

EDUCATORS SHAPING FUTURES

A Global Knowledge Exchange on Teacher Preparation and Development



PLENARY SESSION

Elevating the Teaching Profession: Perspectives from the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030

Matthew Thomas

Senior Programme Specialist, Teacher Development UNESCO

International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030



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FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY





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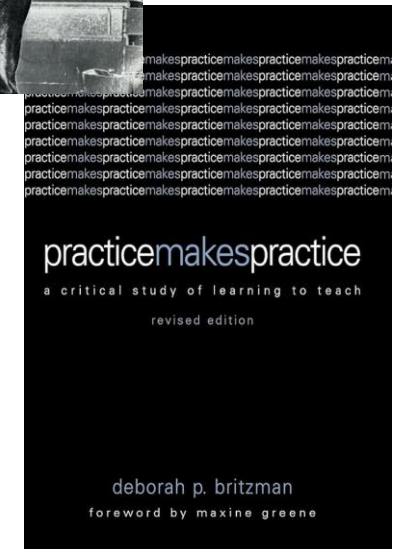
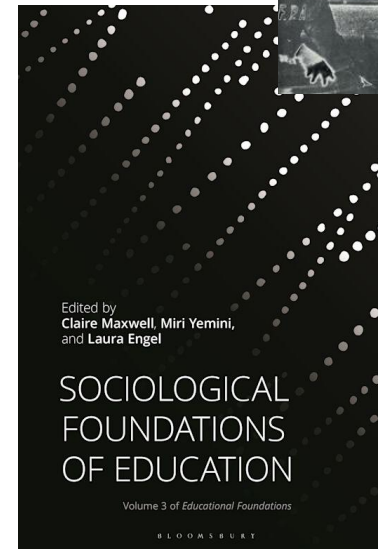
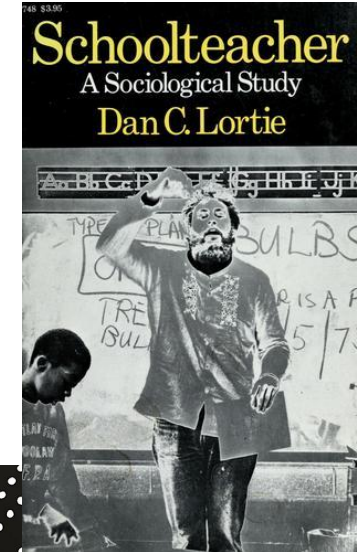
Closing Address: Five Considerations for Elevating the Profession

4 November 2025



Confronting the ‘Apprenticeship of Observation’

- Reconsidering the Teaching Profession
- “Apprenticeship of observation” (Lortie, 1975)
- “Familiarity with the teacher’s work does matter, **it is not a direct line to insight**” (Britzman, 2012, p. 4).
- “Much of what teachers need to know to be successful is **invisible to lay observers**, leading to the view that teaching requires little formal study and to frequent disdain for teacher education programs” (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 300).



The Importance and the Impact

- Teachers need robust education and training, induction and mentoring, and ongoing professional development
- Globally, **44 million** more primary and secondary teachers are needed to achieve universal education by 2030 (UNESCO and TTF, 2024)
- Teacher retention, professional status, and more
- Teaching quality and learning outcomes are also at risk



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[Global Report on Teachers \(2024\)](#)

