

Developing Learner Participation

Module

8



A manual for teacher trainers

Prepared for:

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The Norwegian Association of Disabled

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NAD – The Norwegian
Association of Disabled



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Introduction

The aim of this module is to introduce teacher trainers, teachers and other educators to methods for further developing learner participation, including through developing peer support and involving learners in the making of decisions that affect them.

In a school context, 'Learner participation' could mean many things. For example, it could mean learners:

- being present in school;
- being engaged and active in lessons;
- learning collaboratively and contributing to their learning;
- being involved in all activities, including extra-curricular activities;
- performing roles of responsibility;
- being listened to;
- being involved in decisions that affect them.

The previous seven modules have promoted a range of inclusive strategies that promote the participation of all learners, including those with disabilities and/or special educational needs (SEN). These have included strategies to support school attendance, the accurate assessment of needs, and the access and engagement of all learners through inclusive teaching and learning strategies. Further information is contained in the module on **Including Learners with Additional Needs**. This includes advice and guidance on identifying additional needs, how additional needs can exclude learners, and practical tips and ideas for teachers on supporting learners with additional needs in the school and classroom environment.

Inclusive education is a process that involves restructuring the cultures, policies and practices in schools so that they respond to the diversity of **all** learners in their community. Consulting learners and involving them in decision-making is an important way to make sure such changes are effective. The right a child has to participate is enshrined in the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**. Article 12 of the UNCRC sets out the right of children to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account when decisions are being made on any matter that affects them.

Learners exercising their right in how they are educated not only enables teachers and schools to plan improvements, but also encourages learners

themselves to take greater responsibility for their own learning and the learning of others, e.g., their friends and peers. This helps provide them with the experiences and skills they need to enjoy and succeed in academic and social activities. Furthermore, it means teachers can draw on the cooperation and resources of the learners themselves, a particular benefit where teachers experience a lack of resources.

Planning the delivery of the sessions in this module should be done with close reference to the other training modules in this series, with particular reference to 'Promoting active learning strategies' ([Module 7](#)).

As with the other modules, the training outlined here focuses on using participatory methods and active learning techniques. It follows this basic principle:

We must use inclusive training methods if we are to successfully train others how to teach inclusively.

Duration of training

Trainers should adapt this training to suit the local context and the time available to them for training. Trainers may decide not to use all of the activities, or to shorten some activities if time is limited, or to expand activities if teachers need more support with understanding a particular topic. If all activities are used, without significant adaptation, shortening or lengthening, this module requires approximately 13 hours of training over 2-3 days, depending on the preferred length of training days, number and length of breaks, and so on.

Session 8.1: Commitment to learner participation

This first session helps teachers reflect on what is meant by learner participation and to consider further ways to develop learners' participation in the learning process. By the end of the session teachers will have understood the benefits of further developing learner participation in their schools and some of the barriers that need to be overcome for this to happen.

'The biggest learning resource in any school are the learners. A variety of methodologies of peer support and cooperative learning need to be employed to foster a school culture that encourages learners to learn collaboratively rather than competitively. This will be of mutual benefit to them all.'
Guidelines to Full-service/Inclusive Schools, Basic Education
Department Republic of South Africa, (2010)

Activity 8.1a: 'People Search'

Main



15 minutes

This is an ice-breaker activity that is active and fun, allows for introductions or re-acquaints the group with each other, acknowledges the teachers' experiences, and connects strongly with a key principle underpinning the promotion of learner participation: that all learners bring knowledge and skills to the classroom and have something to contribute.

Resource 8.1

People search

The trainer should give out one copy of **Resource 8.1** to each teacher. There are ten statements in the left-hand column, alongside a space in the right-hand column to fill with a different person's name in each row.

Ask teachers to stand up and approach each other to find someone who has an experience that responds to the requirement of one of the statements. They should write the person's name in the space provided in the right-hand column. They should repeat this until they have ten names (or as many as they can find), with a different person's name against each statement.



Principal trainers finding out about one another

[Image description: two principal trainers, one woman and one man, speak to one another while holding notebooks and sheets of paper.]

Allow 10 minutes for teachers to collect the names of the ten different colleagues (if they can be found) and then allow time for feedback.

The trainer should acknowledge positive interactions between the teachers, the interest they showed in each other and explore anything people want to share that may have arisen during those conversations. Teachers could be asked the following:

- Did they enjoy the activity as an icebreaker? Why?
- Did everybody feel involved? Did they feel acknowledged in anyway? If so how?
- Did any problems or confusions arise? If so, what were these?

Point out that the statements of enquiry in the left-hand column of **Resource 8.1** relate to the world **outside** school. They mainly focus on experiences and skills teachers may be bringing to the training other than those related to their professional roles. If teachers had difficulty finding anyone with any particular experience it may be interesting to discuss if there are any implications for

this. For example, if there were only a very few people who have lived in the same place all their lives, it may be interesting to discuss if this is because people, especially teachers and other professionals, are much more mobile than they used to be.

The trainer should also mention that this activity can be used successfully with learners in the classroom. The statements of enquiry can be adjusted and tailored to some of the likely experiences of those learners. It can therefore help learners' peers and teachers recognise the experiences they have outside school and the skills and knowledge they bring to the school community. It can also help learners have a stronger attachment to the school community and feel more confident by having their experiences outside school acknowledged and validated.

If they plan to use this activity in school, teachers therefore need to consider how the statements in **Resource 8.1** may be adjusted to match the experiences of their own learners. Some suggestions may include changing 'run a business' to 'helps the family by making or selling things', 'has done voluntary work' to 'helps their family and/or neighbours with work around the home' etc.

Note for trainer:

This activity can be run as a competition where the winner is the person who completes all ten names first, though this means less time would be given for the introductions and the conversations that ensue between teachers.

Activity 8.1b: What do we mean by 'learner participation'?

Main



20 minutes

Ask teachers to discuss in pairs what they think 'learner participation' means and give examples. Drawing from **Module 7**, the trainer could give the following as examples if they are needed:

- active learners (participating because they are engaged in the learning)
- learners helping organise and run groups (participating because they are helping the learning process).

After 10 minutes they should feedback their thoughts for the trainer to collect key points on the board or flipchart.

The trainer should then explain the focus of this module by making the following points, acknowledging any points already made in teachers' feedback:

- 'Learner participation', in a school context, can mean a range of things; several of these have already been looked at in earlier modules, for example, learners accessing school and being punctual, accessing the learning, being engaged and actively joining in the lesson, being involved in all the activities including extra-curricular ones, and performing some roles of responsibility.
- There are further ways learner participation can contribute to and improve learning, for example, developing peer support through peer tutoring and peer assessment.
- Learner participation also needs to be understood in the context of children's rights. This equates 'participation' with how all learners, including girls and learners with disabilities and/or SEN, are listened to and whether they are involved in decisions that affect their learning and wellbeing. Note that information about the barriers faced by learners with specific impairments in the module on [Including Learners with Additional Needs](#) may be useful background here.
- By fully participating in the learning process and their school community, learners are able to flourish independently, and develop autonomy through actively engaging responsibly with their peers and adults in their learning community, acquiring the knowledge and skills they need, and taking responsibility for their own learning.
- As independent learners, they use their increased confidence, knowledge and skills to help in their homes and community.

Session 8.2: Developing peer support

This session promotes ways that teachers can further develop learner participation through peer support.

Activity 8.2a: What is peer support and what are its benefits?

Main

 30 minutes

‘Peer support’ refers to learners providing each other with knowledge and skills, or emotional, social and/or practical help.

For teachers to effectively promote peer support they need to acknowledge the range of skills and experiences all learners bring to the classroom. The trainer should mention that **Activity 8.1a** above connects strongly with the key principle underpinning this session, that:

all learners bring experience and skills to the classroom and have something to contribute.

The trainer should explain that this is an important understanding to have when considering what is fully meant by ‘learners’ participation’.

Teachers should together remember specific examples that previous modules promoted peer support, and these should be written by the trainer on the board or flipchart. If examples are needed, then the trainer could mention examples of collaborative learning, such as group work, or of practical and social support offered by their peers to learners with additional needs.

Resource 8.2

Types of peer support

Give out **Resource 8.2** to each group.

Groups should discuss the types of peer support listed, whether learners will need training to provide any of these, and what types of peer support are already provided in their own classrooms and schools.

Resource 8.3

Benefits of peer support

The trainer should then give **Resource 8.3** to each group, allocating one group to each type of peer support. Ask each group to give a detailed example of the type of peer support they have been asked to look at and think of ways that type of support could benefit learners. For example, a detailed example of **'befriending'** could be where a teacher encourages some more socially confident children to invite their classmate who has yet to make any friends to join in with their playground games.

The benefit of this is a learner who is isolated makes friends. An example of a school promoting **roles of responsibility** could be the appointment of 'prefects'; a role that develops learners' communication and leadership skills. An example of **peer tutoring**, such as learners helping each other learn to read, can develop the peer tutors' confidence as learners.



Groups discussing the benefits of peer support

[Image description: Men and women are sitting at two round tables (one table has six people and one has four people). Some are smiling.]

After about 10 minutes, the trainer should ask for feedback on each type of peer support in turn, for discussion by the whole group. The whole group can also add their ideas.

The trainer can summarise by stating that these types of peer support contribute to:

- the promotion of a positive and inclusive school ethos;
- improved relations among learners, including those from different groups;
- increased confidence and self-esteem;
- better understanding of new concepts;
- the development of communication and social skills.

It can be stressed that all these benefits are likely to lead to improved attainment.

It is important to emphasise that schools should make sure that the support they ask learners to give each other is age-appropriate and that adequate training is provided where necessary. The inclusion of all groups in providing peer support, for example, girls and learners with disabilities and/or SEN performing roles of responsibility, also needs to be emphasised.

Activity 8.2b: Peer mentoring

Main



25 minutes

Peer support can help learners who are faced with problems that they may have such as bullying, or difficulties making the transition from home to pre-school/school, or from one school to another, friendship difficulties, or general difficulties accessing learning. This kind of support is sometimes known as 'buddying' or 'peer mentoring'.

Peer mentoring is about making learners feel safe, respected and supported by other learners. This can only happen if teacher expectations of a safe and supportive environment are made clear to learners from the moment they join the school. From day one in their new class, learners therefore need to be able to talk openly, and about themselves and each other, and about how they feel when they are learning.

The trainer should give **Resource 8.4** to pairs of teachers and ask them to read and discuss these guidelines to help them promote a supportive environment in a new class at the start of the school term/year.

After 5 minutes the trainer should ask for any feedback, whether anything could be usefully added to the guidance and whether or not teachers think that the resource is useful.

Introduce the next activity as one that can support good relationships and trust between learners. This activity should take 10 minutes. Blindfolds should be available if possible. Try to find a different 'space' to do this activity, e.g. outside the workshop 'space', to encourage teachers to think about using all available spaces for learning in, especially when classrooms are small and overcrowded.

- Ask teachers to stand up and walk around the room making eye contact with each person they pass.¹
- After about a minute, direct teachers to stop as they pass each person and shake hands warmly with them, or use another form of acknowledgement, while smiling a greeting. They should then carry on to the next person they pass and repeat the process.
- After a few more minutes ask teachers to choose a partner and stand opposite each other. They should then share something positive with their partner about the training session so far (e.g. how friendly people are, how hard someone in particular has worked, something their partner has contributed, etc).
- Teachers should then blindfold their partner (or, if no blindfolds are available, they should close their eyes). They should lead their blindfolded partner around the room, guiding with their hand. After about two minutes the trainer will direct them to swap roles.
- Teachers can feedback how they felt to the main group.

¹ Teachers with visual impairment should be assisted by a colleague (peer support).

Resource 8.5

Creating a safe space

Resource 8.5 should be given to each teacher for them to look at in their own time. It provides a variety of friendship/trust-building activities that can be used to promote the classroom as a safe space, including the activity above. Some 'alternative activities' are suggested for large class sizes if there is not enough space for the main activity.

Extra activity: Developing listening skills

Extra



25 minutes

Resource 8.6

Listening to each other

This activity allows teachers to further explore ways to promote peer support through developing group management and listening skills. The activity can be undertaken if there is enough time. The trainer should distribute **Resource 8.6** to each group of 4-6 teachers and give the following instructions:

- Read through the resource.
- Appoint a Chairperson to ensure everyone gets a turn and is listened to.
- The nominated Chairperson should read out all of the unfinished sentences in turn and ask everyone in the group to spend a couple of minutes thinking about how they would finish off each sentence.
- The Chairperson should then read out all of the sentences again, completing them for her/himself, speaking as openly and honestly as she/he can in this setting.
- Then each member of the group should take turns to speak to the whole group, doing as the Chair did and finishing off each of the sentences for themselves. Teachers should be as open and honest as they can be in this situation.
- If anyone is uncomfortable speaking about one or more of the sentences, then they can 'pass' on these.

After about 10 minutes, when all teachers have had time to speak to their group, encourage a whole-group discussion of the activity, and ask these questions:

- What was it like doing this activity?
- Were any sentences particularly difficult to do?
- What could people in the group do to make each other feel freer to talk openly and honestly?

Collect key points on the board or flipchart, especially points made in response to the last question: What could people in the group do to make each other feel freer to talk openly and honestly?

The trainer should encourage teachers to describe specific behaviour that encourages trust building, such as listening carefully, being respectful of different views and experiences, looking receptive and friendly, supportive body language, etc.

Emphasise the important role of the Chairperson during this activity, and that the Chairperson's behaviour could model the behaviour teachers need to adopt to promote a supportive classroom environment where learners listen to each other. This behaviour would include:

- keeping order and people on task;
- encouraging people to contribute;
- making sure one or more people do not dominate the group;
- encourage shy members of the group to participate;
- making sure people are attentive and respectful of each other's contribution.

Activity 8.2c: Peer mentoring role-play

Main



50 minutes

Teachers are now going to role-play interactions between a learner offering mentoring support (a 'peer mentor') and one who has a pressing problem (a 'mentee').

This activity takes 30-40 minutes. The trainer should give out an envelope containing a set of cards, **Resource 8.7**, to each group of 4-6 people and give the following step-by-step instructions:

- Teachers should get into pairs
- If the group is made-up of an odd number, then one person should play the role of 'observer' who will walk round each pair and observe their role-play
- Teachers in each pair decide who will first role-play the peer mentor, and who will role-play the mentee. Remind teachers that in school settings a peer mentor is a fellow learner of the mentee, which means the peer mentor would usually be from the same year group or an older year group to the mentee.
- Teachers have 5 minutes to prepare themselves to get into their role:
 - a. The teachers role-playing the mentee and the mentor should each take one card from the envelope given to their group, without showing it to anyone else. The teacher playing the mentee should read their card while the teacher playing the mentor should put their card in their pocket or in a safe place. The card explains a particular problem the mentee is having. The mentee can decide a name for themselves and what school year group they are in. They should then tell this to their partner role-playing the peer mentor. The mentee should then think in detail about the problem and how it might be affecting him/her.
 - b. The peer mentor should not look at the card but instead think about how a mentor should behave, not to offer solutions to their mentees problem or tell their mentee what to do, but, instead, how to listen and how to encourage confidentiality (where possible) and trust (keeping in mind, if they did the 'extra activity' **Activity 8.2b**, what was decided people need to do to make each other feel freer to talk openly and honestly?).
- On the trainer's instruction teachers will have 5 minutes for the mentee to share and discuss their problem with the mentor, and for the mentor to listen and respond in the way the teacher in that role feels a peer mentor should.
- On the trainer's instruction, they will then swap roles, with the teacher who was the mentor now becoming the mentee, and the mentee becoming the mentor. The process is repeated: the new mentee takes the card from their

pocket or a safe place, reads it and prepares to get into role and then shares and discusses their problem with the new mentor.

