



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN ACTION

GLOSSARY OF TERMS



This Glossary has been developed as a result of on-going discussions with the IEA Project Steering Group members during the project to refine the 'conceptual framework'. Often the descriptions or definitions have been reached through a process of compromise as specific terms may be used in different ways in different languages and also vary according to country situations.

The definitions given fall into three categories:

- Project working definitions as discussed by the project Steering Group;
- Definitions supported by references from current literature, for example terms which have been defined by UNESCO;
- 'Dictionary definitions' for words which may require some explanation/clarification but which are not project specific.

The focus is on content related terms. The terms are presented in English alphabetical order.

DEFINITIONS

Accessible

Able to be reached, entered or understood.

Assessment

Assessment refers to the ways teachers or other professionals systematically collect and use information about a pupil's level of achievement and/or development in different areas of their educational experience (academic, behaviour or social).

Assessment for Learning

This term is used in a general way in many countries to refer to assessment procedures that inform decision-making about teaching methods and next steps in a pupil's learning. Assessment for learning is a process usually carried out in classrooms by teachers/other professionals that involves finding and interpreting evidence and working with learners to establish where they are in their learning, the next steps to be taken and best ways of moving forward.

Authentic

Reliable/real or trustworthy, genuine.



**Barriers**

Obstacles that prevent learners accessing a full range of learning opportunities and limit their participation in society. Disability is often considered to be due to 'disabling barriers' which can be addressed by designing enabling, accessible environments. Barriers can be due to attitudes, language, culture, organisation of support services, power relations and structures within society.

Child friendly schools

Such schools adopt a rights-based, multi-sectoral approach, concerned with the whole child. The UNICEF website states: '*Schools should operate in the best interests of the child. Educational environments must be safe, healthy and protective, endowed with trained teachers, adequate resources and appropriate physical, emotional and social conditions for learning. Within them, children's rights must be protected and their voices must be heard. Learning environments must be a haven for children to learn and grow, with innate respect for their identities and varied needs. The CFS model promotes inclusiveness, gender-sensitivity, tolerance, dignity and personal empowerment.*' http://www.unicef.org/education/index_focus_schools.html

Conceptual framework

A framework of theories, assumptions, principles and rules. This underpins the work of the project and provides a 'shared vision' to guide project thinking, ensuring coherence and consistency.

Criteria

Principles or standards that examples can be judged by or considered against.

Curriculum

The curriculum can be broadly defined as a reflection of the kind of society to which we aspire (core objectives, concepts); the pedagogical and administrative action plans of an education system (frameworks, structures, supports); an interactive, non-linear and dynamic tool and process of pedagogical development (pedagogy, disciplinary content, didactic strategies, assessment, learning outcomes, encompassing the design and management of the curricula) (IBE-UNESCO, 2010).

Differentiation

Curriculum differentiation is a way of planning, assessing and teaching a heterogeneous group of students in one classroom where all students are learning at their optimal level. (UNESCO, 2004). Differentiation takes account of learner differences and matches curriculum content and teaching methods to learning styles and learner needs. It may focus on input, task, outcome, output, response, resources or support. Care must be taken, however, that differentiation does not lead to lower expectations and segregation within the mainstream system by offering a range of differentiated tasks to everyone in class, giving learners some choice in what they do and how they respond.

Discrimination

To act on the basis of a difference between people, make an unjust distinction on the basis of, for example, gender, disability, ethnic background etc. Legislation is in place in many countries to ensure the right of individuals to be treated equally, for example in education and employment.

Disparity

Inequality or difference that may result from different outcomes or differential treatment of people with distinct characteristics.





