



Distance Learning and Teacher Training Strategies

Lessons from the Caribbean



International
Task Force on Teachers
for Education 2030

Introduction

Context

While COVID-19 had a profound impact on education systems around the globe, low resource countries faced the toughest challenges. Not all schools and educational institutions were prepared to shift to online learning environments, nor did they have the infrastructure, tools and resources to do so. Teachers, often without computer and digital literacy skills, were forced to quickly embrace high- and low-tech solutions to stay connected to their students. Their critical challenge was made more difficult in rural and remote communities with little connectivity and lack of access to computers, tablets and other types of equipment.

Experience and research over the past two years suggest that the presence of devices and technological resources in households during the COVID-19 pandemic was not enough to support quality learning opportunities and continued learner engagement. Since the pandemic began, the primary determinant of uninterrupted, quality education has been, and continues to be, the technological and pedagogical skills of teachers.

The teaching corps in the Latin America and Caribbean region, notably in the SIDS (Small Island Developing States) faced tremendous challenges, and there was an urgent demand among teachers for training in basic computer skills and digital literacy. In response, UNESCO's [Global Education Coalition](#), in collaboration with [Blackboard](#) and the Caribbean Centre for Educational Planning (CCEP) at the University of the West Indies, with the financial support from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and local support for Jamaica from UNICEF Jamaica, launched in 2021 the programme [Distance Learning](#)

[and Teacher Training Strategies in the Caribbean SIDS](#) building on the 2020 pilot project [Professional Development for Teachers for Blended Learning and Online Strategies](#). In 2020, the project set out to train 90 teachers as Master Trainers in online skills development for distance education in the Caribbean in a four-week programme in which they acquired digital literacy competencies and skills with online tools and methods. The launch event of the project was online on 24 August 2020 with two teacher representatives from each of the participating countries in the English and Dutch Caribbean.

Some of the Master Trainers did not continue after the 2020 pilot, so in 2021 more Master Trainers were recruited bringing the total to 51. These Master Trainers led the **Distance Learning and Teacher Training Strategies in the Caribbean SIDS** project, which was designed to support teachers' professional development and strengthen their capacity to engage effectively with students through remote, hybrid and blended learning solutions, using online education tools and particularly the Blackboard interactive platform. The training by Master Trainers covered three teacher cohorts from June to November 2021 with the aim of reaching 10,000 teachers in countries throughout the SIDS region. Master Trainers were helped by assistant Master Trainers. By responding to questions and supporting the development of the course, the assistants become Master Trainers themselves.

The entire project was funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through GIZ, with support from UNICEF Jamaica to train 6,000 teachers in Jamaica.

About the partners

The project benefits from continuous collaboration, support and exchange of expertise and professional experience between the following institutions:



The UNESCO Cluster Office for the Caribbean is the implementing body for the project within the framework of UNESCO's Global Education Coalition, for a Caribbean COVID-19 response. UNESCO Headquarters supported the general coordination of the project.



Blackboard is a well-established global education software providing course content in many languages and a platform for online and blended learning strategies.



The Caribbean Centre for Education Planning, University of the West Indies (UWI-CCEP) is the lead coordinating entity.



The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development through its agency Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) is the primary funding partner.



UNICEF Jamaica is the local donor partner supporting the training of 6,000 teachers in Jamaica.



The International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 or Teacher Task Force (TTF) supported the project's design through the Reference Group; it also promoted the project's visibility and disseminated the challenges and lessons from teacher training in digital skills.

Approach

For the pilot phase in 2020, UNESCO – in cooperation with national ministries of education in the SIDS region and Blackboard – selected the teachers/facilitators from the English and Dutch Caribbean to be trained in online pedagogies and prepared to facilitate a four-week distance training course. A Reference Group – comprised of different stakeholders, ministry representatives of different countries and representatives of the TTF – was convened in the early phases to provide feedback on the design of the project.

