



Government of Samoa  
Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture

# National Professional Development Policy

2018 - 2023





# **National Professional Development Policy**

**2018 – 2023**

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**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SPORTS AND CULTURE**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The National Professional Development Policy is a product of many consultations not only within the ministry, but through discussions and professional conversations with Key stakeholders namely, ESAC, the Teacher Taskforce, National University of Samoa and the Samoa Qualification Authority.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AED	Assessment and Examinations Division
CBA	Classroom Based Assessment
CDMD	Curriculum, Design and Materials Division
DFL	Distance Flexible Learning
DP	Deputy Principal
ESAC	Education Sector Advisory Committee
FA	First Assistant
HOD	Head of Department
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology Division
IS	Infant Supervisor
ISP	Intervention Support Programme
MERD	Monitoring, Evaluation and Review Division
MESC	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture
NPDP	National Professional Development Policy
NTDF	National Teacher Development Framework
ODL	Online Distance Learning
PD	Professional Development
POR	Position of Responsibilities
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSST	Professional Standards for Samoa's Teachers
QAPA	Quality Assurance Performance Appraisal
STAP	Science Teachers Accredited Programme
TDAD	Teacher Development and Advisory Support Division

## DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

<b>Framework</b>	A logical structure that is established to organise policy documentation into groupings and categories that make it easier for employees to find and understand the contents of various policy documents. ( <i>State Services Commission of New Zealand</i> )
<b>Policy</b>	A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by a government, party, business or individual. ( <i>Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary</i> )
<b>Teacher quality</b>	It is generally considered that the quality of teachers is the most important factor that contributes to providing quality education for students. The MSS for Primary and Secondary Schools identifies the minimum standards of qualifications, professional knowledge, practice and attributes of a good teacher. ( <i>MSS for Primary and Secondary Schools 2016</i> )
<b>Management</b>	i) The organisation and coordination of the activities of an institution in order to achieve defined objectives.  ii) The collective body of those who manage or direct an enterprise.
<b>School Management</b>	The organisation, coordination and operations of a school in order to achieve good learning achievement for all students.
<b>ODL</b>	Online Distance Learning (ODL) provided online to enable rural and Savaii teachers to access teacher upgrade programmes.
<b>Teacher Upgrade</b>	Any tertiary programme offered by a tertiary University to complete a formal qualification at a Degree level.

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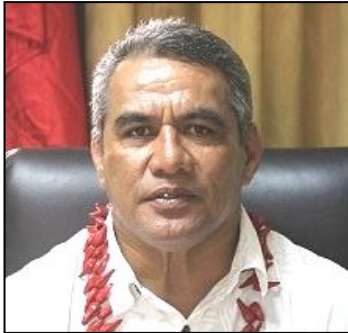
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## FOREWORD



As the Government is committed to improving the quality of our education in line with SDG 4 for sustainable Development of the country, I would like to highlight the importance of investing in promoting teacher quality both through professional development and ensuring they apply their professional learning to improve teaching practice. It is only when these two go alongside each other that learning occurs, hence reflecting an indication of an “effective teacher.”

The value of Professional Development for principals and teachers is unquestionable in ensuring our teachers are up-skilled with ideas and professional tools they need to improve school programmes in order to meet the fast evolving world of today. The ministry upholds the important contribution of professional development programmes towards influencing learning in the classroom. This will also encourage teachers to apply their own professional learning and provide opportunities reflect on own practice and share with colleagues.

Like other professions, teachers ought not to stop learning thus this policy is necessary to guide the professional development programmes our teachers undertake to promote on-going professional conversations. It is when teachers collaborate on new ideas and share from each other that they become better teachers and improve on their own practice which leads to improving student achievement.



Hon. Lōau Solamalemālō Keneti Sio  
**Minister of Education, Sports and Culture**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Professional Development aims to build the capacity of teachers to ensure they continue to strengthen teaching practices to improve student development and learning in their classrooms. The reality of the profession is changing very swiftly placing the demand for skilful teachers in all classrooms. Various changes have been introduced in schools, focusing on the needs of our children to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes that are often different from those taught to their parents. In addition, other changes have been driven by multiple factors such as technology, the environment, economic and social status and government policies.

To meet the student learning focus, the provision of professional development is informed by identified needs from teacher appraisals, student achievement, school support visits to ensure alignment with national curricula and compliance with professional teacher standards.

