

Background Paper  
*Transforming the Education Workforce*

Political Economy of the  
Education Workforce

Monazza Aslam and Shenila Rawal  
OPERA

The Education Workforce Initiative (EWI) was established in response to a recommendation from the Education Commission's *Learning Generation* report to explore new ways of diversifying and strengthening the education workforce. The *Transforming the Education Workforce* report is one of EWI's key contributions to catalyzing this thinking. It draws on recent evidence and provides thought leadership on how to rethink the education workforce. For the full report and other supporting documents, please visit [EducationWorkforce.org](http://EducationWorkforce.org).

The *Transforming the Education Workforce* report was originally commissioned as a set of sequential background papers and thus each paper influenced and references the others. The background papers are written by different authors and cover the rationale for rethinking the education workforce, the design of the education workforce, how it can be strengthened, and political economy and financial considerations.

This background paper focuses on the political economy of the education workforce and proposes considerations for the workforce needed now and in the future.

For questions or more information about this paper, please contact: [info@educationcommission.org](mailto:info@educationcommission.org)

Please reference this publication as: Aslam, Monazza and Shenila Rawal (OPERA). 2019. "Political Economy of the Education Workforce." Background Paper for *Transforming the Education Workforce: Learning Teams for a Learning Generation*. New York: Education Commission.

## Executive Summary

The design and implementation of the education workforce are heavily influenced by the political context. We outline some approaches to navigating the political context for education workforce reforms from initiation through to scale up and sustainability— drawing on the literature and some examples of specific reforms as well as political economy analysis in two Education Workforce Initiative countries.

**In initiating education workforce reform, the drivers of an agenda should be transparent and based on targeted need rather than party politics.** The process of agenda setting should engage key stakeholders – this can be done through mapping stakeholder groups, undertaking consultations, interviews and surveys, and visiting district and school sites to understand the needs, interests and motivations of stakeholders and identify leapfrogging opportunities. Robust evidence should be used to counter political party platforms and inform an understanding the current status of the workforce (such as composition and capacity) and challenges and opportunities within existing priorities and resource constraints. **Top level ownership and commitment to reform are also key during the initial stage to ensure reforms succeed in the long term.** Again, this requires early engagement and extensive consultation from the top level with key stakeholders to get critical feedback for crafting coherent policies. This can support creating a compelling narrative and case for investment in the reform. Identifying local champions to drive this case using their political capital at all levels is crucial - reforms are often undermined when political will is lacking.

**Making reform objectives clear at the outset accompanied by strong evidence to support why they are needed is a first step in designing reforms.** Engaging with stakeholders at an early stage— especially teachers and their unions— can highlight the existence and scale of potential risks or unintended consequences and provide additional evidence to support policy objectives. The respect for teacher unions as partners in the design and implementation of key, even controversial reforms, has been noted as fundamental feature that has contributed to their sustainability or ‘resoluteness.’

**Gaining consensus of stakeholders on the objectives of a policy design is also important** but can be difficult as not all stakeholders are formally organized. Some stakeholders will resist any change and pre-empting these strategic coalitions can be tricky as their voices are often strong. One way of addressing this can be to consider multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral approaches with some accommodations made. Keeping channels of communication open and frequent as well as negotiating where needed is also helpful.

**Implementation of policy requires alignment of the different activities of a reform, ensuring the responsibilities of each actor and how they interact with other actors are clear.** Effective implementation requires a coherent, well-managed and phased rollout, which can be supported by an incremental approach that utilizes sequencing of activities. Delivery approaches and decentralization can potentially help address political economy challenges- such as alignment of reform goals across actors- but clear lines of accountability, good leadership and management must be in place. **Ongoing communication with those implementing the reform is critical throughout the process** so that feedback and adaptation is undertaken to continually ensure alignment of the reform. **An evidence-based and data driven approach to monitoring and evaluation** not only ensures that programs are remaining on track but provides information for course correction – this can be done through setting benchmarks, performance appraisal mechanisms, and education management information systems.

**Sustainability of a reform requires integration with the larger education system**—this includes whether and how it is embedded within existing structures and clarity on incentives that drive the different players who are impacted by the reform. **Reforms should be complemented by support structures**— for example, embedding of reform goals within sector plans and through legislation, capacity building of roles to support accountability structures, and recognition for reform leaders—to ensure scale up and sustainability. **Critical to any successful workforce reform is recognizing the education workforce as agents of change** by harnessing their motivation and encouraging them to work as system leaders. The international community can also support sustainability of reforms by drawing reform leaders into high-visibility commissions or expert panels at the global level and providing networking and knowledge sharing regionally and internationally.

## Introduction

The education sector and any reforms within it do not operate in isolation of the world around them. They are heavily influenced not only by the larger macro governance environment, but also by the motivations and actions of important players both inside and outside the educational sphere. The political economy climate, and whether it is favorable or unfavorable, can severely influence the motivations, incentives and actions of the education workforce. Policy design, implementation and efficacy can either be enhanced or hindered by the nature of the political environment within which any reform is taking place. The changing nature of the global education environment and the particular focus on quality cannot be achieved without considering the education workforce that is expected to deliver that education. Recognizing the importance of reforming the education workforce globally has meant that a vast array of reforms have arisen to this end using the following policy levers: design; attract, train and induct; motivate, develop and progress; and lead, monitor, manage. This paper applies a 2Revolutions lens and political economy aspects need to be considered both within the ‘next’ phase in identifying existing good practices that can be leveraged to improve the current system as well as in the ‘future’ phase when future scenarios are envisioned to experiment and innovate the system needed.

A number of players within the education arena have the power to influence the political economy of education systems the world over. They include (and may not be limited to): government officials (Minister of Education, other ministry officials), local government representatives, school officials/school management (head teacher, governing body and teachers), teacher and education support staff unions, civil society associations, religious bodies, donors, communities, parents and even students. Most often it is the case that teachers constitute the most critical input into the educational process. Nevertheless, their interests and incentives may or may not align with those of their students (notably a group with potentially limited power) or may differ from the society at large.<sup>1</sup> Teachers also make up a large majority of the education workforce and the potential impact that they can have on children’s’ learning outcomes<sup>2</sup> mean that they will be a key focus of this paper. However, other stakeholders within and outside the education system also strongly influence both teachers’ actions as well as pupil outcomes. Therefore, the power relations and incentives of these other actors and ultimately the constraints or facilitation they present in the political arena within which teachers operate, all influence any contribution that teachers and other members of the education workforce can make to improving schooling quality for the children that they teach.

This paper examines how political economy issues influence the design and implementation of education workforce reforms. This is done by highlighting key messages throughout the lifecycle of a typical education reform which includes initiating and setting a policy agenda, designing and planning policies and implementing and sustaining them. The paper outlines good practice approaches to addressing education workforce reform

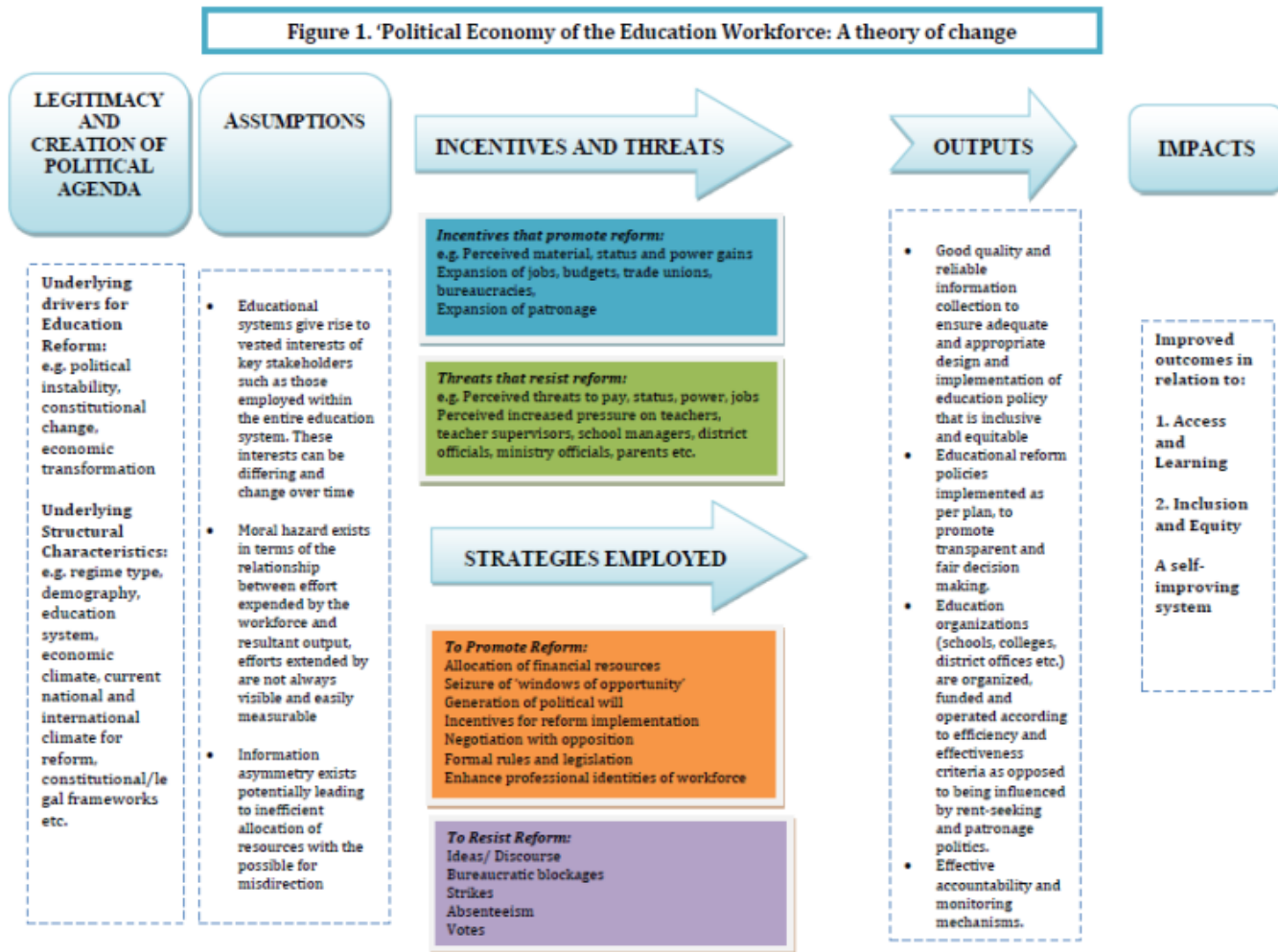
and political economy considerations that should be taken into account, it draws on case studies from the literature and examples from primary research conducted in two Education Workforce Initiative countries – Ghana and Vietnam. Political economy issues affect several factors relating to gender, disability or other inequalities that marginalized groups may face and, therefore, inclusivity and inequality are cross-cutting issues throughout this paper.

### **Political Economy Framework for Education Workforce Reform**

This paper’s discussion is framed around a Theory of Change (ToC) relating to the ‘Political economy of the education workforce’. For the purposes of this ToC, the following definition of Political Economy Analysis (PEA) will be used: ‘Political Economy Analysis is a tool used to understand the interaction of political and economic processes in a society: the distribution of power and wealth between different groups and individuals, and the processes that create, sustain and transform these relationships over time.’<sup>13</sup>

The ToC is based on Kingdon et al. (2014)<sup>4</sup> and emphasizes the importance of ‘actors’ and how their vested interests and incentives and the means by which they pursue these consequently impacts educational outcomes (Figure 1). On the left-hand side, the discussion is nested within the context of the underlying drivers and imperatives for educational reform. These will vary from country to country. The political economy of education is embedded within the underlying social, political, economic and educational structures of the country within which reforms are promoted or resisted. Column 2 identifies key theoretical assumptions and column 3 notes some incentives that promote and threats that generate resistance to reforms. Strategies that can be employed by vested interest groups to either promote or resist reform are also noted. Columns 4 and 5 illustrate the resultant outputs and impacts that may be seen within the broader educational system as result of these factors.

Figure 1. 'Political Economy of the Education Workforce: A theory of change



Source: adapted from Aslam et al. (2016), *Teacher Politics: Meeting Educational Quality Challenges with Teachers*, Report Prepared for the Education Commission.

This theoretical framework guides the underlying research question for this paper: how does the political economy influence the design and implementation of education workforce reforms? More specifically:

- Who are the key stakeholders for education workforce reforms, including beyond the education sector and what are their relationships to one another?
- What are the political economy lessons from previous implementation and experience that can inform approaches for future education workforce reform at scale?
- What tools can be used to navigate the political economy and how can the political economy of these changes be addressed? What considerations are needed for implementation?

As mentioned above, issues relating to inclusivity and gender equality in education workforce reform form a crucial and overarching element across this paper.

The combination of a needs-driven approach combined with top-level ownership, political will at all levels and engagement of key stakeholders such as teachers, who can drive change, are key to initiating effective reforms

**Reforms can be instigated by myriad internal and external factors, including economic, political and social factors and the interaction between them.** Internally these can be in response to a recognized crisis within the system or the need to solve a specific problem within the education sector of a particular country. Many nations are grappling with issues such as high pupil-teacher ratios, poor quality of schooling, lack of funding for education amongst other factors and therefore solving these problems has become a priority of the reform agenda.

Reforms can be instigated by an individual or a group of individuals (such as communities or civil society). For example, civil society played a key role in the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) initiative that was born out of the recognition that although children were in school, they were not learning in India. This citizens-led initiative allowed ordinary citizens to find out whether their children were learning through a nationwide survey of children's ability to read simple text and do basic arithmetic. This annual assessment has taken place ever since 2005 and has now spread across several countries. It has triggered assessment conversations at national policy level in various contexts and led to additional initiatives around teaching at the right level. In other instances, the catalyst for major change has been a passionate, committed and influential bureaucrat (e.g. Mr. Vijaykumar who fostered and drove the Activity Based Learning program in Tamil Nadu, India<sup>5</sup>).

Teachers can be drivers of education policy reform particularly when their opinions are garnered. For example, surveys conducted by teacher unions and the NFER (National Foundation for Education Research) in England showed that teachers were concerned with managing pupil behavior and the efficacy of the implementation of behavior policies. This led the Department of Education to explore how teachers can be supported in this regard. Consulting with stakeholders, especially teachers, can help to identify leapfrogging opportunities – new or innovative practices that enable challenges to be addressed more quickly and don't necessarily follow traditional models of progress—that could help shape reform options.<sup>6</sup>

External influences, such as donor agencies or responses to global agendas (e.g. SDGs), can also elicit major change through financial and technical assistance of nationwide programs such as the Global Partnership for Education's (GPE) education support in over 65 developing countries. It is worth noting that the tensions between donor and global agendas and contextual realities mean that reforms could be imposed on national governments even when they do not align well with local needs. Organizations like the GPE have made active efforts to deal with this concern. For example, the GPE is currently engaged in an external evaluation that aims at assessing the effectiveness of its operational model in supporting partner countries to achieve results in learning, equity, inclusion for all and strengthened education systems. Such evidence-based lessons can help inform donor efforts and ensure that they are better aligned with national objectives. These types of initiatives also give the opportunities for donor countries to air their concerns (e.g. First Annual Report Kenya: December 2018, GPE evaluation is an example of how this engagement has been achieved successfully). Research driven programs are also increasingly being embraced globally as drivers of reform (e.g. TUSOME in Kenya<sup>7</sup>).

