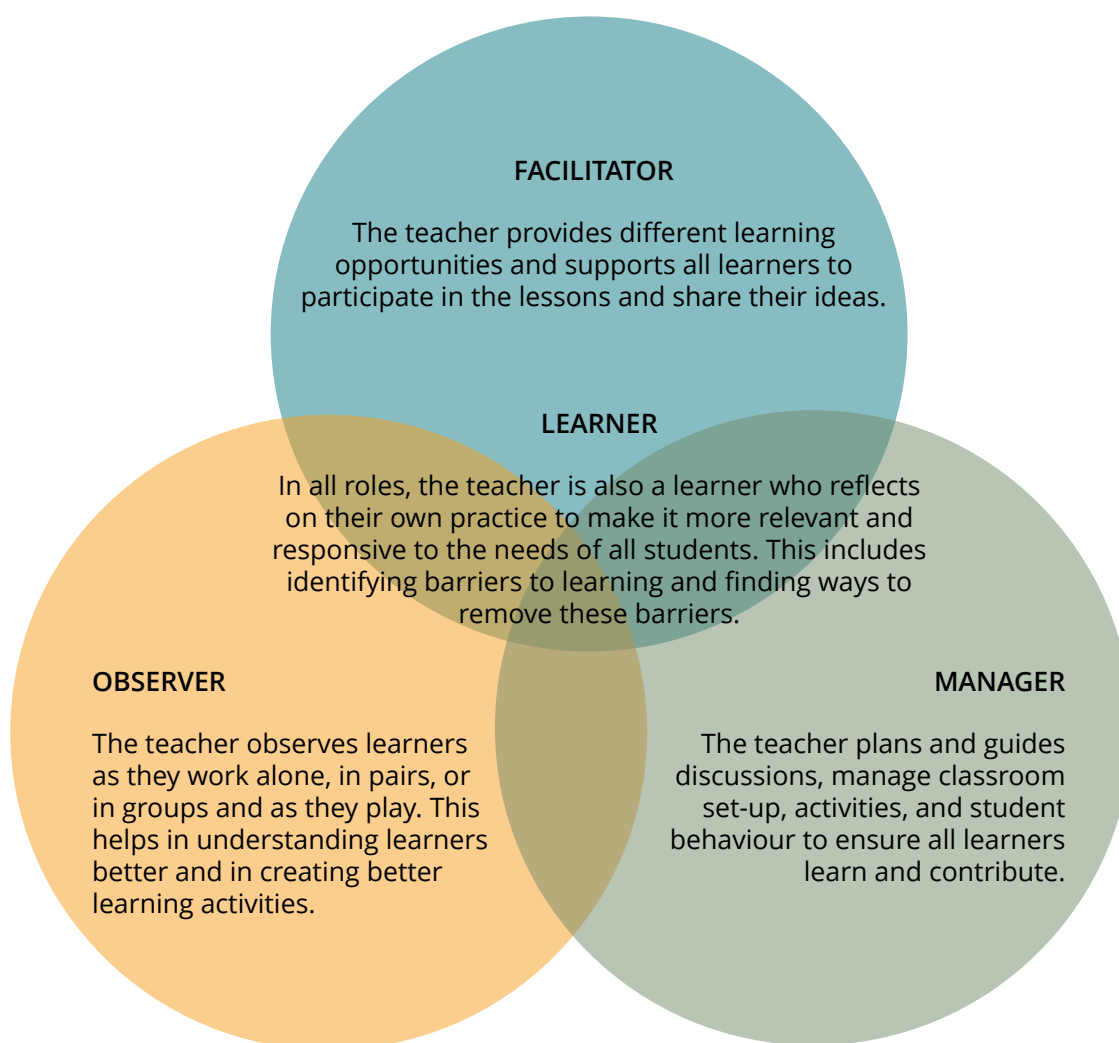


FIGURE 3. Role of teachers in a learner-centred classroom



As [Figure 3](#) shows, these multiple roles reflect the shift from a traditional teacher-centred classroom, where teachers are mainly the source of information and decision-makers, to a learner-centred classroom, where teachers facilitate learning in response to learners' needs. Instead of only directing activities, grading outputs, or defining success, teachers move between roles by guiding discussion, supporting participation, offering choices, and helping learners show understanding in different ways. In this way, learners are recognised as active contributors, while teachers adapt their support to learners' strengths, interests, experiences, and needs.

Representation and role modelling matter

Teachers and education support personnel with disabilities can also promote inclusion through their presence and participation in school life. When learners see adults with disabilities working, leading, supporting others, and contributing to the school community, it helps challenge stereotypes and shows that people with disabilities can live full and productive lives when barriers are removed and the right support is provided. Such role models can also encourage learners with disabilities to imagine broader possibilities for their own futures.

TRY THIS!

Reflect on Your Role in the Classroom

The shift from a teacher-centred to a learner-centred classroom does not happen overnight, it begins with how we see ourselves as teachers, and how we see the learners in front of us.

Take a few minutes to reflect on your own practice using the prompts below. There are no right or wrong answers. This is a starting point for thinking about how you already support inclusion and where you might want to grow.

In your classroom or school, how often do you:	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Not yet
1. Allow students to share their own ideas, experiences, or opinions during lessons	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Move around the class to check in with individual learners during activities	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Notice when a student seems disengaged, uncomfortable, or left out	☐	☐	☐	☐



In your classroom or school, how often do you:	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Not yet
4. Encourage quieter or more withdrawn students to participate	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Make sure all students, including those with health conditions or disabilities, feel they belong in the class	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Display all student work, not just the best outputs	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Treat mistakes or wrong answers as part of the learning process	☐	☐	☐	☐

Reflection:

Which role — facilitator, manager, observer, learner — comes most naturally to you? Which feels most challenging, and why?

Is there a student in your class who may not be fully participating? What might be getting in the way for them?

For education unions:

Think about the teachers in your union or school community. What support, training, or recognition would help them move toward more learner-centred practice?

Specific teaching strategies for inclusive, learner-centred classrooms will be explored in [Unit 4. Learner-centred Strategies](#).

Practice and Application

A. One Small Change for Inclusion

Purpose: To identify one simple, practical step a teacher can take to make their classroom more inclusive.

For teachers:

1. Choose one learner or group who may not be fully participating.
2. Identify one barrier, such as seating, materials, instructions, group work, or classroom climate.
3. Try one small change this week to help them participate.
4. Reflection: What changed? What will you continue or adjust?

For education unions:

1. Ask teachers what makes inclusive teaching difficult.
2. Choose one support teachers need, such as training, planning time, materials, peer sharing, or recognition.
3. Agree on one union action to start this month.
4. Reflection: What support can we start now to help teachers build inclusive classrooms?

B. Spot the Pedagogy

Purpose: To recognise teacher-centred and learner-centred practices in your own teaching.

1. Think back to a lesson you taught this week. Using the comparison table from Section 1.2, identify:
 - One moment that reflected teacher-centred pedagogy
 - One moment that reflected learner-centred pedagogy
2. Reflection Questions:
 - Was this a deliberate choice, or did it happen automatically?
 - What would it take to shift one teacher-centred moment toward a more learner-centred approach next time?

Unit Summary

- * Learner-centred pedagogy sees all learners, including learners with disabilities, as active participants in their own learning
- * Learner-centred pedagogy requires us to rethink the role of teachers and how we see children. Knowledge, information, and decision-making also comes from the students, not only from the teacher.
- * Teachers often have multiple roles in a learner-centred classroom – facilitator, observer, manager, learner. Teachers may perform all roles and move from one to another as they respond to different situations and needs of learners.
- * Learners are actively involved in their education. They are empowered to make decisions in class on how they want to learn and how they want to show what they've learned.

Additional Resources

1. **Child-friendly and accessible learning environments:** UNESCO Embracing Diversity Toolkit <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000137522>
2. UNICEF Webinar 12, **Teachers, Inclusive, Child-Centred Teaching and Pedagogy.** Companion Technical Booklet: <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/7736/file>
3. Ten (10) short videos and manuals - The videos show some of the **ways in which learners can be included or excluded during the course of a typical school day:** <https://www.eenet.org.uk/the-10-videos-and-manuals/>



Unit 2.3. Recognising, Responding to, and Preventing Violence in Schools

Unit Overview

Unit 3 helps educators recognise, respond to, and prevent stigma-related violence, discrimination, and bullying in schools. It explains different forms of school violence, warning signs of distress, and learners who may be at greater risk because of disability, health conditions, gender, minority status, or other forms of exclusion. The unit emphasises safe reporting, immediate support for survivors, positive discipline, restorative and trauma-informed responses, clear policies and referral pathways, and collaboration with families, communities, school leaders, and education unions to build violence-free learning environments.

Unit Learning Objectives

1. Identify physical, psychological, sexual, and institutional forms of violence and bullying in school settings.
2. Recognise warning signs of violence, distress, stigma, discrimination, and exclusion among learners.
3. Respond to violence and bullying through safe reporting, immediate support, referral pathways, and trauma-informed approaches.
4. Apply positive discipline and restorative strategies that promote accountability, learning, and behaviour change without humiliation or harm.
5. Identify curriculum-based, policy-based, and collaborative actions that help prevent violence and strengthen safe, inclusive school cultures.

Unit Outline

2.3.1 Kinds of violence in schools

2.3.2 Responding to violence

2.3.3 Reflecting on teacher's role in keeping a safe and violence-free learning environment

2.3.4 Preventing violence through curriculum and collaboration

2.3.1 Kinds of Violence in Schools⁸

Module 1 showed how stigma and discrimination can appear in schools. Often, they lead to violence. Children are usually the ones doing the harm. But persons of authority such as teachers, administrators, and education support personnel can be involved too.

School violence takes three forms: physical, psychological, and sexual.

- **Physical violence** includes physical attacks, physical fights, corporal punishment, and physical bullying.
- **Psychological violence** includes verbal abuse, emotional abuse, social exclusion, and psychological bullying.
- **Sexual violence** includes forced or attempted sexual acts, unwanted touching, sexual harassment, and sexual bullying.

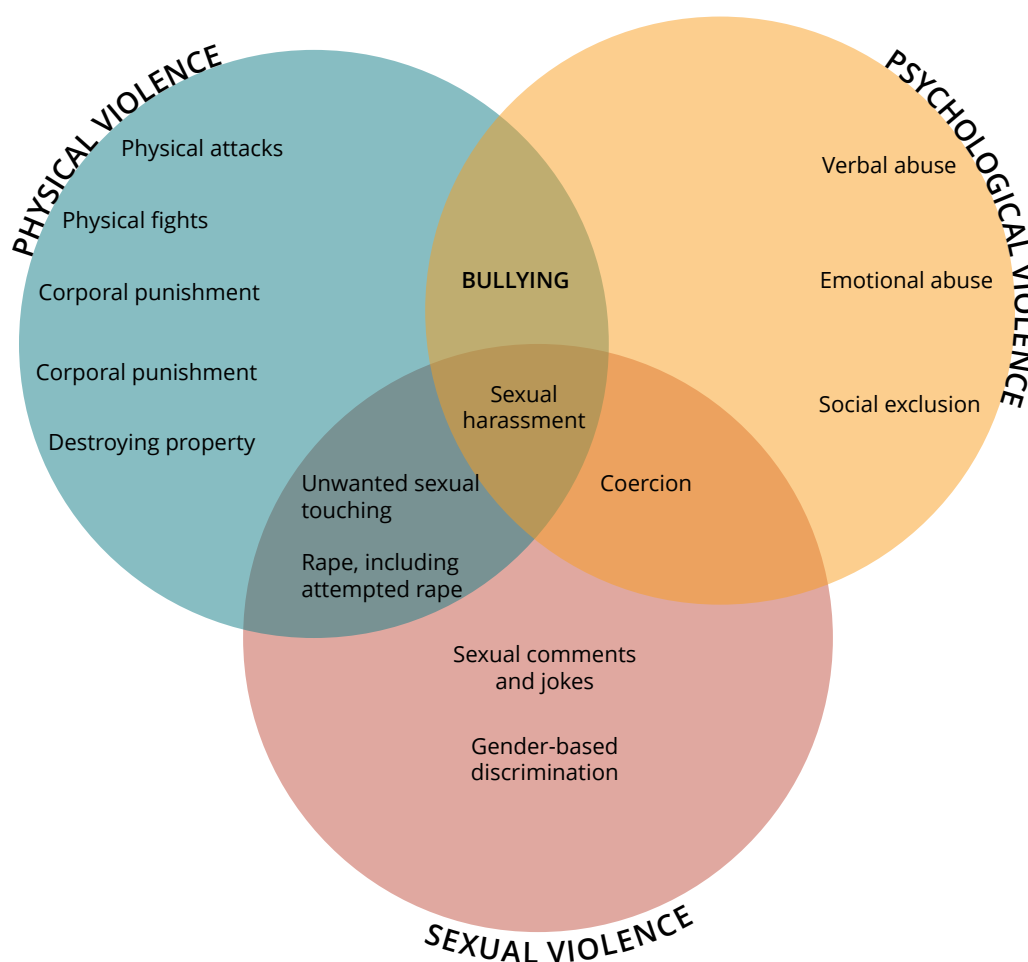


FIGURE 4. Conceptual framework for school violence and bullying ((Source: UNESCO Behind the numbers: Ending school violence and bullying)



These three forms describe violence between people, something one person does to another. However, violence isn't only interpersonal. Violence in schools can also come from the school itself, through its policies, practices, and everyday decisions.

Institutional violence includes “education policies, practices, and processes that disadvantage or exclude certain groups of learners... [including] biased curriculum content, normalized violence in school cultures, insufficient support to vulnerable learners, discriminatory dress codes, or unequal resource allocation.”⁹

Refusing to enrol a child affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), placing students in separate classes because of a health condition or disability, or routinely leaving a student out of school activities are all forms of institutional violence. No single person may intend harm, but the school's own practices cause it. This kind of violence is often harder to recognise than a physical fight or an insult, precisely because it can look like ‘just how things are done’ rather than an incident.

The definitions below are from UNESCO¹⁰ and UNICEF. Laws and policies may define these terms slightly differently depending on your country. Always check your school or national policy.

1. **Bullying** - Bullying is repeated, unwanted, and harmful behaviour. There is also a power imbalance between the person bullying and the person being bullied. To count as bullying, it should happen at least once or twice a month.
 - **Physical bullying** - Repeated hitting, kicking, pushing, locking someone indoors, stealing or destroying belongings, or forcing someone to do things. This is different from a one-time physical fight or attack.
 - **Psychological bullying** - Name-calling, unpleasant teasing, being left out on purpose, being ignored, or being the target of lies and rumours.
 - **Sexual bullying** - Sexual jokes, comments, or gestures aimed at a student. In some countries, this is legally defined as sexual harassment. In this toolkit, we call it sexual bullying. It is a form of sexual violence.
 - **Cyberbullying** - Bullying through phones or the internet. This includes hurtful messages, posts, emails, or texts; sharing embarrassing photos without permission; and any harmful behaviour through calls, texts, social media, or chatrooms.
2. **Physical fights** - A fight between two people of about the same strength who choose to fight each other. This can happen between students, or between a student and anyone else — a stranger, a family member, a partner, or a friend.
3. **Physical attacks** - When one or more people hit or strike someone using a weapon, such as a stick, knife, or gun.
4. **Sexual violence** - Sexual violence includes:
 - Forced sexual intercourse or any other unwanted sexual act
 - Attempted sexual acts without consent



- Unwanted sexual touching
- Other sexual abuse without physical contact, such as threats of sexual violence, exposure, or sexual harassment

5. **Physical violence by teachers** - The intentional use of physical force that could cause death, disability, injury, or harm. This applies even if it is meant as punishment.
6. **Corporal punishment by teachers** - Any punishment that uses physical force meant to cause pain or discomfort, even mild discomfort. This usually means hitting a child by hand or with an object. It can also include kicking, shaking, throwing, or scratching a child.
7. **Harassment** - Words, gestures, or actions that annoy, alarm, abuse, demean, intimidate, belittle, humiliate, or embarrass a student because of who they are.¹¹ For example, because of a disability, a health condition such as leprosy (Hansen's disease), their race, gender, or another characteristic. Unlike sexual harassment, harassment does not need to be sexual in nature to count, and unlike bullying, it does not need to happen repeatedly. A single incident can be harassment if it is tied to a student's identity or circumstances.

Where bullying and harassment overlap

Teasing, name-calling, and exclusion can be both bullying and harassment at the same time. For example, a student repeatedly mocked because of visible signs of leprosy (Hansen's disease) is experiencing psychological bullying and harassment. The difference is what each term requires to "count": bullying needs repetition and a power imbalance, while harassment only needs the conduct to be connected to the student's identity, even once. This matters in practice: a teacher shouldn't wait for teasing about a student's leprosy (Hansen's disease) or disability to happen "enough times" to take it seriously. If it's tied to who the student is, it's already harassment, whether or not it has happened before.

Influencing factors for violence in schools¹²

Violence and bullying in educational settings are driven by a combination of individual, family, school, and societal factors:

- **School climate** - A negative school environment characterised by high competition, tolerance of antisocial behaviour, lack of clear rules, and insufficient teacher support significantly increase the prevalence of bullying.
- **Family environment** - Low-quality family relationships, experiences of domestic abuse, living with single parents or relatives instead of both parents, and lower parental education levels are linked to higher risks of victimisation.
- **Socio-economic determinants** - Poverty and lower socio-economic status expose students to broader social determinants of violence and stress.
- **Societal norms and power dynamics** - Rigid gender norms, stereotypes, and unequal power dynamics within a society often spill over into schools, driving school-related gender-based violence.



Who are at risk of violence?¹³

While any student can become a victim of school violence, evidence shows that the risk is not distributed equally. The most at-risk groups include:

- **Learners perceived as “different”** - Anyone who stands out from the majority in their school environment.
- **LGBTQ+ students** - These learners are three to five times more likely to experience bullying and school violence.
- **Children and young people with disabilities** - They are highly at risk, with girls with disabilities being up to 10 times more likely to experience gender-based violence.
- **Minority groups** - Ethnic, linguistic, and cultural minorities, as well as migrant learners.
- **Gender-specific risks** - Boys are generally more likely to experience physical violence and physical bullying, whereas girls are more frequently the targets of psychological violence, sexual violence, and online harassment. See also Module 4 which further explores stigma and discrimination against women and girls.

Learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) face some of the most severe and least visible forms of school violence. There are documented reports of children being expelled from school, separated from other students, rejected by peers, and bullied and abused not only by classmates but by family members, neighbours, and even teachers.¹⁴ Girls affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) were flagged as especially vulnerable to discrimination and violence. This risk extends to learners whose parent or family member is affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), even when the learner themselves shows no signs of the disease.

Recognising Warning Signs of Violence¹⁵

While some forms of violence (like severe physical abuse) leave obvious marks, others (such as psychological bullying) are easily hidden. Teachers should be vigilant in recognising the silent signs of distress because very few children will actively ask adults for help or report abuse to school staff. A child's reaction to violence may be immediate or delayed, and their responses will vary widely in severity based on their cultural background. Above all, how a child processes and displays trauma is heavily dependent on their age.



Young Children (Age 5 and under)

At this stage, a child's response is heavily influenced by how their primary caregivers react to stress. Warning signs in young children include:

- **Emotional Volatility:** Uncharacteristic irritability, frequent tantrums, or severe difficulty calming down.
- **Hyperarousal:** Appearing constantly on edge or becoming easily startled.
- **Regressive Behaviours:** Reverting to habits typical of younger children, such as thumb-sucking, bed-wetting, or a sudden, intense fear of the dark.
- **Attachment Issues:** Excessive and anxious clinging to caregivers.
- **Repetitive Play:** Obsessively recreating the stressful event over and over during playtime or in conversation.
- **Energy Shifts:** Noticeable, sudden changes in their baseline activity levels.

Elementary & Middle School Children (Ages 6–12)

Children in this age group often manifest their distress through disruptions in their daily routines, both at school and at home. Look for:

- **Academic Decline:** A sudden inability to pay attention, concentrate, or maintain their usual school performance.
- **Emotional Withdrawal:** Becoming uncharacteristically quiet, tearful, sad, or frequently asking to be left alone.
- **Verbalizing Fear:** Openly talking about scary feelings, morbid ideas, or persistent worries.
- **Behavioural Outbursts:** Picking fights with peers or adults, acting out, and getting into trouble more frequently than before.
- **Physical Changes:** Noticeable, sudden shifts in appetite, such as eating significantly more or less than usual.

