



3. How to promote community engagement for inclusion

3.1. Contents for promotion of inclusion outside the schools

As part of this project, a collection of articles and informational leaflets has been developed to promote social inclusion and to raise awareness about the barriers faced by children, young people, and communities. These materials are designed to be accessible to a wide audience and can be used both within and beyond the school context to foster dialogue, understanding, and collective action.

3.1.1. Articles

The articles are particularly suitable for community workshops, parent meetings, training sessions, or awareness campaigns, and they can also be adapted as discussion starters in classrooms or staff seminars. They are available in Appendix 4 of this Guide for easy reference and re-use.

The series of articles offers practical reflections and personal perspectives on key aspects of inclusion. Each piece addresses a different dimension of the topic, combining everyday examples with actionable insights:

- **Accessibility is More Than a Ramp** explores physical, communicative, and relational barriers, reminding readers that inclusion requires more than technical adjustments—it is an ongoing practice of respect and openness.
- **Educating for Inclusion: Where to Start** provides parents, community members, and informal educators with concrete ways to model respect, talk about differences, and create accessible spaces in daily life.

- **Everyday Exclusion Stories** highlights how casual words and actions can leave lasting marks on children and adolescents, encouraging reflection and empathy.
- **Intersectionality** introduces the idea that multiple disadvantages can overlap, stressing the need for holistic approaches in education and community support.
- **Neurodivergence in Everyday Life** presents a child's perspective on living with Autism and ADHD, offering suggestions for teachers, peers, and families to provide meaningful support.
- **What Inclusion Really Means** clarifies misconceptions by contrasting genuine inclusion with tokenistic or superficial gestures.
- **Words Matter** illustrates the harmful impact of discriminatory language while promoting respectful, inclusive communication.

Together, these texts are suitable for use in community workshops, awareness campaigns, parent meetings, or local events. Because they are written in an accessible style, they can also be reprinted as supplements in school newsletters, municipal bulletins, or online platforms to reach a wider readership. Teachers and facilitators may also use them as discussion starters in classrooms, staff training, or community seminars.

3.1.2. Leaflets

Complementing the articles, a set of leaflets has been created to provide concise, visually engaging information on inclusion-related topics. The leaflets, available through the [project's webpage](#), can be easily downloaded, printed, and shared. Their design makes them especially suitable for public display, distribution at events, and outreach in local institutions such as libraries, cultural centres, or municipal offices.

The leaflets summarise core messages from the articles and present them in user-friendly, graphic-rich formats, making them effective tools for awareness-raising among diverse audiences. Each leaflet can stand on its own, addressing issues such as accessibility, language, everyday practices of inclusion, and the importance of empathy. By combining text with imagery and clear examples, they invite immediate reflection and action.

3.1.3. Use and dissemination

Both the articles and the leaflets are intended for broad non-commercial circulation. Schools and partner organisations are encouraged to print them in small or large batches and to distribute them freely in their local communities. Suggested uses include:

- **School-community partnerships:** displaying leaflets in schools, health centres, or local shops to highlight inclusion initiatives.
- **Events and campaigns:** distributing printed copies during open days, workshops, parent meetings, or cultural events.
- **Digital dissemination:** sharing PDFs via school websites, newsletters, or social media channels.
- **Training resources:** using selected articles or leaflets as reading material for professional development sessions or community education activities.

By combining reflective depth (articles) with practical outreach formats (leaflets), these resources form a complementary set of tools for spreading the project's core message: inclusion is not a one-time act but a continuous, shared responsibility across schools, families, and communities.

3.2. Suggestions for creating partnerships

This section presents a collection of ideas and strategies aimed at promoting active community engagement and collaboration. The suggestions are focused on best practices in community involvement, building partnerships and networks, and organizing public events. The main objective is to raise awareness of the needs of disadvantaged pupils and to encourage local communities to take an active role in supporting inclusive education and equal opportunities for all learners.

3.2.1. Community Storytelling Festival

Level: Local.

Type: Cultural event / storytelling / networking.