For educators, the rapid changes taking place in our society have meant a shift from the sole emphasis of academic achievements to fostering a whole person development of students. Teachers are expected to teach in overcrowded classrooms, make more effective use of information and communication technology, address students with a wide range of learning needs and engage more in planning lessons and activities with the student in mind. This shift is reflected in the new Samoa Primary Curriculum that was introduced to the Primary Schools in 2013. This curriculum was designed to encourage student-centered teaching and learning which is not confined to classrooms, but extends into the wider community.

## 2. PURPOSE

The National Teacher Development Framework (NTDF) Goal 2<sup>1</sup> focuses on ensuring all school personnel are engaged in continuous teacher professional development. The guidelines set out in the National Professional Development Policy (NPDP) address the various areas of professional development as noted in Goal 2 of the NTDF which is to support the teacher upgrade programme to enable all teachers to attain a formal qualification, and to encourage all

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to Appendix 2 of NTDF

school personnel to seek for opportunities to improve and perfect their skills to improve student development and student learning in their classrooms.

The Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture believes that the policy must be sufficiently robust for:

- Teachers, schools, teacher education institutions and other stakeholders to ensure the professional growth of individual teachers throughout their careers;
- Teachers, schools, teacher education institutions to plan professional development for school, organisational and individual purposes;
- Teacher education institutions to plan the provision of professional development programmes that match the professional growth and career needs of teachers.

### **3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

This policy is guided by the following overarching vision:

*“The Government of Samoa through the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC) and appropriate partners will provide a teaching service of the highest possible quality that will enable students to reach their maximum potential for learning” (National Teacher Development Framework, 2018)*

The policy is also guided by the following principles in line with the professional teacher standards.

#### **3.1 Participation**

Teachers must:

- engage and participate in professional development programmes to fulfil wider professional responsibilities.
- effectively use professional learning to improve own capacity for effective teaching practice.

### **3.2 Rule of Law**

The Professional Development policy is guided by the Teachers Act 2016 and other related legislation/regulations and policies of MESCC. These must be enforced impartially and ensure the protection of human rights of all stakeholders.

### **3.3 Quality**

Effectively use a range of teaching strategies and resources including ICT to develop well-structured programmes, set high expectations and display role model behaviour that inspire, motivate and challenge students.

### **3.4 Relevance**

- Teacher professional development programmes are guided and informed by reports from relevant divisions and requests submitted from teachers and principals.
- Teachers must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how all their children learn and use a “range of assessments” to inform their practice.

### **3.5 Transparency**

All decisions taken and enforced must be done in a transparent manner and follows rules and regulations. It also means that all information by the school and of the school must be freely available and accessible to parents, students, teachers and all stakeholders who are affected by the decisions made.

### **3.6 Responsiveness**

- It requires that the system is meaningful to the teacher’s own learning and teaching needs. Responsiveness is a measure of efficiency and effectiveness to serve all stakeholders in a timely manner and within reasonable timeframes.
- Teachers need to manage behaviour in a positive manner to ensure a safe learning environment for all.

### **3.7 Equity and Inclusiveness**

All teachers must:

- be treated equally, and provided with educational opportunities to improve their performance irrespective of socially ascribed differences such as gender, socio-economic background, ethnic origin, ability, language, disability, nationality and religion.

- be given the opportunity to participate in professional development programmes to improve teaching and learning.

### **3.8 Effectiveness and efficiency**

Optimum use:

- of teachers with skills in various learning areas contributes to quality education.
- of financial and other resources is also an important dimension of quality education.

### **3.9 Accountability**

- Accountability must be practised in all decisions taken and effectively implemented especially in the management and use of all human, financial and other resources regardless of their sources.
- Teachers should commit to a teaching and learning culture that focuses on effective programmes to improve achievement for all students.

### **3.10 Gender sensitivity**

Traditionally, males are not always associated with the teaching profession and the system needs to be aware of stereotyping and discrimination against men and women.

### **3.11 Sustainability**

Quality professional development programmes require careful planning for the effective use of resources to ensure programmes are inclusive of relevant stakeholders such as family members as well as respective Ministries.

## **4. POLICY STATEMENTS**

The quality of teachers as highlighted in the NTDF 2018, underpins the need for teachers to undertake continuous professional development to grow and improve. Professional development should include the use of technology in the classroom to give teachers the opportunity to prepare for “tech-savvy” classrooms in some cases of today’s technology age.

