

# TEACHER TRAINING RESOURCES IN AFRICA

## Providing dedicated but untrained teachers with vital education

More than a decade ago, The Open University began to apply its expertise in distance learning to provide high-quality teacher training resources on a global scale. Today, our teacher education programme, TESSA (Teacher Education in sub-Saharan Africa), has grown into a thriving network, providing innovative resources and practical advice to teacher educators and teachers across ten African nations. TESSA is already a hugely ambitious and successful programme. Our goal now is to strengthen TESSA through pioneering technology and to further support teachers in their practise. By sustaining this successful programme, you can not only help to expand the reach of TESSA, but also positively enhance classroom teaching and learning experiences for children across sub-Saharan Africa.



## How TESSA works

TESSA - [www.tessafrica.net](http://www.tessafrica.net) - is a resource bank of Open Educational Resources (OER), which enhance the training of teachers both pre-service and those already in the classroom. The materials are available online and offline, in digital and printed formats and in multiple languages. They are freely available for teachers to use, adapt and share, meaning that they can be made relevant to each and every classroom challenge.

The materials include:

- Subject resources: activities, case studies and resources for teaching literacy, numeracy and science.
- Teaching packs: resources grouped so they are appropriate for teaching lower, middle or upper primary school.
- Handbooks, toolkits and audio resources: providing practical guidance and demonstrating a range of teaching approaches in African primary school classrooms.

TESSA has been developed collaboratively with partners and actively integrated into teacher education programmes in Kenya, Tanzania, Sudan,

Zambia and Nigeria. Resources are available in four languages; Arabic, English, French and Kiswahili. Consequently TESSA can maintain its local relevance across such a broad geography.

By using TESSA, teachers are able to build their knowledge of lesson techniques and fine tune their skills. They can choose the materials they need and adapt them to their requirements. Pupils are engaged in classroom activities and take an active role in learning. Where TESSA is embedded in school life children participate, learning increases and attendance is improved.

“ When I look to TESSA, there are so many interesting ways to teach pupils. There are some things I have never tried out myself before and then I integrate it into the preparation of my lessons and also in the delivery of my lessons. TESSA is always ready to deliver. We are so lucky to have TESSA with us. ”

*Millicent Acquah  
Primary School Teacher Ghana (pictured above)*

# Technology for Development: what is a MOOC?

TESSA has always been available online to ensure accessibility to the resources for teachers. Today, TESSA aims to expand this focus on technology by using a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) to provide training in the use of participatory teaching methods. A MOOC is an online course with an unlimited number of participants, accessing the course via the web. In addition to learning activities, many MOOCs provide interactive user forums to support learning between participants. Since 2012, MOOCs have become an effective, innovative and relatively economical means of delivering education at scale.

Capitalising on The Open University's expertise in distance learning, the very first teacher educator MOOC for Africa will be piloted in July 2017. The TESSA MOOC will support the integration of ICT into classroom teaching. The content will be delivered online, but targeted face-to-face sessions will support participants in their learning and those who complete the MOOC will be awarded a certificate of completion. The MOOC will reach thousands of teacher educators and will therefore, extend the reach of TESSA far beyond existing partner institutions and connections.

The TESS-India programme, a sister initiative to TESSA also run by The Open University, has had considerable success supporting teachers through a MOOC combined with classes providing face-to-face support. In India, the MOOC trained 8,000 teachers and teacher educators during two six-week periods.



of participants felt the MOOC increased their professional understanding



of participants said the MOOC helped to improve their teaching

## Supporting TESSA

TESSA has been generously supported to date by the Allan and Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust and The Open University's alumni. This incredible investment has afforded development of the MOOC and presentation with support classes in three African countries. The aim now is to replicate this in Ghana where there is demand for TESSA resource.

Additional investment would deliver:

- July 2017: A pilot first presentation of the MOOC to train teacher educators to become MOOC facilitators.
- October 2017: A second presentation of the MOOC with contact classes run by the July graduates to support further teachers through the course.

This style of pyramid teaching reaches significant numbers cost-effectively. TESSA can make a positive contribution to teachers and students in Ghana, but requires your help to make this happen. Your support can help raise the £32,000 needed to deliver the MOOC and contact classes in Ghana.

## Why support the OU?

In 2016, the United Nations set out the Sustainable Development Goals, with a key target to substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers in developing countries. There is a global drive to integrate technology into the delivery of teaching and learning. TESSA is ahead of these trends, and will build on its success to transform teaching standards.

The Open University (OU) was the world's first successful distance teaching university, founded to bring high-quality degree-level learning to people who do not have the opportunity to attend traditional campus universities. Our technically driven distance learning model and student-centred approach is known to be effective and economical.

Internationally, the OU combines development, distance learning and academic expertise with practical implementation plans delivered in partnership with governments, NGOs and in-country experts to impact the lives of millions of people. With your support TESSA can offer the power of education to anyone who wishes to change their life.