Continuous Professional Development Diploma in Effective School Leadership (CPD-DESL)

STUDENT MANUAL

MODULE 1: OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP/ WORKING WITH PARENTS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBC Competence-Based Curriculum
DHS Demography and Health Survey
GDI Gender Development Index
GMO Gender Monitoring Office
GER Gross Enrolment Rate
GIR Gross Intake Rate
IE Inclusive Education
KOV Katholiek Onderwijs Vlaanderen
MINEDUC Ministry of Education
NER Net Enrolment Rate
NIR Net Intake Rate
NISR National Institute of Statistics in Rwanda
REB Rwanda Education Board
SEO Sector Education Officer
SGAC School General Assembly Committee
SGA School General Assembly
SIP School Improvement Plan
SRGBV School-related gender-based violence
UR-CE University of Rwanda – College of Education
VAWG Violence Against Women and Girls
VVOB Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance
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GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAMME

There is a lot of evidence that effective school leaders strongly influence student learning and other aspects of school performance (Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson, Wahlstrom, & others, 2004; Bloom, Lemos, Sadun, & Van Reenen, 2015). School leaders are especially important in times of rapid change. Rwanda’s education sector has undergone several changes over the past decade, such as 9-year and 12-year basic education, ICT integration, school feeding and the introduction of the CBC. These changes require competent educational leaders who can design a strategy, make sense of an unpredictable environment, provide a vision for how to deal with change to improve the quality of education and influence others to commit to this vision. School leaders have the responsibility to assist others in harnessing the opportunities that changes provide, but they can only do this if they are reflective about their own responses to change, their ability to lead others and if they possess the necessary leadership skills. School leaders’ educational values, reflective strategies and leadership practices shape the processes and pedagogies that result in improved learning.

The purpose of the programme is to equip school leaders with knowledge, competences and values to contribute to school development that results in enhancing student achievement. Head teachers and deputy head teachers will explore their role and develop their competences in setting the strategic direction for the school, leading teaching and learning, managing the school as an organization and involving parents and the local community.

The programme is composed of four modules. In module one we give an overview of school leadership and discuss parental and local community involvement in the management of the school. In module two the focus is on setting the strategic direction of the school. Module three focuses on managing the school as an organization. In module four, we discuss the roles of Head Teachers and Deputy Head Teachers as leaders of teaching and learning.
PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing Module 1, participants will be able to:

▪ Explain strengths and weaknesses of school leadership models;
▪ Describe school leadership practices and their implication on the teaching and learning process for improving students’ achievements;
▪ Explain principles on parent/community-school partnership;
▪ Understand inclusiveness and gender in school leadership;
▪ Explain how involving parents and local communities can contribute to inclusive education.
▪ Describe and critically engage with different leadership models
▪ Describe and implement key ideas of monitoring and evaluation
▪ Prescribe appropriate monitoring and evaluation strategies to improve school leadership practices
▪ Establish strategies to enhance collaboration between the school and parents/ local community as an instrument for improving the quality of teaching and learning;
▪ Identify the role of monitoring and evaluation in school improvement
▪ Act as role model in the community
▪ Demonstrate equity and inclusiveness in school leadership
▪ Show empathy in executing leadership roles
▪ Value the importance of adopting various leadership styles according to the context;
▪ Recognize importance of equity in school leadership.
▪ Appreciate the importance of involving parents and the local community in the school.
On completing **Module 2**, participants will be able to:

- Understand the importance of having a strategic direction, mission, vision and core values in a school;
- Describe the PDCA Cycle as a planning tool for setting strategic directions;
- Explain the concepts of single, double and triple loop learning;
- Distinguish between the concepts and benefits of a vision, mission and core values;
- Develop an inspirational vision and practical mission statement;
- Identify and develop core values for a school;
- Work together with all stakeholders to develop and implement a strategic direction for the school;
- Develop a school improvement plan in line with the school’s vision and education policies;
- Critically analyse the resources needed for the school to achieve its mission and vision;
- Communicate a commitment to excellence and high expectations for all;
- Use the process of setting the strategic direction to make the school more inclusive;
- Value the importance of setting a strategic direction for a school;
- Recognize strategic Improvement Plans as an instrument to set strategic direction;
- Commit to using a school vision, mission and values as instruments to set strategic direction;
- Value the importance of a school’s strategic direction making a school more inclusive;
- Show commitment to drive the school towards excellence.
On completing Module 3, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of group dynamics, change management, as well as human, financial, physical, knowledge and time management;
- Devise and implement strategies to strengthen learning within their school with equal opportunities for all learners;
- Guide change processes within their school;
- Mobilize additional funds with the aim of improving teaching and learning;
- Create an inclusive organisational structure for the school which supports its values and aspirations and which is in line with national policy;
- Manage the school's human, physical and financial resources effectively and efficiently to achieve the school's educational goals and priorities;
- Involve school community members in school processes;
- Create an orderly, safe and respectful school environment;
- Recognize the importance of having insight in group dynamics;
- Appreciate the various roles people play within groups and teams;
- Value the importance of good change management;
- Acknowledge the positive sides of resistance;
- Value the importance of good financial, human resource, physical resource and knowledge management in their school.

On completing Module 4, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the competence-based curriculum;
- Understand the role a head teacher can play in curriculum implementation;
- Develop strategies for raising learning achievement;
- Establish mechanisms of dealing with variety of student needs;
- Effectively deal with challenges in student behaviour;
- Motivate and support teachers in applying appropriate, learner-centred and active
teaching and learning techniques;

- Support the creation of powerful learning environments in their school;
- Promote inclusive education throughout the curriculum;
- Evaluate different assessment procedures;
- Facilitate constructive feedback conversations with teachers;
- Monitor the quality of teaching within their school;
- Initiate and support Communities of Practice within their school;
- Conduct effective lesson observations;
- Foster inclusive teaching and learning within their school;
- Lead continuous professional development of teachers within their school;
- Support teachers in their continuous professional development, taking into account their position in the professional life cycle;
- Establish strategies to enhance collaboration between their school and other schools as an instrument for improving the quality of teaching and learning;
- Devise an induction process that motivates, integrates and supports new teachers in their school;
- Analyse school data to improve learning achievement;
- Use monitoring and evaluation to improve teaching and learning.
PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The programme follows a modular structure that is based on the professional standards for school leaders, as identified by REB. There are 4 modules of 10 credits each (see Figure 1). Apart from many links between the modules, there are also 5 crosscutting themes (school improvement planning, inclusive education and gender, monitoring and evaluation, ICT integration and school collaboration). These themes will be discussed in each module. The programme is offered through 8 monthly face-to-face sessions of 2 days each. In between sessions, you will engage in practice-based assignments. Figure 1 illustrates the structure of the programme.

Figure 1: CPD-DESL Programme Structure with 4 modules that reflect the professional standards for school leaders
This programme is structured and delivered according to four main principles.

1. **Competence-Based Approach**

In alignment with the competence-based curriculum, this programme is competence-based. This means that:

- The focus is on mastery of competences rather than only acquiring knowledge;
- Participants’ competences are explicit, measurable and transferable learning outcomes;
- Feedback to participants is timely and personalised.

2. **Importance of group as source of learning**

The programme is based on research that people learn more in groups. Interactions with each other are at least as important as interactions with lecturers and programme content. Interacting with each other helps to create meaning from the programme content for practice through co-construction of concepts and creative conflict between theory and practice. Participants can share experiences and good practices with each other. This means that participants discuss the content with each other, link it with their personal professional experiences and apply it to their school situation. These interactions foster a culture of dialogue and learning.

3. **Development of a Personal Interpretative Framework**

School leaders’ professional behaviour develops throughout their career. The end of a programme does not mean the end of learning and the achievement of competence. Professional development refers not only to trainings and workshops, but also to the way competences and identity of school leaders change during their career (Kelchtermans & Vandenberghe, 1994). Professional development is a continuous and complex process in which programme concepts, activities, experiences, changing insights, attitudes and skills interact and where, as a result of these interactions, the learner notices that he or she has changed (Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe, 1994).
The Personal Interpretative Framework of a school leader consists of professional self-understanding and a subjective education theory (Figure 2) (Kelchtermans & Vandenberghe, 1994). A person’s Personal Interpretative Framework is his or her unique filter (or glasses) through which that person interprets professional situations and knowledge. Professional development is a constant interaction between thinking and practice. This improves the quality of their professional know-how and strengthens the basis to make school leadership decisions. This will improve the effectiveness of their work. In turn, concrete practices will influence their personal interpretative framework. For example, the opinion about a new education policy will be influenced by how school leaders think it will work in their school. The professional experiences of school leaders result in a continuously changing professional self-understanding and a subjective educational theory (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Personal Interpretative Framework (Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe, 1994)
The ways in which teachers and school leaders achieve, maintain, and develop their identity, their sense of self, in and through a career, are crucial to understand the actions and commitments of teachers and school leaders to their work.

**Professional Self-Understanding**

A school leader’s professional self-understanding is how a school leader sees him-/herself and his/her job. It changes all the time as the result of interactions with people and the environment (teachers, parents, students, other school leaders, SEOs, training...). The self-understanding influences the way people perceive concrete situations and their daily behaviour. Now we will more concretely describe this multidimensionality (Figure 2).

- Self-image is a school leader’s answer to the question: who am I as a school leader?
- Self-esteem is how school leaders assess the quality of their professional behaviour. How good do they think they are as a school leader?
- Job motivation refers to the motives that make people start a career as a Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher.
- Job satisfaction refers to the degree to which school leaders are satisfied with their job.
- Task-perception refers to the content of the job as perceived by the school leader. What must a school leader do to be a good school leader? What is part of the job and what not?
- Future perspective refers to the expectations that school leaders have about the future development of their career and job situation.

**Subjective Educational Theory**

Subjective educational theory relates to what school leaders know about school leadership and how they relate this to concrete school situations. It is the knowledge, opinions and values that school leaders hold about their professional activities. It is called subjective because it refers to someone’s personal interpretation of education theory, not to the education theory
itself. That interpretation will be different for every school leader. As for the professional self-understanding, this changes as a result of professional development and daily experiences in the job. For example, when a school leader learns about group dynamics, he or she will remember some parts of the theory and apply them to her own situation. Other school leaders may remember other aspects of group dynamics, or interpret it differently, which will lead to a different application in their situation. We use the term ‘subjective’ because it is a personal interpretation of educational theories and knowledge. It is different for every school leader.

In this CPD programme, we introduce many concepts and theories. Their value lies in providing a language, a lens through which school leaders are stimulated to look at their practice. Each lens provides a useful, but in itself incomplete picture of the organisation and the role of school leaders (Morgan, 1997). The theories and concepts in this programme should not be memorized, but be used to challenge practice. Learning to become a better school leader results from the dynamic interaction between theory and practice (Figure 2).

4. Reflective Practice

Reflection is a key skill in developing, evaluating and improving one’s personal interpretative framework. Reflection is the human capacity to look back explicitly and think about one’s own actions as a school leader within a complex education context. Complex means that there are many factors influencing education. These factors are all related, making it impossible to predict with certainty how a change in one factor will affect teaching and learning in a school. This context is complex because there are technical, emotional, moral and political dimensions to school leadership. Reflective practice is a crucial process to maintain a critical approach towards yourself and your work. Reflection can be learned through analysis of case studies, using questioning techniques and discussion one’s practice with peers and experts. Reflective practice is closely related to the development of personal interpretative framework, based on an evolving self-understanding and changing subjective education theory.
Activity 1

“Learning to become a head teacher, while you’re being it, is like...
Building the bridge while you are walking on it
Not easy, but not impossible either
Challenging and scary”
(KOV, 2017)

Explain the figure below. Do you recognize yourself in the image below?

Figure 3: Becoming a school leader while you’re being one (KOV, 2017)

PROGRAMME ASSESSMENT

Programme assessment complies with the assessment regulations of the University of Rwanda. It consists of continuous assessment (50%) and summative assessment (50%). Continuous assessment comprises of two types of assessment, marked and non-marked assessment. Marked assessment is based on eight assignments, one after each session, and field assessments. Non-marked assessment is based on participation during training activities,
which include reflection exercises, sharing experiences, peer learning and providing feedback (Figure 4). The assignments will focus on helping you to relate the course content to your practice. Some assignments will require working on your School Improvement Plan with your school team. For other assignments, you will need to reflect individually or with others on what concepts in the course mean for your practice. Other assignments will require you to organize activities with the stakeholders in your school. For every assignment, you will receive detailed information on what is required and how the assignment will be evaluated. Feedback will be provided in accordance with the assessment rubrics.

There are two summative assessment moments in the course. The first moment will cover modules 1 and 2 (two examinations), and the second moment will cover modules 3 and 4 (two examinations).
MODULE ONE

OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND WORKING WITH PARENTS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY
This module gives an overview of the concepts school leadership and management. It also introduces gender and inclusive education as crosscutting topics for this programme. We also introduce the professional standard of working with parents and the local community in school leadership.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, participants should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the concepts school leadership and management;
- Explain strengths and weaknesses of school leadership models;
- Describe school leadership practices and their implication on the teaching and learning process for improving students’ achievements;
- Explain principles of parent/community-school partnerships;
- Demonstrate an understanding of inclusiveness and gender in education;
- Explain how involving parents and local communities can contribute to inclusive education;
- Describe and critically engage with different leadership models;
- Establish strategies to enhance collaboration between the school, parents and the local community as an instrument for improving the quality of teaching and learning;
- Act as role model in the community;
- Demonstrate equity and inclusiveness in school leadership;
- Show empathy in executing leadership roles;
- Value the importance of adopting various leadership styles according to the context;
- Recognize importance of equity in school leadership;
- Appreciate the importance of involving parents and the local community in the school.
UNIT ONE

OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Introduction

School leaders play a crucial role in creating the conditions for effective teaching and learning. No school has sustainably improved the quality of education without effective school leadership (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008). Good leaders identify the aspects of their schools on which to focus to help students learn. They do this through various dimensions of leadership practices. In this unit, we will explore what school leadership and school management mean. Different models and styles of leadership will help us to reflect on our school leadership practices and identify key elements of effective school leadership.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the concepts school leadership and school management;
- Explain school leadership practices and their implication on teaching and learning process for improving students’ achievement;
- Critically evaluate different leadership models;
- Apply situational leadership to your school context;
- Show empathy in executing leadership roles;
- Value the importance of your role in achieving quality education.
**Activity 2**

Individually, think about an outstanding school leader that you know and list down the reasons why this leader is outstanding. After a few minutes, discuss your list with your neighbour and try to agree on some key reasons.
Section 1: School Leadership and School Management

Good school leaders perform both leadership and management tasks. Leadership tasks refer to tasks that set a direction, motivate and inspire, such as providing vision and strategy and leading change. Management tasks relate to planning and controlling such as budgeting, organizing and staffing, problem solving and monitoring. While managers are providing structure and frameworks of operation, leaders provide inspiration.

