Global Education Forum (GEF)
Action Memo
on the Education Workforce

October 25, 2021

The Global Education Forum was established in 2019 with the aims of addressing challenges in the education financing architecture; developing greater collaboration among and coordination of education donors; and advocating for greater investment in education and acceleration of progress towards SDG4.

The Global Education Forum meeting in September 2020 reviewed the priorities identified in the COVID-19 recovery packages of UNESCO's Global Education Meeting and the Save Our Future White Paper, while the Forum meeting in April 2021 focused on the foundational learning, digital learning and school health and nutrition Action Areas. The Forum meeting in Fall 2021 will focus on the education workforce Action Area.

To promote progress on this Action Area, a working group has been established and is being facilitated by the GEF Secretariat (the Education Commission) and co-led by Forum members - the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the European Commission. The group comprises other Forum members from bilateral and multilateral partners, as well as representatives from organizations with education workforce expertise, such as civil society organizations and foundations.

The aim of the working group is to build consensus among Forum members and to develop concrete proposals for how to collaborate and coordinate to strengthen and transform the education workforce for improved education outcomes and more resilient education systems. The working group has developed this Action Memo to provide a rationale for focusing on the education workforce; outline the key challenges faced by the education workforce and summarize the most promising, evidence-based approaches to addressing these challenges; and put forward concrete proposals for multi-agency action.

The working group recognizes the importance of the education workforce[*] at all levels of education; however, this memo focuses on the education workforce at primary and secondary education levels. The challenges and evidence presented in this memo are also likely to be applicable where pre-primary is integrated with the governance for primary and secondary education, such as in education or public service commissions. The early childhood development and tertiary education workforces have their own set of distinct challenges and issues, and while these are not addressed in this memo, it is important to

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[*] The term education workforce describes *teachers and all people who work directly to support the provision of education to students in education systems.* This includes people working across all functions relevant for providing education: leadership and management, teaching and learning, student welfare, operations, and administration. The education workforce includes both compensated and volunteer roles and even communities and families when directly involved in formal education processes with schools. See Education Commission (2019) *Transforming the Education Workforce: Learning Teams for a Learning Generation* and Annex 1 for further details.

note that primary and secondary education outcomes are highly linked to the quality and effectiveness of both early childhood and tertiary workforces. The working group also recognizes the need for prioritization, and given the impact of foundational learning on other education goals, the education workforce for foundational learning[†] is given a high priority.

Introduction

With less than 10 years remaining, the world is at serious risk of not achieving SDG4, especially given the impact of COVID-19 on education. Before COVID-19, 258 million children were already out of school,[‡] and 53% of children in low- and middle-income countries couldn't read and understand a simple story by the end of primary (the indicator for 'learning poverty'), let alone obtain the wider breadth of skills required to thrive in today's societies. Now, with over a year of school closures due to the pandemic, learning poverty is estimated to rise to 63% in developing countries (World Bank, 2021), and over 100 million additional children will fall below the minimum proficiency level in reading (UNESCO, 2021a).

Crisis-related school closures in over 190 countries affected 63 million primary and secondary teachers globally (UNESCO, 2020), and while most countries required at least three-quarters of their teachers to teach remotely/ online, this varied considerably by income level: 69% of high-income but only 25% of low-income countries called on all teachers to engage in remote/ online teaching (UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank and OECD, 2021). Even before COVID-19, evidence clearly showed the significance of teacher impact on quality education - but during the pandemic the centrality of their role in ensuring student learning and wellbeing was undeniable, as they rapidly mobilized and innovated to deliver distance learning and ensure health and safety measures. Yet teachers encountered serious challenges, such as risking their health to support students and families without proper support, and in some instances, facing reduced salaries or discontinued payments altogether. Investing in sufficient quantity of teachers, their wellbeing, health and safety, and professional development, and ensuring they are supported and their rights protected must be a top priority in the crisis recovery and building more resilient education systems for the future.

Although a significant portion of students in low-income contexts have been unable to access to their teachers during school closures, many teachers, in partnership with school leaders and other education professionals, have been working collaboratively with caregivers and families, communities, and health workers to ensure that learning continues and that no child is left behind. The COVID-19 crisis has shown definitively that teachers cannot work alone. Leveraging the wider education workforce, along with families and communities, is supported by evidence on the effectiveness of leaders and other roles in supporting teachers and promoting inclusive, quality education (Education Commission, 2019).

Due to the pandemic, systems have been disrupted and mindsets about education delivery and education workforce design are shifting. Now is the time to consider how greater investment, collaboration and

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[†] The GEF Action Memo on Foundational Learning recommends prioritizing foundational literacy and numeracy for grades 1-3 and extending to upper primary grades in contexts where students have not mastered basic reading and math.

[‡] Data from UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018

coordination among the education community can strengthen and support teachers and harness the broader education workforce for the acceleration of progress towards SDG4.

