# RESPOND

Sustaining the professional development of teachers within schools as professional learning environments

Edited by
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R-F

FrancoAngeli

R-F Ricerca-Formazione

collana diretta da
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La Collana accoglie studi teorici ed empirico-sperimentali che indagano il rapporto tra ricerca e formazione degli insegnanti; essa nasce dalla comune volontà di un gruppo di studiosi e ricercatori di diverse università italiane interessati a questa tematica e con specifiche competenze di ricerca in ambito educativo.

I continui cambiamenti che attraversano il mondo della scuola e che coinvolgono direttamente coloro che operano al suo interno in qualità di insegnanti, dirigenti, educatori, necessitano di professionalità altamente specializzate e allo stesso tempo flessibili, in grado di interpretare le trasformazioni in atto e di gestire la complessità che oggi è presente nei contesti scolastici. Per questo è importante promuovere un rapporto sempre più stretto e sinergico tra la ricerca accademica e la scuola, affinché questa relazione possa essere letta in modo biunivoco e paritario.

La formazione iniziale e in servizio del personale scolastico, e degli insegnanti in particolare, rappresenta una leva decisiva per il miglioramento della qualità dell'offerta formativa, l'innalzamento dei risultati di apprendimento degli alunni e il funzionamento delle istituzioni scolastiche, in un'ottica di equità e di democrazia del sistema di istruzione. La ricerca educativa, con i suoi molteplici approcci teorici e metodologici, deve poter offrire nuovi ambiti di riflessione e strumenti d'intervento per formare competenze e sostenere lo sviluppo professionale degli insegnanti. La possibilità di progettare, realizzare e monitorare interventi e strategie efficaci, sul fronte sia della ricerca sia dell'educazione e dell'istruzione, nasce dalla capacità di far interagire competenze diverse e attivare processi didattici e organizzativi rispondenti ai bisogni di bambini, giovani e adulti. In tale prospettiva, si può parlare di metodologie orientate alla ricerca-formazione, da considerare soprattutto come una scelta metodologica per fare ricerca con gli insegnanti e per il loro sviluppo professionale e il miglioramento della scuola. Una scelta che caratterizza, accompagna e sostanzia (nelle sue finalità e procedure applicative) le specificità e il rigore dei vari approcci metodologici della ricerca empirica, nelle loro declinazioni di volta in volta quantitative, sperimentali, fenomenologiche e qualitative.

La ricerca-formazione pertanto, oltre a rappresentare un settore di studio interdisciplinare, che comprende molteplici apporti teorici ed epistemologici, viene considerata, all'interno della presente collana, soprattutto come un modo di fare ricerca insieme ai professionisti dell'insegnamento, inaugurando nuovi campi d'azione verso cui convogliare risorse e interessi comuni. In questo senso, la collana valorizzerà contributi capaci di evidenziare la contiguità tra insegnamento e ricerca, prestando particolare attenzione alle modalità di coinvolgimento degli insegnanti, al rigore procedurale, alla ricaduta formativa dei risultati raggiunti.

In particolare, gli aspetti presentati di seguito delineano l'idea di Ricerca-Formazione cui la collana si ispira; essi possono pertanto costituire un orientamento per gli autori.

Una Ricerca-Formazione, per essere tale, richiede:

1. una esplicitazione chiara della finalità della ricerca in termini di crescita e sviluppo della professionalità degli insegnanti direttamente coinvolti e un'attenzione a documentare e analizzare le ricadute in termini di cambiamento;

2. la creazione di un gruppo di R-F di cui facciano parte ricercatore/i e insegnanti, nel quale vengano chiariti i diversi ruoli dei partecipanti e in cui vengano negoziati e chiariti obiettivi e oggetti, scelte valoriali e metodologiche della R-F;

3. la centratura sulle specificità dei contesti - istituzionali e non – in cui si svolge la R-F, che si concretizza in tutte le fasi della ricerca attraverso un'analisi dei vincoli e delle risorse in essi presenti;

4. un confronto continuo e sistematico fra i partecipanti alla ricerca sulla documentazione dei risultati e dei processi messi in atto nei contesti scolastici e in quelli della formazione;

5. l'attenzione alla effettiva ricaduta degli esiti nella scuola, sia per l'innovazione educativa e didattica, sia per la formazione degli insegnanti.

La collana intende accogliere contributi di studiosi italiani e di altri paesi, sotto forma di monografie, volumi collettanei, rapporti di ricerca e traduzioni relativi a studi e ricerche che realizzino una sinergia tra università e scuola, compresi volumi che documentino percorsi di Ricerca-Formazione realizzati nelle scuole.

Una particolare sezione della Collana accoglierà inoltre volumi relativi a risultati di ricerche empiriche che affrontino specificamente le questioni della formazione alla/della professionalità docente.

La collana è diretta da un gruppo di quattro studiosi di diverse università italiane che condividono finalità e scelte metodologiche del progetto editoriale e che mantengono un rapporto di confronto e di scambio costante con il Comitato scientifico.

Attraverso la collana, la Direzione e il Comitato scientifico intendono promuovere un ampio confronto tra ricercatori, studiosi, insegnanti, educatori e tutti coloro che a diverso titolo sono coinvolti nei processi di istruzione e formazione.

Comitato scientifico
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Ogni volume pubblicato nella collana è sottoposto *a peer review* da parte di revisori anonimi.

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With the support of the

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Preface

Davide Capperucci and *Martin Dodman*

RESPOND (Sustaining the professional development of teachers within schools as professional learning environments, KA220-SCH-AC336C03) is an Erasmus+ Cooperation partnerships in school education project. It was conducted during the period 2021-2024. The RESPOND partner organizations were the University of Florence (Italy), the coordinating partner, the University Lucian Blaga of Sibiu (Romania), the University of Granada (Spain), the Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences (Norway), the Regional Educational Authority of Piemonte USR – Rete Sostenibilità (Italy), and the Comprehensive School 21, Sibiu (Romania).

Each one of the members of the RESPOND partnership has long been actively involved in the areas of teacher professional development and school development addressed by the project. The target groups and relevant stakeholders involved at all levels of the activities implemented covered a wide range of professional profiles and institutional contexts. These included teachers at ISCED levels 1 and 2, staff in faculties of education involved in initial and continuous teacher education programs, as well as those involved in the provision of continuing professional development, advisory groups or individuals with this role in regional or national contexts, teacher professional associations, the inspectorate, senior management in schools and staff from all curricular areas.

The RESPOND project set out to investigate and analyse the complex relationship between teacher professional development and overall school development. RESPOND considers sustainable teacher professional development at the level both of individual teachers and of the schools they teach and build their careers in. The overall aim is to propose a framework with a series of tools designed to promote ways in each of these levels can be mutually sustaining.

The RESPOND project tools, produced thanks to the joint work between educational researchers and schools in different European countries, are now made available to the scientific community for further research and especially to schools, which, through the collaboration between school leaders and teachers, will know how to use them best to promote sustainable professional development within the professional learning environments in which they work.

Special thanks go to Irene Scierri of the University of Florence for her work on the editorial revision of this volume as well as being a participant in the project. Our thanks also go to all the members of the research teams created by the partner organizations for all the various ways in which they have contributed to the project. Particular thanks are due to the Unità di Ricerca europea e internazionale and the Department of Education, Languages, Intercultural Studies, Literature and Psychology (FORLILPSI) of the University of Florence for their invaluable support for project management throughout.

Chapter One: The RESPOND Project

Davide Capperucci and *Martin Dodman*

Investment in provision for teacher professional development is a significant part of educational policy and budget expenditure worldwide. Within the European context, in recent years there have been several commitments to this goal. The European Commission (2020) affirmed that "teachers and trainers need continuous opportunities for professional development" (Para. 2.4) and underlined the need to "launch a number of initiatives to better support the competence development and career paths of teachers, trainers and school education leaders, and to support the attractiveness of the education profession. These initiatives will help improve professional development opportunities and the recognition of individual competence development achieved in different contexts. They will promote the diversification of career opportunities for teachers, trainers and school leaders and benefit personal, school and system development" (Para. 3.4).

A further document from the Council of the European Union (2020) stated that good quality teaching and learning can be achieved when teachers engage in continuing professional development and underlines that "it is essential to further develop and update the competences of teachers and trainers, to ensure their expertise and encourage their autonomy and engagement, and to foster their personal and professional wellbeing, motivation and feeling for value, preparing to adequately respond to change, but also encouraging them to be proactive and innovative in their profession" (Para. 15).

Furthermore, over the past twenty years there has been a growing body of research concerned with evaluating the efficacy of the provision for professional development and identifying obstacles to its successful implementation in terms of ongoing professional learning and the achievement of high-level competence (Breslow & Bock, 2020; Guskey, 2002; King et al., 2022; OECD, 2024; Popova et al., 2022).

The point of departure for RESPOND project is the belief that rendering teacher professional develop sustainable involves identifying what kinds of

professional learning experiences provide input that can trigger change and how durable change can be triggered in terms of the relationship between how professional profiles are structured and professional learning experiences can strengthen that structure, as well as how this relates to the organization of learning environments and corresponding change within the teaching community. All the specific focuses for the project were chosen as significant and interdependent dimensions for researching and promoting the sustainability of teacher professional development and school development.

1.1. The RESPOND project methodology

The project activities were conducted within a series of intersecting project phases. This enabled a constant process of cycles in which activities fed into and out of each other forming a spiral as the project progressed.

An initial Transnational Project Meeting between partners permitted an exchange of ideas and subsequent development of an initial framework for a literature search and data collection on facilitating and impeding factors in teacher professional development and school development within four intersecting project focuses that were identified as particularly significant. Responsibility for managing each project focus was assigned to leading and supporting organizations during the various phases of elaboration and definition of each one of the products, who subsequently coordinated the work in which other members of the partnership were actively involved in generating ideas, discussing contents and field-based experimentation. This led to the development of work packages related to the focuses with relevant activities and project results intended as tools for teacher professional development and school development for each of them. Subsequent Transnational Project Meetings enabled monitoring and evaluation of the phases conducted thus far and planning for further phases.

Subsequently, for each project focus there was a phase of initial data collection by each of the partners based on a literature search and previous teacher professional development and learning experiences of the participants in order to identify factors that facilitate and impede successful development in particular situations that involve given spheres of action and developing competences within the focuses. The results of this research phase then converged in transnational development of support guidelines and sustainability indexes based on identifying and implementing ways of increasing facilitating factors and decreasing impeding factors in each focus.

This was followed by phases of individual country data collection related to specific focuses based on current ongoing professional learning experiences together with testing of support guidelines and implementation of sustainability indexes. This permitted transnational data analysis and production of reports in order to define optimal characteristics of professional learning experiences and identify ways of maximizing their impact so as to render teacher professional development sustainable within the context of corresponding professional learning environment development.

The project focuses were developed according to specific networking implementation activities carried out by the partners involved in the project within their particular countries. These activities involved successive cycles of workshops, ongoing data collection procedures, production and experimentation of models and tools, analysis, and discussion meetings. In line with the objectives and activities of the project, each country provided a specific contribution related to the skills and expertise of each partner organization. This was accompanied by transnational development of a range of further dissemination activities within partner countries and national and international multiplier events that provided further feedback for the development of the project tools foreseen.

The schools that collaborated in partner countries were able to actively participate in each phase of the project through being consulted in order to identify their needs and obtain their point of view while planning, informed of all decisions taken and the ongoing data collection and monitoring processes that take place, and involved as protagonists in all the activities conducted. Every effort was made to ensure a multilateral flow of exchanges from and to each partner country and its network of schools so that all the participating schools, teachers, classes and learners can be a part of and gain benefit from the project.

Each of the activities furnished opportunities for all participants to provide feedback and feedforward at each one of these participation levels. Structured and semi-structured questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions were used to achieve effective participation in the design, realization and monitoring of instruments, processes and products for each of the phases of the project.

The following sections illustrate the principal features of the theoretical framework underpinning the conception and the overall development of the project.

1.2. An ecological perspective on professional development and professional learning

RESPOND considers teacher professional development as an ongoing career-long process of promotion of increasing levels of competence related to transversal and specific skills and professional learning as a series of significant experiences in formal, non-formal and informal contexts that contribute to that process. Formal professional learning takes place within programmes designed to promote teacher education and in-service professional development. Non-formal professional learning takes place in contexts with an organizational framework (such as association membership or courses involving personal interests) not directly related to the teaching profession. Informal professional learning derives from participation in activities that are not undertaken with a professional learning purpose in mind (such as recreational activities, reading, friendship, navigating in internet). Each of these contexts can provide valuable learning experiences that contribute to the ongoing process of teacher professional development.

Moreover, we believe that, although specific professional learning experiences can take place in very diverse contexts, they can only lead to sustainable professional development when they take place in and are supported by schools that are constituted as professional learning environments designed to promote development both for the teachers who work there and for the school itself, since both are reciprocal parts of the dynamics and the direction of the same process.

Development is a term that derives etymologically from *dis-* (expressing both 'the reverse of' and 'separation') and *viluppare-viluppo* meaning entangle or entanglement. In this sense, development means a process of disentangling or unravelling. In other words, development expresses the idea of understanding or making sense out of complexity or confusion. This can be considered as an essential first step whereby teacher professional development implies being able to identify and analyse the constituent parts of a context or of a specific problem, to build awareness of its various aspects, and become able to envisage alternatives and introduce change designed to improve a given situation.

In this respect, assuming an ecological perspective can provide a fertile framework for understanding the nature of professional development and planning and taking action to further it. Ecology is the study of how living organisms interact with one another and with their physical environment. These interactions are two-way. The physical environment influences the living organisms, and the living organisms alter the physical environment. Thus, the ecology of teacher professional development can be considered in

terms of the relationship between the teacher as a professional and the changing properties of the settings (a composite of the people, their roles and the activities they participate in, and the characteristics of the places they work in) where the teacher's professional profile develops. This process of development is affected by relations between those settings and with the larger sociocultural contexts in which the settings are embedded.

From this perspective, by modifying Lewin's (1936) assertion that human behaviour can be analysed as a function of the relationship between people and their environments, we believe that teacher professional development can be summarized with the formula TPD = f(T+PLE), where teacher professional development (TPD) is a function of the interaction of teachers (T) with the professional learning environments (PLE) in which they operate.

Moreover, following Bronfenbrenner (1979), the settings in which teacher professional development takes place can be seen as involving five interconnected environmental systems, each of which has been carefully considered during the development of the RESPOND tools. Microsystems are patterns of activities, roles and interpersonal relations that are experienced by teachers directly in a particular setting (such as the classroom, informal conversations or teacher meetings) within the learning environments they work in. Mesosystems consist of the interrelations between two or more micro-settings (such as relations between home and school or professional development opportunities which affect the teacher's understanding of and way of working with learners). Exosystems are made up of settings that affect the professional development of teacher, but do not involve the teacher as an active participant (such as government or local education authority guidelines or contractual work conditions). The Macrosystem refers to beliefs, values and behaviours at the level of culture and society which condition each of the environmental micro- meso- and exo- systems contained within it. The Chronosystem refers to the changes in time in each of the environmental systems.

Each of these environmental systems can be analysed through the lens of the concept of the ecological niche. Ecological niches are the set of conditions, resources and interactions that a living organism needs, and which constitute its ecological role within a given ecosystem. At any point in their careers, teachers may find that the components of this set constitute a niche that is particularly favourable or unfavourable to their professional development, because they provide greater or fewer environmental conditions, resources and interactions that correspond with the particular needs of each teacher as an individual. Above all, teacher professional development is a function of the variety and complexity of joint activities. These create the conditions for

reciprocal influence, involving concomitant mutual feedback, with and between members of the same profession who can in turn assume the role of being mutually significant others. This generates progressively more complex patterns of interaction.

The concept of ecological transition can also be a useful framework to employ. For the developing teacher an ecological transition is a move to a new and different context. This may involve working with different age ranges and classes, changing school and thereby discovering whether it is able to provide an adequate professional learning environment, participating in new professional learning experiences, whether in formal, non-formal or informal contexts. A truly significant transition involves the teacher in performing new activities, establishing new relationships and experimenting with new roles in the interactions with colleagues, learners and families.

A further significant concept is that of ecological disturbance. This is a change in environmental conditions that can be caused by a wide range of events and specific circumstances. Its impact depends on its type, intensity and frequency. A disturbance regime is the set of the characteristic types of disturbance, their frequency and intensity in a given context. There can also be unique disturbances which are not necessarily related to others or repeated. Within the careers of teachers, disturbances can include time and work pressure, uncertainty concerning subject matter or didactical decisions, managing diversity in class, learning difficulties for individual students, behavioural problems of students, lack of motivation of students, and many others. However, disturbance is intrinsic to as well as ongoing in all ecological systems and requires a concomitant capacity for adaptability by the members of the community that inhabits the system.

Adaptability is indeed a key function of ecosystem dynamics and development, and the importance of teacher adaptability has long been recognised (Dewey, 1910; Taylor et al., 2011). Teacher professional development necessarily involves adapting to disturbances in all spheres of action. Parsons et al. (2016) identify a number of factors that can enhance adaptability. These include being able to clearly identify needs and goals, building supportive and engaging settings, encouraging ownership through active professional learning, and also tackling obstacles related to building adequate content and pedagogical knowledge, promoting agency and empowerment, stimulating collaboration to reduce isolated teaching, and enabling informed decision making.

Adaptive capacity involves understanding situations, identifying uncertainties or open questions, and establishing methodologies designed to bring about change and also learn from the overall process (Holling et al., 2002). The development of this takes place within adaptive cycles accompanied and

facilitated by collegial hypothesis building and testing to build understanding and enhance flexibility and innovation. During cycles of disturbance and change, schools as ecosystems with high institutional and individual adaptive capacity can learn and store knowledge and experience, create novel approaches to problem solving and balance satisfying the needs of all members of staff with promoting collective unity of purpose and wellbeing.

1.3. Sustainability as a transformative paradigm

RESPOND views sustainability in terms of "an educational culture [that is] a transformative paradigm which values, sustains and realizes human potential in relation to the need to attain and sustain social, economic and ecological wellbeing, recognizing that they must be part of the same dynamic" (Sterling, 2001, p. 22). The sustainability of a teacher's professional development is considered from the dual perspective of its ability to both correspond to global and local realities as well as to multiple and varying learner needs in an increasingly complex, volatile, uncertain, interdependent, and interconnected world. In this sense, the professional development of teachers must be sustainable for the societies in which they play a vital role and thus depends on its ability to intersect with all aspects of human and planetary social and ecological systems.

The sustainability of teacher professional development also involves a capacity to demonstrate characteristics of durability, whereby it can last in time, maintaining its basic integrity while learning and adapting to change, positive ethical orientation, based on principles of justice, respect and inclusiveness, and individual and collective wellbeing, achieved through nurturing healthy relationships. These characteristics must be linked with those of resilience and transformability in the way development proceeds throughout the teacher's career. In this respect, resilience can be seen as the capacity to reorganize and maintain the integrity of one's professional profile in the face of disturbances (during teaching and all other kinds of experiences related to professional learning) while undergoing change, and transformability as the capacity to develop new ways of being to make that change durable, ethical and grounded in wellbeing.

The concepts of resilience and transformability are key components of sustainability literature (Chapin et al., 2010; Clark, 2001; Folke et al., 2010, 2011; Raskin et al., 2002; Walker et al., 2004). Westley et al. (2011) define resilience as "the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganise while undergoing change, so as to still retain essentially the same function, structure, identity and feedbacks" and transformability as "the capacity to

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create untried beginnings from which to evolve a fundamentally new way of living when existing ecological, economic and social conditions make the current system untenable" (p. 763).

Resilience describes the degree to which a socio-ecological system is capable of self-organization, learning and adaptation (Gunderson & Holling, 2002; Holling, 1973; Walker et al., 2004). In this respect, it is essential that we bear in mind that resilience "is not only about being persistent or robust to disturbance. It is also about the opportunities that disturbance opens up in terms of recombination of evolved structures and processes, renewal of the system and emergence of new trajectories" (Folke, 2006). In other words, resilience is inextricably linked with transformability and adaptive change.

When resilience is enhanced, a system is more likely to be able to tolerate disturbance events without losing its integrity and ability to work as a whole. Moreover, good levels of resilience in social-ecological systems means that their members have the capacity to anticipate change and influence future pathways. On the other hand, reduced resilience increases the vulnerability of a system even to small disturbances so that it becomes unable to cope with it. Among the many consequences of this in terms of the teaching profession there may be feelings of frustration and incompetence, a lack of self-esteem and a sense of self-efficacy, the onset of burnout, and many others.

Research into resilience has led to identifying a number of principles for building resilience and sustaining development in social-ecological systems. These include maintaining diversity, managing connectivity, broadening participation, encouraging professional learning, managing the evolution of variables and feedbacks in processes of change, fostering complex adaptive systems thinking, and promoting polycentric governance systems (Biggs et al., 2012). Each one of these is an important component of the relationship between resilience and transformability.

Following Sterling (2024), transformability in teacher professional development requires designing or facilitating professional learning experiences that are "reflexive, experiential, inquiring, experimental, participative, iterative, real-world and action oriented", experiences "which invoke 'learning *as* change' in the active pursuit of sustainability and in designing and developing sustainable systems". Transformational experiences are based on finding answers to transformational inquiry questions such as the following:

- Holistic: How does this relate to that? What is the larger context here?
- Critical: Why are things this way, in whose interests?
- Appreciative: What's good, and positive and what already works well here?
- Inclusive: Who/what is being heard, listened to and engaged?
- Systemic: What are or might be the consequences and effects of this?

- Creative: What innovation might be required?
- Ethical: How should 'this' relate to 'that'? What is wise action?
  How can we work towards the inclusive wellbeing of the whole system and its constituents? (Para. 15).

The possible answers to these questions determine the ways in which teacher professional development can be a motor for change in professional learning environments and at the same the way in which those environments can facilitate or impede that development. At the same time, professional development occurs within the confines of a given professional profile, constituted by the spheres of action within which the teacher works, and the skills required to do so. This in turn determines what are the possible types and range of change within that profile and the ways in which that change can manifest itself and become sustainable for individuals and groups of teachers.

Education as a cultural practice takes place within and through the relationships between complex systems that include individuals, groups, the professional learning environments they inhabit, and the communities in which they are embedded. In this respect, the concepts of coherence and community can give insights into significant factors for the sustainability of teacher professional and concomitant school development. From the perspective of the characteristics of individual teacher professional development coherence can be analysed in terms of four interrelated elements that feed into and out of each other.

Coherence needs repetition in the sense of continuity and enrichment in that previous experience is reiterated within the context of the addition of some new element(s). In this way, repetition leads to progression incorporating new elements into previous ones so as to create a sense of moving in a certain direction, thereby building a pathway to follow. Progression requires systematicity in that there is the perception of interdependence and consequentiality, a clear relationship between specific actions, outcomes and the broad dimension of the school as a learning environment in which this takes place. Moreover, systematicity interacts with pertinence, thereby ensuring that the new is clearly perceived as significant and useful within one's professional practice, functional in terms of one's professional learning and the professional develop this informs.

These characteristics of individual professional learning and development are interrelated with other elements at the level of teachers as members of specific groups within a teaching community. Change can only come about when there is a shared perceived need to adapt to new experience, a necessity or desire to move towards new outcomes, and an ability to create and nurture

interpersonal relationships that can further this. In order to be sustainable, the need for and the specific characteristics of change must co-emerge and be co-specified (manifest themselves in terms of reciprocal needs and answers or ways of satisfying them).

This means a process of co-learning within given spheres of action and co-construction of competences within professional learning communities "with the capacity to promote and sustain the learning of all professionals in the school community with the collective purpose of enhancing student learning" (Bolam et al., 2005, p. 145). Teachers' professional learning processes and the outcomes of their learning can be seen as sustainable teacher professional development when they take place within the context of community that promotes positive and ongoing change both in terms of individual and collective thinking (understanding and modifying habits of mind) and acting (experimenting and consolidating new ways of being and doing).

1.4. A framework for developing tools with intersecting focuses and dimensions

The RESPOND project framework envisages four intersecting focuses designed to produce tools which can facilitate building a teacher professional profile, providing mentorship and peer-to-peer support, enhancing the school as a professional learning environment, promoting and monitoring the sustainability of professional and school development.

The first two tools focus on individual teachers as professionals and also other professional figures whose role is to work with them to facilitate their ongoing professional development. *The RESPOND Teacher Professional Profile for Global Competence and Portfolio* defines a common teacher professional profile related to global competence – articulated in specific areas and types, levels, and indicators of competence – that is elaborated and experimented internationally and can serve to promote self-assessment processes concerning the development of teachers' competences and thereby enhance the sustainability of teacher professional and school development.

The RESPOND Teacher Professional Development Mentor and Peer-to Peer Support Guidelines is designed to promote the roles of and interactions between different actors in school, with particular reference to mentors, newly qualified teachers, experienced teachers, and school leaders, and defines Mentor Support Guidelines for formal institutional support and Peer-to-Peer Support Guidelines for informal support between colleagues.

The third and fourth tools concentrate on the whole school context and its relationship to professional development. *The RESPOND School Development as a Professional Learning Environment* focuses on the ability of schools to understand and promote the complex processes involved in ongoing teacher professional development and its relationship with the school as a professional learning environment. Particular emphasis is placed on identifying indicators of professional and institutional impact and learning lessons for future development.

The RESPOND Promoting and Monitoring Sustainability Indexes proposes an overall sustainability development framework with particular emphasis on identifying factors that facilitate and impede the sustainability of professional and school development and how facilitating factors can be increased and impeding factors reduced. The sustainability development framework proposes both a common core related to the concept of sustainability in terms of ongoing professional development and school development as a professional learning environment and how the framework and the indexes are relevant to diverse and specific situations.

Each one of these focuses contains four dimensions that feed into and out of each other, starting from a posing a guiding question and defining values and attitudes related to the focus. Both of these features are intended to give rise to multiple transformational enquiry questions that emerge as users of the tool work through its various dimensions and gradually build a picture of a given aspect of teacher professional and school development which then enables assessment of the current situation and identification of eventual needs for change and hypotheses for bringing it about.

The *RESPOND Teacher Professional Profile for Global Competence and Portfolio* enable users of the tool to focus on transversal and specific skills for each one of the four dimensions identified and monitor their development within teachers' professional profiles as their careers progress. The *RESPOND Teacher Professional Development Support Guidelines*, the *RESPOND School Development as a Professional Learning Environment* and the *RESPOND Promoting and Monitoring Sustainability Indexes* enable users of these tools to focus on action areas and specific action steps for each one of the four dimensions identified and build action plans designed to promote change.