Both leadership and management skills are fundamental to success. Without the inspiration and motivation by the school leadership, employees would be unproductive. Without structure, rules and management processes, they would also be inefficient. Management is about doing things right, leadership is about doing the right things. Cuban (1988) and Kelchtermans & Piot (2013) link leadership with vision and change while management is about implementing and executing decisions and preserving the effective functioning of the organisation. They stress the importance of both leadership and management. Table 1 summarizes the differences between leadership and management (Kotter, 1988).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Managers</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan and budget</td>
<td>Establish direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain</td>
<td>Change and innovate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control and solve problems</td>
<td>Inspire and motivate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short term view</td>
<td>Long term view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do things right</td>
<td>Do right things</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kotter, 1988
Some authors stress that the distinction between school management and school leadership is not always strict and even unhelpful (Bush, 2008; Bush & Glover, 2014). For example, the development of a School Improvement Plan (leadership task) cannot be separated from the implementation and monitoring of the plan (management task). Many tasks of a school leader have a leadership and a management component. For example, financial management of the school also contains tasks related to planning, vision and staff motivation, which are considered leadership tasks. Successful management of a school requires strong leadership skills.

Finally, good leadership is not easy to define (Cuban, 1988). We recognize good school leadership, but it is difficult to clearly identify what makes a good school leader. Leadership is not the same as being the boss, which refers to formal authority. What we see as good leadership in schools also changes over time. The most important change is that school leadership has become more complex. Schools and schooling are being given ever bigger responsibilities for children’s development and for contributing to and supporting the schools’ local communities (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008). As a result, many schools have seen a diversification of their leadership, through the involvement of deputy head teachers, school general assembly committees and different forms of teacher leadership: school-based mentors, subject leaders and teachers who lead the various teams and clubs in a school. Even learners can take up leadership tasks within a school.

Another way to look at leadership and management tasks is through the distinction between primary and secondary processes (Figure 5). Primary processes are processes that are directly related to the learning process such as teaching quality, curriculum implementation, learner repeating and dropping out, care... (Scheerens, 1990). Secondary processes are related to the creation of suitable conditions for the primary processes and the learning process of the team: personnel, infrastructure, finance, quality control... The primary processes correspond with leadership and the secondary processes with management. Both primary and secondary processes are important tasks for school leaders. Beginning school leaders often focus more on finding their way in the secondary processes. As secondary processes create the conditions for the primary processes, having attention for both is crucial for school leaders.
Activity 3

Individually, think about how much time you invest in primary processes and how much in secondary processes? How could you change the balance of time invested in primary processes and the time invested in secondary processes? After a few minutes, discuss your ideas with your neighbour. Is there a difference in balance between head teachers and deputy head teachers?

The primary processes have the biggest impact on learning outcomes. “The closer educational leaders get to the core business of teaching and learning, the more likely they are to have a positive impact on students’ outcomes” (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008, p. 664). The secondary processes are the basic conditions that need to be in place before school leaders can focus on the primary processes. In Module 3 (Managing the School as an Organisation), we will discuss the main secondary processes. The other modules focus more on the primary (leadership-related) processes.
Section 2: Key Characteristics of School Leadership

Rather than focusing on one definition for school leadership, some authors have identified key characteristics of school leadership. What does it mean to be a school leader? Bush and Glover (2014) identified three key characteristics of school leadership: influence, values and vision.

2.1 Leadership and Influence

Many definitions of leadership consider leadership as a “social influence process whereby influence is exerted by one person (or group) over other people (or groups) to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organisation” (Yukl, Gordon, & Taber, 2002, p. 3).

This definition includes several key elements (Bush, 2008):

- The focus is on influence rather than on authority. Influencing is not the same as imposing or controlling. Both influence and authority are dimensions of leadership, but authority is based on formal position, such as that of the head teacher, while influence can be exercised by anyone in the school. In this sense, leadership is independent of formal positions while authority is linked directly to it. For instance, a head teacher who has been officially appointed has legal authority. However, this appointed head teacher may not be trusted because of various reasons such as incompetence, non-acceptable behaviour, etc. It will be difficult for him to influence teachers. On the other hand, a teacher with high competence and strong social reputation may influence colleagues although she/he does not have legal positional authority;

- The process is intentional. The person who is exercising influence is doing so to achieve certain goals.

- Influence may be exercised by groups as well as individuals. This supports ideas such as leadership teams and distributed leadership.
2.2 Leadership and Values

Influencing can be done with good or bad intentions. It is neutral as it does not explain what goals should be pursued. However, leadership is linked with values. Leaders are expected to base their actions on clear personal and professional values. This idea reflects the growing interest in moral leadership (Bush, 2008).

School leaders’ values are key components for successful leadership. Research shows clear links between leaders’ personal qualities and leadership success (Day & Leithwood, 2007). The most successful school leaders are open-minded and ready to learn from others. They are flexible rather than dogmatic, but with respect for their core values. They are persistent in their high expectations of others, and they are emotionally intelligent and optimistic. Such characteristics explain why successful school leaders facing difficult conditions are often able to achieve results against the odds (Leithwood et al., 2008).

Activity 4

Individually, think about what the key values for effective school leaders are for you? After a few minutes, share your values with your neighbour and agree on 5 key values. Prepare to share and discuss your selected values with the whole group.

2.3 Leadership and Vision

Vision is a third important component of leadership. Beare, Caldwell, & Milikan (1997, p. 99) write that “outstanding leaders have a vision of their schools - a mental picture of a preferred future - which is shared with all in the school community”. They formulate ten generalizations about leadership of which three relate directly to vision. These three are:

1. Good leaders have a vision for their schools.

2. This vision must be communicated in a way which creates commitment among all those who are involved in the school.

3. Good leaders pay attention to institutionalising the vision.
An Example of a Vision:

_G.S. Kimironko will be the first diverse school system to work with families and the community to successfully educate all of its students at high levels._

Having a vision does not mean that school leaders should not be open to new ideas and criticism. Fullan (1992) writes that overly visionary leaders may damage rather than improve their schools:

> “The current emphasis on vision in leadership can be misleading. A vision can blind leaders in a number of ways. The charismatic principal who ‘radically transforms the school’ in four or five years can . . . be blinding and misleading as a role model . . . Principals are blinded by their own vision when they feel they must manipulate the teachers and the school culture to conform to it.” (Fullan, 1992, p. 19).

In Module 2 (Creating Strategic Direction for the School), we will discuss in more detail the process of developing a vision and mission for a school.
Section 3: Key Roles of the School Leader

In this section, we will discuss the role of the school leader as an educator and as an agent of change.

3.1 School Leaders as Educators

A successful school leader is an educator, not in the traditional sense of a teacher who lectures in front of the class, but as a modern educator who can stimulate and motivate others to learn (Verbiest, 2014). Michael Fullan has written a lot on the role of the school leader as a “leader of learning” in the school (Fullan, 2014). It can be considered as another key element of school leadership. John Hattie (2009, p. 83) found that school leaders who help teachers to establish goals and create ‘safe’ environments for teachers to criticize, question, and support other teachers to reach these goals together are the school leaders who have most effect on learning outcomes.

The role of school leaders is to lead teachers in a process of learning to improve their teaching (Fullan, 2014, p. 55). Robinson (et al., 2008, p. 58) found that school leaders who make the biggest impact on learning are the ones who “participate as a learner” with teachers in helping to move the school forward.

Leading learning in a school does not mean giving trainings to teachers, nor does it mean observing individual teachers and giving them feedback. Leading learning means creating an environment in the school that helps everyone to perform to the best of his/ her abilities and to improve continuously. Fullan uses the concept of professional capital (Figure 6).
Professional capital is the result of the interaction of three components: human capital, social capital and decisional capital (Figure 6). In a school, human capital refers mostly to the quality of teachers in the school - their basic teaching competences. However, you can’t increase human capital a lot by focusing only on the capital of individuals. Human capital must be complemented by social capital. Social capital is about people working together to achieve common goals. A few strong, but isolated teachers do not make a good school, as a few good football players do not make a good team. Social capital consists of the quality and quantity of interactions and relationships among people. Social capital in a school affects teachers’ access to knowledge and information, their expectations and trust, and their commitment to work together for a common cause. Decisional capital refers to the ability to make decisions across many individuals or groups within a school and its community.

“The role of school leaders is to build professional capital across and beyond the school”

(Fullan, 2014, p. 71).
Social capital improves individuals more than individuals improve the group. For example, it is very hard for a weak teacher who enters a highly collaborative school to remain there without improving. On the other hand, a highly skilled teacher will not perform well in a non-collaborative school (Fullan, 2014, p. 72).

Focusing on developing professional capital is also efficient for a school leader. The more you invest in human, social and decisional capital, the less energy and the fewer resources you need to spend on micro-management, and the more support you get as teachers help each other.

### 3.2 School Leaders as agents of change

As school leadership has grown more complex, the role of school leaders as gatekeepers has grown (Kelchtermans & Piot, 2013). A gatekeeper guards the entrance of a building and decides what and who comes in and out. The gatekeeper is the bridge between the inside and the outside. Similarly, a school leader finds him/herself between different groups inside and outside the school, such as teachers, parents, students and SEOs. These groups often have different and sometimes even conflicting expectations, for example parents and teachers (Kelchtermans, Piot, & Ballet, 2011). The school leader sits in between these groups, sometimes leaning more to one group, sometimes more to another. It is a very intense and complex role which requires strong emotional, communication and diplomatic skills.

The school leader is also the key person to bring external innovations to the school context. He/she needs to understand the innovation and lead its implementation in the school. Thereby, he/she needs to be able to facilitate change processes in the school. Hereby, it is crucial to keep the right balance between change and conservation: conserve what is going well, change what can be improved. The capacity to implement changes in the school is something that needs to be built in a school through the right professional development. We will discuss this role of the school leader in more detail in the section on change management (see Module 3).
Section 4: School Leadership Models

Activity 5

Read the following two case studies and answer the questions that follow:

1. What is the difference between these two school leaders (School A Vs School B)?
2. How would you call the leadership model that each school leader applies?

Case Study 1.

School ‘B’ is led by Mr John. He called all teachers into a meeting and informed them about the new Competence Based Curriculum. He told them that “This curriculum is a national policy and you must implement it as it is. Guidelines are clear”. One teacher raised her hand and asked “Excuse me Sir, I think we need time to understand it and trainings on how to use it’. The head teacher promptly replied “Madam, it is not negotiable, instructions are clear and after all you are qualified teachers”. The meeting was closed and the teachers left.

Case Study 2.

In School A, staff members already held key roles in teaching, learning, discipline and attendance. The head teacher asked the deputy head teacher to provide a clear link between the role of the school management team and the staff so that the school work is discussed weekly as strategic meetings. During these meetings, team members brought individual cases to discuss with colleagues and their shared thinking informed the next step for the week ahead. Every member was very happy that his/her views were considered. Each team member has developed skills so that the good functioning of the team is now independent of the team leader.
Activity 6

Work in groups of 4. The facilitator distributes cards that each describe one leadership model. Read the description and discuss the positive and negative elements of that model. Do you recognize yourself in that model? Why (not)? Prepare to present your findings to the whole group.

There are many models of school leadership (Bush, 2008; Bush & Glover, 2014). Each model focuses on certain aspects of school leadership. These models reflect different schools of thought, but also the history of school leadership research. We can divide models in two categories: on the one hand, the concentrated views of leadership (leadership is concentrated in the person of the formal leader) and on the other hand the distributed view of leadership (where leadership is shared by several members of the organization). Another way that we can classify the models is by their focus on the key characteristics of school leadership (influence, values, vision, change, educating).

In this section, we discuss some of the most common leadership models (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Models of school leadership (VVOB, 2017, based on Bush, 2008)
4.1 Managerial School Leadership

In managerial school leadership, the focus of school leaders is on managing the functions, tasks and behaviour of all members in the school. Authority and influence are based on a hierarchical structure with decision-making based on positional authority. It is a top-down approach to school leadership. Developing a vision and goal setting are tasks of the school leader(s) and teachers need to accept and implement these without question.

Managerial school leadership means (Bush & Glover, 2014):

- A hierarchical structure of authority, clearly identifying the role of each position.
- A goal orientation, with clear targets set by formal leaders for each position.
- A clear division of labour, with employees having well described tasks.
- Not very personal relationships, based on formal relations, between school leaders and teachers, among school leaders, among teachers and between teachers and learners.
- Accountability to the higher level in the formal hierarchy, rather than to school-level stakeholders such as parents and learners.

The critique on the managerial leadership model is that it neglects the importance of a vision and mission for the school. It is also a hierarchical and rigid structure. It focuses on the management tasks of a school leader, whereas the leadership and educational roles of the school leader have the greatest impact on learning outcomes (Pont et al., 2008). On the other hand, managerial skills are an important component of school leadership because vision without effective implementation leads to frustration (Bush, 2015).