The State of the Education Workforce

Teacher quality is the most important determinant of learning at the school level and teachers are a government's greatest education investment, but in many countries, teachers are still in short supply. In Sub-Saharan Africa, an additional 15 million teachers alone need to be recruited and trained to remain on track to meet SDG4 by 2030 (UNESCO, 2021(b)). In some of the poorest countries, the required increase in teachers to meet SDG4 targets is equal to at least half of the projected number of tertiary education graduates. This is partially due to low secondary completion rates; for example, less than 45% in Sub-Saharan Africa.[§] Teacher shortages occur frequently in vulnerable communities and certain areas (such as rural and remote regions) as well as in particular subject areas (such as math and science), exacerbating inequality. On top of this, multiple interacting and system factors create conditions where teachers are absent or do not spend enough time on instruction. UNESCO & UIS (2021) suggest that countries will need to monitor trends in teacher attrition carefully as teachers leaving the profession might increase due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Teacher wellbeing and working conditions play a crucial role in shortages - high workloads, stress, safety concerns and lack of professional support have been linked to teachers leaving or wanting to leave the profession (UNESCO, 2021b; OECD, 2020). Research also suggests that teacher wellbeing materially affects the quality of learning (Jones et al., 2013; McCallum et al., 2017). In many countries, the profession is still dealing with COVID-19 related health and safety issues and the slow implementation of teacher vaccination. Teachers also report that workload has become particularly heightened during the pandemic, as they have taken on multiple new roles to keep students safe and learning as well as navigate the challenge of hybrid teaching. Of over 1500 teachers surveyed in Costa Rica in February 2021, 84% said they worked more than 8 hours a day and 24% more than 12 hours a day, and workload continued at increased levels when lockdown ended, possibly a result of budget cuts, staff layoffs, or the need to try to catch up on missed learning time and missed assessments (Thompson, 2021). Still, the mental health, including socio-emotional wellbeing and physical health of teachers, is often not a top priority even given these recent challenges. Moreover, there is limited evidence on teacher wellbeing in crisis situations, however, the research that is available shows that teacher wellbeing is context-specific and multi-faceted (Collie et al., 2012; Schleicher, 2018), thus requiring targeted responses.

In some low-income countries, even where there are enough teachers, many are poorly trained, unqualified and have limited pedagogical and subject knowledge. In Sub-Saharan Africa, only 65% of primary teachers and 50% of secondary teachers have the minimum qualifications to teach (UNESCO, 2020). A study of seven countries in Sub-Saharan Africa found that less than 10% of primary school language teachers could demonstrate the minimum level of subject knowledge required to teach grade four students (Bold et al., 2017). Models of initial teacher education and professional development are often outdated and ineffective and continued support is limited (Mulkeen, 2017). Although the UNESCO

[§] Data from UNESCO Institute for Statistics

Institute for Statistics ISCED-T[**] will provide internationally comparable indicators on teacher training and qualifications, more data is needed on teachers and the education workforce at both country and global levels in order to target support for teacher education and development.

Teachers often work in relative isolation and are expected to fulfill increasingly diverse roles and address a wide range of student outcomes and learning needs. On top of an expanding list of responsibilities, the education workforce is rarely designed and supported to deliver inclusive education. In regard to inclusion, less than 3% of countries have adopted an "inclusive education law" that promotes teacher training, while 10% have such a law, but which does not explicitly mention teacher training on inclusive education (UNESCO, 2020). Inequities within the workforce itself also exist and are rarely recognized. For example, in terms of gender, in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2018, less than 50% of primary teachers and only 30% of secondary teachers were female.[††] However, it's important to note that patterns differ across and within countries - in OECD countries the teaching workforce is highly feminized but less so among school leaders, indicating limited career progression opportunities for female teachers (OECD, 2020).

The pandemic directly affected millions of primary and secondary teachers, with those in the poorest countries and women more severely impacted. While some countries halted education provision altogether, many teachers had to distance teach during school closures, with no time to prepare and often with limited guidance and resources. They were expected to adapt curriculum and lesson plans and shift between high, low and no-tech solutions to teaching (UNESCO, 2021a). Even in OECD countries, only 60% of teachers had recent professional development on using ICT for teaching and learning before the pandemic (OECD, 2020). Now more than ever, teachers need initial education and continuous support and professional development on flexible pedagogies and blended teaching (remote, online and offline) and using different technologies, especially while access to technology is still uneven and inequitable. Professional development for teachers must also include strategies to address the increasing mental health issues, stress and inequities among students as a result of the pandemic. As teachers' professional knowledge and experience grows, they need to be trusted to use their professional autonomy to troubleshoot and find sustainable solutions to existing challenges and to lead in educational and pedagogical decision-making.

Support for teachers in conflict and displacement settings is especially critical, as they may be the only resource facilitating student transitions to new schooling and language of instruction, supporting their academic and socio-emotional learning, as well as addressing special needs related to stress and wellbeing (Mendenhall, Gomez and Varni, 2018). Yet, in crisis and displacement contexts, the majority of the teaching workforce do not have opportunities for professional development and work in challenging situations with limited resources, large class sizes and low compensation. Their prior teaching qualifications are often not recognized in countries of asylum, and in many instances, teachers in

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[**] The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) provides a comprehensive framework for organizing education programmes and qualification by applying uniform and internationally agreed definitions to facilitate comparisons of education systems across countries. ISCED is a widely-used global reference classification for education systems that is maintained and periodically revised by the UIS in consultation with Member States and other international and regional organization.

[††] Data from UNESCO Institute for Statistics

displacement settings are not included in national level teacher management and development systems (Richardson, MacEwan and Naylor, 2018).

Critical roles that support teachers - such as school leaders and district education officers[‡‡] or those with supervision roles - also need guidance and professional development. Even in OECD countries, only slightly more than half of school leaders (54%) report having completed a program or course in school administration or principal training at least once before taking up such a role (OECD, 2019). Almost all government schools have a school principal or head teacher, and systems have wider leadership roles such as school supervisors and district officials that support teaching and learning. These professionals are often highly experienced staff with many years of teaching experience, but in practice, leaders like school principals struggle to support teaching and learning and tend to focus on traditional management duties (UNESCO, 2017; Vaillant, 2015). In OECD countries, principals report spending only 16% of their working time on curriculum and teaching-related tasks and meetings (OECD, 2019). Reasons include factors such as poor preparation for new responsibilities, local cultural norms around leadership that see school leaders as a "figurehead" rather than an instructional leader for teaching, and a heavy administrative workload (UNESCO, 2016).

Given this constraint and teachers' own need and capacity for leadership and creativity, especially during crises such as the COVID pandemic, the issue of teacher professional autonomy has become more critical than ever. Yet teachers in many contexts are bound by strict hierarchical systems, and their professional knowledge and experience are not capitalized in order to troubleshoot and find sustainable solutions to existing challenges. Teachers need trust from school leaders and the community to use sound pedagogical judgment that draws on their professional knowledge and experience to lead in educational and pedagogical decision-making.

