



# FOSTERING SCHOOL SUCCESS FOR ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS



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## TOOLKIT FOR A DEMOCRATIC AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOL CULTURE

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

# **FOSTERING SCHOOL SUCCESS FOR ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS**

**TOOLKIT FOR A DEMOCRATIC  
AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOL CULTURE**

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# Introduction

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**W**elcome to the tool “Fostering school success for ethnic minority students”. This manual is designed to equip teachers, school leaders, administrators and other school staff with the knowledge and tools needed to effectively tackle discrimination based on ethnic background in their schools. The tool builds on the previous work of the Council of Europe in different countries and within various projects.

In the long term, tackling discrimination contributes to the creation of a democratic and inclusive school culture by ensuring that all students, regardless of their background and affiliations, feel welcomed and are given the same opportunities to succeed. Students learn to engage with others in respectful and empathetic ways, fostering a school environment where differences are embraced and everyone is empowered to contribute to the community.

In the overall vision of an inclusive and democratic school, one of the four principles is equity and inclusion, as defined by the Council of Europe, which involves ensuring fair treatment, opportunities and advancement for all individuals while identifying and eliminating barriers to full participation. This means providing tailored resources and support to achieve equal outcomes and creating environments where everyone feels welcomed, respected, supported and valued. An inclusive environment respects differences and promotes the full participation of all individuals, regardless of their background or circumstances, aligning with the Council of Europe’s commitment to non-discrimination, respect for diversity and equal access to rights and opportunities.

Although discrimination refers to unfair treatment or unequal opportunities given to individuals or groups on the basis of personal characteristics such as “race”,<sup>1</sup> (Council of Europe 2018) colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation, in this tool the focus will be on tackling discrimination against students because of their affiliation with ethnic minority backgrounds (Council of Europe 1998).<sup>2</sup>

The rationale for the focus on minority students stems from several factors.

- ▶ **Historical context:** ethnic minority persons and persons affiliating with them often have a long history of systemic discrimination and marginalisation, which can manifest in educational disparities. Highlighting this issue helps to address enduring inequalities rooted in historical injustices and social structures.
- ▶ **Cultural sensitivity and identity:** ethnic identities can significantly influence a child’s educational experience and sense of belonging. By addressing issues specific to ethnic minority persons and people who affiliate with ethnic minorities, educators can work towards creating culturally inclusive environments that respect and celebrate diversity.
- ▶ **Intersectionality:** while the focus may be on those from an ethnic minority background, it is important to recognise that individuals can belong to multiple marginalised situations simultaneously (for example, an LGBTQ+ person from an ethnic minority background). Tools and strategies aimed at supporting ethnic minority persons can often be adapted to consider intersectionality and support various forms of discrimination.

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1. Since all human beings belong to the same species, the Council of Europe’s European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) rejects theories based on the existence of different “races”. However, ECRI uses this term in order to ensure that those persons who are generally and erroneously perceived as belonging to “another race” are not excluded from the protection provided for by the legislation.
  2. The terms “ethnic minority students/children/persons” refer to students/children/persons belonging to ethnic minorities and persons affiliating with them, as defined in the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. For the sake of brevity and practicality, for the purposes of this resource material we will use the shortened form “minority students/children/persons” respectively thereafter throughout the text.

- ▶ **Data and research:** the data available regarding the educational challenges faced by ethnic minorities and persons affiliating with minorities are substantial and make it more feasible to create targeted interventions. This research can highlight specific barriers and needs within this demographic.
- ▶ **Policy and advocacy:** often, policies and initiatives aimed at reducing discrimination have a historic focus on “race” and ethnicity, which can influence the development of resources and tools. This can help align with existing frameworks of human rights that emphasise the protection of ethnic minorities and persons affiliating with them.
- ▶ **Community engagement:** focusing on ethnic minorities can facilitate greater community engagement, as many persons belonging to ethnic minority communities are specifically organised around cultural and identities-based issues. This focus can help build trust and collaboration between educators and these communities.

This tool can be used by individual teachers, school staff teams or school leadership. In this manual, you will find valuable information on understanding discrimination as well as helpful tools for self-evaluation, questions for reflection and recommendations for planning and implementing change in your school.

The final section of the tool offers a practical guide for teachers and school staff that can be used as a stand-alone document that will allow a school to evaluate, plan and implement actions to tackle discrimination and create an inclusive and democratic school culture.

# Understanding discrimination

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## Key concepts

Discrimination, according to the Council of Europe, refers to any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference that is made on the basis of personal characteristics such as “race”, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation. It refers to treating someone unfairly or unjustly because of these characteristics, undermining their human rights and dignity. The Council of Europe actively promotes equality and non-discrimination through its various conventions and initiatives, particularly focusing on the protection of individuals and communities in vulnerable situations.

Discrimination in education refers to unfair treatment or unequal opportunities given to individuals or groups based on characteristics such as “race”, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, socio-economic status, sexual orientation or religion. This can occur in various forms, including admission policies, classroom practices, curriculum representation and assessment methods.

## Direct, indirect and systemic discrimination

Direct discrimination means treating somebody in an unfavourable way because of belonging to a certain group. Direct ethnic discrimination occurs when persons affiliating with a specific ethnic group are treated worse than persons affiliating with other groups or are prohibited from or have limited access to certain benefits other groups enjoy. For example, refusing access to a student based on his/her identity, such as affiliation to a minority group.

Indirect discrimination refers to measures, policies, rules, etc. that are meant to be applied in the same way to all persons but are formulated in such a way that they disadvantage persons affiliated with specific groups. For example, asking all students to do homework on a computer will disadvantage those who do not have access to a computer.

A third type of discrimination is structural discrimination, sometimes referred to as systemic discrimination. This includes a complex set of rules and practices that disadvantage less empowered groups while serving at the same time to give an advantage to the dominant groups. Thus, there are patterns of interaction among groups within society, often hard to identify, which generate or maintain exclusion or an inferior status in society of certain groups in relation to others. For instance, a country’s education funding model might allocate resources based on property taxes, meaning schools in wealthier neighbourhoods receive significantly more funding. As a result, students in lower-income areas may attend schools with fewer resources, less experienced teachers and lower-quality facilities.

Power and oppression in education are critical concepts that examine how systemic inequalities impact students’ experiences and opportunities within educational settings. Educational systems often mirror broader societal hierarchies, concentrating authority in the hands of administrators, policy makers and specific educators. This power imbalance can disadvantage students, particularly those in marginalised situations. Educators and policy makers wield significant influence over the curriculum, which frequently reflects the values and histories of dominant cultural groups, while sidelining the experiences and contributions of minority groups and persons affiliating with them.

The systemic inequities in education perpetuate disparities based on “race”, class, language, gender, sexuality and ability, as policies that fail to address these issues can further entrench socio-economic status or put certain groups in a marginalised situation. Moreover, the lack of representation of diverse cultures and histories in educational materials fosters feelings of exclusion and invisibility among students from those backgrounds. Exclusionary practices, such as tracking or the practice of separating students into classes or groups based on their academic performance or perceived ability can reinforce inequalities by disproportionately placing students in marginalised situations into lower academic tracks, thus limiting their opportunities. Furthermore, the authority that school staff hold over disciplinary matters can result in disproportionately harsh treatment of students from specific ethnicities or socio-economic backgrounds. Furthermore, in countries where the dominant language is used exclusively in education, students who are speakers of minority languages may struggle to understand lessons, leading to lower academic performance. The lack of instructional materials in their family language can further exacerbate this issue.

Internalised oppression may emerge as students in marginalised situations adopt societal stereotypes, leading to lowered self-esteem, diminished academic performance, lower academic goals and disengagement, which perpetuate the cycle of oppression. This concept is rooted in the understanding that systemic discrimination and bias can have profound psychological effects on those who experience it (Feagin 2006).

## Key aspects of internalised oppression

**Self-perception:** individuals begin to see themselves through the lens of societal stereotypes, which can lead to decreased self-esteem, feelings of inadequacy and a sense of self-doubt. For example, a student from an ethnic minority in a marginalised situation might internalise the belief that they are less capable or deserving of success.

**Behavioural impact:** internalised oppression can affect behaviour, leading individuals to conform to societal expectations that limit their aspirations and potential. This can manifest as disengagement in education or avoidance of opportunities.

**Coping mechanisms:** people may develop various coping mechanisms in response to internalised oppression, including overachievement to prove worth or withdrawal from social situations to avoid discrimination.

The concept of identity denotes a person’s sense of who they are and the self-descriptions to which they attribute significance and value. Most people use a range of different identities to describe themselves, including both personal and social identities. Personal identities are those identities that are based on personal attributes (caring, tolerant, extroverted, for example), interpersonal relationships and roles (being a mother, friend, colleague) and autobiographical narratives (such as being born to working-class parents or educated at a state school). Social identities are instead based on affiliation with social groups (a nation, an ethnic group, a linguistic group, a religious group, a gender group, an age or generational group, an occupational group, an educational institution, a hobby club, a sports team, a virtual social media group); cultural identities (the identities that people construct based on their affiliation to cultural groups) are a particular type of social identity. The issues of identities are complex and to understand the connection to discrimination we need to ask whether an individual is comfortable with who they are and whether society (the majority) is accepting of their identity/identities.

**Social inclusion** is both an outcome and a process of improving the conditions for enabling groups and individuals to take part in society. It is a process aimed at combating discrimination, minimising social disparities, avoiding exclusion and marginalisation and ensuring the well-being of all members of a society, regardless of their ethnic, cultural or religious affiliations. When individuals or groups are integrated into society, they enjoy basic levels of well-being, gain full and fair access to collective resources and activities, are entitled to active social participation and share equal opportunities.

From an educational perspective, social inclusion is the process of a young individual’s self-realisation within a society, acceptance and recognition of his or her potential by social institutions through access to education and integration in the web of social relations in a community. Childhood and youth are the life stages when young people make the transition from family dependence to autonomy within the larger society under rapidly evolving circumstances. It has a particular meaning for those young people who come from disadvantaged backgrounds and live in precarious conditions. For them social inclusion means overcoming a multitude of barriers in order to acquire their social rights as full members of society.

