Transforming Classroom Practices Programme

The School Based Teacher Development (SBTD): Transforming Classroom Practices (TCP) is one of the dimensions UNRWA’s Reform Strategy. The programme aims at improving the teaching and learning practices of teachers in the classroom by developing active learning pedagogies that will support effective engagement of the students. It will be the basis for an in-service training programme for all UNRWA teachers.

The programme adopts a blended learning approach and consists of 6 modules. Each module focuses on one of the aspects of the teaching-learning process. Collectively, the programme materials are the backbone of providing quality teaching and learning practices in UNRWA schools.

The modules are built interactively where the teacher is requested to reflect on his/her practices and to try the use of a variety of learner-focused strategies.
School Based Teacher Development: Transforming Classroom Practices Programme (SBTD: TCP)

programme support
handbook for teachers
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foreword

Welcome to the School Based Teacher Development: Transforming Classroom Practices Programme (SBTD TCP) which is a key dimension of the UNRWA Education Reform (2011-2015).

As a teacher your role in ensuring quality education for the UNRWA students is crucial. The commitment and skills of UNRWA teachers has been the foundation of the successful education system that has operated across UNRWA’s five Fields over the last sixty years.

The UNRWA Education Reform recognises the central role of the teacher and seeks to further strengthen this key cadre towards the provision of quality education in the 21st century. The vision of the Education Reform is to realise the potential of each and every UNRWA student, for themselves as individuals and to enable them to contribute fully to their local community and to the wider regional and global communities.

This Handbook is written to provide you, as a teacher involved in the SBTD TCP Programme, with information, support and guidance as you work through programme. The SBTD TCP is aimed at improving the quality of primary education through addressing teaching and learning in the classroom. The SBTD TCP Programme, which has been developed by UNRWA staff from Headquarters (HQ) and all five Fields, is an Open and Distance Blended Learning programme that enables all teachers to strengthen their professional practice as they teach through reflecting on their teaching, trying out new ways of working and evaluating their impact.

It is intended that all teachers of Grade 1–6 in your school will undertake the SBTD TCP Programme at the same time so that while you study and carry out classroom based activities, you can share ideas with your colleagues.

As well as reading the material and trying out activities in the classroom, there are six support sessions led by your Head Teacher/School Principal and Educational Specialist. These sessions will help you consolidate your own individual learning and discuss your experience of SBTD TCP in a supportive environment.

We would like to thank the colleagues from the five Fields and HQ who have been involved from the beginning in the development of this programme.
and we would like to thank you, the teacher, for your contribution to date and for your time and efforts in undertaking the SBTD TCP Programme in order to ensure that UNRWA continues to provide their students with an education of the highest quality.

Dr Caroline Pontefract
Director of Education
28th July, 2012
overview

This Handbook has been prepared to help you, as a teacher, to understand the principles and practice of the School Based Teacher Development (SBTD) Transforming Classroom Practices programme, and how to get the most out of it. The SBTD programme is a key dimension of UNRWA’s Education Reform Strategy, which seeks to improve teaching and learning practices in the classroom through comprehensive, high-quality, relevant, in-service training for the UNRWA teachers.

how will the handbook help me?

This Handbook has been written for you, to support and guide you through the different stages of the six-month programme. It will explain what the programme is about, suggest ways of studying and describe the support that is available to you throughout.

what will I be expected to do?

During the programme you will:

● work through the SBTD distance education materials;

● undertake the Activities in the Units and keep records of your experiences and reflections in your Programme Notebook and Portfolio;

● work together with your colleagues in school, sharing experiences and ideas;

● meet with other teachers in neighbouring schools who are studying the same programme;

● present your completed Portfolio for assessment.

how will I benefit from the programme?

You will gain new knowledge about your own teaching and students’ learning. This will enable you to become a better and more effective teacher.

You will gain support and encouragement from colleagues and be able to share your experiences and grow together as teachers.

You will gain a Certificate of Completion that will form part of your Performance Evaluation Report.
what materials do I need?

You will have been supplied with:

- the six core Modules;
- this Handbook;
- your Programme Notebook;
- your Portfolio file.

They will have been presented in a box for you to keep them all together.

During the SBTD programme, it is expected that you and your school colleagues will work together at times and you will work on your own in your classroom at other times. Your local Education Specialists and your School Principal will support you as you participate in the programme, during their normal interaction with the school and your classroom, and each of them will lead three support sessions to help you study. These support sessions will be explained later.

background to and context of the programme

There are two complementary fields of research that have informed the development of this programme. The first is very familiar to you, it relates to the emphasis being placed in all parts of the world on the concept of ‘active learning’. This term refers to realising the importance of the way learners engage with a task, and learn, and particularly the extent to which language helps to develop and deepen their understanding. The second area of research concerns the increasing evidence that, in terms of a teacher’s professional development, learning is most effective when carried out in the context of daily practice. In other words, research shows that teachers appear to change and improve their practice when they can see the immediate relevance of new ideas to their work in the classroom.

