



# PROMISE

Professional Noticing to Improve  
Entrepreneurship Education

## PROMISE Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

The Professional Noticing Project's vision is to create an innovative project that attracts and enhances diversity in its team to develop programmes and resources that meet the diverse needs of the changing communities we serve.

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01

**Introduction: Explanation of  
the purpose and scope of the  
strategy**

## **Introduction: Explanation of the purpose and scope of the strategy**

The principles of equality and inclusion are among the European Union's core values. At the same time, societies are becoming more diverse in many ways. As a result, there is a greater need in Europe to learn to navigate diversity and to build inclusive and cohesive societies. Erasmus+, an EU programme, is a key programme that can help with this. European Union (EU) programmes should make opportunities available to all. However, because of various barriers, some people will not be able to benefit equally from these opportunities. Several policy initiatives prioritise the inclusion of people who face access barriers or have fewer opportunities in education and training.

The Professional Noticing to Improve Entrepreneurship Education Erasmus+ Project commissioned the development of this Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. Our project seeks to promote creative learning and teaching practises. Its main goal is to strengthen HEIs' ability to develop students' entrepreneurial skills by introducing an innovative new skill set: Professional Noticing. There is a need to incorporate a diversity and inclusion strategy into our project because we work in the education sector and need to ensure that teachers, students, and academics who will be involved are given equal opportunity.

The values of inclusion, equality of opportunity, and diversity are central to our project, and we understand how crucial it is to uphold these values at all times. Everything we do will be consistent with how we practise equality, diversity, and inclusion. Together, diversity, equality, and inclusion form a positive strategy to acknowledge that everyone is different and can contribute their own special expertise, knowledge, and experience to the organisation. The purpose of this Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is to promote dignity and respect for all, as well as to foster an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all project participants are acknowledged and valued.

We acknowledge that each person involved in the project, or who wishes to participate, has unique needs that may affect their ability to utilise a variety of services in our community, including those provided by us. In the case of service users, this means that we may, in order

to improve their chances of accessing the services we offer, set up and deliver projects that will specifically work with particular groups.

The following topics are covered in this document: In section 2, the policy background is outlined, drawing on previous programmes in relevant fields. Section 3 goes over the strategy's objectives in greater detail. Section 4 provides the necessary definitions, while sections 5 and 6 outline the measures available within the programmes to ensure their broadest accessibility.

It applies to and binds all project participants, at all levels and in all aspects of our project. Everyone involved in, working on, and participating in our project is expected to meet the same high standards.



02

## **Commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**

## **Commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**

Our vision is to create a project that is fluid in inclusion and rich in diversity. where the diversity of backgrounds and talents fosters creativity and innovation, resulting in the best decisions for long-term growth.

Our mission is to increase diversity in our project and strengthen our inclusiveness by developing a strategy, processes, and actions to support and appreciate participants. A culture in which all participants are empowered and motivated to reach their full potential, and Diversity and Inclusion are recognised as genuine opportunities and assets to the organisations.

Our goal is to increase awareness, provide tools to support fair decision making in development, promotion, and fully integrate Diversity and Inclusion in our organisation, and hold ourselves accountable by defining targets and monitoring our progress.

### **A) Policy Framework**

One of the main goals of the Commission's initiative towards a European Education Area, the EU Youth Strategy, and the European Youth Goals is to include people who face access challenges or have fewer opportunities in education, training, and youth work. Everyone "has the right to quality and inclusive education, training, and life-long learning," according to the European Pillar of Social Rights. Additionally, it is consistent with the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which aims to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all" among other things.

In this regard, the European Council emphasised that "education and culture are key to building inclusive and cohesive societies," and in light of that, it urged Member States, the Council of Ministers, and the European Commission to advance efforts in order to "step up mobility and exchanges, including through a substantially strengthened, inclusive, and extended" programmes.

The idea that programmes should be accessible to everyone, regardless of any barriers they may encounter, underpins all the opportunities they provide to people and organisations

from inside and outside the EU with the goal of leaving no one behind and fostering more inclusive, just, environmentally friendly, and technologically advanced societies.

## **B) Societal Contexts**

Societies are becoming more diverse in a variety of ways (cultures, abilities, social groups, sexualities, political opinions, identities, education, training, literacy levels etc.). Because of this, there is an increased need for informal, formal, and non-formal educational activities to teach people how to deal with diversity and build inclusive and cohesive social systems. The goal of our Erasmus+ Project is to give people the assistance they need to overcome any obstacles they may encounter during this process.

Regardless of their background or circumstances, citizens must be included in and actively participate in democracy and public life in order for modern societies and political systems to function. In this regard, participation in the programmes can help to promote shared citizenship and a greater sense of involvement in society.



03

## **Assessment of Current Diversity and Inclusion Practices**

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**An overview of the current demographic makeup of the workforce within our partner countries, as well as any barriers to inclusion existing within partners' organisations**

Growing societal pressure to embrace diversity has encouraged businesses to review their D&I efforts and take greater responsibility for promoting diversity in societies over the last few years. The majority of companies approached this from an HR standpoint, positioning diversity and inclusion as a core topic on the human resources agenda, resulting in a stronger emphasis on objectivity in evaluation and promotion processes. Furthermore, the implementation of anti-discrimination policies incorporated D&I into company values or commitments, which are typically published on corporate websites and the like.

Below we will analyse the current demographic makeup of the workforce within partner countries and any barriers to inclusion that exist in partner organisations

### **a) Denmark**

In the Nordic countries, they still do not embrace diversity as a business imperative. In studying Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) statements for the 30 top-listed companies in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland (in total 120 companies), Boston Consulting Group (BCG) found that only 11% pursue focused efforts with a clear link to value. Fifty-two percent of companies have a higher-level link to business value, but limited efforts beyond HR and recruitment, while 37% focus on the moral obligation of providing equal opportunities with no reference to the positive business value from D&I.

According to recent rankings, the Nordics are falling behind in terms of female leadership participation. Women's leadership development has stalled, with all countries except Sweden declining in ranking over the last 10 to 15 years. Norway and Sweden were ranked 36th in 2006, Finland 46th, and Denmark 53rd. Sweden is now ranked 35th, the only Nordic country in the top 50, with Finland, Norway, and Denmark ranking 51st, 68th, and 101st, respectively.

When defining D&I efforts, companies must take into account minorities other than women because diversity encompasses more than just women.

**LGBT+** (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and additional groups). A sizeable portion of LGBT+ people still feel uncomfortable disclosing their identity at work. In 2020, 18% of people who identified as LGBT+ did so at their place of employment in Sweden, 27% in Denmark, and 33% in Finland. Furthermore, 12% in Denmark, 13% in Sweden, and 21% in Finland reported having encountered negative attitudes at work because they identify as LGBT+. Companies have every incentive to take action in this regard because employees who don't feel valued and respected lose a lot of talent. According to a 2018 BCG survey, LGBT+ employees who frequently encounter unfavourable workplace experiences are 40% less productive and 13 times more likely to leave their jobs.