The understanding of social inclusion has several aspects: the process has many stages that form a continuum from total isolation to active inclusion. Social exclusion is a state of isolation, of disruption in the social bonds between the individual and society. The other pole is the empowerment of the individual by society for active and equal participation in social life. Young people may enter the process at different points and move towards both poles – either marginalisation or achievement of autonomy and well-being.

Social inclusion is multidimensional and affects various life domains: economic, political, cultural, social and public. The social inclusion processes do not act independently of one another. The successful passage of young people through the educational system provides them with crucial resources such as knowledge, skills and attitudes for their social inclusion in other life domains. Poverty, on the other hand, concentrates social disadvantages in the affected group, which might then slip towards social exclusion.

## **The role of schools and teachers in reproducing inequalities**

The image school likes to have of itself is a place of equality that offers equal opportunities and opens up to all children chances for a good life, based on individual merit. In reality, as proven by statistics, the school is often a place where social inequalities are reproduced and sometimes enhanced, with learners in disadvantaged situations provided with fewer opportunities than their peers. The mechanisms of this phenomenon are hard to identify in most cases and it is also not fair to put the blame on schools for existing social inequalities. However, by promoting inclusion and by paying special attention to those from families in disadvantaged situations, schools can contribute to offering better chances for all learners.

Several studies have pointed out that, without wanting it and without being aware of it, the behaviour and attitudes of teachers have a great impact on school results but also on the way students and young people perceive themselves and their life in the future.

### **Distribution of attention**

A factor that plays a key role in this context is the way teachers distribute their attention among learners during the teaching process. Teachers pay more or less the same degree of attention to all students but analysis of micro-behaviour during teaching proves the contrary: research data show that teachers tend to pay more attention (eye contact, dialogue, mentioning names, asking questions, etc.) to students they consider to be “good students”. Reciprocally, students considered low performers are given less attention.

Students who receive attention are encouraged and stimulated and thus are supported to perform well (virtuous circle), while children who do not attract a teacher’s attention often consider themselves to be unimportant and inferior and have lower self-esteem (vicious circle).

### **Expectations influence achievement: the Pygmalion and Golem effects**

Expectation of achievement is another important factor influencing school results. Students whom teachers expect to achieve good results actually perform better than those with the same background but for whom teachers expect poorer results.

Pygmalion effect: high expectations lead to better performance. Research shows that if teachers expect enhanced performance from students, then the students’ performances are enhanced (Murphy and Thomas 2000; Keller et. al. 2016).

Golem effect: lower expectations lead to poorer performance by the individual.

### **Consequences of categorisation and labelling**

Sometimes teachers separate learners into groups, based on their performance. They do so with good intentions, to be able to respond better to the needs of the students: those students in the group of high performers can advance quicker and go deeper into the subject matter and do not need to wait for the others, while the low performers can participate in learning activities at their level with additional support to help them progress. However, this pedagogical strategy has unwanted negative effects on the students labelled as low performers. Instead of mobilising their efforts to catch up and rise to the level of their peers with better results, they often have a tendency to internalise the idea that they are not able to perform well and become demotivated.

## Stereotype threat

Research has proven that people who belong to a negatively stereotyped group, particularly in a situation of evaluation, become anxious about their performance and feel at risk of confirming the negative stereotypes about their social group (Steele and Aronson 1995; Spencer, Steele and Quinn 1999). For example, if the stereotype of a minority group includes the image that they perform worse in school than majority children, then, if in an exam minority students are reminded that they belong to that group, this will result in lower performances.

## Understanding discrimination faced by ethnic minorities

The right to education for children of minority ethnicities encompasses much more than access to schools. It involves establishing an equitable environment that respects and promotes diversity, ensures safety, provides adequate resources and encourages active participation. Further attention needs to be given to groups of ethnic minorities whose rights to education are accompanied by specific challenges and issues that reflect the broader systemic inequalities faced by communities such as Roma. Deep-rooted negative images and perceptions of Roma restrict the opportunities for social inclusion of these children in schools. Even where school segregation has been abolished, prevailing patterns of discrimination and exclusion provide a challenging context for schools seeking to fully include these children and offer them their full entitlement to education. Research on the educational experiences of Roma children has identified a number of concerns around access to and maintenance of their education. The complexity of their social, economic, educational and psychological needs should be addressed through a set of strategies such as strong home–school links, community involvement and complementary after-school support. A lack of supportive and inclusive measures may have a number of negative effects on their socialisation if the particular needs of these learners are not met.

The right to education is framed by principles of non-discrimination, meaning that minority children should not face barriers or disadvantages to accessing educational opportunities based on their ethnic background. This principle is often articulated in international instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Education systems should respect and promote the cultural identity of ethnic minorities. This includes incorporating cultural and linguistic diversity into the curriculum, enabling all students to learn about children’s minority heritage while also engaging with the broader society. A culturally inclusive approach can enhance the educational experience for minority students and foster a sense of belonging.

Minority children should have equitable access to educational resources, including trained teachers, adequate facilities and learning materials. Disparities in funding and resources between schools in different regions often disproportionately affect schools serving minority communities, leading to poorer educational outcomes.

Minority children may face discrimination, bullying or harassment within educational settings. The right to education extends to the obligation of schools to provide a safe and supportive environment where all students can learn without fear of intimidation or violence. This includes implementing anti-bullying policies and training staff on cultural competence.

Schools and educational authorities should actively encourage the participation of minority students in all aspects of school life, including decision-making processes. This participatory approach can empower students and help address systemic inequalities within the education system.

Many countries have enacted laws and policies aimed at protecting the educational rights of minority students. These include provisions that require schools to provide language support for non-native speakers or measures to ensure that minority groups are adequately represented in educational materials.

Education is a fundamental human right of every child. States parties to international treaties also have the legal obligation to report on progress, address violations and implement measures to promote equality in education.

## Recognising discrimination

- ▶ Indicators of discrimination in schools can take various forms, reflecting the systemic issues that affect learners' experiences and opportunities.
- ▶ Lack of accessibility can be observed in physical spaces that do not accommodate all students, particularly those with disabilities, preventing them from fully participating in educational activities.
- ▶ Inaccessible environments, whether through physical structures or digital platforms, prevent full participation in school life.
- ▶ Inadequate response to accommodation requests can undermine the needs of learners requiring special modifications, demonstrating a lack of commitment to inclusivity.
- ▶ Inappropriate placement, such as tracking or streaming students based on biased assessments, can limit opportunities for advancement.
- ▶ Segregation can occur within classrooms or schools when students from different backgrounds are separated not based on a pedagogical need but based on "race", ethnicity or socio-economic status, often resulting in unequal educational experiences and outcomes.
- ▶ Insufficient training of professionals in cultural competence and inclusive practices can perpetuate discrimination, as educators may not be equipped to recognise or address their biases, further marginalising certain groups of students.
- ▶ Lowered expectations are reflected in the attitudes and beliefs that educators hold about the capabilities of certain students, often leading to less encouragement and reduced opportunities for advanced learning.
- ▶ Exclusion from activities often manifests when certain groups of students are consistently left out of social or extracurricular events, reinforcing feelings of marginalisation and isolation.
- ▶ Disproportionate discipline is evident when students from specific ethnic minorities or in marginalised situations face harsher punishments compared to their peers for similar infractions, suggesting a bias in behavioural management.
- ▶ Inadequate or stereotypical representation in curriculum and teaching resources, such as textbooks, can perpetuate biased views and deprive students of seeing their identities and cultures positively reflected in their education.
- ▶ Educational barriers might involve curriculum materials that do not represent diverse perspectives or fail to address the needs of all learners, leaving some students feeling alienated.
- ▶ Inadequate resources, such as outdated materials, insufficient technology and a lack of support staff, hinder the educational progress of learners, particularly those in underfunded schools.
- ▶ Harassment and bullying related to a student's "race", gender or identities can create a hostile school environment, affecting a student's sense of safety and well-being.
- ▶ Communication barriers frequently arise in classrooms where the language spoken by students or their families differs from that of the educators, preventing effective interaction and engagement.
- ▶ Demeaning language, whether from peers or educators, reinforces negative stereotypes and contributes to a culture of discrimination.
- ▶ Feedback from students and parents, including complaints about unfair treatment, highlights disparities in experiences and indicates unresolved issues within the school system.
- ▶ Social isolation can occur when students are excluded or bullied, leading them to feel disconnected from their peers.
- ▶ Together, these indicators serve as a critical lens through which to examine and address discrimination within educational settings.

## Consequences of discrimination

What happens if you do not adequately recognise and respond to various vulnerabilities in schools?

- ▶ **Exclusion and isolation.** Failing to recognise and respond to vulnerabilities can result in the exclusion of students from meaningful participation in school activities. Students may be physically excluded through inaccessible environments or socially isolated because of stigmatisation. Such exclusion prevents them from forming friendships, participating in group learning or experiencing a sense of belonging, which are critical for social and emotional development.
- ▶ **Inequitable educational outcomes.** When vulnerabilities go unrecognised, learners may not receive the necessary accommodation or support they need to succeed academically. This can lead to poor academic performance, higher dropout rates and diminished opportunities for future employment or education. Without equitable access to resources, these students are left at a significant disadvantage compared to their peers and may drop out early from education, increasing the risk of poverty and creating barriers to full participation in society.
- ▶ **Psychological harm.** Discrimination or neglect can severely impact the mental health of students with vulnerabilities. The lack of recognition or adequate support can lead to feelings of frustration, shame, inadequacy or internalised ableism (internalised oppression). Prolonged exposure to such environments can contribute to anxiety, depression or other mental health challenges, further hindering their ability to thrive in school and life.
- ▶ **Reinforcement of stereotypes and stigma.** Failing to address the needs of learners in vulnerable situations perpetuates harmful stereotypes and stigma within the school community. This can lead to peer bullying, exclusion and discriminatory attitudes from teachers and staff. Such environments teach both students and staff to view disability and vulnerability as deficits rather than natural aspects of human diversity. This will lead to low self-esteem and self-worth.
- ▶ **Missed opportunities for growth.** Schools that fail to recognise and respond to vulnerabilities lose the chance to create inclusive learning environments that benefit all students. Inclusive practices not only support those with additional needs but also teach all students empathy, collaboration and respect for diversity. Ignoring these needs robs the entire school community of these valuable lessons.
- ▶ **Legal and ethical violations.** Failing to address the needs of students in vulnerable situations may violate legal obligations under frameworks like the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities or national anti-discrimination laws. Beyond legal consequences, this undermines the ethical responsibility of schools to provide equitable and supportive learning environments for all students.
- ▶ **Perpetuation of inequality.** When schools fail to adequately address vulnerabilities, they reinforce systemic inequalities and diminish social cohesion. These students are denied the means and opportunities needed to break cycles of poverty or marginalisation, perpetuating long-term disparities in social and economic outcomes.

