

FINAL REPORT OF
THE FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A
CATEGORY 2 TEACHER EDUCATION CENTRE (SHANGHAI) BY THE
SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA,
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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Considering the important role quality teachers play in the provision of quality education, the Shanghai Municipal Government submitted a proposal to UNESCO to establish a Category 2 Teacher Education Centre at Shanghai Normal University. In response to this request, the UNESCO Assistant-Director General, on behalf of the Director General, instructed a mission led by the Chief of Section for Teacher Development to conduct a study to evaluate the feasibility of designing the ‘Teacher Education Centre’ at the Shanghai Normal University, as a category 2 Centre under the auspices of UNESCO.

The team included Dr Edem Adubra, Prof. Francis Owusu-Mensah and Prof. Libing Wang. The team employed a number of data collection methods to gather relevant information to review the proposal. These included attending presentations by key stakeholders from the Shanghai Municipal Government, the Ministry of Education, Shanghai Normal University, and relevant supporting organizations such as Huawei. On-site visits were also undertaken to inspect physical facilities and equipment.

- a. The study reveals the following: The setting up of Category 2 Centre of Teacher Education at Shanghai Normal University is in line with UNESCO’s Strategy C/4 and C/5 and will contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on education and its target 4.c.
- b. There is evidence of a strong and sustainable commitment on the part of the Shanghai Municipal Government to support the Centre.
- c. Shanghai Normal University has the initial staff, which gives it the required ability and capacity to start the Centre; it also has existing facilities, which can be refurbished to accommodate the Centre.

- d. The functions of the Centre will help improve the quality of teacher education and the continuous professional development of educational professionals, and ultimately the quality of education in the targeted regions and beyond, as envisaged by UNESCO.
- e. There is a good prospect of collaboration among the proposed Centre, Shanghai Normal University and Huawei Company in the area of information and communication technology (ICT). This would enable the Centre to deliver quality teacher development through this medium as described in its programme.

Based on the findings, and in order to reinforce the Center's international character, the team recommends that Shanghai Normal University should put in place an additional mechanism to recruit international staff and augment the existing staff for the Centre if approval is given. The Centre should also seek to establish collaboration and synergy with the International Task Force on Teachers at UNESCO to strengthen South-South and North-South cooperation in teacher policy and training across the globe.

2.0 MAIN REPORT

2.1 Background

Following a proposal submitted by the Shanghai Municipal Government to UNESCO to establish a Category 2 Teachers Education Centre (Shanghai) to support the target 4.c of the SDG 4 - Education 2030 and Framework of Action, the UNESCO Assistant-Director General for Education authorized two UNESCO Senior Programme Specialists and an Education consultant to undertake a joint visit to Shanghai for a feasibility study.

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the feasibility of designing the 'Teacher Education Centre' at the Shanghai Normal University, as a category 2 Centre under the auspices of UNESCO, with reference to the following:

1. The clear programmatic linkage between the proposed Centre's activities and UNESCO's programme on teachers as set forth in the strategic programme objectives, priorities (C/4 and C/5) and ongoing initiatives in the field of teachers, including the two global priorities of the Organization (Gender and Africa);
2. The scope of activities of the Centre, its ability and capacity to meet its objectives and proposed functions;
3. The global, regional, sub-regional or interregional relevance and the potential impact of the Centre and the contribution that it is expected to make in strengthening the provision of policy advice, capacity-building, knowledge and information sharing in Member States, and the promotion of the South-South cooperation in the field of Teacher Education;
4. The eventual complementarity or redundancy of the Centre with Category 2 entities or with other similar institutions created by other United Nations systems organizations;
5. The type and nature of cooperation the Centre aims to maintain with UNESCO entities, including UNESCO's Field and Regional Offices, education-related Category 1 and 2 Centres and Institutes, UNESCO's National Commissions, and the role and contribution to be provided by UNESCO;

6. The governance and financial sustainability of the Centre and their alignment with the provisions set out in UNESCO's Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for Category 2 Centres (37 C/18 Part I);
7. Steps to be taken by the proponents to establish and strengthen the Centre, and their readiness for the process.

The team of three arrived in Shanghai on Monday, 19 June 2017 and conducted the feasibility study from 20 to 23 June 2017.

2.2 Methodology adopted for the Feasibility Study

The team used multiple techniques to collect relevant information to address the terms of reference. These included presentations made by key stakeholders from the Shanghai Municipal Government, the Ministry of Education, Shanghai Normal University, and relevant supporting organizations such as Huawei Technology Company. The team also undertook a visit to the office of the Vice Mayor of Shanghai, had extensive discussions on the various dimensions of the proposal, inspected a wide range of facilities of the University and observed some actual Teacher Continuous Professional Development sessions at the University's College of Education. The team visited the College's partnership primary school and further reviewed a number of supporting documents made available by the hosts.