## **4.1 Quality Teaching**

Quality teachers should:

- know about their students' strengths, needs and how student learning progresses. Quality teachers reflect on their programmes and willingly adjust their lessons to appropriately cater for their students in order to meet the students' learning needs. They have thorough knowledge of the curriculum and the different forms of diagnostic and formative assessments tools needed to drive intervention programmes to improve their teaching practice.
- use different ideas and approaches for students who need extra support and extension to meet various needs and use the expertise and assistance of other adults in the village/community to help with some of their students.
- develop positive working relationships with all students and provide opportunities for them to be "empowered" with the skills to articulate their own learning and allow for student voice within the learning process.

## **4.2 Quality Learning**

Quality learning:

- starts in a safe and positive environment where the learners are encouraged to ask questions about their learning.
- is underpinned in a well organised classroom and learning programmes that are well prepared and well-structured with an effective use of useful resources.
- enables students to take control of and reflect on their learning with the teacher being the facilitator.

### 4.3 Related Documents

RELATED DOCUMENTS	LEGISLATIVE & AUTHORITY	YEAR
Education Act	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture	2009
Teachers Act	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture	2016
Public Service Act	Public Service Commission	2004
Public Finance Management Act	Ministry of Finance	2009
National Teacher Development Framework	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture	2011
Government Teachers Appraisal Policy	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture	2018
Minimum Service Standards for Primary and Secondary Schools	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture	2016
Professional Standards and Performance Appraisal for Samoa's Teachers	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture	2011

## 5. APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This policy applies to all government schools (primary and college principals, vice principals, heads of department and teachers).

### 5.1 Types of Professional Development

Professional developments are activities that develop an individual's skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher. It recognises that development can be provided in many ways, ranging from the formal to the informal. It can be made available in the form of courses, workshops or formal qualification programmes, and/or through collaboration between schools or teachers across schools or within schools in which teachers work.

Professional development activities include but are not limited to the following:

- Courses, workshops or conferences relevant to education

- Syllabus, curriculum and assessment professional development conducted by school leaders consultants, MESC officials or other accepted service providers
- Participation in local or overseas programmes
- Hours spent on action research
- Mentoring programmes
- Local or overseas exchange programmes with other schools or districts
- Presenter or trainer for education conferences or workshops
- Observation visits to other schools
- Qualification upgrade programme (Degree programme)

The Ministry is moving to provide online registration for training that pertains to individual teachers. Teachers will be informed when course registration is made available on the MESC website or from the TDAD.

## **5.2 Tiers of Professional Development and Minimum Requirement**

There are 3 tiers<sup>2</sup> of Professional Development governed under this policy which reflects the Professional Standards for Samoa's Teachers.

Moreover, all teachers are expected to meet at least **76 hours** of professional development every year.

### 5.2.1 Tier One: National Level

At national level, a collaborative PD module is provided, which is informed by teacher appraisal data, student achievement results, and relevant professional needs on issues identified from Ministry divisional school and classroom visits, feedback reports from teachers, principals and changes in government laws and legislation that affect education. These programmes are facilitated by MESC, experts from different fields and relevant education stakeholders.

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<sup>2</sup> Refer Appendix 3: Tier Level PD Model.



Professional Development at the national level includes but is not limited to:

- Leadership and Management Training (refer to Leadership Standards)
- Professional Knowledge
- Professional Practice
- Professional Attributes
- Laws and Policies

At least **16 hours** annually of Professional Development on curriculum content, pedagogy and assessment tools, laws and policies, technology (Professional Knowledge<sup>3</sup>)

#### 5.2.2 Tier Two: District/Cluster Level

To reinforce the national programmes, district or cluster PDs can be led by school inspectors and/or PORs. These PDs should focus on best practices in the three key standard areas: Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Attributes. Professional Development conducted at the district or Tier 2 level are informed by Tier 1 activities to ensure the flow of information to other teachers and principals who were not able to attend the national training. Teachers and principals who attended the national training then facilitate the same training in their clusters and districts which will strengthen collaboration and discussion of challenges in schools within the same district.

