Continuous Professional Development Diploma in Effective School Leadership (CPD-DESL)

Student Manual

MODULE 4 : LEADING TEACHING AND WORKING WITH PARENTS & THE WIDER COMMUNITY

5th Edition

UNIVERSITY of RWANDA

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REB | RWANDA BASIC EDUCATION BOARD

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DIPLOMA IN EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP (CPD-DESL)

MODULE FOUR
LEADING TEACHING AND WORKING WITH PARENTS & THE WIDER COMMUNITY

STUDENT MANUAL
MODULE 4
5TH EDITION
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children
CBAM	Concern Based Adoption Model
CBC	Competence Based Curriculum
CoP	Community of Practice
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
DDE	District Director of Education
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DHT	Deputy Headteacher
EDPRS	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan
FTYM	First Time Young Mother
GBV	Gender-based violence
GRROW	Goal, Reality, Resources, Options, Will
GS	Groupe Scolaire
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRM	Human Resource Management
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IE	Inclusive Education
KOV	Katholiek Onderwijs Vlaanderen
MINEDUC	Ministry of Education
NSF	National Strategy for Transformation
NT	New Teacher
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
PDCA	Plan-Do-Check-Act
PLC	Professional Learning Community
REB	Rwanda Education Board
SBM	School-based Mentor
SBMF	School-based Mentoring Framework
SBMPF	School-based Mentoring Program Framework
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEI	Sector Education Inspector
SGA	School General Assembly
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SSL	School Subject Leader
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TDM	Teacher Development and Management
TTC	Teacher Training College
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UR-CE	University of Rwanda – College of Education
VVOB	Education for Development, see https://rwanda.vvob.org/

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FOREWORD

The Rwandan Government considers education as a cornerstone pillar to achieving the country's envisioned socio-economic transformation. In this regard, effective school leadership is paramount to guarantee that education policies and programmes are yielding the expected results which will be observed through learning achievements and school performance. Therefore, it is essential to reconsider the role of school leaders.

In the 21st century, the role of school leaders has become more complex than ever before. School leaders are required to be innovators and open to changes as they guide teachers and learners toward individual and collective targets. Often the biggest barrier to innovation is our own way of thinking; scholars would say. Hence, embracing change requires competent school leaders who can design a strategy, make sense of an unpredictable environment, provide a vision for turning change into improved education quality, influence others to commit to this vision and then bring on board potential stakeholders.

Modern school leaders are first and foremost educators. Not only educators in the sense that they stand in front of a classroom, but educators who continuously collaborate with the teachers and learners to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This calls school leaders to be always ready for learning to model the saying that "Learning starts at birth and ends at death".

This one-year Continuous Professional Development (CPD course was designed in a tripartite partnership between VVOB-education for development, REB and the University of Rwanda – College of Education (UR-CE). The content revolves around the approved professional standards for Effective School Leadership, namely, (i) creating strategic direction for the school, (ii) leading learning, (iii) leading teaching, (iv) managing the school as an organisation, and (v)working with parents and the wider community.

Rwanda Basic Education Board expects much from this programme. Therefore, I call upon all beneficiaries to connect the subject content of this programme with the desired positive changes and better learning outcomes in Rwandan schools.

Dr Nelson Mbarushimana

Director General,
Rwanda Basic Education Board

MODULE 4

LEADING TEACHING AND WORKING WITH PARENTS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Introduction

This module aims at equipping school leaders with the competences to overcome challenges related to leading teaching and working with parents and the wider community. The unit on leading teaching emphasizes the responsibility of school leaders to support teachers in the achievement of student's learning outcomes. The unit discusses CPD including the induction of new teachers, supervision of teaching, giving feedback, coaching and mentoring, and communities of practice.

The role of school leaders as leaders of teaching has grown in importance in recent years, as illustrated by the rise of concepts as instructional and transformational leadership (Bush & Glover, 2014). The challenge for school leaders is finding a balance between micro-managing teaching and learning and a complete reliance on others such as deputy headteachers and teachers for the quality of teaching and learning (Fullan, 2014).

Some headteachers delegate the responsibility for leading teaching to their deputy headteachers and heads of department. However, headteachers and deputy headteachers should both be involved, but prepared to trust others, including teachers, with leadership roles, as illustrated by the concept of distributive leadership (see Module 1,). School leaders should focus on creating a culture of continuous professional development in the school, instructional supervision and collaboration between schools.

In this module, we will discuss the concepts and tools you need to be a true leader of teaching in your school. This module combines two REB professional standards for effective school leadership leading teaching and working with parents and the wider community

Module Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Support teachers in applying appropriate, learner-centred and active learning and teaching techniques;

- Evaluate different assessment procedures;

- Support the Communities of Practice within the school;

- Conduct effective lesson observations and feedback discussions;

- Lead continuous professional development of teachers within your school;

- Establish strategies to enhance collaboration between your school and other schools as an instrument for improving the quality of learning and teaching;

- Effectively conduct an induction for new teachers;

- Analyse and use school data to improve learning and teaching;

- Use monitoring and evaluation to improve the quality of teaching;

- Value the role of assessment and record keeping in leading teaching;

- Appreciate the involvement of stakeholders in leading teaching;

- Describe the principles of parent/community-school partnerships;

- Develop strategies to involve parents and the wider community in the school;

- Establish strategies to enhance collaboration between the school, parents and the wider community;

- Organise the capacity development activities for the School Executive Committee as a partner in the achievement of sustainable learning outcomes;

- Act as a role model in the school and wider community;

- Value the importance of involving parents and the wider community to achieve high quality inclusive education.

UNIT ONE
LEADING TEACHING

Activity 1.

Discuss with your colleagues the strategies you use to support teachers in their responsibility of ensuring the achievement of students' learning outcomes in your school.   Based on the discussion, make a list of the best practices you learnt from your colleagues.

Introduction

It is the responsibility of school leaders to support teachers toward the achievement of students' learning outcomes. Leading teaching as a school leader means identifying the school's goals for learning, identifying what competences teachers need to achieve these goals and deciding on a plan of action. As we shall see, this plan of action can consist of a range of approaches and strategies to engage all teachers in a way that benefits learners and contributes to achieving the strategic goals of the school. Being competent in the standard of "Leading Teaching" means that you can organise effective professional development successfully in your school.

However, successful school leaders also demonstrate effective pedagogical leadership by setting a good example for other teachers to follow. Research in Uganda found that **headteachers in successful schools taught classes**, even though they have many other school responsibilities (Twaweza, 2019)**.** This leading by example encouraged greater effort from teachers as well. Secondly, school leaders can lead teaching by creating the conditions for teachers to develop professional support ties (Thomas et al., 2020).

We will start the unit with a discussion about continuous professional development (CPD). What is CPD and what makes it effective? In the second section, we will give an overview of the education policies in Rwanda that are relevant for you as a leader of teaching in your school.

We will review the priorities of MINEDUC in terms of the competences of teachers. In the third section, we will focus on a specific kind of school-based CPD: the induction of new teachers in the school.

We will see why the induction of new teachers requires special attention by school leaders. In the fourth section, we will discuss the role of school leaders as supervisors of teaching, mainly through conducting lesson observations. In the fifth section, we will focus deeper on giving feedback, as it is a crucial skill in your support to teachers. Coaching and mentoring are CPD methods in which giving and receiving feedback are particularly relevant. In the sixth section, we will look at how you can support coaching and mentoring in your school. Finally, we will look at how you can make CPD in your school more collaborative. Collaborative CPD has several advantages and is more effective than individual CPD.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate a deep understanding of Rwandan education policies governing CPD;

- Explain characteristics of effective continuous professional development (CPD);

- Plan and implement effective CPD (including needs analysis, alignment, communication, knowledge management) in your school;

- Strengthen the induction of new teachers in the school;

- Use a variety of CPD approaches, including mentoring, coaching and conducting lesson observations effectively;

- Use various techniques to supervise instruction effectively;

- Identify and handle challenges in supervising instruction;

- Provide effective feedback to teachers;

- Collect, analyse and use data to develop CPD plans;

- Identify ways to promote coaching and mentoring in your school;

- Initiate and support Communities of Practice (CoPs);

- Monitor and evaluate CPD, including CoPs, in your school;

- Promote inclusive education through fostering teacher CPD and collaboration;

- Appreciate the importance of CPDs in teaching and learning.

Section 1: Continuous professional development (CPD)

Introduction

International research (Robinson, 2008) shows that promoting and participating in professional learning and teacher development is the most important element in effective leadership for learning. As a leader of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in your school, it is important that you understand what effective CPD is. Unfortunately, much CPD for teachers and school leaders is ineffective. In this section, we will explore what CPD is and what makes it effective. This will help you to be a successful leader of CPD in your school.

What is CPD in education?

There are various definitions of CPD in education. Some definitions are more detailed than others.

Broadly speaking, CPD includes all formal and informal learning that enables individuals to improve their own practice, a process of continuing growth of a professional. Rwanda Basic Education Board (REB) uses the following definition for CPD:

> *CPD is a term which covers professional learning over a teacher's career, from initial teacher education onwards. Teachers' knowledge and skills improve through experience and with opportunity to reflect on their experience. Teacher learning is most effective if teachers have opportunities, support and resources for CPD (REB,2018).*

Building on REB's definition we suggest this more comprehensive definition of CPD in education:

> *"CPD is an on-going process encompassing all formal and informal learning experiences that enable all staff in schools, individually and with others, to think about what they are doing, enhance their knowledge and skills and improve ways of working so that pupil learning and wellbeing are enhanced as a result. It should achieve a balance between individual, group, school and national needs; encourage a commitment to professional and personal growth; and increase resilience, self-confidence, job satisfaction and enthusiasm for working with children and colleagues" (Bubb & Earley, 2007).*

In other words, it is about creating opportunities for lifelong learning, with the purpose of enhancing the quality of education in the classroom.

Reasons for CPD in education

The educational landscape in Rwanda is changing quickly. On a regular basis, teachers face new policies, new technologies, innovative approaches to learning and teaching, and many other changes within the educational environment. Furthermore, evidence shows that teachers' professional development can have a positive impact on learner performance and teachers' practice.

According to Guskey (2003) high-quality CPD is a central component in improving education. How teachers teach has an impact on the way their learners learn. Teachers need to adapt their teaching so that learners can understand (REB, 2017). Therefore, it is important that teachers can continually learn throughout their careers. As part of an ongoing process of lifelong learning, CPD includes induction, coaching, mentoring and teacher collaboration.

Examples of CPD activities

When thinking about CPD, many people think about trainings and workshops. However, there are many other CPD activities. Depending on the needs and on your target group, other activities of CPD may be more effective. Some examples of CPD activities are:

- Participating and contributing to workshops/seminars/conferences(in-house/outdoors);
- Short courses and award-bearing programmes (distance, online, face-to-face);
- Study tours and field visits;
- inviting specialist expertise;
- Professional development items in staff meetings;
- Communities of Practice;
- (informal) discussions with colleagues to reflect on practices;
- Action research;
- Case study discussions;
- Lesson study (micro teaching);
- Keeping professional portfolios;
- (research) projects;
- Coaching and mentoring;
- Team teaching;
- Peer observation;
- Developing and adapting new instructional/learning materials;
- Structured feedback from students;
- Self-study (Internet, books, journals, magazines…).

Criteria for effectiveness of CPD in education

What is effective CPD? When can a training that your teachers attended be considered effective? Effective CPD results in demonstrable, desirable and sustained changes in the knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and behaviour among school staff:

- **Demonstrable change**: What has changed? Demonstrable change can be a change in behaviour, but it can also be changes in thinking/ knowledge and attitudes. How can we tell? Do we see changes in classroom practices and at school level? This shows the need for monitoring and evaluation.

- **Sustained change**: Integrated and anchored in school culture and organisation. A sustained change means that the change does not slowly disappear after the CPD activity or after a few months. There is a need for a strong supportive environment for teachers to be able and to be encouraged to try out new practices in their classrooms.

- **Desirable change**: The change needs to be desirable. People need to be aware, informed and convinced that the change will contribute positively to the quality of teaching and learning. An important element in this is who wants the change: teachers, headteachers, deputy headteachers, SEIs, parents, REB, MINEDUC … Each of these stakeholders might have good reasons to want the change and need to convince other stakeholders in the system. There is a need for proper planning and needs analysis at the school level.

Not all changes may be desirable by all, and the needs of individual teachers may not be the same as those from the school. Ultimately, for a change to be sustainable, it needs to be desirable by those who will implement it. They need to be ready and willing to implement the change.

Educators and policy makers around the world increasingly support the notion of investing in quality, career-long opportunities for professional development, and ensuring ongoing, active professional learning. A school as a learning organisation has a supportive culture and invests time and other resources in quality professional learning opportunities for all staff – teachers, school leaders and support staff – starting with their induction into the profession. It also connects work-based learning and external learning (e.g., workshops or courses).

Activity 4

Think individually about the question below:

What can you do to make professional development of the teachers in your school more effective?

As a school leader, it is important to make sure that the CPD that is organised in your school is effective. Ineffective CPD is a waste of energy, time and resources. Below we will explore characteristics of effective CPD.

1. CPD should be team and school focused

Professional development and school development go hand in hand. Professional development can be initiated by individual needs, organisational needs (of the school) or institutional needs in line with the school improvement plan but always with the intention to improve learning and teaching. A school could request some teachers to learn more about questioning techniques with the intention that they mentor and coach other teachers afterwards.

Professional development might also be initiated by needs that are identified in policy documents or strategic plans such as your SIP. Needs analysis must therefore go beyond asking individual teachers "what they need". Also, note that "you don't know what you don't know." (see Figure 2). Therefore, asking people what they need should not be the only source of information to determine professional development needs.

2. CPD should be process oriented

Learning is a process, not a once off event. Effective CPD will create opportunities for try-out (safe environment, time…) and for reporting, feedback and reflection.

The learning activities take place over a long period, so participants have opportunities to really understand and try out the content and become familiar with it. Since learning is a process, CPD should cater for all steps between awareness and reflection on implementation (see Figure 1).
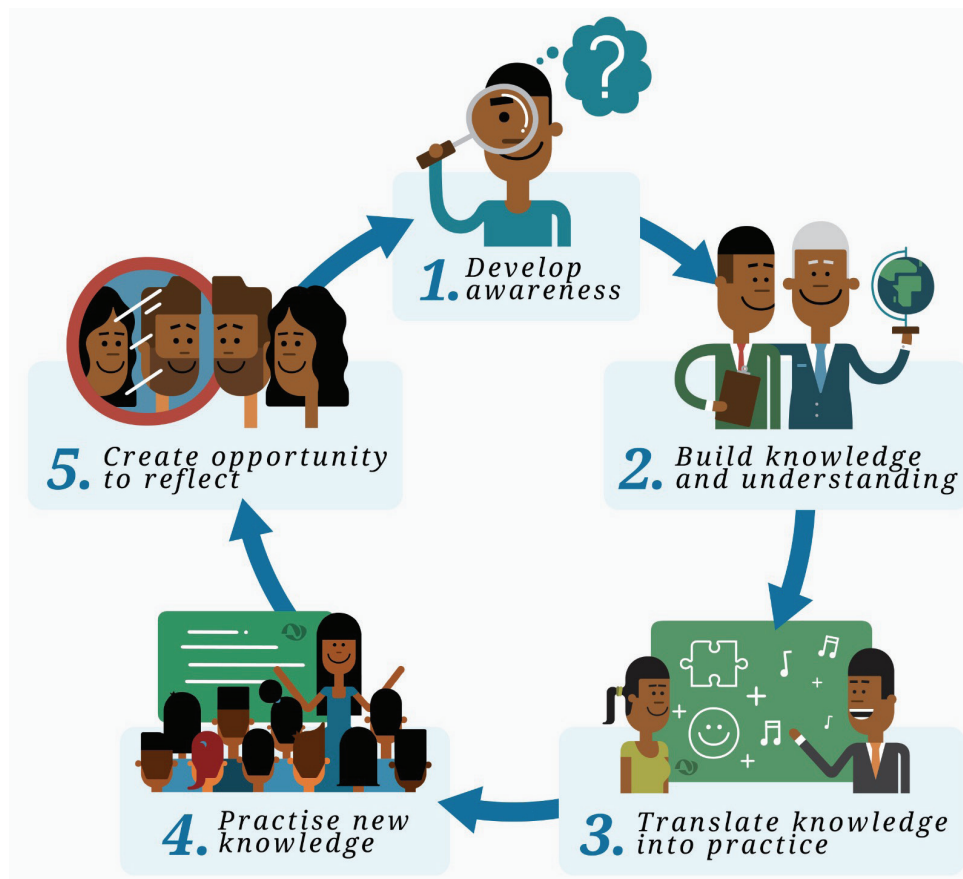
Figure 1: The Learning Cycle (Timperley et al., 2007)

Traditional ways of professional development often focus on creating awareness and building knowledge and understanding. By the time the workshop is over, the knowledge has not yet been translated into practice, nor have teachers had the opportunity to practice new knowledge and to reflect on the learning. Many trainers assume that knowledge of an innovation is sufficient to implement it, but this is not true! Effective CPD is more than only developing awareness and building knowledge and understanding. To create demonstrable and sustainable change, professional development needs to pay attention to all the components of the learning cycle, so also to translating knowledge into practice, practising new knowledge and creating opportunities to reflect. The reason why these stages are often neglected in CPD is that trainings and workshops are less suitable methods in these stages. More effective methods in these stages are coaching, mentoring, shadowing and collaboratively working together in Communities of Practice.

Effective professional development takes the learner from a stage of unconscious incompetence ("I wasn't aware that I could not do this"), first to a level of conscious incompetence ("I know I should be able to do this, but I can't"), then to the level of conscious competence ("When I pay attention, I can actually do it") to ultimately reach the level of unconscious competence ("I do this right, almost automatically") (see Figure2). Sustainable implementation requires that the person moves from comfort (ignorance) over insecurity (resistance) to confidence and security with the new practice (see Figure 2).

CPD can be situated at moving from any stage to another stage, for example moving from unconscious incompetence to conscious incompetence or from conscious incompetence to conscious competence.
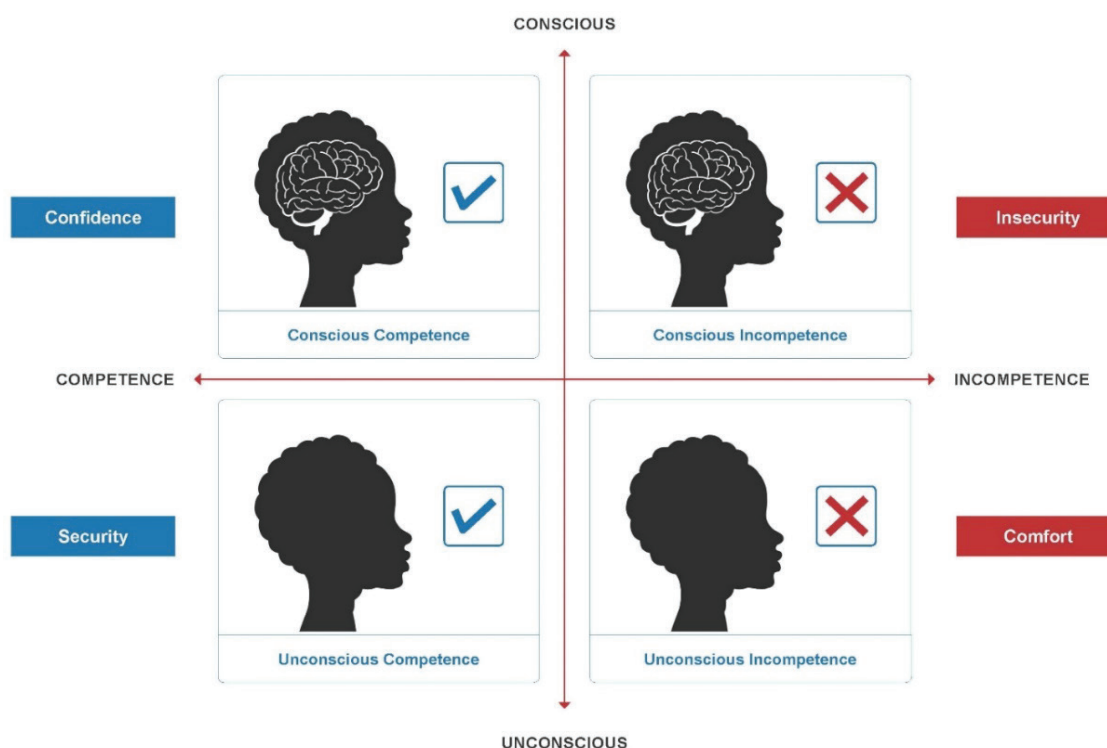
Figure 2: From unconscious to conscious learning (Howell & Fleishman, 1982)

For example, imagine a child that learns to swim. First, the child is not aware of what swimming entails, the moves, the techniques etc. (unconscious and incompetent). The child is comfortable, but he is not aware of swimming. You cannot worry about something you are not aware of. Next, he learns about swimming and how to do it, but he cannot yet swim (conscious and incompetent). The next step is that the child learns to swim. It is very focused on getting the moves right and in the correct order (conscious and competent). He acquires the confidence to swim. In the final stage, the child masters the technique of swimming. He doesn't need to think any more about the different moves but practices them automatically (unconscious and competent). These four stages are a typical sequence in which we learn things. By practice, we can move from conscious to unconscious competence. Unconscious competence is much more durable than conscious competence. Can you apply the four stages to another example, such as cooking a new recipe?

3. CPD should be rooted in reflection

CPD is more than training of skills, it is practice informed by theory and evidence and vice versa. The starting point of professional development is individual, institutional (school) and/or systemic (province, national) self-evaluation. Reflection means that you consciously and explicitly look back at your behaviour as a school leader or teacher within the complex context of education. Reflection is a key part of the experiential learning cycle of Kolb (see Figure 3). In this cycle, reflection is the key stage between the analysis of evidence whether an intervention works and the planning stage.

Reflection is about critically interpreting the evidence in connection to one's own practice. This reflection should be based on how you look at education and the role of school leaders (task description). It changes all the time as a result of your interactions with teachers, parents and learners, discussions with other school leaders, participation in programmes such as this one etc.

A needs analysis is a good starting point, but this goes beyond a survey. The following could be useful sources of information: SIP, error analysis, research findings, policy documents, evaluation of teaching and learning by the School Executive Committee.
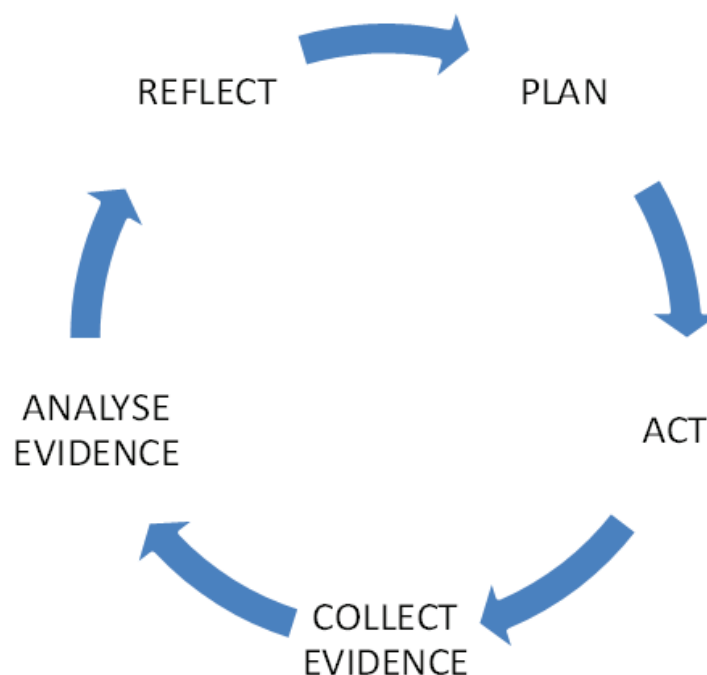
Figure 3: Cycle of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984)

4. CPD should be experiential

Effective CPD takes the context of the individual participant into account. It builds on participants' experience and addresses the actual problems that participants experience in the classroom. It creates opportunities to immediately try out what has been learnt. It is important to give participants hands-on experiences.