The training of the Master Trainers was facilitated by the Caribbean Centre for Educational Planning (CCEP) and the University of West Indies through Blackboard online platform. The participants were assessed and, upon successful completion of the course, received certificates for Core Master Trainers for Online and Blended Teaching from Blackboard. The Master Trainers were then qualified to deliver the four-week online course [Blended Learning and Online Strategies](#) to a group of up to 200 teachers throughout the English and Dutch Caribbean.

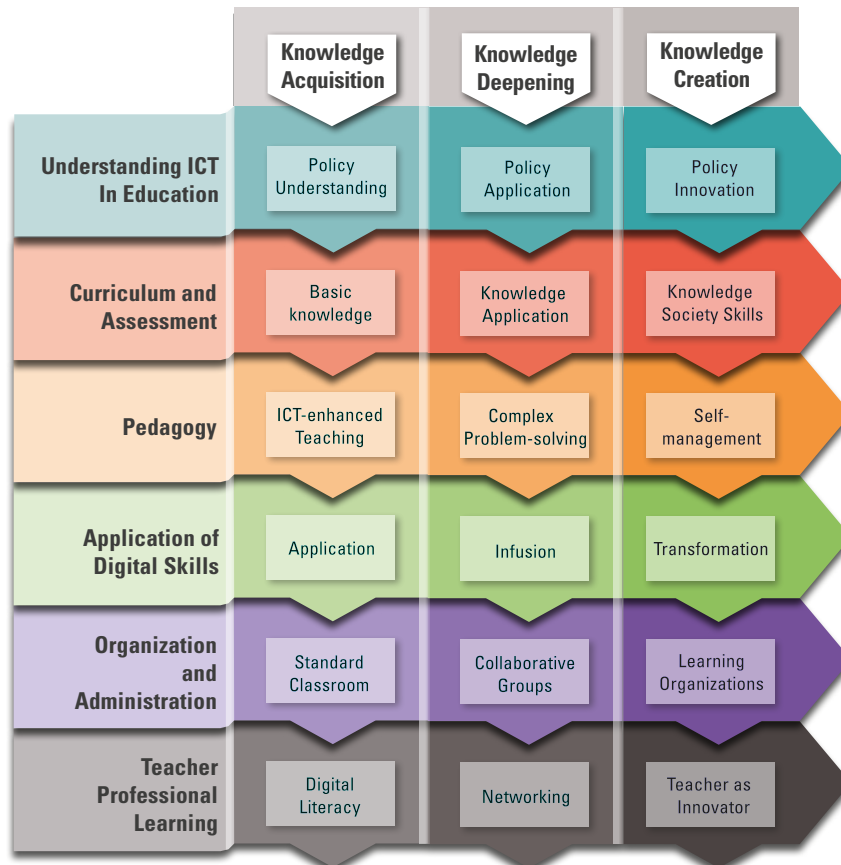
The participating teachers targeted for skills development, working in schools at K-12, elementary and secondary levels, received training to acquire (or improve) their ICT, digital or pedagogic skills, specifically with a view to applying innovative teaching methods or adaptive pedagogies in remote, hybrid or blended classrooms. The planned timeline for the training went from April to October 2021 in three phases: Phase 1 or the design phase; Phase 2 on the development of course material; and Phase 3 on the review and revision of the course.

Methodology: Adaptation of the UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers

Improving teachers' digital competencies is key to the profession, to ensure both the design of quality distance learning and their own professional development. The 2018 UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (ICT-CFT) emphasizes the importance of training teachers on ICT competencies in pre-service and in-service, and during ongoing professional development. According to the framework, six major focus areas need to be addressed in teacher training on ICTs: Understanding ICT in education policy; curriculum and assessment; pedagogy; application of digital skills; organization and administration; and teacher professional learning. These focus areas need to be applied across three phases: knowledge acquisition, knowledge deepening and knowledge creation. Thus, training teachers on ICTs is a complex and demanding task that must be unpacked and addressed comprehensively. Three editions of this Framework have been published to date (in 2008, 2011 and 2018). Each edition presents the technologies most widely used at the time and their application in a school environment.

