



Inclusive Futures

Promoting disability inclusion



Nurturing Inclusive Teachers Through Teachers' Continuous Professional Development:

Learning Brief on the Mentoring, Coaching,
and Community of Learning Approach

May 2025



CONTENT

- 03 Acronyms
- 04 Context
- 05 Methodology
- 06 Why the Coaching, Mentoring and Communities of Learning Approach Matters for Inclusive Education in Tanzania
- 07 Key Lessons Learnt
- 20 Conclusion and Recommendations
- 21 References



Acknowledgements

This learning brief was funded by the UK Government's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The authors are Moses Mnzava and Rachel Butoto, with technical guidance and peer review from Shabani Abeid, Mohamed Juma, Juliette Myers, and Wycliffe Nyakundi.

We thank the Government of Tanzania through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), the President's Office for Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG), and the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) for their support, guidance, and input throughout the development of this learning brief.

We also appreciate the contributions of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and TO51 project consortium partners. OPDs shared meaningful insights during the data collection phase. The consortium partners, including ADD International Tanzania, Light for the World, Sense International Tanzania, and Tanzania Cheshire Foundation, offered technical expertise and conducted thorough document review.

Acronyms

CoL – Community of Learning
DAO – District Academic Officer
DC – District Council
DSNEO – District Special Needs Education Officer
DSQA – District School Quality Assurer
ESRAC – Education Support, Resource and Assessment Centre
FDG – Focus Group Discussion
HoS – Head of School
IE – Inclusive Education
IEP – Individualised Education Plan
LGA – Local Government Authority
MC – Municipal Council
MoEST – Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NF-TCPD – National Framework for Teachers’ Continuous Professional Development
NSIE – National Strategy for Inclusive Education
OPD – Organization of Persons with Disabilities
PO-RALG – President’s Office - Regional Administration and Local Government
SEN – Special Education Needs
SNET – Special Needs Education Teacher
TCPD – Teachers’ Continuous Professional Development
TIE – Tanzania Institute of Education
TO51 – Task Order 51
ToTs – Trainer of Trainers
TRCs – Teachers Resource Centres
UDL – Universal Design for Learning
UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund
WEO – Ward Education Officer



Context

In Tanzania, approximately 2.3% of children aged 0-17 are living with disabilities [13]. Disability is one of several special educational needs (SEN) categories identified in the National Strategy for Inclusive Education (NSIE) 2021/22-2025/26. The strategy calls for tailored support to help these learners thrive [8]. Despite this, many children with disabilities remain excluded from basic education. Of the estimated 400,000 school-aged children with disabilities, only about 11% are enrolled in pre-primary and primary schools [10]. This limited access denies them the opportunity to learn and achieve meaningful education outcomes [2,7,15].

The Government of Tanzania has made notable efforts to advance inclusive education (IE) through policies, strategic frameworks and increased awareness. However, implementation continues to face significant challenges. These are largely driven by limited investment and inadequate resource allocation [3]. For example, many schools have insufficient teaching and learning materials to cater for pupils with disabilities [15]. Teacher preparation is also a concern. Most schools have few staff trained to support pupils with disabilities due to minimal pre-service and in-service training on IE [1,5,6]. However, some studies indicate that Teachers' Continuous Professional Development (TCPD) is helping to improve teachers' ability to support inclusive classrooms, especially in primary schools [9].

In that regard, the Task Order 51 (TO51) IE project was designed to promote equal access and participation of children with disabilities in pre-primary and primary schools in Tanzania. A key focus of the project is strengthening teachers' capacity to create inclusive learning environments. To support this, TO51 is piloting the Mentoring, Coaching, and Community of Learning (CoL) approach. This approach aims to equip teachers with practical skills to ensure all pupils feel supported, valued, and able to reach their full potential. It is envisaged to bridge the knowledge and skills gap among teachers for IE in Tanzania. Therefore, the learning activity highlights the implementation of this approach in 49 targeted schools across three TO51 project councils: Shinyanga Municipal Council (MC), Shinyanga District Council (DC) and Misungwi DC. It demonstrates how IE practices can be strengthened at school level through this approach.



Teachers from TO51-supported schools trained to develop inclusive teaching and learning materials.

Methodology

A mixed case study research design was used to explore the integration of IE agenda into TCPD and assess its effectiveness in enhancing inclusive teaching practices. The study was conducted in three phases: study design, data collection and analysis process, and reporting.

