

# USING EVIDENCE TO DRIVE THE TRANSFORMATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN GHANA

## OVERVIEW

T-TEL – a four year Government of Ghana programme supported by UK aid - is designed to strengthen the performance of newly qualified teachers by improving pre-service teacher education in 40 public Colleges of Education (CoEs). These improvements will be visible in **four key areas**:

- 1 Management and leadership of CoEs
- 2 Quality of teaching and learning within CoEs
- 3 Development and implementation of national policies for pre-service teacher education
- 4 Use of evidence to drive improvement and greater awareness of gender issues in CoEs



**T-TEL's Proposed Research Strategy** aims to support the 4th area through targeted studies that will produce evidence enabling teacher education stakeholders to design effective ways to improve gender responsiveness in CoEs. Our strategy will also provide opportunities for these stakeholders to conduct and publish research.

The diagram outlines the **suggested three core areas of T-TEL's research programme** and how they support the use of evidence to improve teacher education in Ghana. This policy brief provides detail on how T-TEL would implement each of these areas.

## 1. WHAT WORKS AND WHY

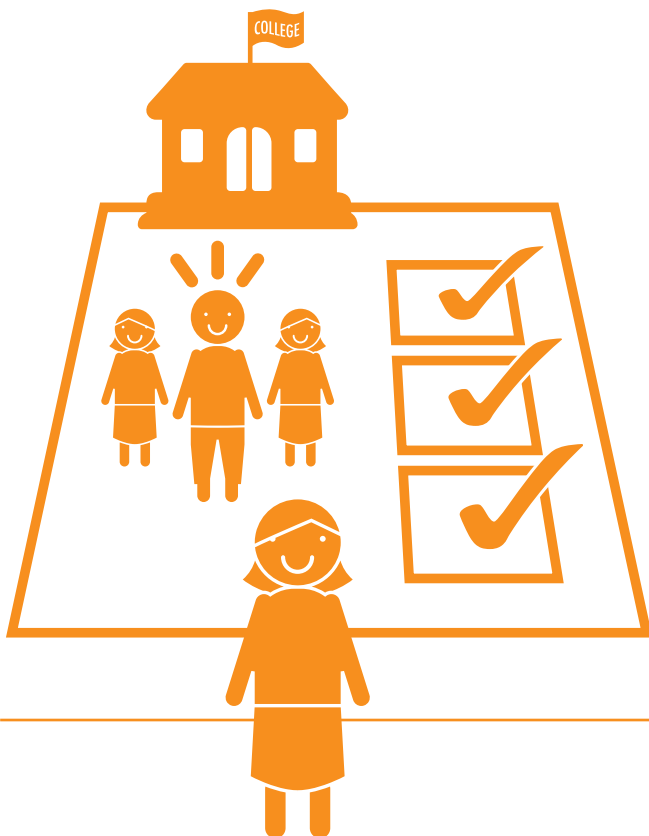
T-TEL activities have been designed to facilitate change in a number of beneficiaries' behaviours and actions, such as:

- **Supporting CoE Principals' use of College Improvement Plans**
- **Enhancing CoE Tutors' use of student-focused teaching methods**
- **Facilitating school Mentors' use of gender-sensitive mentoring strategies.**

To allow the monitoring of how T-TEL beneficiaries are performing before, during and after our activities, T-TEL will embed a longitudinal qualitative study around three quantitative studies (baseline, mid-term and end) in order to explain why changes may or may not be occurring, and how positive changes were brought about.

Using these findings, we will score beneficiary behaviour to show us the T-TEL activities that are 'working' and explain why (or why not) through qualitative analysis. Combined, this qualitative and quantitative research will provide a long-term, mixed-methods approach to understanding and evaluating the impact of T-TEL. It will do this in three ways:

- 1) **Technical/implementation activities will be improved** by consistent qualitative data collection
- 2) **Qualitative data will nuance evaluations of T-TEL** based solely on logframe indicator measurements
- 3) **Robust evidence will be produced by both qualitative and quantitative data** that can inform policy and practice aimed at driving improvements in CoEs.



## 2. TACKLING GENDER ISSUES

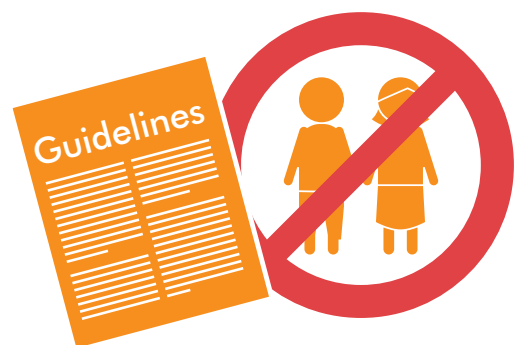
There are a number of gender-related issues in teacher education that T-TEL is designed to tackle. Our activities aim to facilitate change in stakeholders (CoE tutors, Tutors, Beginning Teachers) using gender-responsive teaching and learning.

We are providing robust training on issues of gender and inclusion, to enhance the opportunities and achievements of CoE female students and staff and improve the interactions between Beginning Teachers and their pupils, particularly girls.

