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Leave no one behind

Equity and Inclusion in Education

at UNESCO Multisectoral Regional Office in Bangkok (UNESCO Bangkok)

What is Equity and Inclusion in Education?

Each child, regardless of their background or ability, has the right to receive an equitable and quality education. “Inclusion” involves transformation of all physical and learning aspects of the school, such as curriculum, pedagogy, learning strategies, assessment, and teacher training; and creates an education system that responds to the needs of all children in a common learning environment. “Equity” in education ensures that access to, and opportunities for, children, adolescents, youth and adults in education are just and fair by reduction/elimination of disparities based on a child’s background.

Inclusion and equity are core parts of quality education and contribute to positive impact on the learning outcomes of all learners, especially for those most affected by the learning crisis, such as disadvantaged and marginalized communities, vulnerable groups, and those who have never been to school or pushed out of school early.

Why is equity and inclusion in education important?

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes children’s right to education, health, privacy and protection against all forms of abuse. These rights form a basis for inclusive education for all children.
- It helps make the society more inclusive and less discriminatory by enabling all children to grow up together, experience diversity, and understand the importance of ending discrimination in their country or community.
- Inclusive classrooms are beneficial for everyone by bringing together different experiences, ideas, and skills to make the society stronger. They create higher expectations for all, lead to better results academically, and build skills for a productive contribution to the community.

- Children with multiple identities (such as a girl child with a disability and belonging to a low caste group) or varying abilities are more motivated when they learn in classes surrounded by other children.
- It provides all children with opportunities to grow and develop friendships with one another, fosters a culture of respect, belonging and a willingness to accept individual differences.
- Teachers who are trained to recognize and support children with different needs and multiple identities help make a difference. Moreover, practicing inclusive teaching can be more rewarding and motivating for teachers when all students are participating more in lessons and performing to the best of their ability.

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Equity and inclusion in education ensures a process intended to respond to students’ diversity by increasing their participation and reducing exclusion within and from education.

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Our regional Equity and Inclusion in Education programme

UNESCO Bangkok's Equity and Inclusion in Education programme for the Asia-Pacific region focuses on the following strategies:

Advocacy: UNESCO raises awareness and advocates for promoting equitable and inclusive quality education by providing platforms (such as international conferences, policy roundtable discussions, high-level policy forums, webinars on multilingual education and children with disabilities) to explore, exchange, and sensitize issues related to equity and inclusion. UNESCO also uses different days/decades such as the International Mother Language Day to celebrate and raise awareness on multilingual education.

Technical assistance: UNESCO provides technical advice and assistance to its member states on designing and implementing equitable, inclusive, and quality education policies. UNESCO Bangkok developed more than 300 open-source digital books in 27 ethnic minority languages for Cambodia, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste; and [800 accessible reading materials](#) for children with disabilities in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Nepal, Pakistan and Timor-Leste.

Capacity development: UNESCO supports countries in Asia and the Pacific to strengthen capacity in responding to learners' diversity and needs as well as addressing the multiple forms of discrimination. For example, an online teacher training course "[Responding to Educational Needs of Learners with Disabilities in Emergencies](#)" was developed in partnership with SEAMEO to build capacities of teachers to support learners with disabilities, especially during times of crisis or emergencies.

Research: UNESCO conducts research to support its Member States in formulating and implementing evidence-based policies and strategies to address exclusion in education. Recent studies have looked at the impact of early intervention and quality education of children with disabilities in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as a mapping of language-in-education policies for advancing mother tongue-based multilingual education.

Partnerships: UNESCO relies on a comprehensive and diverse set of collaborative relations and partnerships to promote equity and inclusion in Asia-Pacific region. UNESCO Bangkok hosts [Asia-Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group \(MLE WG\)](#) and [Disability-Inclusive Education in Asia-Pacific Working Group](#) under [the Learning and Education 2030+ \(LE2030+\) Networking Group](#).

Online teacher training courses: Responding to educational needs of learners with disabilities in emergencies

<https://onlinecourse.seameo.org/course>



Vietnamese language



Thai language



Laotian language



Indonesian language



English language



Tetun language



Cambodian/Khmer language



Dzongkha language

Publications



Welcoming diversity in the learning Environment: Teachers' handbook for inclusive education



Ensuring inclusive education for ethnolinguistic minority children in the COVID-19 era



Approaches to language in education for migrants and refugees in the Asia-Pacific region



Tools for planning and monitoring programmes of multilingual education in Asia



The Bangkok statement on language and inclusion



Mother tongue-based multilingual education: The key to unlocking SDG 4 – Quality education for all



Disability-inclusive comprehensive sexuality education in Asia and the Pacific



Early intervention and quality education of children with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific



For more information and to download our publications, please scan the QR code or click on the web link below:
<https://bangkok.unesco.org/theme/inclusive-education>
<https://bangkok.unesco.org/theme/mother-tongue-based-multilingual-education>

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