By recognising and responding to the needs of learners in vulnerable situations, schools can mitigate these negative consequences, fostering equitable, inclusive and supportive environments where all learners can thrive.

## Taking action at school level

### 1. Implement strong anti-discrimination policies

Schools need clear, enforceable policies against discrimination that are in line with international standards and national laws. These policies should explicitly cover all forms of discrimination and outline procedures for handling complaints.

### 2. Create supportive and inclusive school culture

Creating a culture that values diversity and inclusion can be fostered through school-wide initiatives, events and clubs that promote free expression of difference; equal access to resources despite differences; and interaction across differences. Peer-mentoring programmes can also help to build inclusive relationships among students.

### 3. Raise awareness and challenge stereotypes

Launch awareness campaigns within the school to education students and staff about the importance of inclusion and the rights of persons affiliating with minorities and in vulnerable situations like children with disabilities; celebrate diversity and promote diverse positive role models.

### 4. Ensure strong school leadership and teacher agency

Empower teachers as leaders to promote inclusion in the school. Teachers can serve as mentors, advocates and trainers for colleagues to implement inclusive practices.

### 5. Promote an inclusive curriculum

The curriculum should include materials that represent all diversities represented in a society positively and accurately. It should also be delivered in a way that accommodates diverse learning needs and styles, incorporating “universal design for learning” principles.

### 6. Foster peer education

Educating students about individuals and communities in vulnerable situations (such as those with disabilities or those whose family language is different from the language of instruction) can reduce stigma and discrimination. This can be done through assemblies, workshops and integration into the regular curriculum, helping students understand and embrace diversity.

### 7. Engage the school community

Involving parents, guardians and students in discussions about individuals and communities in disadvantaged situations and inclusion is vital. This can include regular communication with families, involvement in individualised education programme meetings and participation in school governance through advisory councils or committees.



# Practical guide for teachers and school staff on fostering inclusion and diversity in schools

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## Introduction

This is a collection of resources that can be used by teachers and teacher trainers to make their schools more inclusive and more effective at managing diversity. They include some background documents about key concepts and issues, instruments useful for the assessment of the situation in the school and for engaging with colleagues in a sustainable and democratic school development process, as well as suggestions for educational activities that can be used with students of various ages or with fellow teachers.

These resources should be seen not as recipes to reproduce but as a source of inspiration for the production of locally adapted materials based on experience and on the needs identified in schools.

## School development planning for becoming an inclusive school – A tool for school leaders and teachers

### Background information

Planning for an inclusive school can be incorporated into school development planning work that is already underway in schools. Each school community will be at a different stage in the school development planning process and will also have different conceptions of the most appropriate way of developing an inclusive and intercultural school. These differences will affect how each school community engages in the planning process. It is suggested that four main stages might be considered by schools:

1. review of current practice and provision;
2. designing a plan;
3. programme of implementation;
4. evaluation.

These stages form a cyclical process, which continually underpins the work of the school. There are many approaches to school development planning and it is important that the school community adopts an approach that suits its particular situation. However, it can sometimes be difficult to know where to start. The following guidelines may give some ideas about how a school might approach school planning from an inclusive perspective. The planning process should assist all the members of the school community in developing an inclusive and intercultural school that addresses the needs of all its learners. The planning process should include the following:

- ▶ conducting a school review using an inclusive and intercultural perspective;
- ▶ developing a school mission, policy and action plan;
- ▶ implementing the school plan;
- ▶ monitoring and evaluating the action plan.

## The school review

As an initial step in the school planning process, it is useful to engage in a review of where the school is positioned at the moment in relation to being inclusive – a situation analysis. The school self-assessment tool could be used for this review.

## Action planning

The school may choose to respond to the need to develop an inclusive school culture by beginning with an action plan. The advantages of using the action plan as a tool for a whole-school approach are that representatives of the whole school community may be involved in different elements of the process, that the school can work on a number of areas at the same time as different groups can work on a variety of tasks and that the plan can focus on making things happen quickly. Some schools may have their own action plans in place already and may, therefore, be ready for a broader planning approach.

## Outlining the roles and responsibilities of the various personnel in relation to the actions

- ▶ Defining priorities.
- ▶ Identifying necessary resources.
- ▶ Setting targets and success criteria.
- ▶ Specifying a time frame.
- ▶ Putting procedures for monitoring and evaluation into place.

## Implementing the action plan

Having developed an action plan, the members of the school community will engage in the process of implementation. The identification of roles, targets, success criteria and a time frame using the action plan model will help the school to turn policies into practice. Priority areas will be dealt with first, with the school culture becoming increasingly inclusive as work in these areas progresses and other areas of intercultural work are focused on. It may happen that in the course of the implementation new issues will arise and require attention. Implementation must, therefore, be flexible to respond to changing circumstances while remaining true to the mission and policies that incorporate the school's intercultural perspective.

## Monitoring and evaluating the school action plan

The action plan should include a procedure for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating by a given date. Successful implementation should contribute to:

- ▶ promoting greater awareness of social inclusion and intercultural issues;
- ▶ promoting a supportive and inclusive learning environment that will foster the development of the self-esteem of all learners;
- ▶ breaking down stereotypes and accepting diversity as an integral and valued part of the school.

As the school planning process is cyclical, this evaluation will inform a further phase review, planning and implementation.

## Tools for school review – A guide for school leaders

### Data about our school

Some data will be easy to obtain from enrolment data and student portfolios. For data you do not have, you may try to obtain it directly from students or their parents through simple questionnaires. Make sure you explain that they are not under any obligation to provide the data and that anonymity will be ensured. The point is not to retrieve data about the individual learner but rather to have an accurate picture of the diverse tapestry of your school.

- ▶ How many students are registered at your school?
- ▶ What is the percentage of students from the following groups:
  - Parenting challenges such as single parent households, conflicted familial relationships, violence, abuse or neglect in family, life outside parental home (living with other family members, a foster family or in foster care, for example);
  - Mental health issues (anxiety or depression);
  - Physical health issues such as visual impairment, mobility impairment, deafness, chronic illness (like diabetes or coeliac disease);
  - A non-dominant sexual orientation;
  - Neurodevelopmental risks such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism spectrum disorder (ASD), dyslexia or other specific learning disorders;
  - Social challenges such as unregulated emotions, violent behaviour, disobedience or antisocial behaviour;
  - Poverty in a sense of lack of resources, opportunities and choice, power and voice, human security;
  - Cultural minority background and affiliations: ethnic, religious or linguistic minority, migrant/asylum seeker status/refugees/internally displaced persons;
  - Traumatic experiences such as parental death, natural hazards, war.
- ▶ Has your student population changed in recent years because of immigration or repatriation?
- ▶ Is there any diversity among your teaching staff (ethnic backgrounds, etc.)?
- ▶ How many students have irregular attendance? Is there a significant number from any of the above-mentioned groups?
- ▶ What is the average grade of all learners?
- ▶ How many parents usually come to parents' meetings?
- ▶ How often do you hold meetings with parents?
- ▶ What kind of extra provision do you offer to your students?
- ▶ How many teachers in your school have received training on issues related to inclusion?

### School self-assessment tool

<b>Key school documents and their communication</b>	<b>1</b>	What elements in key school policy documents include a focus on helping each learner to achieve his or her full potential and developing a positive self-concept?
	<b>2</b>	How are principles of equality and diversity, with an explicit inclusive and intercultural perspective, reflected in key school policy documents?
	<b>3</b>	How are the ideas above communicated publicly in ways that are understandable and accessible to all students and their parents?
<b>Physical environment</b>	<b>4</b>	Where are the cultures and languages of ethnic groups attending the school represented in pictures, multilingual signs, notices and other elements in the school's physical environment?

<b>Social environment</b>	5	What routines are in place for welcoming new students, for assisting them in becoming part of the school and for ensuring that their culture is affirmed in the environment?
	6	What procedures are in place for ensuring that the capabilities and needs of newly arrived students are recognised?
	7	What ways are used to make school and classroom routines and expectations understood by all students?
	8	What procedures are in place for dealing with discrimination and violence?
	9	What measures are in place to prevent and address absenteeism and dropouts?
	10	How are special events planned to be as inclusive as possible of all ethnic groups in the school?
	11	How is recognition given to important festivals and special days of all the cultures in the school?
	12	How are minority persons affirmed in a positive sense of their identities?
	13	How is consideration given to ensuring appropriate language and behaviour in the interactions between teachers and students?
	14	What supportive environment is created for learners with limited knowledge of the language of instruction?
<b>Educational activities and resources</b>	15	How is an intercultural approach reflected in the teaching practice across various subjects?
	16	In what co-operative learning activities are students involved so that they recognise and benefit from each other's strengths?
	17	How are extracurricular activities supporting positive interactions and co-operation between students?
	18	What method is used for assessing the appropriateness of images and messages contained in school texts and other resources?
<b>Involvement of parents</b>	19	What measures are planned for ensuring the involvement of parents, including minority parents, in school activities?
<b>Co-operation</b>	20	What measures are planned for co-operation with educational assistants, community mediators and local stakeholders?