Five Steps for Moving Forward

Collaboration

Connection

Conditions

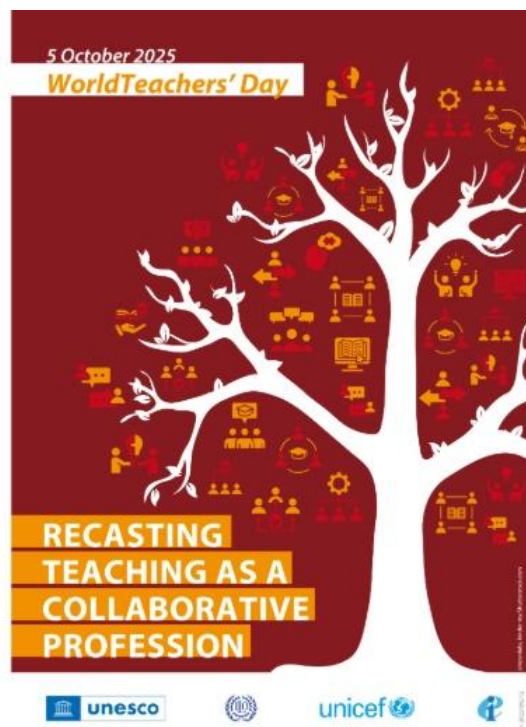
Coordination

Commitment

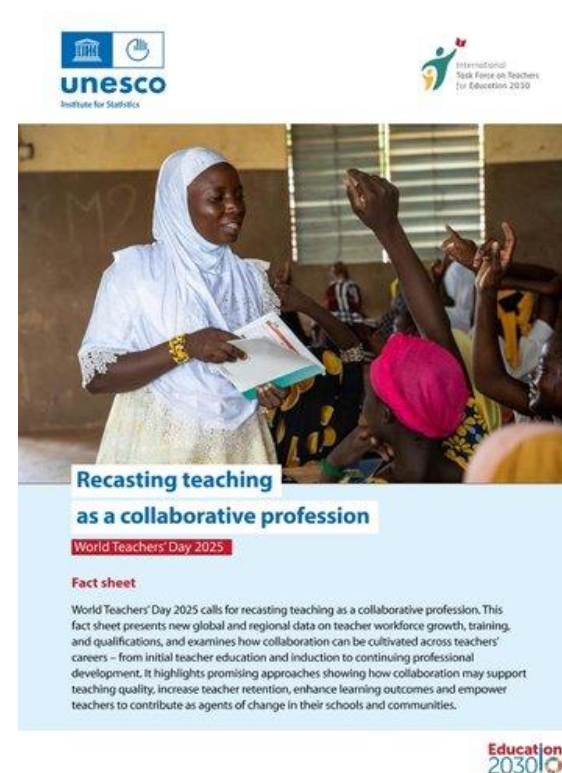
Five Steps for Moving Forward: Collaboration



[Reimagining our futures together: a new social contract for education \(2021\)](#)



[World Teachers' Day \(2025\)](#)



[Recasting teaching as a collaborative profession \(2025\)](#)



Five Steps for Moving Forward: Connection

- Lifelong professional learning for teachers
- Life-wide engagements in community and personal interests
- Life-informed leadership and political action





2026 Global Report on Teachers

Advancing Teacher Professional Development through Lifelong Learning

Concept note

Introduction

Lifelong learning is rooted in knowledge and education traditions found in different cultures worldwide (Elfert, 2015; Tam, 2015). It implies that learning is not confined to a certain space and time such as school, childhood, or preparation for specific actions, practices, and professions. On the contrary, the concept of lifelong learning means that education is a continuous process that spans one's entire life, from cradle to grave, across all levels of education, and throughout all areas of life. In this conceptualization, learning does not only occur within formal education, but also within informal and non-formal learning modalities (UJL, 2022). Thus, lifelong learning encompasses structures and learning experiences aimed at personal, vocational, social, and cultural objectives. While it may take the form of formal education leading to a certificate, degree or other qualification, it may also be pursued for personal enrichment. This learning can be guided by a tutor, educator, or teacher in a traditional classroom setting, or acquired informally, including through digital platforms, independently and without spatial or temporal constraints (Schuller, forthcoming).

Lifelong learning is often characterized by five key elements, wherein it encompasses: a) all age groups, b) all levels of education, c) all learning modalities, d) all learning spheres and spaces, and e) a diverse range of purposes (UJL, 2022). In this sense, promoting lifelong learning entails developing learning ecosystems that enable the realization of the right to education for everyone – regardless of age, background, or context – by providing opportunities to unlock individuals' potential for personal development, as well as for sustainable economic, social, cultural, and environmental progress.