Based on the six focus areas and three phases, the ICT-CFT is structured to yield eighteen different ICT competencies. Each competency is associated with various subobjectives and example activities for classroom settings.

Figure 1. Levels and aspects of the 2018 UNESCO ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (ICT-CFT).



Modules covered as part of the Distance Learning and Teacher Training Strategies course: i) digital teaching approaches for the SIDS region; ii) the fundamentals of developing digital course contents; iii) how to use virtual classrooms to facilitate remote sessions, and; iv) best practices to communicate online, support online learners and build communities of practice.

In each participating country, the training was expected to strengthen teachers' abilities to address challenges in a holistic manner (see section below on *Challenges the project set out to address*) and to respond to the current crisis in the context of their school and local environments. Overall, the project is reinforcing the resilience of countries and the subregion's education systems to future shocks. Its particular focus is on methods to ensure that the most vulnerable girls and boys are not left behind

in their learning and possible gender differences are taken into account in remote, hybrid and blended learning situations.

Geographic coverage

The project covered English and Dutch Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS), including twenty UNESCO Member States and Associated Members in the Caribbean: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas (the), Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Maarten, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

Successes and lessons

Challenges the project set out to address

As part of the dissemination strategy, the TTF and UNESCO Cluster Office for the Caribbean in Kingston, Jamaica organized a webinar, '[The Digital Turn: Empowering the Caribbean's Teachers](#)', to share knowledge and draw lessons from the regional experience, highlighting the need to unpack the complexities of teacher training on the pedagogical use of ICTs. During the webinar, in a series of interviews, stakeholders and teachers participating in the [Distance Learning and Teacher Training Strategies](#) course reported that one of the biggest impacts on their practice at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic was the range of emotions and professional uncertainty associated with leaving physical classrooms and moving to virtual learning spaces. Armed with few digital skills, and little familiarity with pedagogies for online teaching, they had to get comfortable very quickly with the world of virtual schooling. The challenges were complex and multi-layered and, most importantly, nuanced in every local context. As reported by project stakeholders and trainees, a set of common issues can nonetheless be identified:

- i) Accessibility and converting contents into suitable formats for the online environment:** Many teachers in both rural and urban areas had to overcome the lack of access to devices, data and internet connectivity; even in wealthier areas. Although governments were able to provide a certain number of tablets for students, phones were the only devices accessible to many. As a result, teachers had to launch drives to get tablets and laptops donated for their learners and, even then, some students were out of internet reach. Students reported going to neighbours' or families' houses, and others lost motivation or interest due to overwhelming difficulties. Meanwhile, teachers carried the stress of ensuring their learners were online, or finding low-tech or in-person solutions, while also adapting contents for online use.
- ii) Lack of induction to online teaching and school management issues:** Teachers reported that the abrupt changes generated by school shutdowns gave them new responsibilities, but without knowledge on how to set up online classrooms. Most teachers did not receive an induction to the

new schooling arrangements, nor were they able to dedicate time to introducing their students to online platforms and methods of working. Adding to their difficulties was the challenge of helping learners and parents to understand that normal school hours must be respected, even when their children are at home.

- iii) Maintaining the quality of interaction and engagement:** One of the things that teachers missed the most was the daily interaction and engagement with their students in physical classrooms. Online, the possibilities for two-way communication are more limited or one-dimensional, with fewer opportunities for teachers to share experiences that support learning, quickly identify students with difficulties, or approach students one on one if there are problems. Teachers in the SIDS region reported that they missed certain activities such as physically seeing their students graduate. Indeed, it was especially difficult for the groups facing important exams who missed out on the face-to-face support they usually have from their teachers and peers.
- iv) Working with children with special learning needs:** Finally, teachers highlighted the difficulties in maintaining relationships with their students with special education needs, including autism and dyslexia. They explained that their relationships are built over time on a one-on-one basis and founded on the teacher's close knowledge of the individual's educational challenges, and on how to use simple, offline approaches and methods to address them. Understanding how to maintain the pedagogic quality of these relationships in online settings posed a specific set of difficulties.