The trainer should walk around the room, listening to various pairs to get a sense of topics discussed and how the activity is proceeding.

After the two role-plays the trainer should ask each pair to return to their main group of 4-6 people.

Each group now has about 10 minutes to discuss their role-plays with each other, sharing anything interesting about their exchanges, and any problems or difficulties encountered. If there is an 'observer' in the group, they should share what they witnessed. The following questions should guide their discussion and should be written on the flipchart/board:

- Were any of the scenarios/issues raised very difficult for the peer mentor to respond to?
- What qualities did the peer mentors exhibit that were particularly helpful?
- What comments were made by them that were not necessarily helpful?
- Were there any outcomes to the conversations? Should any outcomes be expected?

The trainer should ask each group to feedback these discussions to the main group. Further discussion should be encouraged and responded to.

Resource 8.8

Peer mentoring information

The trainer should give out **Resource 8.8** and ask the teachers to read through these important points about peer mentoring:

- Listening and sensitively asking questions are vital to effective mentoring.
- Other important attributes include approachability, honesty, trustworthiness, compassion and fairness, and being respectful towards those of a different gender or who have different beliefs and backgrounds.
- Peer mentors should not be expected to solve the problems that their mentees share and in fact suggesting solutions may not be helpful.
- Mentors should never tell their mentees what to do.
- Confidentiality should not be promised if it cannot be kept, for example, if there is a child-protection concern.

- Some of these scenarios show us that learners can only support each other if they have full support from teachers, the school and, if necessary, the community.
- Some of the scenarios require peer mentors to be specially trained in how to listen, how to ask questions, and to know when and how to refer the problem to a teacher or other professionals in the school.
- In some schools, learners are specially trained in conflict resolution and at helping groups or individuals resolve disputes. This is sometimes known as 'peer mediation'.

Finally, the trainer should ask which of the above activities in this session so far teachers feel they could adapt to use in their own schools to train learners and develop peer support.

Extra activity: Role play

Extra

Resource 8.9

Role-play

The trainer may wish to remind teachers how useful role-play is as a training tool by giving out **Resource 8.9** to each teacher. They should be asked to read through the handout, which explains the benefits of role-play. Teachers should ask any questions they may have and say whether they think the handout is a useful training resource.

Activity 8.2d: Peer tutoring

Main



30 minutes

Peer tutoring can be especially helpful for embedding learning through providing opportunities both for learners who are peer tutoring to reinforce their understanding and develop their language and thinking, as well as for the learners they help who need further explanation and support. Therefore, the personal and social skills of both those being helped and the helpers are being strengthened (e.g. communication skills and self-esteem, learning to negotiate with each other, and asking for help and support).

Teachers should be reminded of **Session 7.4** of **Module 7**: 'Promoting Active Learning in the Classroom', which provided ways to plan and run group work.

Structured group or pair work provides opportunities for learners to teach each other (the 'jigsaw' strategy described in [Resource 7.21](#) is a good example).

Resource 8.10

Peer tutoring activities

The trainer should ask teachers to discuss how peer tutoring could be used to benefit their learners in their own classrooms. Ideas are brainstormed and collected by the trainer on the board or flipchart.

The trainer should then ask teachers to work in pairs and give out [Resource 8.10](#). Each pair should write down examples of how peer tutoring could be used to respond to at least one of the 'tutoring needs' that are given in the first column. They should also provide suggestions as to how they could organise this in their classrooms. [Resource 8.10](#) gives an example ('learners with reading difficulties') to help teachers with this activity, though they should think of their own.

After 15 minutes the pairs should feedback their thoughts for the trainer to collect key points on the board or flipchart.

The following provide some examples of tutoring activities that relate to the tutoring needs given, if the trainer wishes to share them:

Tutoring need	Example of how peer tutoring could be used and organised
Learners with reading difficulties	Paired reading, with able reader paired up with less able reader. For example, a 'Lunchtime reading club' in the library/quiet area with able readers trained and rewarded for their work.

Tutoring need	Example of how peer tutoring could be used and organised
Reinforcing learning from a particular lesson	More able and confident learners prepare and present to small groups within their class. For example, the class is divided into groups. A confident and able learner is assigned to each group to explain material previously taught to the entire class by the teacher. This activity could finish with a quiz where the peer tutor and the winning group gets a prize.
Learning how to use science equipment safely	Older learners help out. For example, older more experienced learners from other year groups support each group doing their first practical once the teacher has explained how to use the equipment.
Learning about drug misuse	Information communicated from peer-to-peer. For example, learners learning about drug misuse undertake a project on it, including research and inviting expert speakers and those with relevant experiences into school. The learners then relay what they have learned to other classes through displays, presentations, etc.

The trainer should emphasise that learners can only be expected to ‘tutor’ if they are fully prepared and supported in the role. The task must be clear and effective, and peer tutors will need guidance and time to prepare. Effective peer tutoring should firstly be modelled by the teacher, and the peer tutors’ contribution should always be acknowledged and, where appropriate, rewarded.

Activity 8.2e: Peer- and self-assessment

Main

🕒 75 minutes

In **Module 7: Promoting Active Learning in the Classroom**, using assessment for learning was recognised as an effective active learning strategy for inclusion. The trainer should remind teachers that assessment for learning is:

- the process of using classroom assessment to improve learning, where teachers share learning goals with learners;
- assessment criteria is used that clearly specifies the standards that must be met, and what evidence will be used to show achievement of learning outcomes;
- learners therefore recognise the standards to which they should aim, and
- there is feedback that leads learners to identify what they should do next in order to improve.

By collaboratively reflecting on their performance and progress with teachers, learners can develop skills in peer-assessment which, in turn, enable them to assess their own performance. Peer- and self-assessment are therefore powerful tools central to the assessment for learning process and are key to developing learner participation and independent learning skills.

The trainer should ask teachers to brainstorm the benefits of peer- and self-assessment.

After the discussion, the trainer can refer to the following benefits if they were not mentioned:

- Learners clarify their own ideas and understanding of the learning goal.
- Learners better understand the assessment criteria and how it can be applied to their work.
- Learners realise what aspects of their own work need to improve and how to better assess ways of achieving a higher standard.
- Learners get to talk about their own learning through discussing the learning of others.
- Learners increase their motivation through experiencing a wider audience to their work.

Resource 8.11

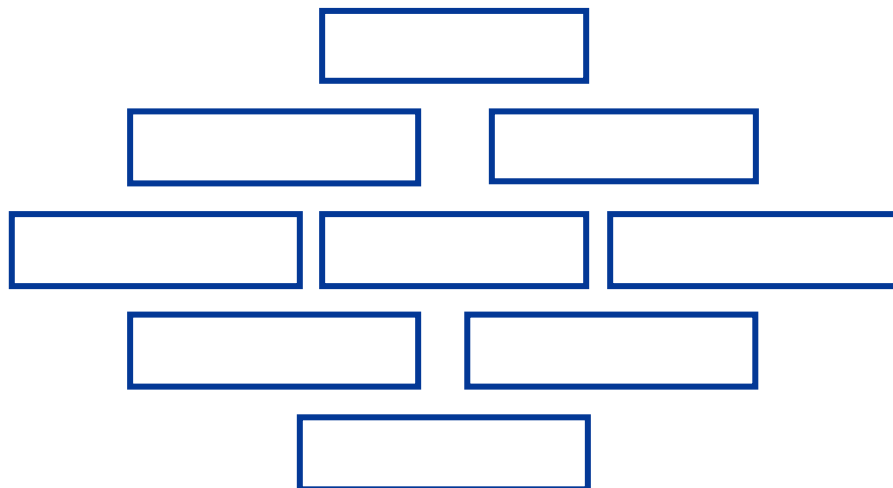
Supporting peer- and self-assessment

Ask teachers to work in small groups and give out the prepared sets of the 'supporting peer- and self-assessment' cards, [Resource 8.11](#), to each group. Explain that this activity looks at key practice that supports peer- and self-assessment, that is, what helps (contributory factors) learners to assess their own work and the work of their peers.

Ask each group to think about how they can encourage learners to comment constructively on each other's work and reflect productively on their own performance. What are the key characteristics of a classroom where learners engage effectively in self- and peer-assessment?

Each group must select nine characteristics or factors (cards) that they consider to be the most important ones. Then they should arrange and rank them in a 'Diamond 9' formation (see example below), with what they perceive to be the most important factors towards the top, the less important towards the bottom, and leaving out any that in their view are least necessary. The trainer should illustrate this diamond on the board or flipchart.

Diamond 9





One group of principal trainers creating their 'Diamond 9'

[Image description: Two male and three female principal trainers are working closely together around a table trying to arrange small cards with writing on into a 'Diamond 9' pattern.]

After 10-15 minutes each group should feedback their decisions and explain them. One way of keeping the discussion focussed is for the trainer to ask each group to share and explain what they decided were the three most important factors, and which they discarded.

There are no right or wrong answers so the trainer should allow plenty of time for teachers to discuss these in detail, why they chose what they did, and whether they have any questions.

Then, for a few minutes, the trainer should ask teachers to discuss in their groups how they would promote one of the key factors that they have identified in their classroom. For example, one group might suggest that to ensure 'our learners understand why the learning is required', they always make sure the learning objectives are linked to wider learning goals, and they use differentiation strategies such as key visuals, so that everyone understands the learning objectives.

These ideas should be fed back to the whole group.

Resource 8.12

Useful approaches – dos and don'ts

The trainer should ask teachers to work in pairs and give each pair a copy of **Resource 8.12**. Teachers are to read through the resource and decide which of the ten listed activities they feel to be positive and **appropriate** peer- and self-assessment activities for their classrooms, and which are less positive and possibly **inappropriate**.

To do this they should keep in mind what is **inclusive** and improves learning. They could make notes on the sheet or, if the trainer prefers, they could make notes separately on a piece of blank paper with two column headings – 'Appropriate' (or 'Dos') and 'Inappropriate' (or 'Don'ts').

After 10-15 minutes the trainer should ask teachers to share what they have decided with their group and then give them the chance to explain and discuss their decisions with the main group.

It is important that the diverse settings represented by teachers are acknowledged so that where an activity is seen as appropriate by one teacher, it may be less appropriate in another's setting (e.g. due to lack of resources or the age of learners).

For the trainer's reference, the following are likely to be **Dos (appropriate)** activities (context depending). Where necessary, explanations or conditions are given in in [brackets]:

1. Learners are divided into groups to hear the presentations they each prepared for homework, and they comment on each other's work. Drawing on those comments, learners then redraft their work before handing it in for marking. [As long as the learners are required to give constructive feedback.]
3. The teacher provides regular opportunities for learners to reflect on their own performance through structured individual and pair work.
4. A teacher sets a short test to check learning halfway through the lesson. She/he asks the learners to tick (✓) or cross (X) their answers (after writing the answers on the board). The teacher asks learners to put their hands up if they have the scores she shouts out in descending order. This

way she/he knows whether she needs to explain any of the learning again. [This can be appropriate as long as the teacher monitors the activity and uses this method for this express purpose – as just a quick check – and also as long as learners are not humiliated or their confidence undermined by being seen to get a low score.]

5. A teacher returns essays where some errors/mistakes that are linked to the assessment criteria are underlined, but no explanation about how to correct them is given. Learners are aware of the assessment criteria. Learners are asked to look at each other's work in pairs and help each other identify how to correct the errors. [This can be a good way to improve learning and also develop self- and peer-assessment, and peer-tutoring skills. It may need to involve careful thought about who is paired with who so that no learner is disadvantaged.]
7. Learners complete a science project in groups. The teacher organises a structured discussion in their group about how they think they performed both individually and as a group. They also present their displays to the whole class for comment.
9. For objective questions (requiring a specific answer) asked in tests, a teacher prepares answer sheets in advance. Once all of the learners are finished, they exchange their answers, and use the answer sheets to grade their partner's answers. The teacher then collects the tests, checks the grading, and grades whatever objective questions are in the tests. [As long as the teacher checks the grading, this can be a useful way to ensure learners from large classes receive their results promptly. However, it again needs to be noted that there may need to be careful thought about who is paired with who.]
10. Every half-term, learners complete a paragraph in their mathematics exercise book describing what progress they have made and what they need to learn next. The teacher then adds a comment before the book is shown to parents/guardians/care-givers.

The following are likely to be **Don'ts (inappropriate)** activities (context depending). Where necessary, explanations are given in [brackets]:

2. Instead of marking an essay him/herself, a teacher gives each learner the marking scheme and asks them to mark each other's work. [For it to be appropriate, this activity should not be done 'instead of the teacher' unless there is good cause – e.g. teacher absence or with the purpose of learners not having to wait long to see how well they performed. It may also need to involve careful thought about who

marks whose work so that no learner is disadvantaged, and the teacher then checking the marking before entering any grades.]

6. Learners' assess each other's work and then collaborate to draw up a list ranking the work, compiling a list from the best performer to the worst performer. [There is nothing positive about this. It could be humiliating, and it is not structured to support learning.]
8. The teacher asks learners to assess each other's work, but the teacher doesn't give any thought about who is paired or grouped with who. [Often careful thought needs to be given to who is paired/grouped with who, so that no learner is disadvantaged.]

When discussing which peer assessment activities could usefully take place in their classrooms, teachers should be encouraged to explain how they can ensure those activities are successful. For example, for learners to comment on each other's presentations in a way that improves learning, they need to know how to make their comments constructive. The trainer should remind teachers of the previous activity where they identified key ways to support peer and self-assessment.

Finally, the whole group can discuss any further issues arising about promoting peer- and self-assessment in the classroom. In summary, the trainer could emphasise the following:

- Activities to promote peer- and self-assessment need to be carefully planned so that they do not disadvantage any learners and are appropriate, challenging and engaging for all learners.
- When learners are able to understand the assessment criteria, progress is accelerated, especially when individuals have opportunities to apply the assessment criteria to work produced by themselves and their peers as part of planned classroom activities.
- Peer- and self-assessment can be supported by key visuals and displays that can illustrate learning objectives and the process of tasks and steps to take.
- Learners need the opportunity to prepare and practise the language used for self-evaluation and assessment.
- Once learners can engage in peer-assessment activities, they will be more able to assess their own work. This enables them to identify any gaps in their own learning and will contribute to their developing independent

learning skills. This will be looked at in more detail towards the end of this module.

- Assessment materials that support self- and peer-assessment need to be prepared (teachers can look at [Resource 8.13](#) as an example).

Resource 8.13

Progress in English checklist

Session 8.3: Involving learners in decisions that affect them

The trainer should tell teachers that the focus of this session is on understanding how learners can be consulted and further involved in decision-making in their schools.