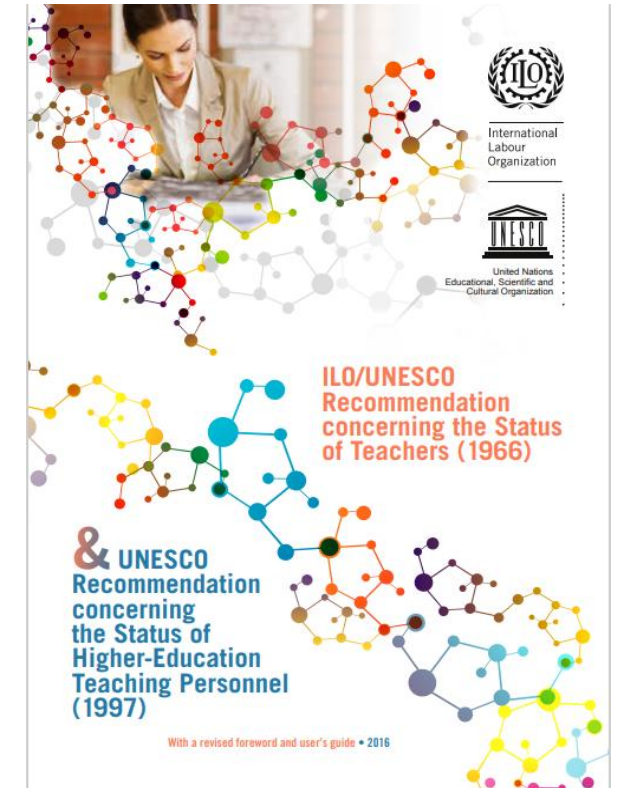
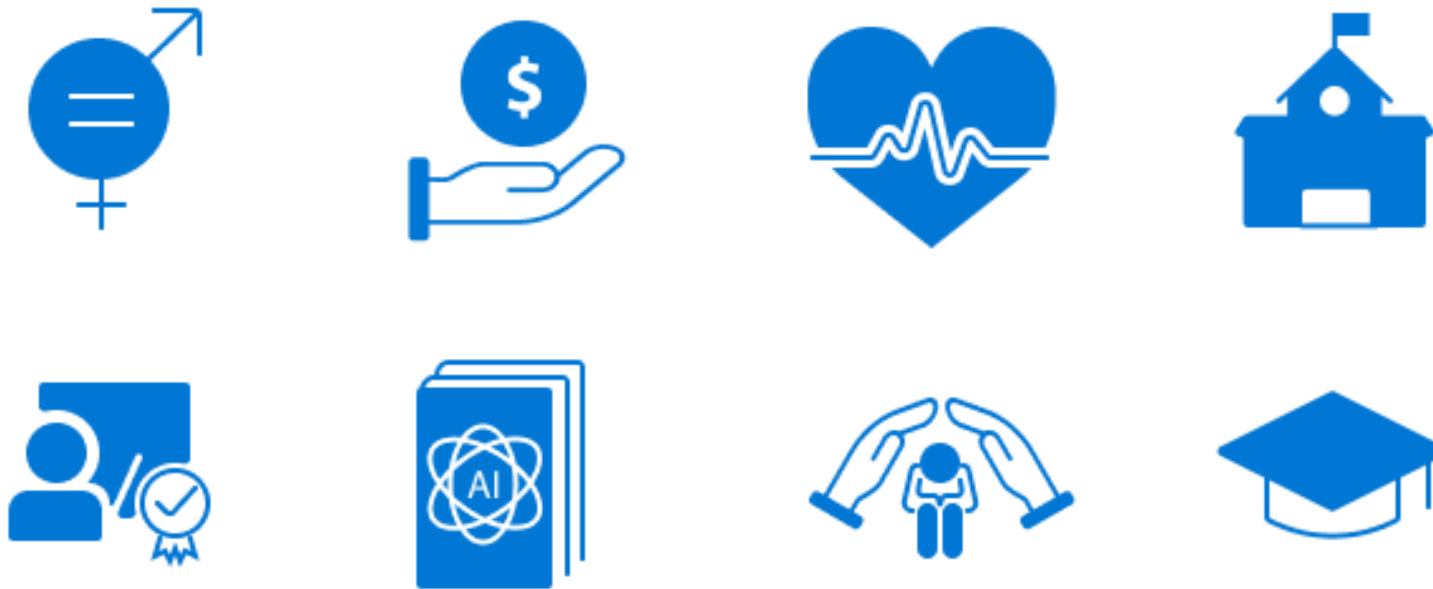
Grounded in these understandings, the 2026 Global Report on Teachers will explore how to support the lifelong learning journeys of educators working across ages, levels, modalities, spaces, and purposes. It aims to move beyond historically situated perspectives of education systems as fixed and isolated entities, toward more nuanced understandings of the interconnectedness of learning ecosystems. In doing so, it will highlight the gaps and areas that require further attention and development; for instance, the ad-hoc ways educators learn about digital technologies like AI, or inconsistent approaches to mentoring and induction, which can lead to attrition. Perhaps most importantly, in showcasing exemplary practices, policies, and programmes – and evidencing their outcomes – the



