SDG 4 Teacher Conference (Arab States)

Quality and Innovation in Teacher Professional Development: Issues and Challenges

Thursday 14 and Friday 15 December, 2017
Beirut, UNESCO Office in Beirut Venue

Keynote speakers

In collaboration with:
Rima Karami Akkary

Rima Karami Akkary is an Associate professor of Educational Administration, Policy and Leadership in the Department of Education at the American University in Beirut, and the program advisor for the Educational Management and Leadership program. She holds a Bachelor in Science, Diploma for teaching science at the secondary level, and Master of Arts in Science Education from the American University of Beirut (AUB), and a Doctorate in Education from Portland State University with a specialty in [K-12] Educational Administration and Supervision with a focus on school principalship, organizational change and educational policy. She is a co-principal investigator and leads the professional development activities in the TAMAM project- a joint project of the Arab Thought Foundation and the American University of Beirut to initiate and research school based reform. The project currently is in 42 schools around Lebanon, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Oman, Sudan, and Qatar. She is also the director of the TAMAM Lebanon Hub a research and development project which examines how to build leadership capacity for sustainable school-based improvement in Lebanese Public Schools. In addition she has designed and conducted many professional development activities for school principals and supervisors, both independently and as part of large-scale reform initiatives. She has published in international and local journals on the principal role, approaches to professional development, program and organizational level evaluation, and models for school-based reform.

Dave Peck

Consultant with the Curriculum Foundation since it was founded in 2009 and CEO since 2013. Consultancy and project leadership involves working with schools, school networks, local and national governments on curriculum development and implementation; assessment; systems; leadership and management; pedagogy and professional development. International work has taken him to Brazil, Chile, Rwanda, Zambia, Lebanon, Morocco, Jordan, Palestine, Qatar, Syria, South Sudan, China, USA and a number of European countries. Regularly invited to speak at conferences on curriculum and other education issues. Engaged with national initiatives: World Class Curriculum Mark and online professional development programmes on curriculum design and assessment.

Graduate Scientist has worked as curriculum subject specialist on national standards in Science, syllabuses and textbooks in and for a range of countries including Brazil, Rwanda, Jamaica, South Sudan, Egypt and the UK.

School Improvement Partner and Adviser to schools in three UK Local Authorities. Senior leader in five UK secondary schools including Headship in two cities, ultimately leading a large inner-city comprehensive. Founding Chair of Birmingham Central Network of secondary schools and chair of national steering group of Heads of Language Colleges. Leader Local Authority 14-19 Team. Leader Education Business Consortium.
Caroline Pontefract

Dr Caroline Pontefract is Director of Education at UNRWA Headquarters in Amman where she has spearheaded a systemic, agency wide Agency-wide education reform which is transforming teaching and learning practices and outcomes for the 520,000 pupils of UNRWA schools in its five Fields of operation – Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and West Bank. She is also leading the Agency’s education in emergency response to the Syrian crisis, which has affected more than 60,000 school-aged Palestine refugees from Syria, through an innovative, multi-stranded approach.

Prior to UNRWA, she was Director for the Social Transformation Division in the Commonwealth Secretariat in London. In this role she was responsible for the triennial Commonwealth Education Ministers Conference, the annual Commonwealth Health Ministers Conference. Previously she was Chief of Teacher Education at UNESCO Headquarters with a global remit for teachers and their professional development and the implementation of the UNESCO-ILO Recommendations on the Status of Teacher Personnel. She has also worked for bilateral and multilateral agencies (DFID, Africa Development Bank), both in the UK and overseas, on the development of education programmes - national and regional - and formerly she worked as an educationalist at universities and local education authorities in UK.

Yusuf Sayed

Yusuf Sayed is the Professor of International Education and Development Policy at the University of Sussex and the South African Research Chair in Teacher Education, and the Founding Director of the Centre for International Teacher Education (CITE), at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), South Africa. He is also an Honorary Professor at the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER), Rhodes University, South Africa. Previously Yusuf was Senior Policy Analyst at the EFA Global Monitoring Report, UNESCO, Team Leader for Education and Skills, the Department for International Development UK, and Head of Department of Comparative Education at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa.

