



Concept note

## Online panel discussion

# The transformation of education begins with teachers: a lifelong learning journey

**6 October, 2022, 10:00-11:30 – Paris time (GMT+2)**

**Registration:** [here](#)

*Interpretation in English, French and Spanish will be available.*

## Background

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Transforming education is critical to achieve SDG 4 and to overcome many of the challenges evidenced by the Covid-19 pandemic. The transformation starts with teachers, they are key decision makers in class, they decide what, when and how to teach, and which pedagogical approaches, places, and tools to use to support learning. However, to transform education, teachers must be supported at all levels and transformation must include a lifelong learning perspective.

UNESCO's recent publication "*Reimagining our futures together: a new social contract for education*" considers the central role of teachers and calls for the teaching profession to be revalued and reimagined as a collaborative endeavor, that sparks new knowledge, creativity and innovation. For this to happen, teacher professional development needs to be conceived as a lifelong, continuous, and reflexive process that includes all teachers and encompasses all education levels and formats. Whether they teach at an ECCE center, school, TVET college, adult literacy course or university, teachers should have the support, training, and tools to transform teaching and learning, however, early childhood, TVET and adult educators tend to be on the margins of teacher education, decent work and contractual conditions.

## About the event

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Following the theme of World Teachers Day in 2022, this session will explore how to enhance the working conditions of ECCE, TVET and adult education teachers and will present frameworks and strategies for their professionalization based on recent policies and programmes that aim to improve the status and professional development of teachers and educators beyond basic and formal education. An expert panel will address the questions embedded in the sections below.

### Adult Learning and Education:

Youth and adult educators and specially literacy practitioners are still in the most precarious position of any group of educators; they receive much less policy attention compared to school teachers and are among the lowest paid teachers and receive the least training<sup>1</sup>. In addition, in many world regions, adult educators are usually characterized by low -or a lack of- qualifications and specific training on the education of young people and adults who have been marginalized from basic education. Adult educators often come from fields other than education and are either community or volunteer teachers with unstable contractual situations. The marginal place occupied by adult learning in education policy further complicates the process of professionalization and the improvement of teachers' working conditions, which are interrelated. This marginal position limits the opportunities to access professional development for adult educators', reproducing the precarious situations they have.

Despite the commitments done in CONFINTEA VI, twelve years ago, to improve training and working conditions to professionalize adult educators, little progress has been made on this aspect, as evidenced in CONFINTEA VII in June this year. The Marrakech Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2022) emphasized again the importance of promoting ALE as a key component of lifelong learning and the dual role that teachers and educators have in creating and promoting lifelong learning and as lifelong learners themselves.

To support the lifelong learning journey of adult educators, different tools and frameworks have been developed, such as the [Curriculum GlobalALE](#). The curriculum, developed by DVV, ICAE and the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, is designed to develop the capacity of adult educators with a cross-cultural perspective. The panel will explore how the initiatives that support teachers' professional development can promote the professionalization of the teaching profession and positively impact their working conditions. The following questions will be addressed:

- What kind of public policies are needed for the institutionalization of adult education teacher professional development and what related measures are needed to elevate the status of the profession?
- What role is there for lifelong learning in the transformation of adult education?
- How to accompany teachers in these transformations?

### Early Childhood Care and Education

Despite the increasing recognition of ECCE as an essential part of education, and its potential contribution as a social equalizer, pre-school teachers still have inadequate training and their opportunities for continuous professional development are scarce. In many countries, teachers in ECCE

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO (2020). *Youth and adult literacy educators: status, challenges and opportunities towards professionalization: synthesis report*. Available from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374746?1=null&queryId=8ebf216a-1c8e-4e75-99ee-431353f47833>

also suffer from inappropriate child/staff ratios, and group sizes leading to poor quality education, childcare and development. Similarly, many countries do not have clear guidelines or standards for ECCE teachers, which leads to poor working conditions and inadequate remuneration compared to their peers in other levels<sup>2</sup>.