Teachers will recognise that, in one sense, teachers are always consulting learners, for example, by checking whether they are able to do something, understand something, want help, have completed the task, or need additional work. But the trainer needs to emphasise that teachers can develop more in-depth ways to consult learners to help them improve the teaching and learning that goes on in their classrooms. This can increase the engagement of all learners, including disadvantaged learners, as well as developing a better understanding of any barriers to learning that they may experience.

Activity 8.3a: Principles and benefits of learner participation

Main



30 minutes

Teachers should be aware of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**, an international agreement that protects the human rights of children under the age of 18, and of how **Article 12 of the UNCRC** sets out the right of learners to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account when decisions are being made on any matter that affects them.

In schools this means adults should work with learners to develop ways of ensuring that their views are heard and valued and encouraging them to become more active teachers in their learning and participate in improving their education. Additional information in the module on **Including Learners with Additional Needs** could be useful here when thinking through the barriers some learners will face to sharing their views and becoming more active teachers in learning.

This is of course not new to teachers. Remind teachers of **Module 1**: ‘An introduction to Inclusive Education’ and the class rules poster they looked at

that was compiled by learners from a primary school in Zambia. In this poster the children listed what an inclusive teacher should do.

Resource 8.14

Key principles of Article 12

The trainer should give out **Resource 8.14** to each group so that they can consider the principles that can inform schools' approaches to developing participation, reading through the inclusive approach that is outlined here.

Resource 8.15

The benefits of learner participation in decision-making

The trainer should then give out **Resource 8.15** to each group. **Resource 8.15** lists some of the benefits of developing participation in decision-making, both to individual learners and to the whole school community. Each group should read and discuss the information.

Resource 8.16

Benefits activity sheet

The trainer should give each group the cards from **Resource 8.16**. Explain that these cards go into two columns. One column is for cards giving 'examples ***of participation***'; these cards are in italics. The other column is for cards that explain the likely 'benefits' of each participation example.

Working in their groups, teachers should think about which 'Example of participation' cards go with which 'Benefit' cards and put the relevant cards together.

The cards in **Resource 8.16** are arranged to show the correct answers, to help the trainer check the groups' work. However, teachers may well be able to show how some of the Benefit cards may also match other example cards.

As a whole group, the trainer can ask for feedback on which example cards have been paired with which benefit cards.

Activity 8.3b: Approaches to listening to and involving learners

Main

 30 minutes

Before going into detail on ways to promote participation, teachers should consider what kind of participatory activities already take place in their learning institutions.

The trainer should emphasise that teachers will be familiar with learners expressing an opinion; it is often evidence that learning is taking place. Listening to learners and involving them in making decisions is also familiar to teachers; enabling their learners to become independent and autonomous is a key learning outcome that teachers aspire to for their learners. Even on a day-to-day level, during the course of a lesson, for example, a teacher will be guiding learners so that they make informed judgements and then to act on them.

However, schools will vary in how much they invest in listening to learners' views when taking decisions that affect their education and wellbeing.

Resource 8.17

Approaches to participation

The trainer should give out **Resource 8.17** to teachers and ask them to work in pairs to help each other to think about the approaches they already have to the participation of learners in their schools. They should list some activities they are aware of taking place in their classroom or school that helps them listen to learners, and also encourages the learners' opinions to be shared.

The trainer should point out the example approaches/activities that are listed in **Resource 8.17** to help them and encourage discussion of them. Teachers who work in early years development settings may, in addition to their approaches to children's participation, also wish to share examples of how they encourage the participation of parents/guardians/care-givers.

After 15 minutes the trainer asks for volunteers to feedback for a whole group discussion. The trainer should take every opportunity to acknowledge what teachers are already doing in their schools, helping them better understand how they already may be consulting and involving learners.

Resource 8.18

The teacher as facilitator

Finally, the trainer should give out **Resource 8.18** to each teacher, asking them to read through and reflect on what it says about the role of facilitator that teachers can usefully adopt when promoting participation. Teachers can be asked to comment on how comfortable they are in adopting this role for certain purposes.

Activity 8.3c: Degrees of participation

Main



30 minutes

This activity allows teachers to consider ways of developing greater participation in their classrooms, through an understanding of the different degrees of participation; from what is just 'tokenistic' or 'decorative', to actions that are fully initiated by learners themselves and lead to collaborative decision-making.

Resource 8.19

Hart's 'ladder of participation'

The trainer should ask teachers to work in small groups. Give each group a copy of **Resource 8.19**. Ask each group to look at the resource, an illustration of Hart's 'ladder of participation'.

Explain that the diagram has been taken from an influential essay by Roger Hart² who, using fieldwork in Kenya, India, the Philippines and Brazil, identified key elements of participation, where children are listened to and involved in decision-making.

The diagram is of degrees of participation, represented by a ladder whose rungs represent increasingly participatory activities in ascending order. The top of the ladder's activities that involve 'child-initiated' shared decisions with adults are the **most participatory**, and those on the bottom three rungs are **non-participatory**.

² Roger A. Hart, 'Children's Participation: From tokenism to citizenship' UNICEF 1992.

Resource 8.20

Hart's 'ladder of participation' cards

The trainer should give each group the cards from **Resource 8.20**. Explain that these cards go into two columns. One column is for cards giving Hart's '**Degrees of participation**' (taken from Hart's ladder of participation), and these cards should be placed in descending order to mirror how they are placed on Hart's ladder. The other column is for cards that give examples (in a school context) of each degree of participation (or 'rung' of the ladder).

Working in their groups, teachers should think about which 'Example' cards go with which 'Degree of participation' cards and put the relevant cards together, referring to **Resource 8.19 (Hart's ladder)** to help to put them in ascending order.



A group of principal trainers discuss which Hart's ladder cards go together

[Image description: A group of four female principal trainers are standing around a table and holding and looking at pieces of paper.]

The cards in **Resource 8.20** are arranged to show the correct answers, to help the trainer check the groups' work.

As a whole group, the trainer can ask for feedback on which ‘Example’ cards have been paired with which ‘Degree of participation’ cards. Teachers can discuss what they have decided and can offer further examples to illustrate their understanding.

The trainer needs to emphasise that even though degrees of participation are illustrated here through particular types of activity, learner participation is not a one-off thing. It is strongly linked to children’s developmental stages and, where facilitated and supported, develops over time through learners experiencing a range of activities and teacher interventions.

Finally, the trainer should point out that there are, in addition to the benefits teachers discussed in **Activity 8.3a** above, further important benefits to a community and society. Though these cannot be easily measured, Hart states that these benefits are of two major kinds:

‘those that enable individuals to develop into more competent and confident members of society, and those that improve the organisation and functioning of communities’³

Activity 8.3d: Overcoming barriers to learner participation

Main

 45 minutes

Resource 8.21

Attitudinal barriers to participation

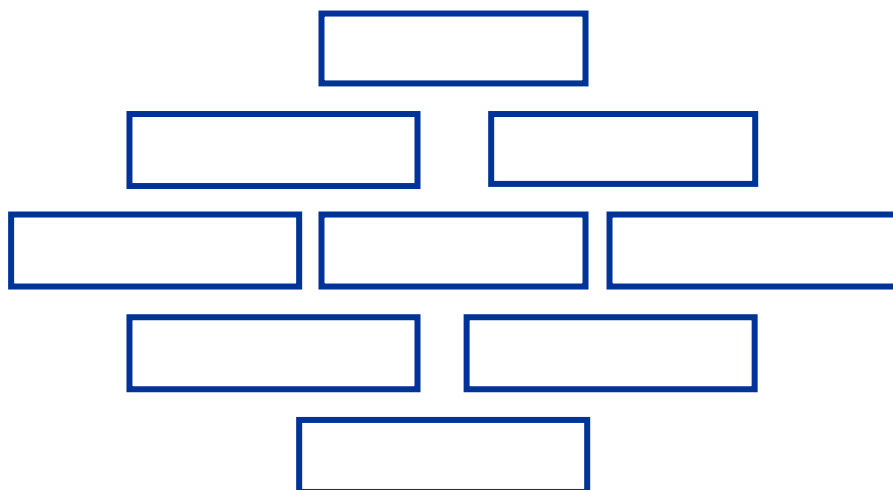
The trainer should ask teachers to work in small groups and give out the prepared sets of the ‘Barriers to participation’ cards, **Resource 8.21**, to each group.

The trainer then invites each group to consider some of the attitudinal barriers to participation that teachers/learners may experience in their particular school. Each group must select nine that they consider to be the biggest barriers. Then they should arrange and rank the barriers cards in a ‘Diamond 9’ formation (see example below), with what they perceive to be the biggest

³ Roger A. Hart, ‘Children’s Participation: From tokenism to citizenship’. UNICEF, 1992

barriers towards the top, the more surmountable barriers towards the bottom, and leaving one out that is the least important in their view. The trainer should illustrate this diamond on the board or flipchart.

Diamond 9



After 10-15 minutes each group should feedback their decisions and explain them. One way of keeping the discussion focussed is for the trainer to ask each group to share and explain what they decided were the biggest three barriers. The trainer should allow enough time for teachers to discuss this, sharing their own reservations and concerns about developing participation.

Teachers should then identify **one way** that their setting might overcome the barriers they have identified in order to increase learners' participation. Each group could be given a different barrier to focus on so that all the barriers are considered.

Each group should share their ideas with the whole group.

The trainer may wish to refer to some of the following issues (some taken from Roger Hart)⁴ to help respond to points made:

⁴ Roger A. Hart, 'Children's Participation: From tokenism to citizenship'. UNICEF, 1992

Card	Some points to make
Our learners are too young to influence decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even during their early school years learners are intellectually capable of working with adults and can express their feelings and thoughts. • Teachers need to develop activities that are appropriate to learners' stages of development. • For example, they must be sensitive to some of the limitations learners have in understanding the perspectives of others.
There is no time, our classes are large, we don't have the resources and there is no space in the curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation should be developed in a way that improves learning and enriches the curriculum, rather than overburdening teachers. • Keep things as simple as possible. Develop participatory activities step-by-step, aim to achieve realistic goals and always share the outcomes with colleagues, senior staff and parents/guardians/care-givers; if appropriate so they can be aware of the benefits. • Developing participation should not create more work but should rather allow teachers to work more effectively by using learners' knowledge and experiences in the classroom. It is a way of delivering the syllabus more effectively.
I don't see how it can improve learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to learners needs to lead to improvements. Acting on what they say makes their involvement meaningful. • Learners gain in self-confidence when listened to and when taken seriously. It is important that they are supported to enable them to listen to each other and to others. • Learner participation supports the development of strategies for problem-solving and research, making learning more independent and deep-seated. • Participation initiatives are most likely to succeed where they are supported by management and sustained and embedded in the school organisation. Meaningful participation is a process, not simply the application of isolated, one- off participation activities or events.

Card	Some points to make
<p>In our culture children's obedience is more highly valued than independence or autonomy. Girls and those from poorer families can see an unquestioning attitude as vital for social respectability or economic survival.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being listened to and able to share an opinion doesn't promote disobedience. In fact, in school, it needs to be part of a learners' engagement with the learning process. • Parents/guardians/care-givers and communities may need to be educated in the benefits of their children learning skills so they can be more independent and autonomous, and so access more meaningful and rewarding employment. • Teachers need to work hard to facilitate the participation of girls, learners from poorer families, and other marginalised and disadvantaged learners so that their voices are heard. • Schools need to recognise the different ways girls are treated in different cultures and discover how to address the barriers to their participation. For example, in many societies it is still assumed that boys will be decision-makers and girls will not. Integrated programmes, with girls and boys participating equally, may therefore be beneficial.
<p>This is not how we do things in our schools. Teachers are the experts. Children must listen to and respect their teachers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers will always be the experts in teaching but, by allowing learners a voice, teachers can better identify the needs, difficulties and learning skills of each learner.
<p>Teachers should not be judged by learners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When discussing improvements to lessons, there is no question of 'judgments' being made. Where teachers invite learners to give feedback about their learning experiences, this should include preparation or training, so that learners understand the boundaries, and comment on their learning constructively. Through such involvement, learners are actively learning about the learning process. • Teachers must be supported to deal with negative feedback constructively and must have confidence that an individual learner's views will not be allowed to distort the bigger picture.

Card	Some points to make
Learners sharing their views might lead to disagreement and conflict.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers need to decide how any disagreement between learners sharing their views will be managed, and whether to seek consensus or majority, or to take learners' views into account in some other way. This process must be transparent.
The loudest learners will be the only ones listened to.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive teachers will already be ensuring quieter, more reticent learners have a voice. Putting too much emphasis on the views of a vocal minority can offer a distorted view. Therefore, teachers need to ensure that all learners are represented in discussions and decision-making, and, in particular, make sure that it is not only the articulate, well-behaved or loudest pupils who are listened to.
Our learners don't have the skills to make decisions cooperatively and our teachers don't have the skills to teach them how.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some areas of the curriculum already teach cooperative decision-making; for example, drama, practical science, sport and PE, class-tutoring. Inclusive teaching skills, including promoting active learning strategies, complement teaching skills needed for fostering participation. There needs to be a commitment from senior management to provide flexibility within the curriculum and to focus on teachers' training needs related to inclusion and participation.
Our learners are too aware of their rights already! We should be focusing instead on getting them to listen to us.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In developing learner participation, it is important that learners understand their responsibilities as well as their rights. They can learn how rights can conflict, and how they can begin to address those conflicts through collaboration and consensus. Learners need to view their involvement as part of collectively making things better, rather than a focus on 'what I want'. According to Hart's research, the most effective participatory activities, though child-initiated, share decision-making with adults who provide support and wisdom.

Finally, the trainer could share this quotation from Roger Hart:

‘Children’s participation does not mean supplanting adults. Adults do, however, need to learn to listen, support, and guide; and to know when and when not to speak. One should not, therefore, think of a child’s evolving capacities to participate as a simple step-like unfolding of individual abilities. One should rather think of what a child might be able to achieve in collaboration with other children and with supportive adults.’⁵

Activity 8.3e: Listening to and consulting learners

Main



45 minutes

The rest of this session’s activities will help make teachers further aware of the value of listening to learners, and how that can improve learning. The activities will support teachers to plan an initiative for their own school setting.

Resource 8.22

‘Young Voices’ video

Resource 8.23

Interview on video transcript

Resource 8.24

Identifying positive approaches

The trainer should introduce teachers to ‘Young Voices’, a 14-minute film from the Norwegian Atlas Alliance made in partnership with EENET, which documents young learners’ views about the quality of schooling they receive. If the trainer cannot access the video online, she/he should give a copy of the video transcript (**Resource 8.23**) to teachers in small groups.

The trainer should give each teacher **Resource 8.24** and the following instructions:

- Watch the film (**Resource 8.22**) or read through the transcript extracts (**Resource 8.23**) whilst thinking about the main points the learners make and the strategies used to give them a voice. This film shows that, with

⁵ Roger A. Hart, ‘Children’s Participation: From tokenism to citizenship’. UNICEF, 1992

careful facilitation, young learners can provide useful insights on a wide range of education issues that can help their schools plan improvements.

- After showing the film, ask teachers if they were surprised to see young learners talking in this way about their schooling? Why or why not? Were the points they raised useful?
- Using **Resource 8.24**, the trainer should ask the teachers to try to remember the main points the learners made, and also identify the approaches for helping learners to share their views that they see in the video/read about in the transcript. They should recall the activities, resources and strategies used.