Diversity

A multi-faceted concept that can contain many elements and levels of distinction, e.g. age, ethnicity, class, gender, physical abilities, race, sexual orientation, religious status, educational background, geographical location, income, marital status, parental status and work experiences. OECD (2010) define diversity as: *'characteristics that can affect the specific ways in which developmental potential and learning are realised, including cultural, linguistic, ethnic, religious and socio-economic differences.'*

Education for All (EFA)

An international initiative first launched in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990 to bring the benefits of education to 'every citizen in every society'. In order to realise this aim, a broad coalition of national governments, civil society groups and development agencies such as UNESCO and the World Bank committed to achieving six specific education goals:

- Expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
- Ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, those in difficult circumstances, and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free, and compulsory primary education of good quality.
- Ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes.
- Achieve a 50% improvement in adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
- Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
- Improve all aspects of the quality of education and ensure the excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

Equality

Equality in education may be understood to imply that everyone is treated in a way that guarantees access to the same educational opportunities. Equality is based on the value that all human persons are equal in fundamental potential and self-worth.

Equal opportunities

The same chances to take part in activities, access services, etc. with no barriers to education and equal life prospects for individuals.





Equity

Equity in education has two dimensions that are inter-linked:

- Fairness – making sure that personal and social circumstances, for example gender, socio-economic status or ethnic origin, do not present an obstacle to achieving educational potential. This aims to minimise divergence across social groups by bringing the achievements of the less advantaged to the same level as those of the more advantaged groups and ensure a basic common standard of education for all learners.
- Inclusion – meeting the needs of all individuals through differential treatment in order to take student diversity into account (Ainscow et al., 2006).

Evaluation

A teacher or other professional reflecting upon all the factors involved in the whole teaching and learning process (which may include assessment of pupils' learning) in order to make decisions about next steps in their work.

Inclusive education

UNESCO (2009) give the following definition: *'Inclusive education is a process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners ... As an overall principle, it should guide all education policies and practices, starting from the fact that education is a basic human right and the foundation for a more just and equal society'*.

Inclusion

Inclusion can be seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all children, youth and adults through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision that covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children (UNESCO, 2009).

It implies a radical reform of the school in terms of educational policy and curricular frameworks, which includes educational content, assessment, pedagogy and the systemic grouping of pupils within institutional and curricular structures.

It is based on a values system that welcomes and celebrates diversity arising from gender, nationality, race, language, social background, level of educational achievement, disability, etc. Inclusion also implies that all teachers are responsible for the education of all learners.

Indicator

An indicator is defined as a parameter, or a value derived from a parameter, which aims to provide information about the state of a phenomenon. Indicators can provide a systemic approach to evaluation, useful for complex areas, such as education when longer term outcomes are important and the work does not correspond to a straightforward input-output or linear model. Numbers or statistics are not necessarily required and indicators can highlight the relationship between different components. Indicators are a dynamic system with explicit values that will differ according to the cultural context and project elements.



***Inclusive curriculum***

A curriculum that accommodates the needs of all learners. An inclusive curriculum aims to successfully educate all learners while celebrating the resulting diversity (Opertti, R. et al., 2010).

Integration

This is generally linked to preparing pupils for placement in ordinary schools. It carries with it an idea that learners need to be educationally and/or socially 'ready' for transfer from special to ordinary school. The expectation is that learners will adapt to the school rather than the school changing to accommodate the learner and meet a wider range of diverse needs.

Marginalisation

Barely provided for or able to access services or participate in society. Generally understood as a social process by which vulnerable groups are moved out of the mainstream to a powerless position in society.

Monitoring

To be aware of the state of a system, and to observe a situation for any changes that may occur over time, using a monitoring or measuring device.

Participation

Taking a part in, or sharing decisions about one's own life and community – a fundamental right of citizenship. Hart (1992) outlined 8 degrees of participation for children and young people and this work has been very influential in increasing attention to the voice of the child. Hart says that participation is the means by which a democracy is built and it is a standard against which democracies should be measured.

Personalised learning

This involves an expectation that everyone will participate and achieve fulfilment and success. Individual targets are set following appropriate assessment and support is provided to ensure targets are met. Personalised learning, therefore, has a focus on learning to learn strategies, assessment for learning, curriculum choice, student voice and mentoring/support. The Agency work on Key Principles (2009) defines personalised learning as follows: *'where the learner sets, records and reviews their own learning goals in collaboration with their teachers and families and is helped to develop a structured way of learning independently in order to take control of their own learning'*.

