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African Union Concludes PACTED 2025 with Launch of Multilingual Platform and Recognition of Africa's Best Teachers



The African Union Commission (AUC) successfully concluded the Pan African Conference on Teacher Education (PACTED 2025) on Friday, October 3, at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa. The three-day conference brought together ministers of education, policymakers, development partners, and educators from across Africa to advance strategies for teacher training, recognition, and professional development, under the overarching vision of transforming Africa's education systems through empowered and motivated teachers.

The closing session coincided with the commemoration of World Teachers' Day 2025, celebrated under the global theme *"The Teachers We Need for the Education We Want: The Imperative to Reverse the Teacher Shortage."* Participants reaffirmed their commitment to improving teachers' working conditions, strengthening professional standards, and fostering collaboration across borders under the newly launched AU Decade of Education (2025–2034) – a continental framework to accelerate progress towards Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG4).

The conference also featured the launch of a multilingual digital platform for African teachers, available in English, French, Arabic, and Swahili, with an African language expansion plan. The platform hosted under the Africa Teachers Forum (ATF) initiative, serves as an interactive knowledge hub comprising over 150 articles, research papers, and good practices, allowing teachers to access training materials, exchange innovations, and participate in communities of practice for continuous professional development.

Panel discussions during the conference highlighted the growing role of digital innovation, data-driven policy, and inter-regional collaboration in revitalizing the teaching profession. Experts and practitioners called for greater investment in teacher well-being, fair remuneration, and leadership pathways, underscoring that empowered teachers are indispensable to achieving equitable, quality education in Africa.

Breakout sessions explored critical themes such as digital learning and innovation, mental health and psychosocial support for teachers, gender-responsive pedagogy, early childhood education and equitable recruitment and retention. Special sessions facilitated by UNESCO, UNICEF, AFTRA, and the African Union's International Centre for Girls' and Women's Education (AU-CIEFFA) showcased innovative models for inclusive teacher development, reinforcing the need for national systems to embed teacher well-being and gender equality in education policy frameworks. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) showcased initiatives like the Nigerian Digital Classroom and the Ugandan Teacher Guides, while United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) led a session on integrating gender responsiveness into teacher education. Discussions underscored the need for inclusive, accessible digital tools and for embedding teacher well-being and mental health into education systems.

In his remarks, Dr. Abdoulaye Salifou, Chief of the Education Sector at the UNESCO Liaison Office to the AU and ECA, in Addis Ababa, representing the United Nations (UN) convening agencies, commended teachers for their resilience and called for "a shift from individualism to collaboration in Advancing Africa's education systems" "He emphasized the importance of reforming international financial systems to prioritize education investment and ensure that technology "supports rather than replaces the human dimension of teaching."

UNICEF's Global Director for Education, Ms. Pia Rebello Britto, underscored the role of strategic partnerships with governments and communities in strengthening foundational learning, early childhood education, and teacher capacity through evidence-based approaches and peer learning platforms such as eLearn, Madrasa, and the Africa Foundational Learning Assessment Institute (AFLAI).

The conference concluded with the African Union Continental Teachers' Awards (CTA 2025), organized by the Department of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (ESTI), celebrating nine outstanding educators from across the continent for their innovation, dedication, and community impact. For the first time, a new category for "Rural Excellence in Teaching" was introduced, recognizing the transformative role of teachers working in remote and underserved areas. The AU Continental Teachers Awards supported by the European Union (EU) through the Regional Teacher Initiative for Africa (RTIA), this years' awards was also supported by Humana People to People, to honour rural teachers with an additional prize of \$2,000 each, symbolizing the AU's growing focus on equity, inclusion, and recognition of teachers at the grassroots. This initiative aims to inspire greater investment in rural education, raise the visibility of rural teachers, and strengthen the continent's commitment to inclusive educational excellence.

In his closing remarks, Prof. Saidou Madougou, Director, for Education, Science, Technology (ESTI) speaking on behalf of H.E. Professor Gaspard Banyankimbona, Commissioner for Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, expressed deep appreciation to Member States, partners, and stakeholders for their dedicated participation and sustained collaboration. "Teachers are the foundation of Africa's development," he stated. "Through innovation, collaboration, and responsive policy, we can ensure that no child, no teacher, and no community is left behind."

The AUC reaffirmed its continued commitment to implementing the outcomes of PACTED 2025 through the Continental Teacher Qualification Framework (CTQF), the Regional Teacher Initiative for Africa (RTIA), and the Africa Teachers Forum (ATF), serving as strategic vehicles to professionalize, valorize, and empower Africa's teaching workforce. The outcomes of PACTED 2025 reaffirmed Africa's collective resolve to value, support, and empower every teacher as agents of change and champions of transformation — aligning with Agenda 2063's Aspiration 1: A Prosperous Africa Based on Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development,

and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) on inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all.

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