4.2 Instructional School Leadership

Instructional leadership is based on the idea that the head teacher is more than a manager. They have the responsibility to improve learning outcomes in the school. Therefore, they should focus on setting school goals, curriculum implementation, inclusivity, quality of instruction
and the school environment. The model is valuable because it focuses on the role of the head teacher to enhance teaching and learning (Robinson et al., 2008). The instructional leadership model suggests that school leaders are the most effective of all potential instructional leaders because they are situated within the school context, unlike administrators in ministries (Pont et al., 2008).

The model has been criticised because it puts too much focus on the head teacher. For a head teacher to be a direct instructional leader demands a lot from him/her. The contribution of other staff, such as deputy head teachers, in instructional goal setting, oversight of teaching and the development of a positive academic and learning culture is neglected in this model. It presents a heroic view of the role of the head teacher that few can achieve (Hallinger, 2005). It is also a top-down approach to school leadership.

Nevertheless, instructional leadership is an important part of school leadership. Robinson and colleagues (2008) point out that leading teaching and learning can be counterproductive if school leaders do not know what specific practices are effective in improving teaching and learning. Without good knowledge of pedagogy and educational research, school leaders risk reinforcing educational myths and focusing on compliance rather than promoting active and effective teaching approaches. For example, many teachers integrate group work in their lessons, not because of a conscious decision to help them achieve the lesson objectives, but because their school leaders want them to do it.

4.3 Transformational School Leadership

Transformational leadership has its origins in research on the ability of some school leaders to inspire teachers to high levels of commitment and moral purpose (Bush, 2017). Researchers argued that this commitment transformed the schools by developing people’s capacity to work collaboratively to overcome challenges and reach ambitious goals. It is closely related to Weber’s idea of charismatic leadership (Tucker, 1968).

This model focuses on individual characteristics of school leaders to inspire and motivate everyone in the school (focus on intrinsic motivation). The head teacher develops a vision and inspires and convinces other school leaders and members in the organisation to pursue activities
linked to that vision. Transformational leadership addresses the critique that a narrow focus on instructional leadership neglects other dimensions of school leadership. Transformational leadership emphasizes vision as the central dimension of leadership. It is individual leadership at its most powerful (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999, p. 9).

This model has also its limits (Bush, 2015). First, transformational leadership may be used to manipulate or control teachers who are required to support the ‘vision’ and goals of the school leader. Second, it lacks the focus on the pedagogical dimension and the impact of the school leader on optimizing learning processes and outcomes (Verbiest, 2014). Third, it is a centralized and individualistic notion of leadership (Kelchtermans & Piot, 2013). There is limited scope for others in the school to contribute to decision-making as the main assumption is that the head teacher can persuade others of his or her vision.

4.4 Moral School Leadership

Research on leadership in schools has focused on the task dimension of leadership – what do leaders need to do in order to make schools effective and functional (Kelchtermans & Piot, 2013)? Currently, there is a growing interest in the emotional dimension of leadership (Kelchtermans et al., 2011). How school leaders experience their working conditions and their role is very relevant to understand their actions and attitudes. School leadership is much more than a set of technical tasks, it continuously involves dealing with emotions and taking moral decisions. Moral school leadership focuses on the importance of values in school leadership.

4.5 Transactional School Leadership

Transformational leadership is often contrasted with transactional leadership (Bush & Glover, 2014). Transactional school leadership states that the relationships between head teachers, deputy head teachers and teachers are based on exchange of resources (more focus on external motivation than intrinsic motivation). Teachers provide educational services (teaching, extracurricular activities) in exchange for salaries. This approach views school leaders and teachers as employees who “do their job” in exchange for a salary. Duties and responsibilities are specified in a job description and clear accountability mechanisms are laid down. The head teacher gives teachers the authority to complete tasks. Transactional leadership does not focus on the importance of having a shared vision for the school.
4.6 Participative school leadership

Participative leadership focuses on the role of the school leader in involving others in the decision-making processes of the school (Leithwood et al., 1999). This model is based on three arguments:

- Participation increases school effectiveness, as decisions of higher quality are made and those involved own the decisions.
- Participation serves to bond staff together, working towards agreed goals.
- Participation increases the total leadership available in the school.

(Bush & Glover, 2014; Leithwood et al., 1999).

For example, when school leaders involve teachers in developing a vision for the school, teachers will have a greater commitment to the goals, because of their ownership of them.

The model assumes that school stakeholders desire to take part in decision-making and that people are more likely to accept and implement decisions in which they have been involved.

When there are many people involved in decision making, participative leadership may slow down the process, as inputs and feedback reach the head teacher from all sides.

4.7 Distributive leadership

Distributed leadership has become the preferred school leadership model in the 21st century. Harris (2013) argues that it is one of the most influential ideas to have emerged in school leadership. Like participative leadership, it focuses on collective, rather than individual, leadership.
The difference with participative leadership is that distributed leadership uncouples leadership from positional authority. Distributed leadership concentrates on engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organization (Harris, 2013). This means that not only school leaders are involved in the leadership of the school, but also teachers, parents and students. Whereas head teachers have the formal authority in schools, distributed leadership emphasizes informal sources of influence. This does not mean that the role of the head teacher is reduced. Harris (2013) argues that head teachers play a big role in creating and nurturing the space for distributed leadership to occur and that it would be difficult to achieve without their active support. Distributive leadership relies more on delegation of leadership tasks by head teachers and is therefore more suitable for well-established groups (see unit on group dynamics).

Leithwood and Jantzi (2006) found that leadership has a greater influence on schools and students when it is widely distributed. Schools with the highest student achievement attributed this to high levels of influence from all sources of leadership, not just from the head teacher.

“Total leadership accounted for a quite significant 27 per cent variation in student achievement across schools. This is a much higher proportion of explained variation (two to three times higher) than is typically reported in studies of individual head teacher effects” (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006, p. 12).

Hattie (2012) calls the collective development of teacher expertise one of the most significant factors in improving learning outcomes. In other words, distributed leadership has positive effects on learning achievement compared with individual leadership approaches.

Muijs & Harris (2003) write that meeting all challenges that schools face nowadays is impossible unless teachers adopt some of the roles that were previously the domain of school leaders. Therefore, teachers are more and more expected to contribute to the overall school quality by taking on responsibilities beyond their classroom duties, such as mentoring, engaging on communities of practice (Struyve, 2017).

So why do not all schools have a distributed leadership structure? The existing authority structure in schools is often a barrier to the successful introduction and implementation of
distributed leadership. In distributed leadership, the power relationship between followers and leaders becomes blurred (Bush & Glover, 2014). Also, teams need to develop the competences to take up leadership tasks (Remmerswaal, 2015). The optimal leadership style depends on the competence level of the group. Starting leaders sometimes expect too much from the team (Binon, 2017).

A positive school climate is an essential condition for distributed school leadership. Harris (2013) argues that good collaboration among teachers is essential and that teachers need time to meet and work together for collective leadership to develop. Also, distributive leadership requires a shared vision on where the school needs to go, a culture of trust and support and structures that support leadership roles by teachers. Therefore, the role and position of the head teacher and other school leaders is still very relevant and important!

**Activity 7**

Think individually about the questions below. Next, discuss them briefly with your neighbour.

- What do you take away from this overview of school leadership models?
- Which model corresponds best with how you work in your school?

**4.8 Situational School Leadership**

**Activity 8**

Based on the outcomes of the previous activity, think about the questions below. Again, discuss them briefly with your neighbour before engaging in a whole-group discussion.

- What leadership model works best?
- Can you give an example from your school?

Discuss your answer with your partner and prepare to share your ideas with the whole group.
Each school leadership model has its value. Ideally, school leaders should use strategies and options from different models. Successful leadership is multi-dimensional, complex and depends on the context of the school. Strong school leaders consider the circumstances they are facing and the people with whom they are working. Therefore, we need school leaders with a large repertoire of practices and the capacity to choose from that repertoire as needed, not school leaders who can only apply one “ideal” set of practices. This is particularly important when school leaders need to lead the school through processes of change.

The term situational leadership is used to highlight the diverse nature of school contexts and the need to adapt one’s leadership model to the situation (Figure 8):

“What is important is how leaders respond to the unique organizational circumstances or problems. There are wide variations in the contexts for leadership and that, to be effective, these contexts require different leadership responses” (Leithwood et al., 1999, p. 15).
For example, school size can have a strong impact on the applicability of leadership models. Participative approaches are much easier to adopt in small schools while large high schools with subject departments may need more elements from managerial and transactional approaches.
Section 5: Leadership Styles

Leadership styles refer to the way head teachers interact with followers. There is a relation with the leadership models. Some leadership styles will fit better in some leadership models. For example, a delegating style corresponds well with distributive models of leadership, whereas a directing style is more suitable in instructional or managerial leadership models.

Research also showed that leadership styles should be linked with the skill level that is present within the team (Remmerswaal, 2015). Teams with low levels of competence need more direction. This is not to keep them at a low level, but to develop them. Also, newly formed groups need more structure. When you engage with new groups in very distributive way, it may create a lot of tensions. The same may happen when a new school leader applies a very authoritative style with an autonomous group, a group that has been working together for a long time. In working with a group, the leadership style should evolve from highly to less directive and from high to low levels of support (see Figure 9).

![The Four Leadership Styles](image-url)

**Figure 9: Leadership Styles (Remmerswaal, 2015)**
Remmerswaal (2015) distinguishes four leadership styles (Figure 9):

(S1) and (D1): Directing: At this level, people do not have much knowledge of the task. They still have to learn the skills needed to be proficient at the task and so they need clear directions and guidance. They need to be told how to do something and what to do.

(S2) and (D2): Coaching: during this stage, team members still need a lot of direction from the leader, but he/she now begins to explain ideas and the reasons for such. This helps the members to develop their skills and reasoning. With this style, leaders begin to explain their message to influence and develop the team.

(S3) and (D3): Supporting: At this level of development, the leader adjusts his/her style to focus more on relationships and less on the task. He/ She allows the team(s) to create their goals but works with them to do this. As the team is competent with the task, the aim becomes to further develop the team to act and to think more autonomously and give them greater scope for self-leadership.

(S4) and (D4): Delegating: The team is well functioning and is highly competent with the task at hand. This leadership style reflects a hands-off approach. The leader now delegates goal creation and decision making to the team and as such, they competently get on with the task: setting goals, creating plans and executing them autonomously. The leader focuses on monitoring progress and evaluating the result of the task.
Section 6: Professional Standards for School Leaders in Rwanda

6.1 Background and underlying principles

The Teacher Statute describes professional standards as the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that a professional must demonstrate as they do their work. The standards reflect a commitment to ensure that all students have access to quality learning and that all schools are administered, managed and led by competent professionals. The standards serve as a guideline for good practice in school leadership. They help school leaders to know what is expected from them and so they can make the necessary efforts to perform to the expectations laid out in the standards. These standards are also a useful instrument when designing systems of accountability, monitoring and evaluation. Table 3 describes the standards for effective school leadership (see also Teacher Statute, 30 October 2014) and Table 4 describes the roles and responsibilities for school leaders per standard.

The standards are based upon the following principles (SLMU, 2017):

- The standards reflect the importance and centrality of student learning and well-being.
- The standards cover broad areas of a head teacher’s work rather than micro-level competences.
- The standards describe a practice that are valid no matter where the school is, its size or socio-economic status.
- The standards are explicit in their expectation but are not prescriptive in terms of methodology acknowledging that good head teachers can achieve the same outcomes using different methodologies.
- The standards highlight areas that are measurable and observable.

The five standards for effective school leadership are based on international research. (Day & Leithwood, 2007) identified eight dimensions of successful leadership.
Successful leaders:

1. define their values and vision to raise expectations, set direction and build trust;
2. reshape the conditions for teaching and learning;
3. restructure parts of the organization and redesign leadership roles and responsibilities;
4. enrich the curriculum;
5. enhance teacher quality;
6. enhance the quality of teaching and learning;
7. build collaboration internally;
8. build strong relationships outside the school community.

In Figure 10, the inner circle represents the core focus of leaders’ attention, the middle ring their core strategies, and the outer ring the actions they take in support of these strategies. Building trust and defining a vision, values and direction for the school are necessary conditions for each of the actions in the outer ring.

*Figure 10: Eight dimensions of successful school leadership (Day & Leithwood, 2007)*
6.2 Self-Evaluation

Activity 9

Complete the self-evaluation about your knowledge and skills of the 5 standards of effective school leadership below.

This self-orientation is intended to help you identify areas for improvement. It is not an evaluation of your work or your leadership competences. You do not need to hand in your self-evaluation to the facilitator.