Each tool is composed of two parts. Part A provides the overall framework for the given focus and its specific dimensions, based on the guiding questions, the values and attitudes, the transversal skills and specific skills and the action areas and specific action steps proposed. Part B provides further material for monitoring and assessing, analysing and studying in more

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depth, reflecting and planning, related to specific aspects of the tools that users may select as being particularly significant for them.

We believe that our overall framework provides a comprehensive tool for promoting teacher professional development and school development as a professional learning environment and that this could be used by individual teachers, groups of teachers, schools or networks of schools. At the same time, we recognize that people working at any one of these levels will neither wish, nor be able, to work with the whole framework at the same time. In this respect, although each one of the individual tools is meant to be seen as part of an integrated whole, users may decide to work with one of the focuses in particular as this can be perceived as particularly relevant to their needs. This means that each tool or part of a tool can be seen as a free-standing and flexible component that can be selected and adapted in its use according to the specificity of a given context.

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Chapter Two: The RESPOND framework for a teacher professional profile and portfolio

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The primary objective of the RESPOND Teacher Professional Profile and Portfolio for Global Competence is to establish a comprehensive framework for cultivating both transversal and specific skills. This framework is designed to foster contexts and conditions that facilitate the mutual interdependence and sustainability of professional development for teachers and the schools in which they work. By offering a structured approach through the profile and its accompanying portfolio, this tool aims to create a consistent scaffolding that supports teacher growth while enabling schools to adopt cross-curricular strategies, thereby avoiding fragmented and unsustainable approaches to development. The four dimensions that form the core of this framework reflect essential aspects of a teacher's professional profile and align with international priorities for the enhancement of both teacher competence and school development.

The profile and portfolio work together to balance teachers' mastery of their subject areas with a deep understanding of student learning and development, coupled with a respect for the diverse backgrounds and needs of the students they serve. This dual focus enables teachers to plan and deliver effective, individualized instruction that promotes learning for every student. Central to this approach is the creation of learning environments that support student wellbeing and foster high levels of engagement and achievement. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to take ownership of their own professional learning and performance, engaging both as individuals and as active members of professional learning communities. This holistic approach aims to build resilient, adaptable educators who are committed to their ongoing growth and the success of their students and schools.

2.1. The RESPOND Teacher Professional Profile

The RESPOND Teacher Professional Profile (TPP) focuses on the continuous building of teachers' professional knowledge, which involves a deep understanding of learners and the diverse ways they acquire knowledge, as well as mastery of curricular content. This encompasses a nuanced awareness of how students' cognitive, social, and emotional needs impact their learning experiences. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of exploring effective teaching methodologies that can bring complex concepts to life and ensure that learning is both accessible and engaging. Teachers must keep informed about the latest pedagogical theories, educational technology, and instructional trends, enabling them to present content in innovative ways that capture students' interest and support their academic growth.

The sustainability of a teacher's professional profile can be viewed through two key lenses. First, it must exhibit characteristics such as durability, resilience, and transformability, allowing the teacher to adapt and grow as their career progresses. This adaptability is crucial in responding to changes in educational policies, societal shifts, and evolving student needs in a world that is increasingly complex and unpredictable. Second, it must align with and respond to both global and local realities, ensuring that teachers are prepared to meet diverse learner needs while remaining sensitive to the social, cultural, and environmental contexts in which they operate. The RESPOND TPP promotes sustainable professional growth not only for individual teachers but also for the schools and educational systems they work within. All three levels (individuals, schools, and systems) must support one another to create a cohesive and resilient educational ecosystem.

The professional development of teachers also plays a critical role in building sustainable societies. The sustainability of any given teacher's professional profile hinges on its ability to intersect with all aspects of human and ecological systems in a deeply interconnected world. This requires a holistic approach to teaching that considers the impact of education on broader societal and environmental challenges, fostering a generation of learners who are both knowledgeable and socially responsible.

The TPP framework incorporates insights from key contemporary educational documents (Bianchi et al., 2022; Council of Europe, 2018; OECD, 2018) to capture a broad spectrum of learner needs and teacher competencies. These competencies are organized around four intersecting global dimensions, each underpinned by values, attitudes, and the need to promote a deep awareness of their importance.

The four dimensions are declined in terms of transversal skills that are common to each one and specific skills which reflect the particular contents

of a given dimension. Transversal skills are those that cut across all dimensions and include the ability to design and implement varied modes and tools for inquiry-based and experiential learning. These skills support educators in presenting relevant content and facilitating learning experiences that promote critical thinking and problem-solving. Specific skills, on the other hand, are tailored to the unique content and goals of each dimension, ensuring that learners acquire the precise competencies needed to thrive within each thematic focus area. Together, these skill sets equip teachers and learners to address the complex, interconnected challenges facing society today, paving the way for a more sustainable and equitable future. This alignment with global perspectives ensures that teachers are well-equipped to navigate diverse educational demands.
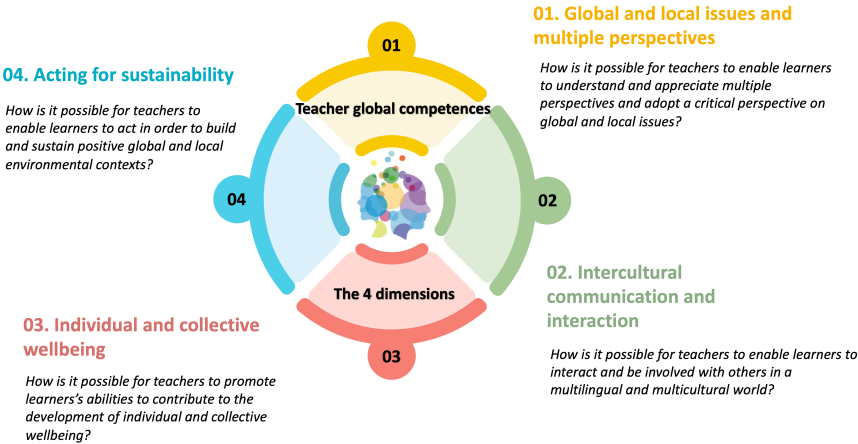
Fig. 2.1 – Teacher global competences

2.1.1. Global and local issues and multiple perspectives

The first dimension of the RESPOND model centres on developing global competence, a concept that underscores how individuals should learn to engage with and understand the complexities of the world around them. Over the past three decades, global competence has become a pivotal reference point for curriculum design, reflecting the necessity for learners to function effectively in a world characterized by increasing interdependence and cultural diversity. This concept was prominently explored in 1996 during the

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"Educating for the Global Community: A Framework for Community Colleges" conference, convened by the American Council on International Intercultural Education. The conference emphasized that globally competent learners are those who can comprehend the interconnected nature of global systems and people, possess a foundational understanding of historical and contemporary global issues, and demonstrate the ability to appreciate and navigate cultural differences with adaptability and respect. Such competence extends beyond mere tolerance of diversity and calls for active celebration of the richness and advantages inherent in cultural pluralism.

Building upon this foundation, educational researchers and institutions have sought to elaborate on what it means to be "globally competent." For example, scholars such as Hunter et al. (2006) have examined the implications and challenges of fostering global competence in educational contexts, while Van Roekel (2010) framed it as an essential skill for navigating the complexities of the 21st century. Other key contributors, including Boix Mansilla and Jackson (2013), Soland et al. (2013), and Wiseman (2017), have further refined the definition and proposed methods for assessing global competence in learners. During this same period, global education systems began to prioritize competencies and capabilities as central to learning outcomes, prompting numerous international bodies to develop systematic models of curriculum design that emphasize global awareness. For example, UNESCO's publication *Global Citizenship Education: Preparing Learners for the Challenges of the 21st Century* (2014) underscores the importance of cultivating a sense of global responsibility and interconnectedness. Similarly, the Council of Europe's *Competencies for Democratic Culture* (2018) and the OECD's *Global Competency for an Inclusive World* (2016) reflect parallel efforts to integrate global competence into educational frameworks. In 2018, this growing focus culminated in the inclusion of a global competence test within the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), with the results published in 2020, further emphasizing the significance of this dimension in shaping modern educational systems.

2.1.2. Intercultural communication and interaction

The second dimension of the RESPOND model shifts attention to intercultural communication, recognizing its vital role in fostering cross-cultural engagement through education. This dimension emphasizes the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that facilitate not only effective but also culturally sensitive communication in diverse social and cultural settings.

Effective intercultural communication goes beyond basic interaction; it requires a deep understanding of cultural norms, values, and contexts, enabling individuals to engage meaningfully and appropriately across cultural boundaries. Deardorff (2006) highlights the need for a structured approach to developing this competence, emphasizing the interplay of cultural awareness, empathy, and adaptability in diverse communication scenarios.

The Council of Europe has taken significant strides in promoting intercultural competence, closely aligning it with the foundational European principles of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. This alignment underscores the importance of intercultural engagement as a means of fostering inclusive societies grounded in respect for individual rights and democratic values. According to Huber and Reynolds (2014), intercultural competence involves a holistic combination of attitudes, knowledge, understanding, and practical skills that manifest through action. This competence empowers individuals to effectively navigate and contribute to intercultural interactions, whether independently or within collaborative settings. By developing intercultural competence, individuals gain the capacity to bridge cultural divides, foster mutual respect, and engage constructively in an increasingly interconnected world. In essence, this dimension prepares learners to thrive in diverse environments, ensuring they are not only equipped to communicate across cultures but also to embody values that promote social cohesion and understanding.

2.1.3. Individual and collective wellbeing

The third dimension emphasizes the crucial role of teacher wellbeing in fostering a positive and effective educational environment. When teachers experience high levels of wellbeing, they are better positioned to build meaningful and supportive relationships with their students, implement innovative and engaging teaching methods, and effectively manage classroom dynamics, including reducing disciplinary challenges. This, in turn, positively influences student outcomes, enhancing both their academic performance and their overall school experience (Kern et al., 2014). Wellbeing is more than a desirable state for teachers; it is essential for them to realize their full professional potential while maintaining their physical and emotional health. In educational research, the importance of teacher wellbeing aligns closely with two of the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 3, which focuses on Good Health and Wellbeing, and Goal 4, which seeks to ensure Quality Education (Guijarro et al., 2021). Together, these goals high-

light the integral connection between a teacher's personal health and professional effectiveness, as a thriving educator is often central to a thriving learning community.

Wellbeing is a multifaceted construct, shaped by cultural, individual, and temporal factors, making it a dynamic and evolving concept (Cardoso, 2018; Cardoso et al., 2022). Among the key frameworks for studying wellbeing, two primary models stand out. The first is the distinction between objective wellbeing – related to tangible resources and external conditions – and subjective wellbeing, which focuses on psychological states and personal perceptions. The second model differentiates between hedonic wellbeing, which is concerned with positive emotions, pleasure, and satisfaction, and eudemonic wellbeing, which relates to deeper psychological functioning, purpose, and self-realization (Butler & Kern, 2016; McCallum et al., 2017). Prominent within the study of positive psychological functioning is the model proposed by Ryff and Synger (2008), which emerged from extensive empirical research. Additionally, Seligman's (2011) PERMA model, widely recognized and respected internationally, highlights five key elements of wellbeing: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment.

In the context of education, adaptations of ecological models, such as those by Mercer and Gregersen (2020) and Guijarro et al. (2021), based on Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecosystemic paradigm, provide valuable insights into how wellbeing operates across different levels of influence. These include the microsystem, which encompasses the immediate classroom context; the mesosystem, which reflects relationships and a sense of community within and outside the institution; the exosystem, representing the broader educational institution and its policies; the macrosystem, which considers broader sociocultural, legal, and political factors; the chronosystem, capturing life events, career development, and critical moments; and the ontosystem, focusing on individual psychological and social characteristics, such as identity and perceived capabilities. This layered perspective demonstrates how teacher wellbeing is shaped by and, in turn, shapes multiple interconnected systems within and beyond the school environment.

2.1.4. Acting for sustainability

The fourth dimension addresses sustainability from the lens of education as a transformative paradigm that promotes and realizes human potential in pursuit of social, economic, and ecological wellbeing. This transformative approach to sustainability emphasizes that these aspects are inseparable and

must be pursued as a cohesive, dynamic whole (Sterling, 2001). Schools, therefore, should be understood as complex ecosystems, wherein interactions between people – students, teachers, administrators, and the wider community – and their physical environment are interdependent. As part of a global biosphere, schools are connected to countless other ecosystems, and their interactions affect not only the school community but also broader ecological and social systems.

Within this view, being part of a school community involves recognizing one's role in this intricate web of relationships and taking responsibility for the impact of individual and collective actions on the global environment. Each member of the school ecosystem must appreciate how their behaviours and decisions influence others and the broader biosphere. This awareness extends to a sense of stewardship over the health and sustainability of all ecosystems on the planet, recognizing that educational institutions play a vital role in shaping responsible, environmentally conscious citizens. In this way, the fourth dimension situates schools as key actors in a broader push towards sustainability, intertwining education, social justice, economic stability, and environmental responsibility into a unified approach for transformative change.

2.2. Part A: The RESPOND Teacher Professional Profile Framework

Dimension 1: Teaching for engagement in global and local issues and perspectives

Tab. 2.1 – Global and local issues and perspectives

Dimension 1 Teaching for engagement in:	Guiding Question	Values and Attitudes
Global and local issues and perspectives	*How is it possible for teachers to enable learners to understand and appreciate multiple perspectives and adopt a critical perspective on global and local issues?*	Developing global and local awareness as recognition, understanding, respect, openness, and responsibility towards diversity, inclusion, dignity, equality, fairness, and freedom.
Transversal Skills	**Specific Skills**	
Develop and implement multiple modes and tools for inquiry and experiential-based learning to: *Identify and propose to learners*	- issues that address relevant questions involving global and local dimensions. - different sources, formats, media, and languages for gathering input. - how differential access to knowledge, technology, and resources affects quality of life and perspectives. - key elements of global and local issues and the interconnections between them. - the need to understand complexity to frame, anticipate, prevent, and act in the face of global and local problems.	
Promote learners' abilities to	- identify local and global issues, understand their significance, and develop inquiry to generate questions. - analyse local and global situations and interpret data and evidence directly or indirectly collected. - recognize and define one's own and other perspectives, and identify what influences them. - integrate and summarize evidence to construct coherent personal responses to globally and locally significant research questions, develop and express personal points of view. - formulate hypotheses on how to deal with critical issues individually and collectively, collaborate and cooperate while working together.	

Dimension 2: Teaching for engagement in intercultural communication and interaction

Tab. 2.2 – Intercultural communication and interaction

Dimension 2 Teaching for engagement in:	Guiding Question	Values and Attitudes
Intercultural communication and interaction	*How is it possible for teachers to enable learners to interact and be involved with others in a multilingual and multicultural world?*	*Developing intercultural communication and interaction awareness geared towards consolidating respect, openness, curiosity, discovery, and democratic values.*
Transversal Skills	**Specific Skills**	
Develop and implement multiple modes and tools for inquiry and experiential-based learning to: *Identify and propose to learners*	- communicative strategies for intercultural interaction. - environments that encourage positive social and cross-cultural. interaction, active engagement in learning, social responsibility in local and global contexts, and self-motivation. - personal and external factors that impact upon intercultural beliefs, behaviours, and decisions. - examples of diversity in intercultural factors and experiences. - local and global socio-pragmatics that portrays a (non-)monolithic perception of the native speaker's language and culture.	
Promote learners' abilities to	- listen to and communicate effectively with people who embody cultural diversity and interact with empathy and respect. - develop intercultural verbal/non-verbal communication competence. - deal with psychological stress caused by intercultural interactions. - evaluate and make judgments about cultural beliefs, values, practices, discourses, and products, including those associated with one's own cultural affiliations, and being able to explain one's views. - act as a mediator in intercultural exchanges, including skills in translating, interpreting, and explaining.	

Dimension 3: Teaching for engagement in individual and collective wellbeing

Tab. 2.3 – Individual and collective wellbeing

Dimension 3 Teaching for engagement in:	Guiding Question	Values and Attitudes
Individual and collective wellbeing	*How is it possible for teachers to promote learners' abilities to contribute to the development of individual and collective wellbeing?*	Developing wellbeing awareness as understanding, promoting, and maintaining self-acceptance, meaning in life, accomplishment, autonomy, positive relations, positive emotions, and health.
Transversal Skills	**Specific Skills**	
Develop and implement multiple modes and tools for inquiry and experiential-based learning to: *Identify and propose to learners*	• the relevance of wellbeing in the international political agenda. • the relevance of wellbeing for physical-mental health and the welfare state. • dimensions of wellbeing and their constitutive elements. • awareness of the intrapersonal, interpersonal, intercultural, and chronosystemic dimensions of wellbeing. • the relevance of wellbeing for positive functioning at different interrelated levels: physical, emotional, mental-intellectual, spiritual, social, and ecological.	
Promote learners' abilities to	• comprehend the importance of wellbeing and its various dimensions. • recognize that wellbeing promotion is the responsibility of people, structures, and institutions. • understand that wellbeing not only resides in people's minds, but it is also part of the sociocultural context. • act to facilitate one's own wellbeing and that of others. • respect diversity as a right and as enrichment in communities and societies.	

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Dimension 4: Teaching for engagement in acting for sustainability

Tab. 2.4 – Acting for sustainability

Dimension 4 Teaching for engagement in:	Guiding Question	Values and Attitudes
Acting for Sustainability	*How is it possible for teachers to enable learners to act in order to build and sustain positive global and local environmental contexts?*	Developing sustainability awareness as promoting, restoring, and maintaining socio-ecosystem health and enhancing justice for all living organisms.
Transversal Skills	**Specific Skills**	
Develop and implement multiple modes and tools for inquiry and experiential-based learning to: *Identify and propose to learners*	• key aspects of the concept of sustainability in global and local environments. • the recognition that humans are part of nature and that respect for the needs and rights of other species and of nature itself is vital for promoting healthy and resilient ecosystems. • activities involving learners in the decision-making process for the implementation of projects related to natural environmental sustainability issues. • ways of envisioning alternative scenarios for sustainable futures. • steps for the co-construction of inclusive physical and emotional learning environments that support individual, collaborative, and cooperative learning based on respectful interactions and meaningful relationships.	
Promote learners' abilities to	• analyse sustainability issues from multiple perspectives to understand the complexity of contexts and interactions within and between environmental systems. • evaluate how personal values and actions align with sustainability values. • identify one's own and others' potential for addressing sustainability issues and to act to contribute to positive environmental change. • take responsibility for one's own learning, helping others' learning and develop self-assessment strategies. • design and conduct action projects to improve health and justice in their environments.	

2.3. Part B: The RESPOND Teacher Professional Profile Portfolio

The RESPOND Teacher Professional Profile Portfolio is a tool designed to enhance the promotion of self-assessment processes related to evaluating the development of teachers' professional competences linked to the global dimensions of the framework. The Portfolio can be used by individuals and groups of teachers working together. It can also be used by schools as part of their development plans as professional learning environments.

Part 1 focuses on self-assessment of the skills envisaged in each of the dimensions of the TPP. Part 2 opens a broader perspective on assessing formal, non-formal and informal professional learning experiences in terms of how they have contributed to the development of these skills. Part 3 focuses on what documentary evidence is available to accompany the self-assessment process. Part 4 invites reflection on overall teacher professional development as part of building an ongoing autographical narrative.

2.3.1. Part 1: Specific skills self-assessment

The existing literature provides a substantial body of work on using portfolios as tools aimed at enhancing self-assessment processes, which play a critical role in evaluating and fostering teachers' ongoing professional growth and competences (Feder & Cramer, 2023; Pérez-Valverde & Ruiz Cecilia, 2014). The RESPOND Portfolio integrates these processes by aligning them with the global dimensions outlined in the RESPOND TPP, creating a coherent framework for professional development and reflection.

The RESPOND Portfolio is highly versatile, designed to accommodate both individual use and collaborative efforts among groups of teachers. When used in collaboration, teachers can reflect on their practices, share insights, and support each other's growth, enhancing collective expertise within a professional learning community. Moreover, schools can integrate the portfolio as a core component of their professional development initiatives, using it to align teachers' professional growth with broader school development goals and fostering environments that prioritize continuous learning and improvement.

The first part of the Portfolio centres on the self-assessment of specific skills within each of the TPP's four dimensions. This segment encourages teachers to reflect deeply on their competencies, assessing their proficiency in each identified skill area. By engaging in this reflective process, teachers gain a clearer understanding of their strengths, areas for improvement, and

opportunities for professional growth. The self-assessment process employs a 6-point Likert scale, providing nuanced insights into teachers' perceptions of their abilities. Each point on the scale is accompanied by a brief definition to ensure clarity and consistency in self-evaluation. For example, the scale ranges from 1 (not at all) to 6 (completely), allowing teachers to gauge their performance on a continuum and set realistic goals for their professional development. This structured approach promotes thoughtful self-reflection, fosters accountability, and empowers teachers to take ownership of their growth within the dimensions of the TPP.

Assess on a scale from 1 to 6 the level you feel you have reached in the development of the specific skills related to each of the teacher global competence dimensions.

Dimension 1: Teaching for engagement in global and local issues and perspectives

Tab. 2.5 – Specific skills related to global and local issues and perspectives

How well do you feel able to…	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.1 Identify and propose to learners issues that address relevant questions involving global and local dimensions.						
1.2 Identify and propose to learners different sources, formats media and languages for gathering input.						
1.3 Identify and propose to learners how differential access to knowledge, technology, and resources affects quality of life and perspectives.						
1.4 Identify and propose to learners key elements of global and local issues and the interconnections between them.						
1.5 Identify and propose to learners the need to understand complexity to frame, anticipate, prevent, and act in the face of global and local problems.						
1.6 Promote learners' abilities to identify local and global issues, understand their significance, and develop inquiry to generate questions.						
1.7 Promote learners' abilities to analyse local and global situations and interpret data and evidence directly or indirectly collected.						
1.8 Promote learners' abilities to recognize and define one's own and other perspectives and identify what influences them.						
1.9 Promote learners' abilities to integrate and summarize evidence to construct coherent personal responses to globally and locally significant research questions, develop and express personal points of view.						
1.10 Promote learners' abilities to formulate hypotheses on how to deal with critical issues individually and collectively, collaborate and cooperate while working together.						

Note. (1) Not at all; (2) Not very well; (3) To some extent; (4) Quite well; (5) Very well; (6) Completely.

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Dimension 2: Teaching for engagement in Intercultural communication and interaction

Tab. 2.6 – Specific skills related to intercultural communication and interaction

How well do you feel able to…	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.1 Identify and propose to learners communicative strategies for intercultural interaction.						
2.2 Identify and propose to learners environments that encourage positive social and cross-cultural. interaction, active engagement in learning, social responsibility in local and global contexts, and self-motivation.						
2.3 Identify and propose to learners personal and external factors that impact upon intercultural beliefs, behaviours, and decisions.						
2.4 Identify and propose to learners examples of diversity in intercultural factors and experiences.						
2.5 Identify and propose to learners local and global socio-pragmatics that portrays a (non-) monolithic perception of the native speaker's language and culture.						
2.6 Promote learners' abilities to listen to and communicate effectively with people who embody cultural diversity and interact with empathy and respect.						
2.7 Promote learners' abilities to develop intercultural verbal/non-verbal communication competence.						
2.8 Promote learners' abilities to deal with psychological stress caused by intercultural interactions.						
2.9 Promote learners' abilities to evaluate and make judgments about cultural beliefs, values, practices, discourses, and products, including those associated with one's own cultural affiliations, and being able to explain one's views.						
2.10 Promote learners' abilities to act as a mediator in intercultural exchanges, including skills in translating, interpreting, and explaining.						

Note. (1) Not at all; (2) Not very well; (3) To some extent; (4) Quite well; (5) Very well; (6) Completely.

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Dimension 3: Teaching for engagement in Individual and collective wellbeing

Tab. 2.7 – Specific skills related to individual and collective wellbeing

How well do you feel able to…	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.1 Identify and propose to learners the relevance of wellbeing in the international political agenda.						
3.2 Identify and propose to learners the relevance of wellbeing for physical-mental health and the welfare state.						
3.3 Identify and propose to learners dimensions of wellbeing and their constitutive elements.						
3.4 Identify and propose to learners awareness of the intrapersonal, interpersonal, intercultural, and chronosystemic dimensions of wellbeing.						
3.5 Identify and propose to learners the relevance of wellbeing for positive functioning at different interrelated levels: physical, emotional, mental-intellectual, spiritual, social, and ecological.						
3.6 Promote learners' abilities to understand the importance of wellbeing and its various dimensions.						
3.7 Promote learners' abilities to understand that wellbeing promotion is the responsibility of people, structures, and institutions.						
3.8 Promote learners' abilities to understand that wellbeing not only resides in people's minds, but it is also part of the sociocultural context.						
3.9 Promote learners' abilities to act to facilitate one's own wellbeing and that of others.						
3.10 Promote learners' abilities to respect diversity as a right and as enrichment in communities and societies.						

Note. (1) Not at all; (2) Not very well; (3) To some extent; (4) Quite well; (5) Very well; (6) Completely.

Dimension 4: Teaching for engagement in acting for sustainability

Tab. 2.8 – Specific skills related to acting for sustainability

How well do you feel able to…	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.1 Identify and propose to learners key aspects of the concept of sustainability in local and global environments.						
4.2 Identify and propose to learners the recognition that humans are part of nature and that respect for the needs and rights of other species and of nature itself is vital for promoting healthy and resilient ecosystems.						
4.3 Identify and propose to learners activities involving learners in the decision-making process for the implementation of projects related to natural environmental sustainability issues.						
4.4 Identify and propose to learners ways of envisioning alternative scenarios for sustainable futures.						
4.5 Identify and propose to learners steps for the co-construction of inclusive physical and emotional learning environments that support individual, collaborative, and co-operative learning based on respectful interactions and meaningful relationships.						
4.6 Promote learners' abilities to analyse sustainability issues from multiple perspectives to understand the complexity of contexts and interactions within and between environmental systems.						
4.7 Promote learners' abilities to evaluate how personal values and actions align with sustainability values.						
4.8 Promote learners' abilities to identify one's own and others' potential for addressing sustainability issues and to act to contribute to positive environmental change.						
4.9 Promote learners' abilities to take responsibility for one's own learning, helping others' learning and develop self-assessment strategies.						
4.10 Promote learners' abilities to design and conduct action projects to improve health and justice in their environments.						