Teenagers (Ages 13–18)

Adolescents often exhibit the most complex behavioural shifts, sometimes masking their trauma with defiance or extreme isolation. Depending on their circumstances, teenagers may exhibit:

- **Obsession or Avoidance:** Either constantly talking about the traumatic event or aggressively denying that it ever happened.
- **Defiance and Aggression:** Refusing to follow rules, frequently talking back, or showing a sudden increase in physical or verbal aggression.
- **Severe Isolation:** Wanting to be completely alone, withdrawing from favourite activities, and abruptly distancing themselves from close friends.
- **High-Risk Behaviours:** Engaging in dangerous activities, experimenting with drugs or alcohol, running away from home, or having run-ins with the law.
- **Physical Exhaustion:** Complaining of constant fatigue, sleeping significantly more or less than usual, and suffering from frequent nightmares.



2.3.2 Responding to Violence¹⁶

Teachers should be prepared to respond promptly and appropriately when they witness an incident of violence in school or receive information that one has occurred. Effective response requires clear school policies and procedures for reporting incidents, protecting those affected, and referring cases to appropriate services and authorities ([See box on Characteristics of an Effective School Safety and Violence Prevention Policy](#)). Responding to interpersonal and institutional violence goes beyond reporting. Schools should ensure that survivors and their families receive the support they need and take steps to prevent similar incidents from happening again. When children are responsible for harmful behaviour, responses should focus on positive discipline, accountability, learning, and behaviour change rather than punishment alone.

1. **Create Safe Reporting Mechanisms** - Ensure students have safe, confidential, and accessible ways to report violence or bullying without fear of retaliation.

Examples:

- Installing a locked, anonymous “worry box” or drop-box in a discreet location (like the school library or nurse’s office) where students can leave notes.
- Designating specific teachers or counsellors as official “Safe Contacts” whom students know they can go to in confidence.
- Setting up a simple, confidential SMS number or online form for older students to report incidents safely.

2. **Provide Immediate Support to Survivors** - Intervene quickly to stop the violence and ensure the survivor’s immediate physical and emotional safety. Offer psychosocial support and counselling to help them process the event and recover.

Examples:

- Providing psychological first aid - moving the student to a quiet, safe space away from peers immediately after the incident to let them calm down.
- Connecting the student with a school counsellor for a structured check-in to process the event, rather than just sending them back to class.
- Creating a temporary safety plan, such as allowing the survivor to leave classes 5 minutes early to avoid the perpetrator in the hallways.

[See also Annex 2: Quick Guide: Responding to Learners Who Have Experienced Violence](#)

3. **Focus on Rehabilitation for Perpetrators** - Instead of relying solely on harsh punishments or expulsions, use constructive discipline. The goal is to focus on rehabilitation, correct inappropriate behaviours, and teach the perpetrator how to resolve conflicts positively.

Examples:

- Utilising “restorative justice” circles, where a trained mediator helps the perpetrator understand the direct emotional and physical impact of their actions on the survivor.
- Mandating participation in empathy-building or anger-management workshops rather than



simply issuing an out-of-school suspension.

- Assigning supervised, meaningful community service within the school to help the perpetrator rebuild a positive connection to their learning environment.\

For further information, see [Annex 3: Dealing with perpetrators of violence](#)

- 4. Encourage Safe Bystander Action** - Most incidents of violence and bullying happen in the presence of other learners, but bystanders often do not intervene. Teach learners safe and appropriate ways to support their peers, such as refusing to encourage the behaviour, checking on and supporting the affected learner, helping them move to a safe place, seeking help from a trusted adult, reporting the incident, and modelling respectful and inclusive behaviour. Learners should never be expected to intervene if doing so would put their own safety at risk.

See also [Annex 4: Supporting Bystanders and Learners Who Witness Violence](#)

- 5. Connect to External Services** - Not all issues can be handled exclusively by the school. Serious incidents, such as severe physical or sexual violence, may require referral to legal authorities, medical and psychosocial services, or other specialised support services. Schools should follow national laws and established safeguarding procedures. Establish strong referral pathways to connect students with health, child protection, and social services for cases that require specialised professional intervention.

Examples:

- Maintaining an updated, accessible contact list of local child protection agencies and social workers for cases involving severe abuse or neglect.
- Establishing formal referral pathways with a local health clinic so survivors can receive proper medical assessments quickly.
- Partnering with external mental health professionals for students exhibiting signs of severe, long-term trauma that exceed the school counsellor's capacity.

- 6. Involve Parents and the Community** - Engage the parents or caregivers of both the survivor and the perpetrator. Strengthening parenting skills and ensuring a united, supportive response at home is critical to preventing the behaviour from happening again.

Examples:

- Hosting structured mediation meetings with the parents or caregivers of both the survivor and the perpetrator to ensure a unified approach.
- Offering positive parenting and non-violent discipline workshops at the school to help caregivers reinforce safe behaviours at home.
- Engaging local community or religious leaders to speak at school assemblies, reinforcing that violence and bullying are unacceptable both in and out of school.



When institutional discrimination or violence occurs, such as a learner being refused enrolment, pressured to transfer, or excluded because of leprosy (Hansen's disease) or disability, the matter may need to be escalated beyond the school. In addition to using school and education authority complaints procedures, families may benefit from referral to child protection services, human rights institutions, or legal advice and legal aid organisations where these are available.

Characteristics of an Effective School Safety and Violence Prevention Policy

A good school safety policy should:

- Align with national laws and international standards on child protection, school safety, and violence prevention.
- Clearly define the forms of violence covered, including physical, emotional, sexual, and online violence, as well as violence between students and between adults and students.
- Identify the issues the policy aims to address and explain why they matter.
- Set clear goals and expected outcomes for creating a safe and inclusive learning environment.
- Establish clear rules and responsibilities for all members of the school community.
- Promote fairness and non-discrimination in how rules are applied and incidents are handled.
- Outline consequences and corrective actions when rules are violated.
- Provide safe and accessible reporting mechanisms and explain referral pathways for additional support or protection services when needed.

Making the policy known and understood

A policy can only be effective if people know about it and understand it. Schools should ensure that the policy is widely shared and regularly discussed.

- Display the policy in visible and accessible locations.
- Introduce and discuss the policy with learners at the start of each school year.
- Inform parents and caregivers through meetings, orientations, and school events.
- Include reminders and awareness activities throughout the year.
- Ensure that staff, learners, and families know how to report concerns and seek support.

Note: Use child-friendly and accessible formats so that all learners, including learners with disabilities and with health conditions like leprosy, can understand the policy and know their rights and responsibilities.

See also Annex 5: Clear and comprehensive policies on safe and violence-free schools

Source: World Health Organization, School-Based Violence Prevention: A Practical Handbook (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2019).



2.3.3 Reflecting on Teacher's Role in Keeping a Safe and Violence-Free Learning Environment¹⁷

Teachers act as the frontline protectors for students. Their everyday actions set the tone for the entire classroom.

- **Setting Expectations** - Teachers are responsible for establishing clear behavioural standards and rules at the beginning of the school year.
- **Modelling Behaviour** - A safe learning environment requires teachers to actively model non-violent, respectful communication. By demonstrating how to listen respectfully and resolve disagreements without aggression, they teach students to do the same.
- **Early Intervention** - Because they interact with students daily, teachers are best positioned to identify concerns early, stop bullying in its tracks, and prevent the escalation of violence.

Importance of reflecting on teachers' values

Teaching practices are often shaped by social, cultural, and gender norms, as well as their own experiences and beliefs. These influences can affect how teachers interact with learners, manage behaviour, and respond to differences, sometimes leading to unequal treatment, discrimination, or the reinforcement of stereotypes. It is important for teachers to reflect on how these norms may influence their practice and to promote fairness and inclusion in the classroom.

Professional development should help teachers:

- Recognise how social, cultural, and gender norms influence teaching, behaviour, and participation in school.
- Understand how teaching practices and learning materials can reinforce or challenge stereotypes.
- Identify and respond to violence, bullying, and discrimination linked to gender, disability, ethnicity, or other forms of exclusion.
- Apply school policies and procedures for preventing and responding to violence and discrimination.
- Build and strengthen collaborative networks with parents and caregivers, fellow teachers, and education support personnel to share information, coordinate support, and respond more effectively to learners' needs.

Shifting to positive discipline

To create a violence-free space, educators must be given the time and space to reflect on and unlearn ingrained prejudices or punitive mindsets. Shifting these core beliefs allows teachers to replace corporal punishment and shaming with empathy and positive discipline.

See also Annex 6: How Teachers can be Supported. For information about challenging or disruptive behaviour in the classroom, see Annex 7: Understanding and Responding to Challenging Behaviour.



2.3.4 Preventing Violence Through Curriculum and Collaboration¹⁸

Every learner has the fundamental right to an education free from fear and violence. However, violence, bullying, and the deep-seated stigma surrounding marginalised conditions—such as leprosy (Hansen's disease) or disabilities—can quickly turn schools from safe havens into hostile environments. Preventing violence requires much more than just reactive punishments after an incident occurs. It demands a proactive, “whole school approach.” This means that violence prevention cannot be a single, isolated lesson; it must be actively woven into the curriculum, the daily school culture, and the wider community.

Curriculum-based activities (The student experience)

Prevention starts in the classroom by equipping students with the tools they need to recognise violence, navigate conflicts peacefully, seek help and support, and challenge harmful norms. To be highly effective, this curriculum must grow and evolve alongside the students. Here are three key strategies to prevent violence in educational settings:

- **Social and Emotional Skills Education** - Integrate regular lessons that teach emotional regulation, empathy, communication, and peaceful conflict resolution.
- **Bystander Intervention Training** - Teach students safely how to intervene or report when they see bullying or violence, empowering them to shift from passive observers to active protectors.
- **Challenging Harmful Norms** - Use classroom activities to critically discuss and dismantle harmful gender stereotypes, social stigma, and prejudices that often serve as the root causes of peer aggression.

The table¹⁹ below shows some examples of key topics for a curriculum that encourages violence prevention by age group.

Preschool (Ages 3 to 5)	Primary School (Ages 5 to 11)	Secondary School (Ages 11 to 18)
Develop life skills		
■ Identifying own emotions and feelings of others ■ Listening to others and paying attention ■ Asking for own needs ■ Getting along with others ■ Managing disappointment	■ Communication skills ■ Awareness of moral reasoning ■ Controlling anger ■ Skills for social and academic success ■ Preventing bullying ■ Understanding perceptions ■ Showing compassion ■ Problem-solving ■ Dealing with peer pressure ■ Dealing with gossip	■ Self-regulation^a ■ Sexual harassment ■ Managing serious peer conflicts ■ Addressing harmful use of alcohol and drugs
Teach safe behaviour		
■ Identifying abusive situations ■ Avoiding risky situations ■ Getting help from adults	■ Internet safety ■ Helping classmates; safe bystander behaviour ■ Preventing gang enrolment	■ Safe dating behaviour ■ Internet safety ■ Helping classmates; safe bystander behaviour ■ Preventing gang enrolment
Challenge social and cultural norms and promote equal relationships		
■ Gender norms ■ Attitudes towards violence ■ Accepting differences	■ Gender norms ■ Attitudes towards violence ■ Accepting differences	■ Addressing social and cultural behaviour around dating and intimate-partner violence ■ Positive relationship norms

^a Emotional self-regulation is the ability to monitor and manage our own emotional state and behaviour. It is developmental in nature, just like learning to walk, talk, and read (Source: UNESCO Asia-Pacific Early Childhood Care and Education: Teacher Training Handbook for Social and Emotional Learning)



Involving the wider school community (The school environment)

A safe school requires the commitment of every adult who interacts with the students, ensuring a consistent message of safety and respect.

- **School Administrators** - Lead the development of clear, restorative (rather than punitive) anti-violence policies.
Example: Conduct a “safety mapping” exercise with students to identify and improve unsupervised or unsafe physical spaces in the school (e.g., poorly lit bathrooms or hidden corners).
- **All School Staff** (not just teachers) - Ensure that education support personnel or non-teaching staff (admin staff, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, custodians, etc.) are also trained to recognise and report warning signs of violence, as bullying often happens outside the classroom.
- **Parents and Caregivers** - Bring parents into the process through positive parenting workshops that teach non-violent discipline at home, ensuring the rules at school match the rules at home. Involve parents in school safety committees so they have a voice in shaping anti-violence policies.

The role of education unions (systemic advocacy)

Education unions are critical drivers of the systemic changes needed to make violence prevention sustainable.

- **Advocating for Training** - Unions can use collective bargaining and social dialogue to demand that all teachers, school administrators, and education support personnel receive comprehensive, paid professional development on positive discipline and trauma-informed care.
- **Protecting Educators** - Ensure that reporting pathways protect teachers and education support personnel from retaliation when they report violence or abuse, particularly when it involves powerful community members or school leadership.
- **Campaigning for Resources** - Advocate for manageable class sizes and the hiring of dedicated school counsellors and social workers. Teachers cannot manage violence prevention alone; they need specialised support.
- **Policy Integration** - Negotiate to include strict anti-discrimination, anti-stigma, and anti-violence clauses within national or district-level collective bargaining agreements, ensuring safe environments for both staff and students.

Creating a violence-free school is not a task that any single teacher can achieve alone. It requires the dedicated, collective effort of educators, administrators, education support personnel, parents, and the powerful systemic advocacy of education unions. By moving away from purely punitive measures and instead building a culture rooted in positive discipline, empathy, and strict anti-discrimination, we can transform schools into true sanctuaries of learning where every student feels safe, valued, and ready to thrive.



TRY THIS!

The Safety Walkabout: Mapping School Safety “Hot Spots”

Violence and bullying rarely happen in the middle of a classroom. They thrive in unstructured, unsupervised spaces. This activity helps educators and unions identify physical “hot spots” in the school where students—especially often marginalised learners, such as those affected by leprosy (Hansen’s disease) or disabilities—are most at risk of harassment.

Gather a small group (this could be a mix of teachers, union representatives, education support personnel, and ideally, a few student leaders). Take 15–20 minutes to walk around the school grounds during a high-traffic time (like recess or class transition) and during a quiet time. Use the checklist below to evaluate the physical environment.

The “Hot Spot” Mapping Checklist

As you walk the school grounds, ask yourselves:

- ☐ Are there “Blind Spots”? Identify areas that are hidden from the view of teachers or education support personnel (e.g., behind buildings, isolated stairwells, or tucked-away corners).
- ☐ Is the lighting adequate? Check bathrooms, hallways, and basements. Are there dark areas where a student might feel unsafe?
- ☐ Where do crowds bottleneck? Note narrow hallways or doorways where students are forced to push past each other, as physical proximity can quickly escalate into conflict.
- ☐ Are bathrooms safe? Bathrooms are notorious hot spots for bullying. Are they located in areas where staff can easily monitor who goes in and out?
- ☐ Where do at risk students go? Notice where marginalised students (such as those with physical impairments or those facing stigma) spend their free time. Are they hiding in isolated areas to avoid peers? Are those areas safe?

Optional Action Point!

For Teachers: Choose one identified hot spot and commit to walking past it during your break times or transition periods this week. Simple adult presence is the fastest way to deter bullying.

For Education Unions: Use your map of “blind spots” and “hot spots” to advocate for practical changes at the next staff or school board meeting. This could mean requesting better lighting, pushing to repair broken bathroom doors, or advocating for the hiring of additional yard supervisors to ensure all areas are safely monitored.

Practice and Application

A. Reflecting on Our Beliefs and Assumptions

Purpose: To explore how personal beliefs, attitudes, and social norms can influence our responses to learners and contribute to inclusion, stigma, discrimination, or violence.

Sometimes stigma and violence are not caused by bad intentions, but by beliefs and assumptions that have become accepted as normal. Recognising these beliefs is the first step toward change.

Consider the statements below. For each one, reflect on whether you have heard it, observed it, or believed it at some point in your life.

- Some children are naturally better learners than others.
- Physical punishment is an effective way to discipline children and young people.
- Boys and girls should behave differently in school.
- Learners with disabilities are better served in separate settings.
- Some forms of teasing or bullying are a normal part of growing up.
- Children should be seen and not heard.
- Certain health conditions should be kept hidden from others.

Reflection Questions

1. Which of these beliefs are common in your community or workplace?
2. How might these beliefs affect learners?
3. Could any of these beliefs contribute to stigma, discrimination, exclusion, or violence?
4. What values or beliefs support inclusion and respect for all learners?

B. Reviewing School and Policy Commitments to Safety

Purpose: To examine how schools, unions, and education systems promote safe, inclusive, and violence-free learning environments.

Review your school policies, union policies, or relevant national education policies. Use the checklist of questions in the box as a guide.

Reflection Questions

1. Which policies or procedures already exist?
2. Are they well known and consistently applied?
3. Are there any gaps or areas for improvement?
4. What actions could strengthen safety and inclusion in your context?

Rapid Policy Review Checklist

Does your school, union, or education system have:

- ☐ A policy on school safety or violence prevention?
- ☐ A child protection or safeguarding policy?
- ☐ A policy on bullying or discrimination?
- ☐ Procedures for reporting violence or abuse?
- ☐ Guidance for supporting learners affected by violence?
- ☐ Clear responsibilities for staff and school leaders?

Unit Summary

- * Violence in schools can be physical, psychological, sexual, or online, and may include bullying, cyberbullying, corporal punishment, harassment, exclusion, and other harmful behaviours.
- * Violence can also be institutional when school policies and practices exclude and discriminate certain groups of learners such as those affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) or those with a disability.
- * Stigma, discrimination, harmful social norms, unequal power relations, and negative school climates can increase the risk of violence, especially for learners who are perceived as different or marginalised.
- * Teachers need to recognise both visible and hidden warning signs of violence and distress, including changes in behaviour, withdrawal, fear, aggression, absenteeism, or sudden changes in participation and learning.
- * Effective responses include stopping the harm, ensuring immediate safety, listening without blame, using safe and confidential reporting mechanisms, following school policies, and referring learners to appropriate support services when needed.
- * Responses to learners who cause harm should focus on accountability, positive discipline, restorative approaches, behaviour change, and trauma-informed support rather than humiliation, exclusion, or punishment alone.
- * Preventing violence requires clear policies, consistent procedures, teacher training, safe reporting pathways, supportive school leadership, parent and caregiver engagement, and collaboration with community services.
- * Education unions can support violence prevention by advocating for safe working and learning conditions, professional development, adequate support staff, anti-discrimination policies, and systems that protect both learners and educators.

Additional Resources

1. **How Teachers Can Recognize the Signs and Support Abused and Neglected Children**, by Aiesha Hemeda: <https://endcan.org/2022/03/30/how-teachers-can-recognize-the-signs/>
2. **Trauma-Informed Care for Children Exposed to Violence: Tips for Teachers**: <http://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/defendingchildhood/legacy/2011/09/19/tips-teachers.pdf>
3. **Responding to Bias Incidents in Middle and High Schools**: Resources and Best Practices for School Administrators & Educators, by Anti-Defamation League: <https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/2025-03/Responding-to-Incidents-Guide-With-Sports-Addendum-2025.pdf>
4. **When 'Just Joking' Is No Joke: How to Respond When Students' 'Jokes' are Biased or Offensive**, article by ADL Education: <https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/when-just-joking-no-joke-how-respond-when-students-jokes-are-biased>
5. **Best Practices of Non-Violent Conflict Resolution** In and Out-of-School: Some examples: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000126679>
6. **Mental Health in Schools**: A Manual: <https://iris.who.int/items/909521ad-332d-4291-bd2e-dd3f6de15bbd>
7. **Creating an Environment for Emotional and Social Well-Being**: An important responsibility of a health promoting and child-friendly school: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/creating-an-environment-for-emotional-and-social-well-being-an-important-responsibility-of-a-health-promoting-and-child-friendly-school>
8. **Understanding Challenging Behaviour** UNESCO. (2017). Embracing diversity: Toolkit for creating inclusive, learning-friendly environments. Specialized booklet 1. Positive discipline in the inclusive, learning-friendly classroom. A guideline for teachers and teacher educators: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000149284?posInSet=2&queryId=799a1b58-3ec3-4aa4-b6d0-f88d0286349a>
9. **Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting PDEP** (Fourth Edition): https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/collection/positive-discipline-essentials?resource_type=resource
10. **Positive Discipline in Everyday Teaching**: A Short Guide: <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/what-positive-discipline-positive-discipline-everyday-teaching>
11. **Positive discipline: Creating a good school without corporal punishment**: <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/positive-discipline-creating-good-school-without-corporal-punishment>



Unit 2.4. Learner-Centred Strategies

Unit Overview

Unit 4 provides practical classroom strategies for making teaching, learning, assessment, and relationships more inclusive. It deepens learner-centred pedagogy through meaningful learning opportunities, multiple learning pathways, cooperative learning, and accessible learning spaces. It then introduces Universal Design for Learning, reasonable accommodation, inclusive assessment, general classroom strategies, rules and routines, and social and emotional learning as everyday approaches for reducing barriers, supporting participation, and strengthening empathy, respect, and collaboration among learners.

