



# ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

## for TEACHERS

### to PROVIDE A QUALITY EDUCATION

# THE LEARNING CRISIS IN NUMBERS

Of the 650 million primary school age children in the world

**250 million** are not learning the basics



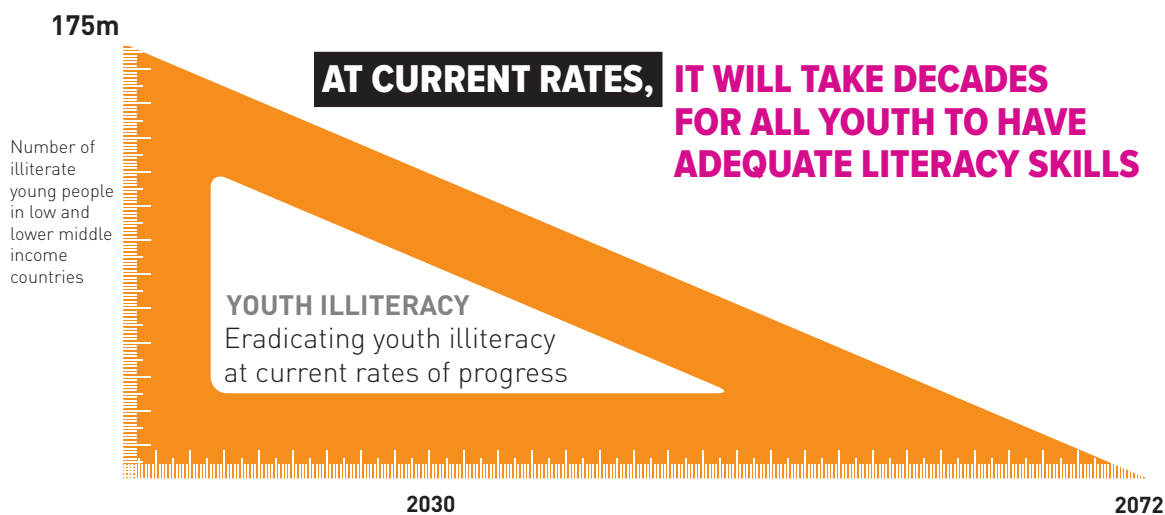
**120 million** have not even completed 4 years of school

**In low and lower middle income countries:**

After **5** or **6** years in school



**one in three** children are still not able to read



# TEACHERS ARE CRUCIAL, YET...

*There is a chronic shortage of trained teachers*



**1.6 million**  
more teachers  
needed by 2015

**3.3 million**  
more needed  
by 2030

Photo: Bangladesh © UNESCO/ G.M.B. Akash.

## OVERCROWDED CLASSROOMS

In 2011, in 26 countries **there were over 40 pupils per teacher** in primary school classrooms

## MINIMAL TEACHER TRAINING

In a third of countries with data, **less than ¼ of existing teachers are trained** to national standards. This problem is especially acute in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia

## INSECURE CONTRACTS

**Over the past decade, teachers have increasingly been hired on short term, insecure contracts** in order to quickly fill the gaps

## INADEQUATE SALARIES

Teachers in some developing countries **don't earn enough** to lift their households above the poverty line

# TEACHERS AND UNIONS SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN FINDING A SOLUTION

In some parts of the world teacher unions are critically important to educational quality and have broadly positive working relationships with government and local educational employers. Virtually all top performing countries on international educational measures have strong unions that participate in setting the educational reform agenda. The unions provide important feedback on the actual conditions of teaching and learning. In some contexts, they provide infrastructure for educational systems where such capacity does not otherwise exist. Some are capable of fostering innovation, bringing needed new educational practices into being. (Bascia, 2013)

1. Education policies can only be effective if those responsible for implementing them are involved in shaping them.
2. In some countries, engaging teacher unions has improved policies aimed at helping disadvantaged students. In Bolivia, unions helped ensure that indigenous rights were written into the constitution. Their promotion of instruction in indigenous languages contributed to a decrease in illiteracy.

**BUT**  
*policy-makers do not engage closely enough with teachers or their unions. It's time for this to change!*

Two teachers stand as panelists next to global policy makers

Crédit : UNESCO/Mulugeta.Ayene



## HOW TEACHERS CAN HELP



### *Help ensure more and better candidates are recruited to become teachers.*

**The message:** There is a chronic shortage of qualified teachers from diverse backgrounds (female teachers, teachers from ethnic and language minorities, teachers with disabilities) making it hard to provide a quality education.

**The aims:** Lobby your government to ensure all candidates have at least completed secondary education with good grades. This must be supported by a broader campaign to expand secondary education.

Campaign to ensure that candidates are recruited from a diverse range of backgrounds, including female teachers and those who are willing to live and work in remote, rural or

poor areas, conflict zones or with disadvantaged children.

Remind governments of the benefits of recruiting some teachers locally and provide them with appropriate training in order to ensure that they are familiar with their students' culture and language.

**The evidence:** Locally recruited teachers are more likely to be familiar with the cultural and social backgrounds of the students and parents in the schools they teach. This closer social distance between the teacher and the students has a positive impact on student learning.

