

Joint message from

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on the occasion of World Teachers' Day

Teachers at the heart of education recovery

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Nearly two years since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, many education systems are still facing significant disruptions. Students and teachers in close to 60 countries remain affected by full or partial school closures. But whether students are learning in person or remotely, teachers are at the heart of the process.

The pandemic has shone a light on the irreplaceable value of the teaching profession in society but also on the difficult working conditions facing many teachers. Teachers have been on the frontlines to ensure learning continuity when schools were closed and to provide socio-emotional support to their students, especially the most vulnerable ones. They have had to rapidly adapt to remote learning and manage new digital tools, often without training. Today, they must assess and address learning losses among their students, cope with issues of health and safety in the classroom, and leverage remote, hybrid and in-person methods to minimize disruption.

Today we celebrate the exceptional dedication and courage of all teachers, as well as their capacity to adapt and innovate under very challenging and uncertain conditions. They are at the heart of global education recovery efforts and are key in accelerating progress towards inclusive, equitable and quality education for every learner, in every circumstance.

Now is the time to recognize the exceptional role teachers play and to empower them with the training, professional development, support and working conditions they need to deploy their talent. This is a time of challenge but also an opportunity for rapid transformation to address the unfulfilled needs which have been multiplied by the pandemic. Sub-Saharan Africa alone requires 15 million more teachers to reach the education goals by 2030. Surmounting these challenges requires bold commitment, investment and innovation on a scale like never before.

A successful education recovery starts with ensuring teachers' well-being, adequate remuneration and safety, including their prioritization for vaccination together with other key workers.

A successful education recovery calls for investment in more teachers and in training and professional development opportunities, so that educators may enrich their practice and gain the skills to integrate and use educational technologies effectively to support learning and adapt to a diversity of learners' needs.

Education recovery will be successful if it is conducted hand in hand with teachers – giving them voice and space to participate in decision-making and respecting their pedagogical knowledge and expertise as we reimagine the way out of the crisis and build more resilient education systems.

On World Teachers' Day, we are not only celebrating every teacher. We are calling on countries to invest in them and prioritize them in global education recovery efforts so that every learner has access to a qualified and supported teacher. Let's stand with our teachers!