While many of these challenges faced by teachers and the workforce are well-known, there is still limited country level and internationally comparable data on many critical issues relating to teachers and the wider education workforce, such as wellbeing, training and qualifications. In low- and middle-income countries, there is rarely data captured on education professionals that support teachers, such as school leaders or district officials, and there is very limited data available on teachers and the workforce in displaced and conflict-affected contexts. To better understand the challenges facing the workforce and support funding and policy decisions, data on key workforce issues needs to be collected and made accessible at country level through existing EMIS and related systems as well as at the global level.

Building Back Better: Transforming the education workforce

In the summer of 2020, the Save Our Future White Paper reviewed the evidence on the most promising approaches to strengthening and transforming the education workforce and put forward a set of immediate and long-term recommendations for countries and the global community to consider. This included the actions in the Teacher Task Force Call for Action on Teachers. (See Annex 2 for a complete list of the recommended actions).

[‡‡] District is used to denote the school-facing workforce at the middle-tier level, although we recognize that some countries have other types of jurisdictions, such as. provinces.

This section builds on the Save Our Future White Paper and draws on more recent evidence to summarize some of the strongest approaches for addressing the challenges presented in the previous section.

Increase qualified teachers and focus on more equitable allocation: Successful education systems demonstrate that higher-skilled individuals can be attracted to the workforce if roles are continuously professionalized throughout the workforce life cycle. This includes recruiting based on capability, ensuring high-quality, research-informed initial teacher education, and to encouraging qualified, experienced teachers to remain in the profession through competitive salaries, compelling career paths, and professional development (Tan, 2019) as well as leadership that promotes trust and professional autonomy. Although each education system will be at a different stage of development, quick-fix solutions to teacher shortages, such as hiring contract teachers, should be avoided and steps towards longer-term reforms aligned with professionalization and systems strengthening should be prioritized. However, many education systems include temporary or contract teachers and should aim to integrate them where possible. Education systems should ensure teacher occupational wellbeing and decent working conditions, as increased stress and high workload, especially in light of the pandemic, contribute to high attrition rates (Palm, 2020; Fraser, 2020). Labor rights and secure employment conditions should also be safeguarded.

To attract and retain teachers in hard to staff areas, some countries have recruited teachers directly from underserved areas or provided alternative pathways to qualification for unqualified teachers, training them in schools supported by distance learning (Mulkeen et al., 2017; Mukeredzi et al., 2015; UNESCO, 2014). For example, the Sierra Leone GATE program supports young women who do not have the required qualifications or funding needed to enter teacher education programs to become teachers (Crisp et al., 2017; Naylor et al., 2019). Women participate in a bridging program, where they become learning assistants in a local primary school and participate in a distance learning program to become qualified primary school teachers.

Financial and non-financial incentives should be considered to attract and retain teachers in underserved areas, especially those typically in short supply like female or science teachers. These can include short-term, practical strategies such as provision of transportation and housing or career guarantees for spouses. Some countries provide longer-term incentives, like career-based ones for those working in hard to staff areas through accelerated or advanced training opportunities, such as a fast track to a masters or management program or scholarships for additional training (ILO & Centre for International Teacher Education, 2016).

Improve collection and availability of teacher and workforce data: Most countries have crude system-level administrative data on teachers and the workforce, which may explain why more detailed datasets, such as that developed by the OECD TALIS, only cover about a quarter of countries worldwide. Ensuring collection of data on key indicators – such as on wellbeing and training and qualifications – and including for roles that support teachers – such as school leaders and district officials - is critical to using data-driven approaches to address issues of access and quality teaching and learning. Integration of this data into country level EMIS (Education Management Information System) or TMIS (Teacher Management Information Systems) could support better visibility of workforce bottlenecks and be used to inform funding and policy decisions.

Use data-driven approaches to improve the availability of qualified teachers in the most marginalized areas including sharing existing expertise: Using teacher and workforce related data in smarter ways can drive more equitable allocation and improve the quality and availability of teachers in the most marginalized communities. Strategic use of geographic information systems data and technology can be used to identify how specialist expertise can be shared across schools (World Bank, 2016; Mackintosh et al., 2020). In Sierra Leone, the use of geographic information systems data to map distances between schools showed that up to a third of schools lacking a subject specialist could be jointly served by specialists at nearby schools with space in their timetable (Mackintosh et al., 2020).

Provide proven, ongoing and collaborative professional development with a focus on learning for teachers and other key roles: More attention and investment must be made to quality pre-service education, ensuring it adequately prepares teachers for the context in which they will teach and that it articulates with the curriculum and in-service professional development. In-service professional development should be free and widely available to all teachers as well as evaluated for effectiveness. Evidence suggests that teacher professional development should involve practice-based cycles that are ongoing, practical, specific, and focused on improving learning outcomes and should align with initial teacher education curricula and instruction to ensure systematic alignment and impact (Popova et al., 2016). It is most effective when it is school-based, focused on a specific subject or pedagogical approach, tailored to teacher needs and topics relevant to the local context, aligned with curricula reform, and provides supporting materials, follow-up visits, and collaboration opportunities to complement training (Popova et al., 2016; Opfer, 2016). In low-capacity situations where classroom teachers lack core competencies and subject knowledge, it can be helpful to provide support through evidence-based structured pedagogy or standardized lesson plan preparation (Snilstveit et al., 2015). Training on formative and ongoing assessment could also be very impactful in low-capacity settings.

Additionally, the COVID-19 reality is forcing systems to deal with repeated closures using blended delivery models, meaning professional development for ICT skills and remote and blended teaching using no-, low-, and high-tech delivery models is increasingly important for systems to provide. Collaboration with teacher education institutions will be key to providing relevant ICT skills in initial education and professional development during the crisis and recovery, harnessing blended approaches as needed. The GEF Action Memo on Digital Learning suggests that upskilling teachers and facilitators should be included as part of immediate catalytic investments at country level in order to reach global digital learning for all by 2030. Technology-based modalities – such as digital platforms for teacher communities of practice - should also be considered for empowering teacher professional development.