Note. (1) Not at all; (2) Not very well; (3) To some extent; (4) Quite well; (5) Very well; (6) Completely

2.3.2. *Part 2: Evaluating contexts*

Part 2 of the RESPOND Portfolio offers a more comprehensive approach to evaluating the diverse contexts – formal, non-formal, and informal – that contribute to teachers' professional learning and skill development. This broader perspective recognizes that professional growth does not happen exclusively within structured settings like workshops or classroom training sessions but also through a variety of experiences that occur outside traditional educational environments. By capturing this wide range of learning contexts, the Portfolio acknowledges the complexity and richness of teachers' professional journeys.

Within this section, teachers are invited to provide detailed descriptions of their professional experiences. For each context–whether it is a formal training program, a non-formal community event, or an informal learning moment–teachers document essential details such as the type of experience, the time frame when it took place, and its duration. This contextual information sets the stage for a deeper exploration of how each experience has contributed to their development.

Teachers are then prompted to identify the specific skills that each experience helped them cultivate. This reflection encourages educators to draw connections between their learning activities and the growth of their professional competences, making the impact of each experience tangible and meaningful. Additionally, they are asked to elaborate on the activities or practices within these contexts that were particularly instrumental in fostering these skills. By doing so, teachers can pinpoint effective strategies that supported their development and consider how they might replicate or adapt these strategies in future learning situations.

The Portfolio further requires teachers to outline indicators of the specific skills or professional learning outcomes achieved through these experiences. This emphasis on outcomes allows teachers to assess their progress in a concrete way, considering both their growth and areas where further development is needed. As part of this reflective process, teachers are also encouraged to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each experience, providing critical insights that can guide their future professional development endeavours.

Finally, teachers are asked to share their thoughts and feelings that emerged from each experience. This component acknowledges the emotional and psychological dimensions of learning, recognizing that professional growth often involves navigating challenges, celebrating achievements, and reflecting on one's evolving identity as an educator. By capturing

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these reflections, the Portfolio offers a holistic view of professional development, integrating practical skill-building with personal insights and self-awareness. This comprehensive approach helps teachers better understand their learning journey and more effectively plan for their continued growth and improvement.

Formal professional learning experiences that can be related to specific skills

Tab. 2.9 – Formal professional learning experiences that can be related to specific skills

Year and type	Length	Specific skills developed	Activities involved	Indicators of skills	Strong or weak points	Thoughts or feelings involved

Non-formal experiences (association membership, courses related to personal interests, etc.) that do not involve school-based professional activities

Tab. 2.10 – Non-formal professional learning experiences that can be related to specific skills

Year and type	Length	Specific skills developed	Activities involved	Indicators of skills	Strong or weak points	Thoughts or feelings involved

Informal experiences (recreational activities with colleagues, reading, friendship, internet, etc.) that do not involve professional activities

Tab. 2.11 – Informal professional learning experiences that can be related to specific skills

Year and type	Length	Specific skills developed	Activities involved	Indicators of skills	Strong or weak points	Thoughts or feelings involved

2.3.3. Part 3: Documentary evidence

Part 3 of the RESPOND Portfolio emphasizes the importance of documenting evidence to support the self-assessment and evaluation process. This section is designed to help teachers reflect on and substantiate their professional learning experiences and the skills they have developed as a result. By gathering and presenting tangible evidence, educators are encouraged to link their reflective self-assessments to concrete examples that demonstrate their progress and achievements.

For each professional learning experience described in previous parts of the Portfolio, teachers are asked to identify relevant documentary evidence that can serve as indicators of their growth. Documentary evidence can refer to documents produced *during* professional learning experiences or *later as a result of* professional learning experiences, such as materials used, data collected, etc. Documentary evidence is a way of providing indicators of teacher professional development.

This evidence may take various forms, including documents produced during or after the experience. For example, teachers might provide instructional materials they developed during a training session, lesson plans or resources created in response to their learning, data they collected for a specific project, or even reflections and evaluations that illustrate their developmental journey.

This emphasis on documentation allows teachers to move beyond abstract reflections and provide a more robust, tangible record of their professional

growth. The evidence serves as a means to validate their self-assessments and offers a concrete basis for evaluating their competencies against the dimensions outlined in the RESPOND Teacher Professional Profile (TPP). By compiling this documentary evidence, teachers not only build a comprehensive portfolio of their accomplishments but also create a resource that can be shared with peers, mentors, or administrators, demonstrating their commitment to continuous improvement and excellence in teaching.

Furthermore, this process highlights the value of documentation in professional learning. It encourages teachers to view their experiences through a critical lens, considering how their work and learning have impacted their practice and contributed to their skill development. This reflective approach helps educators gain deeper insights into their growth trajectory and better understand the connections between theory, practice, and tangible outcomes. Ultimately, the collection and review of documentary evidence enhance the overall effectiveness of the Portfolio, making it a powerful tool for fostering meaningful professional development and growth.

What documentary evidence can I add about the experiences above and the skills they have promoted? (These can be documents produced *during* the experience or *later* as a result of the experience, such as materials used, data collected, etc.).

Tab. 2.12 – Documentary evidence for the self-assessment and evaluation process

Specific Skill	Documentation (short description)

2.3.4. Part 4: Professional learning biography

Part 4 of the RESPOND Portfolio gives users the chance to reflect on their professional development in relation to teacher global competence within a professional learning autobiography. A professional learning autobiography is a self-assessment tool for evaluation of one's own professional

development. Writing the autobiography promotes a process through which it is possible to consciously reconstruct one's professional learning experiences, thereby attributing a personal meaning to the learning experience.

This serves as a reflective journey to explore and articulate personal. Through critical reflection, educators assess how their ideas on learning and teaching evolve, encompassing choices of content, objectives, methodologies, resources, and assessment practices to adapt to diverse learning needs. This dimension invites educators to identify and respond to the needs of both their learners and colleagues, fostering a positive school and classroom culture through inclusive practices, effective collaboration, and relationship-building. Additionally, it offers a space to recognize and leverage personal strengths while acknowledging areas for improvement, setting a pathway for continuous professional growth and meaningful contributions within educational communities.

This part includes three guiding questions:
1. How are (my) ideas on learning and teaching changing concerning choices of contents, objectives, methodologies, resources, and assessment of learning?
2. What do my learners and my colleagues need from me and what do I need from them in terms of creating a positive school and classroom culture, playing our various roles in different spheres of activity, building constructive relationships, and promoting inclusive practices?
3. What are my strengths and how can I build on them? What are my weaknesses and how can I improve them?

2.4. Conclusions

The four dimensions of the teacher professional profile – addressing global and local issues, fostering intercultural communication and interaction, promoting individual and collective wellbeing, and acting for sustainability – serve as a comprehensive framework that reflects the multifaceted role of educators in today's interconnected and dynamic world. Each dimension, when approached individually, invites teachers to critically evaluate and refine their practices, deepening their impact in the classroom and beyond. A reflective portfolio that assesses these dimensions on a personal level encourages educators to explore their strengths and areas for growth, creating a continuous process of professional and personal development.

However, the real power of this framework emerges when these dimensions are not seen in isolation but as elements of a larger, integrated whole. This interconnectedness creates a polyphony – a rich, dynamic composition where each teacher's unique voice contributes to a collective harmony. In this approach, every educator is given the freedom and support to create their own symphony, shaped by their individual experiences, perspectives, and aspirations. Whether driven by a passion for environmental sustainability, a commitment to social justice, a desire to foster intercultural understanding, or a dedication to nurturing wellbeing, each educator can bring their own focus and creativity to bear on their practice.

This polyphonic model recognizes that teaching is not a static profession; it evolves as educators respond to new challenges, diverse cultural contexts, and the changing needs of their students and communities. By allowing for personalized expression within a shared framework, this approach ensures that teachers are not only equipped with the skills and knowledge to make a meaningful difference but are also empowered to innovate, adapt, and lead with authenticity. Ultimately, it is this blend of individual agency and collective purpose that can transform educational spaces into places of profound growth, where both educators and learners thrive and contribute to a more inclusive, resilient, and compassionate world.

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Chapter Three: The RESPOND framework for mentor and peer-to-peer support guidelines

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In this chapter, we introduce a framework for mentor and peer-to-peer support in schools, developed as international guidelines. As a tool, the guidelines focus on the roles of and interactions between different actors in school, with reference to mentors, newly qualified teachers, experienced teachers, and school leaders.

These guidelines are prepared against the backdrop of a global recognition that, around the world, education systems must be transformed if we are to reach the lofty aspirations set out in Sustainable Development Goal 4 to, "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). This includes a specific recognition that at the heart of any educational transformation, we must emphasize and prioritize the role that teachers play. If teachers themselves are to be empowered as agents of change, then it is essential that we lift-up the teaching profession in our societies and ensure that teachers are provided the necessary support for professional development and enabled to take the action within their work to innovate and improve on the status quo.

3.1. The mentor and peer-to-peer support guidelines

The principal aim of these guidelines is to build a framework for developing action areas and specific actions to promote contexts and conditions that facilitate the interdependence between professional development and school development and the sustainability of both. The tool provided by the guidelines aims to create a homogeneous scaffolding for teacher professional and school development and the avoidance of sectoral approaches which risk fragmentary and unsustainable outcomes. The four dimensions focused on

are key features of any teacher's professional profile and resonate with international priorities for teacher professional and school development.

These guidelines are essential for various groups involved in education. First and foremost, they are for school leaders and the teachers under their supervision. The guidelines provide school leadership with valuable strategies for structuring and facilitating an environment where the learning and development of both newly qualified and experienced teachers are prioritized. Second, these guidelines offer insights for teacher educators regarding their ongoing role in bridging the gap between teacher training and professional practice. This includes their engagement in research and development alongside schools, as well as their support for teachers' continuing professional development. Lastly, these guidelines could be beneficial for educational authorities. Decisions related to time management and educational policies should prioritize continuous teacher development and the collective role teachers play in school development. A clear framework, along with the necessary opportunities and expectations for professional growth, must be established at all levels of the education system.

The intended impact of the mentor and peer-to-peer support guidelines is at the level of ongoing professional learning for all teachers, curriculum renewal and delivery to promote global learning and competence, and that of planning for overall school improvement. The levels of participation and dissemination foreseen mean that this product is a key part of the overall RESPOND project and can enable it to impact in terms of intersecting local, regional, national, and international levels by fostering a collegial professional culture throughout all the organisations that play a role in educational systems.

The development of the action areas and their corresponding steps is grounded in educational research. This foundation ensures that the proposed areas are not based solely on the experiences, perspectives or biases of the authors but are supported by research demonstrating their potential effectiveness in fostering learning and professional development throughout a teacher's career. It is crucial that users of these guidelines approach them critically, making necessary adjustment to their local context – there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Instead, the guidelines provide a common starting point for reflection and discussion within each school. To promote transparency, the following section offers a brief overview of the key literature that informed the development of these guidelines, with the hope of encouraging readers to explore these areas further. Additionally, the reference list includes sources that are not explicitly cited in the main text but were actively used in shaping the action areas presented in the guidelines. As the guidelines as a whole draw on various sources across different areas, it would not have

been meaningful to directly link specific sources to individual action steps. This allows interested readers to delve deeper into the research and broaden their understanding of the underlying concepts.

3.1.1. Collective teacher efficacy

Collective teacher efficacy is commonly defined as teachers' shared perceptions and beliefs regarding their possibilities to create a good and productive learning environment for all students. It is about the conviction individual teachers have regarding the collective capacity within their school community. This belief is tied to the idea that the collective effort of teachers can result in positive and meaningful outcomes for all students (Goddard et al., 2000; Klassen, 2010). The term originally stems from social cognitive theory, and Bandura's theories regarding efficacy. "Collective efficacy beliefs are a group shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given level of attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 477). The concept encapsulates the shared belief in a school about the potential of teachers to positively steer students' growth and development (Adams & Forsyth, 2006). This shared belief includes all students, also those who are unmotivated or for various reasons could have disadvantages in their learning and development. Through collective teacher efficacy, changes are created that counteract with conditions, with the students, and/or in their environment that could otherwise lead to challenges for the student's progression (Donohoo, 2018).

Collective teacher efficacy beliefs are an area that has received increasing attention as a field of educational research, especially in the last 30 years. A big part of this research has been concerned with detecting connections between collective teacher efficacy and student's achievement. Findings show that factors strengthening collective teacher efficacy could have an impact on the student's achievement (Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). The connection between collective efficacy and students' academic achievements is seen in how the belief in their collective abilities can direct the energy teachers put into teaching and how unwavering they are when facing students with diverse academic or social difficulties (Salloum, 2022; Tschannen-Moran et al., 2014). The correlation between collective teacher efficacy and student achievement have been positively quantified through meta-analysis, which led to Hattie (2023) putting it at the top factor to influence student achievement (Donohoo, 2018; Eells, 2011).

Collective teacher efficacy shapes how a school operates and how teachers work together. It's about how a school uses the combined ability of its

teachers to reach shared goals. This shared belief affects many aspects of teaching, like instructing, managing classrooms, encouraging students, and dealing with problems (Goddard et al., 2000; Tschannen-Moran et al., 2014). The stronger the belief in collective efficacy, the better teachers can tap into and use the resources within their community. This is because strong relationships based on trust create a supportive community, which is essential for a group to work effectively together (Goddard et al., 2000).

3.1.2. Social cognitive theory

A central concept within the social cognitive learning theory is human agency. In brief, this concept revolves around the idea that all individuals can exert some form of control over their own lives through the actions they choose to take. A key factor associated with human agency is individuals' self-efficacy. Within the social cognitive theory, human agency is developed because of a reciprocal, causal relationship between three areas: behaviour, interpersonal personal factors, and the external environment. The interplay between these factors will vary depending on the situation and will determine individuals' actions and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997).

3.1.3. Cultural-historical activity theory and expansive learning

In the 1920s, Lev Vygotsky (1962, 1980) initiated the development of cultural-historical activity theory by introducing the idea of the cultural mediation of actions. This theoretical framework uniquely added society and culture as an additional unit of analysis in considering the relationship between human activity and an individual's thinking and feelings. Vygotsky believed that learning happens when existing complex cognitive structures that are internalized by a child through activities shared with adults and which are situated in the cultural context of the child. Aleksei Leont'ev expanded on this by adding the concept of a collective activity system, which moved this theory beyond a focus on the individual as sole unit of analysis and helped to explain how social groups through collective actions have a mediating role on activities.

From 1978 Yrjö Engeström (1999, 2014) has built on cultural-historical activity theory by introducing Expansive Learning and Activity Theory. This work proposes that learning new forms of activity is a process in constant creation, not based on fixed, existing knowledge and skill. Expansive learn-

ing is focused on collective transformation in the collective system, recognising that this is initiated by individuals. Engeström explained that this can happen when individuals start to question the established norms in an activity system, and this can escalate into collaborative and deliberate collective change Expansive learning also focuses on horizontal development as complementary to vertical development. Vertical development explains that human learning is aimed at developing higher levels of competence. Horizontal development comes about when knowledge concepts are challenged by the lived experience of these concepts, thus bringing about a change in the individual.

In expansive learning, learners learn something that is not yet there. In other words, the learners construct a new object and concept for their collective activity and implement this new object and concept in practice (Engeström, 2014, p. 74).

Engeström (1999) detailed an expansive learning cycle based on seven consecutive actions. The first action in the cycle is questioning or challenging aspects of existing knowledge, understanding or practice. This is followed by the second action of analysing these aspects to find out how and why this applies in practice and what is the systemic explanation of the situation. This action involves a transformative step in collective understanding, discourse or practice in relation to the situation. The third action involves the modelling of the new explanatory relationship that was identified in a way that can be publicly transmitted. "This means constructing an explicit, simplified model of the new idea that explains and offers a solution to the problematic situation" (Engeström, 1999, p. 383). In the fourth action, the model is tested, examined and experimented with to grasps it dynamics, capabilities and limitations. This is followed by the fifth action which is the actual implementation, application or extension of this new model. The sixth action involves reflection on and evaluation of the process, and the seventh action involves consolidating the outcomes of this process and integrating into a stable form of practice.

Expansive learning initiates the zone of proximal development, as defined by Vygotsky (1980), and is often stimulated by the need to address contradictions that arise during interaction with the collective activity system. In addition, Engeström and Sannino (2017) also explain the importance of expansive learning as a boundary crossing process in which collective concept formation takes place due to engaging with unfamiliar situations or domains that require new conceptual resources to adequately address or encounter them. This process in turn strengthens network building and the potential for

further engagement and collaboration among the group to address further development and undergo subsequent expansive learning cycles.

3.1.4. Communities of practice

The social learning theory "Communities of practice" (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) provides a valuable concept for understanding the important learning opportunities that exist at a community-level. The concept of communities of practice is postulated on three common aspects: *mutual engagement*, *joint enterprise*, and *shared repertoire.* The concept starts with the idea that people group together to complete activities, and in doing so they must negotiate the meanings of the actions they engage in with one another. "Membership in a community of practice is therefore a matter of mutual engagement. That is what defines the community" (Wenger, 1998, p. 73). The second aspect, joint enterprise, accounts for the fact that this type of mutual engagement must be a negotiated experience in which both purpose and relationships of accountability are developed. This leads to the community establishing its own unique form of practice. The mutual engagement and joint enterprise of a community of practice leads to the development of the third aspect – a shared repertoire. Through a history of negotiation and practice, a common set of resources are established that allow the members of the group to interact without having to constantly re-examine shared understandings.

The concept of communities of practice has gained support as a valid approach to *situated learning.* "The overall apparatus of situated learning is a significant rethink of learning theory of value to anyone wanting to take learning beyond the individual… Part of its appeal is that a seemingly natural formation which enhances learning can be consciously developed, which is important for those implementing change" (Barton & Tusting, 2005, p. 3). The learning process in communities of practice is dynamic in that renegotiation and change are a continuous part of such practice. *Reification* and *participation* are key aspects to this learning process as the two main ways in which participants can influence the process of practice. In the process of community practice, *reification* is the act of bringing concrete meaning to abstract concepts through their regular application and codification. *Participation*, on the other hand, is the process through which diverse ideas and concepts can be deliberated over to reach common understanding to structure practice on (Wenger, 1998, pp. 88-93).

3.2. Part A: The RESPOND Mentor and Peer-to-Peer Support Framework

This tool focuses on the roles of and interactions between different actors in school, with reference to mentors, newly qualified teachers, experienced teachers, and school leaders, and defines Mentor Support Guidelines for formal institutional support and Peer-to-Peer Support Guidelines for informal support between colleagues.

04. Developing the school culture for professional development

How can systems be established to promote sustained professional development and strengthen the development of a sustainable school culture and learning community?

01. Leadership for mentorship and peer-to-peer programs

How can the school develop good leadership, qualifications and structures for effective mentorship and peer-to-peer programs?

01

Mentor and peer-to-peer support guidelines

04

02

The 4 dimensions

03

03. Sustained support for teacher professional development

How can peer-to-peer collaboration and continuing professional development strengthen teachers' competence and the practical application of their skills and knowledge?

02. Support for transitions from teacher education to teaching profession

How can mentorship and peer-to-peer programs support newly qualified teachers' transition from teacher education/training to professional practice of teachers?

Fig. 3.1 – The 4 Dimensions of Mentor and Peer-to-Peer Support

Tab. 3.1 – Overarching values, attitudes and competencies that guide mentorship and peer-to-peer programmes

Values	Attitudes	Global competencies
• Authentic leadership and coaching • Trust building and empowerment • Culture of continuous improvements • Communication and cooperation • Recognition of teachers' role and impact	• Responsibility • Awareness and empathy • Self-reflection and critical thinking • Adaptive and flexible practice • Openness to others' points of view	• Global and Local Issues and Multiple Perspectives • Intercultural Communication and Interaction • Individual and Collective Wellbeing • Acting for Sustainability

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Tab. 3.2 – Leadership for mentorship and peer-to-peer programs

Dimension 1	Guiding Question
Leadership for mentorship and peer-to-peer programs	*How can the school develop good leadership, qualifications and structures for effective mentorship and peer-to-peer programs?*
Areas of actions	**Specific steps of action**
Identify the purpose and vision for mentorship and peer-to-peer programs	• Clarify the reasons for building a mentorship and/or peer-to-peer program(s). • Involve participants in the process of creating a strong vision. • Communicate the vision for the program to all involved. • Set measurable short-term targets and long-term goals for the mentorship program. • Create a roadmap for the program's vision, including a plan for achieving the goals. • Identify and support varying individual mentoring needs across specific learning goals, preferences, and professional needs.
Integrate evidence-based management practice in systems and structures	• Ensure to keep updated on relevant research literature and policy documents. • Stimulate cooperation with other institutions and establish opportunities for sharing experiences across schools and regions. • Share experiences and practices within and between schools. • Motivate continuous professional development and lifelong learning. • Conduct observational- and evidence-based reflection on outcomes and impacts.

Enhance teachers' professional competence by developing a school culture for action, reflection, and sharing of competence	• Facilitate arenas for sharing and critical discussions of personal practice and experience, by promoting:
	   ○ Knowledge acquisition – creation of new insights, skills and relationships.
	   ○ Knowledge sharing – dissemination of such learning within and among members of the organization.
	   ○ Knowledge utilization – integration of learning to make it broadly availability, its generalization to new situations, and its practical application.
	• Provide space for dialogue and reflection regarding teaching practice.
	• Develop strategies for dealing with difficult situations supported by a professional repertoire of practice.

Provide clear opportunities and strategies for career development and advancement	• Establish model pathways/guidelines for teachers' career advancement and link to opportunities for professional development. • Encourage teachers to take on new responsibilities and leadership roles linked to their career advancement pathway. • Supervise individual teachers to develop their own pathways for career advancement and facilitate its achievement through regular review and provision of necessary opportunities.
Establish systems for training and qualification of professional mentors and peer-to-peer guides	• Identify if training of mentors will be through an individual school-based program or a common mentor education program (e.g., led by a Teacher Education Institution or professional training organization). • Establish accredited training programs for mentors and peer-to-peer guides. • Support experience-based reflection and learning for continued enhancement of mentors and guides.

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Tab. 3.3 – Support for transitions from teacher education to teaching profession

Dimension 2	Guiding Question
Support for transitions from teacher education to teaching profession	*How can mentor and peer-to-peer programs support newly qualified teachers' transition from teacher education/training to professional practice as teachers?*
Areas of actions	**Specific steps of action**

Implement sustainable mentorship programs	• Implement an induction phase where mentoring is prioritized in a systematic way during the first years of teaching, based on:
	  ◦ *A co-designed plan between the mentor and the newly qualified teacher.*
	  ◦ *The encouragement of building personal skills and competence.*
	  ◦ *The promotion of new skills and competence.*
	  ◦ *A trustful relationship between the mentor and the mentee.*

Design personalized mentoring plans for the mentees	• Assess the mentees' current competences. • Identify the mentees' needs for professional development. • Set development targets for mentees according to the schools' eco-systems. • Facilitate a continuous meta-reflection on the process and outcome.
Enhance social and academic membership and engagement in the learning community, and strengthen cooperation between school and teacher education	• Include and recognize the newly qualified teachers as important resources and contributors in the professional community. • Establish forums for reflexive dialogue where newly qualified teachers can share their knowledge on issues such as new teaching methodologies, the use of technology in education, interdisciplinary perspectives, and action-based research-initiatives to strengthen the quality of teachers' own teaching.
Establish and distribute in-depth knowledge about school culture, the teaching profession, and transitions from teacher education to professional practice	• Create spaces for reflecting on connections between qualification in teacher education and further professional development in professional practice. • Facilitate opportunities for collaboration and joint planning between newly qualified teachers and more experienced colleagues.

Cultivate professional flexibility and resilience	• Motivate newly qualified teachers to further develop and stay in the profession. • Provide and initiate programs where newly qualified teachers can further develop their competence. • Reduce the experience of isolation by newly qualified teachers and increase their self-confidence and self-esteem.

Tab. 3.4 – Sustained support for teacher professional development

Dimension 3	Guiding Question
Sustained support for teacher professional development	*How can peer-to-peer collaboration and continuing professional development strengthen teachers' competence and the practical application of their skills and knowledge?*
Areas of actions	**Specific steps of action**

Develop sustainable mechanisms for peer-to-peer support and ongoing learning opportunities for teachers	• Equip the teachers with tools and methods for different forms of peer-to-peer-support, including
	   ○ *Observation of others, being observed, and mentoring each other – structure the school day to give teachers time for activities.*
	   ○ *Joint problem solving: a problem for one teacher, is a problem for the whole school.*
	• Facilitate opportunities for the staff to meet and work with common issues regularly and encourage interdisciplinary collaboration.
	• Reduce the teacher`s isolation through peer-coaching.
	• Stimulate teacher collaboration to internalize new practices.

Stimulate active and engaged participation in school leadership	• Communicate clear expectations for individual and collective professional development. • Prepare individual development plans for all teachers which follow the overarching school goals and have clear expectations for further advancement. • Show interest and motivate teachers to focus on development, by: ○ Having an overview of all development projects and follow-up on the progress and results. ○ Creating a shared vision of the school goals and operationalize these visions to create ownership among the staff. ○ Being open to pilot and experience new learning innovations. • Lead by example, by: ○ Providing personal follow-up, showing concern and being responsive. ○ Encouraging openness to feedback and willingness to learn from mistakes. ○ Investing in personal growth, new knowledge, and self-development.
Create genuine practices for teacher collaboration and unity	• Develop a school culture where the staff trust each other, discuss challenges and successes, share experiences, observe and reflect over each other`s practices, including: ○ Planning and problem-solving as a collaborative activity. ○ Regular meetings to discuss student work, plan lessons and discuss research. ○ Teachers take advantage of each other's knowledge and skills to create a coherent culture where the collective capabilities of the whole teaching staff are greater than the individuals. • Appreciate and value all staff for their unique experience, competence, and opinions by allowing all voices to be heard and supporting the work of each individual. • Use reflective dialogues to develop and enhance teachers' meta-view on their own and collective practices. • Support teachers in establishing good routines and structures for their own work, set limits for their roles and responsibilities, and develop teachers' resilience and adaptability to stay in the profession over time.

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Encourage critical re-flection and create systems for teacher feedback and ap-praisal	• Dare to be critical of one's own and peers' prac-tices – be able to reflect and understand this as an opportunity for continuing development. • Understand teaching as a learning profession – all teachers should develop their skills and knowledge throughout their whole career. • Share reflections regarding students' results from mapping surveys, standardized tests and class-room observations as a basis for further planning and teaching, and assess if current practices are achieving the desired outcomes. • View feedback as a tool for teachers' improve-ment, not as an assessment to locate the weak-est. • Recognize professional learning as a part of the day-to-day practice.