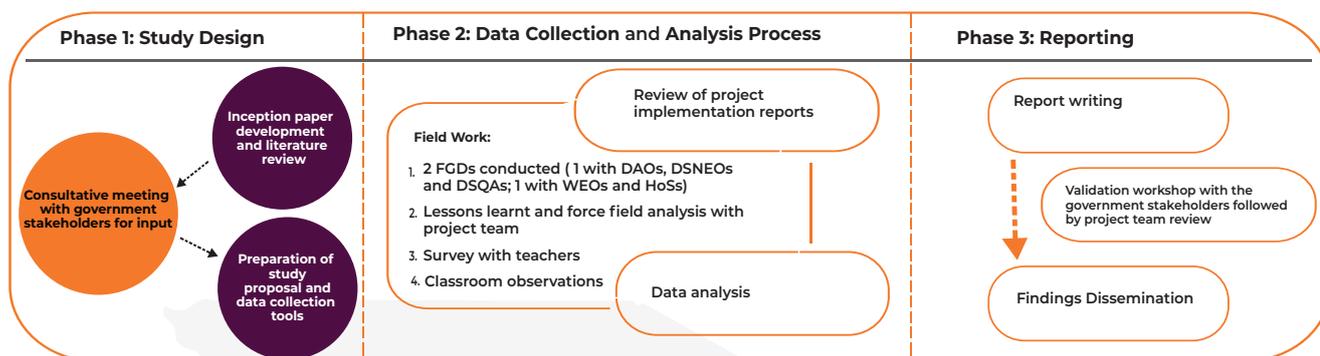


Figure 1: Learning Activity Process Map

In the first phase of the learning activity, an internal technical team prepared an inception paper, which was reviewed and refined with input from government stakeholders. This informed the development of the study proposal and data collection tools.

The second phase involved data collection and analysis. **Several methods were used for collecting data:**

- A desk review of project implementation reports.
- Two focus group discussions (FGDs): one with District Academic Officers (DAOs), District Special Needs Education Officers (DSNEOs) and District School Quality Assurers (DSQAs), and another with Ward Education Officers (WEOs) and Head of Schools (HoSs). Participants were purposively selected based on their roles and involvement in the project.
- A lesson learnt session with the project team to reflect on successes, challenges, and opportunities for improving the Mentoring, Coaching and CoL approach. Additionally, a force field analysis was conducted with the same team to explore factors driving or hindering the adoption and scaling of the approach.
- A survey involving 207 teachers (81 male, 126 female) from 28 project schools, drawn from a sample of 245.
- Systematic classroom observations in 28 sampled schools. The classrooms selection was purposive to ensure that they had pupils with different types of disabilities.

Following data collection, analysis was conducted to identify key trends, insights, and patterns related to the implementation and effectiveness of the approach.

The final phase focused on report writing, validation of findings with government stakeholders, and dissemination of results to relevant audiences.

Why the Coaching, Mentoring and Community of Learning Approach Matters for Inclusive Education in Tanzania

Tanzania has adopted an inclusive education approach, aiming to ensure that all learners, including those with special education needs, have equitable access to quality education in mainstream classrooms. This places a clear expectation on teachers to create inclusive learning environments that accommodate diverse learner needs. However, many in-service teachers in Tanzania did not receive training on inclusive education during their initial teacher education. This gap calls for targeted in-service training and continuous capacity strengthening.

The National Framework for Teachers' Continuous Professional Development (NF-TCPD) provides a platform for in-service teacher professional development. While inclusive education is embedded in the framework, evidence suggests that it remains underrepresented in practice, particularly within CoL sessions. As a result, there is a need for more structured and practical ways to build teachers' capacity for inclusive education. The Coaching, Mentoring, and CoL approach offers an innovative strategy that leverages the NF-TCPD system to integrate IE agenda into routine TCPD activities.

Emerging Successes

- i) The approach has demonstrated early signs of sustainability by being anchored within the existing NF-TCPD system, making it easier to scale and align with national priorities.
- ii) CoL has proven to be an effective and widely accepted platform for engaging in-service teachers in discussions and reflection on inclusive education practices.
- iii) Teachers who engaged in this approach showed improved awareness, knowledge, skills and confidence in supporting learners with disabilities.

Challenges

- i) Mentoring and coaching components for inclusive education were not clearly structured or consistently applied during the pilot phase, limiting the intended impact of this approach.
- ii) The absence of practical guidance affected implementation, including limited training for mentors and coaches, inconsistent documentation of mentoring and coaching activities, and time constraints for school level follow-up.
- iii) Power dynamics between mentors and mentees were not adequately addressed, which in some cases hindered open collaboration and learning.

Key Lessons Learnt

1 Unpacking the Coaching, Mentoring and Community of Learning Approach

The Coaching, Mentoring and CoL approach is designed to strengthen teachers' capacity to support inclusive education by integrating inclusive practices into ongoing TCPD activities. It combines one-to-one coaching, expert mentoring, and peer learning to build teachers' knowledge, skills and confidence in creating inclusive classrooms. At its core, the approach promotes continuous, practical learning using structured support materials such as the national inclusive pedagogy module and manual, supplemented with content on Universal Design for Learning (UDL). These tools support both individual and peer-led reflection and improvement.

The approach is built on three interconnected pillars: personalized coaching to provide direct targeted support; mentoring by experienced or expert teachers; and collaborative learning through school-based CoL. Together, these elements help teachers adopt inclusive teaching practices that support the participation, achievement and learning of all pupils, especially those with disabilities.



Illustration 1: Mentoring, Coaching and Community of Learning Framework

Community of Learning for Inclusive Education

The TO51 project builds on the national TCPD framework, which requires all public schools to hold weekly CoL sessions during working hours. These sessions are peer-led, scheduled into the school calendar, and provide a structured platform for in-service teacher learning. They allow teachers to share experiences, discuss challenges, and provide feedback to one another on lesson plans, adaptations, classroom practices, inclusive approaches and other education issues they encounter.