5. CPD should be focused

Effective CPD identifies specific objectives and content. Not only the facilitator but also participants need to know exactly where they are going and why. They should have an idea of the desired future (what do we want to reach?) and this future is clearly linked to improved teaching and learning and the impact on students. The CPD should be linked to the needs that are identified in the School Improvement Plan. Time is available to allow the changes to take place.

6. CPD should be collaborative

CPD is more effective when it is done together with colleagues. The facilitator should not present the topics to the participants but engage with them. Participants actively engage together in the learning (not: "we need to be workshopped").

Learning is a shared responsibility between facilitator and participant. The facilitator needs to encourage collaboration among participants. Research by OECD (see Figure 4) found that teachers who collaborate more with their colleagues – teaching jointly in the same class, observing and providing feedback on each other's classes, engaging in joint activities across different classes and age groups, and taking part in collaborative professional learning – report higher self-efficacy. Self-efficacy means that they feel more confident to do their work and have a higher self-esteem. Effective CPD recognises that a lot of learning takes place while collaborating with colleagues.
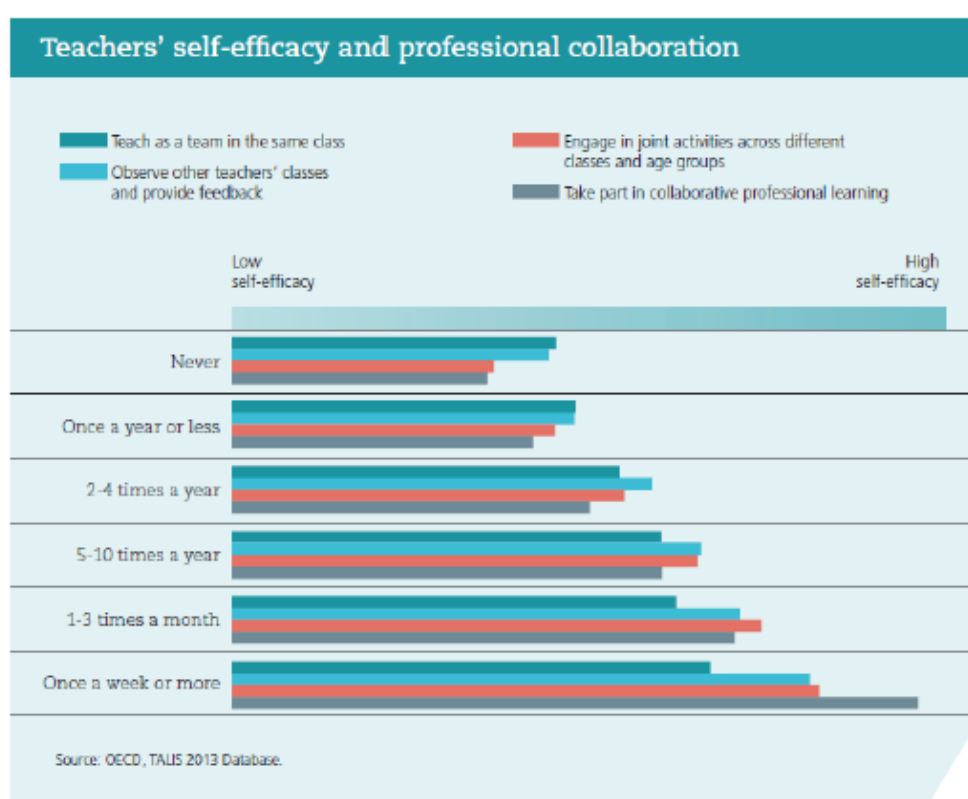
Figure 4: Relation between teachers' self-efficacy and professional collaboration (OECD, 2013)

7. CPD should be context specific

Effective CPD takes a variety of prior knowledge, preferences, contexts (such rural vs. urban), needs and mental models into account. Effective CPD uses suitable CPD strategies that allow participants to differentiate in content, process and assessment (Nicol, 2007). Give lecturing its due place, but not more than that. Provide ample opportunities to participants to actively engage with the content and construct their own understanding.

"Learning is the most personal thing in the world. It is as unique as a face or like a fingerprint."

Professional life cycle of a teacher

The context and needs of teachers differ at each stage of their teacher life cycle. The concept of professional life cycle is used to show that teachers and school leaders continuously engage in learning and that their learning needs evolve as they move through this cycle. This starts with the teacher training (novice), continues with induction (apprentice), becoming a professional, an expert and finally reaching a stage of mastery (see Figure 5).

Key elements of the professional life cycle

Newly qualified teacher
• Content knowledge
• Pedagogical knowledge
• Knowledge of curriculum

Junior teacher
• Cooperation and reflection on practice with colleagues in CoPs
• Feedback from experts
• To exchange experiences and insights with colleagues
• Extending ones repertoire (new methods, practical skills, and examples)

Senior teacher
• To take up leadership roles within the school
• Opportunity to be of importance to others
• Training (completely self-driving)

Time

Newly assigned teacher
• To feel welcome and accepted by the group
• Opportunity to build a routine
• Support and understanding of experienced colleague or mentor
• Training courses: solutions-orientated and immediately applicable.

Master teacher
• Being allowed to increase impact on students
• Learning about new ideas and opportunities
• Support other teachers

Figure 5: Key components of the professional life cycle (Steffy & Walfe, 2001)

Figure 5 shows that teachers have different professional development needs depending on which stage in their professional life cycle they are in. Teachers who are new in the profession need concrete support in pedagogical content knowledge (how to teach the subject), class management and subject content knowledge. More experienced teachers benefit from professional development that helps them discover and try out new approaches to increase their impact with their learners. Teachers who have achieved expert or mastery level have more needs to be useful to others within their school or in neighbouring schools.

By helping other teachers, they also gain skills. As a school leader, it is important to realise that teachers have different professional development needs and that a one-size-fits-all approach is therefore not the best approach. In the next section, we will focus more on the CPD needs of a particularly vulnerable group of teachers, those who are new to the profession.

8. CPD involves producing and constructing

It is important to realise that knowledge and skills are not passed on, they are acquired by participants. It is not because you teach something, that your students have learnt something! No one can do their learning for them. Participants need to actively work on a product to ground the learning. Learning takes place through a production process. This provides motivation. There are individual differences in learning gains: how much is being learnt and what is being learnt.

9. CPD requires ownership

Effective CPD involves participants in such way that they take charge of one's own learning. Participants develop and implement what they have learned because they are owners of the process. It is important to link this energy with a vision and strategic plan as this will further motivate participants.

Activity 5

Select one of the CPDs that are organised in your school, think about it and answer the following questions:

- What kind of data were used to prepare the selected CPD?
- What can you do in your school to make the selected CPD of your teachers more effective?
- Which data do you need to collect to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the selected CPD activities for your teachers?
- Which of the criteria of effective CPD can you improve upon for the selected CPD?
- While implementing the selected CPD, how do you take into account the stages of professional life cycle developed by Steffy & Wolfe (2001)?
- How can you integrate the selected CPD into teachers' Performance Contracts?

Start improving the selected CPD in collaboration with the Deputy Headteacher, the SBM and your teachers.

A key aspect of school leaders' role as leaders of teaching is to coordinate CPD in the school. CPD should be effective, meaning that it should lead to desirable, sustainable and demonstrable changes in teaching practice. In this section, we discussed what effective CPD is and what elements make it effective. Being familiar with the criteria of effective CPD will help you to organise effective CPD in your school.

Section 2: Rwandan education policies and stakeholders for CPD Programmes

Activity 6

Think about the following questions to assess your knowledge about CPD policies in Rwanda:

- What policies and official documents related to CPD that you are familiar with?
- What are the key stakeholders in CPD programmes?
- For each stakeholder that you identified, list its main roles in CPD of teachers.

Introduction

The development of any society today requires steady investments in the education sector. For education to provide what is expected of it, teacher training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) are of the utmost importance. This is true in the sense that teachers are the backbone and the true reflection of the quality of the education (Srinivasacharlu, 2019). It is indeed emphasised that "*There is no system in the world or any school in the country that is better than its teachers. Teachers are the lifeblood of the success of schools.*" (Ken Robinson)

This section will review global and national guiding documents in terms of quality of education and by extension inform the imperative for CPD of teachers.

1. Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) came into effect in January 2016, and they will continue to guide education policy and funding. They are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. In as far as SDGs are concerned, CPD for teachers connects with SDG 4 (quality education) and SDG 5 (gender equality).

2. Rwanda Vision 2050

Rapid economic growth is Rwanda's overarching development goal— a strategic choice to anchor its long-term vision. Vision 2050 encapsulates this choice with long-term, income-based goals that aim for upper-middle-income status by 2035 and high-income status by 2050. One of the pillars to achieve this vision is to have skilled people for the socio-economic development of the country.

This pillar underlines the importance of education and training for producing citizens who have the knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable them to be entrepreneurs in their own learning, thinking and doing. In this perspective, improving the quality of education and training remains one of the overarching goals of the Government of Rwanda (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, 2020).

3. National Strategy for Transformation

The National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) which timeframe starts in the year 2017 and ends in 2024 identifies five objectives to transform Rwandans into a capable and skilled people with quality standards of living and a stable and secure society. One of them is to ensure quality of education for all aiming at building a knowledge-based economy. To achieve this objective, different strategic interventions such as increasing the number of qualified teachers and improve their welfare are denoted as priority areas. The quality of teachers can be ensured through their effective training, preparation as well as their in-service trainings as specified in in the Rwanda teacher statute.

4. Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy

The first priority of the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS II) is to develop skills and attitudes by reviewing and reforming the national education system. The strategy aims to put more emphasis on improving the quality of education and learning outcomes across all levels of education.

5. Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018/2019 – 2023/2024

The Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018/2029 -2023/2024 of the Ministry of Education in Rwanda is structured around nine strategic priorities; two of which (i.e., strategic priorities number 2 and number 9) have a particular focus on CPD:

- **Strengthened continuous professional development and management of teachers across all levels of education in Rwanda**. This priority plans to introduce a comprehensive cluster and school-based CPD for all categories of teachers. The new approach of CPD for teachers will focus on enhancing the professional competences of the teachers required for delivering the competence-based curriculum (CBC) adopted in Rwandan education system as of the year 2015. CBC is based on an active and constructivist approach to learning. Therefore, the key components of the CPD for teachers will include a focus on early grade literacy and numeracy; active learning and practicing of continuous assessment. A sub-component of this strategic priority is also to improve teacher management practices. This includes the deployment, staffing norms, transfers, retention and incentivisation strategies.

- **Strengthened governance and accountability across all levels of education in Rwanda.** This priority stipulates that school leaders will be trained and supported in school leadership to equip them with sufficient skills so they can provide CPD to their teaching staff, drive the school improvement and development processes. School leaders also need to acquire competences to identify strengths and weaknesses of their teachers, provide required support and advice on pedagogical aspects, subject matter, inclusion and other cross-cutting issues. Therefore, decentralised entities of education will need to prioritise the oversight of schools to foster a continuous ethos of improvement in learning outcomes across all schools.

This could be done through school-based CPD of teachers to be established from the District level as well as the involvement of key stakeholders to enhance community involvement in monitoring, and accountability for desired positive changes in students' learning outcomes.

6. Teacher Development and Management Framework (2017)

This framework stipulates that teacher development (including initial teacher education and continuous professional development) has received much attention due to its potential to improve overall educational quality. The assumption is that teacher development improves teaching, which increases children's learning engagement and achievement. Therefore, improving teacher development is a priority for the Rwandan government, civil society groups and development partners.

7. Teacher Statutes

The presidential Order No 064/01 Of 16/03/2020 establishing special statutes governing teachers in nursery, primary, secondary and technical and vocational schools underlines the importance of CPD. In its Article No 12, bullet 3 about requirements for promotion to a higher category, it is mentioned that a teacher is promoted to a higher category when "he or she has successfully completed Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses in teaching career". The Article No 52 of the same statutes specifies seven mandatory areas of CPD for teachers. These are 1° pedagogical and Instructional; 2° measurement and assessment; 3° inclusive education; stipulates how teachers would be promoted from the level of a Junior teacher to a Master teacher. It is for all teachers at all levels (Pre-primary, primary and secondary levels).

8. School Based Mentor Program Framework (SBMPF) (2016)

This framework underlines that teachers will need to learn new methodologies in order to increase the quality of their teaching, (and therefore the quality of learning) that takes place in their schools. Improving the quality of teaching cannot happen in one training session, but happens throughout a teacher's career.

This ongoing process of improving teachers' knowledge, skills, attitudes and values at school after initial training is known as Continuing Professional Development (CPD). In this framework, CPD has several forms at the school and sector level. For example, school-based in-service training (SBI), Communities of Practice (CoPs), lesson observations by peers, developing and teaching model lessons, self-study, formal training and other courses and workshops (REB, 2016).

Stakeholders involved in CPD

CPD in schools is not the only responsibility of school leaders. REB's key strategy to deliver CPD at school level is through the School-based Mentoring Program (SBMP) (REB, 2016). This framework describes the responsibilities of all stakeholders in relation to CPD. Table 1 summarizes the key responsibilities for each stakeholder, including the SSL.

Table 1: Responsibilities of stakeholders for CPD

Teachers
- Keep personal record of training received;   - Actively participate in CPD -training/sharing practices with peers;   - Implement new teaching methods learned in training;   - Seek support from peers, SSLs and SBMs when needed;   - Improve skills in English as medium of instruction;   - Monitor learners' progress through formative and summative assessment to understand the impact of new methodologies on quality of teaching and learning in their class.

School Subject Leaders
- Provide subject CPD Action Plan for the term supported by SBM to Deputy HT;   - Report CPD activities conducted during the term to Deputy HT;   - Work with SBM to assess CPD needs, especially for specific subject content;   - Collaborate with SBM to facilitate CPD sessions for their subject;   - Work with SBM to help improve subject specific English for teachers (e.g., vocabulary);   - Support teachers to develop teaching and learning materials and give model lessons;   - Conduct model lessons under the guidance of the Deputy HT.

School Based Mentors as a:
Coach in English: - Assist all teachers to improve the quality of their English-language skills for use as a language of instruction;   - Facilitate teachers' use of English self-study materials to assist peers to improve their English proficiency.   ***Expert in teaching and learning:***   - Are informed and inspired by innovations in education;   - Show personal leadership in professional development, which makes them role models for other teachers in CPD.   ***Guide and organiser of school-based CPD***:   - Promote the development of teachers in order to improve students' learning and to improve the school as a learning organisation;   - Organise CPD-activities in school and set up learning communities to encourage best practices;   - Provide support to NTs to facilitate their integration in the school community and to support their growth as teacher. Therefore, SBMs connect NTs to colleagues, who can take an active role in mentoring NTs.   ***Promoter of reflective practice:***   - Stimulate reflection and facilitate giving of feedback on the quality of teaching and learning at school encourage teachers to reflect on their own teaching. Teachers can then improve their teaching practices by focusing on building on strengths and overcoming weaknesses. In this way, SBMs develop the capacity for CPD of all teachers in the school.

Deputy Headteachers

- Supervise and support SBM and SSLs;
- Approve the CPD plan submitted by SBM and SSLs and forward to HT;
- Assist the SBM to find resources for CPD activities;
- Assist the headteacher in preparing and analysing monthly reports;
- Conduct lesson observations, CPD meetings, model lessons and training as part of CPD plan;
- Teach classes (6 periods per week) to allow the SBM a reduced teaching load.

Headteachers

- Organise academic staff to select a mentor;
- Make time for CPD and mentoring activities on the school timetable;
- Discuss CPD training needs of school staff ;
- Work together with SBM, teachers and Deputy Headteacher/ DOS to develop a CPD plan for school;
- Work with Deputy HT to supervise SBM activities;
- Monitor SBM and CPD activities and send reports to SEO each term;
- Motivate teachers to improve quality of education in their school;
- Provide necessary resources ;
- Teach classes (6 periods or 340 minutes per week) to allow SBM reduced load).

Sector Education Inspectors

- Communicate information from district to school and vice versa;
- Regularly collaborate with headteachers to monitor SBM work ;
- Report on CPD activities ;
- Co-ordinate and implement SBMP and CPD activities at the sector level: e.g., sector level Professional Learning Communities for peer learning between SBMs and teachers.

District Directors of Education & District Education Officers

- Ensure that every public school in the district has a SBM;
- Through DCC, select qualified Mentor Trainers based on REB guidelines ;
- Facilitate and support SBMP and CPD activities in the district ;
- Ensure every school has resources necessary to carry out effective SBMP and CPD activities.

Development Partners

- Support trainings for SBMs and SSLs, school leadership, district education stakeholders;
- Assist in developing communities of practice for SBMs ;
- Provide technical support (financial and resources) for development of materials (English, pedagogy, and mentoring skills).

University of Rwanda College of Education

- Partner with REB to provide CPD Certificate and Diploma Programmes;
- Oversee monitoring and evaluation for CPD Diploma and Certificate Programmes.

Rwanda Basic Education Board

- Produce and distribute training materials;
- Coordinate and plan training of SBMs through inspectors, support and collaborate with schools in monitoring of the School-based Mentoring Program Framework (SBMPF);
- Collect and analyze monitoring reports from districts;
- Provide training to district and sector officials, subject teachers, support staff and school leaders to enable them to take up their roles and responsibilities.

Source: REB, 2016

Activity 7

Reflect on the responsibilities of the various stakeholders in CPD as listed above.

- Are any responsibilities unclear or missing?
- What challenges do you face when working with these stakeholders on CPD?
- What measures have you taken to address these challenges?
- Which data should be collected by each stakeholder in order to organise and conduct effective CPD?

In this section, we gave an overview of the education policies in Rwanda that are relevant for you as a leader of teaching in your school. Being familiar with the plans and policies of MINEDUC is important as they identify the priorities in terms of the competences of teachers and the roles of stakeholders such as SBM and SSLs.

Section 3: Teacher induction

Introduction

In this section you will explore the concept of new teachers' induction, its importance and different approaches. You will also learn about your responsibilities related to the induction of new teachers and those of other stakeholders. Finally, we discuss the optimal content and different activities within an induction programme.

Activity 8

Read the case study below and answer the questions:

Mr Bwenge Athanase graduated from Kabuhariwe College of Education with distinction. A few months after graduation, he applied for a teaching job in a school in Gasabo district. He was short-listed for the test organised by the District. He sat for the test and emerged first with a score of 90%. He was appointed a teacher of Biology in Senior One in Kamatamu Secondary School. When he reached the school, Athanase was given a timetable and pedagogical documents. He started teaching but faced various professional and social challenges that affected his performance. The headteacher complained that he was not competent although he performed well in the college and the district recruitment test.

- What professional and social challenges could Mr Bwenge have faced?
- What could be the reasons for Mr Bwenge's challenges?

There are many **definitions of induction**. In line with the Teacher Development and Management (TDM) Policy, we define induction as a comprehensive, coherent, and sustained professional development process that is organised by the school, sector and district to develop, support, and retain new teachers (NTs) and seamlessly progresses them into a lifelong learning program (Wong, 2004).

In other words, the support and guidance provided to NTs is about building the teaching profession, keeping them teaching and ensuring that they are part of a learning community (Wong, 2004).

Who are NTs?

According to the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018/19-2023/24 a New Teacher is a teacher in his/her first two years of his/her career: *"Newly Qualified teachers, trainers and lecturers will participate in school/ institution-based coaching and mentoring schemes for the first two years of their career".* This is in line with the Rwandan Teacher Development and Management (TDM) Policy that states that:

> *"The key to retaining teachers, especially teachers in the early years of their career, is to provide a robust system of professional support that can quickly address job-related challenges and enhance commitment to teaching. All beginning teachers – defined as teachers in the first 3 years of their career, will receive systematic professional support from their school leaders, mentors and school inspectors specially trained for this purpose."*

Considering that the TDM Policy is subordinate to the ESSP and according to the planned transfer of secondary teachers to primary education, we consider New Teachers to be teachers in their **first two years of their career** and **Newly Appointed Teachers**. In addition, regarding the movements of teachers that occur every school year (transfer of secondary teachers to primary education vice-versa, the affectation of teachers to new schools, etc.) we consider also Newly Assigned Teachers as new teachers who need to go through the induction program. To conclude, New Teachers (NTs) are Newly Qualified Teachers, Newly Assigned teachers.

In that context, Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) are the Newly Appointed Teachers in the first 3 years of their teaching career. Newly Assigned Teachers (NATs) are the teachers teaching in the first 3 years within their newly assigned school.

Reasons for induction

Activity 9

Some years ago, you started your career in education. Based on your experiences, reflect on the following questions:

- What do you remember about your first school year?
- How was the transition from training to practice?
- What challenges did you face?
- Could you count on support in dealing with those challenges?

Think about your memories of your first year(s) of teaching and write them on a piece of paper.

The first years of teaching are a special time in a teacher's career, different from what has gone before and what comes after.

> *"Everything is new: where to put the desks, what to do on the first day and every day after that, who the students are, what their families are like, and what interests, resources and backgrounds the students bring to the classroom, what to teach, how to test students, what the headteacher expects, how to manage students during lessons, how to deal with students' diverse learning needs and ensure that everyone is learning"* (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

Therefore, they need to undergo an initiation process into the teaching profession.

Secondly, teaching is a **complex profession** and pre-service teacher education is rarely sufficient to provide all knowledge and skills for successful teaching. A lot can be acquired only on the job (e.g., assessing student's work, creation and scoring of tests; writing informative reports to parents about their children's progress and communicating more generally with parents) (Britton et al., 2000). Hence, there is a necessary role for schools in providing an environment where new teachers can learn the craft and succeed as teachers.

New teachers face **common challenges** (Cautreels, 2009; Feiman-Nemser et al., 2014):

- Inappropriate or heavy teaching assignments
- Disproportionate numbers of challenging students
- Lack of collegial support
- Intense parental pressure to perform well from the first day on the job
- Curriculum planning
- Learning to teach in a challenging context
- Dealing with students' diverse learning needs and ensure that everyone is learning
- Classroom management and arrangement
- Establishing a fair evaluation system

> **Activity 10**
>
> List in a table the consequences for the difficulties new teachers face and activities to overcome them: column 1 difficulties - column 2 consequences - column 3 activities.

Thirdly, induction is crucial because teachers face a relatively **high turnover rate** compared to other professions (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Three main factors of a difficult start of NTs are: (1) teachers can face a difficult integration into their new school; (2) there is need for continuous development of the pedagogical skills of the NT; and (3) there may be few opportunities or difficulties in finding a permanent job at the new school (i.e. the problem of frequent migration of teachers) (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003).

Moreover, research (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Wang et al., 2008) has shown that quality induction has not only a positive impact on the retention of NTs but also on their classroom teaching practices and the learning outcomes of their students. Induction programmes should therefore be part of a school-wide strategy on teacher professional development, teacher collaboration and lifelong learning as showed in

Finally, induction is also **useful for more experienced teachers**. It presents them with an opportunity to analyse and reflect on their own practice and share their expertise, contributing to their own professional development. Finally, many teachers still work largely in isolation from their colleagues. This isolation is again especially challenging for NTs, who are often left to "sink or swim" within the confines of their classrooms (Ingersoll and Strong, 2011). Therefore, induction must be well planned, carefully executed and evaluated to ensure it meets needs of NTs and provides a firm foundation for career-long professional development.

Top five professional development needs of a new teachers

1. NTs need to master applying the Competence-Based Curriculum, its principles and pedagogical approach. More specifically, they need to know how to integrate generic competences and cross cutting issues.