"I miss the direct interaction in the classroom, where I can see the students' facial expressions and they can see my facial expressions too. In the online environment, there is much less interaction, plus some students shy away from participating."

Dwighton Johnson, Grade 3 Maths, Languages, Arts, Social Studies and Sciences teacher at Lowmans Leeward Anglican Primary School in Saint Vincent

Capacity outputs

Since the inception of the pilot project **Professional Development for Teachers for Blended Learning and Online Strategies**, a total of 51 Master Trainers have been certified by Blackboard to train others to engage in innovative, technology-supported teaching methods for blended learning and online teaching strategies.

The four-week distance training course has trained over 5,000 teachers in the first two cohorts, and over 7,000 in the third cohort. A total of 12,440 teachers have been enrolled across twenty SIDS countries (Table 1).

Table 1: Teachers participating in the Distance Learning and Teacher Training Strategies in the Caribbean SIDS project.

Cohort	Beginning date	Number enrolled	Number of countries (SIDS)
1	22 June 2021	1,809	6
2	3 August 2021	3,128	13
3	28 September 2021	7,503	20
Total		12,440	20

Noted successes in capacity development include:

- i) Strengthened capacities of Caribbean Master Trainers/educators to deliver appropriate training in digital skills and blended learning solutions;
- ii) Increased number of teachers supported to deliver distance/home-based learning and effectively support learners;
- iii) Improved professional skills of teachers to share knowledge and skills with peers on effective online facilitation and student engagement within classrooms.

"This year I am supporting the UNESCO Blackboard training as an assistant Master Trainer. In this role I am responsible for responding to comments in the discussion area, providing information to the teachers while the Master Trainer leads the session, and also respond to participants' questions individually in the chat. I also help grade some of the assignments and assist the Master Trainer with technical issues. I aim to become a Master Trainer myself in the next course."

Dwighton Johnson, Saint Vincent

teachers themselves to experience what a good quality online training course feels like. The standards of course design, contents and delivery approach were very high to begin with, and much appreciated by the participants. The fact that the course allowed time for collaboration, reflection and experimentation helped to raise the standards. In particular, participants highlighted:

- The Blackboard platform was user-friendly, intuitive and easy to manage;
- The use of polls and surveys during the different modules allowed time for reflection and feedback in understanding concepts;
- The platform allowed for the formation of language groups where participants could express themselves more comfortably (even if course contents were still in English).
- The 'live' worksheets were useful as a basis for teachers to prepare their own worksheets in school according to class topics being addressed.
- The reading materials provided offered further opportunities for self-reflection.

Equally important, different elements of the course were adjusted as the project progressed to accommodate participants' personal and professional needs and local school contexts. The adjustments gave the course flexibility and were mainly made in response to teachers' and facilitators' concerns about pacing, assignment demands and submission dates, and options for group work. Recognizing certain teachers' difficulties in connecting to the online platform, Blackboard also offered the option of downloading textbooks, the availability of which increased as the course was rolled out to different cohorts. Last but not least, and with acknowledgement of time constraints on teachers' ability to complete the course, different levels of certification were created. Blackboard provided two certificates: first, a completion certificate for those who completed the content and quizzes of each module, and second, an achievement certificate for those who completed the previous

What worked well in the course methodology?

Overall, the Master Trainers and teacher Cohorts appreciated the training's similarity to a Massive Online Open Course (MOOC). The following elements related to the course methodology were identified for particular attention.

Quality and flexibility of course design

One of the main aims, from the perspective of Blackboard and the implementing partners, was for

activities and passed the assignments and projects that were required for the course.