## Planning for social inclusion and diversity education – A guide for school leaders

### Working process

#### *PHASE 1 – SOCIAL INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY EDUCATION IN OUR SCHOOLS CARDS*

##### Preparation

- ▶ Read the statements on the social inclusion and diversity education in our schools cards (see below) in silence.
- ▶ Discuss the content of cards.
- ▶ Next, deal out the five cards which you deem most important (the remaining cards can be alternatives).
- ▶ Then arrange yourselves into small groups (5-7 participants).

### Group work

- ▶ Discuss your choices and, as a group, agree upon a total of five cards.
- ▶ Order these on a sheet so that the two most important cards are in the centre. The other three you can place elsewhere around the sheet.

### In the plenum

- ▶ Present your group poster and note down both central statements on the flipchart.
- ▶ Each participant will receive two sticky dots and will label the most important statements that you have chosen.

## PHASE 2 – INVENTORY

In the small groups, the condition of the schools will be assessed using the table given below. The table should be shown on a flipchart or projected onto the wall – in this phase only the first two columns need to be edited.

### Our points of focus/priorities

What we do already at our school:	Experiences we have had with this:	Goals we want to achieve:	Our next steps:	Potential co-operation partners:
School:	Contact partner:			

## PHASE 3 – PRESENTING THE EVALUATION TO THE SCHOOL TEAM, PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Presentation of the group results of points one and two of the table in the plenum.

## PHASE 4 – DEVISING AN ACTION PLAN

With the completion of the remaining columns in the table, the objective will be formulated, concrete steps set and a contact person appointed.

## PHASE 5 – POSSIBLE IMPULSES

- ▶ Who does what, when and with whom?
- ▶ When will a report be made about the work of the group (business meetings, overall conferences and parents' evenings)?
- ▶ Where do we go from here?
- ▶ What support do we need (e.g. advanced training)?

## Social inclusion and diversity education in our schools cards

<p>The teaching follows the individual learning objectives of the students.</p>	<p>Our school would like all children to have good starting chances.</p>	<p>We consider the circumstances of children in disadvantaged situations and try to support them.</p>	<p>We have regular contact with parents.</p>
<p>The teaching staff appreciate and respect the language competences that students bring with them to the school.</p>	<p>Language comparisons have a firm place in school teaching.</p>	<p>Elements of families' cultures and languages are visible and audible in the school.</p>	<p>Minority languages are present in school and recognised in mainstream teaching (about literature, festivals or religion, for example).</p>
<p>We promote co-operation between students of different ethnic minorities.</p>	<p>Our school participates in European partnership programmes and uses these for intercultural learning.</p>	<p>The school is open to co-operation with other schools in the district/city/region. It uses peer learning with other schools for quality development.</p>	<p>Individual learning progress is observed, documented and considered for the planning of learners' progress.</p>
<p>A support system is established for new students and those with limited knowledge of the language of instruction.</p>	<p>Parents with a migrant background are continuously involved in pedagogical affairs with their intercultural and linguistic skills.</p>	<p>Our school is known as a place of intercultural learning.</p>	<p>The intercultural orientation of our school is a mark of quality and will be made known through public work.</p>
<p>The basis of our school development is a continuous improvement process, in which the entire school community is involved.</p>	<p>The intercultural development of our school requires advanced training.</p>	<p>At our school there is an open dialogue and conflict culture, wherein common values are strived for and critical opinions are allowed.</p>	<p>International contacts enable a change of perspective and represent the building blocks of our school's development.</p>
<p>Intercultural opening means first and foremost openness and critical skills in dealing with others.</p>	<p>The intercultural experience training strengthens the students/teachers and staff/parents and promotes empathy and perspective change.</p>	<p>The critical analysis of our practices of co-operating with ethnic minority students and students in marginalised situations and their parents is a priority in our school.</p>	<p>External consultation is essential for the development of the school.</p>

The school is well connected to other communal/regional intercultural groups and institutions.	At our school, there is a comprehensive support concept that seeks to enhance children's strengths.	The observation and support of the individual learning development of each child is the basis of our pedagogical work.	We consider minority parents and children as individuals and not as stereotypical representations of their cultures.
Students who return to school (after a long absence or drop out) receive particular attention and support.	We have democratic policies, which are known to students, staff and parents.	We actively encourage minority children.	All minority languages may be spoken at our school.
Parents with a migration background are not spoken about but are spoken with.	All actors in our school need to have the skills and competences needed to deal with diversity.	We are enriched by different lifestyles, cultures, religions and languages.	Dealing with diversity is not always easy and sometimes leads to conflicts.
Linguistic and cultural diversity are normal in our school (as in society).	We only tolerate non-violent responses to conflict and clashes of interest.	We encounter other cultural orientations with curiosity, interest, openness and a desire to build understanding.	Intercultural education is a central task of our school, aimed at all students and parents, including monolingual families.
Partners and organisations from outside the school contribute to supporting the language development of students whose families do not practise the language of instruction at home.	Successful language development requires close and goal-oriented co-operation with preschools.	A supported transition to the receiving school is important for educational achievement.	In our school, parents are seen as important partners and we aim to continuously involve both minority and majority parents in school matters.
Conflicts are not suppressed but rather openly discussed and dealt with.	Everyone has prejudices, fears and acquired attitudes. We make ourselves aware of these and are critical of them.	The language development of multilingual children is integral and is made up of guided and non-guided processes.	The language development of multilingual children requires the involvement of their parents.

## Principles of social inclusion in education

- ▶ All children, irrespective of their affiliation to any ethnicity, must have access to quality education. Since the world is becoming increasingly diverse, we need to prepare children for that world. Intercultural education is an important part of every child's educational experience whether the child is in a school that is characterised by ethnic diversity or in a predominantly mono-ethnic school, or whether the child is affiliated to the dominant or the minority identity.
- ▶ Social inclusion applies to all children irrespective of their age. Recognising that diversity is normal in humans is something that is appropriate to all ages. Many of the skills, attitudes and capacities that will be crucial to the child later in life will begin to be developed at a young age.
- ▶ Languages and cultures are identified as fundamental components of intercultural education. While it is important to give a child accurate information and to challenge stereotypes and misconceptions, developing the child's intercultural capacity is more effective if it is done through talking with the child about their thoughts rather than simply telling him/her the "right and wrong" of the situation.
- ▶ Education happens naturally through the "hidden curriculum" of the social and visual world within which the child lives. While it is possible and necessary to include intercultural ideas in the taught "formal curriculum", the images and resources that surround the child are also crucial. In exploring the hidden curriculum, it is important to note that what is absent can be as important as what is present.
- ▶ Education is concerned with ethnicity and culture and not simply with "race" (visible difference). Although "race" may often be the basis for discrimination, intercultural education should be equally concerned with discrimination against all individuals affiliated with ethnic minorities or in marginalised situations.

## Statements on social inclusion

### Education for social inclusion aims to:

- ▶ foster conditions conducive to pluralism in society;
- ▶ raise children's awareness of their own cultures and attune them to the fact that there are other cultures;
- ▶ develop respect for lifestyles different from their own so that children can understand and appreciate each other;
- ▶ foster a commitment to equity and non-discrimination;
- ▶ enable children to make informed choices about, and take action on, issues of prejudice and discrimination;
- ▶ appreciate and value similarities and differences;
- ▶ enable all children to speak for themselves and articulate their cultures and histories.

## Ten guidelines for social inclusion and diversity education

1. Education is a fundamental human right of all children.
2. Diversity education is embedded in knowledge and understanding, skills and capacities, attitudes and values.
3. Intercultural education and social inclusion are integrated with all subjects and with the general functioning of the school.
4. Intercultural education requires a real-world focus.
5. Visibility and use of languages are central to developing intercultural competences.
6. The process of social inclusion takes time and is an ongoing and continuous process.
7. The school context is important for facilitating learning and inclusion.
8. Schools should reflect the diversity of their learners.
9. All children should be treated with respect.
10. Co-operation between schools and the wider community may bridge the gap between schools and minority parents.

*Discuss the meaning and implications of these guidelines. Which are the most challenging ones?*

## Checklist: what information should be gathered about a newly arrived child?

- ▶ What is the child called by their parents and friends?
- ▶ What language competences does the child have and what is their level of proficiency in each language (understanding, speaking, writing)?
- ▶ How does one say key phrases in the child's first language, such as a greeting, "please/thank you", "join in", "stop", "well done/very good", etc.?
- ▶ What is the child's religion, how is it practised and has this any implications for school and classroom planning?
- ▶ Are there any cultural practices that might affect classroom interaction?
- ▶ Are there any gestures deemed inappropriate or rude in the child's home culture but which may not cause offence to people affiliated with the dominant ethnic group or vice versa?
- ▶ What elements of the background of the child represent valuable assets and can be used for further learning (such as extracurricular activities undertaken in the host country, ability to play a music instrument, places visited, ICT skills, etc.).

## Observation sheet for teachers: looking closely at a newly arrived student

Write a case study on a newly arrived student in your school setting. Information should include the following.

- ▶ Background information on the child's prior learning and experiences.
- ▶ Information on the child's accomplishments/achievements and progress.
- ▶ Information on some of the barriers encountered by the child and how he/she is surmounting them.
- ▶ The child's own perspective on their learning.
- ▶ Suggested areas/approaches for further interventions to support the child's full inclusion and achievement.

## School development strategies for social inclusion – A practical guide for school leaders

Investing time in developing good social inclusion policies is almost certainly time well spent, anticipating and preventing problems later. As a school you should consider the following promising social inclusion strategies.

- ▶ Ensuring that all relevant staff are informed that they will be receiving a new student.
- ▶ Ensuring that each child is interviewed to assess their past educational experiences and future needs and that this information is accurately recorded and forwarded to all relevant teaching and support staff.
- ▶ Ensuring that parents/carers are shown around the school and that school practices are discussed.
- ▶ Ensuring that, wherever possible, there is an interpreter or bilingual classroom assistant when the child starts.
- ▶ Providing training and information for all school staff involved about the background of the children.
- ▶ Ensuring that the learner's progress is reassessed after a specified period, for example half a term, and that there are monitoring procedures in place.
- ▶ Ensuring that there are opportunities for students who are not coping to be supported by mentoring.
- ▶ Ensuring that essential information is translated.
- ▶ Assistants or interpreters are used for school admission interviews, assessments, meetings and parents' evenings.
- ▶ Organising social events such as a coffee morning for parents/carers who are new to the locality (parents cafés).
- ▶ Inviting parents/carers to help in the school's activities – many have skills that can usefully be employed in schools.