Yusuf is an education policy specialist with a career in international education and development research. His research focuses on education policy formulation and implementation as it relates to concerns of equity, social justice, and transformation. He has published on various issues in international education and development including education quality and teacher education, exclusion and inclusion; and education governance and the role of the state; equity, financing and education. His is presently engaged in several research projects on teachers and teacher education including the ESRC/DFID funded project “Engaging teachers in peacebuilding in post conflict contexts: evaluating education interventions in Rwanda and
South Africa and several large-scale studies about teacher professionalism, teacher education and continuing professional development in South Africa and globally.

Sandra Stotsky

Sandra Stotsky is professor of education emerita at the University of Arkansas, where she held the 21st Century Chair in Teacher Quality. She served as Senior Associate Commissioner at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education from 1999-2003, where she was in charge of developing or revising all the state’s K-12 standards, teacher licensure tests, and teacher and administrator licensure regulations. She served on the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education from 2006-2010, on the National Mathematics Advisory Panel from 2006-2008, and on the Common Core Validation Committee from 2009-2010. She was one of the five members of the Validation Committee who would not sign off on the standards because they were not rigorous, internationally benchmarked, or research-based. She was also editor of the premier research journal, Research in the Teaching of English, published by the National Council of Teachers of English, from 1991 to 1997. She has published extensively in professional journals and written (or contributed to) several books. She did her undergraduate work at the University of Michigan and completed a doctorate in reading research and reading instruction at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.
Mona earned her PhD degree in 2005, from McGill University, in the area of administration and policy studies in education. Her PhD thesis was on ‘Globalization and higher education policy reform in Jordan’.

Mona has been supporting UNESCO Office in Beirut, since October, 2016 for different events, such as the teacher training workshop on Learning to Live Together, the Higher Education Regional Forum on ICTs in Higher Education, as well as a case study on teacher preparation and development in the context of evolving education reform policies in Jordan, for the Regional Conference on Quality and Innovation in Teacher Professional Development: Issues and Challenges. She has been supporting the highly esteemed Select Review Committee for Fulbright Scholarships in Jordan, as an external reviewer since 2012. At the same time, Mona has been assisting the EU Madad Trust Fund and the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, as Madad Lab Committee Member, advising and facilitating the process of skills development prototypes for refugees and hosting communities, since March 2017. Mona was engaged in the preparations for the Arab Open University conference in Jordan, on the Preparation of the Arab Teacher, chaired a session on in-service teacher development: experiences from Algeria, Bahrain and Jordan.

Before this, Mona worked with Queen Rania Teachers Academy, a partner of CUMERC and Teachers College at Columbia University, as Director of Policy, Research and Institutional Development (2011-2016). She led the Arab Program on Teacher Policies and Professional Development (APTP) and organized several Policy Forums on teacher-related policies in the Arab Region. Moreover, she led several studies and workshops on teacher-related policies and professional development. At the same time, Mona also prepared position papers for the Queen Rania Foundation, on teacher policies in Jordan and higher education reform. Mona’s work at QRTA also included initiating institutional partnerships and joint programs between QRTA, UNESCO, UNICEF, Finnish Institute in the Middle East, Arab Open University, and Arab Thought Foundation. She also works on building partnership with potential donors. Mona has also been working on developing links with universities, with the view of linking with academics and higher education institutions. She sat on the MoHE Projects Committee, with the objective of developing a list of national priorities in the higher education sector and to support the process of attract donor-funded projects.

Dr. Taji joined Columbia University Middle East Research Center (CUMERC) as resident fellow in February 2010. As member of the National Implementation Committee, and coordinator of its 5-specialized sub-committees, she organized the National Conference for the Development of Study Plans, Teaching and Learning, and Scientific Research. At the same time, Mona managed the Institute for Scholars and took a leading role in the initial selection of applicant fellows and scholars and reported to the Faculty Steering Committee, at Columbia University. She was engaged in the academic life at CUMERC, by preparing CUMERC’s performance report and request for funding for the Scientific Research Fund. Dr. Taji also organized a conference titled ‘Discussion on Research and Higher Education’ in 2011 and a joint workshop with the Higher Education Accreditation Commission. Before that Mona was supporting higher education reform in Jordan, through World Bank projects since September 2005. She was part of a WB supervision mission team in Sept. 2005. She then joined the World Bank-funded Higher Education Development Project, to manage the Competitive Fund projects in public universities, and supported H.E. the Minister of Higher Education in a number of assignments.