

The International Federation of University Women (IFUW) urges all governments and education sectors to commit to immediate, concrete legislative and policy action to combat the global shortage of qualified teachers at all levels

Geneva, Switzerland 05 October 2014 – Today on [World Teachers' Day 2014](#), the International Federation of University Women ([IFUW](#)) urges all governments and education sectors to immediately develop and implement concrete legislative and policy action to address the looming qualified teacher shortage – a significant, global challenge that threatens long-term sustainable development across all sectors. To bridge the supply/demand gap at the local, national and international level, States must ensure that prospective and current teachers are provided with competitive remuneration as well as comprehensive training and qualifications at all levels and in all disciplines, including competencies in education technology and e-learning.

President of IFUW Catherine Bell highlighted the deeply concerning global statistics underlining the impending teacher deficit, as well as the impact this could have if not immediately addressed by policy makers: “As global populations increase, so too does the demand for qualified teachers, with estimates projecting that by 2030, an extra 5.1 million teachers will be needed at the lower secondary level alone.¹ When we add to the equation that 93 countries already face an acute teacher shortage,² there can be no question that, left unaddressed, this trajectory will dangerously exacerbate the number of children not currently in lower secondary school, which already stands at approximately 69 million.”³

While a shortage in the supply of qualified teachers is most prominent in sub-Saharan Africa and Arab States,⁴ all regions need to significantly invest in teachers, including by providing appropriate salaries and quality training. Developed countries are not immune to the effects of teacher shortages and must also take concerted action. Within the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) - an international organisation of primarily Western and European States - teachers' salaries are in general less than the average annual wage for employees with a similar level of education.⁵ Ensuring a constant supply of qualified and motivated teachers is a critical step to combat the staggering global illiteracy rates, especially in girls and women, who account for two thirds of the world's 774 million illiterate.⁶

The International Federation of University Women ([IFUW](#)) is based in Geneva, Switzerland, and has an international membership. Founded in 1919, IFUW is the leading girls' and women's global organisation advocating for women's rights, equality and empowerment through access to quality education and training up to the highest levels. IFUW is in special consultative status with ECOSOC and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO.

– ends –

For more information, please contact: Aoife Hegarty T: +41 22 731 23 80; Email: ah@ifuw.org

Learn about our grants & fellowships and our advocacy work. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and Twitter (@IFUWomen).

¹ UNESCO (2013) <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/fs27-2013-teachers-projections.pdf>.

² UNESCO, <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/global-teacher-shortage.aspx>.

³ UNICEF, <http://data.unicef.org/education/secondary>.

⁴ UNESCO, <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/world-teachers-day-2013.aspx>.

⁵ OECD (2011) http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/gov_glance-2011-en/06/01/index.html;jsessionid=3pvkmbn5shlv.x-oecd-live-02?itemId=/content/chapter/gov_glance-2011-31-en&csp=3f0c56b964e27a8505088f5991d15792

⁶ UNESCO (2013) <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/GMR/images/2011/girls-factsheet-en.pdf>.