2. NTs need to acquire knowledge and skills for managing large classes. Managing large classes means paying attention to each learner, and making sure they all receive the necessary guidance for their intellectual, physical, and emotional development. Additionally, the right methodologies need to be applied to make sure each learner is learning, and disruptive behaviours are handled correctly.

3. NTs need to know how to develop teaching and learning materials by using available local resources in an innovative and creative way. In addition, NTs need to acquire an understanding and abilities of using these teaching materials to enhance learners' knowledge and skills.

4. Instructional planning for the classroom is a very important step in the teaching and learning process. NTs need to know how to elaborate schemes of work using the Competence-Based Curriculum. They also need to know how to write lesson plans with clear objectives and how to plan activities which support learners to achieve learning outcomes.

5. NTs need to know the importance of assessment for learning. They need to know and be able to apply a variety of activities and strategies for formative and summative assessment.

Induction programmes

How does an induction programme look like? What are the success factors of an effective induction programme?

> **Activity 11**
>
> - Read the different types of induction activities and identify the activities that you are familiar with or already use;
>
> - Revisit your CPD plan and SIP and write down the data that you collected and analysed in preparation of the induction program at your school.
>
> - Describe 2 induction activities that you already apply including the challenges you face. Come up with strategies to address those challenges.
>
> - How could you work with the SBM in dealing with these challenges?

A key objective of an induction programme is to strengthen a beginning teacher's self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task (Bandura, 1977).

Self-efficacy can be strengthened through 4 activities or experiences (Bandura, 1977; Goddard et al., 2004):

- Mastery experiences;
- Vicarious experiences;
- Social persuasion;
- Affective state.

First, **mastery experiences** are positive perceptions of past performances. When teachers feel satisfied with a teaching accomplishment, it contributes to their self-efficacy and expectation that future performances will be. In this respect, school leaders should provide teachers with opportunities to develop necessary skills and competences.

Second, **vicarious experiences** refer to observing others with whom teachers can identify. When the teachers they observe perform well, the teachers believe in their own abilities to make progress in their teaching. School leaders could meet this need for vicarious experiences by planning peer observations in the schedule.

Third, **social persuasion** pertains to the activity in which people are convinced that they can deal with the situation successfully. Social persuasion could be enacted by providing specific and sincere feedback from the school leaders, school-based mentors and subject leaders.

Fourth, **affective states** are also considered to influence teachers' self-efficacy. When teachers experience high levels of stress and anxiety in stressful situations, their expectations of success are diminished. Therefore, school leaders should guide teachers in coping with these stressful situations and provide a safety net for teachers to create positive experiences.

A good induction system contains several elements (Feiman-Nemser et al., 2014):

- Committed school leadership that promotes a developmental approach to teacher learning;
- Orientation to school policies and procedures before school starts;
- Opportunities to learn with and from colleagues;
- Mentoring from experienced colleagues, including a mentor from the same field and common planning time with other teachers in the same subject;
- Being part of a network of teachers;
- Curricular support including the availability of complete curricula and resources;
- Growth-oriented supervision with transparent teacher evaluation processes.

In brief, an induction programme is a range of formal and informal services and activities provided to new teachers to support their learning and development.

What are those different types of activities? Five types of formal activities are proposed for the induction programme in Rwandan schools: mentoring, communities of practice, seminars and trainings, pre-service support to school-based induction by TTC tutors and coaching. Each of them is detailed below:

1. Mentoring

This can include one-to-one mentoring and group mentoring.

We discuss mentoring in Section 6.

Examples of mentoring activities are:

- Joint lesson planning;
- Observing mentor's teaching, including a discussion before and after observation;
- Observing fellow teachers, including a discussion before and after observation;

    o Observing a teacher teaching the same subject or grade;

    o Observing a teacher teaching another subject or grade;

    o Observing another new teacher;

- Observing NT's teaching, including a discussion before and after observation;
- Analysing student work and results on formative assessments;
- Analysing marking and record keeping systems;
- Discussing about teaching and learning issues, not focused on a specific lesson;
- Suggesting and discussing teaching and classroom management techniques.

The draft of TDM policy presents an approach of new teacher induction, where support, development and assessment exist together. Following registration, NTs undergo a probation period of one year during which they work under the mentorship of more experienced teachers in the subjects they are qualified to teach. During this probation period, NTs have to demonstrate that they are reaching the professional teacher standards. Upon successful completion of probation, a teacher has the full entry to the teaching profession.

2. Communities of Practice (CoP)

NTs and more experienced teachers meet regularly to discuss their work. They develop solutions to concrete classroom challenges and share good practices. Activities that can be undertaken within a CoP are:

- Collaborative lesson preparation;
- Lesson study/observation;
- Case discussions;
- Analysing student work on formative and summative assessments;
- Analysing marking and record keeping systems;
- Aeveloping strategies for teaching learners with learning disabilities.

We discuss CoPs in Section 7.

3. Seminars and trainings

Trainings can be organised at school, sector or district level. In some circumstances, trainings can be useful. Advantages of seminars and trainings are:

- They get information and skills directly to people who need it.

- They are a quick and important initial step in strengthening the ability to implement and realise specific goals.

- Trainers have strong control over the content and the learning process

- They have the potential for creating a sense of community or common purpose, which can later be turned into a Community of Practice.

However, seminars and trainings have disadvantages too:

- They are usually limited in scope and time;
- They take place at a fixed time and place;
- They rely on outside trainers;
- They focus a lot on the knowledge and less on the skills and the context of the trainees.

4. Pre-service support to school-based induction by TTC tutors

The ESSP (2018/2019- 2022/2023) and the TDM Policy foresee in a role for TTC tutors in the induction of new teachers. This role includes following activities:

- A mentor from the TTC and the school-based mentor (SBM, SSL or DHT) observe the NT teaching (with discussion before and after observation);

- Review with the NT of student work and results on summative assessments;

- Review of NT's progress in teaching: a discussion of targets, areas for improvement between NT and his/her mentors.

5. Coaching

The NT receives coaching support to discuss specific challenges he/she struggles with. Through coaching conversations, the NT will formulate solutions him/herself and build his/her confidence in the teaching profession. Over a timeline of one year, the following **induction activities are** suggested (Table 2):

The activities coloured in grey should take place during the entire school year, from the start of the school year until the end.

Table 2: Example of a one - year induction programme

no.	Type of activity	Facilitator of activity
	Before starting	
1	Introduction to induction programme	District Director of Education (DDE) & Sector Education Inspectors (SEI)
2	Logistical support for accommodation	DDE & SEIs
3	Introduction to school's mission, values, policies, procedures & resources	HT
4	Visit of classrooms and staffroom	(D)HT
	Term 1	
1	Appointing a mentor to each NT	HT
2	Introduction to colleagues, learners, school general assembly committee	HT
3	Providing classroom materials including curriculum resources	(D)HT
4	Introduction to record keeping	in-school NT mentor
6	Needs assessment of the NT	in-school NT mentor & TTC tutor
7	Development of individual CPD plan (goals and actions)	in-school NT mentor
8	Mentoring activities	in-school NT mentor
9	Coaching activities	in-school NT mentor
10	Community of Practice (CoP) session	SBM/SSL
11	Lesson observation for informal evaluation	(D)HT
12	Seminars/trainings	(D)HT

Term 2		
1	Mentoring activities	in-school NT mentor
2	Coaching activities	in-school NT mentor
3	Monitoring activity: lesson observation for informal evaluation	NT mentor from pre-service & in-school NT mentor
4	Monitoring activity: review of NT's CPD Plan (review progress and sets targets)	TTC tutor & in-school NT mentor
5	Approving reviewed NT's CPD plan	(D)HT with NT mentors
6	CoP sessions	SSL/SBM
7	Lesson observation for informal evaluation	(D)HT
8	Seminars/trainings	(D)HT /SBM
Term 3		
1	Mentoring activities	In-school NT mentor
2	Coaching activities	In-school NT mentor
3	Monitoring activity: lesson observation for informal evaluation	TTC tutor & in-school NT mentor
4	CoP sessions	SBM/SSL
5	Lesson observation for formal evaluation	(D)HT
6	Monitoring: end-of-year review of NT's performance by TTC tutor with in-school NT mentor	TTC tutor & in-school NT mentor
7	End of year informal discussions/meetings with in-school NT mentor, TTC tutor, other colleagues	TTC tutor, in-school NT mentor & (D)HT
8	Seminars/trainings	(D)HT/SBM

Source: VVOB, 2018

Research shows that induction of NTs is successful when following **conditions** are in place (Birkeland & Feiman-Nemser, 2007; Wong, 2004):

- An appropriate (realistic) assignment for new teachers, providing them with sufficient time to engage in activities in an induction programme;

- Enough time for SBMs and SSLs to induct new teachers;

- A collaborative school culture where administrators, teachers and parents share:

  - A vision and mission of the school;

  - An understanding that teaching is complex work and learning to teach well takes time and requires collaboration and continuous professional development;

  - An understanding that the school must provide teachers with learning opportunities just as it does for students;

  - An understanding that all members of the school community are responsible for the growth and development of colleagues and students.

That shared understanding is not present in many schools. It must be cultivated. One way to do this is induction, which opens conversations about how to develop the practice of new teachers. This gives experienced teachers a reason to discuss learning and teaching, and a safe focus that is outside of their own practice (Birkeland & Feiman-Nemser, 2007).

School leaders have a key role to play in the development of a successful induction system. Research shows that the transformational abilities of a school leader have a positive impact on the how intrinsically motivated new teachers are to teach, how affectively they feel committed to the school and how satisfied they are with their job (Thomas et al., 2020). Moreover, transformational school leaders positively affect new teachers' job attitudes by increasing the number of colleagues supporting the new teacher (Thomas et al., 2020).

Activity 13

Read again the case study of Mr Bwenge at the start of this section and answer the following questions:

- Why is it important for Bwenge Athanase to have an induction at Kamatamu Secondary School, even if he scored very well on the recruitment tests?

- Assume you were the headteacher of Kamatamu Secondary school. Identify 3 induction activities and for each explain how the activity would help Athanase to perform well.

- Which data do you need to prepare those induction activities? Justify the reasons you need those data to prepare mentioned activities.

In the sub-section on reasons for induction, we discussed the importance for new teachers to undergo an initiation process into the teaching profession.

In the sub-section on induction programmes, we listed various activities that should be part of an induction process, including mentoring (and coaching), taking part in a Community of Practice and participating in seminars and trainings. Mentoring and coaching should include lesson observations and feedback discussions.

Appendices 1, 2, 3 & 4 are guidelines which can be used to ensure fruitful induction programmes for teachers and headteachers.

- Appendix 1: Monitoring Guide for Induction of New Teachers

- Appendix 2: Monitoring Guide for Induction of New Headteachers

- Appendix 3: Competence profiles of stakeholders involved in the induction of NTs

- Appendix 4: Competence profile of the Sector Education Inspector as coach of headteachers

Section 4: Supervision of teaching

Introduction

The nature and quality of instructional supervision within a school has effects on the expertise, practice and job satisfaction of teachers and, by extension on student outcomes. Within a distributed school leadership model (see Module 1), supervision of teaching can be done by various people, including the headteacher, deputy headteacher in charge of studies, school-based mentor and the school subject leaders.

However, strong school leaders are distinguished from their colleagues in lower performing schools by their personal involvement in planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and teachers (Robinson et al., 2008). There are **four components** in this involvement:

- Strong school leaders are actively involved in teacher **discussions on instructional matters**, including how teaching approaches impact student achievement.

- Strong school leaders conduct **active oversight and coordination of CBC implementation**. School leaders and staff work together to review and improve teaching. School leaders are directly involved in coordinating the implementation of the CBC across year levels. This includes such activities as monitoring the progression of teaching objectives for developing knowledge, skills and values across year levels.

- Strong school leaders are involved in **classroom observation and subsequent feedback** sessions. Research has shown that classroom observations are crucial for helping teachers improve their teaching (Robinson et al, 2008).

- Strong school leaders systematically **monitor student progress** and use the information to improve teaching. School leaders should coordinate schoolwide examination of data (Heck, 2000). Teachers' use of data to evaluate student progress, adjust their teaching, plan their weekly program and give students feedback is a strong indicator of school quality (Robinson et al., 2008).

In the remainder of this section, we will focus on conducting lesson observations. It is important to note that school-based mentors are trained on these skills and can support the headteacher with lesson observation.

What is lesson observation?

Lesson observation aims at:

- Observing each other's practice, providing feedback and learning from each other to improve their impact on students' learning;

- Focusing on improving teacher practice in alignment with learner needs and school and system priorities;

- Making classroom practice more visible and encourage colleagues to collaborate to improve teacher practice and student learning.

Why lesson observations?

Lesson observations are meant to:

- Provide effective professional learning that emphasises reflection and feedback on practice to improve learning;

- Develop teachers' self-awareness about their own teaching practice and its impact;

- Help determine professional learning needs at individual and school level;

- Supports the development of a common understanding of effective teaching practices that have impact;

- Supports sharing of ideas and expertise among teachers including modelling of good practice;

- Provides opportunities to discuss challenges and concerns with colleagues;

- builds whole-school accountability for the quality of teaching and learning in the school.

Conducting a lesson observation

Most supervision of teaching is done by lesson observations. There are four steps in conducting successful lesson observations:

- Planning the lesson observation together

- Conducting the lesson observation

- Giving feedback on the lesson

- Reflection on how the lesson can be improved
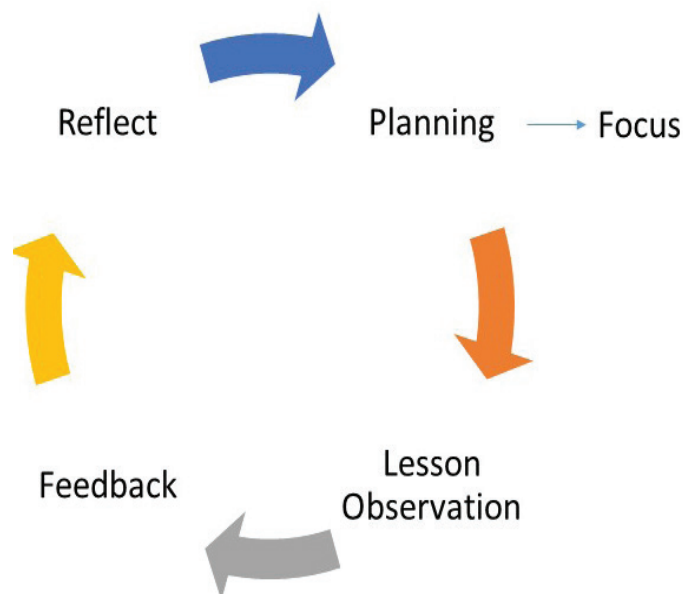
Figure 6: Process of conducting lesson observations (VVOB, 2017)

1. **Planning the lesson observation**

Before the lesson observation, the teacher and the observer should sit together to prepare for the lesson observation. Items to discuss are:

- What is the **purpose of the lesson observation**? Is it developmental or evaluative? What will be done with the observations? Will the lesson be recorded? Be honest about this and be aware that the observer and teacher may interpret the objectives differently. For example, even if you, as school leader, say that the purpose of the supervision activity is learning, the teacher may still interpret it as an evaluation activity.

- Discuss how the lesson **fits within the CBC**. Is it the first lesson of a unit? Is it building on what was done in the previous lesson? A lesson plan can be used to guide this discussion. Some questions to ask are:

  - What do you want learners to learn? What is fundamental and what is less important?

  - How does the lesson relate to what came before and what comes next?

  - How will you know if students have learned the content of the lesson?

  - What will you do if students have not achieved the outcomes of the lesson?

  - How will you provide more learning opportunities for learners who have mastered the content and for those who still struggle with understanding it?

- Discuss the **focus of the lesson observation**. This should be a two-way discussion:

  - The observer indicates what he/she will focus on during the lesson, using the lesson observation form.

  - The teacher requests specific areas that the observer should focus on, for example the reactions of particular learners, how learners work together in groups, gender etc.

  - The observer and the teacher plan a lesson together and determine anticipated outcomes. Problems of instruction are shared and materials and strategies of teaching, processes of learning and evaluation are agreed upon.

  - Below we briefly discuss some possible focus areas for lesson observations.

2. Conducting the lesson observation

At the start of the lesson observation, the observed teacher provides the school leader (HT or DHT) a copy of his/her lesson plan. It is important to focus on the agreed observation criteria (teacher competences). However, other issues may arise that become target or areas for review.

During the lesson observation, take as many notes as you can or, even better, record (parts of) the lesson but always ask permission of the teacher. Having a record of what you noticed during the lesson (not what you thought), will help you with the feedback discussion afterwards. You can agree on a report format with teachers or use the template provided in appendix 6 of this student's manual.

Generally, observers try to be as unobtrusive as possible during the lesson and only intervene when the teacher makes a grave professional error (important content error, corporal punishment). It might be a good idea to make clear arrangements on this with the teacher beforehand.

3. Giving feedback on the lesson

Feedback and reflection on the lesson afterwards is **crucial for learning**. Ideally, feedback is given as soon as possible after the lesson observation. Sit down with the teacher in a quiet place for the feedback discussion and foresee **plenty of time**. Before providing your feedback, start by allowing the observed teacher to give his/her own impression of his or her lesson. You can use questions such as: are you satisfied with your own teaching? If yes, why? If not, why?

In the next section, we will discuss criteria of effective feedback. Perhaps, the key element to remember is that teachers need to be convinced that your feedback will result in better teaching and learning.

Therefore, it can often be better to **focus your feedback on a few aspects** to improve upon, rather than overwhelming the teacher with lots of negative elements. The evaluation ends with the observer and teacher agreeing on changes in the teacher's strategy and a follow-up observation.

4. Reflection on how the lesson can be improved

Based on the feedback, the teacher reflects on how the lesson can be improved. For this, the teacher can use other information and data as well, such as student work and assessment results. **We don't learn from practice, but from reflecting on our practice** (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). The reflection can be done individually, with the observer, or with peers in a Community of Practice. The reflection results in a plan for the next lesson. Follow up with teachers about their development.

Suggestions for organising lesson observations

- Be clear on the **purpose** of the lesson observation and use an a**ppropriate lesson observation form**. There are many observation forms, depending on the purpose and focus. They are like the glasses you use to look at a lesson. Different glasses give you a different focus. Lesson observation forms for evaluative purposes usually have lots of items and questions. Forms for developmental purposes usually have a more open structure with a lot of space for writing observations, as their focus is on having a productive conversation about the lesson. In Appendix 5 & 6, we include two examples of lesson observation tools.

- You don't have to observe always full lessons. Trained observers usually get a good sense of a lesson in 5 to 10 minutes. **Short and regular observations** are better than full lesson observations once per year or per term.

- Know what good teaching and learning looks like. Learn about effective teaching and learning by reading up-to-date research and working with other school leaders and teachers.

- Don't just focus on the teachers. **Ask learners** what they are learning, how they are learning it, and so on.

- Give **effective feedback**, with lots of praise and just a few points for improvement (see next section).

- Have short informal conversations with your teachers about their teaching. You can use these to **follow up on feedback** you gave during a lesson observation.

- Both headteachers, deputy headteachers(s) and school-based mentors should be involved in lesson observations and instructional supervision. However, it remains important that the headteacher is sufficiently engaged in the supervision of teaching.

- Stimulate **lesson observations by colleagues**. Colleagues can give each other more detailed, subject-specific feedback. Also, teachers may be more willing to sharing challenges with their colleagues than with school leaders.

- **Offer choice**: allow staff some control over who observes them/who they observe and the timing of observations.

Activity 15

Read the case story of the peer observation programme in Hillbrook Anglican School bellow and answer the following questions:

- What are the success factors of this programme?
- Could you implement such a programme in your school? What would you do differently?
- How would you measure the effectiveness of the programme in your school?

Under the leadership of Mr Sharland, Deputy Headteacher in Hillbrook Anglican School in Australia, teachers started with peer observations. The reason for starting the programme was the realisation that there was a lot of expertise available within the school. However, good practices and innovations usually stayed within one classroom.

However, he also realised that many teachers had not had any other teachers in their classrooms for most of their careers, except when they were formally evaluated. Mr Sharland introduced the programme slowly using small steps, really bringing people on board. Participation by teachers was voluntary. Teachers could sign up to the programme and approach other teachers to observe their lessons. Observations were limited to 10-15 minutes and no feedback was given initially in order to let teachers get used to having other teachers in their classrooms.

Teachers used the observations to reflect on their own teaching. Gradually, the school developed a stronger culture of support. 80% of the teachers currently take part in the programme. The next step is to expand the programme to all teaching staff.

A video about the case story (3'16") is available on: https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/introducing-classroom-observation

Extension: another video (5'41") on a peer observation programme in Ipswich Girls' Grammar School (Australia) is available on: https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/peer-observation

The activity above illustrates various principles and good practices related to supervision of teaching:

a) Coaching, mentoring and conducting lesson observations are related. A lesson observation can be a starting point for a coaching or mentoring conversation about challenges that the teacher experiences.

b) Many teachers are not used to having regular lesson observations. Go slowly with implementing lesson observation programmes, for example by starting it as a voluntary programme.

c) Share findings and ideas of lesson observations with the wider group of teachers.

Teachers Helping Teachers: Peer Observations

Teachers can collaboratively observe each other for professional development purposes. These peer observations are confidential and nonevaluative in nature. Peer observations benefit both the observer and the observed teacher:

- Observers see new techniques in action, get new ideas for their teaching toolkits, and can reflect on their own assumptions, beliefs, and teaching practices based on what they witness.

- Observed teachers benefit from analysing the descriptive data the observer collects about classroom interactions and the class environment; they can also grow though discussions that result from observer questions and suggestions to improve learning outcomes.

- Based on their discussions and reflections, participants can develop action plans or action research projects to improve their teaching practice.

- Peer observations can also improve camaraderie, deepen collaboration, and increase self-awareness among participating teachers.

Peer observation can be either formative or summative. Formative observations are designed to provide guidance and advice to help an instructor improve. To be most effective, formative evaluations should be confidential and should remain the property of the teacher being observed. Formative lesson observations give the teacher opportunities to reexamine their teaching with an observer who is a colleague. Summative evaluations are not confidential and usually performed for use in personnel decisions such as promotions and for comparison in relation to other colleagues in the department.

Peer observations generally consist of three stages which are similar to steps of lesson observation explained in the above paragraphs: pre-observation, observation, and post-observation.

Focus areas during lesson observations

1. Learner-centred pedagogy

In order to supervise teaching, it is important for a school leader to understand what a learner-centred pedagogy means. Table 3 shows the differences between teacher-centred and learner-centred education. In a learner-centred classroom the learners co-influence the teaching and learning process, in contrast to a teacher-led classroom whereby the teacher is fully in charge of the content, the teaching and learning process. In a teacher-led classroom, it is only the teacher who has the authority to deliver knowledge, skills and attitudes. Learners are like empty vessels to be filled.

Table 3: Teacher - led versus learner - centred education

Teacher-led education	Learner-centred education
Teacher controls the content and teaching and learning process.	Learners co-control the content and the learning process.
Dominant techniques are lecturing and whole class drilling (all learners repeating what the teacher says).	There are many collaborative interactions between the teacher and learners and among learners.
Fixed curriculum	Room for individual interests, learning preferences and needs
Teacher is the only source of knowledge.	Teacher is a facilitator of learning.

Source: Altinyelken, 2010; Schweisfurth, 2013; Vavrus, Thomas, & Bartlett, 2011

Examples of techniques that can promote student-centred learning are group work, brainstorming, questioning, experiments, storytelling, role play, case study and jigsaw (UR-CE, 2017).