“Building an online classroom involves more than just recording lectures or meeting via video-conference. Participants in this course were eager to acquire strategies to make remote learning accessible to, and engaging for, all of their students...we had teachers from all levels who not only took on this professional development during a time of immense stress but did so with a positive attitude that demonstrated their commitment to helping their students succeed.”

Melissa Mertz, Sr., trainer at Blackboard

The focus on how to use online tools and pedagogies as part of remote and blended learning

Teachers reported that their knowledge and level of comfort in using technological tools to facilitate learning increased due to their participation in the training. In particular their capacity improved to:

- i) Use synchronous and asynchronous approaches in the teaching of different subject matters;
- ii) Understand the importance of pace and scheduling in online classrooms and apply these principles in their teaching practice;
- iii) Motivate and keep students focused and build relationships in the online classroom; and
- iv) Use online tasks and quizzes, educational videos, video games, interactive platforms and web conferencing tools such as Zoom and quality online educational resources to make lessons more interactive, and to ensure student interest.

Facilitation of learning in inclusive classrooms

The second last module of the UNESCO-CCEP-Blackboard training addressed issues related to engaging with learners with special education needs in inclusive classrooms. For example, the course introduced software that facilitates learning for persons with hearing impairments. Activities were suggested to sensitize all students to understand how learners living with a certain type of disability might feel and the challenges they face. Videos demonstrated how to include all children in classrooms and make learning an enjoyable experience for all.

Support to Master Trainers

Master Trainers stated their involvement had been eased by:

- their previous completion of the same course, which allowed them to facilitate based on experience;
- weekly meetings and mentorship sessions organized with trainers from Blackboard;

→ a practicum session with Cohort 1 during their work training teachers, and individual mentorship sessions with Blackboard Trainers;

→ a community space created using WhatsApp, which made it easy for Master Trainers to communicate quickly with one another and to share ideas and challenges as well as suggestions for addressing them; and

→ a channel provided on the Blackboard platform where the Master Trainers could hold meetings, share information and ask questions directly.

How have teachers benefited directly?

Teachers' personal and professional confidence to apply digital skills in the classroom was enhanced

Based on the collaboration between UNESCO, Blackboard and the Caribbean Centre for Educational Planning, this was achieved through a variety of practices as described below.

- i) **Using online pedagogic and digital tools in the classroom:** Teachers reported being more comfortable with digital options for teaching and learning – in relation to working on their devices from home, structuring how subjects are taught within online classrooms, and incorporating multimedia and low-tech tools into their teaching practice more generally.

Some teachers reported that their skills for planning online sessions had improved. Others noted they would now be comfortable to introduce orientation sessions at the beginning of the school year to ensure students are comfortable with devices. Others stated the UNESCO Blackboard training had taught them how to use video content more effectively; for example, rather than longer 45-minute videos, using four separate ten-minute videos to maintain students' concentration and prompt discussion.

“I learnt many things, and I feel that I am more knowledgeable of different online skills. I can now apply them to get desired results.”

Haynese Carlyle, a teacher at John's Hall Primary School in Jamaica

- ii) **Engaging with learners individually and structuring group work:**

Teachers felt the course allowed them to connect with individual students more effectively in online spaces and therefore increase classroom engagement. Different methods introduced during the training, such as 'jigsaw' strategy, have helped teachers to structure group work more effectively so that students can work in small groups on a particular concept and then share knowledge with their classmates.