Unit Learning Objectives

1. Explain the key elements of learner-centred pedagogy and how they support inclusion.
2. Apply Universal Design for Learning principles to plan lessons that offer multiple ways to access, engage with, and demonstrate learning.
3. Identify reasonable accommodations that remove barriers while maintaining learning goals and expectations.
4. Use inclusive assessment practices to understand learner progress, guide teaching, and support learner reflection.
5. Use classroom strategies, rules, routines, and low-cost adjustments that support access, participation, and belonging.
6. Integrate social and emotional learning approaches that nurture empathy, respect, collaboration, and equity.

Unit Outline

Unit 2.4.1 Elements of learner-centred pedagogy

Unit 2.4.2 UDL and reasonable accommodations

Unit 2.4.3 Inclusive assessment

Unit 2.4.4 General classroom strategies

Unit 2.4.5 Socio-emotional learning for inclusion and equity

2.4.1 Elements of Learner-Centred Pedagogy

Learner-centred pedagogy helps teachers respond to diverse learning needs by recognising that learners learn in different ways. Using varied teaching and assessment methods can reduce the need for individual remediation and improve learning for all.

There are four key elements of learner-centred pedagogy: meaningful learning opportunities, multiple learning pathways, cooperative learning, and accessible learning spaces (Figure 5). We will look into each one below.



FIGURE 5. The four elements of learner-centred pedagogy

1. Meaningful Learning Opportunities²⁰

Learners are more motivated when lessons are clear, relevant, and connected to what they already know. Use the infographic as a quick guide: explain the purpose, build on prior knowledge, connect learning to daily life, give learners time to practise, and provide different ways for them to show what they know.

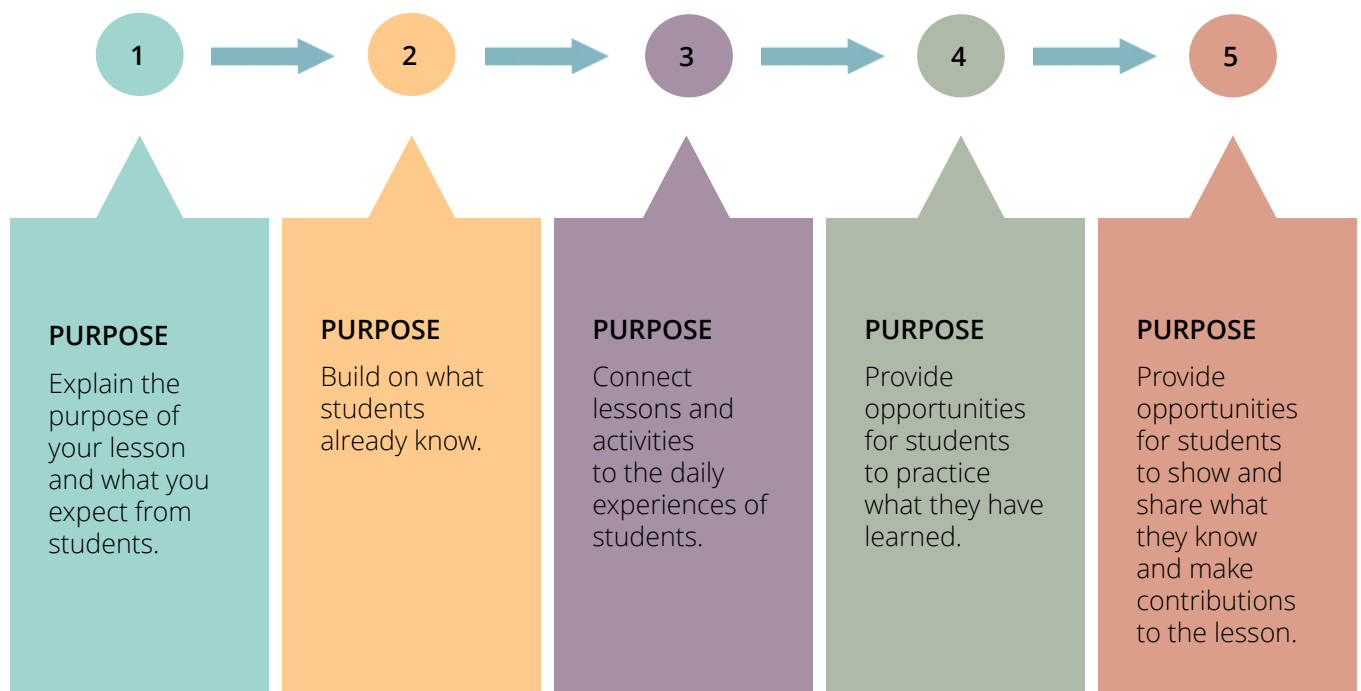


FIGURE 6. Ways to provide meaningful learning opportunities

TRY THIS!

Create Meaningful Learning Opportunities in Your Classroom

Examples of how you can create meaningful learning opportunities for all learners.

1. Purpose

Help learners understand what they are learning and why it matters.

- Write or display learning objectives and expected outputs where all learners can see them. Use simple, clear language and check that all learners understand what is expected.
- At the start of a lesson, tell learners not just what they will learn, but why it is useful to them.
- Break down complex objectives into smaller, manageable steps so learners can track their own progress.
- At the end of the lesson, return to the objectives together and ask learners to assess whether they feel they have met them.



2. Prior Knowledge

Build on what learners already know before introducing something new.

- Review previous related lessons before introducing a new concept or activity. Ask learners to brainstorm in pairs or groups to summarise what they remember from the previous session.
- Use a quick warm-up activity, such as a true-or-false quiz, a word association game, or a short discussion, to activate existing knowledge before the lesson begins.
- Ask learners open questions such as: “Have you ever seen or heard of this before? Where? What do you already know about it?”
- Acknowledge and build on learners’ responses, even when their prior knowledge is incomplete or partially incorrect. Use misconceptions as a teaching opportunity rather than dismissing them.
- For learners who may have missed previous sessions, pair them with a peer who can briefly catch them up before the new content begins.

3. Relevance

Connect learning to learners’ real lives, experiences, and communities.

- Provide examples that are relevant to the age, background, and lived experience of learners.
- Show how lessons apply to everyday life. Invite students to bring objects, photos, or stories from home that connect to the topic being discussed.
- Link content to the local context. Use place names, community situations, and examples that learners will recognise.
- When teaching about health or social issues, draw on situations that reflect the realities of the community, while being sensitive to learners who may be personally affected.
- Invite community members, local leaders, or persons with lived experience to share their perspectives as part of the lesson.
- Ask learners: “Where have you seen this in your own life? How does this connect to something you already know or do?”

4. Practice

Give learners opportunities to apply and consolidate what they have learned.

- Design activities that allow students to use new concepts in practical, hands-on ways. When teaching about plants, take learners outside to explore real plants in their surroundings. When teaching about stigma, use role-plays or case studies drawn from familiar situations.
- Offer different types of practice such as individual tasks, pair work, group activities, and creative outputs. This enables learners to engage in the way that works best for them.



- Allow learners to attempt tasks before the teacher explains everything. Productive struggle or working through a challenge before being given the answer, deepens understanding.
- Provide immediate, constructive feedback during practice so learners can adjust and improve while the task is still fresh.
- Revisit key concepts across multiple lessons and in different contexts so learners have repeated opportunities to practice and retain what they have learned.

5. Show

Create opportunities for learners to demonstrate and share their understanding.

- Have students discuss in pairs or groups to share what they know and compare their thinking with others.
- Ask learners to share their own stories, experiences, or observations related to the lesson topic. Invite them to bring objects, drawings, or photographs from home that connect to what is being learned.
- Offer a range of ways for learners to show what they have understood — not just written tests. Options might include drawing, storytelling, demonstration, peer teaching, role play, or creating a poster or short presentation.
- Display all learner outputs in the classroom — not only the most polished work. Seeing their work valued and visible encourages all learners, including those who find academic tasks more challenging.
- Use peer sharing as a learning tool: when one learner explains a concept to another, both learners benefit.
- Celebrate progress, not just correct answers. Acknowledge the effort and thinking behind a response, even when it is not fully correct.



2. Multiple Learning Pathways²¹

All students can learn, but not all students learn in the same way. Some learn best by listening, others by doing, discussing, reading, or seeing. Most learners use a combination of approaches, and these preferences can shift depending on the topic or the stage of learning they are at.

As a teacher, recognising and responding to different learning pathways is one of the most practical things you can do to make your classroom more inclusive.

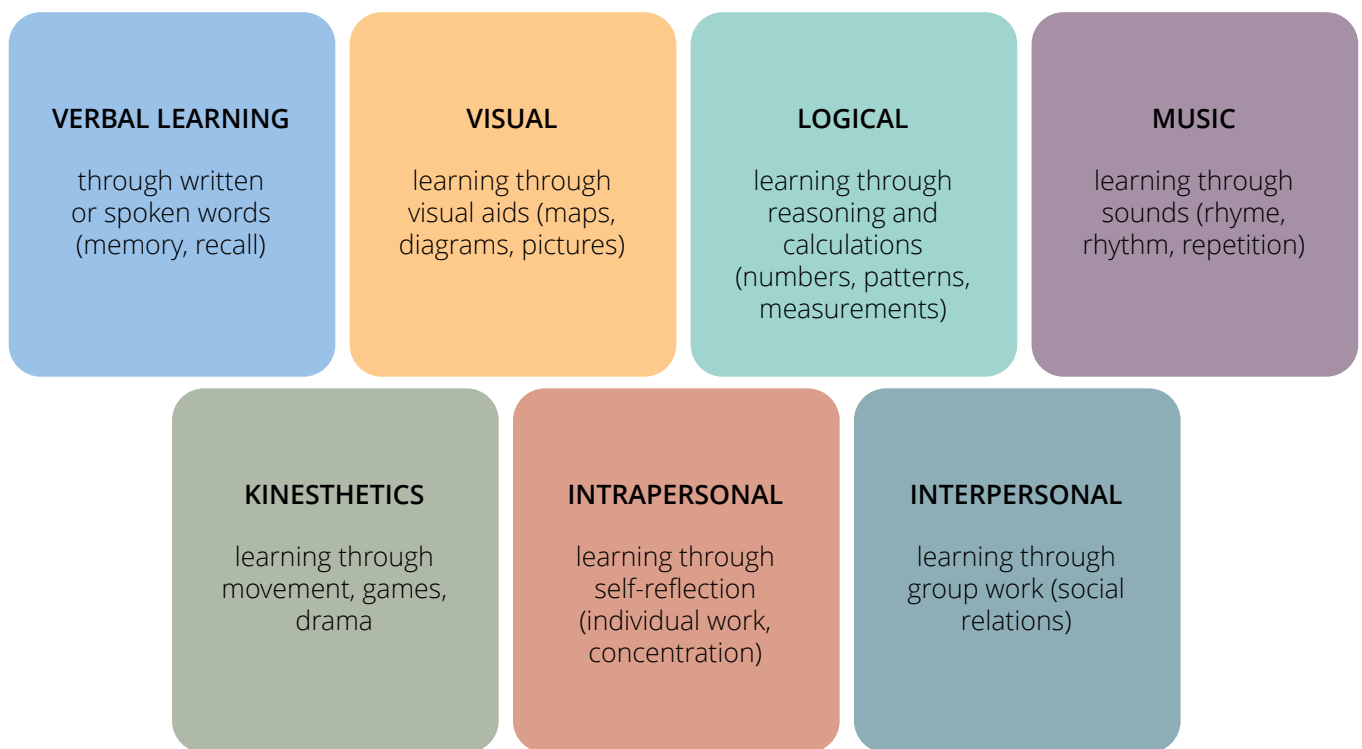


FIGURE 7. Common learning pathways

Remember: No learner fits neatly into one pathway, and no single activity reaches everyone. The goal is variety, not perfection. Even small adjustments, like adding a visual to a verbal explanation or offering a choice between two tasks, can make a meaningful difference for learners who would otherwise struggle to engage.



TRY THIS!

Support Multiple Learning Pathways

1. Vary your teaching activities within each lesson.

Do not rely on a single method. A lesson that includes a short explanation, a visual, and a group activity already gives learners three different ways to access the same content. For example, when teaching about leprosy (Hansen's disease) transmission, you might explain the facts verbally, show a diagram of how the bacteria spreads, and then have learners sort myth and fact cards in pairs.

2. Observe how your learners engage and adjust.

Watch who participates easily and who holds back. A student who rarely speaks during class discussion may produce a detailed drawing or write a thoughtful response. Use what you observe to adjust your activities and ensure no learner is consistently left out because of how content is delivered.

3. Offer learners a choice of activities.

Where possible, let learners choose how they want to engage with and demonstrate their learning. For example, after a lesson on stigma, one learner might write a short reflection, another might draw a poster, and another might present their ideas to a small group. All three are showing understanding, just in different ways.

4. Let learners decide how they access information.

Give learners some ownership over how they learn. For example, when introducing a new topic, you might offer options such as: listening to a short teacher-led discussion, watching a video, reading a reference text, interviewing a knowledgeable person in the community, or exploring their own sources. This builds independent thinking and respects the different ways learners process information.

3. Cooperative Learning

Group work is one of the most commonly used teaching strategies, but placing students in groups does not automatically mean they are learning cooperatively. True cooperative learning is purposefully planned. It gives every learner a role, a responsibility, and a stake in the group's success.

When done well, cooperative learning helps students understand content more deeply, develop communication and social skills, build positive relationships across different backgrounds and abilities, and stay engaged in productive activity. It also gives teachers more time to work with individuals or smaller groups who need additional support.

Features of cooperative learning

For group work to be genuinely cooperative, it needs to include the following:

Positive Interdependence	Each student's success is tied to the success of the group. No one can fully succeed unless everyone does. This encourages students to support each other rather than compete.	<i>Example:</i> Assign each group member a different piece of information needed to complete a shared task. No one can finish without the others.
Individual Accountability	Every member contributes their fair share. Each student is responsible not only for their own work but for supporting others in the group.	<i>Example:</i> After a group task, ask each student to individually explain one thing they contributed and one thing they learned from a groupmate.
Interpersonal and Social Skills	Cooperative learning requires skills that must be explicitly taught such as listening, communicating clearly, building trust, making decisions together, and managing disagreements respectfully. These do not develop automatically.	<i>Example:</i> Before a group activity, spend a few minutes discussing what good listening looks like, or role-play how to disagree respectfully.
Face-to-face interaction	Students actively help each other learn like sharing resources, explaining ideas, encouraging one another, and celebrating each other's efforts.	<i>Example:</i> Ask groups to explain a concept to each other before presenting it to the class, so all members have a chance to clarify their understanding.
Group processing	After completing a task, groups reflect on how well they worked together. Ask what went well, what was difficult, and how they can improve next time.	<i>Example:</i> End group tasks with two quick questions: "What did our group do well?" and "What would we do differently next time?"

How does learning together benefit students?

- 1. Deeper understanding of content** - Explaining ideas to a peer, asking questions within a group, and hearing different perspectives all help students process and retain information more effectively than listening alone.
- 2. Shared responsibility and independence** - Group work teaches students to divide tasks, take turns, manage their time, and understand how their individual contribution affects the whole. Students learn to work both interdependently and independently.
- 3. Communication and social skills** - Students practise active listening, giving and receiving feedback, motivating one another, and resolving disagreements. These skills are valuable far beyond the classroom, and they need to be modelled and practised, not just assumed.
- 4. Decision-making** - In a group, students encounter different opinions, weigh options, make collective decisions, and live with the outcomes. This builds critical thinking, flexibility, and the ability to work through disagreement constructively.



Cooperative learning is particularly powerful in diverse classrooms. When groups are intentionally mixed by ability, background, language, or learning style, students learn from each other's strengths and develop empathy and respect for differences. For learners with disability or those affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), well-structured group work can be a meaningful way to participate, contribute, and belong rather than being singled out or left behind.

TRY THIS!

Make Learning in Groups More Effective

- 1. Ensure diversity in groups.**

Groups should be composed of mixed abilities and different genders. Students who might learn slower are more stimulated in mixed ability groups. Students who might learn faster strengthen their understanding by explaining and supporting others.

- 2. Define roles.**

Ensure that roles are well defined. You may randomly assign roles in the beginning of the school year and later allow students to vote or choose their own roles. However, ensure that every student experience different roles. Examples of roles are reporter, scribe, facilitator of discussion.

- 3. Create class rules together.**

Create class rules together with the students. Discuss how students should work in groups including taking turns to talk, rotating roles, resolving conflicting ideas, etc. This will help establish a safe and supportive learning space for all learners.

- 4. Be present to support.**

Teachers should be present during groupwork to provide support where and when needed. The teacher should go around, check for understanding of the activity and content, and provide additional support where needed.

- 5. Encourage group processing.**

Give students the time and procedure for reflecting on how well they're working together. Group processing can involve reflecting on tasks they were asked to do and how well they worked together as a team. The goal is to improve how they work together. For example, groups can reflect on what worked, what didn't work, and what they can do better next time.



4. Accessible Learning Spaces

An accessible learning space is more than a physical room, it is an environment where every learner feels welcome, safe, and able to participate fully. Creating such spaces requires attention to the physical environment, learning materials, classroom culture, and activities beyond the classroom. While it is not always possible to anticipate every learner's needs in advance, there are practical steps teachers can take to reduce barriers and promote inclusion from the start.

- 1. Physical Space** – The layout and design of a classroom plays a critical role in either supporting or hindering a student's participation. It involves actively arranging the physical environment so that all students, including those with sensory needs or mobility impairments, can navigate the space, use classroom resources, and engage in activities seamlessly.
 - Consider whether learners who use wheelchairs, crutches, or mobility aids, including those with leprosy (Hansen's disease)-related physical impairments, can move freely into and around the room. Leave clear pathways between desks and ensure that group workstations have space for all learners to join without being singled out.
 - Seating arrangements that allow all learners to see the teacher, the board, and each other. Flexible seating, where learners can move chairs or sit in different configurations, supports different learning activities and needs.
 - Lighting, sound levels, and the size of text on boards or presentation materials. Ask learners whether they can see and hear clearly and adjust accordingly.
 - Where possible, involve learners in thinking about the classroom setup. They often know best what helps or hinders their participation.
- 2. Learning Materials** – Accessible learning materials ensure that all learners can effectively understand and engage with educational content, regardless of their individual learning style, primary language, or physical and cognitive abilities. This dimension requires educators to move beyond a "one-size-fits-all" approach to presenting information.
 - Present information in more than one format where possible. For example, verbal explanation supported by a visual, or a written handout alongside a group discussion.
 - Use clear, plain language in written materials. Avoid jargon and check that reading levels are appropriate for your learners.
 - For learners with visual or hearing impairments, consider alternatives such as large print, audio formats, tactile materials, or sign language support.
 - Allow learners to access and engage with materials in ways that suit them. For example, by listening to instructions rather than reading them, or by responding to a task verbally rather than in writing.
 - Creating accessible materials takes time and creativity. Start small, even one adjustment per lesson can make a meaningful difference.
- 3. Classroom Climate** – The classroom climate dictates whether learners feel safe enough to participate, ask questions, and learn or try new things. Cultivating a positive climate is especially vital to protect learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) or disabilities, who are highly vulnerable to stigma, negative stereotypes, and marginalisation from peers and teachers.



- Model respectful language and behaviour at all times. Address stigmatising comments or behaviours promptly and calmly, without shaming the student responsible.
- Use a variety of engagement strategies so that all learners can contribute, not just those who are confident speaking in front of the whole class. Options might include small group discussions, written reflections, peer conversations, or anonymous question cards.
- Build a sense of community within the class through peer-to-peer activities that encourage relationship-building, mutual support, and trust. When learners know and respect each other, they are more likely to include rather than exclude those who are different from them.
- Make it clear, through both words and actions, that all learners belong in the classroom and that their contributions are valued.