Description

What it is: A community event where disadvantaged pupils, parents, teachers, and local citizens share personal stories through different media: oral storytelling, drawings, short digital stories, or theatre sketches. Pupils can co-create stories with local artists, while teachers guide discussions on themes like empathy, respect, and inclusion. The event can be hosted in a local cultural centre or school hall and include workshops where families work together on storytelling projects.

How it works: Children and parents prepare short narratives (stories, drawings, digital mini-films). Local cultural associations and libraries provide space and facilitation. On the day, the stories are shared publicly, followed by moderated discussions.

What is needed: A venue (school, library, community centre), basic audiovisual equipment, facilitators/artists, coordination with local NGOs.

Who is involved: Pupils, families, teachers, local artists, NGOs, municipal cultural departments.

Impact: Builds bridges between school and community, gives a voice to disadvantaged children, raises public awareness of socio-economic and cultural challenges, promotes empathy and intergenerational dialogue.

Resources

- Similar practice: [Community storytelling for inclusion](#),
- Short inspiration video: [All Are Welcome read aloud](#).

3.2.2. Empathy Walk

Level: Local, international.

Type: Public event / interactive awareness activity.

Description

What it is: An interactive, city-wide activity where the community experiences the challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils. Inspired by empathy walks used in inclusion training, participants rotate through stations simulating barriers: e.g., trying to read a text in an unfamiliar language, navigating with noise-cancelling headphones (to simulate hearing difficulties), or attempting simple tasks without access to digital tools. Each station is guided by pupils and teachers with contextual explanations.

How it works: Set up different “challenge stations” in a public square or park, each representing an obstacle disadvantaged pupils face. Volunteers (teachers, students, NGOs) facilitate and debrief. Information panels provide local statistics and stories.

What is needed: Public space permissions, simple props (headphones, blindfolds, old textbooks), volunteers, printed guides.

Who is involved: Pupils, parents, teachers, local NGOs, municipal authorities, possibly local businesses as sponsors.

Impact: Increases community understanding of barriers disadvantaged pupils face, sparks dialogue, creates partnerships for ongoing support, and motivates volunteers.

Resources

- Similar practice: “Walk a Mile in My Shoes” empathy exercises used in education and diversity training: UNICEF empathy walk activity
- Video example: Walk in My Shoes campaign

3.2.3. Together for Every Child

Level: Local.

Type: Events.

Description

What it is: Organize interactive events like Inclusion Week, exhibitions, performances, or storytelling sessions, awareness walks, or open house days in schools.

How it works: Use accessible venues (schools, libraries, parks, squares), involve students and families, and include emotional and creative elements (art, testimonies, talks). Include testimonies, art from students, interactive booths, and expert talks to make it informative and engaging.

What is needed: Promote events with posters, flyers, social media campaigns, school newsletters, and local press. Materials: Visual aids, student artwork, videos, banners, audio systems, translation or sign language support if needed. Modest funds can go a long way; reach out to local sponsors, NGOs, or municipal grants.

Who is involved: students, parents and families, teachers and school staff, community members as neighbours, local business owners, local press, local Authorities and NGOs, volunteers.

Impact: These events help educate the community and raise awareness, reduce stigma, empower pupils, and build partnerships among schools, NGOs, and local services.

Resources

- [Giornata della Terra, Torino 2026.](#)

3.2.4. Collaborate, Communicate & Co-Create

Level: Local, regional.

Type: Networking.

Description

What it is: Build a strong support network, raise public awareness, and involve the community in shaping solutions for disadvantaged pupils.

How it works: Create a local education network with teachers, NGOs, youth workers, and social services. Use social media, newsletters, and local media to share stories, highlight student voices, and promote inclusive values. Host co-creation workshops or “listening circles” with pupils and families to design real solutions based on lived experience.