2.3 Findings from the feasibility Study

2.3.1 Programmatic Linkage between the Centre's activities and UNESCO's programme on teachers:

The proposed Centre aims at promoting the development of teacher education worldwide, with particular focus on supporting developing countries in Asia-Pacific and Africa in order to improve education quality and teacher quality. This objective is in line with UNESCO's Strategy C/4 (2014 – 2021), Strategic Objective, which seeks to support Member States to develop educational systems to foster high quality and inclusive lifelong learning for all. It is also in line with the Draft Programme and Budget of Major Programme 1 for 2018-2021 (39C/5), particularly Expected Result 5, including its engagement with

UNESCO's ongoing initiatives in the field. The proposed Category 2 Centre is therefore relevant to UNESCO's priorities and will contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, notably its target 4.c.

2.3.2 The scope of activities of the Centre and its ability and capacity to meet its objectives and proposed functions.

According to the proposal, the Centre's activities will focus on four key functions of knowledge production, capacity building, technical service and information sharing.

Concerning **knowledge production**, the Centre seeks to make use of well-known experts in basic and teacher education to research and disseminate findings in such areas as teacher development, administration and evaluation, as well as innovation in basic and teacher education.

Regarding **capacity building**, the Centre aims to utilize multi-level training programmes to build the capacity of basic and teacher education institutions. This means that the Centre will provide training for staff at various levels in the provision of basic and teacher education.

The **technical service** offered by the Center will involve leveraging ICT to provide professional service in basic and teacher education for least developed countries in Asia and Africa.

In the area of **information sharing**, the Centre seeks to work closely with UNESCO's Field and Regional Offices, National Commissions, category 1 institutes and other category 2 Centres of UNESCO.

A critical analysis of the functions of the Centre about the human resource base of Shanghai Normal University, which is expected by the Shanghai Municipal Government to serve as a professional supporting institution of the Centre, reveals that the University has strong ability and capacity to start the Centre. A number of experts have already been identified to staff the center, and a strategy is in place to recruit new staff members upon approval of the creation of the center.

The University has both teaching and non-teaching staff with excellent academic backgrounds. The University further has renowned Professors and Associate Professors who have distinguished themselves in the area of Teacher Education and Teacher Professional development. Shanghai is noted for its outstanding performance in many fields including teacher education and basic education. The results of major international studies like the programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) and Systems Approach for Better Educational Results (SABER) point to the outstanding performance of Shanghai students, teachers and principals, which has attracted worldwide attention. With the establishment of the Centre, Shanghai aims to share this experience with both developed and developing countries.

Besides, the University has institutes, such as Shanghai Institute for Teacher Education (SITE) and Research Institute for International and Comparative Education (RIICE), which are actively involved in the professional development of teachers and school administrators (principals and primary school heads) in Shanghai and in some developed and developing countries. A typical example is the training of mathematics teachers from the United Kingdom and of educational administrators from Kenya.

The staff of these institutes, under the leadership of a renowned Professor, Minxuan Zhang, have built capacity over the years and can therefore form a solid human resource base for the Centre. Interaction with the staff revealed that they are very enthusiastic and prepared to actively sustain the Centre's programme. Professor Zhang, who has enormous experience in Teacher Education is expected to Chair the Centre once it is approved. Other experienced professors to give the Centre a strong leadership will support him.

In order to consolidate this wealth of competence and experience, the mission recommended that, considering the international nature of the Centre's functions, there would be the need to recruit a few international staff.

2.3.4 Support from the Shanghai Municipal Government and Shanghai Normal University

A study of the application documents revealed that the Shanghai Municipal Government would support the Centre in terms of finance, materials and facilities.

Specifically, the government has promised to provide \$ 2 million every year to the Centre for its work and activities as a UNESCO Category 2 Centre for teacher education. The Municipality will provide an area of 110,000 square meters to the Centre and will support the Centre with 20 staff on government payroll. Besides, the government has committed to provide US\$ 2 million as a Funds-in-Trust to support UNESCO's objectives in teacher education. The Vice Mayor of Shanghai who gave very impressive and convincing assurance on the preparedness of the government to support and sustain the Centre confirmed these commitments of the Shanghai Municipal Government to the team. Other senior officials participated in the roundtable discussions on all aspects of the project, to confirm that if UNESCO's governing bodies approve the Category 2 Centre, it will not lack government's support. It is worth adding that the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO fully backs the initiative on behalf of the national government.

The top management of Shanghai Normal University has also pledged its unflinching support for the Centre. It is worthy to note that the University President and the Dean of the College of Education were actively involved in the discussions with the team during the feasibility study.

With such an assurance, the team concludes that if the request is granted, it will enjoy continuous support of the government and the University.

2.3.5 Infrastructure Base to Support the Centre

The team undertook on-site inspection of the facilities already existing. It discovered that Shanghai Normal University has many buildings and has assigned some to be used in their current state for the Centre's activities. It has made provisions to refurbish others to make them fitting for the purpose of the Centre. In addition to the existing facilities, the university plans to construct and furnish new buildings for the Centre. Building plans and designs were shared with the mission.

In conclusion, as far as facilities are concerned, the Center will have all necessary infrastructure to sustain its diverse programmes and accommodate beneficiaries.

