



**National Council for Tertiary Education**

Leading Tertiary Education to Greater Heights

# Summary Report

# National Teacher Education Learning Summit

June 26<sup>th</sup> 2019



**TRANSFORMING  
LEARNING,  
SUSTAINING  
CHANGE**

Evidence and learning  
for improved teacher  
education

# Education Learning Summit

**June 26, 2019**

**Ghana Shippers' House  
West Ridge, Accra**

@tteleghana



**LIVE**



**T-TEL**



Ministry of Education



UKaid



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# INTRODUCTION

The 2019 National Teacher Education Learning Summit, led by NCTE with T-TEL's support, provided an opportunity to reflect on commitments made during the previous summit in 2017, share key findings from research conducted over the past 18 months and offer a space for those working at the front line of the B.Ed. delivery in Colleges of Education (CoEs) to share successes and challenges in shifting attitudes and practices.

Over 200 people from across Ghana's teacher education sector, including representatives from the Ministry of Education, the President of PRINCOF, Regional and District Directors of Education, participated in three plenaries, two panel discussions and had the opportunity to learn from 18 different presenters on various aspects of teacher education. The Summit was also privileged to have a delegation from Ethiopia's Ministry of Education present.

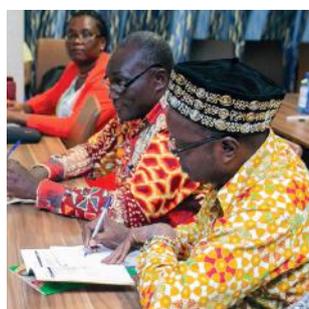
This summary report highlights those key findings and discussion points raised throughout the day which have implications for action.

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# PROGRESS ON AGREED ACTIONS FROM THE 2017 NATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION LEARNING SUMMIT



Agreed action	Progress to date
MoE must accelerate measures to make the teacher education curriculum more practical.	The B.Ed. curriculum has significantly increased the amount of time student teachers spend gaining real life teaching practice in school classrooms.
School inspection routines need to be reformed accordingly by GES, to become more supportive of these methods.	NIB has introduced new school inspection as part of broader reforms in the education sector.
NTEC pledged to accelerate efforts towards making teacher licensing more proficiency-driven, in line with the new curriculum framework.	NTEC is introducing a portfolio assessment system to complement the written teacher licensing examinations.
MoE should take steps to ensure that student teachers are better informed about the curriculum reform process.	Student teachers, through TTAG, were extensively engaged in stakeholder consultations on the new curriculum.
Colleges of Education and MoE should intensify their efforts towards adopting student-focused instruction	The B.Ed. has created a much more interactive student-centered approach to teaching which is being implemented in all CoEs.
Colleges ought to take steps to ensure that teacher assessment routines prioritise teaching practice and mentorship more seriously.	The B.Ed. curriculum focuses on learning through teaching practice, with 30% of total marks linked to teaching practice.
NTEC will spearhead the formulation of a blueprint for ICT development in collaboration with NITA.	A management information system for the teacher education sector is currently in development, spearheaded by NTEC, in collaboration with NITA and NAB.



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# KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION AT THE 2019 NATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION LEARNING SUMMIT



- 1** Affiliate universities must ensure that colleges have the accredited curriculum and related course outlines ahead of time and in-hand so they can familiarise themselves with the content and properly prepare lessons.
- 2** NTC should re-consider the format of the licensure exams to ensure it reflects the practice-orientated nature of the B.Ed curriculum
- 3** GES and district education offices should focus greater attention on monitoring learning in schools.
- 4** Tutors need to be willing to stretch themselves to make interactive learning possible with the resources they have.
- 5** The MoE, NCTE, and affiliate universities should commit resources to Colleges of Education to help mitigate issues of large class size, support continued improvements (including to infrastructure) and contribute to upgrading college staff.
- 6** NCTE should sustain efforts to upgrade the qualification of tutors – the Transition Support Fund is the first step in enabling colleges to be able to do this.
- 7** MoE and NCTE should continue to support leadership capacity building programmes to ensure the effective implementation of policies in CoEs.
- 8** Colleges and basic schools should start keeping dedicated records on prevalence of Special Education Needs (SEN) within their student populations that are accessible centrally by all in the teacher education sector.

# PLENARY DISCUSSIONS

## Group work as a pedagogical approach



Students liked approaches which encourage social and collaborative skills, such as group work, as they were able to clarify questions and make new friends. These approaches can be challenging because large class sizes mean you need lots of space for groups to work. However, it can be an effective way for student teachers to learn from each other.

### Recommendations for action:

- ▶ Tutors and teachers should consider arranging their classrooms in ways which are conducive to group work, e.g. tables instead of desks.
- ▶ Tutors need to be willing to stretch themselves to make interactive learning possible with the resources they have.

“This curriculum can change our story.”

Dr. Sakina Acquah (UEW)

## Special education and inclusive education

Colleges are making efforts to be compliant with the Inclusive Education (IE) policy. Some are making changes to physical infrastructure to suit the needs of student teachers with Special Education Needs (SEN) and a large proportion of tutors, student teachers and teachers in basic schools from the sample are receiving training on IE and SEN. However more needs to be done to ensure data and infrastructural compliance, and to address apparent gaps in the quality of training and in depth of awareness and understanding about what the IE policy means.