- Group work: a technique whereby learners are given a challenging task to be carried out in small groups. All group members must be actively involved. Mixed-ability groups should be used whenever possible. This promotes co-operation, peer support and valuing individual contributions and is especially useful for project work, learning or practising a new skill, discussing an assignment, problem solving etc. Same ability groups can help you focus on developing a particular skill or concept with learners, especially when you are differentiating in terms of content or learning processes. Same ability groups should only be used on a temporary basis and should not be composed of the same learners all the time.

- Brainstorming: a technique whereby learners generate ideas about a given topic.

- Questioning: questions are a key ingredient of student-centred classrooms. Questions should stimulate thinking and involve all learners. Questions should be asked by teachers to learners, by learners to teachers and by learners to learners.

- Storytelling: a technique whereby the teacher or a learner tells a story and asks questions to the class for motivating learners in learning or giving context to a lesson to be learnt.

- Role playing: a technique in which learners act out a scenario related to a given topic.

- Discussing case studies: a technique whereby learners are presented with a case of a complex and realistic situation, in which they must take a decision or solve a problem related to the learning objectives.

- Jigsaw: a form of group work that gives each learner opportunities to learn the content of a given sub-topic in a small group, and to teach it to group members. Learners with the same sub-topic meet and share ideas until everyone masters the content before going back to their respective groups and teach the content to their group members.

2. Inclusion

In Module 1, we introduced the main ideas of inclusion. A key element of an inclusive lesson is that all learners are treated as individuals. Therefore, teachers should use classroom strategies that involve all learners. During lesson observations, you should focus on how teachers deal with learners with learning challenges.

Activity 16

Answer the following questions:

- Do you have data on students with special needs education? How did you collect them? Are they disaggregated? Based on those collected data, what activities did you plan in your SIP?

- What can teachers do to support learners with visual impairments?

- What can teachers do to support learners with hearing impairments?

- What can teachers do to support learners with developmental impairments?

- What can teachers do to support learners with physical impairments?

- What can teachers do to support fast and slow learners?

Table 4 lists classroom strategies to help learners with various learning challenges. It is not feasible nor desirable that all teachers develop specialized expertise to support learners with various impairments (learning sign language, reading braille…). However, teachers can take a variety of measures to accommodate learners so that impairments do not turn into learning disabilities. Such measures benefit all learners, not just those with learning impairments.

For specialised support, school leaders should bring in specialised teachers and check if family, friends or people from the local community can provide support.

Table 4: Impairments and possible classroom strategies to accommodate them

Impairment	Classroom strategy to accommodate
Hearing	- Convey information to the child using informal signs and hand gestures. - Seat the child in the front row. Speak loudly and clearly. - Ensure the child can see your mouth when you speak. - Provide the child with a detailed outline of the lesson/objectives. - Make sure that there is a quiet class environment. - Use visual instructions (charts, pictures and icons) and concrete objects. - After giving instructions to the whole class, check comprehension with the learner who is hearing impaired. - Assign the child a learning buddy (partner). - Speak with the child's parents to identify and build on communication techniques used at home. Check if family or friends can support the learner in the school.
Talking	- Encourage the child to continue when he/she is trying to communicate. - Be attentive while he/she is talking. - Provide opportunities to use different ways of communication such as role play, gestures, drawing, writing, etc. - Speak with the child's parents to identify and build on communication techniques used at home.
Physical access	- Ensure the child is physically able to access his/her classroom and seat. - Ensure the child can access learning materials. - Assign a student helper or circle of friends to help the child navigate the classroom. - Shift classroom furniture so that there are clear passageways.

Reading	▪ Ask the child to follow along with a finger.
	▪ Provide a piece of paper or other material and instruct the child to uncover one sentence at a time while reading.
	▪ Provide extra reading practice time in school and at home.
	▪ Pair the child with a reading buddy who reads with him/her daily.
Seeing	▪ Ensure that the classroom has good lighting.
	▪ Write in large and clear letters on the blackboard.
	▪ Use a clear and loud voice
	▪ Regularly repaint the blackboard for good contrast
	▪ Use contrasting colours for writing (e.g.,, no pink on a black background, but white)
	▪ Assign the child a learning buddy.
	▪ Seat the child in the front row.
	▪ Refer the child for glasses, if possible.
	▪ Use audio materials
	▪ Use concrete objects that give learners tactile experiences.
	▪ Use a consistent vocabulary (e.g.,, don't say book one time and manual another time).
Developmental	▪ visit the home of the learner, get to know the learner better and familiarize yourself with the strategies used at home.
	▪ collaborate with parents, family and friends.
	▪ use team work with mixed ability grouping
	▪ use lots of teaching aids and manipulatives.
	▪ differentiate in lessons.
	▪ provide short tasks with lots of variation.
	▪ set individual objectives, for example by using a target sheet.

Source: UNESCO, 2014, adapted by VVOB

Differentiation is a key classroom strategy to make teaching and learning more inclusive. Every classroom at every grade level has students with varying ages, abilities, prior knowledge and backgrounds. In Rwanda, many students' mastery of learning is several grade levels below the grade they are in (Rwanda Education Board, 2018). Perhaps the most important work of teachers is to identify students' level of prior knowledge and then plan lessons that support and challenge all students to learn.

This will enable teachers to differentiate instruction effectively, considering the large class sizes, providing remediation for struggling learners so they can catch up with their peers and providing challenging content and activities for fast learners. Teachers can differentiate by varying the level of support, the quantity of exercises, the difficulty level of the task or the outcome. Figure 7 shows an example of differentiation by setting tasks at different levels of difficulty.

> An example of good practice in a Rwandan school:
>
> A P3 Mathematics teacher in Kayonza district modelled this very well during a lesson on perimeter. Rather than only providing one or two questions for pupils to work on independently, he provided 4 questions. The questions were of varying levels of difficulty, allowing **all** pupils to achieve, from the pupils with learning difficulties to those who were able to work at a faster pace.

These are the questions that the teacher in Kayonza created and used:

Low	Medium
10 cm 10 cm What is the perimeter of the square?	12 cm 5 cm What is the perimeter of the rectangle?
Medium/high	**High**
The perimeter is 20 cm, what could the possible lengths of each side be?	The area is 24 square centimetres. What are the possible perimeters? How can you know?

Figure 7: Example of differentiation for mathematics (BLF, 2019)

It is important when including students who are blind not to teach them the sighted alphabet; a b and c as sighted people see it. This is not relevant to someone who uses Braille and will only cause confusion. For a Braille user to be fully included, he or she should have the same opportunities for reading and writing in their preferred format as other students. If a Braille machine is noisy put a mat or other padding under it.

Alternatively, the student could be supplied with a hand-held Braille frame and stylus. Audio recording is also an effective way of assessing spelling, note taking etc. Group work and peer support should also be used as an important part of teaching and training. We provide more information on the Braille alphabet in Appendix 7.

Activity 17

Read the scenario related to the role of school leaders in leading inclusive teaching and learning.

Case study 1

Daniel is 12 years old. He has a learning and developmental disability due to foetal alcohol syndrome. He cannot read or write but is very eager to learn. He lives with his older brothers and sisters as his parents passed away.

Role play: TV interview. You, as a headteacher, are part of a panel of experts, answering questions on IE when viewers phone in.

Case study 2

Francesca is 14 years old. She completes all her classwork very quickly but is then noisy and disruptive in class. She can sometimes be a bully – especially with the quieter children

Role play: you are a headteacher. Many teachers come to you to complain about Francesca. You hold a meeting to listen to concerns. Teachers want you to exclude her.

Case study 3

Maria is 8 years old and has been deaf since birth. She lives in a small village, has lots of friends and communicate with them and her family by informal/ community sign language. She has never been to school and feels very sad that she has to sit and watch all her friends go to school together every day.

Role play: hold a meeting between school leaders, community leaders and parents to discuss education for Maria.

Case study 4:

Victoria is a 13-years old girl. She studied in school until P6, but then her family prevented her from studying further. Victoria says that her father told her not to go to school. He said, "Now you can read and write it is enough for you". Just stay at home now and help your mother.

Role play: visit her home to talk to parents about further education for Victoria.

Case study 5:

Emmanuel has no parents as they both passed away. He is HIV positive. He lives with his grandmother who is blind and dependent on him – even to use the toilet. He comes to school but is often absent or late. He always looks tired and hungry.

Role play: You are a headteacher chairing a meeting with teachers and community members to discuss the case of Emmanuel. Find solutions.

REB, in partnership with the Building Learning Foundations programme, has produced a Guide for identifying and helping children with learning difficulties and special educational needs (SEN), which is distributed to all P1-P3 English and Mathematics teachers.

One of the government's disability commitments is that by the end of 2020, every school in Rwanda will need to include inclusive education actions in their **Annual Plan and Performance Contract**.

3. Gender

Activity 18

In module 1, unit 5 we discussed gender responsive pedagogy. Thinking back of what you learned then, make a list of points of attention for teachers during lesson observations in your school.

Gender responsive pedagogy refers to teaching and learning processes that pay attention to the **specific learning needs of girls and boys** (Mlama, 2005). Gender responsive pedagogy calls for teachers to take an integrated gender approach in the processes of lesson planning, teaching, class management and performance evaluation. As a school leader, it is important that you can make teachers aware of gender responsive pedagogy and help them to become more sensitive to gender stereotypes in the classroom.

Examples of a gender responsive pedagogy are (Mlama, 2005):

- Ask same amount of questions to boys and girls;

- Ask questions of same difficulty level to boys and girls;

- Use examples that reflect interests of boys and girls;

- Provide equal opportunities to boys and girls to engage with learning resources (experiments, concrete materials, ICT);

- Use examples that feature boys and girls in equal amounts and in non-stereotypical situations (e.g., word problems in mathematics, women as scientists, men as caregivers);

- During group work, make sure that boys and girls take up leadership roles;

- Foster high expectations for all learners for all subjects (e.g., girls can be equally good at mathematics and science than boys).

Conclusion

Strong school leaders are involved in **classroom observation and subsequent feedback** sessions. Leading teaching implies setting clear performance standards for teaching and make regular classroom observations that help teachers to improve their teaching. In this section, we focused on the process of lesson observations, including the steps, the organisation and the focus areas. In the next section, we will discuss the process of giving effective feedback after the lesson observation.

Section 5: Giving effective feedback

Introduction

> **Activity 19: Case study**
>
> A school leader conducted a lesson observation in Mr Rukundo's Class in Gasabo District. Afterwards, it took him two weeks before giving feedback to the teacher. During the feedback conversation, the school leader criticised Mr. Rukundo by saying that he used wrong teaching methods and that he was not up to the job. He warned him that if he did not improve quickly, he would lose his job.
>
> ▪ What impact do you think the school leader's feedback had on Mr Rukundo?
>
> ▪ If you were this school leader, how would you give feedback to Mr. Rukundo in order to improve his teaching?

The term feedback is often used to describe all kinds of comments made after the fact, including advice, praise and evaluation. But none of these are feedback, strictly speaking. Basically, feedback is **information about how we are doing in our efforts to reach a goal**. Some examples. I tell a joke with the goal of making people laugh, and I observe the audience's reaction. They laugh loudly or barely react. I teach a lesson with the goal of engaging students, and I see that some students have their eyes focused on me while others are sleeping.

It is important to make the **difference between feedback and advice**. Feedback is communication about what you think went well and not so well during the lesson. Feedback is about seeing how well you have come to achieving your goal. It is about what you did, not about what you need to do next. Feedback should start from observations (with evidence). From observations, you can move to interpretations. Advice is the third step and is about what you think the teacher should do next time (Figure 8). If you move immediately to giving advice, the teacher may dispute the advice, because you didn't agree on the observations and interpretations
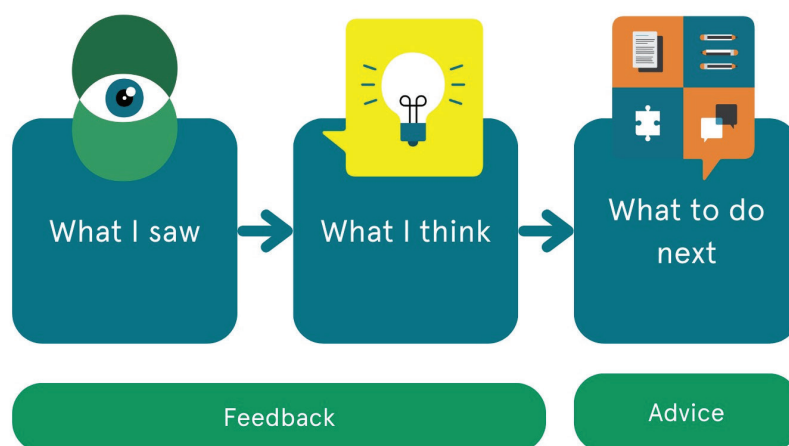
Figure 8: The process of giving feedback and advice (Wiggins, 2012, adapted by VVOB)

Giving feedback is more than sharing a list of suggestions for change. By giving feedback, you want the teacher to change his/ her practice. Secondly, teachers are in front of their class every day, whereas you, as observer, only visit occasionally. Therefore, **the way you communicate the feedback is very important**. When not given well, teachers may become defensive, demotivated or dismissive (will reject it) of the feedback. Remember that the goal of feedback is to improve practice one step at a time, not to show how much you know about teaching a good lesson.

Activity 20

Look at the list of possible strategies below. For each strategy, decide whether this will be effective or ineffective for a school leader to use when observing and giving feedback to teachers. If you agree with the statement, put a tick, if you disagree put a X. If you are unsure, put a "?".

- Allow other teachers in the school to sit in on the feedback session so that they can learn too.
- Begin with positive points about the lesson to build self-confidence.
- Schedule the feedback session for as soon after the lesson as possible.
- Provide the teacher with a detailed list of all their strengths and weaknesses.
- Let the teacher see your observation form and notes.
- Tell the teacher what they should or shouldn't do in the next lesson.
- Ask the teacher what changes they would make if they were teaching the lesson again.
- If something goes wrong, blame other things and not the teacher.
- Let the teacher start first with giving their impressions of the lesson.
- Give general feedback, rather than focusing on specific situations during the lesson.

Does the appropriateness of some of the statements depend on the situation?

Early **research on feedback** focused on whether it was better to give grades or to give comments for learning. Page (1958) was the first one to systematically investigate the effect of grades versus comments on learning outcomes. He found that comments (feedback) were more effective than grades. Other researchers repeated Page's study many times over the years, with an interesting result: sometimes these results were replicated, and sometimes they weren't (Paul Black & Wiliam, 1998).

More recent research has identified the solution: it depends on the quality of the comments. in these early studies about comments, the "feedback" was judgmental, not descriptive. (Butler & Nisan (1986) identified that the most effective feedback was feedback on the task, descriptive, affecting both performance and motivation and fostered interest in task for its own sake (self-regulation). This has been confirmed by later studies (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999; Hattie, 2009).

How do you give feedback?

1. Set clear goals and engage with them during feedback

Make sure that teachers understand what is expected of them, what the goals, criteria and standards are. To what extent do teachers have opportunities to engage actively with goals, criteria and standards, before, during and after an assessment task?

Effective feedback requires that a person agrees on a goal, acts to achieve the goal, and receives goal-related information about his or her actions. If I am not clear on my goals or if I fail to pay attention to them, I cannot get helpful feedback (nor am I likely to achieve my goals). Information becomes feedback if I am trying to achieve my goals and the information tells me whether I am on track or need to change course.

It is always a good idea to ask the teacher when visiting a class, "What would you like me to look for and perhaps count?" In everyday school situations, goals are often implicit. In school, teachers are often unclear about the specific expectations. Therefore, it is crucial to remind them about the goal and the criteria by which they will be assessed. Teachers must be on the same page about what high-quality work is. Teachers need to look at student work together and identify standards of good practice. This will help teachers within the school identifying desired standards and becoming more consistent over time. As leaders of teaching and learning, school leaders should lead this process to ensure that goals, assessment criteria and standards are consistent across the school.

2. Make sure the feedback is actionable and transparent

Effective feedback is concrete and specific; it provides actionable information. Thus, comments like "Good work!" and "You did that wrong" or just a grade are not feedback at all. We can easily imagine teachers asking themselves in response to these comments, what specifically should I do differently next time, based on this information? No idea. They don't know what was "good" or "bad" about what they did.

The goal of feedback is to improve practice. This means that part of the feedback is about motivating the teacher to change their practice. It means setting high expectations and instilling the belief that these expectations are realistic for the teacher to achieve. It also implies that effective coaches know that in complex situations, feedback about what went right is as important as feedback about what didn't work.

3. Encourage motivation and positive self-esteem

Many lesson observers have the tendency to make a list of everything that went wrong in the lesson. During the feedback session, they present the whole list to the teacher. The result is that the teacher is overwhelmed, doesn't know where to start to improve things and gets demotivated. **Giving too much feedback can be counterproductive**, as the teacher doesn't know where to start and may dismiss all the feedback as unattainable. It is better to help the teacher concentrate on only a few key elements of performance. Other aspects can be the focus of the next feedback session.

4. Encourage dialogue around practice

Good feedback is about developing a shared understanding about the gap between current and desired practice and about the changes that are needed to bridge that gap. This is achieved by feedback dialogue around the practice or assessment tasks.

Use discussions after lesson observations to discuss aspects of teaching and learning, how to make the group work more effective, how to involve the children in the back and how we could use concrete materials to introduce the topic.

Feedback should be a two-way conversation in which also the school leader should be open to new ideas. In this way, the two participants engage in a professional dialogue.

5. Facilitate the development of self-assessment and reflection skills

As a school leader, you may only observe your teachers and provide feedback once in a while. Therefore, it is important that teachers develop the skills to self-assess and reflect on their practice. Remember that we don't learn from practice, but from reflecting on our practice. In this course, we use build in opportunities for reflection, self-assessment or peer assessment, which you can adapt to your work with teachers.

6. Make the feedback descriptive

Feedback should start with building a shared understanding of observations. Make sure that you first agree on what you observed during the lesson. Starting from these observations, suggestions can then be made to improve performance. Feedback must be accepted by the teacher. Many feedback conversations lead to arguments because the feedback givers are not sufficiently descriptive: they jump to an interpretation from the observations instead of simply presenting what they observed. For example, an observer may make the common mistake of stating that "many students were bored in class." That is a judgement, not an observation. It would have been far more useful and less debatable had the observer said something like, "I counted ongoing inattentive behaviours in 12 of the 25 students once the lesson was underway.

The behaviours included texting under desks, passing notes, and making eye contact with other students. However, after the small-group exercise began, I saw such behaviour in only one student."

Such care in offering neutral, goal-related facts is the whole point of the supervision of teaching and of good coaching. Effective supervisors and coaches work hard to carefully observe and comment on what they observed, based on a clear statement of goals.

7. Feedback should be given timely

The sooner you give feedback after the lesson, the better. Teachers don't want to wait for hours or days to find out how the observer perceived the lesson or teacher's performance and what could be improved.

We don't give feedback only in schools. In sports, for example, coaches give a lot of feedback to help people improve their performance. Read the following case story about a coach giving feedback to her daughter who is running.

Case Story

My daughter does athletics. She is training hard for the 1000m run. After each tour on the running track her coach shouts split times (the times for each tour) and bits of feedback ("You're not swinging your arms!""You're on pace for 5:15"), followed by advice ("Pick it up—you need to take two seconds off this next tour to get in under 5:10!").

My daughter and her teammates are getting feedback (and advice) about how they are performing now compared with their final target time. My daughter's goal is to run a 5:00 kilometre. She has already run 5:09. Her coach is telling her that at the pace she just ran in the first lap, she is unlikely to meet her goal. Then, he tells her something descriptive about her current performance (she's not swinging her arms) and gives her a brief piece of concrete advice (take two seconds off the next lap) to make achievement of the goal more likely. The ability to improve one's result depends on the ability to adjust one's pace based on ongoing feedback that measures performance against a concrete, long-term goal.

Imagine that the coach would shout a grade after each tour, for example, "B+ on that lap!" Or, only general comments, such as "good" or "not so good". My daughter would not know what to do to reach her goal.

Adapted from Wiggins, 2012.

Activity 21

Revisit previous feedbacks (at least 10) you provided to teachers, and explain how you can improve the quality of them, taking into account everything we have discussed in this unit? What would you change and why? Mention at least five data on which your feedbacks were based.

The principles of effective feedback that we discussed in this section will help you to improve the quality of feedback that you provide to teachers.

Conclusion

Formative assessment with lots of feedback and opportunities to use that feedback, enhances performance and achievement (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Feedback has been identified as one of the most effective interventions to improve learning (Hattie, 2009; Timperley et al., 2007). In this section, we discussed what effective feedback is and 7 guiding principles to give effective feedback.

Section 6: Coaching and mentoring

Introduction

Activity 22: Case study

Mr Mutsinzi, an excellent student at the University of Rwanda-College of Education, achieved a first-class degree with a Bachelor of Education. He quickly got a teaching job in Ingenzi Secondary School in Gatsibo District. However, the headteacher noticed that Mr Mutsinzi seemed not very motivated to encourage learners to use English. After a good discussion with Mr Mutsinzi, the headteacher found that the teacher had a good knowledge of English but was shy and did not like to speak English in front of others.

The headteacher asked the deputy headteacher and the SBM to plan an intervention to support the teacher. They developed some SMART targets with him and provided him with support and some challenges to achieve the targets. One target involved being observed and supported in a few lessons a month by the SBM and discussing feedback to help him gain confidence. The DHT and the SBM worked together, and the teacher felt well supported.

- What do you think about the strategies from this headteacher to support Mr Mutsinzi?

- Mention any other strategy you would have used to support Mr. Mutsinzi if you were the headteacher of Ingenzi Secondary School.

Activity 23

Write down your definitions of mentoring and coaching, post them and discuss them with your colleagues.

In education, both coaching and mentoring are activities that are related to supporting teachers' learning and development. Usually, these terms refer to a relationship where the coach/mentor aims to support his/her coachee/mentee in his/her personal and professional growth. Moreover, mentoring is often seen in relation to new teachers where the mentors are more experienced teachers. Coaching is more general and can concern all categories of teachers.

Coaching is a professional relationship in which an educator with appropriate skills provides support to one or a group of educators in the process to understand and solve problems by themselves with the aim to improve their performance in their profession, through initial and follow up conversations. It builds on a shared understanding of effective teaching, learning and leadership.

Mentoring is a professional relationship in which an experienced teacher provides advice to one or more less experienced teachers with the purpose to improve the quality of teaching and grow in the teaching profession. It builds on a shared understanding of effective teaching and learning.

Table 5: Difference between coaching and mentoring

Coaching	Mentoring
Coaches don't need to have first-hand experience of the coachee's work. The coach can be any professional with expertise in coaching.	Mentoring is a planned pairing of a more skilled or experienced person (usually in the same subject) with a less experienced person.
School leaders can use coaching techniques successfully in the management and development of team members.	Ideally, mentors have no management relationship to the mentee.
Coaches ask 'powerful' questions and not offer or give advice.	Mentors will often provide direction and advice to mentees.
Effective coaching is intended to help you to learn rather than by "teaching" you. By engaging with an experienced coach, the coachee will develop insights leading to better teaching.	Mentoring involves helping mentees to develop their career, skills and expertise often building upon the experiences of the mentor in the process.

Source: Askew & Carnell, 2011

In Rwanda, mentorship responsibility can be assigned to the School-Based Mentor (SBM), Deputy Headteacher in charge of studies or a School Subject Leader (SSL).

Activity 24: Case story - The story of Sam

Mr. Sam has graduated in History. After his acceptance to teaching History at Groupe Scolaire Nyarusange, he was visited by the Director of Studies (DoS) while teaching in senior two. The DoS observed that the lesson plan was not consistent. He recommended him to see Mr. John, the History subject leader so that he will be helped on how to prepare a good lesson plan. John showed him how a lesson is introduced, developed, concluded and how to assess learners. The DoS visited Sam for the second time and he observed that he mastered the planning of the lesson. At the end of the term, Sam prepared and submitted exam papers to the DoS. The DoS took his time to read and go through them to see whether they follow the Bloom's taxonomy. He noticed that the Bloom's taxonomy was not respected. The DoS invited Sam in his office for a discussion.