Active learning is not a new concept. It does require us, however, to think about the opportunities that students have to engage practically with tasks. A student can learn in theory about the problems of the environment, but it becomes much more meaningful for them if they walk around a community with their peers and teachers and identify the issues being faced. A student can listen to an explanation of how the Earth rotates around the Sun, but it becomes much clearer for them if they have to build a working model of this and then verbalise their understanding of how the planets revolve around each other.
Although understanding of the processes of active engagement and verbalisation has been long known, school and classroom systems do not always reflect this. The need for order and the temptation to regiment everything in institutions, with large classes, can lead to student passivity, which is not conducive to the best learning. This programme, building on contemporary understandings of learning, will show how active learning and good order are related, not opposing, concepts.

Professional learning or teacher development should also be active in style and method. The international evidence about learning is as applicable to adults, such as teachers, as it is to students. In the past, however, much pre-service and in-service education has reflected the same passivity that has been seen in schools. We all recognise how much more interesting it is to become involved in a debate about a new idea than to just listen to an expert telling us about it.

Additionally, there is a global interest in teacher learning, which builds on evidence about the importance of context. The phrase ‘situated learning’ is used to describe how much more effective learning can be if it is ‘situated’ in the practical context where change and improvement are needed – for a teacher, that means the school. And the phrase ‘communities of learners’ is used to describe how the more successful professional development programmes allow learners, in this case teachers, to work cooperatively together to improve practice.
The SBTD Transforming Classroom Practices programme is built around the concept of active learning, it is situated in the context in which teachers work and it allows teachers to work within a community of practice made up of their peers, as well as experts from within and outside the school.

The programme is a core component of the education reform being introduced in UNRWA schools. Importantly, it is built around the school and staff of the school as a whole, and it enshrines, in the structure and activities of the programme, whole school development.

The programme uses an Open and Distance Learning (ODL) approach, which means the materials are written to you as the learner and are interactive, requiring you to undertake tasks, many of which will be carried out in your classroom. This way of working may be new to you and you may find the interactive nature of the materials a very different and challenging way of working. This Handbook will help you to understand the approach and how to work through the Modules.

### introduction to the programme

As we have said, the SBTD Transforming Classroom Practices programme is built around the concept of active learning, it is situated in the context in which you
work – the school – and it allows you to work within a community of practice of your peers, as well as experts from within and outside the school.

The programme draws extensively on international evidence and it focuses on:

- the importance of teachers having high expectations about what students can achieve;
- the importance, for the student's learning, of active pedagogic approaches on the part of the teacher;
- the growing understanding of the increased effectiveness of school based teacher development, whereby teachers work with their colleagues in their schools to change and improve classroom practice over time.

Teacher development, like the professional development of any profession, is a continuous process. The sorts of activities and reflection involved in the SBTD programme replicate the ways that teachers, at any stage of their career, can improve practice. Being open to new ways of working and new research findings about how the brain works, and having a passion for helping children learn more effectively are at the core of being a good teacher. Good teaching supports effective learning and effective learning enhances children's life chances. The wider community expects professionals such as doctors, health workers, lawyers and architects to keep up to date with the latest ideas and methods; teachers should be no different to this.

**aims and objectives of the programme**

The main aim of the SBTD programme is to improve teaching and learning practices and contribute to the development of UNRWA students in respect of:

- achieving attainment levels that meet international standards;
- preparing for the social and economic conditions (life skills and employability) of the 21st century;
- developing a positive approach to learning as an ongoing process;
- increasing respect for human rights, democratic values and diversity;
- building knowledge of, and pride in, the Palestinian identity, culture and heritage;
- participating in a socially responsive way in local communities.

Throughout the programme, teachers will reflect on their own experience, interact with new ideas, and plan and implement new approaches.
The objectives of the SBTD programme are to:

- develop an understanding of the personal and collective professional development processes;
- ensure that teachers use active pedagogical methods in educationally engaging classroom environments;
- promote the use of a variety of learner-focused assessment strategies, including formative and summative approaches;
- build a repertoire of teaching strategies to enable the effective teaching of literacy and numeracy;
- create an understanding of the contemporary inclusion agenda and develop classroom and school strategies and practices to meet diverse needs;
- be fully aware of the importance of engaging parents in their child’s education, and implement strategies to do this in order to raise achievement.

All UNRWA teachers have a sense of mission to improve the life chances of Palestinian children. To help realise this mission, we all need to better understand the importance of working imaginatively and creatively to meet each child’s educational needs. They will also need to work as part of a team that is focused on raising the level of achievement of each and every student and across the school as a whole.
structure and content of the programme

overview

The SBTD Transforming Classroom Practices programme comprises six Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Modules, six short videos linked to each Module, six face-to-face support sessions led by a School Principal or Education Specialist, a reflective Programme Notebook in which Teachers write their comments, thoughts and reflections and a Portfolio. There will also be ongoing support from peers and two lesson observations, one from the SP and the second from ES to provide evidence of active participation. The next section provides details about each part on such structure.

educational materials for SBTD-TCP programme

The written materials in the SBTD programme are produced in distance education mode and written in an interactive style that talks directly to you, the teacher. This is very different from the usual textbook style. The writers have tried to write clearly and to explain fully any key concepts. They were very aware that you might be studying under difficult circumstances and have made every attempt to make you feel comfortable in your reading and not needing to check words or refer to other texts for information. The Modules have also been written without gender or any other bias, in terms of language used, the illustrations and the examples or activities given.

