The implementation of Standards of Inclusiveness and Equality: Reflection of the Project Experiences

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1. The creation of Child-Friendly Schools through UNCEF project (2000s-early 2010s)

Inclusive Education is the key concern of CFS

Diversity

Equity

Quality

CFS

▸ to develop a school-level quality education model centered on learners development and based on children's rights.

1. Why support inclusive education in Child-friendly Schools (CFS)

Key International Commitments:

▶ UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

▶ Millennium Development Goals

▶ Education for All

▶ UNESCO's Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (1994)

▶ Dakar Framework for Action (2000)

Context of inclusive education in China:

▸ In 2004 UNESCO Southeast conference, Chinese participants have got the following consensus:

The effects of inclusive education should not be limited in special education itself, we should pay attention to educational problems of all the disadvantaged children, including migrant children, handicap children, dropout children and children affected by HIV issues.

General issues for quality education of China:

▸ Low achievement levels

▸ Non-completion of 9 years compulsory education

▸ Authoritarian School environment

▸ Passive and rote learning

▸ No focus on social/emotional skills

▸ Safety issues – physical and mental

▸ Inadequate skill development of teachers

Issues of rural area education:

▸ Dropout of students in rural areas (especially girls)

▸ Poor condition of schools in rural areas especially the minority regions

▸ Safety issues in boarding schools

▸ Migrant children and the left-behind Children' s education

Gender issues in education:

- Barriers for girl's education in poor, minority areas

- Gender stereotypes of teachers

- Female teachers' low participation rates in village schools and in leadership

A study shows that, girl's education is the main obstacle of compulsive education of China. There are 3 million of children dropping out from schools, and among them 80% are girls*.

▸ *毛小瑞. 给予贫困地区女童更多关注[N]. 农民日报,2005-04-07(006).

Issues related to minority education:

- ▶ Challenges for bilingual education

- ▶ Cultural protection of minority heritages

2. The development of CFS standards in mid 2000s

- To recognize children's rights
- To define the critical minimum inputs (standards) required
- To identify basic, measurable activities
- To identify the roles and responsibilities at different levels – school, community, county, province, nation to enable well-rounded development

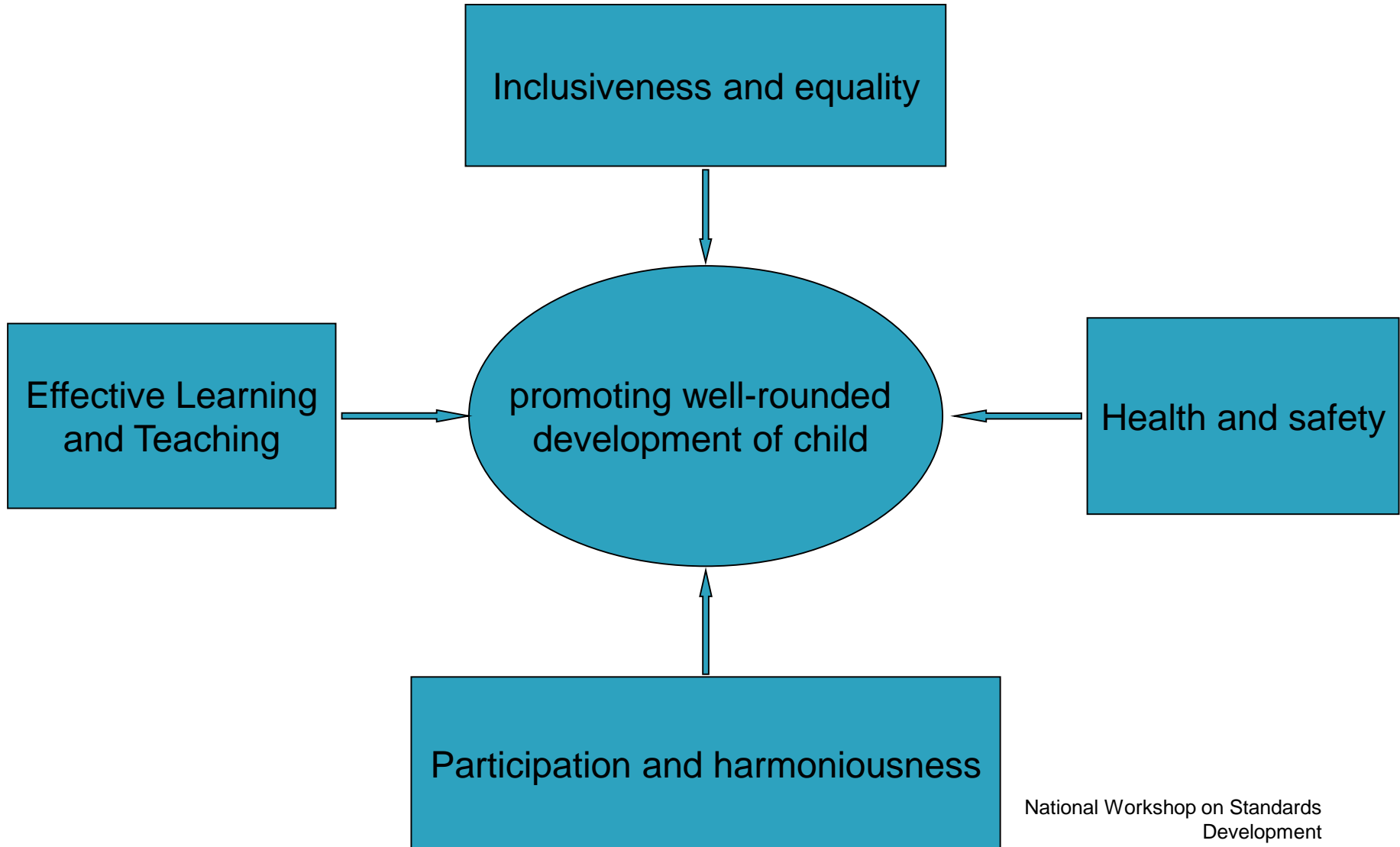# CFS Original International Framework: 5 components

