

The following sections contain **practical tips for teaching children** as to remove barriers to learning, development and participation related to different types of impairments.

“Practical Tips for Teaching Children with Hearing Impairments

- *Organize the classroom so that all the children are sitting in a U shape. This way the children can see each other, which will make it easier for children with hearing impairment to use sign language, read lips and understand mimics, thereby making it possible to participate more actively in discussions and classroom activities.*
- *Spend some time giving face-to-face instruction, since group situations can be quite challenging for children with hearing impairment.*
- *Look at the child (with hearing impairment) while speaking to her/him.*
- *Speak slowly and clearly, but not too loud.*
- *Use short, simple, and clear sentences.*
- *Be consistent in use of language.*
- *Use clear mimics and gestures.*
- *Use “natural” signs (i.e. for tired, sleeping, eating or drinking) if you are not able use formal sign language.*
- *Ask the child (if s/he has an oral language) to repeat what s/he has understood.*
- *Write down key words of information given during the class and give it to the child at the end of every day.*
- *Work together with an audiologist (if available) to teach and encourage the child to use her/his residual hearing to the maximum extent possible, even if the preferred means of communication is sign language (manual communication).*
- *Reduce all unnecessary noise, as multiple sources of sound will make it more difficult for the child to use her/his residual hearing. This is also important if the child is using a hearing aid (amplification).*
- *If some of the classrooms in the school are more noisy than others (noise from busy roads, trains, airports or factories), the school should be flexible and move the class who has children with hearing impairment (as well as classes who have children with visual impairment or other disabilities) to a less noisy classroom.*
- *Be flexible with time, as most children with hearing impairment (both deaf and hard of hearing) will struggle to understand everything that goes on in the classroom (as a result of their hearing loss).*
- *Focus more on content than on grammar when assessing the writing of children who primarily use sign language for communication. Because the grammar of sign languages is very different from written languages, these children are in fact writing in a “second” language.*

Please take into consideration that:

- *Facial hair - beards and moustaches (worn by teachers) may affect the ability of children with hearing impairment to read lip movement and understand facial mimics.*

- *Face covering - veils covering eyes, eye brows, nose, mouth and cheeks (worn by teachers and fellow students), will affect the ability of children with hearing impairment to read lips and understand mimics.*
- *The majority of children who are deaf (profound hearing loss) are born to hearing parents. The school should therefore also attempt to provide instruction for parents on implications of deafness within the family.*
- *A child who is deaf may need more time to learn than other children. This is because s/he must learn to read and write in a “second” language – a language that is quite different from her/his first language.*
- *A child who is hard of hearing may also need more time to learn than other children, as s/he will not always be able to hear the teacher’s voice and what the other children talk about in the classroom. Therefore, much of the information given during the lessons will be lost.”*

(“Teaching Children with Disabilities in Inclusive Settings” – pp. 39-41

In “Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments Specialized Booklet 3”, UNESCO Bangkok, 2009)

“Practical Tips for Teaching Children with Visual Impairments

- *Select books with good print quality and layout. The text should ideally be left-aligned (with an even left margin, and an uneven right margin). This will make it easier for children with low vision to read, with a minimum of assistive devices. It will also benefit other children who struggle with reading.*
- *Books and other reading material should be provided in Braille for those who depend on Braille for reading and writing. The books should be provided for free or at the same price as sighted children pay for their books (in ink print).*
- *Children who write Braille should have access to writing frames and stylus for free, or at the same price as pen and pencils.*
- *Appropriate visual devices should be provided to children with low vision based on their individual needs as well as availability of devices.*
- *Orientation and mobility (O&M) training should be provided – how to move about with a white cane, use trailing techniques as well as touch and protection techniques, effective use of landmarks (including sound and echo), guiding techniques (human guide) as well as techniques for free movement in space.*
- *Space awareness activities – enable children with visual impairment to move about in open space in order to feel confident and in control over their own bodies and movements.*
- *Activities of daily living (ADL) – many children with visual impairment need training in performing daily tasks that for most other children are learnt by mimicking and copying their parents, siblings and peers. These are, amongst others: going to the toilet, washing and dressing, tying shoelaces, eating and drinking without spilling, pouring a glass of water, and using cutlery (or sticks).*
- *If you have children with albinism in your class, please make sure that their eyes and skin is protected from the sun when playing outside or having physical education, ideally with long sleeves, long trousers, skirts with stockings, caps and sun glasses, because their skin will burn easily in the sun. Children with albinism are therefore extremely vulnerable to skin cancer.*

