



Concept Note

**Annual Meeting and 11th Policy Dialogue
Forum
Montego Bay, Jamaica, 5-9 November 2018**

*Prepared by the Secretariat of the International Task Force on
Teachers for Education 2030, 2018*

Theme: “Strengthening Teacher Education: A prerequisite for quality teaching, training and learning”

“We will ensure that teachers and educators are empowered, adequately recruited, well trained, professionally qualified, motivated and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems.”

Incheon Declaration, 2015

Context

Teacher quality is a key factor affecting student outcomes, and therefore, has always been central to the world education community’s initiatives geared towards initial teacher education and continuous professional development. In addition to addressing quality imperative, the need to align with internationally agreed ratio whereby pupils per trained teacher should not exceed 40:1 (UIS, 2014), beckons at closing teacher quantity gap as well. The International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 and partners have demonstrated so far, their efforts and commitments to promoting teacher and trainer quality at all levels of education including TVET.

Since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Incheon Declaration and Education 2030 Framework for Action, for the past three years, the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 (TTF) revamped its efforts to make valuable contributions to close teacher quantity and quality gaps. It has revisited the three strategic areas of its work (advocacy, knowledge creation and sharing and country support and engagement) – and used its annual Policy Dialogue Forum (PDF) as a robust rallying platform for its members and partners to share experiences and develop strategies for improving teacher quality, status, teaching and learning.

Therefore, Policy Dialogue Fora are needed to confront different perspectives while trying to unpack the meaning and implications of the teacher target and its importance to the other SDG 4 targets. They serve to also disseminate knowledge and experiences on key concepts and are proposed by the TTF to all those organizations working on teachers as a hub for discussing different approaches to theory and practice on teachers and teaching. The annual policy dialogue forum is a valued programme for TTF members and partners, and included as a flagship activity in the TTF 2018-2021 Strategic Plan.

It is also essential to address teacher education in a broader and clear teacher policy framework. This is why teacher policy development has been introduced as an effective move to support countries to refrain from tackling teacher education as a stand-alone step. The teacher policy development guide published by the TTF (UNESCO, 2015) seeks to analyze other dimensions of the teaching profession intertwining together and affecting teacher education.

In March 2016, the 8th PDF in Mexico City, launched in a way the milestones on new perspectives for the *“Implementation of the Teacher Target in the Sustainable Development Goals and Education 2030 Agenda”*.

In December 2016, the 9th PDF held in Seam Riep, Cambodia, dealt with an essential topic to the Education 2030 Agenda with the theme, *“Teacher Motivation: What do we know and what*

do we need to achieve the Education 2030 Agenda?”

The 10th Policy Dialogue organized in Lomé, Togo in September 2017, with the theme, “*Teaching: A Profession*”, sought to unravel the issue of teacher professionalization by highlighting what it means to call anyone a teacher.

This year, the forum to be held in Jamaica will focus on yet another central concept in the SDG Teacher Target, the training of teachers: “**Strengthening Teacher Education: A Prerequisite for Quality Teaching, Training and Learning.**”

Focusing the 2018 PDF on *Teacher Education* is very strategic in dealing with different dimensions of the Teacher Target in SDG 4. As mentioned above, the TTF started in Mexico looking closely into the Teacher Target in the SDG 4 and Education 2030 Agenda, in order to securitize the teacher issue. From this overarching approach, the focus shifted to specific areas. In Cambodia, Teacher Motivation was debated as an important policy pillar of the 2015 Incheon Declaration, and a critical factor affecting teachers’ performance and impacting on how they motivate learners and achieve learning. Then in Togo, when probing into teaching as a profession, it became even clearer that how teachers are prepared and supported throughout their career deserves closer and keener consideration. One of the recommendations at the end of the forum stipulated that to establish teaching as a profession, a clinical and practice-based approach is needed in which the learner is at the center of all practice. Teaching strategies must be evidence-based interventions that effectively facilitate learning for all.