Develop awareness and understanding of current research and evidence on effective teaching practice	• Organize time and space for teachers to explore research literature by:
	  ○ Making current research available (and makes it mandatory reading) as a foundation for staff meetings.
	  ○ Reducing hours earmarked to teaching and giving more time to professional develop-ment.
	• Ensure access to research literature through:
	  ○ Demonstrating how to search for relevant re-search literature.
	  ○ Making printed copies of research available.
	• Create a culture of talking about research findings.
	• Provide time and space for critical reflections by teachers to identify their schools` challenges and assess how current research could support their specific situations, including:
	  ○ Creating an understanding that effective teaching requires regular development and improvement, that experience alone is only part of that development, and that opportuni-ties for professional development should be valued.
	  ○ Providing opportunities for critical discussions about relevant research and what can be an inspiration for the teachers' further develop-ment and their practices.

Expect and encourage teachers to continuously build bridges between theory and practice throughout their careers	- Support teachers to conduct practice-based research about student and teacher learning, testing new work methods and measuring the effect of innovative practices, by supporting: - Lesson study. - Action research. - Publication of practice-based research work for other teachers and researchers to use. - Provision of necessary resources for teachers to conduct practice-based and design-based research. - Apply current research and experience as a basis for constantly developing teaching practice and promote an openness towards testing new solutions, which can be strengthened by: - Instructional experimentation. - Trust and help seeking. - Share and celebrate teachers' experiences with the rest of the teaching staff – both positive and negative.

Tab. 3.5 – Developing the school culture for professional development

Dimension 4	Guiding Question
Developing the school culture for professional development	*How can systems be established to promote sustained professional development and strengthen the development of a sustainable school culture and learning community?*
Areas of actions	**Specific steps of action**
Promote collective ownership of the schools' mission, values and goals	• Conduct a shared assessment and evaluation on the current status of the school -- which responds to the key questions: Where are we now? & Where do we want to go? • Provide opportunities for cooperative dialogue and deliberation on the schools' mission, values and goals. • Encourage active participation in identifying forward looking improvements and/or targets for the school's development and in developing strategies to achieve them. • Promote the responsibility of teachers (both individually and collectively) for the achievement of these targets and goals. • Build strong collaboration with parents and guardians around the development of a holistic learning community. • Strengthen and embed the school's role in wider society by establishing a strong network with external stakeholders and local actors. • Establish processes for regular review and renewal of the school's vision and/or mission.
Enhance a culture of continuous improvements	• Pilot and test new approaches and alternative practices on a regular basis and evaluate outcomes in relation to professional contexts. • Incentivize and reward innovative teaching practice. • Promote creative approaches and recognize that valuable learning comes from both what worked well and what did not work. • Provide opportunities for critical reflection and discussion on current teaching practices, habits and presumptions. • Utilize research-based evidence to inform and enhance continuous improvements.

Create a structure and process for sustained professional learning and development at an organizational level	• Support processes for knowledge acquisition, sharing and utilization. • Coordinate and routinely arrange opportunities for exchange, sharing and collaboration among staff and students. • Provide defined and differentiated roles and responsibilities for school staff to implement and achieve collective initiatives. • Ensure time is given to staff to work collectively as a professional learning community. • Facilitate opportunities for school-based professional development. • Promote competence development between colleagues through conversations and observation of professional practice.
Integrate intuitive knowledge processes into management procedures	• Establish structures for supportive leadership that facilitate organizational learning and development. • Enhance opportunities for decentralized leadership and stronger engagement. • Embed organizational learning within daily processes in order to acquire, share and utilize knowledge within and across the school. • Integrate a systematic structure for review, reporting and feedback that supports collective knowledge generation.
Implement the mentorship and peer-to-peer programs in school development plans and strategies	• *Following guidelines under dimension 2 and dimension 3 respectively.*

3.3. Part B: Additional documents

In this section, we present supplementary documents to accompany the guidelines. First, we introduce an example of an agreement for mentors and leaders involved in peer-to-peer programs (3.3.1). Next, we provide an example of a peer-to-peer support agreement (3.3.2) before presenting a development plan for teachers (3.3.3). Finally, we highlight the importance of observation and suggest various tools that may support teachers in their professional development (3.3.4).

3.3.1. Draft agreement for mentorship

Name of Mentor: Name of Mentee:

As mentor/leader you agree to:
1. Provide an induction phase where mentoring is prioritized in a systematic way during the first years of teaching.
2. In the first academic year, design a personalized mentoring plan for the mentee (including an assessment of current competencies, needs for professional development, targets for development, and opportunities for continuous meta-reflection on process and outcome).
3. Introduce the mentee to the institution in ways that acknowledge the mentee as an important resource and contributor in the professional community.
4. Create spaces that secure professional opportunities for the mentee to collaborate and engage in joint planning with more experienced colleagues.
5. Facilitate opportunities for the mentee to participate in further professional development programs.
6. Meet with the mentee regularly, if possible, at least once a week, for discussions, support, feedback, advice and guidance.

Signed (Mentor/leader) Date:

3.3.2. Draft agreement peer-to-peer support

Name of Mentor: Name of Mentees:

As mentor/leader you agree to:
1. Provide tools and methods for peer support, including observation, mentoring, and joint problem-solving activities. Allocate dedicated time during the school day for these activities.
2. Prepare individual development plans for all teachers which follow the overarching school goals and have clear expectations for further advancement.
3. Facilitate opportunities for joint teacher collaboration to internalize new practices and implement practice-based research practices.
4. Organize time and space for the mentees to read and discuss research literature as a basis for practice and professional development.
5. Create opportunities for the mentees to participate in further professional development programs.
6. Arrange regular meetings and interdisciplinary collaboration opportunities for staff to address common issues and share experiences.

Signed (Mentor/leader) Date:

3.3.3. Individual teacher development plan

Name:
Date:
Position:
Organization:

Timeline: This plan is designed for implementation over a one-year period

Goal: To improve professional competence and expand knowledge and skills in teaching practices

Review and adjust: The development plan should be reviewed at regular intervals (e.g., each quarter) and adjusted as needed based on assessments and changing professional development goals or needs

Use: The plan should be filled out individually and adjusted/discussed with a supervisor. The plan should be followed up collectively.

Action Steps:
1. Identifying Areas for Improvement: Identify specific areas that need development or improvement. This could include classroom management, curriculum development, student assessment, or use of technology in teaching. What have I not been able to identify, and why? What can I do to change this?
2. Enrolling in Professional Development Courses: Identify relevant professional development courses or workshops that focus on these identified areas. These could be online courses, seminars, or workshops offered by educational institutions or organizations. What have I not been able to implement, and why? What can I do to change this?
3. Seeking Peer Observation: Identify a schedule for peer-to-peer observation. This includes observing other teachers' classes to gain insights into different teaching strategies and classroom management techniques. Constructive feedback from peers can also provide valuable insights. What have I not been able to implement, and why? What can I do to change this?
4. Seeking Mentorship: Identify possibilities for receiving guidance from a mentor or a more experienced teacher. A mentor can provide personal insights, advice, and feedback to help improve teaching competence. What have I not been able to implement, and why? What can I do to change this?
5. Continuing Education: Consider and identify further formal education such as advanced degrees or certification programs related to the field of teaching. What have I not been able to implement, and why? What can I do to change this?
6. Enhancing Self-Learning and Self-reflection: Identify educational literature, research articles, and books to stay up to date with the latest trends and advancements in education. What have I not been able to implement, and why? What can I do to change this?

7. Implementing Changes: Describe your application of new learning and techniques in the classroom. Reflect on their effectiveness and potential adjustments. Which challenges have I faced in implementing these strategies, and why? What can I do to overcome these challenges in the future?
8. Assessing, reviewing, and adjusting: Identify achieved competence development and implemented measures from the development plan in the past year. What has given me new competence? What agreed-upon measures have I been able to implement? What have I not been able to implement, and why? What can I do to change this?
9. Contributions in peer-to-peer guidance: Describe and reflect on your role, involvement, and contributions in peer-to-peer relationships. Which aspects have I not been able to follow up, and why? What can I do to change this?
10. Contributions to overall school development: Describe your role and contributions to the development of a professional learning community at the school. In which areas have I not been able to contribute, and why? What can I do to change this?

3.3.4. Observation forms

Peer guidance can take many forms based on needs, culture and the people involved. The forms presented here are very general frameworks that can be used as a starting point for observation as a method for working with academic and professional development of teachers. The forms must be adjusted based on local conditions and the actual needs of the individual teacher and the individual situation to be observed, and they must be reviewed both before and after the observation by all parties involved. Furthermore, this must be part of a greater focus on professional development for the individual teacher and as a school as a whole. Individual observations without a larger purpose mean little or nothing if they do not have a concrete target in the short and long term for school development on an individual and organizational basis.

Working with peer guidance in the form of observations requires careful planning and implementation. The following overview can be a general approach to areas that are important to work on before, during and after observations in order to ensure to a greater extent, firstly, that the observations are a good experience for those involved, and secondly, that the observations have a purpose for the individual teacher and for the development of the school as a whole. Ultimately, the focus must be on how teachers' pedagogical practice affects the student's academic learning and development, what awareness teachers have of this and how they adjust their pedagogical practice based on evidence and empiricism in order to moderate the students'

needs and thus facilitate as much as possible for their learning and development.

Before the observation:
1. Planning: Agreement on time and place for the observation. There should be an agreement on what is to be observed and what the objective of the observation is
2. Transparency: It is important that the person to observe and the person to be observed are comfortable with the process. Discuss the purpose and process of the observation in advance
3. Preparation: All parties must prepare for the observation. The parties involved must be familiar with the observation form. The person to be observed should prepare their teaching as usual

During the observation:
1. Objectivity: The observer should be as objective as possible and focus on the agreed points in the observation form
2. Notes: Take detailed notes during the observation that can be used to provide constructive feedback afterwards

After the observation
1. Debriefing: After the observation, there must be a debriefing where the observer shares his observations and gives feedback
2. Reflection: The person who was observed must be given the opportunity to reflect on the feedback. It can also be useful for all parties to reflect on the process as a whole
3. Action plan: Based on the feedback, it can be useful to create an action plan based on what was observed and what is the focus for further development. This should have a concrete time frame, and preferably an agreement about a new observation at a later time or a reflective conversation about how the development work has gone.

Observation and peer guidance in general consist of characteristics and knowledge that must be developed and learned over time. It is strongly recommended that all schools have some teachers who have taken courses and/or education that provides formal competence in the role of supervisor. These should further function as key persons who both observe and supervise in their schools, but who also work to secure and assist colleagues in this type of development work.

Unseen observation

Unseen observation can be described as a method that doesn't require a third-party observer to be physically present in the class for "live observation". Instead, it's a process that requires the teacher to engage in self-evaluation and introspection, along with reflection and discussion with their "collaborator", both before and after the lesson (O'Leary, 2022). Unseen observation shifts the focus from traditional evaluation-based observation methods, moving from proficiency checking to valuing in-depth reflection on teaching and learning through collaboration and group reflection. This happens through discussions about the teacher's preparations, instruction and the impact of this. By removing the performance aspect usually associated with evaluation-based observations, unseen observation allows teachers to view observation as a pedagogical tool to enhance their professional development, rather than just assessing their performance (O'Leary, 2022).

Peer-to-peer observation

About the form:
1. Information about the observation: Date, time, place and name of the person observing, and the person being observed, and the purpose of the observation.
2. Observation points: A list of specific points to be observed. These points must be clear, measurable and relevant to the purpose of the observation.
3. Notes section: An area where the observer can take detailed notes during the observation.
4. Feedback section: An area to give constructive feedback based on the observations. This may also include a section for the observed to reflect on the feedback.
5. Action section: An area to create an action plan based on the feedback. This may include specific steps for improvement, resources that may be helpful, and a schedule for when those steps will be implemented.

Observation of:	Subject:			
Observer:	Date:			
	Class/group:			
Purpose of the observation				
Sub-areas/assessment criteria	Very good	Good	Less good	Notes
Observation point 1				
Observation point 2				
Observation point 3				
Observation point 4				
Comments				
Actions				

Logbook

Observations can also be carried out using a logbook. This can be an effective way of making observations, but there are some aspects that are essential:

1. Distinguish between description and interpretation: A description is a neutral rendering of what actually happened, while an interpretation is an explanation or analysis of the meaning of what happened. It is important to keep these two types of information separate to ensure that the interpretations do not colour the descriptions
2. Objectivity: Descriptions should be as objective as possible, based on observable facts. The interpretation part is naturally more subjective, but try to keep the interpretations as neutral and based on the observations as possible
3. Respect: The interpretation part should always be respectful and constructive. Remember that the aim of the observation is to support the colleague's professional development, not to criticize or judge them
4. Communication: When giving feedback, it is important to communicate both the descriptions and interpretations clearly and in a supportive way. Explain how you arrived at the interpretations based on the descriptions, and be open to dialogue. Remember that interpretations

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can be wrong. Therefore, try to be open to feedback also from the person being observed, so that the observer can learn and develop his observation skills.

	Subject: Date: Class/group:
Purpose of the observation	
Description	Interpretation

3.4. Conclusions

The principal aim of the guidelines for mentorship and peer-to-peer programmes is to build a framework for developing action areas and specific actions to promote contexts and conditions that facilitate the interdependence between professional development and school development and the sustainability of both. The tool provided by the guidelines aims to create a homogeneous scaffolding for teacher professional and school development and the avoidance of sectoral approaches which risk fragmentary and unsustainable outcomes. The four dimensions focused on are key features of any teacher's professional profile and resonate with international priorities for teacher professional and school development.

The intended impact of the mentor support and peer-to-peer support guidelines is at the level of ongoing professional learning for all teachers, curriculum renewal and delivery to promote global learning and competence, and that of planning for overall school improvement. The levels of participation and dissemination foreseen mean that this product is a key part of the overall RESPOND project and can enable it to impact in terms of intersecting local, regional, national, and international levels by fostering a collegial professional culture throughout all the organisations that play a role in educational systems.

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Chapter Four: The RESPOND framework for school development as a professional learning environment

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In recent years, a substantial body of literature has focused on the need for school development as way to improving learning outcomes for students (Day et al., 2016; Sammons et al., 2014). In the RESPOND project we have been particularly concerned with linking the ultimate goal of the achievement of students as learners to that of teachers as professional learners and investigating how in this respect the school can envisage itself as both a learning environment for students and a professional learning environment for teachers. As Smylie (1995) affirms:

We will fail ... to improve schooling for children until we acknowledge the importance of schools not only as places for teachers to work but also as places for teachers to learn (p. 92).

This involves building collaborative structures and practices within the school community based on a process of collaborative inquiry in which teachers work together to research systematically their own educational practice. The structures should facilitate reflection both as individual thinking and dialogue between colleagues leading to adjusting teacher practice. This involves teachers monitoring their teaching practice to determine if it is having an impact on student learning and drawing conclusions that become the occasion for professional learning. It also requires a school development process that informs, promotes, supports and satisfies individual and collective professional learning needs.

The tool described in this chapter focuses on developing action areas and specific actions steps that schools and their teaching communities can undertake in the endeavour to achieve this.

4.1. School development as a process of enquiry

Hopkins (2007) defines school development as being a process of enquiry that unites promoting student achievement with continuous improvement based on leadership, planning, and professional development. Such a process requires the building of a reflective school environment in which all members of the school community take responsibility for monitoring and evaluating their individual and collective action and performance and for planning change that can bring about improvement where it is deemed necessary. This involves collecting data containing information that enables an evidence-based review of current and ongoing features of the school concerning both the whole-school experience and learning outcomes related to diverse aspects of learner achievement.

This will enable building an overall picture of the quality of educational provision within the school as it evolves over time and permit the participation of all members of the school and its community in a process of assessment of how well learners are performing and the educational goals that the school poses for itself are being achieved. This should in turn lead to identifying strengths, in terms of good practices that can be shared and promoted throughout the entire school as well as weaknesses that can be analysed and improvements that can be envisaged as part of a school development plan that emphasizes its nature as a professional learning environment.

A development plan of this kind involves deciding on priorities for particular areas that need to be improved and defining the intended outcomes that should ensue, as well as showing how all the members of the school community will have a role in contributing to their achievement. The emphasis must be on promoting medium- and long-term sustainable solutions, rather than on realizing quick fixes (Dinham, 2016; Zepeda, 2013). This requires specifying the action steps to be undertaken and the resources needed in order to achieve those outcomes. Planning also entails establishing a realistic timescale for putting into practice the action steps and achieving the outcomes. Responsibility for leading and carrying out each phase of the plan and the action steps, as well as monitoring, assessing and adjusting action steps and outcomes and evaluating the plan as a whole must be clarified and recognized by all.

Such a process of school improvement is clearly complex and challenging, requiring a high level of coherence in its conception and coordination in its realization (Day et al., 2016; Hopkins & Craig, 2015; Robinson et al., 2017; Sammons et al., 2014). Above all, it necessitates working together to build a shared vision of the school, its mission, goals and expectations for learners and teachers who are people with needs and aspirations, and ongoing

participatory involvement in assessment of the outcomes of school improvement efforts (Zepeda, 2013).

Leadership plays a very important role in providing a common framework that can guide all the choices made in terms of the coherence between objectives, action steps and outcomes during school development (Robinson, 2007) so that they contribute to moving in the same direction towards the medium and long-term sustainable goals, rather than aiming at finding quick fixes (Dinham, 2016; Zepeda, 2013). Coherence is described by Murphy (1992) as being:

One of the most powerful and enduring lessons from all the research on effective schools is that the better schools are more tightly linked – structurally, symbolically, and culturally – than the less effective ones. They operate more as an organic whole and less as a loose collection of disparate subsystems (p. 96).

Hopkins (2013) argues that many efforts at implementing school development fail because leadership focuses on discrete aspects of development, rather than on a whole-school perspective involving intersecting and complementary aspects with collective engagement. In the same way, if schools embark on multiple initiatives that are not part of a coordinated overall plan, this is highly likely to create incoherence and lead to undesirable outcomes such as increased teacher stress (Robinson et al., 2017). In this respect, Day et al. (2016) also emphasize the need for school leaders to promote school improvement "through the combination and accumulation of various relatively small effects of leadership practices" (p. 238), while Hopkins & Craig (2015) and Taylor et al. (2001) argue the need for professional learning for school leaders as well as teachers.

It is fundamental that school development plans should be context-appropriate and relevant to school needs (Dinham, 2016; Taylor et al., 2001; Zepeda, 2013). Zepeda also underlines the need to pay attention to combining individual and organisational needs. Balancing satisfying teachers' personal and relational needs with promoting school improvement requires paying careful attention to both without overly prioritizing either one of them (Liljenberg & Blossing, 2021). This means that planning must be evidence-informed (Taylor et al., 2001; Van Der Voort & Wood, 2014; Yatsko et al., 2015) and based on data collection and consultation with all members of the school community though examining, discussing and interpreting data in order to identify needs, objectives and action steps.

Defining a positive school culture is also clearly a key factor in school development (Leithwood et al., 2004; Louis & Lee, 2016; Park et al., 2019).

However, while there is wide agreement on this there is no commonly accepted definition of what constitutes a school culture. This means there is no clear idea of how school cultures may be built or changed so as to ensure a positive impact on teacher professional learning and thereby student learning outcomes (Louis & Lee, 2016).

Changing a school's culture is complex and requires time (Dinham, 2016; Hollingworth et al., 2018; Leithwood et al., 2004). It can be argued that school culture necessarily precedes other changes in the school (Zbar et al., 2008), or that it can be built through the action steps involved in implementing school development plans. Louis et al. (2016) consider building a school's culture as being a question of "supportive structures, social relationships, politics, and reinforcing the norms and values that constitute a school's organization" (p. 320).

In this respect, Louis & Wahlstrom (2011) argue that changing a school culture requires distributed leadership based on interconnectivity and teamwork whereby responsibilities are shared among various individuals and widespread involvement is encouraged. Moreover, there has been increasing recognition of the interrelatedness of student and professional learning achievements with social and wellbeing outcomes. Hopkins & Craig (2015) argue that supportive structures are particularly critical in facilitating changes in school culture and that if such structures are not built and maintained, it is unrealistic to expect the achievement of a positive school culture able to sustain teacher professional and school development and render them mutually sustaining.

As underlined in Chapter 1, environmental disturbances encountered trigger change, but do not determine it. It is the overall context of the school as a professional learning environment that determines what can and what cannot be a trigger and what can and what cannot be triggered. Change in professional learning environments and in the teachers themselves depends on the characteristics of that environment at a given point in time and the extent to which these characteristics can facilitate or impede certain kinds of change or create certain predispositions to change. Any attempt to promote teacher professional development or school development that fails to take account of this will be unsustainable.

4.2. The Four Dimensions of School Development as a Professional Learning Environment

This section highlights some of the key research literature in the field and explores how these works can be viewed in relation to one another. It is not

intended as an in-depth introduction but rather as a brief overview. This is by no means a comprehensive literature review; instead, it offers insights into key discussions within the field and how research can contribute to fostering professional development for teachers. A complete reference list is also provided, allowing further exploration of topics that may be relevant and of interest to your school.

4.2.1. Building educational values and leadership

Collaboration plays a crucial role in creating effective teaching and learning environments. Schools that prioritize collaborative practices benefit from shared responsibility and collective problem-solving. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) highlight that schools with collaborative cultures foster a sense of collective responsibility and pride. This demonstrates that collaboration is not just a tool for problem-solving but a cornerstone of a thriving educational community. This aligns with DuFour and Marzano's (2011) assertion that shared responsibility within collaborative cultures enhances collective capacity and distributed knowledge. They argue that these collaborative dynamics drive greater improvements in both teaching quality and student outcomes.

Marzano and Hefleblower (2016) emphasize that sustainable professional learning is built upon strong collaborative structures. Vescio et al. (2008) further support this by demonstrating that collaboration empowers teachers to develop more student-centred approaches, ultimately improving student achievement. This underscores the principle that investing I teacher collaboration is a prerequisite for enhancing student learning and development.

Effective schools prioritize collaboration. Darling-Hammon et al. (2017) argue that high-performing schools leverage the collective knowledge and skills of their teachers to ensure coherence and unified practices. In such environments, failure is seen as an opportunity for collective reflection and growth (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

While teacher collaboration is vital, the role of school leadership cannot be overlooked. Leaders play a pivotal role in fostering and sustaining collaborative environments. Ontario Principals (2009) emphasize that continuous student improvement relies on school leaders who systematically promote collaboration. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argue that clear and supportive leadership fosters teacher commitment and resilience by establishing solid foundations and clear expectations. Dunn and Hattie (2021) highlight the importance of adaptive leadership, where leaders continuously examine teaching and learning practices and adjust collaborative structures to meet their

schools' evolving need. This iterative approach ensures that leadership remains responsive and dynamic.

Fullan and Sharratt (2022) underline the importance of leadership that empowers teachers to view student data as a catalyst for growth. They argue that such leadership fosters a culture of continuous learning for both students and teachers. By establishing clear standards and building consensus around them, schools can more effectively assess whether current practices align with desired outcomes (Ontario Principals, 2009). Hattie (2009) asserts that for learning to occur, students must experience cognitive change, and teachers must understand how to facilitate this process. This requires not only access to data but also the competence to interpret and apply it effectively. DuFour and Marzano (2011) emphasize that ensuring continuous student learning requires teachers to engage in an ongoing learning cycle. They argue that the best way to achieve this is by strengthening teachers' collective capacity through structured professional learning communities, where active participation is expected and valued.

4.2.2. Creating the conditions for a positive learning environment

A positive learning environment is crucial for both student success and teacher development. However, designing such an environment requires careful consideration of the diverse and complex needs of individual teachers and the collective teacher staff as well as the student's needs. As Dunn and Hattie (2021) point out, balancing these needs is a significant challenge for school leadership with developing professional learning frameworks. In facilitation teachers' professional development as part of the leadership's effort in school improvement, it is crucial that teachers act as drivers of this work than merely being its target. A comprehensive system for development work relies on school leadership and teacher jointly exploring and reflecting (Donohoo & Velasco, 2016). To foster such a developmental environment, it may be advantageous to have a school leadership that emphasizes instructional leadership, grounded around some core practices. These include fostering active and participatory learning among staff, actively utilizing student data to inform subsequent instructional planning as a response to identified learning outcomes and engaging in collaborative reflections and systematic observations of classroom practices (Jenssen & Paulsen, 2024).

Student's academic and social development is shaped by the prevailing culture within each school. This culture establishes normative guidelines for how teachers perceive and practice their profession. As a leader, it is crucial

to be aware of the powerful influence of these cultural norms, to understand which types of cultures are more beneficial for students' learnings, and to establish a framework and expectations for the desired culture and its associated values within the school. Collaborative cultures, where trust and respect among teachers have been cultivated over time, play a vital role in developing teachers' professional capital and in enabling students to reach their learning potential (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). While such cultures have several defining characteristics, a particularly central and impactful one is teachers working within professional learning communities. Research consistently highlights the value of PLCs in improving student outcomes. According to Marzano and Hefleblower (2016), "A growing research base supports the claim that PLCs lead to improved student outcomes" (p. 11). PLC provide a structured platform for teachers to collaborate, share practices, and reflect on their teaching strategies, fostering a culture of collective improvement.

The field of education is inherently complex, with multiple factors interacting and influencing conditions within schools and their learning cultures. In addition to professional learning communities, it is also relevant to discuss collective teacher efficacy, as these concepts strongly influence each other, and, together, provide significant insights into a school's culture (Voelkel, 2011).

In addition to providing benefits for teachers and students, professional learning communities (PLCs) benefit school leaders by increasing their ability to support teacher development and student achievement (Marzano & Heflebower, 2016, p. 12).

Hord (1997) affirmed that a professional learning community (PLC) engages teachers in a cycle of looking at what is happening in their school; determining if they can make it a better place by changing curriculum, instruction, or relationships between community members; and assessing the results – all with the goal of enhancing their effectiveness as professionals. Similarly, Stoll et al. (2006) stated that the term "suggests a group of people sharing and critically interrogating their practice in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, learning-oriented, growth-promoting way". Fulton and Britton (2011) identified the goal of a PLC as "focusing teachers on improving their practice and learning together about how to increase student learning", As mentioned previously, one of the best-known articulations of PLCs comes from DuFour et al. (2008): "We define a professional learning community as educators committed to working collaboratively in ongoing

processes of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve" (Marzano & Heflebower, 2016, p. 6). Moreover: "As a by-product of enhancing teachers' instructional prowess, PLCs can also help establish a culture in which teachers feel more empowered in their work" (Marzano & Heflebower, 2016, p. 9).

