



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



International Institute  
for Capacity Building  
in Africa



# Norwegian Teacher Initiative Teacher Policy Capacity Workshop-Malawi

Meeting Report

18 June, 2020, 14:00-16:30 (GMT+3)

Microsoft Teams

## Context

### Introduction

The Norwegian Teacher Initiative (NTI), Strengthening Multi-Partner Cooperation to Support Teacher Policy and Improve Learning, aims to strengthen the ongoing works by many international organizations by improving the coordination and cooperation among key international agencies and partners supporting member states to realize target SDG 4.c within the Education 2030 framework. One of its main objectives is strengthened national teacher policies that impact teaching and learning. The main objective aligns with the teacher target SDG 4.c.

The Government of Malawi, through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), has made tremendous progress in improving the quality and quantity of teachers and teacher educators to ensure quality and effective teaching and learning. Such efforts have been implemented through the National Education Policy (NEP), National Education Sector Plan (NESP), Education Sector Implementation Plan (ESIP) I and II, the National Strategy for Teacher Education and Development (NSTED), Education Act, National Education Standards (NES) as well as the recently launched CPD Framework. These policies, frameworks and strategies have provided guidance to addressing teacher issues.

However, the MoEST lacks a consolidated policy that looks at teacher issues holistically. This has, therefore, necessitated the need to develop a comprehensive stand-alone teacher policy. The policy is expected to provide a framework to guide the professionalization of teachers; to streamline interventions aimed at standardizing teacher-related interventions at all levels of the education system; and to make broad provisions to enable effective teacher utilization for the required improvements in learning outcomes.

The development of this policy is expected to follow a consultative approach both within and beyond the education sector, with the aim of promoting wide coverage of themes, and ownership and endorsement of the final product by the government of Malawi. The policy is expected to be cognizant of the status of the nine dimensions of the *UNESCO Teacher Policy Development Guide* developed by UNESCO's International Institute of Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA). However, establishing a core policy team and building its capacity is one of the initial activities in the development of this policy.

Against this background, UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA), through UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa (ROSA) and Malawi MoEST facilitated a workshop to officially establish and build capacity of the proposed teacher policy to prepare them for the development of the policy. The workshop is a follow up of IICBA's earlier technical support to the policy development core team with a visit to Malawi in July 2019 by Dr. Binyam Sisay to discuss the baseline study and introduce teacher policy development guidelines.

The main purpose of the capacity-building workshop was to build a common understanding on the status of the development of the Malawi national teacher policy, as well as to build capacity of the policy core team and consultant contracted to assist with the development of the policy.

The specific objectives of the workshop were to:

- build a common understanding on the status of the development of the Malawi national teacher policy;
- build capacity of the policy core team and consultant contracted to assist with the development of the policy, cognizant of the status of the nine dimensions of the UNESCO Teacher Policy Development Guide;
- enhance the capacity of members of the policy development core team to participate effectively in the

---

development of the policy;

- provide a platform to further enhance the role of the core team as well as collect data to inform the development of the Malawi national teacher policy and discuss pertinent issues pertaining to the development of the policy;
- Learn from and share experiences with teacher education experts from Uganda.

In attendance, there were 12 participants who include the Malawi policy core team involving officials from various directorates in the MoEST, Teachers Union of Malawi, Teacher Education Institutions, and school certifying officials. There were also representatives from the Uganda policy team, the IICBA team, and the development partners.

The webinar was moderated by Dr. George Mindano, the Norwegian Teachers Initiatives Project Coordinator in Malawi.

## Main Topic Discussed

The session started with an introductory remark from Dr. George Mindano who explained the education context in Malawi and with an update on the policy development process. Then, he gave the floor to Dr. Binyam Sisay Mendisu of IICBA to introduce the teacher policy development process and the various dimensions that needs to be taken into account.

## Introduction to Teacher Policy Development Process and Guidelines

### Dr. Binyam Sisay, Programme Officer, IICBA

Dr. Binyam Sisay gave an overview on IICBA's work and the process of teacher policy formulation. In his presentation, he highlighted the crucial role that teachers play in achieving global and regional targets set under the frameworks of SDG 4 and Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025 (CESA 16-25). He addressed that the policy should be informed by and aligned to frameworks at the global and regional levels.