**Nationality** should be a key diversity factor when discussing value because businesses operate in increasingly complex and global business contexts. While only about 20% of leadership teams are not from the Nordic region, the top 30 companies in each of the Nordic countries have sourced more than half of their revenues from outside the region. When dealing with customers and suppliers in nations where culture, business norms, and market dynamics diverge from our own, having employees of various nationalities in the company can be a crucial asset. According to an analysis of the executive teams of the 30 largest publicly traded companies in each Nordic nation, 80% of them were native to the region. By contrast, only 2% (combined) of the executive teams came from Asia, Africa, or Australia.

Nordic businesses are strongly motivated to advance D&I, with a focus on the growing understanding that diversity is not only about doing good, but also about doing well as a business. However, the majority of Nordic businesses find it challenging to express precisely what kind of value they anticipate from improved D&I. Value and actual progress will typically either be slow to materialise or fail to materialise when this ambition to find value is neither concrete nor connected to the company's businesses. Leaders need to step back and reconsider their approach to D&I; businesses that are able to use diversity as a competitive advantage will be more successful in this decade and beyond.

### **European E-Learning Institute – Our Danish Partner**

Our organisation places a high priority on diversity and inclusion, with a specific focus on our desired business goal: to foster an open, welcoming environment for all employees, regardless of their gender, age, nationality, sexual orientation, ethnicity, (dis)ability etc. We

strive to provide each employee with the opportunity for advancement, benefits, and more while providing equal opportunity to all team members.

# 04

## Aims of the Strategy

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This Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Strategy is designed to ensure equitable access to professional noticing (PN) programmes for all individuals, irrespective of their background or circumstances. Our commitment to D&I stems from the recognition that a diverse and inclusive environment enhances learning, fosters innovation, and drives personal and professional growth. By actively addressing and dismantling barriers that various target groups may face, both within and outside of Europe, we aim to create a more equitable and supportive environment for all participants. This strategy provides a comprehensive framework for inclusion and diversity projects, particularly those funded by Erasmus+ programmes, ensuring that these core values are deeply embedded in every aspect of our initiatives. Through this strategy, we seek to cultivate an environment where diversity is not only acknowledged but celebrated, and where all participants are empowered to contribute their unique perspectives and talents.

### Goals and Objectives

The primary goals of this strategy are to:

1. **Promote Equity and Access:** Ensure that all individuals, especially those with fewer opportunities, have equitable access to PN programmes and other related initiatives. This involves identifying and removing systemic barriers that may prevent full participation.
2. **Enhance Understanding and Awareness:** Cultivate a shared understanding among stakeholders of the importance of D&I in PN and provide clear guidelines for inclusion. This includes educating all members of the organisation about the benefits of diversity and how to implement inclusive practices effectively.
3. **Reduce Barriers:** Identify and reduce barriers to participation in PN programmes for individuals with limited opportunities. This encompasses not only physical and logistical barriers but also socio-economic and cultural barriers.

4. **Foster Positive Interactions:** Equip programme stakeholders to interact positively and effectively with diverse individuals from various backgrounds. This involves training in cultural competence, empathy, and effective communication strategies.
5. **Recognise and Value Diversity:** Promote the recognition and appreciation of diversity as a valuable source of learning and growth within the context of PN. By valuing diverse perspectives, we can enhance the learning experience for all participants.
6. **Support Continuous Improvement:** Encourage continuous improvement and higher-quality project development that includes and benefits people with fewer opportunities. This includes regular assessment and refinement of our D&I strategies to ensure they remain effective and relevant.

### **How We Aim to Achieve These Goals**

To achieve these objectives, our strategy will focus on the following key actions:

- **Creating a Shared Understanding:**
  - Define who might be regarded as having fewer opportunities and establish a clear framework for including these individuals in Erasmus+ programmes and our projects. This involves developing detailed criteria and guidelines to ensure clarity and consistency.
  - Develop resources and training materials to educate stakeholders on the importance of D&I in PN. This includes workshops, seminars, and online modules that cover a range of topics related to diversity and inclusion.
- **Reducing Barriers to Participation:**
  - Identify common barriers faced by individuals with limited opportunities and develop strategies to address these challenges. This could involve providing financial support, accessible materials, and tailored assistance.
  - Provide support to applicants and potential participants to overcome these barriers, ensuring that appropriate conditions for learning, working, or volunteering are in place to meet their support needs. This includes offering mentoring and counselling services to guide participants through the process.

- **Increasing Commitment to Inclusion and Diversity:**
  - Foster a culture of inclusivity among all participants in the project's activities, encouraging a welcoming attitude towards diversity. This involves setting clear expectations for inclusive behaviour and recognising and celebrating diversity.
  - Implement policies and practices that promote inclusivity at every stage of project management and execution. This includes developing inclusive recruitment practices, ensuring diverse representation in decision-making bodies, and creating an inclusive work environment.
- **Recognising and Valuing Diversity:**
  - Ensure that the experiences and competencies gained by individuals with fewer opportunities are recognised and valued. This could involve creating platforms for sharing success stories and providing opportunities for these individuals to mentor others.
  - Highlight and celebrate the contributions of diverse individuals within the context of PN projects. This includes showcasing diverse role models and providing opportunities for diverse voices to be heard.
- **Supporting Beneficiary Organisations:**
  - Provide beneficiary organisations with the tools, training, funding, and coaching needed to develop and implement high-quality projects that involve and support individuals with fewer opportunities. This includes offering specialised training sessions and developing resource guides.
  - Facilitate the exchange of best practices and lessons learned among organisations to promote continuous improvement. This involves creating networks and forums for organisations to share their experiences and collaborate on D&I initiatives.
- **Embedding D&I Throughout the Project Lifecycle:**
  - Integrate D&I considerations at all stages of the project lifecycle, including promotion, outreach, support, assessment, participant selection, preparation,

implementation, results, evaluation, dissemination, and follow-up. This ensures that D&I is not an afterthought but a fundamental part of the project's design and execution.

- Regularly review and update our D&I strategies to ensure they remain relevant and effective in addressing the needs of diverse participants. This involves conducting periodic evaluations and soliciting feedback from participants and stakeholders.



05

## Definitions

## Definitions

### A) Target Groups

The regulations establishing the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps programmes define “(young) people with fewer opportunities” as individuals who, due to economic, social, cultural, geographical, or health reasons, or because of their migrant background, disability, educational difficulties, or any other reason that could give rise to discrimination under Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, face obstacles that prevent them from having effective access to opportunities under these programmes.

Given this definition, our strategy's primary target groups are those individuals who, due to various exclusion factors, find themselves at a disadvantage compared to their peers participating in Erasmus+ programmes and, ultimately, our project. These individuals may be in such precarious positions because of one or more of the following exclusion factors:

- Individuals from low-income backgrounds who may lack the financial resources to participate fully in educational and professional opportunities.
- Those facing discrimination or social exclusion due to their ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or other social factors.
- People from different cultural backgrounds who may face challenges in integrating into new environments due to language barriers or cultural differences.
- Individuals living in remote or rural areas with limited access to educational and professional opportunities.
- Those with chronic illnesses, disabilities, or mental health issues that can limit their participation in various programmes.
- Individuals with educational difficulties, such as learning disabilities or a lack of access to quality education, which can hinder their academic and professional development.