To strengthen IE within this structure, the project introduced a School-based Trainer of Trainers (ToTs) model. In each school, three ToTs were identified: the Head of School, Academic Teacher, and either an exemplary teacher or a Special Needs Education Teacher (SNET). WEOs were also included in the ToTs structure to provide oversight and technical support across schools. These ToTs received training on IE and are responsible for leading CoL sessions focused on inclusive practices. The training topics covered a range of practical and reflective themes, including identifying different types of disabilities; establishing referral systems for assessment and appropriate placement of children with disabilities; supporting learners based on their specific conditions; creating positive and inclusive classroom cultures; addressing implicit bias in school settings; strengthening family engagement; applying inclusive teaching methods; and improvising teaching and learning materials.



Fatuma Gilalah, head of school at Buhangija Primary School in Shinyanga MC, facilitating a community of learning session.

The ToTs have served as lead peer facilitators for inclusive education in their schools. They guide discussions, model inclusive practices, and support their peers in applying new inclusive teaching strategies. This model has proven effective. The inclusive education agenda has been meaningfully integrated into CoL sessions, supported by relevant training materials. These sessions have provided a collaborative space for shared inquiry, peer support and reflection, helping teachers develop practical skills and adaptive strategies for inclusive classrooms.

While the CoL model has shown strong potential, there is a need for a consistent reporting template and monitoring mechanism to track progress, offer feedback, and provide ongoing support.

Coaching and Mentoring for Inclusive Education

While closely related, coaching and mentoring serve distinct purposes. Coaching focuses on specific tasks and skill development, while mentoring supports broader personal and professional growth over time [4,11,14]. During project implementation, one of the key challenges was how to effectively deliver the coaching and mentoring components of the approach. Insights from focus group discussions, as well as reflections from the project team through a lessons learnt and force field analysis sessions, highlighted key learnings around these two elements. These are outlined as follows.

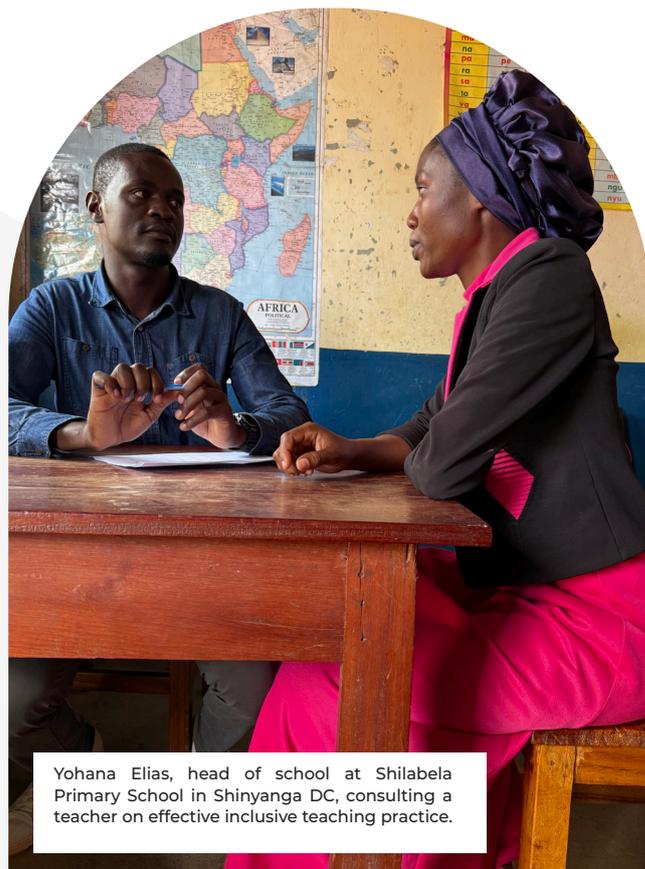
Coaching

In the TO51 project, coaching was delivered by school-based ToTs as a core part of the TCPD framework. Coaching for inclusive education is a targeted support system that helps teachers improve their classroom practices through regular feedback, personalised guidance, and goal-driven skill development. It responds to the “how to” of inclusive teaching by focusing on short-term, performance-oriented improvements using active observation, questioning and reflection.

This approach offers practical, in-school support that equips teachers with the day-to-day guidance they need to apply inclusive teaching in real classroom settings. It focuses on strengthening teachers’ capacity to create inclusive learning environments by improving their instructional techniques, classroom management and soft skills such as empathy, cultural responsiveness and effective communication. **The study identified four primary roles of coaches within this approach:**

- **Conducting classroom observations and providing feedback:** HoSs, academic teachers and Heads of Special Needs Education Units are mandated to enter classrooms and observe teaching practices. As coaches, they are expected to systematically observe lessons in classrooms that include pupils with disabilities and engage teachers in structured reflection. This process helps identify strengths and areas for improvement in managing inclusive classrooms. Coaches then provide constructive feedback. For example, they may assess whether an individualised education plan (IEP) addresses a pupil’s specific needs and work with the teacher to develop action plans.
- **Provision of individual consultations:** Coaches offer one-on-one support to teachers either by initiating sessions or responding to teachers’ requests for guidance. These consultations focus on specific challenges in inclusive teaching and may involve co-developing personalised strategies for individual pupils, including support with designing and implementing IEPs.

- **Provision of peer coaching:** Coaches are expected to create platforms for SNETs to demonstrate effective strategies for teaching specific categories of pupils with disabilities. This enables peer-to-peer exchange of practical knowledge, experiences and inclusive teaching techniques.
- **Conducting professional development workshops:** Based on identified needs, coaches organise and facilitate workshops on topics related to IE. These may be triggered by recurring teacher challenges, new inclusive strategies worth sharing or pressing socio-cultural issues in the school context. Workshops provide structured opportunities for teachers to learn new techniques, reinforce existing skills and stay updated on IE practices.