**The drivers of a reform agenda (who initiated it and why) should be transparent, the agenda should be driven by needs rather than party politics and the process of setting the agenda should help inform and engage the stakeholders.** This will ensure that from the very beginning a wide range of education stakeholders

at all levels of the education system (national, district, school) are informed enough to have confidence in what is being initiated and will most likely affect them.

The current mechanism for initiating reform in most countries happens at the national level where political parties and government officials make decisions regarding future reforms and decide how to move forward with any new and innovative ideas. Policy directions often follow a similar political process. For example, in Vietnam<sup>8</sup>, the Communist Party, National Assembly and government set the reform agenda and it is usually initiated through resolutions in each of these with the Ministry of Education then being assigned the role of implementer of these resolutions. This department then likewise issues directives and regulations for the lower tiers of government (provincial/municipal) and other stakeholders (e.g. schools) to actually implement the proposed agenda. According to one stakeholder, there is a strict and clear hierarchy in power delegation from ministerial level to provincial/city departments and district/ward levels. Similarly, in Ghana<sup>9</sup>, the government always drives and initiates education reforms. From the political perspective, the government sets the agenda through the party manifesto with the ministries then cascading relevant elements down to the appropriate implementing agencies. In the first instance, the government or a Minister in Ghana will make an announcement based on parliamentary discussion which is then followed by a more formal policy and consultation process engaging various stakeholders such as development partners and the civil society.

A risk of such top-down, state-initiated, education agenda setting, especially if it is not informed by evidence, is the resultant reforms being divorced from the needs and realities at the ground level. Another risk involves a **greater tendency for reforms to be politically and financially driven (see example in Ghana box) as opposed to driven by societal goals and market needs**. Politically driven reforms are also subject to corrupt practices, and a politician may even deliberately chose to lobby or recommend a policy precisely because that policy gives them scope for corruption. It has been suggested in the literature that this is why most education policies are to do with expanding access to education and providing inputs to schools rather than reforms that focus on improving quality.<sup>10</sup>

**Ensuring policy is needs-driven\*, as opposed to ‘party politics-agenda driven’ requires engaging a wide range of educational stakeholders in the bargaining processes.** Teachers and the broader education workforce are critical to ensuring policy is driven by local needs. Teachers understand on-the-ground challenges well and evidence suggests that a key feature of successful reforms is teachers and school leaders empowered as change agents. A reflection from Rio de Janeiro’s former secretary reveals how critical it is for the top-level to engage with teachers: Wilson Risolia, who led a major personnel reform in Rio state, said that his top strategy in raising test scores and graduation rates was ‘staying close to schools’ which entailed visiting schools continuously and listening to teacher, director and student feedback. Although this program generated political push back and implementation challenges, it produced impressive results— increases in student learning and reductions in repetition and dropout lifted Rio state from 26<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> place in the national education quality rankings in four years— that probably could not have been produced without this effort.<sup>11</sup>

The Big Fast Results program in Malaysia used several channels to solicit feedback and input at the initiation of the reform process from a wide variety of stakeholders, including teachers, families, civil service, school management, government agencies, donors and private sector. The design of policy solutions involved 6-week intensive delivery ‘labs’ with a range of these stakeholders to identify needs and brainstorm policy solutions.

---

\* Namely the policy or strategy is guided by market trends and citizens and community needs as opposed to based on individual or groups’ political agendas.



This inclusive development of policies ensured stakeholder ownership of the plans, which improved the functioning of the delivery system during implementation. During implementation, the effects of the delivery lab made a real difference—one former director general of the civil service said “I’ve not seen ministries, ministers, civil servants, and frontline workers coordinating so fast before. The response times were amazing – they were working like a light infantry.” In addition feedback was solicited during the design process through interviews with citizens, and public input was requested online and through texting. After policy proposals were developed, town hall sessions were held to solicit feedback on the findings. These were widely attended, with 5,000 participants in Kuala Lumpur alone. These town hall sessions ensured that concrete promises and commitments were out in the public. Idris Jala said, “...after declaring promises publicly in such a detailed way, you have no choice but to deliver.”<sup>12</sup>

Encouraging the voice of multiple stakeholders seems to be the aspiration of most governments but the extent to which this apparent inclusivity is a reality is questionable in many contexts. This could be due to several factors, including costs, logistical difficulties, time, inertia or for the sake of appearances.

**Ensuring reform is driven by societal and market needs also requires sophisticated evidence and data that can highlight where challenges and opportunities exist and where they are most relevant within the system.** To initiate knowledge-driven reform, policy-makers need quality data. Oportunidades, Mexico’s conditional cash transfer, is an exemplary program that has endured since 1997 despite political and economic changes because it provided strong evidence of how the program improved lives of children. The results of impact evaluations aided the decision to continue the program after the new government was elected in 2000.<sup>13</sup> Other programs illustrate how evidence can be deeply integrated into policymaking processes. Delivery Units like the Prime Ministers’ Delivery Unit<sup>14</sup> in the UK or the Punjab Education Reform Roadmap<sup>15</sup> in Pakistan are tightly linked with regular data collection and monitoring and evaluation, which informs decision-makers about which policy decisions to make in real time. In this model, data is collected frequently, a specific team is dedicated to analyzing it and officials use the data to base their policy proposals on evidence. This is a highly iterative form of policy-making, in which policy is refined based on evidence and lessons learned. When decision-making is based on data and targets, it is important that indicators are chosen carefully and measure genuine results. To account for perverse incentives, data should draw on independent assessments along with government sources when feasible.<sup>16</sup>

**Top-level ownership and political will at all levels are essential for reforms to succeed.** Top-level ownership will ensure that plans can get tabled as part of the national agenda for example either as part of a sector plan or as part of the formal political agenda. Top-level ownership can also help secure the financial backing required for planning and implementation (although this is not guaranteed) and the technical support needed to succeed (assessing institutional capacity).

**This ownership can be facilitated by high levels of commitment to the reform at all levels and the backing of key political champions** (see TTEL case study box in Appendix). The Brookings Millions Learning report highlighted ‘political champions’ at the national and local level (such as Queen Rania Al -Abdullah in Jordan, secretaries of education in Mexico and the examples given from Ecuador and ABL champions in India) that have been found to have been the linchpin behind successful policy-making and implementation.

Stakeholder interviews in Ghana highlight the fact that political reform champions (such as those in the Ministry of Education, CoEs and their leadership, district officials and schools, the National Teaching Council etc.) existed across all levels in the education system and facilitated political will across the national, regional, district and school-levels that drove the TTEL reform agenda forward. Despite initial institutional resistance to change

and a desire to maintain the status quo by many stakeholders, extensive consultations and early engagements meant that these political challenges and blockages were mitigated[i]. These initial and ongoing consultations acknowledged the importance of all stakeholders, allowed them to provide feedback and then adapted their policies in light of this feedback. Giving stakeholders this ownership and demonstrating a willingness to taken on board their opinions and modify the program accordingly meant that these stakeholders were then more likely to champion this reform.

Some successful initiatives have been more effective by focusing on policymakers who are on the ground and closest to the problems. Not only do they experience the challenges themselves, but they are also the most likely to identify innovative solutions to problems and can be held accountable if actions are not completed. One example is the ‘Lesson Study’ program in Zambia (also now found in more than 50 countries globally). Before the Lesson Study program was introduced, officials from Zambia had the opportunity to learn and observe the program in schools in other implementing countries like the Philippines and saw the benefits and opportunities for the approach in Zambia. Of these officials, a small group of advocates, or ‘local champions’ emerged, some of them former schoolteachers turned policymakers. These local champions held insights about local realities and became the core driving force within government to scale up the program.

We can learn from several examples of where not having political will undermined reform implementation. In Mexico in 2008, President Felipe Calderon signed a major reform program in 2008 with the teachers’ union, SNTE, which included clear standards for hiring and competency tests, but SNTE officials later boycotted the tests and revoked the agreement. In 2015, the government of Sao Paulo, Brazil, proposed a consolidation of thousands of schools and within weeks students had occupied over 200 schools and shut down the main street in the city multiple times. The governors’ popularity dropped and in response, he fired the secretary of education and suspended the proposed reform.

In Indonesia, under the New Order, politics was dominated by military and bureaucratic officials, well-connected business conglomerates, and mobile capital controllers. This group prioritized improved access to education, but they did not prioritize learning or teaching quality. Because the school was one of the few national institutional structures that reached all the way down to the village level, it was an important vehicle for mobilizing votes at election time and exercising political control– linking the political elites and the masses. The group of political elites were able to benefit from increased numbers of teachers and teacher distribution, by ensuring teachers were plugged into the networks of corruption. The New Order required the teachers to display loyalty to the state and become members of the sole recognized teachers’ organization, which was a mechanism for controlling teachers rather than articulating their interests. As a result, there was a remarkable growth in teacher numbers – from 700,000 in 1970 to 1.4 million in 1983. Students were able to qualify as primary school teachers by graduating from senior vocational secondary schools ‘Teacher Education Schools’ which offered low quality trainings. Teacher absenteeism skyrocketed, and there was poor distribution of teachers as political and bureaucratic elites ensured their cronies gained teaching positions at preferred urban schools. After several decades, the problems with quality, equity and cost of the education system had become apparent and a series of reforms were initiated. However, because the system was benefitting the elites and there was no political will amongst elites to change the system, there was little scope for these reforms to be successfully implemented.<sup>17</sup>

Key political economy considerations for initiating reform:

- Ensuring that the initiation of the reform is open and transparent from the very beginning so a wide range of education stakeholders at all levels of the education system (national, district, school) are informed enough to have confidence in what is being initiated and will most likely affect them

- Ensure the reform is driven by societal and market needs rather than political agendas; robust evidence is critical as well as engaging a wide range of stakeholders in a genuine way to get to consensus; engaging a diversity of stakeholders can also facilitate identification of leapfrogging opportunities
- Top level ownership and political will at all levels are essential for the reform to succeed, this can be facilitated by political champions
- Creating the narrative and investment case for reform

Smart policy design is backed by strong evidence, makes aims and objectives clear at the outset and establishes a well-designed consultation process

**Where reforms have been effective, their aims and objectives have been made clear at the outset, and strong evidence supporting why they are needed has been put forward early on in the process.** A clear emerging theme<sup>18</sup> in policy design across all contexts appears to be that of clarity and transparency. For example, as shown in the case study on TTEL (see Box 1), the aims and objectives of the policy were made clear and disseminated to key stakeholders e.g. through stakeholder engagement presentations. Vague policies that are not sufficiently backed by concrete evidence have been shown to have been behind the failure of several educational policies. Programs that do not incorporate viable plans based on robust evidence and that are inadequately costed are also doomed for failure.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, focusing on the ‘right’ drivers of reform— those policy levers that support changing the culture of the whole system, such as capacity building, pedagogy and systemic policies— can determine the difference between success and failure. The ‘wrong’ drivers of change, such as punitive accountability, individualism, technology and fragmented policies are not wrong policy drivers per se, they are just badly placed as lead drivers.<sup>20</sup>

**In communicating the aims and objectives of reform, the health sector has created a ‘new narrative’ to engender buy-in and to generate momentum for investment and political commitments for health workforce reform.** The sector positions investments in health and social care workers as an urgent and essential requirement for countries based on strong evidence to provide better health care and meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals on health, employment, education and gender.

**Box 1: A clear and transparent agenda, a comprehensive consultation process and a planned incremental phase out – TTEL in Ghana**

High quality pre-service teacher training should be a priority in the education workforce reform agenda. Many countries across the globe face the challenge of poorly trained teachers and in-service training has been unable to fill the void where low-quality pre-service training has fallen short. Whilst reforming pre-service training is typically more challenging than modifying in-service training, it remains a more fitting solution in the long-run. This type of fundamental shift in the status-quo requires high levels of political will, the backing of key political champions, a concrete and sound plan that is owned nationally and the engagement of key stakeholders to ensure the most favorable conditions for implementation and sustainability.

The T-TEL reform can be argued to have, to a certain extent, made strides in each of these fundamentals. Despite initial institutional resistance to change and a desire to maintain the status quo by many stakeholders, extensive consultations and early engagements meant that these political challenges and blockages were mitigated<sup>21</sup>. **These consultations took various forms such as stakeholder forums, curriculum reform**

**forums, presentations by the government to unions, teacher training colleges and learning events.**

These initial and ongoing consultations were commendable in that they acknowledged the importance of all stakeholders, allowed them to express their views and then adapted their policies in light of this feedback. Giving stakeholders this ownership and demonstrating a willingness to taken on board their opinions and modify the policy accordingly meant that these stakeholders were more likely to champion this reform.

**Political will was engendered through persuasive evidence** rather than through expecting stakeholders to be the passive recipients of policy. Crucially, the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders were defined during the consultation process and a clear roadmap of the timeline and process of implementation provided. This strong communication strategy made for a more coherent and well-managed phase out that aimed to encourage cooperation in implementation.

**Engaging in dialogue with key educational stakeholders right from when policy is being conceptualized and gaining consensus amongst stakeholders at this stage has been seen as key to later implementation and final success** (e.g. teacher unions, teacher colleges, inspecting bodies, curriculum design bodies, etc.).

Commitment, openness and concrete efforts together with a clear strategic approach by decision makers can help build consensus across all levels and have, as an example, been signposted as one of the key successes of educational reforms introduced in Karnataka relating to teacher recruitment and transfers.<sup>22</sup> In this instance, through the reform process, ministers and senior officials personally approached and convinced stakeholders and together with senior bureaucrats, they and the Chief Minister could be seen as real champions, without whom none of these efforts would have come to fruition.<sup>23</sup> Policy designed without engagement from key stakeholders can run into serious challenges in the implementation stage.

**Engaging with stakeholders at all levels and at an early stage can also highlight the existence and scale of any other potential risks or unintended consequences a policy may have.** It is also important to understand the interests and motivation of each stakeholder so that they can be taken into account when engaging with them.

**Collaboration and consultation with teachers (mainly through unions and associations) should be instituted very early on** in order to ensure that when policies are designed at the upper tiers of government, ground realities are borne in mind. Teachers play a pivotal role in the implementation of policies and are often the subjects of education workforce reforms. These reforms tend to have a huge impact on their day to day working so their effective implementation and subsequent impact will be diluted if the education workforce, crucial stakeholders, themselves are held at arm's length. Lessons from previous policies have shown that teachers can be a key driving force in the policy team as opposed to being the passive recipients of reforms, the difficulties often arise when teachers are not part of the solution.<sup>24</sup> Whilst teachers may present resistance to reforms (especially those that directly affect their own wellbeing), evidence shows that this can be avoided through negotiations, adapting policies in light of teacher input where necessary and most importantly by keeping channels of communication open and transparent.<sup>25</sup>

In the Activity Based Learning (ABL) program in Tamil Nadu, India, teachers were the architects of the ABL pedagogic design.<sup>26</sup> Despite potentially increasing the burden on teachers, teachers themselves productively initiated this change as they were the most aware of the problems existing in the system and, therefore, an appropriate provider of input in creating a workable and relevant solution. Evidence from the ABL program has suggested that teachers understand the problems and challenges and need to be provided with feedback loops

even after a program has been implemented.<sup>27</sup> Previously discussed initiatives such as TTEL in Ghana and Lesson Study in Zambia provide further examples of this.