Table 2: Self-evaluation on standards of effective school leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In our school, we</th>
<th>I know this well and I can support others with it</th>
<th>I know about this, but I want to learn more</th>
<th>I don’t really know about this</th>
<th>I don’t know what it means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Setting Strategic Direction of the School</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a vision for the school which is clearly formulated, shared and widely understood and which takes different views into account</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translate the vision for the school into a strategic plan with clear objectives and high expectations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Create a school climate that is motivating and inspiring and a culture that encourages innovation, creativity and collaboration

**Leading Teaching and Learning**

- Set individual, group and school targets related to learning
- Monitor, analyse and review data related to learning
- Create a positive, safe and conducive learning environment
- Make sure that there is a continuous, school wide focus on learners’ achievement
- Make sure that evaluation and assessment of learners are well organized
- Promote excellence, equity and high expectations for all learners
- Ensure that all teachers share a common understanding of quality teaching and the role of a teacher within the school
| Establish structures and systems to support teaching and learning |  |  |  |
| Monitor and review classroom practice and promote improvement strategies |  |  |  |
| Ensure arrangements for performance management are in place to hold teachers to account for their students’ learning |  |  |  |
| Spend sufficient time to observe teaching and learning activities and engage in constructive conversations with teachers on teaching and learning |  |  |  |
| Develop a programme of continuous professional development for your staff |  |  |  |
| Stimulate collaboration among staff. |  |  |  |
| Supervise an induction programme for new staff |  |  |  |
| **Managing the School as an Organisation** |  |  |  |
| Create and manage clear improvement plans and policies |  |  |  |
| Manage the school resources efficiently and effectively in a way that benefits student learning |
| Ensure that providing equitable learning opportunities is at the centre of strategic planning and resource management |
| Monitor, evaluate and review the systems, policies and structures and the effect of these on student outcomes |
| Make regular inspections of the school to ensure that school premises and equipment are being used properly |
| Create a sense of ownership and involvement in the school with all staff by involving them in decision making. |
| Manage and organize the school environment effectively and efficiently to ensure that it meets the needs of the curriculum, health and safety regulations |
| Manage the school’s financial and human resources effectively and efficiently to achieve the school’s education goals and priorities |
| Assign tasks and delegate duties |
| Promote income generating activities for the school |
| Organize recruitment of support staff and ensure their contracts are signed |
| Promote and implement strategies for motivating staff and students |
| **Involving Parents and the Local Community** |
| Create and maintain effective partnerships with parents including communicating effectively about student performance and welfare |
| Partner, where appropriate, with NGOs, agencies, businesses or other organisations to support teaching and learning |
| Serve as a link between school and different stakeholders |
### 6.3 Professional Standards for school leaders

REB is in the process of approving professional standards for school leaders, which, together will describe the roles and responsibilities of school leaders in Rwanda (Figure 11). Although knowledge and skills are assigned to each of the five standards, they are all related to each other.

#### Activity 10

Work in groups of 4. You will receive a card with the description of one standard. Read the description and the roles and responsibilities for the standard given to you. Translate the standard to your context. What does the standard mean for your school? What are you already doing and is going well with relation to the standard? What do you expect from this programme to improve upon still in your school? Write your thoughts on a flip chart and prepare to present and discuss with the whole group.
Table 3: Professional standards for school leadership (REB, 2018)

| STANDARD 1: SETTING STRATEGIC DIRECTION | Building a vision and mission for the school community is a fundamental responsibility of school leaders to build trust, to inspire and motivate students and staff. This vision should express the core educational values of the school. |
| STANDARD 2: LEADING LEARNING | The role of school leaders is to ensure that all students learn. This implies setting high expectations for all students and staff members. Creating a constructive and safe learning environment and culture is an essential aspect of the role of the school leader. |
| STANDARD 3: LEADING TEACHING | To ensure that all students learn effectively, teaching must be of the highest possible standard. The school leader must create the environment, conditions and structures to support this. |
STANDARDS FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

STANDARD 4: MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL AS AN ORGANIZATION
School leaders need to ensure that the school’s structures, policies, people and resources are organized and managed in such a way that they contribute to an effective and safe learning environment.

STANDARD 5: COMMUNITY AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT
Improvements in the school and in the local community are interdependent. School leaders should commit to engaging with parents and the local community to raise expectations and improve student outcomes and well-being.

Table 4: Roles and Responsibilities of school leaders per standard (REB, 2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STANDARDS</th>
<th>ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL LEADERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| STANDARD 1: SETTING STRATEGIC DIRECTION | - Develop a vision for the school which is clear, shared and widely understood and which takes a range of views into account  
- Translate the vision for the school into a strategic plan with clear objectives and high expectations for all  
- Create a school climate that is motivating and inspiring and a culture that encourages innovation, creativity and collaboration among staff |
| STANDARD 2: LEADING LEARNING | - Set individual, group and school targets related to student learning  
- Monitor, analyse and review data related to student learning  
- Create a positive, safe and conducive learning environment  
- Ensure that there is a continuous, school wide focus on students’ achievement  
- Ensure that evaluation and assessment of students are well organized  
- Promote excellence, equity and high expectations for all students |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STANDARDS</th>
<th>ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL LEADERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| STANDARD 3: LEADING TEACHING | - Ensure that all teachers share a common understanding of quality teaching and the role of a teacher within the school  
- Establish structures and systems to support teaching and learning  
- Monitor and review classroom practice and promote improvement strategies  
- Ensure arrangements for performance management are in place to hold teachers to account for their students’ learning.  
- Devote sufficient time to observe teaching and learning activities and engage in constructive conversations with teachers on teaching and learning  
- Develop a programme of continuous professional development  
- Stimulate collaboration among staff.  
- Supervise an induction programme for new staff |
| STANDARD 4: MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL AS AN ORGANIZATION | - Coordinate the development and implementation of clear improvement plans and policies  
- Manage the school resources efficiently and effectively in a way that promotes student learning  
- Ensure that providing equitable learning opportunities is at the centre of strategic planning and resource management  
- Monitor, evaluate and review the systems, policies and structures and the effect of these on student outcomes  
- Make regular inspections of the school to ensure that school premises and equipment are being used properly  
- Create a sense of ownership and involvement in the school with all staff by involving them in decision making.  
- Manage and organize the school environment effectively and efficiently to ensure that it meets the needs of the curriculum, health and safety regulations  
- Manage the school’s financial and human resources effectively and efficiently to achieve the school’s education goals and priorities  
- Assign tasks and delegate duties  
- Promote income generating activities for the school  
- Organize recruitment of support staff and ensure their contracts are signed  
- Promote and implement strategies for motivating staff and students |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STANDARDS</th>
<th>ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL LEADERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STANDARD 5: COMMUNITY AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT</td>
<td>- Create and maintain effective partnerships with parents including communicating effectively about student performance and welfare  &lt;br&gt; - Partner, where appropriate, with NGOs, agencies, businesses or other organisations to support teaching and learning  &lt;br&gt; - Serve as a link between school and different stakeholders  &lt;br&gt; - Establish partnerships and share practices with other schools  &lt;br&gt; - Ensure the school plays a productive role as a member of its local community  &lt;br&gt; - Meet parents and discuss learners’ progress, results and conduct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UNIT TWO

GENDER AND INCLUSIVENESS IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Introduction

Activity 11

Two participants represent two different leaders: one representing gender sensitivity and inclusiveness. Another representing extreme lack of gender sensitivity and inclusiveness. Two participants will come to seek services from both leaders who will respond according to what they represent.

In Rwanda, gender equality has been incorporated in the Constitution. Rwanda has adopted a National Gender Policy (Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, 2010) and a Plan of Action to ensure effective gender mainstreaming and full participation of women in all activities related to nation’s socio-economic development. The National Institute of Statistics (NISR) and the Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) have established a Gender Statistics Framework (GSF) for Rwanda which includes the annual publication of a National Gender Statistics Report. The most recent report can be downloaded at http://statistics.gov.rw/publication/gender-statistics-public-sector-rwanda.

The Government of Rwanda places a high priority on gender equality. In the 2013 parliamentary elections, 64% of the elected leaders were female. On the Gender Development Index (GDI), Rwanda scored 0.992, placing it in the top group of countries in 2015 (UNDP, 2017). However, important challenges remain at the household, school and societal level. Rwandan society is characterised by a patriarchal social structure that underlies the unequal social power relations between men and women, boys and girls. This has translated into men’s dominance and women’s subordination. Intensive campaigns and advocacy by Rwandan civil society are making progress in changing the patriarchal mindset.
However, important barriers remain to achieve gender equality for Rwandan children. Half of all girls and six out of ten boys in Rwanda experience violence during their childhoods (UNICEF & MINEDUC, 2017). Violence in childhood leads to mental distress, early pregnancy and sexual risk-taking, and is a contributing cause of violence later in life. Boys who are subjected to harsh physical punishment, who are physically abused themselves, or who witness their mothers being beaten are more likely to abuse their partners later in life. Within the education sector, school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) remains a challenge, contributing to high repetition and dropout rates (UNICEF & MINEDUC, 2017). In the recently published LARS (Learning Achievements in Rwandan Schools) III results, boys significantly outperform girls both in numeracy and literacy.

In this unit, we will introduce key terms related to gender and inclusive education, discuss the status of gender equality in Rwanda and discuss your role as a school leader in promoting gender and inclusive education.

**Activity 12**

In a donut discussion, you form 2 concentric circles. With your partner in front of you, you briefly discuss the questions below. Under the guidance of the facilitator, you regularly change your position, so that you discuss each question with different people.

- In what ways do you think education in Rwanda is doing well in terms of gender?
- In what ways do you think gender in education can be improved in Rwanda?
- What are the effects of gender discrimination in the school and classroom?
- What are you doing in your school to promote gender equity?
- What can be done more?
Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, participants should be able to:

▪ Understand the importance of inclusiveness and gender in school leadership;
▪ Explain key terms related to gender and inclusive education;
▪ Devise ways how involving parents and local communities can contribute to inclusive and gender responsive education.
▪ Demonstrate equity and inclusiveness in school leadership;
▪ Actively address gender stereotyping and gender blindness within their schools;
▪ Value the importance of gender equity and inclusive education.
Section 1: Key Terms

Sex refers to the biologically determined characteristics for males and females. It is a biological term referring to people and animals as being either female or male depending on their genes and is therefore generally unchanging and universal. Sex also refers to biologically determined differences between individuals that make them male or female. Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, attitudes, behaviour, activities and attributes that society considers appropriate for men and women. The allocated roles and prevalence of attitudes and values vary per culture, class, age, ethnicity and time. Gender is a socially constructed perception about the roles that men and women play in a culture or community. Gender also involves issues of power in terms of who takes decisions and who owns resources at household, community and society level (Subrahmanian, 2005) in this regard. These two goals are distinguished as gender parity goals [achieving equal participation of girls and boys in all forms of education based on their proportion in the relevant age-groups in the population] and gender equality goals [ensuring educational equality between boys and girls]. In turn these have been characterised as quantitative/numerical and qualitative goals respectively. In order to consider progress towards both types of goal, both quantitative and qualitative assessments need to be made of the nature of progress towards gender equality. Achieving gender parity is just one step towards gender equality in and through education. An education system with equal numbers of boys and girls participating, who may progress evenly through the system, may not in fact be based on gender equality. Following Wilson (Human Rights: Promoting gender equality in and through education. Background paper for EFA GMR 2003/4, 2003.

Activity 13

Based on the picture below, discuss the difference is between gender equality and gender equity? How does this relate to the education system in Rwanda?
Gender equality refers to a situation where both girls and boys are equally represented in numbers in classes, schools or jobs (Subrahmanian, 2005) Rwanda has taken major steps in ensuring gender equality in education enrolment. However, gender inequalities persist at the level of participation and performance and this calls for a clear understanding of the underlying gender issues.

Gender parity is a 50:50 ratio of males and females accessing education. Gender parity is about equality in terms of numbers and proportions of women and men, girls and boys. Analysing gender parity in education means a comparison of female and male learners’ level of access to education at each level of education (Colclough, 2007). Rwanda has achieved gender parity in primary school enrolment as one of the few African counties.

Gender equity is the process of being fair to women and men (Subrahmanian, 2005). Gender equity calls for those who are in disadvantaged positions to have fair share of the benefits. This means giving to those who have less based on needs and introducing special measures and interventions to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on a level playing field (Figure 12). Gender equity leads to gender equality.
**Gender awareness** means that teachers, civil servants and policy makers are informed about issues concerning gender and education in Rwanda. Lack of gender awareness may lead to cases of gender stereotyping. However, shifts in gender equality require not only awareness and behaviour change, but also changes in the fundamental power dynamics that define gender norms and relationships (UNICEF, 2017).

**Gender stereotypes** are simplistic generalizations about differences between males and females. Gender stereotyping is related to gender blindness. Gender stereotypes assign roles to males and females based on their sex, rather than their competences or preferences. For example, maths is for boys and nursery is for girls (Zuze & Lee, 2007).

**Gender blindness** is about failing to see how it is gender and not innate (born) differences that create differences between males and females in our society (UNICEF, 2017). For example, a gender-blind teacher may see no problem with learner’s leadership without fair gender representation.

**Gender sensitivity** is the opposite of gender blindness. It is the ability to recognize gender issues, men’s and women’s different perceptions and interests arising from their respective social roles.

**Gender mainstreaming** in school leadership refers to considering gender issues in all school activities. It involves making gender an integral part of the planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes within the school (UNICEF, 2017).

**Gender responsiveness** refers to taking action to correct gender bias and discrimination so as to ensure gender equality and equity (Mlama, 2005).

**Gender-based violence** refers to acts of violence inflicted on women because of their gender and sexuality. It includes physical violence in the form of corporal punishment, psychological violence such as verbal abuse, and sexual violence ranging from unwanted sexual talk and indecent touch to rape.
Section 2: Status of Gender Equality in Rwandan Education

In this section, we will discuss how the Rwandan education system is doing in terms of gender equality. Table 5 shows some key gender-disaggregated (data for males and females) education indicators. Appendix 1 contains definitions for the main indicators in the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Percent Female</th>
<th>Percent Male</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross Intake Rate in P6 in 2017</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Intake Rate in P6 in 2017</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross Intake Rate in S6 in 2017</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Intake Rate in S6 in 2017</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition rate from Primary to Lower Secondary Education (P6 To S1)</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition rate from lower to upper secondary in 2016</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in tertiary institutions (%of male/female) in 2017</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross Enrolment ratio in primary education (2017)</td>
<td>140.1</td>
<td>138.2</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross Enrolment ratio in secondary education (2017)</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Percent Female</td>
<td>Percent Male</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross Enrolment ratio in tertiary education (2017)</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of teaching staff for secondary education</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of teaching staff for Primary education</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition rate in Primary Education</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition rate in Secondary Education</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropout rate in Primary Education (2016-2017)</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropout rate in Secondary Education (2016-2017)</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Rwanda Education Statistics 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of women age 15-19 years old who have begun childbearing without Education</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td></td>
<td>NISR: DHS 2014-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of women age 15-19 years old who have begun childbearing with primary education</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td></td>
<td>NISR: DHS 2014-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of women age 15-19 years old who have begun childbearing with Secondary or higher education level</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>NISR: DHS 2014-15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 14

Answer the questions below individually. Next, discuss the answers in pairs. Does the assessment help you to identify gender issues in your school?

