

UNIT 2: AN INCLUSIVE CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOL



Introduction

- In unit 1 we introduced the concept of the Child Friendly Schools (CFS).
- In this unit shall learn more about the dimensions of CFS.
- Specifically, we will examine the inclusive Child Friendly Schools which is a dimension of CFS.
- Specifically, we will look at the definition of inclusive CFS, legal framework for inclusive CFS, key performance area of inclusive CFS, components of inclusive CFS and skills required to implement inclusive CFS.



Expected learning outcomes

Upon completion of this unit you will be able to:

- a) Define inclusive CFS
- b) Describe legal framework for inclusive CFS
- c) Discuss key performance areas of inclusive CFS
- d) Explain the components of inclusive CFS.
- e) Apply the skills required to implement inclusive CFS.



Definition of inclusive CFS

- Before we go on to examine inclusive CFS in detail, we need to establish the meaning of the terms inclusive CFS approach and an inclusive CFS.

What is a CFS inclusive approach?

- A CFS is inclusive of children when it seeks out children who are not attending school and does not exclude, discriminate, or stereotype on the basis of difference.
- It welcomes, nurtures, and educates all children regardless of their sex, physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other characteristics.
- It provides these children with an education that is free, compulsory, and accessible, especially to families and children at risk.
- It respects and responds to diversity and ensures equal opportunity for all. It treats diversity as an opportunity for, rather than an obstacle to, quality education.

What is the inclusive CFS?

- This is an institution that has children with diverse backgrounds and abilities and the teacher is expected to use a variety of teaching methods and resources to cater for the various different learning needs of the learners.
- These schools use an inclusive learning approach which seeks out and includes ALL the traditionally excluded children such as those with challenges or who may not speak the language of the classroom.
- An inclusive class therefore includes children with diverse backgrounds and abilities.
- Inclusive CFS **have** child centered classrooms, which focus on the interests of the students, abilities and learning styles, placing the teacher as a facilitator of learning





Legal framework of an inclusive CFS

The legal framework of inclusive CFS includes:-

(a). United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC): Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) ensures each child's right to a free and compulsory basic education and to the protection of their dignity in all disciplinary matters. In addition, Article 29 charges States Parties to ensure the fullest possible development of each child's ability and to the development of their respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; for parents, cultural identity, and values; and for the environment.

(b). National constitution (2010) - article 53, 54, 55, 56 and 59 of the constitution have provisions on children's right to free and compulsory basic education, including quality services and to access educational institutions and facilities for persons with disabilities that are integrated into society, to the extent compatible with the interests of the person.

Sessional paper No. 1 of 2019:

- This is the current sector-wide framework to realign education and training sector to Vision 2030 and the Constitution of 2010.
- The key policy issues in Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2019 are:
 - a) **Pre-primary:** Provide free and compulsory Pre-Primary Education for all 4 to 5 year olds in Kenya; and provide health and nutritional support for 0-5 year olds attending day care centers and schools.
 - b) **Primary education:** Provide free and compulsory primary education; and implement automatic transition and transfer between grades and across levels of basic education.
 - c) **Secondary education:** Provide free and compulsory secondary education to all children.
 - d) **Special needs education:** Provide quality education to all learners with special learning needs; and review and revitalize programs to promote inclusive education in all institutions.



Key performance areas

To begin to develop inclusive CFS it's important to focus on the following three key performance areas:

- i. Are there mechanisms for ensuring access to all children regardless of background or ability?
- ii. Are there mechanisms for respecting and responding to diversity that ensure equal opportunity in learning and learning achievement for all children regardless of background or ability?
- iii. Are there mechanisms for eliminating stereotypes within the curriculum, learning materials, and teaching-learning processes?



The components of inclusiveness in Child Friendly Schools (CFS)

Inclusivity in a CFS includes three major components:

- i. **Access:** Mechanisms for ensuring access to all children regardless of background or ability;
- ii. **Diversity:** Mechanisms for respecting and responding to diversity that ensure equal opportunity in learning and learning achievement for all children regardless of background or ability;
- iii. **Elimination of stereotypes:** Mechanisms for eliminating stereotypes within the curriculum, learning materials, and teaching-learning processes.