Our strategy recognises that these exclusion factors, when combined with specific outreach, communication, and project design practices, can create significant challenges and barriers to taking advantage of opportunities within our project. It is essential to identify and address these barriers to ensure that our initiatives are genuinely inclusive and accessible.

The need for additional support for inclusion and diversity is context-dependent, and it is crucial to rely on the judgement of knowledgeable staff who are equipped to assess these needs. Staff should actively seek feedback and input from participants to understand their unique challenges and provide tailored support. This approach ensures that our D&I strategy is responsive and effective, addressing the specific needs of our target groups and enabling them to fully benefit from the opportunities provided by our project.

By focusing on these target groups and addressing their specific challenges, we aim to create a more inclusive and equitable environment where all individuals have the opportunity to succeed and thrive. This commitment to supporting people with fewer opportunities is central to our D&I strategy and reflects our dedication to fostering diversity, inclusion, and equal access for everyone involved in our initiatives.

## **B) Obstacles to Accessibility and Outreach**

From previous project experience, we have been able to pinpoint the main obstacles that have limited the participation of people from underprivileged areas in the projects. These potential obstacles are highlighted in the list below. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but rather to serve as a guide for removing these obstacles in order to broaden the reach and accessibility of our projects.

### **1. Cultural Differences**

While individuals from all backgrounds may view cultural differences as obstacles, they can especially hurt those with less opportunity. These discrepancies could pose major obstacles to learning in general, especially for those with migrant or refugee backgrounds, particularly recently arrived migrants, those who belong to national or ethnic minorities, sign language users, those who struggle with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion, etc. Participating in any type of project activities may expose participants to foreign languages and cultural differences, which may turn them off and limit the benefits of their participation. These cultural differences may even make it impossible for prospective participants to apply for assistance through the programmes, acting as a complete entry barrier.

### **2. Social Obstacles**

Social adjustment issues like poor social skills, risky or anti-social behaviour, past criminal activity, past substance abuse, or social marginalisation may be a barrier. Other social barriers may result from a person's family situation, such as being the first person in the family to enrol in a higher education programme, being a parent (especially a single parent), a care giver, the breadwinner, an orphan, or having lived in or currently being housed in an institution.

### **3. Economic Obstacles**

Economic disadvantage, such as a low standard of living, low income, students who must work to support themselves, reliance on the social welfare system, long-term unemployment, precarious circumstances or poverty, homelessness, being in debt or having financial issues, etc., may act as a barrier. Other challenges could result from the limited transferability of services (particularly assistance for those with fewer opportunities), which must travel "mobile" with the participants when going to a distant location or, more specifically, abroad.

### **4. Discrimination**

Discrimination based on gender (including gender identity and expression), age, ethnicity, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation, disability, or intersectional factors creates barriers (a combinations of one or several of the mentioned discrimination barriers).

### **5. Health Problems**

Health issues, such as severe illness, chronic diseases, or any other physical or mental health issue, may create barriers to participation in our project.

### **6. Disability**

This encompasses any physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments that, when combined with other obstacles, may prevent someone from participating fully and effectively in the project.

### **7. Geographical Obstacles**

Living in a remote or rural area, on a small island or in a remote region, in an urban suburb, in an area with poor facilities or limited public transportation, in a third-world country, etc., may be a barrier.

## **8. Obstacles linked to Education and Training Systems**

Barriers may exist for people who struggle academically in education and training systems, early dropouts, NEETS (people not in education, employment, or training), and low-skilled adults. These educational challenges, while they may also be related to one's own circumstances, are primarily the result of an educational system that imposes structural restrictions and/or fails to fully take into account each individual's unique needs. When the structure of the curriculum makes it challenging to complete a learning or training mobility abroad as part of their studies, people may also encounter participation barriers.

### **C) Understanding Diversity**

In the context of this strategy, diversity refers to all kinds of differences. Diversity in terms of ethnicity, religion, culture, and language is more obvious than diversity in terms of other factors. However, diversity goes beyond just these features. As stated in the definition of "people with fewer opportunities," it also refers to various (dis)abilities, educational levels, social backgrounds, economic circumstances, health statuses, or the place of origin.

This strategy seeks to embrace and celebrate diversity so that difference can be a source of learning rather than a foment of hatred and competition. The Erasmus+ Programmes' participants and participating organisations should be prepared to work with diversity and make the most of what diversity has to offer to enhance the programme. As a result, more people from all walks of life will interact positively, which will ultimately benefit those who have fewer opportunities.



06

## **Diversity & Inclusion in the Context of Professional Noticing**

## **Diversity & Inclusion in the Context of Professional Noticing**

Professional noticing refers to the ability of educators and professionals to observe, interpret, and respond to the diverse needs and behaviours of individuals in educational and professional settings. It involves recognising subtle cues and patterns that inform effective teaching and learning strategies. By honing their noticing skills, educators can better understand their students' unique needs, strengths, and challenges, leading to more tailored and effective instruction.

D&I are pivotal elements in modern education and professional development. These principles ensure that every individual, regardless of their background, abilities, or identity, has equal opportunities to engage and succeed. In the context of PN, integrating D&I means acknowledging and valuing the differences among individuals and ensuring that these differences are respected and leveraged to enhance learning experiences. This approach not only promotes equity but also enriches the educational environment by fostering a culture of mutual respect and understanding.

The importance of D&I in PN cannot be overstated. Diverse and inclusive practices help break down barriers that might prevent individuals from fully participating in educational activities. They create a supportive environment where all students feel valued and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives. This inclusivity enhances learning outcomes by allowing a wider range of experiences and viewpoints to inform discussions and problem-solving processes.

This strategy aims to outline how D&I can be effectively integrated into PN, providing educators and trainers with actionable insights and methods to foster an inclusive environment. By addressing specific aspects such as activities for visually impaired students and the development of diversity issues, this strategy highlights the comprehensive approach needed to make professional noticing truly inclusive.

### **Use of Language: Importance of Inclusive Language in Professional Noticing**

The use of inclusive language is a fundamental aspect of promoting diversity and inclusion (D&I) within professional noticing (PN). Inclusive language respects and acknowledges the diverse identities and experiences of all individuals, fostering an environment where

everyone feels valued and respected. Research underscores the significant impact that language has on shaping perceptions and creating inclusive environments (Brown, 2015).

### **Inclusive Language for Diverse Identities:**

Inclusive language involves being mindful of how we address and refer to individuals from various backgrounds, including different genders, ethnicities, abilities, and socio-economic statuses. For instance, using gender-neutral language such as "they" instead of assuming "he" or "she" can make all students feel included, particularly those who identify as non-binary. The Inclusive Language Guide by the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB, 2021) provides comprehensive guidelines on using respectful and inclusive language, ensuring that communication is free from biases and stereotypes.