4. Out-of-Classroom Activities – Field visits, community placements, practical activities, and out-of-school learning experiences are valuable, but they can also create new barriers if accessibility is not considered.

- Before any out-of-class activity, assess whether the location, activities, and costs are accessible to all learners, including those with mobility challenges, health conditions, and financial limitations.
- Plan alternatives or adjustments for learners who may face barriers and involve them in finding solutions where possible.
- Remind learners that inclusive behaviour outside the classroom matters just as much as inside it.

TRY THIS!

Check Your Teaching and Learning Materials for Diversity and Equity

Learning materials should be easy for learners to understand and engage with, but they should also reflect fairness, diversity, and respect. Inclusive materials show people in varied, positive, and realistic ways. They avoid reinforcing stereotypes or prejudice, such as always portraying women in domestic roles, scientists as men, or Indigenous communities only as poor or dependent. Reviewing materials through a diversity and equity lens helps ensure that all learners can see themselves represented with dignity and possibility.

Use the questions below as a quick guide when reviewing learning materials:

1. Look at the illustrations

- Do images reinforce stereotypes (for example, men as leaders, women as caregivers)?
- Who is most visible, and who is missing?
- Who is active and who is passive?

- Are people of all genders shown in varied roles and activities?
- Are learners with disabilities, including learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) or other health conditions, shown participating actively rather than only observing or receiving help?

2. Examine the storyline

- How are problems introduced and resolved?
- Do all characters -- of different genders, abilities, or health conditions -- have agency, or are some groups shown as dependent, silent, or needing to be "rescued"?
- Are the successes of girls, women, persons with disabilities, or learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) or other health conditions based on effort, skills, and ideas rather than appearance, strength, or pity?
- Would the story still make sense if roles related to gender, disability, or social position were reversed?

3. Consider lifestyles and contexts

- Are different cultures and communities shown in realistic and respectful ways?
- Do materials avoid portraying people with disabilities, learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), or marginalised groups only as poor, sick, weak, or dependent?
- Are different ways of living presented as normal and valuable?

4. Notice relationships and power

- Who makes decisions and who holds authority in the story or example?
- Are people of all genders shown as leaders and decision-makers?
- Are persons with disabilities or health conditions shown influencing outcomes, not only being supported by others?
- Are certain groups consistently shown in subordinate roles?

5. Pay attention to role models and heroes

- Who is presented as capable, brave, or successful?
- Are women, persons with disabilities, or learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) or other health conditions ever shown as heroes or problem-solvers?
- Do learners see role models they can relate to?

6. Reflect on learners' self-image

- Could any messages limit what a learner believes they can achieve because of gender, disability, or health condition?
- Would learners with disabilities or learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) feel respected and included by this material?
- Do the materials communicate that all learners belong and have potential?

Source: Adapted from UNESCO, Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive Learning-Friendly Environments.

Practice and Application

A. Creating Meaningful Learning Opportunities

1. Review the five elements — Purpose, Prior Knowledge, Relevance, Practice, Show — using the “Try This!” examples as a guide.
2. Choose one upcoming lesson and identify one concrete action for each element.
3. Write these into your lesson plan and try them this week.
4. Reflection: Which element was easiest to plan for? Which took more thought, and why?

B. Reflecting on Learner-Centred Pedagogy

1. Choose one of the four elements of learner-centred pedagogy below, whichever feels most relevant to you.
 - Meaningful learning opportunities
 - Multiple learning pathways
 - Cooperative learning
 - Accessible learning spaces
2. Reflect on the questions below and write your responses in your learning journal or notes.
 - How does this element already show up in your school or classroom?
 - How could strengthening it help a learner affected by leprosy (Hansen’s disease), disability, or another stigmatised condition feel more included rather than singled out or excluded?

C. Making Learning in Groups More Effective (Cooperative Learning)

1. Reflect on a recent group activity in your classroom using the five “Try This!” tips — diversity in groups, defined roles, class rules, teacher presence, and group processing.
2. Identify one tip you are not yet using consistently, and plan how to apply it in your next group activity.
3. Reflection: What changed in how students worked together?



2.4.2 UDL and Reasonable Accommodation

The CRPD defines **Universal Design** as “the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. ‘Universal design’ shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.”²²

Universal Design comes from the field of architecture. The concept means designing spaces that are usable by all people, not only by the ‘average citizen’. An example of universal design is including ramps with handrails alongside stairs in buildings. This allows people with mobility challenges, like those using wheelchairs or walkers, the elderly, or persons with wheeled bags, to access the building easily. Universal design ensures equal access for all, regardless of their abilities. Note that universal design is not only for persons with disabilities.



FIGURE 8. Stairs with ramp and handrails (Source: <https://www.acumen-studeos.com/ramps-staircases-public-buildings-design/>)



Applied to education, **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** is a strategy for creating learning environments, lessons, activities, and teaching and learning materials that are accessible for all learners, with and without disabilities.

See also Annex 8: How does UDL differ from traditional and differentiated instruction?

Three Key Principles of UDL²³

UDL requires teachers to design lessons and activities with a range of choices for learners to meet varying needs, interests, and preferences. This includes designing the following in multiple ways, which are linked to the three (3) key principles of UDL:

- how the content is presented
- how students learn about a topic
- how students show what they have learned

1. **Multiple means of REPRESENTATION** - presenting information in different ways so learners can understand, connect with, and remember the lesson. This may include spoken explanations, written text, visuals, audio, hands-on materials, or other formats.

Multiple Means of REPRESENTATION	
WHAT	■ Flexible approaches to design and delivery ■ Presenting information and content in different ways
HOW	■ Choose teaching materials that reflect learners' different needs and preferences. ■ Present ideas in different ways, including visual and audio options. ■ Use clear language, symbols, graphics, tactile materials, or concept maps when helpful. ■ Support understanding by linking to prior knowledge and using examples, prompts, checklists, or organisers.
WHY	Planning lessons around students' needs reduces barriers and helps more learners understand and retain skills and information.

2. **Multiple means of ACTION AND EXPRESSION** - giving learners different ways to practise, respond, and show what they know. This may include speaking, writing, drawing, demonstrating, using tools, or creating outputs that match their strengths and preferences.



Multiple Means of ACTION AND EXPRESSION	
WHAT	■ Flexible approaches for students to manage and demonstrate their learning ■ Different ways for students to express what they know and have learned in a medium they are comfortable in
HOW	■ Share goals, steps, and timelines clearly. ■ Let learners express ideas through speech, writing, drawing, video, or other media. ■ Use hands-on tools and varied strategies for solving problems.
WHY	Different ways to show learning make assessment more accessible and help teachers see what learners understand and can do.

3. **Multiple means of ENGAGEMENT** - using different ways to spark interest, motivation, and participation. This helps learners stay connected to the lesson in ways that match their interests, needs, and level of independence.

Multiple Means of ENGAGEMENT	
WHAT	■ Flexible approaches to engage students to learn ■ Stimulating students' interest and motivation for learning
HOW	■ Know learners' interests, motivations, and preferred ways of learning. ■ Offer choices and give learners some say in learning tasks. ■ Use active tasks that allow learners to explore and try things out. ■ Build collaboration through group work with clear goals, roles, and responsibilities. ■ Give timely feedback that focuses on effort, progress, and improvement.
WHY	Learners are more likely to succeed when they are interested, motivated, and actively involved.

UDL reminds us that learners need different levels of support, choice, and independence. When teachers plan for this from the start, they reduce barriers, increase participation, and help every learner engage with confidence and dignity.



TRY THIS!

UDL Guide Questions for Teachers When Planning Lessons

1. Multiple means of representation - Flexible approaches to design and delivery

- How can I incorporate visual elements, such as images, charts, or diagrams, to enhance understanding and engagement?
- Are there any hands-on activities or experiments that can provide a tangible experience for students and reinforce the content?
- How can I use simple tools or resources, like whiteboards, flashcards, or presentation software, to present the lesson content and get students actively involved in learning?

2. Multiple means of action and expression - Flexible approaches for students to manage and demonstrate their learning.

- How can I provide hands-on activities or manipulatives that allow students to physically engage with the concepts and demonstrate their understanding?
- Are there opportunities for students to engage in discussions, debates, or presentations to communicate their ideas and insights about the topic?
- What writing activities, such as essays, stories, or journal entries, can I incorporate to encourage students to reflect on their learning and showcase their understanding?
- What other activities can I prepare to make sure I have provided all the options based on my students' interests, strengths, and preferences?

3. Multiple means of engagement - Flexible approaches to engage students to learn

- How can I provide different options for students to work independently and in groups to keep them engaged and motivated?
- What real-life examples or applications can I incorporate to make the lesson more relatable and interesting for students?
- How can I make learning fun and active by incorporating games, hands-on activities, or interactive technologies?
- Are there specific interests or hobbies of my students that I can tap into to increase their engagement with the lesson?



Reasonable Accommodation

Reasonable accommodation means “necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.”²⁴

Reasonable accommodation is making small, targeted changes to the learning environment or teaching approach so a student can overcome a specific barrier without changing the curriculum, standards, or learning goals. While UDL anticipates barriers in advance and reduces the need for individual adjustments, no amount of planning can anticipate every learner’s needs. Reasonable accommodation fills that gap by addressing difficulties as they arise, for any learner, with or without disability. This is particularly important for learners affected by leprosy (Hansen’s disease) or those with chronic diseases as in some cases they may develop impairments and would require sustained support in class.

Key points to remember:

1. Accommodation changes how a student learns or participates, not what they are expected to learn.
2. It is personalised. What works for one student may not work for another, even with a similar condition or difficulty.
3. It should be developed with the student and not decided for them. For some students with disabilities, this may also involve parents, caregivers, or specialists.
4. It is a right, not a favour. Schools and teachers have a duty to provide reasonable accommodation when a student needs it.

Example:

Daniel, a student with leprosy (Hansen’s disease)-related nerve damage, has reduced sensation and grip strength in his hands, making it difficult for him to write for long periods. After discussing this with Daniel, his teacher agrees to let him complete written tasks using a laptop, gives him extra time during timed tests, and provides print outs of lecture notes. Daniel still learns the same content and is assessed against the same learning goals as his classmates. The accommodation simply removes the barrier that was getting in his way.

A low-tech alternative is using writing tool modifications such as using pencil grips or wide-diameter tools such as jumbo pencils or pens.

Supporting attendance during treatment and recovery

For some learners, the biggest barrier isn’t inside the classroom, it’s simply getting to school consistently. For example, leprosy (Hansen’s disease) treatment can take many months, and learners may need time off for clinic visits, to manage a leprosy (Hansen’s disease) reaction, or to recover from a leprosy (Hansen’s disease)-related impairment. Support shouldn’t stop once a learner is cured. Physical, social, and emotional needs can continue well beyond that point. Schools can support these



learners and their families through flexible deadlines and make-up work rather than penalising absence outright, individual learning support such as a designated teacher or peer buddy to help a learner catch up, and a simple follow-up check-in when a learner returns after an extended absence, not to single them out, but to make sure they aren't left to catch up alone. A learner returning after treatment for a leprosy (Hansen's disease) reaction, for instance, may need a few weeks of adjusted workload and a quiet word from a teacher rather than being handed a stack of missed assignments on day one.

It's worth noting that none of this is leprosy (Hansen's disease)-specific in practice. The same flexibility helps any learner who falls behind through no fault of their own — a student out with a bad cold, one who's missed school helping care for a sick family member, one needed on the family farm during harvest, or any other short-term difficulty that keeps a learner away. Building flexible deadlines, catch-up support, and a simple return check-in into normal classroom practice means a teacher isn't scrambling to invent a special process when a learner affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) needs it, it's already how the classroom works for everyone.

Note on modification

An accommodation removes or reduces a barrier without changing what a student is expected to learn. The content standard and performance expectations stay the same. A modification, by contrast, changes the content standard or performance expectation itself. The curriculum is adjusted. Because modifications lower or alter what is being taught, they carry a risk: students may miss out on important content they are otherwise capable of learning. For this reason, accommodation should always be the first option considered, with modification used only when truly necessary.



TRY THIS!

Common Accommodations to Try in the Classroom

Presentation accommodations (changes the way information is presented)

- Listen to audio recordings instead of reading text
- Learn content from audiobooks, movies, videos, and digital media instead of reading print versions
- Work with fewer items per page or line
- Work with text in a larger print size
- Have a “designated reader” or someone who reads test questions aloud to students
- Hear instructions spoken aloud
- Record a lesson, instead of taking notes
- Get class notes from another student
- See an outline of a lesson
- Use visual presentations of verbal material, such as word webs
- Get a written list of instructions

Response accommodations (changes the way assignments or tests are completed)

- Give responses in a form (spoken or written) that’s easier for them
- Dictate answers to a scribe who writes or types
- Capture responses on an audio recorder
- Use a spelling dictionary or digital spellchecker
- Use a word processor to type notes or give answers in class
- Use a calculator or table of “math facts”

Timing accommodations

- Take more time to complete a task or a

test

- Have extra time to process spoken information and directions
- Take frequent breaks, such as after completing a worksheet

Setting accommodations

- Work or take a test in a different setting, such as a quiet room with few distractions
- Sit where they learn best (for example, near the teacher)
- Use special lighting or acoustics
- Take a test in a small group setting
- Use sensory tools such as an exercise band that can be looped around a chair’s legs (so fidgety kids can kick it and quietly get their energy out)

Scheduling accommodations

- Take more time to complete a project
- Take a test in several timed sessions or over several days
- Take sections of a test in a different order
- Take a test at a specific time of day

Organisation skills accommodations

- Use an alarm to help with time management
- Mark texts with a highlighter
- Use a planner or organiser to help coordinate assignments
- Receive study skills instruction

See also Annex 9: Handwriting Accommodations Master List

Source: Adapted from Amanda Morin, “Common Classroom Accommodations and Modifications,” Understood, <https://www.understood.org/en/articles/common-classroom-accommodations-and-modifications>.

Practice and Application

A. Applying UDL in the Classroom

1. Choose a subject and topic (e.g., English – sequence of events) that you will teach in the following week.
2. Plan for multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement for your selected subject and topic. You can use the template below for planning.
3. Refer to the UDL Guide Questions for Teachers When Planning Lessons in this unit to help you.
4. Apply these ideas in your class.
5. Reflect on your experience:
 - How did learners experience the lesson overall? What did you notice about their engagement, confidence, or enjoyment?
 - Which parts of your plan worked well, and which did not go as expected?
 - What helped you apply UDL in your lesson? For example, certain materials, preparation time, or support from colleagues?
 - What got in the way, and what would make it easier for you to apply UDL more consistently?
 - Based on this experience, what would you adjust next time to reduce barriers and better support all learners?

Grade level: _____

Subject: _____

Topic: _____

I will present my content using: <i>(Multiple means of representation)</i>	I will use the following activities to engage my students: <i>(Multiple means of engagement)</i>	My students can express what they learned through: <i>(Multiple means of action and expression)</i>
1. e.g., PowerPoint Presentation 2. 3.	1. Eg., Grouping activities 2. 3.	1. eg., Choice or Menu board for the different activities they may want to do 2. 3.

B. Common Accommodations to Try in the Classroom

1. Review the list of accommodations (presentation, response, setting, timing, scheduling, organisation).
2. Identify one learner in your class who may benefit from a specific accommodation, and try it this week.
3. Reflection: Did the accommodation help? What would you adjust next time?



2.4.3 Inclusive Assessment

Inclusive assessment helps teachers understand learners' progress, needs, and strengths so they can make better teaching decisions. In inclusive classrooms, assessment is used to improve learning, not only to grade learners. It helps teachers adjust lessons, recognise individual differences, and expand access to learning opportunities.²⁵

Importance of Assessment

Assessment gives teachers, learners, and families useful information about learning progress and support needs. It can be used to:

1. **Support teacher reflection:** Are learners meeting the intended outcomes? What teaching approaches are working, and for whom?
2. **Guide learner reflection:** What do I understand? What do I still need to practise or explore?
3. **Strengthen communication with families:** What can families and teachers share to support learning at school and at home?
4. **Monitor progress:** Where is the learner now, and what support or adjustments are needed next?

Key elements of Inclusive Assessment

- Assessment is aligned with learning goals and used to inform teaching.
- Learners take part in assessing and reflecting on their own learning.
- Teachers use both formative and summative assessment.
- Assessment methods are flexible, accessible, and responsive to learner differences.
- Schools support teachers in using inclusive assessment practices.

Types of Assessment

1. **Summative assessment, or assessment OF learning**, is usually conducted at the end of a project, unit, course, semester, programme, or school year. It measures how well learners have achieved the expected content and competencies. It provides evidence of learning for teachers, learners, families, school leaders, and other stakeholders.²⁶

Assessment OF learning can be used to:

- plan future learning goals and pathways
- provide evidence of achievement to learners, families, educators, and external groups
- support clear, transparent reporting
- guide decisions about evidence, assessment methods, and feedback



SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT	
Assessment OF Learning	
Remember	Looks back: What has been learned?
Purpose	Measure achievement, report progress, and support decisions.
Focus	Grades, standards, certification, progression, and accountability.
When	At the end of a lesson sequence, unit, term, course, or programme.
Teacher role	Judge evidence against goals and standards; assign grades or levels.
Examples	Final test, project, paper, performance, portfolio, or recital.

2. **Formative assessment, or assessment **FOR** and **AS** learning**, is used during teaching to check learners' understanding, needs, and progress. It helps teachers adjust instruction and helps learners improve while learning is still taking place.²⁷

Assessment **FOR learning** uses evidence of learners' knowledge, skills, and understanding to guide teaching. It clarifies what learners are doing well, where they need support, and what next steps will improve learning.²⁸

Assessment **for learning** should:

- help learners improve, not only achieve marks;
- use formal and informal evidence to plan next steps;
- make learning goals clear;
- provide feedback that motivates improvement;
- reflect the belief that all learners can progress;
- include self- and peer assessment in regular routines;
- engage teachers, learners, and families in reflecting on evidence; and
- be accessible and inclusive for all learners.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT	
Assessment FOR Learning	
Remember	Looks forward: What support is needed next?
Purpose	Improve learning while teaching is still happening.
Focus	Feedback, next steps, motivation, and learning support.
When	During lessons, activities, and practice tasks.
Teacher role	Check understanding, identify needs, adjust teaching, and give useful feedback.
Examples	Observation, open questions, quick checks, exit tickets, draft feedback, portfolios.

3. **Assessment **AS** learning** happens when learners monitor and assess their own learning. They ask questions, reflect on what they know and can do, and use feedback to set goals and improve.²⁹



Assessment **as** learning should:

- help learners take responsibility for their learning
- encourage learners to ask questions about their progress
- involve learners and teachers in setting learning goals
- help learners use feedback and self-assessment to identify next steps
- build regular habits of reflection, peer feedback, and self-assessment

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT	
Assessment AS Learning	
Remember	Looks inward: How am I learning?
Purpose	Help learners monitor, reflect on, and take responsibility for learning.
Focus	Self-assessment, peer feedback, reflection, goal setting, and learning habits.
When	During and after learning activities.
Teacher role	Model reflection, teach self-assessment, and guide learners to set next steps.
Examples	Learning journals, reflection questions, peer review, self-checklists, exit slips.

TRY THIS!

Make formative assessment part of everyday teaching

Observe: Notice who participates, who hesitates, and who needs support.

Ask: Use open questions to find out what learners understand and where they are unsure.

Listen: Give learners time to explain their thinking in their own words.

Feedback: Offer specific, constructive guidance while learners can still improve.

Peer check: Let learners review each other's work using simple criteria.

Self-check: Use exit cards, learning journals, or thumbs up/down to help learners reflect.

Choice: Allow learners to show understanding through speaking, drawing, demonstrating, or writing.

Adjust: Use what you learn to adapt teaching, grouping, materials, or support.

Remember: Formative assessment is not only about finding mistakes. It helps teachers and learners decide what to do next.

Practice and Application

A. Use a Quick Formative Assessment Check

Choose one lesson this week and use a simple check to find out what learners understand and what support they need next.