What is needed: Social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, etc.), templates for posts (Canva, etc.), hashtags, campaign name/logo, smartphone or camera for photos/videos, consent forms for photos/videos/records, local media contacts (radio, newspaper, bloggers), email newsletter tool, printed materials: sign-in sheets, feedback forms, interpreters or translation materials (if needed). Suggestion: Use digital platforms (WhatsApp group, shared drive, regular Zoom meetings) for continuity and accessibility.

Who is involved: Educators, teachers and school staff, students and families, community organizations, local influencers, journalists, media, volunteers, youth ambassadors.

Impact: Aligns efforts and resources, increases visibility and empathy, builds trust and long-term engagement, ensures solutions are relevant, inclusive, and supported by the community

3.2.5. Storytelling Workshops with Local Role

Level: Local.

Type: Event / community engagement.

Description

What it is: Organise interactive storytelling workshops where local role models read books to 6–8-year-old pupils, followed by discussions about dreams, resilience, and kindness.

How it works: Partner with schools, libraries, and community centres to host sessions. Invite diverse local figures to read and share their personal stories.

What is needed: Books with empowering messages. A venue (school/library/community centre). Volunteers to help organise and moderate.

Who is involved: Teachers, parents, local professionals, NGOs, and librarians.

Impact: Boosts children's confidence and aspirations. Strengthens community bonds and shows children they are valued.

3.2.6. Community Art Exhibition

Level: Local.

Type: Event.

Description

What it is: An exhibition showcasing artwork by 6–8-year-olds from disadvantaged backgrounds, displayed in a public space (mall, town hall).

How it works: Pupils create art around themes like "My Dream Neighbourhood." Local artists help curate; the community votes on favourites. Funds raised go toward school supplies.

What is needed: Art materials, venue permission, promotional posters.

Who is involved: Schools, local artists, council members, media.

Impact: Validates children's voices and talents. Raises awareness of educational inequalities.

Resources

- [The Big Draw – Campaigning for drawing since 2000.](#)

3.2.7. The Gift of Understanding

Level: Local.

Type: Event.

Description

What it is: A single interactive booth at the Doukas Christmas Bazaar where visitors experience "a day in the life" of disadvantaged students through a short storytelling and role-play activity.

How it works: Inside a booth, resembling a "Christmas Box", students present a 5-minute storytelling session: a short narrative about a child facing a barrier. After the story, volunteers invite visitors to try a quick role-play simulation (e.g., reading a Christmas card with blurred vision glasses, or trying to follow holiday instructions in a foreign language). Finally, students present "The Gift of Understanding" — a message board where visitors can write a short Christmas wish for inclusion and hang it on a symbolic Christmas tree.

What is needed: Promotion within the bazaar program Christmas tree, festive decoration, printed story cards, markers, simulation tools.

Who is involved: Students, teachers, parents & families, community visitors, local NGOs.

Impact: It raises awareness to students about the everyday challenges of disadvantaged students. It highlights that the greatest gift at Christmas is empathy and inclusion.

Resources

- [Doukas Christmas Bazaar 2024](#).

3.2.8. Maths for all – Solving Barriers Together

Level: Regional.

Type: Event.

Description

What it is: A public math contest and exhibition, organised by Thales in Cyprus, where students, parents, and community members participate in accessible, team-based math challenges designed around the theme of inclusion and equality. The goal is to show that mathematics is not about competition alone but also about collaboration, creativity, and making knowledge accessible to all.

How it works: The event takes place in a community space. Participants are divided into mixed teams (students, parents teachers, community members). Each team works on math puzzles, riddles, or problem-solving tasks linked to real-life themes such as fairness, resource sharing, and accessibility. Between rounds, short testimonies from disadvantaged pupils, teachers, or NGOs highlight real educational barriers and how inclusion makes a difference.

What is needed: Promotion through flyers, media, school newsletter, math puzzles and activity sheets, banners with inclusion messages.

Who is involved: Students of different ages, math teachers, parents and families, local NGOs, local media.

Impact: This event reframes mathematics as a tool for inclusion rather than exclusion. It fosters teamwork, breaks stereotypes about who can succeed in math, and creates empathy by connecting problem-solving to real issues faced by disadvantaged students. It empowers children, strengthens partnerships between schools, families, and NGOs, and shows the community that inclusion is about solving challenges together.