In 30 developing countries, increasing the proportion of female teachers has

been found to improve girls' access to and achievement in education, especially in rural areas. In Punjab province, **Pakistan**, girls' test scores are higher if they have a female teacher.

### **The positive examples:**

**South Sudan** works with secondary school girls to raise their interest in teaching and offers them financial assistance to start teacher training.

**Afghanistan** aims to increase the number of female teachers by 50% by 2014 with monetary and housing incentives, and special training programmes for women in remote areas and women who do not meet current qualification requirements.

**Cambodia, Liberia and Papua New Guinea** provide scholarships for teacher trainees from disadvantaged areas, who often have specific mother-tongue language skills.

In conflict affected areas of the **Central African Republic** and **Democratic Republic of Congo**, teachers are recruited locally to keep education going.

**Egypt** introduced stringent entry requirements including an examination, an interview, and demanding high secondary school achievements.

In **Singapore**, candidates are chosen from the top third of high school graduates.

In **Finland**, only about 10% of applicants are accepted to teacher education programmes.

**Mozambique** has been running training for visually impaired teachers for more than ten years.





## *Show how important training is for teachers to do a good job and support other teachers in their work.*



**The message:** An education system is only as good as the quality of its teachers. Good teacher training gives children – and especially those falling behind – the support they deserve.

**The aims:** Tell your government the importance of initial teacher education making up for weak subject knowledge.

Make sure there is an ongoing training for untrained community and contract teachers to address knowledge gaps and upgrade and reinforce acquired skills.

Remind them that teachers need more and better in-service and ongoing training to support all their students, especially those of weaker cognitive skills who need the most help, especially in early grades, and students from a wide range of backgrounds.

Teachers need training in the use of different assessment tools to continuously detect and address learning difficulties early.

Give teacher trainees classroom experience and give new teachers access to mentors. Teacher educators and trainers also need training.

**The evidence:** Analysis of results for grade 4 from 45 countries found that the better the teacher quality, the higher the level of achievement. In **Poland**, a student attending a school with less qualified and experienced teachers was 25% more likely to score below the mathematics benchmark compared with a student attending a school with better qualified and more experienced teachers.

An appropriate combination of face-to-face and distance teacher education programmes has the potential to expand the training of

teachers. In **Ghana** and **Pakistan**, costs per student graduating from these programmes have been estimated at between one-third and two-thirds of conventional programmes. However, when such programmes are designed and instituted, necessary measures should be taken to ensure quality.

### **The positive examples:**

In **Mexico**, training and support is given to teachers in community-run pre-schools in disadvantaged areas.

In **Guinea**, as a part of a policy developed by the Government jointly with teacher unions, contract teachers receive 18 months of training.

In **Benin**, a programme designed in 2007 offers community and contract teachers three years of training to give them qualifications equivalent to those of civil service teachers.

In **Kenya**, a school-based teacher development programme combined six months of self-study, based on distance learning materials and meeting with tutors at cluster resource centres. The programme helped teachers adopt learner-centred methods.

In **Viet Nam**, teachers learn to create individual education plans that are adapted for children with different learning needs, and to assess learning outcomes of children with special needs or disabilities.

**Germany** focuses on helping teachers identify and address problems faced by low achieving students. Teachers also receive an extended period of mentoring by experienced teachers before becoming fully qualified.

**South Africa** supplements paper-based distance learning with text messaging.

In several countries, including the **United Kingdom, France, Israel, Norway, Singapore** and **Switzerland**, mentor teachers are given formal training. In **Norway**, principals assign an experienced staff member as a mentor to each new teacher.



Photo: Oxfam Novib

***Quality Educators for All:*** This is joint initiative by **Education International** and **Oxfam Novib** (Netherlands) that helps teachers in Mali and Uganda to share experiences and support one another to implement competence-based education. The project supports un/under-qualified community teachers, leading to their certification and integration into the public service. Analysis shows that both teaching and learning have improved as a result.





## Help governments understand what might motivate teachers to work in challenging areas and low achieving schools

**The message:** We need incentives to work in challenging areas where living conditions are bad, but learning needs are high.

**The aims:** Governments need to provide incentives such as better housing, allowances, debt-repayment, bonuses or career advances to motivate teachers to work in remote areas.

**The evidence:** Inequality in deployment leads to fewer teachers in deprived areas and schools and to disadvantaged students being taught by teachers with weaker subject and pedagogical knowledge. This exacerbates inequality in learning outcomes.

It is also one reason some children leave school before learning the basics. In **Bangladesh**, the proportion of students reaching the last grade of

primary school is 60% in sub-districts where there are 75 students per teacher, compared with three-quarters where there are 30 students per teacher.

### **The positive examples:**

One reason for the **Republic of Korea's** strong and equitable learning outcomes is that incentives, such as stipends and greater promotion opportunities, enable disadvantaged students to have better access to more qualified and experienced teachers. 77% of teachers in villages have at least a bachelor's degree, compared with 32% in large cities.