### Recommendations for action:

- ▶ Colleges should establish the office of special needs coordinator to support and ensure the adaptation of the national IE policy at the college level, including sensitising staff on the policy.



- ▶ NAB must play a more active role, if adherence to the IE policy is to be meaningfully monitored in CoEs.
- ▶ Colleges and basic schools should start keeping dedicated records on prevalence of SEN within their student populations that are accessible centrally by all in the teacher education sector.
- ▶ The MoE should design and roll-out a professional development programme for college tutors and basic schoolteachers on SEN to address training gaps.

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## Leadership in colleges of education

Trust is a key element in strong leadership. Trust means different things to different people and it's important to understand this if you are to forge good working relationships that mean your leadership makes a strong and lasting impact.

### Recommendations for college leadership include:

- ▶ Admitting mistakes
- ▶ Providing praise and affirmations
- ▶ Being visible and approachable
- ▶ Caring for staff and keeping their confidence.



“Trust is the energy, lubricant and glue that makes collaboration happen — for better or for worse.”

Sam Awuku (T-TEL)



“This is a community... Everybody must know what we are trying to achieve at the end of the day”

Dr. Hayford Mensah Ayerakwa (Research Trust Limited)



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# PROGRESS ON THE FIRST YEAR OF B.ED. IMPLEMENTATION

## Summary of panel discussions

The first panel discussion sought to reflect on whether implementation of the B.Ed. was on track. The answer was resoundingly yes, but everyone on the panel noted challenges, which are to be expected given it's the first year of implementation.

Both the Transition Support Fund and supported teaching in school (STS) were identified as promising areas of change, and Prof. Imoro Braimah (the moderator) said that he hoped, as the first B.Ed. cohort move through their degree, the challenges become less for those who follow. Sai Winnifred Ruth, a first-year student teacher at Accra College of Education, brought attention to several challenges she can see are affecting her studies, including the need for more sympathetic timetabling so that student teachers are not sat in the same subject class for hours and so they have time for their STS. Prince Obeng-Himah of CETAG noted the effects of large class size and classroom management which is putting pressure on tutors who are delivering the curriculum.

“Education is everybody’s business.”

Duncan Nsoh (District Director of Education, Upper West)

### Recommendations for action:

- ▶ Universities need to ensure that their affiliated colleges have the accredited curriculum to hand so they can familiarise themselves with the content and prepare to teach it effectively.
- ▶ The MoE should remove constraints to recruitment which is limiting colleges’ ability to recruit for key positions.

The second panel discussion of the day, explored how to sustain the changes introduced. Robin Todd of T-TEL noted that changing the examination system – which has nurtured rote learning within Ghana’s education system – should maintain the changes that are taking place. While Ms. Florence Kasi highlighted how the National Teachers’ Standards (NTS) are a critical way to ensure improvements are made.





Akwasi Addae-Boahene noted the key drivers which got us where we are today and which will continue to sustain the change – particularly technical leadership, stakeholder engagement and government support. Dr. Suleiman Iddrisu noted that it was only right that the oldest profession – teaching – is finally taking its rightful place as a professional career in Ghana through the licensing examination and recognised how the Transition Support Fund is supporting commitments to upgrade the qualifications of tutors in colleges.

#### **Recommendations for action:**

- ▶ NTC and other agencies should review licensing exam plans so it is line with B.Ed. curriculum’s broader focus on learning through practice rather than memorising for exams.
- ▶ The MoE, universities and CoEs must continue to explore how the upgrading of tutors’ qualifications can be supported beyond the Transition Support Fund.



# SUMMARY OF PARALLEL SESSIONS



Six breakout sessions were held across the course of the day, with a range of 30-minute presentations available for participants to attend. Findings and implications have been summarised below in terms of broad thematic areas.



To see presentation slides from the day, go to the T-TEL Learning Hub and search 'Learning summit'.

## Evidence on impact of changing teacher education

Several presentations throughout the day highlighted outcomes of T-TEL activities from the perspective of independent evaluations, colleges themselves and research undertaken by universities who offer teacher education programmes. Findings included:

- Across several areas related to leadership and gender-sensitive teaching and learning, further focus is required to address missed gender-related targets.
- In-service teachers need to be up to date with new trends in teacher education if mentoring of newly appointed teachers is to be effective.
- Newly qualified teachers, who received a DBE qualification in 2018, rated their experience of teaching practice highly.
- Methodist College of Education have introduced seven quality assurance indicators which are guiding the college towards improvements in monitoring the quality of their teaching and learning environment.

### Implications:

- ▶ Prioritise closing the gap in gender-sensitive practices amongst college tutors within teacher education and amongst beginning teachers in school classrooms.
- ▶ There should be further investigation into the barriers and constraints which affect how far student teachers implement what they learn in college when they enter basic schools.
- ▶ Regular training and sensitisation for in-service teachers on newer trends in teacher education, such as the National Teachers' Standards (NTS) and STS, is needed for them to be effective mentors to beginning teachers and student teachers during their placements.
- ▶ Universities should explore how they can support colleges of education to maintain and improve the teaching environment they provide in the context of a lack of resources and high government dependency.