1. Find out information in your school about the following:

   ▪ Which statistics in the table do you have in your school? Compare the statistics you have with national statistics.

   ▪ Are there any gender gaps in your school?

   ▪ As a school leader, what are you doing to fill these gaps?

2. When visitors come to the school who does the following tasks between female and male teachers, girls and boys:

   ▪ Receiving the visitors

   ▪ Cooking and serving

   ▪ Presenting the visitor with gifts

Discuss the gender equality implications of this situation.

3. What are the specific gender roles in the local community of the school. Make a list of the tasks performed by men, by women, by boys and by girls.

   ▪ Is there a gender equitable distribution of the tasks?

   ▪ What impact do these have on the education of the girls and boys?
Discussion gender statistics

Some key findings from the overview of gender-disaggregated education statistics are:

- GIR for Primary 6 have increased, both for males and females, showing that more children finish primary education. There is no gender imbalance at this level.

- NIRs remain much lower than GIRs, meaning that there are many over-aged and under-aged children in the education system. To achieve the universal target of 100% GER, more strategies and plans should be elaborated to ensure the smooth transition of students to secondary level (so that over-aged children do not remain in primary). Moreover, a recommendation is that parents should be sensitized to send their children on time to the Nursery level. This would enable children to be school-ready to join the primary level at the appropriate age.

- Transition rates for primary to secondary education are lower than those from lower secondary to upper secondary education. This means that the transition from primary to secondary education remains the main barrier for learners, where most drop-outs take place. Transition rates are slightly higher for boys than for girls.

- Dropout rates in primary and secondary education are similar for boys and girls. However, dropout for younger boys tends to disrupt their education and contributes to over-ageing, whereas dropout for girls more often represents the end point in their education (UNICEF & MINEDUC, 2017).

- Despite recent declines, repetition remains a major issue in Rwanda’s education system. By Primary 6, 85% of children in the education system have repeated at least once (UNICEF & MINEDUC, 2017). A key characteristic of Rwandan classrooms in primary and secondary school is high age-variation within grades. High age-variation within grades inevitably affects class dynamics and the quality of teaching. At primary ages, girls are less likely to repeat than boys, a difference that reverses in secondary education.

- GER in secondary and tertiary education are much lower than for primary education. Strong differences between gross and net rates point to many learners that are not
at the right level according to their age level, due to late entry, temporary drop-out or repetition. Enrolment and intake rates at secondary level are gender balanced, but at tertiary level, there are still more males than females who enrol.

▪ Data on the percentage of women age 15-19 years old who have begun childbearing according to their education level show that the higher their level of education, the lower the number who have begun childbearing in their teens.
Section 3: Gender in Schools

Activity 15

Reflect on the gender situation in your school and identify gender inequities with respect to the following aspects:

- Number of teachers (males and females)
- Number of students (boys and girls)
- Learning outcomes
- Leadership roles (students leaders, heads of department, subject leaders)
- Infrastructure (toilets, dorms, girls rooms, ICT use etc.)

What do you think are the causes of the inequities?

As a school leader, what are you doing to address the inequities?

The gender inequities that run through society have an impact on the school environment. This is reflected in school processes such as teaching, teacher–student interaction, school management, and the planning and design of the physical infrastructure (Figure 13). Teaching and learning materials, for example, may contain gender stereotypes. Teachers are not always aware of the gender specific needs of both girls and boys. School management systems may not sufficiently address gender constraints such as sexual harassment, and many schools do not have adequate or separate toilets for girls and boys. As a result, the schools do not provide a gender responsive environment for effective teaching and learning to take place.
A gender responsive school is one in which the academic, social and physical environment and its surrounding community consider the specific needs of both girls and boys. This implies that the teachers, parents, community leaders and members, and the boys and girls are all aware of and practice gender equality. It also assumes that school management systems, policies and practices recognize and address the gender- or sex-based needs of both girls and boys. In addition, in a gender responsive school the academic delivery, including teaching methodologies, teaching and learning materials, classroom interaction, and management of academic processes, is gender responsive. The students, both girls and boys, are empowered to practice gender equality and to protect the rights of all learners. Gender responsiveness includes the physical environment in the school – including buildings, furniture and equipment.

Schools play a powerful role in constructing male and female identities (Aikman & Underhalter, 2007). They influence how boys and girls see themselves and each other. Schools are places of intense interaction where both the formal and informal curriculum shape learners’ understanding about gender. Every day attitudes and beliefs about gender are brought into the classroom and influence what is taught and how it is taught. Teachers, school leaders and learners construct gender through their daily interactions and relationships. Below are some of the stereotypes that may be held by teachers and head teachers about boys and girls in a school.
Activity 16

Discuss the stereotypes and gender equity challenges below. Which of them do you recognize in your school? Can you add more? What are you doing to address them?

Table 6: Gender Stereotypes in schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are loud and clear in speech</td>
<td>Speak softly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are not shy</td>
<td>Are shy and cannot express themselves well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are assertive</td>
<td>Accept whatever is decided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are energetic</td>
<td>Have no physical energy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here are some examples of gender equity challenges in East African schools (Zuze & Lee, 2007; Mlama, 2005):

- Young girls who drop out of school to take care of their young siblings;
- Young girls who drop out of school to become nannies;
- Young girls who are not allowed to participate in school clubs like their brothers because of being busy with domestic chores;
- Young girls who are absent from the school because there are no hygienic facilities;
- Girls being involved in sweeping while boys are playing or reading story books;
- Boys who dropped out from school and perform child labour such as making bricks, mining, keeping animals etc.
- Social norms that boys are better at maths and science than girls;
- Girls are viewed as temporary residents in the parental home so returns on education will be enjoyed by the husband’s family;
- Different treatment in classroom of boys and girls (See section 4).
Section 4: Gender in Classrooms

Activity 17

Discuss following questions briefly with the whole group:

- What do you understand by gender responsive pedagogy?
- Give examples of how gender responsive pedagogy is implemented in your school.
- Which aspects of gender responsive pedagogy do you consider during classroom observations?

Observations of classroom practices show that teaching and learning is often gender biased (Consuegra, 2015). Many teachers apply teaching methodologies that do not give girls and boys equal opportunities to participate, and often this happens unconsciously (Consuegra, 2015). They also use teaching and learning materials that reinforce gender stereotypes. Therefore, there is an urgent need to introduce gender responsive pedagogy.

Gender responsive pedagogy refers to teaching and learning processes that pay attention to the specific learning needs of girls and boys (Mlama, 2005). Gender responsive pedagogy calls for teachers to take an integrated gender approach in the processes of lesson planning, teaching, class management and performance evaluation. As a school leader, it is important that you can make teachers aware of gender responsive pedagogy and help them to become more sensitive to gender stereotypes in the classroom.

For example, in many schools, classroom roles are allocated per learner’s sex. This practice reinforces certain social values which reflect gender stereotyping. Table 7 indicates some roles that are often assigned to boys and girls.
Table 7: Typical Role Distributions in classrooms and schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead a team</td>
<td>Acts as secretary to discussions in a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head prefect</td>
<td>Assistant Class prefect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spokesperson</td>
<td>Peel potatoes and bananas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play football</td>
<td>Play netball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run marathon</td>
<td>Fetch water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lift weights</td>
<td>Clean the blackboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice boxing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In girls’ schools, roles are often assigned depending on the perception of the teacher as to how the girls correspond to boys in terms of:

- Physical structure (appearance, body form, height, weight, strength)
- Intelligence (class performance)

Strong and intelligent girls are likened to boys and their performance is compared to that of boys, often in a positive light. For example, Umutoni runs as fast as a boy, Kayitesi is as intelligent as Rurangwa. These practices reinforce the perception that only boys can do better and therefore girls can only play the role of followers or copycats.

Teachers and school leaders can reinforce gender stereotypes in other ways during teaching and learning:

- Asking more difficult questions to boys;
- Asking more questions to boys;
- Have higher expectations for boys than for girls
- Giving more opportunities to boys to solve problems at the blackboard
- Believing that boys are more able to do maths and science than girls.
- Using examples that are more appealing to boys than to girls.

Examples of a gender responsive pedagogy are (Mlama, 2005):

- Ask same amount of questions to boys and girls;
- Ask questions of same difficulty level to boys and girls;
- Use examples that reflect interests of boys and girls;
- Provide equal opportunities to boys and girls to engage with learning resources (experiments, concrete materials, ICT);
- Use examples that feature boys and girls in equal amounts and in non-stereotypical situations (e.g. word problems in mathematics, women as scientists, men as caregivers);
- During group work, make sure that boys and girls take up leadership roles;
- Foster high expectations for all learners for all subjects (e.g. girls can be equally good at mathematics and science than boys).
Section 5: Making Schools Gender Responsive

Activity 18

With examples, discuss how you can make your school gender responsive.

School leaders should determine the level of gender responsiveness of the school. This can be done by collecting following information:

- Does the school ensure that both girls and boys have equal access to school resources such as textbooks, library resources, and laboratory equipment?

- How does the school deal with sexual harassment? How many cases of sexual harassment are reported in a given period?

- Are there separate and adequate toilets and hygienic facilities for both boys and girls?

- How many teachers have knowledge and skills about gender responsive teaching?

- Does the school have any activities to promote the participation of girls in science and maths?

- What action has the community taken to support girls’ education? For example, curbing early marriage, reducing pregnancy rates, reducing household tasks for girls, monitoring school attendance of girls, monitoring behaviour of teachers.

Based on your answers on the questions above, you can indicate steps that might be taken in each area to improve gender responsiveness. However, a gender-responsive school requires an integrated approach involving various interventions in an integrated way. Becoming a gender responsive school should be a key objective in the development of your SIP (see: Module 2).
Becoming a gender responsive school should be a key objective in the development of your SIP.

The interventions to make your school gender responsive can include the following:

- Organising gender sensitization activities for parents, community members, teachers, girls and boys to raise their awareness and understanding of the need to support the education of girls and boys.

- Training teachers in the skills for making teaching and learning processes responsive to the specific needs of girls and boys.

- Empowering girls with skills for self-confidence, assertiveness, speaking out, decision making and negotiation for them to overcome gender-based constraints to their education.

- Empowering boys with skills to refrain from gender oppressive attitudes and practices such as macho-ism, bullying and sexual affronts and to develop the self-confidence needed to accept gender equality positively.

- Training the school community in the skills necessary to improve their reproductive health and protect themselves against sexually transmitted diseases, particularly HIV/AIDS.

- Training the school community to manage sexual maturation issues of both girls and boys with emphasis on menstruation management.

- Training teachers and students in guidance and counselling skills.

- Establishing guidance and counselling desks to provide services for the social and psychological development of girls and boys.

- Work with the community to provide support to needy girls and boys to ensure that they do not drop out of school.
▪ Providing gender responsive infrastructure including:
  
  o Separate and adequate toilets for girls and boys.
  
  o Adequate and clean water and sanitation, especially to enhance menstruation management and the overall health of the school community.

▪ Carrying out activities to promote the participation of girls in science and mathematics subjects.

▪ Establishing a gender responsive school management system that ensures gender equality in the governance and operation of the school. This may include collecting gender-disaggregated data on all aspects of teaching and learning.

▪ Involving the community and other stakeholders in monitoring and taking action to ensure improved enrolment, attendance and performance of girls and boys.

▪ Establishing a database to track student performance and welfare as well as the levels of gender responsiveness of all aspects of the school

Activity 19

How can you improve gender equity in your school? In your group, agree on 3 concrete actions that you will work on in your school during the next school year.

Also, think about how you will monitor progress and how you will know at the end of the year whether your actions were successful.
Section 6: Understanding Inclusive Education

Activity 20

Describe in 1 sentence what inclusive education means to you. Compare and discuss with your neighbour.

Inclusive education is about treating all learners as individuals. It is about making sure that all learners can learn. Therefore, it is much broader than special needs education, which focuses on learners with disabilities.

When we think about inclusive education, often we just think about getting children into school, i.e. making sure they are present in school. However, we also need to ensure that children are participating in lessons and school life, and that they are achieving academically and socially as a result of coming to school.

*Always think about: Presence, Participation and Achievement* (Ainscow, 2005).
It is not enough that they simply attend the lessons; all children should be given the same opportunities to fully participate and achieve.

**Equal presence:** Teachers should be instructed to do daily attendance of the children disaggregated by sex. If there is an attendance issue specific to boys or girls, talk with parents through SGA meetings. Invite the concerned parents at school to speak about why girls and boys should be provided with equal learning opportunities and how to support their learning needs.

**Equal participation:** Teachers should ensure that both girls and boys are participating actively and given chances to lead in classroom activities, classroom discussions, and different clubs. There should be full participation of both a girl and a boy student representative during SGAC meeting.

**Equal achievement:** Parents, teachers and school leaders should ensure both boys and girls have equal opportunity to access learning materials and that there are not any achievement gaps. You may think it is too difficult to address the needs of a diverse range of children,
as there are so many challenges. However, by working as a team within your school, with support from families and local communities, and by making small changes to your teaching methods, you will be able to meet the needs of all children – including those with disabilities.

Activity 21

In this activity, we will discuss in more detail what inclusive education means in a school. Think about each statement and vote whether you agree with it or not.

1. All children with learning disabilities should sit together in the same class – this means they would not feel different.

2. Communities and schools can work together to make school environments more accessible.

3. Children who are visually impaired will get a much better education in a special school for the blind.

4. Teacher training on inclusion for children with disabilities would be most effective if it is separate to all other training – this is because it is a specialist area. Should be integrated, it’s about good teaching practice.

5. The main concept of inclusive education is to ensure that children with disabilities are educated. What is meant with disabilities? Is poverty a disability? It is a barrier to learning. Inclusive education is about looking at all learners as individuals.