1. Inclusive

2. Effective

3. Healthy and protective

4. Gender sensitive

5. Encouraging participation of children, families and communities

Vision:

▸ ensures inclusive enrolment and equal treatment of all school-aged children, in safe, healthy and protective environments,

▸ promotes learners' actual acquisition of relevant knowledge, capacities and attitudes through relevant life skills-integrated curriculum and effective teaching,

▸ and strives for democratic participation of all pupils, teachers, the family and the local society, making the school a harmonious* learning community.

*2004, the national goal of establishing a harmonious society was issued by the Chinese government

Key standards of CFS

Inclusiveness and equality

Effective Learning and Teaching

promoting well-rounded development of child

Health and safety

Participation and harmoniousness

Chinese MOE's short-term plan about CFS standards:

▸ Standards is not the end but the beginning

▸ UNICEF support for piloting to learn lessons

▸ Adopt as national guidelines for school quality

▸ Identify some standards as national priority

▸ Encourage provinces to decide their respective priorities

3. Development of Inclusiveness and equality standards

Basic ideas:

▸ A child-friendly school actively identifies excluded children and gets them enrolled in school.

▸ Diversity brings strength to education.

▸ Gender equity is the key in combating discriminatory attitudes.

Research method: action study

▸ Stage 1: literature review

▸ Stage 2: Development of the structure and standards

▸ Stage 3: Pilot test and field study

▸ Stage 4: Modification of the standards

▸ Stage 5: Getting more feedback from MOE and other stakeholders

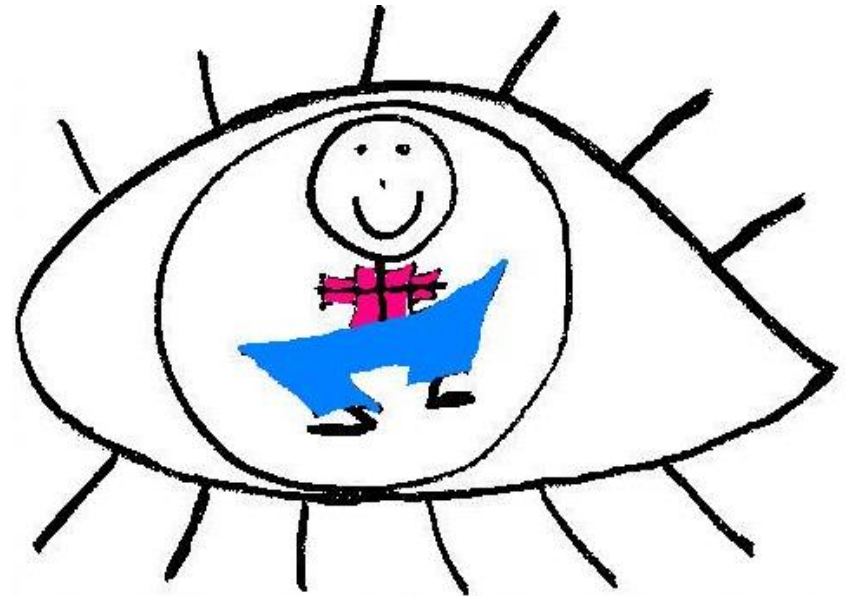▸ Stage 6: Action study in project schools

The definition of inclusion:

▸ "The processes of increasing the participation of students in, and reducing their exclusion from, the cultures, curricula and communities of local schools."