Reform efforts aimed at improving educational quality are especially likely to face resistance from strong veto groups (e.g. teacher unions, university students, bureaucrats) particularly if they ‘produce concentrated costs and distributed benefits’.<sup>28</sup> These groups are typically well resourced, highly organized and politically connected which improves their bargaining power in the reform process. In particular, teachers are able to influence and shape educational policies either due to the fact that they are members of unions that have strong bargaining power or they themselves are able to exert and influence political decisions through their own political engagement (e.g. in India not only are serving teachers part of well-organized unions but they themselves form a substantial proportion of the legislature) allowing them to more effectively lobby for policies in which they have an interest. Unions have played an incredibly constructive role as drivers of change and can be viewed either as already playing a facilitative role in the reform process or as key partners to engage in the process.<sup>29</sup> In Tanzania, the Tanzania Teacher Union (TTU) was identified as one of the potential drivers of change capable of playing a facilitative role in the reform process.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, in eight Anglophone African countries, it was found that whilst advocacy for better pay and conditions has been a significant part of teacher union activities, unions had also been involved in professional development activities and in providing training opportunities for teachers or in the development of codes of professional conduct.<sup>31</sup> Unions can be either a driver of change or a barrier to reform and are, therefore, important partners for gaining support for such initiatives.<sup>32</sup>

More ambitious ‘future’ reform efforts require extensive negotiations with key stakeholders including accommodating some demands as well as modifying the reform package to incorporate parts of the reform where resistance is faced. Two thousand and six proved a turning point in Ecuador where the new education Minister, Vallejo, managed to negotiate an incredibly ambitious and far-reaching education reform package (Plan Decenal de Educacion (PDE)). A fundamental factor in its success was that it had the support of key stakeholders such as the teacher’s unions, the national organizations for religious and secular schools and the Ministry of Finance. In addition to this, the two leading presidential candidates including the eventual winner were committed to implementing these changes. Ensuring unprecedented continuity, the President then re-appointed Vaelljo as Minister of Education. These key political figures went beyond proposals advanced as part of the PDE, challenged the core union interests and advocated sweeping changes in relation to teacher pay, evaluation and dismissal. Whilst some of these proposals were partially watered down in the face of resistance (often violent opposition), it reflected the President’s willingness to spend political capital and publicly and aggressively campaign for reform.

Chile has experienced a radical set of teacher reforms including standardized student testing, school-based bonus pay, higher standards for teachers, individual teacher performance evaluations, individual teacher bonus pay, an exit exam for graduates of teacher education programs and the elimination of job stability for poor performing teachers. This comprehensive and controversial set of policies focusing on rewarding teacher excellence as well as enforcing performance accountability has been implemented against a backdrop of strong teacher unions.<sup>33</sup> **This has been achieved through two government political strategies namely negotiation and sequencing.** Teacher policies were developed in consultation with teacher unions through a protracted series of negotiations. The reforms were also implemented gradually, over time and in a piece-meal manner. Therefore, **the respect for teacher unions as partners in the design and implementation of key, even controversial reforms, has been noted as fundamental feature that has contributed to their sustainability or ‘resoluteness’.**<sup>34</sup>

However, some contexts are more challenging. Mexico presents a contrasting case to Chile where tremendously powerful and resistant teacher unions have proven more difficult for governments. A more confrontational attitude with teacher unions has meant that government's resoluteness for achieving reforms has been achieved through embedding them within constitutional changes. Implementation of the education reform has continued to meet opposition from teacher unions who have sometimes sought to obstruct implementation, for example by discouraging teachers from taking part in examinations.

**When workforce reform involves other members of the workforce (such as district officials, support personnel and administrative staff), they should also be involved in the planning and design process.** In some countries, such as Ghana, these individuals may be organized into a union, however, in most situations they are not well-represented or organized making it more difficult to engage in the process.

The education reforms in the Punjab (Pakistan) focusing on teachers (including those aimed at hiring a better qualified teaching force, strengthening merit-based recruitment through independent testing and by giving District Management Officers greater autonomy in teacher selection etc.), have highlighted some key flaws in policy design and implementation when district officials are not consulted. Firstly, the policy documents appeared to lack comprehensiveness and have been considered to not meet the needs and concerns of the different districts and constituents due to policies being designed at the upper levels of governments with little understanding of the working at the district level and on the ground realities of the education system. By not taking account of the opinions of officials at the lower levels of education, namely those who interact with teachers on a day to day basis, this gap between policy making and implementation has led not only to half-hearted implementation with a lack of buy-in from teachers but also flawed implementation.

In STIR in India, stakeholders' motivation across the system was an 'elephant in the room'. Recognising the need to step back and address motivation of key stakeholders beyond teachers, instead of simply adopting technical solutions too fast was a real driver for change.<sup>35</sup>

The beneficiaries of education reforms (e.g. students at the primary and secondary level and parents) are less organized than teachers and, therefore, do not seem to have as collective a voice on educational matters as compared to the strong bargaining power of more organized groups.<sup>36</sup>

In many countries, large majorities of teachers (often two-thirds or more) are women.<sup>37</sup> Primary data collected from key stakeholders in Vietnam suggests that women and marginalized groups are not always sufficiently well represented in the reform process, a key stakeholder remarked, 'Women and marginalized groups are involved in [the policy-making] process both theoretically and practically, but their opinions are insufficient in terms of power to change the policies'. Some strategies to improve the level of participation of marginalized groups in policy development include organizing for participation through forming coordinated social movements and user lobbies, and explicit promotion of user participation in all aspects of policy making.<sup>38</sup>

Including additional stakeholders can also help governments identify innovations which are key to leapfrogging. Findings from Brookings Institution suggest that civil society organizations are taking the lead on innovation- more than 60 percent of the interventions identified by Brookings are delivered by nonprofit or nongovernmental organizations including both the large and well established such as Camfed, and small newcomers as well.<sup>39</sup>

Civil society groups can also be persuasive in calling on governments to do more for education, for example, in countries such as Zimbabwe, through organizations like ECOZI (Education Coalition of Zimbabwe), civil

society are gaining more of a voice in policy design.<sup>40</sup> ECOZI is an a-political coalition uniting civil society in the common pursuit of quality education with an emphasis on publicly-funded education and vulnerable and marginalized groups. ECOZI has been included as a member of the Education Coordinating Committee, a Local Education Group (LEG) chaired by the Minister of Education and including senior ministry officials, donor partners and multilateral organizations, giving civil society a voice and participation in government policy and program formulation, implementation and review in order to ensure that the benefits of education accrue especially to vulnerable, hard-to-reach and marginalized populations.<sup>41</sup>

Engaging private sector partners could potentially contribute positively to education in the country if their activities are implemented and monitored well.<sup>42</sup> In some contexts for example Latin America, despite business being a ‘consumer’ of education, business seems to be rarely involved in consultations on education workforce reforms.<sup>43</sup> In other contexts such as Vietnam, businesses, can foster relationships with politicians and use those relationships to shape regulations that might benefit them. In the primary research, civil society representatives corroborated the view that big corporations and businesses in Vietnam have been working closely with government officials and have the potential to exert influence in policy making (e.g. the Amendment of Higher Education Laws). Prime Minister Julia Gillard pro-actively engaged with business as part of her education reforms in Australia and used their mechanisms for example ‘boardroom lunches’ and language for example ‘education markets and ‘cost-effectiveness’ to do so.<sup>44</sup>

The health sector has attempted several multi-sectoral approaches to workforce design which have involved stakeholders from across sectors. This has entailed clearly defined roles and responsibilities (with the government recognized as bearing the ultimate responsibility for health provision but with health authorities at all levels identified as key actors), active seeking out of opportunities to collaborate and influence non-health sectors and recognizing that intergovernmental organizations and structures can play a crucial role in supporting multisectoral action on health. The health sector has also adopted some fundamental principles: legitimacy, accountability, transparency, participation, sustainability and collaboration.<sup>45</sup>

The discourse between various stakeholders (such as that between teacher unions and teacher colleges) also provides a clearer awareness of any potential opposition to the reform and how this can be best mitigated. Primary data collected from Vietnam corroborates this view. Stakeholders in the country provided mixed evidence on the extent to which various stakeholders interact with each other. Whilst some were of the opinion that this interaction did happen to some extent during the consultation process, they concurred that there were no formal mechanisms or platform in place for this stakeholder engagement and interaction to continue on an ongoing basis. These aspects are especially critical in relation to education workforce reforms as reluctance or resistance to change (either merely through inertia or because of a need for security, predictability and stability) are an understandable response for example because of either a preference for status quo or a fear of the unknown.

In summary, policy design considerations that have been proven to enhance later adoption of a reform include: involving key stakeholders in reform design, undertaking feasible compromise based on feedback and considering those who may be adversely affected by the reform and engaging with them and with other groups who may oppose the reform. In the design phase, in particular, pre-empting strategic coalitions amongst all the education stakeholders can also improve the efficacy of these reforms.<sup>46</sup> This discussion highlights the crucial importance of engaging key stakeholders from the beginning of and during the reform design process.

**An education workforce can only function effectively when clear lines of accountability, quality leadership and management are in place, including clear definitions of roles and responsibilities:** all

factors evidence suggests are strongly associated with better educational outcomes.<sup>47</sup> Low levels of accountability may be a reason why learning levels have not improved in line with educational investment globally. Research has suggested that whilst educational spending levels and enrolment rates have increased across the developing world, learning levels have not kept pace and, in fact, remain worryingly low in many contexts. This has, in part, been attributed to poor accountability (World Bank Service Delivery Indicators database). The centralized nature of education systems means that it is difficult for parents to hold education systems accountable. Whilst many input-based policies have been implemented globally, research has shown that these can be largely ineffective in the absence of complimentary initiatives to improve accountability and pedagogy. It has been suggested that accountability needs to be improved in relation to teachers (see TUSOME example below), schools, parents (discussed below) and resource management. TUSOME can provide an example of improved accountability at a micro level without punitive measures. Accountability was established by the CSOs doing regular classroom observations, leading to the teachers themselves, despite not having sanctions or incentives based on their performance in the classrooms, feeling accountability for their performance simply by having this classroom level monitoring, through a change in organizational culture rather than through a punitive accountability model.

Key political economy considerations for policy design and planning:

- Aims and objectives made clear at the outset, supported by strong evidence of why they are needed put forward early on in the process
- Involve key stakeholders in reform design in a transparent way including those who may oppose the reform, pre-empting strategic coalitions if possible
- Well-designed consultation process with roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders clearly defined

**A concrete and coherent implementation plan needs to include alignment across the systems, a well-managed and phased rollout and ongoing communication with key stakeholders at all levels of the system**

**The impact of a policy lies in its implementation which requires alignment and integration across the entire education system<sup>48</sup> and engagement of stakeholders at all levels.** Political factors can play a crucial role in influencing the execution of education policy and these political economy dynamics can either aid or hinder the efficacy of a reform. The impact of education policies ultimately hangs on their effective implementation down to classroom level (where the results are actually achieved) and is impossible without teacher buy-in<sup>49</sup>. Overcoming initial teacher reservations, particularly when educators may not be keen to participate or may not acknowledge their own professional learning needs, by including them as partners and allowing them to evaluate their own progress and goals has also been noted as a critical enabling factor in STIR's success in India and Uganda. As the Vietnam box shows below, the political economy dynamics outside of education also need to be taken into account.

Even 'disruptive pedagogic innovations'<sup>50</sup> which require fundamental shifts in behaviors of key actors across the system have the potential to succeed in complex and challenging settings if propitious conditions are created. Jehanabad, Bihar, provides one such example where teaching at the right level was achieved to improve children's learning outcomes in a context of established mindsets and entrenched systems and interests<sup>51</sup>. Key to the successful implementation in Jehanabad appears to have been the all-encompassing



involvement of key stakeholders in the implementation of the intervention. Involving teachers, Cluster Resource Centre Coordinators (CRCCs), and district administration in the process created ownership of the problem and a joint effort to reach workable solutions. Alignment and focus across all layers of the schooling system was another critical element for success. By not having multiple programs or teaching interventions simultaneously competing for resources and time, this pedagogic intervention had an opportunity to take root and be successfully implemented. At the district level, this ensured that the administration could focus on aligning all major activities with this intervention to achieve desired goals.<sup>52</sup> As this example shows, mid-level bureaucrats and school personnel can also seek to influence and resist the translation of policies into effective regulations and actions especially during the implementation stage<sup>53</sup>. Consensus and buy-in to the reform across all cadres – right from the central government down to the school level – remains important.

The human dimension plays a very important role in the implementation phase of the policy lifecycle. The implementation of education policy is a complex journey that relies on a large number of these often widely dispersed individual decision makers<sup>54</sup> who are required to work together and collaborate according to a given plan that they may, but more likely may not, have had a role in formulating. Whether stakeholders have been engaged in the process early on or not, in practice policy design and implementation must be seen as interactive processes and not discrete ones<sup>55</sup>. The incentives and vested interests of all stakeholders can shape the reforms at every stage of the process and even after a policy design has apparently been accepted and adopted. Primary evidence collected as part of the EWI Political Economy Analysis from stakeholders in Vietnam has emphasized the importance of school leaders and teachers as change agents. School leaders are key decision-makers who influence and inspire and without them reforms have little chance of succeeding. In Pakistan, strong leadership and autonomy at the school level has been seen to have the potential to improve student and teacher outcomes with incentives for greater leadership and innovation at the school and sub-district level possibly crucial for improved learning outcomes<sup>56</sup>. Evidence from Mexico has suggested that for school-based decision-making reforms to actually be effective, the leadership and ‘coherence of vision among school staff’ can act as significant enablers – or barriers – to impact<sup>57</sup>.

**Ongoing communication with stakeholders throughout implementation is important in order to communicate critical feedback and progress on reform.** Effective communications strategies were key to the adoption of major teacher policy reforms in Mexico, Ecuador and in Peru.<sup>58</sup> The expansion of ICT allows for more innovative forms of communication, for example, education secretary of Rio de Janeiro, Claudia Costin, was one of the first in the world to use Twitter to communicate directly and daily with the municipality’s 55,000 teachers. She also made a point of responding to critical feedback without defensiveness and publicly acknowledging and acting upon useful suggestions, which signaled to teachers that she was listening to them and built trust and support through a four-year process of very progressive reforms.

Communications was a strength of the Big Results Now! (BRN) program in Tanzania which had a high profile launch in 2013 and was featured prominently across the print and broadcast media. Official letters were written to all District Education Offices and a two-day launch event was held, attended by at least three officials from every District and Regional Education Office. Performance contracts were signed by national, regional and district education officials. These efforts clearly had an impact because when the delivery approach team carried out district-based fieldwork later in the year, education officials, principals and teachers in remote rural areas of the country had all heard of BRN and knew it was intended to drive up pass rates in schools.<sup>59</sup> Similarly, in Malaysia, PEMANDU’s communication strategy was designed to keep stakeholders informed every step of the way. It included Open Days to provide public engagement and communication feedback and strategies to inform the public about the plans and progress.

Effective implementation requires a **coherent, well-managed and phased rollout with a clear roadmap of the timeline and process of implementation**. Policy-makers need to consider the sequencing of reforms as well as how they may be bundled together. The sequencing can be driven by technical logic for example an initial teacher training reform would be more effective after a teacher recruitment reform, but it can also be driven by political considerations for example, which elements of a reform would be more palatable at the outset, for example Peru, Ecuador and Colombia introduced voluntary teacher evaluations before moving to compulsory ones.<sup>60</sup> In terms of bundling, consideration needs to be given to the interdependencies of the reforms and the sequencing needed to manage the implementation.