- *Seat the children with visual impairment so that they can hear well because they will depend more on their hearing than most other children, both for learning and participation.*
- *If some classrooms in the school are noisier than others – (noise from busy roads, trains, airports or factories), the school should be flexible and move the class who has children with visual impairment (as well as classes who have children with hearing impairment or other disabilities) to a less noisy classroom.*
- *We should seat children with low vision so that they can maximize the use of their residual vision as well as prevent them from being blinded by light (reflection from sunshine and other light sources). Many children who are blind have some light perception and feel bothered by light, while others will benefit from light because they will be able to use their light perception for mobility purposes.*
- *The seating arrangements should be fixed or at least not changed too frequently, so that the children can orient themselves and find the way to their seats independently, as well as know where all their friends are seated (located).*
- *Prevent the classroom, especially floor areas, from being cluttered to ease mobility for the children concerned and prevent accidents and injuries.*
- *Likewise, important objects in the classroom (books, learning material and devises) should not be moved around too much. Have fixed places so that children with visual impairment can find things independently.*
- *Think about a “goal” that should be set for the child with visual impairment (what should be learned throughout the school year), and try to find ways and strategies to help the child achieve this goal. This will help you to plan for when you might need external support from an itinerant resource teacher, or an assistant teacher (if these are available), how the other children in the class can help out, and what kind of adjusted teaching and learning material would be needed. Remember it may take time to get hold of books in Braille, an abacus or other material – if these are at all available.*
- *Spend some time to explain to the child with visual impairment about the process of learning in class before they start, especially in classes where series of different activities are required, such as in science experiments, physical education, cooking and crafts classes. It is also important to explain and show how different equipment that is used in the class works because children with visual impairment might not be able to follow the general instructions.*
- *Read everything that is written on the blackboard aloud and slowly.*
- *Try to speak while facing the children (not away from them) because children with visual impairment greatly depend on their hearing to receive information, and they need to hear you clearly.*
- *Involve the other children in the class to help out. Explaining a visual concept to a person who cannot see is an interesting challenge for most sighted children (and adults). It can help them to see things from different perspectives and deepen their understanding of shapes, colors and functions. Assisting their friends with visual impairment will contribute greatly to their social, emotional and academic development, and be mutually enriching.*
- *Encourage the class to think about how to include their peers with visual impairment in physical education programs. Inclusion is not just the responsibility of teachers, but also of students. Through physical education, children can learn how to include their peers with disabilities in after-school activities, as well. This is one of the most important points in inclusive education*

because children with visual impairment tend to be excluded from most after-school activities, even when they are included in regular classroom activities.

- *Produce tactile learning material as part of “class projects.” If the children make tactile maps, for example, it will help all children learn geography better, especially children who depend on oral and tactile information for learning.*
- *Use real objects that the child can feel and handle, rather than just working abstractly with pen and paper. This is important for all children, but especially for children with disabilities.*
- *It is difficult for a child with visual impairment to understand the concept of “things,” especially very large and very small things. Therefore, provide as many opportunities as possible for the children to touch different “things.” If a big tree has fallen down or been cut down near the school, take the children there to see and touch it. This will provide better understanding of size, height and length for all the children in the class, not “just” for the child with visual impairment.*
- *Remember that it takes much, much longer to write Braille characters than ink letters – one character can have up to five dots. Those dots are embossed separately, when using a stylus and a writing-frame.”*

(“Teaching Children with Disabilities in Inclusive Settings” – pp. 48-52

In “Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments Specialized Booklet 3”, UNESCO Bangkok, 2009)