- ▶ Recruiting staff such as Roma mediators and teachers from minority communities. Such intercultural staff could be shared between neighbouring schools that have only a few asylum-seeking or refugee students.
- ▶ All schools must have a member of staff with overall responsibility for child protection. It is essential that they are aware of the needs of minority children.
- ▶ Because many repatriated families experience multiple social needs, schools need to develop good links with community organisations and other agencies.

## Providing a welcoming environment in school

Immediate enrolment and regular attendance at school is highly desirable for newly arrived children and particular attention needs to be paid to minority children. Children should be offered a school place as soon as possible after they return to school even if the official documents are incomplete.

Some children come from countries where the education system is different. Schools may be organised differently and the style of teaching may be more interactive and collaborative. The range of subjects taught in a child's previous schooling might also be different.

Once children have a school place, the initial meeting and interview with parents/carers and their children is a time for good relationships to be established. Parents/carers should be made to feel they can trust the school and be able to provide key educational information about the child in confidence. It is reasonable to ask parents/carers about the languages spoken at home, past schooling and about their relationship to the child. Families can also be asked if they are in receipt of benefits or social support.

### Group work assignments for teachers

- ▶ **1.** Design a map of your school for newly arrived children and parents.
- ▶ **2.** Develop a set of questions for a first meeting with parents of newly arrived children.
- ▶ **3.** Create a friendly classroom together with your pupils with signs in different languages, paintings, etc.
- ▶ **4.** Prepare an inclusive storyboard with your pupils about your community, village, etc.

## The concept of resilience and its relevance for education

Resilience is a psychological concept describing the ability of individuals to cope with traumatic experiences, such as violence, abuse, war, flight or bereavement. After a traumatic experience such as displacement and loss of stability, it is normal to exhibit strong emotional reactions, but with time these usually lessen. Children's reactions to such events vary vastly in both the short and long term. Some children regain strength rather soon, others are not strong enough to cope.

Many factors influence their psychological well-being. The duration and intensity of trauma, the child's age, the child's personality and character, the quality of childcare and the experiences in a new country all affect how the child will come to terms with being an asylum seeker and refugee. Certain adverse or risk factors make it more likely that problems will arise. Other protective factors help guard a child against long-term psychological distress.

It is useful for teachers to think about adverse and protective factors when working with repatriated children. Schools and teachers who wish to promote well-being should try to maximise the protective factors in a child's life and minimise the adverse factors, as much as they have control over them, helping to make it less likely that a child will suffer long-term psychological stress.

The overview below identifies the most important protective factors that may contribute to emotional recovery and resilience. These supportive conditions provided from families and schools could complement each other. If family conditions remain adverse, the role of schools as a supportive environment is important.

**Protective factors include:**

- ▶ having parents/carers and/or a family network who can give their children attention and good quality childcare;
- ▶ having access to other people, particularly from their own community, who provide friendship and support;
- ▶ some understanding of the reasons for leaving their home country. Obviously younger children may have an incomplete understanding of such stressful experiences and be in a more vulnerable situation. Children who are able to process their traumatic experience are less likely to suffer long-term distress and those with high self-esteem are more likely to overcome traumatic events;
- ▶ being able to maintain some links with their former host land and members of their extended family and friends;
- ▶ remembering good things about life in the former country;
- ▶ being happy in a new school, making friends and being able to learn at school;
- ▶ feeling optimistic about the future and about making progress are important;
- ▶ being able to talk about stressful events and thus gain control over them;
- ▶ being able to ask for help when things go wrong;
- ▶ having a hobby or interest to pursue;
- ▶ having plans for their future.

**Students in vulnerable situations: understanding symptoms of distress**

Students who arrive at your school with an interrupted prior education are in a most vulnerable situation: in danger of depression, low achievement and early dropout. Besides living in an environment they are not familiar with, children with interrupted prior education may feel frustrated or inadequate because of their inability to read, write or complete some tasks, or because of the lack of opportunity to continue learning and their unfamiliarity with the school facilities and classroom equipment.

In an additional vulnerable situation are those students whose experiences of displacement and deprivation prevent them from settling into a new school. Such students may manifest disturbed behaviour. It is important to be aware of some of the past experiences of repatriated minority children.

**Such experiences may include:**

- ▶ loss of a familiar school environment, of material belongings and familiar surroundings;
- ▶ negative incidents with local authorities and border police;
- ▶ hostility in the new homeland;
- ▶ material deprivation in their new homes;
- ▶ being with people who do not understand or know about their experiences.

**Distress that children are facing can manifest in various ways, including:**

- ▶ acting out stressful events or problems in their thoughts and in their play and drawings. Playing out such events enables them to develop an understanding of these events and gain control over difficult emotions. When children play out violent or traumatic events time and time again it indicates that they are not getting over the experience;
- ▶ physical symptoms;
- ▶ nightmares and disturbed sleep;
- ▶ crying and feeling overwhelming sadness;
- ▶ being nervous or fearful of certain things such as loud noises;
- ▶ being unable to form relationships with other children, perhaps being too sad and withdrawn to want to play or unable to trust other children. A newly arrived child might also not understand what other

children are doing. These children may be isolated because they are rejected by other children, who see them as different or because of their disturbed behaviour;

- ▶ having difficulty relating to adults because they mistrust them. Sometimes children keep away from adults because they fear loss: they are reluctant to show affection to a significant adult lest that person disappear.

### **Key strategies for teachers to provide emotional support and social inclusion in the classroom**

Teachers' competences should include knowledge and understanding of child development and awareness of the needs of children, as well as a basic knowledge about intervention strategies.

#### **Awareness of symptoms**

The team of teachers in a school will need to examine all of the school's policies for the care of learners experiencing psychological problems. Providing emotional support for these children is an integral part of a school's policy and cannot be considered in isolation from matters such as providing a welcoming environment, good home/school liaison and support. It is important for teachers to be observant and to know when children are distressed. Only then can appropriate support be given. Manifestations of some of the following behaviour may indicate that a child is deeply distressed.

- ▶ Losing interest and energy or being very withdrawn and taking little interest in surroundings.
- ▶ Being aggressive or feeling very angry. Children can display aggressive behaviour for a number of reasons. Some children copy the violence they have seen around them. Young children may be unable to put their feelings into words so they use violence as an outlet. Traumatic experiences can also make children feel tense and irritable and they may lose their temper easily.
- ▶ Lacking concentration and feeling restless. Children who are worried or unhappy often find it difficult to concentrate on their work. They may daydream, become withdrawn or restless.
- ▶ Feeling very irritable.

#### **Training**

In-service training should aim to increase teachers' knowledge about children's backgrounds and to develop their listening and communication skills. Some teachers may also want to consider validated counselling courses.

#### **Counselling**

A small number of repatriated children will need more intervention. Some schools offer individual or group counselling to children who have suffered abuse or stressful experiences, usually facilitated by teachers who have obtained counselling qualifications or by other professionals. However not all societies have the same attitude to counselling services and some families may view counselling as inappropriate.

#### **Talking to children**

Many schools have well-planned inclusive strategies and one of the most important things a teacher can do is to talk to distressed children, listen to what they say and take their communication seriously. To do so, the teacher or mentor has to make a regular time to be free.

#### **Play**

Those who work with younger children can use play with individuals and small groups of children to make sense of their experiences, explore issues such as fear and trust and help newly arrived children settle in.

#### **Autobiography and creative writing**

Children can be encouraged to write about themselves, their home country and present circumstances, keep a diary or make a scrapbook or picture book about themselves. Such autobiographical techniques

are frequently used with asylum-seeking and refugee children and help develop an understanding of complex events and feelings. Younger children can use paints and crayons to draw about themselves and work with an adult to write down captions to their drawings.

## Art

Art and drama can be used in the same ways as creative writing and play to enable children to express themselves and develop an understanding of complex events and feelings. Primary school teachers, art teachers and care workers can be trained to use art with disturbed students and those in vulnerable situations in ways that help them settle.

### Other useful techniques include:

- ▶ self-portraits;
- ▶ mask production and discussion of facial feature and feelings;
- ▶ the desert island: children work in groups of four or five around a large sheet of paper; they are told to paint the items they would like to take if they were together on a desert island. There is space for painting personal items as well as communal space for children to paint together. The activity is a good prompt for talk.

### Discussion points for teachers:

- ▶ What can you use for your work?
- ▶ How would you try to support a child in distress?
- ▶ Give examples of interventions for different grades and age groups.

## Co-operation between the school and parents to provide support to children facing difficulties in school

### Key strategies for working with parents.

If a child experiences difficulties at school, it is essential to develop good communications with parents and other key carers. Sometimes parents and children's problems may be closely interlinked. Leaving their home country often disrupts family relationships: children may lose parents or key carers. More frequently, children lose the attention of their parents, who may be so preoccupied by basic survival and their own problems that they cannot give young children the attention they need. Where parents are emotionally absent, it is important to ensure that they receive social support.

Ensuring that children and families have access to social and community support. For many children, isolation and lack of support are significant risk factors. If children are experiencing difficulties at school, teachers should check that they and their families have the support of the community, after-school clubs, access to playgroups, befriending schemes and language classes.

## Co-operative learning

Co-operative learning is a way of learning in a group. Co-operative learning is instruction that involves students working in teams to accomplish a common goal, under conditions that include the following elements.

1. Positive interdependence. Team members are obliged to rely on one another to achieve the goal. If any team members fail to do their part, everyone suffers the consequences.
2. Individual and group accountability. All learners in a group are held accountable for doing their share of the work and for mastery of all of the material to be learned.
3. Face-to-face positive interaction. Although some of the group work may be assigned separately and done individually, some must be done interactively, with group members providing one another with feedback, challenging reasoning and conclusions, and perhaps most importantly, teaching and encouraging one another.