After 10-15 minutes of group discussion the trainer should collect feedback and write on the board or flipchart key points the teachers make about strategies used. The trainer should link the discussion to what teachers have already learned in earlier activities about key principles of, approaches to, and degrees of, participation.

Note for trainers:

Some of the learners' main points about inclusive education:

- The importance of understanding and using sign language;
- Inclusive education is not just about improving physical access;
- Inclusive education is about including more than just people with disabilities;
- Learners consider resources like food and water to be very important for their inclusion;
- Friendship and supporting each other is a key part of inclusion for many students;
- Inclusive education does not always require lots of financial or material resources.

Some of the approaches/strategies used to facilitate consultation seen or mentioned in the film:

- Taking place in a school where the head teacher is committed to listening to learners (e.g. open-door policy);
- The learners themselves conducting the research;
- Taking photographs or drawing pictures of places in school that make them feel happy and places that make them feel unhappy;

- One-to-one interviews;
- Interpretation and translation, including using sign language;
- Group discussion.

Some other strategies that could be used

- Questionnaires (if accessible);
- Suggestion boxes (if accessible);
- Other creative activities including the use of art, media such as photography and film, role-play;
- Small focus groups;
- Newsletter planning and publishing.

Ways of promoting learners' confidence:

- Use of creative and collaborative activities;
- Listening to learners and taking their views seriously;
- Creating a safe environment for learners to share their views, especially with adults.

Resource 8.25

Some strategies for consulting learners

Finally, the trainer can give out **Resource 8.25** and introduce it as a list of some strategies for supporting and promoting consultation with learners. This is not a comprehensive list.

Activity 8.3f: Planning to consult learners in your own school setting

Main



90 minutes

This activity is designed to help teachers further develop their confidence to consult learners, by giving teachers the opportunity to creatively plan a consultation activity together.

The trainer should remind teachers that they have already discussed things that they have consulted their learners about or may want to in the future (see **Resource 8.18** above).

Resource 8.26

Things learners may want to be consulted about

The trainer should give each teacher a copy of **Resource 8.26** and ask them to work in groups.

The trainer should explain that **Resource 8.26** offers a range of examples of things learners may have something to say about that might, if listened to, lead to improvements at teachers' schools.

The trainer should give the following instructions:

- Look at **Resource 8.26** and discuss the first row together (examples of issues) and then look at the second row and decide if there are any other issues relevant to teachers' schools/classrooms
- Each teacher should then individually complete the last two questions on the sheet themselves, in relation to their own school and classroom setting.

After 5-10 minutes the trainer should give out the following resources:

Resource 8.27

Planning a consultation activity

Resource 8.28

Guidance to planning a consultation activity

The trainer should ask teachers to work in groups and introduce the activity as one devised to support their planning a consultation with learners in their own schools.

The trainer should go through the planning sheet (**Resource 8.27**) so everyone understands what they need to do. Teachers should refer to the previous activity and **Resource 8.25** for ideas. Teachers should also look at **Resource 8.28**. This provides guidance for completing the activity, and also a checklist to make sure that the activity will be participatory. The groups' ideas should be written on flipchart paper.

After 30 minutes (or sooner, if everyone has finished), each group should nominate one of their members to take their plan to a neighbouring group. Each group should now hear about their neighbouring group's plan from the visiting teacher. They should then discuss the other group's plan, ask questions

to the visiting representative, and then, referring to **Resource 8.19 (Harts' ladder)**, decide which degree of participation each group's plan meets. These decisions can then be fed back to the whole group. It is important to emphasise that the level of participation needs to be appropriate to the aims of the consultation and the context of the school setting.

Finally, the trainer should explain that learner participation is often seen as a series of projects, introduced by those staff who have a commitment and interest in involving learners. But there is a very strong argument to be made that learner participation cannot be limited to times and opportunities organised by staff. Allowing learners to be heard only in particular lessons, or on particular issues, can lead to:

- Confusion, for learners and possible disruption as they attempt to be heard in other places
- Token participation, with only certain learners able to participate, and only token issues deemed reasonable for discussion
- Unrealistic expectations, with learners believing that they have more power than is possible or desirable.

Introducing particular projects may be a good place to start, but it cannot remain at this level. If listening to learners and encouraging participation is important then it should be recognised that **it will underpin everything a school does**.

Activity 8.3g: Gender equality case study

Main

 30 minutes

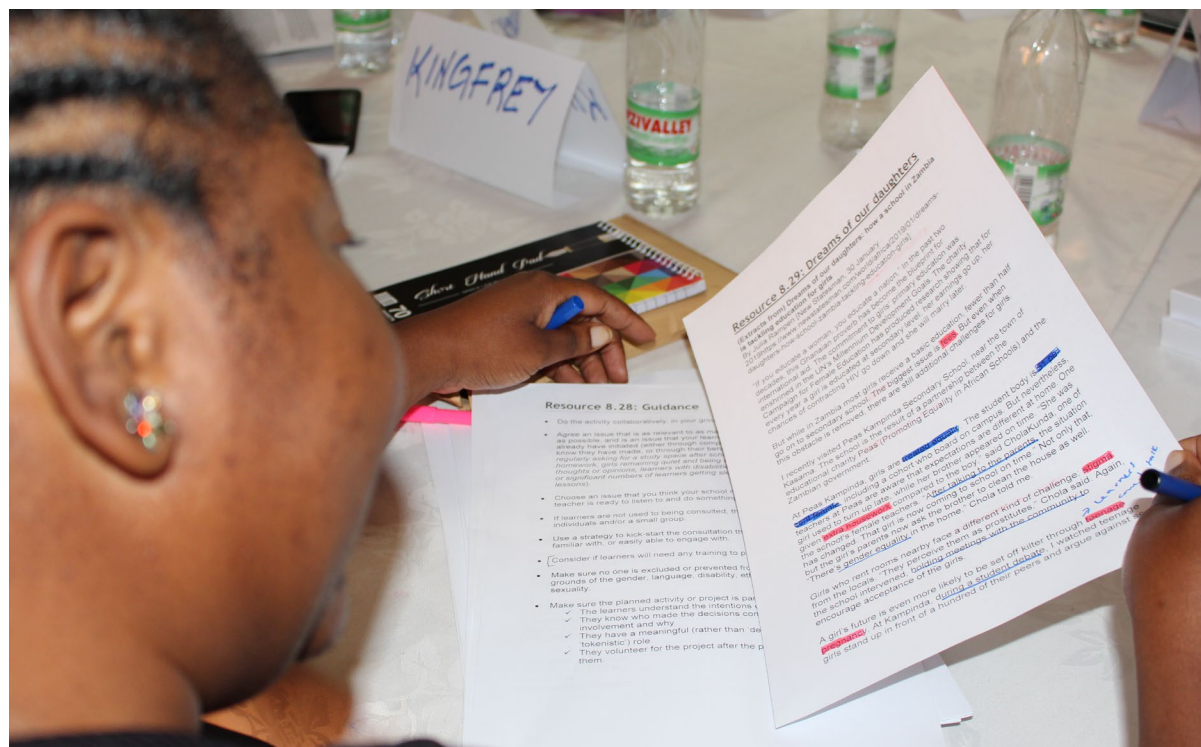
The aim of this activity is to provide a case study to help teachers consider in greater depth some key equality issues for consultation.

Resource 8.29

Dreams of our daughters

The trainer should ask teachers to work in pairs and read **Resource 8.29**. This is an extract from a 2019 current affairs magazine article and provides an example of an initiative to increase girls' participation in education.

Using coloured pens/pencils, each pair should be asked to use a different colour to highlight a) the barriers the girls face, and b) what has been and is being done to help the girls overcome them. If no coloured pencils/ pens are available, then circle or underline the relevant text.



A principal trainer highlights her 'Dreams of our daughters' worksheet

[Image description: A female principal trainer is looking at a sheet of printed paper. She has highlighted some of the words with different colours.]

The trainer should collect feedback from the whole group and then ask the following three questions for general discussion:

- What further barriers do girls in your school and community face when trying to get a secondary school education?
- If you had to choose an issue to consult girls about, what would it be?

Session 8.4: Promoting independent learning skills

Independent learners are able to make informed choices and take responsibility for their own learning activities. They are motivated and confident enough to take decisions and act on them. They are able to reflect on their learning, think critically and identify their weaknesses and how to improve. Independent learning skills are important, for succeeding in education and for entering the world of work.

Roger Hart points out that developing participation skills is key to developing independent learning skills. Working with someone else, encouraging each other and talking through difficulties can be the most effective way of working independently. If you have a problem, explaining it to someone else can help to clarify issues for you.

This session focuses on developing skills of reflection and critical thinking to further support learners' independent learning skills.

Activity 8.4a: Reflecting on our own learning

Main



30 minutes

This activity is designed to help teachers think about what it means to reflect on their own learning. We can develop important independent learning skills by understanding how we learn, which helps us improve our performance.

Resource 8.30

Thinking about how we learn

The trainer should give out **Resource 8.30** to teachers in small groups and ask them to read the information and then carry out the task. This should take no more than 5-10 minutes.

The trainer should then ask one group to share what they decided were the sections about **'how'** the girl learned and which were about **'what'** she learned (as explained in the task). The other groups should discuss the ideas, seeing if everyone agrees.

Note for trainers:

- **What** the girl learnt was three local factors influencing climate change (but she couldn't explain them properly)
- **How** she learnt was through finding somewhere quiet, keeping on writing and crossing out words and putting in new ones (but she was nervous doing it that way without a plan or knowing what to do, and she was crossing out words all the time)

The trainer should then ask if teachers see the difference between thinking about **what** they are learning and **how** they are learning, between the content of their study and the process of doing it.

Then, for about 5 minutes, the trainer should ask teachers to discuss the second paragraph in the learner's account in [Resource 8.30](#), where she reflects on what to change about **how** she learns.

The trainer should point out that only when learners begin to examine the process are they likely to consider whether there might be other more effective ways of studying. Being aware of the two dimensions of study (**what** they are learning and **how** they are learning) and being able to analyse both of them is an important part of learning how to learn.

[To emphasise this, **if there is time**, the trainer could ask teachers to think back to an example of study they have done in the past, or any fairly structured learning opportunity they remember. They should focus on a particular activity or task when they were consciously engaged in learning. Working in pairs, they should briefly tell their partner **what** they were learning – what was the subject, topic or task? Having reminded themselves of that, they should then briefly recall **how** they learnt it.]

Finally, the trainer should emphasise that there is **no single method of learning that guarantees success**. What works best for one of us will not necessarily be the same as the approach used by other learners, even when studying the same thing. We are all unique as learners. We need to find out what works best for us, and it will be different for different purposes and contexts.

Resource 8.31

Ways to promote reflection on learning

Give out **Resource 8.31** to teachers and ask them to read through the ideas for encouraging their learners to reflect on their own learning. They should discuss these and also add any further ideas they may have.

Activity 8.4b: Developing critical thinking skills

Main



25 minutes

Reflecting on our own learning involves:

- **Thinking for a purpose** – in this case improving the way we learn
- **Analysing** - how we learn and making judgements on our own performance
- **Being critical** – not in a negative way, but through questioning and examining what and how we learn.

Throughout their time at school, learners are expected to compare, contrast, evaluate, understand, organise, and classify information – in other words, think critically. This empowers them to make decisions and deal with problems confidently, which are essential skills in school and the rest of their lives. Many people would say that the most important characteristic of an effective and independent learner in education is that they are capable of critical thinking – actively challenging both themselves and others.

People do not necessarily become wiser as they become older. The trainer needs to emphasise that **thinking needs to be developed**, and learners gain from teaching methods focusing on the development of their thinking skills, engaging them in meaningful conversations and motivating them.

The trainer should point out that critical thinking skills are promoted through many of the participatory strategies already considered in this module, including collaborative learning and peer support, peer- and self-assessment, and the involvement in decision-making.

Resource 8.32

Building a foundation of critical thinking with very young learners

The trainer should give a set of cards cut up from **Resource 8.32** to each group. Explain that critical thinking skills need to be nurtured from a very early age,

using very small steps, and [Resource 8.32](#) gives some tips about how to do this.

Teachers must decide which **‘How to promote critical thinking’** cards, that are in bold, go with which **‘ways we can do it’** cards. The cards in [Resource 8.32](#) are arranged to show the correct answers, to help the trainer check the groups’ work.



‘How to promote critical thinking’ cards, and ‘ways we can do it’ cards

[Image description: Small pieces of paper with printed words and phrases on them are laid out on a white tablecloth. Two hands are resting on the table.]

After about 10 minutes, the groups’ decisions can be shared with the whole group who can then discuss whether the resource is useful for planning, and whether any teachers can add further examples of practice that build a foundation for critical thinking skills for very young learners.

The trainer should emphasise that allowing time for a learner to navigate problems is central to developing a learner's critical thinking skills. There are of course situations where an adult needs to step in. At these times, it is helpful if the adult models their own critical thinking by verbalising what is happening

inside their mind as they try and solve a problem. Learners learn from observing how adults think.

Resource 8.33

Activities to promote critical thinking

The trainer should give out **Resource 8.33** to teachers seated in pairs and ask them to discuss the activities. They should decide if the resource is useful for promoting critical thinking skills, and if they can add any activities themselves that are useful for teachers to know.

The trainer should finish by emphasising the following:

- Ask for answers which go beyond repeating information or expressing likes or dislikes.
- When making quizzes and tests, make sure that questions are designed to show critical thinking skills, as opposed to just memory. Sometimes, a wrong answer with an imaginative explanation shows stronger critical thinking skills than a correct answer with no explanation.
- Most importantly, create a supportive environment in which learners are free to use their critical thinking ability without fear of getting the wrong answer. Praise effort as well as accuracy, ask learners for their opinions and encourage learners to give reasons for their choices.

Session 8.5: Using action research to promote learner participation

Remembering previous action research undertaken, it is important to re-emphasise how every school has a unique set of challenges and strengths in education, requiring a unique set of responses. Teachers, therefore, cannot simply rely on ‘experts’ from elsewhere to tell them how to make their school inclusive. Teachers – along with the learners, parents/guardians/care-givers and other members of the school community – need to be experts in their own situation. They need to be able to investigate what is happening in their school and community, and identify barriers to inclusion that need tackling, or inclusion solutions that need expanding. With the help of others, they then start taking relevant action. Action research is very useful for this. It helps stakeholders to look at their situation, analyse the problems, suggest solutions and then act.

In this session teachers will conduct a ‘supervised’ action research activity that could support an action research initiative in their own school, or schools they work with, and in communities.

Activity 8.5a: Deciding the focus

Main



45 minutes

Resource 8.33

Enabling Education Review Issue 7 2018 (‘Children as researchers’ pages 22-33)

This activity will provide teachers with the opportunity to decide what their research focus will be.

The trainer should tell teachers that they will be visiting a pilot school to conduct observations and interviews. During this activity teachers will decide what they want their action research to focus on.

The trainer should give teachers the following instructions:

- Individually look back over the work you have done throughout this module and make a (mental) note of what each session was about.