The six Modules look at different aspects of teaching and learning in the environment in which UNRWA schools operate. An overview of the six Modules and the four Units within each Module is shown below. It is worth noting that three Modules of the six have what we call ‘double’ Units. This is to allow for more thorough investigation of the topic addressed in that Unit. It is envisaged that each Unit will take you one week to complete. The double Units will thus take two weeks.

module 1: developing active pedagogies

Unit 1: Creating a variety of active teaching and learning strategies
Unit 2: Exploiting the local environment as a learning resource
Unit 3: The learner centred, educationally stimulating, classroom environment
Unit 4: Developing professional knowledge and skills
module 2: learning focused classroom practices

Unit 5: Expectations as the key to effective teaching and learning
Unit 6–7: Building successful communities of learning (double Unit)
Unit 8: Celebrating learning success

module 3: assessment for quality learning

Unit 9: Strategies for developing learner centred assessment practices
Unit 10–11: Questioning techniques to promote formative assessment practice for student learning (double Unit)
Unit 12: New ways of recording progress in learning

module 4: the teacher’s role in promoting literacy and numeracy

Unit 13: Literacy across the curriculum
Unit 14: Strategies for reading and responding to information texts
Unit 15: Numeracy across the curriculum
Unit 16: Practical educational games to promote numeracy

module 5: the inclusive approach to teaching and learning

Unit 17–18: Inclusive schools and classrooms (double Unit)
Unit 19: Identifying the diverse needs of learners
Unit 20: Supportive teaching and learning strategies

module 6: engaging parents and professional development

Unit 21: Strategies for engaging and working with parents in the learning process
Unit 22: Establishing an achievement dialogue with parents
Unit 23–24: Professional development and looking ahead (double Unit)

structure of a unit

To make it easier to access the materials, each Unit has the same structure:

- An **Introduction**, which provides an overview of the Unit and introduces the ideas to be explored.

- **Teacher Development Outcomes** – these are the key learning outcomes of the Unit.
● **Case Studies** – of which there are two case studies or more in each Unit. These give examples of how a teacher, or groups of teachers, approached a particular issue, or implemented a particular teaching strategy or way of working in their classroom. These are not necessarily for you to copy, but are giving examples of practices and approaches to think about. They may help you to extend your repertoire of strategies to use in the classroom.

● **Activities** – these involve you working alone, or with colleagues, trying out new ideas in planning, teaching and organisation within the classroom and sharing experiences. The Activities are written to stimulate you to consider different ways of teaching and ask you to reflect on what happened. It is important to think about what worked well and why this is so, so that you can repeat your successes. It is crucial also to consider the impact on students’ engagement with the activities and their learning. Reflecting on what did not go quite as well as expected and the unexpected will also give you insights into how you could adapt your teaching in the future.

● **Explanatory linking text** – is provided between Case Studies and Activities. The text sets the Activities and Case Studies in a context by providing insights into current theories about best practice. This is to read and reflect upon.

● **Summary** – gives conclusion to the ideas and learning outputs for each unit together with self-reflection questions.

Each Unit is approximately 3,000 to 3,500 words and it is expected that one Unit will take you one week to complete. One Module will take you four weeks. To help you as you work through the weekly Units, you will be provided with a Programme Notebook to record your reflections as required within each Unit.

Another dimension of the programme is that there will be, over time, a range of multimedia resources that will offer different approaches to consolidate your learning and challenge your thinking.

Finally, the programme will not be assessed by formal examination but you will be required to complete a Portfolio, which will include specified completed Activities, reflections and examples of work carried out with students. The Programme Notebook will also be used as evidence of your active participation in the programme but will not be formally assessed.

On successful completion of the programme, you will be given a Certificate of Completion. This will form part of your Continuing Professional Development File and be used in the Human Resources Performance Evaluation Scheme in UNRWA schools.
studying the programme

This Open and Distance Learning (ODL) programme will actively engage you in your studying through the questions, Activities and Case Studies that encourage reflection on what you do as a teacher. The studying focuses on educational professional issues, rather than traditional subjects. This means that you are not learning something totally new. Instead, you are learning to reflect on your own experience so far and think how you could extend and develop your teaching strategies. This should make it less like studying and more like having a professional conversation with another teacher. But you will also be able to talk with your school colleagues about your experiences, as you will all be participating in the programme at the same time.

You will, however, still need to be organised and plan for your studying. Each Unit should take you one week to complete (double Units should take two weeks) and much of this study will be as part of your normal duties in school. However, you will need to read through the Unit beforehand so you can plan your work for the week, including SBTD tasks. You need to tell your family you are working on this programme and it will involve some extra time in preparation and writing up your experiences. You may also like to let your students know about the programme you are undertaking and the studying you will be doing, sometimes in school. This would be a good example for them – seeing you working and studying.

Figure 4: You will need to be realistic in your planning.
working through the module and its four units

The best way to work through the material is to read through the Unit for that week. As you read, think about your classroom as it is now and how what you are reading could impact on what you do or how you organise your classroom. Symbols are used in the text to flag up the common parts of the Unit. These are given below:

- **Activity**
- **Case study**
- **Comment**
- **Summary**

As you read the text and Case Studies, think of what you already do in your classroom and how you could modify and adapt the way you work in order to apply some of the ideas being explored. The purpose of the programme is, as has been said earlier, to develop a more interactive way of working that will enhance the learning of the students in your classes. You are not expected to actually do the Case Studies yourselves, just read and reflect!