(Index for Inclusion, written by Tony Booth and Mel Ainscow in UK)

Looking through a gender lens...
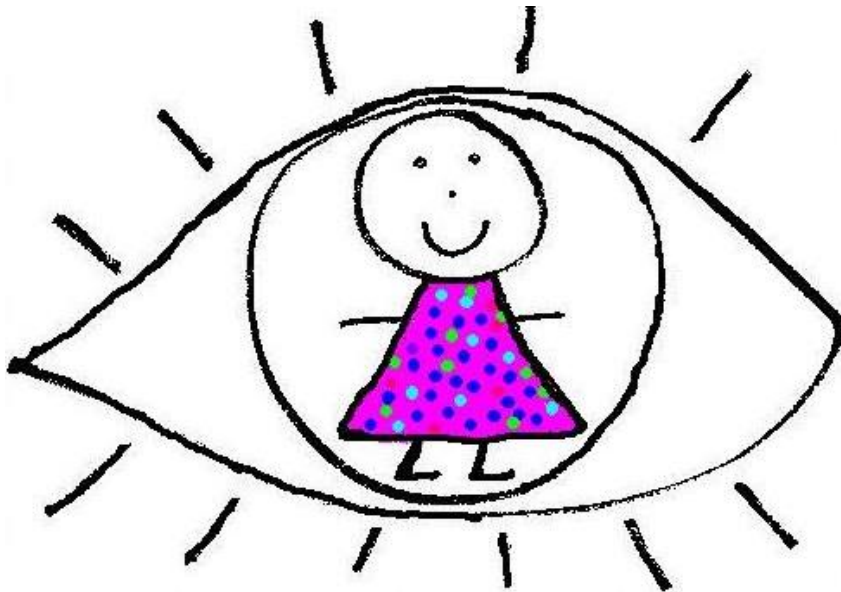
**See women's and girls'
needs and rights**

**See men's and boys'
needs and rights**

Sight or vision is a combination of what each eye sees

1.Safeguarding Children's Equal Rights in Attending School

Inclusiveness and equality

2.Showing respect on students' differences and diversity

3. Creating the teaching and learning environment with gender equality

1) Safeguarding Children's Equal Rights in Attending School

▸ Schools are to work proactively to provide opportunities for school age children to get enrolled into school and to create conditions for their equal attendance, with special focus on girl children and children with disabilities, children in poverty, migrant children and left-behind children and the specific difficulties they face while being enrolled.

2) Showing respect on students' differences and diversity

- Students are able to get equal treatment during the educational process regardless of their background and capabilities and acquire the knowledge, attitude and skills necessary for their future development.

- Showing respect and understanding on the diversity of the students based on their respective cultures, languages, family background and experiences, and establishing a school culture which is tolerant, friendly, equal and respectful.

3) Creating the teaching and learning environment with gender equality

▸ Schools provide a non-discriminative teaching and learning environment and preparing boy and girl children for equal entry into the society.

Table 1.1 Safeguarding Children's Equal Rights in Attending School (1)

Standards	Indicators	
	Process indicators	**Outcome indicators**
1.1 Inclusive education becomes the core rationale for running schools.	● There are contents on CFS and inclusiveness in school motto, publicity poster boards (or columns) and speeches by school leaders; ● The equal rights of children to attend school are emphasized in school management, school policies and measures； ● All teaching faculties and staffs have learned the Law on Compulsory Education and CRC and know the basic content of them.	● Percentage of head teachers, teachers and parents who know the basic content of child rights; ● Children show awareness of their rights and participation when describing their school life.

Table 1.2 Safeguarding Children's Equal Rights in Attending School (2)

1.2 Schools are actively going out to look for and enroll every school age child into school.	● The schools are active in keeping in touch with relevant government authorities including public security, civil affairs and family planning departments to get to know the situation and distribution of all school-age children in their catchments areas； ● There are clear statements in student enrollment policies on provision of relaxed enrollment measures such as relaxed control on enrolling age, providing bilingual learning environment and care for the subsistence for children in difficult situations including orphans, children affected by HIV/AIDS, children from families with special difficulties and disabled children; ● There are specific work procedures in schools to guarantee children with difficulties to get accepted smoothly into school; ● Schools give focused publicity to parents on the rights of children (especially girl children) and the significance of attending schools.	● Percentage of enrollment of school age children and especially that of the school age children with special needs in the community; ● Percentage of enrollment of girl children.