Policy Guidelines suggested actions

The UNESCO Policy Guidelines set out policy concerns, policy questions, gaps to be resolved and suggested actions. It is the suggested actions that are the focus of the IEA project.

Qualitative

Concerned with/depending on quality. Qualitative research attempts to explore issues of 'why' and 'how' through the analysis of a range of information usually in the form of words (e.g. notes from observations/interviews) pictures, videos or objects rather than statistical analysis. This type of research is more subjective as interpretation of events is important. Data is less readily generalised.



**Quality assurance**

A programme for the systematic monitoring and evaluation of the various aspects of a project, service, or facility to ensure that standards of quality are being met.

Quality education

There is no one definition, list of criteria, a definitive curriculum, or list of topics for a quality education. Quality education is a dynamic concept that changes and evolves with time and changes in the social, economic, and environmental contexts of place. Because quality education must be locally relevant and culturally appropriate, quality education will take many forms around the world. (UNESCO, 2005) Quality education is an effective means to fight poverty, build democracies and foster peaceful societies. Quality education empowers individuals, gives them voice, unlocks their potential, opens pathways to self-actualisation and broadens perspectives to open minds to a pluralist world.

Quantitative

Measured/measurable by or concerned with quantity. As opposed to qualitative research, quantitative research is concerned with analysis of numerical data.

Reliability

In research, reliability refers to the consistency of a measure – a test may be said to be reliable if the same result is obtained repeatedly.

Social cohesion

This is a multi-faceted concept. Dimensions include: material conditions such as employment, income, health, housing and education; social order and respect for others; relationships between individuals and communities; inclusion in society and equal access to opportunities/life chances. The promotion of social cohesion is intended to build more inclusive societies by giving everyone the chance to have access to fundamental rights and employment, to enjoy the benefits of economic growth with equity and social justice and thereby play a full role in society

Social exclusion

The European Commission defines social exclusion as: *‘a process whereby certain individuals are pushed to the edge of society and prevented from participating fully by virtue of their poverty, or lack of basic competencies and lifelong learning opportunities, or as a result of discrimination. This distances them from job, income and education opportunities as well as social and community networks and activities. They have little access to power and decision-making bodies and thus often feel powerless and unable to take control over the decisions that affect their day to day lives.’* Social exclusion may result from ‘rootlessness’ and migration; rural exodus; dispersed families; disorganised urbanisation; rupture of traditional society and higher levels of education required to gain employment, amongst other things. (Acedo et al., 2008)



Social inclusion

Social inclusion is a process which ensures that those at risk of poverty and social exclusion gain the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and to enjoy a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live. It ensures that they have greater participation in decision-making which affects their lives and access to their fundamental rights (as defined in the Charter of the Fundamental Rights of the European Union).

Sustainability

Ability to keep going/maintain. Projects are more likely to be sustainable if they have: clear goals, shared with all participants; sound financial arrangements; effective marketing strategies; plans for changes in personnel and planned links with existing work.

UNESCO Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The MDGs are eight goals to be achieved by 2015 that respond to the world's main development challenges. The MDGs are drawn from the actions and targets contained in the Millennium Declaration that was adopted by 189 nations and signed by 147 heads of state and governments during the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000.

UNESCO Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education

A document that aims to assist countries in strengthening the focus on inclusion in their strategies and plans for education. The document was accepted in the UNESCO 48th International Conference on Education.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) 2006

The Convention and its Optional Protocol was adopted on 13 December 2006 and entered into force on 3 May 2008. The Convention marks a 'paradigm shift' in attitudes and approaches to persons with disabilities, viewing people with disabilities as 'subjects' with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society. It also represents a paradigm shift from a 'medical' model which views the impairments as the problem towards a 'social' model which perceives the problem as the barriers which have been constructed by societies.

Validity

The quality of being defensible, well-grounded or sound. In research, validity is the extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure.

Whole school approach

A whole school approach is one that involves all members of a school community (i.e. students, staff, parents and carers, community members) and seeks to include all areas of school life. It recognises that real learning occurs both through the 'formal' curriculum and through the 'hidden' curriculum and learners' experience of life in school and community.



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