One of the most powerful factors in creating a positive learning environment is collective teacher efficacy. Collective teacher efficacy has emerged in recent years as a crucial predictor of school culture and has been shown to have a positive impact on student learning outcomes (Goddard, 2001; Salloum, 2022; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). Donohoo (2016) emphasizes that "When a school staff shares the belief that through their collective actions, they can positively influence student outcomes, student achievement increases" (p. xv). CTE can be defined as the collective belief of teachers in a school that they together have the necessary competence to execute actions to creating positive learning experiences for all students (Goddard et al., 2004). The relationship between high levels of CTE and student academic achievement has been consistently demonstrated through studies conducted over the past 30 years across various contexts. This makes CTE a critical component in the development and maintenance of sustainable learning environments that place all students' learning and development at the core of their practice (Donohoo, 2018; Eells, 2011; Hattie, 2023; Hattie et al., 2021). Teachers with high CTE demonstrate persistence, experiment with new teaching methods, and focus on meeting the needs of all students, particularly those who are struggling. This belief also translates into higher expectations for students and encourages greater parental involvement.

When a sense of collective efficacy is shared, teacher behaviours are favourable to actions that impact students results, including setting more challenging goals, increasing parental involvement and time on task, and decreasing disruptive behaviour to name a few. At the same time, when efficacy is in doubt, teachers spend less time on academics and are more likely to give up on students who do not learn quickly. Clearly, efficacy matters. Fostering collective efficacy is a timely and important issue if we are going to realize success for all students (Donohoo, 2016, p. 25).

An effective learning environment not only supports teachers but also empowers students. Donohoo (2016) argues that "Educators with high efficacy encourage student autonomy" (p. 22). By adopting a student-centred teaching approach, educators allow students to take responsibility for their learning, make decisions about their learning paths, and pursue their interests. While curriculum standards remain a guiding framework, teachers can

create opportunities for students to engage in meaningful, self-directed learning experiences (Donohoo, 2016).

4.2.3. Understanding and satisfying teacher professional development needs

Professional development is essential for improving teaching quality and student outcomes. School leadership plays a crucial role in designing and sustaining effective development programs. This is emphasized by DuFour and Marzano (2011), who state that at school cannot be successful unless the leadership is well-functioning and efficient. When the school leadership focuses on the development and growth of the teachers, they indirect influence classroom practices and by that, have an impact on student's academic achievements. This kind of influence and accountability is crucial to be able to organize and lead a school toward their said goals.

Professional development not only improves individual teachers' skill but also has a profound impact on students and the overall school culture. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) emphasize that well-supported and dynamic school environments increase teacher retentions and motivation. They argue that such schools foster a belief in student success and shared eagerness among staff to keep improving, regardless of experience level. Similarly, Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) highlight the importance of providing teachers with continuous opportunities to hone their skills and take on new responsibilities, ensuring ongoing professional growth.

High-performing educational systems focus on improving teaching practices to directly impact student outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Donohoo (2016) identifies collective teacher efficacy as a key factor, enabling teachers to work together to tailor teaching to students' need and improve learning results. A strong professional culture is essential for creating sustainable improvement. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) note that a culture centred on collaboration and learning enables both experienced and new teachers to thrive. Marzano and Hefleblower (2016) argue that professional learning communities (PLC) provide an effective structure for fostering shared responsibility and continuous development within schools

Dunn and Hattie (2021) emphasize that school leaders who adapt evidence-informed approaches to their unique school context achieve the most significant impact for both teachers and students. This highlights the need for professional development to address the specific challenges and opportunities within each school. To achieve this effective school leaders contin-

ually collect and analyse data about their schools to inform ongoing development effort. Such data provide critical insights into how pedagogical practices align with the school's goals (Dunn & Hattie, 2021). DuFour and Marzano (2011) similarly stress the importance of establishing systems for monitoring instructional practices and the student achievement. They argue that understanding the impact of teaching practices is essential for aligning them with school objectives. For meaningful change to occur in student learning, school leaders must foster an awareness among teachers that changes in teaching structures and content could be necessary (Dunn & Hattie, 2021).

Developing frameworks that balance individual teacher needs with consistency across classrooms present a significant challenge for school leaders (Dunn & Hattie, 2021). Professional learning framework should prioritize three key conditions: providing opportunities for teachers to innovate and refine their methods, creating spaces for observing and discussing different practices, and implementing systems to monitor and evaluate instructional approaches (Dunn & Hattie, 2021). In some cases, it may not be necessary to implement new systems for monitoring because the existing system in the school already has this information. Time to assess what kind of data the school already collects, why it is collected and if it serves its purpose is important for both leaders and teachers. Dunn and Hattie (2021) also highlight the importance of valuing the time teachers spend outside the classroom preparing and collaborating, as these activities are crucial for professional growth. Teachers need opportunities to reflect on their practices, collaborate with peer, and participate in meaningful professional learning. DuFour and Marzano (2011) emphasize that school leaders should actively engage teachers in discussion on improving student learning and take part in designing curriculum, instruction and assessment.

In summary, school leaders play a pivotal role in professional development by tailoring initiatives to their context, using data to guide improvement, and supporting teachers' collaborative work outside the classroom. Supporting teacher professional development requires leaders to implement diverse strategies tailored to the unique needs of their schools. Research highlights several effective approaches, including collaborative activities, structured opportunities for reflection, and data-driven evaluation of teaching practices. One approach to collaborative and reflective practices is peer coaching, which involves teachers observing each other's teaching and reflecting together to improve their practices. Dunn and Hattie (2021) highlight how peer coaching fosters awareness of the impact of various teaching strategies on students. Through open discussions on both challenges and successes, teachers develop their methods collaboratively. For such practices to thrive, a school culture based on trust and openness is essential.

Another critical strategy is providing teachers with time and space for professional growth. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) emphasize the importance of engaging teacher in evidence-based research to inform their practices and enhance their ownership of teaching. To achieve this, schools must prioritize collaboration and create conditions where teachers can explore and apply research in their work. Setting aside time signals its importance and reflects the values underpinning the school's practices. Dunn and Hattie (2021) further note that leadership plays a pivotal role in cultivating a culture of continuous learning by setting high yet realistic expectations for both teachers and students.

A third strategic focus is the monitoring and evaluation of teaching practices. This involves creating a shared understanding of how teaching impacts student learning and ensuring alignment with the school's goals. Dunn and Hattie (2021) emphasize the importance of using student learning data to guide development efforts. Similarly, DuFour and Marzano (2011) stress the need for systems that track the impact of teaching and enable continuous adjustment to practice. These approaches should focus on collective improvement rather than singling out individual teachers, fostering a unified vision for learning and development.

Effective professional development requires a balanced focus on multiple strategies. Leaders must remain attuned to their school's unique challenges and opportunities, continuously evaluating and adapting to the needs of their staff and students (Dunn & Hattie, 2021). This underscores the importance of leadership that is both responsive and proactive, ensuring sustained growth within the school community.

4.2.4. Evaluating professional learning outcomes and impacts

Evaluating the outcomes and impacts of professional learning is a critical step in ensuring that initiatives lead to meaningful change. While previous sections have highlighted the use of data to guide development, this dimension focuses on evaluative thinking as a tool for reflection and continuous improvement.

Dunn and Hattie (2021) describe evaluative thinking as a systematic process of questioning, evidence gathering, and reasoning. This approach allows school leaders and teachers to move beyond simply measuring results to understanding the underlying causes of success or failure. For example, rather than asking whether a professional development initiative increased student

outcome, evaluative thinking prompts questions such as: What specific practices contributed to the change? How can these practices be sustained or adapted to other contexts?

By embedding evaluative thinking into school culture, leaders can foster an environment where learning is continuous and iterative. This aligns with earlier dimensions on data use but shifts the focus towards interpreting and learning from evidence to guide future strategi. Such an approach ensure that professional learning is not a one-time intervention, but part of an ongoing cycle of improvement.

Central to such evaluations is a strong and genuine culture of collaboration among staff, where the shared goal is always learning for all students. When such a culture and mindset permeate the staff, it fosters a positive environment for both teachers and students, which is essential for teachers' professional development processes (Wright, 2022). This involves teachers taking collective responsibility for student learning through collegial reflections on teaching practices, challenges, and successes (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). These reflections enhance awareness of how teachers' actions directly impact student learning and emphasize that changes in practice lead to changes in learning outcomes.

By fostering such awareness, it becomes evident that improving learning outcomes requires a robust framework for teacher evaluations and a systematic approach to collecting evidence on how various practices contribute - or fail to contribute - to learning. These processes can be sensitive, as they often involve questioning classroom practices. To prevent evaluations from becoming overly personal, a culture focused on how "we" teach and understanding learning – rather on individual teachers – is crucial. In practice, this requires teachers to show mutual respect and consideration for one another as professionals and colleagues (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Donohoo (2014) illustrates how these processes can challenge and, at times, necessitate adjustments to existing understandings of learning. Leadership plays a vital role in recognizing the challenges inherent in such changes and supporting teachers throughout these processes (Ontario Principals, 2009). How teachers navigate these changes is often reflected in their levels of collective efficacy.

This collective efficacy can be fostered through the development of professional learning communities within schools. Leadership holds the responsibility for establishing and maintaining the framework and expectations for these communities, ensuring that requirements are clearly articulated and consistently followed. Over time, systematic practices foster a shared culture where teachers collectively explore learning and development – for both students and for themselves. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) elaborate that such

communities focus on examining student learning and identifying effective teaching principles. They further note that this process presupposes an organized approach where teachers develop problem-solving skill and engage in constructive discussions about good and bad practices, enabling collective decision-making for the advancement of teaching.

Building on this foundation, Donohoo (2014) emphasizes the importance of structured data collection processes to support evaluation efforts. She suggests structuring this work through a plan addressing three key questions: 1) What evidence should be collected? 2) How should it be collected? And 3) When and by whom? She further outlines a five-step cyclical process for analysing data – organizing, reading, describing, categorizing and interpreting – to ensure that evidence and research-based practices are promoted. Establishing fixed systems for evaluation creates expectations for teachers' practices and fosters an evidence-based culture that supports effective teaching.

In addition to creating systemic processed, these frameworks also shape practical aspects of school operations, such as meeting structures. This includes determining the types of collaborative meetings teachers engage in, how time is allocated, and how learning is discussed. Strong leadership is critical, providing exemplary practices and active engagement in teachers' professional growth.

4.3. Part A: The RESPOND School Development as a Professional Learning Environment Framework

The four dimensions of the tool are intended to permit a focus on four key areas related to educational values and leadership, a positive learning environment, teacher professional development needs, and learning outcomes and impacts.

04. Evaluating professional learning outcomes and impacts

How can schools monitor and evaluate professional learning outcomes and impacts?
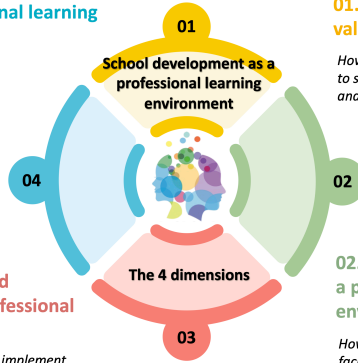
01. Building educational values and leadership

How can schools create a learning-centred culture to support overall teacher and student engagement and achievement?

03. Understanding and satisfying teacher professional development needs

How can schools develop and implement an organisational model for the supply of professional development support for both newly qualified and experienced teachers?

02. Creating the conditions for a positive learning environment

How can schools provide educational opportunities, facilities, and resources to promote teacher and student learning?

01 — School development as a professional learning environment

The 4 dimensions

01 / 02 / 03 / 04

Fig. 4.1 – The 4 dimensions of school development as a professional learning environment

Tab. 4.1 – Overarching values, attitudes, and competencies for school development as a professional learning environment

Values	Attitudes	Global competencies
• Learning centred environment for teachers and students • Culture of innovation • Competent community • Sustaining diversity	• Empowerment • Engagement • Responsibility • Reflectiveness	• Global and local issues and multiple Perspectives • Intercultural communication and interaction • Individual and collective wellbeing • Acting for sustainability

Tab. 4.2 – Building educational values and leadership

Dimension 1	Guiding Question
Building educational values and leadership	*How can schools create a learning-centred culture to support overall teacher and student engagement and achievement?*
Areas of actions	**Specific steps of action**
Developing a mission statement that makes clear the school's educational values.	• Designing, in cooperation with all the actors involved in the school, easily accessed and user-friendly surveys to collect specific needs from the community, families, teachers, students, staff in school with various functions, educational authorities and policy makers. • Creating tools for collating and analysing the information obtained through administering the surveys. • Conducting focus groups to use the results of the surveys and other literature sources to identify key educational values (democratic ideals, inclusion, cooperation, sustainable education, equity, multicultural, state of wellbeing, valorise of everyone's ability, lifelong learning, diversity, active learning …) that should characterize the school. • Editing, publishing, and disseminating the school's mission statement.
Setting realisable targets for school improvement and staff development, supported by overall performance review and self-evaluation processes.	• Analysing the information obtained from the surveys to identify gaps between the current situation and the educational values contained in the mission statement. • Formulating specific targets to bridge the gaps identified and establishing sub targets as waystages. • Defining an action plan with an order of priority and specific steps to undertake. • Establishing measurable parameters and a timeline of process evaluation. • Building a progressive process of continuous evaluation (monitoring and adjusting before, during and after the action taken).

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Ensuring adequate human resources for intersecting management, teaching, and support roles	• Creating an overview of existing collective competence within the school community.
	• Establishing an outline of the areas of competence that need to be developed in the future.
	• Analysing the extent to which the current allocation of human resources is consistent with the chosen targets for school improvement and staff development.
	• Organizing the existing human resources in the most flexible and efficient way, including engaging in networking with other schools.
	• Providing professional learning and development pathways to promote specific roles equipped with the necessary competences.
Promoting a school culture that is learning centred and fosters empowerment, responsibility, reflectiveness, innovation and engagement for teachers and learners.	• Promoting the membership of professional learning communities by facilitating access to and understanding of various models of
	• learning and teaching processes ("when there is no right way but there are possible ways, there is less resistance against change").
	• Creating contexts for discussing issues and presenting points of view and procedures for resolving conflicts.
	• Providing teachers with a toolbox of ideas and strategies for use in developing their professional profiles (see RESPOND Development Focus 1: Teacher Professional Profile).
	• Developing systems and expectations for teacher self-assessment and reflection on one's own practice in collaboration with
	• colleagues (see RESPOND Development Focus 1: Teacher Portfolio).

Tab. 4.3 – Creating the conditions for a positive learning environment

Dimension 2	Guiding Question
Creating the conditions for a positive learning environment	*How can schools provide educational opportunities, facilities, and resources to promote teacher and student learning?*
Areas of actions	**Specific steps of action**
Designing and publishing a school curriculum that is clearly described in terms of global competence for learners and teachers and easily accessible to teachers, students, and families.	• Establishing global competence as a key framework for defining learning objectives and driving pedagogical innovations. • Building educational plans that allow for teachers' freedom and creativity in their delivery while also providing dynamic and flexible • learning opportunities for students. • Providing opportunities for active learning, community engagement, and decentralised curriculum to support the application and transfer of knowledge, skills, and competence. • Developing school contracts for teachers, students and families with a focus on the values, behaviours, and attributes they agree to uphold in an effort to foster a positive, respectful, and inclusive learning environment.
Developing learning pathways to take account of recognising and respecting diversity and supporting individual learning needs and well-being for all students and teachers.	• Developing adapted curricula and individual learning plans for students tailored to meet their specific learning needs, support their well-being, and provide them with targeted learning achievements to strengthen their sense of autonomy and inclusion. • Providing opportunities for effective collaboration and cooperation in learning and school activities to promote students' efficacy • and belonging. • Supporting positive relationships of respect and self-expression in the classroom through active communication, democratic dialogue, and restorative approaches. • Integrating approaches to advance inter- and pluri-cultural competencies in teaching plans, and incorporate pluralistic, multicultural and cross-disciplinary perspectives in teaching to facilitate different ways of learning, knowing, and understanding.

Developing school premises that create a positive learning environment for students and teachers and provide adequate learning resources to support delivery of the curriculum.	• Assessing the key attributes of the physical learning environment to consider how it facilitates the school's pedagogical aims and • learning objectives and to identify its current limitations. • Elaborating a strategic vision for long-term transformation that the school would like to achieve, oriented towards the fundamental principles of enhancing a safe, inclusive, and effective learning environment. • Prioritising key actions for incremental improvements that can be taken to work towards this strategic vision and establish a structured implementation plan. • Identifying opportunities to acquire necessary resources to implement these improvements.
Providing specialist resources and facilities to support active learning and diverse opportunities for curricular contents in areas such as art and design, music, languages, ICT, physical education, and the sciences.	• Promoting the use and integration of open educational resources that can be flexibly applied to meet the differentiated learning needs of individual students. • Employing digital learning technologies both to enhance students' ICT skills and strengthen opportunities for active, inquiry-based learning, self-discovery, and creative expression. • Inspiring students' love of learning through the development of rich opportunities for hands-on, applied, and experiential learning that allow students to deeply explore those areas in which they hold a personal passion or interest. • Providing for a balanced development of specialist resources and facilities across all subjects, and over time ensure all subjects have the opportunity to create critical learning moments where knowledge, skills and competence can be transformed into practical • actions and behaviours.

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Tab. 4.4 – Understanding and satisfying teacher professional development needs

Dimension 3	Guiding Question
Understanding and satisfying teacher professional development needs	*How can schools develop and implement an organisational model for the supply of professional development support for both newly qualified and experienced teachers?*
Areas of actions	**Specific steps of action**
Developing and implementing methods and tools in the process of collecting data on teachers' professional needs.	• Promoting a democratic approach based on bottom-up processes through encouraging group discussions, focus groups, debates, and interviews with the management team. • Creating a school culture for engaging in data use focused on improvement rather than accountability and based on data teams for collection and discussion groups for analysis of data in a climate of trust and respect. • Developing a methodology for collecting data with tools such as questionnaires and interviews which encourage involvement, maintain the option of anonymity, and establish a grading mechanism for the information gathered such as a Likert scale. • Promoting an intergenerational dialogue whereby there can be an exchange of practices and opinions between experienced and newly qualified teachers, professional needs can emerge, and lasting relationships can be built.
Establishing a process whereby professional development priorities can be identified in terms of their coherence with overall school development.	• Promoting a shared vision of the school as an ecosystem in which individual teacher needs and interactions are related to the overall professional learning environment. • Identifying factors within the school organization and functioning that impede or facilitate teacher professional development. • Helping individuals to work together to identify their strengths and weaknesses and work together in a process of co-emerging whereby reciprocal needs manifest themselves. • Aligning teacher professional profiles to educational plans and creating processes whereby reciprocal feedback and feedforward between profiles and plans can take place and personal goals and school goals merge.

Identifying effective collaborative approaches to promoting and supporting teacher professional development.	• Promoting a culture of intellectual stimulation and dissemination and sharing of educational research through means such as participatory platforms and digital libraries. • Keeping up to date on the range of teacher professional development approaches and opportunities available. • Creating structures for co-specifying whereby reciprocal answers to professional needs define themselves and can set in motion a process of co-learning within given spheres of professional action and co-construction of competences within professional learning and development communities. • Developing support strategies to encourage teachers to participate in professional learning and development activities and building teacher programmes and timetables to provide adequate time to enable participation.
Offering a range of types of professional development activities that can be engaged in.	• Creating a balance between participation in teacher education programmes at national and international level and specific school- embedded professional development projects. • Providing information about and facilitating attendance of educational conferences and seminars as well as courses and workshops related to a range of education-related topics. • Participating in school network-based teacher professional development initiatives. • Promoting action research-based projects for groups of teachers. • Ensuring the constant availability of mentor and peer-to-peer support services.

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Tab. 4.5 – Evaluating professional learning outcomes and impacts

Dimension 4	Guiding Question
Evaluating professional learning outcomes and impacts	*How can schools monitor and evaluate professional learning outcomes and impacts?*
Areas of actions	**Specific steps of action**
Monitoring and evaluating student learning outcomes with clear feedback and feedforward into teaching and learning strategies.	• Ensuring involvement of all staff in defining and carrying out monitoring and evaluation procedures for professional learning outcomes. • Establishing objectives with short-, medium- and long-term professional learning outcomes in terms of transversal and specific skills (see RESPOND Development Focus 1: Teacher Professional Profile) to match teacher professional profiles and school educational plans. • Monitoring the level of correspondence between developing teacher professional profiles and school education plans. • Defining indicators of feedback and feedforward to teaching practice in terms of understanding contexts and action and envisaging potential change.
Establishing tools for monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional development activities.	• Establishing tools that ensure monitoring and evaluation procedures in which teachers will be able to give and receive feedback with respect, openness, fairness, equality, and dignity. • Evaluating outcomes of professional learning experiences and relative impact of formal, non-formal and informal contexts (see RESPOND Development Focus 1: Teacher Portfolio) in terms of ongoing teacher professional development. • Relating professional learning outcomes to both existing experience and problem solving and future experience and problem posing for teachers as individuals and members of a professional community. • Monitoring participation rates and levels of satisfaction relative to different types of professional development activities.

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Giving value to professional development outcomes in relation to schools as institutions that promote the professional learning of their members.	• Promoting an institutional culture whereby sharing and understanding each other's strengths and weaknesses and successes and • difficulties creates bonds, builds trust, and empowers individuals and relationships. • Establishing channels for sharing experiences, outcomes, strategies, resources, opportunities, and ideas both as mutual exchange and avoiding duplicating in order to lighten individual and team workloads. • Creating opportunities for job shadowing within the school, in school networks and international contexts, co-teaching, team teaching and other peer-to-peer experiences. • Ensuring there is ample community acknowledgment of the efforts of all members of staff and their contribution both to classroom practice and overall school development.
Identifying alternative ways in which unsatisfied need for professional development can be best addressed.	• Understanding reasons why professional learning experiences may have been unsatisfying both in terms of the experiences themselves and the ability of the school environment to facilitate the application of their outcomes. • Identifying alternative professional learning experiences that can rectify the weaknesses identified in previous experiences. • Implementing changes in the school environment to overcome eventual obstacles to applying the outcomes of professional learning experiences. • Updating knowledge of types and availability of professional learning experiences for individuals, groups and the teaching community at school, network, national and international level.

4.4. PART B: Reflection sequences

Part B of the RESPOND tool The Four Dimensions of School Development as a Professional Learning Environment proposes reflection sequences that aims to give indications for possible key questions related to a systematic approach to specific aspects of each of the four dimensions. The questions posed are intended to permit an assessment of the current situation in a school and consider action steps that can be taken in the light of what emerges.

The focus of the reflection sequences is particularly on:

1. systematic monitoring, identifying and evaluating evidence for positive feedback achieved through current practice
2. establishing ways in which improvement can be achieved through devising and implementing specific action steps.

The reflection can create the basis for assessment of the level of satisfaction regarding the current situation in the school on the basis of the following scale:
(1) Very dissatisfied
(2) Dissatisfied
(3) Slightly dissatisfied
(4) Neutral
(5) Slightly satisfied
(6) Satisfied
(7) Very satisfied

Tab. 4.6 – Building educational values and leadership

Level of satisfaction regarding the current situation of the school		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.1	To what degree does our school have a consensus on what constitutes a learning centred school culture relevant to our specific context, based on a shared pedagogical language and a way of systematically monitoring that our practice as a school is coherent with creating that culture?							
1.1.1	To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school?							
1.1.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**						
	Step 1							
	Step 2							

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	Step 3								
1.2	Do we have a way of systematically promoting cohesion of purpose among the teaching staff?								
1.2.1	To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school?								
1.2.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**							
	Step 1								
	Step 2								
	Step 3								
1.3	Do we have a way of systematically providing opportunities for all members of the teaching staff to actively participate in developing school policies and making decisions?								
1.3.1	To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school?								
1.3.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**							
	Step 1								
	Step 2								

	Step 3							
1.4	Do we have a way of systematically monitoring and acknowledging when the school fails to meet the standards it sets for itself?							
1.4.1	To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school?							

1.4.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**
	Step 1	
	Step 2	
	Step 3	

Tab. 4.7 – Creating the conditions for a positive learning environment

Level of satisfaction regarding the current situation of the school		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.1	Do we have a way of systematically providing opportunities for teachers and learners to actively participate in developing the school curriculum?							
2.1.1	To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school?							

2.1.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**

	Step 1								
	Step 2								
	Step 3								

2.2	Do we have a way of systematically creating a positive climate of belief in the ability of learners and teachers to achieve their goals?								
2.2.1	To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school?								

2.2.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**
	Step 1	
	Step 2	
	Step 3	

2.3	Do we have a way of systematically monitoring and acknowledging achievement by learners and teachers based on data collected that is related to the instructional, personal and social domains?								
2.3.1	To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school?								

2.3.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**							
	Step 1								
	Step 2								
	Step 3								
2.4	Do we have a way of systematically considering different and potentially better ways of doing things to promote continuous development in these domains?								
2.4.1	To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school?								
2.4.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**							
	Step 1								
	Step 2								
	Step 3								

Tab. 4.8 – Understanding and satisfying teacher professional development needs

Level of satisfaction regarding the current situation of the school		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.1	Do we have a way of systematically opening and maintaining lines of communication to ensure the flow of information and build trust between school management and all members of the teaching staff, thereby encouraging teachers to engage actively in collegial communities, fostering a culture of self-reflection and improvement aimed at enhancing teaching to benefit all students?							
3.1.1	To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school?							
3.1.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**						
	Step 1							
	Step 2							
	Step 3							
3.2	Do we have a way of systematically encouraging members of the teaching staff to express evidence-based diverse opinions on specific aspects of teacher practice and professional development, as well as clear follow-up procedures ensuring feedback for change?							
3.2.1	To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school?							
3.2.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**						

	Step 1			
	Step 2			
	Step 3			

| 3.3 | Do we have a way of systematically promoting discussion on current empirical research on effective schooling and critical reflection on this as an opportunity to challenge and refine their own practices to adapt to changes and new challenges related to leaners and their needs? | | | | | | | | | |

| 3.3.1 | To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school? | |

3.3.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**
	Step 1	
	Step 2	
	Step 3	

| 3.4 | Do we have a way of investigating the potential correlation between significant personal issues of teachers, their professional performance, and needs for professional development? | | | | | | | | | |

| 3.4.1 | To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school? | |

3.4.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**
	Step 1	
	Step 2	
	Step 3	

Tab. 4.9 – Evaluating professional learning outcomes and impacts

Level of satisfaction regarding the current situation of the school		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.1	Do we have a way of systematically monitoring the relationship between specific teaching and learning strategies and student learning outcomes, and encouraging and facilitating adjustments in teaching practices?							
4.1.1	To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school?							
4.1.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**						
	Step 1							
	Step 2							

	Step 3							
4.2	Do we have a way of systematically helping teachers to monitor the impact of their professional learning experiences on their achievement as teachers and promote teachers' individual and collective efficacy beliefs, motivation and resilience?							
4.2.1	To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school?							
4.2.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**						
	Step 1							
	Step 2							
	Step 3							
4.3	Do we have a way of systematically acknowledging the contribution of all members of staff to successful learning outcomes and overall school development?							
4.3.1	To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school?							
4.3.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**						
	Step 1							

	Step 2						
	Step 3						
4.4	Do we have a way of systematically recognizing unsatisfactory professional learning issues and potential obstacles to this recognition that should be addressed before they lead to negative outcomes, and setting expectations for teachers in a way that aligns with a learning centred school culture while also preserving positive professional relationships?						
4.4.1	To what extent and what way does this generate positive feedback for our school?						