DoS: Good morning Sam, how are you doing?

Sam: Good morning Sir, I am fine, thank you.

DoS: What do you refer to while setting an exam?

Sam: I usually refer to the content of the lesson.

DoS: What types of questions do you set?

Sam: Two types of questions: open and closed.

DoS: Have you ever heard of Bloom's taxonomy?

Sam: Yes, I know it.

DoS: Do you know all levels of Bloom's taxonomy?

Sam: Yes, I know them.

DoS: If you look at the exam paper you have set, do you think that Bloom's taxonomy has been taken into consideration?

Sam: (After reading the paper) I realise that the exam paper focuses only on the three first levels.

DoS: Do you think the required standards are met?

Sam: (After thinking about it replied): No.

DoS: What can be done?

Sam: I have to readjust the setting of questions. I will bring the revised question paper tomorrow.

DoS: Thank you very much. Have a nice day.

Sam: You are welcome Sir.

After reading this case story, answer the following question:

- Is this dialogue between Mr Sam and his DoS a coaching or mentoring conversation? Justify your answer with characteristics of coaching and mentoring.

Coaching and mentoring are related, and many conversations contain aspects of both. Table 5 above helps you identify aspects of coaching and mentoring.

Benefits of coaching and mentoring

In Section 1, we discussed the following criteria of effective continuous professional development.

- CPD should be team and school focused
- CPD should be process oriented
- CPD should be rooted in reflection
- CPD should be experiential
- CPD should be focused
- CPD should be collaborative
- CPD should be context specific
- CPD involves producing and creating
- CPD requires ownership

Activity 25

Brainstorm on how coaching and mentoring fulfil the criteria of effective CPD.

When performed well, coaching and mentoring are effective methods of CPD because:

1. They link individual development to the development of the group and the school.

2. They are not a once-off activity, but a process consisting of various conversations which can consider the various elements of the learning cycle (Figure 1) and the evolution from unconscious incompetence to unconscious competence (Figure 2).

3. Both methods stimulate reflection by the coachee/ mentee about his/her situation as a source of learning.

4. Coaching and mentoring include moments for the coachee or mentee to try out new approaches or methods, based on action points agreed during the coaching or mentoring conversations. The experiences are discussed in follow-up conversations.

5. Coaching and mentoring focus on specific challenges of the coachee or mentee. They don't try to change or discuss everything at once.

6. Coaching and mentoring are collaborative methods. They involve at least 2 people, but both methods can take place in small groups as well. Well-structured conversations form the basis for learning.

7. Coaching and mentoring are context specific. They start from the specific situation of the coachee or mentee and focus on what he/she identifies as points for learning.

8. Coaching and mentoring conversations result in action points that may include producing lesson plans, teaching resources, test questions etc.

9. Responsibility for learning in coaching and mentoring lies primarily with the coachee or mentee. He/she needs to take the initiative to engage in coaching and mentoring and identify areas for learning. Coaching and mentoring therefore requires the coachee and mentee to take ownership of their learning.

The GRROW Model for coaching

Effective coaching requires to structure and shape coaching conversations. There are many models that can be used for coaching (i.e, GRROW, GROW, TGROW and OSKAR). A model that is often used in school coaching is the GRROW model. This model builds on a model which was originally described by Whitmore (1994) and Landsberg (2015). GRROW is an acronym for Goal, Reality, Resources, Options and Will (Figure9).

Figure 9: GRROW model (Clement, 2017; Whitmore, 1994)

The GRROW model is not a fixed structure that you strictly need to follow during a coaching conversation. Clement (2017) prefers to speak of a five-step game, because the coaching process is more like a game, or a dance with 5 different elements, rather than a rigid structure.

Like most coaching models, the GRROW model assumes that the coach is not necessarily an expert in the coachee's situation.

The coach acts as a facilitator in helping the coachee to choose the best option. A coach can also give advice, but he/she always needs to relate it to the coachee(s). It is the coachee who learns and comes to solutions, rather than the coach telling the coachee what to do.

In the GRROW model, the main steps of a coaching or mentoring conversation are:

- **Goal** – Explore the objective, the desired result: What do you want to achieve?

  The coach and the coachee need to look at the challenge the coachee is facing. This can be a question or a problem related to a specific situation. A question could be "How can I involve my students more in my lessons?" A situation refers to the practice of the coachee where he/she struggles with something and doesn't know how to deal with it. Therefore, he/she needs to identify the behaviour he/she wants to change. Once the desired change has been determined, this change needs to be structured as a goal to achieve like being able to manage a big class, using teaching and learning resources, managing disturbing behaviours of learners,...

- **Reality** – Explore the problem, the current reality and its context: What is happening now? This phase is about describing the current reality of the coachee and helping to get some key information that is needed in order to reach the goal effectively. When exploring the reality, the questions should most often be started with words like "what", "when", "where", "who" and "how".

- **Resources** – Explore the available talents, skills and means: What tools and resources are available? The coachee should think about available resources that could help him/her in achieving his/her goal; resources in the environment and resources within the coachee him/ herself. People find it difficult to ask for help. As a coach you need to stimulate your coachee to ask for help; to look at the possibilities where the coachee can find some help; to make these resources alive. A coach is not expected to do something on behalf of the coachee.

- **Options** – Explore what can help the coachee to solve his/her problem and reach his/her goal: What could you do?

  The purpose of this stage is to create and list possible solutions. It is not about finding the "right" answers. At this stage no answer should be rejected. The quantity of options is more important than their quality or feasibility. It is from this variety of creative possibilities that specific action steps can be selected.

- **Will** – Make a plan, take decision and agree on action: What will you do?

    The purpose of this phase is to invite the coachee to make a choice; to decide which of the options is most likely to help him/her to reach his/her goal, and to transform this into a concrete action plan. It is important that the coachee formulates the plan, not the coach. As a coach you need to hear that the coachee is sincere and expresses what he/she will do.

As conclusion, keep in mind that the GRROW model helps to remind you about what is really important in your conversation. The order of elements should be flexible. For example, in conversation, a coachee can decide to start with describing the challenges he/she is facing before the goal is set.

Successful coaches and mentors also need various key skills. These skills are (Clement, 2017):

- Exploring

- Appreciating and reinforcing

- Confronting and staying connected

- Challenging

- Inspiring

- Allowing and giving space

- Relaxing and keeping the sense of humour

Activity 26

Read the example of a coaching conversation below and try to identify each step of the GRROW model.

An example of a coaching conversation

Murenzi: Hello Munyana, what is the issue you'd like to work on this morning?

Munyana: I've been a headteacher for 3 years and I want to make sure I am developing my teachers effectively. I also need to do more to work with the parents as pupils' attendance needs to improve.

Murenzi: You are describing two issues there Munyana. One is about developing your teachers and the other is about pupil attendance. Which one feels more urgent to you at the moment? Munyana: I think teacher development is my top priority and my goal for this session.

Murenzi: So, what would be a good outcome for you from this conversation?

Munyana: I would like to discuss different ways to encourage teacher development and have some new ideas of what I can do differently.

Murenzi: Tell me about teacher development in your school at the moment.

Munyana: We have a programme of teacher development linked to improving teaching and learning at the school, but it needs more work.

Murenzi: What steps have you taken to grow this programme of development?

Munyana: I called a meeting to discuss what professional development we would need as teachers. I asked every teacher to come with ideas to discuss.

Murenzi: What happened?

Munyana: Only a few teachers came to the meeting and only one had come with ideas.

Murenzi: What could you do to solve this problem?

Munyana: I could call another meeting to talk about teacher professional development.

Murenzi: What else could you do?

Munyana: I could talk to my heads of departments and ask them for ideas on improving teaching and learning.

Murenzi: Any other ideas?

Munyana: I could make a clear link between teacher development and the SIP and share this with all my teachers so that they are involved.

Murenzi: Which is the best option for you? How far do they meet your objective?

Munyana: The first option isn't as strong as I have tried this before. The other 2 are good options and they do meet my objective for this coaching session.

Murenzi: To summarise, we discussed 3 options to help you get the support for teacher development at your school. What will you do first?

Munyana: I will talk to my heads of departments and let them know I'd like to hear their ideas.

Murenzi: When will you do this?

Munyana: I will arrange the meeting as soon as I get back to school. I will make it Friday lunchtime, so we have time to discuss things.

Murenzi: How will you know you have been successful?

Munyana: If I have lots of ideas from my heads of departments on how to move forward with teacher professional development. My teachers will feel supported and motivated.

Source: BLF, 2019

Role of school leaders in supporting coaching and mentoring

Coaching and mentoring can be related to lesson observations. Lesson observations can be great starting points for a coaching conversation and actions identified during coaching may include observing a colleague and asking them to be a mentor.

Being a leader of teaching means using the expertise within your school team to the fullest and breaking down silos between teachers. However, remember from the unit on change management (Module 2) that such changes should be introduced carefully and gradually, producing the enthusiasm of early adopters and giving teachers the choice to adopt changes at their own pace.

Activity 28

Reflect on the following question:

- How can you as a school leader support coaching and mentoring in your school?

As a school leader, you can support coaching and mentoring in a variety of ways:

- Raise awareness with teachers within your school about coaching and mentoring, especially with SBMs and SSLs;

- Support SBMs and SSLs who enrol in the UR-CE Certificate Programme in Educational Coaching and Mentoring;

- Provide SBMs and SSLs with a mandate and time in their timetable to provide coaching and mentoring to their peers;

- Make coaching and mentoring a part of the induction programme of new teachers;

- Discuss regularly experiences with coaching and mentoring with your team (HoDs, SBMs, SSLs) and identify good practices;

- Talk about coaching and mentoring within your PLC at the sector level.

Conclusion

In this section we explored coaching and mentoring as two methods for effective CPD. As a school leader in your role as a leader of teaching, you can support teachers to start programmes of instructional coaching and mentoring. You provide this support in various ways: encouraging your SBMs and SSLs who have been trained on coaching and mentoring to practise and implement what they have learned, creating conducive conditions for coaching and mentoring (time and space), raising awareness with your teachers about the benefits of coaching and mentoring and by starting an instructional coaching programme in your school. VVOB and UR-CE have been training SBMs and SSLs in your school on coaching and mentoring so they can take a leading role in implementing coaching and mentoring in your school.

Section 7: Promoting collaborative learning

Introduction

Collaborative learning means that people work together in teams to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product (Guskey & Kwang Suk Yoon, 2009). CPD is more effective when it is done in a collaborative way (Brodie, 2013). Research (OECD, 2013) shows that teachers who collaborate more with their colleagues – teaching jointly in the same class, observing and providing feedback on each other's classes, engaging in joint activities across different classes and age groups, and engaging in professional learning together – have more confidence in their teaching skills and show higher motivation.

Research in Uganda shows that successful schools had peer-led professional development sessions to enable teachers to learn from their more experienced peers (Twaweza, 2019). These locally-organised and regularly held peer-led teacher professional development sessions at the school targeted specific areas of need – including preparation of schemes of work and lesson plans, conducting assessments, handling teacher-learner relations, classroom management and teacher work ethics. Second, these schools used teacher mentoring and coaching through structured and comprehensive peer-led support supervision as a means of improving classroom instructional practices.

In this section, we will focus on teacher collaboration within a school (Communities of Practice or CoPs) and collaboration of school leaders within a sector (Professional Learning Communities or PLCs).

> **Activity 29**
>
> Most of you have been participating in a Professional Learning Community in your sector. Based on your experience with participation in PLCs, answer the following questions:
>
> - What have you learned in the PLC about your own functioning as a school leader?
>
> - What have you learned in the PLC about your role as a leader of teaching in your school?
>
> - How does your participation in the PLC support you in school improvement planning?

As said above, CPD is more effective when it is done in a collaborative way. Your participation in a PLC of school leaders in your sector may have helped you to take up your role as a leader of teaching in your school. Participating in a PLC may help you to inspire your teachers to start learning together in a Community of Practice. In this section, we will go deeper into the reasons for starting and characteristics of PLCs and CoPs.

In this section, we will look in more depth at the role school leaders can play initiating and supporting Communities of Practice in their schools. Part of the support can be delegated to school-based mentors and school subject leaders.

Communities of Practice and Professional Learning Communities

Different terms are used to refer to similar concepts: a community of practice, a learning community, a professional learning community, School-Based In-service (SBI), a professional learning network.

To avoid any confusion, REB suggests using the term "Community of Practice" for teams of teachers working together and the term "Professional Learning Community" (PLC) for school leaders working together at the sector level. In 2022, REB approved the national PLC framework and applies the following definition for CoPs or PLCs:

> "*A Community of Practice or Professional Learning Community is a platform where colleagues meet regularly, to share expertise, experiences, challenges, and learning and work collaboratively to improve their work, which leads to effective teaching and learning and ultimately to improved student learning outcomes*".

CoPs are not a new concept. Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger developed the concept of Communities of Practice already in the early 1990s (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Their concept was based on observations of how people learn. They realised that people learn most things outside school, in informal situations and by observing and imitating rather than by listening to lectures. Communities of Practice are a part of our daily lives. Think about how you learned to ride a bicycle or learned cooking. Probably by observing and practising rather than studying books.

> **Activity 31**
>
> Reflect on the current situation in your schools and answer the following questions:
>
> - Do you have CoPs in your school?
> - If not, what are the challenges to set up CoPs and how could they be overcome?
> - If yes, what CoP(s) do you have in your school?
> - What is going well and what are challenges do you face?
> - Are the topics discussed and the activities implemented in the CoPs related to the priorities set in your SIP? If not, how could you link the CoP activities in your school with the SIP? How could you work together with your SBM?
>
> Write down how you can improve CoPs in your school.

CoPs won't be successful from the first day. Remember from the unit on Group Dynamics (Unit 1, Module 2) that groups go through stages during their development. Before groups reach the performing stage, they go through various stages (forming, norming, storming) while productivity is low. Successful CoPs are characterised by various elements that are called key enablers (Katz et al., 2009). They include purpose and focus, relationships, collaboration, inquiry, leadership and accountability.

Conditions for successful CoPs and PLCs: key enablers

> **Activity 32**
>
> Question for reflection: What conditions need to be met for a CoP or PLC to be successful?

CoPs and PLCs are more than staff meetings. The major difference is that the objective of a CoP is professional development. CoPs and PLCs are about learning, growth and development. This is done by collaboratively inquiring and reflecting on one's practice. Secondly, in CoPs and PLCs, the agenda is set by all the members together, not only by the leader or the facilitator.

Some conditions need to be in place to have a successful CoP or PLC. The most important task for school leaders is to ensure that conditions for a CoP in their school are met. We call these conditions key enablers.

Figure 10: Key enablers of CoPs and PLCs (Katz et al., 2008)

1. Purpose and focus

A shared vision on what is high-quality teaching and learning is critical for a CoP or PLC. When members take ownership of this commitment, learning (and not teaching) becomes the focus. A vision needs to be translated into a concrete and realistic learning focus, which challenges teachers and school leaders to question their current practice, make changes and inform their own learning needs. Teachers need to feel responsible for making sure that all learners in the school can learn to the fullest of their abilities. To be effective and successful, CoPs and PLCs need to define the purpose of its activities and focus on it. Remember, if you don't know where you are and you don't know where you are going, do not be surprised to end up being where you do not want to be.

2. Relationships

Relationships are about mutual trust and respect. Members share information openly, including successes and failures, and they trust and respect each other. Some of the information shared could be sensitive, which means that confidentiality is important for members of a CoP or PLC. A spirit where people are not afraid to talk about challenges they experience in their teaching, critically comment to others, avoid gender stereotyping and share their ideas on learning, is very important for a CoP or PLC. Mutual trust and respect don't come automatically in a group (see Module 3, Unit 1 on Group Dynamics). Time and effort are needed to create them, but once they are there, powerful learning can take place.

3. Collaboration

Members in a CoP or PLC engage in intensive interactions where they present their beliefs and best practices to investigate, explore, reflect together, and adopt it. It is expected that they will work together collaborating to identify challenges and jointly create solutions. Collaboration means much more than relationships. Collaboration is an intensive interaction that engages educators to share their practices and to debate on them. This kind of collaboration allows educators to solve problems related to teaching and learning, building commitment through understanding, solve issues of mutual concern, and spread their innovations beyond their schools and sectors.

4. Inquiry

Inquiry is about learning by asking questions. It means that teachers and school leaders collectively question their practices and routines, examine their ideas about teaching and learning, find ways to respond to differences and conflict, and engage in supporting one another's professional growth. Inquiry means that data about teaching and learning are collected and used to analyse performance of the school.

5. Leadership

Members in a CoP or PLC, both male and female, share roles and responsibilities in the session, i.e., setting the agenda, leading on specific tasks. This is also called distributed leadership.

Next, for a CoP of teachers, school leaders need to provide practical support such as adapting teachers' timetables and providing a meeting space. Secondly, school leaders should foster the distributed leadership approach in the CoP (see Module 1, Unit 1, Section 4) through encouraging and motivating teachers to participate, setting and monitoring the agenda, creating a culture of collaboration, promoting enquiry and building capacity.

Similarly, for a PLC of school leaders, SEIs, with the support of the DDE and DEO, need to provide support to school leaders to participate in a PLC at sector level, and monitor its implementation.

6. Accountability

Members in a CoP or PLC hold each other accountable for agreed upon decisions and targets set in the sessions. This accountability is demonstrated during the reflection sessions where members can pose questions, discuss reasons for successes or failures and provide support so that each member can be successful and grow.

Having CoPs and PLCs is not the objective. The objective is to improve teaching and learning and CoPs and PLCs are a means to that end. School leaders and SEIs have a role to play in making CoP and PLC members accountable for the fact that the time and resources spent are resources that are well spent. School leaders can ask CoP members to identify goals and targets for the year.

For example, a CoP on maths may decide to focus on fractions. At the end of the year, they want to develop a common set of lesson plans and three learning materials, and they want to achieve a 20% increase in the examination results for the questions on fractions. This is external accountability.

Internal accountability means that CoP members hold each other accountable for showing up on time, actively engaging in discussions and implementing what has been agreed upon in the CoP.

Importance of diversity within CoPs and PLCs

Diversity within a CoP and PLC helps creating a stimulating learning environment. If everybody has the same expertise and always agrees with each other, you will learn not so much as when each member has different ideas and interests to bring to the CoP and PLC. CoPs and PLCs should be open to new members, such as new teachers or headteachers. They should not discriminate according to gender. Also, effective CoPs are not isolated communities, but form networks with other schools, invite external experts or members from other CoPs without losing their focus. In this way, expertise and alternative viewpoints can be brought into the CoP. The same applies to PLCs.

Role of the facilitator in CoPs and PLCs

The facilitator has a crucial role to play in CoPs and PLCs. He or she needs to be able to motivate and build trust, understand group dynamics, facilitate discussion and guard outcomes.

The role of the facilitator isn't to tell teachers or headteachers what to do, to impose ideas or to judge them. A facilitator also is not necessarily a content expert. Rather, a facilitator needs to support discussion, bring in alternative ideas and data and step in when it risks wandering off.

In practice, the role and responsibilities of the facilitator may vary. He or she can take more initiative when there are many new members in the CoP or PLC. Gradually, as members become more experienced, the facilitator's role may evolve into a more hands-off role. Facilitators should make sure that all perspectives are valued and that all members can contribute to the discussions.

Now that you know more about the general characteristics of PLCs and CoPs, let's take a look at each method of collaborative learning in more detail.

PLCs of school leaders at sector level

Reasons for PLCs

Because of their specific role, school leaders often have a "lonely" position at the school in between teachers and the outside world (Kelchtermans et al., 2011). At the same time, the role of school leaders has become more complex in recent years, due to more responsibilities, bigger schools and increased demands for accountability (see Module 1, Section 1).

Moreover, school leaders are often assigned to a school without specific training and as they realise that their role is very different from the role of a teacher, they may need support.

More experienced colleagues in neighbouring schools within the sector are often the best source for such support. They can offer the quick, practical and useful support that starting school leaders need. PLCs are a great way for school leaders to regularly meet each other, discuss their practice and learn from each other's experiences. Three different types of PLCs exist.

Types of PLCs

Based on the previous and ongoing experience in Rwanda, the national PLC framework (REB, 2022) proposes three types of PLCs namely, structured PLCs, semi-structured PLCs and unstructured PLCs. The implementation of PLC sessions will depend on the selected structure of the PLC.

1. Structured PLC

These are compulsory PLCs facilitated by the Sector Education Inspectors (SEIs). Informal leadership is held by the school leaders. The SEI is responsible for making sure that necessary conditions are met and that members can freely share ideas. The SEI is also responsible to make sure that all members (female and male) actively participate. The school leaders decide what is discussed in the PLC since they are experts in school leadership. During the first PLC session of a school year, they select one topic from a list of priority topics, that they want to focus on during that year. This list is based on the government priorities which are stipulated under the seven Years Government Programme laid out in the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) (Government of Rwanda, 2016) and in the ESSP 2018/2019-2023/2024 (MINEDUC, 2018) (see Appendix 8).

The sessions of structured PLCs are organised on a quarterly basis and take place in schools on rotational basis. At the end of each session, members agree upon actions to be accomplished before the next session. These PLC sessions focus on School Improvement Planning and the discussions are structured in an action-oriented cycle: identification, planning, review, reflection and dissemination (see Figure 11). Implementation is not included in the overview of PLC sessions, as it is organised in each school in between the sessions.

The PLC cycle
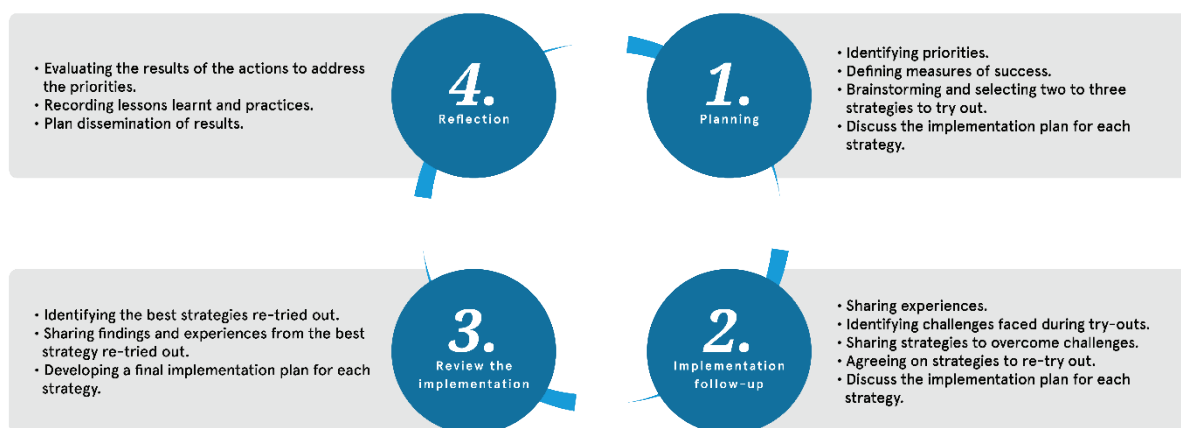
Figure 11: Structure of action-oriented cycle of PLC sessions

- **Planning session**

During the first session of the school year, PLC members identify a challenge, that will become the PLC priority of that year and identify measures of success. The common challenge should be based on the situational analysis and priorities of members' SIPs. Members compare what actions they have planned to address the selected priorities and discuss the merits and challenges of each action. They identify some actions to implement before the next PLC session and agree on an implementation plan for each action.