When you come to an Activity, read it through perhaps a couple of times and think about how you could carry out the Activity in your own classroom. When you are clear what you are going to do, make notes of the key points and gather any resources you will need.

Both the Case Studies and the Activities will often have a comment after them. These will provide you with insights into what you have just read, as well as present alternatives and suggestions to challenge your thinking and further develop your practice. There are no right or wrong answers, but it contains ideas and concepts that will help you to improve your teaching methods in order to develop the learning of your students to the maximum extent.

At times you will be asked to record your responses to questions or activities in your Programme Notebook. Your Programme Notebook will not be assessed as such, but it will be submitted as evidence of your participation in the programme and therefore contribute to the award of the Certificate of Completion. The Programme Notebook has been introduced to help you develop further as a reflective teacher (a teacher who thinks about their own teaching). You can also reflect on your teaching by gathering views from your pupils and colleagues before, during and after teaching any lesson to help you think about your own teaching effectiveness. Perhaps you already think about your teaching every day and work to develop and extend your skills. It is hoped that this programme will extend further your
thinking about your teaching and the following questions can help you evaluate what you do.

- Did I involve the pupils actively in the lesson?
- Did I have enough resources? Were they suitable?
- How did I use the time and was this effective?
- Did I achieve my lesson objective? How do I know this?
- What did the students learn? How do I know this?
- What could I do to improve my lesson?

**I was much better today when I effectively engaged my students during the class because I.....**

Figure 5: Ongoing reflection of your practices helps develop your teaching skills.

**support structure of the programme**

Throughout the six months of your study of this programme, other Grade 1–6 teachers in your school and area will be doing the same, and support sessions are built in to help all the teachers in your school successfully complete the programme. Support is provided by the materials, your peers, your School Principal and your Education Specialist.

The pattern and sequence of support that you will receive is given in the diagram below.
in-school support

Firstly there are the written text Units, which will help you explore the recent developments in teaching and learning around the world that have been shown to impact markedly on children’s learning and achievements. The materials are addressed to you and ask you to try things out in your classroom, to reflect on your experiences and to dwell on questions that challenge your thinking about classroom practices. The materials do provide some responses to the questions raised, but this is not an issue of right and wrong answers. Many of the questions in the text are about interactive pedagogy and therefore can be answered in many ways. For example, there are many ways to help students learn their number bonds and although the relevant Units will give some ways to do this, you may think of other ways.

Each Unit focuses on a particular aspect of teaching, such as how students learn best, different ways of organising the classroom or your role as a teacher, but all Units are focused on enhancing the learning of the students you teach.

peer support

As you work through the programme, all the other Grade 1–6 teachers in your school will also be working through the same materials and so there is great opportunity for you to share your experiences in the classroom with your peers. By sharing your successes and also the things that did not work as well as you had hoped in the classroom, you and your colleagues can learn together. It is true that a problem shared is a problem halved and a success shared is very affirming and rewarding.
programme notebook

The Programme Notebook is your personal diary of what you did through your study of the SBTD programme and what happened. Throughout the programme, you will be asked to write in your Programme Notebook as evidence of your work, but – more importantly – it is also a place for you to capture your own thoughts and reflections on the ideas and concepts presented in the Units. You may also want to record students’ comments about some of the activities you have tried with them, to provide evidence of their success, or to help with your reflections.

While the Programme Notebook is not assessed, it is submitted as evidence of participation in the programme to count towards the Certificate of Completion. Its main purpose, though, is to help you think about and reflect on the ideas presented in the SBTD programme materials.

school principal in-school support sessions

Your School Principal will introduce all Grade 1–6 teachers to the programme before you start and then conduct three sessions (Sessions 2, 4 and 6 in Diagram 6) in school to help extend your understanding of the key concepts and ideas in Modules 2, 4 and 6. Each face-to-face session follows the same format and there will be short videos to help you visualise and discuss some of the approaches being described in the Modules. Each session will normally be held towards the middle or end of each Module, and it is a time for you as a group to share ideas, ask questions and discuss any issues.
In order to gain maximum benefit from these sessions, you should do some preparation beforehand. Be sure you have read through the Module, tried some of the Activities, and made notes of any questions you have and any ideas that you would like to discuss further. Your School Principal will guide the session and help any individuals who have particular concerns.

**education specialist out-of-school support sessions**

Your local Education Specialists will be there to help you as you study the programme and they will also run the three support sessions for Modules 1, 3 and 5 (Sessions 1, 3 and 5 in Diagram 6). These will be arranged locally with two or three schools so that you can share experiences with other teachers.

As with the School Principal support sessions, you should prepare for these sessions beforehand so that you can get the most out of them.

**classroom observation**

The aim of classroom observation is to help you understand your own practice better and to reflect on how well you are putting into practice some of the SBTD ideas. Your lesson will be observed by your School Principal or Education Specialist, but prior to the lesson you will agree with the observer what aspects you particularly want them to focus on as they observe. This will relate to the Unit or Module you are currently working through.

Being observed as you teach may be a new experience for you. The observations are designed to help you reflect on your classroom practice. You may feel nervous to start with, but try to forget the observer is there. Concentrate instead on what you are doing and the impact it is having on the students' participation and learning in the lesson.