### **Inclusive Language in Educational Settings:**

In the context of professional noticing, educators should be particularly aware of the language they use when interacting with students. According to a study by the National Education Association (NEA, 2018), inclusive language in educational settings helps create a supportive learning environment where all students feel seen and heard. For example, avoiding idioms or colloquial expressions that may not be understood by non-native speakers or students from different cultural backgrounds can make the content more accessible and inclusive.

### **Promoting Respect and Equity:**

Using inclusive language promotes respect and equity within the classroom. Research by Sue et al. (2007) highlights that microaggressions, which are subtle and often unintentional discriminatory comments, can have a significant negative impact on students from minority backgrounds. By consciously using inclusive language, educators can avoid these microaggressions and create a more welcoming environment for all students. This practice involves avoiding assumptions about students' backgrounds and being mindful of terms that could perpetuate stereotypes.

### **Training and Awareness:**

Educators must receive training on the importance and implementation of inclusive language. The Teaching Diverse Students Initiative (TDSI, 2020) emphasises that professional development focused on inclusive communication can significantly enhance teachers'

abilities to support a diverse student body. Training sessions should cover the principles of inclusive language, practical examples, and strategies for integrating these principles into everyday interactions and instructional materials.

### **Impact on Student Engagement and Achievement:**

The use of inclusive language has been shown to positively impact student engagement and achievement. A study by Harper and Davis (2016) found that students who feel respected and valued through inclusive communication are more likely to participate actively in class and achieve higher academic outcomes. This underscores the importance of language as a tool for fostering an inclusive and effective learning environment.

### **Examples of Inclusive Language:**

- **Gender-Inclusive Terms:** Use "partner" instead of "husband" or "wife," and "parent" instead of "mother" or "father" to avoid assumptions about family structures.
- **Ability-Inclusive Terms:** Use "person with a disability" rather than "disabled person," focusing on the individual rather than their condition.
- **Culturally Inclusive Language:** Avoid using slang or idiomatic expressions that may not be understood by all students, and be sensitive to the cultural connotations of certain words or phrases.
- **Economic Sensitivity:** Use terms like "economically disadvantaged" instead of "poor," and "wealthy" instead of "rich" to maintain a respectful tone.

In conclusion, the use of inclusive language is a critical component of D&I in professional noticing. By being mindful of how language is used to address and refer to individuals from diverse backgrounds, educators can create a more inclusive and respectful learning environment. This involves using gender-neutral terms, avoiding stereotypes, ensuring accessibility in communication, and providing ongoing training for educators on the principles of inclusive language. By prioritising inclusive language, educators can enhance student engagement, foster a culture of respect, and support the diverse needs of all learners.

### **Example of Activities for Visually Impaired**

In PN, it is essential to design activities that consider the diverse abilities of students, including those who are visually impaired. These activities should be adaptable, ensuring that students with visual impairments can participate meaningfully. This may involve using tactile learning tools, providing auditory instructions, and creating an inclusive environment where all students, regardless of their visual abilities, can develop their noticing skills effectively.

Research supports the importance of creating adaptable educational activities for visually impaired students. For example, a study by the American Foundation for the Blind (2018) emphasised that tactile learning tools, such as raised-line drawings and three-dimensional models, are vital in helping visually impaired students understand spatial concepts and develop their cognitive skills. Additionally, the use of technology, such as screen readers and audio-described software, can greatly enhance the learning experience by providing auditory information that complements visual content.

Providing auditory instructions is another crucial aspect of inclusivity for visually impaired students. According to a report by the National Federation of the Blind (2019), clear and detailed verbal explanations help bridge the gap caused by visual impairments, allowing students to follow along with the material more effectively. This includes describing visual elements in detail and giving precise instructions for tasks that typically rely on visual cues.

Creating an inclusive environment goes beyond just adapting materials; it also involves fostering a classroom culture that values and respects all students' contributions. Research published in the Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness (2020) highlights the positive impact of peer support and collaborative learning strategies on visually impaired students. By encouraging group work and peer interactions, educators can help visually impaired students feel more integrated and supported in their learning environment.

Moreover, it's important for educators to receive training on how to effectively teach visually impaired students. The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) suggests that professional development for teachers should include specific strategies for engaging visually impaired students and understanding their unique needs. This training can equip educators with the skills necessary to adapt their teaching methods and materials, ensuring that all students can participate fully in PN activities.

## **Development of Diversity Issues**

Understanding and anticipating diversity issues is crucial in professional noticing (PN). Diversity issues encompass a wide range of factors, including race, gender, socio-economic status, disability, and cultural background. Addressing these issues requires a proactive approach to ensure that all students are given equal opportunities to succeed. Research shows that inclusive education practices significantly improve academic and social outcomes for all students, highlighting the importance of developing robust strategies to manage diversity.

Educators and planners should develop future-oriented strategies to assess and manage risks related to diversity. A study by the National Centre for Education Statistics (NCES, 2019) indicates that schools with proactive diversity strategies see improved student engagement and lower dropout rates. These strategies often involve data collection and analysis to identify and understand the specific needs of diverse student populations. By continuously monitoring how diversity issues evolve, educators can adapt their approaches to meet the changing needs of their students.

Continuous monitoring of diversity issues is essential for creating an inclusive curriculum. According to research by Banks and Banks (2016), an inclusive curriculum that reflects the diverse backgrounds and experiences of students leads to better educational outcomes and promotes a sense of belonging. This involves incorporating diverse perspectives into the curriculum content, ensuring representation of various cultures, and addressing topics such as social justice and equity. By doing so, educators can help students develop a broader understanding of the world and appreciate the value of diversity.

Ensuring that teaching methods are inclusive is another critical aspect of managing diversity issues. Inclusive teaching practices, as highlighted by Gay (2018), involve using a variety of instructional strategies to accommodate different learning styles and needs. This can include differentiated instruction, which tailors teaching methods to individual students' strengths and challenges, and culturally responsive teaching, which incorporates students' cultural references in all aspects of learning. These approaches not only support diverse learners but also enhance the learning experience for all students.

Creating robust planning methods is essential for educators to proactively address potential challenges and support a diverse student body effectively. The Universal Design for Learning

(UDL) framework, as discussed by Meyer, Rose, and Gordon (2014), provides a set of principles for developing flexible learning environments that can accommodate the diverse needs of all students. UDL encourages educators to offer multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression, ensuring that all students can access and participate in learning activities.

Incorporating these diversity strategies into professional noticing is essential for educators to effectively respond to the needs of their students. Professional noticing involves observing, interpreting, and responding to student behaviours and interactions. By understanding diversity issues and anticipating potential challenges, educators can be more attuned to the subtle cues that indicate when a student might need additional support or a different approach. This heightened awareness enables educators to make informed decisions that foster an inclusive and supportive learning environment, ultimately enhancing the educational experience for all students.

## **Cultural Sensitivity and Audience Awareness**

Effective professional noticing requires cultural sensitivity and awareness of the audience's diverse backgrounds. Cultural sensitivity involves recognising and respecting the differences in cultural norms, values, and practices among students. Research underscores the importance of cultural sensitivity in education, showing that it significantly influences student engagement and learning outcomes (Gay, 2018). To create an inclusive environment, educators must be mindful of cultural differences and strive to foster an atmosphere that respects and acknowledges the diversity within their class or team.