Access to education regardless of background or ability

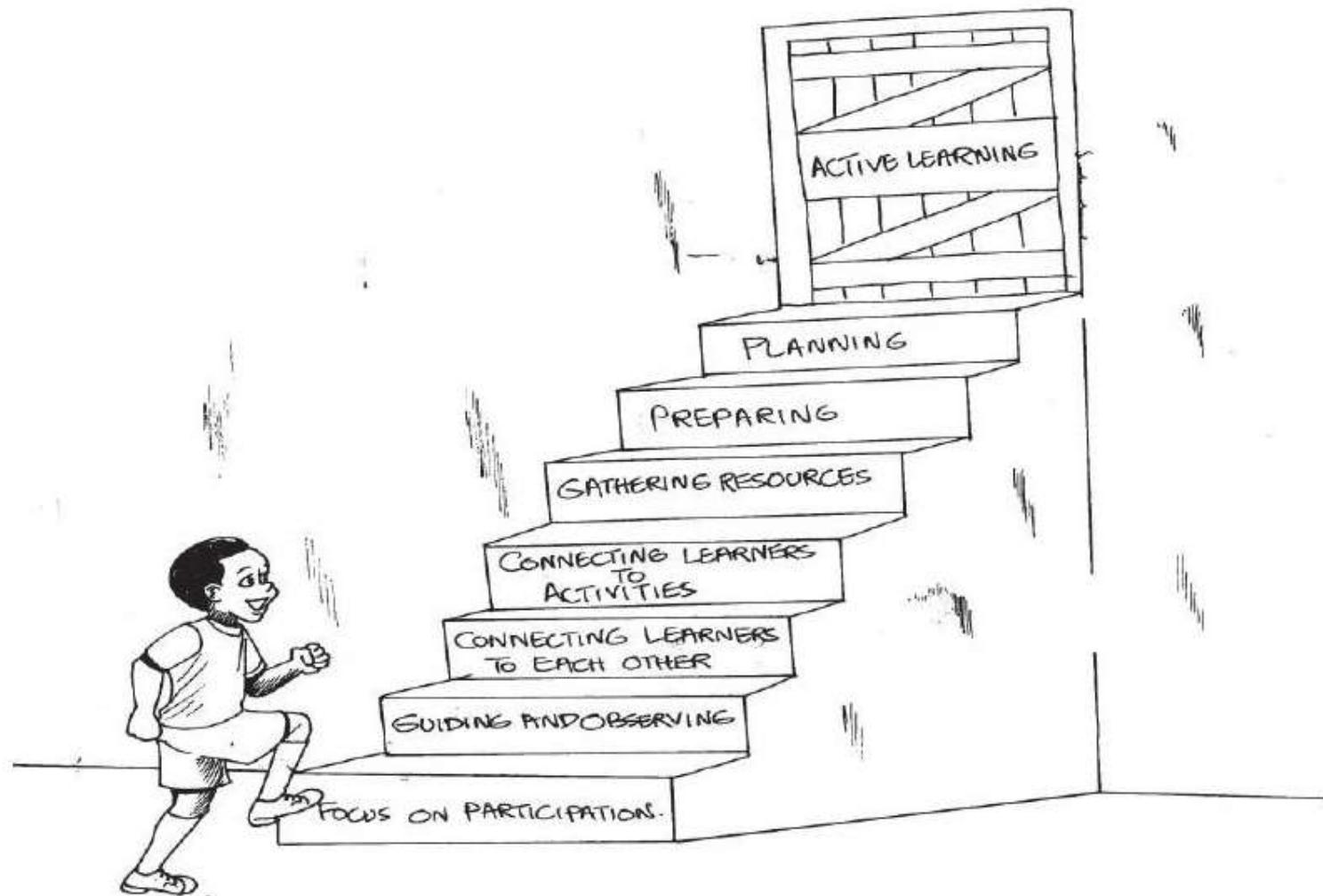
- **(a). A Child-Friendly School:** 'Inclusive' includes not only children with disabilities but also all the children who are, or can potentially be, excluded from school and from learning in the classroom due to a child's personal characteristics, those of her/his family environment, as well as the social and physical environment of our communities and schools. The success of CFS is in getting all children in school thus goes beyond simply identifying and including children with disabilities or special learning needs. It must be measured against the full enrolment and completion of **All** children, including those affected by the barriers noted above.



- **(b). A Child Friendly Classroom:** Some children may be excluded from participating and learning in the classroom. In other words, just because a child is in a classroom does not mean that she or he is included in the classroom. For instance, they may be children: For whom a lesson or textbook is not written, or taught, in their first language; Who are never asked to contribute; Who never offer to contribute; Who cannot see the blackboard or a textbook or cannot hear the teacher; or Who are not learning well and for whom no attempt is made to help them. These children may be sitting at the back of the classroom and may soon dropout altogether. To be inclusive, CFS are responsible for creating a learning environment where ***ALL*** children can learn, ***ALL*** children want to learn, and ***ALL*** children feel included in our classrooms and schools.