Classrooms are complex places and what may work in one classroom and context may not be possible in another classroom and any feedback and discussion needs to be relevant to you and your context. Remember the observer’s role is to support, not to inspect. They are acting as a critical friend, i.e. they are watching you and giving feedback and then asking how you might improve or develop your practice. The observer should try to help you to think about and try out the techniques or strategies that you will find most useful and easy to use. They should give you time to think for yourself and to respond to their questions about what you thought of the lesson and what you could do, so that you are in control of your own learning. If you think they are not doing this, it is important to discuss it with them.
Make sure that you and the observer have time to talk about the lesson as soon as possible after the lesson end.

There are three stages to observing in the classroom and each stage impacts on the next stage.

1. **planning the observation together before the observation**

   Agree the focus of what is to be observed. You should lead on choosing this. Discuss what activities you have tried recently and your feelings about these. It may be that you want to focus on the types of questions you ask in the lesson or whether your instructions and organisation for group work are effective. Having agreed the specific aspect you want them to observe, you will need together to think about what kind of evidence you want them to gather to feedback the impact of your way of working in that lesson.

2. **the actual observation of the lesson**

   Using an SBTD observation sheet, the observer will make notes of what they see and hear. They will not write everything down, but they should write down any significant incidents and actions that relate to the chosen focus. Do not be intimidated by them sitting in class and writing, but concentrate on what you are trying to do in the lesson and focus on helping your students learn well. It won’t be easy, but try to forget they are there.

3. **a meeting after the observation**

   This should be a relaxed, friendly, but professional discussion in which you feel empowered and see the value of any feedback that you are given. Research into giving such feedback shows that it is only useful if the recipient, in this case you, the teacher, sees the feedback as relevant and understands how to use it. The observer should allow you time to reflect on your experience and think for yourself about how to develop and improve your practice, as this will build your confidence in your own abilities more.

   It is important that the observer gives you a summary of the meeting by talking about:

   - the focus of the observation;
   - what you say you have learnt from the experience;
   - the learning outcomes for the session;
   - agreed action and the way forward.
A summary of these pointers will be included on the observation sheet for you to put in your Portfolio. Each teacher will have two observations in their Portfolio one by your School Principal and the other by your Education Specialist. Remember, if you are not satisfied that all these stages have been carried out in the observation, discuss this with the observer.

**assessment of the programme**

The programme is not graded, but you will have to produce evidence of active participation in the programme in order to obtain your Certificate of Completion. This will be awarded when you submit your completed Portfolio with your Programme Notebook. Your School Principal and Education Specialist will moderate these Portfolios and recommend you for award of the Completion Certificate.

**portfolio**

The Portfolio, which is one of the documents you were given in your materials pack, has the details of what you should include in it as you work through the programme. The Portfolio has to be submitted at the end of the programme to your School Principal as part of the assessment procedure for the award of the Certificate of Completion.

As you complete each Module, you need to choose six of class activities (one for each Module) to write up in more detail. For these six activities, you should include in your Portfolio your evaluation of the Activity, your reflections on its impact in the classroom, and the implications for your teaching and learning and the way you work and plan in the future. You may also want to include a sample of a student’s work or what the student said in order to show evidence of learning.

As well as your specially chosen Activity, you should also choose four additional Lesson Plans for each Module (24 lesson plan for all modules). These will show how
you integrated elements of the SBTD TCP training material in your lessons. Perhaps you tried out strategies that were discussed in the material. Maybe you tested some of the suggestions made in the Modules. Perhaps you build on a case study and these Lesson Plans will form part of the package you submit for assessment of active participation in the programme.

You should also fill the form related to lessons plans that focus on the activity/case study/strategy and then briefly explain how it links to what you learned in SBTD: TCP programme)

**conclusion**

The SBTD programme is key to the overall UNRWA Education Reform Strategy. The aim of the programme is to challenge current thinking about the roles and responsibilities of all teachers so that they enable students to achieve their full potential, gain worthwhile employment and become useful and confident members of society. Your role as a teacher is to have an open mind and be open to new ideas, build your confidence and self-esteem in trying out new ways of working in your classroom and continue to improve your skills as a teacher. The impact of trying out the different ways of working and the resultant change in students’ attitudes to school and learning will be motivation in itself, but if continuing professional development is seen as part of your being a good teacher, the benefits to students will increase even more.
Appendix 1

Guidelines for School Based Teacher Development: Transforming Classroom Practices

UNRWA
Education Department HQ (A)
Teacher Development and School Empowerment Unit (TDSE)

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1. **Introduction to the Programme**

The SBTD TCP is an open and distance learning programme situated in the context in which teachers work – the school. It allows teachers to work within a community of practice of their peers In addition to education experts from within and outside the school.

The SBTD: TCP programme aims to change classroom practices to enhance achievement levels and thus the life chances of Palestine refugee students in UNRWA schools. Having a professional teaching force in place is a key pillar of UNRWA’s education reform as good teaching makes quality learning. That is why UNRWA is committed to continuous professional development (CPD).