In addition, T-TEL plans to conduct research on two key issues that greatly affect female students and staff, but have thus far been under-researched at colleges. These include:

- a) **Gender and Leadership:** A study that looks into the formal and informal enablers and constraints on female participation and representation in CoE leadership, management and decision-making. It includes an investigation into the key issues related to gender and college management from the perspective of Principals. A better understanding of these will help drive the improvement of gender responsiveness within tertiary institutions.
- b) **Sexual Harassment:** There is a growing body of evidence about sexual harassment in education institutions in Ghana, but very little work has been carried out in CoEs. NCTE and NTC have already identified sexual harassment as a policy priority and T-TEL has conducted a review of CoE policies on sexual harassment to support this. This research would provide further evidence of the nature and scope of harassment in colleges.

Both these studies will produce robust evidence that will raise the awareness of key gender issues in CoEs, and inform policy and practice aimed at improving gender-related issues in education.



### 3. SUPPORTING NEW AND INNOVATIVE IDEAS

To support the change process in colleges, **T-TEL has launched a Challenge Fund to identify and nurture innovative ideas and activities that improve teaching, learning and management in CoEs.** These activities will be initiated and implemented either by colleges themselves or through partnerships with other organisations. Although recipients of the Challenge Fund will be expected to monitor and measure their results as part of accountability requirements, T-TEL aims to conduct more rigorous research on promising ideas and models that could be replicated across colleges.

As an example, one college has suggested that Tutors' experience of teaching and conducting in-service training in partner schools will improve their own abilities, and the level of Teaching Practice in basic schools. An in-service training model at basic schools - conducted by Tutors and based on T-TEL's Tutor Professional Development training - would be an interesting and sustainable way to improve pedagogy across basic and tertiary education. T-TEL could support the implementation of this activity through:

- 1) supporting Tutors to teach in partner schools for an amount of time**
- 2) helping Tutors adapt T-TEL Tutor Professional Development materials to an in-service training programme for partner school teachers**
- 3) supporting Tutors to facilitate training with mentors, student teachers and staff teachers at partner schools**
- 4) conducting rigorous research with all participants regarding training activities and outcomes.**

The exact research design, methods for data collection and implementation strategy will depend on the applications received and agreements with participating CoEs. However, the overall aim of the research will be to produce robust evidence that can inform policy to scale-up innovative and successful interventions.

### 4. OPPORTUNITIES FOR T-TEL STAKEHOLDERS TO CONDUCT AND PUBLISH RESEARCH

These research studies all include opportunities embedded in their designs for CoE Tutors, Principals, T-TEL stakeholders such as College Improvement Advisers (CIAs) as well as MA students<sup>1</sup>.

For the longitudinal qualitative study, six Tutors from each case study CoE will be selected and supported to collect data and contribute analysis. For the Gender & Leadership study, CIAs will add 1-2 days onto their CoE visits to collect data with key respondents across all colleges. For the Challenge Fund, the Tutors will conduct action research at both an individual and intervention level to improve subsequent replication by other CoEs. In each of these studies, participating stakeholders will be given thorough training and support by T-TEL in data collection tools, methods and protocols, data analysis and writing.

In addition, T-TEL also aims to support the development and implementation of a 'Ghana Educator' journal – a resource to recognise and disseminate promising ideas and innovations for improved learning in teacher education classrooms. This could include pedagogical adaptations from T-TEL's Professional Development course. The journal would recognise CoE Tutors who have been using and adapting T-TEL modules, and would provide a framework to support Tutors' experience in writing for publication, including for example clear templates for article-writing for Tutors.

The journal would also create the opportunity for Tutors to publish (already a requirement for tertiary educators), reinforce pedagogical improvements promoted by T-TEL training and recognise and disseminate best practice amongst teacher educators. Ideally, NTC would take responsibility for the journal, and T-TEL would provide all the necessary support to implement it.



<sup>1</sup>MA scholarships will be offered to select CoE Tutors and their research activities will be tied to T-TEL's research programme

## 5. EVIDENCE FOR BETTER RESULTS AND INCREASED GENDER AWARENESS

The use of evidence to drive improvements and greater awareness of gender issues in CoEs is central to the transformation of teaching and learning. This evidence will be packaged and presented in the following ways:

- 1) **Policy briefs** with recommendations based on findings from the 'what works', Gender and Challenge Fund Innovation studies
- 2) **Ghana Educator journal articles** including pedagogical best practice based on Tutor action research into their application of strategies created from T-TEL Tutor Professional Development
- 3) **National/International journal articles** discussing findings from our research, contributing to wider debates on teacher education in Africa
- 4) **Dissemination workshops/conferences** allowing scrutiny, feedback and dissemination of findings after each study is conducted.

## NEXT STEPS

This research strategy has been created by T-TEL and is currently being discussed with NTC and NCTE. Consensus will be achieved before it is finalised to ensure it best meets the needs of the teacher education sector in Ghana. However, T-TEL believe the body of work proposed will provide the evidence that decision-makers and college leaders need to develop the policies and practices to truly and sustainably transform teacher education in Ghana.

If you have any questions, please contact our Key Advisor for Research Sharon Tao at: [Sharon.tao@t-tel.org](mailto:Sharon.tao@t-tel.org).



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