- Thinking about all the sessions, decide what you might like your action research to focus on. Think of reasons why and think about whether it is a focus that you will be able to observe in the school. You may wish to consider what peer support, participation in decision-making processes or explicit promotion of independent learning skills already take place at your school, and where there are significant gaps. This may help you decide what you want to explore further.
- You may also wish to consider ways to involve learners in the action-research and in responding to the findings. Look at **Resource 8.34**, the 'Children as researchers' section from pages 22-33, to see if it gives you any ideas.
- Pair up with another teacher and discuss your decisions with each other to make sure they seem practicable. Think of creative ways to involve learners in conducting the research.

The trainer should write each teacher's chosen research topic on the board or flipchart. The whole group can discuss whether the chosen topics seem practicable. Finally, the trainer should ask teachers to present their research focus **in the form of an enquiry or question**.

For the trainer's reference, the following enquiries could arise from the main session topics covered in this module:

- Can peer support be realistically developed in my school? If yes, which type and why? If no, why not?
- Does the teacher use any peer support strategies? If yes, what are they? If no, what teaching strategies are most commonly used?
- Is peer- or self-assessment evident? How effective is it? How do we know?
- Do teachers and the school consult learners? If yes, give examples and evidence of how it affects learning. If no, what steps can be taken to consult them?
- Are learners given roles of responsibility? Are girls and boys equally represented in those roles? If not, why not? Can it be redressed?
- Are learners involved in decision-making? How? If not, how could they be involved?

What are the main concerns of learners? Can they be involved in finding solutions? How?

Activity 8.5b: Preparing for the school visit

Main



60 minutes

One aim of this activity is to help teachers remember some of the action research methodology, which they can then use in their setting. The trainer must explain clearly, however, that action research ‘for real’, e.g. performing the tasks over a longer period with school and community members, will involve more than simply replicating what they do in this short visit to the pilot school. This activity also helps teachers to compile questions/observation sheets to support their action research visit.

The trainer should explain to teachers that during this activity they will decide how they will record what they see and consider what questions they might ask.

The trainer should remind teachers what they have already learned about asking interview questions and preparing observation sheets (especially in **Session 3.4:** ‘Strategies and solutions in identifying out-of-school children’) in **Module 3:** ‘Identifying Out-of-School Children’.

They should be especially reminded of the following:

Observations

- Record what we see as objectively as possible.
- Pay attention to what happens, interactions among people, body language, what is said, and also the silences.
- Record what you see, hear or touch on an observation sheet.
- Remember observers often need to be as unobtrusive as possible – for instance if you are observing a classroom, you should not ask the learners or teachers questions or interfere with the running of the lesson.

Interview questioning

- There are two basic types of questions:
 - **closed questions** – these elicit short, fixed answers. ‘Yes’ and ‘no’ answers are examples of closed questions.

- **open questions** – these elicit longer answers which are not fixed or limited to predetermined categories. ‘Why?’ questions are open questions because they require explanatory answers.

Focus group discussions

- These are discussion groups with perhaps one particular stakeholder group, for example, parents/guardians/care-givers, or a range of stakeholders who focus on a particular topic.
- Teachers will need to prepare for a focus group discussion in a similar way to preparing for an interview. Prepare guiding questions to help you get the discussions started, and to ensure that you stay ‘on topic’.

The trainer should highlight that focus group teachers are not always used to speaking openly, which can make it difficult to get a discussion started. In their groups, teachers should think of methods they could use to stimulate a lively discussion, even if their focus group teachers are shy or not used to expressing their views. This module’s activities about learner participation may offer inspiration. The trainer should then facilitate a plenary feedback and makes notes on a flipchart.

Mapping

- Mapping is a way of making sense of (and sharing) the school and community environment.
- It includes the natural and built environment, and also the social and cultural environments.
- In an action research activity, you can use a map to highlight barriers and solutions.

The trainer should then give out **Resource 8.35** and **Resource 8.36** and ask teachers to read both and remind themselves of these tools.

Resource 8.35

Example of an observation sheet

Resource 8.36

Interview guidelines

The trainer should ask teachers to work in pairs, helping each other to:

- decide who they might interview at the pilot school to investigate their chosen topic, or whether they want to meet a focus group;
- prepare some questions that they could use;
- decide what they will be looking for if they visit a class in session;
- decide how they may go about using mapping to support their research.

Teachers should then feedback in plenary, so the trainer can check the interview/focus group discussion questions, and both the trainer and other teachers can further discuss the observation/questioning planned, including use of open and closed questions.

Activity 8.5c: Feedback on the action research session

Main



60 minutes

One of the benefits of using action research is that different people can be involved as researchers using techniques that best suit them and the stakeholders they want to find out information from. During the action research session, teachers may not have had time to try more than one of the techniques. A detailed feedback session can therefore help them to share what they learned when using other techniques. It also enables them to consider lessons learned when planning to conduct more extensive action research in future.

Before the next module, each group should create a presentation (visual and verbal) which pulls together all of the information they gathered using the various techniques – classroom and around-the-school observations, mapping, interviews and focus group discussions, and so on.

During the next module, the trainer should facilitate one of the fun feedback/sharing methods already suggested in previous modules (carousel, press conference, etc). The trainer can also ask teachers to reflect on the techniques they used during the action research practice session – the pros and cons, what went well, what was not so successful, what they would do to improve the action research, etc.

Grouping activity

 15 minutes

This is a warm-up activity that allows the trainer to re-organise groups so that teachers are working with different people.

Resource 8.37

Group activity

The trainer should shuffle the prepared animal cards from **Resource 8.37** and give them out, one to each teacher. Explain that each teacher should go into action when told to, making the action and noise of the animal they have been given until they find all the other teachers who are the same animal as them. They can only make the action and noise of their animal, they cannot speak, or say the name of their animal.

When everyone has found all the teachers who are the same animal as them, they should stand together quietly.

The trainer should acknowledge those who put their heart and soul into the activity. Teachers are then told that they are with the group they will be working with for the next few activities and they should now go and sit with them.

Resources

Module

8

Resource 8.1: People search

Find someone who.....	Name
...speaks at least three languages fluently.	
...looks after young children at home.	
...has lived in more than three places.	
...has a parent or grandparent born in another country.	
...has run a business.	
...has done voluntary work for a charity or their community.	
...plays team sports.	
...cooks for their family.	
...lives in the same village/town that they were born in.	
...knows first aid.	

Resource 8.2: Types of peer support

There are many different types of peer support. Peer support initiatives often include:

- **Peer-mediation:** Learners help groups or individuals resolve disputes.
- **Befriending:** Examples could include: 'playground pals', mentors, and 'buddies'.
- **Performing roles of responsibility:** These involve learners performing roles to help the running of a lesson or of school facilities.
- **Peer education or 'tutoring':** These involve learners passing on their skills and knowledge to others. This can include peer assessment, supportive reading schemes or being educators on specific topics, such as stereotyping, discrimination or drug education.
- **Peer advocacy:** These involve learners representing their peers in forums, such as a school council.

Resource 8.3: Benefits of peer support

Type	Example	Benefits
Peer mediation		
Befriending		
Roles of responsibility		
Peer tutoring		
Peer advocacy		

Resource 8.4: Promoting a supportive environment

Be clear about your expectations

- Clearly explain requirements and procedures
- Make sure learners quickly know what behaviour and effort is expected of them
- Always acknowledge positive behaviour and effort
- Encourage learners to be open about their feelings whilst being at all times respectful towards others
- Listen to learners: encourage their questions and answer them patiently

Help learners to get on with each other

- Plan friendship-building activities at the start of the term/year
- Make activities collaborative, challenging and enjoyable

Quickly allocate roles of responsibility

- Ensure that all learners have the opportunity to perform roles of responsibility in the classroom as soon as possible
- Support those who are less confident, or have additional needs, to exercise some responsibility for their peers

Model the behaviour you expect

- Treat all learners with respect
- Challenge any attempts to ridicule or tease or embarrass others
- Listen to all learners equally, showing you value all their contributions
- Be fair at all times

Resource 8.5: Creating a safe space⁶

Activity One: Trust-building

Blindfolds should be available if possible.

- Ask teachers to stand up and walk around the room making eye contact with each person they pass.⁷
- After about a minute, direct teachers to stop as they pass each person and shake hands warmly with them, or use another form of acknowledgement, while smiling a greeting. They should then carry on to the next person they pass and repeat the process.
- After a few more minutes ask teachers to choose a partner and stand opposite each other. They should then share something positive with their partner about the training session/lesson so far (e.g. how friendly people are, how hard someone in particular has worked, something their partner has contributed, etc).
- Teachers should then blindfold their partner (or they close their eyes tightly). They should lead their blindfolded partner around the room, guiding with their hand. After about two minutes teachers should then swap roles.
- Teachers can feedback how they felt.

Activity Two: Finding connections

Main activity

Teachers moving around the space have to quickly get into “a group of...”, which is whatever the teacher/trainer chooses, e.g. same age, same length of hair, support same football team, shoe size, same number of brothers and sisters, etc.

It is important to start with simple groupings but can move into more complex ones that require the teachers to question each other in greater depth.

⁶ These activities are taken from ‘I am Here: Teaching about refugees, identity, inclusion and the media’ Save the Children 2004.

⁷ If visually impaired teachers are present, they should be assisted by a friend (peer-support).

Alternative activity

Teachers sit at tables/desks in groups of 4 - 6. They should discuss in their groups what they might have in common, e.g. same age, same length hair, same football team, shoe size, same number of brothers and sisters, from the same place/region, how they feel about something, etc. They can then each write down what they share in common with other members of the group, and who those members are.

The trainer/teacher should get feedback on this to the whole class/group.

Activity Three: Sharing happy memories

Main activity

In groups of four (4), each person thinks of a time that they were happy and with family or friends. Without explaining their memory or talking to the others, they should place each member of the group into a frozen picture representing their memory, with themselves as themselves. If there is time everyone should do it.

The trainer/teacher should select a group to show their frozen picture (maybe one frozen picture from each group if there is time). The rest of the teachers should try to guess answers to three questions after seeing it:

- How could the people in the memory be connected (e.g. family? friends?)?
- What might be happening?
- If so, why could that be a happy memory?

Teachers are **not** expected to then explain what was really happening.

Alternative activity

Each person should be asked to think of a time they were happy and with family or friends. They should write a few sentences describing the occasion. They need to explain:

- How are the people in the memory connected? (e.g. family? friends?)
- What happened?
- If so, why is it a happy memory?

The teacher can ask for volunteers to read theirs out.

Activity Four: Our communities, our connections

Groups can brainstorm what groups, other than friends and family, they feel they belong to (e.g. town, church, temple, mosque, sports team, boy scouts, girl guides, etc).

They should list them down on flipchart paper and then display them on the walls.

Resource 8.6: Listening to each other

Read through the following five unfinished sentences:

‘One thing I enjoy is.....’

‘One thing people like about me is.....’

‘I can be unhappy when.....’

‘In ten years’ time I want to be.....’

‘One thing I would like to improve on is.....’

After everyone has read through the unfinished sentences, appoint one person in your group to chair the activity.

The nominated Chairperson should read out each unfinished sentence in turn and ask everyone in the group to spend a couple of minutes thinking about how they would finish off each sentence.

The Chairperson should then read out each sentence again, completing them for her/himself, speaking as openly and honestly as she/he can in this setting.

The Chairperson should then go round each member of the group and ask them to complete each of the sentences, speaking to the whole group.

If a person does not want to finish any of the sentences, then they can ‘pass’ on these.

Resource 8.7: Mentee scenarios

Copy and cut out a set of these cards and place in an envelope; one set for each group.

I am always getting into trouble and I don't know why.	I am really interested in sports, but the teacher won't select me for any teams.
This girl is disrespecting me all the time. If she doesn't stop, I am going to beat her.	I am always too nervous to put my hand up in class. Now my teacher says I am too lazy to join in.
I find reading really difficult and I never understand the textbook.	Some of my classmates make me do their homework for them.
My best friend told my secrets to some other girls in the class. Now I don't want to come to school anymore.	I don't understand my teacher very well.
Some boys keep asking me for money. I am scared of them and of their friends.	I am always too busy at home to do any homework.
I am much older than my classmates. They laugh at me.	I need help in class as I can't see very well. But my teacher says other learners mustn't miss out by helping me.

Resource 8.8: Peer mentoring information

- Listening and sensitively asking questions are vital to effective mentoring.
- Other important attributes include approachability, honesty, trustworthiness, compassion and fairness, and being respectful towards those of a different gender or who have different beliefs and backgrounds.
- Peer mentors should not be expected to solve the problems that their mentees share and in fact suggesting solutions may not be helpful.
- Mentors should never tell their mentees what to do.
- Confidentiality should not be promised if it cannot be kept, for example, if there is a child-protection concern.
- Some of these scenarios show us that learners can only support each other if they have full support from teachers, the school and, if necessary, the community.
- Some of the scenarios require peer mentors to be specially trained in how to listen, how to ask questions, and to know when and how to refer the problem to a teacher or other professionals in the school.
- In some schools, learners are specially trained in conflict resolution and at helping groups or individuals resolve disputes. This is sometimes known as 'peer mediation'.

Resource 8.9: Role-play

Role-play can be an effective learning tool, but it can also make teachers feel uncomfortable. If your learners are not used to role-play then, before starting, it is important to explain how it works and its benefits.

- Role-play is a powerful active learning strategy that should be conducted in a safe space where social and ethical issues can be openly explored.
- Role-play is participatory and helps information to be retained and utilised.
- The more authentically learners engage in their role the more they will learn.
- Role-play is a useful training tool. By tackling social and ethical issues in a safe non-threatening way, teachers can think through the issue and practice some skills and tools to use.
- Scenarios need to be based on real situations that learners encounter.
- There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers in role-plays.
- After the role-play it is important to discuss the experience, any outcomes, and what outcomes teachers might expect.
- An observer role can be allocated to those who are uncomfortable to participate in the role-play, perhaps because issues are being raised that have personally affected them. These observers should take notes as they watch others and then provide comments to the other teachers during the discussion after the role-play.

Resource 8.10: Peer tutoring activities

Tutoring need	Example of how peer tutoring could be used and organised
Learners with reading difficulties	Paired reading, with able reader paired up with less able. For example, 'Lunchtime reading club' in the library/quiet area with able readers trained and rewarded for their work
Reinforcing learning from a particular lesson	
Learning how to use science equipment safely	
Learning about drug misuse	

Resource 8.11: Supporting peer- and self-assessment




Copy and cut out a set of these cards for each small group. Put the sets into envelopes.