Understanding students' unique perspectives is a crucial aspect of cultural sensitivity. According to a study by Nieto and Bode (2018), students' cultural backgrounds profoundly influence their learning styles, behaviours, and interactions. Educators who invest time in learning about their students' cultural contexts can tailor their teaching methods to better meet the needs of a diverse student body. This understanding can be achieved through direct communication with students and their families, participating in cultural events, and integrating cultural awareness training into professional development programs.

Incorporating culturally relevant examples into the curriculum is another essential component of cultural sensitivity. A study by Ladson-Billings (1995) introduced the concept

of culturally relevant pedagogy, which emphasises the importance of using students' cultural experiences as a foundation for learning. By incorporating examples and content that reflect the diverse backgrounds of students, educators can make the curriculum more relatable and engaging. This approach not only validates students' cultural identities but also enriches the learning experience by exposing all students to a broader range of perspectives.

Fostering an atmosphere of respect and inclusion involves creating a classroom environment where all students feel valued and supported. Research by Banks (2016) highlights that an inclusive classroom environment is characterised by mutual respect, open communication, and equitable opportunities for participation. Educators can promote such an environment by setting clear expectations for respectful behaviour, encouraging collaboration, and addressing any instances of bias or discrimination promptly. This helps to build a classroom culture where diversity is celebrated, and all students feel safe and included.

Professional noticing in culturally diverse classrooms also involves being aware of and sensitive to the subtle cues that may indicate cultural misunderstandings or conflicts. According to a study by Sue et al. (2007), microaggressions—subtle, often unintentional, discriminatory comments or behaviours—can have a significant negative impact on students from minority backgrounds. Educators must be vigilant in noticing these microaggressions and addressing them promptly to prevent them from undermining the inclusive environment. This requires ongoing self-reflection and a commitment to continuous learning about cultural competence.

Furthermore, professional development for educators should include training on cultural competence and sensitivity. A report by the American Educational Research Association (2012) recommends that teacher education programs incorporate comprehensive training on cultural diversity and inclusive teaching practices. Such training can help educators develop the skills and knowledge needed to effectively navigate and respond to the complexities of cultural diversity in the classroom.

## **Teaching and Implementing Noticing Tasks**

Noticing tasks in professional settings should inherently incorporate diversity and inclusion (D&I) principles. These tasks need to be designed and taught with a focus on inclusion, ensuring that all students can engage and benefit from them. Research has shown that when

educational activities are inclusive, they foster a sense of belonging and improve overall student performance (Schwartz, 2014).

In designing noticing tasks, educators should consider various aspects of diversity, such as cultural background, language, abilities, and learning styles. A study by Tomlinson (2017) on differentiated instruction highlights the importance of adapting tasks to meet the diverse needs of students. Differentiated instruction involves modifying content, process, and product based on students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles. By incorporating these principles into noticing tasks, educators can ensure that all students are given opportunities to engage meaningfully with the material.

Teaching these tasks with a focus on inclusion means providing multiple means of engagement and representation. The Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework, as outlined by Meyer, Rose, and Gordon (2014), suggests offering various ways for students to interact with content and demonstrate their understanding. For example, noticing tasks could include visual aids, hands-on activities, and opportunities for verbal and written expression. This approach ensures that students with different strengths and preferences can participate fully.

Educators should emphasise the importance of diversity within these tasks, teaching students not only to notice but also to appreciate and value the diversity around them. According to Banks (2016), multicultural education promotes an understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures, which can be integrated into noticing tasks. For instance, students can be encouraged to observe and discuss how cultural differences influence behaviours, communication styles, and problem-solving approaches in various contexts. This fosters a deeper understanding of diversity and its role in shaping human experiences.

Moreover, teaching students to value diversity involves creating a classroom culture that celebrates differences. Research by Gay (2018) on culturally responsive teaching underscores the need for educators to create an environment where diversity is seen as an asset rather than a challenge. This involves setting expectations for respectful interactions, encouraging collaboration among students from different backgrounds, and addressing any biases or stereotypes that may arise. By promoting an inclusive classroom culture, educators help students develop positive attitudes toward diversity.

Implementing these noticing tasks requires continuous reflection and adaptation. Educators should regularly assess the effectiveness of their noticing tasks and seek feedback from students to identify areas for improvement. A study by Hattie (2009) on visible learning emphasises the importance of feedback in the learning process. By incorporating student feedback, educators can refine their noticing tasks to better meet the needs of a diverse student body.

Professional development for educators is also crucial in effectively implementing inclusive noticing tasks. Training programs should provide educators with strategies for designing and teaching noticing tasks that incorporate D&I principles. According to a report by the National Education Association (2016), professional development focused on cultural competence and inclusive teaching practices enhances teachers' abilities to support diverse learners. Ongoing training and collaboration among educators can foster a community of practice that values and prioritises inclusion.

## **Linking D&I Strategy to Learning Templates**

Linking diversity and inclusion (D&I) strategy to learning templates is crucial in professional noticing. Learning templates serve as structured guides for educators, detailing the instructional methods, assessment strategies, and learning objectives. By explicitly connecting the D&I strategy to these templates, educators can ensure that D&I principles are seamlessly integrated into every aspect of teaching and learning.

To begin with, each component of the learning templates must be scrutinised to align with D&I guidelines. Research by Ladson-Billings (1995) on culturally relevant pedagogy highlights the importance of embedding cultural references and perspectives into the curriculum. By ensuring that learning materials reflect the diverse backgrounds and experiences of students, educators can create more engaging and relatable content. This might involve including case studies from various cultural contexts, using examples that resonate with a diverse student population, and ensuring representation in reading materials and multimedia resources.

Moreover, inclusive assessment strategies are essential for aligning learning templates with D&I principles. Traditional assessment methods may not always capture the abilities of all students, particularly those from diverse backgrounds or with different learning needs. According to Tomlinson (2017), differentiated assessment practices, which offer multiple

ways for students to demonstrate their understanding, are crucial. These might include project-based assessments, oral presentations, portfolios, and peer evaluations. By diversifying assessment methods, educators can provide equitable opportunities for all students to succeed.

Additionally, the instructional methods outlined in learning templates should incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. The UDL framework, as discussed by Meyer, Rose, and Gordon (2014), advocates for providing multiple means of engagement, representation, and action/expression. This approach not only caters to diverse learning preferences but also ensures that all students can access and engage with the curriculum effectively. For example, providing materials in various formats (text, audio, visual), offering choices in how students complete assignments, and creating interactive and collaborative learning opportunities are all ways to integrate UDL into learning templates.

Professional development for educators is another key aspect of linking D&I strategy to learning templates. Continuous training on inclusive teaching practices and cultural competence can equip educators with the skills needed to implement D&I principles effectively. A report by the National Education Association (2016) emphasises that professional development focused on D&I helps teachers understand and address the diverse needs of their students. Workshops, seminars, and collaborative planning sessions can facilitate the exchange of best practices and innovative strategies for integrating D&I into learning templates.