4. Appropriate use of collaborative skills. Students are encouraged and helped to develop and practise trust-building, leadership, decision-making, communication and conflict-management skills.
5. Group processing. Team members set group goals, periodically assess what they are doing well as a team and identify changes they will make to function more effectively as a team in the future.

Only learning activities that include all the five elements above qualify as co-operative learning.

**Co-operative learning is group work, but not all work in groups is co-operative learning; some work differs from the group work in several aspects:**

- ▶ groups are heterogeneous;
- ▶ all the participants are actively involved;
- ▶ individual accountability is guaranteed;
- ▶ face-to-face interaction takes place (all the group members can see and hear each other);
- ▶ there is intentional development of social skills;
- ▶ self-evaluation of the process and the outcome is carried out.

Co-operative learning demands the fulfilment of all these principles.

Co-operation improves the quality of social relationships, the ability to adapt oneself to a group, and facilitates the social and intellectual development of the personality. Co-operative learning tasks are aimed not only at the result of the work but also at the process and social skills that stimulate academic education. Taking into account that co-operative learning develops social and academic skills equally, it can be concluded that it contributes to the social and cognitive development of the individual.

The teacher who applies co-operative learning creates an educational environment that develops the skills to co-operate and to summarise and analyse the information, and the skills to put forward and prove a hypothesis and evaluate the process and the outcome of personal and group members' work. In organising and managing the co-operative group, the role of the teacher changes. The teacher is not the only source of information. The responsibility is shared with the students. The teacher learns not to intervene in the group work without need but is actively observing the process and organising its evaluation.

**Using co-operative learning, the teacher is responsible for the group work on three levels:**

1. problem-solving;
2. group management;
3. processing the relationships.

Co-operative learning provides an opportunity for students to be creative and develop their critical thinking skills, be tolerant and accept differences. Moreover, learning through collaboration raises learners' self-esteem and generates positive attitudes towards self, peers, teachers, school and education.

Co-operative learning can be used successfully with students of different ages, from preschool to adult education. The level of the task's difficulty and the research problems depends on the students' age and interests, but, basically, the way and mode of learning remain the same.

Co-operative learning corresponds to current policies in several different education systems and it aims to develop all-round personality, improve socialisation and educate people on how to live and work in a democratic society. Co-operative learning is increasingly used in different educational institutions, vocational, pre-service, in-service education and various re-qualification courses.

The use of co-operative learning brings important benefits for both learning and the classroom environment. Some of these benefits are:

- ▶ Increased motivation to learn and active involvement of students in learning. Each member has opportunities to contribute in small groups. Students are apt to take more ownership of their material and to think critically about related issues when they work as a team.

- ▶ More opportunities for personal feedback. Because there are more exchanges among students in small groups, students receive more personal feedback about their ideas and responses. This feedback is often not possible in large-group instruction, in which one or two students exchange ideas and the rest of the class listens.
- ▶ Acknowledgement of individual differences. When questions are raised, different learners will have a variety of responses. Each of these can help the group create a product that reflects a wide range of perspectives and is thus more complete and comprehensive.
- ▶ A positive attitude to diversity. Students learn to work with all types of people. During small-group interactions, they find many opportunities to reflect upon and reply to the diverse responses from fellow learners to the questions raised. Small groups also allow students to add their perspectives on an issue based on their cultural differences. This exchange inevitably helps students to better understand other cultures and points of view.
- ▶ Improvement in interpersonal and group relations. Students learn to relate to their peers and other learners as they work together in group enterprises. This can be especially helpful for students who have difficulty with social skills, for newly arrived students or for students from ethnic minorities. They can benefit from structured interactions with others and the others can overcome their prejudices through this process.

**There are also risks that must be taken into account when designing and implementing co-operative learning activities.**

- ▶ “Good” students do the work and the others do not really learn.
- ▶ “Good” students lose time waiting for the others while they could have advanced quicker.
- ▶ The work in groups actually excludes and demotivates minority students, shy students or those with lower language skills.
- ▶ Failure or low group achievement can lead to worse interpersonal and intergroup relations in a mixed class.

**Ways to mitigate these risks include the following.**

- ▶ Define the tasks clearly and also explain that working together is an element to be considered, besides the actual outcome, in the individual assessment of each student.
- ▶ Avoid labelling children and stimulate team spirit in the class.
- ▶ Be careful with the distribution in groups. For most tasks heterogeneous groups work well if there is a clear and balanced distribution of roles in the group, based on the strengths of each member (sharing strengths). However, for some learning tasks, you can consider homogeneous groups but be clear that this is not co-operative learning.
- ▶ Supervise the group and provide support when needed.
- ▶ Ensure that the group is put back on track and all members contribute.
- ▶ Keep the size of the groups between three and five persons.

## **Promoting language awareness and cultural diversity**

### **Key methods at all ages of schooling**

Children should be encouraged to celebrate their home language. There should be labels and signs in relevant languages. Teaching all the children about the various languages of the children in the group helps to celebrate multilingualism and plurilingualism by:

- ▶ letting children teach staff and allowing other children to learn some words in their different languages, including the Roma language;
- ▶ making labels and signs in relevant languages;
- ▶ learning a few words in relevant languages, particularly greetings;
- ▶ encouraging parents to come in and read stories or teach songs, or do other activities with children in their family language;

- ▶ encouraging communication such as hellos and goodbyes;
- ▶ telling children folk tales from various countries and different ethnic groups;
- ▶ celebrating various holidays, introducing food and music from different cultures.

**The following activities may be useful for promoting creative expression.**

- ▶ A treasure basket containing materials of different textures or objects that make different noises can be used to encourage such play. Also useful are small toys, figures and other objects that facilitate the telling of stories and puppets, props and clothes for role-play.
- ▶ Drama, including the use of miniature figures and mask-making, which allows children to play out feelings and “conflicts”.
- ▶ Opportunities for free play, allowing children to use play to interpret stressful events that have taken place in their lives.
- ▶ Using stories, followed by discussion, acting and play.

### **Diversity education across the curriculum**

This document includes various suggestions for educational activities schools can use across the curriculum to raise awareness about cultural diversity.

In addition, small projects can be added to the basic curriculum. The arts, history and language teaching offer many opportunities.

Projects might include work on stories and testimonies; writing stories and accounts of migrations; interviewing and making presentations about relevant issues. History projects can deal with the growth of diversity, local history projects or personal oral histories on returnees and refugees.

In civic education classes, students can develop their civic competence and their speaking and listening skills through role-play and debate about relevant issues. Students can be given texts to read such as newspaper articles, autobiographies, diaries, letters and leaflets.

### **Peer mentoring among students and mentors**

A peer-mentoring school programme is a framework established in school and supported by the school in which volunteer students provide assistance to other pupils of a younger age or to those facing various barriers that prevent them from being successful in school (such as a lack of family support and learning conditions and resources, language issues or arrival from another school with different requirements).

Engaging in peer mentoring brings benefits for both the mentor and the person receiving support.

**For students benefiting from a mentor’s support, the effects include:**

- ▶ improved attitudes to school and peers;
- ▶ feelings of competence and self-efficacy;
- ▶ better grades and academic achievement;
- ▶ pro-social behaviour and attitudes.

**For mentors, improvements have been reported with:**

- ▶ connectedness to school;
- ▶ self-esteem;
- ▶ empathy and moral reasoning;
- ▶ intrapersonal communication and conflict-resolution skills;
- ▶ relationships with parents.

The mentoring is mainly about a relationship, although it usually occurs through specific activities like homework support, joint visits to cultural or educational places outside school or support in school, even during lessons. Participants in the programme may also be offered opportunities to engage in joint group activities (such as community volunteering programmes or organising a community event).

In effective mentoring programmes mentors receive training (within school, from a teacher or a senior mentor, or outside school, from an NGO or a learning centre) and also benefit from regular meetings to provide each other with support to overcome challenges. Usually, one teacher takes the role of programme co-ordinator.

Clear ethical rules should be put at the basis of the work of mentors, and the school should have transparent and fair procedures for recruiting, training and supporting mentors, as well as for identifying beneficiaries and matching them with the mentors.

**Some risks to avoid in peer-mentoring programmes are as follows.**

- ▶ Mentors and mentees may not fully understand their roles. Mentees may not understand how a mentor can help them reach their goals, may feel ashamed or intimidated for being in the programme or perceive the enrolment in the programme as a form of punishment.
- ▶ Peer mentors can sometimes provide negative role models. Therefore, the recruitment of mentors should take this into account and regular monitoring and supervision will reduce risks.
- ▶ Peer-mentoring relationships may experience difficulties and might need external support to overcome them.

## **Peer mediation**

**Mediation is a conflict-management strategy with the following characteristics.**

- ▶ The parties in conflict request or agree to the intervention of a third party, the mediator, with a role of supporting them to find a mutually satisfactory solution to disagreements.
- ▶ The role of the mediator is not to propose solutions but to assist parties to engage in dialogue and reach an agreement.

**Usually, the mediation process involves the following steps.**

1. Explain the rules and principles to be respected by the parties and mediator during mediation:
  - the aim is to find a mutually acceptable solution;
  - the mediator is to be as impartial as possible;
  - everyone has equal opportunity and time to talk;
  - everyone is to keep calm and there is to be no name calling;
  - no interruptions;
  - confidentiality must be ensured, except when there is evidence or suspicion of danger to others or to themselves or any signs of present or past abuse.
2. Ask parties to express their positions, needs, interests and goals.
3. Give feedback, paraphrase and ask questions to ensure clarity.
4. Ask parties to propose realistic solutions.
5. Support parties to find common ground, by analysing solutions and picking the option which is best for both.
6. Make sure both parties understand what the solution means and accept it.
7. Take note of the agreement.
8. Discuss follow-up if necessary.

In school-based peer mediation programmes conflicts and disagreements between students are addressed through mediation performed by student mediators. They act as volunteers, receive training from a teacher responsible for the programme and respect the principles of mediation (for example, they propose but not impose their interventions and remain impartial).