“Practical Tips for Teaching Children with Deaf-blindness

- *The first step would be to find out how much residual hearing and/or vision the child has, if any.*
- *If the child has residual vision and/or hearing, we need to try to make use of it to create communication and encourage learning, development and participation.*
- *We should attempt to invite and develop communication by offering our hands under the child’s hands, instead of just shaping her/his hands into formal signs. Signs may not yet have any meaning for her/him.*
- *If the child offers to share her/his toys with us, we should follow what her/his hands are doing and share the child’s exploring.*
- *We should make our hands available to the child, next to hers/his, and allow the child to use our hands, rather than us directing her/his hands.*
- *We should follow the child’s lead. We must acknowledge and try to interpret the communication efforts of the child before we can expect the child to understand our formal signs.*
- *If a child has very few signs, we should accept her/his signs by imitating them under her/his hands, then modelling the sign for what we think s/he is trying to tell us (again with our hands under her/his).*
- *If the child has sufficient functional vision, we should model the signs within her/his field of vision.*
- *We should try to build on the child’s own communication by developing a more formal system when the child is ready. This approach will also foster a trusting relationship with the child by giving more control to the child and allowing her/him to learn the power of her/his communication.”*

(“Teaching Children with Disabilities in Inclusive Settings” – pp. 88-89

In “Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments Specialized Booklet 3”, UNESCO Bangkok, 2009)

“Practical Tips for Teaching Children with Physical Impairments

- *Classrooms and school facilities (libraries, toilets, sport grounds and play areas) should be made physically accessible for all children.*
- *Children who use wheelchairs, calipers or crutches for mobility may find it difficult moving around within a traditional classroom blocked by rows of chairs and desks. It is therefore important that we “set up” the classroom in such a way that all the children can move about freely. Children must not just have physical access to their own desk, but also to other parts of the classroom for group activities or just to fetch something from a shelf or cupboard, or to paste a drawing on the wall.*
- *Children who get easily tired, and need much rest, may find it difficult to come to school on time or to stay in school the whole day. We should therefore repeat important information once or twice to make sure that all the children have heard it at least once. This will also benefit children with ADHD and children who may have had difficulties understanding the information the first time around.*
- *Children with physical impairments may sometimes wish/need to use their own furniture, such as ergonomic chairs and sloped writing tables. This should be accommodated without being obtrusive for the other children.*
- *Specially-designed furniture should, if possible, be made available for those who need chairs and tables that differ from standard classroom furniture. This does not have to be expensive. Chairs can be designed based on local models.*
- *Some children would be more comfortable standing rather than sitting down – especially children with back injuries. This should be accommodated in the classroom.*
- *Children who are motor impaired, or are without one or both arms/hands, may need to use a tape recorder or an electronic note-taker during class. They should also have the option of providing giving in their homework on a cassette tape or printed out from a computer with voice-recognition software.*
- *Many children with physical disabilities will need additional time to read, write, or take notes. This may affect their classroom participation as well as the time they would require to finish assignments. Teachers and school administrators (as well as school inspectors and supervisors) should make sure that the children concerned get the time they need to properly show what they have learned in school. This is important for all children, both with and without disabilities. It is particularly important that extra time is given during exams.*
- *Some children with physical impairment may need extensions on deadlines for homework and classroom activities that involve locating and using library resources. Teachers should therefore provide reading lists, a list of things to do, and learning material well before the start of the activity, so that the children concerned can prepare properly and begin early.*
- *Activities that take place outside of school (such as visits to museums, galleries and sport activities), should be planned and implemented in such a way that all children can participate and benefit from the activities. If the class visits a museum or exhibition, it should be a place that is physically accessible. If sport activities are organized, they should be planned in such a way that all the children are physically “challenged” according to their individual potential and abilities.*

- *The other children in the class should be encouraged to help and assist their classmates with disabilities as part of their own social, emotional and academic development, which is mutually enriching.*