- iii) **Structuring work days and setting boundaries:** In the transition to online teaching, many teachers have had to deal with additional managerial tasks as well as the work involved in corresponding regularly offline with individual learners. This can feel overwhelming. The training taught teachers how to better structure their work days and set boundaries.
- iv) **Overall preparation in view of another pandemic:** In the evolving climate, students and teachers should be able to quickly switch from face-to-face to online teaching and learning and be familiar with the devices and platforms. Many teachers reported that acquiring better awareness of online pedagogies and classroom management skills, as well as digital tools, has made their job easier, whether the pandemic continues or not. COVID-19 is still here, but they are better prepared in the event of another pandemic or disaster situation.
- i) **The partnership between Blackboard, UWI-CCEP, the Reference Group and the TTF** was critical to the pedagogic and operational success of the project as the involvement of different partners brought a variety of expertise and allowed further dissemination and engagement with different actors.
- ii) **Support of the UNESCO Office for the Caribbean and country National Commissions** in the SIDS region were critical in approaching national ministries of education with requests to inform all the school districts of the upcoming project and identify potential recruits to become Master Trainers for different school districts.
- iii) **The involvement and commitment of Master Trainers** from across the participating countries underlined the central role and value of local Master Trainers in the project. The Master Trainers were crucial in mobilizing participants in different countries, with spirited encouragement to stay engaged in and complete the course. They helped participants with technical challenges and other issues in accessing and navigating the course, thus acting as a bridge between the project partners and participants.
- iv) Master Trainers proved essential in ensuring that the course was flexible, acting as an ‘ear on the ground’ and reporting in real time on how well the training was going and any emerging challenges in relation to contents, pace, timing, etc. This enabled the course to be adapted as teachers advanced through the different modules. Finally, stakeholders noted that identifying and training a suite or cadre of Master Trainers will be critical to scalability at local level in any country where the course is introduced in the future.
- v) **The weekly meetings between the implementing and coordinating partners** helped to ensure partner stakeholders were informed of issues as they emerged, given the unique needs of teachers in the SIDs region.

“At my school, I’m one of the teachers responsible for organizing and securing the student profiles needed for the digital platform we use, and I’m also one of the teachers to turn to when it comes to troubleshooting. I am constantly working in the background while also teaching, and while I love it, there are days when it just feels like too much... We shouldn’t add to our workload, because for many of us, being isolated at home is already very stressful. That’s why the feedback feature I learnt about in the UNESCO teacher training is very useful for structuring my days and setting boundaries. By setting up the feedback section, I can respond within a certain amount of time so I can maintain my downtime, and students can expect to get a response to their questions within a set timeframe.”

Tinuke Ola-Peters, French and Spanish Teacher, Trinidad and Tobago

New human connections were made through the online training community and opportunities for national and regional interaction

Both facilitators and teachers have reported taking advantage of the online platform to interact with each other and share their ideas. The level of interaction and sense of community within the cohort groups at regional level have been very much appreciated.

Which working arrangements worked well during the project in the Caribbean?

The following elements were reported as having worked well in the overall project coordination and working arrangements:

“With this project, a group of teachers are evolving to become leaders in the adoption of digital teaching strategies for the entire region. We are witnessing their confidence growing and their community strengthening. We are part of a true partnership that had immediate impact on the professional development of 10,000 teachers but is also building capability in the region to make projects like this sustainable. I’m very pleased I was able to be part of this project and team.”

Mike Ayala, Blackboard Manager

Key lessons

What improvements to the training course could be made?

With plans to replicate the training model in five African countries, integrating all the lessons learnt from the original pilot project will be essential for the successes of future projects. Feedback from partners, teachers, Master Trainers and stakeholders suggests that project partners should consider the following in future iterations of the training:

→ **Timing of the course:** It is preferable not to offer the course at the beginning or end of the school year as teachers are usually overloaded with course preparation, wrap-up and/or managerial tasks. Many will thus be unable to engage fully with course contents in those periods. The fact that the training was organized for the first two cohorts during the long summer vacation period may have contributed to the less than 50 per cent participation rate.

→ **Enrolment procedures:** Teachers wishing to participate should be allowed to enroll directly online, rather than having to send their request through district offices and experience intermediary layers of administration and uncertainty about their admission to the course. Online registration might encourage higher enrolment rates.

→ **Communication about the launch of the course:** There should be clear information about the official launch of the course. Some teachers reported that they had very little advance notice of the start date. Participants of the last cohort even reported that the course had started and neither the Master Trainer nor teacher trainees were properly informed. A suggestion to increase participation and engagement was to open the course online for introductions and announcements at least one week before it officially starts.