Consequently, the rationale for the choice of the 11th PDF theme stems from the interest aroused among participants in the very first sub-theme on “Professional Training and Development” discussed last year in Lomé, Togo. The discussions clearly underscored teacher training and development as having the most direct link with the closing of the quality teacher and teaching gaps and as a repository for actions to improve educational quality and learning in an inclusive and equitable manner. The threefold concern of Incheon Declaration – ensuring that teachers are well trained, motivated and supported – can then be encapsulated in this year’s theme.

Strengthening teacher education in order to guarantee quality teaching, training and learning for all calls for policy options that include, but also go beyond, the sole sphere of teacher training and continuous professional development, the types of training offered and their durations and objectives. Planning to reinforce teacher education also requires policy dialogue between policymakers and practitioners and may require a holistic approach to teacher competency profile and learner profile, as well as the negotiation of adequate allocation of resources. More, it is evident that indicators like the ratio of pupils to trained teachers have impacts on students’ learning outcomes. Between 1999 and 2012, pupils to trained teacher ratios declined in 44 out of 50 countries with data, requiring policies of upgrading teacher qualifications in pre-service training (Education for All Global Monitoring Report, Policy Paper 19, April 2015; UIS, 2016).

Regardless of geographical contexts, the need to close quality gap persistently arises to meet the requirement below:

‘If we want schools to produce more powerful learning on the part of students, we have to offer more powerful learning opportunities to teachers... Unless teachers have access to serious and sustained learning opportunities at every stage in their career, they are unlikely to teach in ways that meet demanding new standards for student learning or to participate in the solution of educational problems.’

Feiman-Nemser 2001, in Burns, M. and Lawrie, J. (eds), *Where it’s needed most: Quality professional development for all teachers*, INEE 2015:7

Besides, Jamaica hosting the 11th PDF represents one of the groups of countries SDG Goal 4.c is calling for giving priority to: (“... least developed countries and Small Island developing States”). The host country and region (the Caribbean) are typical targets whose specific challenges should receive attention and be addressed.

In sum, the proposed sub-themes (section 4 below) that the Forum will discuss illustrates why teachers and educators' skills and competencies have a bearing on many SDG 4 goal targets, including those related to knowledge and skills for labor (TVET) and to equal chances for quality learning. This extended coverage underpins the 11th PDF holistic approach in addressing this year's thematic focus area and breaks with the promptness to associate teachers and educators' debate to basic education issues only. As mentioned above, the focus on TVET will remind all that trainers/instructors and other education personnel represent an important group among teachers and educators.

Objectives

The Policy Dialogue Forum aims at establishing a shared vision among members and partners of the Teacher Task Force on crucial issues for the implementation of the Teacher Target in the SDG and Education 2030 Agenda. Teacher education is at the center of any strategies or policies that aim at the "supply of qualified teachers" for a quality and inclusive education. The TTF overarching objective is to contribute to increasing the quality and the quantity of teachers and educators through appropriate teacher policies. It directly contributes to, and illustrates the spirit of *Incheon Declaration*, 2015:

"We will ensure that teachers and educators are empowered, adequately recruited, well-trained, professionally qualified, motivated and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems."

More specifically, at the 11th PDF, stock will be taken by TTF members and partners of country progress and research findings linked to teacher education and CPD towards achieving SDG 4.c. The PDF offers a platform for multi-stakeholder communication and networking and the identification of ways to urge for adequate resource mobilization for teacher development.

Finally, deliberations will aim at informing ongoing concerns and reflections for effectively monitoring progress on SDG4, as pursued by the SDG – Education 2030 Steering Committee, UNESCO's Global Education Meeting in December 2018 and the UN's High Level Political Forum in July 2019.

Expected Outcomes

Within the framework of the four sub-themes, the outcomes of the keynote speeches, group discussions, plenary sessions, and the exhibitions will produce the following outputs:

1. Participants will have taken stock of a broad spectrum of models of teacher training and innovations from all regions and shared good practices on new trends in teacher education and CPD.
2. Participants will have developed collaboration and networking in order to promote further research and advocacy at the national, regional, and global levels.
3. Participants will have made recommendations on how to improve teacher education through international cooperation to the Teacher Task Force, the national governments, the SDG4 Steering Committee and the development partners.