1. **Set a clear goal:** Tell learners what they should understand or be able to do by the end of the lesson.
2. **Check during learning:** Use one quick method, such as thumbs up/down, an exit card, one open question, or a two-minute peer explanation.
3. **Look for patterns:** Notice who is confident, who is unsure, and which ideas need more practice.
4. **Adjust teaching:** Re-teach, give examples, form support groups, or offer another way for learners to practise.
5. **Let learners reflect:** Ask learners to complete one sentence: "I understand...", "I need help with...", or "My next step is..."

Reflection: What did you learn about your learners? What will you change in your next lesson?

B. Making Formative Assessment Part of Everyday Teaching

1. **Using the eight steps in the "Try This!" box** (Observe, Ask, Listen, Feedback, Peer check, Self-check, Choice, Adjust), choose two steps you don't currently use regularly.
2. **Apply** them in your next lesson.

Reflection: What did you learn about your learners that you didn't know before?



2.4.4 General Classroom Strategies

Use the strategies in this section as a quick classroom toolkit. They are low-cost, practical adjustments that can support many learners, including learners with disabilities, health conditions, or experiences of stigma. Start with small changes, observe what helps, and adjust based on your learners' needs.

Quick Inclusive Teaching Checklist

- **Plan clearly:** Share lesson goals, steps, and expected outputs in simple language.
- **Use more than one format:** Combine talk, visuals, examples, objects, movement, or hands-on practice.
- **Check understanding often:** Ask learners to explain, show, point, draw, or demonstrate what they understood.
- **Build in choice:** Let learners show learning through speaking, writing, drawing, demonstrating, or peer explanation.
- **Support participation:** Use pairs, mixed groups, buddy systems, and roles so no learner is isolated.
- **Allow flexibility:** Give extra time, shorter steps, repeated instructions, or alternative response formats when needed.
- **Keep expectations high:** Adjust access and support, but continue to expect effort, learning, and progress from every learner.

TRY THIS!

Three-Minute Inclusion Checklist

Before the lesson

- Identify one possible barrier, such as unclear instructions, too much text, limited movement space, or a task that depends only on writing.
- Prepare at least two ways to present key information, such as a short explanation plus a visual, object, demonstration, or example from daily life.
- Break the main task into small steps and decide which instructions should be written, spoken, modelled, or repeated.
- Plan how learners can participate in different ways, such as speaking, pointing, drawing, showing, acting out, or working with a peer.



During the lesson

- Check whether all learners can see, hear, move, and access the materials; adjust seating, lighting, noise, or grouping if needed.
- Pause after instructions and ask learners to show understanding by repeating the steps, giving an example, or demonstrating the first action.
- Notice who is not participating and offer a low-pressure way to join, such as pair discussion, a non-verbal response, or a simpler first step.
- Give feedback that names the effort or strategy used, not only whether the answer is right or wrong.

After the lesson

- Ask learners one quick reflection question, such as "What helped you learn today?" or "What made the task difficult?"
- Note which adjustment helped more than one learner and keep it as a regular classroom routine.
- Identify one learner who may need follow-up support, encouragement, peer support, or a different way to show learning next time.

Note: One strategy can support many learners. For example, written instructions may help learners with hearing difficulties, learners who need more processing time, and learners who missed part of the explanation

Strategies by Domain of Difficulty

The table below shows some simple supports to address common classroom barriers. Remember, these are starting points. Always observe the learner and ask what helps.

Area of difficulty	Low-cost strategies to try
Speech and communication	Use gestures, pictures, objects, or signs; give instructions in small chunks; allow extra response time; check understanding by asking learners to show or repeat the task.
Seeing	Seat learners where they can see clearly; use large, high-contrast text; read aloud what is written; reduce visual clutter; allow audio, oral, or tactile ways to access and show learning.
Hearing	Face learners when speaking; reduce background noise; use written instructions and visuals; ensure videos have captions; check that learners can see the board and the speaker.

Area of difficulty	Low-cost strategies to try
Mobility or coordination	Keep pathways clear; allow extra time for transitions; provide accessible seating and materials; offer alternatives to handwriting such as typing, oral responses, peer note-taking, or recording.
Learning and attention	Use short, clear instructions; break tasks into steps; connect lessons to real-life examples; repeat key points; use visuals and hands-on materials; create a buddy system.
Routine, friendship, or behaviour	Use predictable routines, visual schedules, and transition cues; give limited choices; teach social rules explicitly; protect learners from teasing and bullying; link activities to learners' interests.

Establishing Rules and Routines³⁰

Inclusive classrooms work best when learners know what to expect. Clear rules and routines help learners feel safe, reduce confusion, and free more time for meaningful learning. Keep rules few, positive, easy to understand, and consistently applied.

- 1. Co-create rules with learners:** Ask what helps everyone feel safe, respected, and ready to learn.
- 2. State rules positively:** Use "Use kind words" instead of "No teasing."
- 3. Keep routines visible:** Display the daily schedule, lesson steps, and transition cues.
- 4. Teach routines explicitly:** Model, practise, and revisit routines regularly.
- 5. Review and adjust:** If a rule or routine is not working, discuss it with learners and improve it together.

Classroom Routines to Plan with Learners: 4Ms

- 1. Movement:** Agree how learners enter, exit, move around, line up, shift seats, and transition between activities.
Example: "When we move into groups, walk quietly, take your materials, and sit where everyone can join."
- 2. Management tasks:** Create simple routines for attendance, classroom jobs, forms, announcements, and keeping the room organised.
Example: Assign rotating roles such as attendance helper, board cleaner, materials monitor, or class messenger.
- 3. Materials:** Plan how materials are prepared, distributed, used, collected, and stored.
Example: Place materials in labelled baskets, give one learner per group the role of materials manager, and use a checklist before activities begin.
- 4. Meaningful group work:** Give each learner a clear role so everyone can contribute.
Example: Facilitator, timekeeper, recorder, reporter, encourager, checker, or materials manager --- rotate roles, so learners practise different responsibilities.

Practice and Application

A. Build Classroom Rules and Routines

1. Watch: Building Strong Foundations With Classroom Routines: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5OdxVchUiXQ>
2. After watching, identify one classroom rule or routine you want to improve.
3. Rewrite it in positive, learner-friendly language.
4. Plan how you will model and practise it with learners.
5. Try it for one week, then ask learners what is working and what needs adjustment.

B. Three-Minute Inclusion Check

1. Apply the Three-Minute Inclusion Check — before, during, and after one lesson this week.
2. Use the prompts as a quick checklist rather than a long planning exercise.
1. Reflection: What is one adjustment that helped more than one learner at once?

2.4.5 Socio-Emotional Learning for Inclusion and Equity³¹

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is a process that helps learners and adults build the skills and attitudes they need to understand emotions, show empathy, form respectful relationships, make caring decisions, and contribute to an inclusive classroom.³²

SEL is not a separate lesson added on top of academic learning. It is part of everyday school life: how people speak to one another, how conflicts are handled, how decisions are made, and how every learner is supported to feel safe, respected, and able to participate.

Why does SEL matter for inclusive education?³³

Learners need more than access to knowledge, they also need to feel safe, respected, and connected to others. When teachers intentionally build empathy, emotional awareness, and respectful relationships, learners are more likely to participate, support one another, and challenge stigma or exclusion when it happens. Below are some reasons why SEL is a critical part of creating inclusive learning environments.

1. **Improved mental wellbeing and reduced anxiety and depression** - Learners who feel emotionally supported are better able to cope with stress and challenges.
2. **Reduced school dropout** - When learners feel safe and connected at school, they are more likely to stay engaged and continue their education.
3. **Improved social behaviour and reduced bullying and harassment** - SEL builds empathy and conflict-resolution skills, directly reducing the kind of peer-driven exclusion that affects learners with leprosy (Hansen's disease) or disability.
4. **Stronger connectedness to learning and school** - learners who feel they belong are more motivated and participate more fully in class.
5. **Better interpersonal relationships** - SEL helps learners build trust and respect across differences, rather than distancing themselves from peers who are seen as different.
6. **Improved academic performance** - emotional wellbeing, self-regulation, persistence, and determination, and academic learning are linked; learners who feel secure are better able to focus and learn.
7. **Reduced inequality and social disadvantage**, including reduced discrimination and social exclusion - SEL does not just support individual learners; it can shift the culture of an entire classroom or school away from stigma and exclusion.

SEL is not only about individual wellbeing, it is a tool for building school cultures where discrimination and exclusion are actively reduced.

SEL competencies³⁴

Below are the five interconnected competencies of SEL and some examples of skills. These can be built and nurtured across developmental stages and in school from early childhood through tertiary.



FIGURE 9. SEL framework

1. **Self-Awareness** - Understanding one's own emotions, thoughts, and values, and how they shape one's behaviour. Includes knowing one's strengths and limits with confidence and a clear sense of purpose.

***Key skills:** Naming emotions, recognising own biases, linking feelings to actions, building a growth mindset, knowing identity and what matters to oneself.*

Stage	Classroom example
Early childhood	Naming a feeling ("I feel happy/sad/angry") using pictures or a feelings chart
Primary	Reflecting in a journal on what they did well and what they found hard in a task
Secondary	Discussing how their cultural background or personal experiences shape their opinions on a topic
Tertiary	Identifying personal biases when analysing a case study or evaluating an argument

- 2. Self-Management** – Managing one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviour to reach one's goals. Includes handling stress, staying motivated, and delaying gratification.

Key skills: *Calming oneself down, setting goals, staying organised, showing self-discipline, taking initiative.*

Stage	Classroom example
Early childhood	Taking deep breaths or using a "calm-down corner" when upset
Primary	Setting a simple personal goal for the week and tracking progress
Secondary	Managing time and stress while preparing for exams or balancing schoolwork with other tasks
Tertiary	Independently planning and managing long-term project deadlines

- 3. Responsible Decision-Making** - Making thoughtful, ethical choices about your behaviour and interactions. Includes weighing consequences and considering the wellbeing of yourself and others.

Key skills: *Staying curious and open-minded, solving problems, thinking critically, considering how choices affect others.*

Stage	Classroom example
Early childhood	Choosing to share a toy and talking about why sharing is kind
Primary	Discussing as a class what to do if someone is being left out of a game
Secondary	Debating the consequences of a real or hypothetical ethical dilemma, such as how to respond to bullying
Tertiary	Evaluating the social impact of a policy or professional decision in a case study

- 4. Relationship Skills** - Building and maintaining healthy relationships, and working well with different people. Includes communicating clearly, cooperating, resolving conflict, and offering or asking for help.

Key skills: *Active listening, teamwork, resolving disagreements, standing up for others, leading respectfully.*

Stage	Classroom example
Early childhood	Taking turns and using kind words during group play
Primary	Working in pairs or small groups on a shared classroom task
Secondary	Leading a small group project and resolving disagreements between members



Stage	Classroom example
Tertiary	Collaborating in diverse teams on a group assignment or fieldwork placement

5. **Social Awareness** - Understanding and empathising with others, including people from different backgrounds. Includes recognising social norms and recognising when those norms are unfair.

Key skills: Seeing others' perspectives, showing empathy and compassion, recognising unjust norms, valuing diversity.

Stage	Classroom example
Early childhood	Noticing when a classmate is sad and offering comfort
Primary	Listening to a classmate's story about their culture, family, or experience
Secondary	Discussing why a classmate affected by a health condition like leprosy (Hansen's disease) might face unfair treatment, and what could be done differently
Tertiary	Examining how institutional or social systems contribute to stigma and discrimination, and proposing ways to address them

Keep SEL age-appropriate and inclusive. Younger learners may focus on naming feelings and taking turns. As learners get older, SEL needs to grow with them. Older learners can discuss fairness, identity, conflict, and ethical choices. Adapt activities so learners with disabilities, health conditions, or different learning needs can participate meaningfully.

Approaches to Apply SEL in the Classroom

SEL can be built into everyday teaching. Learner-centred approaches help learners practise empathy, communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and respect while they learn academic content.³⁵

1. **Project-based learning** - Learners work together to investigate a real issue and propose a solution, such as improving cleanliness, safety, or inclusion in school.
2. **Cooperative learning** - Learners take clear roles in pairs or groups so they practise listening, helping, explaining, and making decisions together.
3. **Restorative practices** - Teachers use strategies that help positively resolve conflict. For example, teachers may use 'restorative circles' or guided conversations to repair harm, rebuild trust, and help learners understand how their actions affect others.
4. **Service learning** - Learners connect classroom learning with community action, such as awareness activities, peer support, or small projects that respond to local needs.

See Annex 10: Welcome, Engage, and Close Approach for additional learning on how to build SEL into everyday teaching.



TRY THIS!

Start the Day with an Emotion Check-In

Help learners build emotional awareness by starting the day or lesson with a simple emotion check-in. Invite learners to identify how they are feeling using colours, emotion words, pictures, symbols, or an emotions chart such as a Mood Meter or Feelings Wheel. This helps learners recognise, name, and express their emotions, while giving teachers insight into how learners may be feeling and what support they may need.

For younger children, learners can point to colours, pictures, or emoji faces that best match their feelings.

For older learners, encourage them to use a wider range of emotion words and, if they are comfortable, briefly reflect on what may be influencing their feelings.

Adaptation for older learners: Instead of using colours or pictures alone, ask learners to select an emotion word and complete a short prompt such as:

- Today I am feeling _____ because _____.
- One thing that would help me learn well today is _____.

Regular emotion check-ins help create a classroom culture where feelings are recognised, respected, and discussed in healthy ways.

Integrating SEL in Lesson Plans

SEL is strongest when it is practised throughout the day, not treated as a separate lesson.

Teachers can plan for SEL by linking social and emotional skills to academic activities, so learners practise empathy, self-management, decision-making, and respectful relationships while learning content. Use these steps to integrate SEL into lesson planning:

Step 1: Identify the SEL skill learners need - Reflect on what social or emotional skill will help learners succeed in this lesson, such as listening, taking turns, expressing feelings, managing emotions, decision-making, or perspective-taking.

Example: In a lesson on creating classroom rules, learners need to practise respectful listening and perspective-taking so they can consider what helps everyone feel safe, respected, and included.

Step 2: Link SEL with lesson objectives - Write objectives that combine academic learning with the SEL skill learners will practise.

Example: The lesson objective becomes: "Learners will suggest classroom rules and explain how these rules help everyone feel safe, respected, and included."



Step 3: Design engaging practice - Use activities such as role play, art, discussion, reflection, choice, and games so learners can practise SEL skills in meaningful ways. Keep activities flexible and inclusive. Offer choices, prepare alternatives, and invite learners to share thoughts or feelings when they are comfortable.

Example: Learners first think quietly about one rule, share it with a partner, listen to a different idea, and then work in groups to agree on two rules. Each group explains how their rules support everyone, including classmates who may be shy, new, has a disability, or affected by stigma.

TRY THIS!

Tips for Education Unions: Supporting SEL in Schools

SEL works best when schools lead it together. It should not be left to individual teachers alone. Shared leadership should involve school leaders, teachers, learners, families, and education unions.

- 1. Advocate for SEL in teacher training and professional development** - SEL should be part of pre-service teacher education and ongoing professional development. Unions can advocate for this in national teacher education standards and training plans. SEL should be treated as core teacher preparation, not an optional add-on.
- 2. Push for conditions that support teacher wellbeing** - Teacher wellbeing is essential for effective SEL. Teachers need safe workplaces, manageable workloads, adequate support staff, and access to mental health resources. Unions can advocate for these conditions, so teachers are supported to model SEL in practice.
- 3. Join the collective leadership table** - SEL needs shared leadership. Students, families, teachers, school leaders, and other partners all have roles to play. Union representatives can request a seat in school-level SEL planning. This helps ensure that teacher voice and working conditions are included in decisions.
- 4. Champion equity within SEL implementation** - SEL should be grounded in equity and local realities. Unions can advocate for programmes that address the real barriers learners face, including stigma linked to disability health conditions such as leprosy (Hansen's disease). SEL should not be standardised in ways that ignore context.
- 5. Support networks and peer learning among educators** - Professional networks help teachers share SEL practices and support one another. Unions can convene peer-learning sessions, share resources across schools, and highlight successful approaches that others can adapt.
- 6. Use union platforms to raise the visibility of SEL and inclusion** - Unions can keep SEL and inclusion visible through newsletters, meetings, posters, campaigns, and community events. These platforms can reinforce anti-bullying messages, stigma reduction, and daily conversations about inclusion.

Source: UNESCO, Mainstreaming Social and Emotional Learning in Education Systems: Policy Guide (UNESCO, 2024).

Practice and Application

A. Strengthening SEL in Your School

For teachers and education unions, think about your school as a whole and not just your own classroom.

1. **Identify one practice already happening in your school that reflects SEL principles** like empathy, fairness, respectful relationships, or inclusion. It could be something small, like how conflicts are handled or how new students are welcomed.
2. **Identify one gap** such as an event, policy, or routine where SEL principles are missing or could be strengthened. This might be how a struggling student is spoken about in the staff room, or whether teacher wellbeing is genuinely supported.
3. **Reflect and discuss:**
 - *For teachers:* What is one small change you could make in your own classroom this week to strengthen emotional safety or inclusion?
 - *For union representatives:* What is one conversation you could start with school leadership, fellow union members, or at a meeting to advocate for stronger SEL support, training, or working conditions?
4. **Share your reflection with a colleague.** Even one shared idea can begin to build a collective effort where SEL becomes something everyone in the school carries forward together.

B. Start the Day with an Emotion Check-In

1. Try a simple emotion check-in with your class this week — using colours, words, or an emotions chart.
2. Note any patterns you observe over a few days.
3. Reflection: Did anything come up that you wouldn't have noticed otherwise?

Unit Summary

- * **Learner-centred pedagogy recognises that learners learn in different ways.**
- * **Teachers support inclusion by offering meaningful learning opportunities, multiple learning pathways, cooperative learning, and accessible learning spaces.**
 - Meaningful learning connects lessons to purpose, prior knowledge, daily life, practice, and varied ways to show understanding.
 - Multiple learning pathways help learners access content through listening, seeing, doing, discussing, reading, and creating.
 - Cooperative learning works best when groups have clear roles, shared responsibility, positive interdependence, social skills, and time to reflect.
 - Accessible learning spaces address physical layout, materials, classroom climate, and out-of-class activities so all learners can participate.
- * **Universal Design for Learning or UDL plans for learner diversity from the start.**
 - UDL offers multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement.
 - UDL reduces stigma by giving choices and support to all learners, not only selected individuals such as learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) or learners with disability.
 - Reasonable accommodation provides targeted support to address a specific barrier as they arise, while keeping learning goals and standards the same.
- * **Any learner may need reasonable accommodation at any point, not just learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) or those with disability.**
 - It is personalised such that an accommodation for one student may not work for another, even with a similar condition or difficulty.
 - Reasonable accommodation is a right. Schools and teachers have a duty to provide reasonable accommodation when a student needs it.
- * **Inclusive assessment helps teachers understand learner progress, strengths, and needs. It is used to improve learning, not only to grade performance.**
 - Summative assessment looks back at what learners have achieved.
 - Assessment for learning informs teaching while learning is still happening.
 - Assessment as learning helps learners and teachers reflect, monitor progress, and set next steps.
 - Flexible assessment methods allow learners to show understanding the best way they can through varied means such as speaking, writing, drawing, demonstrating, or other accessible formats.

- * **Inclusive teaching can begin with small, practical adjustments in the classroom. Teachers can reduce barriers by planning clearly, using varied formats, checking understanding, offering choice, supporting participation, and keeping expectations high.**
 - Quick inclusion checks before, during, and after lessons help teachers notice barriers and adjust support.
 - There are simple, low-cost strategies to help address difficulties in several domains such as communication, seeing, hearing, mobility, attention, learning, routines, friendship, or behaviour.
 - Clear rules and routines help learners feel safe, reduce confusion, and support meaningful participation.
- * **SEL builds the emotional, social, and relational skills learners need to participate, belong, and challenge stigma or exclusion.**
 - SEL supports wellbeing, school connection, respectful relationships, reduced bullying, and stronger participation.
 - The five SEL competencies are self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness.
 - SEL can be integrated through project-based learning, cooperative learning, restorative practices, service learning, and daily routines.
 - Education unions can support SEL by advocating for teacher training, wellbeing, shared leadership, equity, peer learning, and visible inclusion campaigns.