Our learners are eager to find out what progress they are making	Our learners understand that supporting each other's work helps them improve their own work
Assessment activities usually take place in time for feedback to be given and discussed	Our learners want to know what they need to learn next
Our learners understand the importance of clear and accurate feedback and how to give it	Our learners know how to work cooperatively and to respect each other
Our learners know the importance of taking responsibility for their own learning	Our learners understand why the learning is required (how it fits into the course of study, etc.)
Our learners understand the learning objectives	Our learners are regularly required to reflect on their own performance
The whole class have high expectations of each other's behaviour and effort	Our learners understand the assessment criteria – sometimes they are involved in creating it

Resource 8.12: Useful approaches - dos and don'ts

1. Learners are divided into groups to hear the presentations they each prepared for homework, and they comment on each other's work. Drawing on those comments, learners then redraft their work before handing it in for marking.
2. Instead of marking an essay him/herself, a teacher gives each learner the marking scheme and asks them to mark each other's work.
3. The teacher provides regular opportunities for learners to reflect on their own performance through structured individual and pair work.
4. A teacher sets a short test to check learning halfway through the lesson. She/he asks the learners to swap their papers and tick (✓) or cross (X) their neighbour's answers (after writing the answers on the board). The papers are handed back so each learner can look at how well they did.
5. A teacher returns essays where errors are underlined, but no explanation about how to correct them is given. Learners are aware of the assessment criteria. Learners are asked to look at each other's in pairs and help each other identify how to correct the errors.
6. Learners' assess each other's work and then collaborate to draw up a list ranking the work, compiling a list from the best performer to the worst performer.
7. Learners complete a science project in groups. At the end the teacher organises an activity where they have a structured discussion in their group about how they think they performed both individually and as a group. They present their displays to the whole class for comment.
8. The teacher asks learners to assess each other's work, but the teacher doesn't give any thought about who is paired or grouped with who.
9. For objective questions (requiring a specific answer) asked in tests, a teacher prepares answer sheets in advance. Once all of the learners are finished, they exchange their answers, and use the answer sheets to grade their partner's answers. The teacher then collects the tests, checks the grading, and grades whatever objective questions are in the tests.
10. Every half-term, learners complete a paragraph in their mathematics exercise book describing what progress they have made and what they need to learn next. The teacher then adds a comment before the book is shown to parents/guardians/care-givers.

Resource 8.13: Progress in English checklist

Skill Area	Activity	☺ ✓	☹ ○	☹ x
Speaking and Listening 	I can have a short conversation.			
	I can talk about school life using sentences.			
	I can talk about past and future, too.			
	I can understand when people explain something simply.			
Reading 	I can read a story or text that I have not seen before.			
	I use my knowledge of the letters and sounds to work out how to read new words.			
	I can talk about poems or stories or information that I have read.			
Writing 	I can write in sentences, but I still make grammatical mistakes.			
	I am still learning how to spell unfamiliar words.			
	I use full stops and capital letters and form my letters clearly.			
Now I am at Level				

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Resource 8.14: Key principles of Article 12

Article 12 of the UNCRC sets out the right of children to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account when decisions are being made on any matter that affects them.

In inclusive schools there is a clear and visible commitment to involving learners.

Inclusive schools recognise that low self-esteem can be one of the biggest barriers to participation.

An inclusive approach to participation means that:

- when seeking learners' views, ways are found to involve those who may appear to lack confidence or motivation
- no learner is excluded or prevented from getting involved on grounds of their ethnic origin, gender, language, disability, culture or sexuality
- extra support is given to those who might face particular barriers to getting involved, such as learners with additional needs
- feedback on the benefits and outcomes of participation is regularly provided to learners and their parents/guardians/care-givers.

Resource 8.15: Benefits of learner participation in decision-making

Learners who participate in decision-making have been shown to:

- enjoy enhanced self-esteem and motivation,
- be able to better communicate their needs,
- gain important personal, social and organisational skills,
- become familiar with group and democratic processes.

For **schools**, this has supported:

- better staff-learner and learner-learner relationships,
- more inclusive school classrooms, where needs are better understood,
- more relevant and effective policies,
- learners showing greater responsibility and improved behaviour,
- improved pupil engagement, well-being, and learning.

In the best-case scenarios, pupils and adults work together as partners to ensure that their school provides the best possible learning environment for all. Learners are involved in their own learning and feel that they have a stake in their learning community.

Resource 8.16: Benefits activity sheet

Copy and cut out a set of these cards for each small group. For the trainer's reference, the 'benefit cards in the right-hand column are arranged next to the 'examples of participation' cards they explain.

<i>Examples of participation</i>	Benefit
<i>Every classroom has a 'suggestion box' for learners to leave notes in, suggesting improvements.</i>	Learners are better able to communicate their needs because they are regularly consulted.
<i>Learners plan a sports competition themselves.</i>	Learners gain important personal, social and organisational skills by being involved in organising something together.
<i>Learners are elected to represent their peers on the school council.</i>	Learners become familiar with group and democratic processes.
<i>Learners are consulted about when the school day should start, and the time is adjusted to maximise attendance and punctuality.</i>	Learners' views being listened to means that school policies become more relevant and effective.
<i>Learners are listened to, their views on teaching and learning are sought and teachers see how learners can contribute.</i>	Because the views of learners are sought, the classroom and the teaching are better organised to meet their needs. So, there is improved pupil engagement, classrooms are more inclusive and there are excellent staff–learner and learner-learner relationships.
<i>Learners are asked to organise hosting visitors on a school open day. They model excellent behaviour on the day, and it was felt they represented the school.</i>	Learners enjoy enhanced self-esteem and motivation because they are <i>treated</i> as responsible members of the school community. As learners are involved in decision-making they learn to behave more responsibly.

Resource 8.17: Approaches to participation

What are we already doing that helps us listen to learners?

What are we already doing that enables learners to express their opinions about something that affects them?

Examples:

- The head teacher's door is always open to learners, and teachers are expected to arrange a time if learners want to discuss something with them
- The expression of feelings is allowed. For example, through play, including messy play, art or role-play
- Teachers deploy active learning strategies, including. group work and learner feedback
- Classroom rules are drawn up with learners
- All-girl discussion forums are organised to ensure their views are heard
- There are opportunities for learners to discuss issues in a 'safe space' to allow the free expression of views
- Learners are encouraged to volunteer to help staff organise and run extra-curricular activities or the school library
- Learners and their parents/guardians/care-givers are consulted about school uniform
- Questionnaires and suggestion boxes are used to find out how learning could be more enjoyable or accessible
- There is a school council
- School prefects are consulted about learners' behaviour
- Learners design fund-raising campaigns themselves

Resource 8.18: The teacher as facilitator

An effective teacher will employ a range of strategies.

When promoting participation, teachers will want to adopt the role of **facilitator**. A facilitator is someone who helps learners to initiate an enquiry, or understand their objective, and assists them to plan an activity to achieve that objective.

In doing so, the facilitator remains "neutral", meaning she/he does not take a particular position.

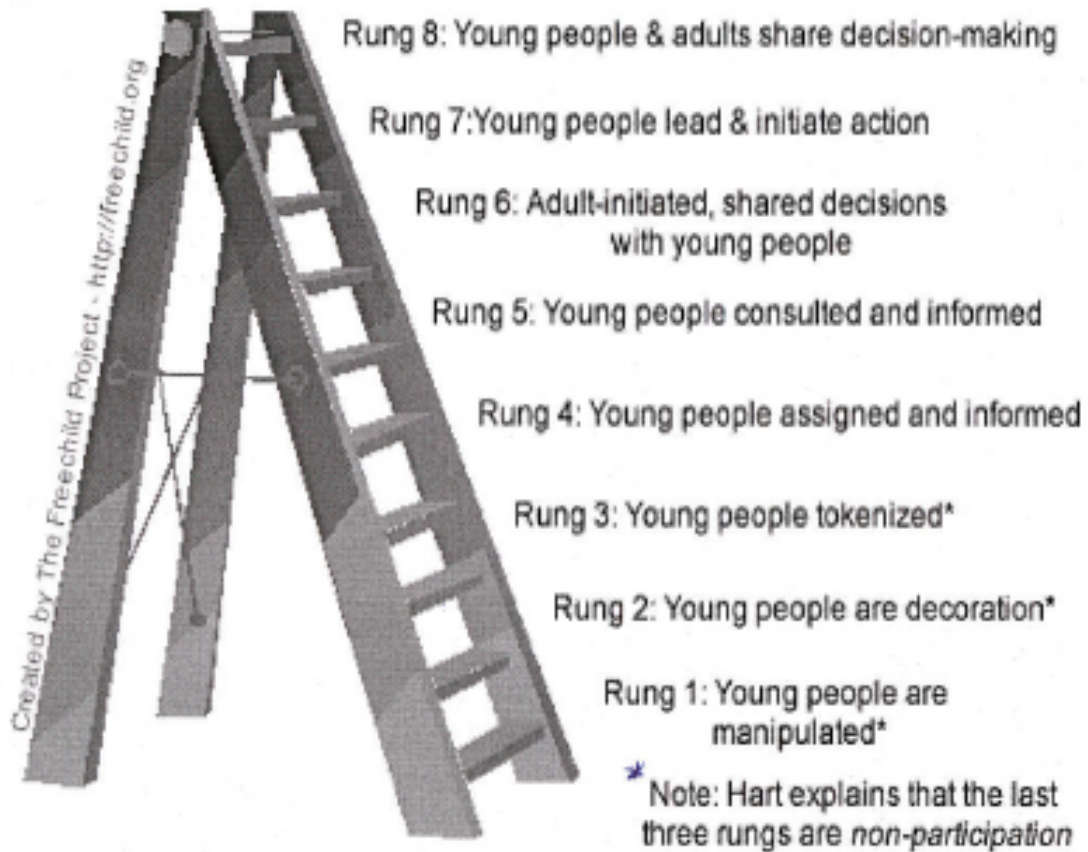
Employing skills of facilitation means teachers can put the responsibility on the learners to manage their own learning process, with the guidance of the teacher.

The facilitator's role is to introduce ideas, encourage the sharing of perspectives and show learners' actions in a collaborative and enabling way, guiding but not controlling the outcomes.

Similarly, promoting other inclusive strategies, such as active learning strategies, means a further shift in the role of teacher from providing answers to raising questions, stimulating thinking, encouraging exploration, making associations and prompting reflection and evaluation.

Resource 8.19: Hart's 'ladder of participation'

Roger Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation



Adapted from Hart, R. (1992). *Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship*. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

The ladder metaphor is borrowed from Sherry Arnstein (1969). The categories are from Roger Hart.

Resource 8.20: Hart's 'ladder of participation' cards

Copy and cut out a set of these cards for each small group. For the trainer's reference, the 'example' cards in the right-hand column are arranged next to the 'degree of participation' cards they explain.

Degree of participation	Examples
Manipulation	When learners do not understand the issues or their role. For example, a teacher uses drawings by children in her Year One primary class to advertise a private nursery business she is starting-up in her spare time when the drawings are nothing to do with the business and the children know nothing about it.
Decoration	Learners are aware of what they are doing and there is no pretence of an event being inspired or run by learners. However, they have little idea of what it is all about and no say in organising the occasion. For example, learners are given T-shirts related to a cause they have little knowledge of or involvement in, and they are asked to sing or dance at an event in such clothes.
Tokenism	An appearance of learner participation only. For example, learners are selected by teachers to make a speech to parents/guardians/care-givers on behalf of the student body, but with little or no preparation on the subject and no consultation with their peers.

Assigned but informed	Learners are assigned a project to do without initiating it themselves, but they are fully informed about it and there is a real purpose to the project. For example, a science project set by the teacher.
Consulted and informed	Although a project is designed and run by teachers or other adults, the learners' views are taken seriously. For example, teachers conduct a survey of learners' views about the quality of school meals. The learners are informed about the results.
Adult-initiated shared decisions with young people	Learners are <i>to some degree</i> involved in every part of the project. Teachers make no assumptions about what the learners want and the learners are fully briefed, and understand how and why compromises are made. For example, learners are taught desktop publishing so they can design a school newsletter for parents/guardians/care-givers and the local community to read about the school. They develop skills in decision-making, collaborative working, research, interviewing, etc. whilst drawing on technical support and sharing editorial decision-making with teachers.

Young people initiated and led	<p>Learners have the initial idea and decide how the project is to be carried out. Adults are available but do not take charge. For example, a group of learners set-up an indoor games club. They involve a teacher who agrees to support them if necessary, and they reach an agreement with the school to have access to a classroom on Thursday lunch-times and on that day bring in cards, a Nsolo set and other indoor games to play.</p>
Young people shared decisions with adults	<p>Learners initiate, design and run the project and inform themselves fully in order to proceed, but they are competent and confident enough to understand the need for collaboration and that in asking adults for their input, the project may be strengthened. There is abundant trust. Adults serve as listeners, observers and sounding boards. Teenage students design and direct a video report on how pregnant teenagers feel about being pregnant and what advice they have for other teenagers. They consult their teacher throughout the filming and she shows the video at a national teacher conference on sex and relationships education that she is organising.</p>

** Example taken and adapted from Roger A. Hart, 'Children's Participation: From tokenism to citizenship' UNICEF 1992*

Resource 8.21: Attitudinal barriers to participation

Copy and cut out a set of these cards for each small group.

Our learners are too young to influence decisions.	There is no time, our classes are large, we don't have the resources and there is no space in the curriculum.
I don't see how it can improve learning.	In our culture children's obedience is more highly valued than independence or autonomy. Girls and those from poorer families can see an unquestioning attitude as vital for social respectability or economic survival.
This is not how we do things in our schools. Teachers are the experts. Children must listen to and respect their teachers.	Teachers should not be judged by learners.
Learners sharing their views might lead to disagreement and conflict.	The loudest learners will be the only ones listened to.
Our learners don't have the skills to make decisions cooperatively and our teachers don't have the skills to teach them how to.	Our learners are too aware of their rights already! We should be focusing instead on getting them to listen to us.

Resource 8.22: ‘Young Voices’ film

Go directly to

www.facebook.com/50837772141/videos/1040666268376/

or

www.youtube.com/watch?v=pPONNwPLUpw

The film is 14 minutes long.

A guide for facilitators wishing to use the film in training or advocacy is available from:

www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/YV%20DVD%20booklet.pdf.

A note about the participating schools

The schools featured in the film all have boarding facilities. Despite offering residential facilities, they are *not* special schools. All three schools are mainstream schools that enrol a range of students. Rock High School and Bigwa College cater for learners from quite a wide area, and so daily travel may not always be feasible, particularly in the case of Bigwa, which enrolls mostly rural students.

Resource 8.23: ‘Young Voices’ film transcript

Juliana Atwine: I think inclusion means being part of something.

Pauline Awori: Education is for everybody.

Emmanuel Papaok: Inclusion it is a form of education that is extended to people who might not have the privilege to learn.

Narrator: On behalf of the Norwegian Atlas Alliance we visited three schools in Uganda and Tanzania. All of the schools are in the process of developing inclusive education, and they enrol students with and without disabilities.

We used photography and drawing to help the students tell their stories. We asked them to take photographs or draw pictures of places in school that make them feel happy and places that make them feel unhappy. Ismail chose his dormitory as a happy place because that is where he spends time with his friends.

Facilitator: Can you explain how your friends help you in the dormitory?

Ismail Ibrahim Etyang: When I want to go somewhere, they show me the road.

If there is something wrong, they help me and warn me. All of that.

Facilitator: How do you help your friends?

Ismail Ibrahim Etyang: I help my friends who have physical disability.

Facilitator: What makes you happy about coming to school?

Blantina Nyachwo: Where I sleep. I can read my books where I sleep because there is electricity. I can read seriously and be ready with my homework, and I understand it well. My teacher teaches me volleyball and I like it. I play together with my friends.

Narrator: A friendly environment and the opportunity for students to communicate and interact with each other and with teachers is crucial to make a school inclusive.

Blantina Nyachwo: I came to this school. They asked me good morning in sign language. I don't know, I had a communication barrier. That's what I hated in school. I was taught and now I know sign language. Now my parents are very happy with me because I'm in school and I can read.

Narrator: Winny explained that very often when she goes to class there is no sign language interpretation.