Coaching is emerging as a promising practice for professional development, including in low- and middle-income countries and could be critical to support teachers in this crisis. It should be data-driven and structured to include reflections on practice, strategies for improvement, clarity around the why as well as the what is being done, new practice trials, and progress reviews (Coetzee, 2019; Kraft et al., 2016; Naylor et al., 2019).

Leverage the wider education workforce in team-based approaches to support teaching and learning: Emerging evidence suggests that supporting teachers and learners with a team of education professionals and other roles can be an effective way to improve learning and promote a broad range of education

outcomes.[§§] Team-based approaches are integral to other sectors, such as health[*] and early child development, where they have demonstrated improvements in outcomes, service delivery and cost-effectiveness (D'Amour et al., 2009). While few education systems employ formal team structures, many already include elements of team approaches, such as teachers working together in professional learning communities or school principals working with district officials and teachers to engage caregivers in their child's learning.

Team-based approaches harness the diverse expertise and experience of different roles existing within systems to support teaching and learning. For example, including trainee teachers as part of learning teams at schools can provide better initial preparation for them, as studies show it is crucial for future teachers to gain practical experience in classrooms during their pre-service education (Bramwell et al., 2014), and provide teachers with additional support. Teaming the most experienced and strongest teachers and those with specialist skills with less experienced teachers and learning support staff can help share expertise within schools and support peer learning (Arizona State University, 2020; Basile, 2020; OECD, 2019). In addition, teachers collaborating together through professional learning communities has been shown to improve teaching and learning outcomes and motivation (Patterson, 2014; Vangrieken et al., 2015; Ratts et al., 2015; Darling-Hammond, Hyler and Gardner, 2017; Dogan, Pringle and Mesa, 2015; Vescio et al., 2008; also see Mary Burns blog series for GPE here). Singapore, for example, provides an example of a state-led initiative that promotes formal teacher collaboration through professional and network learning communities (Hairon, 2021).

Roles beyond the school - community workers, trained volunteers, and parents - can also provide critical support, especially for approaches proven to improve foundational learning, such as mother tongue instruction, Teaching at the Right level (TaRL) and addressing barriers to inclusion (Deforges and Abouchaar, 2003; TaRL, 2020). The GEF Action Memo on Digital Learning also highlights the critical role that families and caregivers play in remote and digital learning.

Reorient school and district leaders and middle tier roles toward instructional leadership: School leadership and management roles have been found to be strongly associated with better educational outcomes, and district roles (or roles at the level of organization above the school but below central level) have been powerful in supporting teachers and leaders to improve their practice and sustain change (Leithwood, 2013; Pont et al., 2008). Evidence suggests that school leadership that provides instructional guidance and fosters continuous improvement is the key to successful, large-scale, and sustainable education reform (UNESCO, 2016). Instructional leadership happens most powerfully when school leaders support teacher learning and motivation and create a culture of collaboration and shared responsibility (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). Additionally, a recent survey of teachers and school leaders in low- and

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[§§] See the *Transforming the Education Workforce* report for more details on team-based approaches in education: https://educationcommission.org/transformingtheeducationworkforce/

[*] An excerpt from WHO's "HEARTS Technical package for cardiovascular disease management in primary health care: team-based care" (2018) explains team-based approaches in health in this way: "Many low-resource settings have a shortage of physicians and health workers. In order to provide patient-centred continuous care more effectively, primary care systems can include team-based care strategics in their clinic workflows and protocols. Team-based care uses multidisciplinary teams (which may involve new staff, or the shifting of tasks among existing staff) … Teams reduce the burden on physicians by utilizing the skills of trained health workers."

middle-income countries showed that the beliefs of school leaders can greatly influence the attitudes of teachers and foster a more inclusive and equitable learning environment (Priya and Sampat, 2021).

To help school leaders do this, school leaders need effective professional development to prepare and support them in their role. Furthermore, in contexts with the requisite infrastructure and connectivity, time for instructional leadership could be freed up by using technology to assist in administrative and management functions, such as data collection and analysis or timetabling. Administrative tasks (finance and management of school resources) could be shifted to lower-cost support staff who could be shared across schools if necessary. A recent rigorous review suggests that district supervision can be effective when it includes: support for school self-evaluation, building school capacity, ensuring schools have access to improvement resources, and providing feedback in a respectful and constructive manner (Eddy-Spicer et al, 2016).

Studies show that instructional leadership at the middle tier - roles such as supervisors, mentor teachers, and pedagogical coaches - can also play an important role in motivating and supporting teachers to improve their practice. Where policymakers have invested in strengthening these and similar roles, they have been able to catalyze at-scale change by promoting teacher collaboration and a coaching culture (Childress et al., 2020).

Further longer-term recommendations focused on strengthening of the workforce include transforming initial teacher education; providing evidence-based collaborative professional development for all members of the workforce; promoting professional autonomy; establishing the policies, funding, and structures to uphold the rights of the workforce and ensure fair and effective social and policy dialogue; and collecting key data on the workforce to aid decision-making and evaluating what does and does not work (Save Our Future, 2020).

All actions taken must preserve the right of the education workforce to participate in decision-making through social and policy dialogue (ILO & UNESCO, 1966). Social and policy dialogue requires a deliberate regulatory environment, funding and institutional mechanisms to do so (ILO, 2012), such as social dialogue frameworks, governing bodies and participation of the workforce in local education groups (UNESCO, 2018). At the school level, distributed leadership approaches can support participation of the education workforce in decision-making (OECD, 2020).

Existing efforts to address workforce challenges

Many GEF member organization are working to address these long-standing challenges facing the education workforce through promising, evidence-based approaches. See Annex 3 for a list of relevant member initiatives. The actions put forward in the following section of this memo consider ways to build on and promote collaboration across these existing initiatives focused on the workforce.