If we want to achieve the commitment of the international community to ensure at least one year of universal, quality pre-primary education for all (Target 4.2), the improvement of the status and professionalization of ECCE teachers is paramount.

Given the importance of the community and parental involvement in ECCE, and the many spaces in which young children learn and interact, the panel will look at the role of ECCE teachers in bridging the classroom with other learning spaces, and into the competencies and conditions needed for this. The panel will address the following questions:

- What are the challenges faced by ECCE teachers today and how can they be supported to lead the transformation of education and contribute to better and more equal educational chances for all?
- How do education systems need to transform to support teachers and ECCE altogether?
- How can ECCE teachers leverage parents and communities to transforming education?

### **Technical and Vocational Education and Training TVET**

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is another area of action in which UNESCO is committed to promote lifelong learning. TVET is about skills for work and life, which contributes to sustainable development and lifelong learning, as it can take place at secondary, post-secondary or tertiary levels and includes work-based learning and continuous professional development. As in all levels of education, teachers are key pillars for quality education. Indeed, the UNESCO Recommendations concerning TVET (2015)<sup>3</sup> emphasizes the importance of developing policies and frameworks to ensure qualified TVET staff and teachers trained and supported.

Despite its importance at all educational levels, the programmes that work with TVET teachers and address their pedagogical training are not numerous. One such programme is UNESCO's [BEAR II project](#) which has focuses on capacity development in East Africa.

TVET teachers have also much to share in the development of skills as those for life and work, and in the use of multiple learning spaces -other than schools. Work-based learning problem-based programmes and applied pedagogies are but a few of the lessons that can inform teacher professional development broadly. However, seldom do TVET teachers and trainers have the chance to reflect upon their practice and share their experience with other teachers, beyond the vocational track. Given the need to further develop the pedagogical skills of technical and vocational educators, and the promise that TVET practices hold to refresh educational methods, the panel will touch upon the following questions:

- What key educational transformations can come from TVET experiences regarding an active role of teachers (from work-based learning to teacher participation in the curriculum)?

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<sup>2</sup> UNESCO (2022). *The Global Partnership Strategy for Early Childhood 2021-2030*  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000380077>

<sup>3</sup> UNESCO (2015) *Recommendations concerning Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)*.  
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000245178>

- How to integrate and recognize work-based and experiential learning in teacher education?
- How to accompany teachers in transformations?

**Panel objectives:**

1. To present and discuss the common challenges of ECCE, TVET and ALE teachers in terms of professional development and working conditions, specifically with an angle of teachers as lifelong learners.
2. To examine the alternatives and opportunities for ECCE, TVET and ALE teachers ensuring their professional development in transforming education and teaching
3. To highlight the transformative role of teachers and of education beyond K12, their importance and need of support.
4. To show good practices of accompanying and supporting teachers in the face of transformations through lifelong learning.

## Agenda

Thursday, 6 October 2022	
10:00 – 10:15  zoom	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opening: <b>Mr David Atchoarena</b>, Director UIL, UNESCO</li> <li>• Presentation on lifelong learning as a principle to transform education and teaching: <b>Mr Borhene Chakroun</b>, Director, Division for Policies and Lifelong</li> </ul>
10:15 – 11:05	<p><b>Panel Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderated <b>Mr Carlos Vargas</b>, Chief of Section for Teacher Development at UNESCO and Head of the TTF Secretariat</li> <li>• Speaker on ECCE teachers– community and parental involvement: <b>Ms Mercedes Mayol Lassalle</b>, President OMEP</li> <li>• Speaker on adult educators- working conditions and professionalization: <b>Ms Katarina Popovic</b>, Secretary General, ICAE</li> <li>• Speaker on TVET teachers– work-based learning and teacher preparation: <b>Mr Emmanuel Osinem</b>, Director of Centre for Technical Vocational Education, Training and</li> </ul>
11:05 – 11:25	<p><b>Q&amp;A</b></p>

**11:25 – 11:30**

**Closing**

- **Mr David Atchoarena**, Director, UNESCO's Institute for Lifelong Learning