6. It is possible for children with special needs to be allowed extra time when taking exams.

7. It is a good strategy for children who have difficulty moving around to be able to watch other children playing sports such as basketball and football. By doing this they will feel included. Inclusive teacher may offer 2 sports, so that child has the choice to watch or play.

8. A child who is consistently late for school should be punished – no matter what the reason is.
Some key elements about inclusive education that you may have discussed during the previous activity:

▪ Collaboration is a key element to achieve inclusive education. It is not about teachers needing a lot of specialized knowledge and skills to deal with learners with disabilities.

▪ Inclusive education is about treating all learners as individuals. It is about good teaching.

▪ Inclusive education means getting to know your learners and understanding why learners behave in the way they do. Why is a learner absent-minded, filthy or disruptive?

▪ An important role for a school leader is to create a culture of inclusive education by acting as a role model through each of the standards of leadership.

▪ Inclusivity goes beyond the school. It is about children who are not learning because of their home situation, because they are sick or poor or have too many domestic responsibilities. Therefore, it is important to involve the local community and look for support to become an inclusive school.
Activity 22

In small groups, prepare a short role play describing one of the situations below:

1. The first school leader convenes a staff meeting to discuss the issue of three students with disabilities. He raised negative ideas about inclusion of these students. Some participants in the meeting support the school leader and others are against him/her using various arguments. The school leader will insist against adopting inclusive education.

2. A second school leader also convenes staff meeting to discuss the same issue. Despite the negative views from some participants, the school leader convinces them that these students should be catered for. Teachers and school leaders develop a plan to ensure access, participation and achievement of the learners.

3. During a staff meeting, a deputy head teacher asks the mathematics teacher why more than half of the learners did not pass the exam. The teacher responds that there are many slow learners in the class. Some learners achieved outstanding results, which proves that the teacher covered all topics of the curriculum adequately. Develop a reaction and discussion about this argument.

4. During the staff meeting, you explain inclusive education and you ask teachers to make their lessons more inclusive. One teacher reacts by saying that inclusive education is not possible in classes of 50 students or more. Develop a reaction and discussion about this argument.
UNIT THREE

WORKING WITH PARENTS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Introduction

Productive and positive parent-school partnerships play a critical role in promoting student learning. Parents are the first educators of their children and they continue to influence their children’s learning and development throughout the school years. Given the limited time that children spend in school, interactions with family and community members are likely to have more impact on a child’s learning and development than school-based interactions. For this reason, parental and family involvement in education is a critical ingredient in any successful school.

A balanced approach to school decision-making and parental involvement creates a sense of shared responsibility among parents, community members, teachers and school leaders. In turn, shared responsibility:

- Ensures that parents’ values and interests are heard and respected;
- Allows for more engaged and supportive parents;
- Makes the school more accountable to its community.
- Helps learners to value the role of their parents in their education.

The school should be a welcoming environment where school leaders and teachers value and understand the important role of parents in children’s education success. In such schools, parents are active participants in the life of the school, and feel connected to each other, to school staff, and to what children are learning.
Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, participants should be able to:

▪ Describe the principles of parent/community-school partnerships;

▪ Demonstrate ways to involve parents and the local community in the school;

▪ Establish strategies to enhance collaboration between the school and parents/local community as an instrument for improving the quality of teaching and learning;

▪ Support the capacity development of the SGAC as a partner in the achievement of sustainable learning outcomes;

▪ Act as a role model in the community;

▪ Value the importance of involving parents and the local community to achieve high quality inclusive education.
**Self-Evaluation**

**Activity 23**

Think individually about common practices in your school and indicate whether the statements in the table below are valid for your school.

Next, share and discuss your answers with your neighbour. On which statements do you have the same opinion, and on which did you make a different assessment?

**Table 8: Self-Evaluation on School – Parent/Community Partnerships**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In my school</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents and school staff are active partners in decisions that affect children’s learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The School General Assembly plays a role in creating policies, practices and programs that continuously improve the school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The school is a welcoming environment whereby school leaders and teachers value and understand the important role of parents in children’s education success.</td>
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<td>Parents are active participants in the life of the school, and feel connected to each other, to school staff, and to what children are learning.</td>
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<td>In my school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents and school staff engage in regular and meaningful communication</td>
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<td>about children’s learning and wellbeing. Information is shared between</td>
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<td>school and parents through a variety of communication channels to</td>
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<td>promote ongoing constructive dialogue.</td>
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<td>Parents and school staff continuously collaborate to support children’s</td>
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<tr>
<td>academic progress both in the classroom and at home. Assessments are used</td>
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<td>to inform support strategies and monitor learning.</td>
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<td>Parents and school staff actively promote the needs of all children.</td>
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<td>Learning environments are responsive to diverse communities, and ensure</td>
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<td>equity in relation to gender, disability and family background.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents and school leadership cultivate positive relationships with other</td>
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<tr>
<td>services within the school community and work together to support school</td>
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<td>improvement. The school serves as a centre for community learning events</td>
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<td>and requests support for extra-curricular activities.</td>
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source: Save the Children, Mureke Dusome project, 2017
Section 1: Research on the involvement of parents and the local community in the school

International evidence makes a strong case that schools alone cannot be responsible for the education of children, but that this is the shared responsibility of schools, families, and local communities. Various studies have found that lack of positive relationships between school staff and families can have negative effects on children’s learning outcomes (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). But the opposite is also true; when families and school staff know each other and have personal, respectful relationships, students have more academic success. These relationships and the regular participation of parents help to share the responsibility for learning, and reduce the potential blaming of teachers for student failures by the parents (Florez, 2011).

When parents are asked by schools to support their students, they develop confidence in their ability to help their children succeed academically, have positive experiences with teachers and school leadership, increase their understanding of the school’s needs, and experience improved communication with their children. Researchers also found that “educators experience greater job satisfaction, higher evaluation ratings from the parents and administrators and more positive associations with their families” when they collaborate with parents (Nyatuka, 2015).

Finding ways to facilitate relationships among parents may lead to increased participation of families and increased impact of a school’s family engagement strategy. By creating a social network and community feeling around school priorities, parents’ interest and enjoyment in attending school events may increase. This network also may help to improve collaboration and communication among families around student learning, as well as ownership and accountability for attendance and participation in school priorities.

For years, research has shown that children who benefit from engaged parents and supportive community environments are much more likely to succeed in school than those who do not (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Specifically, these students tend to have better learning outcomes, higher completion rates, higher attendance, and better attitudes towards school (Jeynes, 2003). This evidence is true for primary and secondary school students, regardless of their parents’ education level, their family’s socio-economic status or where they live (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).
Even though the evidence is clear, effective collaboration requires understanding from all stakeholders, time, and creativity. Effective parent–school partnerships are collaborative relationships which involve school staff, parents/guardians and the school wider community. This collaborative relationship is based on mutual trust and respect and shared responsibility for the education and learning of all students at the school.

It is worth noting that throughout this guide, the term ‘parents’ is used to refer to all primary caregivers. This recognizes that there are children, in Rwanda and globally, with unique family situations that involve different family or non-family members.

Parent-school partnerships in many Rwandan schools are not yet sufficiently developed to ensure children meet the learning goals set in the curriculum. Many barriers to effective collaboration stem from a lack of understanding around the impact parents and communities can have when they truly engage with children in ways that support their learning and development. Kabarere, Muchee, Makewa, & Role (2013) found that high performing schools in Rwanda tend to have more involved parents. However, all schools scored low in involving parents in the management of the school and benefiting from parents as resources to improve teaching and learning.

Historically, expectations around family and community support for learning have focused mainly on paying school fees, buying uniforms and materials, or participating in / contributing resources and labour to school building campaigns (REB, 2012). Many school leaders have been content when some parents turned up at the SGA meetings (Kabarere et al., 2013). Engagement has been focused on involvement that does little to build understanding, trust, or collaboration. A 2007 study of Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Uganda, and Zimbabwe found that important education decisions are almost never decentralized in a way that encourages genuine local community participation (Dunne, Akyeampong, & Humphreys, 2007).

Evidence suggests that many parents still believe that a child’s education is the sole responsibility of schools and feel ill-equipped to support their child’s education at home (Nganga, 2009) the government of Kenya is involved minimally. Indeed, parents are responsible for planning, developing and managing different early childhood programs. Consequently, problems such as funding and lack of program consistency are common. Because early childhood programs are
essential, the government should be involved actively in the development and implementation process (Nganga, 2009). Rwandan teachers report that many parents do not have the time or resources to support their children’s efforts to learn and that many parents do not regularly meet with teachers to discuss children’s progress (Kabarere et al., 2013).

There is clearly a need to develop and foster appropriate, effective linkages between students, their families, their schools, and their communities that support learning of all students. There is not a single perfect approach for fostering impactful partnerships. However, evidence suggests that it is possible - with concerted efforts - to create enabling environments in the home, school, and community that encourage and support learning, while building awareness and understanding that opportunities for learning are valuable and more than just school-bound activities.

The following activity highlights barriers to the active engagement of parents and identifies strategies to overcome them.

**Activity 24**

What barriers to active engagement do parents face?

For each barrier, what strategies can you use in your school to overcome it?

Parents (male and female, rich and poor, literate and illiterate, parents with and without disability) may face a wide range of challenges and require additional support to participate in the school. However, they can also bring unique expertise and insights to the school and help the school in becoming more inclusive.
Section 2: Epstein’s Model for School-Family-Community Partnerships

Activity 25

Think about the following statements and vote whether you agree or don’t agree:

1. It is not necessary to involve all parents as some of them are not interested in their children’s education.
2. The main purpose of involving parents is to raise funds for the school.
3. It is the school’s responsibility to help parents to support their children with their education.
4. Parents who are illiterate cannot do much to support their children at school.
5. It is a good idea to organize literacy courses for parents after school hours or during weekends.
6. I already do a lot to involve parents in the school, but many parents don’t have time to be involved in the school.
7. Parents should be able to observe lessons of their children in the school.
8. The SGAC meetings are the best instrument to involve parents in the school.

Joyce Epstein, an American educator, has been studying and writing about school-family-community partnerships for over thirty years. Over time, she has developed and refined a framework for successfully involving parents and community members in schools (Epstein, 1987). Her model emphasizes six types of community and parental involvement that schools can use. While this framework was developed in and around American schools, these principles, or some variation of them, have served as a framework and are applicable to the Rwandan context.
▪ **Parenting:** Assist families with parenting skills, family support, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions to support learning. Assist schools in understanding families’ backgrounds, cultures, and goals for children.

▪ **Communicating:** Communicate with families about school programs and student progress. Create effective, reliable two-way communication channels between school and home.

▪ **Volunteering:** Improve recruitment and training to involve families as volunteers and as audiences at the school. Enable educators to work with volunteers who support students and the school. Provide meaningful work and flexible scheduling.

▪ **Learning at Home:** Involve families with their children in academic learning at home, including homework, goal setting, and other curriculum-related activities.

▪ **Decision Making:** Include families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy activities through school councils or improvement teams, committees, and other organizations.

▪ **Collaborating with the Community:** Coordinate resources and services for families, students, and the school with community groups, including businesses, agencies, cultural and civic organizations, and colleges or universities.
### Activity 26

Complete the following table by indicating your current practices in relation to the different components of Epstein’s model. Explain how you could use ICT for each type of parent/community involvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of involvement</th>
<th>Current practices</th>
<th>By school leaders</th>
<th>By parents</th>
<th>How ICT could be used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parenting</td>
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<td>Communicating</td>
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<td>Volunteering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning at home</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decision making</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborating with community</td>
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</table>
Section 3: Building School-Community Partnerships in Rwandan Schools

Activity 27

Rwanda Education Board and its partners developed the National Parent-School Partnership Standards, based on Epstein’s work. Read these standards and relate each standard to the Epstein’s model.

The National Parent-School Partnership Standards from REB identify what parents and schools can do together to support student learning. They aim to guide SGAC leaders, parents, school leadership, teachers, community members and students to work together for the educational success of all children. The Standards also highlight best practices for effectively engaging families and communities in supporting children’s learning both in and out of school.

More specifically, the National Parent-School Partnership Standards aim to:

- Highlight expected competences from parents and schools to build effective partnership
- Inform the development of a school improvement plan
- Monitor progress in reaching school improvement goals
- Assess current parental involvement practices at the school
- Inform capacity building needs for School General assembly organ
- Develop ideas for engaging parents and communities
**Standard 1-Sharing Responsibility for Learning**

Parents and school staff are active partners in decisions that affect children’s learning. The School General Assembly plays a role in creating policies, practices and programs that continuously improve their school.

**Standard 2- Active Participation in the School Life**

The school is a welcoming environment whereby school leadership and teachers value and understand the important role of parents in children’s education success. Parents are active participants in the life of the school, and feel connected to each other, to school staff, and to what children are learning.

**Standard 3- Communicating Effectively**

Parents and school staff engage in regular meaningful communication about children’s learning and wellbeing. Information is shared between school and parents through a variety of communication channels to promote ongoing constructive dialogue.

**Standard 4- Supporting Learning**

Parents and school staff continuously collaborate to support children’s academic progress both in the classroom and at home. Assessments are used to inform support strategies and monitor children’s learning.

**Standard 5-Ensuring Equity and inclusion**

Parents and school staff actively promote the needs of all children. Learning environments are responsive to diverse communities, and ensure equity in relation to gender, disability and family background.
**Standard 6-Collaborating with the Wider Community**

Parents and school leadership cultivate positive relationships with other existing services within the school community and work together to support school improvement. The school serves as a hub for community learning events and solicits support for extra-curricular activities.