2.3.6 Technical Support to the Centre: Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The mission has gathered evidence that the Centre will leverage efficient and sustainable Information and Communication Technology (ICT) system to enhance its activities. There is a planned collaboration among the Centre, Huawei, the leading ICT solution provider, and Shanghai Normal University to build a 'state-of-the-art teacher education information exchange centre. The center will be equipped with advanced facilities and a wealth of easily accessible data.' Under this agreement, Huawei is to build a smart cloud education platform and a cloud data centre, equipped with a teaching management system, a digital library and various teaching resources. During discussions with the mission, a representative of Huawei clearly confirmed this proposed technical support of his company to the prospective Center. The foregoing evidence speaks to the availability of strong infrastructure and equipment base for the proposed Centre. As already pointed out, some of the infrastructure can readily be used in their present state. For the others, the authorities showed evidence of readiness to adapt them to users on campus as well as beneficiaries from developing contexts.

2.3.7 Cooperation of the Centre with other UNESCO entities (Regional Offices, Category 1 Institutes, education-related Category 2 Centres, UNESCO's Commissions), and the role and contribution to be provided by UNESCO

According to the proposal, the Centre aims at becoming a reliable partner of the Teacher Education Section of UNESCO. It is ready to cooperate with the Section in its areas of work: collaborative research on international teacher education policies, capacity development for teacher trainers and other school administrators with an extensive use of ICT, exchange of expertise, etc. in a South-South, North-South cooperation manner.

At regional level, the Centre aims to strengthen its cooperation with UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education. It will support the Bureau in its teacher education endeavors in the Asia-Pacific region and engage in local teacher education innovation and development activities in the region through cooperation and co-construction.

Furthermore, the Centre will continue to work with major partners of UNESCO: the World Bank, UNICEF, APEC and other international organizations, to pool together human and financial resources, knowledge, information and modern technologies.

2.3.8 The eventual complementarity or redundancy of the Centre with Category 2 entities or with other similar institutions created by other United Nations systems organizations;

A study of the Strategic Vision and the four key functions of the proposed Centre indicates that the Centre will complement the work of centres under the auspices of UNESCO and other international organizations already working in the area of teacher education. It will strengthen teacher education and teacher professional development activities in developing countries especially Asia and Africa. It will achieve this through collaboration and leveraging ICT to provide high quality training for these institutions and agencies as well as sharing best practices.

2.4 Conclusions

Among the key conclusions, the following could be highlighted:

- i. The setting up of a Category 2 Centre of Teacher Education at Shanghai Normal University is in line with UNESCO's Strategy C/4 and C/5, particularly Strategic Objective 1.
- ii. The Category 2 Centre will also support the target 4.c of the SDG 4 - Education 2030 and Framework of Action, aiming to substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers in developing countries through international cooperation.
- iii. There is evidence of a strong and sustainable commitment on the part of the Shanghai Municipal Government to support the Centre.
- iv. As academic and professional supporting institution, Shanghai Normal University has identified the necessary initial staff for the Centre to capacitate the latter to start and run its programme.
- v. Shanghai Normal University has existing facilities to accommodate the Centre, and plans to refurbish and further build infrastructure to sustain the programme
- vi. The functions of the Centre will help improve quality of teacher education and the continuous professional development of educational

professionals, and ultimately, the quality of education across the globe as envisaged by UNESCO.

- vii. There is a good prospect of collaboration among the Centre, Shanghai Normal University and Huawei Technology Company to provide a strong ICT support to the Centre, thereby making it possible for the Centre to leverage ICT in professional development of teachers

In order to complement the above and reinforce the Center's international character, the team that has conducted the review has made the following recommendations:

- i. Shanghai Normal University should seek to recruit a few international staff and augment the existing staff for the Centre if approval is given.
- ii. The staff of the proposed Centre should uphold the philosophy of knowledge sharing and cross fertilization of ideas from all beneficiary/participating countries involved in the Centre's activities for the mutual benefit of Asia-Pacific, Africa and generally, enhancing South-South and North-South collaboration.
- iii. The Centre should also seek to establish collaboration and synergy with the International Task Force on Teachers at UNESCO to strengthen South-South and North-South cooperation in teacher policy and training across the globe.
- iv. The authorities should go ahead with their plans to renovate and refurbish buildings for the proposed centre (now a hotel called Shanghai International Centre for Education Exchange with 11000 square meters) to meet the objectives of the Centre once approval is given.

2.5 Recommendation

The feasibility study has identified and documented significant strengths and the "uniqueness" of the proposed Centre as a UNESCO Category-2 Centre for Teacher Education at the Shanghai Normal University. The Centre is likely to

add great value to UNESCO in its coordinating role of the implementation of SDG 4 - Education 2030, especially concerning the target on Teachers.

In the light of the above, the team that has reviewed the proposal recommends that UNESCO's General Conference approves the establishment of Category-2 Teacher Education Centre at Shanghai Normal University, in the People's Republic of China.