Yohana Elias, head of school at Shilabela Primary School in Shinyanga DC, consulting a teacher on effective inclusive teaching practice.

Mentoring

The project design identified district school quality assurers (DSQAs), particularly those specialised in special educational needs, as ideal mentors for inclusive education. This aligns with their existing mandate to visit schools, observe classroom practices, conduct exit meetings and provide feedback and recommendations to teachers based on their observations. Additionally, the National Framework for Enabling Schools to Become More Inclusive tasks DSQAs with assessing school inclusivity and offering improvement guidance. The approach therefore envisaged that mentoring for inclusive education could be seamlessly integrated into their routine responsibilities.

Within this framework, DSQAs are expected to support teachers individually or collectively through regular observation, feedback, collaboration and shared learning experiences. Mentorship is intended to be a structured, supportive relationship in which mentors guide teachers to strengthen their inclusive teaching and classroom management practices.

The overall goal of mentorship is transformative. It aims to build an inclusive mindset and culture at the level of individual teachers, teaching teams and the school. Because it involves shifting attitudes

and behaviours, mentoring is seen as a long-term engagement centred on ongoing support, guidance and knowledge transfer. **In this context, mentors are defined by three core roles:**

- **Providing long-term guidance:** Mentors should have strong knowledge and experience in inclusive education. They serve as trusted advisors, offering continuous support as teachers navigate complex situations and build confidence in inclusive practices.
- **Modelling inclusive practices:** Drawing on their own experiences, mentors are expected to share practical strategies and demonstrate best practices in inclusive teaching, making their insights relatable and applicable.
- **Link teachers to professional development opportunities:** Mentors are also expected to stay informed about current trends and opportunities in inclusive education. They play a key role in connecting teachers to relevant resources, learning opportunities and workshops that support teachers' ongoing professional growth.



Beatus Manumbu, district school quality assurer, providing feedback to teachers at Ng'walukwa 'A' Primary School in Shinyanga DC, following classroom observation.

Practical Takeaways from the Approach

1. HoSs and WEOs are Best Positioned to Serve as Mentors:

DSQAs are not well suited for mentoring roles due to their limited visits to schools. These visits often occur only once per academic year, and each DSQA is responsible for all schools within their respective districts. Their engagements are too infrequent to support the sustained and transformational relationships that effective mentorship requires. In contrast, HoSs and WEOs are consistently present in schools and communities. Their formal roles give them the authority and access to observe classroom practices, provide feedback, and support teachers regularly, making them better placed to serve as mentors for inclusive education.

.....

2. Need for an Inclusive Education Coaches and Mentors Facilitators Manual:

ToTs and WEOs were trained on the basics of IE, but not specifically on coaching and mentoring competencies. Their roles and responsibilities, as well as those of teachers, remain undefined, raising concerns about their preparedness. Developing a dedicated facilitators manual for IE coaches and mentors is critical. This resource will provide clear guidance and help build the capacity needed to scale and sustain the approach effectively.

.....

3. Clear Guidelines are Needed for Coaching and Mentoring Sessions:

While CoLs are well institutionalised, with 98% of schools allocating time during working hours and most holding sessions weekly, coaching and mentoring remain weakly integrated. These components need to be formalised and recognised as structured and accountable school functions. Developing clear guidelines and a working model for implementing coaching, mentoring, and CoL activities will improve consistency, impact, and monitoring.

.....

4. School Leadership Support is Essential in Inculcating Inclusive Culture and Practices:

School leadership plays a critical role in fostering inclusive education by championing the initiative, promoting systemic change, allocating time for CoL sessions, and ensuring teachers have the support they need to thrive. Leadership commitment is essential to build a school culture that values inclusivity and prioritises professional learning.

.....

5. Teacher Attitude is the Bedrock of a Successful Coaching, Mentoring and CoL Approach:

Inclusion is driven by values and perceptions. The success of this approach relies heavily on teachers' openness, curiosity, and willingness to learn. Their enthusiasm and readiness to engage in continuous learning are key to creating inclusive classrooms and sustaining the impact of this approach.

2 The Coaching, Mentoring and Community of Learning Approach is Effective in Nurturing Inclusive Teachers and Shows Strong Potential for Impact.

The Coaching, Mentoring and CoL approach has proven effective in building teachers' IE knowledge, skills and support systems. About 86% of surveyed teachers reported that IE is now a key agenda item in their weekly CoL sessions. Additionally, 94% agreed that CoL sessions have helped them overcome classroom challenges by encouraging peer learning and problem-solving. As a result, 85% indicated that CoL sessions have directly supported their development as more inclusive teachers.

Classroom observations support this progress. Approximately 83% of observed teachers demonstrated inclusive representation and delivery. This included adapting classroom management and lesson delivery to meet the needs of pupils with disabilities. However, performance was lower in two areas: 59% of teachers supported diverse forms of pupil expression, and only 53% provided varied engagement opportunities. These findings suggest improvement but also highlight the need for continued support.