**Implementing through existing initiatives might facilitate smoother rollout. The early childhood development sector presents a good example of cross-sectoral thinking about how interventions can be implemented through existing initiatives.** It is increasingly recognized that ECD can be delivered through existing initiatives. For example, early stimulation and learning have been effectively integrated into health and nutrition programs through the use of conditional cash transfer programs that have integrated early childhood developments. The success of such programs has been witnessed in the Latin American context such as Colombia.<sup>61</sup> Similarly, pre-existing school-feeding programs provide an institutional architecture through which early learning interventions can be delivered.<sup>62</sup>

**One of the features seen to be effective is the adoption of an incremental approach** which is supported by the bureaucracy across the different levels of the education system. This gradual integration of the policy over time as compared to trying to achieve sudden fundamental shifts (smaller scale initiatives that gradually grow instead of a trying to achieve a 'big bang') stabilizes the process and makes implementation more likely to succeed as witnessed in successful teacher reforms in Tamil Nadu where the Activity Based Learning (ABL) intervention involved major pedagogical changes, which were a fundamental departure from how teachers had been teaching children and therefore directly impacted teachers, were successfully implemented and rolled out extensively across the entire state<sup>63</sup>.

The ABL approach was initially adopted in 13 schools before being gradually rolled out in a phased manner across the entire state. Positive experiences in the pilot schools provided an impetus to stakeholders to more willingly engage in the program. This provides an example of where piloting can be an effective strategy before scaling up a program (TUSOME is another example of an effective pilot before scale-up). The existing education system was leveraged to roll out and scale up the intervention successfully. A combination of hierarchical and relational features contributed to its success. This meant a complex mixture of top-down and bottom-up methods. In the first instance, recognizing that hierarchy matters, a top-down approach was used to ensure that higher echelons of the bureaucracy were engaged, and subsequently, a bottom-up (relational approach – a process with active participation from the bottom-tier of the hierarchy) was also initiated. In relation to the hierarchical approach, for example, the education department used state government institutions and procedures and employed district and block institutions to ensure the implementation and training aspects for a state-wide rollout were in place. The relational features were clearly evident right from the early stages where the innovator-early adopted nexus was at the very core of creative and innovative design. During the rollout, another key feature was ensuring that teachers became change agents and felt a strong sense of ownership. Sensitization to the ABL program and observing the pedagogy's initial success became a powerful catalyst for this driver of change<sup>64</sup>. In contrast, the scale-up journey in a neighboring state of Karnataka was far less successful and this was attributed to the high turnover and lack of continuity of tenure of bureaucrats that hindered the rollout in this state<sup>65</sup>.

**Leadership continuity has been shown to be essential in not only catalyzing a reform but also in sustaining it** as the Activity Based Learning (ABL) program in India shows. This radical pedagogical reform was scaled up to all the 35,000 government and aided schools of Tamil Nadu, becoming a massive reform. One of the primary factors that enabled this scale up and sustainability over 11 years was the passion and sustained work of a senior bureaucrat over a 17-year period, and his inter-personal qualities of winning the cooperation of teachers and ministers, and in particular co-opting teacher union leaders early into the reform. Concerted political sponsorship often by a single individual leader is also a key feature for success in Delivery Units. In many cases, this is the President or Prime Minister (e.g. President’s Recovery Priorities in Sierra Leone; Prime Ministers’ Delivery Unit (PMDU) in the UK). If the leader begins to lose enthusiasm or interest, this is often a clear warning sign of the Unit’s decline. Delivery Units also rarely survive transitions of power. In many cases, they are too closely associated with the previous administration – “governments always have a problem crediting the previous administration with anything” according to Claudio Seebach, the former head of the Chilean Delivery Unit, which was scrapped in 2014 with a new administration. Similarly, the UK’s PMDU was also removed in 2010 with the incoming Coalition Government. The same happened with Delivery Units during transitions of power in Brazil, the Netherlands, Mongolia, and Queensland (Australia).<sup>66</sup>

**Box 2: An example of evidence-based policy making, cooperation and synergies across programs combined with a sense of ‘ownership’ – collaboration of TUSOME and PRIEDE in Kenya**

Education has been a somewhat successful story in Kenya with policy focusing on access to education through the introduction of free primary education in 2003 and free secondary education in 2008 despite some concerns regarding educational quality. Major reforms have been undertaken in the education sector to align teaching materials, syllabi and assessments to a new competency-based curriculum. The sector’s budget and resource allocations have increased and one of the key priority areas includes teacher resource management.

Two notable nationwide reforms affecting the education workforce in Kenya have been TUSOME (‘Let’s Read’ in Swahili) and PRIEDE (Kenya Primary Education Development Project) focusing on improving early grade mathematics and early grade literacy by enhancing teachers’ capacity for education delivery. They have focused on the following workforce roles: head teachers, Boards of Management (BOMs), teacher educators and teachers, Curriculum Support Officers (CSOs), district officials, civil society organizations and ministry officials. Both initiatives have independently and jointly been deemed successful.

The main drivers of success in the effective implementation of TUSOME have been:

- The setting and communication of clear expectations
- The effective monitoring of implementation using appropriate benchmarks and effective feedback mechanisms that have encouraged greater instructional support through useful and credible feedback to teachers.

PRIEDE’s success has come from:

- A strong sense of government ownership, political will, engagement of many stakeholders
- The strengthening of monitoring and evaluation systems, particularly those relating to the appraisal and continuing professional development of teachers (a new Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) system has supported teachers in improving their competencies, encourages self-evaluation and professional development, improved accountability at the school-level and even

representatives of the teacher union have indicated that whilst there was a reluctance initially to adopt this tool, its value has become apparent over time).

A focus on the ground-level implementers of these programs (CSOs, teachers) has meant that even despite initial apprehensions, they themselves have been the key drivers of these reforms not through punitive accountability models but through changes in organizational culture. The fact that CSOs and their headteachers visit schools and conduct structured classroom observations on a far more frequent and regular basis is a shift in prevailing norms under which teachers and education officials typically work in sub-Saharan Africa. This shift in professional norms under which teachers operate is believed to be altering incentives and behaviors.

Another key feature that has been highlighted as being crucial to these programs' success is the fact that they have been based on robust research evidence from a smaller scale pilot showing impact that was later scaled up.

These initiatives have benefited from a strong sense of government ownership, integrating implementation through government mechanisms, shifting the focus to the classroom, and ensuring that key stakeholders (particularly those across the education workforce) have been engaged in a collaborative manner throughout the reform process.

One unexpected consideration resulting from these two programs is the need to mitigate any differences in financial incentives when running multiple reforms at the same time, to avoid competition.

In Ghana, the strong **influence of the political and economic elite on education policy** design and the **subsequent allocation of resources** have been identified as a crucial factor undermining successful implementation of education policies aimed at universal education access.<sup>67</sup> The ideological preferences of the elite are also likely to shift as education goals change. They remain important stakeholders whose political influence must be recognized if major education reforms are to be successfully implemented.<sup>68</sup>

**Policy implementation can be particularly rife with political interference and corruption.** Even if the apparent reason for a policy failure is some leakage (unauthorized or unanticipated expenditure) or corruption in the system so that the policy does not get implemented as intended, underlying this is some political constraint or some vested interest that does not want to reduce the corruption in the system.<sup>69</sup> The politicians or bureaucrats making the policy, or the vested interests lobbying for it, are the most likely beneficiaries of the corruption. As previously discussed, they may choose to lobby or recommend or even make that policy precisely because that policy gives them scope for corruption. It has been suggested in the literature that this is why most education policies are to do with expanding access to education and providing inputs to schools rather than reforms that focus on improving quality.<sup>70</sup>

**There are many situations when even the most well-meaning and well-planned policies are faced with an implementation or policy gap resulting in a significant difference between stated policy goals, the intended and actual policy implemented and the realization of these goals.** Many reasons have been put forward to explain implementation gaps and policy failures including inadequate planning, failures in technical design, low state capacity, poor administration, poor delivery systems, inadequate governance, and corruption amongst other political economy factors<sup>71</sup>. Policy gaps however provide politicians and education department

officials opportunities to use their political power to mold the implementation of policies in their favor. These have been identified as factors hindering the implementation of numerous teacher reform efforts in the Punjab, Pakistan.<sup>72</sup> Some of these gaps emerge from poor policy design but some are due to a lack of involvement of key stakeholders, particularly district-level officials in policy formulation and subsequent training which hinders effective implementation.<sup>73</sup> These contextual factors are important considerations of education workforce reforms.

**Center of government Delivery Units and decentralization can both be influenced by and potentially help address political economy challenges of implementation.** Both of these strategies aim to deal with political economy issues of implementation and have been identified as promising. The first of these are Delivery Units, discrete monitoring and management teams which use the authority of the leader to respond to failures and challenges in system delivery to ensure that targets that have been set are accomplished and implementation challenges met. Sometimes, Units are preceded by delivery labs, intensive consultative processes that bring together key players to work together iteratively on implementation plans and solutions to be managed by the Delivery Units.<sup>74</sup> The second (decentralization) is focusing on those who have been designated as having the responsibility of implementing the reform.

There is not sufficient robust independent and causal evidence on Delivery Units or Delivery Labs, but some cases are considered generally successful such as the implementation units in Malaysia's Performance Management and Delivery Unit, UK's Prime Ministers' Delivery Unit, and Tanzania's Big Results Now!<sup>75</sup> These were all designed to guide and improve government service delivery emphasizing principles like strategic prioritization and clear goals; signaling of priorities from the top; coalition building and alignment; smart measurement, data feedback loops and monitoring; policy coherence and coordinated planning; and finally, analytical problem-solving, innovation and flexibility.

Successful examples of delivery labs in Tanzania and Malaysia in education as well as other sectors where participants (numbering 50-100) from the government, private sector and civil society came together (lasting around 6 weeks) to ensure coalition building and alignment as well as to secure buy-in and support from stakeholders. According to delivery lab practitioners, what separates these labs from other consultative methods is the intensity, duration, breadth and seniority of stakeholder engagement as well as the level of detail and step-by-step action for specific actors<sup>76</sup>. The end-product of Delivery labs is **a very clear roadmap or implementation plan** which take the level of detailed planning from a 30,000 feet view (setting priorities from a big picture perspective) to '3-foot' plans that outline each specific task, deadline and responsible owner for carrying out each reform priority. This level of detail can seem tedious, but also ensures that there is no question of who is responsible and what the timeline is.

More research is needed on Delivery Units, Delivery labs and other approaches to delivery to determine whether any causal impact of these approaches can be identified, and to understand the reasons these have been considered successful in some countries. The effectiveness of these approaches depends on many factors, including whether they are being applied with sensitivity to the political and bureaucratic context, including the leadership style of the person in charge. It will be important to understand whether these reforms are a useful way of navigating political economy factors.

Another implementation strategy to address political economy issues is specifically focusing on those on the ground and who have been identified as those who are ultimately delegated the responsibility of implementing the reforms. Decentralization drives in many contexts have also delegated the responsibility of implementing reforms to head teachers and other school leaders. This changing role can lead to conflict between leadership

‘building a community’ and a more ‘contractual’ view of their roles as managers and administrators.<sup>77</sup>

**Decentralization of education policy and implementation in many contexts has shifted the focus of attention to district officials, to their roles and responsibilities as well as the political economy considerations that shape the incentives of individuals at this tier of government.** District level officials have a key role to play in organizing professional development opportunities, facilitating collaboration between schools and utilizing data to target resources and deploy staff to meet local needs. Several examples from around the world illustrate positive benefits from collaboration between teachers and district staff for instructional support through coaching or classroom observation. Evidence also suggests that district roles such as supervisors can support improved teaching and learning outcomes through undertaking specific functions such as: supporting school self-evaluation, building school capacity and ensuring schools have access to improvement resources, and providing feedback in a respectful and constructive manner.<sup>78</sup> However, there is evidence that rent-seeking<sup>79</sup> and local-capture<sup>80</sup> are also more likely in decentralized education systems<sup>81</sup>. District-level officials and mid-tier officials (e.g. clerks who serve as mediators between teachers and schools and higher government officials) have been found to be more susceptible to rent-seeking and political pressures in some contexts<sup>82</sup>. The potential heterogeneity of interests and incentives for the distribution of benefits and rents often creates adverse political economy conditions that undermine effective implementation and reform<sup>83</sup>. A review<sup>84</sup> of the evidence relating to a major workforce initiative (namely one exploring contract teachers) has also shown that implementation conducted in a centralized manner posed a major hurdle to the reform and that decentralizing the process and empowering those on the ground, including parents and communities, could be a critical driver of change. In addition to this, as central governments in many decentralized contexts are heavily reliant on regional governments, they need to establish incentives for these regional governments to act in ways that are in accordance with the central agenda in the absence of their own direct control over implementation. Therefore, whilst district officials should be leveraged in education workforce design by being the ‘face of policy’ and by having the potential to influence the implementation of major reforms, leveraging their positions in ways that ensure minimization of rent-seeking and corruption is an important consideration. As mentioned above, a key to this is engaging them in the design process so that they ‘own’ the policies they are meant to be implementing. It should also be noted that decentralization can add to the complexity of the political economy dynamics and may not automatically engender greater inclusion. Decentralization can also create a communication gap between policy-makers and teachers.

Several more structural solutions have been put forward such as decentralization (discussed above), access to better information (see below) and improving competition for example through non-state provision. Along these lines, the World Bank has announced financing to be more results-based ensuring that specific targets are visible with built-in consequences in case there is failure to meet them<sup>85</sup>.

**Adopting a data-driven approach can help mitigate some of these political considerations at the district level.** Evidence from Malawi<sup>86</sup> has shown that, in the absence of good quality administrative data, teachers are found to leverage informal networks and political patronage to prevent being placed in more remote rural schools whilst a lack of data and an objective allocation criterion prevents administrative officials from standing up to these formal and informal pressures. This has resulted in substantial political capture of the system by teachers and resultant inefficient teacher allocations. It has also resulted in significant asymmetries of power with communities exercising substantially weaker voice than teachers<sup>87</sup>. Improved data has been shown to alleviate some of these constraints. Better data in Malawi has been shown to result in enabling the development of more precise policies whilst also empowering officials by providing them with tools to resist political pressure. Better data has also enabled communities to create countervailing pressures to ensure officials can implement

agreed policies<sup>88</sup>. However, increasing data availability or information for all system stakeholders may not necessarily mitigate patronage and/or rent-seeking effects in and of itself. Evidence from Uttar Pradesh, India, has suggested that providing information (three different interventions: providing information on existing institutions; training community members in a testing tool for children and training volunteers to hold remedial reading camps) did not have any impact on community involvement, teacher effort or learning outcomes. This suggests that stakeholders are severely constrained in influencing public services.<sup>89</sup>

Key political economy considerations for implementation:

- Coherent implementation strategy with a well-managed and phased roll out, including incremental planning and sequencing so policies are given enough time to be effectively executed before other policy changes take place
- A clear roadmap of the timeline and process of implementation provided, taking into account existing initiatives and prioritizing single reforms so multiple programs or teaching interventions do not simultaneously competing for resources and time; this also includes considering implementing through existing initiatives might facilitate smoother rollout
- Strong communication strategy to facilitate critical feedback and progress on a reform
- Inclusive stakeholder engagement with coordination and cooperation of key stakeholders at different levels of the education system
- Leadership continuity is critical for sustaining reforms
- Delivery approach and decentralizing the implementation process are strategies that can help address political economy challenges
- Effective monitoring of implementation through strong data and evaluation systems are necessary to ensure continued coherence of a reform

**Successful scale-up and sustainability needs key stakeholders to take ownership of reforms and become crucial drivers of systemic change**

**The ‘whether and how’ a program is embedded within the government system<sup>90</sup>, and the incentives that drive the different players who are likely to be impacted by the reform, are important to understand for successful scale-up and ongoing implementation.** Scaling up programs and ensuring their sustained and long-term impact has proven a challenge to many a promising educational reform across several contexts<sup>91</sup>. Efforts to scale up interventions, even those that have shown initial potential, have proven ineffectual or have not been successfully continued in the long run. This has meant that these efforts have not translated into long-term impact in the form of improvements in the education system. Political economy factors have played a role in this and, therefore, these considerations must be borne in mind to ensure that future efforts transpire to more favorable ends.