*(“Teaching Children with Disabilities in Inclusive Settings” – pp. 55-56
In “Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments
Specialized Booklet 3”, UNESCO Bangkok, 2009)*

“Practical Tips for Teaching Children with Developmental Impairments

- *Use simple words and sentences when giving instructions. Check that s/he has understood.*
- *Use real objects that the child can feel and handle, rather than just working abstractly with pen and paper. This is important for all children, especially for children with disabilities.*
- *Do one activity at a time with the child. Make it clear when one activity is finished and another one is starting.*
- *Break a task down into small steps or learning objectives. The child should start with an activity that s/he can do already before moving on to something that is more difficult. Go back one step if the child encounters problems.*
- *Try to link the tasks to the child’s experience and everyday life (this is important for all children).*
- *Give extra practice by repeating the task a few times. This will insure that the child masters the skill. It will help increase her/his self-confidence; however, repetitions should not be exaggerated.*
- *Repeat a few main tasks with certain intervals so that they become “habits” to prevent skills from being forgotten.*
- *Ask other children (who are doing well academically) to help and assist their classmates with developmental impairment as part of their own social, emotional, and academic development, which is also mutually enriching.*
- *Be generous with praise (honest praise) and encouragement when the child is successful and masters new skills, as well as when s/he is trying (and working) very hard.*
- *Motivate the other children in the class to include the child with developmental impairment in out-of-class play and sport activities, which is also mutually enriching.*
- *Ignore undesirable behavior if the child is doing it to get your attention. Give praise and attention when the child’s behavior is good.*

The three main principles for teaching children with developmental impairment:

- 1. Divide skill development into small steps and allow for slow progression.*
- 2. Make frequent repetitions.*
- 3. Give a lot of praise and motivation.”*

*(“Teaching Children with Disabilities in Inclusive Settings” – pp. 64-65
In “Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments
Specialized Booklet 3”, UNESCO Bangkok, 2009)*

“Practical Tips for Teaching Children with Specific Learning (Reading and Writing) Difficulties

- *The teacher should make sure that all the children in the class feel valued and important – including those children who experience barriers to learning, development and participation.*
- *Encourage and motivate all the children in the class to do the best they can.*

- Have high expectations for intellectual stimulation (do not underestimate the children concerned), but reasonable expectations for written responses and reading skills.
- Explain things many times and in many different ways – sometimes to the whole class, to a smaller group of children (as many will benefit from this), as well as individually to the child with dyslexia.
- When you give instructions, be deliberate and use few and accurate words, and make simple sentences. Allow time for the meaning of the words to “sink in.” Make sure that all the children have understood by asking them to explain it back to you or to another child.
- Guide the children about how to tackle tasks systematically. Children with dyslexia will often need to be taught things that other children learn automatically without your help (this will benefit many other children experiencing barriers to learning, as well). This might include: how to clean up their desk; put away their books after they have finished with them; get dressed properly; remind them to look for something they have misplaced; pack their school bag; and tie their shoelaces. It is important that you (as a teacher) and their parents recognize the importance of taking time to teach these skills in a calm, systematic and repeated regular routine.
- Try to evaluate written assignments together with the child. If possible, focus on what the child has done right (content, spelling, grammar, sentence structure). Select some of the main errors and concentrate on those, instead of overwhelming the child with corrections.
- When you evaluate (grade or mark) a written assignment in a child’s absence, use two colors for corrections and suggestions – one for content and another for spelling and presentation. Only spelling that has been taught specifically should be corrected.
- While you are looking at children’s work, try to understand the reasons for their mistakes and give them the chance to explain their difficulties to you. This will help you to know what they need to be taught or to practice.
- Watch out for signs of falling confidence and self-esteem.
- Enable all the children in the class to show their skills and knowledge. Allow them to share their interests with their friends, tell stories and participate in drama and dance. Children with dyslexia will often “shine” orally - teachers should encourage this as it build confidence and self-esteem.
- Remember that children with dyslexia have to work much harder than many of the other children in the class. Look out for fatigue and make sure that they get enough rest by doing tasks they master well, and with which they feel comfortable.
- Be generous with praise (honest praise) and encouragement when the child is successful, shows progress and masters new skills, as well as when s/he is trying (and working) very hard (even if the expected results are not met)."