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- **(c). Children with special needs:** Children with special needs should be admitted to schools within familiar environments; school policies, strategies and institutional capacities should be made appropriate to the range of special needs amongst learners and rules and regulations adapted to make active participation of learners with disability possible. Individual schools should seek technical support and training of their teaching as well as non- teaching staff for effective management of SNE programs. As a matter of necessity, every school should have their teachers trained in SNE alongside their regular curriculum dispensations. Care should be taken when talking about learners with disabilities as certain expressions could be inappropriate or humiliating when used. The design of school infrastructure should be carefully done, considering the needs of persons with physical, visual, hearing and intellectual impairments. For example: While all public spaces, footpaths, corridors, bridges, doorways and roads should have adequate circulation to minimize the risk of accidents, a general turning circle of 1500mm is recommended for wheel chairs. Controls and switches must be located within the reach of all persons including those with special needs. Other disability friendly facilities and equipment such as ramps, toilets, braille materials, hearing aids and clearly defined paths should be provided by all schools as pictured below.



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Barriers that keep children out of school

Below are some of the major barriers to inclusion that may affect whether a child attends school and is able to participate in learning:

- **Individual factors** such as poverty, insecurity, low self-esteem and confidence, special needs or different abilities, the fear of stigmatization associated with HIV and AIDS, teenage pregnancy and low motivation to attend school;
- **Home-based factors** such as poverty and the resulting inability of care givers to provide for learners' needs, which may force children into child labour to make ends meet, gender stereotypes that degrade the capability of girls against boys and vice versa;
- **School environment-based factors** such as hidden costs of education, long distances to schools, forced repetition, rigid and sometimes overly demanding school schedules, inadequate or unfriendly physical facilities and personnel, large class sizes and heavy workload, violence such as through bullying and discrimination may also cause children to drop out of school;
- **Community based factors** such as insecurity; negative attitudes, stereotypes, bias, taboos, shame, ignorance and misinformation which may lead to low self-esteem and social ostracizing of children from certain families hence directly excluding them from schools.



Diversity - respect for diversity in schools

- A CFS is inclusive when it respects, and welcomes diversity and ensures equality of opportunity for all children, regardless of background or ability. However, it must go beyond this respect to respond to diversity by meeting the differing circumstances and needs of children.
- This response entails promoting an inclusive 'social climate' in that a common understanding exists amongst all school personnel the school.
- The school community must all understand the value of inclusive education for each child, family, and community.
- The school needs to identify, monitor, and address barriers to inclusion, many of which may not have been initially realized.
- It also needs to promote diversity amongst its staff (e.g., teachers with different backgrounds and abilities), which will foster a climate of understanding and positive action in dealing with the diversity of children in a school or classroom.
- And lastly, a CFS must respond to the basic physical, social, and learning needs of children with diverse backgrounds and abilities, the benefits of which will not only be felt by these children, but all children.



Elimination of stereotypes in schools

- A stereotype is an image or idea of a particular type of person that has become fixed because it has been widely held for a long time. Stereotypes may be positive, such as "people who wear glasses are intelligent," or stereotypes may be negative, such as "street children are thieves."
- A CFS is inclusive when it does not promote or adhere to discriminatory stereotypes that place one individual in a subordinate position to others, that promote exclusion from school and learning in the classroom, or that require conformity to rigid social norms.
- Prejudice and discrimination can be reflected unintentionally in the curriculum, learning materials, and teaching practices.
- This is the case especially for girls, children affected by HIV/AIDS, as well as other children with diverse backgrounds and abilities.
- For instance, children living on the streets may be portrayed in schoolbooks or story books as pickpockets, and working children may be depicted as poor even though they may have much strength, such as excellent survival skills.
- Likewise, children affected by Down syndrome may be considered 'slow' even though many times they have excellent social skills.



- If CFS curriculum and learning materials are inclusive of children with different backgrounds and abilities, they will be more sensitive to the diversity of children and their circumstances. They also will be more relevant to children's learning.
- In particular, learning materials are inclusive when they:
 - i. Include **ALL** children, even those with diverse backgrounds and abilities;
 - ii. Are relevant to all children's learning needs and abilities;
 - iii. Are appropriate to all cultures;
 - iv. Value social diversity (for example, socio-economic diversity; poor families can be very
 - v. Good families for children; they may come up with creative solutions for problems, and They could be depicted as inventive);
 - vi. Are useful for the children's future lives;
 - vii. Include men and women in a variety of roles;
 - viii. Use appropriate language that includes all of these aspects of equity.