Nevertheless, there are examples of initiatives that have succeeded in scale-up, some of which have done so within government structures and others working outside the public system. An example of the former is Escuela Nueva that has shown ongoing improvement in teaching and learning in several countries in Latin America and elsewhere at an increasingly large scale by working through government systems with a bottom-up approach. This particular program exemplifies deep change through the dispersed and collective engagement in the construction of innovation at the local level. Escuela Nueva has deliberately interacted with the hierarchy showing that connected and autonomy can co-exist as a crucial element of sustainability. It has had an explicit strategy to liaise with government through links with the national curriculum, information sharing,

interactions with the ministry personnel and generally seeking financial and political support as part of its model. It has also related its own assessments to national assessments<sup>92</sup>.

An example of scaling outside government systems is Pratham's scale-up of the 'Read India' program which has consistently shown significant improvements in literacy outcomes in thousands of schools and communities in India by working outside government structures.<sup>93</sup> This has been achieved by implementing interventions and resultant change at the ground levels and shifts in priorities at the system level. It highlights the role that non-government actors can play in bringing about effective pedagogy to scale to improve learning. Additionally, Pratham's program has provided the opportunity for local villages to become the center of reforms<sup>94</sup>.

The political economy dimensions differ depending on whether a program is embedded within the government systems or is located outside it. Evidence has shown that small-scale interventions that appear to have been successfully implemented by non-state partners, can fail when replicated at scale by the government<sup>95</sup>. Whilst smaller scale initiatives may stimulate dynamic incentives in an experimental setting, when replicated in a unionized system with weak public sector bureaucracy, this same program may lack credibility and be doomed for failure.<sup>96</sup> The importance of good bureaucracy and evidence that policy-makers can use in achieving knowledge-driven solutions for real problems is important. Therefore, the 'whether and how' a program is embedded within the government system<sup>97</sup>, and the incentives that drive the different players who are likely to be impacted by the reform, are important to understand for successful scale up and ongoing implementation.

**Mechanisms for coordination across ministries can be a key element to successful implementation of certain reforms.** In Malaysia, for instance, a key function of the Performance Management and Delivery Unit (PEMANDU) was to work between Ministries and improve coordination. Because the Unit functioned across Ministries with the personal leadership of the Prime Minister, roadblocks in inter-ministerial work could be quickly removed. In addition, policy goals that required inter-ministerial coordination became cross-ministerial "cooperative initiatives", with cabinet workshops for each goal involving all relevant ministerial representatives. One example of this is ECCE which involved workshops and a taskforce with the Ministry of Education, The Ministry of Community Development, the ECCE council (private pre-school), PERMATA (large nationwide ECCE program), and Perpaduan. These representatives were involved in the design of reforms and implementation plans, with specific roles in plans and ways of working together. The reforms opened public pre-schools, created an online data capture system, and offered incentives such as grants and fee assistance to encourage private pre-schools, with policy changes to recruit and upskill pre-school teachers. As a result, pre-school enrolment increased from 67 percent in 2009 to 85 percent in 2016.

**Workforce reforms need to be complemented by support structures that reinforce and backup well-meaning changes.** An example of a piloted program achieving success at the national scale through a government system is the previously mentioned TUSOME program. The factors that resulted in the success of this and the PRIEDE program have been discussed in Box 2. It is worth emphasizing the following characteristics of these reforms that relate to successful scale up and sustainability. These include ensuring support structures and capacity development resulted in the ongoing support of the program and establishing inbuilt accountability mechanisms to ensure continued impact in the long term. These will be a critical for TUSOME to ensure that even after a donor-funded program ends, systems are in place for it to continue into the future. Continual monitoring and accountability supported by reliable and timely data can also ensure longer term change is achieved. One major criticism globally of educational reforms is that whilst they have managed to achieve laudable results in terms of increasing enrolments and a higher number of schools, there has not been a reciprocal increase in education administrative staff and capacity.<sup>98</sup> This requires the development of



institutional structures and capacity that provides ongoing support that enables teachers and students and other key stakeholders to take full advantage of proposed changes. Additionally, embedding education goals and key program elements within sector plans and through legislation can ensure that these initiatives are not abandoned with a change of key players in the reform process. From a political perspective, it is recognized that ministerial tenure can hinder long-term reform if there is a high turnover of ministers<sup>99</sup> as compared to sustained political engagement on the part of either a continued office of a key political official or of the government reform team.<sup>100</sup> Awards or global recognition of leaders could potentially be a way of igniting, encouraging and rewarding political will.

**Using an evidence-based and data driven approach to monitoring and evaluation not only ensures that programs are remaining on track but crucially also provides information for course correction and adaptation for sustainable success** as illustrated by TUSOME in Kenya and the data-driven approach in Malawi (see above). Information systems that have been well developed can provide credible, reliable and up-to-date information on students as well as the workforce. For example, a robust education workforce information system could provide transparent and merit driven management of the education workforce cadre in order to make the education workforce system more efficient and effective.<sup>101</sup>

**Visionary leaders can play a key role in scaling reform and the international community can support them to do so.** Key barriers to systemic change are often habit, inertia and a lack of motivation, particularly for innovation as suggested by stakeholder interviews in Vietnam. A systematic review of teacher effectiveness reforms at scale<sup>102</sup> has also highlighted the fact that the bureaucratic environment can be so deeply entrenched within a system that it is difficult for people who have been part of this system to have the ability or initiative to become agents of change and to sustain any advances. One effective strategy for sustaining pro-reform groups can be to draw key stakeholders into high-visibility reform commission or expert panels. This approach was adopted by Julia Gillard in 2010 whose concern about inequities in the funding of schools in Australia led her to setting up an expert panel to conduct a review. This panel was chaired by a respected business leader and included representatives from political parties, a respected economist and representatives from religious/NGO/indigenous schools to provide political cover and technical input for major reform.<sup>103</sup> The Brookings Millions Learning report highlighted the critical role that ‘visionary leaders’ have played in scaling reforms for example the leaders of Pratham and Sesame Workshop and the two secretaries of state in Amazonas state amongst others. The global community has an important role to play in encouraging and supporting Ministers to embark on challenging workforce reforms.

## Critical to any successful workforce reform is recognizing the education workforce as agents of change

This research recognizes that a crucial driver for systemic change is **recognizing the important role of the education workforce in driving system wide advancements**. This involves not just improving the quality of staff but also creating suitable mechanisms and policies that support and encourage new and existing members of the workforce. This will help grow a skilled system in which the collective capacity of people to create and pursue overall visions is enhanced. Both case study and primary evidence has emphasized that **a key feature of successful reforms is when school leaders and teachers are empowered to become change agents**, this gives them a strong sense of ownership and allows them to drive the change. Wider members of the workforce must now also be seen as change agents, able to initiate, drive and manage change which is essential

for moving towards a self-improving system. As one stakeholder in Vietnam noted, motivations need to exist for teachers (and the education workforce) to commit to their careers as previous reforms have focused mainly on learners rather than on improvements that can motivate teachers (and the education workforce). The STIR initiative focusing on enhancing children’s education by fostering system-wide conditions that boost teachers’ motivation has shown the positive benefits in terms of system-wide learning gains (see Box 3).

Teachers are at the center of most education reform efforts, either because the reforms focus on teachers, or because the reform proposals directly impact teachers’ work. In many countries, involvement of teachers’ unions in influencing policy occurs at the discretion of the government. The relation between teachers’ unions and policy makers differs across countries and political contexts.

Unions in countries like Norway, Belgium and Sweden engage in collaborative decision making due to structural arrangements. In Sweden, it is law that unions and other organizations and authorities receive government proposals ahead of their formal presentation in parliament and recommend revisions. Government and teacher leaders meet formally once a month but have close relationships and see each other weekly during seminars and continuous discussions. Unions are strongly supported by teachers (80% of teachers are members). Unions often use focus groups with teachers and school visits to hear directly from teachers and use this to develop strategies to persuade the government on policy stances.<sup>104</sup>

In South Africa, one mechanism that is being explored to foster more cooperative rather than adversarial relations between unions and the education authorities is ‘trust agreements’. These refer to legally binding bilateral accords functioning outside the collective bargaining mechanism. Whereas collective bargaining focuses on conditions of employment, the trust agreement centers on professional issues – school organization, professional development and school-site collaboration and decision-making. The aim is to anticipate and address issues before they become adversarial, creating space to agree on implementable policies. They create conditions for ongoing consultation without resorting to collective bargaining processes that end in strike action.<sup>105</sup>

If teachers unions jointly own reforms with the government, they are more likely to support and enhance implementation. For example, in South Africa, SADTU works to develop professional learning strategies for teachers so they are well equipped to implement curriculum reforms.

**Box 3: ‘Igniting and sustaining teachers ‘intrinsic motivation’ – the STIR Education initiative in Uganda and India**

Teacher quality is universally recognized as potentially the most critical institutional factor in determining student outcomes. With high levels of teacher absence and low teacher motivation a challenge in many education systems globally, reigniting intrinsic teacher motivation has been at the forefront of the initiatives in Uganda and India. Recognizing the unique opportunity to help demotivated teachers has STIR working with over 200,000 teachers and impacting over 6 million children in these two countries at relatively low cost. The STIR program operates at both the national level as well as the sub-national level. STIR has worked in collaboration with national governments to align the program with each respective country’s education agenda. At the national level they conduct system-partnership diagnostics together with the partner government, try to understand needs and priorities, learn, assess, refine and adapt their approach continually and develop implement-support models accordingly. At the local level, district and sub-district officials are trained, and network participation is used to motivate and create impact amongst teachers. The program

builds teacher networks and trains officials to reignite teacher motivation at scale within the existing teacher workforce. These teacher networks allow teachers to see tangible results from the initiative which take the form of increased motivation and improved mastery of curriculum and content. Engaging key stakeholders from all levels of the education system and at all stages of the process have been the overriding elements helped this initiative reap these rewards. Critical champions within government, local government, amongst school leavers and, perhaps most importantly teachers themselves (STIR actively works with teacher unions to implement their program in Uganda), have driven this initiative from the design stages through to initial and ongoing implementation. This design and strategy have meant that STIR have initiated system-wide change on a national scale. This example also illustrates the importance of political whilst also demonstrating politicians using a needs-based approach and being smart about demonstrating positive changes.

Key political economy considerations for scale up and sustainability:

- ‘Whether and how’ a program is embedded within the government system<sup>106</sup>, and understanding the incentives that drive the different players who are likely to be impacted by the reform is important
- Embedding education goals and key program elements within sector plans and through legislation can ensure that these initiatives are not abandoned with a change of key players in the reform process
- Workforce reforms, need to be complemented by support structures including monitoring that reinforce and backup well-meaning changes
- Visionary leaders are key to scale up effective programs
- The global community has an important role to play in sharing evidence and encouraging and supporting Ministers/ visionary leaders to embark on workforce reforms

## Summary: Creating conditions across the lifecycle of a reform to mitigate political economy challenges and harness opportunities

Based on the lifecycle of education workforce reform, this paper has highlighted key political economy aspects of existing systems that have either hindered or driven change for policy reform as well as presented considerations and approaches to creating an environment that is conducive for mitigating key political economy challenges and sustaining education workforce reforms. Further political economy considerations will need to be at the forefront of discussions both within the ‘next’ stage of education workforce reform (in identifying existing good practices in the current system that can be leveraged to improve the system in the near future) as well as in the ‘future’ stage (when longer-term future scenarios are envisioned to experiment and innovate the system).

### **Further considerations for the next stage— developing learning teams**

In the next stage, as education workforce design pivots toward the development of learning teams and greater shared, horizontal responsibility, it will be increasingly important to ensure the input and consensus of key stakeholders in initiating and designing reforms. A wide range of education stakeholders, particularly those from marginalized populations and groups not formally organized, at all levels of the education system should be genuinely and seriously engaged in policy initiation and design to better understand their priorities and needs. This will aid in identifying opportunities and potential risks, but also in designing a team-based workforce that can work well and efficiently together,

As learning teams begin to generate evidence of what works and potential opportunities to scale, it will be critical to use more robust, relevant data to drive selection of the right reform levers and inform subsequent policy design in more sophisticated ways.

As learning teams start to take shape, roles and responsibilities of each actor will need to be clearly defined, including how they articulate with other roles in the system. Leveraging the wider community to support teachers as part of learning team, should be considered, especially where capacity is low. They can also support student learning in more revolutionary teaching models as they may be more attentive to local cultural and contextual needs. However, their vested interests and any potential rent-seeking opportunities need to be mitigated to ensure that their engagement is for the betterment of all children. Engagement with the community could also strengthen accountability structures. Elite capture (where the more powerful within a community use this power for their own purposes) is a potential threat within this model and need to be recognized and minimized. Similarly, businesses can be an incredibly powerful partner when engaged appropriately within the education system. However, they may be viewed with suspicion (as was suggested by primary data from Vietnam) particularly if they are perceived to be using this power to forward their own agendas. A transparent system allowing for business collaborations needs to be developed to overcome this constraint and to gain public trust in this relationship.

Designing reforms in the next should consider implementing using an incremental approach and through existing structures where possible for efficiency and smoother roll out. A coherent and well-managed plan accompanied by a clear roadmap of the timeline will still key for successful implementation.

Leaders and reform champions should be identified at all levels to maintain political will and drive change during the reform process. Communication strategies should take advantage of more diversified ways of communicating with stakeholders, such as using social media platforms, throughout implementation.

Monitoring and evaluation systems should be in place, as well as feedback loops, with the learning teams implementing reform increasingly taking ownership of these mechanisms, ensuring growth of the profession. Encouraging the learning teams implementing reform to become change agents themselves will be crucial—this means supporting teams and designing processes to overcome ingrained habits and cultures, inertia and low motivation. This will help create the conditions where the education workforce feel empowered to lead reform and act as changemakers.

Providing these changemakers with information that can assist systems to continuously self-improve remains a critical challenge and an important consideration. Evidence has shown that capacity building, engendering ownership and accountability as well as empowering key individuals and institutions have been central in establishing systemic evolution.

### **Further considerations for the future stage— creating learning systems**

The ‘future’ stage will reimagine the design of the education workforce with much bolder and more far-reaching reforms that go well beyond traditional models but build on foundations established in the next stage. In the future stage, where learning teams at all levels will increasingly lead the sector in creating a learning system, it will be important to consult with stakeholders outside of education as well to leverage a diverse set of expertise to facilitate innovative solutions. As more complex and widely connected networks become a key feature of education system and system capacity grows, reforms for the future stage should more seriously consider cross-sectoral collaboration in designing reforms.