(“Teaching Children with Disabilities in Inclusive Settings” – pp. 71-72

*In “Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments
Specialized Booklet 3”, UNESCO Bangkok, 2009)*

“Practical Tips for Teaching Children with ADHD

- Allow children with ADHD to move while learning. Many children with ADHD need to be moving while listening. If we require them to sit still while learning, they will use all their concentration on sitting still and very little (if anything) for learning. However, if we allow them to choose their own motion, it will almost certainly be very distracting to the teachers and other children in the classroom. It is, thus, important to choose activities for them.
- Allow children with ADHD to respond orally. Writing is sheer torture for many children with ADHD. When doing mathematics, jumping from the math calculating part of the brain to the put thoughts down in writing part of the brain can for many seem like an impossible task. The

child may take a section of writing and recopy it with no problem. S/he can dictate each and every step of a complicated math problem with great ease. Yet tie the two together, and a 5-minute task may turn into 45 minutes.

- Integrate motion into most learning activities. When learning spelling and mathematics, the children can play a game where they line up in the classroom according to how long their names are: TAUFIK will stand in front of BUDI and IIS because his name has 6 letters, but MUHAMMAD will be standing in front of TAUFIK because his name has 8 letters, KARTINI will have to stand between MUHAMMAD and TAUFIK because her name has 7 letters, and so on. This is a good game to play to help children learn both spelling and mathematics, and to be physically active at the same time. The game can be played inside the classroom, as well as in the school yard.
- Give your students a checklist of the things that need to be done every day. This helps children with ADHD to be accountable and develop responsibility. Many children with ADHD want to know what is going to happen next. They do not necessarily like surprises, and it gives them great satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment when they can tick off each assignment as it's completed."

"Practical Tips on Teaching Children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and How to Develop ASD-Friendly Schools

- All teachers should see it as their responsibility to identify and address the needs of all children, especially the needs of children with disabilities - including the needs of children with autistic spectrum disorder.
- One teacher should volunteer as a resource person to the school.
- Appoint one teacher (ideally s/he should volunteer) that will become the main focal point for autistic spectrum disorder. S/he should be trained and later provide guidance for her/his colleagues who come in contact with and/or are teaching children with autistic spectrum disorder.
- Encourage teachers with knowledge and experience in teaching and working with children with autistic spectrum disorder to share their expertise with others in and out of school – including community outreach programs - as well as with educational authorities and in other schools nearby.
- Continuously update the school "information bank" on new developments related to autistic spectrum disorder for the use of teachers, school administrators and parents.
- Consult specialist staff – resource teachers from support units or resource centers. Encourage the creation of a dynamic support system.
- Ensure that children with ASD have individual learning plans that are tailored to meet their needs.
- Provide opportunities for children with ASD to generalize skills learnt in one setting to other situations/settings."

("Teaching Children with Disabilities in Inclusive Settings" – pp. 75-79 In "Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments Specialized Booklet 3", UNESCO Bangkok, 2009)

"Practical Tips for Teaching Children with Social, Emotional and Behavioral Difficulties

- We should try to find out why the child experiences difficulties. It is important to respond based on an informed assessment of the situation. We should discuss it with the child and, if necessary, with her/his parents to try to come up with a strategy to solve the problem together.
- Children should be challenged (intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically) according to their individual abilities. If we consistently give tasks to children that are too complicated for

them to master, or too easy, too boring, or irrelevant for their lives, some children may react by “misbehaving” to provoke a response, get attention or create a distraction for their feeling of “failure.”