Skills required to establish an inclusive CFS

Skill 1: Children's government:

- Ensure that your school has a functioning children's government which addresses problems affecting them (including peace building). Here are some ideas for managing children's governments:
 - a) Reconcile decentralization within the overall school system and consider conferring greater professional autonomy to student leaders (within an acceptable range);
 - b) Review responsibilities and levels of administrative support for student leaders to focus their priority on educational leadership;
 - c) Formalize the identification and development of potential leaders rather than leaving it to chance;
 - d) Review student leadership appointment processes and criteria to ensure they reflect prevailing societal demands;



- e) Appoint student leaders for only fixed periods of time;
- f) Prioritize support for professional development programs for student leaders on leadership values so as to move them beyond maintenance and management to relationships and school improvement;
- g) Pay greater attention to the context in which student leaders operate, especially in relation to school sizes and the learning environments;
- h) Encourage teachers to extend their work as educators beyond the classroom to the entire school for more effective role modelling and mentorship
- i) Build the attractiveness of leadership roles in schools in 'challenging circumstances':
- j) Support student leaders by developing quality network learning communities, shared leadership roles, apprenticeships and mentoring such as through benchmarking;
- k) Consistently seek evidence of the performance management effects of student leadership on schools, their programs and personnel before committing further resources in these areas.



Benefits of children governments

The benefits of children's government include the following:

- i. **Accountability:** Promoting the provision of appropriate and adequate human resources, funds equipment, infrastructure and related resources that meet the needs of every child;
- ii. **Transparency:** Promoting transparency, cost effective use and the sustainable implementation of educational resources;
- iii. **Participation:** Promoting good governance, participation and inclusiveness of different stakeholders (parents, communities, private sector etc.) in the development and management of basic education;
- iv. **Democracy:** Democratic decision making by promoting respect for children's opinions in matters that affect them;
- v. **Independent and critical thinking:** Encouraging independent and critical thinking as well as skills, and capacities for development;



Skill 2: Curriculum supervision: Ensure that there is effective supervision of curriculum in place. Here are some ideas for effective curriculum supervision:-

- The school provides flexibility to teachers to pursue innovative teaching methods for helping all children to learn.
- The curriculum allows for different teaching methods and learning styles, such as discussion or role play.
- The content of the curriculum relates to the everyday experiences of all children in the school whatever their background or ability.
- The curriculum integrates literacy, numeracy, and life skills into all subject areas and targets all children regardless of background or ability.
- The curriculum promotes attitudes such as respect, tolerance, and knowledge about one's own and others' cultural backgrounds.
- The curriculum is adapted for different learning rates and styles, particularly for children with learning disabilities.



- In learning materials, the roles of children are balanced and without discrimination, regardless of a child's background or ability.
- In learning materials, children with diverse backgrounds and abilities are portrayed positively.
- In learning materials, the topics are interesting to children with diverse backgrounds and abilities.
- In learning materials, people with diverse backgrounds and abilities are included in history, literature, and art.
- Learning materials include pictures, examples, and information about many different kinds of people, including girls and women, ethnic minorities, people of different castes and social or economic backgrounds, as well as people with disabilities.
- Learning materials are in the language children use in and out of school (such as on the playground).
- In learning materials, the language used encourages children with diverse backgrounds and abilities to be interested in the text and is free of discrimination.
- The school shows respect for children of all religions; children have opportunities to learn about different religious traditions, as appropriate, during the school day.
- The school has staff, such as counsellors and teachers, who can identify and help with the students' special learning needs.



Skill 3: Record keeping: Ensure that there is proper record keeping (administrative, academic, finance and stores). Below are some ideas for effective record keeping :-

- The school has a master list of all school-age children in the community, whether enrolled or not.
- The school is aware of and, whenever possible, is changing policies and practices - such as costs, daily schedules, and the school calendar - that prevent children with diverse backgrounds and abilities from receiving a quality education.
- Monitoring mechanisms exist to identify and enroll school-age girls and boys in school, to track their attendance and learning performance, and to undertake appropriate home visits when necessary to improve attendance.



Skill 4: Learner participation: Ensure that both boys and girls are actively participating in the lessons. In brief it involves:

- ALL students have textbooks and learning materials that match their learning needs.
- ALL students are able to learn in their mother tongue while they master the national language.
- ALL students receive regular assessment information to help them monitor their progress.
- ALL children have equal opportunities to participate in all school and classroom activities.
- ALL students help to develop guidelines and rules in the classroom



- ALL students help to develop guidelines and rules in the classroom and in the school regarding inclusion, non-discrimination, violence, and abuse
- Children understand the concept of inclusive education and can identify culture and gender bias in learning materials.
- Children with diverse backgrounds and abilities have equal opportunities to learn and to express themselves in the classroom and at school.
- Children with learning difficulties have opportunities to review

Skill 5: Learning process: Ensure interactive pupil- centered method used in teaching /facilitation and learning. Techniques for the interactive learning process include:-

- Base every new learning on the background knowledge of learners.
- Structure your lessons around "big ideas" rather than unconnected pieces of information. In this way, children have an umbrella under which they can connect new information with what they already know.
- Consider children's developmental needs. Some children will need more time to progress than others.
- Be a facilitator of learning and recognize the unique characteristics of ALL learners.
- Encourage learners to talk to you and to one another during all activities, whether individual or team oriented.