The future will see greater fluidity in where and how learning takes place, particularly with regards to delivery supported by technology, and this will have impact on the different stakeholders including parents and students. Skepticism and a lack of trust on the part of teachers, parents and other education stakeholders with respect to the use of technology in alternative forms of delivery and instruction has become more apparent. For example, primary data collection in Vietnam has suggested reluctance on the part of parents for pupils to use technology for their own learning as they felt this would encourage increased social media use rather than increased use for learning. Similarly, teachers and other members of learning teams could resist the use of technology if it were perceived as a threat, rather than an asset, to their role. Ensuring that evidence behind reforms using technology is robust and clearly articulated to stakeholders will be key.

As ICTs continue to spread and networks become more established, communication strategies should become more multi-directional, taking advantage of the diverse array of platforms and channels that could facilitate feedback and dialogue.

The state level will continue to provide system-wide leadership, but the school and district levels come to the forefront of a learning system through innovative networks. Where these changes can be perceived to alter the status quo and require either increased efforts or decreased personal benefit, they may be resisted and therefore mitigating these political economy repercussions will be crucial in ensuring the success of this type of reform agenda.

## References

Asim, Salman; Chimombo, Joseph; Chugunov, Dmitry; Gera, Ravinder. 2017. Moving Teachers to Malawi's Remote Communities: A Data-Driven Approach to Teacher Deployment. Policy Research Working Paper; No. 8253. World Bank, Washington, DC.

Aslam, M., Rawal, S., Asadullah, N., Kingdon G., Bari, F., Malik, R., Rose, P., (2016a), Teacher Politics: Meeting Educational Quality Challenges with Teachers, Report Prepared for the Education Commission.

Aslam, M., Rawal, S., Kingdon, G., Moon, B., Banerji, R. and Das, S., (September 2016b), 'Evidence on Impact of Reforms of Education Systems to increase Teacher Effectiveness at Scale in Developing Countries on Quality of Teaching and Learning Outcomes: A Systematic Review', Department for International Development (DFID), London

Banerjee, A., Banerji, R., Berry, J., Duflo, E., Kannan, H., Mukherji, S., Shotland, M. and Walton, M., (2016), "Mainstreaming an Effective Intervention: Evidence from Randomized Evaluations of 'Teaching at the Right Level' in India." NBER Working Paper 22746.

Banerjee, Abhijit, V., Rukmini Banerji, Esther Duflo, Rachel Glennerster, and Stuti Khemani. 2010. "Pitfalls of Participatory Programs: Evidence from a Randomized Evaluation in Education in India." American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, 2 (1): 1-30.

Banerji, R. (2015). How do systems respond to disruptive pedagogic innovations? The case of Pratham in Bihar. RISE Working Paper Series. RISE-WP-15/002 October. [http://www.riseprogramme.org/sites/www.riseprogramme.org/files/151026\\_BanerjiWP.pdf](http://www.riseprogramme.org/sites/www.riseprogramme.org/files/151026_BanerjiWP.pdf).

Bari, F., Raza R., Aslam, M., Khan, B. and Maqsood., N. (2015). An Investigation into Teacher Recruitment and Retention in Punjab. Rep. Lahore: IDEAS. Web.

Bold. T., Kimenyi, M., Mwabu, G., Ng'ang'a, A. and Sandefur, J., (2013), 'Scaling up What works: Experimental Evidence on External Validity in Kenyan Education' Working Paper, Centre for Global Development, Washington D.C.

Bruns, B. & J. Luque (2014), Great Teachers: how to raise student learning in Latin America and the Caribbean, The World Bank Group, Washington D.C.

Bruns, B. & B.R. Schneider (2016), 'Managing the Politics of Quality Reforms in Education: Policy Lessons from Global Experience Barbara Bruns Classroom Research Associates and Center for Global Development, Background Paper for the Learning Generation Report.

Crouch, L., & DeStefano, J. (2017). Doing Reform Differently: Combining Rigor and Practicality in Implementation and Evaluation of System Reforms. (International Development Working Paper; No. 2017-01). Research Triangle Park, NC: RTI International.

Dang, H. H.; Glewwe, P. W.. 2017. Well begun, but aiming higher: a review of Vietnam's education trends in the past 20 years and emerging challenges (English). Policy Research working paper; no. WPS 8112. Washington, D.C. : World Bank Group. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/105601498481351222/Well-begun-but-aiming-higher-a-review-of-Vietnams-education-trends-in-the-past-20-years-and-emerging-challenges>

Dede, C, Honan, J.P, Laurence C. Peters. et al. (2005), *Scaling Up Success: Lessons Learned from Technology- based Educational Improvement* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005).

DFID (2009), *How To Note on Political Economy Analysis*, DFID, U.K.

Duggan, S., (2001,) "Educational Reform in Viet Nam: A process of change or continuity?", *Comparative Education*, 37:2, 193-212

Education Commission (2018), *Research Program on Delivery Approaches: Annexes*.

Evans DR, Sack R, Shaw CP (1995) *Formulating education policy: lessons and experiences from sub-Saharan Africa*. Paris: DAE/UNESCO.

Freudenberger, E., & Davis, J. (2017). *Tusome external evaluation—Midline report*. Prepared for the Ministry of Education of Kenya, USAID/Kenya, and the UK DFID under contract no. AID-615-TO-16-00012. MSI, A Tetra Tech Company, Washington, DC. Retrieved June 18, 2018 from [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PA00MS6J.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00MS6J.pdf).

Fullan, M. (2016), *The Elusive Nature of Whole System Improvement in Education*, *Journal of Educational Change*, 17 (4): 539-544.

Fullan, M., & Quinn, J. (2016). *Coherence: The right drivers in action for schools, districts, and systems*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin

Grindle M (ed.) (1980) *Politics and policy implementation in the Third World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Habib, M. (2015) *Teacher and School Administrator Incentives for Improved Education Delivery in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province*

Jeevan, S., (2018), *2015 and Beyond: Delhi Education Revolution*, STIR Education Internal Document Uganda overview and workplan

Kingdon, G. And M. Muzammil (2009) "A political economy of education in India: the case of Uttar Pradesh", *Oxford Development Studies*, 37, No. 2: 123-144, June 2009

Kingdon, G. and Muzammil, M. (2003): *The Political Economy of Education in India, Teacher politics in Uttar Pradesh*, Oxford University Press.

Kingdon G.G, Little A, Aslam M, Rawal S, Moe T, Patrinos H, Beteille T, Banerji R, Parton B and Sharma SK (2014) *A rigorous review of the political economy of education systems in developing countries*. Final Report. Education Rigorous Literature Review. Department for International Development

Kingdon, G & J. Bedi (2016), The political economy of the scale-up of the ABL programme in Tamil Nadu, A DFID Funded Report.

Kremer M (2003) Randomized evaluations of educational programs in developing countries: some lessons. *American Economic Review* 93(2): 102–106.

Languille, S and Dolan, J. (2012), Political Economy Analysis of the Education Sector in Tanzania', for DFID.

Little A (2010) Access to elementary education in India: policies, politics and progress. CREATE Research Monograph No. 44. London: University of London

Mbiti, I.M., 2016. The need for accountability in education in developing countries. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 30(3), pp.109-32.

Mizala, A., and B. R. Schneider. 2014. "Negotiating Education Reform: Teacher Evaluations and Incentives in Chile (1990-2010)." *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration and Institutions* 27 (1): 87-109.

Mulkeen A (2010) Teachers in Anglophone Africa: issues in teacher supply, training, and management. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Ofsted, 2007, Reforming and developing the school workforce, OFSTED, U.K

Overseas Development Institute, 2005, An analytical framework for understanding the political economy of sectors and policy arenas

O'Toole, L. (1986), "Policy recommendation for multi-actor implementation: an assessment of the field", *Journal of public policy*, Vol. 6/2, pp. 181-210, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0143814X00006486>.

O'Toole, L. (2004), "The Theory-Practice Issue in Policy Implementation Research", *Public Administration*, Vol. 82/2, pp. 309-329, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.0033-3298.2004.00396.x>.

Patrinós H, Kagia R (2007) Maximizing the performance of education systems: the case of teacher absenteeism. In: Campos, JE, Pradhan S (eds) *The many faces of corruption*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Pedley D, Taylor D (2009) Politics and policy in education: aligning and harmonising with what country priorities. In: *A safari towards aid effectiveness*. June 2009. [www.norrag.org/fr/publications/norrag-news/online-version/a-safari-towards-aid-effectiveness.html](http://www.norrag.org/fr/publications/norrag-news/online-version/a-safari-towards-aid-effectiveness.html) (accessed 21 January 2014).

Piper, B., Zuilkowski, S.S, Dubeck, M., Jepkemei, E., S. J. King (2018a), 'Identifying the essential ingredients to literacy and numeracy improvement: Teacher professional development and coaching, student textbooks, and structured teachers' guides', *World Development*, 106 (2018) 324–336

Piper, B., Destephano, J., Kinyanjui, E.M., & Salome Ong'ele (2018b), 'Scaling up successfully: Lessons from Kenya's Tusome national literacy program', *Journal of Educational Change* (2018) 19:293–321



Psacharopoulos, G. (1989), "Why educational reforms fail: A comparative analysis", *International Review of Education*, Vol. 35/2, pp. 179-195.

Ramachandran, V., Beteille, T., Linden, T., Dey, S., Goyal, S., Chatterjee, Goel, P., 2017. *Getting the right teachers into the right schools : managing India's teacher workforce (English)*. Washington, D.C. World Bank Group.

Reimers, Fernando & Cárdenas, Sergio. (2007). Who benefits from school-based management in Mexico?. *PROSPECTS*. 37. 37-56. 10.1007/s11125-007-9015-0.

Schneider, B.R., Cevallos Estarellas, P., Bruns, B., (2018) *The Politics of Transforming Education in Ecuador: Confrontation and Continuity, 2006-17*, RISE Working Paper RISE-WP-18/021

Singal, N., Pedder, D., Malathy, D., Shanmugam, M., Manickavasagam, S., & Govindarasan, M. (2017) 'Insights from within activity based learning (ABL) classrooms in Tamil Nadu, India: Teachers perspectives and practices'. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 60, 165-171.pp. 11.

Somerset A (2011) Access, cost and quality: tensions in the development of primary education in Kenya. *Journal of Educational Policy* 26(4): 483–499.

Takashi Hamano (2008) Educational reform and teacher education in Vietnam, *Journal of Education for Teaching: International research and pedagogy*, 34:4, 397-410

Viennet, R. and B. Pont (2017), "Education policy implementation: A literature review and proposed framework", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 162, OECD Publishing, Paris,

Wolfenden, F., Buckler, A., Santos, C., and Mittelmeier, J., (2018), *Education Workforce Initiative: Initial Research*, The Open University April 2018, prepared for the International Commission on Financing Education Opportunity (the Education Commission) as initial research to inform the approach to the Education Workforce Initiative's Education Workforce Report.

World Development Report (2018), The World Bank, Washington D.C., USA.

## **Appendix 1: Methodology**

This paper explores and summarizes the literature on the impact of political economy factors on the design and implementation of education workforce reform. This includes an analysis of specific examples in the form of case studies to highlight good practice or lessons learned from specific reform efforts. These case studies present analysis based on both desk-based research of existing evidence as well as, where possible, some new primary data. An in-depth Political Economy Analysis (PEA) and findings from a primary data collection exercise are presented for two countries: Ghana and Vietnam. This PEA hopes to identify obstacles and constraints to the reform process as well as opportunities for leveraging policy change and supporting reform.

This research takes a systems approach that is particularly useful in understanding why reforms in education have been effective or not. This type of analysis helps to identify specific opportunities, barriers as well as the

incentives and constraints that influence the efficacy of such endeavors. In the first instance, a mapping of key stakeholders is necessary<sup>107</sup>. Figure 2 provides an identification of key stakeholders in the education sector to help identify all players in the system (particularly the most dominant ones), what their interests and incentives and how the overall dynamics within the sector influence reform.

Box 1 outlines some of the areas of focus and broad themes that are covered in the literature review, case studies and PEA<sup>108</sup>.

### **Box 1: Areas of focus and broad themes**

#### **Roles and responsibilities of educational stakeholders**

- Identifying who the key stakeholders are;
- What are the incentives and interests faced by different players and have these varied over time?

#### **Power relations and decision-making**

- Who are the key decision-makers and to what extent is power vested in the hands of specific individuals or groups?
- Who exerts direct/indirect pressure on the decision-making process?
- What mechanism are available for different stakeholders to exercise their power and what are the implications of this powerplay for the education sector?

#### **Rent-seeking/corruption/patronage politics**

- How significant is the extent of rent-seeking, corruption and patronage politics in the education sector? Where is it most prevalent (e.g. at the point of delivery, procurement, job allocation etc.).
- What is or has been the impact of such behavior on education outcomes and educational reform?

#### **Implementation issues**

- What political economy factors (e.g. technical design, capacity failings, pushback on gender and other equality issues etc.) have facilitated or impeded (or could potentially facilitate or impede the) implementation of workforce reforms?

#### **Driving Forces**

- Are there any key reform champions or those likely to resist the reforms?
- What political and economic conditions drive or inhibit education reform both at the design as well as the implementation stages?
- How do existing ideologies and/or social norms (in particular with respect to gender, inequality and other forms of marginalization) influence or undermine the reform process?

*Source: Adapted from Kingdon et. al. (2014) and the ODI Analytical Framework for Conducting Political Economy Analysis in Sectors: World Bank Problem Driven Governance and Political Economy Analysis.*

## Appendix 2: TUSOME & PRIEDE (Kenya)

**Program name:** TUSOME ('Let's Read' in Swahili) & PRIEDE (Kenya Primary Education Development Project)  
**Focus of program:** Improving early grade mathematics and early grade literacy by enhancing teachers' capacity for education delivery  
**Main role(s) addressed:** head teachers, Boards of Management (BOMs), teacher educators and teachers, Curriculum Support Officers (CSOs), district officials, civil society organizations, ministry officials.  
**Location:** Kenya (nationwide)

### Education Context:

Education has been a somewhat successful story in Kenya with policy focusing on access to education through the introduction of free primary education in 2003 and free secondary education in 2008. This has resulted in more children enrolling and completing the primary cycle, however, there have been concerns about the quality of education which is reflected in lower learning outcomes. 2016's Education Sector Report highlights the country's progress towards education goals relating to access, quality and equity whilst noting some of the key challenges faced by the sector such as deficits in teacher deployment and inadequacies in the assessment system. Major reforms have been undertaken in the education sector to align teaching materials, syllabi and assessments to a new competency-based curriculum. The sector's budget and resource allocations have increased and one of the key priority areas include teacher resource management.

### Program Overview:

**TUSOME ('Let's Read' in Swahili):** Built upon the highly successful Primary Mathematics and Reading (PRIMR) initiative (2011-2014), testing early grade education interventions to assess their effectiveness and potential for national scale-up. It is an example of one of the first experiences of taking a piloted literacy program to scale at the national level using government systems (Piper et al. 2018b). One of the key aspects of the intervention is enhancing teachers' capacity to effectively delivery classroom instruction and enhance collaboration with other literacy actors. TUSOME trains Curriculum Support Officers, administrators, teachers and instructional coaches based on practical classroom-based experiences. The trainings help develop teachers' pedagogical skills in critical technical areas such as phonemic awareness, reading comprehension, lesson planning, and curriculum coverage. Head teachers (principals) are trained to provide instructional leadership for their schools while managing the acquisition, utilization and maintenance of the new learning materials. In addition, Senior County and national education leaders are trained on new reading techniques, and address gaps in the relevant laws, policies, strategies, and regulations that impact early-grade reading.