2. **Programme implementation**

   a. The programme is aimed at all UNRWA Grade 1-6 teachers. It will be rolled-out over a three year period. There will be three phases. Each Phase will be implemented over one academic year. The first phase will start in October 2012 and finish in June 2013.

   b. The programme will be implemented by geographical area, not only at the school level. This is important as the programme not only trains the teachers but also aims to strengthen the professional support system. It is therefore key that it is implemented by Area and not by school only. In this way, the teachers of Grade 1 to 6 and all the support cadres within one geographical area will be engaged in the programme at the same time. This will enhance the impact of the programme.

   c. The Field management will identify the geographical areas and the timing of SBTD TCP roll out starting in 2012-2013 and finishing by June 2015.

3. **Participation**

   3.1 **Participation guidelines**

   a. The programme is aimed at all Grade 1-6 teachers regardless of qualifications, years of service or subject specialisation. The programme is designed in such a way that all teachers will benefit. It will professionally move all teachers forward and thus both inexperienced and experienced teachers will benefit. More experienced teachers are also encouraged to support less experienced colleagues.
b. Participation, progress and delays in the programme will be reflected in the teacher’s annual Performance Evaluation Report (e-PER) as it is part of the commitment to professional development.

c. All teachers who have successfully completed the programme will receive an UNRWA endorsed Certificate of Completion.

d. Their completion of the programme will be forwarded to the Field HR Office for inclusion in the formal personnel file.

e. Completion of the Programme is considered a prerequisite for possible future career advancement and priority consideration for placement opportunities.

### 3.2 Target Audiences

a. The primary beneficiaries of this SBTD TCP are all UNRWA Grade 1-6 teachers.

b. Daily paid, casual or volunteer teachers working in UNRWA schools are also allowed to participate in the programme.

### 3.3 Management and Monitoring of SBTD (TCP) participation

Support for the teachers participating in the programme is an integral part of the design of this open and distance learning programme. The role of the HT/SP and ES is to provide this support to the teacher and assist them in completing this important programme. Their role is therefore not an inspectoral one. In large schools, Deputy HTs/SPs can assist the HT/SP in this role. Any relevant information on progress and delays will be reflected in the e-PER.

#### 3.3.1 Opting out or cancellation

There are circumstances whereby a teacher can opt out of the programme:

a. Teachers due to retire within one year can choose not to participate in the programme;

b. Unforeseen personal circumstances that mean that a teacher can no longer take part in the programme will be discussed with the HT/SP, ES, AEO and communicated to the CFEP. The HT/SP, ES and AEO will endeavour to accommodate the needs of the teacher (see 3.3.4 delay);

c. If a teacher is expelled from his/her duties during the programme, he/she will not be allowed to continue the programme.
3.3.2 Educational Psychology (Ep) Course and SBTD Transforming Classroom Practices

Teachers who are currently taking part in the Educational Psychology (EP) programme can choose not to participate in this programme. However, they can opt to participate in both SBTD TCP and EP if they are in the second year of EP and feel they can do both at the same time.

3.3.3 Absenteeism

a. While the SBTD TCP is a self learning programme, there are six face-to-face sessions that teachers should attend in addition to an introductory session prior to the programme launch in the school.
   • three in-school sessions with the HT/SP;
   • three out-of-school session with an ES.

Participation in the 6 in-school and out-of-school sessions is one of the completion criteria for SBTD TCP. This means attending at least four sessions out of six sessions.

b. If a session is missed, it can be compensated by an alternative session at another school or date with the HT/SP or by attending a parallel session organized in a different school or on a different date.

c. Failing to participate in at least 4 sessions will result in the non-issuance of the SBTD TCP certificate (refer to certification requirement for further details).

3.3.4 Delays

a. Newly recruited teachers who have missed the start of the SBTD TCP by no more than one month are strongly encouraged to join the programme. Additional support from the HT/SP and the ES will be available if requested to accelerate the process of catching up with peers. Colleagues are also encouraged to support these newly recruited teachers. The decision by the newly recruited teachers not to participate in the programme will be reflected in the e-PER.

b. Teachers who due to unforeseen personal circumstances (such as maternity leave, grave illness) incur a delay in the programme progression can apply for a dispensation. Filled dispensation forms will be submitted to HT/SPs. HTs/SPs will then discuss with the ES and AEO and communicated to the CFEP. A template will be provided.

Any teacher who incurs a delay will be assisted in finding alternatives ways to complete the programme (eg joining teachers who are studying in another school in
another Area at a later stage). Compensation sessions can be organized at school, Area and/or Field level. This will be the decision of the CFEP.

c. Teachers who for the reasons above delay the SBTD TCP, have until June 2015 to finish the programme. Not competing SBTD TCP will be recorded in the e-PER, and in the personnel file of the staff member.

3.3.5 Completing in exceptional circumstances

a. When a teacher is more than half way through the SBTD TCP, i.e. teacher has worked through three or more Modules and has attended the relevant supporting sessions, and he/she is transferred into:

i. A non-educational post: he/she has the right to complete the programme. This needs to be discussed with the HT/SP, ES and AEO and communicated to the CFEP.

ii. Another UNRWA school where SBTD is being implemented: he/she will complete the programme in his/her new school.

iii. Another school/Area where the programme is not implemented, the teacher can still opt to continue the programme, attending the support sessions organized within the school/Area where he/she previously taught. This needs to be discussed with the HT/SP, ES and AEO and communicated to the CFEP.

b. A teacher, who leaves his/her post in an UNRWA school, barring dismissal by UNRWA, can opt to complete the programme. This needs to be discussed with the HT/SP, ES and AEO and communicated to the CFEP.