Proposals for consideration by the Global Education Forum

To address these workforce challenges, a set of proposed actions at both the global and country levels, each with specific recommendations, are put forward for the GEF's consideration. These include actions around multi-agency financing, coordination and collaboration, and advocacy, as these are the GEF's central objectives. Please note that the previous GEF meeting considered two actions relating to teachers and other thematic areas: 1) prioritization of COVID-19 vaccinations for teachers and teacher training and 2) support for foundational learning interventions.

Proposed global level actions

Action 1: Develop a set of principles to guide investment in the education workforce
- By March 2022, members, through the GEF education workforce working group, develop a white paper outlining a set of principles to serve as common guidance on how to support and strengthen teachers and the education workforce and uphold their rights. The principles would help set a shared vision and promote alignment across donor workforce programs. They would help donors evaluate workforce reform opportunities and increase the effectiveness of their investment in the workforce. The principles would be used to guide the other education workforce actions set out in this memo, including the investment tracker proposed in Action 3, the diagnostic in Action 5, and the country work in Action 6.
- The principles would draw on GEF member frameworks and existing principles and be aligned with globally agreed upon normative instruments and guidelines on teachers, such as the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers. They should be developed in collaboration with the education workforce.

Deliverable: A white paper with agreed principles published and endorsed by GEF members and shared with country counterparts.

Action 2: Advocate for prioritization of investment in teachers and the broader education workforce

Members to **advocate** for greater and more effective investment in the education workforce to be prioritized on global and national education agendas.

- Members to work together to promote evidence on the education workforce, making the case for increased investment in teachers *as well as* other members of the education workforce to Ministries of Finance, Labour and Education in partner countries and others in the global community. This could be undertaken through policy dialogues, high-level discussions as well as by complementing or expanding existing advocacy related to teachers and their professionalization, such as the Teacher Task Force's 'Invest in Teachers' Campaign, the annual World Teachers Day (UNESCO, ILO, UNICEF and Education International), and the Teacher Task Force's Biennial Policy Dialogue Forum. Members should consider advocating for a spotlight on teachers and the education workforce to be included at the Summit on Transforming Education in 2022 proposed in the UN Secretary General's recent report "Our Common Agenda."

- Members to partner with international organizations from other sectors, such as WHO and ILO, to advocate for continued prioritization of social sector workforces more generally in global development agendas. This work should develop a shared narrative that demonstrates the benefits of investing across the social sector workforces (labor, education and health), recognizing them as key to economic growth and sustainable development. Members would need to engage key actors beyond education, such as Ministries of Finance and Ministries of Labour. An example activity could be a campaign for 'Year of the Education Workforce,' following WHO's 2021 'Year of the Health Worker' could be considered.
- As part of this, the WHO has proposed to collaborate on developing a strong 'investment case' which outlines the myriad benefits of investing in the education workforce specifically, including the wider economic benefits (such as increased employment that supports local communities) and social benefits (such as improved health outcomes). The investment case should be used in tandem with the investment tracker (Action 3) and could be hosted alongside it.
- Advocacy for specific workforce issues should be undertaken for the high priority and neglected areas highlighted in Action 4, such as the education workforce for foundational learning and in displacement and conflict affected settings, workforce wellbeing, and the broader education workforce that supports teaching and learning including leadership, teacher support structures and the use of team-based approaches.[***] Members could also promote improved social and policy dialogue in the education sector. This would build on GPE and EI's previous collaboration to increase the capacity of unions to engage in education policy and improve the relationship between unions and government, as well as the OECD and EI's International Summits on the Teaching Profession, which bring together education ministers and union leaders from high-performing systems to jointly discuss and resolve teacher policy issues.
- Advocacy to ensure that the education workforce is properly considered in country level digital learning action plans and other actions included in the Action Memo on Digital Learning should be considered.

Deliverables: These could include a range of communications products, events and campaigns, policy dialogues and other advocacy-related deliverables as determined by the GEF members. There should also be a concrete investment case for investing in the education workforce outlining economic and wider social benefits, such as health and safety.

Action 3: Track global investment in the education workforce

- Members to develop a 'global education workforce investment tracker' aligned to the principles for supporting teachers and the education workforce (see Action 1) to capture their current and

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[***] The African Development Bank would support advocacy around TVET and STEM/Higher education issues. AfDB would be supportive of any collective initiative led by local education donor groups in countries where it has an active portfolio (or business development) on education/skills development.

projected investments in teachers and the education workforce. This could include overall expenditure as well as the type of investments made in the workforce to better understand the quality of investments. An annual report detailing the state of investment in the workforce could be developed based on the tracker.

- The tracker would be used to support advocacy for greater investment proposed in Action 2 and to track investment in the high priority and neglected issues proposed in Action 4. It could also be used to encourage countries to track their own investment in the education workforce beyond teacher renumeration.
- A discussion will be needed to decide how to capture non-earmarked funding, country budget support, as well as whether and how to track country investments. This work would need to align, where possible, to existing efforts to track investment around other education themes, such as learning   assessments.

Deliverables: A digital dashboard illustrating annual investment in the education workforce, hosted and maintained by a GEF member or group of GEF members, acommpanied by an annual report detailing the state of investment in the workforce.

Action 4: Build evidence on high priority and under-researched issues to strengthen the education workforce

This would include **generating and sharing new evidence** through **spotlight reports and events** on the following issues that are either high priority or receive less attention in global education agendas, research and investment.[†††] Members could also consider including education workforce highlights in existing reports and publications.