The 11th PDF theme

“Strengthening Teacher Education: A prerequisite for quality teaching, training and learning”.

This theme is directly in line with the implementation and monitoring of the SDG 4.c targets related to teachers and complement lessons learnt from the previous fora. The discussions will be organized around the following four sub-themes to shed light on various ways of developing teacher education:

- Knowledge, skills and competencies for teacher development
- Teacher training: Skills and competencies for work
- Promoting equal learning opportunities for all through teacher education
- Teacher education: Digital learning and continuing professional development

As they stand in this concept note, the sub-themes introduce key thematic focus areas, bringing forth highlights on related issues. They are drafted to guide plenary presentations and to trigger off discussions at breakout sessions.

Sub-theme 1: Knowledge, skills and competencies for teacher development

This sub-theme will address the set of knowledge, skills and competences teachers should have. It will look at teacher education as career-long education and the roles of teacher educators. A special attention will be paid to system features that shape aspects of teachers’ professional careers, the nature of teachers’ professional development, competency frameworks, curriculum development and professional learning communities/communities of practice. It will refer to curriculum processes from development to implementation through teaching, evaluation and learning outcomes.

The rapid and varied changes in today’s societies have implications for the type of education at schools and teacher education that are needed. Teacher education in the increasing complex world must be forward-looking and prepare teachers who are continuous learners themselves. Teacher education in a globalized world must facilitate teachers to think about the sort of education that is meaningful and relevant to young people’s needs in 21st century different learning environments. Here an additional aspect regarding TVET teachers will marginally be referred to. (Sub-theme 2 elaborates more on TVET teachers, instructors/trainers’ education and CPD). Teaching practice in general education refers to pedagogical practice, i.e. how best to teach and to foster learning through various methods. Teaching practice for TVET teachers includes both pedagogical and vocational practice.

Discussions will contribute to the development of global guidelines for a core set of knowledge, competences and attributes for teaching standards developed in teacher competency frameworks (TCF).

To conclude, this sub-theme will probe the role of research, aimed at empowering teacher communities of practice so they can develop the capacity to reform their own situations.

Sub-theme 2: Teacher training: Skills and competencies for work

This sub-theme will look at the specific requirements in training teachers, trainers and facilitators in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) for the employability of youth (and adults). The challenge is twofold and lies in the function of basic education and its curriculum potentials for prevocational skills acquisition. In addition, the sub-theme aligns with

the following SDG 4 Target 4.3, 4.4 and 8.6:

4.3. *“By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university”.*

4.4. *“By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship”.*

8.6. *“By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training”.*

The question arises to know how teacher and trainer preparation and continuous professional development can be tailored to meet different technical and vocational skills demands in emerging and developed labor markets, and particularly in continuously changing labor markets due to globalization, automatization and digitization. The answer to this query henceforth may preclude public policy dominations and impose public private partnerships.

Furthermore, given the fact that good quality teaching and training are crucial to TVET, this sub-theme will also shed light on the status and challenges trainers in companies and tutors. It will further scrutinize some relevant factors on TVET teachers and teaching. These include the governance on TVET teachers, their recruitment and deployment, engagement of industries for pre-service and in-service training of TVET teachers, continuous professional development (CPD) of TVET teachers with licensing concept (as an emerging trend), equipment and materials for teaching and learning on TVET, appropriate pedagogy in the context of teaching TVET, keeping abreast of the changing skills demands in the labor market, etc.

Sub-theme 3: Promoting equal learning opportunities for all through teacher education

Against the backdrop of the SDG 4 agenda, stakeholders within the global education community have started to mobilize and collaborate to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. The dual focus of the agenda on equity and learning puts teachers at the heart of policy responses that could be developed to foster equal participation and learning globally. Teachers can be an impactful equalizing force to overcome unequal life chances from birth. This sub-theme will explore the role of teacher education and professional development programs in perpetuating or mitigating inequalities at both the classroom and system level.