Following that, Dr. Binyam comprehensively demonstrated the process of teacher policy formulation, which is summarized below:

- The context of education and teachers in Africa was given, underlining the achievement on expanding the level of access to primary and secondary education across Africa, and the urgent need of providing adequate quality teachers, in order to bring about real improvements in teaching and learning to the continent. Thus, a holistic and comprehensive teacher policy is much needed.
- UNESCO has developed several guidelines and tools on the formulation of teacher policies, which include:
  - (a) Methodological Guide for the Analysis of Teacher Issues (2010)
  - (b) Teacher Policy Development Guide (2015)
  - (c) Teaching Policies and Learning Outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa (2016)
- During the launching phase, it is critical to have relevant discussions on initiating the teacher policy development process at the level of both government and public to inspire ownership and a strong willingness to implement the policy. In addition, a comprehensive diagnostic study should be undertaken to map the teachers' issues and challenges of the country, in order to inform the policymaking.
- **9 key dimensions of teacher policy:** 1) Teacher recruitment and retention; 2) Teacher education: initial and continuing; 3) Deployment; 4) Career structures/paths; 5) Teacher employment and working conditions; 6) Reward and remuneration; 7) Teaching professional standards; 8) Teacher accountability; 9) School governance.
- **6 stages of advancing through the policy process:** 1) Building political will; 2) Drafting technical support materials for discussion; 3) Consolidating and balancing contributions; 4) Anticipating the financial and political implication of the policy; 5) Preparing a framework for implementation; 6) Enacting the policy.

Link to full presentation:

<http://www.iicba.unesco.org/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/UNESCO%20IICBA%20-%20Binyam%20Sisay%20Mendis%20%28Virtual%20Workshop%20NTI%20Malaw%2018%20June%202020%29.pdf>

### Q&A

**Q: How do we balance between being comprehensive and trying to prioritize, considering the availability of resources?**

---

**A:** (Dr. Victoria Kisaakye Kanobe) Many countries are actually struggling with the issue of prioritization. Using Uganda as an example, the policy eventually tackles 6 out of 9 dimensions.

The prioritization is informed by the diagnostic study which sought to evaluate all dimensions to ascertain how well the country has been performing along the 9 dimensions. In other words, the study is a self-reflection that attempts to show what is/not working, and to what extent to improve the system based on available resources. In a nutshell, a good diagnostic study is able to show a number of pointers and also lead to prioritization automatically.

(Prof. Joseph Oonyu) For Uganda, we looked at what dimensions give us the biggest multiplier effect, what factors cause changes with less effort, and we began with these aspects.

**Q: How can we be flexible in as far as some of the issues happening (e.g. social dialogue with teachers) are concerned? Are there other relevant issues that could also be potentially included in the policies?**

**A:** (Prof. Joseph Oonyu) The policy is going to be developed alongside other frameworks and will require Malawi to look at the important aspects for effective implementation such as continuing professional development and social dialogue etc.

(Dr. Binyam Sisay) Countries have their own ways to address different issues. For the issue of social dialogue, either you can make it a stand-alone or mainstream it across other dimensions.

**Q: For Malawi, one of the challenges is the timeline. Meanwhile, Malawi is almost heading towards the end of the development of the national education sector investment plan which will run for the next 10 years. The teacher policy we are developing should be aligned with this document.**

**To what extent is the diagnostic study for Malawi in alignment with what was prioritized in the education sector?**

**A:** (Dr. George Mindano) The diagnostic study for Malawi was done between August and September last year. But the data still needs to be further analyzed to be comprehensive enough to inform the policy. In addition, apart from the diagnostic study which is looking in one area, it is good for Malawi to develop a more robust and comprehensive tool/model/study as reference points for policy development, like Uganda conducted a diagnostic study using Teachers Initiative in Sub-Saharan Africa (TISSA) methodology.

## Dimensions on Teacher Policy Development

**Dr. Victoria Kisaakye Kanobe, Senior Program Coordinator (CapED), IICBA**

Based on the *Teacher Policy Development Guide* developed by UNESCO International Task Force for Teachers, Dr. Kisaakye provided an overview of teacher policy development dimensions, divided into 5 parts: 1) Reasons for developing teacher policies; 2) Components, recommendations, and strategies of teachers' issues from international and regional frameworks; 3) 9 Dimensions of teachers' issues; 4) Practical aspects of policy design; and 5) Guiding principles of teacher policy development.

In her presentation, 9 dimensions of teachers' issues were highlighted:

1. Recruitment, deployment, qualifications, requirements to enter and remain in teaching;
2. Teachers' workload, employment conditions, contract status;
3. Compensation (salary and non-salary benefits), retirement rules and benefits;
4. Monitoring and evaluation of teacher quality, statistics, management information system;
5. Teacher education & continuous professional development - initial teacher education, pre- and in-service training, teacher accountability, and teacher evaluation;
6. Social dialogues for teachers (i.e. teacher representation and voice);
7. School leadership/governance and how that impacts on the teachers;
8. Cross-cutting areas (teachers and teaching as a means to ensure equity, quality and relevance of learning, teacher motivation);
9. Other thematic areas (preparedness for addressing/responses to crisis and emergencies, education in emergencies, health education, GCED, gender responsiveness, climate change etc.).