Additional Resources

1. **Video: 'Cooperative Learning Roles'.** The video introduces common roles in a small group to encourage participation of all members: <https://youtu.be/zR6rTKPkjgQ>
2. **Video: 'What is Group Work?'.** The video shows how clear expectations and well-defined roles engage students in learning: <https://youtu.be/TgcNHL4vpp4>
3. **Video: 'Leveraging Prior Learning'.** <https://youtu.be/rD0L6UiEXrc?si=kvUWTXFsRc4Vrr4a>
4. **Meaningful Learning Opportunities:** Wenk, Laura. "The importance of engaging prior knowledge": <https://sites.hampshire.edu/ctl/2017/09/14/the-importance-of-engaging-prior-knowledge/>
5. **Meaningful Learning Opportunities:** Yale Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning, "The beginning and end of class": <https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/Beginning-End-Class>
6. **Child-friendly and Accessible Learning Environments:** UNICEF Webinar 10: Access to School and the Learning Environment I - Physical, Information and Communication : <https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/reports/access-school-and-learning-environment-i-physical-information-and-communication>

7. **Universal Design for Learning in Action: 100 Ways to Teach All Learners**
8. Rapp, Whitney H. (2014). **Universal Design for Learning in Action: 100 Ways to Teach All Learners**. Baltimore, Maryland: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., Inc.
9. **UDL Now: A Teachers Guide to Applying Universal Design for Learning in Today:** <https://publishing.cast.org/https://publishing.cast.org/catalog/books-products/udl-now-third-edition-novak>
10. **UDL Now Book Club Guide** (contains links to further resources): https://www.novakeducation.com/hubfs/Books/UDLNow_Book_Club_Guide-1.pdf
11. **What Really Works with Universal Design for Learning:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/2018053220>
12. **Universal Design for Learning and its Role in Ensuring Access to Inclusive Education for All:** https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/default/files/universal_design_for_learning_final_8.09.2021.pdf
13. **Video: UDL at a Glance**, by cast.org, a nonprofit education research and development organization focused on the application of UDL in creative inclusive learning environments: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDvKnY0g6e4>
14. **Video: What is UDL? Universal Design for Learning Explained:** <https://youtu.be/eYN-qrKIiYI?si=MrJjNsWRBXsmQMIm>
15. **Video: UDL - Principles and Practice**, by National Center on Universal Design for Learning: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=pGLTjw0GSxk>
16. **Video: UDL in Action** - 5th Grade Writing , Cecilia Solis, a 5th-grade teacher in Walla Walla, takes on a tour of how she has applied UDL principles in her classroom during writing and the impact it has had on her and her students: <https://youtu.be/4CJVfkh0TyE?si=ztO1ZKzTgEGISgNN>
17. **Further information on the SEL framework for applying SEL in the school community:** <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/#social-emotional-learning>
18. **Videos: Link to various videos on SEL competencies for teachers:** <https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/social-emotional-learning/t/core-competencies-SEL/>
19. **Example activities of SEL 3 signature practices – Welcome, Engage, and Close:** <https://signaturepractices.casel.org/>
20. **“SEL Teaching Practices That Enhance Academic Learning and Engagement”**, the guide lists examples of ways teachers can create opportunities for learners to practice and reflect on social and emotional skills: <https://casel.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/2024/10/SEL-Teaching-Practices-10.2024.pdf>



Unit 2.5. Collaborative Roles in Promoting Inclusion and Addressing Stigma

Unit Overview

Unit 5 focuses on collaboration as a shared responsibility for sustaining inclusion and addressing stigma. It explains how a whole school approach brings together school leaders, teachers, education support personnel, learners, families, caregivers, communities, health and social services, and education unions. The unit highlights how each group can help shape inclusive attitudes, strengthen school policies and routines, remove barriers, support learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), disability, health conditions, or stigma, and build school cultures where all learners feel safe, respected, and able to participate.

Unit Learning Objectives

1. Explain the purpose and key elements of a whole school approach to inclusion and stigma reduction.
2. Describe how learners can participate meaningfully in creating safe, inclusive, and respectful school environments.
3. Identify ways to collaborate with families and caregivers to support learners and reduce stigma at home and in school.
4. Identify opportunities for collaboration with the wider community, including health, social, and local support systems.
5. Explain how education unions can advocate for inclusive policies, teacher support, safe working conditions, and stigma-free school cultures.

Unit Outline

2.5.1 The whole school approach

2.5.2 Student participation

2.5.3 Family and carers

2.5.4 Collaboration with the wider community

2.5.5 Education unions



2.5.1 The Whole School Approach

Inclusive education does not happen in isolation. It involves families, communities, school leaders, and education unions working together. Each group has a role in shaping attitudes, removing barriers, and supporting all learners. This is especially important for learners affected by stigma, disability, or health conditions like leprosy (Hansen's disease). When everyone works together, learners feel supported both in school and at home. It also helps reduce fear, misunderstanding, and discrimination in the wider community. Inclusion is not a one-time activity. It is a shared responsibility that requires ongoing effort, cooperation, and commitment.

A whole school approach means that everyone in the school community works together to make the school safe, welcoming, and inclusive for all learners. It “implies collective and collaborative action in and by a school community to improve student learning, behaviour and well-being, and the conditions that support these”.³⁶ The school community³⁷ comprises teachers, school leaders, education support personnel, learners, families and caregivers, and the wider community.

In a whole school approach:³⁸

- Inclusion is part of everyday school life
- All learners are treated with respect and fairness
- Stigma and discrimination are actively challenged
- Policies, teaching, and school routines all support inclusion

Each school is different, so this approach should be adapted to the local context. However, the goal is always the same: to make sure every learner feels safe, respected, and able to participate.

Key Elements of a Whole School Approach to Ending Stigma

The following elements outline a comprehensive whole school approach. These can be adapted and expanded as minimum standards for establishing inclusive, stigma-free environments within your school or union.³⁹

1. Collaborative leadership and community engagement

- School principals, teachers, education support personnel, student councils, and parents work collaboratively to co-create and lead strategies that build safe, inclusive learning environments.
- Community leaders, local health organisations, and education unions actively partner with the school to champion equity and dismantle community-level stigma.

2. Clear and inclusive code of conduct

- The code explicitly defines core inclusive values, identifies different forms of stigma and



discrimination, and outlines expected positive behaviours.

- It establishes an unambiguous, zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, bullying, and harassment.
- The code actively promotes and rewards conduct that nurtures a positive, welcoming, and safe school climate for all

3. Continuous capacity building for school leaders, teachers, and education support personnel

- School administrators, teachers, and education support personnel are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to identify, respond to, and proactively prevent discrimination and violence.
- School administrators and teachers receive ongoing training in inclusive pedagogical strategies, such as UDL, learner-centered instruction, and the provision of reasonable accommodations

4. Learner empowerment and child rights

- Curricula actively integrate child rights approaches, respect for diversity, and social and emotional learning.
- Student leadership is intentionally fostered, ensuring that marginalised learners, including girls, boys, non-binary individuals, learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), learners with and without disabilities, are equally represented and given a voice.
- Schools intentionally promote healthy peer relationships to improve overall student awareness and attitudes regarding inclusion, equity, and diversity.

5. Transparent reporting, monitoring, and accountability

- Schools provide safe, accessible, and strictly confidential channels for students and staff to report experiences of discrimination, stigma, or violence.
- Reporting mechanisms are directly linked to effective medical, psychosocial, legal, and academic support systems, ensuring survivors and their families are provided appropriate support.
- Dedicated child protection committees or institutional review mechanisms are established to monitor incidents and uphold accountability.

6. Responsive and restorative incident management

- Inclusive, learner-centered protocols are established to respond effectively to the specific, intersectional needs of students who experience discrimination, particularly learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease).
- Clear, active referral pathways are maintained with local child protection, health, and social welfare systems to ensure comprehensive, multi-sector support.

7. Safe and accessible physical environments

- School architecture, classrooms, and learning spaces follow Universal Design principles,



ensuring they are physically accessible and gender-responsive.

- Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) facilities are present, fully accessible, private, and secure for all learners.
- Protective measures are considered to ensure students can travel safely to and from the school premises without fear of harassment.

8. Meaningful engagement of families and carers

- Families and carers are recognised and actively involved as essential partners in sustaining school-wide inclusion.
- Schools establish regular, two-way communication channels with families to collaboratively plan how to best support the holistic well-being and academic success of their children.



2.5.2 Student Participation

Why is Student Participation Important?

One of the strongest reasons to develop student participation structures in schools is that children have a right to express their views on matters that affect them. This principle recognises that all children have ideas, perspectives, and experiences that deserve to be heard and taken seriously.⁴⁰ It is supported by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)⁴¹ and the CRPD.⁴² This includes learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), who may face silence, stigma, discrimination, or exclusion in school and therefore need safe, respectful opportunities to be heard.

In the classroom, this means that all children, including children with disabilities and learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), have the right to contribute actively to their learning. They are not simply recipients of instruction or knowledge. Every learner has the capacity to shape their own learning and support the learning of others.⁴³ When students are meaningfully involved, they become active partners in creating an inclusive classroom. For learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), meaningful participation can also help challenge stigma, strengthen belonging, and ensure that decisions about support are informed by their lived experience rather than by fear or assumptions.

Barriers to Learner Participation

Learners are a valuable resource for making inclusion work in practice. Why, then, are their voices so often missing from decisions about teaching and learning? Some of the attitudinal, environmental, and institutional barriers that limit student participation include:⁴⁴

- The misconception that young children do not understand how the world works
- The belief that children cannot communicate their feelings and ideas
- The assumption that adults always know best and children should only listen
- Adults not knowing how to help children process and communicate their thoughts and feelings
- Methods for gathering children's views that are not suited to their age, interests, or preferred ways of communicating
- Children feeling afraid or uncomfortable about sharing their opinions and experiences with adults
- Many children with disabilities lacking access to communication tools such as sign language or other accessible supports
- Children not receiving information in accessible and age-appropriate ways that help them form their own views and participate meaningfully
- Fear, stigma, or discrimination that makes learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) hesitant to speak, ask for support, or take part in school life
- School environments that do not protect confidentiality or respond appropriately to teasing, bullying, or exclusion
- Participation approaches that are too rigid, formal, or adult-centred



Some children and young people may need support to express their views

Children communicate and make sense of their feelings, experiences, and ideas in ways that reflect their age and stage of development. Some children, such as younger ones, shy kids, or those with disabilities, may need additional support. However, this does not reduce the value of their views. The same is true for learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), including those who may be dealing with stigma, visible impairments, treatment-related absences, or fear of being judged.

With the right tools, support, safe environment, and time, all children can provide important insights into how they learn and what helps them participate. Meaningful inclusion requires listening to all learners, including children with disabilities and learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), when decisions are made about the support they need in and beyond the classroom.

To address barriers to learning, we first need to understand them. One of the best ways to do this is by listening to learners themselves and involving them in identifying what needs to change. This is especially important when stigma or discrimination affects participation, as learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) can help schools understand what makes them feel safe, respected, included, and able to learn.

Meaningful participation is a process

Participation can be understood as an ongoing process in which learners express their views and are actively involved in decisions that affect them. It requires information-sharing and dialogue between children, adolescents, and adults, based on trust and mutual respect. It also means that children's views are given due weight in ways that reflect their age and maturity.⁴⁵

We can think of student participation at three broad levels. These levels are not rigid or mutually exclusive. A single activity may include more than one level, and a process may begin with consultation and gradually become more collaborative or learner-led.

Levels of Participation⁴⁶

- 1. Consultative participation** - Adults listen to children's ideas, opinions, and experiences. Children's and young people's views inform adult decision-making, but do not take part directly in making the final decisions.

In the classroom, this may include teachers asking students what helps them learn and what makes participation difficult. For learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), consultative participation may include private and respectful opportunities to share concerns about stigma, bullying, attendance, treatment-related needs, or support in school.

- Adult-initiated and led
- Learner's voice is recognized
- Learners have no control over outcomes
- Learners have no decision-making power



- 2. Collaborative participation** - Adults and learners work together as partners. Decision-making is shared, and learners have influence over both the process and the outcome.

In the classroom, this may mean teachers and students jointly deciding what questions to explore, what issues to raise, or how to improve classroom participation. For learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), this can include working with teachers to agree on practical supports, anti-bullying responses, flexible participation arrangements during treatment, or ways to promote respect and accurate information among peers.

- Adult-initiated
- Adults and learners are partners
- Children and young people have an influence in both process and outcomes

There are opportunities for increased levels of self-directed action by learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) or with disabilities over a period of time.

- 3. Learner-led participation** - Adults create an enabling environment in which children and young people are encouraged to take the lead. Learners identify priorities, raise concerns, and advocate for themselves. The adult's role shifts from directing to supporting and guiding.

This may look like a classroom where learners feel safe and confident enough to raise issues that matter to them and propose solutions. For some learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), this may include leading peer awareness efforts, speaking up about discriminatory treatment, or helping shape school responses that protect dignity and inclusion.

- Learner-initiated
- Learners identify issues that matter to them
- Adults facilitate and support
- Learners have greater control over both process and outcomes

Tools and strategies that support the participation of all learners including those affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) and with disability, were discussed in Unit 4 Learner-centred strategies.

Ethical Participation

It should be emphasised that the participation of children and young people should always be age-appropriate, voluntary, and conducted in a safe environment that protects their safety, rights, and privacy. Participation should also reflect each child's evolving capacities, consistent with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. What a younger child can meaningfully take part in will look different from what an older adolescent can, and adults should adjust accordingly rather than applying one standard to every age.

This is especially important in the context of leprosy (Hansen's disease). Inviting a learner affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) to share their experience — for example, as a peer educator or spokesperson in an awareness activity — can be genuinely empowering, but it is not automatically so. Many children affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) carry significant stigma and, in some cases, trauma, and may not yet feel ready to speak about their experience publicly, even if asked warmly and



with good intentions. Adults hold the responsibility here, not the child: participation must always be offered, never expected, with a genuine and low-pressure way to decline, ongoing support before and after, and a safe setting where the child controls how much they share. A child's willingness to speak publicly should never be treated as a sign of successful participation — silence, or choosing a quieter role, is just as valid an outcome.

TRY THIS!

The 5-Minute Student Voice Readiness Check

Before we can effectively empower student voice especially for learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), disabilities, or stigma, we must ensure the classroom environment is ready to receive it. Based on the Search Institute's Student Voice Framework, use this quick self-assessment to evaluate if your classroom has the foundational conditions needed for students to safely speak up.

Take 5 minutes to answer "Yes" or "No" to the following questions:

Part 1: Trust and Heartset (The Foundation)

Students must deeply assess if a teacher is trustworthy before they will take the risk of sharing their true thoughts.

- ☐ **Earned Respect:** Do I actively work to earn my students' trust and respect through empathy, rather than expecting it simply because of my authority as a teacher?
- ☐ **Emotional Safety:** Do my students feel safe coming to me when they are frustrated, upset, or facing a challenge?
- ☐ **Sustaining Connections:** Do I regularly engage in one-on-one conversations with students that go beyond academics, grades, or discipline?

Part 2: Classroom Structures (The Opportunities)

Voice requires clear, intentional, and structured spaces to be heard.

- ☐ **Clear Intent:** When I ask for student input, am I completely transparent about why I am asking and what decisions their feedback will influence?
- ☐ **Varied Formats:** Do I provide multiple, accessible ways for students to share their voice (e.g., anonymous question boxes, small group discussions, visual voting) so that shy or anxious learners can participate?
- ☐ **Dedicated Time:** Do I carve out dedicated, unhurried time during the week specifically for student feedback, rather than squeezing it into the last minute of class?



Part 3: Power Dynamics and Inclusion (The Reach)

True student voice means sharing power and ensuring the most marginalised voices are amplified.

- ☐ **Equal Access:** Do I intentionally manage discussions so that everyone has a chance to contribute, rather than just listening to the loudest, most confident students?
- ☐ **Representativeness:** Am I actively seeking out and validating the perspectives of marginalized learners, such as those who might be experiencing isolation or stigma?
- ☐ **Responsiveness (Closing the Loop):** When students share their opinions, do I follow up and explicitly show them how their input created a real change in the classroom?

Your Next Step:

If you answered “No” or “Not Yet” to any of the questions above, do not worry, that is simply your starting point. Pick ONE unchecked box to focus on this week. For example, if you need to work on Responsiveness, make it a goal to explicitly tell your class on Friday how a specific piece of their feedback changed the way you taught a lesson.



2.5.3 Family and Carers

Families and carers play a key role in inclusive education. They are often the people who know the learner best and can help schools understand the learner's strengths, needs, interests, and daily experiences. This is especially important for learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), disability, stigma, discrimination, or health other conditions. When families and schools work together, learners are more likely to feel supported, attend regularly, and take part fully in school life.

Why Family and Carer Involvement Matters

Parents and carers have a right to be involved in decisions that affect their children's education. Moreover, they have the main responsibility in the upbringing of their child.⁴⁷ Their involvement can improve both learning and wellbeing. They can share helpful information about what supports the learner at home, what causes stress or difficulty, and what helps the learner feel safe and included.

This is especially important for learners affected by stigma or discrimination. Families may notice early signs of bullying, exclusion, shame, or fear. They may also help schools understand how stigma linked to leprosy (Hansen's disease), disability, or other health conditions is affecting attendance, participation, confidence, or relationships.

Teachers also have an important role in keeping families informed. When schools share clear and respectful information about learning, participation, and support, families are better able to reinforce learning at home and raise concerns early. Communication should be practical, regular, and sensitive to family circumstances.

In practice, this may mean teachers create regular formal or informal opportunities to meet with families and carers to:

- Obtain information about the child
- Share what is done in the classroom
- Give tips on how parents can further support their child at home
- Families and carers can help challenge stigma

Families and carers of learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) and learners with disabilities can help build more inclusive attitudes in the wider school community. When families understand what inclusion is and why it matters, they are better able to challenge fear, myths, and discrimination.

This matters a lot for learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) and other stigmatised conditions. Misunderstanding and fear among adults and children can reinforce exclusion and bullying in school. Families and carers can help reduce this by using respectful language, sharing accurate information, supporting affected learners, and speaking up when discrimination happens.

In practice, this may mean teachers:

- Provide parents with clear information about inclusive education, what to expect, and how it benefits all learners, including their own child



- Hold community meetings to address negative attitudes, prevent bullying, and build support for children with disabilities and other learners affected by stigma

Levels of family and carer partnership

Family and carer involvement can take different forms, depending on what opportunities schools make available. What matters is that communication is two-way, respectful, and focused on the learner's inclusion, wellbeing, and participation.⁴⁸ Some examples include:

1. **Families as advocates** – Families and carer networks can help push for more inclusive policies and practices, including better support for learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), disability, or stigma.
2. **Families as contributors to inclusive education** – Families can support learning and development at home, share useful information with teachers, and help identify what makes participation easier or harder for the learner.
3. **Schools and families as partners** – Schools can involve families in planning, decision-making, and school activities so that inclusion becomes a shared goal.
4. **Families supporting families** – Parent and carer networks can create spaces to share information, encouragement, experience, and practical support.
5. **Families in school governance** – Families can take part in committees, consultations, and school decision-making processes that shape inclusion, learner support, and safe spaces.

Partnerships work best when families, carers, and schools feel respected and informed. Roles should be clear, communication should be open, and there should be regular opportunities to talk about what is working, what is not, and what needs to change. This is especially important when learners are affected by stigma or discrimination, because trust and confidentiality are essential to meaningful support.



2.5.4 Collaboration with the Wider Community

Why do we need to involve the community?

When looking at the wider community surrounding the school, we are likely to find several organisations and institutions that can help support inclusion and combat discrimination. Local government bodies, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), international NGOs, parent groups, education unions, organisations of persons affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), faith-based organisations, women's organisations, community leaders, local health and medical care centers, legal support groups, colleges and universities, and youth groups are just some of these valuable potential partners.⁴⁹

Communities possess rich resources that schools can tap into to properly support learners, particularly those affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) or those with disabilities. Community members can actively support inclusive education in several ways:

- **Providing direct support:** Local governments, civil society groups, organisations of persons affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), OPDs, local health and medical centers, and other similar organisations and institutions can help children obtain necessary assistive devices or connect families to essential health, medical care, legal aid, and social protection services.
- **Raising awareness:** Community groups can act as powerful advocates for inclusive education, raising public awareness about the rights of learners affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) and actively dispelling myths and fears surrounding leprosy (Hansen's disease).
- **Fostering social inclusion:** Youth groups can intentionally include children with disabilities or those affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) in their outside-of-school activities, helping to normalise inclusion and directly challenge negative peer attitudes.