Professional Development at the cluster or district level includes but is not limited to:

- Leadership and school management skills
- MSS for Primary and Secondary schools
- Curriculum knowledge sharing
- Pedagogy sharing

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<sup>3</sup> Indicators in the Professional Standards for Teachers

- Classroom management strategies
- Presentation skills
- MESC legislation and policies
- Areas of the professional standards needing improvement

At least **20 hours** of Professional Development on curriculum content, pedagogy, classroom management, planning and organising lesson plans, school plans (Professional Skills)

### 5.2.3 Tier Three: School Based Level

At school level, Professional Development is planned and delivered by the principal, PORs or the teachers. Teachers and Principals that attend District/Tier 2 Professional Development workshops are then encouraged to facilitate their own programs which are informed by the needs of their own schools.

Professional Development at this level includes but is not limited to:

- School planning (as per MSS requirements, SGP, SGF, SMP, SMOM)
- Student assessment and learning (as per SNAF and National Reports)
- Classroom Based Assessment
- Teacher pedagogy and curriculum knowledge sharing
- Relevant professional standards needing improvement
- MESC legislation and policies
- Sharing of best teaching practices

At least **40 hours** of Professional Development on classroom management, pedagogy, assessment tools, support teacher system, collating evidence for teaching and learning (Professional Knowledge, Professional Skills and Professional Attributes).

## 5.3 Professional Development Programmes for Teachers and PORs

### 5.3.1 Induction Programme

The Induction Programme provides support to:

- New teachers
- New PORs
- Retirees and relievers/part-timers
- Volunteers

All new teachers are expected to participate in the Induction Programme within the first 2 years of their role in which they will be supported through workshops on leadership, curriculum, pedagogy, laws and policies, classroom management, technology and e-resource and other areas as reflected in the Professional Standards for Samoa Teachers.

The following leaders and the relevant divisions in the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture are involved in the development and sustaining the Induction Programme for teachers and PORs:

- New teachers
- School principals
- Support teachers
- Teachers and PORs
- Policy, Planning and Research Division
- School of Operations
- Teacher Development and Advisory Division
- Curriculum, Design and Materials Division
- Assessment and Examinations Division
- Corporate Services Division
- Information, Communication and Technology and Media Division
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Review Division

School Inspectors, Principals and PORs work together to develop an induction programme schedule to guide the Induction of new teachers/principals.

### 5.3.2 School Mentoring Programme

Professional Development support is vital to new teachers and who are entering or re-entering the teaching profession. The mentor's overall role is to promote the growth and development of the beginning teacher to improve student learning. When new teachers are hired, they are given a programme without the benefit of any period of gradually getting accustomed to the school culture, learning environment and other factors that affect everyday student learning. Mentors are critical supporters in guiding new teachers to enhance their planning, instruction, and content knowledge.

A wide range of strategies are available to the mentor in working with the beginning teacher. Some of the activities include but are not limited to:

- Introduce and orient the teacher to the new school
- Provide one on one support on curriculum content
- Model and conduct lessons
- Provide formal and informal assessment strategies
- Discuss relevant MESC and PSC Policies that are relevant to improve the new teacher's work performance

School Mentors are Deputy Principals, Heads of Departments and other teachers that are designated by the Principal.

### 5.3.3 Intervention Support Programme

Teachers who are appraised through the MESC Appraisal System (QAPA)<sup>4</sup> and do not meet the Professional Standards are required to attend the Intervention Support Programme (ISP) facilitated by the Ministry. After the first 6 months the teacher will be appraised again through the QAPA process:

- If the teacher meets the standards, **he/she will exit** from the ISP and continue with school based monitoring and Annual Performance Appraisal.
- If the teacher does not meet the standards, **he/she will continue in the ISP** for the last remaining 6 months of the 12 month programme.

Based on the Appraisal reports from the MERD, the TDAD will work with relevant MESC divisions, School Principals and School Inspectors to design a programme that suits the needs of teachers in the ISP which can be offered through National, Cluster or School Based Professional Development. In addition, other areas of one-to-one support may include but are not limited to:

- Developing lesson plans for outcome based learning
- Content based support
- Pedagogy for student-centered learning
- Integrating technology in teaching
- Review and Application of Policies

### 5.3.4 Teacher Upgrade Programmes

Professional Development programmes also include the formal academic qualifications required for teachers through attending a tertiary institution to complete a Degree in Education or a Degree relevant to their teaching subject and background.

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<sup>4</sup> Government Teachers Appraisal Policy 2018 - 2023.

Based on the Sponsorship Policy<sup>5</sup>, teachers without a degree are mandated to participate in a teacher upgrade programme, in consultation with their principal and the MESCS. These degree programmes are offered through the USP, NUS, and other international institutions.