Furthermore, the alignment of D&I strategy with learning templates requires regular evaluation and feedback mechanisms. Educators should continually assess the effectiveness of their teaching practices and seek input from students on how inclusive they find the learning environment. Research by Hattie (2009) on visible learning underscores the importance of feedback in enhancing educational outcomes. By incorporating feedback loops, educators can make data-informed adjustments to their learning templates, ensuring that they remain responsive to the evolving needs of a diverse student body.

Another critical element is the development of inclusive classroom environments that reflect the principles outlined in the learning templates. Studies have shown that the classroom environment significantly impacts student learning and well-being (Dorman, 2003).

Classrooms should be designed to accommodate diverse learners, with accessible resources, flexible seating arrangements, and visual displays that celebrate cultural diversity. Creating a welcoming and inclusive physical space reinforces the D&I principles embedded in the learning templates and promotes a positive learning experience for all students.



07

## **Our Role in Preparing, Rolling Out and Following Up on the Project**

## **Our Role in Preparing, Rolling Out and Following Up on the Project**

Inclusion and diversity should be addressed in applicant organisations' projects. Organisations play an important role in making inclusion a reality, particularly in terms of organisational development (acquiring and developing more capacity in handling inclusion projects and disseminating it throughout the organisation) and outreach to and interaction with participants before, during, and after the project. The guidelines that follow will help you plan and carry out these activities and projects.

Through our initiatives, we actively foster opportunities for online and in-person interaction between people from various backgrounds (cultures, views, abilities). Our project, which is funded by the Erasmus+ Programme, provides the framework, networks, and structures needed to promote and facilitate fruitful personal interactions during project activities. The project seeks to aid individuals in navigating diversity and promoting social cohesion. In order to prevent those who have fewer opportunities from feeling stigmatised because of their background, dialogue between non-marginalized groups and those who are marginalised should be encouraged throughout all activities.

The following elements and strategies are part of our project and support and promote inclusion and diversity.

### **A) Inclusion & Diversity as Priorities in Project Application**

Inclusion and diversity play a significant role in the Erasmus+ programme's selection of applications for funding and distribution of financial assistance. Our project actively promotes inclusion and diversity and includes people with fewer opportunities at its core.

Implementing the values of diversity and inclusion is crucial to the continuous assessment criteria and is not only considered when evaluating applications. As a result, the goal of our project is to uphold the inclusivity and diversity standards established by the Erasmus+ Programme.

### **B) Accessibility of the Project**

In order to make project reporting mechanisms, documents, and forms clearer, shorter, and easier to understand, our project strives to adopt a user-friendly approach. We will make the project's resources available in partner languages and display the project in a way that is both user-friendly and accessible on our online learning platform. Our online digital learning environments will make participation easier for everyone, but especially for those who have fewer opportunities, such as the visually impaired or those with low digital competence.

### **C) Networking and Capacity Building for Inclusion and Diversity**

We are invited to address inclusion and diversity as project coordinators in accordance with our needs and the needs of our community. Working together with peers from other organisations to support those with fewer opportunities can be beneficial for staff members who are specifically involved with issues of inclusion and diversity and participants with fewer opportunities in our organisations. We are well-positioned to plan initiatives for the projects that emphasise inclusion and diversity. The format and structure of the project provide an excellent opportunity for us to develop our own approach to inclusion and diversity within our organisation. We must continuously train, evaluate, and develop our capacities in order to improve social inclusion and foster diversity. Different types of assistance, such as training sessions, peer learning experiences, and job shadowing opportunities, can be arranged to help us build our capacity in this area.

In terms of mobility projects, we should aim for reciprocity when it comes to hosting participants with fewer opportunities and plan our projects accordingly in our partnerships, according to project coordinators. This will present a chance to improve the partnership's expertise and level of trust. Projects involving mobility should encourage internal collaboration between relevant staff members who have knowledge of inclusion and diversity. The training opportunities provided by the project should be utilised by the organisations as well.

Partners can improve their capacity to manage high-quality projects intended to promote inclusion and diversity and build a network of reliable partners through cooperation or networking activities managed by the National Agencies, the Resource Centres, or other knowledgeable organisations, or through opportunities offered by online platforms like

EPALE, the School Education Gateway, or eTwinning. These events must be planned so that everyone can participate in them, including from a logistical standpoint.

#### **D) Outreach and Raising Awareness**

To ensure that all opportunities are known about and to reach the target groups who have trouble accessing the programmes, outreach activities are crucial for the programmes. Organizations should inform the public about the various opportunities to be gained from the project. By adjusting the approach to their unique information needs, people with fewer opportunities should be approached in their respective personal environments. The collaboration with local/regional stakeholders who work with these target groups is a key success factor for providing information to under-represented groups.

To reach out to those with fewer opportunities, specific strategies and actions include:

1. Fewer opportunities for in-person interactions with particular target groups at events or meetings (such as info days specifically for them);
2. Collaboration with organisations and people working in fields related to the inclusion of people with fewer opportunities as middlemen to, if necessary, reach out to specific target groups
3. Publications and promotional materials with information on the project's goals and opportunities for the target audiences in the appropriate languages and formats, such as large print and easy-to-read.
4. 4. Use of plain, understandable language in communication and information. As much as possible, use visuals instead of abstract language and needless complexity.

#### **E) Diversity and Inclusion Programs**

As highlighted in the list below, project partners will take a variety of actions throughout the course of this project to advance diversity and inclusion.

1. We will use inclusive language

For a project to foster a culture where everyone is accepted and included, language is crucial. With all available tools—written, visual, or verbal—our project partners will use language to foster a positive environment. The language will be affirming and inclusive of all people regardless of gender, race, religion, age, nationality, etc.

## 2. Be mindful of inclusion when speaking with project participants

Erasmus+ Projects place a strong emphasis on networking, meeting new people, and building relationships. In our project, we will conduct interviews and build relationships with many participants, stakeholders, and others. As a result, when we interact with others, we must remember that they may come from a different background than us, and we must always be respectful, considerate, and understanding of those we interact with.

## 3. Introduce Diversity and Inclusion from the beginning of the project

Include diversity and inclusion from the start of the project's life cycle. We clearly communicate the importance of caring about D&I, how we define it, and the steps we are taking to foster belonging in the project during project implementation. We are ready to answer any questions our participants may have about our project's efforts to increase diversity.

## 4. Resources created during the project lifespan

All project resources developed throughout the project will be made available to those who are visually impaired or have learning disabilities. The resources will also be inclusive, with language, imagery, and video accommodating diversity.



07

## **Monitoring and Evaluating Inclusion and Diversity**

## Monitoring and Evaluating Inclusion and Diversity

### 1. Capture inclusion concerns in your baseline

We must ensure we have all the necessary data before designing an inclusive M&E system. The initial situation analysis needs assessment or baseline study that we use as the foundation for our methodological decisions must identify the groups or exclusionary practises in the project's context that require our special attention. As a result, this preliminary analysis must carefully take into account power dynamics as well as the reasons behind discrimination and inequality in a particular setting. We can't decide which indicators to use, how much data disaggregation is necessary, the best data collection techniques, etc., until we have a clear picture of the situation.