4.4.2	**What steps could we take to build this?**	**Why we can assume this step will contribute to the overarching theme, informed by a knowledge and evidence base.**
	Step 1	
	Step 2	
	Step 3	

4.5. Conclusions

Building a positive school culture for school development as a professional learning environment capable of facilitating teacher professional necessarily involves change. However, change must not threaten, or be perceived to threaten, the integrity of the overall organization and risk causing disintegration. At the same time, while not everything can or should be

changed, change that occurs in any of its parts must involve and be integrated into the whole organization. Otherwise, it risks being isolated and short-lived, unsustainable because of not being sustained by the various intersecting relationships within the organization.

To achieve this, a school culture must be based on a system of shared values and attitudes together with collaborative and cooperative professional learning that derives from reflective dialogue, conversing and exchanging. Key questions to be posed are always to what extent is a given school culture able understand situations and devise and implement change, ascertain and make provision for teacher professional development needs, and evaluate the degree to which such provision does actually meet those needs. In this respect, it is fundamental to understand to what extent the school facilitates the functioning of groups that share competences, resources and responsibilities, plan and undertake action and assess its validity and efficacy in terms of the way it has been put into practice and the outcomes achieved.

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Chapter Five: The RESPOND framework for promoting and monitoring sustainability indexes

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This chapter presents the RESPOND promoting and monitoring sustainability indexes which constitute the last tool produced by the project. This is closely connected to the first three tools presented in the previous chapters. The indexes represent both tools for school self-evaluation and monitoring of the dimensions connected to the professional learning and development of teachers as well as the functioning of schools understood as organizations capable of institutional learning and development and thereby supporting teacher professional learning and development (MacBeath & McGlynn, 2004).

The indexes represent tools that schools can use flexibly to verify the presence and effectiveness of school policies and intervention strategies related to the school's mission (Ball et al., 2012). At a broader level they can contribute, in an empirical and situated manner, to keeping the quality and effectiveness of schools under control, in line with what has been said by international studies on "effective schools", which consider the self-evaluation of schools as a fundamental tool for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of schools both in terms of developing teachers' professional skills and increasing student learning outcomes. The initial and more recent studies about the effective schools (Brookover et al., 1979; Creemers et al., 2022; Damiano, 2006; Mortimore et al., 1988) envisage that it is possible to break open the "black box" of the school by studying characteristics related to organization, practices, context and resources of schools. The results of the effective schools research converge around five factors capable of incisively influencing the quality of schools and initiating internal changes: (i) strong educational leadership; (ii) emphasis on the acquisition of basic skills; (iii) an orderly and secure environment; (iv) high expectations of pupil attainment; (v) frequent assessment of pupil progress and school outcomes (Scheerens, 2002).

For this reason, the evaluation of schools becomes not only a tool for the accountability of the results achieved to be shared with the stakeholders and the management of the school system, but above all a tool capable of orienting the change of schools in view of the achievement of measurable and monitorable targets over time.

5.1. The strategic role of self-evaluation and monitoring for the professional development of teachers and schools

The last 20 years has witnessed a rapid growth in the areas of research and practice covering the fields of school effectiveness and improvement. This has produced a transition in the governance strategy of national governments combining devolution of authority, administrative autonomy and a strong emphasis on the quality of education (Keddie & Mills, 2019; Klein, 2017). New models of school regulations based upon accountability measures, and evaluation practices, have received considerably more attention (Darling-Hammond, 2020). Such models have led to the development of national educational policies that include standards for school performances, external student assessment, internal and external evaluations, and the development of best practices.

These educational policies point to two different approaches to accountability: a so-called government-based versus a school-based accountability approach. The second model seems to have been more successful within schools, with greater appreciation for self-evaluation rather than external evaluation. As demonstrated by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (2018; 2020a; 2020b) and Eurydice reports (Eurydice, 2015), the improvement of quality in education has become the central concern of educational policy in many European countries. Several European and North American countries have completed – or are working on – legislation and monitoring in the field of School Self-Evaluation (SSE) and School monitoring (SM), considering in particular the responsibility of schools to manage their own quality assurance processes internally.

A system of school self-evaluation and monitoring can be considered from several positions depending on the school's goals, ranging from a restricted view that focuses purely on the school's outcomes, to a broad perspective in which school assessment is focused on input, internal processes at school and classroom level as well as performance.

School evaluation provides the identification and judgment of the quality of schools, as well as the improvement of their educational, managerial and organizational effectiveness. Hofman et al. (2003b) developed a framework for school evaluation using relevant standards from an accountability perspective and combined them with a school improvement perspective. This led to the use of the so-called CIPPO model (Context, Input, Processes at school level, Processes at classroom level, Output) which is an adapted version of the well-known Context- Input-Process-Product model (CIPP) that has been widely used in research into school and classroom quality management (Stufflebeam, 2000).

For the school improvement perspective, the framework adds theoretical organizational perspectives that focus on school development using a system of integral school evaluation as a starting point (Dalin, 1993; Reynolds & Teddlie, 2000; Stoll & Wikeley, 1998). In this process, four implementation stages for improvement reflect the Plan-Do-Check-Act *(PDCA)* cycle (Deming, 1994): the stage of orientation and preparation (plan phase), implementation (do phase), evaluation (check phase) and finally the institutionalization or integration (act/adapt phase).

Studies into effective school improvement offer knowledge on the matters schools should consider in relation to self-evaluation. These lead to three general theoretical perspectives regarding how school evaluation is developed or takes place in a certain school setting:

1. School self-evaluation within schools as high-reliability organizations (Hofman et al., 2003a; Stringfield & Slavin, 2001).
2. School self-evaluation developed under pressure of external organizations (Hofman et al., 2005).
3. School self-evaluation within schools as learning organizations (Argyris & Schön, 1978; Carnall, 1990; Leithwood et al., 2001).

The RESPOND project has intended to adopt this third perspective The third theoretical approach considers the school as a learning organization that focuses on the teaching staff and its ability to learn through interaction and peer exchange. Leithwood et al. (1999) define a learning organization as "a group of people pursuing common purposes (and individual purposes as well) with a collective commitment to regularly weighing the value of those purposes, modifying them when that makes sense, and continuously developing more effective and efficient ways of accomplishing those purposes" (p. 4). This definition sees the learning organization as a dynamic process, characterized by a low degree of hierarchy in between school staff and a widespread collaboration at all stages of the process. The goal is reaching not a static finish, but a continuous accentuation of purposes and means. In

a learning organization, schools need to adapt to their context and population while giving shape to five aspects that promote collective learning identified by Leithwood et al. (2001): (i) school vision and mission; (ii) school culture; (iii) school structure; (iv) school strategies; (v) school policy and means. A learning organization does not aim only at the self-consistency of the organization itself but at its continuous improvement, therefore self-evaluation becomes the priority tool from which to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the school through the use of a rational model of analysis based on specific dimensions, areas, indicators and descriptors. The latter represent the most specific unit of analysis, functional to the collection of information relating to the context, processes and educational and managerial results achieved by the school. School self-evaluation represents a data driven process, focused on collecting evidence on the functioning of the school rather than on the perception that the professionals who work there may have of it (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2010; Datnow & Hubbard, 2016).

For the RESPOND project, school self-evaluation has many different functions that explain how it has to be implemented in and for the schools (Eurydice, 2015). For this reason, it is important to point out some statements and assumptions about how the 'construct' of school self-evaluation has been perceived by the research team.

- School self-evaluation empowers a school community to identify and affirm good practice, and to identify and take action on areas that merit improvement.
- School self-evaluation is primarily about schools taking ownership of their own development and improvement.
- School self-evaluation represents a collaborative, reflective process of internal school review, focused on school improvement.
- School self-evaluation further develops the school development planning process, and focuses it firmly on school organization, management and teaching and learning.
- School self-evaluation involves reflective enquiry leading to action planning for improvement that is informed by evidence gathered within each school's unique context. The process enables schools to use this evidence to identify meaningful and specific targets and actions for improvement that focus on teaching and learning practices. It enables them to create and implement improvement plans, to measure their progress, and to identify their achievements.

In their ongoing engagement with school self-evaluation, schools should continue to focus on teaching and learning. They should continue to use the process to implement national initiatives and to identify and work on aspects

of their own teaching and learning practices which require development and improvement.

School self-evaluation to be effective must be considered as a collaborative, inclusive, reflective process of internal school review (Capperucci, 2015). During school self-evaluation the principal, deputy principal and teachers, under the direction of the board of management and in consultation with parents and students, engage in reflective enquiry on the work of the school (Brown et al., 2020). It is an evidence-based approach which involves gathering information from a range of sources and making judgments with a view to bringing about improvements in students' learning and school organization (Abrams et al., 2020).

Self-evaluation requires a school to address the following key questions with regard to an aspect or aspects of its work:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we know?
- How can we find out more?
- What are our strengths?
- What are our areas for improvement?
- How can we improve?

School self-evaluation builds on and develops the process of school improvement planning. It is a way of working that contributes to both the permanent and developmental sections of the school plan. Through school self-evaluation, schools reflect on and review their day-to-day practices and their policies, with a particular focus on organization, management, teaching and learning. It provides all schools with an internal process for developing and progressing action planning for improvement (Harris & Crispeels, 2006).

According to these basic assumptions, the project partners have agreed on the following definition of school self-evaluation:

The process undertaken by the school to systematically gather information about its activity and functioning, analyse and evaluate this information in relation to the quality of education provided, and make informed decisions leading to decision-making. In the process of self-evaluation, both quantitative and qualitative insights into the school's processes and outcomes are generated, facilitating a comprehensive diagnosis of the institution. It serves as a tool for fostering self-awareness regarding the institution's strengths and weaknesses, critical and success factors. This self-awareness tool is instrumental in improving the overall quality of educational services provided by the school through informed decision-making (van Velzen, 2012, p. 75).

Therefore, school self-evaluation involves reflective enquiry leading to action planning for improvement that is informed by evidence gathered within each school's unique context. The process enables schools to use this evidence to identify meaningful and specific targets and actions for improvement that focus on teaching and learning practices and outcomes. It enables them to create and implement improvement plans, to measure their progress, and to identify their achievements.

In this sense, self-evaluation represents an indispensable and preliminary phase in pursuing school improvement, that here is considered as:

a systematic approach aimed at enhancing the performance and outcomes of educational institutions. It involves strategies and interventions of varying intensity to support and improve schools. The goal is to ensure that all students are supported and that there is a sustained improvement in their academic achievements (van Velzen et al., 1985, p. 98).

and as:

a systematic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively (van Velzen et al., 1985, p. 98).

School self-evaluation provides a meaningful context in which boards of management can further develop and review the policies and practices to ensure they support continuing developments and improvements in school organization, teaching and learning (O'Brien et al., 2020).

Although both processes, school self-evaluation and improvement plan construction, are under the coordination of the school board management, they are not self-sufficient. In fact, to be effective they require not only the contribution of school staff with specific skills related to quality assurance, but they also need the contribution and collaboration of a wide range of stakeholders.

In the context of education, the term stakeholder generally refers to anyone who is invested in the well-being and success of a school and its students, including administrators, teachers, staff, students, families, community members, elected officials, and government representatives such as local business leaders and school board members (Brown et al., 2020; 2021).

The various stakeholders can be involved in the self-evaluation process, not so much because they care about identifying the strengths and weaknesses of a school, but above all because they are interested in how the

school can overcome obstacles, limits and fragilities in order to pursue the improvement of both the professional skills of school staff and the learning outcomes of students (Demetriou & Kyriakides, 2012). From this it is easy to understand the close link of reciprocity that exists between self-evaluation of schools and improvement (Mac Ruairc, 2019).

It is only when the actions in the improvement plan are implemented that the work of the school can improve. All relevant school personnel should share ownership of the actions to be implemented at individual teacher, working groups with specific responsibilities, or whole-school level. These actions should become part of the ordinary teaching and learning process (Kyriakides & Campbell, 2004).

The improvement plan is the tool that enhances the results of the self-evaluation process and gives concreteness to another process, that of improvement, through which it the school tries to intentionally orient the change towards a specific direction.

Characteristics of a school improvement plan are as follows:

It is organized into a timetable and has:
- a medium-term cycle – usually a three to five-year rolling program;
- a yearly cycle – linking the plan to the academic and financial years.

The plan should also include deadlines, for example:
- short term objectives, within 3 months;
- medium-term objectives, within 18 months;
- long-term objectives, 18 months or more.

A school improvement plan should:
- be simple;
- identify from two to three main priorities;
- have a strong emphasis on monitoring and evaluation;
- clarify links between priorities, goals/targets and improvements;
- focus on the impact the plan has on student outcomes.

The school improvement plan should be about:
- managing change: the plan should be seen as a live document and not produced to be stored somewhere. It should also have a strategic view of the future broken down into achievable aims;
- the need to focus on standards: the quality of education should be the driving force behind the school improvement plan. It is driven by the analysis of evidence and is honest about strengths and weaknesses;

- the link between teaching and learning: a clear link between the School Improvement Plan, the strategic direction of the school and the learning objectives expressed in the school aims should be stated;
- the need for links with governors, staff, students and parents: the wider community is essential for school improvement. Involving the school community in the improvement plan shows ownership of the plan and a wider support network to achieve the objectives;
- the way the school improvement plan will be implemented: the school should not try and tackle everything all at once. It is essential that it is targeting objectives, but also that everyone has a chance to understand each objective and their responsibilities to meet these objectives (Arcaro, 2024).

In order to evaluate the impact of the school self-evaluation process and improvement actions, they must be monitored. Schools will need to decide:
- How monitoring will occur
- Who will be responsible for monitoring
- How progress will be determined and reported
- When and to whom progress will be reported (for example, at staff meetings, planning meetings, board meetings)
- If targets and actions realistic or need to be changed

The role of those leading the process, and the role of all teachers, in the ongoing and systematic monitoring of the implementation of the plan is important. In this regard, the gathering and use of information at specified intervals to check if the required improvements are being made is necessary. The results of monitoring could lead to an adjustment of the timetable and revisions of some of the actions, inaugurating a new cycle of school self-evaluation and improvement (Elassy, 2015).

For this reason, the PR4 indexes of the RESPOND project can be used firstly as indicators for the school's self-evaluation and secondly during the implementation phase of the improvement plans as a tool for monitoring the progress of the improvement actions undertaken.

5.2. The RESPOND Promoting and Monitoring Sustainability Indexes

The RESPOND Promoting and Monitoring Sustainability Indexes is a tool designed to enable self-assessment of teacher professional and overall

school development within the four dimensions of sustaining teacher professional profiles, sustaining mentoring and peer to peer support, sustaining the school as a professional learning environment and sustaining teacher wellbeing (Fig. 5.1).
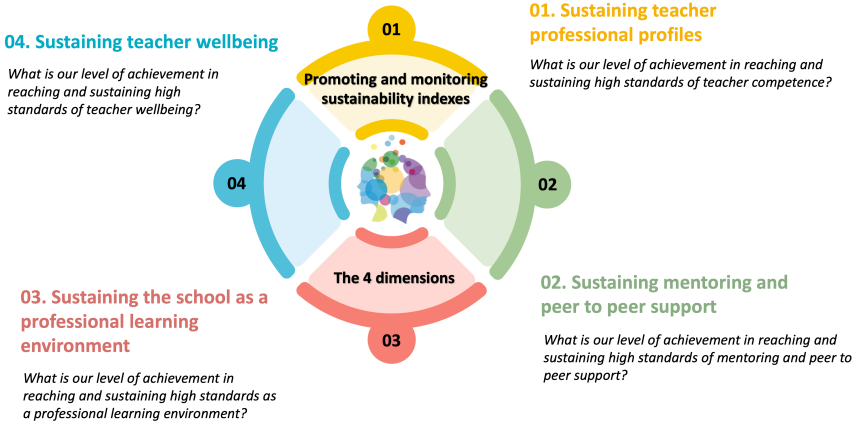

Fig. 5.1 – The 4 dimensions of promoting and monitoring sustainability indexes

The RESPOND Promoting and Monitoring Sustainability Indexes tool is made of two parts closely related to each other. In this paragraph, Part A of the tool is illustrated.

Part A provides checklists regarding the levels of achievement in reaching high standards for each dimension within four action areas (Table 1). Schools can identify whether their current practice takes account of the sixty-four indicators listed, and, if so, assess the level of satisfaction for each one.

Each indicator is evaluated and monitored using a 7-point Likert scale where the value 1 indicates the lowest level of satisfaction and the value 7 the highest level of satisfaction.

To accompany the work of analysis and self-assessment first and monitoring the progress of the improvement actions implemented by the schools, for each dimension of the tool a guiding question has been foreseen to better focus on the object to be investigated.

Tab. 5.1 – Sustaining teacher professional profiles

DIMENSION 1. Sustaining teacher professional profiles *What is our level of achievement in reaching and sustaining high standards of teacher global competence?*									
Global and local issues and multiple perspectives (1) **Intercultural communication and inter-action (2)** **Individual and collective wellbeing (3)** **Acting for sustainability (4)**	**No**	**Yes**	If "Yes", indicate the level of satisfaction regarding the current situation in the school.						
			1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
1.1A In designing its curriculum and providing specific curricular activities, does the school place emphasis on promoting learning about global and local issues and knowledge[1]?									
1.1B Does the school have working groups and/or individual teachers who have specific responsibility for the development and assessment of global competences for teachers and learners?									
1.1C Does the school organize professional learning opportunities for teachers to develop and promote enquiry-based and experiential learning?									
1.1D Does the school organize professional learning opportunities for teachers to develop and promote collaboration and cooperation skills in learners?									
1.2A In designing its curriculum and providing specific curricular activities, does the school place emphasis on promoting learning about intercultural issues, interaction, communication and mediation?									
1.2B Does the school have working groups and/or individual teachers who have specific responsibility for the development and evaluation of provision for intercultural education?									
1.2C Does the school promote the development of multilingual competence and provide multilingual and multicultural resources in its teachers to facilitate effective intercultural communication?									

		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1.2D Does the school organize professional learning opportunities for teachers to promote skills for listening and effective communication, respect, and empathy towards people from different cultures?								
1.3A In designing its curriculum and providing specific curricular activities, does the school place emphasis on promoting learning about individual and collective wellbeing?								
1.3B Does the school have working groups and/or individual teachers who have specific responsibility for the promotion and evaluation of individual and collective wellbeing?								
1.3C Does the school organize professional learning opportunities for teachers to develop and promote affective and relationship skills in learners?								
1.3D Does the school promote learners' abilities to understand and respect diversity as a right and as enrichment in communities and societies?								
1.4A In designing its curriculum and providing curricular activities, does the school place emphasis on the development of global and local issues related to sustainability?								
1.4B Does the school have working groups and/or individual teachers who have specific responsibility for the development and evaluation of provision for sustainability education?								
1.4C Does the school organize professional learning opportunities for teachers to develop and promote sustainability knowledge and skills in learners?								
1.4D Does the school promote sustainable learning environments to be inclusive of learning needs for all learners?								

Note. (1) Very dissatisfied; (2) Dissatisfied; (3) Slightly dissatisfied; (4) Neutral; (5) Slightly satisfied; (6) Satisfied; (7) Very satisfied.

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Tab. 5.2 – Sustaining mentoring and peer to peer support

DIMENSION 2. Sustaining mentoring and peer to peer support *What is our level of achievement in reaching and sustaining high standards of mentoring and peer to peer support?*									
Leadership for mentorship and peer-to-peer programs (1) **Support for transitions from teacher education to teaching profession (2)** **Sustained support for teacher professional development (3)** **Developing the school culture for professional development (4)**	**No**	**Yes**	If "Yes", indicate the level of satisfaction regarding the current situation in the school.						
			1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
2.1A Has the school prepared a clear vision for mentorship and peer-to-peer programs detailing the overall purpose and goals and a roadmap for developing and implementing its mentorship and peer-to-peer programs with short-term and long-term targets?									
2.1B Does the school collect and reflect on observational and evidence-based data on the outcomes and impacts of its practices?									
2.1C Does the school promote peer reflection, collaboration and cooperation, and the exchange of effective practices, teaching materials and assessment procedures between teachers?									
2.1D Does the school support individual teachers in developing their own pathways or plans for career advancement and enable their participation in professional development for mentors?									
2.2A Does the school offer an induction phase for newly qualified teachers where mentoring is prioritized in a systematic way during the first years of teaching, with personalized mentoring plans that assess mentees' competence and development needs, establish clear professional development targets, and plan and monitor for their achievement?									
2.2B Are special efforts taken to actively engage newly qualified teachers in the professional community and to recognize them as important contributors of new ideas, methods and approaches?									

2.2C Does the school facilitate opportunities for collaboration and joint planning between newly qualified teachers and more experienced colleagues?									
2.2D Does the school leadership emphasise the mental and emotional well-being of newly qualified teachers in their transition to the teaching profession and include this in discussions between mentors and mentees?									
2.3A Are teachers provided with regular opportunities and tools/methods for different forms of peer-to-peer-support (such as observation, mentoring, joint problem solving, peer coaching, and collaborative teaching teams)?									
2.3B Are individual and collective professional development plans prepared which are also aligned with the overarching school goals and expectations for further advancement, with tools for observation, monitoring, and assessment of the competences of teachers on teaching practice during and at the end of a given period?									
2.3C Does the school encourage and promote a school culture where the staff trust each other, with time and space to discuss challenges and successes, share experiences, observe and reflect on each other`s practices, and assess how current research could support their specific situations?									
2.3D Does the school support, encourage and reward teachers to conduct practice-based research about student and teacher learning, test new working methods and measure the effect of innovative practices?									
2.4A Does the school promote collective ownership of its mission, values and goals, together with its role in society, through shared assessment and evaluation, cooperative dialogue and deliberation, and identifying strategic development targets?									
2.4B Does the school actively encourage and incentivize regular piloting and testing of new approaches and alternative practices and evaluate outcomes in relation to professional contexts?									

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			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.4C Does the school provide defined and differentiated roles and responsibilities for school members to implement and achieve collective initiatives and organizational development efforts, actively involving teachers and learners in these processes?									
2.4D Does the school have a systematic structure for review, reporting and feedback that supports collective knowledge generation and organizational learning?									

Note. (1) Very dissatisfied; (2) Dissatisfied; (3) Slightly dissatisfied; (4) Neutral; (5) Slightly satisfied; (6) Satisfied; (7) Very satisfied.

Tab. 5.3 – *Sustaining the school as a professional learning environment*

DIMENSION 3. Sustaining the school as a professional learning environment. *What is our level of achievement in reaching and sustaining high standards as a professional learning environment?*									
Building educational values and leadership (1) **Creating the conditions for a positive learning environment (2)** **Understanding and satisfying teacher professional development needs (3)** **Evaluating professional learning outcomes and impacts (4)**	**No**	**Yes**	If "Yes", indicate the level of satisfaction regarding the current situation in the school.						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.1A Does the school have a mission statement that clearly identifies the values that underpin its educational curriculum?									
3.1B Does the school employ surveys to gather information on the specific needs of the school community?									
3.1C Does the school clearly identify objectives for improving teachers' professional competences and promoting the achievement of its learning outcomes?									
3.1D Does the school adopt forms of participative and widespread leadership with a transparent and equal distribution of roles and responsibilities?									

3.2A Does the school have a published curriculum that is accessible and comprehensible based on promoting global competence and providing learning pathways that respect diversity?									
3.2B Does the school provide premises and promote activities designed to improve conditions for teachers, learners and for all members of the school personnel in terms of furniture, technology, connectivity, and care of learning and leisure environments?									
3.2C Does the school conduct surveys to ascertain the quality of the professional relationships within the teaching staff and between the teaching staff and other members of the school community and create adequate opportunities for discussing issues and establishing procedures for resolving conflicts?									
3.2D Does the school provide the resources and the facilities necessary to support the introduction of innovative teaching methodologies?									
3.3A Does the school develop and implement tools for ascertaining the professional development needs of the teaching staff and identifying ways of satisfying them?									
3.3B Does the school promote the exchange of good practices and collaborative research projects on teaching-learning processes through a range of means such as participatory meetings, online platforms and digital libraries?									
3.3C Does the school promote action research projects between its teachers and with teachers from other schools or participation in professional development initiatives with research institutes and universities?									
3.3D Does the school have adequate human, financial and logistical resources to be a professional learning environment able to promote the professional development of all its teachers?									

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	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.4A Does the school have clear guidelines and procedures for the professional development and career advancement of its teachers and ways of assessing their progress?									
3.4B Does the school have clear procedures and tools for monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional learning initiatives?									
3.4C Does the school clearly communicate the outcomes of the procedures implemented for monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional learning initiatives?									
3.4D Is the school able to clearly identify the features that make it a professional learning environment?									

Note. (1) Very dissatisfied; (2) Dissatisfied; (3) Slightly dissatisfied; (4) Neutral; (5) Slightly satisfied; (6) Satisfied; (7) Very satisfied.

Tab. 5.4 – Sustaining teacher wellbeing

DIMENSION 4: Sustaining teacher wellbeing *What is our level of achievement in reaching and sustaining high standards of teacher wellbeing?*									
A culture of wellbeing (1) **An environment for wellbeing (2)** **Actions for wellbeing (3)** **Individual and collective wellbeing (4)**	**No**	**Yes**	If "Yes", indicate the level of satisfaction regarding the current situation in the school.						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.1A Has the school created a community culture based on developing psychosocial capital and promoting wellbeing in terms of positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, accomplishment, and health?									
4.1B Does the school offer opportunities for developing professional job satisfaction and personal wellbeing through institutional participation and career advancement?									
4.1C Does the school have specific procedures for evaluating the level of wellbeing of the teachers and all other members of the school community?									

