

Guiding questions for designing the workforce using learning team and learning system visions

To consider how to redesign the existing workforce taking into account learning teams and learning systems, policymakers could consider these guiding questions.

Questions for consideration

1. Consider cultural, social, equity, and political factors

- **What are the needs of the education sector plan?** What are the key functions needed to deliver those goals?
- **What is the size, scale, and capacity of the state and district system?** This includes distance (catchment size) and connectivity (geographical and technological). The larger the scale, the larger the scope for specialized roles. In smaller jurisdictions, collaboration across districts may be needed to provide specialist support. Where there are remote areas, ratios of face-to-face staff may need to be higher as each role holder will have a smaller case load to allow time for travel.
- **What is the language mix of the workforce and how does this align to learner needs?**
- **What is the gender balance and diversity of the workforce in relation to student demographics?** Which groups are underrepresented and at different levels of seniority? How will proposed reforms impact gender equity and representation of minority groups?
- **What is the level of complexity of middle-tier structures,** e.g. regional, district, cluster, and even smaller units of organization?
- **What is the cultural and political status of workforce roles?** E.g. school principal roles may be highly valued as outward facing community leaders, with no appetite for instructional leadership; therefore investment in instructional leadership may have more impact in deputy principals.

2. Be respectful of the maturity of the system and the pace of change desired

- **What are the current binding constraints or inefficiencies in the workforce model that affect education outcomes?** For example, if a major limiting factor is the lack of mother-tongue teachers to support foundational learning, then more investment in local learning assistants may be prioritized. If closing within-district achievement gaps is a major priority, then investment in data analysts and district managers may be prioritized.
- **What is the current capacity of the workforce – what is manageable for the pace of change desired?** If there is already a system or institutions for local in-service teacher training, for example, the move to pedagogical coaching may be a manageable incremental step for the system. For other systems, the introduction of coaches may require a major workforce investment. Where capacity is lower, additional quality assurance and management may need to be considered, such as additional lead pedagogical coaches.
- **What is the quality of existing data on the workforce?** What are the gaps in workforce data that need to be addressed to improve workforce planning?

- **How decentralized are workforce accountabilities?** The more decentralized the system, the more technical skills and accountabilities will need to be designed into workforce roles at the school and district levels. If the system is highly centralized and school principals have limited managerial authority to take school improvement action, then investment in pedagogical coaches rather than supervisors may be wiser.
- **How can policymakers take a long-term view?** Introducing new ways of recruiting teachers with the right dispositions and skills will take several years before it impacts student outcomes, and many years before they are consistent across a country.

3. Consider learning team and learning system approaches

- **How can the skills and expertise of the workforce be optimised?** How can they be better aligned towards learning, equity and inclusion? How can more experienced teachers work together with less experienced ones?
- **What structures and practices need to be in place to enable more team-work?**
- **How can school and district leaders focus more on instructional leadership and data-driven improvement?** What do they currently do they either needs to be done by someone else, technology or eliminated?
- **What kind of learning configurations could maximize the skills of different workforce roles?** How could alternative learning arrangements, including those that are tech-assisted, help target individual learning needs?
- **What structures and practices must be in place to facilitate schools working more effectively together to improve education outcomes?** What formal measures can support the exchange of evidence and knowledge about effective instruction and management approaches?
- **How can cross-sectoral collaboration improve education outcomes?**
- **How can a culture of research and development be encouraged throughout the system?** How can the government support shared research, evaluation, evidence, and lessons learned to help scale up or target effective innovations?

4. Embed systems thinking into workforce redesign

- **How can workforce initiatives be aligned across system levels?** For example, efforts to improve pedagogical coaching at the district level will struggle if a culture of coaching and trust is not cultivated and modeled by leaders at the state level.
- **What interdependencies exist between workforce reforms and other policy initiatives, including wider reforms across the workforce life cycle?** E.g. if pedagogical coaches are promoting particular teaching standards, are inspectors and supervisors using these in their accountability frameworks to send consistent messages to teachers?

- **Are the right systems in place to support the success of workforce roles?** If supervisors have a role in supporting school performance review, for example, what systems are in place to ensure the review system is effective, such as incentives for performance?
 - **What wider policy choices are relevant to workforce reforms?** E.g. if a strong national- or state-level inspectorate is desired, this will impact the priorities of the supervisor role.
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5. Be mindful that a workforce design exercise is about people and change at scale, not drawing new organizational charts

- **What success measures and evaluation processes can be implemented for new initiatives to generate new local evidence on what works?**
 - **What key skills, behaviors, and culture are needed to make workforce design successful?** These should also be defined alongside new roles.
 - **How can the government best engage the workforce in design and policy decisions?** What types of tools and strategies are most effective at connecting policymakers and the workforce in meaningful dialogue?
 - **How can key roles be designed as champions for change?** Workforce redesign offers opportunities to establish key roles, such as pedagogical coaches, as champions for change who can influence and motivate colleagues to work in new ways that have more impact on learning outcomes.
 - **How can policymakers build on bright spots in the system** and existing strengths? E.g. localities with high levels of parental engagement could leverage this to recruit community volunteers.
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