3.2.9. Walk in Their Shoes – Simulation Day

Level: Local.

Type: Event.

Description

What it is: Interactive event where community members experience the challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils (simulations of learning difficulties, financial barriers, accessibility issues).

How it works: Activity stations simulate dyslexia reading, learning with distractions, studying without resources, etc. Debrief sessions explain real-life impact.

What is needed: Volunteers, simulation materials, facilitators, venue.

Who is involved: Teachers, NGOs, pupils (as guides), parents, community leaders.

Impact: Empathy-building, increases community understanding and willingness to support policies/resources for inclusion.

3.2.10. Voices That Matter

Level: Regional, national, local, international.

Type: Youth-Led advocacy campaign.

Description

What it is: A campaign designed and led by disadvantaged pupils to share their experiences and needs with the wider community through posters, videos, podcasts, or social media storytelling.

How it works: Pupils brainstorm key messages, then create content (art, short films, digital posts) with guidance from teachers or NGOs. Their work is showcased through school exhibitions, public screenings, social media, or local press.

What is needed: Art supplies, digital tools (cameras, editing software), workshop space, guidance from communication/creative mentors, partnerships with local media for outreach.

Who is involved: Pupils (as creators), teachers (facilitators), NGOs and youth organizations (technical and creative support), parents (support and encouragement), media partners (sharing the content).

Impact: Builds pupils' confidence, leadership, and communication skills; raises awareness of their challenges and aspirations; fosters empathy in the community; influences local decision-makers by amplifying authentic youth voices.

3.2.11. Guiding Hands

Level: Local.

Type: Mentor program.

Description

What is it: Local volunteers, university students, or retired professionals mentor disadvantaged pupils, offering academic help and life guidance.

How it works: Pupils are paired with trained mentors who meet them weekly (in-person or online). Focus on study support, confidence building, and role modelling.

What is needed: Recruitment of mentors, training sessions, matching system, supervision.

Who is involved: Pupils, volunteer mentors, schools, NGOs.

Impact: Increases educational performance, social integration, and motivation of disadvantaged pupils.

3.2.12. Skills for All

Level: Local.

Type: Community skill-building workshops.

Description

What it is: Workshops where pupils and community members learn practical skills together (digital literacy, coding, crafts, cooking).

How it works: Weekly sessions in school or community centres, facilitated by teachers, volunteers, or local experts.

What is needed: Venue, materials, facilitators, scheduling system.

Who is involved: Pupils, teachers, local experts, NGOs, volunteers.

Impact: Increases skills, promotes intergenerational learning, strengthens community bonds.

3.2.13. Hearts in Threads

Level: Local.

Type: Community-driven initiative.

Description

What it is: It is a community-driven initiative that mobilizes pupils, teachers, parents, and local artisans to create and sell handmade *Mărțișoare* (traditional Romanian spring tokens) at a school or community fair held on the week before 1st of March. All proceeds go towards supporting the educational needs of disadvantaged pupils (school supplies, clothing, books, transport, meals, etc.)

How it works:

Step 1. Planning & Coordination:

- A core team is formed: teachers, school administration, parents and possibly a local Artisan House.
- A clear goal is defined (e.g. “Raise 3,000 RON to buy school backpacks for 15 disadvantaged students”).- The date and location of the fair are set—usually the week before 1st of March.
- A communication plan is developed to involve the school and wider community.

Step 2. Creative Workshops:

- Craft workshops are organized in school during art classes or after school.
- Pupils (including those disadvantaged) make Mărțișoare using affordable or recycled materials (thread, beads, felt, paper, clay).
- Parents, local artists, or senior citizens may be invited to co-lead sessions, the workshops being an opportunity of social bonding and inclusion time.

Step 3. Awareness Campaign:

- Posters, flyers, and social media posts are created by pupils/ parents/ teachers.
- Each Mărțișor comes with a small tag explaining its purpose: “This token supports the education of a child in need. Thank you!”
- Local media is informed to help spread the word.