→ **Connectivity and device availability:** Sometimes teachers faced challenges in completing the modules because of poor connectivity and lack of access to devices. Development partners can support by liaising with tech companies to identify solutions, like initiatives including free internet data and loaned devices.

→ **Pace and workload:** A few teachers reported that the course was paced too fast and the workload excessive for the allotted time. There were many

reading materials and assignments, making it quite demanding on teachers with already heavy schedules and competing priorities. Greater flexibility to allow participants to advance at their own pace was suggested, for example by doubling the time available to complete the course and having synchronous sessions every second week instead of every week.

→ **Relevance of course contents:** Participants flagged that the course content will need to be updated to match evolving needs. Nearly two years on from the start of the pandemic, teachers' ICT and pedagogical skills needs have shifted. During the shutdown period teachers needed skills to support online access and maintain learner engagement. Now, as they have become more familiar with online classrooms, they need to enhance pedagogical skills that foster deeper cognitive abilities and greater productivity in hybrid and blended learning spaces. Such skills should help teachers support student learning through appropriate use of different types of educational technologies, integrating them into classroom practice. Teachers should also learn how to use technologies to undertake research about their practice and share learnings with teachers from other schools.

→ **Parental involvement:** Since parents are essential partners in their children's education, there was a suggestion to create a space in the Blackboard platform for them to contribute and interact.

→ **Data security and privacy protection:** Concerns were raised about data protection related to teachers' personal information collected during the training. More steps could be taken to ensure their privacy, which can be explained in advance to mitigate any issues.

→ **Reuse of materials and scalability:** The training materials were greatly appreciated and there was interest in the continued use of the Blackboard platform and all the resources when teachers return to face-to-face teaching. Countries and their education partners also showed interest in the reuse of materials to scale up the project once the organized training is completed. For this, copyright conditions should be stated clearly, and open educational resources privileged, when possible.

→ **Follow-up training:** Participants showed interest in follow-up courses/training, and there were reflections on how countries can rely on the Master Trainers to keep providing regular courses. Other course options and informal mentorship can be explored and shared with participants.

Future orientations

Within the broader landscape of educational change and COVID-19 recovery currently taking shape, the following needs were raised for general consideration at the end of the webinar 'The Digital Turn: Empowering the Caribbean's Teachers', and in general as lessons of the whole project:

→ **Teacher education policies should be aligned** and: a) recognize that failure to invest in teachers' ICT and digital capacities will undermine investments in education technologies, online platforms and tools; b) create opportunities for education experts to work hand-in-hand with technology experts to make education systems more receptive and ready for the use of technologies in the classroom.

→ **Initial and in-service teacher education should be reimagined and remodelled to embrace technologies as part of teaching.** With the increasing adoption of remote, hybrid and blended learning modalities, teachers will need ICT/ digital and pedagogical skills, as well as the specific skills to enhance teaching and learning through the best use of technologies.

→ **There should be greater flexibility in teacher training** through multimodal formats. This approach will familiarize teachers with quality online training and accelerate their capacities for remote, hybrid or blended teaching. Materials and platforms for online teacher training should be translated and contextualized, so that they are best adapted to the needs of