2026 Global Report on Teachers: Supporting the Lifelong Learning Journeys of Educators | 1

Five Steps for Moving Forward: Conditions

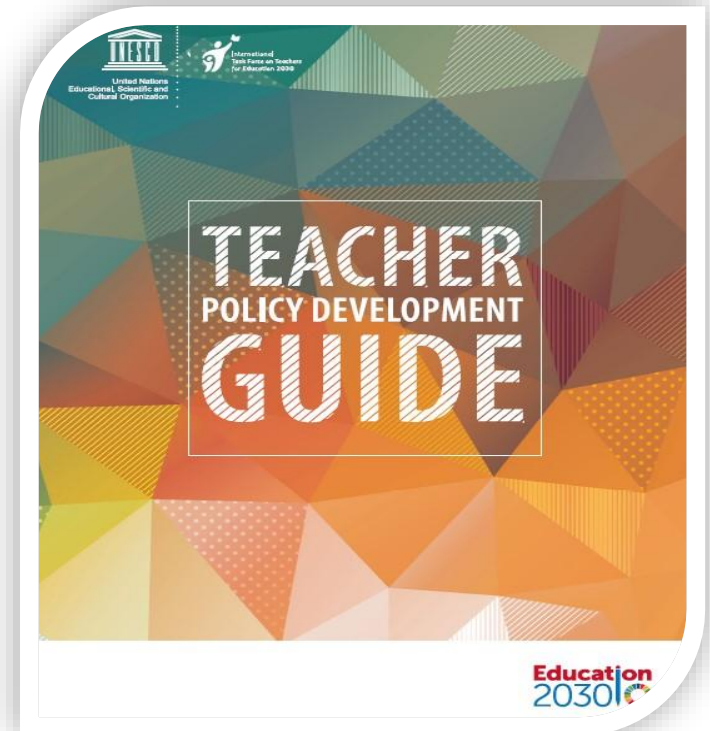
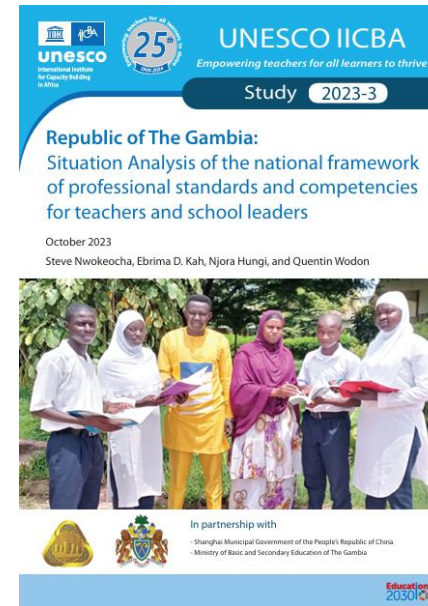
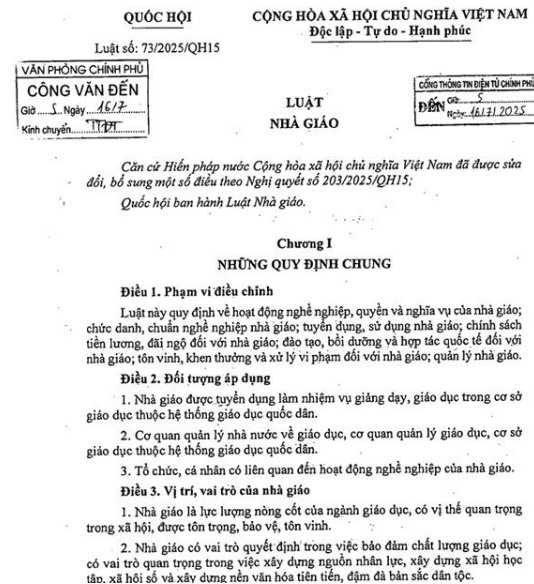
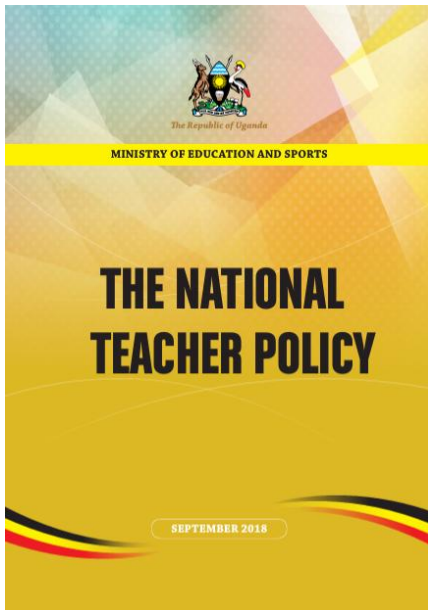
- The Recommendations concerning the Status of Teachers (1966) and the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (1997) remain the **only normative instruments** for teachers
- They were visionary, but revisions are vital in key areas



[Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel \(1966 and 1997\) | International Labour Organization](#)