- We should make sure all children feel appreciated and valued, regardless of their abilities, disabilities or backgrounds. If children feel ignored, some may “misbehave” to get attention.
- We should clearly explain the consequences that different behavior and actions will have. This way, children will realize/understand that they do not only choose their behavior, but also influence the response to that behavior. The responsibility for the response is therefore transferred from parents and teachers to the children themselves because they will have to experience the consequences of their actions. The response should be measured and in accordance with the information the children received before they made their decision to act a certain way.
- We should develop a set of manageable rules for each of the children in the class. Start with just a few because otherwise they will be overwhelmed. These rules should be developed in collaboration with the child and her/his parents. Different children should be given different rules to keep, which may demand different levels of self-control and discipline depending on their abilities to control their behavior.”

(“Teaching Children with Disabilities in Inclusive Settings” – pp. 84-85

In “Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments Specialized Booklet 3”, UNESCO Bangkok, 2009)

Special schools may exist together with the mainstream schools: *“I would like to say at this point that I don’t see the role of special school being diminished in any way because of the increasing number of children with special needs attending mainstream schools. There will always be a vital role for our special school and a place for them in our society. There is also huge potential there for the sharing of knowledge and tapping into the expertise of teachers in both special and mainstream schools! Teachers may need to become inclusive on a professional level and value the experiences of all teachers in both special and mainstream schools. Inherent in the philosophy of inclusion is the need to be aware of all children and their varying needs – it is up to us as teachers to be aware of their needs and to accommodate them in whatever setting is most appropriate to them. It is up to the schools to accommodate children in mainstream if that is their choice.”*

<http://www.into.ie/ROI/Publications/InclusiveSchool.pdf>

UNICEF has most fully developed the **child-friendly school model**, but it shares characteristics with many other **models that are concerned with outcomes** more than only academic effectiveness and measurable student achievement. Such a school must, of course, be effective in **helping children learn what they want to, and need to, learn**. But it must also be democratic in nature; protective and healthy for children (both their physical and psychological health); sensitive to issues of gender; welcoming of student, parent, and community participation; and, above all, inclusive. In being inclusive, it must therefore: (1) not exclude or discriminate against on the basis of difference; (2) provide education that is free and compulsory, affordable and accessible; and (3) respect and welcome diversity and respond to it as an opportunity and not as a problem.

“This has several implications for what child-friendly schools must do:

- *They must have a mechanism for identifying and enrolling the excluded - a kind of child-focused, school- and community-based EMIS which collects data on all children, aged 0-6 and beyond,*

their family circumstances, their health history, and their educational achievement. This might be based on local, community-level structures and data such as village government censuses, or be a function of the parent-teacher-community association or school committee, or even be the responsibility of the students themselves, mapping houses in the community with out-of-school children and working with teachers to get them enrolled.

- *They must have a healthy, protective, and inclusive school culture and learning environment - hygienic, safe, free of corporal punishment, and respectful of difference and diversity. They must not exclude on the basis of difference (language, gender, income, caste, ability) and therefore resist the kinds of means tests - financial or academic - which are becoming more and more prevalent in schools around the region, beginning even with kindergarten.*
- *They must promote more targeted, affirmative action in regard to excluded learners. This can mean the abolition of school fees and other costs for some or (preferably) all students, targeted school food programs, assistance with transport, support for teachers to recognize children with emotional-behavioral problems, basic counselling skills for teachers, the provision of teacher aids and other special support (so-called “assistive devices”) for children with disabilities, and the remediation for children with learning difficulties such as delayed literacy.*
- *They must be able to assess learning differences among their students and then personalize instruction to match these differences. This can mean working in the mother-tongue of the students (even when more than one is spoken in a classroom), providing special assistance to children with disabilities (e.g., putting sight- and hearing-impaired students at the front of the room), and teaching in more gender-responsive ways in contexts where the sex of learners makes a difference.”*

<http://www.idp-europe.org/eenet-asia/eenet-asia-9-EN/page24.php>

Analysis of inclusive practice in the world and analysis of inclusive school characteristics showed that there are a certain number of **general principles in inclusive education**, and a certain number of **characteristics present in all schools implementing inclusive education**.