### 2. Use inclusive indicators, both quantitative and qualitative

Indicators let us know whether an intervention is working or whether the desired results have been attained, and they also let us know when something is not going as expected. Making certain that various groups are represented in our indicators enables us to measure and evaluate results accurately and change course while the project is still in progress if our monitoring data indicates that this is required.

Therefore, developing pertinent indicators is a requirement before mainstreaming inclusion in M&E. Depending on the goals of our intervention, there are various ways to accomplish this. Here are some examples of various types of indicators and approaches to using them:

#### **Person-related and non-person-related indicators**

To check if the intended changes in people (individuals, households, communities, or societies) are the same, different groups of beneficiaries can be distinguished by result indicators that measure these changes. An indicator that distinguishes between "refugees living in a camp setting" and "refugees living in urban housing" would be an example of this. A specific indicator can be used for a project or activity that targets a particular group. As an illustration, consider measuring change for women only as opposed to both women and men.

In cases where having a specific status or identity is irrelevant to the changes being observed, neutral indicators that are neither differentiated nor specific are appropriate. For example, if the indicator is 'all health advisors acquire knowledge about ethical standards of care for persons with disabilities,' it makes no difference whether the health advisors themselves are disabled.

Indicators for intended changes that are not measured in relation to people but have an impact on people's inclusion in the project's environment can also reflect how inclusive an intervention's goals are. Changes in institutional performance (at the outcome level) or the availability of a new product or service are examples of these (output level). Consider a project that assists a ministry in the design and implementation of a policy. Even if the policy is not primarily concerned with gender, a gender-inclusive outcome indicator such as "every year, the ministry publishes gender-differentiated statements on the policy's results" could be included.

### **Combining quantitative and qualitative indicators**

Because some changes are countable while others are not, it is critical to consider the use of both quantitative and qualitative indicators. Inherently qualitative concepts, such as 'empowerment' or 'gender equality,' cannot be captured solely through quantitative measures. Assume you use the 'female-to-male ratio' as a criterion for a capacity-building course. Even if you discover that the course had a high female participation rate, this does not tell you whether men and women benefited equally from it. To better understand the actual impact of the training, you would have to ask questions such as 'Was the training content relevant to both men and women?' or 'Did participating in the training produce equally positive results for both?'. In other words, while equal participation is necessary for gender equality, it is not sufficient in and of itself. Inclusion indicators will focus on the substance and quality of results, with specific criteria for what constitutes each in the context of the project.

### **3. Using indicators to set inclusion targets**

If we have made a commitment to inclusion, we can use indicators to hold ourselves accountable. Output indicators are frequently used to monitor quality and participation, which are both important aspects of project inclusion. We can then set targets or quotas for

inclusion at the output level. Setting a target for a certain level of participation of a specific group in our activities, or of beneficiary satisfaction, is one example.

#### **4. Use a mixed-methods design for data collection and analysis**

Quantitative and qualitative indicators can tell us different things about the effectiveness and quality of our intervention, and quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods have different uses and benefits. The former are particularly useful for describing what is happening to a large population and generalising results, whereas the latter are particularly useful for answering 'why' questions, allowing us to better explain our findings in their specific context.

A combination of both methods allows us to better understand the effects of an intervention on a population as a whole and on different groups within it. We can test the validity of our results for various groups using triangulation. Having both perspectives also allows us to explain changes in complex contexts and understand what works and for whom, as well as what does not work and why. It also allows us to extract lessons that can be used to improve the ongoing delivery of a project or to inform future interventions.

#### **5. Collect disaggregated monitoring data**

Data disaggregation based on relevant characteristics allows you to assess the impact of your intervention on different beneficiaries, reveal any patterns in their participation in activities or use of products and services, and track the inclusion goals of your project. Some groups risk becoming 'invisible' in our data if we do not disaggregate, which could result in an intervention not being adequately targeted and thus leaving people behind.

Many categories of data can be disaggregated, including sex and gender, age, disability (and type of impairment, if applicable), geographic location (urban, rural, remote, etc.), race, ethnicity, class, income, language group, migratory status, marital status, sexual orientation, level of education, or religion. The decision is based on what information is most relevant and useful to your intervention and indicators, as well as the specific context in which you are working. This decision should be guided by the initial situation analysis.

Ideally, disaggregated data should be captured in the baseline for an intervention and then collected, analysed, and reported on consistently. Having high-quality disaggregated

monitoring data will also have a direct impact on the quality and usefulness of subsequent inclusion evaluations.

## **6. Encourage the participation of stakeholders in M&E, in particular beneficiaries**

The concepts of inclusion and participation are inextricably linked. Involving stakeholders in the monitoring and evaluation of your intervention can improve its effectiveness, accountability, and sustainability. The recipients of your intervention are "subject experts" on their own situation, with personal, localised, and contextual knowledge. This knowledge can assist us in designing an M&E system, gaining a better understanding of findings, and ensuring that results are useful to and for affected communities.

Participation can be integrated into our M&E system in a variety of ways, including:

- Determining how progress should be defined and measured: Choosing indicators and metrics collaboratively can make an intervention's goals more realistic, culturally relevant, and responsive.
- Using participatory data collection methods: methods that actively involve primary stakeholders provide us with insights into beneficiaries' opinions and experiences while also facilitating the data collection process itself. Many methods, such as community mapping and participatory ranking, have been developed specifically for participation.

Even if an M&E framework does not employ such methods, we can ensure that more commonly employed methods are as inclusive as possible by identifying and removing barriers to participation and representation for all groups. You could, for example, hold separate focus group discussions for different groups (based on their gender, ethnicity, membership in a host or displaced community, and so on) to allow people to fully express themselves if they would feel inhibited or unsafe in a mixed group.

Involving beneficiaries in data interpretation and action: A collaborative approach to interpretation is a useful way to reach conclusions with beneficiaries or to review and validate conclusions drawn by M&E practitioners.

## **7. Establish a beneficiary feedback mechanism**

Beneficiaries' perspectives can be collected in a systematic manner to provide useful insights into the impact of an intervention and the quality of its processes. A beneficiary feedback mechanism can collect data on how well an intervention reaches and benefits (or is perceived to reach and benefit) different groups. To ensure that it is an inclusive and representative monitoring tool, rather than one dominated solely by powerful groups, we must identify and remove barriers to its use by the most marginalised groups. It is also critical to establish a process for making changes based on feedback.

A beneficiary feedback mechanism, when properly designed, can encourage our interventions to be more demand-led, people-centred, and inclusive. Suggestion boxes, a dedicated phone number or email address for receiving feedback, a staffed help desk at the project site, and community scorecards are examples of tools for such a mechanism.

## **8. Uphold ethical and safety considerations**

A non-inclusive M&E system that does not consider the differential impact it may have on people can have negative consequences. At best, it may result in some groups being left behind by an intervention, and at worst, it may have the unintended consequence of reinforcing discrimination or jeopardising people's safety. Our methodological and practical decisions about our M&E processes are also ethical decisions that should be conflict-sensitive and guided by the 'do no harm' principle.