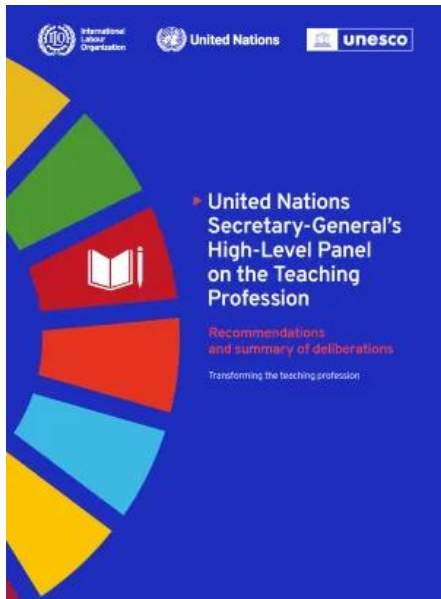
Five Steps for Moving Forward: Coordination

- Coordination among Ministries, donors, partners, etc.
- Coordination of policies within national contexts



Five Steps for Moving Forward: Commitment

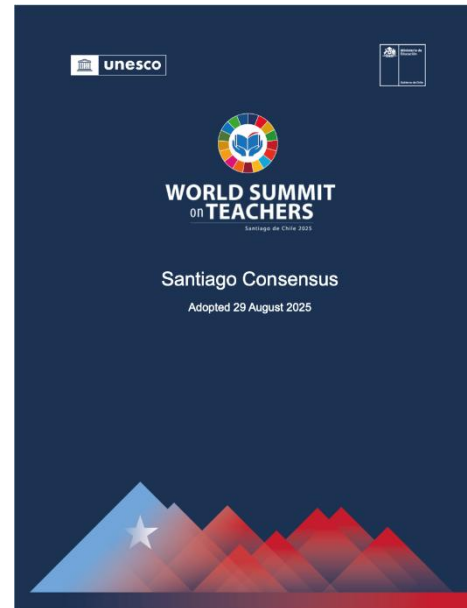
- There is robust evidence about how to advance the teaching profession
- And there are recommendations and commitments at the highest levels



[United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession \(2024\)](#)



[Fortaleza Declaration \(2024\)](#)



[Santiago Consensus \(2025\)](#)

'...we call upon the international community to take action to transform the teaching profession into a high-status, highly qualified, well supported, adequately remunerated and highly respected profession ...'

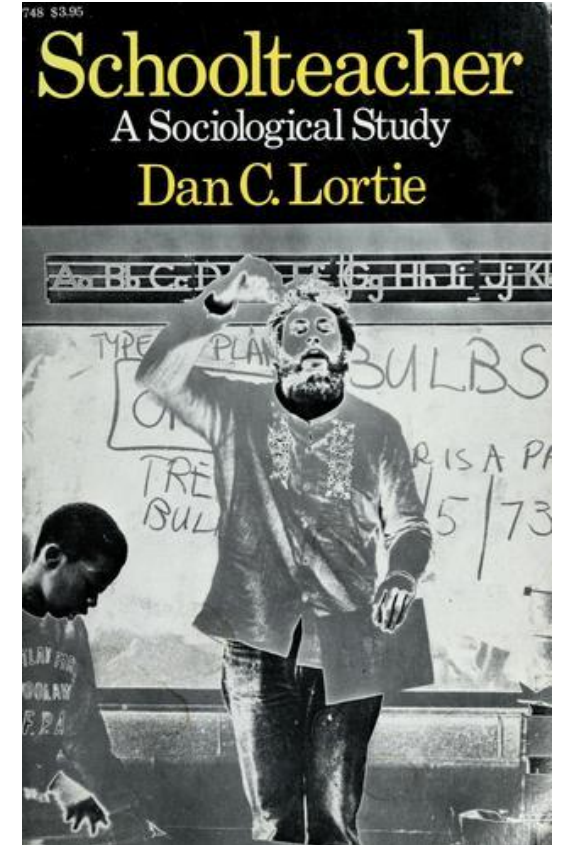
What are concrete next steps?

**Are any considerations
missing or misconstrued?**



Confronting the 'Apprenticeship of Observation'

- Lortie reminds us how important it is to carefully prepare and support teachers
- But it also serves as a call to ensure we don't assume what it means to be a teacher
- *Educators Shaping Futures* is perhaps the final goal
- But let's not forget that *Shaping Educators' Futures* is a key step to getting there
- Work on teachers doesn't work without them.



Thank you

Learn more: www.unesco.org/education

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Matthew A. M. Thomas
Programme Specialist, Section for
Teacher Development, UNESCO



United Nations
Educational, Scientific
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