This progress is notable given that most teachers had no prior training in inclusive education. Over half of the surveyed teachers reported not receiving any inclusive education preparation during their teacher training programmes. The majority held a Grade A Teaching Certificate (64%), followed by a Diploma in Primary Teacher Education (22%). Moreover, many teachers had over 15 years of teaching experience, yet 63% felt unprepared to manage inclusive classrooms.

During project implementation, these gaps contributed to passive resistance among teachers, especially in adopting IEPs and preparing learning materials using locally available resources. Teachers cited heavy workloads, overcrowded classrooms, and a lack of incentives as key challenges. Some were discouraged by the expectation to take on additional duties without recognition or support. There was also an overreliance on the project to supply teaching materials, which was neither sustainable nor conducive to creativity or ownership.

Despite these challenges, the Coaching, Mentoring and CoL approach has helped shift teacher attitudes towards IE. Most teachers reported that consistent project support through CoL sessions has built their awareness, willingness and confidence to adopt inclusive practices. They also suggested that further improvement could be achieved by inviting external facilitators to enrich CoL sessions. Currently, 54% of CoL sessions are run exclusively by internal peers. However, 90% of teachers believe external facilitators would be more effective in addressing complex IE challenges.

Additionally, teachers' resource centres (TRCs), though not a formally part of this approach, emerged as a promising resource for enhancing inclusive teaching. TRCs offer infrastructure, materials and training opportunities, including digital tools. However, their potential remains underutilised due to limited training events, lack of awareness among teachers, distance from schools, and weak coordination with local government authorities (LGAs). Other issues include limited inclusive education resources, inadequate tailoring of programmes to teacher needs, and weak collaboration with non-government organisations and education stakeholders.

In summary, this approach has not only increased teachers' inclusive education capacity but also demonstrates strong potential for long-term impact. Strengthening its implementation through external expertise, better integration with TRCs, and clearer structural support will be key to sustaining its effectiveness.



“

On top of the heavy workload, I think mostly teachers' discomfort and bias towards inclusive education was because of limited awareness, knowledge and skills. These sessions are giving teachers something they can work with, hands-on-skills. They learn how to identify who may have disabilities. They know what to look for and what to do when they have a pupil with disability in class. This is empowering. It gives teachers confidence and a sense of control. That is very important for a teacher to effectively manage an inclusive classroom.

Fatuma Gilalah, head of school at Buhangija Primary School in Shinyanga DC

3 Universal Screening, Identification and Assessment is Pivotal for Teachers to Adequately Prepare for and Support Learners with Disabilities

The Government of Tanzania set a target for each region to establish a well-equipped Education Support, Resource and Assessment Centre (ESRAC). However, progress toward this target remains limited. Recognising the urgency, President's Office - Regional Administration and Local Government [12] issued guidelines to support the establishment of ESRACs at the council level. These centres are intended to ensure that all children showing signs of disability receive timely assessments and the support they need. In line with this, the TO51 project supported the construction of two ESRACs and the renovation of one across three project councils: Misungwi DC, Shinyanga DC and Shinyanga MC.

The project also facilitated universal screening of pupils in all 49 targeted schools. Pupils identified with disabilities were assessed at the ESRACs and linked to relevant services, including referrals and placement. Teachers and education stakeholders described the process as unprecedented and transformative, bringing attention to previously unaddressed learning needs and improving awareness at school, community and council levels. **Key results from this initiative include:**

- Strengthened collaboration between schools and ESRACs, with teachers engaging more frequently with specialists for guidance on pupils' placement, assistive device recommendations, and other learning support needs.
- The screening exercise identified 1,632 pupils with disabilities across 49 project schools, revealing a high prevalence of previously unrecognised children with disabilities.
- The initiative increased awareness among teachers, parents, and community members on how to support children with disabilities, making CoL sessions more focused and responsive to learners' actual challenges.
- The assessment findings enabled teachers to adapt their teaching methods, classroom management, and communication to better meet individual learner needs, resulting in more effective teacher-pupil interactions.

Furthermore, the project's standardised approach also revealed disparities between schools in terms of enrolment of pupils with disabilities. For example, Mitindo Primary School in Misungwi DC reported the highest rate (14.79%), followed by Buhangija Primary School in Shinyanga MC (11.96%) and Iselamaganzi Primary School in Shinyanga DC (7.4%). These schools host ESRACs, and their proximity to support services was identified as a key factor influencing enrolment. In contrast, other schools recorded rates as low as 0.3%. These differences highlight that schools may require differentiated support based on the concentration and complexity of pupils with disabilities. In some contexts, inclusive education sessions carry greater urgency and practical relevance, underscoring the importance of context-specific planning.

4 Integrating the Coaching, Mentoring and Community of Learning Approach into Existing Basic Education Structure is Foundational for Cost-Effectiveness and Sustainability

The NSIE 2021/22–2025/26 called for the integration of inclusive education IE into the teacher training curriculum. This reform has been implemented, and the current curriculum now equips pre-service teachers with the skills to manage inclusive classrooms. It marks a shift from the former system that distinguished between regular and special education teachers. However, it will take years to phase out in-service teachers who were trained under the previous curriculum. Most will exit the system through retirement, and there is no explicit national plan to accelerate this transition. As such, IE remains a critical and ongoing area of focus in TCPD. This underscores the continued relevance of the Coaching, Mentoring and CoL approach in strengthening inclusive practices among in-service teachers.