Immaculate Ikiror: One challenge is that we are few trained teachers and we have a heavy workload. Some children with disabilities need one-to-one teaching, one teacher to one child, which sometimes becomes difficult. Another challenge is large class sizes. You find that the number of children is large and assessment becomes difficult.

Sign language interpreter: How do you feel when you are in class and the teacher doesn't use sign language?

Winny Auma: I feel bad, but I keep quiet. They only speak without using sign language.

Narrator: Resources like sign language interpretation and Braille books are not the only things needed to make a school inclusive. Winny chose the water tank as a happy picture that makes her feel included.

Facilitator: Can you explain why you took that photo?

Winny: Because when it rains we get water there. It's good.

Facilitator: Why do you think it's good?

Winny: Because we use the water for drinking, bathing and mopping. When there is no water or rain we go down to fetch water.

Facilitator: You have to go from school to fetch water when there is no rain?

Facilitator: When we talk about inclusion do we mean just people who are disabled or do we want to talk about other people who need to be included?

Florence Asabit: Even illiterate people who cannot read and write also need to be included.

Anna Mukite: I think the poor can be included.

Juliana Atwine: People who cannot help themselves like the young. Even the old.

Narrator: Inclusive education is more than just making schools physically accessible. It can be about the way the classroom is organised, or the way teachers encourage their students. Some students told us that it's about finding a quiet place to read and relax.

Scovia Awino: I took this photo because here is the library where they keep

books. During your free time you can go there and pick any book you like. There is no noise. You read safely. That's why I took this picture.

William Osinde: I took this photo in a Senior 5 class. Some students don't concentrate. There is one student behind here. He is walking in class at the time when his friends are concentrating on the lesson. Those who are seated behind end up not understanding what the teacher in front is saying.

Facilitator: How does this affect the students' education?

William Osinde: Those who sit behind don't concentrate and in the end they don't perform well. Others end up dozing in class, sleeping. One enters class in the morning and leaves to go back home and has not grasped anything.

Narrator: Some students were concerned about health and hygiene issues in school.

Facilitator: Can you say why you took a picture of the latrines?

For my friend, if he wants to help himself he has to put his crutches down, and he can't hold on when it's dirty because first he has to put his hands down to touch the floor where you find urine all over the place.

Juliana Atwine: I took it at the school kitchen, which means in our society here we lack health and cleanliness and sanitation. And it's because of this that sometimes we get disrupted in education in class. Maybe after eating this you get a stomach ache you have to run to the toilet there and then and you miss what the teacher teaches.

Narrator: Inclusive education in Bigwa means first of all a friendly environment where the students feel safe and the head teacher's door is always open.

Emma Machenje, Principal: The door should be open for them (the students) whenever they feel like coming. I can't say that I am tired or I don't want to see them. Even in the street when they see you they want to tell you something, you have to be patient and listen to them. Otherwise if they get frustrated you destroy everything.

Narrator: Bigwa has a system where students with and without disabilities are paired. The arrangement is voluntary.

Emma Machenje: We create awareness on people with disabilities and how we should help them and not overprotect them. We tell them that they have their own physical ability, they can do some things, but what we need is to guide them what to do in the school compound and in the classrooms and things like that. We

say that those students who feel that they can assist the students with disabilities should volunteer, and then you find out that they come up to help them.

Omari Chota: It's very important to have a friend in the college, because sometimes you do exercises together. I'm going to get busy with tailoring.

Dickson Msemo: I don't have any problem helping them. It doesn't affect my progress. The college here I really like it because the way it welcomes people with disabilities. What is done here is to make sure that people with disabilities do not feel isolated. We help them participate in any kind of activity so that we can be together. That's why we talk about inclusive education.

Mariam Abdallah: During break we play together and in class we study together. Whatever we do we do together.

Narrator: We asked the students to draw three pictures of themselves showing what they did before they enrolled at the college, what they like doing in college, and what they want to do in the future.

Omari Chota: With this one I was farming. In the second picture I am playing football. In the third one I'm doing some exercises of tailoring. I was very happy to join the college because I was feeling that I was going to learn something. I really want to learn tailoring.

Narrator: All of the students involved in the 'Young Voices' project were able to share their experiences of education and their feelings about being included or excluded. They offer inspiration to students and teachers in other schools in other countries. Many of the inclusive education ideas they talked about do not involve complicated or expensive solutions. Instead the students felt that working together and helping each other can be one of the most important steps in developing inclusive education.

Aron Nducha: To me a good teacher is someone who's close to his students.

Alex Owori: We are meant to relate to each other.

Pauline Awori: Disability is not inability.

Resource 8.24: Identifying positive approaches

<p>List at least three of the main points made by learners in the film?</p>	
<p>What strategies did the facilitators use to encourage and support the young learners to speak out?</p>	
<p>What other strategies could they have used?</p>	

Resource 8.25: Strategies for consulting learners

- Questionnaires or suggestion boxes
- Creative activities including the use of art, media such as photography and film, role-play
- Training learners to share their views and conduct consultations
- School council
- One-to-one interviews
- Focus groups
- Newsletter planning and publishing
- Teaching about children's rights, responsibilities, laws, justice and democracy in the curriculum
- A focus on the learning of social skills of communication, negotiation, assertiveness and collaboration.

Resource 8.26: Things learners may want to be consulted about

<i>Discuss in your group:</i>	
Some examples of issues that learners may have something to say about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What helps them to learn? • What gets in the way of learning? • What makes a good lesson? • What did they gain from an activity? • Are the girls treated fairly? • School meals • School rules • How to make cleaning duties fairer? • Physical barriers to access for learners with disabilities
Can you think of any other issues that your learners could be consulted about that would help you plan improvements?	
<i>Complete individually:</i>	
Which of the above are particularly relevant to your school setting?	
Which of these would your school agree to consider implementing?	

Resource 8.27: Planning a consultation activity

Propose an issue you would like to consult your learners about and why. Which learners?	
Is this something your learners could have initiated themselves? If so, how?	
Do you think this is something that your school is ready to listen to and do something about?	
Suggest one particular benefit that consulting learners about this would bring.	
Propose a strategy/activity that could successfully engage learners to kick-start the consultation (i.e. think of a creative way to start consulting your learners about the issue).	
List some next steps you need to take to move this consultation forward.	

Resource 8.28: Guidance

- Do the activity collaboratively, in your group.
- Agree an issue that is as relevant to as many of your school settings as possible, and is an issue that your learners could in some way already have initiated (either through complaints or suggestions you know they have made, or through their behaviour: e.g. learners regularly asking for a study space after school and for help with their homework, girls remaining quiet and being reluctant to offer their thoughts or opinions, learners with disabilities dropping out of school, or significant numbers of learners getting sleepy during afternoon lessons).
- Choose an issue that you think your school management, or the class teacher is ready to listen to and do something about.
- If learners are not used to being consulted, then plan to consult just individuals and/or a small group.
- Use a strategy to kick-start the consultation that the learners are familiar with, or easily able to engage with (i.e., think of a creative way to start consulting your learners about the issue).
- Consider if learners will need any training to participate.
- Make sure no one is excluded or prevented from getting involved on grounds of the gender, language, disability, ethnicity, culture or sexuality.
- Make sure the planned activity or project is participatory. That is:
 - ✓ The learners understand the intentions of the project
 - ✓ They know who made the decisions concerning their involvement and why
 - ✓ They have a meaningful (rather than 'decorative' or 'tokenistic') role
 - ✓ They volunteer for the project after the project is made clear to them.

Resource 8.29: Dreams of our daughters

(Extracts from) 'Dreams of our daughters: how a school in Zambia is tackling education for girls' By Julia Rampen [New Statesman, 30 January 2019]

<https://www.newstatesman.com/world/africa/2019/01/dreams-daughters-how-school-zambia-tackling-education-girls>

"If you educate a woman, you educate a nation." In the past two decades, this Ghanaian proverb has become the blueprint for international aid. The commitment to girls' primary education was enshrined in the UN's Millennium Development Goals. The charity Campaign for Female Education has produced research showing that for every year a girl is educated at secondary level, her earnings go up, her chances of contracting HIV go down and she will marry later.

But while in Zambia most girls receive a basic education, fewer than half go on to secondary school. The biggest issue is fees. But even when this obstacle is removed, there are still additional challenges for girls.

I recently visited Peas Kampinda Secondary School, near the town of Kasama. The school is the result of a partnership between the educational charity Peas (Promoting Equality in African Schools) and the Zambian government.

At Peas Kampinda, girls are treated equally. The student body is 51 per cent female, including a cohort who board on campus. But nevertheless, teachers at Peas are aware that expectations are different at home. One girl used to turn up late, while her brother appeared on time. "She was given extra housework compared to the boy," said Chola Kunda, one of the school's female teachers. "After talking to the parents, the situation has changed. That girl is now coming to school on time." Not only that, but the girl's parents now ask the brother to clean the house as well. "There's gender equality in the home," Chola told me.

Girls who rent rooms nearby face a different kind of challenge: stigma from the locals. "They perceive them as prostitutes," Chola said. Again, the school intervened, holding meetings with the community to encourage acceptance of the girls.

A girl's future is even more likely to be set off kilter through teenage pregnancy. At Kampinda, during a student debate, I watched teenage girls

stand up in front of a hundred of their peers and argue against sex education in schools. “When a person starts learning about sex, they are going to be concentrating on that subject,” one girl railed. Both sides, though, seemed passionate about the same issue: preventing teenage pregnancies. “No wonder we have poverty in our country,” one defender of sex education lamented. “Because of early marriages and teen pregnancies.”

Zambia is a deeply Christian country, and it is rare to see a school that lacks a portrait of Jesus. This makes it harder to carry out simple initiatives such as distributing contraceptives. Legal abortion is difficult to access, and Claire Albrecht, a local aid worker, has encountered many girls who have turned to traditional medicine rather than drop out of school. But such methods are risky. “There was a girl in a village where we stayed. It was her third time, and she died.”

Schools such as Peas Kampinda have had success encouraging young mothers to return to education. But for some girls, dropping out seems the easy option.

“I went to school when bullying was at its peak,” Chola recalled. It was an entrenched system that she described as “hell. A lot of people left school because of it.”

But Chola’s older sister was paying for the fees. Having frequently been pulled out of school herself to take care of her siblings, she urged Chola to stick with it. Now 32, Chola is a strong advocate of the Peas child protection policy. “A teacher in this school is very empowered and concerned about protecting children in school,” she said. There is also zero tolerance of corporal punishment.

In the playground at Kampinda, meanwhile, the girls in which so much hope is invested eat their lunch, laugh about boys and ask me questions. “I want to be a surgeon,” one said. “I want to be a lawyer,” another told me. “I want to be a pirate,” a third said with a smile. The girls, mostly boarders, are glad to be at a school where the older years can’t force them to do chores and the teachers won’t beat them up. They have dreams of travelling after school, to neighbouring countries, even to London. “There is a lot of housework [at home], so it’s better we stay here,” said Patience Kabwe, one of the boarders. “We don’t have much time to do that – it’s just half an hour of sweeping. Most of the time we spend studying.”

Resource 8.30: Thinking about how we learn

This is an account by a learner reflecting on an essay that she completed for geography:

‘We had to write an essay for homework about factors influencing climate change in my home area. I was nervous because I find essays really difficult. I started to panic a bit because I only had the weekend to do it. I usually think that if I keep on writing, I might get there in the end. Luckily, I found somewhere quiet to work, but it still took me ages – I kept changing the words round over and over again. It wasn’t productive and for a lot of the time I had no idea about what I was trying to do. In the end I managed to identify three factors influencing climate change, but I didn’t satisfactorily explain them.

Now that I’ve thought about it, I can see that I was trying to write the essay without planning how I was going to do it. That’s why I couldn’t get started. When I got my feedback from my tutor, it was clear that I hadn’t actually answered the question.’

Task: In your group, **in the first paragraph** highlight in one colour where the learner describes what she learnt about the topic, and highlight in another colour the sections where the learner writes about HOW she went about the task (that is, how she learnt).

Resource 8.31: Ways to promote reflection on learning

- Make time in lessons, for learners to reflect on feedback. Build reflective practice by stopping work periodically and encouraging learners to record their thoughts about what they've learned or share their thoughts with a peer.
- Use language about learning so learners get used to using it, e.g. always explain why you are asking learners to do things, how it will help their learning, communicate (e.g. develop a visual display of) the outline of the topic and learning objectives, regularly facilitate peer- and self-assessment
- Ask learners to recall one good/enjoyable/effective learning experience, and one that was less effective and enjoyable, then ask them why they think the first was more effective. Encourage learners to give importance to how they felt.
- Use writing, drawing and silence as tools to slow down thinking and allow for silent reflection. By using these, learners can focus on other viewpoints.
- Once a week, learners write down one reflection they have about their learning during the week on a sticky note/post-it. They then stick their reflection statement on the wall somewhere at eye-level in the classroom. Learners then do a gallery walk where they explore the reflections that were placed around the classroom. Once they have had the chance to view the reflections, as a class, discuss what and how they have learned. Younger learners can draw happy or sad or confused faces and then talk about why they felt like this
 - a. Outside the classroom, mark out a lake/river/swimming pool on the ground, making one end the deep end and other end the shallow end. Ask students to reflect on how they felt about a particular learning experience or activity and position themselves somewhere along the length of the pool depending on how they felt about the experience (shallow end if it was so easy for them and/or they were bored, and deep end if they felt out of their depth).
 - b. Ask students if, when learning something new, they like to take it slowly and be sure of themselves (staying in the shallow

end of the pool), or they like to throw themselves into an activity and literally 'jump in the deep end'!

- c. Ask students to look where others put themselves along the pool. Does seeing someone at the opposite end from themselves help them to understand why they behave in the way they do when learning something new?
- Use learning diaries or journals
- Use exit questions. For example, before learners leave your class, ask them to quickly jot down a new way of doing something that they have learned on a sticky note/post-it (or answer another reflection question).

Resource 8.32: Building a foundation for critical thinking with very young learners

Copy and cut out these cards and give a set to each group. The 'How/why' cards in the right-hand column are arranged next to the 'tips' cards they explain.

How to promote critical thinking	Ways we can do it
Provide opportunities for play	Letting the child test how things work by playing with water and sand
	Enabling the child to explore cause and effect when dropping things off a chair....'what happens if I....?'
Pause and wait – don't intervene immediately	Silently counting to 60 before intervening while child is attempting a task
	Time for child to readjust and manoeuvre to grasp a toy effectively or to think and maybe refine without adult completing the task for them
	Time for observation of what child is doing
Ask open-ended questions	Responding to a child's questions with a question
	Respecting child's answers even if incorrect, e.g. 'that is interesting, why do you think that?'