- Ask questions that allow learners to explain their ideas rather than those that require a "Yes" or a "No" answer only. Thoughtful questions will generate active discussions amongst learners and further stimulate children to search for information. Interacting with others, receiving new information and reflecting on ideas helps children to construct new knowledge.
- Plan cooperative learning activities to enable work and learn together. This interaction is especially important when the groups include both boys and girls or when they contain children with diverse backgrounds and abilities. Moreover, cooperative learning can improve discipline in class because children are working together rather than being disruptive.

Skill 6: Text book-pupil ratio: Ensure that the text book-pupil ratio in all subjects is excellent

- Excellent: 1:1 text book ratio
- Satisfactory: 1:2 text book ratio
- Unsatisfactory: 1:3 text book ratio
- Poor: >1:3 text book ratio



Skill 7: Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources (TALULAR):

- Ensure the availability and use of Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources (TALULAR) e.g. sticks, leaves, beans etc.





Skill 8: Teacher commitment: Ensure that you have competent/dedicated teachers. In brief this involves:-

- Teachers visit 'model schools' and/or attend workshops or classes on developing an inclusive classroom and school, thus receiving advanced professional training on a regular basis.
- Teachers can give presentations to other teachers, parents, and community members on developing an inclusive classroom and the value of diversity in the classroom. Teachers believe that all children - girls, poor or wealthy children, language and ethnic minority children, as well as disabled children - can learn.



- Teachers can explain the full meaning of 'inclusive education' (beyond simply children with disabilities or special learning needs) and can give examples of how it can be fulfilled within the school and classroom.
- Teachers, with the assistance of students, are involved in finding
 - school-age children who are not in school and in developing individualized learning programs to fit their needs. Teachers know about diseases that cause physical, emotional and learning disabilities and can help unhealthy students to get proper care.
 - Teachers have high expectations for all children, regardless of their background or ability, and encourage them to complete school.
 - Teachers are aware of resources that are available to assist children with special learning needs.
 - Teachers can identify culture and gender bias in teaching materials, the school environment, and in their own teaching, and can correct this bias.
 - Teachers are free to adapt curriculum, lessons, and school activities to the needs of children with diverse backgrounds and abilities.
 - Teachers use content, language, and strategies in their teaching that help all students to learn regardless of their background or ability.
 - Teachers can assess children's learning in ways that are appropriate to the children's abilities and needs, rather than only depending upon examination scores.



Skill 9: In-service training (INSET): Ensure that the teachers attend in-service training programs. The school should have a plan to develop diverse school staff (women and men with different backgrounds in race, ethnicity, physical ability, religion, language, socio-economic status, etc.).

Skill 10: Assessment and feedback: Improve the quality of school assessment and feedback. Assessments are useful in establishing what has been learnt. Making observations to establish what the child knows is referred to as continuous assessment. Some of the ways that could be used to continuously assess children includes; checklists of skills, tests, portfolios, quizzes and self-assessment. Continuous assessment enables teachers to follow learners' progress and if need be to improve their practice by modifying their teaching methodologies and resources. It provides a forum for teachers to engage parents and guardians in supporting the learners. In the same vein, parents should receive information from the school about their children's attendance, participation, and achievement.

Skill 11: Completion rate: Ensure that a high proportion of learners who started class one eight years ago completing school and sitting KCPE for primary level; or learners who started form one four years ago completing and sitting KCSE. Below is a guide for completion rates.

- Excellent: > 70%
- Satisfactory: 50% - 69%
- Unsatisfactory: 49% - 20%
- Poor: 19% >



Skill 12: Teacher-pupil ratio: Ensure that the teacher-pupil ratio (how many pupils study with one teacher) is excellent (see below):

- Excellent: 1:45-55
- Satisfactory: 1:56-70
- Unsatisfactory: 1: 71-84
- Poor: 1:85 <





- In this unit we have looked at the components of an inclusive school.
- We have learnt about the benefits of an inclusive school and the skills that you require in order to make the schools inclusive.
- We hope you can now identify barriers to inclusion in your school environment.