What Collaboration with the Wider Community Looks Like in Practice

Here are examples of how teachers and schools build strong community partnerships:

1. **Finding out who is missing** - Working alongside community leaders to identify which children are currently out of school, often due to the fear of stigma or health conditions like leprosy (Hansen's disease), and strategising together on how to safely bring them back to the classroom
2. **Taking learning into the community** - Whenever possible, stepping outside the classroom. Organising field trips that allow students to explore and practice what they learn in real-world settings. For example, visiting a local market connects classroom math to daily life, while showing the community that all children belong in public spaces.
3. **Bringing the community into the school** - Inviting local figures, and parents, to be guest speakers (e.g., local health workers discussing facts about illness and disability) or to volunteer for school activities like storytelling or playground repairs. Using a community mapping tool (see sample tool in Practice and Application) can help identify these opportunities.
4. **Sharing ownership of school improvement** - Involving community members along with families in discussions about the school's core values and including them in planning for school improvements. When the community feels ownership, inclusive practices become more



sustainable.

5. **Leading awareness campaigns** - Teachers trained in inclusive education lead awareness-raising sessions for local authorities, parent associations, and community groups to openly discuss disability and leprosy (Hansen's disease). Using these sessions to gather the community's own ideas on how to remove barriers to participation.
6. **Sustaining the connection** - Creating regular opportunities for collaboration. Maintaining a culture of teamwork by hosting consistent meetings, open dialogues, or inclusive social events that bring the school and community together.

Stigma thrives in silence and isolation, making the wider community an essential ally in the fight for inclusive education. When schools actively partner with local organisations, health services, and community leaders, they create a unified front that challenges misconceptions about leprosy (Hansen's disease) and disability both inside and outside the classroom. These collaborations not only connect families to vital support systems but also transform the community itself into a protective network that champions the rights, dignity, and education of every child.



2.5.5 Education Unions

Education unions are not just representatives of labour, they are powerful advocates for equity in our schools and communities. Because “the trade union movement is guided by the principles of human rights, democracy, and social justice,”⁵⁰ unions are uniquely positioned to defend the rights of the most marginalised learners, ensuring they “achieve their maximum potential”. To achieve this, unions engage in a wide variety of activities aside from teaching, such as advocacy, mobilisation, empowerment, campaign, training, bargaining and to name a few.⁵¹

The Power of Social Dialogue

One of the most effective tools unions have is social dialogue, working alongside employers, governments, civil society organisation, and organisations of persons affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease). As highlighted by the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE), “social dialogue in itself plays an important role in making education more inclusive.”⁵²

Education unions are encouraged to be actively involved in discussions and negotiations about all aspects of education to help build truly inclusive systems. Below are some examples of opportunities for involvement⁵³:

1. **Working conditions** - ensuring teachers have paid time and properly resourced space within their working hours to provide extra support to learners who need it most.
2. **Professional development** – creating continuous in-service and pre-service professional development for teachers, school administrators, and education support personnel so they are fully equipped to address complex issues like health-related stigma.
3. **Inclusive funding** - ensuring sufficient and flexible public education funding is used to support inclusive education and accessible learning environments.
4. **Recruitment and retention of teachers** – influencing recruitment and retention policies and guideline to reflect diversity in the education workforce, encouraging hiring of teachers and education staff from underrepresented groups such as those with disabilities and health conditions such as leprosy (Hansen's disease).

Driving Systemic Reform

When unions partner with school leadership, the impact is transformative. Recent research highlights that when education unions collaborate with schools, “they have the potential to drive significant school reform, enhance teacher motivation, and tackle disparities in resource allocation”⁵⁴. Reconceptualising unions as collaborative partners strengthen education systems and lead to better learning outcomes .

For children and families affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease), the advocacy of education unions can be life-changing. Unions can apply their collective power to end leprosy (Hansen's disease)-related stigma in several practical ways:

1. **Advocating for safe policies** - Unions can use collective bargaining to demand zero-tolerance anti-discrimination policies, ensuring that no child is denied enrolment and no teacher is denied employment due to a leprosy (Hansen's disease) diagnosis.



2. **Empowering educators** - Teachers may fear backlash from the community if they welcome a learner with leprosy (Hansen's disease) into their classroom. Unions can provide vital support.
3. **Mobilising the community** - Because unions have deep roots in local communities, they can launch awareness campaigns to dispel myths about leprosy (Hansen's disease), replacing fear with facts and solidarity.

By integrating the fight against stigma into their core advocacy, education unions ensure that inclusion is not just a policy on paper, but a daily reality in every school. Further strategies on how education unions can drive advocacy for inclusion and ending stigma and discrimination will be discussed in [Module 3: Advocacy Tools for Education Unions](#).



TRY THIS!

One Conversation, One Connection

This unit is about collaboration, but you don't need to wait for a big programme or policy change to start. You can begin with one small, simple action this week.

Choose ONE of the following to try before your next class or meeting:

Option 1: Create a simple way for students to give feedback

Try one small, low-effort feedback routine, such as:

- Asking "Is there anything that would make it easier for you to take part in class?" during circle time at the end of the day
- Setting up a simple feelings board where students can point to or place a mark next to how they felt that day
- Placing a suggestion box where students can drop in a note, anytime, about what would help them

Notice what comes up. You don't need to act on everything right away, just start listening.

Option 2: Reach out to a family

Try one small step to connect with a parent or carer, such as:

- A quick, informal chat at class dismissal even two minutes is enough to ask how things are going at home
- A short note or message sharing one positive observation about their child
- A parent-teacher conference, if you don't already have one scheduled
- Ask if there's anything they'd like you to know, and listen without judging the answer.

Option 3: Identify one community connection

Think of one person or group in your community (a health worker, a local leader, a parent association, an organisation of persons affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease)) who could support inclusion at your school. Note their name and one way they might help.

Option 4: Talk to your union

Mention one inclusion-related concern (such as a need for training, materials, or support for a specific learner) to a colleague or union representative. See what they suggest.

Reflect:

- What did you learn from this that you didn't know before?
- What is one next step you could take, based on what you learned?

This is a quick way to start practising what whole school collaboration looks like, one relationship at a time. You'll build on this further in the Community Mapping activity at the end of this unit.

Practice and Application

Community Mapping

Purpose: To identify people, groups, and services that can help the school support inclusion, reduce stigma, and respond to learner needs.

Complete the table on your own. Think about your school or community and write only the most important examples.

1. List people, groups, or services that can support learners and families.
2. Write what support already exists.
3. Write one gap or challenge.
4. Choose one simple action you can take next.

Use this table:

Community Partner or Group	Current Support	Gap or Challenge	One Simple Action
Example: families and caregivers	Attend meetings or share learner needs	Some families are hard to reach	Use one simple message or meeting time that works for them

Unit Summary

- * Inclusive education is strengthened when the whole school community shares responsibility for safety, participation, and belonging.
- * A whole school approach aligns leadership, policies, classroom practice, school routines, learner voice, family engagement, community partnerships, and union advocacy around inclusion and

stigma reduction.

- * Learners should be active participants in shaping inclusive school cultures through peer support, student leadership, feedback mechanisms, and activities that promote respect and belonging.
- * Families and caregivers are essential partners in understanding learner needs, reducing fear and misinformation, supporting participation, and reinforcing inclusive values at home and in school.
- * Collaboration with community actors, including health, child protection, social services, local leaders, civil society organisations, and organisations of persons affected by leprosy (Hansen's disease) can strengthen referral pathways, awareness, and practical support for learners.
- * Education unions can help sustain inclusion by advocating for teacher training, safe working conditions, adequate resources, anti-discrimination policies, and stigma-free schools.

Additional Resources

1. UNESCO. **A Resource Pack for Global Citizenship Education (GCED): Module 6 - Whole School Approach**: https://openlearning.unesco.org/assets/courseware/v1/1554885be57ff8c7ed500abe187e6eca/asset-v1:UNESCO+UNESCO-04+2021_01+type@asset+block/Whole_school_approach.pdf
2. UNICEF. (2013). **Take Us Seriously! Engaging Children with Disabilities in Decisions Affecting their Lives**: <https://www.unicef.org/media/126316/file/Take-Us-Seriously.pdf>
3. UNICEF. (2014a). **Webinar 7, Partnerships, Advocacy and Communication for Social Change**. Companion Technical Booklet: <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/7711/file>
4. UNICEF. (2014b). Webinar 13. **Parents, Family and Community Participation in Inclusive Education**. Companion Technical Booklet: <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/7741/file>
5. Search Institute's **Student Voice Toolkit**: <https://searchinstitute.org/resources-hub/student-voice-toolkit>

DO

- Listen without interrupting.
- Remain calm and supportive.
- Take concerns seriously.
- Respect the learner's dignity.
- Follow school safeguarding procedures.
- Seek guidance if you are unsure what to do next.

AVOID

- Asking leading or detailed investigative questions.
- Promising complete confidentiality.
- Blaming or criticising the learner.
- Pressuring the learner to share more than they want to.
- Contacting the alleged perpetrator yourself.
- Trying to resolve serious cases on your own.



Annexes

Annex 1: CRPD and UNESCO Definition of Inclusive Education

The following definitions show that inclusive education is not simply about placing all learners in the same classroom. It is about transforming education systems so that diversity is welcomed, barriers are removed, and every learner can participate fully, feel a sense of belonging, and achieve on an equal basis with others. In this way, access, participation, belonging, and equity are not separate goals, but essential features of truly inclusive education.

CRPD

Every child has the right to inclusive quality education. The CRPD and the subsequent General Comment No. 4 (GC4), states that inclusive education requires a “transformation in culture, policy and practice in all formal and informal educational environments to accommodate the differing requirements and identities of individual students, together with a commitment to removing the barriers that impede that possibility. It involves strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners. It focuses on the full and effective participation, accessibility, attendance and achievement of all students, especially those who, for different reasons, are excluded or at risk of being marginalized. Inclusion involves access to and progress in high-quality formal and informal education without discrimination. Inclusion seeks to enable communities, systems and structures to combat discrimination, including harmful stereotypes, recognize diversity, promote participation and overcome barriers to learning and participation for all by focusing on the well-being and success of students with disabilities. It requires an in-depth transformation of education systems in legislation, policy and the mechanisms for financing, administering, designing, delivering and monitoring education.”⁵⁵

UNESCO

Inclusive education means all children learn together in the same school. It defines inclusive education as “a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the state to educate all children.”⁵⁶



Annex 2: Quick Guide: Responding to Learners Who Have Experienced Violence

When a learner shares that they have experienced violence, discrimination, bullying, or abuse, your first response matters. A calm, supportive response can help the learner feel safe and encourage them to seek further help.

1. **Ensure the learner's immediate safety** - If the learner is in immediate danger, take steps to keep them safe and follow your school's child protection and emergency procedures.
2. **Stay calm and listen** - Give the learner your full attention. Allow them to speak at their own pace. Do not interrupt, pressure them to talk, or ask unnecessary questions.
3. **Believe and reassure the learner** - Thank the learner for telling you. Let them know they did the right thing by speaking up. Avoid blaming, judging, or questioning their actions.

Examples:

- *"Thank you for telling me."*
- *"I'm glad you came to me."*
- *"This is not your fault."*
- *"You deserve to be safe."*

4. **Respect privacy and confidentiality** - Speak with the learner in a private place where possible. Explain that you will only share information with people who need to know in order to keep them safe. Never promise to keep abuse or serious harm a secret.
5. **Record only the essential facts** - Write down what the learner says using their own words whenever possible. Record the date, time, and any observed injuries or behaviours. Avoid making assumptions or conducting your own investigation.
6. **Report and refer promptly** - Follow your school's reporting procedures and refer the learner to the appropriate child protection, health, psychosocial, or social welfare services. Where required by law, report concerns to the relevant authorities.
7. **Continue supporting the learner** - Check in with the learner, maintain a safe and inclusive classroom, and provide reasonable accommodations if needed while respecting their privacy and dignity.

Remember: Your role is to listen, support, report, and refer. Not to investigate or determine whether the learner is telling the truth.



Annex 3: Dealing with Perpetrators of Violence⁵⁷

When a student engages in violent behaviour, it is important to respond quickly, fairly, and consistently. School policies and procedures should guide how incidents are reported, investigated, and addressed.

Key Principles

- Meet separately with the survivor and the student responsible for the behaviour to ensure both can speak safely and openly.
- Use positive discipline and restorative approaches whenever appropriate.
- Focus on repairing harm, taking responsibility, and preventing future incidents.
- Address the behaviour without humiliating or shaming the student.
- Ensure responses are timely and proportionate to the incident.
- Take a trauma-informed approach

Children who use violence may have experienced violence, neglect, or other forms of trauma themselves. Understanding the reasons behind a child's behaviour can help identify the support they need.

Consider:

- What factors may have contributed to the behaviour?
- Does the student need additional support or referral?
- How can the school help the student learn from the incident and make positive changes?

Violence by School Staff

Violence can also be committed by teachers or other school staff. Schools should have clear procedures for reporting, investigating, and responding to allegations involving staff. Rules and consequences should be applied fairly and consistently to everyone to help create a safe and accountable school environment.

Remember: The goal is not only to stop harmful behaviour, but also to promote accountability, support learning, and prevent future violence.



Annex 4: Supporting Bystanders and Learners Who Witness Violence

Learners who witness violence may also experience fear, distress, guilt, or anxiety. They may worry that they could be the next target or regret not being able to help. Teachers should acknowledge that witnessing violence can affect learners' wellbeing and create opportunities for them to process what they have seen in a safe and supportive way.

Teachers can:

- Check in privately with learners who witnessed the incident and ask how they are feeling without pressuring them to discuss details.
- Reassure learners that the violence was not their fault and that the adults in the school are taking steps to keep everyone safe.
- Encourage safe bystander action, such as supporting the affected learner after the incident, refusing to encourage harmful behaviour, helping the learner seek safety, informing a trusted adult, and reporting concerns. Learners should never be expected to intervene if doing so would put them at risk.
- Reinforce positive classroom norms by discussing empathy, respect, inclusion, and everyone's shared responsibility to help create a safe learning environment.
- Watch for signs of ongoing distress, such as withdrawal, fear, changes in behaviour or attendance, and refer learners to appropriate psychosocial or counselling services if needed.

Remember: Witnesses may need support just as much as the learner directly affected by violence. Responding to both helps restore a sense of safety and strengthens a positive, inclusive school culture.



Annex 5: Clear and Comprehensive Policies on Safe and Violence-Free Schools⁵⁸

Relying solely on the good intentions of individual teachers is not enough to keep students safe. To effectively address violence, bullying, and stigma, schools must establish comprehensive, written policies. When a student experiences violence, bullying, or severe discrimination, the moments immediately following the incident are critical. Without clear guidelines, teachers and school staff are forced to make high-stakes decisions on the spot, which can lead to inconsistent, biased, or ineffective responses.

According to WHO guidelines, comprehensive school policies are the backbone of a safe learning environment for several key reasons:

- **They eliminate the guesswork** - clear policies provide a step-by-step roadmap for educators. when an incident occurs, a teacher does not have to wonder, “is this serious enough to report?” or “who do i tell?” the policy explicitly outlines what constitutes violence and the exact protocol for reporting it safely.
- **They guarantee consistency and fairness** - policies ensure that every incident is handled with the same level of care, regardless of which teacher witnesses it. this consistency is vital for building trust among students; they need to know that the rules apply equally to everyone and that their reports will be taken seriously every time.
- **They define roles and boundaries** - a good policy clarifies that teachers are not expected to be therapists or law enforcement. it outlines clear referral pathways, specifying exactly when a teacher should hand an issue over to a school counselor, the principal, or external child protection services. this protects educators from carrying the entire burden of a crisis.
- **They shift the focus to support and rehabilitation** - effective policies move schools away from purely punitive measures (like immediate expulsion, which often just shifts the problem elsewhere). instead, guidelines instruct staff on how to apply constructive discipline, rehabilitate the perpetrator, and mandate immediate psychosocial support for the survivor.
- **The education union’s role** - education unions play a critical role in this area. unions can use collective bargaining and social dialogue to ensure that these policies are not just written, but actually implemented, funded, and supported with adequate professional development so every staff member knows how to use them.



Annex 6: How Teachers Can Be Supported

Teachers cannot be expected to carry the emotional and practical burden of violence prevention entirely on their own. The following are examples of how teachers can be supported effectively:

1. **Targeted training** - Teachers must receive comprehensive pre-service and in-service training. They need practical, evidence-based tools for positive discipline and classroom management, rather than just being told to “stop violence.”
2. **Transforming harmful beliefs and norms** - Schools must provide safe spaces and structured professional support for teachers to critically reflect on, address, and transform their own harmful beliefs, as well as broader social, cultural, and gender norms. Unlearning these ingrained prejudices is essential to ensure educators do not inadvertently perpetuate discrimination or normalise aggressive behaviour.
3. **Clear policies and referral pathways** - Teachers should not be forced to act as therapists or law enforcement. Schools must provide clear, written procedures for reporting violence and established referral pathways to social or child protection services, so teachers know exactly who to call for help when a crisis occurs.
4. **A collaborative network** - Teachers are most effective when supported by engaged school leadership, involved parents, and the wider community, ensuring that the rules enforced in the classroom are echoed outside of it.



Annex 7: Understanding and Responding to Challenging Behaviour⁵⁹

Understanding challenging behaviour

What is considered challenging behaviour can vary across cultures, schools, and classrooms. In general, challenging behaviour refers to actions that may affect a learner's own wellbeing, the wellbeing of others, or the learning environment. Examples include:

- **Disruptive behaviour** - refusing instructions, excessive noise, tantrums, leaving a seat without permission.
- **Unsafe or aggressive behaviour** - bullying, verbal aggression, hitting, kicking, damaging property.
- **Socially inappropriate behaviour** - stealing, lying, or behaviour that violates social norms.
- **Withdrawn behaviour** - extreme shyness, anxiety, or social isolation.

Challenging behaviour is often a form of communication. It may indicate that a learner is struggling with a task, does not understand expectations, feels frustrated, is seeking attention, or is experiencing difficulties outside the classroom.

Understanding the reasons behind challenging behaviour

Children's behaviour is influenced by their experiences, needs, and environment. Common reasons for challenging behaviour include:

5. **Seeking Attention** - Some learners may use negative behaviour to gain attention when they do not know other ways to seek support or connection.

What can help?

- Give positive attention when learners behave appropriately.
- Praise effort and positive behaviour.
- Teach learners appropriate ways to ask for help or attention.
- Give learners meaningful responsibilities and classroom roles.
- Avoid giving unnecessary attention to minor attention-seeking behaviours.

6. **Seeking Control or Independence** - Some learners test boundaries or seek greater control over their environment.

What can help?

- Stay calm and avoid power struggles.
- Offer choices where appropriate.



- Give learners opportunities to take responsibility.
- Focus on solving the problem rather than winning an argument.

7. Responding to Hurt or Frustration - Some learners act out because they feel angry, excluded, unfairly treated, or unsuccessful.

What can help?

- Build positive and trusting relationships.
- Acknowledge feelings and concerns.
- Help learners express emotions appropriately.
- Teach conflict resolution and problem-solving skills.

8. Avoiding Failure - Some learners may withdraw, refuse tasks, or become disruptive because they fear making mistakes or failing.

What can help?

- Set realistic expectations.
- Break tasks into manageable steps.
- Encourage effort as well as achievement.
- Create opportunities for learners to experience success.
- Use mistakes as learning opportunities and reassure learners that progress takes time.

9. Misinformation, Limited Awareness, or Uncertainty About Difference - Some learners may act in hurtful, avoidant, or disruptive ways because they have heard inaccurate information about disability, leprosy, or other differences, have had little opportunity to learn about them, or do not feel confident about how to treat or interact respectfully with classmates who are different from them.

What can help?

- Provide accurate, age-appropriate information about disability, leprosy, and human differences.
- Challenge myths and stereotypes calmly, using facts and inclusive language.
- Model respectful interaction and give learners simple examples of what to say and do.
- Create structured opportunities for learners to cooperate, ask respectful questions, and build confidence with one another.
- Reinforce that everyone deserves dignity, participation, and belonging.

Annex 8: How Does UDL Differ from Traditional and Differentiated Instruction?

Differentiation can sometimes stigmatise learners when “special arrangements” are made only for some. In practice, it may also be reduced to simplifying content or reducing tasks, which can lower expectations and affect learners’ potential and self-esteem. This can limit their access to the same high-quality curriculum as others, a right protected by the CRPD and General Comment 4 on Article 24.