Step 4. The Fair:

- A fair is held in the school yard, gym, or a public space (library, community centre).
- Pupils, parents and teachers manage the stands, explain the cause, and sell the Mărțișoare.
- Donation boxes are also available for those who wish to contribute more.

Step 5. Post-Fair Reporting:

- Funds raised are counted transparently.
- Purchases made for the disadvantaged pupils are documented and presented to the school community.
- Pupils write thank-you notes or make a short video expressing gratitude.

What is needed: Materials: Threads, beads, paper, pins, glue, safety scissors, labels.

Human Resources: Pupils, teachers, volunteers, parents, local crafters.

Logistics: Tables for the fair, promotional materials, donation boxes.

Permission: Approval from school authorities and possibly local authorities for public spaces.

Who is involved: Pupils: Makers, sellers, ambassadors.

Teachers: Coordinators and mentors.

Parents: Supporters, craft helpers.

Local community: Buyers, sponsors, donors.

Disadvantaged pupils: Both contributors and beneficiaries.

Local businesses or NGOs (optional): Material donations, sponsorships.

Impact: Short-Term:

- Immediate funds raised for educational needs.
- Increased awareness of the challenges some pupils face.
- Pupils feel empowered and united for a cause.

Long-Term:

- Boosted community solidarity.
- Disadvantaged pupils feel included and supported.
- Development of empathy, entrepreneurship, and creativity in all pupils.
- Potential to repeat or expand the initiative annually
- Use leftover Mărțișoare to offer them to the pupils' mothers or to local elderly homes.

3.2.14. Seeds of Change

Level: Local.

Type: Community project.

Description

What it is: Creating a *sustainable urban school garden*, in order to offer hands-on environmental education for disadvantaged pupils, to promote community involvement and to raise awareness of pupils' needs through a practical and visible community project. It would be a joint initiative to transform unused or underutilized school space into a productive and educational garden, which will serve as an outdoor classroom, a community hub, and a therapeutic green space for disadvantaged pupils.

How it works: Step 1: Planning & Design

- Site assessment by landscape experts and faculty students.
- Garden design workshops with pupils and teachers.
- Community meeting to collect input and support.

Step 2: Construction & Planting

- Collaborative workdays with pupils, parents, NGO staff, students, and volunteers.
- Installation of raised beds, compost area, seating, and tool storage.
- Selection and planting of local, seasonal, and/or edible species.

Step 3: Education & Engagement

- Weekly garden lessons tied to curriculum (science, ecology, nutrition).
- Workshops led by agronomy students (e.g. composting, vertical gardening).
- Open garden days for families and the public.
- Harvest festivals or seasonal community events.

What is needed:

- Land/space within or near the school.
- Initial funding (tools, soil, plants) – via NGO grants or local sponsors.
- Expertise from the Faculty of Horticulture (design, soil analysis, mentoring).
- Volunteers (parents, pupils, staff).
- Educational materials (lesson plans, journals, newsletters etc).

Who is involved:

- NGOs, for Project coordination, funding applications, community engagement.
- Faculty of Horticulture, Landscape Design Dept., for Garden design, pupil-led workshops, technical guidance.
- School leadership and teachers, for Integration with curriculum, coordination with pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils of, in their capacity of main beneficiaries and active participants.
- Parents & community members, as volunteers, supporters, attendees of events.
- Local businesses, for In-kind donations, event sponsorships.

Impact: Educational Impact:

- Improves science, health, and environmental literacy for disadvantaged pupils.
- Encourages hands-on, experiential learning, boosting engagement and confidence.

Social & Emotional Impact:

- Creates a sense of ownership and pride in pupils.
- Provides a calming, inclusive space for all pupils, especially those facing hardships.

Community Impact:

- Strengthens bonds between school, university, and local community.
- Raises public awareness of pupil needs through visible, shared success.
- Sparks future partnerships and replicable models for other schools.