- **Session to follow up on the implementation of actions**

During this second PLC session, which preferably takes place in the school of one of the members, members share their experiences and challenges from implementing the actions identified during the previous session. They share strategies to overcome the challenges and agree on changes in the strategies. They develop an updated implementation plan.

- **Session to review the implementation of actions**

In this third PLC session, which takes place in a different school, members again share findings and experiences from try-outs, and agree on the most successful strategies. They develop a final implementation plan for each strategy and identify changes to be made in each SIP.

- **Reflection session**

During the final session in the cycle, members evaluate the results of the actions to address the selected priorities. They also discuss the entire process and record lessons learnt and practices. They plan how they can share these lessons learned and practices with others.

Each PLC session lasts approximately **2 hours** and has two main sections:

- The first section will be focusing on the PLC priorities and takes an hour and a half;

- The second section is for any other issues and lasts half an hour.

The content and structure of each PLC session is described in Appendix 9.

2. Semi-structured PLC

These PLCs are facilitated by a selected/trained HT, such as Local Leader of Learning (LLL) or a National Leader of Learning (NLL). These PLC sessions are organised on a monthly basis and include topics planned from district level PLCs and other topics that are important to their geographical context.

3. Unstructured PLC

For these PLCs, headteachers identify their learning needs, the focus, and objectives of their learning. They can be organised whenever needed and facilitated by any headteacher as agreed upon. An example of such PLC is a visit of a good performing school by PLC members.

The full PLC framework is available in Appendix 10.

Activity 33

Reflect on how the PLC in your sector is helping you (or not) in your professional development as a school leader.
You will be guided by the following questions:

- To what extent has collaboration within your school and with other schools improved?

- On which standard(s) of effective school leadership has the PLC helped you to improve?

- On which standard(s) has the PLC not helped you to improve?

- How do you ensure that tasks that are agreed upon in the PLC are completed?

- How do you establish a practice of inquiry (ask questions, find evidence, find data) in your PLC?

- What is the role of DDEs and DEOs in the PLCs?

CoPs of teachers at the school level

CoPs are an instrument for learning. In CoPs, teachers discuss, reflect and learn together about how to improve their practice. More concretely, teachers can engage in a variety of activities such as:

- Developing expertise in the **analysis of learner results**. For example, a maths teacher can't understand why learners always make similar mistakes. Perhaps the question is not clear, or perhaps the teaching strategy should be changed? By investigating the results from different classes, members of a CoP can suggest changes.

- Engaging in **lesson study**. In lesson study, teachers develop a lesson plan together. One teacher tries out the lesson plan while other teachers of the CoP observe and take notes. Afterwards, the lesson is discussed in the CoP and improvements are made. Teachers can take turns in who teaches the lesson.

- **Curriculum implementation**. For example, activities to develop understanding of, and the ability to use, the Competence Based Curriculum.

- **Developing learning materials**. Working together to develop a manual, experiment materials, games etc.

- **Implement crosscutting topics.** Teachers from different subjects or grades often face similar challenges with crosscutting topics such as differentiation, gender, environmental awareness, class management or integrating ICT in their teaching. Some teachers may have more expertise than others in these topics. A CoP across subjects could focus on developing expertise in these crosscutting topics.

Activity 34

Read the following case studies and think about how a CoP could be used to address the challenges described in the case studies. Thereafter based on the case studies, which strategies are you going to adopt to improve and sustain CoPs in your school?

Case study 1

Elisabeth has a concern that she shares with her deputy headteacher: she knows that language is a problem in her P 4 Maths lessons, because every time she does problem sums, she is met with blank stares from her learners: "I am so confused. I cannot understand my learners… they did so well in the last test! They can add, they can sort objects and yet when I ask them to apply these skills of adding and sorting in a problem sum, they do not understand. Can it be the children? Is it me?"

Case Study 2

Mrs Nzeyimana, the school headteacher, is very disappointed. Her school's Grade P6 results are very low, so low in fact that she has been visited by district officials to find out whether the school has a problem. She has been informed that the school is under observation and that it is imperative that something be done to ensure that in the next P6 exams the maths results will have shown a dramatic improvement. She calls a meeting of all teachers and tells them, in no uncertain terms, that she expects exceptional results in the next exams. As subject leader for maths, Gabriel is accountable, and he takes his responsibility very seriously.

Case Study 3

Susan is a CoP facilitator. She is so disappointed – the CoP meetings which started so well in the second half of last year, are no longer well-attended. She really believed that her CoP group had the potential to develop themselves and their school culture.
Also, on a personal level, not only did she enjoy the camaraderie that she experienced in the first few meetings, but she is also beginning to doubt her own skills. Is she the reason for the growing absenteeism?

Case Study 4

Mr Gatera, the headteacher of a school in Eastern Province, has experienced an increase in the number of dropouts in his school in recent years. Most dropouts are girls. He wishes to turn the situation around. During the staff meeting, he presents the dropout data and asks his teachers for ideas. One teacher has followed a training on CoPs and suggests starting a CoP that focuses on reducing dropouts. How could this work?

Case Study 5

Jemima started her first teaching job, but after one month at her new school, she is still lost. "I can't manage my class … discipline is chaotic, and nobody seems to be learning anything!" In the staffroom after school, after a chaotic day with her P5 class, she confides in another new teacher,

Emilie, who is also fresh out of the teacher training college and who also seems quite stressed about her first month at the school: her learners are impossible – they don't listen, she has barely managed to settle them down when the bell rings for the next class, she has tried punishing them, but nothing helps…

This activity illustrates that CoPs can serve a variety of goals, depending on the context and challenges of each school. In CoPs, the agenda is not imposed from above, but based on what teachers themselves experience as challenges or find important to improve their teaching.

Activity 35

Discuss and answer the following questions:

- How would you encourage SBMs/SSLs to start up CoPs?
- How would you encourage teachers to actively participate in CoPs?
- How can you support SBMs/SSLs in sustaining and facilitating effective CoPs.
- If there are already CoPs in your school, what have you been doing to sustain them?

Reasons for CoPs

Research (Bolam et al., 2005; Kools & Stoll, 2016; Vescio et al., 2008) has shown that CoPs contribute to the quality of teaching and learning within a school.

- They bridge the gap between education theory, policy and practice, creating spaces for addressing practical issues and connecting pedagogical practice with subject content knowledge.

- They provide spaces where young teachers share innovative ideas with experienced colleagues and where experienced teachers can in turn mentor young teachers. This stimulates teachers to critically interrogate their practice rather than to recycle old ideas.

- CoPs help to increase the capacity of the school to achieve sustainable improvement in the learning that takes place in the school. School-based CoPs not only aim to achieve individual goals, but also aim at changing school culture which could become more collaborative and more focused on learning by all. Learning based on concrete needs, which is a key element of CoPs, ensures that development is truly relevant.

- They have a positive effect on teacher confidence and satisfaction.

- They have a positive effect on teaching and learning outcomes.

Activity 36

Read the case study below and answer the related questions thereafter.

In the first school term of the year, all teachers received a 5-day introductory training on inclusive education, arranged by the Ministry of Education and facilitated by an international NGO. A second training, which would follow, was due to take place in the third term; however, the headteacher was concerned that this would not be enough and felt that unless the teachers committed to a plan of activities to mentor and support each other, the new skills they would learn would not be sustained.

The headteacher, who had also attended the first 5-day training together with members of the newly established Inclusive Education Working Group (IEWG) and the Inclusive Education (IE) Facilitator, developed a program of assignments for teachers to practice in between the two trainings. The assignments were as follows:

Inclusive Education Assignments

- Lesson observations – Plan and schedule lesson observations (remember to follow the rules for observing a colleague's lessons). Evaluate each other's work, identify good teaching practice and give constructive advice.

- Complete Basic Target Sheets for three children. Monitor and evaluate the targets.

- Observation sheet for the accessibility of the school environment. Walk around the school, inside and outside, and carry out an assessment for accessibility (is it a child-friendly environment?). Take photos of anything that is a barrier to inclusion.

- Organise weekly meetings to share good teaching practices, including ideas for teaching resources.

- As a team, plan and establish a small resource base for teaching and learning materials such as teaching aids and materials to make them. Identify teacher(s) who will be responsible for managing this resource base.

- As a team, plan and implement a community or school activity to raise awareness on inclusive education.

- Using the lists of classroom strategies to include children who have various kinds of impairments. Make a similar resource for your school. If possible, make it poster sized (using flip-chart paper) and display it in your school as a visual reminder of good (inclusive) teaching practice.

The headteacher reported at a later stage that even though the assignments were not all completed, the teachers appeared to be working together more closely as a team and helping each other. She had attended some of the weekly meetings that had been organised by the Inclusive Education Working Group. Teachers were using the meetings to discuss individual case studies and sharing ideas on teaching strategies.

Some lesson observations had been carried out but in general there was limited flexibility in the timetable to allow for this. The headteacher had allocated a small storeroom to be used for the establishment of the School Resource Base, which enables teachers to store and share resources as if they were books in a library. Teachers reported that it made their work easier and the lessons more effective and inclusive. There was a large cardboard box in a common area of the school where both teachers and children collected waste materials they had brought from home. The materials, such as food boxes, maize sacks and bottle tops, were used to make teaching aids.

Questions for reflection and discussion

- Look at the list of IE assignments at the school in Malawi – In the context of schools in Rwanda would all these assignments be possible? If not, why?

- Is it possible to adapt the teachers' timetable to allow for activities such as support meetings and lesson observations?

- Establishing a school resource room for storing and sharing teaching aids – What do you do if there is no spare room in school?

The case study highlights the benefits of teachers working together for their own work satisfaction and the inclusion of all children. Establishing a working group on inclusive education might be a good idea to harvest the ideas and motivation from some teachers to make their lessons more inclusive.

Gradually, members of this working group could focus on reaching out the other teachers in the school by workshops, lesson observations and coaching or mentoring sessions.

The role of school leaders in supporting CoPs

School leaders have a key role in stimulating CoPs. Research shows that it is nearly impossible to create learning communities from which formal leaders are absent (Murphy, 2015). Many participants attributed the success of their CoP to the school leader´s strong leadership, support, and motivation to create and maintain the CoP (Vangrieken et al., 2017).

School leaders need to provide practical support to CoPs such as providing teachers with sufficient time to work in CoPs, adapting timetables, providing a space for the CoP and resources.

Secondly, school leaders should give instructional leadership through encouraging and motivating teachers to participate, setting and monitoring the agenda, creating a conducive culture to collaborative learning, promoting enquiry and building capacity.

They should communicate clear expectations from the CoP´s operation, but also involve teachers in its design and implementation, delegate responsibilities to the teachers and acknowledge the professional achievements reached by the CoP (Owen, 2014; Vangrieken et al., 2017).

Teachers are more likely to participate actively in CoPs if school leaders themselves believe in the value of them. Read the following case story and discuss what you would do in Gaston's case.

Activity 37

Gaston is a headteacher. He has learned about CoPs in the UR-CE Diploma Programme on Effective School Leadership and wants to start CoPs in his school. He organises a meeting with his subject leaders. Before the meeting, he thinks about how he will go about it. He suspects that subject leaders will raise some concerns, for example about a lack of time and motivation with some teachers. Some may question whether a CoP is effective. What would you do in the position of Gaston? How can you stimulate teachers to become part of a CoP and how can you make sure that the CoP is effective?

School leaders have various roles to play in supporting CoPs :

- Creating awareness with teachers about what CoPs are and why they can be a powerful method of continuous professional teacher development.

- Motivate teachers to actively engage in CoPs.

- Create the conditions for teachers so they can take part in CoPs (time, space).

- Act as a bridge between different COPs within the school, and possibly neighbouring schools.

- Monitor and evaluate progress in the quality of teaching and learning as a result of participation in CoPs.

Figure 12: Roles of school leaders in supporting CoPs (VVOB, 2017)

As a school leader, how can you know whether the teachers who are part of a CoP are learning anything and, more importantly, changing their practice? Should you attend CoP sessions to check whether members discuss teaching and learning related issues and whether everybody is involved?

Remember that CoPs are bottom-up structures that place their members at the centre of their professional development. Members themselves decide on what they think is important to work on in their CoPs. Trust that teachers are professionals who will do everything to teach well is an important condition for successful CoPs.

Does that mean that you should take a hands-off approach and don't be involved at all in CoPs? No. If teachers get the time to work together in CoPs, you can expect that the quality of teaching and learning outcomes will improve. Some things you can do to **monitor and evaluate a CoP** of teachers:

1. Regularly ask members informally whether they think the CoP has been useful. Ask them to give specific examples.

2. Regularly observe teachers during lessons and discuss how the CoP has helped them to improve their teaching.

3. Ask for a short report per term in which members list what they have been working on in the CoP.

4. When discussing learning outcomes or examinations with your teachers, ask how the CoP could be useful.

5. Finally, it is important to keep the key enablers for CoPs in mind. Let members regularly evaluate (individually or with all members) how well their CoP is doing on each key enabler.

The role of school subject leaders and school-based mentors in supporting CoPs

At the school level, CoPs can be organised per subject (e.g., CoP of maths teachers), per group of subjects (e.g., CoP of science and maths teachers) or across subjects (e.g., CoP on LCP). Key roles in developing CoPs are for the subject leaders and the school-based mentor.

1. Role of the School Subject Leaders

A school subject leader has the following roles to play in creating a successful CoP in the school:

- Motivating teachers to participate in a CoP, especially new teachers;
- Raising awareness about CoPs with peers and school leaders;
- Coordinate the organisation of action-oriented cycles of CoP sessions;
- Act as the representation of the CoP to the school leadership;
- Facilitate CoP sessions, ensuring active participation of all members;
- Encourage participants to engage in deep reflection and inquiry, using data;
- Report on the results of the CoP to school leadership and other teachers;

2. Role of the School-Based Mentor

The SBM has the following roles to play in supporting CoPs:

- Raise awareness about the potential of CoPs to improve school-based CPD;

- Ensure alignment and exchange of good practices among CoPs;

- Encourage teachers to be active in a CoP, in particular new teachers;

- Encourage participants to engage in deep reflection and inquiry, using data;

- Coordinate reporting by SSLs about activities and results achieved in the CoP.

Approach to CoPs in Rwanda

Rwanda Education Board (REB) has proposed **a spiral improvement model** based on the Plan, Do, See and Improve process as illustrated in Figure 13.
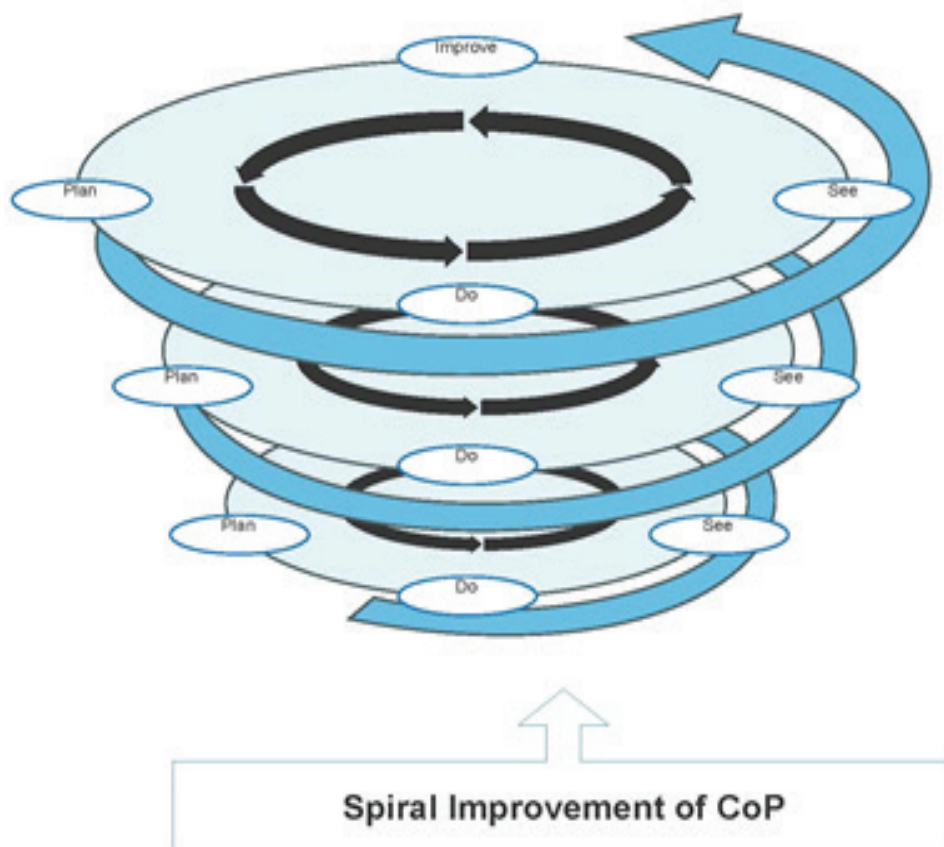
Figure 13: Spiral improvement process of a CoP (REB, 2016)

Each completed cycle in the CoP increases trust, cooperation and productivity among CoP members. As a result, by each cycle, the quality of the CoP improves.

Each cycle consists of 3 CoP phases. The structure is based on lesson study, a model of professional development that involves lesson planning and evaluation by teachers together. Figure 14 describes the three steps.

The CoP cycle

Teachers try out the solutions they came up with and planned for. Teachers take notes on how the try-out went, which will be discussed in the next CoP.

Examples of activities:
Try out a homework assignment, observe a lesson of a colleague, apply a new teaching method, or review a lesson plan with a colleague...

- Select at most two priority challenges.
- Analyse teachers' challenges (goal, reality, resources).
- Discuss the possible solutions (options).
- Plan activities to overcome the challenges (will).

1.
First CoP phase
Identification, analysis and planning

- Teachers share the results of the try-outs.
- Reflect on and discuss the pros and cons of the tried-out approach.

Successful
- Extract the lessons learnt and discuss how to consolidate them.
- Plan consolidation actions (individual or as group).

Not successful
- Analyse the situation on a deeper level (reflection model) and make new resolutions.
- Plan second try-out activities.

Teachers carry out dissemination of the consolidated lessons learnt.

After a completed CoP cycle, the SSL or SBM submits a final report to the HT. A new CoP cycle starts.

2.
Mid CoP phase(s)
Reflection and consolidation

3.
Last CoP phase
Dissemination and evaluation

- Review consolidation efforts.
- Plan to disseminate beyond your CoP.
- Determine success factors for the dissemination.
- Assess the effectiveness of the CoP cycle you just went through.

Teachers carry out the consolidation efforts (individually or in group).

Examples of consolidation efforts:
Write a story of success, film a teaching method, develop a new assessment tool, develop a series of lesson plans, or develop learning materials for pupils...

Figure 14: Action - oriented cycle for CoP phases

Below we describe in detail the identification and planning (phase 1), reflection and consolidation (phase2), and dissemination and evaluation (phase 3) stages of the CoP cycle. Lesson try-outs take place in between sessions.

1. First CoP phase: identification, analysis and planning

During the first CoP phase the members will identify all challenges they face in their teaching, the implementation of the CBC or their induction as new teachers.

They will first classify these priorities into three areas:

1. Challenges they can directly control (direct control - linked to own behaviour)

2. Challenges they can control with the help of others (indirect control - linked to other people's behaviour)

3. Challenges they can't control (out of control - outside of their zone of influence)

Then they will prioritise the challenges that are in their direct and indirect control and select challenges that will be the focus of that CoP cycle. The members will analyse these prioritised challenges and discuss possible solutions, for example using the ideas from Module 2. After a discussion of potential solutions, the members will plan activities to overcome the challenges. This may include creating teaching and learning materials, developing lesson plans or planning peer observations.

After the CoP phase, each member will implement the planned activities to overcome the challenges. The members will take notes on how the activities went for discussion during the next CoP phase.

2. Second CoP phase (s): reflection and consolidation

During this CoP phase, the members will share results and discuss the tried-out approaches. Informed by evidence, the group discusses the pros and cons of the tried-out approaches and reflect on its effectiveness.

If try-outs were successful, the members will document the lessons learnt and will discuss how they can combine these lessons and make them visible and concrete for other colleagues.

Once they decide on the actions to make the lessons concrete and visible, they will plan to implement them. Each member carries out the planned actions.

Making lessons learnt visible and concrete can take on different forms such as developing teaching and learning materials, writing a case study, developing an assessment tool etc.

If the try-outs were not successful, the group will analyse the challenge. Following this analysis, they will discuss new solutions and plan for a second try-out, for example a revised lesson plan. As long as the tried-out approaches don't yield the expected results, the CoP members will repeat this middle phase. Only when the members have found an effective solution for their prioritised challenges will they proceed to discuss and plan efforts to make their lessons learnt visible and concrete.

Each member will go back to their teaching schedule and implement the activities agreed upon during the second phase to overcome the challenges. The members who are implementing these activities will take notes for discussion during the next CoP phase.

3. Third CoP phase: dissemination and evaluation

In the last CoP phase, members will share and review the outputs of their lessons learnt. With these outputs they will discuss and plan how to share them with their colleagues beyond the CoP group and even the wider school community. As this concludes one CoP cycle, the members will reflect on the effectiveness of the CoP cycle.

After the last CoP phase, the members go back to their teaching schedule and implement the plan to share what they learnt.

Conclusion

In this section we explored collaborative learning. Learning with and from each other is a powerful CPD method. As a school leader in your role as a leader of teaching, you can support teachers to collaboratively learn on identified needs for improvement in school-based CoPs. You can also boost your own learning by participating on a sector-based PLC.

Conclusion of the Unit one

Different topics were tackled in this unit including Continuous Professional Development (CPD), teacher induction, supervision of teaching, giving effective feedback, coaching & mentoring and promotion of collaborative learning.

A school leader has to promote and develop activities related to CPD. In Rwanda, many policies advocate for CPDs in schools and provide detailed information on stakeholders involved in CPD activities. It is very important for a school leader to collaborate with all stakeholders in CPDs to ensure their sustainability. In addition, induction of new teachers is among the responsibilities of school leaders. It was shown that new teachers face many challenges at school and that school leaders have responsibilities to help those teachers minimize the encountered challenges by organising proper and effective induction. Besides, supervision of teaching and provision of effective feedback are among responsibilities of school leaders. This unit has discussed both concepts and has shown their effectiveness.

Coaching and mentoring are two other CPD activities that are performed by school leaders in their schools. It is good to collaborate with SBMs and SSLs to create conducive conditions for both activities and stimulate collaborative learning in school. To this end, school leaders are asked to participate in Community of Practice (CoPs) at school level and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) at sector level.

UNIT TWO

WORKING WITH PARENTS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Introduction

Productive and positive parent-school-community partnerships play a critical role in promoting student learning. Parents are the first educators of their children, and they continue to influence their children's learning and development throughout the school years. Given the limited time that children spend in school, interactions with family and community members are likely to have more impact on a child's learning and development than school-based interactions. For this reason, parental and family involvement in education is a critical ingredient in any successful school.

A balanced approach to school decision-making and parental involvement creates a sense of shared responsibility among parents, community members, teachers and school leaders. In turn, shared responsibility:

- Ensures that parents' values and interests are heard and respected;

- Allows for more engaged and supportive parents;

- Makes the school more accountable to its community;.

- Helps learners to value the role of their parents in their education.

The school should be a welcoming environment where school leaders and teachers value and understand the important role of parents in children's education success. In such schools, parents are active participants in the life of the school, and feel connected to each other, to school staff, and to what children are learning.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the principles of parent/community-school partnerships;

- Demonstrate ways to involve parents and the wider community in the school;

- Collect and use data about parents and community involvement in teaching improvement;

- Establish strategies to enhance collaboration between the school and parents/ local community as an instrument for improving the quality of teaching;

- Support the capacity development of the School Executive Community as a partner in the achievement of sustainable learning outcomes;

- Act as a role model in the school and wider community;

- Value the importance of involving parents and the wider community to achieve high quality inclusive education.

