Addis Ababa University
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Inclusiveness

Chapter 2
Concept of Inclusion

2.1. Definition of Inclusion

- The principle of inclusion is simple.
- It is the opposite of exclusion and also alienation.
- It is the principle that says that whatever benefits accrue to members of a society are the heritage of all people, not just those who are able-bodied.

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- Inclusion means that all people are entitled to full membership of the human family.

- Fundamentally, inclusion is the principle that:
  - We are all entitled to participate fully in all aspects of society;
  - We all have the same rights and responsibilities;
  - We all have something to contribute.
- It is the principle which demands valued recognition of all people and the entitlement of all meaningful interaction, involvement and engagement in every part of the complex and multifaceted societies in which we live.

- Inclusion is the right of the individual and the responsibility of society as a whole.
- Inclusion requires the removal of barriers and social structures which impede(restrict) participation.
- It requires proactive policy making, lateral thinking and on-going commitment.

- The principle of inclusion accepts disability as human diversity. Inclusion is not a one-time project, rather it is a process which is ultimately intended to pass through or achieve the following organically linked steps or processes:
    - Developing Inclusive plan or policy/legal frameworks;
    - Developing Inclusive culture with in communities and institutions; and
    - Evolving inclusive practice.

- There are three dimensions need to be considered for the effective implementation of inclusive services that accommodate the special needs of persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups:
  - Create non-discriminatory attitude within communities towards PWDs and other vulnerable groups;
  - Develop accessible and or barrier free physical as well as service environments for equal participation of PWDs and other vulnerable groups in socio-economic activities;
  - Empower physical and psychosocial capacity of PWDs and other vulnerable groups.

- In accordance with the analysis of WHO regarding environment in reference to disability, it includes both the physical and service environments as listed briefly below:
  - Technology and product
  - Natural environment and human made change to it
  - Social support and relationships
  - Attitude
  - Policy, system and services

2.2. Principles of Inclusion

- In accordance with UNESCO (2005) the following are four major principles of inclusion:

  1. **Inclusion is a process.**

  It has to be seen as a never-ending search to find better ways of responding to diversity.

  It is about learning how to live with difference and learning how to learn from differences.

  Differences come to be seen more positively as a stimulus for fostering learning amongst children and adults.

❖2. **Inclusion is concerned with the identification and removal of barriers** that hinders the development of persons with disabilities.

❖ It involves collecting, collating and evaluating information from a wide variety of sources in order to plan for improvements in policy and practice.

❖ It is about using evidence of various kinds to stimulate creativity and problem solving.

❖3. **Inclusion is about the presence, participation and achievement of all persons.**

❖ ‘Presence’ is concerned with where persons are provided and how reliably and punctually they attend; ‘participation’ relates to the quality of their experiences and must incorporate the views of learners/and or workers and ‘achievement’ is about the outcomes of learning across the curriculum, not just test and exam results.

4. **Inclusion invokes a particular emphasis** on those who may be at risk of marginalization, exclusion or underachievement.

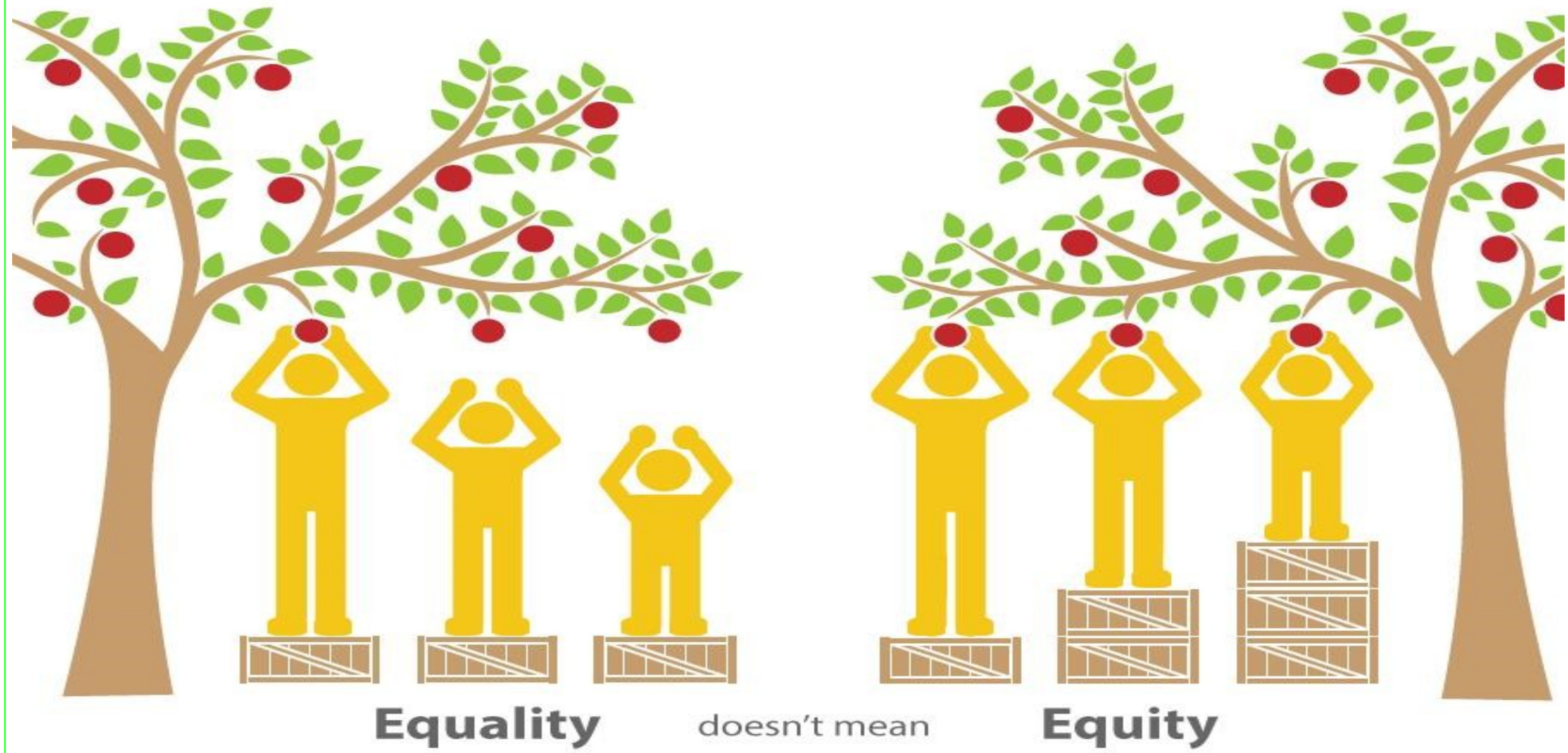
❖This indicates the moral responsibility to ensure that those ‘at risk’ are carefully monitored, and that steps are taken to ensure their presence, participation and achievement.

