

The Education Workforce Initiative

With increasing numbers of students, by 2030, the demand for teachers in low- and lower-middle-income countries is projected to rise by 25 percent, and in low-income countries it will nearly double. In many countries, this increased demand is equal to half or more of the projected graduates of tertiary education. Furthermore, young people need an education workforce that can support and prepare them for the 21st century.

In response, the Education Commission has developed the Education Workforce Initiative.

PURPOSE

The Education Workforce Initiative (EWI) aims to develop concrete options for policymakers to re-design, expand, and strengthen the education workforce to meet the changing demands of the 21st century and to enable quality education.

Drawing on evidence from in-depth case studies on how education workforce reform is implemented and examples of innovation, EWI will harness the latest experience to inform new ways to approach workforce design and implementation. An international High-level Steering Group will oversee this work.

WHY NOW?

Teacher shortages impact many countries, especially in regions home to the most vulnerable communities – often in remote or conflict areas. There are also shortages in certain subject areas such as science and mathematics. New approaches are needed. But increasing the supply of qualified teachers alone will not be enough.

To succeed in this century, thrive within an ever-changing job market, and be equipped for lifelong learning, young people need to learn 21st century skills. The role of the teacher – and that of supporting figures – should evolve in parallel with the needs of the time.

Education outcomes must be improved. Costs for teachers and other human resources in the sector often take up 70-80% of national education budgets. Teachers need support to strengthen and ensure the effectiveness of their teaching and learning practices and to address student welfare. This is an opportunity to explore how improving professional development, harnessing the latest technology and re-designing the education workforce could provide greater support.

EWI complements the existing UNESCO International Task Force on Teachers for 2030. It focuses on a limited set of priorities in depth to address key gaps, involves new actors, and creates a strong platform for country implementation.

PRIORITIES

EWI focuses on the following priority areas in primary and secondary education:

Re-thinking the design of the education workforce (with a focus on district, cluster, and school level) to ensure the right roles are in place for inclusive, quality education;

Exploring the **changing roles** of the teacher, school, and district leaders and the **introduction and professionalization of other roles** within the workforce, so they are fit for the 21st century, have a strong focus on leading learning and address the needs of marginalized groups; and

Strengthening the current and future education workforce through more effective attraction, recruitment, preparation, deployment, induction, support, and professional development that allows for the changing roles and the potential of technology to enable open, adaptive, personalized and distance learning.

EXPECTED RESULTS

An Education Workforce Report to inform education workforce reform. This will include a review of recent evidence; lessons from other sectors; new thinking and in-depth examples of how effective education workforce reform or innovative approaches have been implemented.

Country-specific proposals for education workforce reform in 3 countries (discussions underway with Vietnam, Ghana and Sierra Leone). These will be co-developed with policymakers in the countries represented in the High-level Steering Group, in collaboration with local research partners and other actors who will help sustain the reforms in the longer term. The initiative aims to build local and international capacity in this critical area of education reform.

STRUCTURE

A High-level Steering Group of international experts chaired by Commissioner and former Minister of Education of South Korea Ju-Ho Lee with Vice Chairs Susan Hopgood, President of Education International and Theo Sowa, Commissioner and CEO of the African Women's Development Fund.

An Advisory Group comprising key stakeholders including the International Task Force on Teachers for 2030, international agencies, practitioners, non-state actors, and thought leaders to provide specific expertise and help shape outputs.

Research organization(s) to lead the research for the Education Workforce report.

Partnerships between international and local research partners, think tanks, implementing organizations, and governments to develop country policy options.

A Secretariat, led by the Education Commission.

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