Table 1.3 Safeguarding Children's Equal Rights in Attending School (3)

1.3 There are monitoring mechanisms for putting student dropouts under control and making sure that children are retained in schools.	● Individual files and change records are created by schools for school attendance of children with special needs； ● School attendance rate and retention rate are included in the self-assessment and teacher evaluation systems in schools; ● Student attendance check is to be carried out strictly and in the case where students are absent, teachers can look actively for solutions; ● Head teachers and teachers in schools make use of community resources to block the dropout of students who are in difficult situations and help them return to school campus.	● Retention rate of children with special needs after they are enrolled; ● Teachers have knowledge on the situations of children from families with special difficulties and children who become wearied of school.

Table 2.1 Showing respect on students' differences and diversity(1)

2.1 Perfecting rules and policies to ensure the special educational needs of children are satisfied.	● Teachers have received training on inclusiveness and special education； ● Language background of students is taken into consideration in teaching materials and classroom instructions; ● The personnel who have received special training are assigned to take care of the daily subsistence of students in boarding schools; ● Schools and teachers in collaboration with community provide emotional care to children whose parents work as migrant workers in cities outside their hometown.	● The needs of all students especially those with special difficulties have been given considerations in school regulations and facilities; ● Children with learning difficulties make continual progress; ● Teachers are able to give examples on telling the differences between students and applying appropriate education.

Table 2.2 Showing respect on students' differences and diversity(2)

2.2 Creating a campus culture which is friendly, harmonious and respectful to the diversified backgrounds of students.	● Schools provide students with the opportunities to know about different cultures and customs, including making use of school broadcast station, poster column, blackboard and other cultural and physical events and activities to demonstrate different languages, customs and cultures； ● Teachers have basic knowledge on their basic rights, the socio-economy and the culture of the community they live in; ● Teachers have the awareness and skills to carry on the ethnic cultures and folk cultures; ● Efforts are made to enrich students' campus life and have each of the students to have opportunities to display and discover their unique talents; ● There is a balanced gender percentage in the composition of teachers and ethnic teachers in schools in minority inhabited regions.	● No students are bullied, biased and infringed in schools; ● Students with weak capabilities can also feel the trust and support their teachers show to them; ● Students are not biased or discriminated against when speaking in their native languages or dialects; ● Students are willing to learn and experience different cultures, languages and customs.

Table 3.1 Creating the teaching and learning environment with gender equality(1)

3.1 Schools advocate for gender equality to ensure gender sensitivity in teaching and learning contents and environment.	● Teachers should make suggestions on correcting any obviously gender-biased contents in the teaching and learning materials and try to avoid causing any impact on students; ● Schools and teachers are able to break away from the influence of the traditional gender bias when guiding students to choose their future occupations or take professional preferences; ● Male and female role models especially those non-traditional gender roles of work are actively demonstrated in school posters and columns; ● Teachers do not make their questions easier or more difficult for girl or boy students when raising questions in class; ● The safety and health education in schools includes the special education and instruction on sexual harassment and self-protection.	● Students are able to differentiate sensitively from biased and discriminative languages; ● Female students are not treated with gender bias and discrimination or suffer from sexual harassment. They feel that school life improves their self confidence and capability; ● There is no gender, ethnic or cultural discrimination on the design of curriculum and teaching and learning materials; ● No distinctive differences exist in the career opportunities and academic performances for boy and girl students.

Table 3.2 Creating the teaching and learning environment with gender equality(2)

3.2 Both male and female teachers have the equality to participate in school management and enjoy equal opportunities to development.	● All teaching staffs know that gender equality is one of the basic state policies in our country; ● Female teachers feel that they receive the same respect and treatment in their work as their male counterparts; ● There are regulations in schools on providing special care to female teachers before and after their delivery period and the same regulations are being implemented; ● Male and female teachers have the same opportunities to receive external trainings.	● Percentage of male and female teachers in various levels of administrative leadership positions; ● Percentage of male and female teachers in various levels of professional titles.

4. The implementation of the CFS standards (from late 2000s to 2010s)

- Writing guidelines of the standards (combining theory with practice; promoting innovative actions)
- Developing self-evaluation procedure
- Training of principals and teachers
- Implementation in the project counties
- From pilot counties to large scale implementation in many provinces
- Mainstreaming into the China compulsory education school management standard

5. Reflections

▸ Putting inclusiveness and equity standards in the CFS framework and looking at schools in a holistic way

▸ Connection with the national goals of China and integrating into the national compulsive school management standards

▸ Encouraging schools to do self-diagnosis using the standards and prompting the action research method for self improvement

A good balance of the top-down and bottom-up approaches; and evidenced based school level improvement.

Issues:

▸ Mainstreaming of gender equity in education

▸ Legislating for inclusion in education

Future directions

Collective effort is needed for inclusive and equity education

Thank you!