The **Gambia** introduced an allowance of 30% to 40% of their base salary for positions in remote regions. By 2007, 24% of teachers had requested a transfer to hardship schools.

In **Senegal**, the government has created since 2011 Regional Training




Centers for education personnel (Centre régionaux de Formation des Personnels de l'Éducation) aiming to bring access to teacher training closer to candidates to the profession.

In **China**, the government established the Free Teacher Education programme in 2007 to give high performing students at the best universities incentives to teach in rural schools.

In **Malawi**, the rural hardship allowance introduced in 2010 raises the basic pay of a newly recruited teacher by as much as a quarter.


**Rwanda** provides subsidized loans to trained teachers working in hard-to-reach areas. The majority of teachers in those areas are participating in the programme, with members allowed to borrow up to five times their savings.



***Tell your government what motivates teachers to enter and stay in your profession.***

**The message:** We need to be respected for the job we are doing. Our pay must cover our basic needs and more and our loyalty rewarded with career progression.

**The fact:** A teacher who is the only or main breadwinner, and has at least four family members to support, needs to earn at least US\$10 per day to keep the family above the poverty



line. However, average teacher salaries are below this level in eight countries, all of which are in sub-Saharan Africa.

**The aims:** Teacher salaries should meet their basic needs. Teachers should be offered the best possible working conditions.

Teachers need an attractive career path that rewards those who address

diversity and support weak students. Teachers should be appointed to civil service posts rather than hired on short-term contracts and lower pay.

**The evidence:** Six studies published between 1990 and 2010 found that teacher salaries were directly linked to learning outcomes.

Countries that rely heavily on contract teachers – where teachers are on short term contracts and low pay – rank at or near the bottom for education access and learning.

Low pay and little career progression lead to increased absenteeism. It also encourages teachers to take on second jobs – sometimes private tuition – which reduce their commitment to their regular teaching jobs.

When teachers are paid less than people in comparable fields, the best students are less likely to aspire to become teachers, and teachers are more likely to lose motivation or leave the profession.

In **Chile**, performance-related pay led to increased learning inequalities. If implemented, policies must be designed to avoid these harmful side effects while providing incentives that aim at improving the learning of the weakest and most disadvantaged students.

### The positive examples:

In **Canada, Luxembourg** and **New Zealand**, teachers are paid more than the average for full-time workers with a tertiary education.

In 2009, **Norway** took further steps to raise the status of the teaching profession. Teaching received higher ratings in the media, and, in 2011, the number of applicants rose by 38% from the previous year.

**Brazil** rewards schools with collective bonuses and sees a positive impact on children's learning outcomes.

**Ghana** has a new career structure that is intended to motivate teachers to improve their instructional practice.



# THE PRACTICAL STEPS TO ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE

**Choose the issue** you want to focus on. **Compile what you know** about it from your own experiences. **Collect available data** about the issue in your country from respected sources.

**Are you a teacher? Start the change in your own classroom** and be a good example others can follow. Your voice will have more impact when you can show how well your students have learned.

**Your students can help snowball your calls for change.** Teach them about leveraging their voices on social media using #teachlearn in their tweet, to join a common online conversation and help lobby politicians, the press and the world. Next, get your school colleagues on board, and **begin a school-wide reform.** Speak up!

Remember **parents and members of the community can help spread your messages** as well. They have a strong interest in supporting quality education. Hold an evening event, and talk about what works, and why

parents should care. Build a team of support.

**Lobby your trade union** – get the agenda on their list of priorities.

**Identify the focal point of the International Task Force on Teachers for EFA** in your country. Share your actions and their results with him/her.

**Find a good opportunity** to raise your issues – look at the education events, election campaigns, international days and school term times to find a good moment to talk to your media, or work within your union to call for change.

**Get your media onside** – tell them about your situation, using the evidence in this toolkit as well. Write a letter to your local paper, talking about your circumstances, and what change you need.

**Use social media to raise your voice.** Find if your President, Minister for Education, or Prime Minister is on twitter and tweet your calls to them.



**Get in touch with local or national NGOs** working on quality education and offer yourself as a spokesperson for them – for events, or with the media. Your stories can strengthen the case for better government support.

If you're a teacher educator, or head teacher, you can **help other teachers to be aware of issues** at the school, community and national levels so that they know which of their experiences will be most relevant to policymakers.

**Are you a union official or staff member?** If you work for a teachers' organization or union, **support your members to engage in policy-making processes**, by sharing their own classroom experiences.

**Send a message to your Government, the United Nations (UN), its agencies and donors** demanding that education and teachers should be given high priority in a new global development strategy after 2015.

Unions and teacher organisations should continue to **reinforce the positive reputation of the teaching profession**, as a key partner for governments in improving learning outcomes.



TIPS:

**Avoid  
being angry!**

**Focus on the  
positive!**





**POLICY-MAKERS MUST SUPPORT TEACHERS TO END THE LEARNING CRISIS**



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**ADVOCACY TOOLKIT**  
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Developed by an independent team and published by UNESCO, the Education for All Global Monitoring Report is an authoritative reference that aims to inform, influence and sustain genuine commitment towards Education for All.

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