Link to full presentation:

<http://www.iicba.unesco.org/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/Overview%20of%20Teacher%20Policy%20Development%20Dimensions.pdf>

---

## Challenges in the Development of Teacher Policy in Uganda

**Prof. Joseph Oonyu, Makerere University, Uganda**

Prof. Oonyu shared Uganda's experiences in the development of teacher policy, focusing on the background of policy making, key considerations of policy formulation and implementation, as well as lessons learnt from the policy-making process.

He first demonstrated the dual problems of teacher quantity and quality in Uganda, underlining the major issues of under-professionalization, lack of standards, and under-motivation within the teaching profession. This highlighted the need to have a comprehensive teacher policy that tackles these issues in order to promote consistent and quality teaching and learning, in turn, to improve educational reforms and strengthen social capital to drive the modernization of the country.

Thereafter, he illustrated the pre-requisites of the process and underlined the crucial roles of strong political commitment, a clear institutional anchorage, and an inclusive and accountable process in the policy formulation. Furthermore, the policy development process and phases of policy formulation were demonstrated:

- Policy development process: 1) Baseline or situational analysis; 2) Bench marking; 3) Drafting by a team led by a consultant; 4) IICBA Technical Team made inputs; 5) Several writing workshops; 6) Several validation workshops; 7) Process of adoption by Ministry: Policy Division, M&E, ESSC and will next go to top management and then cabinet.
- 7 phases of policy formulation:
  - Phase 1: Undertaking a diagnostic study;
  - Phase 2: Setting up of a country technical team to lead the process;
  - Phase 3: Development of a guiding framework for the national teacher policy;
  - Phase 4: Stakeholder consultations on the selected policy dimensions;
  - Phase 5: Undertaking a Regulatory Impact Assessment Study;
  - Phase 6: Development of a costed implementation plan;
  - Phase 7: Approval of the draft policy documents by the Government of Uganda.

Prof. Oonyu then shared an example of policy goals, objectives and strategies in Uganda teacher policy, which was followed by the core challenges faced by Uganda during the policy formulation and several key lessons learnt:

- Main challenges are 1) identification of policy needs; 2) Consensus building among stakeholders; 3) Alignment with other national and international policy frameworks and roles; 4) Cultivating broad political will for the policy is time- and effort-consuming; 5) Identification of champions/leaders to run the ideas; 6) Financial support; 7) ensure sustainability of policy.
- Lessons on what works: 1) A diagnostic study with very clear recommendations; 2) Stakeholder mapping and engagement: This included engaging the most teacher unions; 3) Government commitment to have the process succeed; 4) Technical guidance and financial support from UNESCO; 5) A committed core team of visionary drivers or champions; 6) Commitment of the consultant as a lead person for the team helped to collate and gather information; 7) The existence of a UNESCO project office helped to coordinate the relevant activities;

Link to the presentation:

<http://www.iicba.unesco.org/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/2National%20Teacher%20Policy%20Joseph%20Oonyu%2018.6.2020%20presentation%20Uganda.pdf>

### Discussion

**Comment:** (Dr. Binyam Sisay) There are ways to enrich the diagnostic study that was done for Malawi. One way could be to have studies like TISSA done in Uganda.

While the situation is more limited due to different reasons, it is also possible to fast track the process of developing the diagnostic study we have in hand to make it more informative and comprehensive. For example, we could strategically identify the gaps and missing elements that arise in the study and primarily focus on these areas, in which more data such as surveys or relevant studies could be utilized to enrich the analyses.

**Q: (To Uganda) How much weight was placed to the inputs from learners in the process of developing policy framework?**

**A:** (Prof. Joseph Oonyu) When conducting the diagnostic study, Uganda had extensive consultations with students

---

especially those from upper-secondary schools. The consultation reflected issues such as the large workload of teachers and the teaching of soft skills. In addition, the consultation with student leaders gave very inspiring views of students on what should be incorporated in the teacher policy. And their concerns are taken care of in the broad objectives of the policy.

**Q: (To Uganda) How long did it take for Uganda from the beginning to having the final draft of the policy before it went for the cabinet review?**

**A:** (Prof. Joseph Oonyu) It has taken probably four years, from 2016 up to the current.

**Q: (To Uganda) How do you manage partnerships?**

**A:** (Prof. Joseph Oonyu) Firstly, we mapped different stakeholders and looked at their regional influence. It is also important to know how much we would reach by consulting them. Then, by managing the stakeholders, we had regular meetings, at least once every 2-3 months. Based on the meeting, we would synthesize aspects that we were supposed to do and followed up in the next meeting/step. This enabled us to look at where to add after designing a road map/framework.

The process became faster thereafter. We had an assistant commissioner to ensure the process could be completed within the shortest time possible. Within 3 years, we completed most of the activities.