Members would ensure that investments in these areas have an evaluation and learning strategy. They should promote the evidence widely, including with their country counterparts and government and NGO partners (including key actors beyond education, such as Ministries of Finance) and use them to stimulate awareness and catalyze discussion on prioritizing these issues at country level and to inform investment and policy decisions. The Teacher Task Force will explore how to leverage their Knowledge Hub, Policy Dialogue Forum and membership to foster sharing and discussion of evidence from this work. The UNESCO/ ILO CEART (Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel) could also support promotion of the evidence on these issues.

- **The education workforce for foundational learning:** This work would build on the evidence and support the actions included in the Action Memo on Foundational Learning and shine a spotlight on the skills, competences and support that teachers need to improve foundational learning as well as identify other education workforce roles that can play a role in foundational learning, such as community volunteers who speak student's mother tongue. Any research on the education workforce for foundational learning will need to align with evidence on the pedagogical approaches that have shown the most impact and explore how pre- and in-service teacher

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[†††] The African Development Bank would support building evidence and sharing knowledge on the high priority issues as they relate to TVET and STEM.

education can prepare teachers to implement these approaches. This is a key issue given its prioritization amongst donors and fundamental role in achieving other educational goals.

- **The education workforce in crisis, displacement, and conflict-affected settings**: There is limited data and research on teachers and other roles in crisis and displacement settings which constrains support for them, including meeting their health and wellbeing needs, recognizing their contribution, and importantly, including them in national level management and development systems. This work could build on the Norwegian Teacher Initiative's "Guidance note on developing crisis-sensitive teacher policy" and UNHCR's Annual Education Report and include research to better understand the specific challenges and support required for teachers and the education workforce in refugee, displacement, fragile and conflict-affected contexts. GEF members could input to and build on the work of a planned UNESCO IIEP, EDT and UNHCR study starting in 2022 on the typology of teachers for persons of concern (PoC).
- **Education workforce wellbeing:** This work would include building the evidence base on education workforce wellbeing globally and agreeing indicators for systems to measure it. This could explore and identify the enabling factors required for systems to support teacher and other education professionals' wellbeing and the inter-relationships with student wellbeing. It could build on existing work, such as the TALIS 2018 indicators of teachers' level of stress, indicators of teacher wellbeing from the upcoming PISA 2022 teacher questionnaire, and INEE landscape review of teacher wellbeing.
- **The broader education workforce that supports teaching and learning, including leadership, teacher support structures, and the use of team-based approaches**: This could include members piloting, generating and sharing evidence on innovative approaches that explore the structures and roles that support teachers and impact teaching and learning - such as school leaders, district education officials, school supervisors, communities and families, and inclusion roles. This would include capturing their impact on teaching and learning, interdependencies, cost effectiveness and how the approaches can be scaled and embedded in education systems. This work should aim to collaborate with UNESCO to inform the 2024 GEM Report which will focus on leadership. It should also be undertaken in cooperation with the Coalition on School Feeding to consider the broader workforce required to support that. To kickstart this work, a Global Coalition on Team-based Approaches could be established, see Annex 4 for further details.

Deliverables: These could include a range of research and knowledge products, such as issue briefs or spotlights in existing reports, specific parts of the TTF knowledge platform as well as events to share the evidence.

Action 5: Support data collection on the broader workforce and development of a global education workforce diagnostic to promote better design and planning of the workforce

- Building on existing global education data and planning initiatives - such as the UIS SDG4 indicators, UNICEF Time to Teach, OECD TALIS, and World Bank GEPD – and regional data collection mechanisms where possible, members would support countries to collect foundational data on teachers as well as the broader education workforce. This could also include developing a wider set of complementary indicators to fill existing data gaps on critical issues related to

teachers and the wider education workforce, such as data on teacher quality (such as initial teacher education and teacher experience); teachers and the workforce in displacement and conflict-affected settings; and the other areas included in Action 4.[‡‡‡]

- Support for expanded data collection would align with the work already underway to develop a global education workforce diagnostic. Working with the existing Global Steering Committee and building on GPE's mapping study of existing frameworks and tools for analysis of teacher and workforce issues, members would support the development, piloting and roll out of the global education workforce diagnostic which would aim to better analyze how teachers and other important roles - such as school leaders - interact and contribute to teaching and learning and other important sector goals.

- The diagnostic would support with issues that can be, at least partially, addressed by workforce design and planning, such as increasing access to qualified teachers in marginalized areas and more equitable allocation, and it would collect data on education roles beyond teachers, such as school leaders or middle tier roles, to facilitate more a more holistic approach to the education workforce in education design and delivery.

- See Annex 5 for more details.

Deliverables: 1) A technical document outlining a set of core indicators on teachers and the broader education workforce and data collection methodology as a minimum foundation for education workforce data. 2) A global education workforce diagnostic that can be tested with countries.

Action 6: Work with countries to test and scale innovative and evidence-based approaches to strengthening the education workforce

It will be important to ensure the country-level voices guide the specific recommendations accompanying these actions.

- Members would collaborate to support countries on key workforce challenges. Two countries to be considered by the GEF for workforce reform include Mozambique to strengthen evidence-based teacher development and Ghana to promote equitable teacher deployment and allocation. This work would include co-ordination of GEF members at a country level, ensuring collaboration to contribute to systemic rather than piecemeal impact.[§§§]

- GEF members, in partnership with UNHCR, could collaborate in a displacement setting or country with a protracted crisis to address specific issues such as the inclusion of refugee teachers in national teacher management and development systems. Advocacy and support could focus on

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[‡‡‡] The African Development Bank, through its upcoming SEPA 2021-2025, would support strengthening statistical and M&E capacities in TVET and higher education for more effective service delivery for youth employability, based on country-demand.

[§§§] The African Development Bank, through upcoming SEPA 2021-2025, would support teacher training and in-service professional development with a focus on TVET and higher education/STEM (through scholarship and research grants among others as already the case through some higher education projects).

teacher professional development, access to fair renumeration, addressing inequities in teacher supply and distribution, and recognition of qualifications. Other critical elements of support will include provision of coaching, mentorship support and meeting of mental health needs.