### **Therefore, an effective peer mediation programme should consider:**

- ▶ recruiting and training student mediators;
- ▶ promotion of the programme so all students know how it works and how they can benefit;
- ▶ providing support to student mediators to perform their role;
- ▶ effective monitoring and ensuring the quality of the process.

## **Working together: school, parents and community**

### **Involving all parents**

Establishing strong links with parents is an essential part of supporting the education of minority students. The most successful schools that work with these students are those that foster a high level of parental participation. Such schools usually have good links with community initiatives, learning centres<sup>3</sup> and local projects, including those of minorities.

Parents play a crucial role in the education of their children. They are a child's key educator and know them better than anyone else. There is a wealth of research evidence that shows that children do better when there is a close working partnership between home and school. The involvement of parents and their relationship to a school is crucial for improving school attendance and completion of education.

Parental involvement is thus a key factor in learners' achievements and this is the case across all ethnic groups.

### **Research (Hill and Tyson 2009, McBride and Brown 2009) identifies that:**

- ▶ parental involvement has a significant effect on student achievement throughout the years of schooling;
- ▶ a father's interest in a child's schooling is strongly linked to positive educational outcomes;
- ▶ educational failure is increased by a lack of parental interest in schooling;
- ▶ many parents want to be more involved in their children's education.

**Some parents, however, have few links with their child's school. Some schools also report that it is difficult to develop links with the student's family. It is worth considering some of the reasons for such problems.**

- ▶ Past experiences in the host country may make these parents suspicious of authority and wary of contact with schools.
- ▶ Parents may be unfamiliar with the education system and events such as parents/carers meetings are unfamiliar.
- ▶ Parents have negative experiences from their own schooling.

**A school that has developed strong links with the local community has a welcoming environment that:**

- ▶ makes all parents feel that they are wanted and have a positive role to play;
- ▶ shows parents that they can always make their feelings and opinions known to staff and that these will be dealt with respectfully and seriously;
- ▶ demonstrates that parents/carers' linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds are valued and respected;
- ▶ shows that the school is part of the community it serves.

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3. In several countries learning centres have been established specifically for Roma learners, providing targeted support and resources to enhance educational access, promote cultural identity and improve academic outcomes for students affiliated to a historically marginalised community.

## Key points to reflect upon

**Recognising diversity within and across ethnic groups:** a starting point for encouraging more minority parental and community involvement is recognising there are different communities with different experiences. Individuals from within and across different communities should also not be viewed in ways that label or stereotype them.

**Challenging racism and negative perceptions:** some school practitioners may make assumptions about parents on the basis of their background and these can be unfairly judgmental. Negative perceptions need to be challenged.

**Addressing barriers:** minority parents and children may face a range of economic, social and practical barriers to being involved in schools.

**Empowering parents:** minority parents should be invited to meet teachers and see the school.

## Building strong community links

Schools must develop good links with community organisations in their locality. If a school wishes to improve the involvement of minority parents in its activities, it can ask the relevant community groups to respond to the school's overtures. Community groups can sometimes provide interpreters to mediate in an emergency. They can also be invited to speak to students or be involved in activities and cultural or awareness-raising projects. Schools can research and list local community organisations and individual returnees who could be invited in to help.

### Among the services offered by community groups and organisations are:

- ▶ advice on welfare rights and housing;
- ▶ language classes, employment training and careers advice;
- ▶ supplementary schools for students, cultural-educational activities, sport;
- ▶ youth activities;
- ▶ senior citizens' activities;
- ▶ women's groups;
- ▶ sport, cultural events and outings;
- ▶ production of newsletters and information.

## Examples

One German local authority has been able to secure statutory funding for 10 German language classes for parents. All of the classes are based in the schools their children attend and run in school hours during term time. Most parents who attend these classes are refugees. In the same schools, peer mentors from various ethnic groups co-operate individually with younger students. They work as tutors or invite them to out-of-school activities, do homework with them or help with translations of school work.

A large secondary school in Sweden with a high proportion of refugee children decided to promote parent attendance at parents' evenings. It was found that few Turkish and Kurdish parents attended these meetings. After this, the school took on a trilingual classroom assistant who spoke Kurdish and Turkish. His services were used at parents' evenings and to translate letters to the home. Parental attendance at school events, by both mothers and fathers, improved after this.

A London school with a large number of Albanian children provided a room for parents to meet. A refugee community organisation and a community school teaching Albanian have grown out of the parents' meetings.

A German school established a coffee place where mothers/parents could meet. Roma mediators organised information meetings and volunteers offered literacy classes. The school attendance of children became more stable and children and mothers enjoyed after-school activities in this café.

## Assignment

In small groups, please discuss the following issues.

- ▶ Whether similar projects could be implemented in your school.
- ▶ Other social projects together with minority parents/educators.
- ▶ The idea of peer mentoring in your school.

## The role of the educational mediator

Ethnic minority educational mediators have a key role in many schools in supporting the involvement of parents, carers and communities.

### Their work includes:

- ▶ ensuring there is a welcoming school ethos;
- ▶ advising on a range of ways to make sure that parents and carers from diverse backgrounds are listened to and consulted about their needs;
- ▶ developing strategies to ensure that parents understand the school's approach to teaching and learning.

### The role of mediators is also related to:

- ▶ encouraging parents to support their children's learning;
- ▶ identifying ways for parents to contribute to the life of the school;
- ▶ developing links between school and community;
- ▶ ensuring that parents know that home languages have an important role in children's learning;
- ▶ ensuring that the school values bilingual skills.

The desirable position of the mediator is represented in the lower part of the diagram below. The upper part presents two ways in which the role of the mediator is misused, often found in practice.

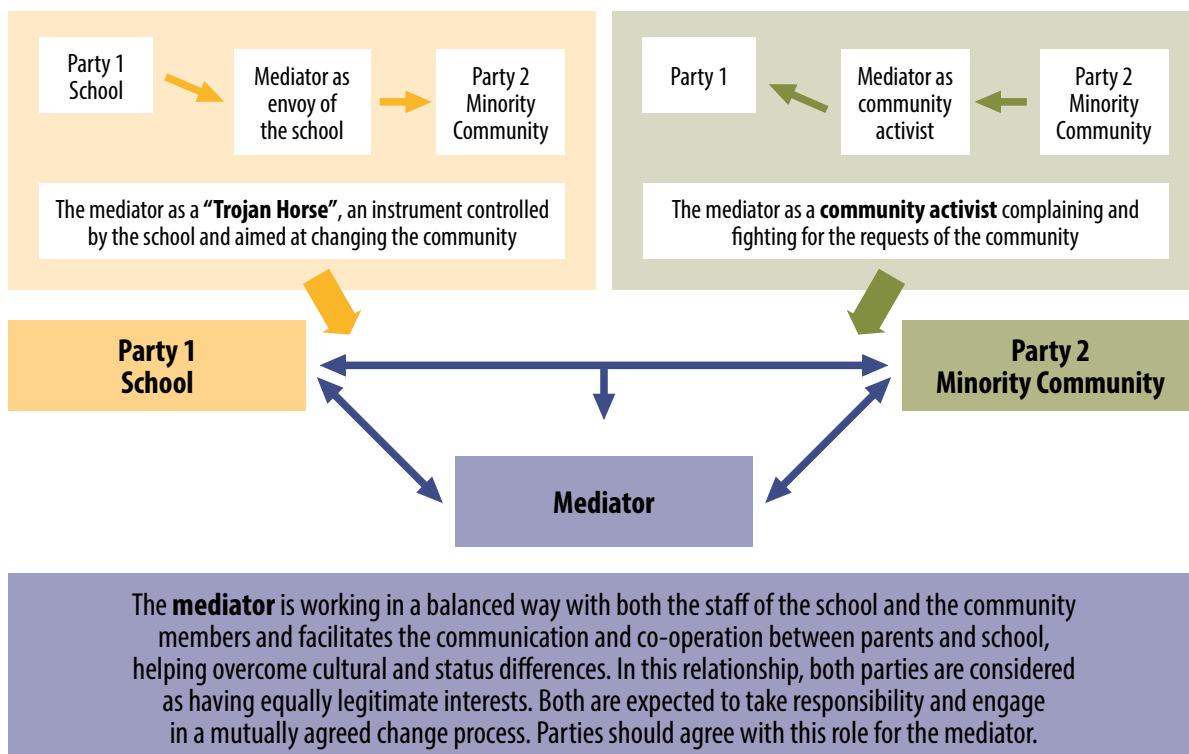


Diagram 1. The position of the mediator (Council of Europe 2017).

# Monitoring and evaluating the school development process – A guide for school leaders

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## Key points for monitoring and evaluation: active learning, parental involvement and community support

### Active learning

Active learning involves learning in collaboration with others. Learning within a community of learners enables the child to construct his/her own knowledge, to explore issues from multiple perspectives and then to review and reflect on his/her discussions with peers. Through this process of active learning, children are more likely to internalise what they have learned and be able to apply it in their day-to-day lives and in everyday situations. In other words, the way the child acquires knowledge affects the degree to which that knowledge becomes useful or not useful to the child. This makes active learning crucial to learning the meaning of responsible citizenship.

#### Active learning:

- ▶ engages children physically, cognitively and emotionally;
- ▶ promotes action, as children learn to recognise their own capacity and self-efficacy;
- ▶ places children at the centre of the learning process by ensuring that the content is relevant to their own lives and is engaging for them;
- ▶ requires an atmosphere of trust and support in order to ensure that children do engage and feel secure in expressing their own view or in trying out new skills.

### The involvement of parents and the wider community

Parental involvement is crucial to a child's success in school. The involvement of parents in the formal education of their children complements and acknowledges their central role in the child's development.

Parents may feel reluctant to approach their child's school. In particular, this may be an issue for parents from minority ethnic groups or parents whose first language is not that of the school. In order to improve school contact with all parents and the wider community, schools might consider exploring ways of addressing parental fears and concerns and can start with the following recommendations.

