



Concept Note for the 2026 World Teachers' Day Programme

Standing with Teachers and Shaping the Future Together

5 to 8 October 2026





Proposal

The UNESCO Regional Center for Quality and Excellence in Education proposes a joint international programme with the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 from 5 to 8 October 2026. The programme will celebrate the status of the teaching profession, listen systematically to teachers' voices, discuss the preliminary framework of the Teacher We Want project – which addresses the growing gap between the competencies teachers need in an era of AI and digital transformation and their current professional reality, amid wide disparities among countries. It responds to this gap by developing an integrated conceptual model of "the teacher we want," spanning professional-pedagogical, digital/AI, and innovation-entrepreneurship competencies, and translates this model into a graduated performance-indicator matrix to guide teacher preparation, professional development, licensing, and evaluation policies.

The programme will conclude by agreeing on a consultation pathway leading to the Teacher Task Force 15th Policy Dialogue Forum, scheduled for late November, which will address the challenge of substantially increasing the supply of qualified teachers to advance quality education and lifelong learning.

The project framework will be presented as preliminary material for consultation and validation, not as a final model for adoption. This approach makes use of the available evidence while protecting scientific integrity and involving teachers, their organizations, and policymakers in developing the outputs before piloting and final peer review.

Background and rationale

World Teachers' Day 2026 marks the sixtieth anniversary of the 1966 UNESCO and International Labour Organization Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers. The occasion provides an opportunity to connect the protection of the profession's status, teachers' rights, and their professional voice with their capacity for continuous learning and leadership in educational transformation.

The Teacher We Want project provides an initial knowledge base comprising a literature review, comparative analysis, a field instrument, and a competency framework under development. Partnership with the Teacher Task Force adds value by testing the relevance of this work across regions, linking it to social dialogue and global policy, and turning the celebration into a process with defined outputs and follow-up.

World Teachers' Day is co-convened globally by UNESCO, the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNICEF, and Education International. This proposed programme is designed as a complementary contribution to that shared global observance, aligned with its 2026 focus on protecting and advancing the status of the teaching profession.



Objective

To launch a joint international pathway that connects the Status of teachers with lifelong professional learning, recognizing teachers not merely as implementers of education policy, but as its architects, in keeping with the standards set out in the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers. The period from 5 to 8 October will be used to present the preliminary framework, listen to teachers and the challenges they are facing, examine its relationship with system enablers, and agree on consultation and validation steps leading to the 15th Policy Dialogue Forum and piloting in 2027.

Conceptual basis

The project moves from a question focused on the competencies expected of teachers to a broader policy question: What should education systems put in place to enable teachers to develop and exercise these competencies with effective professional voice and adequate status?. The framework therefore presents two interconnected levels:

- The professional and digital core for teachers, covering teaching and assessment, inclusion and equity, ethics, agency and leadership, digital and data literacy, and future readiness.
- System enablers, covering status and protection, preparation and professional induction, time and funding, school leadership, career pathways, and social dialogue.

Guiding principle: competency indicators should be read alongside indicators of system enablement. They should not be used in isolation to judge teachers or hold them responsible for institutional constraints.

Proposed programme 5 to 8 October

Date	Proposed activity	Format and duration	Immediate output
5 October	Global launch and high-level dialogue Joint opening, teacher voices from diverse contexts, presentation of the evidence and preliminary framework, and multi-stakeholder dialogue	Hybrid 90 minutes Scheduled to complement UNESCO's celebration	Partnership announcement, opening messages, and consultation questions
6 October	Teacher Voices Forum Regional listening windows focused on professional status, working conditions, and learning priorities	Virtual Windows arranged across time zones	Initial summary of common issues and contextual differences



Date	Proposed activity	Format and duration	Immediate output
7 October	Enabled Teacher Policy Lab Testing the relationship between competencies and system enablers through real cases	Interactive virtual session 120 minutes	Proposed amendments to the framework and policy priorities
8 October	Partnership and Roadmap Session Reviewing lessons, confirming the consultation pathway, and defining partner roles	Virtual 75 minutes	Concise closing statement and roadmap to the 15th Policy Dialogue Forum

Participants

The programme will engage teachers and representatives of their professional organizations, policymakers, teacher education and accreditation institutions, school leaders, researchers, regional offices and organizations, and technical and funding partners. Teachers and their representatives should account for at least 40 percent of participants. Participation should also reflect geographic and gender diversity and include early-career teachers, rural and remote communities, teachers with disabilities, and crisis-affected contexts.

Outputs

- A joint launch package comprising a concept note, visual presentation, and standardized consultation questions.
- A multilingual synthesis of teachers' voices and priority issues, using only quotations authorized for publication.
- A revised preliminary version of the Teacher We Want framework that distinguishes the common core from context-specific adaptation pathways.
- A roadmap for joint regional consultations, analysis, and validation, leading to presentation of the findings at the 15th Policy Dialogue Forum.
- A refined Teacher We Want framework, updated by a joint RCQE–TTF technical team based on consultation findings.
- A proposal for piloting and adaptation in 2027, to be completed in accordance with institutional and scientific approvals.



Communication and documentation

Across the four days, the communication narrative will move from listening to teachers, to building the framework with them, and then to translating their voices and the evidence into policy options and a follow-up roadmap. To help disseminate the project, and reach a wider audience, a dedicated hashtag will be created for the “#TeacherWeWant” project and used consistently across all materials and platforms.

Proposed materials include a single programme webpage, a short video with clear consent, focused cards built around consultation questions, and a closing brief explaining what was heard and how the framework changed in response. Materials will be available in Arabic, English, French, and Spanish, subject to available capacity. The Teacher Task Force will help disseminate outputs and findings through its network of members, teacher organizations, and partners.

Core message

The teacher of the future is the outcome of a professional system that protects teachers’ status and voice, provides lifelong learning, and ensures the agency, resources, and career pathways they need to lead learning and transformation. The proposed programme will build this framework with teachers, governments, and partners through a common core and adaptation pathways that reflect different contexts.

Registration and attendance link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86769132420?pwd=8GHRFttR2vuIOpKaiQjwpReej3uGEq.1>