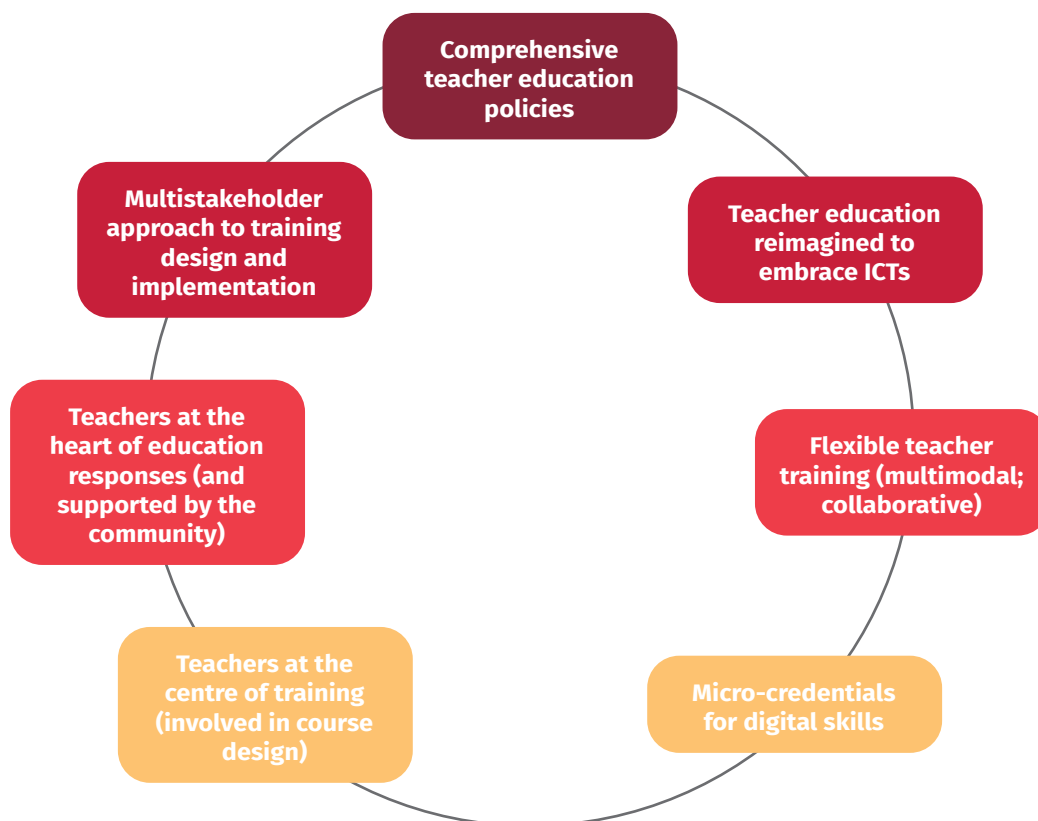
users in different locations. Opportunities for teachers to support each other's professional development through online communities of practice or through individual mentoring should be explored.

→ **Micro-credentials should be recognized as a valuable teacher professional development tool.** Through micro-credentials teachers can be recognised for their mastery of specific ICT and digital skills acquired through online training programmes.

→ **Teachers should be at the centre of training programmes and involved in their design.** Regular meetings and communication between Master Trainers and course participants should be promoted, to ensure that training can be adapted to meet participants' changing needs.

→ **Multistakeholder approaches are needed to design and implement online training programmes.** It is crucial to rely on partnerships involving all stakeholders, namely governments, intergovernmental organizations (including offices on the ground, like UNESCO field offices), teacher training institutions and training providers, as well as teachers and their representatives (for example unions).

→ **Teachers should be placed at the heart of education responses** to crisis and emergency situations, and supported by the community. The importance of the role played by teachers to ensure education continuity should be recognized, while promoting collaboration with parents and the broader community to support online learning.



The project *Education response to COVID-19: Distance Learning and Teacher Training Strategies in the Caribbean SIDS* has been launched in January 2021 with the aim to train 10,000 teachers in the Caribbean SIDS in the use of online education tools, resources and interactive platforms to effectively engage students through online learning. It is led by UNESCO, Blackboard and the Caribbean Centre for Educational Planning (CCEP) at the University of the West Indies. Learn more: <https://en.unesco.org/distance-education-caribbean>.

The International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 (also known as Teacher Task Force) is a global and independent alliance. Members are national governments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, international development agencies, civil society organizations, private sector organizations and UN agencies that work together to promote teacher-related issues.

The Teacher Task Force Secretariat is hosted by UNESCO at its Headquarters in Paris.

For more information, see: www.teachertaskforce.org

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