Monitoring and evaluation inform continuous improvement, for example through classroom data and student assessments that collect information to evaluate program implementation and student learning. Therefore, TUSOME is helping institutionalize monitoring mechanism and reinforcing expectations for decentralized school support, teacher instructional behavior and student outcomes (Piper et al. 2018b).

**PRIEDE (Kenya Primary Education Development Project):** The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) has allocated 88.4 million USD (2015-2019) to Kenya with the objective of improving early grade mathematics competency and to strengthen management systems at school and national levels (building upon the PRIMR success). This includes increasing teacher competencies and enhancing teacher pedagogical supervision. School management and accountability have also been strengthened through school data analysis and appraisals of teacher competencies amongst other factors.

**Cost:** TUSOME – 73.8 million USD; PRIDE: 88.4 million USD

**Scale:** Nationwide

**Timeline:**

TUSOME: 2014-2019

PRIEDE: 2015-2019

**TUSOME**

**Impact:**

The program has reached 7 million children (grades 1-3) in more than 22,600 public schools, 5027 private schools and 1500 alternative basic education institutions. The program has delivered more than 19.1 million books and trained more than 98,000 grade 1 and 2 teachers and headteachers.

Studies evaluating TUSOME (Piper et al. 2018a, Piper et al. 2018b) have found several positive impacts of this program. The papers highlight the fact that it is incredibly promising that they were able to implement this type of reform through government systems at scale. Emphasis thorough out the implementation of the TUSOME program has been through fidelity. External evaluations showed that teacher guides and other inputs were widely available and 95% of the teacher used the guides when observed in the classrooms (Freudenberger and Davis 2017). When evaluated from a cost-effectiveness perspective, it was found that combining professional development of teachers, teacher instructional support and coaching with 1:1 student books and structured teacher lesson plans was most cost effective in improving learning outcomes. TUSOME has been assessed on four fronts: (i) setting and communicating expectations, (ii) monitoring and accountability, (iii) provision of inputs and (iv) impact on learning outcomes. These studies have broadly shown positive impact across all these aspects with some results showing TUSOME's impact as large and meaningful.

**Key drivers for success/enabling factors:**

Two of the main drivers of success in the effective implementation of policies are the *setting of and the communication of expectations in the first instance and, secondly, monitoring that implementation* (Crouch and DeStephano 2017). TUSOME appears to have been successful in both these regards. The first of these was the use of national benchmarks and communicating expectations for Kiswahili and English learning outcomes all the way down to the school level. Monitoring was achieved through accountability and feedback mechanisms to assess performance against these benchmarked expectations that were developed in a functional manner. Feedback data encouraged greater instructional support at the county level and key aspects to ensure successful scaleup were also put into place. Whilst the classroom observations that were conducted as part of this program may have fallen short of the desired rate, they were far more frequent, focused on instructional quality and did include basic feedback for teachers. The program achieved high levels of fidelity of implementation with regards to the provision of materials, improving teachers' professional development and, to some extent, instructional support (Piper et al. 2018a and 2018b). All these factors contributed to the successful implementation of this program.

Another key driver of change enabling TUSOME's success has been the *internalization of the program by the government system*. This was achieved by working with the Teacher Services Commission (TSC – an independent government commission established under the Constitution to manage human resources within the education sector) and enhancing the role of the CSOs because these CSOs are the frontline of public education and can be seen as the face of the policy in this context. At a more micro level, the teachers

themselves, despite not having sanctions or incentives based on their performance in the classrooms, felt an accountability for their performance simply by having this classroom level monitoring, through a *change in organizational culture* rather than through a punitive accountability model.

And finally, a critical enabling factor in this case was the *shift in focus to the classroom* which was achieved through teachers developing a different means of engaging with their students through new materials, new teaching techniques and new expectations (Piper et al. 2018a and 2018b).

## **PRIEDE**

### **Impact:**

Over 7.6 million early grade math textbooks have been distributed, 109,259 teachers trained by August 2018 and 25,869 classroom observations have been conducted. According to the Joint Support Mission Report (March 2018), over 90% of teachers had been appraised as of Term 3 in 2017, 19,300 TPAD training materials and manuals had been distributed, 141 Master trainers, 1041 CSOs (Curriculum Support Officers), 4000 Head Teachers and 8000 BOMS (Boards of Management) had been trained in Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) implementation.

### **Key drivers for success/enabling factors:**

GPE's country-level evaluations have provided insights into some of the key factors that have driven the success of PRIEDE. A core enabling factor that has been the impetus behind this program has been the *wide-ranging political will across the board* to improve the country's education system.

The PRIEDE program has been held in overwhelmingly positive regard and this has been further strengthened and complimented by a *strong sense of government ownership*, right from planning, through implementation to monitoring and evaluation. This government commitment has been financial as well as non-financial through the deep integration of this program within government institutions. In addition to this, it has led to increased capacity building within the workforce of the government sector.

Another crucial factor has been the improvement in and *engagement of many stakeholders (including parents, civil society groups, teacher organisations, government officials etc.) in an inclusive dialogue* that continues to be worked on. This engagement has been cited as invaluable in improving the efficacy of the implementation of this program, in particular on the part of teachers and head teachers through extensive dialogue and engagement with them.

As with TUSOME, *monitoring and evaluation systems have been strengthened*, so much so that the ambitious National Education Management Information System (NEMIS) program has been widely lauded as collecting timely, accurate and credible data. These efforts are likely to come to fruition by improving policy-making, planning, monitoring and resource allocation across the education system in the country. The development of the Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) system has supported teachers in improving their competencies. This open appraisal system encourages self-evaluation and professional development, encouraging teachers to not only become more empowered but also earn confidence from other stakeholders within the education system such as parents. The TPAD system has created greater accountability at the school-level and even representatives of the teacher union have indicated that whilst there was a reluctance initially to adopt this tool, its value has become apparent over time.

### **Lessons learned:**

The GPE country evaluation has also provided evidence of *complementarity* between TUSOME and PRIEDE that has benefited both programs. Both TUSOME and PRIEDE have used workforce reforms as a keystone to ensuring the success in their delivery. These reforms have engaged multiple actors within the education workforce. For example, by engaging CSOs, they have ensured that these programs are truly integrated into the government system. Additionally, teachers have been mobilized as drivers of change in the implementation and delivery of these programs. Delivery, training and implementation for both programs has been done by the same CSOs and teachers and this has also led to apparent cost and scale benefits. Additionally, this provides good evidence for ensuring that where multiple education reforms are taking place in a country, alignment across the programs, in terms of design, implementation and incentives should be borne in mind as early as the planning stages.

Whilst there are many more advantages to the parallel implementation of these two programs, one unintended consequence relates to the differences in the remuneration of observers in the two programs. This has generated some competition with CSOs apparently conducting more TUSOME observations than PRIEDE observations due to the differing financial incentives. Given that competing resources are often being allocated to different agendas, an awareness of the potential adverse political consequences is essential for ensuring a mutually beneficial environment where the effects of any such adverse consequences can be managed and mitigated. TUSOME and PRIEDE suggest that large scale workforce reform efforts, particularly those involving multiple players, are more likely to succeed when these players have been engaged fully in the reform process giving them the political will to drive the reform agenda. Key to this is that it inculcates a strong sense of ownership on the part of all players.

Finally, part of the GPE initiatives in Kenya have taken the form of the development of an Education Sector Plan (2013-2018) that is very government-driven, thereby ensuring that national stakeholders show strong political commitment and will towards enforcing that plan even after individual reforms have ended. In Kenya, the sector plan has had a very strong focus on equity and inclusion with the enactment of several policies relating to disability, gender, disadvantaged groups etc. A critical success of this ESP has been the fact that it appears to have been developed in a consultative manner. Future workforce reforms should, therefore, include these key ingredients of ownership, engagement, collaboration and commitment. A strong sector plan borne of these components will then provide a strong foundation from which future reform efforts that are effective, inclusive and equitable, can emerge.

## Appendix 3: STIR (India and Uganda)

**Program name:** STIR Education’s Teacher Intrinsic Motivation (TIM) initiative

**Focus of program:** Aims to ‘reignite the spark in teachers’ by focusing on their intrinsic motivation. It aims to empower teachers and other education workforce individuals to become more committed, skillful and influential change-makers.

**Main role(s) addressed:** In Delhi, India: teacher, mentor teachers, District Institute for Education and Training (DIET) faculty member; In Uganda: teachers, head teachers and County-coordinating tutors (CCTs).

**Location:** India and Uganda

**Education Contexts:**

India has made huge towards the universalisation of basic education. However, the quality of provision remains poor and ensuring that students from all groups, particularly those who are marginalised, remains a key policy focus. Learning outcomes have not kept pace with increased enrolment and whilst children are moving from one grade to the next, learning levels and grade competencies have not been achieved. For example, in New Delhi, India, the average grade 6 student was found to be performing at a grade 3 level in math. Even by grade 9, the average student had only reportedly reached a grade 5 level and the gap in learning between the better and worse performers widened over time<sup>109</sup>. Poor quality has been attributed to many factors including poor curriculum and syllabus, deficient pedagogy, unmotivated and over-pressured teachers as well as underfunding across the education system. Recent evidence has suggested that reorienting teaching to the level of the student as opposed to tied to the rigid expectations of a curriculum can improve learning outcomes<sup>110</sup>.

The Government of Uganda has been dedicated to providing equitable access to a quality and affordable education to all its citizens. However, the education sector has been constrained by challenges relating to student and teacher absenteeism, weak school-level management structures, unavailability of learning materials and very high class sizes. In particular, the supply of teachers, particularly in remote rural areas has been a key concern<sup>111</sup>. The Education Sector Plan has focused on increasing participation (particularly of disadvantaged groups) but also improving quality, effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of education services. Initiatives in recent years have focused on strengthening teacher competence, motivation and accountability as well as supporting an enabling environment for strengthening teacher competency (e.g. GPE grants). STIR is an example of one such initiative.

**Program Overview:**

The STIR program operates at both the national level as well as the sub-national level. At the national level they conduct system-partnership diagnostics together with the partner government, try to understand needs and priorities, learn, assess, refine and adapt their approach continually and develop implement-support models accordingly. At the local level, district and sub-district officials are trained, and network participation is used to motivate and create impact amongst teachers.

The five-year intervention focuses largely on improving teacher motivation across the education system. Teachers are required to undergo a ‘development journey’ lasting two years in which they collaborate with other peers in neighboring schools to develop their teaching skills. These networks are run by cluster-level government officials who have been especially trained in providing 21<sup>st</sup> century and core teaching skills to the teachers. The program builds teacher networks and trains officials to reignite teacher motivation at scale within the existing teacher workforce. These teacher networks allow teachers to see tangible results from the initiative which take the form of increased motivation and improved mastery.

**Cost:** Average cost/student is approximately \$0.4/year. This low-marginal cost has been achieved through the government absorbing more of the cost of the intervention into existing roles and resources in India. Also, a recent transition to a government-led model (in partnership with the Teachers' Union in Uganda) which utilises existing system-resources more than halved the cost of the initiative.

**Scale:** Since 2012, STIR have reached 200,000 teachers and impacted 6 million children in India and Uganda.

**Timeline:** Nov 2014 – Nov 2020

**Impact:**

In Uganda, STIR operates in 27 districts and has intervened with 30,000 teachers and 1.8 million children. In India, STIR operates in 34 districts with 170,000 teachers and 4.2 million children. Evidence has shown positive effects on teacher motivation and effort as well as student engagement and learning<sup>112</sup>.

An independent World Bank-funded randomised control trial of the STIR intervention in Delhi showed that even when only a fifth of the teachers in a school had access to the intervention, the entire school saw a strongly statistically significant gain in learning levels in maths (0.11 standard deviation average across the entire school). This strong 'spill over' of learning gains across the whole school coincided with a statistically significant gain in teachers' growth mind set and motivation.

In Uttar Pradesh (UP) STIR interventions led to a statistically significant increase in teacher effort (measured by teaching time), of up to a maximum of an additional lesson per day for children taught by teachers involved in the intervention (LATE/IV analysis). At the whole school level, every dollar invested in the approach resulted in approximately seven dollars of more teaching time. However, both treatment and control improved sharply versus baseline, bucking the trend of flatlining or declining learning levels, STIR is still trying to understand the reasons why. The main structural differences between Delhi and UP were that in Delhi, there were staff dedicated to running the teacher networks, and there was more in-school support from headteachers to support classroom practice change in between the teacher network meetings. This suggests that the teacher intrinsic motivation model is sensitive to the system structural conditions and so more effort needs to be put into working with governments to ensure these system conditions can be put in place to maximise impact. With the government increasingly absorbing more and more of the costs of the intervention into existing roles and resources, the marginal cost of the STIR intervention has since fallen further, to as little as 40 cents per child per year in India (Jeevan, 2018).

**Key drivers for success/enabling factors:**

An overriding driver of success for the STIR initiative in both Uganda and India has been the program's embedding into the national policy agenda. In Uganda, STIR encouraged the government to include the approach within the sector plan as well as the budget structure to ensure it is and that it remains a national priority. For India, the focus has been on aligning and integrating the program with each state's individual strategic and learning priorities. These synergies across program goals and the government agenda ensure both are implemented and sustained in the most effective and efficient manner by encouraging coordination between them. For example, by aligning well with government initiatives (e.g. in Delhi, the Delhi Education Revolution), strong political pressure can help ensure support for these initiatives as well as ensuring their implementation at scale<sup>113</sup>. In Uganda, STIR aims to support government priorities such as aligning closely with the Teacher Incentive Framework 2017 and the Uganda National Teacher Policy 2017<sup>114</sup>.

Another key factor to initiate system structural change has related to teacher engagement. In Delhi two important elements in encouraging teacher motivation have been identified as having staff dedicated to running



teacher networks and more in-school support from headteachers to support classroom practice change<sup>115</sup>. Overcoming initial teacher reservations, particularly when educators may not be keen to participate or may not acknowledge their own professional learning needs, by including them as partners and allowing them to evaluate their own progress and goals has also been noted as a critical enabling factor in STIR's success in India and Uganda. Teachers and other stakeholders have also been engaged through collaborative initiatives with teacher unions, members of local government, funders and other stakeholders within the education system.

**Lessons learned:**

One of the key levers that have encouraged the success of this program has been ensuring critical champions exist across all levels of the education system to keep driving the initiative forward and ensuring that these champions have the political capital and mandate to do so. Additionally, the system has to have the right apparatus in place to implement and to subsequently sustain change. However, changes in personnel can affect stability<sup>116</sup>.

In India, stakeholders' motivation across the system was an 'elephant in the room'. Recognising the need to step back and address motivation instead of simply adopting technical solutions too fast could provide a real driver for change<sup>117</sup>.

Across both India and Uganda, the STIR initiative provides an example of a reform which was designed as a system-wide intervention and this design agenda has meant that the implementation saw system-wide benefits<sup>118</sup>.

## **Appendix 4: T-TEL (Ghana)**

**Program name:** Transforming Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL)

**Focus of program:** Strengthening Initial Teacher Training

**Main role(s) addressed:** Teachers, teacher educators, head teachers, district officials

**Location:** Ghana (nationwide)

**Education Context:**

There has been considerable progress in the last few decades in the Education Sector in Ghana however the sector still faces the challenge of many children remaining out of school, poor learning outcomes, equity in access and learning and teacher deployment and time on task. The new Education Strategic Plan (2018-30) focuses on access and equity, quality, relevance, efficiency and effectiveness and sustainability.