- ▶ Providing opportunities for informal meetings between staff and parents and establishing parent-teacher contact that offers opportunities to discuss and understand each other's points of view.
- ▶ Providing information to parents in a way that takes account of the existence of a diversity of literacy levels as well as cultural and linguistic diversity, for example parent-teacher meetings, inviting parents into the school for special events, etc.
- ▶ Inviting parents to become involved in extracurricular activities or intercultural events.
- ▶ Identifying opportunities where parents and other members of the community can support the school, for example with language support, translation or homework clubs.
- ▶ Developing strategies to involve the wider community in an intercultural approach, for example inviting individuals or community groups that may have a particular area of expertise.

## The role of all the members of the school community

It is important that all the members of the school community (students, parents, teachers, support staff and management) are included in the process of creating a school that values cultural diversity and are involved in the collective responsibility of developing and maintaining an inclusive and intercultural school.

One of the underlying principles of successful school development planning is good communication between all members of the school community. It is important, therefore, that everyone involved has the opportunity to have his/her views heard and feels a sense of involvement in the process of change.

### Guidelines for school leaders for monitoring and evaluation

The implementation of a school plan should include procedures for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating by a given date.

#### The process of monitoring and evaluating should include:

- ▶ individual reflection;
- ▶ team or group sessions;
- ▶ meetings with all stakeholders.

Formative evaluation should be seen as a way to support the effective and efficient implementation of the school development process.

After having developed an action plan, the members of the school community will engage in the process of implementation.

#### Successful implementation should contribute to:

- ▶ promoting a greater awareness of social inclusion and intercultural education;
- ▶ helping all students to be fully included in the school;
- ▶ promoting a supportive and inclusive learning environment for all;
- ▶ including parents and the wider community;
- ▶ building coalitions between teachers, students, parents and external stakeholders in order to reduce rates of dropout or underachievement.

The clarification of tasks, goals, success factors and indicators along with a time frame will help the school to gradually transform the planning into good practice.

It is important to identify priority areas that will help the school culture to become more inclusive and intercultural, as work in these areas is progressing.

As the school development process is cyclical, the process of evaluation will inform a further step of planning and implementation. It may happen that in the process of implementation new challenges arise and need attention. Implementation must be flexible to respond to new issues and changing circumstances while remaining true to the mission of equity and social inclusion.

## How do I as a school leader organise a participatory evaluation process?

After months of work it is time to stop and look back at what has been done and at what has been achieved, as well as to look at how the current situation is. This is the evaluation. It is like pushing the rewind button on a video player to rewatch a movie or like looking in a mirror to see how you (as a group of stakeholders) look now.

#### Among the key stakeholders you might consider involving are:

- ▶ all teachers who attended training;
- ▶ students or their representatives:

- ▶ the school principal;
- ▶ representatives of parents, including minority parents;
- ▶ a representative of the local education authority;
- ▶ local NGOs or learning centres.

Considering your specific work context, you might choose to involve only some of the above or add other stakeholders.

**The goal of the evaluation is an improvement of work and co-operation in the future. The purpose of evaluation is not:**

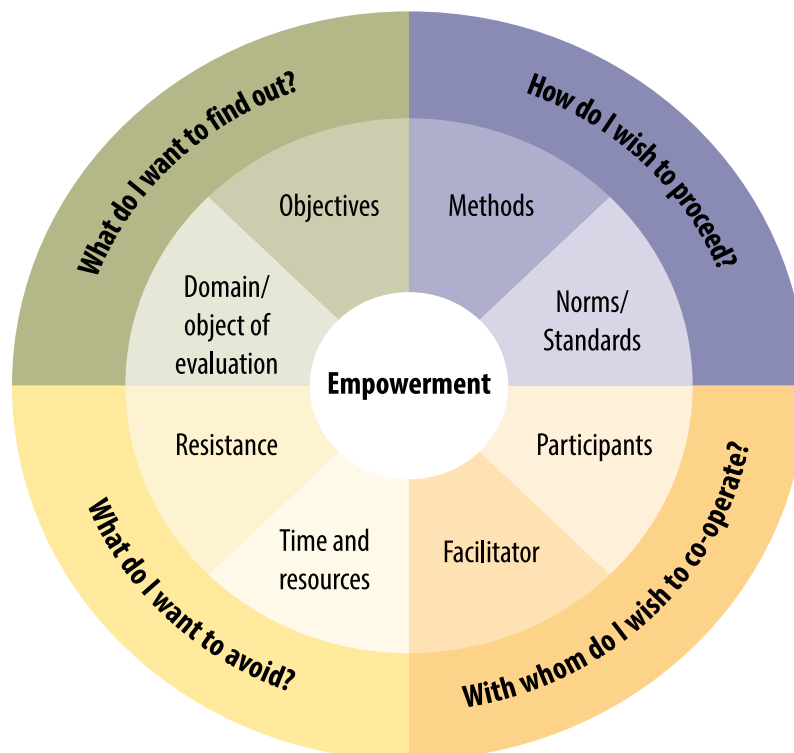
- ▶ to find out who has done a good job and who has not;
- ▶ to identify who is guilty for not achieving the results expected;
- ▶ to prove that everything is perfect and that you did a great job.

**But it is:**

- ▶ to review activities and identify what worked well and what did not work well and why;
- ▶ to reflect on what has been done and learn from successes and failures;
- ▶ to measure the effects of the work and set the basis for the planning of the next cycle of activity.

Evaluation is a process that needs to be planned and prepared. Its goals are best achieved if it is a participatory process in which various relevant stakeholders are actively involved.

Diagram 2 can help to structure the planning of the evaluation. It also shows how this process can generate empowerment of the team of teachers actively engaged in the process and motivate them to continue the work.



**Diagram 2. Evaluation planning structure (Council of Europe 2017).**

You should do the planning of evaluation together, as a team. You may want to convene a meeting with several key stakeholders, people who know the situation, the work done and who have been involved in the planning process. Together, you should find answers to the following questions.

## **What is going to be evaluated?**

There will be two elements to look at: the activities in the school development plan and the impact of these activities on the school, the teachers, the students and on the co-operation with parents. You might also want to look at more specific issues such as the school attendance of a particular group of students, extracurricular activities, attendance of parents at school activities, school results, relations and attitudes in school among children, etc.

## **What are the objectives of the evaluation?**

Here you should define more precisely what you want from the evaluation, based on the general statements on the purpose of evaluation mentioned above.

## **What methods and instruments will be used to collect information?**

You will need to collect facts (what has been done), figures (numbers, percentages, etc.) and opinions/perceptions/attitudes from various stakeholders in the community and institution(s). Where do you get this information from? How? Who can contribute? You might decide to define a few questions to ask parents and have a member of the team compile an overview or summary of the answers.

## **What norms and standards need to be taken into account?**

There are some elements that you need to take into account when you plan this process: for example, legal requirements, administrative procedures of the education system, limitations of access to some personal data, etc. In some cases, in order to pose questions to students, you need the agreement of the parents.

## **Who will be involved in the evaluation process?**

A very important decision concerns who you are going to invite to take part in the evaluation meeting. It is important not to involve too many people, but to have a group representing the main categories of stakeholders.

## **Who will be the facilitator of the process?**

The evaluation meeting needs someone to act as facilitator or moderator, to make sure that everybody gets to speak, that no one is monopolising the discussion, that the attitude is positive and constructive and that the interventions are not deviating from the subject. This could be one of the members of the team, but it could also be someone else you trust, possibly someone from an NGO you are working with.

## **What resources and how much time will be necessary and how can you increase efficiency?**

List what you need for collecting the information and for the evaluation meeting (meeting room, etc.). Estimate how much time will be needed to prepare the meeting (collect and organise the information) and how long the meeting should be.

Some forms of resistance might be expected from school stakeholders and you will need to think about how to address it. Knowing the people you invite and the topic of the discussion, think about what can go wrong, what opposition you might encounter in the group and how you can counter this.

Once the plan is ready, you need to make sure that it will be implemented and that within a reasonable time you will have the information collected and organised and that everything is prepared for the evaluation meeting.

When the information is ready, you can convene the evaluation meeting, according to the plan defined during the evaluation planning meeting.

The facilitator of the meeting will start by specifying the object and objectives of the evaluation, before stating that all the discussions in the group will remain confidential, that they are expected to produce a better understanding and a constructive analysis of the work done and of the current situation, and that

each person should focus on his/her own area of responsibility and not on blaming others. All opinions will be listened to and will be considered important if they are formulated respectfully and constructively.

Then the information gathered is reviewed and discussed by the group, taking into account both facts and opinions. Conclusions will then be formulated, pointing out what has improved, what worked well, what did not work well and what priority topics will be focused on in the future.

The group will then also decide what information from the discussions will be communicated to others outside the group. Once this is decided, the group will identify the best ways to communicate the results to those that might be concerned.

**By using such an approach, as a team, you will:**

- ▶ obtain a clearer picture of the results of the work done;
- ▶ build additional support within the school and from partner institutions or NGOs.



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The tool “Fostering school success for ethnic minority students” aims to equip educators and school staff with essential knowledge and strategies to address discrimination effectively within schools. Central to this effort is the principle of “equity and inclusion”, which seeks to ensure fair treatment and the elimination of barriers that hinder engagement and participation. The tool emphasises the importance of fostering a democratic and inclusive school culture where all students, particularly those from ethnic minority backgrounds, feel welcomed and have equal opportunities to succeed. This involves offering tailored resources to promote “welcoming and enabling environments” that “respect diversity” and support all individuals. The focus on ethnic minority students addresses historical systemic discrimination, acknowledging the unique challenges these students face in educational settings. The rationale includes recognising the influence of ethnic identity on a child’s educational journey, addressing multifaceted marginalisation through an intersectional lens, leveraging substantial research data on educational challenges within these communities and promoting community engagement through cultural understanding. The tool provides individual educators, teams and school leaders with resources for self-evaluation, reflection and guidance on planning interventions that facilitate a transformation to inclusive and democratic school cultures.



## TOOLKIT FOR A DEMOCRATIC AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOL CULTURE

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