Sustainability Impact:

- Promotes ecological awareness, sustainable living, and green urban spaces.
- Encourages long-term responsibility and care for shared resources.

Resources

- [Post Liceul Teoretic "Tudor Arghezi" Craiova](#)

3.2.15. Sound of Inclusion

Level: Local.

Type: Music outreach program.

Description

What it is: A structured music outreach program where musicians from the local philharmonic or music schools regularly visit schools with disadvantaged pupils, in order to:

- present musical instruments.
- demonstrate how they work and sound.
- share musical stories and experiences.
- offer basic hands-on workshops.
- invite pupils to attend rehearsals or performances.

How it works: Step 1: Partnership & Planning

- Establish agreements between school(s), philharmonic, and/or music schools.
- Develop a calendar of musical visits and events.
- Identify target pupil groups (especially disadvantaged or with low cultural exposure).

Step 2: Interactive Music Sessions

- Musicians visit schools in small ensembles or solo.
- Each session introduces a family of instruments (strings, brass, percussion, etc.).
- Pupils listen, ask questions, and try playing simple sounds.
- Use visual aids, stories, and games to make it accessible.

Step 3: Musical Encounters & Community Events

- Pupils visit the philharmonic for open rehearsals or performances.
- Public community events showcasing what pupils have learned (mini concerts, open workshops).
- Optional: set up a "music corner" in school with donated instruments.

What is needed:

- Partnership agreement (school + music institution).
- Scheduling coordinator (from school or NGO partner).
- Basic instruments for demonstration and pupil interaction.
- Transportation (for visits to the philharmonic or music schools).
- Printed materials (diagrams, listening guides, visuals).
- Funding for logistics, materials.

Who is involved:

- School leadership & teachers (Music Education and form teachers), for coordination, pupil engagement, space logistics.
- Local Philharmonic / Music Schools, for providing musicians, instructors and hosting visits.
- Disadvantaged pupils, as main beneficiaries – active participants and audience.
- Parents & local community - invited to events as supportive presence.
- Municipality / local sponsors, for funding or in-kind support.
- NGO partners (optional), for coordination, outreach, fundraising, impact reporting.

Impact:

- Bridges the cultural gap for pupils from low-income or marginalized backgrounds, who often have limited access to extracurricular or cultural education such as music lessons or concerts.
- Supports auditory processing and language development, especially for children who may struggle with concentration or traditional academic settings — music helps stimulate cognitive function through active listening and pattern recognition.
- Sparks interest in creative pathways, offering alternative forms of expression and success for children who may not thrive in traditional classroom models.

3.2.16. Children First Day

Level: Municipal.

Type: Public Event / Cultural Festival / Policy Awareness.

Description

What it is: A dedicated municipal awareness day focused on disadvantaged children, with community-led activities, storytelling, street theatre, and policy discussions.

How it works: Held in a central square or park, the event includes workshops, mini-performances by children, info stands from NGOs, and a roundtable with decision-makers on child inclusion.

What is needed: Event permits, coordination with schools and NGOs, sound system, volunteers, safety measures.

Who is involved: Municipality, schools, NGOs, cultural groups, families, media.

Impact: Increases visibility of disadvantaged pupils' needs, creates a platform for community solidarity, strengthens policy focus on inclusion.

Resources

- [UNICEF – Child Friendly Cities](#)

3.2.17. Theatre of Tiny Voices

Level: Local / Regional.

Type: Theatre / Cultural Event / Awareness.

Description

What it is: A participatory theatre performance co-created with children on themes of friendship, diversity, and challenges they face.

How it works: Led by theatre educators, children develop characters and scenes over weeks of workshops. The final performance is open to the public and followed by a discussion with families and educators.

What is needed: Theatre educator, rehearsal space, costumes/props, event venue, promotion.

Who is involved: Children, theatre facilitators, teachers, parents, cultural venues.

Impact: Amplifies young voices, boosts self-esteem, fosters empathy in audiences, encourages creativity and expression in disadvantaged children.

Resources

- [ASSITEJ – Theatre for Young Audiences](#)