The main difference between DI and UDL is that DI adjusts learning for individual or small groups of students, while UDL offers learning options to all students from the start. DI can be helpful when learners need reasonable accommodations, such as ramps, accessible toilets, or communication supports. However, UDL reduces the need for separate adjustments by recognising that all learners learn differently and may need support at some point. UDL designs for all students and offers choices in without the stigma.

The table below outlines the key differences between traditional instruction, differentiated instruction, and UDL⁶⁰

Traditional Instruction	Differentiated Instruction	UDL
Static	Reactive	Pro-active
Evaluates the curriculum	Evaluates the student	Evaluates the classroom environment and culture
Follows scripted lesson	Adapts script when it’s not effective	Intentional in considering ALL students in the beginning of the teaching process (designing or planning stage)
Does not consider students who may be marginalised	Plans different learning experiences for students in the margins	Plans for ALL students
Designed for the average students	Designed for the average students, with modifications for some	Designed for all students
Ignores barriers	Works around barriers	Eliminates barriers



Annex 9: Handwriting Accommodations Master List

Category 1: Paper and Writing Surface Adjustments

Accommodation	Quick How-To Description	When to Use It / Who It Benefits
Adapted paper	Use bold lines, raised lines, or highlighted margins.	Students with difficulty staying in lines or with letter sizing.
Graph/grid paper	Provide equal-sized boxes to guide letter/number spacing.	Students struggling with spacing or math alignment.
Slanted writing surface	Use a slant board or angled binder.	Improves wrist extension and visual tracking.
High-contrast paper	Choose cream or pastel backgrounds.	Students with visual sensitivity or fatigue.
Reduced visual clutter	Provide worksheets with fewer items.	Students who become overwhelmed by busy pages.
Angled paper placement	Teach correct paper tilt for handedness.	Students with awkward wrist/arm positions.
Colored paper for contrast	Use light colors for improved visibility.	Students with visual processing differences.
Extra-wide rule paper	Provide more space between lines.	Students with large handwriting or reduced fine motor control.
Half-sheet assignments	Give smaller, less overwhelming work sections.	Students who fatigue quickly.
Folded paper guides	Fold into sections to create visual zones.	Students who lose their place on page.

Category 2: Pencil and Writing Tool Modifications

Accommodation	Quick How-To Description	When to Use It / Who It Benefits
Pencil grips	Use commercial grips to position fingers.	Students with inefficient grasps.
Shortened writing tools	Use golf pencils or short crayons.	Encourages tripod grasp.
Weighted pens/pencils	Add weight to writing tools.	Students with tremors or low muscle feedback.
Mechanical pencils	Keeps lead sharp, reduces pressure.	Students who press too hard or break tips.
Adapted pens/markers	Choose pens with smooth ink flow.	Students who tire quickly when writing.
Adaptive grip training tools	Use specialized grips like "Grotto Grip."	Students learning new grasp patterns.
Textured pencil shafts	Wrap pencil in foam, rubber, or grip tape.	Students needing tactile feedback.
Broken crayon technique	Give very short crayons.	Encourages proper finger positioning.
Large-diameter tools	Use jumbo markers or pencils.	Students with low strength or limited control.

Vertical writing surfaces	Use easels or whiteboards.	Builds shoulder stability and improves control.
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Category 3: Seating and Positioning Supports

Accommodation	Quick How-To Description	When to Use It / Who It Benefits
Proper chair and desk height	Adjust so feet are flat and elbows at desk height.	All students; foundation for posture.
Footrests or wobble cushions	Add stable or movement-based support.	Students with poor core stability or fidgeting.
Non-slip writing mats	Keep paper from sliding.	Students needing both hands free to write.
Hand and wrist support	Provide rests or soft splints.	Students with joint instability or fatigue.
Proximal stability activities before writing	Wall push-ups or putty work before writing.	Students who slump or tire easily.
Flexible seating options	Standing desks, cushions, therapy balls.	Students with sensory or movement needs.

Category 4: Instructional and Task Modifications

Accommodation	Quick How-To Description	When to Use It / Who It Benefits
Boxes for handwriting ^b	Use boxes to allow students to understand letter size and space.	Students who have difficulty with visual spatial skills.
Pre-written start points/tracing	Highlight starting spots or give dotted letters.	Students learning letter formation.
Chunking assignments	Break tasks into short parts.	Students who fatigue or lose focus.
Oral responses/scribes	Allow verbal answers or dictation.	Students with slow or painful handwriting.
Typing or speech-to-text	Offer tech alternatives.	Students who need reduced handwriting load.
Extra time	Give extended deadlines.	Students who write slowly.
Visual schedules for writing steps	Display each writing step.	Students who need sequencing support.
Pre-cut worksheets	Trim to fit the task at hand.	Students overwhelmed by full-page layouts.
Writing frames	Use boxes or outlines for writing.	Students who need spacing guidance.
Highlight the writing margin	Use bright cues for start/stop lines.	Students drifting outside margins.

Category 5: Alternative Writing Approaches

Accommodation	Quick How-To Description	When to Use It / Who It Benefits
Alternate response formats	Use circling or multiple choice instead of writing.	Students with severe motor challenges.

^b See also: <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/product/letter-size-handwriting-practice-occupational-therapy-year-long-bundle-7664485>



Labelling tasks instead of sentences	Replace long answers with labels.	Students practicing content over handwriting.
Stamps or stickers for repetitive items	Use stamps instead of writing repeated words.	Students with hand fatigue.
Collaborative writing	Partner writes while student dictates.	Students needing peer assistance.
Dictation with student editing	Adult writes, student revises.	Students who can edit but not produce lengthy text.

Category 6: Engagement, Motivation and Regulation Supports

Accommodation	Quick How-To Description	When to Use It / Who It Benefits
Highlighted writing lines	Color the bottom line or spaces.	Students needing visual placement cues.
Finger spacers	Use tools to keep word spacing consistent.	Students who crowd words.
Modeling letter formation	Teacher demonstrates slowly with cues.	Visual learners
Visual step cards	Show each letter stroke in order.	Students needing step-by-step visuals.
Reduce copying from the board	Give printed reference instead.	Students with visual tracking issues.
Incorporate interests into writing	Use favourite topics in writing tasks.	Builds motivation.
Scheduled movement breaks	Plan brief breaks to stretch or move.	Students who fatigue or fidget.
Positive reinforcement for effort	Praise persistence and improvement.	Builds confidence.
Hand warm-up routines	Use fine motor warm-ups before writing.	Prepares muscles for better control.
Gamify handwriting practice	Turn tasks into fun challenges.	Students who avoid practice.
Movement-based writing	Write on walls, floors, or with whole body.	Sensory seekers or kinesthetic learners.
Theme-based writing days	Change tools/themes weekly.	Keeps novelty high.
Roll the dice silly sentences.	Motivates writers.	Students who have difficulty with spelling, legibility or motivation.
Choice boards for topics	Let student choose topic.	Increases buy-in.
Nontraditional surfaces	Chalkboards, sand trays, textured paper.	Students needing sensory variety.
Pressure feedback tools	Carbon copy paper or pressure pens.	Students with inconsistent pressure.
Handwriting warm-up worksheets	Use loops, lines, and patterns.	Students needing motor planning warm-up.
Self-monitoring sheets	Student rates neatness and effort.	Encourages self-reflection.
Fine motor crafts before writing	Lacing, origami, or cutting first.	Warms up muscles for handwriting.

Source: Elizabeth Kosek, "Big List of Handwriting Accommodations for IEPs (60+ Occupational Therapy Accommodations!)," Empowering OT Resources, August 19, 2025, <https://empoweringotresources.com/big-list-of-handwriting-accommodations/>.

Annex 10: Welcome, Engage, and Close Approach⁶¹

Based on CASEL's 3 SEL signature practices, Welcome, Engage, and Close helps build social and emotional learning into everyday teaching. These practices help teachers create belonging, support active participation, and end lessons with reflection and clear next steps.

Welcome	Begin with an inclusive welcome routine, activity, or greeting that helps learners feel seen, respected, and ready to learn.	Examples: morning circle, a warm greeting at the door, or a short connection activity linked to the lesson purpose	
Engage	Use varied strategies during the lesson so learners can interact with the content, connect it to their lives, and participate in different ways.	Examples: Balance interactive and reflective activities, pair or group work, individual thinking time, short brain breaks to support focus, participation, and readiness to learn.	
Close	End intentionally by helping learners reflect on what they learned, appreciate one another, and identify a next step.	Examples: A reflection question, group summary, appreciation ritual, or transition routine that connects the lesson to future action	



Annex 11: Practice and Application – Facilitated Activities

These are suggested activities to process learning and check for understanding and are meant to be conducted by a facilitator.

Unit 1. Inclusive Education: Principles and Practice

A. Definition Match and Compare

Purpose: To compare key definitions of inclusive education and identify what they imply for policy, practice, and everyday teaching.

Work in small groups. Read three short definitions of inclusive education: one from a national policy or law, one from the CRPD, and one from UNESCO (*See: Annex 1 UNCRPD and UNESCO Definition*). Then talk about what each one highlights.

1. Underline or list key words in each definition, such as access, participation, belonging, support, equality, or change.
2. Find one or two things that are the same.
3. Find one important difference in each definition.
4. Share back:
 - Which definition seems strongest or most complete, and why?
 - What does this comparison show about how your education system understands inclusion?
 - What still needs to change in practice?

B. Identifying Barriers

Purpose: To recognise different types of barriers to inclusion and identify practical steps educators can take to reduce them.

Work in pairs or threes. For each case study, identify the type of barrier and suggest one to two practical actions that you could take to help address it.

Case study 1: A teacher assumes that a learner affected by leprosy should not join group work because other children may feel uncomfortable. The learner is regularly seated alone and is rarely asked to participate in class discussions.

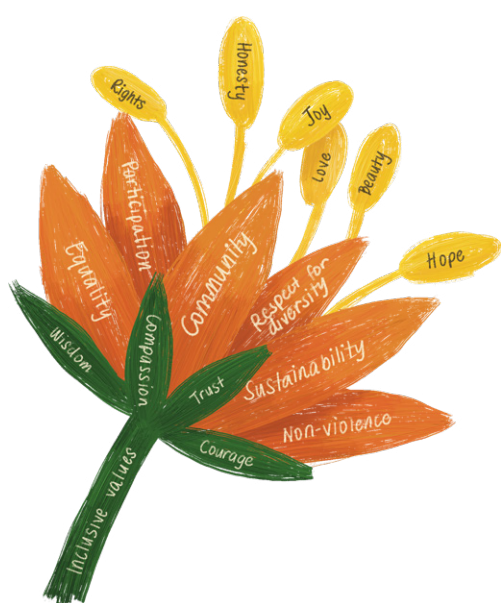
- What type of barrier is this?
- What are two things you could do to help change the situation?

Case study 2: A learner with a mobility difficulty wants to attend class, but the room is on the second floor and the school has no ramp or handrail. Because of this, the learner often arrives late or misses lessons.

- What type of barrier is this?
- What are two things you could do to help address the problem?

Case study 3: A school requires a birth certificate before a child can enrol. One learner in the community does not have the required documents, so they have not been admitted even though they are ready to attend school.

- What type of barrier is this?
- What is one thing you could do yourself to help the child or family take a next step?



C. Value Flower

Purpose: To explore how inclusive values shape school culture, classroom practice, and union action.

- Work in small groups, preferably grouping teachers in the same school or union.
- Look at the Value Flower again and select one value that you feel is critical for addressing stigma in your school or union.
- Reflect on how your chosen value can impact your school. Complete the table below.

[Write your chosen inclusive value here]	
If deeply embedded in the school	If NOT present in the school
■ What positive influence would it have on relationships between students, teachers, and school leadership? ■ How would it impact the way classes are organized, policies are drafted, and union meetings are run? ■ How would it influence daily pedagogical choices?	■ What would happen to at risk students, such as those affected by leprosy or disability, in terms of relationships and safety? ■ How would the lack of this value affect teacher morale, school policies, and union solidarity? ■ How would this absence manifest in teaching methods and classroom management?

- Review your completed matrix. Write down one concrete action you can apply this week, either in your classroom or within your local union branch, to actively promote the value you analysed.



Unit 2. Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environments

A. Classroom Snapshot Sharing

Purpose: To compare experiences and generate practical ideas for shifting toward learner-centred practice.

1. In pairs or small groups, each participant briefly describes a “typical lesson” they teach (2–3 minutes each).
2. As a group, discuss:
 - Which elements of this lesson are teacher-centred? Which is learner-centred?
 - What would need to change to make the lesson more learner-centred?
 - What is one realistic step that could be tried in the coming week?
 - Each participant commits to one small change and shares it with the group before the session ends.

B. Role Carousel

Purpose: To explore the different roles teachers play in a learner-centred classroom — manager, facilitator, observer, and learner.

1. Set up four stations or flip-chart sheets, one for each role (Manager, Facilitator, Observer, Learner).
2. In small groups, rotate between stations and write down:
 - One example of this role in everyday teaching
 - One challenge teachers face in performing this role
3. Bring the group back together to share highlights from each station. Discuss:
 - Which role do most participants find easiest? Which is hardest, and why?
 - How can teachers support each other in strengthening the roles they find most difficult?



Unit 3. Recognising, Responding to, and Preventing Violence in Schools

A. Values Continuum

Purpose:: To explore how personal beliefs, attitudes, and social norms can influence our responses to learners and contribute to inclusion, stigma, discrimination, or violence.

Ask participants to stand along a continuum from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree” in response to selected statements.

Example statements:

- Corporal punishment is sometimes necessary.
- Boys and girls should be disciplined differently.
- Learners with disabilities learn best in separate classrooms.
- Schools should actively address stereotypes and discrimination.

Facilitate discussion:

1. Why did participants choose their position?
2. How do these beliefs influence teaching and school culture?
3. What values support safe and inclusive schools?

Conclude by identifying shared values that promote inclusion, dignity, and non-violence.

B. School Safety Mapping

Creating safe and inclusive schools requires both individual commitment and supportive policies. Strong systems help ensure that all learners are protected, respected, and able to participate fully in education.

Purpose: To identify people, groups, and services that can help the school support inclusion, reduce stigma, and respond to learner needs.

Complete the table with a partner or a small group, preferably with colleagues in the same school or community. Think about your school or community and write only the most important examples.

1. List people, groups, or services that can support learners and families.
2. Write what support already exists.
3. Write one gap or challenge.
4. Choose one simple action you can take next.



Use this table:

Community Partner or Group	Current Support	Gap or Challenge	One Simple Action
Example: families and caregivers	Attend meetings or share learner needs	Some families are hard to reach	Use one simple message or meeting time that works for them

Invite groups to share one strength and one priority action. Discuss:

1. Which actions can be taken immediately?
2. Which require support from school leadership, unions, or government?



Unit 4. Learner-Centred Strategies

A. Creating Meaningful Learning Opportunities

Purpose: To generate practical ways to make learning purposeful, relevant, and accessible for diverse learners.

1. In small groups, assign each group one element (Purpose, Prior Knowledge, Relevance, Practice, or Show).
2. Each group brainstorms 2–3 practical examples for that element, drawing on their own subject areas.
3. Groups present their ideas to the rest of the room, building a shared bank of strategies everyone can use.

B. Reflecting on Learner-Centred Pedagogy

Purpose: To reflect on learner-centred pedagogy and identify improvements that strengthen inclusion for learners experiencing stigma or barriers.

1. Divide participants into four groups and assign each group one element: meaningful learning opportunities, multiple learning pathways, cooperative learning, or accessible learning spaces.
2. Each group discusses how the assigned element already appears in their school or classroom and identifies one way it could be strengthened to support learners affected by leprosy, disability, or another stigmatised condition.
3. Groups share one classroom example and one practical improvement with the full group.
4. Conclude by identifying one shared action participants can try in the coming week to make learner-centred pedagogy more inclusive.

C. Making Learning in Groups More Effective (Cooperative Learning)

Purpose: To practise strategies that make group learning more structured, inclusive, and supportive for all learners.

1. Divide participants into small groups and assign each group one of the five cooperative learning tips.
2. Ask each group to role-play or describe how they would introduce that tip to students for the first time.
3. Groups present their approach, and the larger group discusses which ideas they want to try.



D. Applying UDL in the Classroom

Purpose: To apply Universal Design for Learning principles to lesson planning so learners have varied ways to access, engage with, and show learning.

1. Ask participants to work in small groups by grade level, subject area, or teaching context.
2. Each group selects one shared lesson topic, uses the UDL planning template to identify options for representation, engagement, and action/expression, then presents its plan to the full group for feedback.
3. Refer to the UDL Guide Questions for Teachers When Planning Lessons in this unit to help you.
4. The facilitator should encourage participants to focus on realistic, low-cost adjustments that reduce barriers for all learners, including learners with disabilities, health conditions, or experiences of stigma.
5. Apply these ideas in your class.
6. Reflect on your experience:
 - How did learners experience the lesson overall? What did you notice about their engagement, confidence, or enjoyment?
 - Which parts of your plan worked well, and which did not go as expected?
 - What helped you apply UDL in your lesson? For example, certain materials, preparation time, or support from colleagues?
 - What got in the way, and what would make it easier for you to apply UDL more consistently?
 - Based on this experience, what would you adjust next time to reduce barriers and better support all learners?

Grade level: _____

Subject: _____

Topic: _____

I will present my content using: <i>(Multiple means of representation)</i>	I will use the following activities to engage my students: <i>(Multiple means of engagement)</i>	My students can express what they learned through: <i>(Multiple means of action and expression)</i>
1. e.g., PowerPoint Presentation 2. 3. 4.	1. Eg., Grouping activities 2. 3. 4.	1. eg., Choice or Menu board for the different activities they may want to do 2. 3. 4.





E. Common Accommodations to Try in the Classroom

Purpose: To select appropriate classroom accommodations that reduce barriers and support learner participation.

1. Present participants with a short, anonymised case description of a learner facing a specific barrier (for example, difficulty writing for long periods, or processing spoken instructions slowly).
2. In small groups, ask participants to select two or three accommodations from the list that could help, and explain why.
3. Groups share their recommendations and discuss any differences in approach.

F. Making Formative Assessment Part of Everyday Teaching

Purpose: To strengthen everyday formative assessment practices that help teachers check understanding and respond to learner needs.

1. In pairs, take turns describing how you currently check for understanding during a lesson.
2. Identify together which of the eight formative assessment steps are missing.
3. Agree on one step each partner will try this week, and plan to check in with each other afterward.

G. Three-Minute Inclusion Check

Purpose: To practise a quick inclusion check that helps teachers anticipate, respond to, and reflect on barriers before, during, and after a lesson.

1. In small groups, walk through the Three-Minute Inclusion Check together using a shared lesson scenario provided by the facilitator.
2. At each stage (before, during, after), discuss as a group what you would do and why.
3. Compare approaches across groups at the end.

H. Start the Day with an Emotion Check-In

Purpose: To experience a simple emotional check-in and consider how it can support belonging, safety, and learner well-being.

1. As a group, try the emotion check-in on yourselves first — each participant shares how they're feeling using a colour, word, or symbol.
2. Discuss as a group:
 - How did it feel to do this exercise?
 - How might it feel different for a student, especially one experiencing stigma or exclusion?



Unit 5. Collaborative Roles in Promoting Inclusion and Addressing Stigma

A. Community Mapping

Purpose: To identify people, groups, and services that can help the school support inclusion, reduce stigma, and respond to learner needs.

1. Ask participants to work in pairs or small groups. Each group completes one table together, using examples from their own school or community.
2. List people, groups, or services that can support learners and families.
3. Write what support already exists.
4. Write three gaps or challenges.
5. Choose three simple action you can take next.

Reflection

- Which actions can be taken immediately?
- Which require support from school leadership, unions, or government?

Use this table:

Community Partner or Group	Current Support	Gap or Challenge	One Simple Action
Example: families and caregivers	Attend meetings or share learner needs	Some families are hard to reach	Use one simple message or meeting time that works for them



Endnotes

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TEACHING INCLUSION, BUILDING BELONGING

*A Toolkit for Educators and Education Unions
to Promote Inclusion and End Stigma Related
to Leprosy (Hansen's Disease)*

MODULE 2

Classroom Guidance for Educators



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Published by Education International - September 2026
ISBN 978-92-9276-042-7 (PDF)