Self-Evaluation

> **Activity 38**
> Think about common practices in your school and indicate whether the statements in the table below are valid for your school.

Table 6: Self - evaluation on school - parent/ community partnerships

In my school,	Strongly agree	Agree	Dis-agree	Strongly disagree	Brief explanation
Parents and school staff are active partners in decisions that affect children's learning.					
The School General Assembly plays a role in creating policies, practices and programs that continuously improve the school.					
The school is a welcoming environment whereby school leaders and teachers value and understand the important role of parents in children's education success.					
Parents are active participants in the life of the school, and feel connected to each other, to school staff, and to what children are learning.					
Parents are involved in the development of the school improvement plan, its implementation and monitoring and evaluation.					
Parents and school staff engage in regular and meaningful communication about children's learning and wellbeing. Information is shared between school and parents through a variety of communication channels to promote ongoing constructive dialogue.					
Parents and school staff continuously collaborate to support children's academic progress both in the classroom and at home. Assessments are used to inform support strategies and monitor learning.					

Parents and school staff actively promote the needs of all children. Learning environments are responsive to diverse communities, and ensure equity in relation to gender, disability and family background.					
Parents and school leadership cultivate positive relationships with other services within the school community and work together to support school improvement. The school serves as a centre for community learning events and requests support for extra-curricular activities.					

Adapted from: Save the Children, Mureke Dusome project, 2017

Section 1: Research on the involvement of parents and the wider community in the school

International evidence makes a strong case that schools alone cannot be responsible for the education of children, but that this is the shared responsibility of schools, families, and local communities. Various studies have found that lack of positive relationships between school staff and families have negative effects on children's learning outcomes (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). But the opposite is also true; when families and school staff know each other and have personal, respectful relationships, students have more academic success. These relationships and the regular participation of parents help to share the responsibility for learning, and reduce the potential blaming of teachers for student failures by the parents (Florez, 2011).

When parents are asked by schools to support their students, they develop confidence in their ability to help their children succeed academically, have positive experiences with teachers and school leadership, increase their understanding of the school's needs, and experience improved communication with their children. Researchers also found that "educators experience greater job satisfaction, higher evaluation ratings from the parents and administrators and more positive associations with their families" when they collaborate with parents (Nyatuka, 2015).

Finding ways to facilitate relationships among parents may lead to increased participation of families and increased impact of a school's family engagement strategy. By creating a social network and community feeling around school priorities, parents' interest and enjoyment in attending school events may increase. This network also may help to improve collaboration and communication among families around student learning, as well as ownership and accountability for attendance and participation in school priorities.

For years, research has shown that children who benefit from engaged parents and supportive community environments are much more likely to succeed in school than those who do not (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Specifically, these students tend to have better learning outcomes, higher completion rates, higher attendance, and better attitudes towards school (Jeynes, 2003). This evidence is true for primary and secondary school students, regardless of their parents' education level, their family's socio-economic status or where they live (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Effective collaboration requires understanding from all stakeholders, time, and creativity. Effective parent–school partnerships are collaborative relationships which involve school staff, parents and the wider school community. This collaborative relationship is based on mutual trust and respect and shared responsibility for the education and learning of all students at the school.

Throughout this unit, the term 'parents' is used to refer to all primary caregivers. This recognises that there are children, in Rwanda and globally, with unique family situations that involve different family or non-family members.

Parent-school partnerships in many Rwandan schools are not yet sufficiently developed to ensure children meet the learning goals set in the curriculum. Many barriers to effective collaboration stem from a lack of understanding around the impact parents and communities can have when they truly engage with children in ways that support their learning and development. Kabarere, Muchee, Makewa, & Role (2013) found that high performing schools in Rwanda tend to have more involved parents. However, all schools scored low in involving parents in the management of the school and benefiting from parents as resources to improve teaching and learning. Recent research into high performing schools in Uganda shows the importance of active school executive committee (former SGAC) that are directly involved in supervising and evaluating teachers and the school's general performance – teaching, learning, welfare and co-curricular activities (Twaweza, 2019). In highly performing schools, issues of teacher absenteeism from school or class are brought to the attention of the school executive committee, and such teachers are required to defend themselves before these bodies (Twaweza, 2019).

This has greatly bridged the accountability gap that is prominent in many schools in which these structures are not playing such roles. The involvement of these bodies in supervising schools has also resulted in schools realising and responding to the need to conduct co-curricular activities.

Historically in Rwanda, expectations around family and community support for learning have focused mainly on paying school fees, buying uniforms and materials, or participating in / contributing resources and labour to school building campaigns (REB, 2012). Many school leaders have been content when some parents turned up at the SGA meetings (Kabarere et al., 2013). Engagement has been focused on involvement that does little to build understanding, trust, or collaboration. A 2007 study of practices in Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Uganda, and Zimbabwe found that important education decisions are almost never decentralized in a way that encourages genuine local community participation (Dunne et al., 2007).

Evidence suggests that many parents still believe that a child's education is the sole responsibility of schools and feel ill-equipped to support their child's education at home (Nganga, 2009). Rwandan teachers report that many parents do not have the time or resources to support their children's efforts to learn and that many parents do not regularly meet with teachers to discuss children's progress (Kabarere et al., 2013).

The findings of a study conducted in Rwanda on a sample of 354 parents from 89 schools showed that only 64,5% of parents participated at least once per school year in school functioning and management activities. The study showed also that only 53.3% of parents supported their children to do the homework with a difference between urban (73%) and rural (43.8%) areas. In the family, the mothers (56%) supported mostly their children in their homework (Yves, 2011).

The following activity explores the barriers to the active engagement of parents in the school activities and identifies strategies to overcome them.

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Activity 39

Individually, reflect about the following questions:

- What barriers to active engagement in school activities do parents face?
- Do you have data available on parent engagement in your school? Which data?
- For each barrier, what strategies can you use in your school to overcome it?

</div>

Parents (male and female, rich and poor, literate and illiterate, parents with and without disability) may face a wide range of challenges and require additional support to participate in the school. However, they can also bring unique expertise and insights to the school and help the school in becoming more inclusive.

Box: An example of good practice in a Rwandan school

In one school, the headteacher worked hard to ensure that the school is not seen as a separate entity but part of the wider community. She worked hard to encourage the view that parents and teachers work together to develop each child's potential.

The headteacher wanted to help parents understand what teachers were trying to achieve on children's development and shared some challenges faced by teachers. Hence, she invited parents to a meeting to provide any insights into their children and help address faced challenges. After the meeting, the headteacher invited parents to meet with the teachers. The headteacher was also keen for teachers to understand what challenges parents and families were facing.

The headteacher found the process of bringing teachers and parents together cleared up many frustrations, for example about the way a teacher handles discipline or why a parent is unhappy with the amount of homework being assigned to his/her child. Parents had a better idea of what their child's day is like. The teachers gained a better understanding of individual family dynamics, cultural background and challenges which a family faces as well as their strengths. Parents developed a better understanding of the teacher's expectations and the challenges that teachers face in class. Parents also learned to appreciate the values and discipline code of the school.

As a result of this trust relationships build, more parents volunteered at the school. Younger children were often excited to see their parents in a volunteer role at school and helped to give them a positive outlook on school.

Source: BLF, 2019, adapted by VVOB

Section 2: Epstein's model for school-family-community Partnerships

In this section we explore what role parents and communities can play to raise the quality of teaching and learning in Rwandan schools. To do this, we use a research-based model that was developed by Joyce Epstein, an American educator. She has been studying and writing about school-family-community partnerships for over thirty years. Over time, she has developed and refined a framework for successfully involving parents and community members in schools (Epstein, 1987). While this framework was developed in and around American schools, these types, or some variation of them, have served as a framework and are applicable to the Rwandan context.

Epstein's model emphasizes six types of community and parental involvement that schools can use.

1. **Parenting**: Assist families with parenting skills, family support, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions to support learning. Assist schools in understanding families' backgrounds, cultures, and goals for children.

2. **Communicating**: Communicate with families about school programs and student progress. Create effective, reliable two-way communication channels between school and home.

3. **Volunteering**: Improve recruitment and training to involve families as volunteers and as audiences at the school. Enable educators to work with volunteers who support students and the school. Provide meaningful work and flexible scheduling.

4. **Learning at Home**: Involve families with their children in academic learning at home, including homework, goal setting, and other curriculum-related activities.

5. **Decision Making**: Include families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy activities through school councils or improvement teams, committees, and other organisations.

6. **Collaborating with the Community**: Coordinate resources and services for families, students, and the school with community groups, including businesses, agencies, cultural and civic organisations, NGOs and colleges or universities.

Activity 40

a) Think about the following statements and tick those that best reflect the principles of parents/ community and school partnership.

b) What are your current practices related to these types?

- It is not necessary to involve all parents as some of them are not interested in their children's education.

- The main purpose of involving parents is to raise funds for the school.

- It is the school's responsibility to help parents to support their children with their education.

- Parents should also be involved in the school improvement planning.

- Parents who are illiterate cannot do much to support their children at school.

- It is a good idea to organise literacy courses for parents after school hours or during weekends.

- I already do a lot to involve parents in the school, but many parents don't have time to be involved in the school.

- Parents should be able to observe lessons of their children in the school.

- School Executive Committee meetings are the best instruments to involve parents in the school.

- Only mothers should be involved in the education of their children at school.

Section 3: Building school-community partnerships in Rwandan Schools

The National Parent-School Partnership Standards from REB identify what parents and schools can do together to support student learning. They aim to guide School Executive Committee (SEC) leaders, parents, school leadership, teachers, community members and students to work together for the educational success of all children. The Standards also highlight best practices for effectively engaging families and communities in supporting children's learning both in and out of school.

More specifically, the National Parent-School Partnership Standards aim to:

- Highlight expected competences from parents and schools to build effective partnership;
- Inform the development of a school improvement plan;
- Monitor progress in reaching school improvement goals;
- Assess current parental involvement practices at the school;
- Inform capacity building needs for School General Assembly organ;
- Develop ideas for engaging parents and communities.

> **Activity 41**
> Rwanda Basic Education Board and its partners developed the National Parent-School Partnership Standards, based on Epstein's work. Read these standards below and relate each standard to the Epstein's model.

Standard 1: Sharing Responsibility for Learning

Parents and school staff are active partners in decisions that affect children's learning. The School General Assembly plays a role in creating policies, practices and programs that continuously improve their school.

Standard 2: Active Participation in the School Life

The school is a welcoming environment whereby school leadership and teachers value and understand the important role of parents in children's education success. Parents are active participants in the life of the school, and feel connected to each other, to school staff, and to what children are learning.

Standard 3: Communicating Effectively

Parents and school staff engage in regular meaningful communication about children's learning and wellbeing. Information is shared between school and parents through a variety of communication channels to promote ongoing constructive dialogue.

Standard 4: Supporting Learning

Parents and school staff continuously collaborate to support children's academic progress both in the classroom and at home. Assessments are used to inform support strategies and monitor children's learning.

Standard 5: Ensuring Equity and inclusion

Parents and school staff actively promote the needs of all children. Learning environments are responsive to diverse communities, and ensure equity in relation to gender, disability and family background.

Standard 6: Collaborating with the Wider Community

Parents and school leadership cultivate positive relationships with other existing services within the school community and work together to support school improvement. The school serves as a hub for community learning events and solicits support for extra-curricular activities.

Activity 42

Based on your self-evaluation about the above standards on building School-Community Partnerships, write any two standards that you need to improve and two actions to take for each.

In this section, the importance of building school-community partnerships in Rwandan schools to support student learning was emphasised. Therefore, school leaders should invest in building strong school-parents-wider community partnerships.

Section 4: Involving the wider community in achieving Inclusive Education

Parents and the wider community play an important role in making the school more inclusive. Collaboration is a key word in achieving inclusivity. Parents and the wider community can help teachers and school leaders in finding solutions for learners with impairments. For example, volunteers can help with assisting learners with visual or hearing impairments, or with remedial exercises. We will explore how school leaders can involve the wider community to make the school more inclusive through several case studies. Each case study introduces one aspect of inclusive education and offers ideas that you may apply for your own school.

Activity 43

Read the case stories and underline examples of school community collaboration. Discuss the questions at the bottom of each case story.

Case story 1

I am a headteacher in a 9 Year Basic Education school. We have only a small number of students. The capitation grant is not enough to accommodate school issues. I heard that communities in other schools are engaged to improve children's learning.

I decided to visit a similar neighbouring school. In my learning visit, I was welcomed by the headteacher at the primary school. I sat with him for a while in his office and he shared with me how his school has managed to improve over the last several years. He said that one of the factors that had helped children have better results was the useful collaboration they have with the community around the school. The headteacher in collaboration with the school executive committee had mobilized funds during an accountability day. The funds were used to purchase books and other reading materials to be used by children and other people in the community. After seeing those books, parents began making reading materials from recycled materials. On a quarterly basis, the community came together to make additional reading or scholastic materials. In a short tour around the school, the headteacher took me to a learning centre inside the school where people from the surrounding community meet for capacity building in various domains including learning languages as well as adult literacy classes. Returning from the visit, I shared the learning with teachers and school executive committee. We discussed how we could apply similar measures in our school context and generated an action plan based on these ideas.

Based on the examples described in the case story, identify other initiatives of collaboration with the community that can help your school improve students learning outcomes.

Case story 2

In my school, we had an issue of dropout and poor attendance for primary children. Together with the SEO, School executive committee, and cell and village leaders, we formed groups and decided to visit households in the community. We interviewed children and adults in the households separately to find out why children were not in school. In many cases, adults reported that they were keen for their children to go to school, but the children indicated that their parents wanted them to work or were prioritizing the education of a sibling. Some parents were ignoring or hiding their children with disabilities, because they thought they could not successfully attend school with other children.

After discussing this together, the school, village, and cell leadership decided to collaborate to monitor daily attendance records. Children attending less than 15 days a month are considered to have dropped out of school. School and community leadership groups then visit the households of the children to find out why they were not attending. They work with the parents and community to overcome the barriers they were facing. Solutions have ranged from organising extra support by adult volunteers to children with disabilities, to creating funds to help the poorest families to enrol their children in school. The sector is using the data from the visits to prioritize their resources in order to reach all school aged children.

What best practices have you learnt from this story? How are you going to apply these practices? What else can you do to ensure equity and social inclusion in your school?

Case story 3

My name is Mutoni and I am ten years old. In my family, I have a mother, two elder brothers and one younger sister. My mother sells vegetables in the market to support our family. I like reading books, but it is rare for me to find time to read. My brothers often bring books home from school and read in the afternoons, but that is when I must cook dinner for my family. During the weekend, my brothers attend the reading club in the village, but that is when I must clean the house, wash the clothes and care for my baby sister. By Monday, I am exhausted from all the housework and have not found the time to do my homework. When I get at school, I fail to do exercises given by the teacher.

During a Parent-Teacher Day, the Girls Club presented a sketch that reflected my life. After the presentation, parents discussed the challenges girls were facing and many testified that were also disproportionately burdening their daughters with domestic responsibilities. My mother was also in the meeting. When we reached home, she called me and my brothers together and told us that we need to share the domestic work so that I could also have time to attend the reading club, revise my lessons and play. From that time onward, I began arriving at school on time and my grades started improving!

To what extent do you think there are girls in your school who face similar challenges as Mutoni? Are there other gender-related obstacles that girls or boys in your school experience?

Case Story 4

Parent A: Last year my child repeated Primary One. I am interested in supporting my child's learning so he can do better, but I am not sure how. I take part in the school executive committee meetings, but they seem to be rarely held. The headteacher appears to be very busy, and I don't think she has time to work with the school executive committee. The school executive committee parent representatives are also teachers, so I don't feel as if I can approach them with my issues. I decide to stay out of the school affairs and trust that the teachers will help my child to do better this year.

Parent B: Last year my child repeated Primary One. I heard that many other children in the same class also repeated. Together with my child's teacher, we raised our concern during the school executive committee meeting. The school executive committee President took note of the issue, and a committee was elected to investigate the causes of excessive repetition of students identifying barriers both in and out of school. In the next SGA meeting, the committee presented the findings. Based on this, the school executive committee made an action plan to resolve this challenge, and a special SGA meeting was called to share it. Parents gave feedback on the improvement measures and responsibilities were clearly laid out. School leaders, teachers and parents collaborated on the improvement plan, and progress was monitored.

Parent A and Parent B describe different experiences with the school. Which type of experience is more common in Rwanda? What do parents at your school often do when their children are not succeeding academically? What can school leaders and school executive committee do to improve this?

Case story 5

I am a deputy headteacher in a school where most parents are not involved in children's learning. The School General Assembly meetings occur but only 40% of the parents usually attend. In the school executive committee meeting, we brainstormed how parents can be encouraged to volunteer in the school. We identified areas where the school could use support from parents. Everyone in the school executive committee was given a village in which he/she became a focal point to go to work with the village chief in sensitizing parents on the importance of volunteering in school activities. We shared different areas where volunteers were needed. Parents were asked about their interest and availability to volunteer. Everyone indicated the type of activities they could support and a schedule based on her/his availability, including at least one volunteer day per term. Some parents committed to more frequent volunteer visits, even on a weekly basis.

As a result, parents from all levels of socio-economic backgrounds started to volunteer in different school activities. Literate parents planned visits to read with P1, P2 and P3 students who are at risk of repeating.

Artistic parents supported teachers to make classroom displays, such as alphabet or number charts. Parents who knew how to sew helped repair books and other ripped learning materials. Others who had building experience, helped to make the new pre-primary classrooms more child-friendly by adjusting desk height to fit smaller children. The parents got the opportunity to know each other through their volunteering efforts which improved parents' communication and support network. As a result of this success, we organised an end-of-the-year event to celebrate our achievements.

Based on the examples provided in the case story and in the previous activity description, identify 5 areas where parent volunteers could support your school improvement plan.

Case story 6
As a headteacher, I received several complaints from parents about teachers in my school. Similarly, at staff meetings, teachers complained that parents weren't supporting their children. I discussed the issue with my deputy headteacher and the other school executive committee members, and we decided to organise a Parent-Teacher Day at school. We chose a day during school holidays when teachers didn't have lessons. We invited families to come to school to discuss their children's progress. During the Parent-Teacher Day, some meetings were very productive. Teachers gave updates on the child's strengths and weaknesses, as well as other general observations. They also shared various ideas with parents on how they could support their children's learning at home. However, I also noticed a meeting where the teacher was too critical of the child's learning abilities. He asked the parent why she never replied to the information he sent home. The parent responded that she was frustrated about the negative messages she always received and felt the teacher was not doing his job.

Based on the observations from Parent-Teacher Day, I realised that teachers need guidance on how to give productive feedback to parents. I organised a session with the teaching staff. I explained the importance of how we communicate with parents. I suggested always starting communication with a positive aspect, for example, something the child does well or a good personality trait. I explained that after the positive comment, teachers can introduce challenges or areas for improvement, choosing their words carefully to not make parents defensive. They should also encourage parents to respond or share their ideas on the issue. Finally, teachers should finish with another encouraging comment or appreciation in order to end on a positive note.
Teachers began applying this approach. Communication between parents and schools increased. Teachers began communicating more positive feedback to parents. As a result, I noticed parents coming to school to talk to teachers, not only when there was a problem but also for regular interaction and communication.

What was the challenge this headteacher faced and the strategy she used to address it? How did she refine her approach to be more impactful?

Case story 7

I was deployed to work in another district. I registered my child in the local school. I noticed the school leadership was mostly focusing on Primary six classes and ensuring teachers prepare students to pass the National Examination. However, even those Primary six students were not performing well because they did not have the foundations from the lower grades.

In the school executive committee meeting, parents blamed teachers and the school leadership that their children were not performing well. I shared with them some of the factors that I saw working in my child's previous school. I discussed how the school empowered teachers and parents to monitor students learning through formative assessments. Children were assessed regularly through exercises and activities that checked if they were learning. When struggling students were identified, parents and teachers met to discuss strategies to support the child. Parents were interested so we organised another meeting whereby a workshop was provided to parents on how they can support their children's learning both at home and at school. Parents were coached on how to help children to revise lessons at home, read with them and provide the required learning materials.

Parents gradually became more confident engaging in their children's learning process. They monitored how their children's learning was progressing and met teachers to discuss areas where their children needed additional support. Parents in the communities committed themselves to helping children complete their homework, revise for exams and to read recreationally. Teachers were motivated by parental involvement in their children's education. They began using teaching methods to meet individual learning needs. They allowed children to take learning materials home to use with their parents. They conducted simple formative assessments and communicated regularly with parents when children were having difficulty. The following year, children's performance considerably improved.

Which actions do you think were the most significant to improve children's learning? Why?

What is your school already doing to support the community?

In a study about parents' involvement, in home and school-based activities, such as talking to their children, helping them in doing homework, communicating with teachers, volunteering in school activities, and attending school events. Parents reported difficulties/barriers to their involvement in the above activities result from the following reasons:

1. Lack of enough opportunities to be involved
2. Not feeling welcomed by the school
3. Miscommunication about what school and parents believe are the appropriate ways of parents' involvement in their children's education
4. Social and cultural differences among parents and teachers.
5. Economic low-income and illiteracy of some parents

Questions

- Based on your school data, indicate if the highlighted barriers exist or don't exist.
- If yes, what is your school doing to address those barriers?
- If not, what did you do to overcome them?

Exploring school activities to support local communities

Although schools have limitations, they can still provide great resources to support communities to address their challenges and increase their connection with the school.

- **Provide expanded learning**: By allowing community members to benefit from the school resources. For example, allowing the community to access book collections from the school library. A teacher can provide parenting sessions to the families in the school community.

- **Build broad-based support for increased welfare of the surrounding community**: The school can teach the neighbouring community about important community issues such as hygiene, diet. Etc. Additionally, the school can initiate projects to raise funds to support the poorest families and to create programs that support vulnerable families.

- **Provide quality extra-curricular programmes**: The school can collaborate with parents to strengthen after school learning activities. For example, teachers can be encouraged to support and assist extracurricular community activities during school holidays.

- **Creating a welcoming environment**

  1. Provide a display space or notice board for important information:

     - Contact information for the school administrators, teachers,school executive committee president

- School calendar with a list of important dates and events

- Announcements.

2. Invite parents to visit the school

- Plan days and hours for the visit that are flexible to both male and female parents

- Through village meetings and Umuganda, share times when school leaders will be available at school for a meeting (e.g., Friday mornings)

- Encourage parents to visit during break and lunch times when staff are more available to discuss their children's education issues;

- Coordinate school tours and orientation for new parents

- Inform parents at the beginning of each term on what their children will be learning and how they can help them.

3. Ensure physical space is made available for parent coordination and activities

Provide disability & gender sensitive access to buildings (classrooms, offices and toilets). Prepare and publicise school activities in which parents participate like leading discussions on a given topic.

- *Parent-Friendly Staff*

  - Support office staff and teachers to:

    o Be open and welcoming to parents

    o Communicate information (positives not just problems)

    o Encourage participation

    o Be responsive to parents and their needs/requests

- *Parent-Friendly Policies*

  - Working with school executive committee and other parents, the school staff can develop and publicly post a parent-school partnership policy that explains the school's commitment to involvement of parents in school activities and parents' commitment to the school and its staff.

  - Ensure the school executive committee and parents' perspectives are included when developing the school's improvement plan. This will ensure their views are reflected and that they have ownership of the plan and can support its implementation.

- *Practical ideas for parent volunteer activities*

  - Support after school activities like reading clubs, mathematics practice, sport and cultural activities.

  - Make class displays, like alphabet or number charts.

  - Repair textbooks, storybooks or other teaching and learning materials.

  - Construct new classrooms or rehabilitate old ones.

  - Plant trees in the school compound.

  - Assist in planning and organising school events.

  - Give presentations in classes or at assemblies about their specializations and skills in different domains (safety, hygiene, etc.).