*“The first and basic principle of an inclusive system is providing **equal opportunities to all**: every child has an unassailable right to education and no child can be excluded from education – the key belief of inclusive schools is that every child can learn and has benefits of education. The principle of inclusive schools is that schools are adjusted to pupils’ needs and not vice versa – that pupils are adjusted to the school’s needs. **Inclusive education practice confirms the importance of the attitude that individual differences among children are a source of richness and diversity, and not a problem, and that various needs and the individual pace of learning and development can be met successfully with a wide range of flexible approaches.***

*Analysis of inclusive school development showed that inclusion is not only a crucial point in a school’s orientation and organization, but also that the development of the inclusive dimension in schools is a **continuous process of changes** directed towards strengthening and encouraging different ways of participation of pupils, teachers, parents and members of the local community in the school’s work. It is also directed towards developing culture, policy and practice which meet pupils’ diversities, towards identifying and removing obstacles in learning and participating, towards developing a suitable curriculum, and to suitable teachers’ trainings and developing different ways of supporting pupils in*

schools. In this process, when a school is determined towards an inclusive approach, an issue of high importance is the further development of positive attitudes towards pupils belonging to very sensitive and marginalized groups and constant orientation towards monitoring educational needs and identifying obstacles for the meeting of those needs.”

*(“A guide for advancing inclusive education practice”,
Fund for an Open Society, Belgrade, 2009 – pp. 28-29)*

Restructuring the educational system as to become inclusive is more than environment and architecture. For an issue as broad and deep as inclusive education, the need for a whole-school approach to change is essential. At a minimum, this involves the follow aspects:

- ***“Inclusive school policies.** Individual schools, supported by their clusters and local education office as well as parents, community leaders, and their students, should base their school self-assessment and development plans (e.g., goals, targets, gaps to be filled, ways to fill them, etc.) on the principles of inclusion. This means actively looking for children in the community not in school and getting them enrolled, identifying the most important barriers to access to and learning in the school and trying to eliminate them, personalizing instruction to respond to diversity among its students, and welcoming this diversity and using it creatively to improve the quality of education provided.*
- ***Sympathetic and knowledgeable school leadership and supervision.** Head teachers and principals, supervisors and inspectors, must not only internalize the philosophy and principles of inclusiveness but also be able to support the practice of inclusive teaching and learning.*
- ***Support services/personnel.** Additional support, even extra staff, should be sought to assist in the implementation of more inclusive education. These might be teachers trained in special needs education, perhaps based in local resource centers (e.g., former special schools); para-teachers, teaching assistants, and community members able to assist in bilingual education programs; school counsellors/senior women teachers to support girls’ development towards adolescence; “outreach” teachers able to provide education to children needing to remain at home; and remedial teachers, especially in early literacy, to ensure that slow learners receive the support they need.*
- ***In-service professional development and good practices.** Making education more inclusive and responsive to all learners, as we have seen, requires new teacher skills. In-service professional development is therefore required, and good practices in inclusive education should be sought, disseminated, and adapted to different contexts as needed.*
- ***Local curriculum content.** Inclusion is made easier to the extent that the curriculum is made relevant to the local context and needs of learners rather than being completely standardized to a national and often urban-biased context. Many education systems, in fact, now mandate that a certain percentage of the curriculum in basic education (e.g., 25%) can be “local content”; but this is easier said than done. There is therefore the need to develop local competencies and skills to adapt and develop curricula to local and more inclusive contexts. The building of teachers’ capacity to be co-developers of such curricula is an important part of the process.*
- ***Community involvement.** More inclusive education cannot be achieved without the support and assistance of the local community. This is partly a matter of attitudes; if parents do not want children with disabilities, or of different castes or ethnicity, or affected by HIV/AIDS in the same*

classroom with their own children - and the school does nothing to combat this exclusionary attitude, then inclusion will never be achieved. Communities must therefore be encouraged to support the education of all children living in them. Parents and other community members can also more actively support inclusive practices; they can be involved, for example, in mapping children not in school, in enrolment campaigns, and in support in the classroom for excluded groups of learners or for mother-tongue teaching and learning.”

(<http://www.idp-europe.org/eenet-asia/eenet-asia-9-EN/page24.php>)