The biggest challenge of managing partnerships is about power relations. Therefore, we need to make sure we are as inclusive as possible and provide clear directions to all actors. It should be noted that in some cases, we got opposition from others, not because of people's will but the lack of information. Thus, we should make information available and give relevant guidance to partners.

**Q: (To Malawi) what are some of the dimensions featured in the diagnostic study Malawi undertook?**

**A:** (Dr. George Mindano) Beside of the 9 dimensions of teacher policy, we added the dimension of social dialogues. At this stage, the tools and data have been produced. What we lack is some critical analyses of the diagnostic study that make it more comprehensive and robust enough to inform the policy development.

**Q: (To Malawi) How is the level of stakeholders' involvement?**

**A:** (Dr. George Mindano) Tools and studies targeting various stakeholders such as managers and teachers have been developed. Stakeholders such as primary education authorities, teacher education colleges, and teacher unions have been engaged in the policy development process.

**Q: (To Uganda) Can we learn a little more about the motivational/incentive framework? What are some of its anticipated strengths and challenges?**

**A:** (Prof. Joseph Oonyu) There are different models of motivations that we can look at. In Uganda, we especially considered what options available in the resources constraints context. Various options of motivating teachers in different contexts were discussed at the higher levels within the ministries. We also had consultants who gave recommendations on it.

An important question is, except salary enhancement which has been done regularly, what else can be done to stimulate teacher motivations?

**Q: (To Uganda) Have resources been committed to implementation, or are there priority areas for action?**

**A:** (Prof. Joseph Oonyu) The policy has been approved by the cabinet. The implementation framework has been developed.

**Q: With reference to the strategies, especially on the Establishment of the Uganda National Institute of Teacher Education (UNITE), how has UNITE managed to coordinate teacher education and development issues given the fact that there are different teacher education and training institutes that offer pre-service and in-service?**

**A:** UNITE is supposed to be the lead teacher trainer, setting standards and providing support to other teacher education and training institutes. The Grade III & V teacher institutions are going to be affiliated institutions of UNITE. In addition, Uganda is moving away from the grade III & V teachers to graduate teachers. It is suggested that it takes about 10 years for a teacher to move from the current level to be a graduate teacher. UNITE is coordinating this process and the ministry of Education is forming a task force to support UNITE.

**Q: Why did Uganda decide to have several Continuing Profession Development (CPD) frameworks instead of only one?**

**A:** (Prof. Joseph Oonyu) Uganda has one CPD framework. Before the framework, there were several efforts by different stakeholders.

**Q: (To Uganda) Learning from the experiences of Uganda, what safeguards did they institute do to keep the process technical so that it should be affected by political interventions?**

A: (Prof. Joseph Oonyu) It was not one of our major concerns. But when we constituted the core team, we were mindful of different actors. During the consultative process, we always brought different actors on board including politicians like parliament members. By building mutual understanding, the work would be easier.

**Comment:** (Ms. Milandu Mwale) We should think about how much we have penetrated the education donor group to bring in as many development partners as possible.

There is a fear of stakeholders that this policy is not much different from many other policies in Malawi. Therefore, we need to punch through to emphasize what makes the teacher policy a stand-alone for Malawi, to reflect what we could do differently to increase the buy-in of key stakeholders of education sectors.

## Recommendations and the Way Forward

- A similar platform could be made in the next two months (or regularly) to reflect the progress, learn from others and discuss the way forward.
- Dr. Binyam emphasized that the extension of the NTI project for another 6 months or one year offers a great opportunity to fast track the process.
- There is a national consultant on board who will take responsibilities to fast track the process.
- It was recommended to have an international consultant which would be very helpful as moving forward.
- Besides the policy development, the implementation plan of the policy should also be analyzed during the design phase.

## Agenda

Friday, 18 June, 2020		Moderator: Dr. George Mindano
	Introduction of the workshop and participants	Dr. George Mindano, National Teachers Initiatives Project Coordinator in Malawi
	Introduction of IICBA and the Teacher Policy Development Process	Dr. Binyam Sisay, Programme Officer, IICBA
	Dimensions on Teacher Policy Development	Dr. Victoria Kisaakye Kanobe, Senior Program Coordinator (CapED), IICBA
	Challenges in the Development of Teacher Policy in Uganda	Prof. Joseph Oonyu, Makerere University, Uganda
	Q&A and Discussion	Dr. Binyam Sisay, Programme Officer, IICBA
	Strategies and the Way Forward	Participants

If you have any questions or comments regarding this Meeting Report, please do not hesitate to contact Ruixi Liu at [r.liu@unesco.org](mailto:r.liu@unesco.org) and Maryann Dreas-Shaikha at [mj.dreas@unesco.org](mailto:mj.dreas@unesco.org).

You can also see updates and resources from a variety of IICBA events and programs on its website: <http://www.iicba.unesco.org/> and its Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/iicba>