4.1D Are teachers encouraged to assess and express how they currently feel about their professional wellbeing?								
4.2A Does the school provide equal treatment and support for all teachers regardless of gender, age, experience, or other differences?								
4.2B Does the school provide adequate human and financial resources dedicated to the professional wellbeing of teachers?								
4.2C Does the school create a working environment with a climate that is welcoming, respectful, and inclusive, in which every teacher can feel safe, supported, and appreciated?								
4.2D Are all the physical spaces in the school safe, clean, and comfortable, to contribute to general wellbeing?								
4.3A Does the school provide professional learning opportunities and support for promoting inclusiveness for learners and teachers in all areas of the life of the school as a community?								
4.3B Does the school provide professional learning opportunities for teachers concerning emotional awareness, stress management, and coping strategies and the support and resources necessary to implement them in their working environment?								
4.3C Does the school offer specific activities such as mindfulness, yoga, voice caring, or others, that are applicable to the various spheres of action (classroom, meetings …) in teachers' daily routines?								
4.3D Does the school provide opportunities for teachers to develop professional relationships and networks that enable them to learn from one another and are mutually sustaining at times both of achievement and difficulty?								
4.4A Does the school have members of the community with specific responsibilities and procedures (interviews, focus groups, …) for lowering the risk of attrition and burnout and reaching and sustaining teacher wellbeing?								

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4.4B Is the school flexible in terms of modes of work, managing workloads, and, wherever possible, adapting to teachers' individual needs, personal and work conciliation?									
4.4C Does the school give all teachers the opportunity to participate in decisions as well as activities through dialogical procedures?									
4.4D Does the school have procedures to deal with conflicts between members of the staff and an effective protocol to resolve disagreements?									

Note. (1) Very dissatisfied; (2) Dissatisfied; (3) Slightly dissatisfied; (4) Neutral; (5) Slightly satisfied; (6) Satisfied; (7) Very satisfied.

5.3. Assessing levels of achievement

Part B is designed to help identify and reflect on particular strengths and weaknesses within the dimensions and action areas, the factors that can facilitate and impede achievement, how facilitating factors can be increased and impeding factors reduced, and what five specific actions can be undertaken to prioritize and improve weaknesses.

To conduct this self-assessment activity related to the dimensions and action areas of the tool, schools can take the questions below as a reference to guide reflection both at a personal and collective level, extending it to the entire organization.

Please now analyse the levels of achievement you have expressed for each of the indicators.
1. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of your school for each of the dimensions assessed.
2. Identify the factors that you believe can facilitate or impede the achievement of high levels.
3. Identify specific actions to undertake to improve areas of weakness.

In doing this you may find it useful to consider the following questions:
1. To what extent is the indicator both declared and realized? Is there a discrepancy?
2. To what extent is the indicator shared and participated in by all the school members of staff?
3. To what extent is the current workload of the school members of staff compatible with indicator?
4. To what extent is the level of resourcing necessary for the indicator in terms of human, physical, technological and financial resources?
5. To what extent is accessibility to and support for using resources and implementing actions a facilitating or impeding factor for the indicator?

Please also use any other criteria that you feel are appropriate.

The reflection stimulated by the questions above can be useful both to accompany the school's self-evaluation process, with the aim of gathering information on the strengths and weaknesses related to the practices implemented and the results achieved, and to monitor the progress of the improvement actions planned by the school.

The tables below can graphically support the reflection work required for schools.

Tab. 5.5 – Sustaining teacher professional profiles

DIMENSION 1. SUSTAINING TEACHER PROFESSIONAL PROFILES	
What are our strengths and weaknesses in reaching and sustaining high standards of teacher competence?	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
What are the factors that can facilitate or impede reaching and sustaining high standards of teacher competence?	
Facilitating factors	**Impeding factors**
What are the five specific actions we can undertake to prioritize and improve our weaknesses?	

Tab. 5.6 – Sustaining mentoring and peer to peer support

DIMENSION 2. SUSTAINING MENTORING AND PEER TO PEER SUPPORT	
What are our strengths and weaknesses in reaching and sustaining high standards in mentoring and peer to peer support?	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
What are the factors that can facilitate or impede reaching and sustaining high standards in mentoring and peer to peer support?	
Facilitating factors	**Impeding factors**
What are the five specific actions we can undertake to prioritize and improve our weaknesses?	

Tab. 5.7 – Sustaining the school as a professional learning environment

DIMENSION 3. SUSTAINING THE SCHOOL AS A PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	
What are our strengths and weaknesses in reaching and sustaining high standards of sustaining the school as a professional learning environment?	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
What are the factors that can facilitate or impede reaching and sustaining high standards of sustaining the school as a professional learning environment?	
Facilitating factors	**Impeding factors**
What are the five specific actions we can undertake to prioritize and improve our weaknesses?	

Tab. 5.8 – Sustaining teacher wellbeing

DIMENSION 4. SUSTAINING TEACHER WELLBEING	
What are our strengths and weaknesses in reaching and sustaining high standards of sustaining teacher wellbeing?	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
What are the factors that can facilitate or impede reaching and sustaining high standards of sustaining teacher wellbeing?	
Facilitating factors	**Impeding factors**
What are the five specific actions we can undertake to prioritize and improve our weaknesses?	

5.4. Conclusions

The RESPOND Promoting and Monitoring Sustainability Indexes have been designed to be used by multiple actors and for multiple functions.

As for the actors, they can be considered useful for:

- all those who have responsibility for ensuring that schools provide quality education for students;
- trustees and local/national bodies who may wish to ensure that the school self-evaluation process reflects the school's ethos and includes suitable consultation with the entire school community;
- boards of management, principals, deputy principals and teachers to enable them to use appropriate information to affirm good practice and to have a clear focus on the specific areas that need to be targeted for improvement or development;
- school communities including students and parents, to enable their fullest participation in school self-evaluation and improvement processes.

As for the functions, they have been designed to provide schools with tools that can support the professional development of teachers and schools in relation to the research areas investigated by the RESPOND project. Schools can freely choose the dimensions related to teaching professionalism and the development of schools on which they want to focus their attention and interest (Salokangas & Ainscow, 2018). As has been said on several occasions, the use of all RESPOND tools is absolutely flexible and at the discretion of the schools, which can decide to investigate all the dimensions that make up each of the four products or focus only on some of them or on specific areas of action of interest to them. The same applies to the PR4 indexes, which can be adapted to the needs of self-evaluation and monitoring of the improvement of each school, based on the strategic choices and internal policies defined by the school management board (Honingh et al., 2020).

The indexes proposed here lend themselves to both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. On the quantitative side, the use of the Likert scale allows statistical analyses on the frequencies associated with the seven levels of satisfaction provided by the scale, the average values of each indicator, up to correlational analyses between the various indicators of the model (Schildkamp, 2019). On the qualitative side, wide-ranging analyses can be conducted relating to an entire dimension or more at a micro level for each individual indicator, focusing on the effectiveness of the actions implemented by the school or on those not yet present but which it

would be desirable to foresee to introduce elements of innovation and change both in the teaching practices of teachers and in the organization and management of the school (Geijsel et al., 2010).

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Chapter Six: Trialling, applying and developing the RESPOND tools

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The primary aim of RESPOND has been to conduct research directed towards the improvement of educational practice, in terms both of teacher professional development and overall school development as a professional learning environment, and to produce tools able to promote this aim. This has involved investigating the conditions for realizing a coherent developmental process bringing change in particular practical contexts, whereby what we have identified as key educational values and attitudes can be translated into context-dependent choices about which concrete approaches and procedures are consistent with them and can be applied in those specific circumstances. This has necessarily entailed close collaboration within the partnership between the researchers who analyse the educational practice and propose frameworks for improvement and the teachers who actually implement them through applying the tools provided.

During the project, there has been an endeavour to combine analysis both of teacher needs and teacher reactions to the tools being developed, conducted through structured and semi-structured questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions in order to ascertain what the participating teachers and schools perceive as key questions and specific requirements in terms of professional profiles, support guidance and school communities. The objective has been to enhance the validity and the efficacy of the RESPOND tools through trialling and considering ways of applying them to monitor and improve their relevance to needs, feasibility of implementation and effectiveness in furthering the sustainability of individual, team and institutional development.

In this respect, the presence of the Piedmont Regional Educational Authority in Italy and the Secondary School 21 from Sibiu in Romania as members of the partnership has been of particular importance in ensuring a dialogue based on feedback and feedforward as the project progressed. The individual schools and networks of schools they have provided have been able

to actively participate in each phase of the project in terms of being consulted in order to obtain their point of view while planning, informed of all decisions taken and the ongoing data collection and monitoring processes that take place and involved as protagonists in all the activities conducted.

Participating schools have been engaged in activities involving data collection concerning professional development sustainability through questionnaires, focus groups and interviews, testing of sustainable change framework implementation, data analysis for evaluation of framework implementation, dissemination and involvement of their mentors and teachers in teacher professional development programs, and data collection for the internal project evaluation system.

6.1. Trialling and applying experiences conducted by the Piedmont Regional Educational Authority, Italy

The Piedmont Regional Educational Authority (Ufficio Scolastico Regionale – USR Piemonte) is responsible for implementing national education and teacher professional policies in the region by collaborating with public bodies, universities, and private associations. Based in Turin, it operates through ten offices, including regional and provincial branches, managing over 4,000 schools. Its offices are divided by function and operate at regional and provincial level, providing an administrative and support role for schools at all educational levels. They play an administrative and support role for schools more than 4000 schools at all educational levels. One of the main activities conducted is providing teacher professional development opportunities for at each of these levels, including coordinating and participating in Erasmus+ projects and other international initiatives by using eTwinning, ESEP, Erasmus+ project platform, Epale and Salto. It promotes the use of technology in education through partnerships and collaborations, supporting foreign language assistant programs, facilitating language exchange opportunities, and collaborating with cultural institutions to enrich the overall educational experience both for newly qualified and experienced teachers.

The USR Piemonte has created a network for furthering sustainable development through operating as a community of schools, to promote projects related to incorporating the principles of sustainability into approaches to teaching practices and to all aspects of teacher professional learning and de-

velopment. The group of schools comprising the network includes six Comprehensive Schools (Istituti Comprensivi - IC)[1] across different urban and rural areas of the region, included remote and disadvantaged areas, covering pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education levels. Each one of the schools has been able to contribute its particular expertise to sustainability-focused initiatives related to different areas such as new and inclusive learning spaces, innovative teaching and assessment approaches; planning, management and monitoring of European projects; digital skills, administrative and accounting management. The participants within each school were identified by the relative school leaders on the basis of their involvement in innovative school projects, in-service and pre-service teacher training and tutoring experiences, English language competence at B2 level, digital skills, expertise in running European projects and personal professional portfolio development.

The overall aim of the work of the USR Piemonte is to facilitate the provision of high-quality education and empower school communities all around the region to become more active and engaged in Europe. In line with the RESPOND project aims and methodology, each member of the network has been keen to participate in the partnership to be able to contribute to the development of tools coherent with school needs through analysing and trialling them and also beginning to plan how the tools could be incorporated into an overall regional plan for further development of support activities for specific schools and networks of schools throughout the Piedmont region.

The role of the USR Piemonte team[2] in the RESPOND project included participation in key events during each of the project phases such as Transnational Project Meetings (TPM) and Learning, Teaching and Training Activities (LTTA). Four people, including both USR Piemonte staff and teachers from the network schools participated in each of the meetings, rotating so as to fully represent the various members of the team. USR Piemonte was also responsible for the organization both of TPM 4 and LTTA 4 in Turin.

During each phase of the project, the network engaged in online meetings, document analysis, and individual school-based activities. In particular, in

the spring of 2023 and 2024 the schools conducted trialling activities with a particular on the first two tools, both of which were considered currently most pertinent to the teacher professional development needs within the various school contexts.

Between 2023 and 2024, the network carried out three simulations to support the development of the *Teacher professional profile portfolio* and the *Mentor and peer-to-peer support guidelines*. Participants from each of the schools followed a structured process with phases of introduction, individual work, small group discussions, and plenary sessions. To ensure accessibility, materials were provided in multiple languages, including English, Italian, and Romanian, with translations provided by network members. A glossary was distributed, a tool which participants found particularly useful. These simulations allowed the network to extend its commitment to enhancing teacher professional development and pan-European collaboration. Table 6.1 summarizes the organization and the specific focuses of the simulations.

Tab. 6.1 – Organization and specific focuses of the simulations

Simulations of application of the Teacher Professional Profile Portfolio		Simulations of application of the Mentor and Peer-to Peer Support Guidelines
Turin, 20 March 2023	Cuneo, 24 May 2023	Cuneo, 11 April 2024
Teacher Professional Profile Portfolio	*Teacher Professional Profile Portfolio*	*Mentor and Peer-to Peer Support*
Dimension 2: Teaching for engagement in intercultural communication and interaction	Dimension 3: Teaching for engagement in Individual and collective wellbeing	Dimension 2: Ongoing teacher professional development support
12 Teachers from network schools	3 Teachers from Secondary School 21, Sibiu	12 Teachers from network schools
	21 Teachers from network schools	

Participants generally expressed positive feedback concerning the simulations, highlighting the collaborative atmosphere and opportunities for professional development. They emphasized the importance of addressing wellbeing, resilience, and the need for support, especially for educators in demanding roles.

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Participants suggested increasing opportunities for sharing experiences and strategies, as well as creating more individualized approaches to professional development opportunities and tools based on the need to encompass and cater for teacher and learner needs.

As regards future development of the tools, participants underlined the need to create a balance between a theoretical framework and practical, hands-on approaches to professional learning and development. They stressed the importance of including a focus on about teacher wellbeing as a way of prioritizing their perspectives and involvement. They also suggested incorporating more simulations in international contexts to foster a richer exchange of ideas and cultural perspectives, thereby enhancing the relevance and impact of the teacher professional development activities.

The IC Robilante was particularly active in enhancing the creation of a mentoring structure, fostering innovation by integrating successful practices from international schools and strengthened teamwork and professional collaboration among staff. The activities they promoted involved:

- experienced teachers providing guidance to newly qualified colleagues about classroom management and assessment strategies. They had time for reflections on teaching practices and continuous professional growth;
- attending workshops and seminars led by education experts on topics such as digital tools in education and inclusive teaching methodologies;
- following the experimentation of project tools and the meetings on sustainability organized by USR Piemonte, involving also teachers who did not take part in the initiatives;
- promoting the trialling of new teaching approaches, inspired by observations in partner schools, and the implementation of technology enhanced learning activities.

The feedback by IC Forno underlined how during the trialling of the tools, teachers expressed satisfaction with the overall focus on their professional development, the importance of non-formal and informal learning opportunities, self-assessment of their skills, and the identification of areas for improvement. They expressed particular appreciation for the tools' emphasis on their wellbeing, resilience, and the potential benefits of mentoring, tutoring, and leadership.

Participation in the project has had an impact at multiple levels:

- teachers reported increased confidence and motivation in their roles, thanks to tailored mentoring and coming into contact with practices in other countries;

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- new strategies for classroom management and active learning have been adopted and seen to improve the overall teaching quality;
- partnerships with schools in other countries have enriched the cultural awareness of both teachers and learners. They also increased the participation at the level of international exchange programmes. During this year a delegation of teachers will visit partner schools abroad to observe their teaching practices and participate in professional development activities involving aspects of the RESPOND framework;
- the adoption of innovative methodologies led teachers to build more engaging and effective lessons.

In particular, participation in the project, with its pan-European perspective, is seen as having had a transformative impact on the schools involved, strengthening the professional profiles and skills of their teachers and fostering a spirit of innovation.

The IC Tommaseo from Turin also expressed its gratitude for the opportunity given by the Erasmus+ RESPOND project. This provided teachers with an unparalleled opportunity for professional growth within an exceptionally enriching environment. They engaged with colleagues from diverse backgrounds in a highly stimulating atmosphere, highlighting the significant role of both formal and informal interactions in fostering professional development. They also successfully hosted one of the RESPOND meetings, offering teachers valuable firsthand experience, and implemented innovative teaching methods leading to increased collaboration and professional learning for its teachers.

Participation in the RESPOND project also led to the implementation of a Sustainability in Education Workshop. As part of its collaboration with Hamar University, USR Piemonte hosted a seminar featuring Dr. Shepherd Urenje, an expert in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Dr. Urenje has extensive experience in Scandinavia, Asia, and Africa and his areas of expertise cover leadership in sustainability education, effective learning methodologies, and mentoring cohesive teams to achieve project goals. His work focuses on equipping teachers and educators with tools to integrate the concept of sustainability into all teaching practices.

The primary goal of this workshop was to enhance the capacities of teachers, educators, and stakeholders to address 21st-century ecological, economic, and sociocultural challenges. This aligns with Education 2030 and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which emphasize inclusive, equitable, and quality education as a cornerstone for lifelong learning. Education is seen as a transformative tool that underpins the achievement of all 17 SDGs, driving both personal and societal progress.

During the workshop, participants reflected on critical questions about the quality and relevance of modern education in preparing young people for an uncertain future. They explored the question: "What does teaching and learning for an unknown future entail?" and examined strategies to rethink classroom practices and to empower learners to adapt to dynamic global challenges.

The Workshop was held in a school introduced key concepts of ESD and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The mixed group of teachers made up of RESPOND network members explored aspects such as:

- defining sustainability and its implications in education;
- a "Mission exercise" to contextualize sustainability;
- applying sustainability principles in teaching and learning;
- 21st-century teaching and learning;
- needs for change in educational approaches and the rationale behind them;
- competencies required for sustainability education and their implementation;
- practical strategies for integrating these competencies into educational practices.

Discussion of these themes was the occasion for enriching feedback into the development of the RESPOND tools and applying them during trialling activities.

In terms of future developments, USR Piemonte project participants are keen to implement the RESPOND tools in their schools both at the level of promoting individual reflection and its development into collective discussions leading to analysis of situations and proposals for action steps capable of inspiring positive change within the entire educational community.

Teachers believe that the tools can be integrated into school self-evaluation processes, prompting teachers to reflect on their past professional learning experiences and current needs, particularly in light of the ongoing global educational crisis and the complex relationships between various learning stakeholders.

Through the analysis and collective sharing of responses, teachers can identify strengths and weaknesses, formulate new training and development proposals, and foster a shared sense of motivation. By exchanging best practices and innovative teaching methodologies, and by providing opportunities for collaboration among educators from diverse backgrounds and experiences, teachers can create a virtuous cycle that inspires continuous improvement.

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All this can be stimulated by the tools which can provide a framework for linking a teacher professional profile to professional learning experiences as well as promoting mentoring and peer-to-peer support, an approach still often overlooked in Italy's approach to initial teacher education and help for newly qualified teachers, but which is a powerful means for stimulating motivation, developing skills, and fostering professional development.

The aim for the future is to create conditions for the sustainability of the connections established with partner schools and continue embedding innovative educational practices into common and context-specific teaching frameworks. Monitoring of the benefits that accrue from more dynamic and interactive learning environments that are developed in terms of learning outcomes achieved will be continued using the RESPOND tools.

6.2. Trialling and applying experiences conducted by the Comprehensive School 21 from Sibiu, Romania

Comprehensive School 21 is a state school located in Sibiu, in the centre of Romania. In the school year 2024-2025, it is attended by around 815 children in 36 classes comprising 3 pre-primary classes, 21 primary classes and 12 lower secondary classes. The school is accredited for Erasmus+ projects in the period 20021-2027 and has participated in several European projects and also the national projects "School of values" and "We help together" aimed at classroom testing of innovative teaching methodologies based on the integrated use of cooperative learning through ICT. Other projects also have included professional learning activities aimed at teachers for the development of skills related to distance learning and the use of online teaching-learning platforms. Among the priorities of the school is that of promoting continuous improvement both as regards learning outcomes and the methodological, organizational and relational skills of the teachers.

The school has been engaged for many years in the areas of developing support structures for newly qualified teachers' internal self-assessment processes aimed at monitoring and improving the validity and efficacy of all its activities as a school. We saw participation in the RESPOND project can represent an important opportunity to contribute to the construction of tools for self-evaluation as a school and its ability to promote teacher professional development and overall school development within a European perspective.

Activities developed by the Comprehensive School 21 level during its participation in the RESPOND project involved the following two phases of trialling and two of applying selected tools. The first and the second trialling

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phases involving the *Teacher professional profile and portfolio* and the *Mentor and peer-to-peer support guidelines* were held in Sibiu in the period 21-24 March 2023 and at a school in Turin in the period 22-26 May 2023. Each took place in the context of an Erasmus+ jobshadowing experience conducted jointly by the Comprehensive School 21 and the USR Piemonte, involving Romanian and Italian teachers[3]. In the first phase the participants aalso included university students of Pedagogy in the Primary Education Department, the English Department, and the Science Department at the University Lucien Blaga in Sibiu, together with students from the Sibiu Pedagogical High School within the mentorship and practice programme conducted at our school.

Activities involved the development of mentor tools and mentee tools, mentor and mentee logbooks, evaluation reports and questionnaires. Classroom activities conducted with mentor and peer-to-peer support were also trialled. Materials related to these trialling phases can be consulted at:
- Analysis of the professional needs of the teachers
- Interpretation of the results
- Working materials

The first phase of applying involved the *Teacher professional profile and portfolio* at school level took place in the period February – June 2023. Subsequently, the second phase of applying involved *the Mentor and peer-to-peer support guidelines* and *the School development as a professional learning environment* tool at school level in the period June 2023 – November 2024. In each phase, activities involved developing English, Romanian and Italian versions of the tools, focus group discussions on their contents and use, and classroom activities conducted with mentor and peer-to-peer support. Further discussion focussed on the development of mentor tools and mentee tools, mentor and mentee logbooks, evaluation reports and questionnaires. Through group reflection at the end of these phases emerged a clear perception on the part of the teachers of heightened awareness of the importance of the mentorship in school activities, the exchange of experiences and practices between more and less experienced peers, and the value of developing innovative approaches as a stimulus in improving and consolidating

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[3] Participants from Comprehensive School 21were Violeta Hortensia Solomon, Codruta Nicoleta Trantor, Florina Sandina Radut, Camelia Han, Crina Iuliana Constantinescu, Carmen Minculeasa, Liliana Lupean. Participants from USR Piemonte were Mara Tirino, Laura Balessio, Susi Cameletti, Giorgia Chiesa, Maria Chiara de Rinaldis, Maria Elena Guiguet, Marta Anna Oliviero, Valeria Visone, Miriam Vulcano.

professional and social skills. This enabled further feedback into the partnership process of refining the tools produced.

A number of benefits of participation in the project emerged from reflection sequences used as part of trialling and applying the project tools and also functioning as evaluation of the tools themselves. The teachers who were involved in the activities, the project was clearly perceived as having potential to open up new perspectives for professional development leading to pedagogical innovation and teaching excellence, positively influencing the quality of teaching in Comprehensive School 21 by helping to diversify teaching as a result of collaborative activities and of strategic and reflective co-working.

Participation in the project had an important impact on teachers' and learners' wellbeing, as well as on teaching standards and learning outcomes, helping teachers successfully become members of school structures and school communities by fostering closer collaboration between teachers, encouraging peer-to-peer feedback and enabling professional aptitude for critical reflection on teaching practice.

At school level, the project has promoted a more active participation of teachers in the decision-making process of the institution, thereby consolidating a more pluralistic and democratic culture of dialogue and cooperation. Participation helped develop ways of bringing about significant changes regarding the way the teachers view themselves and their school, moving away from what is for many teachers a fixed and inflexible set of institutional routines and raising their awareness of their own potential and of the prospects for personal and professional learning and development within a context of social construction of knowledge and innovation.

This means that the project allowed teachers to develop a range of competences that are critical for sustainable professional development, including enquiry skills, critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaborative working, interpersonal relationships, problem solving, decision making, organization, management and leadership, all within the framework of global competence for both professionals and schools. At the same time, the overall school culture benefited from a change in the teachers' attitudes towards their professional development and in the participatory processes of the teaching staff, thereby rendering ongoing school development sustainable.

Collaborating with the RESPOND partner universities was also perceived as having brought benefits in terms of the redefinition of initial training for promoting a teacher's professional profile, workshop activities and teaching practice. This involved the extension of the future professional profile of the teachers in order to include global competences, as well as the use of the

tools developed for self-assessment and monitoring of future teachers' competences.

Going beyond the perspective of individuals and groups of teachers, the tools provided by RESPOND are considered to offer valuable indicators such as strategic orientation and school organization, development and enhancement of human resources, integration within the local territory and dialogue with stakeholders. It seems clear that the tools related to *School development as a professional learning environment* and *Promoting and monitoring sustainability indexes* will be useful for Secondary School 21 and its internal monitoring and evaluation units, as well as for local and national educational authorities in terms of promoting the development of policies for the improvement of the quality of educational provision and in particular the self-assessment for professionals and schools through tools and indexes that have been scientifically validated through an ongoing trialling and applying process.

A significant part of the work conducted by the Comprehensive School 21 project team, together with the University "Lucian Blaga" of Sibiu, concerned ascertaining and analysing teachers' professional development needs, a theme of particular importance for the third dimension of the tool School development as a professional learning environment. Initially, a needs analysis was carried out with the aim of identifying the problems or teachers' needs to be solved. A detailed assessment was made of the current situation and the factors that led to these needs. Data collection was carried out through surveys, interviews, questionnaires or market research in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the needs. Interpretation of the results then led to establishing the order of importance of the identified needs.

A sample questionnaire that was developed to conduct the needs analysis of teachers in Secondary School 21 can be consulted via this link.

The 45 participants in the project came from a range of types of schools, including general education teachers (77.8%) vocational teachers (15.6%) and mentors (11.1%), situated both in urban areas (88.9%) and rural areas (11.1%). They included pre-primary (11.1%), primary (40%), lower secondary (28.9%) and upper secondary (20%) teachers. Their professional experience involved 0-5 years (2.2%), 5-15 years (13.3%), 15-25 years (28.9%), over 25 years 55.6%).

The Table 6.2 includes examples of the most frequent answers given.