The Degrees offered for teachers in an upgrade programme include but are not limited to:

- Bachelor of Education (Primary or Secondary)
- Bachelor of Science (Secondary Teaching)
- Bachelor of Arts (Teaching English)
- Bachelor of Commerce (Teaching Accounting, Economics, Business Studies)
- Graduate Diploma

## **6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **6.1 Principals**

- Plan professional development programmes in collaboration with staff
- Implement PD training to improve student learning
- Compile and update PD profile for each teacher
- Monitor and report the impact of PD on teaching and learning (PD pre/post-evaluations)
- Develop a commitment to professional growth of staff
- Promote individual and collegial self-efficacy
- Stay committed to continuous of school improvement and take the school forward to becoming a learning community

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<sup>5</sup>Sponsorship Program Policy for National University of Samoa 2015.

## **6.2 Teachers**

- Ensure consistent attendance to PD opportunities and engagement
- Support the effective implementation of the PD plan
- Apply ideas from PD workshops into own classroom programmes to improve student learning
- Ensure that Interactive learner-centered strategies are adopted
- Develop comprehensive understanding of what makes students learn

## **6.3 School Inspectors**

- Collect evidence of PD programmes conducted
- Foster closer professional collaborations between cluster schools for professional development and professional learning opportunities
- Attend regular professional development in clusters/schools
- Share knowledge of application of professional learning with teachers and principals
- Collaborate with TDAD on professional development needs of teachers and principals

## **6.4 Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture**

- Provide focused and more structured PD programmes based on performance needs of the teachers and PORs
- Monitor the performance of teachers and PORs through the performance appraisal system to ensure PD programmes are effectively used to improve teaching and learning
- Facilitate and monitor PD programmes at different levels
- Provide recommendations to relevant providers for improvement of programmes
- Collaborate with teachers and principals to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of PD programmes

## 7. MONITORING, EVALUATION & REPORTING

### 7.1 Annual Professional Development Schedule

Principals will submit their Professional Development Schedule for the following school year to the TDAD by **Friday of the last week of November**. This schedule will be used to monitor school based PDs and will be a support document for principals' appraisals. Teacher data from the MERD and National results and analysis reports from the AED will also inform the themes and topics principals and teachers would use for their professional development programmes for the school year. It should be specific and relevant to the developmental needs of both the school and its staff based on evidence provided by the MESC or through professional collaborations.

### 7.2 Professional Development Report

Professional development conducted by principals, teachers, MESC staff, consultants or service providers, will need to complete the Professional Development Report Template<sup>6</sup> attached at the back of the MESC Training and Events School Calendar and submit to TDAD. The template includes:

- Purpose of Professional Development
- Key points
- Learning outcomes
- Links to student learning
- Evaluation/feedback from teachers
- Recommendations

Teachers who attend or participate in overseas workshops are required to submit a one page summary to MESC including recommendations for their particular schools. They may

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<sup>6</sup>Refer Appendix 4: Form - PD Template.



also be requested to present their findings to MESC management team, at local conferences or to other stakeholders.

### **7.3 Monitoring**

One important aspect of Professional Development is to ensure that the different programmes are offered by MESC have a positive impact on teacher and student performance. Upon completion of School Based Professional Development and the submission of school PD reports, MESC through the MERD, TDAD and SOD will monitor the schools performance to gauge any change of practice due to effective Professional Development. The schools can provide evidence of student work that is linked to the School PDs that reflect improvement in student learning. Samples of student work can include essays, poems, posters, projects, running record reports, quizzes, tests and others.

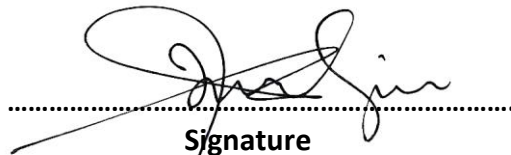
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**EFFECTIVE DATE:** July 2018