5. **It promotes the two dimensions of inclusion, equality and equity.**

Equality is equality of equals.

Aristotle defined equality as “treating equal people equally.”

Whereas, equality refers to the provision of special support for the ones who were (are) neglected in the participation of socio-economic activities of the society they live in.


Equality
doesn't mean
Equity

2.3. Rationale for Inclusion

- The following rationales justify why inclusion is needed to be applied as a strategy to make the participation of PWDs and other vulnerable groups visible in all aspects of life of the society.

2.3.1. Educational Foundations

- Children do better academically, psychologically and socially in inclusive settings.
- A more efficient use of education resources.
- Decreases dropouts and repetitions.
- Teachers competency (knowledge, skills, collaboration, satisfaction).

2.3.2. Social Foundation

- Segregation teaches individuals to be fearful, ignorant and breeds prejudice.
- All individuals need an education that will help them develop relationships and prepare them for life in the wider community.
- Only inclusion has the potential to reduce fear and to build friendship, respect and understanding.

2.3.3. Legal Foundations

- All individuals have the right to learn and live together.
- Human being shouldn’t be devalued or discriminated against by being excluded or sent away because of their disability.
- There are no legitimate reasons to separate children for their education.

2.3.4. Economic Foundation

- Inclusive education has economic benefit, both for individual and for society.
- Inclusive education is more cost-effective than the creation of special schools across the country.
- Children with disabilities go to local schools.
- Reduce wastage of repetition and dropout.
- Children with disabilities live with their family and use community infrastructure.
- It facilitates better employment and job creation opportunities for people with disabilities.

2.3.5. Foundations for Building Inclusive Society

- Formation of mutual understanding and appreciation of diversity.
- Building up empathy, tolerance and cooperation.
- Promotion of sustainable development.

2.4.Features and barriers of inclusive environment

- Inclusive environment is characterized by the following features that revolve around the formation of accommodative and barrier free atmosphere.
- An inclusive environment is one in which members feel respected by and connected to one another.
- An inclusive environment is an environment that welcomes all people, regardless of their disability and other vulnerabilities.
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Features and barriers Cont'd …

- It recognizes and uses their skills and strengthens their abilities.
- An inclusive service environment is respectful, supportive, and equalizing.
- An inclusive environment reaches out to and includes individuals with disabilities and other vulnerable groups at all levels of services and community life.
- An inclusive environment is a place which is adjusted to individuals' needs.

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- It acknowledges that individual differences among individuals are a source of richness and diversity, and not a problem, and that various needs and the individual pace of learning and development can be met successfully with a wide range of flexible approaches.
- Besides, the environment should involve continuous process of changes directed towards strengthening and encouraging different ways of participation of all members of the community.

Cont’d …

- An inclusive environment is also directed towards developing culture, policy and practice which meet pupils’ diversities, towards identifying and removing obstacles in learning and participating, towards developing a suitable provision and supporting individuals.

Cont'd….

- Regardless of these positive features and qualities of inclusion in terms of the promotion of the issue of disability and vulnerability in public services, there are three types of barriers preventing persons with disabilities from participating in society on equal terms with non-disabled people:
    - Social and attitudinal barriers;
    - Environmental and technical barriers; and
    - Institutional barriers.

Social and attitudinal barriers

- Attitudinal barriers, including prejudice and discrimination cause the biggest problems to persons with disabilities.
- Disability is associated with shame, fear and/or pity, easily leading to isolation or overprotection.
- Disability is often also seen as a curse and punishment of wrong doing and wrath of God.

Cont’d…

- PWDs are assumed as incapable/inadequate and dependent upon others who deserve passion and charity.
- In order to avoid discrimination, the family may keep the person with a disability hidden at home.
- Negative language reflects and can reinforce prejudices.

Environmental and technical barriers

- Environmental barriers include natural or technical barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from participation.
- PWDs encounter these barriers in areas such as: public transport, hospitals and clinics, schools and housing, shops and marketplaces, places of worship, media and communications etc. due to the physical inaccessibility of such service areas.
- Technical barriers include high steps and concrete platforms, narrow entrances, lack of or too heavy doors, narrow cubicles, lack of light and handrails.
- Natural barriers include uneven, rough or steep paths on muddy and/or slippery ground.

Institutional barriers

- Institutional barriers are related to legislation, policies and action plans.
- Even if policies and legislation take persons with disabilities into account, the challenge is that they often lack directives, strategies and guidelines for implementation.
- In addition, the relevant ministries/ bureaus responsible may not be aware of these policies.
- Consequently, persons with disabilities are frequently left out of planning, implementation and management of different public services.