3.3.6 Participation refusal

If a teacher refuses to participate in the SBTD TCP, a discussion needs to take place with the HT/SP, ES and AEO, so that both staff member and management fully understand the circumstances and consequences of the refusal. If the staff member persists, he/she will provide a written statement from the staff member to the CFEP detailing the rationale for the refusal. The CFEP, in consultation with HR, will respond in writing outlining possible consequences for future career opportunities, and/or priority consideration for placements, to be detailed in Phase II of the SBDP and teacher career path policy (yet to be approved). The written statement of refusal will be recorded in his/her e-PER, teacher’s file and communicated to UNRWA’s HR Department for inclusion in the personnel file.
4. **SBTD TCP Assessment**

4.1 **Assessment policy**

a. The assessment will focus on teachers’ professional practices rather than on any theoretical or formal examination.

b. The assessment will not be pass or fail but rather Completion or Non-Completion.

c. The assessment will be informed by the teacher’s self-evaluation mainly through the Portfolio, but the decision whether to issue a Certificate of completion will be made by the HT/SP in coordination with the ES involved in the programme, taking into consideration all the activities required.

d. All teachers who have successfully completed the programme will receive an UNRWA endorsed Certificate. Their completion of the programme will also be recorded in the e-PER and forwarded to the Field HR Office for inclusion in the formal personnel file.

e. Schools where more than 80% of teachers have successfully completed the SBTD TCP will be issued a School Award.

4.2 **Assessment activities and process:**

The following will form the basis of the assessment of programme completion and certification:

a. Portfolio

   i. Evidence of preparation for, execution and evaluation of six classroom activities, one from each of the programme Modules. For each Module the Teacher is asked to include in his/her Portfolio a copy of his/her lesson plan for the activity selected to submit for, as well as evidence of his/her experience, learning and reflections on that activity.

   ii. Lesson plans showing at least 24 activities across the programme duration, linked to the SBTD TCP. The teacher should highlight the Activity in their lesson plan and explain briefly how it is linked to the TCP programme. The lesson plans will be submitted at the end of the programme to the HT/SP.

It is the teacher’s responsibility to ensure that the Portfolio contains all the relevant documents. Teachers are encouraged to consult with the HT/SP or liaise with peers if in doubt as to what is required.
The Portfolio will be formally submitted by the teacher to the HT/SP for assessment at the end of each semester (i.e. mid-term after completion of Modules 1-3 and final after Modules 4-6). The mid-term assessment will help the HT/SP identify potential problems and will enable the HT/SP to provide further assistance to the teachers who request it. At the end of the assessment process, the Portfolio will be returned to the teacher for future professional development purposes.

b. The Programme Notebook which comprises reflections by the teacher will form part of the assessment. Throughout their studies, teachers are encouraged to reflect on topics, case studies and classroom activities. While this reflective component of the programme is an important part of the programme design, it is also a personal one. Therefore, the HT/SP will not assess the actual content of the notebook as this will comprise of individual reflections and considerations. The HT/SP will however check that the teacher has utilized this notebook as a tool for self-reflection. The Programme notebook will be submitted to the HT/SP together with the Portfolio.

c. Attendance of the in-school and out-of school sessions led by HT/SP and/or ES: As outlined above, failure to attend more than two face-to-face sessions (in-school or out-of-school) out of six formal support sessions without any attempt to compensate, will result in non-issuance of the Certificate of completion. HT/SP and/or ES who lead the sessions will record attendance and follow up on absenteeism.

d. The Classroom Observation: At least two classroom visits reports (template provided, annex2) by the HT/SP and ES will be used in the assessment process.

e. Attendance by the teacher of the Midterm and Final evaluation session with HT/SP will also be taken into consideration in the summative assessment process.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Personal Development Portfolio</strong></th>
<th><strong>Participation</strong> of the in-school and out-of school sessions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintained by Teacher &amp; submitted to HT/SP for assessment</td>
<td>Records maintained by HT/SP and ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of six classroom activities, one from each of the programme modules.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson plans showing at least 24 activities across the programme duration linked to SBTD TCP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Programme Notebook</strong></td>
<td><strong>Classroom observation reports</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintained by Teacher &amp; submitted to HT/SP for assessment</td>
<td>Records maintained by HT/SP and ES. An extra copy can be maintained by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation Discussion</strong></td>
<td><strong>Evaluation Discussion(s)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion between HT/SP &amp; ES about the teacher’s submitted documentation and attendance</td>
<td>Midterm and Final Evaluation between the Teacher and HT/SP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 9: SBTD (TCP) Assessment Process and Activities.*
appendix 2

Classroom observation form

1. General Information

Name of school: ____________________________
Boys: ____________________________
Girls: ____________________________
Co-ed: ____________________________

Date of observation: __________________
Field: ____________________________
Educational Area: ____________________

2. Details of lesson

Teacher’s Name: ____________________________
Teacher’s No: ____________________________

Class: ____________________________
Subject: ____________________________

No. of students present: ____________
No. of students with additional learning needs (students in need of extra help in class): ____________

No. of students absent: ____________

3. Lesson topic ________________

4. What are the lesson objectives?

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

5. Which aspects of teaching/learning will be the focus of the lesson observation? (tick appropriate boxes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brainstorming</th>
<th>Drama or role play</th>
<th>Formative assessment</th>
<th>Pair work</th>
<th>Using local environment</th>
<th>Addressing students’ additional needs</th>
<th>Group work</th>
<th>Questioning</th>
<th>Classroom management</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

handbook for teachers
Lesson observation:

Guidance: Observations should be based on directly observed occurrences not opinions or value judgments.