When deciding what data to collect and how to collect it, we must always weigh the benefits of having that data against the risks to informants. For example, because certain participatory data collection methods can be time-consuming, they may be avoided in an emergency response setting. Despite the fact that the data collected through these methods would be beneficial to the intervention or your organisation, you determine that the process would place an undue burden on beneficiaries, who would otherwise be spending their time and energy on survival activities.

The principle of doing no harm also applies to the way we gather data. For instance, you should be able to give survivors of gender-based and sexual violence referral information to support services in case they need it during your interview. In case they were stigmatised in their community if others heard about their experience, you would take great care to protect their anonymity. This idea also applies to those who gather data. In this case, hearing the

interviewee's first-hand account of a traumatic experience puts the interviewer at risk for experiencing secondary trauma. Therefore, when hiring interviewers, you should take into account their ability to gather this kind of data and make sure that they have the necessary support and/or supervision.

## **9. Explicitly refer to inclusion in reporting and evaluations**

Even if an intervention doesn't have any explicit inclusion-related goals, we can still use an inclusion lens by emphasising pertinent monitoring data findings in our reporting. It is important to take note, for instance, if one group of people uses a product or service significantly less than another. As M&E professionals, we analyse data to derive insights that will help project decision-makers. We can increase their awareness of the problem by consistently drawing their attention to inclusion gaps in our reports.

It is also best practise to include specific evaluation questions to gauge how well an intervention performed in terms of inclusion. To determine the right questions to ask in order to accurately assess impact and change for various groups, beneficiaries should be consulted. If an intervention did not take into account inclusion in its programming, this is an interesting finding in and of itself, and the effects of that choice merit further investigation in an evaluation.

Clearly, there is a lot we can do to increase inclusivity in M&E. Depending on our objectives, we can choose to do it in a specific way and to a certain degree. For example, we can simply gather information about how inclusive an intervention is on its own; go a step further by ensuring that primary stakeholders, particularly those who are typically marginalised or excluded, participate in our M&E processes; or actively use these processes and our findings to encourage social change in the context of our project..

In the end, our circumstances will also influence and perhaps constrain our choices. We must consider organisational capacity, the human and financial resources at our disposal, as well as the environment in which we are operating, when designing an M&E system. However, even small adjustments that we make within these limitations can ultimately have a significant impact on the visibility and substantive representation of groups that are typically marginalised and excluded in our programming.

08

## Community Outreach

## Community Outreach

By incorporating the following initiatives, an organisation can demonstrate its commitment to diversity and inclusion beyond the workplace and create positive change in the wider community.

- Partnerships with local organisations: The organisation could form partnerships with local organisations that represent diverse communities, such as minority-owned businesses, LGBTQ+ organisations, or organisations that support people with disabilities.
- Support for diversity-focused initiatives: The organisation could support initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion in the wider community, such as scholarships for underrepresented students, mentorship programs for diverse entrepreneurs, or diversity and inclusion events.
- Volunteer opportunities: The organisation could offer volunteer opportunities for employees to get involved in diversity and inclusion initiatives in the community.
- Community engagement events: The organisation could host or participate in community engagement events, such as cultural festivals, diversity fairs, or town hall meetings, to build bridges and foster understanding.
- Diversity education programs: The organisation could develop and deliver diversity education programs for community members, such as workshops or seminars on topics related to diversity and inclusion.
- Employee resource groups: The organisation could support employee resource groups that focus on diversity and inclusion, such as a women's network, an LGBTQ+ network, or a network for employees with disabilities.
- Community sponsorships: The organisation could sponsor events or initiatives in the community that promote diversity and inclusion, such as a diversity film festival, a diversity-focused arts exhibit, or a cultural parade.



09

## **Communicating Our Diversity & Inclusion Strategy**

## Communicating Our Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

Effectively communicating and disseminating our diversity and inclusion (D&I) strategy is vital for fostering an inclusive culture within our partnership. This involves both internal and external communication efforts to ensure everyone understands and supports our D&I goals.

### Internal Communication

- **Employee Training and Workshops:** Conduct regular training sessions and workshops to educate employees about the importance of diversity and inclusion. These sessions should cover how each individual can contribute to achieving the partnership's D&I objectives.
- **Internal Newsletters and Bulletins:** Use internal newsletters and bulletins to regularly update employees on the progress and developments of the D&I strategy. Highlight key achievements and upcoming initiatives to keep everyone informed and engaged.
- **Employee Resource Groups:** Promote the formation of employee resource groups focused on diversity and inclusion, such as women's networks, LGBTQ+ networks, or groups for employees with disabilities. These groups can serve as platforms for sharing experiences and promoting inclusivity within the partnership.
- **Senior Leadership Engagement:** Ensure senior leaders are actively involved in promoting the D&I strategy. They should lead by example, demonstrating inclusive behaviours and championing the importance of diversity within the organisation.

### External Communication

- **Project Website:** Dedicate a section of the partnership's website to the D&I strategy. This section should detail the goals, initiatives, and progress of our D&I efforts, providing transparency and accountability.
- **External Newsletters and Press Releases:** Regularly update external stakeholders on the D&I strategy through newsletters and press releases. This helps to communicate our commitment to diversity and inclusion to a broader audience.
- **Community Engagement Events:** Host or participate in community events such as cultural festivals, diversity fairs, or town hall meetings. These events build bridges with

the wider community and foster mutual understanding and support for our D&I efforts.

- **Supplier Diversity:** Promote our commitment to supplier diversity by encouraging diverse suppliers to engage in our procurement processes. Highlighting this commitment externally can attract a wider range of suppliers and partners.
- **Diversity Awards and Recognition:** Recognise and celebrate the contributions of employees, partners, or suppliers who significantly advance our D&I goals. Awards and recognition programs can motivate continued efforts and demonstrate our commitment to these values.
- By effectively communicating our D&I strategy through these channels, we can build a culture of inclusiveness, show our dedication to diversity and inclusion, and engage employees, stakeholders, and the community in supporting these values.



10

## Continuous Improvement

## Continuous Improvement

To ensure our D&I strategy remains effective and impactful, continuous improvement is essential. Here are steps we can take:

**Evaluate Current Initiatives:** Assess existing D&I initiatives, policies, and practices to identify strengths and areas for improvement. This evaluation sets a baseline for measuring progress.

**Set Clear Goals:** Define clear and measurable D&I goals that align with the partnership's overall mission and values. This focus helps to direct efforts and resources towards the most impactful initiatives.

**Foster an Inclusive Culture:** Create a culture that supports diversity and inclusivity by offering flexible work arrangements, recognising different cultural holidays, and respecting the diverse backgrounds of all team members.

**Regular Monitoring and Evaluation:** Continuously monitor the effectiveness of D&I initiatives. Collect feedback from employees, conduct diversity audits, and use data to measure progress. Adjust strategies as needed based on this evaluation.

**Stay Informed on Best Practices:** Keep up with best practices and emerging trends in D&I by attending conferences, participating in workshops and webinars, and networking with other organisations and experts in the field. This ongoing education ensures that our D&I strategy remains relevant and effective.