A major strength of the approach lies in its integration into the existing education system. It builds on national structures rather than creating parallel systems. It is implemented primarily by civil servants such as HoSs, academic teachers, WEOs, DAOs, DSNEOs and DSQAs through their existing responsibilities. This design makes the approach cost effective, scalable and sustainable. **The TO51 project supported several key measures to institutionalise this approach within the government education system:**

- **Collaborative planning and implementation with the public sector:** The approach was co-designed and delivered in collaboration with Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) and PO-RALG. Additionally, inclusive education training materials were developed by the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE), ensuring alignment with the revised curriculum. Seasoned tutors from government teacher training colleges served as master trainers, ensuring consistency between pre-service and in-service teacher preparation.
- **Utilising existing structures and civil service personnel:** Project implementation relied on structures already mandated by government, particularly the CoL system, which is compulsory in all public schools. Civil servants carried out project activities as part of their existing roles, helping to avoid duplication and promoting ownership. It is recommended that the roles of DSQAs and DAOs be formally strengthened from the outset, given their crucial mandates in IE oversight and support.
- **Strengthening stakeholder engagement:** Effective implementation requires collaboration with key actors across all levels: LGA, regional, and national. During implementation, limited regional level engagement was noted as a risk to long-term sustainability. Going forward, stronger involvement of regional education officers is necessary for consistency and upscaling. Equally important is engaging organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), political leaders, the Tanzania Teachers' Union (TTU), Teachers' Service Commission (TSC), and the Tanzania Teachers' Professional Board (TTPB). International development partners should also be involved to support financing and scale-up of inclusive education innovations.

5 Success in Nurturing Inclusive Teachers Requires an Inclusive Ecosystem

Inclusive education is not the sole responsibility of teachers. It is a systemic process involving multiple actors working together. Within the school, this includes management, teachers, pupils and support staff. Beyond the school, it involves parents, communities, education officers, OPDs and other stakeholders. Nurturing inclusive teachers must happen within the broader effort to build inclusive schools and inclusive communities.

The TO51 project has recognised this reality. It has supported the formation of parent peer-support groups and encouraged collaboration among school, community, OPDs and LGA education actors. Going forward, the project's role will be to continue strengthening the connections between all key players, so they function as a cohesive system. The National Framework for Enabling Schools to Become More Inclusive (2023) offers useful guidance for aligning these efforts.



“

Before the introduction of inclusive education modules in the communities of learning, the most common practice in schools was to consider pupils with disabilities as a responsibility of special education teachers. These trainings have given us a new perspective. Each pupil belongs to the school and is a responsibility of every teacher, and each teacher is available for and should be supportive to every pupil. Inclusion is attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, practices and a way of school life. Everyone in the school's internal and external community must be on board to build an inclusive school.

Edward Mdagata, district special needs education officer at Shinyanga MC

Building inclusive schools requires a coordinated, multi-faceted approach. Key components include:

- Inclusive school leadership and policy commitment:** School leadership must actively promote inclusivity through decision-making, resource allocation and positive modelling. The project's investment in head of schools, SENU and academic teachers has laid a strong foundation for this. Equally important are inclusive school policies and culture; schools need clear policy statements that commit to inclusive practices. For example, Buhangija Primary School in Shinyanga MC has demonstrated strong leadership by fostering an inclusive culture and reinforcing its commitment through visible messaging across the school.



Translation of Messages in the Pictures

Image 1: We are also part of society, we need to be loved, protected and valued

Image 2: Help in Sign Language

Image 3: How to apologies in sign language

Image 4: You can't discuss us without including us

Image 5: Being disabled is not being unable

Image 6: In an enabling environment we can without being enable

Image 7: We are part of society, we should be involved, we can do everything in the One who empowers us

Image 8: Equal Right for All

Additionally, collaboration with stakeholders is a key leadership responsibility. Effective inclusive schools engage parents, community leaders, LGA education actors, religious institutions, OPDs and pupils in building an inclusive environment.

- **Nurturing inclusive staff:** The Coaching, Mentoring and CoL approach has proven effective in strengthening teacher capacity. However, inclusivity must extend to all staff. Where schools have support staff, they too must be sensitised and supported based on their roles.
- **Physical, instructional and support systems:** Inclusive schools must ensure physical accessibility, access to assistive devices and inclusive instructional practices. These include the use of IEPs, UDL and collaboration with specialists such as those at ESRACs.

While it is possible to envision a model of an inclusive school, the real challenge lies in mobilising and coordinating the diverse actors needed to bring it to life. Investing in teachers is necessary, but results will only be fully realised when other parts of the school and community ecosystem are functioning effectively. Going forward, the project may consider adapting the UNICEF Inclusive Education System Framework to guide its efforts. The framework is a useful tool for visualising the interconnected processes needed to foster meaningful and sustainable inclusion.

