

TEACHER TRAINING INITIATIVE FOR SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (TTISSA)

RESTORING THE CONFIDENCE OF THE TEACHING STAFF

AWARENESS

There is now greater awareness that achieving Education for All (EFA) goals entails:

- the enrolment of school-age children;
- the construction of suitable schools able to accommodate them; and
- the development of quality curricula.

However, efforts to achieve EFA goals will not yield the desired results if the number of teachers qualified to supervise and accompany the learning process is insufficient.

It is estimated that in Sub-Saharan Africa, the demand for new teachers is 4 million and that approximately 1,600,000 new positions should be created to achieve EFA goals by 2015. The teacher issue has therefore been recognized as an absolute priority.

This finding led UNESCO and its partners in 2006 to rethink the teacher issue, which should no longer be considered from a teacher training perspective alone but in all its dimensions (status, welfare, wages, professional development of teachers, etc.) through UNESCO's Teacher Training Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa (TTISSA).

In addition to being a prerequisite for the achievement of all EFA goals, this initiative specifically meets the following objectives:

- Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality (Goal 2);
- Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills (Goal 6).

THE UNESCO APPROACH

To increase the quantity and quality of teachers, it is necessary to restore confidence in the teaching trade and thereby ensure that teachers are further motivated to stay in the profession and contribute to the effective learning of their pupils. However, in order to achieve this, certain essential conditions such as the consideration of the salary issue, the review and analysis of labour market conditions in order to identify recruitment needs, as well as the financial capacities

of Member States must be met to address the "teacher challenge."

UNESCO promotes the search for a balance between the teaching staff, their work environment and their career requirements. To that end, UNESCO BREDAs and its partners develop strategies such as:

- **Advocacy and support for the development of teacher policies:** To encourage member countries to make organized efforts for the design and implementation of viable national policies on teacher training, recruitment and retention as well as on issues relating to the status and working conditions of teachers.
 - o *Example of a practical application: Support to develop policies and strategies was provided in seven countries: Angola, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Zambia.*
- **Capacity strengthening:** Technical support services, tools and approaches were developed for requesting countries to perform a diagnosis of the teacher issue in all its dimensions, revise existing policies or engage in training actions.
 - o *Example of a practical application: An assessment of the teacher policy led to the capacity-building of institutions and of national experts in countries engaged in the exercise.*
- **Creation and adoption of innovative approaches:** The production of improved data for research on working conditions and status of teachers is now encouraged to support advocacy actions and strengthen capacities in an attempt to better take into account their professional needs and career aspirations.
 - o *Example of a practical application: Research on issues affecting teachers was conducted in Burundi, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea, Niger, Sierra Leone and Zambia.*

TANGIBLE RESULTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Through TTISSA, UNESCO BREDAs has, in collaboration with its partners, undertaken positive actions with regard to:

- **Advocacy:** To foster South-South knowledge exchange on teacher policies, for all Sub-Saharan African countries. Moreover, World Teachers' Day is an opportunity for UNESCO to expand its advocacy actions. These actions have produced encouraging results, particularly in Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Ethiopia, Madagascar, and Nigeria.
- **Capacity strengthening:** The methodological guide to

analyze the teacher issue designed for this purpose, thematic notes prepared on key areas and catalogued reference documents were – and will continue to be – essential for the following three categories of activities: training on the methodology for analyzing the teacher issue, the organisation of inter-country workshops to share and exchange assessment results and experiences and the implementation of actions following diagnosis. The methodological guide was used to examine the various facets of the teacher challenge at the national level so as to build a systemic view in four countries: Benin, Burundi, Lesotho and Mali.

- The dissemination of innovative approaches: UNESCO BREDA encourages a healthy collaboration between governments and trade unions for a stronger involvement and mobilization of teachers to mainly ensure that these stakeholders realize that the first priority is to develop a teacher policy that is beneficial to the majority of actors and to publish various diagnostics at the regional level. In Burundi, a study was conducted on the teaching profession and its prospects as well as on the development of a career plan.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Following an initial implementation phase coordinated by the UNESCO Headquarters between 2006 and 2009, the initiative is now under the coordination of BREDA. In January 2010, BREDA established a TTISSA coordination committee. All stakeholders of the initiative as well as financial partners who expressed their commitment to support actions being undertaken are effectively represented on this committee. The establishment of this committee and the dissemination of the Initiative's assessment results in August 2009 prompted discussions on the future direction of TTISSA.

TTISSA will continue to foster the development of country-specific holistic teacher policies in member countries. Concomitantly, TTISSA will continue its capacity building activities which will give a more prominent place to the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs). Hence, in partnership with the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), an online learning platform is being developed to enable teachers to learn from each other and to develop, share and assess their teaching aids. Other actions integrating the use of ICTs in training activities will be conducted with partners.

TTISSA intends to build a strong partnership with the Task Force on Teachers for EFA, of which UNESCO is a Steering Committee member, to conduct joint studies on issues relating to the shortage of teachers.

Since current indicators on teachers mainly focus on wages, working conditions, hours, etc., new indicators, at the request of the African Union (AU) will complement these to further determine the professional needs and career aspirations of teachers with a view to obtaining a mapping of teacher training courses in Africa.

LESSONS LEARNED

Launched in 2006 in 17 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (for the first phase), TTISSA aims to mobilize and assist Member States to develop proactive policies to help:

- Improve the status and working conditions of teachers;
- Improve the management and administration of education systems;

- Develop appropriate teacher policies; and
- Improve quality for a consistent development of the teaching profession.

The initiative, in its holistic approach to the teacher issue, conducted actions that go beyond the goals of EFA while seeking to keep greater focus on primary school teachers. Today, its major challenge is to cover all sub-systems of the education and training sectors.

LINKS AND GATEWAYS

TTISSA is one of three UNESCO initiatives to accelerate the realization of EFA goals by 2015. It interacts with various sectors and sub-sectors, other initiatives and areas of expertise including:

- Sectoral Analysis, Policy and Planning Section: To obtain quality data on the conditions of teachers for a better integration of the issue in sectoral strategies and policies.
- Technical and vocational education and training (TVET): Through the development of centres of excellence, particularly for training of trainers in TVET.
- Basic Education in Africa Programme (BEAP): By ensuring the provision of quality training to the number of teachers needed for the implementation of an extensive basic education programme.
- Education to HIV & AIDS (EDUCAIDS): by working on the issue of teachers affected and infected by HIV/AIDS.

STRATEGIC PARTNERS

UNESCO works closely with the following institutions to achieve the objectives of TTISSA:

- Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA): Currently implementing several activities that are complementary to those of TTISSA and that are areas of collaboration.
- International Labour Organization (ILO): Cooperates with UNESCO on issues related to the status of teachers and on the drafting of recommendations on the teaching profession.
- African Union: Has made the teacher issue an important part of the seven priorities of the Second Decade of Education, to the attainment of which TTISSA contributes considerably.
- Bilateral cooperation: Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland finance, through the Cap-EFA programme, teacher training programmes implemented with the support of UNESCO BREDA; the Spanish cooperation supports activities in the DRC; the Principality of Monaco supports capacity-building actions in relation to teacher training in Burkina Faso; the US permanent mission to the UN supports training activities on social dialogue; the French development agency (AFD) offers collaboration in the analysis of class practices and distance learning for teachers; the Italian cooperation continues to provide UNESCO with support on the teacher issue in addition to its support for the teacher project in Guinea-Bissau.