



Bahrain

Dr. Majed Ali Al Noaimi
Minister of Education



On November 12, 2002, Dr. Majed Ali Al Noaimi was appointed to Bahrain's Minister of Education, which has since hosted various UNESCO activities under his patronage. Prior to this position, Dr. Noaimi was President of the University of Bahrain and Professor of history and culture. He also served as Director of the offices of the Crown Prince and Commander in Chief of the BDF, of the Undersecretary of the Minister of Defence, and of the Bahrain Centre for Studies & Research. Born in 1955, Noaimi's commitment to education has been a lifelong achievement. He earned a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Kuwait, Master's Degrees from Ain Shams University in Egypt and the Military College of Saudi Arabia, and a doctoral degree from the University of Wales.

How Can Teaching and Learning Strategies Contribute to Inclusion

The ultimate goal of the teaching and learning process in school is to offer the student the best opportunity to learn. However, effective learning is conditional upon certain pre-requisites which include:

- a relevant and well designed curriculum
- a well qualified teacher, and
- a safe environment which is conducive to learning.

The assumption is that once those conditions are met, the school will be ready to receive the students. However, the important question to ask will be:

Are the students ready to start the inner journey of learning?

Can the school claim to be inclusive?

That means before teaching can start the school must find a way of determining the level of the learning ability of each and every student in the classroom. Once that is done the school will have a clear picture of the group of students in the class and the type of learning difficulties or disabilities they have.

To achieve inclusion in a mainstream classroom, the school should design teaching and learning strategies that can embody the concept of lifelong learning as a governing factor in the process of teaching and learning, together with the application of Information and Communication Technologies in education. Lifelong learning strategies require a democratization of learning of the content, and pedagogy. The role of the teacher (who remains the central figure in education) is that of a facilitator. He is no more the only source of information. His major task is to encourage independent learning and critical thinking among his students.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have been conceived as one of the important facilitating tools that could foster the development of new competences and abilities in learners. They contribute immensely to the quality of teaching, and they provide space for cooperative learning. Integrating technology into the syllabus is proving to be valuable for enhancing and extending the learning experience for teachers and students.