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## Strengthening learning outcomes through student-centred approaches

Several presentations focused on the effects of more interactive approaches to teaching and learning. Findings included:

- Junior high school students who experienced experiential teaching and learning in science and mathematics enjoyed the subjects and recorded higher BECE results than those in classrooms where teacher-centred pedagogy was pervasive.
- Digital tools, including social media and mobile apps, are increasingly relevant and useful to education for research purposes, co-creation of knowledge, and supporting interactions between teachers and pupils and tutors and student teachers.
- The use of open educational resources enables more interactive approaches to teaching and frees up time for the tutor or teacher to support students one-on-one or in groups.
- Prevalence of access to smartphones amongst student is at 90% and they have largely positive attitudes towards using them for learning.

### Implications:

- ▶ The use of hands-on learning to teach STEM subjects heightens learners' enjoyment and engagement for greater understanding.
  - ▶ Provide continuous professional development for in-service teachers to ensure they have the necessary understanding and skills in technology and new creative teaching approaches.
  - ▶ Digital applications, such as Edmodo, can be used to support interactions between teachers and pupils and tutors and student teachers.
  - ▶ Re-think social media and mobile phone policies in schools and colleges of education to allow for greater use of digital tools in the classroom which make the most of existing and accessible materials (eg. phones).
- ▶ Integrate OERs into teaching and learning processes throughout the basic school level.
  - ▶ Employing a range of pedagogical approaches, including individual activities and group-based learning, will cater for a range of learners needs and achieve learning outcomes.



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## Teaching practice and professional development

Some of the presentations looked at the role of teaching practice in student teachers' development and the importance of college tutors continuing to develop their skills and knowledge as teachers. Findings included:

- A combination of pedagogical skills, suitable personal disposition and a good grasp of the subject matter are key ingredients that student teachers need to be successful in their teaching practice.
- At Akatsi College of Education, professional development has improved the pedagogy of tutors and, in turn, this is having a positive impact on student teachers during their teaching practice.

### Implications for action:



- ▶ Courses on teaching methodology should balance subject matter knowledge, pedagogical skills and personal disposition, instead of focusing exclusively on pedagogy.
- ▶ College staff should be sensitised on the importance of professional development (PD) to ensure it is taken seriously and PD sessions are factored into college activities accordingly.

## Role of parents and communities in education

A couple of presentations also touched on the role of parents and communities in teacher education. Findings included:

- Learners at a senior high school in Kumasi who experienced a more authoritative parenting style performed better in all subjects than those whose parents used a different style.
- Large family size and lower levels of educational background of parents can have a negative effect on pupils learning outcomes.
- Community support for learning in school and at home contributed to the effectiveness of remedial support for upper primary students to acquire foundational knowledge and skills they had missed at lower primary school.

### Implications:

- ▶ Policy, in a similar vein to the free SHS rollout, should seek to account for learners' social backgrounds and mitigate inequity in education opportunities.
- ▶ Community engagement is critical to successful interventions to improve learning schools.
- ▶ GES and district education offices should focus greater attention on monitoring learning in schools.



## Leadership and institutional development

The role of leadership and institutional development for effective changes to teacher education at the college-level was raised in a couple of presentations. Findings included:

- “Push” mechanisms for engaging leaders, such as emails, print letters, WhatsApp and SMS, have limited success in generating ownership for education reforms amongst teacher education institutions.
- Training for leadership at Methodist College of Education has had a positive influence on gender-responsive practices of management and other members of college staff.

### Implications:

- ▶ Building ownership and generating interest in reforms require a range of engagement mechanisms, including more meaningful participation through workshops, group meetings and spaces for dialogue, that actively engages key stakeholders to lead that change.



## Subject-specific knowledge

A handful of presentations touched on specific subject areas, with some broader implications for teacher education and education reforms more generally. Findings included:

- History presents an opportunity for pupils to tap into creative and critical thinking (e.g. through analysing historical sources).
- The importance of understanding Akan sentence construction to extract meaning from traditional proverbs.

### Implications:

- ▶ A shift towards more interactive teaching, using an investigative approach where pupils assume the role of “explorers” will foster more immediate relevance to the intended outcomes of the curriculum.
- ▶ Using a dual language approach to lesson delivery, especially for early-grade learners, will help them to understand lessons better.



**Go to our YouTube channel to watch how the day unfolded.**

## SUMMIT CLOSE

Grace Woods, Education Adviser at DFID Ghana, drew attention to how improvements in teacher education over the previous four years have happened at the college-level and taken on a life of its own beyond T-TEL. Robin Todd, T-TEL Team Leader, ended his closing statement by saying that it is possible to build a world-class teacher education system in Ghana if stakeholders continue to believe and support the reform process.

“We want to have as many voices as possible from all parts of the teacher education . . . There’s more to be done and forums like this will help us to do that.”

Robin Todd (T-TEL)





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