Record your observations throughout the lesson focusing on the area agreed before the lesson. When you make an observation record the time. Remember to only describe what happened and make notes on any points that you would like to clarify with the teacher later.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Narrative Observation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post Observation dialogue questions: These questions are designed to prompt a reflective dialogue with the teacher after the lesson so that they can take ownership, (with your help) of any improvements. Remember that feedback is a two way process so first ask the teacher to talk through how well they thought the lesson went before using some of the questions below to help further reflection.

Please record answers/key point against each question: The questions are split into core questions and supplementary. Use your professional skills to decide which supplementary questions to ask depending on the focus of the lesson. Remember that the objective is to help staff to identify their areas of success and areas for development too.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core questions</th>
<th>Answers/key points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Why did you choose this particular method/activity to meet your intended learning objectives?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How far did you share and clarify the learning objectives with pupils at the start of the session?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How far do you think you achieved your learning objectives?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How do you know this? What evidence do you have? (Related to question 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How can you improve or maintain your current level of practice?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Would you use this method again? What, if anything, would you do differently and why?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supplementary questions</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. What particular strategies did you use to ensure that the activity/lesson was learner focused?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. How effective was your classroom management using this method/activity? Have you modified your previous approach? How? Why?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. How effective do you think the resources used were? In an ideal world what else could you have used/done?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. What methods did you use to assess for learning during the activity and after the activity?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. How did you ensure that the children engaged with the task at all times?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. How well did the activity link with the rest of your plan? Why?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Can you highlight one thing that didn’t go so well and one thing that went really well in the activity? How do you know this?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. How inclusive do you think the activity/lesson was? How did you ensure this?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. How did the activity develop literacy and or numeracy? How do you think this could be improved?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Would you be willing to share your experience of this and other methods with others?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teacher’s comments on lessons learned from this observational experience:

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Summary: (written by the observer)

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Teacher name & signature: ____________________________________________

Head Teacher/School Principal or Education Specialist name and signature:

___________________________________________________________________

Lesson observation date: ______________________________________________
How each question relates to the SBTD learning outputs

These questions change the process from an inspectorial, type of judgement to a developmental reflective dialogue with a critical friend. This is included to illustrate the function of each question and area of SBTD it relates to.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Actual focus</th>
<th>Area of SBTD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Why did you choose this particular method/activity to meet your</td>
<td>Understanding of active learning methods</td>
<td>to ensure that teachers use active pedagogical methods in educationally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intended learning objectives?</td>
<td></td>
<td>engaging classroom environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How far did you share and clarify the learning objectives with pupils</td>
<td>Planning methodology/lesson introduction</td>
<td>to ensure that teachers use active pedagogical methods in educationally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at the start of the session?</td>
<td></td>
<td>engaging classroom environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How far do you think you achieved your learning objectives?</td>
<td>Reflection on own performance Assessment for</td>
<td>evaluate the role of the teacher through critical reflection to promote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>learning</td>
<td>the use of a variety of learner focused assessment strategies including</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>formative and summative approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How do you know this? What evidence do you have? (Related to question</td>
<td>Assessment for learning</td>
<td>to promote the use of a variety of learner focused assessment strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>including formative and summative approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How can you improve or maintain your current level of practice?</td>
<td>Critical reflection</td>
<td>plan to improve practice and evaluate the impact of professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>activities on that practice evaluate their own performance and need for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>continuous personal and collective professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Would you use this method again? What, if anything, would you do</td>
<td>Critical reflection</td>
<td>plan to improve practice and evaluate the impact of professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>differently and why?</td>
<td></td>
<td>activities on that practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supplementary questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Actual focus</th>
<th>Area of SBTD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. What particular strategies did you use to ensure that the activity/</td>
<td>Active learning strategies</td>
<td>to ensure that teachers use active pedagogical methods in educationally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lesson was learner focused?</td>
<td></td>
<td>engaging classroom environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>How effective was your classroom management using this method/activity?</td>
<td>Classroom management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Have you modified your previous approach? How?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>How effective do you think the resources used were? In an ideal world</td>
<td>Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>what else could you have used/done?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>What methods did you use to assess for learning during the activity and</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>after the activity?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>How did you ensure that the children engaged with the task at all times?</td>
<td>Active learning and motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>How well did the activity link with the rest of your plan? Why?</td>
<td>Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Can you highlight one thing that didn't go so well and one thing that</td>
<td>Reflection on practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>went really well in the activity? How do you know this?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>How inclusive do you think the activity/lesson was? How did you ensure</td>
<td>Inclusive practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>this?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>How did the activity develop literacy and or numeracy? How do you think</td>
<td>Critical reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>this could be improved?</td>
<td>Assessment Literacy and numeracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Would you be willing to share your experience of this and other methods</td>
<td>Team work Sharing pedagogy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with others?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>