



Declaration on Teacher Professional Development at Scale

Quality education for all through empowered and effective teachers.

Teachers play a pivotal role in engaging students in their learning, supporting them to monitor and manage their own learning, and enabling them to enhance their learning outcomes. Facilitating quality learning and enabling students to develop lifelong learning skills require teachers to have the competencies to carry out such a role. High-quality teacher professional development (TPD) provides teachers these requisite competencies and keeps their knowledge and skills relevant and up-to-date.

A massive teacher shortage around the world is a critical bottleneck in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 – ensure inclusive and quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. UNESCO estimates that 68.8 million teachers need to be recruited and trained in developing countries if the goal of universal enrollment in primary and secondary education is to be achieved by 2030.¹ At the same time, existing teachers are often poorly prepared. In sub-Saharan Africa and in the Caribbean, around a quarter of secondary school teachers have had no formal training.² The attrition rate among public primary school teachers in sub-Saharan Africa is as much as 15%³ while an estimated 20% of instructional time is lost in Latin America and the Caribbean due to absenteeism and inadequate preparation.⁴

The provision of high-quality TPD to all teachers, from pre-service to induction to in-service, poses a challenge for many countries, especially those in the Global South where there are limited resources and significant rural-urban, regional, and other gaps. Addressing these gaps requires innovative approaches to TPD.

Information and communication technologies (ICT) have the potential to contribute to inclusive, high-quality, and cost-effective TPD. The term “teacher professional development at scale” (TPD@Scale) as used here derives from “learning at scale” or L@S, referring to large-scale, ICT-mediated learning environments that engage large numbers of learners, remotely or face-to-face, with limited expert intervention. The MOOC (massive open online course) is the most well-known variant of L@S, but other forms exist and are emerging: open courseware, intelligent tutoring systems, learning games, and a variety of peer learning networks and collaborative communities. TPD@Scale focuses on teachers as learners and as part of a professional learning community that engages in continuous TPD. Informed by the principles of effective TPD and depending on the particular contexts of the teachers, teacher education institutions, and schools, approaches to TPD@Scale may be “blended,” combining online and offline methods, modalities, resources, and activities when and where appropriate.

¹ UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (2016, October). The world needs almost 69 million new teachers to reach the 2030 education goals. UIS Fact Sheet, 39. Retrieved from <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/fs39-the-world-needs-almost-69-million-new-teachers-to-reach-the-2030-education-goals-2016-en.pdf>

² UNESCO. (2016). Education for people and planet: Creating sustainable futures for all. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002457/245752e.pdf>

³ UNESCO. (2016). Education for people and planet: Creating sustainable futures for all. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002457/245752e.pdf>

⁴ Bruns, B., & Luque, J. (2015). Great teachers: How to raise student learning in Latin America and the Caribbean. Washington, DC: World Bank. Retrieved from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/20488>



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The TPD@Scale Coalition for the Global South is a collaborative effort of ministries of education and other government agencies; international organizations; development agencies; non-governmental organizations; universities, education colleges, and training institutions; research and policy centers; private corporations; and other education and technology stakeholders. The Coalition aims to contribute to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 by promoting quality, equitable, and sustainable large-scale, ICT-mediated teacher professional development through collaboration, research, and implementation support.

The Coalition operationalizes this mission through three main objectives:

- support governments and implementers across the Global South in the design, development, and deployment of quality, equitable, and sustainable TPD@Scale models;
- support research and knowledge-sharing on innovative TPD@Scale models and how to adapt them effectively and appropriately for a wide range of Global South contexts; and
- harmonize efforts and investments in TPD@Scale in the Global South.

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