**Program Overview:**

The Transforming Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL) (2014-2020) program has been implemented in partnership with the government and other education stakeholders (e.g. National Teaching Council, Colleges of Education etc.). This DFID (UK Department for International Development) funded program helps support the implementation of the new policy framework for Pre-Tertiary Teacher Professional Development and Management in Ghana by improving the quality of teaching and learning in relevant national bodies, institutions and all 46 public Colleges of Education (CoEs) across the country. The program focuses on key areas within the teacher education sector including policy & institutional development, leadership and management, challenge & payment by results fund, tutor professional development, school partnerships & teaching practice, curriculum reform and gender and inclusion. The program includes professional development sessions, mentor

programs, school visits and lesson observations amongst other elements as well as national policy activities. The overall goal of the program is to build institutional capacity, transform the delivery of pre-service teacher education and move towards a high quality, practicum focused pre-service education system.

**Cost:** Part of Girls - Participatory Approaches to Students Success (PASS) in Ghana (£51 million), TTEL accounts for about 15 million of the £51 million.

**Scale:** Operates in all 46 Government Colleges of Education (CoEs) across the country as well as other education institutions

**Timeline:** Nov 2014 – Nov 2020

**Impact:**

The impact of this program has been measured at various levels: CoE level, mentor-level, tutor-level and at the teacher-level. A midline evaluation has shown promising results at all levels indicating that pupils have benefited in many respects (more engaging classroom settings, teachers meeting more diverse needs of pupils, increase in gender-sensitive and student-centered strategies etc.). An endline survey was also conducted to measure progress against log-frame indicators over the projected period and the findings from this have been equally promising. Core competencies of teachers in English, Math and science increased, gender sensitive instructional methods saw some improvement between mid and end-line, however this was highlighted as an area for further improvement. Tutors showed a good level of performance in demonstrating student-focused teaching methods throughout the period. However, the use of teaching and learning materials for pedagogical practices did not show similar improvements from mid to endline. With regards to mentors, despite an overall positive performance, endline targets for mentors were not met. At the college-level, leadership and management practices and gender-sensitive policies have improved to meet college-improvement plan goals<sup>119</sup>.

**Key drivers for success/enabling factors:**

High quality pre-service teacher training should be a priority in the education workforce reform agenda. Many countries across the globe face the challenge of poorly trained teachers and in-service training has been unable to fill the void where low-quality pre-service training has fallen short. Whilst reforming pre-service training is typically more testing than modifying in-service training, it remains a more fitting solution in the long-run. This type of fundamental shift in the status-quo requires high levels of political will, the backing of key political champions, a concrete and sound plan that is owned nationally and the engagement of key stakeholders to ensure the most favorable conditions for implementation and sustainability. The T-TTEL reform can be argued to have, to a certain extent, made strides in each of these fundamentals.

Stakeholder interviews highlight the fact that critical champions (such as those in the Ministry of Education, CoEs and their leadership, district officials and schools, the National Teaching Council etc.) existed across all levels in the education system and this political will across the national, regional, district and school-levels drove the reform agenda forward. Despite initial institutional resistance to change and a desire to maintain the status quo by many stakeholders, extensive consultations and early engagements meant that these political challenges and blockages were mitigated<sup>120</sup>. These initial and ongoing consultations were commendable in that they acknowledged the importance of all stakeholders, allowed them to air their views and then adapted their policies in light of this feedback. Giving stakeholders this ownership and demonstrating a willingness to taken on board their opinions and modify the program accordingly meant that these stakeholders were then more likely to champion this reform. For example, a presentation was held with unions to discuss the program itself, the role the union and thereby teachers could play, giving unions and teachers a voice. Additionally, the government provided a multi-stakeholder forum where they invited members of parliament, development partners, program officials, unions, principles of education, media, etc. with the aim to provide details of the

program itself and what it meant for the profession. Commendably, it also included a roadmap of the timeline and processes of implementation and, crucially, what everyone's roles and responsibilities were<sup>121</sup>. A perception study was also conducted to investigate and assess perceptions regarding the proposed curriculum reforms from key CoE stakeholders, who had participated in the consultation process and were identified as crucial to the reform's successful implementation<sup>122</sup>. These activities examined constraints at all levels and then acknowledged and aimed to address them. This resulted in policy changes such as revisions in the curriculum and other research-induced activities.

**Lessons learned:**

T-TEL provides an example of open and ongoing collaboration between government and key stakeholders. Early and regular engagement formed a crucial ingredient that helped to generate and sustain buy-in for the program. Political will was, therefore, generated through persuasion and evidence.

The most important factor in evaluating the impact of a policy is whether it is able to sustain this impact in the long run or whether the system reverts back to the status quo. In order to make sustainable change, programs need to work at the policy and the institutional level to make sustainable change. A constructive and dynamic engagement process gave all stakeholders a sense of ownership of the program that should help the longevity of T-TEL<sup>123</sup>.

For T-TEL's continued success, this government engagement with stakeholders has highlighted some areas that could be the focus of attention such as: vested financial interests in current curricula and examination, inadequate dissemination, acquisition of teaching and learning materials, training on new curriculum, MoE barriers to CoEs becoming autonomous, some college leaders not taking ownership and finally, the complex tension of meeting the differing standards, culture and mindsets between teacher training colleges and universities<sup>124</sup>. These challenges, if not addressed, will not allow the program to make the sustainable long-term change it is capable of.

---

<sup>1</sup> Kingdon et al. 2014

<sup>2</sup> The critical role a teacher plays in a child's educational experience has been evidenced by a large body of research in developing and developed countries.

<sup>3</sup> Typically used by the OECD/DAC and DFID.

<sup>4</sup> This research recognises the different theoretical frameworks available (e.g. RISE, sector-planning tools etc.). However, as the authors of this paper were co-authors of the Kingdon et al. (2014) report, the framework underpinning that report has been used.

<sup>5</sup> Kingdon and Bedi 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Millions Learning

<sup>7</sup> Piper et al. 2018a, Piper et al. 2018b.

<sup>8</sup> Evidenced through primary research.

<sup>9</sup> Evidenced through primary research.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Bruns and Schneider (2016) *Managing the Politics of Quality Reforms in Education*

Princeton University 2009

<sup>13</sup> WDR 2018.

<sup>14</sup> Barber, M. (2008), *Instructions to deliver*, Methuen, London

<sup>15</sup> Das 2013

<sup>16</sup> World Bank. 2018. *World Development Report: Learning to Realize Education's Promise*; Wild et al 2012; Pritchett 2012

<sup>17</sup> Rosser, A and Mohamad Fahmi. 2017. The political economy of teacher management reform in Indonesia. *Interantional Journal of Education Development*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2017.12.005>

<sup>18</sup> From PEA and desk-based research

<sup>19</sup> Somerset 2011, Kremer 2003

<sup>20</sup> Fullan and Quinn (2016)

<sup>21</sup> Primary data from stakeholder interviews (2018/2019).

<sup>22</sup> Ramachandran et al. 2018

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Aslam et al. (2016a), p. 81.

<sup>25</sup> Aslam et al. 2016a

<sup>26</sup> Kingdon & Bedi (2016)

<sup>27</sup> Singal et al. (2017)

<sup>28</sup> Corrales 2017 p. VII

<sup>29</sup> Languille and Dolan 2012 & Mulkeen 2012.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid

<sup>31</sup> Mulkeen 2012.

<sup>32</sup> Kingdon et al. (2014)

<sup>33</sup> Bruns and Luque (2014).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> In China, 80 percent of 15 million teachers are women

(<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/07/world/asia/wanted-in-china-more-male-teachers-to-makeboys-men.html>, accessed 6 February 2016). For high income OECD, the proportion of women teachers was 82 percent in primary schools (from 71 percent in Denmark to 96 percent in Italy) and 63 percent in secondary

---

education (from 51 percent in Netherlands to 73 percent in Canada) (OECD  
(<https://data.oecd.org/eduresource/women-teachers.htm#indicator-chart>)

<sup>38</sup> Kleintjes, Sharon & Lund, Crick & Swartz, Leslie & Flisher, Alan & Mhapp Research Programme Consortium, The. (2010). Mental health care user participation in mental health development and implementation in South Africa. *International review of psychiatry* (Abingdon, England). 22. 568-77. 10.3109/09540261.2010.536153.

<sup>39</sup> [https://ssir.org/articles/entry/leapfrogging\\_toward\\_success\\_in\\_education](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/leapfrogging_toward_success_in_education)

<sup>40</sup> Network of NGO, INGO, faith-based organisations, community based organisations and civil society organisations in Zimbabwe with an interest in working within the education sector.

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.ecozi.co.zw/about-us.html>

<sup>42</sup> Wolfenden et al. (2018)

<sup>43</sup> Bruns and Schneider, 2016

<sup>44</sup> Bruns and Schneider, 2016

<sup>45</sup> Jim Campbell's presentation at the HLSG meeting, September 2018 & Health in All Policies (HiAP) Framework for Country Action January 2014.

<sup>46</sup> Corrales 2017.

<sup>47</sup> Naylor, Ruth, Charlotte Jones and Pearl Boateng (Education Development Trust). 2019. "Strengthening the Education Workforce." *Background Paper for Transforming the Education Workforce: Learning Teams for a Learning Generation*. New York: Education Commission.

<sup>48</sup> Wolfenden et al, 2018

<sup>49</sup> Brun and Luque (2014), p. 315.

<sup>50</sup> Banerji 2015

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Kingdon et al, 2014

<sup>54</sup> Grindle 1980

<sup>55</sup> Evans et al. 1995

<sup>56</sup> Habib (2015)

<sup>57</sup> Reimers et al. (2007)

<sup>58</sup> Bruns and Schneider 2016

<sup>59</sup> Todd, Robin and Ian Attfield. 2017. "Big Results Now! in Tanzanian education: Has the Delivery Approach delivered?"

<sup>60</sup> Bruns and Schneider 2016

<sup>61</sup> Rao et al. 2014

<sup>62</sup> DFID RED Note: Early Childhood Development (2018)

<sup>63</sup> Ramachandran, 2018

<sup>64</sup> Kingdon and Bedi (2015)

<sup>65</sup> Ibid

<sup>66</sup> Gold, Jen. 2017. Tracking Delivery. Institute for Government.

<sup>67</sup> Pedley 2009

<sup>68</sup> Little 2010

<sup>69</sup> Kingdon et al. 2014.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Kingdon et al., 2014; Patrinos and Kagia, 2007

<sup>72</sup> Bari et al. 2015

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, p. 5.

---

<sup>75</sup> The Education Commission has begun a research programme on delivery approaches with the Blavatnik School of Government at Oxford University with funding from DFID.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Wolfenden et al., 2018

<sup>78</sup> Eddy-Spicer, D., Ehren, M., Bangpan, M., Khatwa, M. & Perrone, F. (2016). *Under what conditions do inspection, monitoring and assessment improve system efficiency, service delivery and learning outcomes for the poorest and most marginalised? A realistic synthesis of school accountability in low- and middle-income countries*. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, UCL Institute of Education, University College London

<sup>79</sup> Rent seeking is an attempt to obtain economic rent by manipulating the social or political environment in which economic activities occur rather than by creating new wealth.

<sup>80</sup> A form of corruption where public resources are biased for the benefit of a few individuals of superior social status in detriment to the welfare of the larger population.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> E.g. in Punjab, Pakistan (Bari et al. 2015).

<sup>83</sup> Drazen, 2000.

<sup>84</sup> Aslam and Rawal, 2016

<sup>85</sup> Mbiti (2016)

<sup>86</sup> Asim et al. 2017

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, p. 6

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, p. 25.

<sup>89</sup> Banerjee et al. (2010)

<sup>90</sup> Piper et al. 2018a

<sup>91</sup> Piper et al. (2018b)

<sup>92</sup> Fullan 2016.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Fullan 2016.

<sup>95</sup> Bold et al. 2013

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Piper et al. 2018a

<sup>98</sup> Ramachandran et al. (2018)

<sup>99</sup> Corrales 2017

<sup>100</sup> Schneider (2018) in Equador and Kingdon and Bedi (2016), India.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Aslam et al. (2016b)

<sup>103</sup> Bruns & Schneider (2016)

<sup>104</sup> Bascia, Nina and Pamela Osmond. 2013. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. Report for Education International.

<sup>105</sup> Govender. 2015. "Teacher unions' participation in policy making: a South African case study. Education and Skills Development, Hman Sciences Research Council. Vol. 45, No. 2, 184–205, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2013.841467>

<sup>106</sup> Piper et al. 2018a

<sup>107</sup> DFID (2009) How To Note on Political Economy Analysis.

<sup>108</sup> Not all aspects will be covered in all instances.

<sup>109</sup> World Development Report (2018), p. 7.

<sup>110</sup> Banerjee et al. (2016)

<sup>111</sup> [www.globalpartnership.org](http://www.globalpartnership.org)

<sup>112</sup> [www.stireducation.org](http://www.stireducation.org)

<sup>113</sup> 2015 and Beyond: Delhi Education Revolution (2018)

<sup>114</sup> STIR Education (2018) Internal Document Uganda overview and workplan

<sup>115</sup> Jeevan 2018.

<sup>116</sup> Stakeholder interviews (primary data collected 2018/2019).

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> <http://www.t-tel.org/files/docs/Learning%20Hub/Research%20and%20evidence%20-%20teacher%20education%20in%20Ghana/Final%20Endline%20Report,%20August%202018.pdf>

<sup>120</sup> Primary data from stakeholder interviews (2018/2019).

<sup>121</sup> [http://www.t-](http://www.t-tel.org/files/docs/Learning%20Hub/Teacher%20education%20policies%20and%20protocols/Presentation_Teacher%20Unions%20Presentation_March2018.pdf)

[tel.org/files/docs/Learning%20Hub/Teacher%20education%20policies%20and%20protocols/Presentation\\_Teacher%20Unions%20Presentation\\_March2018.pdf](http://www.t-tel.org/files/docs/Learning%20Hub/Teacher%20education%20policies%20and%20protocols/Presentation_Teacher%20Unions%20Presentation_March2018.pdf)

<sup>122</sup> [http://www.t-tel.org/files/docs/Learning%20Hub/Research%20and%20evidence%20-](http://www.t-tel.org/files/docs/Learning%20Hub/Research%20and%20evidence%20-%20teacher%20education%20in%20Ghana/Understanding%20Stakeholder%20Perceptions%20on%20the%20curriculum%20reform%20and%20consultation%20process.pdf)

[%20teacher%20education%20in%20Ghana/Understanding%20Stakeholder%20Perceptions%20on%20the%20curriculum%20reform%20and%20consultation%20process.pdf](http://www.t-tel.org/files/docs/Learning%20Hub/Research%20and%20evidence%20-%20teacher%20education%20in%20Ghana/Understanding%20Stakeholder%20Perceptions%20on%20the%20curriculum%20reform%20and%20consultation%20process.pdf)

<sup>123</sup> Stakeholder interviews.

<sup>124</sup> <http://www.t-tel.org/files/docs/Learning%20Hub/Research%20and%20evidence%20-%20teacher%20education%20in%20Ghana/Longitudinal%20study%20report.pdf>

**the**  
**Education**  
**Commission**

The International  
Commission  
on Financing Global  
Education Opportunity

[educationcommission.org](http://educationcommission.org)