How to promote critical thinking	Ways we can do it
Help child develop hypotheses	Asking 'if we do this, what do you think will happen?'
	Saying things like: 'Let's guess what will happen next'
Encourage thinking in different ways	Asking 'what other ideas could we try' [to help develop problem-solving skills]
	Suggesting 'let's think of all the possible solutions'

This activity draws on guidance from Bright Horizons' 'Developing thinking skills in kids' (www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/developing-critical-thinking-skills-in-children)

Resource 8.33: Activities to promote critical thinking

- **Problem-facing questions:** Give learners questions that they should use when faced with a problem, such as ‘How would someone else feel about this?’, ‘Is it fair?’, or ‘What can I do about this?’ These, and other questions, can be displayed around the classroom for learners to see and use throughout the lesson, until they are in the habit of using them automatically. [This gives learners tools in order to think critically.]
- **Fact or opinion:** Create some statements that are either fact or opinion. Learners look at the statement and have to write down ‘fact’ or ‘opinion’ and then a sentence to explain how it can or can’t be proven. They then compare their answers with their peers and discuss. [For differentiating between fact and opinion.]
- **Café discussion:** Learners each choose a character to create a persona – they decide a name, age, gender, marital status, occupation, education level, etc, for their character. Next, the class should be given an historical event or current issue related to the lesson to discuss. They should also get some time to do some research, and to think about how they want to represent their character’s views. The class splits into groups. What follows is a 20-minute ‘cafe-style’ conversation about the chosen topic. Be sure each learner practices being open-minded and disagreeing respectfully. [For role-playing and interpersonal communication skills.]
- **Words that count:** Ask learners to imagine they live in a world where there are only 10 words they can ever use. They can repeat them as much as you want, but they can’t ever use any other words. They write down the 10 words they’d choose. Next, ask them to make up to 10 sentences with them in order to communicate something to their group. They should write the actual intended meaning below each sentence for their own reference. They can use feeling and gesture to help their group understand. [This works on some skills using metaphor and choosing words carefully.]
- **Questioning common situations:** Ask questions as a way of exploring assumptions and some common situations in life that we take for granted. For example:
 - What is a game and why do we play them?

- Why do sports seem to get more attention than other matters, such as disease or poverty?
- What would happen if no one could ever play games again?
- Why do humans wage war on each other?
- How do we decide who wins and loses?
- How does war affect those who do not participate?
- What is the legacy of war?

[This exercise encourages us to look at who we are both as individuals and as a society.]

- **Making choices:** Explain to the class that part of life is being able to agree a healthy balance between our needs and our wants. It's also about focusing on what we consider to be truly important. Ask them to imagine they can have any 3 things that they want. In return they must give away three things that they already have. What do they want and what will they give away, and why?
- **Talk it through:** Present scenarios for learners to discuss and debate. They should be based primarily on ethics and morality. They encourage learners to take a stand and defend their viewpoint. These can be done in pairs but are much more compelling in larger class debates where views are divided. They can also be used as individual worksheets – learners can circle an answer and then explain their choice in writing. [Learners learn the importance of being able to take a stance on an issue and defending that stance with logic, reasoning, knowledge, and common sense.]

Example scenarios

- Banji finds an expensive-looking watch in a classroom one day. It has no name on it, and it's not near anyone's desk. Should he: a) Give it to the school office b) Ask around if it belongs to anyone c) Keep it and not say anything?
- Thandi's friend is stressed about a future test. Thandi already took the test and got 100%, so she knows all the answers already. Should she: a) Just give the answers to her friend b) Use her knowledge to coach her friend c) Not get involved at all?
- Joshua overhears two boys bragging about having posted some inappropriate images of a female student online for a joke. Should he: a) Mind his own business b) Report the incident to the school principal c) Confront the boys and defend the student?

- You witness a bank robbery and follow the thief down the street. He stops at a church orphanage and gives them all the money. Would you: a) Report the man to police since he committed a crime b) Leave him alone because you saw him do a good deed?

Most of these activities are adapted from 'The Critical thinking Workbook' by the Global Digital Citizen Foundation <https://globaldigitalcitizen.org/free-download-critical-thinking-workbook/amp>

Resource 8.34: Enabling Education Review Issue 7 2018 ('Children as researchers' pages 22-33)

(www.eenet.org.uk/enabling-education-review/enabling-education-review-7/eer-7/children-as-researchers/)

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Children as researchers

EENET recently worked with children in Armenia and Ukraine. We helped older children (aged 12-15) to learn about action research – using activities and games to investigate a situation and find solutions to problems. The older children then worked with younger children in primary school (aged 6-7) and with very young children from kindergarten classes (aged 4-5) to find out about their experiences of school.



Ukraine

Capital: Kiev
Official languages: Ukrainian
Population: 42,418,235
Out-of-school children: 56,000
Pre-primary enrolment: no data available



The young researchers used lots of different games and activities to encourage the younger children to talk about their experiences and feelings.

At school we don't like ...

Teachers take our phones from us, put them in a box, and do not give them to us at breaks.

Sometimes the teacher shouts.



Sometimes the boys behave badly, they fight among themselves.

The teachers do not explain why they give us bad marks.

The young researchers discussed
“why is it difficult to express ourselves?”

We don't have the skills.

We are shy and afraid of looking stupid.

We are afraid we cannot formulate our ideas.

We do not think adults will take us seriously.

We think our opinion is not valued and will not change anything.

It's hard to find a common language with an adult.

Our parents do not take us seriously, even the older young people (20 years old), so it is important to find ways to communicate with all people.

Parents are not interested in our opinion. Or they pretend that they listen to us; nevertheless, they do not listen to what we said.





Five out of nine younger children said that teachers and adults did not listen to them. Sometimes they wanted to say something but were too scared.

Our Ideal teacher

- Should not be angry.
- Should not ask us to do homework.
- Should play with us more often.
- Should play more football in the playground.
- Should not write [bad] comments.

What was it like working as researchers with younger children?

We became more united.

It is interesting to work in a team.

We needed to listen to each other.

You need to help your fellow researchers.

We must not quarrel.

We learned a lot.



What was it like working with kindergarten children?

- ✓ They are so small!
- ✓ How do educators cope with them?
- ✓ It is necessary to give a medal to educators after one working day!
- ✓ Compared with the primary school, it is more difficult but also interesting.
- ✓ The children speak openly and sincerely; they do not think what to say, they speak it as it is. And it was cool!
- ✓ Today was an interesting and difficult day; we played a lot. Keeping children interested is hard. Nevertheless, they are so sweet, sincere, they do not know how to lie, they tell us about their relatives.
- ✓ They can cry so quickly, and we do not have time to understand why.
- ✓ Teachers do a great job working with little children.
- ✓ We think being a teacher is not as easy as it may seem; it is a difficult job.



The young researchers suggested some follow-up activities, to build on this action research:



- ✓ Conduct joint lessons. Mix students of different classes (ages) to establish mutual understanding between us and them.
- ✓ Conduct other research in the warmer weather in the playground (for example, about natural history).
- ✓ Motivate children to tell not horror stories but fairy tales, as well as write them down in their notebooks.
- ✓ Use 'Beyblade' for educational purposes, for example: contests, competitions. [Beyblades are spinning toys that the younger children were very interested in and wanted to play with a lot.]
- ✓ Show children cartoons about friendship. It is difficult to explain what friendship is and how to be friends. Involve parents so that the approach is the same for teachers at school as well as for parents.
- ✓ Allow the use of mobile phones for educational purposes, to explain the culture of communication with the gadget.
- ✓ Undertake action research with other primary schools nearby. This would help with the transition from primary school to our secondary school.
- ✓ Use project activities in school children's education. We are ready to share our knowledge and practical experience.



Armenia

Capital:	Yerevan
Official languages:	Armenian
Population:	2,924,816
Out-of-school children:	5,000
Pre-primary enrolment:	52%

In Armenia the older children worked with kindergarten and primary school children.

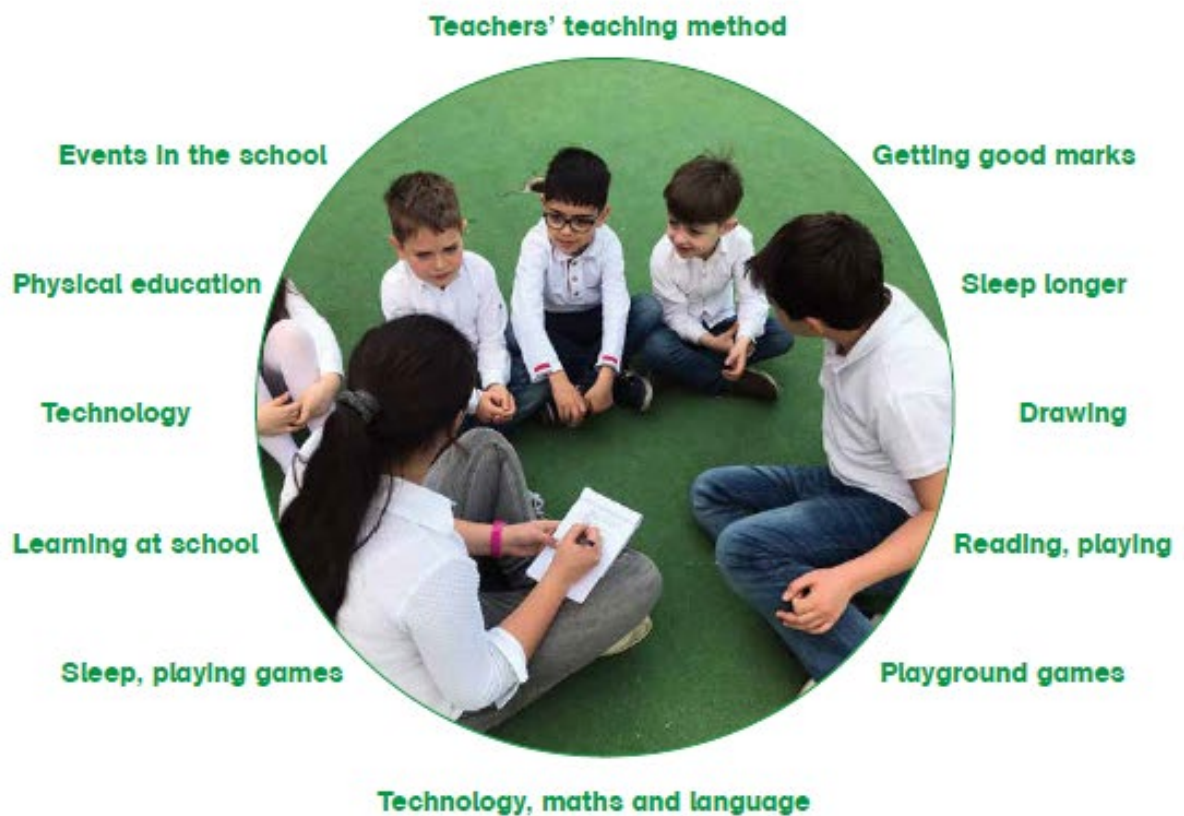
“When we visited the kindergarten, some of the younger children were excited, and some were shy. In order to create a warm atmosphere, we asked what they wanted to do. The children answered unanimously that they wanted to play in the school yard. We took into account the children’s opinions. We asked them to draw their dreams of the kindergarten and then we started asking questions.”

The older children had played games with the younger children, took photos, distributed sweets, asked questions, and took notes. Later, the older children made posters showing what they had found out during their research activities with younger children. Their research was focused on asking the younger children what they liked and disliked about school.





Primary school children liked:



Primary school children
"We don't like..."

Young researchers' ideas for solutions

Too many children in the classroom	→	Reduce the number of children in each classroom
Breaks are too short	→	Make breaks longer
Homework is too much and there is no time for rest	→	Give children less homework
We don't have enough chance to use modern smart devices during the classes	→	Give the children chance to use electronic books and devices
When I hurt my leg in PE	→	Teachers should be more attentive
When I am not engaged in the activities	→	We suggest also organising psychological games
When I am mocked by teachers	→	Teacher should try to explain better, because when she is angry, children get upset
When the teacher is angry	→	Reduce the number of children in the class so the teacher can spend more time with each of them. Don't get angry when children who do not want or do not understand something. Talk and listen.



Primary school children "We don't like..."

Young researchers' ideas for solutions

When a teacher hits a book on the table



Discuss children's rights to make own and free decisions

Waking up early



Start lessons later, not early in the morning

Sitting too long



More activities, moving around

Play with Lego



Take into account children's opinions and listen to their wishes

Classes are long



Different approaches for each child. Ask them what they would like instead

Don't like the idea of going to school



Start preparing children for school from the last year of the kindergarten

We would like to change the food (school meals)



Make them more affordable and organic food / different food

The lunch is expensive and not nice



Kindergarten children liked:



Kindergarten children "We don't like..."		Young researchers' ideas for solutions
Spending long time in kindergarten	→	More games and entertainments
When they force you to eat	→	Explain to children about the usefulness of food
Some children don't like sleeping	→	Let children make choice, sleep or not
Eating soup (borsch)	→	Explain children about the usefulness of food

Resource 8.35: Example of an observation sheet

[illegible]

Resource 8.36: Interview guidelines

The following are guidelines to help you in conducting good interviews:

Preparation

- Make sure your interview has a clear purpose.
- Make a short list of topics or questions to guide your interview (4 or 5 are enough).

Introduction

- Introduce yourself first at the start of an interview.
- State clearly the purpose of your interview.
- Ask the interviewee(s) if they have enough time for the interview at the moment, or if not, ask if they can suggest another convenient time.
- Ask if the interviewee(s) if they want the interview to be confidential.

Conducting the interview

- Begin with some friendly, general conversation to help make the interviewee(s) feel comfortable.
- Make the first questions easy ones for the interviewee(s) to answer – beginning an interview with a very personal, or difficult, question may cause offence and stop the flow of information.
- Try to express only one idea per question to avoid confusion.
- Avoid too many 'yes' or 'no' closed questions because that can stop the flow of information.
- Be careful about how often you ask 'why?'. Although 'why?' is an important question, asking this too often or pushing too hard for an answer can make the interviewee(s) feel uncomfortable.
- Be careful about asking 'leading questions' - that is questions that try to influence the interviewee(s) answers. An example of a 'leading question' is 'Don't you think that....?'

- Ask the interviewee(s) to repeat an answer if you didn't understand it or weren't able to record what they said. Also, ask them to explain, or clarify their answers if you didn't fully understand them.
- Avoid passing judgement, giving advice, or your own opinions.
- Tell the interviewee(s) when you are changing the topic, so they can be prepared.
- Be aware of your body language, because this may tell the interviewee(s) what you are feeling about their answers and may disturb the interview. It can also make the interviewee(s) feel uncomfortable or like you are not really interested in what they are saying if, for example, you look bored, or fidgety, or avoid eye contact.

Closing the interview

- Keep your interviews relatively short (less than an hour if possible).
- Try to summarise the main points that you have learned during the interview to check with the interviewee(s) if you've correctly reflected what was said.
- Ask the interviewee(s) if there are any questions they'd like to ask you.
- Thank the interviewee(s) for their time and trouble.

Guidelines for recording an interview

- Use a notebook.
- Record details of what was said.
- Record details of body language and feelings that were expressed.
- Record your observations about how the interview went.
- If it was a group interview, who said what and did the others agree?
- Make any follow up notes as soon as possible after the interview.
- Record your personal impressions.

Adapted from: S.B. Rifkin and P. Pridmore, (2001) 'Partners in Planning – Information; participation and empowerment', Macmillan Education.

Resource 8.37: Grouping activity

Copy and cut out a set of these cards; one card per person with an equal balance of animal cards amongst the whole group. Choose as many animals as you want groups. For example, if you want 5 groups, and have 40 teachers, then choose five animals and copy and cut out 8 cards of each animal.

Elephant	Monkey
Snake	Cow
Frog	Hyena
Cat	Goat

Notes