**Activity 28**

Based on your self-evaluation, write two action points for improvement. Share them with your neighbour. Explain why you chose these actions.
Section 4: Involving the Local Community in Achieving Inclusive Education

Parents and the local community play an important role in making the school more inclusive. Collaboration is a key word in achieving inclusivity. Parents and the local community can help teachers and school leaders in finding solutions for learners with impairments. For example, volunteers can help with assisting learners with visual or hearing impairments, or with remedial exercises.

Case Studies

We will explore how school leaders can involve the local community to make the school more inclusive through several case studies. Each case study introduces one aspect of inclusive education and offers ideas that you may apply for your own school.
Activity 29

Work in small groups. Read your assigned case story and underline examples of school - community collaboration. Discuss the questions at the bottom of each case story. Prepare to present your case story and discussion for the whole group.

Case story 1

I am a head teacher in a 9 Year Basic Education school. We have only a small number of students. The capitation grant is not enough to accommodate school issues. I heard that communities in other schools are engaged to improve children’s learning.

I decided to visit a similar neighbouring school. In my learning visit, I was welcomed by the head teacher at the primary school. I sat with him for a while in his office and he shared with me how his school has managed to improve over the last several years. He said that one of the factors that had helped children have better results was the useful collaboration they have with the community around the school. The head teacher in collaboration with the SGAC had mobilized funds during an accountability day. The funds were used to purchase books and other reading materials to be used by children and other people in the community. After seeing those books, parents began making reading materials from recycled materials. On a quarterly basis, the community came together to make additional reading or scholastic materials.

In a short tour around the school, the head teacher took me to a learning centre inside the school where people from the surrounding community meet for capacity building in various domains including learning languages as well as adult literacy classes. Returning from the visit, I shared the learning with teachers and SGAC. We discussed how we could apply similar measures in our school context and generated an action plan based on these ideas.

Based on the examples described in the case story, identify other initiatives of collaboration with the community that can help your school improve students learning outcomes.
Case story 2

In my school, we had an issue of dropout and poor attendance for primary children. Together with the SEO, SGACs, and cell and village leaders, we formed groups and decided to visit households in the community. We interviewed children and adults in the households separately to find out why children were not in school. In many cases, adults reported that they were keen for their children to go to school, but the children indicated that their parents wanted them to work or were prioritizing the education of a sibling. Some parents were ignoring or hiding their children with disabilities, because they thought they could not successfully attend school with other children.

After discussing this together, the school, village, and cell leadership decided to collaborate to monitor daily attendance records. Children attending less than 15 days a month are considered to have dropped out of school. School and community leadership groups then visit the households of the children to find out why they were not attending. They work with the parents and community to overcome the barriers they were facing. Solutions have ranged from organizing extra support by adult volunteers to children with disabilities, to creating funds to help the poorest families to enrol their children in school. The sector is using the data from the visits to prioritize their resources in order to reach all school aged children.

What best practices have you learnt from this story? How are you going to apply these practices? What else can you do to ensure equity and social inclusion in your school?

Case story 3

My name is Mutoni and I am ten years old. In my family, I have a mother, two elder brothers and one younger sister. My mother sells vegetables in the market in order to support our family. I like reading books, but it is rare for me to find time to read. My brothers often bring books home from school and read in the afternoons, but that’s when I must cook dinner for my family. During the weekend, my brothers attend the reading club in the village, but that’s when I must clean the house, wash the clothes and care for my baby brother. By Monday, I’m exhausted from all the housework and haven’t found the time to do my homework. When I get at school, I fail to do exercises given by the teacher.
During a Parent-Teacher Day, the Girls Club presented a sketch that reflected my life. After the presentation, parents discussed the challenges girls were facing and many testified that were also disproportionately burdening their daughters with domestic responsibilities. My mother was also in the meeting. When we reached home, she called me and my brothers together and told us that we need to share the domestic work so that I could also have time to attend the reading club, revise my lessons and play. From that time onward, I began arriving at school on time and my grades started improving!

**To what extent do you think there are girls in your school who face similar challenges as Mutoni? Are there other gender-related obstacles that girls or boys in your school experience?**

**Case Story 4**

Parent A: Last year my child repeated Primary One. I am interested in supporting my child’s learning so he can do better, but I am not sure how. I take part in the SGA meetings, but they seem to be rarely held. The head teacher appears to be very busy and I don’t think she has time to work with the SGAC. The SGAC parent representatives are also teachers, so I don’t feel as if I can approach them with my issues. I decide to stay out of the school affairs and trust that the teachers will help my child to do better this year.

Parent B: Last year my child repeated Primary One. I heard that many other children in the same class also repeated. Together with my child’s teacher, we raised our concern during the SGA meeting. The SGAC President took note of the issue and a committee was elected to investigate the causes of excessive repetition of students identifying barriers both in and out of school. In the next SGA meeting, the committee presented the findings. Based on this, the SGAC made an action plan to resolve this challenge, and a special SGA meeting was called to share it. Parents gave feedback on the improvement measures and responsibilities were clearly laid out. School leaders, teachers and parents collaborated on the improvement plan, and progress was monitored.

*Parent A and Parent B describe different experiences with the school. Which type of experience is more common in Rwanda? What do parents at your school often do when their children are not succeeding academically? What can school leaders and SGAC do to improve this?*
Case story 5

I am a deputy head teacher in a school where most parents are not involved in children’s learning. The School General Assembly meetings occur but only 40% of the parents usually attend. In the SGAC meeting, we brainstormed how parents can be encouraged to volunteer in the school. We identified areas where the school could use support from parents.

Everyone in the SGAC was given a village in which he/she became a focal point to go to work with the village chief in sensitizing parents on the importance of volunteering in school activities. We shared different areas where volunteers were needed. Parents were asked about their interest and availability to volunteer. Everyone indicated the type of activities they could support and a schedule based on her/his availability, including at least one volunteer day per term. Some parents committed to more frequent volunteer visits, even on a weekly basis.

As a result, parents from all levels of socio-economic backgrounds started to volunteer in different school activities. Literate parents planned visits to read with P1, P2 and P3 students who are at risk of repeating. Artistic parents supported teachers to make classroom displays, such as alphabet or number charts. Parents who knew how to sew helped repair books and other ripped learning materials. Others who had building experience, helped to make the new pre-primary classrooms more child-friendly by adjusting desk height to fit smaller children. The parents got the opportunity to know each other through their volunteering efforts which improved parents’ communication and support network. As a result of this success, we organized an end-of-the-year event to celebrate our achievements.

*Based on the examples provided in the case story and in the previous activity description, identify 5 areas where parent volunteers could support your school improvement plan.*
Case story 6

As a head teacher, I received several complaints from parents about teachers in my school. Similarly, at staff meetings, teachers complained that parents weren’t supporting their children. I discussed the issue with my deputy head teacher and the other SGAC members, and we decided to organize a Parent-Teacher Day at school. We chose a day during school holidays when teachers didn’t have lessons. We invited families to come to school to discuss their children’s progress. During the Parent-Teacher Day, some meetings were very productive. Teachers gave updates on the child’s strengths and weaknesses, as well as other general observations. They also shared various ideas with parents on how they could support their children’s learning at home. However, I also noticed a meeting where the teacher was too critical of the child’s learning abilities. He asked the parent why she never replied to the information he sent home. The parent responded that she was frustrated about the negative messages she always received and felt the teacher was not doing his job.

Based on the observations from Parent-Teacher Day, I realized that teachers need guidance on how to give productive feedback to parents. I organized a session with the teaching staff. I explained the importance of how we communicate with parents. I suggested always starting communication with a positive aspect, for example, something the child does well or a good personality trait. I explained that after the positive comment, teachers can introduce challenges or areas for improvement, choosing their words carefully to not make parents defensive. They should also encourage parents to respond or share their ideas on the issue. Finally, teachers should finish with another encouraging comment or appreciation in order to end on a positive note. Teachers began applying this approach. Communication between parents and schools increased. Teachers began communicating more positive feedback to parents. As a result, I noticed parents coming to school to talk to teachers, not only when there was a problem but also for regular interaction and communication.

What was the challenge this head teacher faced and the strategy she used to address it? How did she refine her approach to be more impactful?
Case story 7

I was deployed to work in another district. I registered my child in the local school. I noticed the school leadership was mostly focusing on Primary six classes and ensuring teachers prepare students to pass the National Examination. However, even those Primary six students were not performing well because they did not have the foundations from the lower grades.

In the SGA meeting, parents blamed teachers and the school leadership that their children were not performing well. I shared with them some of the factors that I saw working in my child’s previous school. I discussed how the school empowered teachers and parents to monitor students learning through formative assessments. Children were assessed regularly through exercises and activities that checked if they were learning. When struggling students were identified, parents and teachers met to discuss strategies to support the child. Parents were interested so we organized another meeting whereby a workshop was provided to parents on how they can support their children’s learning both at home and at school. Parents were coached on how to help children to revise lessons at home, read with them and provide the required learning materials.

Parents gradually became more confident engaging in their children’s learning process. They monitored how their children’s learning was progressing and met teachers to discuss areas where their children needed additional support. Parents in the communities committed themselves to helping children complete their homework, revise for exams and to read recreationally. Teachers were motivated by parental involvement in their children’s education. They began using teaching methods to meet individual learning needs. They allowed children to take learning materials home to use with their parents. They conducted simple formative assessments and communicated regularly with parents when children were having difficulty. The following year, children’s performance considerably improved.

Which actions do you think were the most significant to improve children’s learning? Why?
Exploring school activities to support local communities

Activity 30

What are you already doing to support the local community?

Individually, write on post-its activities that you are doing in their schools to support the local community? Then, post them on the wall. Through a gallery walk you will explore the activities from other participants.

Although schools have limitations they can still provide great resources to support communities to address their challenges and increase their connection with the school.

- **Provide expanded learning**: By allowing community members to benefit from the school resources. For example, allowing the community to access book collections from the school library. A teacher can provide parenting sessions to the families in the school community.

- **Build broad-based support for increased welfare of the surrounding community**: The school can teach the neighbouring community about important community issues such as hygiene, diet. etc. Additionally, the school can initiate projects to raise funds to support the poorest families and to create programs that support vulnerable families.

- **Provide quality after-school programmes**: The school can collaborate with parents to strengthen after school learning activities. For example, teachers can be encouraged to support and assist extracurricular community activities during school holidays.

- **Creating a welcoming environment**
  - Provide a display space for important information
    - Contact information for the school administrators, teachers, SGAC president
    - School calendar with a list of important dates and events
    - Announcements.
- Invite parents to visit the school
  - Plan days and hours for the visit that are flexible to both male and female parents
  - Through village meetings and Umuganda, share times when the head teacher will be available at school for a meeting (e.g. Friday mornings)
  - Encourage parents to visit during break and lunch times when staff are more available
  - Coordinate school tours and orientation for new parents
  - Inform parents at the beginning of each term on what their children will be learning and how they can help them.

- Ensure physical space is made available for parent coordination and activities

- Provide disability & gender sensitive access to buildings (classrooms, offices and toilets)

- Prepare and publicize school activities in which parents participate like leading discussions on a given topic.

**Parent-Friendly Staff**

- Support office staff and teachers to
  - Be open and welcoming to parents
  - Communicate information (positives not just problems)
  - Encourage participation
  - Be responsive to parents and their needs/requests
**Parent-Friendly Policies**

- Working with SGAC and other parents, the school staff can develop and publicly post a parent-school partnership policy that explains the school’s commitment to involvement of parents in school activities and parents’ commitment to the school and its staff.

- Ensure the SGAC and parents perspectives are included when developing the school’s improvement plan. This will ensure their views are reflected and that they have ownership of the plan and can support its implementation.

**Practical ideas for parent volunteer activities**

- Support after school activities like reading clubs, mathematics practice, sport and cultural activities

- Make class displays, like alphabet or number charts

- Repair textbooks, storybooks or other teaching and learning materials

- Construct new classrooms or rehabilitate old ones

- Plant trees in the school compound

- Assist in planning and organizing school events

- Give presentations in classes or at assemblies about their specializations and skills in different domains (safety, hygiene, etc.)

- Provide one-on-one support to struggling learners or children with disabilities.

- Identify children in the community who have dropped out of school and work with school staff to reach out to them

- Volunteer during lessons to support group or project work

- Support with the development of learning and teaching materials from recycled materials.
**Activity 31**

Think about the school you are leading. In the table below identify three measures you will take to involve the local community in the school. Write them on a paper and indicate the expected outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Expected outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Section 5: Building the Capacity of the School General Assembly Committees

**Activity 32**

Think individually about the following questions. Next, discuss your ideas with your neighbour what according to you is the role and purpose of the School General Assembly (SGA) and the School General Assembly Committee (SGAC)? Next, discuss your ideas with your neighbour. Prepare to share the outcomes of your discussion with the whole group.

- How are the School General Assembly Committees (SGACs) elected at your schools?
- How do you work with the SGAC and SGA?
- What is the role and purpose of the School General Assembly (SGA) and the School General Assembly Committee (SGAC)?

The School General Assembly is the supreme organ in terms of learning, teaching and welfare. It monitors the overall operation of the school and take a keen interest in the school development (Official Gazette n° 31 of 30/07/2012). In particular, it is responsible for:

1. to formulate the specific vision of the school in accordance with its mission;
2. to provide views and suggestions in relation to the school’s overall development;
3. to appoint and remove members of the School General Assembly Committee;
4. to appoint and remove Audit Committee members;
5. to submit meeting reports to the Sector authorities with a copy thereof to the Executive Secretary of the Cell in which the school is located;
6. to approve internal rules and regulations of the school;
7. to approve the annual budget of the school;
8. to approve the contribution of parents if necessary.
The **School General Assembly Committee (SGAC)** is the level of the School General Assembly that is in charge of implementing the decisions of the School General Assembly (Official Gazette n° 31 of 30/07/2012). The SGAC should meet once a term. Whenever necessary, the SGAC can hold a special meeting.

