The theme of the 10th Policy Dialogue Forum of the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, “Teaching: A Profession,” was chosen to examine the meaning and implications of what it means to be a ‘professionally qualified’ teacher in order to generate recommendations to develop an international guiding framework for elaborating national or regional professional standards for the teaching profession.

Teaching standards work in conjunction with formal professional qualifications to describe what teachers should know and be able to do. They define teaching competence with respect to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are valued in the profession, and are used to describe desirable levels of performance at different stages of a teacher’s career. As such, teaching standards guide teachers’ professional learning and development. Teaching standards also provide a framework for ethical behaviour and professional accountability, and in this way contribute to the continued professionalization of teaching as a profession.

To that end, the objectives of the 10th Policy Dialogue Forum were to:

1. Take stock of progress, share good practices, and review the current state of the professionalization of teaching through presentations and analysis of country- and region-specific case studies; and

2. Discuss and agree on a set of key recommendations, as presented in this Outcome Statement, for drafting a guiding framework of national professional standards for the teaching profession.

In the plenary and breakout sessions, discussions were organized around four sub-themes and from each of these sub-themes key recommendations were made:

**A. Professional Training and Development:**

At its core, teaching standards should define the knowledge, skills, and competencies required for effective teaching. A framework for the development of national teaching standards should include links to initial teacher education curricula to ensure that student teachers learn about the foundations of the profession, but also new pedagogical innovations on effective teaching and learning. A framework should make clear how teaching standards are linked to formal qualifications, but also to continued professional development so that practising teachers can maintain currency and stay abreast of best practice. Teaching standards should define how ongoing professional learning can be linked to career progression.

**Recommendations**

i. Teacher education should be viewed as an applied professional qualification that requires student teachers to apply the concepts and strategies they are simultaneously learning about in their coursework within practical settings.

ii. To establish teaching as a profession, a clinical practice-based approach should be adopted where the learner is the centre of all practice. Teaching standards should not be highly prescriptive; there is no one way to teach. Teaching strategies should consist of evidence-based interventions that have impact on student learning.

iii. Teacher education programs should be developed and accredited on the basis of professional teaching standards.

iv. Teaching standards should include monitoring and evaluation tools to make sure that they
are implemented. Teaching standards should be reviewed after a set period of time.

v. School-based continuous professional development should be part of teaching standards.

vi. Professional teaching standards should be linked to career development pathways in order to motivate teachers for continuous improvement, including pathways to school leadership.

B. Governance:

A framework for developing national teaching standards should support countries to implement governance mechanisms to ensure adherence to the standards and how they should be applied. The framework should specify the roles that various stakeholders should play at each level of the governance system, for example, the specific role of teacher organizations in development and monitoring of teaching standards and in the cyclical review and accreditation of teacher education programs.

Recommendations

i. Governments need to legislate for a dedicated professional body to have the legal power to regulate and exercise professional leadership for teachers, such as a teaching council.

ii. The professional body should be built on sound governance and linked to teacher professionalism that ensures teachers meet professional standards that include meeting a code of ethical practice.

iii. The professional body should build professional alliances with key stakeholders, including teacher organizations, employers, parents, and the community. This may be through the composition of the regulatory body.

iv. The professional body should regulate a realistic career pathway from teacher preparation to recognition of teacher excellence and leadership.

v. All teachers, whether employed in private or public schools, should be required to meet professional teaching standards.

C. Values and Accountability:

A framework for developing teaching standards should support countries to define standards of ethical practice and the professional dispositions required for teaching, such as for example, a sense of empathy, a sense of responsibility for students’ learning, and an ability to work collegially. The framework should describe how professional values can address accountability of the various actors, as well as how public interest in the teaching profession can be accounted for in the process of developing standards.

Recommendations

i. The professional dispositions and ethical practice of teachers are critical to building and maintaining effective professional relationships and should be viewed as important as academic knowledge and skills.

ii. Teaching standards must include a code of conduct with requirements and expectations for professional and ethical practice by teachers.

iii. Teaching standards should require teachers to have a commitment to excellence in teaching and learning, continuous learning and improvement, and a recognition that they are role models.
D. Addressing Diversity:

A framework for developing professional teaching standards should ensure that inclusion and equity concerning the diversity of teachers, learners, and teaching-learning processes are respected. The framework should support Member States to develop standards that can remain focused on the whole learner as well as the diversity of learners.

Recommendations

i. A principled and rights-based approach should be adopted for the development of teaching standards. The approach should recognise education as a fundamental right and should be founded on the recognition of commonalities between learners. Teaching standards should recall constitutionally accepted diversities, as well as diversities that are relevant in the classroom (social, cultural, linguistic, ethnicity, class, gender, and individual differences).

ii. National teaching standards should be articulated so that they are amenable to (re)formulation at regional and local levels as required for ensuring inclusion and equity at these levels.

iii. Teaching standards should reflect and refer to the knowledge, competencies, attitudes, and beliefs that teachers should develop during initial teacher education and continuous professional development to enable them to address diversities (e.g., knowledge for inclusion of all abilities, local or indigenous knowledge for appropriate interrogation and integration, knowledge about diversity from the political, cultural, social, and historical perspectives).

iv. Teaching standards should refer to the resources that teachers need in order to achieve full inclusion and equity.

In light of the above recommendations, and considering the importance of enhancing the understanding of decision-makers, employers, professional bodies, teacher educators, teacher organizations, as well as of teachers of the core requirements for a high-quality teaching workforce for the provision of inclusive and equitable quality education and life-long learning for all, the participants of the 10th Policy Dialogue Forum of the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030:

1. Urge all members and partners of the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 to widely disseminate this Statement among stakeholders; and
2. Urge the Secretariat of the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 to work with the International Labour Organization and Education International to develop an international guiding framework for elaborating national or regional professional standards for the teaching profession.

Adopted in Lomé on 21 September 2017.