- GEF members should draw on lessons from the Norwegian Teachers Initiative, ensuring learning from this recent donor coordination at country level.

Deliverables: Country action plans on the education workforce with clear coordination processes between GEF members agreed.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Defining the Education Workforce and Team-Based Approaches

The Education Commission's *Transforming the Education Workforce* report (2019) defines the education workforce as: *Teachers and all people who work directly to support the provision of education to students in education systems. This includes people working across all functions relevant for providing education: leadership and management, teaching and learning, student welfare, operations and administration. The education workforce includes both compensated and volunteer roles and their engagement with communities, families, and professionals from other sectors when directly involved in formal education processes.*

Developing an effective teacher workforce by prioritizing the professionalization of teachers and ensuring their effective management and support is a critical first step to improve education outcomes. Teachers are at the heart of the learning process, but the report emphasizes that they cannot work alone. It takes a team of professionals working together to educate a child – teachers need leadership and support to be effective and to help learners with the greatest needs. Other education roles and relationships are also strongly associated with better education outcomes. Specialist and complementary education support roles have been effective in helping reach those left behind and enabling inclusion. District roles can support teachers and school leaders to improve their practice and sustain change, and in a number of successful systems, state-level (central government) roles have used clear change leadership, coalitions, and evidence-based adaptive policymaking to drive system change. A team-based approach could enable

these roles with different levels and areas of expertise to better leverage their skills. Many of these roles already exist in education systems, but they have received very little attention and there has been limited experimentation with ways professionals with different experiences, specializations and levels of qualifications could work together effectively in team-based approaches, especially in low-income contexts.

Annex 2: Save Our Future Actions to Strengthen the Education Workforce

Immediate Actions:
- Local education authorities and schools in collaboration with teachers, communities, and other sectors to take immediate steps to maximize support for student learning by creating student-centered learning teams[****] — for example, by supporting teachers with existing teaching and learning roles (such as teacher trainees); teaming the most experienced and strongest teachers with those with less experience; and recruiting and training community members and parents as "community education workers" to support differentiated instruction, continuity of learning, and the welfare and inclusion of all children.
- All levels of governments to work with teacher education institutions to provide rapid evidence-based professional development for the highest need teachers (based on evidence such as learner assessments and other data). This could include content knowledge, strategies for differentiated instruction, effective pedagogy (particularly for building foundational skills), no- and low-tech ways of teaching and learning remotely, and working in learning teams. School-centered and collaborative approaches including coaching should be used where possible and technology harnessed where proven and available.
- All levels of governments to provide school leaders with resources, evidence for decision-making, and clear and timely guidance to successfully navigate crisis responses and professional development that enables safe school reopening, undertaking immediate learner assessments, remote and blended learning, and facilitating collaborative professional development.
- All levels of governments to use data-driven approaches to improve the quality and availability of teachers in the most marginalized areas, for example through incentives to address workforce needs and gender, inclusion, and specific subject gaps; improve attendance; reallocation of qualified teachers at a local level; and sharing shortage expertise and specialist skills across schools in person and remotely, supported by technology where appropriate.
- National and local governments to create the policies and structures, including legislative measures, to ensure fair, inclusive, and effective social and policy dialogue with members of the workforce in both public and private sectors and proactively engage the workforce in formal decision-making, including in Local Education Groups or their equivalent. This dialogue should be continuous so it can respond in a timely way to changing contexts.

[****] Learning teams are groups of professionals led by teachers that collaborate inside the classroom, and within schools, districts, and systems to ensure learning for all. Learning teams will be different in every context and at every level in the system. They can include qualified teachers, education support personnel, leadership and management, and health and welfare specialists. Learning teams engage the community to draw on local knowledge and support. This approach represents a shift from teachers working in relative isolation undertaking many different roles to a design where learners are supported by a teacher-led collaborative team of professionals which collectively leverages a variety of expertise and experience to focus on improving the learning and inclusion of all students, as well as continually learning themselves. See the Save Our Future White Paper, Action Area 3 for a more detailed description of the learning team approach.

Mid- to Longer-Term Actions:

- All levels of government, with support from development partners, to commit to longer-term strengthening of the workforce — including transforming initial teacher education; exploring alternative routes into teaching to address teacher shortages; providing evidence-based collaborative professional development for all members of the workforce; establishing the policies, funding, and structures to uphold the rights of the workforce, ensuring social and policy dialogue with them and their representative organizations; collecting key data on the workforce to aid decision-making and evaluating what does and does not work.

Annex 3: Existing GEF Member Initiatives Focused on the Education Workforce

- The **Global Partnership for Education's** considers 'quality teaching' as a priority area in its work. It supports its partner countries in developing Partnership Compacts which facilitate the engagement of all country-level partners on issues of quality teaching as well as the participation of teachers and school leaders in sector dialogue. GPE grants support diagnostics, data on teachers and teaching quality, evidence-based interventions in this area and the capacity of teachers' organizations to participate in policy dialogue. In addition, GPE's Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) includes global grants focused on teacher professional development and regional work on teacher issues.
- **The Teacher Task Force**'s new Invest in Teachers Campaign, which is calling on countries and donors to urgently increase their funding of teachers and teaching and commit to substantially increasing the supply of qualified teachers by 2030 through international cooperation on teacher salaries and working conditions; training and professional development; health, safety and psychosocial support.
- UNESCO is collecting information on the prioritization of teachers in national vaccine rollout plans. The TTF is also beginning to collect data on the numbers of teachers vaccinated to date. https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/teacher-vaccination
- The **World Bank's** TEACH & COACH tools and resources focused on evidence-based in-service teacher professional development and resources as well as the Service Delivery Indicators which examine teacher effort and ability in African countries. The Global Platform for Successful Teachers supports countries to implement comprehensive teacher policies based on five principles: making teaching attractive; improve pre-service education; improve selection, allocation and monitoring; provide high-quality professional development an school leadership; use technology wisely.
- The **OECD** Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) surveys teachers and school leaders globally about their teaching practices, initial training and professional development as well as working conditions and learning environments at their schools. TALIS 2024 will cover education professionals from early childhood education and care up to upper secondary education, and will include for the first time a module on general teacher pedagogical knowledge. Work in 2021-22 will also focus on exploring the need and scope for adapting TALIS surveys to the realities of teaching in low- and lower-middle income countries to enhance its relevance to a broader range

of countries. Besides TALIS, the OECD has also developed a survey module looking at teacher well-being to be administered to teachers as part of PISA 2022. Policy work is focusing on teacher professional learning and digitalization. Meanwhile The Global Teaching InSights video library offers a resource that can be used to train teachers and could be linked to the World Bank TEACH and COACH initiatives.