The **SGAC members are:**

- The President
- The Vice President
- The owner of the school, or a representative
- The school head teacher who is also the secretary
- Two advisors elected by the parents
- Two teachers (a man and a woman) representing all teachers, elected by the body of teachers
- Two students (a boy and a girl) representing the students, also elected by the students.

At least thirty percent (30%) of members of the SGAC must be females.

**Key responsibilities of SGA and SGAC members** and key principles of engaging SGA and SGACs are stipulated in the ministerial order no 003/2016 of 08/01/2016 that governs the functioning of SGA and SGAC. The basic responsibilities of the SGAC are the following:

- Follow up of the implementation of the decisions taken by the General Committee;
- Prepare the General Assembly meeting;
- Follow up on the use of school’s budget and its wealth;
- Examine the school’s existing problems and ways of solving them;
- Present to the General Assembly the objectives for improving the quality of
education and school performance and governance;

- Monitor students that have dropped out or have high rates of absenteeism, and encourage them to value their education;

- To link the school and the parents, neighbours of the school and the local authorities;

- To follow up on the promotion of a culture of reading within and outside the school;

- To follow up on the promotion of peace building, equity and inclusion;

- All other activities that the General Assembly will assign.

Relationship between the SGAC and school leaders

Studies show that better-achieving schools have higher levels of trust between school staff and parents, while schools with the lowest achievement rates have minimal trust (Save the Children, Mureke Dusome project, 2017). Therefore, SGAC members must have a close working relationship with the school leadership. This working relationship is characterized by:

- Collaboration in the preparation of school guidelines and development plans

- Building trust among SGAC and School Leadership

- Promoting transparency and sharing information on time

- Respect the number of SGA and SGAC meetings as stipulated in the Law

- Publicise and recognize the achievements resulting from the collaboration with parents

- Work together to find solutions for challenges the school is facing
When this relationship is not well managed, it can create conflicts in the school. Some problems which can occur are:

- Some SGAC members, such as the school owner or President, conduct excessive supervision of school activities;
- School leaders plan and implement all activities without involving other SGAC members;
- Parent voices are not heard because elected parent representatives are also teachers or school staff;
- The elected committee are based solely on the opinions of the head teacher;
- Only the head teacher and SGAC president are involved in school activities. Other members of the SGAC are not involved;
- Meetings that are not carried out because there is lack of collaboration between the head teacher and SGAC members

**Activity 33**

Using the table below, select 5 strategies that you will implement in your school. You can also identify strategies that are not yet in the list.

The table below provides a lot of suggestions on what parent representatives and head teachers can do to improve the involvement of parents and the local community in the school.
Table 9: Roles and Responsibilities of Parent Representatives and school Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Parent Representatives can do</th>
<th>What school leaders can do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support the school leadership to identify community partners that can support families and school</td>
<td>Organize meetings within the school and invite all stakeholders and community partners to create a plan for working together, along with check-in points to assure progress is occurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with the school to plan school improvement activities and send out invitations to community partners who can fund efforts.</td>
<td>Identify and invite partners in the community that can support the school to provide rewards during school events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect low income and vulnerable families with agencies that can support them to raise their income</td>
<td>Support vulnerable parents to find opportunities to raise their income and be able to satisfy the learning needs of their children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree with school leaders on which school resources can be used by the community, as well as the time, place and specifics of accessing them</td>
<td>Discuss with the community ways of maintaining well the rented resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate to the community the available school resources that vulnerable families can access</td>
<td>Inform the community members the available resources at school that can be useful to them and how they can benefit them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborate with village leaders to celebrate the achievements of the village as result of use of school resources</td>
<td>Celebrate the achievements of the school resulting from the collaboration with the community and acknowledge partners who availed resources to be benefited by the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with the school to identify teachers for facilitating parenting sensitization sessions</td>
<td>Work with the SGAC to identify teachers for facilitating parenting sensitization sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engage former students who completed at least primary level to participate in out of school children’s learning activities</td>
<td>Engage former students and Urugerero youth to participate in the development of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobilize parents to use locally available materials to be used by children in reading clubs within the village</td>
<td>Collaborate with volunteers who are promoting afterschool learning activities and support them with basic materials to make learning resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer learning from other SGAC on their achievements in promoting collaboration with the wider community</td>
<td>Peer learning from what other schools achieved in collaboration with the wider community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in establishing school vision and Guidelines</td>
<td>Involve parents in the establishment of school vision and guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in partnership with the school leadership, identify ways the SGA can support one or more goals of the school improvement plan</td>
<td>Present school projects and plans to parents and value their inputs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage parents to participate actively in various SGA committees and other temporary committees formed to resolve identified issues as they arise</td>
<td>Involve all parents in decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage both male and female parents and parents with disabilities to participate in SGA meetings and arrive on time</td>
<td>Ensure SGA meetings are well planned and involve all SGA members either males or females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage women to communicate their ideas in meetings and to assume SGAC leadership responsibilities</td>
<td>Communicate the importance of women having equal representation in terms of leadership and voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure there is diverse parent representation in the SGAC, including parents of children at different grade levels, gender, social economic status or disability</td>
<td>Empower the SGAC members to effectively assume their responsibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Throughout the year, publicly acknowledge committed teachers and appreciate their efforts</td>
<td>Acknowledge parents who participate actively in SGA meetings and contribute to the school improvement plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and share ways to make all families feel welcome and involved</td>
<td>Adopt a specific schedule to meet with parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage parents to visit children at school and in classroom. Ensure that both males and females parents do follow up of their children’s learning at school and at home</td>
<td>Ensure that all school staff are friendly, acknowledge and assist visitors immediately, as well as answer the phone regularly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor parents who need support or encouragement to be involved</td>
<td>Communicate activities that can be done by volunteering parents within the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify different talents parents possess and share the information with the school leadership</td>
<td>Share with parents the school ‘s needs in terms of areas for volunteerism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish and monitor parent volunteer programmes.</td>
<td>Establish and monitor parent volunteer programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGAC reach out to parents who are not involved and encourage participation in SGA meetings and school activities</td>
<td>Value and include every parent regardless of social economic background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobilize parents to participate in school events and support planning and organization when necessary</td>
<td>Inform the parents and the community what is happening in school and encourage participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGAC ensure significant parent involvement in the school improvement plan</td>
<td>Invite parents to be involved in developing the school improvement plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognize the special constraints on parents with disabilities and share with the school strategies to involve those parents in the school activities.</td>
<td>Discuss with SGAC members strategies to involve parents with disabilities in the school activities.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage parents to ask children what they have done or learnt at school each day. If the content is new or unfamiliar, have the child explain it.</td>
<td>Discuss with SGAC members strategies to involve parents with disabilities in the school activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage parents to read their child’s report cards and see where they are doing well and the areas where they need help. Encourage them to ask teachers how they can help their child improve.</td>
<td>Avail time to discuss with parents how they can support children improve their results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage parents to discuss with their children about what they think is helping or hindering their learning.</td>
<td>Discuss with children about what they think is helping or hinder their learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage parents to ask their children or their child’s teacher what they are doing well in. What have been their successes? Then praise them and celebrate progress.</td>
<td>Communicate to parents how children are progressing and areas they need support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage parents to read together at home. If they aren’t literate, help them find someone else to read with.</td>
<td>Encourage teachers to lend books and other reading materials to children to read at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage parents to ensure that their child has the essential materials they need to learn, such as notebooks, books, pens, school bag, etc.</td>
<td>Communicate to parents the needed materials at the start of the year. Inform them of the usefulness of those materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage parents to play games with their children at home that use words and numbers. Sing, tell stories, and share proverbs</td>
<td>Encourage parents to sing, tell stories and share proverbs with their children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage parents to make learning and play materials from local resources. Share and show examples.</td>
<td>Encourage parents to make learning and play materials from the local environment. Show examples of materials developed that can support different learning areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage parents to ensure that their child is healthy, clean and has enough food. Children cannot learn well if they are sick or hungry.</td>
<td>Talk with parents whose children seem to be unhealthy, unclean or hungry. Discuss how these challenges can be addressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage parents to discuss with teachers any learning barriers their child has. This will allow the teacher to better create a classroom conducive environment that supports his/her learning</td>
<td>Identify children with special needs, talk with their parents and ensure that you take measures that facilitate them in their learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure all school-aged children attend school and that those with disabilities are provided appropriate support.</td>
<td>Work with other stakeholders, parents and children to identify and consult children at risk of exclusion, as well as their families, to ensure support is provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit parent volunteers to provide extra support and supervision to children with disabilities.</td>
<td>Observe an extra-curricular activity such as a reading club and provide constructive feedback to community volunteers on how to better include all children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitize all parents on how to talk to their children about inclusion and discrimination.</td>
<td>Through careful observation of students and by collaborating with teachers and parents, identify children with learning disabilities. Support these children to learn with others in the classroom or seeking further guidance from your SEO or partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage parents of children with disabilities to meet regularly with teachers to discuss the child’s progress, needs, and how to best support his/her learning.</td>
<td>Ensure teachers of children with special needs meet regularly with parents to discuss the child’s progress, needs, and how to best support his/her learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 6: Planning and Conducting Effective SGA and SGAC meetings

SGA and SGAC meetings are the ideal opportunity for parents, parent leaders and school staff to communicate. For this communication to be effective, the meetings must be well planned and facilitated.

Activity 34

Discuss the following questions in small groups:

- How do you plan or prepare for effective SGAC meetings? What needs to be done in advance?
- How do you communicate the time for meeting to parents? Is this effective?
- How do you conduct SGA meetings? What are the different agenda items of the meeting?
- How do you encourage active participation of all parents?
- How do you encourage children (boys and girls) to raise their voices and perspectives?
- What strategies are used to ensure communication is two-way (not just giving information, but also receiving ideas)?

After your discussion, read the text below to learn more how to plan and conduct a SGA or SGAC meeting.
There are different ways to plan and conduct a SGAC or SGA meeting depending on the objectives. Below are some guidelines:

- Prepare the objectives and agenda of the meeting in advance. Consult SGAC leaders and other school staff to inform/decide on the main objective for the meeting.

- Think about who should attend the meeting and prepare invitations. Use various communication channels to ensure that they are accessible to all parents, including those with disabilities

- Send invitations on time (14 days in advance for normal meetings, and 5 days in advance for urgent meetings)

- Prepare the venue for the meeting, ensure adequate seating for all.

- Agree on how the meeting will be conducted to engage parents to participate actively.

**PARTS OF THE SGAC or SGA MEETING**

1. **Opening the meeting**

   - Welcome word by the President of SGAC (Chair of the meeting)
   - Presentation of the chair of the meeting, the minute-taker and any visitors
   - Monitor attendance. Ensure there is a sufficient number of attendees required to hold the meeting
   - Explain the objective of the meeting
   - Run through the agenda of meeting and check if there are any additional points to be added
   - Set ground rules, such as respecting ideas of others, staying on topic, avoid receiving calls inside the room, not interrupting others, etc.
2. **Review the minutes of the previous meeting**
   - Give a summary of the previous meeting
   - Check if action points taken were put into practice
   - Discuss challenges or future action points
   - Approve minutes

3. **During the meeting**
   - Address each agenda item
   - Minute taker records a summary of ideas
   - Action points, responsible people and time frames are decided for each item

4. **Closing the meeting**
   - Share with attendees a summary of decisions and action points
   - Agree on date of next meeting
   - Thank participants
   - Remind participants to sign attendance list

5. **Things to be considered while chairing a meeting**
   - Good management of time. If necessary, end discussions or suggest that they can be continued after the meeting.
   - Ensure communication remains positive and productive
   - Encourage active participation of all participants, including men and women and people with disabilities.
▪ Discourage “sub-meetings” (meetings within meetings) of parents discussing issues simultaneously

▪ Reach consensus after having discussed an issue

▪ Support attendees who have difficulty in expressing themselves, so they can also be heard

▪ Manage different behaviours of participants in the meeting
MODULE REFERENCES


APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Definitions Education Indicators

The following formulas come from UNESCO’s Education Indicators Technical Guidelines (2009).

1. **Gross Enrolment Rate (GER)**

Total number of students enrolled in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education in a given school year.

\[ \text{GER} = \frac{\text{Number of pupils at a level in year } t}{\text{Population of school age in year } t} \times 100 \]

2. **Net Enrolment Rate (NER)**

Enrolment of the official age group for a given cycle of education expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population.

\[ \text{NER} = \frac{\text{Number of pupils of specified age at a level in year } t}{\text{Population of related school age in year } t} \times 100 \]

3. **Repetition rate (RR)**

The proportion of pupils enrolled in a given grade and a given school year who study in the same grade the following school year.

\[ RR^{t+1} = \frac{\text{Number of pupils repeating in a level in year } t}{\text{Number of pupils enrolled in that level in year } t - 1} \times 100 \]
4. **Drop-out Rate (DR)**

The percentage of pupils who leave the school without completing the grade they were enrolled in during the school year.

\[
DR^{t-1} = \frac{\text{Number of pupils who leave the school in a level in year } t}{\text{Number of pupils enrolled in that level in year } t-1} \times 100
\]

5. **Gross Intake Ratio (GIR)**

Total number of new entrants in a certain grade of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population at the theoretical entrance age to that grade of education. The GIR for P6 and S6 are used as an alternative for the completion rates of primary and secondary education respectively. Calculation includes all new entrants to the grade (regardless of age). Therefore, the ratio can exceed 100%, due to over-aged and under-aged children who enter primary school late/early and/or repeat grades.

6. **Net Intake Ratio (NIR)**

New entrants to a certain grade of education who are of the official entrance age for that grade, expressed as a percentage of the population of the same age. It is calculated by dividing the number of children of official grade entrance age by the population of the same age, and multiply the result by 100. The NIR should not exceed 100%.

7. **Transition Rate (TR)**

The number of new entrants in a given level of education as a percentage of the pupils who were enrolled in the previous level of education in the previous year. Only new pupils entering the next level of education are given consideration; repeaters at this level are eliminated.