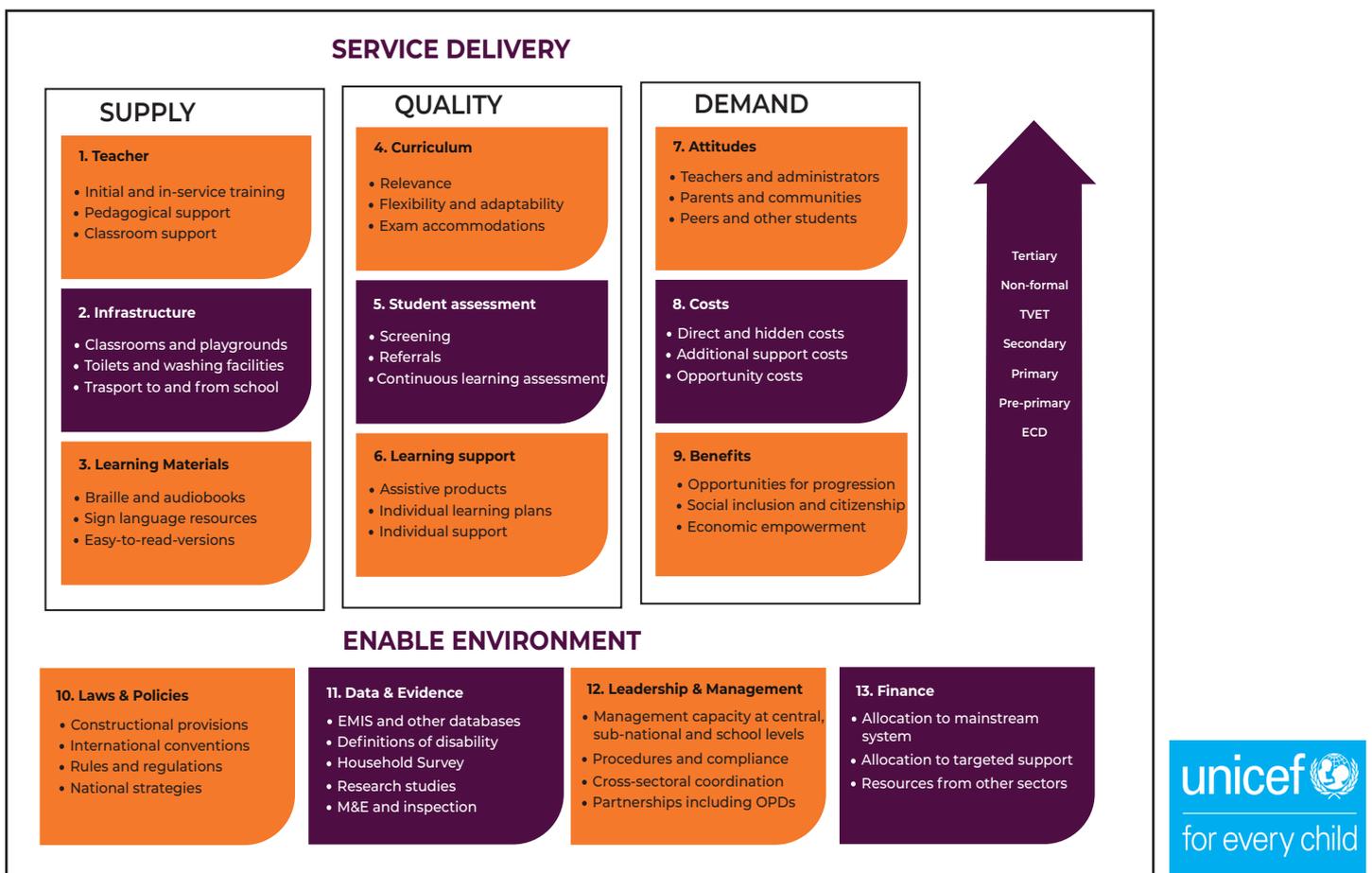


Figure 2: UNICEF Inclusive Education System Framework

Conclusion

The piloting of the Coaching, Mentoring and CoL approach has shown promising results in strengthening inclusive education through TCPD. By aligning with the existing government education system and leveraging in-service capacity, the approach has demonstrated both practicality and potential for scale. For inclusive education to be truly effective, efforts to support teachers must be part of a broader ecosystem that includes inclusive school leadership, active community involvement, and system-level coordination. The project has laid valuable groundwork, and with continued investment in structured support, inclusive practices can become embedded across schools and communities in a sustainable way.

Recommendations

- **Develop and institutionalise coaching and mentoring tools:** There is a need to develop standardised manuals, clear guidelines and step-by-step procedures to support the implementation of coaching and mentoring of in-service teachers in IE. These tools should define roles, expected practices and follow-up mechanisms to ensure consistent and effective delivery across schools, without diluting the original intent of the approach.
- **Strengthen the role and use of TRCs:** To support IE more effectively, schools should make greater use of existing TRCs by transforming them into active hubs for professional learning. This involves equipping them with relevant materials, assistive devices, digital tools and expert support. Their greater visibility can be achieved through awareness-raising among teachers and by strengthening their connection to CoL and other in-service teacher training activities.
- **Expand and embed universal screening, identification and assessment in schools:** This process should be integrated into routine school operations to ensure all learners with disabilities are identified early. This allows for proper placement, the development of IEPs and timely provision of appropriate support services. ESRACs should continue to play a central role in coordinating and delivering these services.
- **Ensure full integration of the Coaching, Mentoring and CoL approach into government education structures:** The approach should be embedded within the national TCPD framework and supported through government structures at all levels. Engagement must go beyond local authorities to include regional education actors and national institutions to enhance sustainability, scale-up and ownership.
- **Foster inclusive school and community environments that support teachers:** The success of inclusive teaching depends on the broader environment. Efforts must be made to sensitise school leaders, parents, pupils, community members and LGA education actors so they contribute meaningfully to inclusive practices. The UNICEF Inclusive Education System Framework can serve as a roadmap to guide coordinated actions among stakeholders and ensure that teachers operate in truly inclusive schools and communities.

