

Webinar: Teacher voices in and for lifelong learning

Background

Lifelong learning is increasingly recognised as essential for unlocking the potential of all individuals and fostering sustainable economic, social, cultural, and environmental development worldwide (UIL, 2022). This concept is particularly relevant in the context of the teaching profession, which plays a crucial role in building lifelong learning systems and sustainable societies amidst rapid digitalization, demographic shifts, climate change, and ongoing crises. UNESCO has been a leading advocate for lifelong learning for all.

On the one hand, the concept '*teachers as lifelong learners*' is rooted in both in the idea of lifelong learning and the continuous professional development for teachers. This discussion has gained significance since the 1972 Faure Report and the inclusion of lifelong learning in SDG 4. The urgency of equipping teachers with the tools and skills for continuous professional development is underscored by several international reports and initiatives, including the [UN Secretary General's High-level panel on the Teaching Profession](#), the [International Commission's Futures of Education report](#), and the [Global Report on Teachers](#). As teachers face accelerating global challenges—ranging from climate change and demographic shifts to mass migration and socio-economic transformations—their ability to continuously adapt and learn becomes crucial. The relevance of lifelong learning as an organising principle in teacher education has never been more critical. Policymakers now view teacher development through the lens of lifelong learning, recognising that professional growth must extend throughout a teacher's entire career. This includes everything from pre-service training to ongoing in-service professional learning (UNESCO and International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, 2024).

On the other hand, teachers are pivotal in transforming education into lifelong learning systems, acting as '*facilitators of lifelong learning*' who instill lifelong learning values, dispositions, attitudes, and skills in their students and communities. As active agents of change, teachers possess capacities to influence educational practices and shape learning environments. However, their influence is often limited by a lack of involvement in policy-making, including decisions on curricula, which are typically made by higher authorities. Additionally, teachers often face time constraints that hinder their ability to engage in reflection and professional development. Addressing these challenges requires a rethinking of the support systems and professional development opportunities available to teachers. The [Global Report on Teachers](#) also emphasizes the importance of involving teachers in all phases of education decision-making processes as a key strategy for transforming the teaching profession. By entrusting teachers' capacities, involving them in policy decisions, and providing them with the necessary time and resources for professional development, we can empower them to play a more active role in shaping the positive educational changes.

In this context, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) and the UNESCO Section for Teacher Development will collaboratively host a webinar focused on integrating teachers' voices in shaping policies and practices of lifelong learning. This event is organised in the framework of World Teachers' Day in 2024, which is observed annually on October 5th to honor educators

worldwide. World Teachers' Day is an opportunity to recognise the transformative role teachers play in education, reflect on the support that they need to realize their potential fully and reimagine the future of the teaching profession together with them.

Key questions

The webinar will address following questions:

- How does lifelong learning enhance teacher voice?
- How does teacher voice facilitate lifelong learning for teachers and their learners?

Participants

The primary target audience of this webinar is policy makers, researchers, academics and professionals in the field of teacher education and professional development to explore and exchange knowledge on integrating teachers voices in providing them with lifelong learning opportunities and encouraging them as facilitators of lifelong learning.

Format and structure

The webinar will be hosted on Zoom and is open to all interested in the topic. It will explore the role of lifelong learning in enhancing teachers' voices and how this in turn can promote lifelong learning among teachers and learners.

The webinar will follow a presentation format, where speakers will deliver presentations based on guiding questions. Following the presentations, there will be a Q&A session, allowing participants to engage in discussion.

Date and registration

Date: 11 October 2024

Time: 13:00-14:00 (Paris time)

Format: online, Zoom webinar

Languages: English

Registration link: https://unesco-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_wnT_QcBLT5SjusGTKDKVQQ#/registration

Agenda

11 October 2024	Agenda
<p>13:00 – 13:05 5 mins</p>	<p>Opening remarks</p> <p>Moderator: Ms Chung Dolma, Assistant Programme Specialist, UIL</p> <p>Welcome remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Isabell Kempf, Director, UIL
<p>13:05 – 13:55 50 min</p>	<p>Main session</p> <p>Moderator: Ms Rakhat Zholdoshalieva, Team Leader, Quality Learning Ecosystems, UIL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher testimony – Teacher as a Lifelong Learner: Ms Sister Zeph, Founder and CEO of the Zephaniah Women’s Education and Empowerment Foundation (ZWEE), Pakistan Strengthening teacher voice – A global perspective: Mr Carlos Tames Vargas, Chief, Section for Teacher Development, Division of Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems, UNESCO Education Sector Lifelong learning for teacher professional development: Mr Yusuf Sayed, Professor of International Education and Development Policy, University of Sussex (UK); the Founding Director of the Centre for International Teacher Education (CITE), Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa Teacher leadership and voices and lifelong learning: Mr David Frost, Co-director, HertsCam Network, and Emeritus Fellow, Wolfson College, University of Cambridge, UK Teachers’ views of lifelong learning: Ms Songge Ma, Associate Professor, College of Education, Shanghai Normal University, China <p>Questions and answers</p>
<p>13:55 – 14:00 5 mins</p>	<p>Summary and closing remarks</p> <p>Ms Rakhat Zholdoshalieva, Team Leader, Quality Learning Ecosystems, UIL</p>