- **UNICEF's** Global Education Strategy includes teachers and teaching practices as priority areas of investment to address the learning crisis. It works to support national governments to strengthen initial teacher training, professional development, school leadership and supervision, incentives and accountability. Annual investment for teacher development exceeded USD53 million in 2020. UNICEF's foundational literacy and numeracy initiative includes teachers as primary strategy and is developing a range of resources to support classroom level practices in assessment and pedagogy. UNICEF Innocenti's Time to Teach research on teacher absenteeism, motivation, retention and time on task to inform the design and implementation of teacher policies in 20 African countries.

- The **Global Education Coalition's** flagship program on teachers which aims to increase the value of teachers' roles and offer professional development opportunities to strengthen digital and pedagogical skills. Through high-quality, large-scale learning opportunities, the flagship intends to reach one million teachers with training and ensure that quality and equitable teaching can continue.

- The **Norwegian Teacher Initiative**: Strengthening Multi-Parner Cooperation to Support Teacher Policy and Improve Learning (2017 to Oct 2021) is coordinated by UNESCO and brings together strengths of seven global partners for improvement of teaching and learning through development of teacher policies. Their work aims to address workforce issues such as recruitment, deployment, motivation, training, remuneration and social participation. UNICEF is currently the lead agency supporting the initiative in Ghana and Malawi, while UNESCO leads in Burkina Faso and Uganda. More information is available at: https://en.unesco.org/themes/teachers/nti

Annex 4: Global coalition to promote team-based approaches for the education workforce

A global coalition is proposed that would bring together NGOs, development agencies, donors, private sector, research and country partners, and civil society organizations to work together on an ambitious multi-year agenda with the goal of piloting new team-based models for the education workforce and generating robust evidence on these models, their cost effectiveness and how they can be scaled and embedded in education systems with the most impact, especially for addressing access to qualified teachers for the most marginalized, equitable allocation and evidence-based professional development. It would also aim to identify sustainable funding sources to scale existing team-based programs and identify existing constraints – whether political or related to human resources and financing - for governments in implementing these types of approaches. Where the coalition could fit with existing education networks focused on teachers and the workforce (such as the Teachers Task Force) would need to be considered.

Once evidence has been collected, the Coalition would promote the findings and programs to ensure team-based approaches are considered. As part of this, the Coalition could undertake country level or regional policy dialogues to share evidence and learning or run campaigns to illustrate how learning teams address specific education challenges – such as learning teams for girls' access and learning, foundational literacies, and inclusion.

A few high-level 'champions' from countries and learning team programs would complement the Coalition's activities. Given the multi-sectoral nature of learning teams and diversity of education issues they address, the Coalition could align their agenda and coordinate, where appropriate, with other relevant coalitions, such as the Global Coalition for Education Data (UIS) and the Global Coalition on School Feeding (WFP).

Annex 5: Global Education Workforce Diagnostic

The *Transforming the Education Workforce* report called on the global education community to work together with countries to review their education workforce and develop relevant diagnostics and tools to inform actions towards an education workforce that meets their system needs. While teacher policy frameworks and planning tools exist, an initial review and consultations suggest there are currently no formal processes or tools to analyze roles beyond teachers or the interrelationships between them and other workforce roles for their impact on improved student outcomes and system goals. There is a need for a diagnostic that can analyze the education workforce required to drive system goals - this includes teachers (and differentiated teaching roles) and other roles at the school and system level. This type of analysis would allow for a better understanding of how teachers and other important roles function in an education system; how they interact with each other; and how these relationships impact teaching and learning, especially for the most marginalized. This type of diagnostic could generate new insights on where and how to leverage existing capacity within the education workforce when examined in conjunction with the other elements in a system (finance, curriculum, etc.).

The aim of the diagnostic will be to help policymakers and members of the education workforce identify and prioritize the highest-impact reforms to education workforce design, policies and interventions - for teachers and the wider education workforce - and adjust them as needed in order to improve quality and inclusive education and promote more resilient systems. The diagnostic would aim to complement existing education workforce planning approaches, such as education sector plans, expanding and strengthening the teacher area of analysis and planning with new insights and understanding of policy options for the wider workforce.

A global Steering Committee has been established to provide strategic guidance for this work and includes GPE, UNESCO IIEP, the Teachers Task Force, FDCO, Norad, IADB, Education International, the World Bank and WHO.

In partnership with and supported by GPE, work on the diagnostic has begun with a mapping study that analyzed existing workforce tools, diagnostics and guidelines (such as SABER, TTISSA, the Teacher Policy Development Guide) to understand their coverage of workforce roles and issues as well as the limitations

and strengths of their approaches. The mapping revealed a distinct gap in that the reviewed tools in that they do not provide any significant guidance for data collection and analysis on education roles beyond teachers who support and contribute to teaching and learning (with the exception of school principals and administrators from a few specific perspectives). The tools also do not allow for analysis of the interactive and collective dimensions of teachers and other role's impact on teaching and learning. The study did note that any future workforce diagnostic could build on the existing tools which have been useful for analyzing some of the critical issues relating to teachers and teaching. The study with the complete list of findings and recommendations will be available later this year.