In the classroom, teacher practices can impact equitable participation and learning for vulnerable groups. The teacher-student relationship is subject to cultural stereotypes, norms, and perceptions that influence teachers’ beliefs and efforts that children from all groups with all abilities can learn. In addition, teachers may not be sufficiently prepared to cope with the diversity of students in the classroom, particularly when facing large class sizes, hindering the learning process for many students. This sub-theme will consider how teacher training and professional development programs can be designed to better cater to the diversity of children in the system, and ensure that the teacher practices they promote do not perpetuate the situation of exclusion of disadvantaged children.

At the system level, providing disadvantaged groups with better access to more qualified and experienced teachers has been an underlying factor for countries which have succeeded in achieving more equitable learning outcomes. With the bulk of the remaining disparities in levels of participation and learning associated with dimensions of poverty, location, ethnicity, gender, or disability, the absence of adequately trained teachers in the most deprived areas constitutes one of the most important issues. Thus, this sub-theme will also reflect upon how policies, institutional structures, and service delivery related to teacher education and professional development can help ensure that teachers are adequately posted and trained to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged children.

Sub-theme 4: Teacher education: Digital learning and continuing professional development

The massive recruitment of new teachers, particularly in least developed countries, with little or no training is a real cause for concern. Thus, garnering interest in pedagogical approaches that include efficient use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in teacher education and CPD can help quickly meet learner needs.

In the digital age, technology-integrated education requires digital skills and digitally-infused pedagogy to ensure efficacy and efficiency of ICT use for personalized adaptive and student-oriented teaching and learning. Taking to scale promising solutions in the use of advanced information and communication technologies (ICT) for teacher education remains an unmet expectation. The sub-theme will offer opportunity to share results achieved in effective use of ICT in pedagogy, teacher development and resourcing, education actors' networking through communities of practice. Approaches used to ensure equity, reaching disadvantaged groups, as well as the risks associated with ICT, while underscoring that ICTs cannot replace teachers, overcoming teacher resistance and enhancing public-private partnerships (PPP) will be covered.

Technology is being used in new ways in teacher professional development and training. New teacher education and training programs have turned to ICT as a mean of professional development. The UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers, among the promising tools, is aimed at helping countries to develop comprehensive national teacher ICT competency policies and standards, and to harness digital facilities for professional learning. Yet, policies and strategies for ICT competencies of teachers need to be spelt out clearly in teacher education programmes. This is the sine qua non condition to tap on digital learning advantages to promote continuing professional development.

Discussion articulation

A deliberate combination of a Ministerial panel on the theme of the forum, presentations in plenary sessions, breakout sessions and "Special Presentations" will showcase a rich array of good practices and lessons learnt for enhancing teacher training, fostering innovation and promoting effective learning in the TTF Member States and network.

The Ministerial panel is a noteworthy innovation in the organization of the annual policy dialogue fora of the Teacher Task Force. For the first time, six Ministers in charge of Education from the five UNESCO regions are invited to join the host Minister as high-level policymakers, to share their perspectives on the critical issue of teacher education with the forum participants. They will talk about innovative reforms they have initiated to enhance the quality of learning by improving teacher training and the status of teachers.

The sub-themes will be introduced in a plenary session, before participants break into 4 groups to engage more deeply into the various dimensions of the sub-themes they have selected. In addressing the sub-themes, an attempt will be made to link core principles with context-based applications and/or lessons learnt, research evidence, practitioner's voice, implications for improving learning and teacher/trainer indicators. Research evidence and pilot projects will be presented and debated. The forum will enable the acquisition of pertinent knowledge and insights for the introduction or revision of teacher training policies.

Participants

The 11th PDF will bring together over 200 participants from around the world and about 100 teacher stakeholders from the host country. It will allow policy makers, researchers, representatives from UN and other international organizations, teacher organizations, teachers, private sector organizations and foundations, to dialogue and network. It will provide the platform for

stocktaking of existing policies and practices, exchange of information, experiences and good practices on teacher-related gaps among all the various constituencies.