**RECOMMENDED REVIEW DATE:** 2023

**APPROVED BY THE HON. MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SPORTS AND CULTURE**

  
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**Signature**

**Lōau Solamalemālō Keneti Sio**

14/03/2018  
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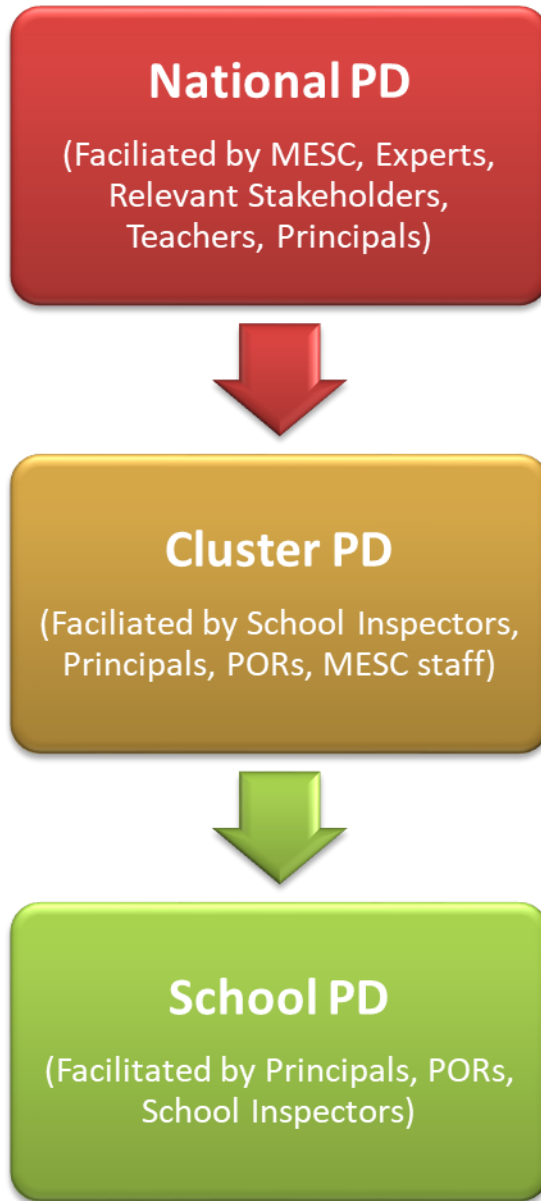
## 9. APPENDICES

<b>Appendix 1: Risk Management Plan</b>			
<b>Risk/Activity</b>	<b>Risk Level</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Mitigation Plan</b>
<b>Full understanding of NDPD</b>	<b>Moderate to High</b>	Inconsistency of implementing the policy	Conduct/strengthen awareness workshops of the purpose of the NDPD.
<b>Full understanding of new policies and</b>	<b>Moderate to High</b>	Inconsistency of implementing the policy	Conduct awareness workshops of policy in collaboration with teachers, SI and other stakeholders.
<b>Avoid guidelines stated in policy</b>	<b>Moderate to High</b>	Policy objectives will not be achieved	Ensure that all relevant members and parties involved should understand the policy contents.
<b>Monitoring</b>	<b>Moderate to High</b>	Policy issue areas cannot be solved	Monitor schools for changes that reflect the NTDF is integrated in school planning.
<b>Objectives not filtered down to the implementers of the NPDP</b>	<b>Moderate to High</b>	Policy objectives will not be achieved	Ensure correct and open communication from the MESC office to principals and teachers.
<b>Resistance of staff to change past practices</b>	<b>High</b>	Ineffective implementation of the policy Minimal and no improvement from policy implementation overtime	Change the mind-set of staff, principals and teachers through correct and open communication by building relationships of trust. Ensure senior management are of the same understanding of the NPDP

## Appendix 2: Implementation Plan

Phase	Action	Timeframe	Responsible Ministry/Organisation
Endorsement Phase to finalise NPDP	On-going follow up	February 2018	MESC CORE and Full Executive, Cabinet
Awareness Phase	Conduct workshops with key principals and teachers	April- July 2018	MESC- TDAD/PPRD
Transition Phase	Professional development support for principals and teachers to encourage the integration of the NPDP in their school plans.	August 2018 - April 2019	MESC- TDAD MESC – MERD MESC SOD
Monitoring Phase	PD School visits to view initial application of ideas/strategies to develop a higher quality teaching force.	May 2019- October 2019	MESC
Review Phase	Evaluate/Conduct review on the effectiveness of policy implementation.	March 2020	MESC

### Appendix 3: Tier Level PD Model



## Appendix 4: Form - PD Template

### Professional Development Plan

<b>Learning Objective(s):</b>
<b>Trainer(s):</b>

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Key Points</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Learning Check</b>
<b>Introduction:</b>			
<b>Main Session:</b>			
<b>Conclusion:</b>			