

## **POLICY BRIEF**

### **Introduction**

Each year, October 5<sup>th</sup> marks the celebration of World Teacher's Day (WTD), which recognizes the valuable impacts teachers have in education. On September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016, UNESCO-IICBA, in collaboration with the African Union Commission (AUC) and the International Labor Organization (ILO), celebrated WTD with the launch of their **Teacher Policy Guide** publication. This celebration also marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UNESCO/ILO recommendation to advocate for the working conditions of teachers.

In addition to UNESCO-IICBA, the AUC, and ILO, other partners for this seminar included: Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), Education International (EI), the University of Free State in South Africa (UFS), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), and the AU member countries.



*Group photo of WTD participants*

The **objectives** of this seminar were to:

- Reflect on the creation of viable teacher support and motivation frameworks and their implementation -- in furtherance of the goals of improving the quality of education at point of delivery and improving learning outcomes;
- Gather examples of best practices for empowering teachers and school leaders so they may play a more significant role in the achievement of CESA and SDG 4, and in the improvement of policy formulation.

### **Summary**

Throughout the day, the participants discussed how to strengthen professional support for teachers and their classroom practices as part of efforts to improve the quality of education and equity of learning outcomes, including initiatives that may increase teachers' motivation. This seminar highlighted the centrality of teachers at the core of national education systems and in the achievement of SDG4, and covered topics that are well aligned with the objectives of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) and Education Agenda 2030. There was also great

focus on improving teacher's professional development, with emphasis on supporting and motivating teachers. The seminar included a Davos style panel discussion on these issues.

The Davos style panel discussion was comprised of experts from the education sector, including Mr. Dennis Sinyolo (EI), Dr. Dipane Hlalele (UFS), Dr. John Oliphant from Lesotho, Dr. Beatrice Njenga (AUC), and Mr. Lawalley Cole (ADEA), who served as chairperson. During this discussion, panelists covered topics such as the status, living and working conditions of teachers, professionalization of teaching, school leadership and management, salaries and incentives, the creation of local, national, and regional standards and guidelines which are contextually relevant, and the need to improve teacher education and preparedness at all levels.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that a Teacher Support and Motivation Framework be created, highlighting the following action steps:

1. Invest in holistic, inter-connected teaching policies, recognizing that **the teaching profession must adapt to, and be more relevant for, the shifting demands of society on the African continent**,
2. Build on internationally agreed standards and national frameworks, to ensure **the professionalization of teaching in Africa**. Countries must **invest in re-valoring the status of teachers and teaching as a profession**, with observance of minimum standards for teachers' professional development across all categories of teachers
3. Provide the right incentives to enhance teachers' motivation in regards to **salary and social protection, teachers' professional autonomy, school leadership functions, and empowered school governing bodies**
4. Provide quality support for newly trained teachers, including **pre-service placement opportunities and training in contextually relevant pedagogies and assessments**
5. Improve and expand teacher professional development programs which provide **school or cluster level continuous professional development opportunities and clearly defined guidelines for career development, school leadership, and management roles**
6. Ensure adequate support for TVET teachers, **increasing the attractiveness of recruitment to TVET teaching at all levels** as well as **introducing more flexible national TVET curriculum guidelines with great autonomy for teachers** to bridge the gap between guidelines and local labour markets

These recommendations pertaining to teacher motivation in Africa will be fed into the panel discussion event in Paris on October 5<sup>th</sup> organized by The Teachers Taskforce (TTF) Secretariat at UNESCO Headquarters.

It is also recommended that organizing members of the World Teachers' Day seminar continue to work together with TTF and EI going forward, with the intention of having a planning meeting in early 2017 focused on the implementation and use of the proposed Teacher Support and Motivation Framework.

### **Conclusion**

This one-day seminar served as the beginning of the serious commitment that UNESCO-IICBA and its partners have made to improve teacher support and motivation frameworks in Africa. If we hope to make improvements in the conditions of teachers, we must provide them with the support and motivation they need and deserve as professionals.

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