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Tab. 6.2 – Examples of the most frequent answers given

1. What are the sources of professional satisfaction you have on a daily basis in working with students? - Students' motivation. - Students' results in performing given tasks. - Products made by students. - Face-to-face work with students. - Collaboration with students in the activity.
2. What are 3 problems you experience in your direct, daily work with students? - Too dense subject matter. - Little time for teaching and systematization. - Dense portfolio. - Lack of interest of some students. - Too little time allocated to teaching important concepts. - Way of organizing the school year (modules). - Low attention and concentration span. - Discipline problems. - Poor resistance to sustained intellectual activity. - Student motivation. - Parent-teacher-student relationship. - Student-student communication. - Lack of attention.
3. What are 3 professional needs identified so far that you have encountered in your teaching position? - Satisfactory tasks, files not related to the overwhelming teaching work - need for release; need to have access through subscriptions to certain educational platforms chosen according to the needs of the class and my professional appreciation; quality time in interaction with colleagues. - School curriculum that is not adapted to the student's needs, green week that has no practical application hours, merit scholarships that should not be given by class but by average. - School curriculum that is not adapted to the student's needs, green week that has no practical application hours, merit scholarships that should not be given by class but by average.
4. What difficulties do you encounter in selecting and using teaching materials, including digital materials? - Inadequate, inappropriate for the age group being taught. - Inappropriate language for the age group of pupils/students. - Little time to search for materials. - Internet connection/lack of internet source for use of materials.

5. What difficulties do you encounter in carrying out the weekly learning/planning unit? (3 examples) - Too little time often hurriedly reworking teaching to correspond to what is required in the classroom. - Details that are not relevant to the actual activity, the template. - Writing remains, because problems arise in class that make us deviate from the planning anyway, the rubric we have to respect. - Too much content.
6. What problems do you encounter in classroom management/crisis management/special needs management? (examples from teaching work) - The oppositional attitude of some students. - The need to "divide" during the activity, without efficiency, the quality of teaching is lost, the lack of motivation of students with special needs, the differentiated training that takes time. - Lack of support teachers for children with problems.
7. What problems do you encounter in communicating with student's family? - Family's disinterest in their child's school situation. - Lack of motivation to stimulate own child in learning. - Lack of education. - Parents' inability to stimulate learning in their children.
8. What most inspires or motivates you in your teaching career? - My primary school teacher. - The child. - My love for my teaching career. - My relationship with the children.
9. If you had to give one piece of advice to a student wishing to enter the teaching profession, what would it be? - Communication and empathy! - To love what they have to do! - Arm yourself with patience! - To be willing to work out of love for children! - I have students in practice, and I always tell them that without heart and dedication you can't reach the satisfaction of a fulfilling job. - Patience. - Being a teacher requires dedication. - Before entering the teaching profession, develop a deep understanding of why you choose this career. - Teaching is a mission that requires dedication, patience and passion. Always be ready to learn, adapt to change and develop your communication and empathy skills.

After identifying the needs that emerged through the surveys, interviews and interpretation of the answers to the questionnaire, our RESPOND research team started to implement a mentoring programme in collaboration with "Lucian Blaga" University and other institutions in the field such as the

National Pedagogical College "Andrei Saguna" in Sibiu. Both mentors and mentees from partner institutions participated in this implementation.

A particular focus of this program, in line with the framework proposed by the RESPOND project, was to develop sustainable mechanisms for peer-to-peer support and ongoing learning opportunities for teachers, having as the main objective to encourage teachers to continuously build bridges between theory and practice throughout their careers. Achieving this goal is a very complex process that requires taking into account a number of specific variables including the overall aim of the mentoring process, the specificity and content of the mentoring activities, the characteristics of mentees (specialization, teaching experience, learning styles, professional development options, etc.) and the characteristics of the mentor's style (pedagogical convictions, empathic and proactive attitude in the mentoring relationship)

As intervention strategies in the mentoring activity, we have chosen those considered to be the most suitable for the teachers in our school:

- Team teaching, in which the mentor and the mentee teacher worked side by side to more effectively meet the needs of the students in the class.
- Consolidating strategies (debate, brainstorming, etc.), in which participants shared experiences or analysed specific topics established in the mentorship plan.
- Simulation strategies (especially based on role-playing), in which participants explored issues they cannot address in their daily lives, experiencing attitudes and values different from their own.

At the end of the implemented programme, the participants felt that every tool they had used had made a substantial contribution to their professional learning and development. They also found that these interventions were highly helpful going forward, particularly for new teachers and sometimes even for more experienced ones.

6.3. Applying and developing the RESPOND framework and tools

Participation in the RESPOND project has resulted in reciprocal benefits for all the participants. The research and development of a framework and tools carried out as the project progressed allowed both the university teacher education institutions and the schools themselves to gain further knowledge of, as well as methodological competence related to, the complex processes

involved in ongoing teacher professional development and its mutual relationship with school development.

The researchers and their partner organizations have benefited in terms of their ability to promote professional and school development on a wider scale within each of the partner countries, through dissemination activities beyond the partnership, and within further transnational projects related to the same theme. The benefits for the teachers and the schools who were members of the networks formed in each of the partner countries comprised furthering the sustainability of individual, team and institutional development, both in terms of the ability to identify needs related to impeding and facilitating factors within action areas and to elaborate and deliver action plans based on specific action steps in order to reach ascertainable levels of impact and durability at each of these three intersecting levels of development.

As the project progressed, the aim of producing an overall framework for rendering teacher professional development and school development mutually sustaining, with complex, intersecting focuses and dimensions, meant that it became increasingly important to develop all the parts of the tools taking account of the range of potential contexts in which they could be applied. On the one hand, this involved considering applications at the level of educational systems and their various ramifications as local educational authorities, of networks of schools working together, of schools as individual institutions, departments within schools, or groups of teachers who choose to use RESPOND tools because of specific professional needs they have identified. On the other hand, it led to the need to render each single tool and individual dimension as free-standing and flexible in its use as possible, in order to enable using the framework in a modular way, making choices on the basis of context-driven priorities and objectives.

This perspective is based on a belief that successful innovation necessarily involves making decisions that take account of a number of crucial variables. In the first place, it is clear that given approaches and choices related to innovation cannot be successful for all contexts at all times. On one hand this means there is a need to look closely at what conditions are needed for attempts to be successful. As Bryk et al. (2015) put it, "change ideas work in some places but not in others". Projects related to teacher professional development and school development should always involve finding answers for the questions: "what works, for whom, and under what conditions?" (pp. 13-14). Within the ecological perspective we propose, while environmental disturbances encountered are the necessary trigger for change,

the specific characteristics of the school as a professional learning environment determine what can and what cannot be a trigger and what can and what cannot be triggered.

Particular emphasis must be given to identifying factors that facilitate and impede the sustainability of professional and school development within each of the focus areas and on how facilitating factors can be increased and impeding factors reduced. Significant factors that can be identified in this respect and can function as obstacles or facilitators are related to support, or its lack, from leadership, a sense of community and being accompanied, as opposed to be alone or excluded, the existence, or absence, of accessible materials and resources, and the availability and functionality, or otherwise, of educational spaces (Valdés Sánchez & Gutiérrez-Esteban, 2023).

At the same time, variation in outcomes is the "natural state of affairs in complex organizations" (Bryk et al., 2015, p. 13). Since "outcomes are emergent and unpredictable" (Cochran-Smith et al., 2014, p. 6), action plans and action steps will always be open to adjustment as they proceed. Teacher professional development and concomitant school development will constantly require finding step-by-step answers to the following questions:

- What have we done?
- What have we learned?
- What are we going to do now?

The process of answering such questions can be seen as the development of adaptive expertise (Le Fevre et al., 2016). This is defined as:

[…] a way of working in complex environments that focuses on learning and change for the purpose of improving valued outcomes. Adaptive expertise draws on deep conceptual knowledge and a well-honed skill set. It is driven by a holistic inquiry mindset, underpinned by curiosity, responsiveness and willingness to learn and change. Adaptive expertise is highly metacognitive and involves self- and co-regulated learning through continuous cycles of action and deliberate reflection. Individuals, organizations and larger systems can demonstrate adaptive expertise in the way they respond to evidence about outcomes and create new understandings and ways of working in their attempts to improve them for learners. Adaptive expertise involves seeking transformative and sustainable improvement at all levels of the system (p. 314).

Each one of the RESPOND tools has been developed to make it as much as possible a facilitator of adaptive expertise while at the same time being adaptable in terms both of its application to particular contexts and of eventual circumstances that require modifying its contents in line with specific needs that emerge during its application. This is directly related to the way

in which developing adaptive expertise requires co-identifying and co-defining specific areas and aims for improvement (Bryk et al., 2015) and limit horizons in order to avoid undertaking change on too large a scale. According to Fullan (2009), it is important to determine a small number of ambitious goals that are clear and relevant in terms of a systemic focus for improvement. The same principle is expressed by Hargreaves and Shirley (2020) when they affirm that improvement should be based on "fewer initiatives and more initiative" (p. 98). In this respect, the RESPOND framework aims at providing tools with an overall coherence of conception together with the possibility of context-specific application of individual components given by the question-and-answer structure of the checklists and consequent empowerment of teachers in building a common understanding of issues and taking initiative for determining and putting into practice action steps.

An equally important variable in bringing about change is the question of the timescale involved in processes of professional learning and development. Lortie (1975) described one of the most powerful characteristics of teachers and schools as presentism. Presentism refers to the overwhelming pressures of schools that keep teachers locked into short-term perspectives and unable or unwilling to envision or plan collaboratively for long-term, systemic change. This characteristic is closely linked to those of conservatism and individualism.

Other authors (Cohn & Kottkamp, 1993; Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009) have subsequently demonstrated the persistence of these patterns of thinking and behaviour. According to Hargreaves and Shirley, "well-designed projects that offer collaborative opportunities and incentives to engage with long-range and short-term improvement can fail to eliminate presentism" (p. 2507). Moreover, "educational change efforts are embedded in a sea of social, economic, and cultural conditions that persistently pull people back to, and endlessly immerse them in, short-term orientations" (p. 2529).

Going beyond such short-sighted, tunnel vision requires the adoption of the new ideas by the members of the social system within the innovation (Rogers, 2003). This presupposes commitment to innovation of all of the participants, both the teachers who enact change and the school leaders that facilitate it, and the RESPOND framework and tools are all designed so promote this. This commitment is fundamental for the sustainability of teacher professional development because innovation necessarily involves new learning goals, learning approaches and learning activities and the extent to which these will be achieved depends on teachers' willingness to collaboratively change and adapt their practices (Pieters et al., 2019).

RESPOND sees this process as dependent on creating a professional learning environment whereby the school becomes a learning organization,

in which professional learning is the nucleus of innovation (Crossan et al., 1999). Because sustainable development depends on the learning of (groups of) individuals, it is fundamental to ensure that the learners themselves are in charge of the learning process and clearly perceive its purpose and benefits. This involves seeing action steps not as mere implementation of action plans, but rather as the drivers of professional learning. As (Elmore, 2016) puts it:

Implementation is something you do when you already know what to do; learning is something you do when you don't yet know what to do. […] When we are asking teachers and school leaders to do things they don't yet know how to do, we are not asking them to implement something, we are asking them to learn, think and form their identities in different ways (p. 531).

In this respect, RESPOND conceives of innovating as a process carried out together, since working together with colleagues who are reciprocally significant others facilitates both the intellectual and emotional management of the innovative process. This in turn depends on building a school culture that is open and predisposed to innovation (Lambriex et al., 2020), thereby facilitating the emergence of projects for change and enabling them to be sustained over time.

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The RESPOND glossary

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Teacher professional development and school development as a professional learning environment are all about change, including even changes in the paradigms that are referred to during the process. According to Kuhn (1962), any transition from one paradigm of reference to another requires the search both for new lexis and for new definitions of existing lexis. This can lead to terminological confusion, which involves both existing and new signifiers and signifieds. This confusion is not necessarily negative but is rather a reorganization of relationships and a redefinition of meanings that are naturally part of the new conceptualization (Dodman, 2016). The following RESPOND glossary offers definitions of many key terms used in this volume that we believe are central to building a paradigm for sustainable development.

Accomplishment refers to the extent to which people are making use of their personal talents and potential. Some of the most important ideas associated with this dimension include the feeling of continuous development, growth and expansion of the self, openness to new experiences, realization of one's potential, awareness of the improvement of self and behaviour over time, self-knowledge and effectiveness, competence, mastery and efficacy, and the idea of having something important to contribute to society.

Action projects are self-directed action plans created by groups of people for addressing global or local issues of interest or personal relevance, thereby creating experiences that raise awareness and can lead to a tangible outcome. The members of a group formulate ideas, plan ways of acting, and implement interventions designed to produce solutions for problems, create improvements and innovations, and promote sustainability in environmental systems.

Assessment is a process that focuses on identifying both student and teacher professional learning progress and achievement with reference to specific skills and the indicators of those skills.

Autonomy refers to the extent to which people are independent and self-determined, in terms of viewing themselves as living in accord with their own personal convictions, while recognizing complexity and adopting multiple perspectives on issues. They are able to resist social pressures to think and act in certain ways, regulate their behaviour from within and self-evaluate themselves according to their own standards. Critical thinking is core to this dimension.

Career development refers to the ongoing process of acquiring new knowledge, skills, experiences, and opportunities to advance and grow in the teaching profession. It encompasses a range of activities and strategies designed to support teachers in enhancing their effectiveness, expanding their expertise, and progressing along their career paths.

Collective capabilities refer to the combined skills, knowledge, and resources of the entire school community working together to achieve common goals and address challenges effectively.

Collaboration is when people are able and willing to help each other to deal with issues where there is a need for reciprocal support on the part of one or of a number of them. It implies understanding and respecting differences, recognizing individual strengths and weaknesses, and working within an inclusive framework.

Cooperation is working together towards the achievement of a common goal that is the reason for being of a particular group of people. It implies interdependency and a sense of accountability whereby a successful outcome depends upon the efforts of everyone involved.

Complexity is the state or quality of an issue, and the phenomena involved, comprising many different components that interact in multiple ways with each other and with their wider environments. It requires corresponding thought process based on understanding how the connections between parts give rise to the whole. It implies a non-linear relationship between components or agents and the fact that there are no clear boundaries between them.

Critical reflection involves deeply analyzing and questioning thoughts, actions and experiences to gain insight, improve understanding, and inform future decision-making.

Cross-cultural deals with the comparison of different cultures. In cross-cultural communication, differences are understood and acknowledged, and can bring about individual change, but not necessarily involve collective transformations. In cross-cultural societies, one culture is often considered "the norm" and all other cultures are compared or contrasted to that dominant culture.

Current research refers to the latest studies, investigations, and scholarly inquires conducted within a particular field or discipline, aimed at advancing knowledge, understanding, and addressing contemporary issues or questions.

Democratic values are cornerstones that underpin democracy. These values lie at the heart of and characterize democratic competence. They provide standards or criteria for how people deal with issues: evaluating actions, both one's own and those of other people; justifying opinions, attitudes, and behaviours; deciding between alternatives; planning behaviour; and attempting to influence others. Three sets of values can be identified: valuing human dignity and human rights; valuing cultural diversity; valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality, and the rule of law.

Documentary evidence can refer to documents produced during professional learning experiences or later as a result of professional learning experiences, such as materials used, data collected, etc. Documentary evidence is a way of providing indicators of teacher professional development.

Evaluation is a systematic process of collecting and analysing data to determine the effectiveness, quality, and impact of programmes, policies, or interventions, make overall judgements and take decisions.

Effective teaching practices are instructional strategies, methods, or techniques employed by educators that have been demonstrated through research or experience to positively impact student learning outcomes. These practices are characterized by their ability to engage students, promote deep understanding, and facilitate meaningful learning experiences.

Evidence refers to facts, data, or information that supports or verifies a claim, hypothesis, or conclusion. It can be derived from research, observations, experiments, or credible sources, and it is used to provide justification for assertion or arguments.

Environmental systems are the sets of interactions and relationships between living organisms that interact with one another and with their physical surroundings. These interactions are two-way. The physical surroundings influence the living organisms, and the living organisms alter the physical surroundings. An environmental system can be both natural and anthropic. A school is an anthropic system, based on the interactions and relationships between learners, teachers, buildings, and outdoor spaces, that functions as a learning environment for both student learning and teacher professional learning.

Evidence-based management practice involves making informed decisions and implementing strategies based on reliable and relevant experience-based knowledge and research findings. It emphasizes the use of empirical and theoretical knowledge, best practices, and proven methodologies to guide administrative, instructional, and organizational processes in the school setting.

Experience-based reflection involves a deliberate and systematic process of examining and analyzing past teaching experiences, actions, and outcomes to gain insights, deepen understanding, and inform future practice. It emphasizes the critical examination of one's own teaching practices, decisions, and interactions with students in real-world classroom contexts.

Genuine practices refer to authentic, sincere, and ethical actions or behaviors that are carried out with integrity and honesty, reflecting a commitment to principles and values

Global issues concern the global community, such as environmental issues, social issues, political crises, and economic crises, and which requires a global approach to be able to address it. Examples include biodiversity loss, climate change, environmental disasters, biotechnology risks, inequality, and poverty. Global issues range in severity from catastrophic risks that threaten the existence of the entire human race or its societies to questions which may have less impact but that affect everyone.

Health refers to people's perception of their physical and mental wellbeing when compared to people of their age and gender. Recognizing psychosomatic reactions and disorders and understanding how to cope with physical and mental problems are important aspects of health. Stress management is a significant component and involves the ability to distinguish between negative and positive stress and maintain tolerable levels of stress. Physical activity, healthy nutrition, sleep quality, work-life balance, time management and the health of the environment are all key factors.

Indicators are specific, observable, and measurable characteristics that can be used to show the presence or development of something. In teacher professional development, an indicator refers to the concrete manifestation of a skill that one believes one possesses.

Intercultural describes communities in which there is engagement between different cultures based a deep understanding of and mutual respect for all cultures. Intercultural communication focuses on the mutual exchange of ideas and cultural norms and the development of deep relationships. In an intercultural society, no one remains unchanged because all members learn from each other and grow together by dealing with issues within an intercultural framework.

Leadership involves guiding, supporting, and empowering people to effectively fulfill their roles within the school. It encompasses the skills, qualities, and actions necessary for leaders to facilitate meaningful and productive experiences for all members of the school community.

Lifelong learning refers to the ongoing process of acquiring new knowledge, skills, and competencies throughout the professional career. The concept involves continuous professional development aimed at enhancing teaching effectiveness, embracing educational innovations, and adapting to evolving student needs and learning environments.

Local issues arise and can be addressed at a local level such as a specific country, region, or town, or involve particular groups of people in a given area. Examples include such issues as civil rights, the right to information, discrimination, multiculturalism, the quality of life, access to medical care, and the rights of people with disabilities.

Meaning in life is a feature of people who have goals in life and a sense of directionality in moving towards them as they deal with issues. Present and

past life and personal beliefs give meaning to life. Essential components are optimism guided by vision and values; a sense of connecting to something beyond oneself; a sense of social coherence (how social functioning makes sense to us) or social actualization (thinking that our society is a potentially good place, or that it can become a better place for all people).

Mentee refers a person who receives guidance, advice, and support from a mentor. The mentor helps the mentee to develop specific skills and knowledge that will enhance their personal and professional growth

Mentor refers to an experienced and trusted teacher who in a collaborative and dialogical way provides guidance, support, and advice to someone less experienced, typically referred to as a mentee, to help them develop professionally. Mentors share their knowledge, expertise, and insights to help mentees navigate challenges, set goals, and achieve their potential

Mentorship entails a dynamic relationship in which the mentor and the mentee offers counsel and direction to each other, aiding in their professional growth, learning, and development

Meta-view is the ability of teachers to reflect on and evaluate their teaching practices from a higher-level perspective, considering how these practices impact student learning and adjusting accordingly.

Multilingual refers to the coexistence of different languages, used for a variety of purposes, at a territorial, social, or individual level. It is a natural feature of human evolution. It can be compared to plurilingualism, which is often used to describe the dynamic and developing linguistic repertoire of an individual user or learner.

Multicultural refers to a society that contains several cultural or ethnic groups. People live alongside one another, but different cultural groups may have, but do not necessarily have, engagement or interactions with each other. When they do engage, learning and working in a multicultural environment contributes to diversity of thought processes and perspectives that make approaches to dealing with issues more dynamic and innovative.

Newly qualified teachers are teachers who have recently completed their initial teacher training and gained their teaching certification. They are in the early stages of their teaching career and may be undergoing an induction period to help them transition into the profession.

Peer-to-Peer Programmes are initiatives that facilitate collaborative learning and support among teachers within the same professional community. In these programs, teachers work together to share experiences, insights, and resources, as well as provide feedback and guidance to one another. The aim is to foster a culture of continuous improvement and professional development by leveraging the expertise and experiences of peers.

Peer-to-Peer support refers to a relationship where a teacher with similar experiences, roles or positions provides each other with assistance, advice or guidance. The term is often used in educational or workplace settings and is based on the idea that mutual support can be beneficial for learning, problem-solving, or dealing with challenges. The goal of peer mentoring is to cultivate a supportive relationship by exchanging knowledge and experiences, thereby offering opportunities to learn from diverse perspectives.

Perspective is the ability to view objects, events, and ideas in realistic proportions and relationships, in terms of different angles and dimensions, considering one's own perceptions, attitudes, or behaviours and those of others. Both global and local issues can best be described, explained, predicted, or influenced when viewed or treated from multiple and different perspectives.

Professional development refers to the way in which activities, programmes, processes and experiences that can enhance the understanding, knowledge, skills, and competencies of teachers in their professional field. It supports both directly and indirectly ongoing learning and growth to improve performance and career advancement.

Professional growth refers to ongoing processes of learning, improvement, and advancement in the career as a teacher. It involves expanding knowledge, developing skills, and refining teaching practices to enhance academic and social learning in the classroom.

Professional learning autobiographies are a self-assessment tools for reflecting on and developing awareness of one's own professional development. Writing the autobiography promotes a process through which it is possible to consciously reconstruct one's professional learning experiences, thereby attributing a personal meaning to the learning experience.

Professional learning experiences lead to professional development and can take place in formal, non-formal and informal contexts. Formal professional learning takes place in institutional contexts designed for pre-service

and in-service teacher education. Non-formal professional learning takes place within organized contexts such as associations that provide courses and activities not directly related to the teaching profession. Informal professional learning takes place in real and virtual settings not organized for learning purposes such as home, family, friendships, reading, internet.

Professional learning outcomes are the result of an experience or an activity that is significant for teacher professional development. This refers to any kind of successful outcome of a professional learning experience that is not necessarily a part of the specific skills set out in the Teacher Professional Profile, but which enriches a teacher's professional development.

Reflective dialogue involves thoughtful and introspective conversations between individuals or groups, where participants engage in critical examination, analysis, and interpretation of their thoughts, experiences, or actions. These dialogues encourage deeper understanding, insight, and learning through open communication, questioning, and sharing perspectives

Resilience: refers to the ability to bounce back from adversity, setbacks, or challenges demonstrating adaptability, perseverance, and emotional strength in the face of difficulties. It involves coping effectively with stressors, maintaining a positive outlook, and continuing to move forward despite obstacles or setbacks.

School culture encompasses the shared values, beliefs, norms, traditions, and behaviors within a school community. It reflects the collective attitudes and perceptions of students, teachers, administrators, and staff members, shaping the overall environment and influencing interactions, decision-making, and learning outcomes within the school.

School development is a process of enquiry that unites promoting student achievement with continuous improvement based on leadership, planning, and professional development.

School improvement plans are the tools that enhances the results of the self-evaluation process and gives concreteness to another process, that of improvement, through which it the school tries to intentionally orient the change towards a specific direction.

Self-acceptance is a type of ongoing reflection on one's own characteristics and behaviours that involves developing awareness and acceptance of both

personal strengths and weaknesses. It goes beyond the notion of self-esteem and can encompass the idea of self-care, whereby service or help to others is seen not as self-sacrificing but rather an enriching sociocultural component of people as social beings who actively collaborate and cooperate together.

Self-assessment involves people reflecting objectively on their work, determine how this work aligns with established assignment criteria, and decide on ways for improvement. It provides an opportunity for people to agree and take ownership of the assessment criteria. It promotes the skills of reflective practice and self-monitoring, encourages self-directed self-reporting of the efficacy of one's actions and progress towards objectives, and increases motivation for all members of a group.

Self-evaluation is a collaborative, reflective process of enquiry on the work of the school designed to identify its strengths and weaknesses, and its priorities for improvement and development. Self-evaluation enables schools to act to improve the quality of education that they provide, to affirm and build on what is working well, to identify areas in need of development and to decide on actions that should be taken to bring about improvements in those areas.

Sustainability refers to the interdependency between all the parts of an environmental system and how, through their interactions and relationships, they must act together to maintain equilibrium within the system. In both natural and anthropic environment systems, this requires the achievement of a paradigm which values, sustains and realizes the wellbeing and health of life and the physical surroundings that support it.

Sustained support involves providing consistent and continuous assistance, resources, or encouragement over an extended period to help individuals or initiatives achieve their goals, address challenges, and maintain progress

Teacher collaboration refers to educators working together, sharing ideas, resources, and expertise to enhance learning and learning outcomes.

Teacher unity refers to the collective cohesion, collaboration, and solidarity among educators, working together towards common goals and advocating for shared interests within the educational community.

Transformability is the ability to recognize significant changes in one's own environment and to react successfully to them. This involves developing

new strategies, envisaging and enacting change, building new structures, systems and ways of being.

Values are basic and fundamental beliefs that guide or motivate attitudes or actions. They help determine what is important in life. Values describe the qualities that institutions and people choose to embody to guide how they want to be, how they treat themselves and others, how they act and interact within the world.

Vision refers to a statement or description of the overarching goals, aspirations, and desired future outcomes. It articulates the collective values, beliefs, and ideals of the school community, including administrators, teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders.

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RESPOND

The RESPOND project investigates and analyses the complex relationship between teacher professional development and school development as a professional learning environment. It proposes a framework with a series of tools designed to promote ways in which each of these levels can be mutually sustaining. The *RESPOND Teacher Professional Profile for Global Competence and Portfolio* enable users of the tool to focus on transversal and specific skills and monitor their development within teachers' professional profiles as their careers progress. The *RESPOND Teacher Professional Development Support Guidelines*, the *RESPOND School Development as a Professional Learning Environment* and the *RESPOND Promoting and Monitoring Sustainability Indexes* enable users of these tools to focus on action areas and specific action steps and build action plans designed to promote change.

The RESPOND framework is intended for staff in faculties of education involved in initial and continuous teacher education programs, as well as those involved in the provision of continuing professional development, advisory groups or individuals with this role in regional or national contexts, teacher professional associations, the inspectorate, senior management in schools and staff from all curricular areas.

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