References

- [1] Akiyoo F, Mosha H, Ogoti E. "Adequacy of Teaching and Learning Resources for Implementing Inclusive Education in Primary Schools in Arusha Region, Tanzania." *International Journal of Innovative Research and Development*. 2022 Feb 28;11(2), DOI: 10.24940/ijird/2022/v11/i2/FEB22022.
- [2] Baltazari J, Lyamtane E, Siamoo P. "Parents Social Factors Influence on Enrolment of Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Public Primary Schools in Tanzania Municipality, Tanzania." *International Journal of Contemporary Applied Researches*. 2021;8(7), pp. 169-192.
- [3] Braun AM. "Barriers to inclusive education in Tanzania's policy environment: national policy actors' perspectives." *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*. 2022 Jan 2;52(1), pp. 110-28, DOI: 10.1080/03057925.2020.1745057.
- [4] Clutterbuck D. "What's happening in coaching and mentoring? And what is the difference between them?." *Development and Learning in Organizations: An International Journal*. 2008 Jun 27;22(4), pp. 8-10, DOI: 10.1108/14777280810886364.
- [5] Mapunda PH, Omollo AD, Bali TA. "Challenges in identifying and serving students with special needs in Dodoma, Tanzania." *International Journal of Child Care and Education Policy*. 2017 Dec;11(10), pp. 1-6, DOI: 10.1186/s40723-017-0036-8.
- [6] Mgonja EE, Mwila PM. "Special Needs Education Teachers: Their Roles in the Learning Process of Students with Special Needs in Inclusive Secondary Schools in Dar es Salaam City, Tanzania." *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*. 2023 Apr 17;42(3), pp. 45-61, DOI: 10.9734/AJESS/2023/v42i3919.
- [7] Mnjokava CE. "Influence of Parental Involvement on Implementation of Special Needs Curriculum in Public Primary Schools in Arusha Region, Tanzania." *African Journal of Emerging Issues*. 2024 Feb 10;6(1), pp. 124-36.
- [8] MoEST. *National Strategy for Inclusive Education 2021/22-2025/26*. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, The United Republic of Tanzania. 2021.
- [9] Mawere M, Muchemwa S. "2 A Framework for Teacher Continuing Professional Development: Towards the Effective Teaching of Learners with Special Education Needs in Zimbabwe." In *Contemporary Innovation Trends in the Zimbabwean Education System*. Langaa RPCIG. 2024, pp. 7-56.
- [10] Nyimbi I, Kajiru I. "Education for Persons with Disabilities in Tanzania: Assessment of Policy and Legal Framework Efficiency." In *Inclusive Education Developments in Africa*. Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland. 2024 Sep 3;117, pp. 117-145, DOI: 10.1007/978-3-031-64549-5_7.

[11] Pelan V. "The difference between mentoring and coaching." Talent management magazine. 2012 Feb, pp. 34-37.

[12] PO-RALG. *Guidelines for the Establishment and Operation of Diagnostic and Assessment Centres for Identifying Special Learning Needs for Children at the Council Level (ESRAC)*. President's Office - Regional Administration and Local Government, The United Republic of Tanzania. 2022..

[13] UNICEF. *Situation analysis of children and young people with disabilities in mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar*. Tanzania: United Nations Children's Fund. 2021.

[14] Viera CA. "A Comparison of Mentoring and Coaching: What's the Difference?." Performance Improvement. 2021 Aug;60(7), pp. 13-20, DOI: 10.1002/pfi.21993.

[15] Welwel WB, Otieno KO. "Assessment of access and retention of learners with special needs in primary education in Tanzania: A study of Arusha District." Journal of Research Innovation and Implications in Education. 2022;6(1), pp. 211-21.





International

NYANI NO 4 NA 5

makundi, viashiria na afua stahiki.

VIASHIRIA

AFUA STAHIKI.

1. Baki ya usikivu

- Mkao
- Ulongeaji
- Kuitika bila sauti
- Kuwa mtulivu Sara
- Kujishukia

- Shime sikio
- Kuongea kwa sauti
- Kuongea kwa kumlazama / Kutazamana
- Kwa ishara / alama.
- Kuongea kwa sauti kulinga
- Kuondanota yake
- Kutandisha kwa kipelelezi.

2. U...

- Hapepesi macho
- Hashituki
- Hasira sana / harako
- Mtulivu

- Apatiwe fimbo nyeupe
- Awe na mhu na kumsaidia / kumuongoza.
- Awekwe kile mazingira rafiki yasiyo hatanshi.
- Kuwa nao wakati wote na kuwajali.

ADD International is a disability rights organisation. We partner with organisation of disability activists in Africa and Asia and help them access the tools, resources and support they need to build powerful movement for change.

ADD International, Tanzania. 5th Floor, Mlimani Tower Building, Dar es Salaam. +255 785 467 949 / info@add-tanzania.org www.addinternational.org/tanzania



ADD International. Registered in England and Wales as Action on Disability and Development. Company no. 2033925. Charity Commission no. 294860.