  - Provide one-on-one support to struggling learners or children with disabilities.

  - Identify children in the community who have dropped out of school and work with school staff to reach out to them.

  - Volunteer during lessons to support group or project work.

  - Support with the development of learning and teaching materials from recycled materials.

Activity 45

Think about the school you are leading and its wider community. What measures will you take to more involve the wider community in the school? For each measure, write down the expected outcomes. Use the table below to rank them according to their order of importance.

In the table below identify three measures you will take to involve the wider community more in the school.

Measures	Expected outcomes
1.	
2.	
3.	

Section 5: Strengthening the capacity of the school executive committee

In this section, we explore the role of the school executive committee in improving teaching and learning. A school executive committee will only be able to support school leaders and teachers in raising the quality of the school if it has the capacity to do so. An important role of school leaders is therefore to strengthen the capacity of the school executive committee.

Activity 46

Think about the following questions about the School General Assembly (SGA) and the school executive committee.

- How are the school executive committees elected at your schools?
- How do you work with the school executive committee and SGA? What is their contribution in school Improvement planning process?
- What is the role and purpose of the School General Assembly (SGA) and the school executive committee?
- Are at least thirty percent (30%) of the members of the school executive committee females in your school? What strategies do you have in place to ensure that this 30% female membership is achieved?

The School General Assembly is the supreme organ in terms of learning, teaching and welfare. It monitors the overall operation of the school and takes a keen interest in the school development (Official Gazette n° Special of 18/02/2021). In particular, it is responsible to:

- Formulate the specific vision of the school in accordance with its mission;

- Provide views and suggestions in relation to the school's overall development;

- Appoint and remove members of the School executive Committee;

- Appoint and remove Audit Committee members;

- Submit SGA meeting reports to the administrative sector authorities with a copy thereof to the Executive Secretary of the Cell in which the school is located;

- Submit meeting reports to the Sector authorities with a copy thereof to the Executive Secretary of the Cell in which the school is located;

- Approve internal rules and regulations of the school;

- Approve the annual budget of the school;

- To approve the contribution of parents if necessary.

The school executive committee is the level of the School General Assembly that is in charge of implementing the decisions of the School General Assembly Official Gazette n° Special of 18/02/2021). The school executive committee should meet once a term. Whenever necessary, the school executive committee can hold a special meeting.

The **school executive committee members** are:

- five (5) parents elected by peers including a chairperson and a deputy chairperson;

- the head of the education institution, who also acts as rapporteur;

- the owner of the education institution or his or her representative in case of Government subsidised or private education institution;

- two (2) teachers representing their peers, including a male and a female elected by their peers;

- two (2) learners representing their peers, including a male and a female where possible elected by their peers.

At least thirty percent (30%) of members of the school general assembly must be females.

Key responsibilities of SGA and school executive committee members and key principles of engaging SGA and school executive committee are stipulated in the Official Gazette n° Special of 18/02/2021) that governs the functioning of SGA and school executive committee. The basic responsibilities of the school executive committee are the following:

- To monitor compliance with laws and regulations governing the school and advise on the internal rules and regulations of the school;

- To monitor the management of the school's property and welfare of learners;

- To examine problems faced by the school and advise on how to address them;

- To advise on the school's vision, planning and strategy;

- To advise on the education institution's budget and parents' contributions;

- To submit a report to the School General Assembly;

- To submit meeting reports to Sector authorities, with a copy to the executive secretary of the Cell where the school is located;

- To perform such other responsibility as may be assigned by the School General Assembly.

Relationship between the school executive committee and school leaders

Studies show that better-achieving schools have higher levels of trust between school staff and parents, while schools with the lowest achievement rates have minimal trust (Kabarere et al., 2013; Save the Children, Mureke Dusome project, 2017). Therefore, school general assembly members must have a close working relationship with the school leadership. This working relationship is characterised by:

- Collaboration in the preparation of school guidelines and development plans;

- Building trust among school executive committee and School Leadership;

- Promoting transparency and sharing information on time;

- Respect the number of SGA and school general assembly meetings as stipulated in the Law;

- Publicise and recognise the achievements resulting from the collaboration with parents;

- Work together to find solutions for challenges the school is facing.

When this relationship is not well managed, it can create conflicts in the school. Some problems which can occur are:

- Some school general assembly members, such as the school owner or President, conduct excessive supervision of school activities;

- School leaders plan and implement all activities without involving other school executive committee members;

- Parent voices are not heard because elected parent representatives are also teachers or school staff;

- The elected committee are based solely on the opinions of the headteacher;

- Only the headteacher and school executive committee president are involved in school activities. Other members of the school executive committee are not involved;

- Meetings that are not carried out because there is lack of collaboration between the headteacher and school executive committee members.

Box: Helping parents understand how their children learn in the classroom

Each teacher can invite small groups of parents to come and watch/listen to lessons in their child's class. S/he chooses a lesson that takes place directly before a break or at the end of the day so that the learners leave the class after the lesson. The teacher should prepare very well for this lesson and make sure the lesson plan has clear objectives, uses a range of activities and includes opportunities for formative assessment.

The procedure below has worked well for other teachers.
1. The teacher prepares the classroom so that the parents sit at the back of the classroom where they can see the learners, but the learners cannot see them unless they turn around.
2. The teacher explains to the parents that they should not talk or disturb the learners during the lesson. Tell the parents the topic of the lesson they will observe.
3. The teacher tells the learners that some of their parents are coming to watch their lessons.
4. Parents should come into the class once all the learners are sitting quietly. They should walk to the back and sit down.
5. The teacher welcomes the parents and thanks them for coming. S/he asks them to observe the different types of activities the learners do and the way in which the learners work with one another.
6. The teacher teaches the lesson using a learner-centred approaches which include group work or pair work; the teacher should also use a range of open-ended questions.
7. Teacher concludes the lesson as usual and the learners are sent out.
8. The teacher discusses the lesson with the parents. The teacher explains the objective of the lesson and gives her/his view of how well the learners achieved the objective. The teacher asks the parents about the lesson:
   - what they liked about the lesson;
   - what they didn't like;
   - what they saw the children doing;
   - what they think the children learned.
9. The teacher should take the opportunity to explain the importance of:
   - having clear objectives for every lesson;
   - open-ended questions where learners have to predict, give opinions, imagine etc.;
   - group work or pair work where learners have to complete a task;
   - formative assessment.
10. Discuss with parents how they can use some of the ideas they observed in the classroom with their children at home, e.g., asking open questions, letting the children complete tasks independently, helping them to work collaboratively with older or younger siblings.
11. Thank the parents for their participation. Tell them that if they have any questions or concerns about their child's learning they should come and see you anytime at the end of the school day or other appropriate time. Encourage parents to come to PTA meetings and other meetings at the school to participate in school decision-making and school activities.

Source: BLF, 2019

Table 7 provides many suggestions on what parent representatives and school leaders can do to improve the involvement of parents and the community in the school.

Table 7: Roles and Responsibilities of Parent Representatives and school leaders

What Parent Representatives can do	What school leaders can do
Support the school leadership to identify community partners that can support families and school.	Organise meetings within the school and invite all stakeholders and community partners to create a plan for working together, along with check-in points to assure progress is occurring.
Work with the school to plan school improvement activities and send out invitations to community partners who can fund efforts.	Identify and invite partners in the community that can support the school to provide rewards during school events.
Connect low income and vulnerable families with agencies that can support them to raise their income.	Support vulnerable parents to find opportunities to raise their income and be able to satisfy the learning needs of their children.
Agree with school leaders on which school resources can be used by the community, as well as the time, place and specifics of accessing them.	Discuss with the community ways of maintaining well the rented resources.
Communicate to the community the available school resources that vulnerable families can access.	Inform the community members the available resources at school that can be useful to them and how they can benefit them.
Collaborate with village leaders to celebrate the achievements of the village as result of use of school resources.	Celebrate the achievements of the school resulting from the collaboration with the community and acknowledge partners who availed resources to be benefited by the school.
Work with the school to identify teachers for facilitating parenting sensitization sessions.	Work with the school executive committee to identify teachers for facilitating parenting sensitization sessions.

Engage former students who completed at least primary level to participate in out of school children's learning activities.	Engage former students and Urugerero youth to participate in the development of the school.
Mobilize parents to use locally available materials to be used by children in reading clubs within the village.	Collaborate with volunteers who are promoting afterschool learning activities and support them with basic materials to make learning resources.
Peer learning from other school executive committee on their achievements in promoting collaboration with the wider community	Peer learning from what other schools achieved in collaboration with the wider community
Participate in establishing school vision and Guidelines.	Involve parents in the establishment of school vision and guidelines.
Working in partnership with the school leadership, identify ways the SGA can support one or more goals of the school improvement plan.	Present school projects and plans to parents and value their inputs.
Encourage parents to participate actively in various SGA committees and other temporary committees formed to resolve identified issues as they arise.	Involve all parents in decision making.
Encourage both male and female parents and parents with disabilities to participate in SGA meetings and arrive on time.	Ensure SGA meetings are well planned and involve all SGA members either males or females.
Encourage women to communicate their ideas in meetings and to assume school executive committee leadership responsibilities.	Communicate the importance of women having equal representation in terms of leadership and voice.
Ensure there is diverse parent representation in the school executive committee, including parents of children at different grade levels, gender, social economic status or disability.	Empower the school executive committee members to effectively assume their responsibilities.
Throughout the year, publicly acknowledge committed teachers and appreciate their efforts.	Acknowledge parents who participate actively in SGA activities and contribute to the school improvement plan.
Identify and share ways to make all families feel welcome and involved.	Adopt a specific schedule to meet with parents.

Encourage parents to visit children at school and in classroom. Ensure that male and female parents follow up of their children's learning at school and at home.	Ensure that all school staff are friendly, acknowledge and assist visitors immediately, as well as communicate regularly with parents by phone, WhatsApp or any other communication.
Mentor parents who need support or encouragement to be involved.	Communicate activities that can be done by volunteering parents within the school.
Identify different talents parents possess and share the information with the school leadership.	Share with parents the school's needs in terms of areas for volunteerism.
Establish and monitor parent volunteer programmes.	Establish and monitor parent volunteer programmes.
School executive committee reach out to parents who are not involved and encourage participation in SGA meetings and school activities.	Value and include every parent regardless of social economic background.
Mobilize parents to participate in school events and support planning and organisation when necessary.	Inform the parents and the community what is happening in school and encourage participation.
School executive committee ensure significant parent involvement in the school improvement plan.	Invite parents to be involved in developing the school improvement plan.
Recognise the special constraints on parents with disabilities and share with the school strategies to involve those parents in the school activities.	Discuss with school executive committee members strategies to involve parents with disabilities in the school activities.
Put in place mechanisms of supporting children with learning difficulties.	Put in place mechanisms of supporting children with learning difficulties.
Encourage parents to ask children what they have done or learnt at school each day. If the content is new or unfamiliar, have the child explain it.	Ensure teachers provide regular homework to children and ensure that children are supported to do it.
Encourage parents to read their child's report cards and see where they are doing well and the areas where they need help. Encourage them to ask teachers how they can help their child improve.	Avail time to discuss with parents how they can support children improve their results.

Encourage parents to discuss with their children about what they think is helping or hindering their learning.	Discuss with children about what they think is helping or hindering their learning.
Encourage parents to ask their children or their child's teacher what they are doing well in. What have been their successes? Then praise them and celebrate progress.	Communicate to parents how children are progressing and areas they need support.
Encourage parents to read together at home. If they aren't literate, help them find someone else to read with.	Encourage teachers to lend books and other reading materials to children to read at home.
Encourage parents to ensure that their child has the essential materials they need to learn, such as notebooks, books, pens, school bag, etc.	Communicate to parents the needed materials at the start of the year. Inform them of the usefulness of those materials.
Encourage parents to play games with their children at home that use words and numbers. Sing, tell stories, and share proverbs.	Encourage parents and teachers to sing, tell stories and share proverbs with their children.
Encourage parents to make learning and play materials from local resources. Share and show examples.	Encourage parents to make learning and play materials from the local environment. Show examples of self-made materials that can support different learning areas.
Encourage parents to ensure that their child is healthy, clean and has enough food. Children cannot learn well if they are sick or hungry.	Talk with parents whose children seem to be unhealthy, unclean or hungry. Discuss how these challenges can be addressed.
Encourage parents to discuss with teachers any learning barriers their child has. This will allow the teacher to better create a classroom conducive environment that supports his/ her learning.	Identify children with special needs, talk with their parents and ensure that you take measures that facilitate them in their learning.
Ensure all school-aged children attend school and that those with disabilities are provided appropriate support.	Work with other stakeholders, parents and children to identify and consult children at risk of exclusion, as well as their families, to ensure support is provided.

Recruit parent volunteers to provide extra support and supervision to children with disabilities.	Observe an extra-curricular activity such as a reading club and provide constructive feedback to community volunteers on how to better include all children.
Sensitize all parents on how to talk to their children about inclusion and discrimination.	Through careful observation of students and by collaborating with teachers and parents, identify children with learning disabilities. Support these children to learn with others in the classroom or seeking further guidance from your SEO or partners.
Encourage parents of children with disabilities to meet regularly with teachers to discuss the child's progress, needs, and how to best support his/her learning.	Ensure teachers of children with special needs meet regularly with parents to discuss the child's progress, needs, and how to best support his/her learning.
	Provide gender-sensitization training to teachers that include specific instructional strategies
Actively participate in the development of the SIP by establishing priorities and setting goals and strategies for school improvement.	- Convene the school planning team - Provide leadership and guidance in the development of the plan - Clearly explain the SIP planning process to the planning team and help them understand their role in the process - Facilitate actual planning workshop
Developing, approving and monitoring the budget.	Engage the school community in the budget process.
✏	✏

Section 6: Planning and conducting effective school executive committee meetings

SGA and school executive committee meetings are the ideal opportunity for parents, parent leaders and school staff to communicate. For this communication to be effective, the meetings must be well planned and facilitated.

Activity 48

Reflect on the following questions:

- How do you plan or prepare for effective school executive committee meetings? What needs to be done in advance?
- How do you communicate the time for meeting to parents? Is this effective?
- How do you conduct SGA meetings? How do you identify the different agenda items of the meeting?
- How do you encourage active participation of all parents?
- How do you encourage children (boys and girls) to raise their voices and perspectives?
- What strategies are used to ensure communication is two-way (not just giving information, but also receiving ideas)?

After your reflection, read the text below to learn more how to plan and conduct an SGA or school executive committee meeting.

There are different ways to plan and conduct a school executive committee or school general assembly meeting depending on the objectives. Below are some guidelines:

- Prepare the objectives and agenda of the meeting in advance. Consult general assembly leaders and other school staff to inform/decide on the main objective for the meeting.

- Think about who should attend the meeting and prepare invitations. Use various communication channels to ensure that they are accessible to all parents, including those with disabilities.

- Send invitations on time (14 days in advance for normal meetings, and five days in advance for urgent meetings).

- Prepare the venue for the meeting, ensure adequate seating for all.

- Agree on how the meeting will be conducted to engage parents to participate actively.

Structure of a general assembly committee or school general assembly meeting

Opening the meeting

- Welcome word by the President of school executive committee (Chair of the meeting);
- Presentation of the chair of the meeting, the minute-taker and any visitors;
- Monitor attendance. Ensure there is a sufficient number of attendees required to hold the meeting;
- Explain the objective of the meeting;
- Run through the agenda of meeting and check if there are any additional points to be added;
- Set ground rules, such as respecting ideas of others, staying on topic, avoid receiving calls inside the room, not interrupting others, etc.

Review the minutes of the previous meeting

- Give a summary of the previous meeting;
- Check if action points taken were put into practice;
- Discuss challenges or future action points;
- Approve minutes.

During the meeting

- Address each agenda item;
- Minute taker records a summary of ideas;
- Action points, responsible people and time frames are decided for each item.

Closing the meeting

- Share with attendees a summary of decisions and action points;
- Agree on date of next meeting;
- Thank participants;
- Remind participants to sign attendance list.

Things to be considered while chairing a meeting

- Good management of time. If necessary, end discussions or suggest that they can be continued after the meeting;
- Ensure communication remains positive and productive;
- Encourage active participation of all participants, including men and women and people with disabilities;
- Discourage "sub-meetings" (meetings within meetings) of parents discussing issues simultaneously;
- Reach consensus after having discussed an issue;
- Support attendees who have difficulty in expressing themselves, so they can also be heard;
- Manage different behaviours of participants in the meeting.

Conclusion of the Unit two

In Unit two we discussed the importance of working with parents and the wider community in strengthening quality education in Rwandan schools. The Ministry of Education developed national Parent-School partnership standards as a guideline for education leaders to strengthen the parental and wider community involvement. It has also established national legal frameworks for school general assembly, school general assembly committees and school leaders' responsibilities. The unit has provided a wide range of ideas and examples of how you can involve parents and the community in the education process. This may include income generating activities, support for learners with learning difficulties, literacy classes and clubs, ICT classes for parents, and support with construction. This partnership works in both ways: schools and the community can help parents with the education of their children, and parents and the community can support the school in achieving quality inclusive education.

CONCLUSION OF MODULE FOUR

This module is composed of two main units which are 'Leading teaching' and 'Working with parents and the wider community'. In unit one, important concepts related to leading teaching were discussed. Those are CPDs, induction of teachers, supervision of teaching and provision of effective feedback, coaching and mentoring and collaborative learning. These are among duties and responsibilities of a school leader. Active participation and collaboration of the school leader with different stakeholders will contribute to the success of those responsibilities which in turn lead to effective school leadership. In unit 2, the emphasis was put on working with parents and the wider community. Working with parents and the wider community strengthen the quality education in Rwandan schools. It was pointed out that in school leadership, a school is not an isolated island and that its success depends largely on a strong partnership between the school and its stakeholders. This partnership works in both ways: schools and the community can help parents with the education of their children, and parents and the community can support the school in achieving quality inclusive education.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Monitoring Guide for Induction of New Teachers

This guide can be used by SBM, (D)HT, SEI, TTC tutor, DEO and DDE in conducting and monitoring induction activities for NTs.

1. Identification of the school and NTs:

Name of the school:					
Name of the sector:					
Name of the district:					
Name of the NT1:					
	Sex	male		female	
	Years of experience				
	Subjects				
	Other				
Name of the NT2:					
	Sex	male		female	
	Years of experience				
	Subjects				
	Other				
Name of the NT3:					
	Sex	male		female	
	Years of experience				
	Subjects				
	Other				

(add more if needed)

2. Checklist of Induction activities/programme

Induction Activities/Programme	Observation
Induction Meeting	
Logistical support for accommodation	
Introduction to school's mission, values, policies, procedures & resources	
Visit of classrooms and staffroom and other school facilities	
Appointing a mentor to each NT	
Introduction to colleagues, learners, school general assembly committee	
Providing or arranging for classroom materials including curriculum resources	
Introduction to record keeping	
Needs assessment of the NT (use Annex 5)	
Development of individual CPD plan (goals and actions)	
Mentoring activities	
Coaching activities	
Community of Practice (CoP) session	
Lesson observation	
Seminars/trainings	
Support from pre-service teacher training institutions	

(*add more if needed*)

3. Guiding questions to reflect on your role in NT's induction

The following questions can be used to reflect on the induction activities implemented at school level:

1) **Which induction activities were conducted?** By whom? If not, why? What are possible strategies to overcome challenges?

2) **What were the results/outputs** of the induction activities conducted? Did those results/outputs reach the expected goals? If yes, well done. If not, could you explain why? What are possible strategies to overcome those challenges?

3) **What did you learn** from the induction activities that is relevant to your role/position?

4) **What could you improve** as an SBM/HT/SEI/DEO/DDE regarding your role in induction of NTs?

4. Possible NTs' professional development needs

Ask NTs to fill **annex 5 (Teacher competences (professional needs self-assessment))** and identify their **priority professional development needs**.

Possible needs could include, but are not limited to:

- Filling pedagogical documents

- Setting assessment questions

- Developing teaching and learning activities

- Integrating cross-cutting themes in lessons

- Developing teaching and learning materials

- Integrating generic competences in lessons

- Managing big classes

- Learner centered teaching

- Play based learning approaches

- Inclusive teaching and learning (supporting all educational needs: such as low/high achieving learners, learners with socio-emotional problems, learners with low English proficiency, learners with physical disabilities, …)

- Formulating instructional objectives

- Applying principles of competence- based teaching

- other: ………………

Appendix 2: Monitoring Guide for Induction of New Headteachers

This guide can be used by SEI, DEO and DDE in conducting and monitoring induction activities for NHTs.

1. Identification:

Name of the sector:					
Name of the district:					
Name of the NHT1:					
	Sex	male		female	
	Years of experience				
	School				
	Other				
Name of the NHT2:					
	Sex	male		female	
	Years of experience				
	School				
	Other				
Name of the NHT3:					
	Sex	male		female	
	Years of experience				
	School				
	Other				

(add more if needed)

2. Checklist of Induction activities/programme

Induction Activities/Programme	Observation
Induction Meeting	
Introduction on the roles and responsibilities	
Introduction to the standards of effective school leadership	
Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)	
Appointing a mentor to each HT	
Introduction to colleagues, learners, school general assembly committee	
Providing or arranging for classroom materials including curriculum resources	
Introduction to record keeping	
Needs assessment of the HT	
Development of individual CPD plan (goals and actions)	
Mentoring activities	
Coaching activities	
Seminars/trainings	

(add more if needed)

3. Guiding questions to reflect on your role in NHT's induction

The following questions can be used to reflect on the induction activities implemented at sector/district level:

1) **Which induction activities were conducted?** By whom? If not, why? What are possible strategies to overcome challenges?

2) **What were the results/outputs** of the induction activities conducted? Did those results/outputs reach the expected goals? If yes, well done. If not, could you explain why? What are possible strategies to overcome those challenges?

3) **What did you learn** from the induction activities that is relevant to your role/position?

4) **What could you improve** as an SEI/DEO/DDE regarding your role in induction of NTs?

4. Possible HTs professional development needs

Ask NHTs to read through the **School Leadership Assessment tool** and use it to reflect and identify their **priority professional development needs**.

Possible needs could include, but are not limited to:

- Understanding of educational policies

- Record keeping procedures

- Reporting systems

- Management of leaners and school staff with diverse needs

- Supervision of school activities

- Management of school facilities

- Reporting protocols

- Management of financial resources

- Working with parents and wider community

- Working with other Headteachers

Appendix 3: Competence profiles of stakeholders involved in the induction of NTs

The competence profiles from stakeholders involved in the induction of NTs have been developed based on the responsibilities described in the SBMPF, interviews with SEIs and focus group discussions with teachers, NTs, parents and headteachers:

Sector Education Officer Profile

Standard description:

In relation to the induction of New Teachers (NTs), Sector Education Officers (SEIs) coordinate educational activities at sector level in relation to the induction of NTs. They ensure that School Leaders are focused on the professional development of NTs by effectively implementing the induction programme. Furthermore, they are involved and take their responsibility in the recruitment of teachers. In addition, they pay attention to NTs wellbeing by speaking in favour of timely payment of salaries and guaranteeing medical insurance by the district.

Competences:

Knowledge:

In order to fulfil his/her responsibilities related to the induction of NTs, the SEI should **know/ understand** the following:

- Principles of recruitment and placement;
- Professional teacher development as a continuous process;
- The meaning and importance of the induction programme for NTs;
- The roles that different educaAtion stakeholders play in the School Based Mentor Programme;
- Principles and theory on mentoring, coaching and reflection;
- Understanding the content of initial teacher training and NTs' needs;
- Monitoring and evaluation.

Skills:

In order to fulfil his/her responsibilities related to the induction of NTs, the SEI should **do** the following:

- Set clear goals for the induction of NTs in their sector with relevant stakeholders;
- Include educational activities related to the induction of NTs in the sector education improvement plan with School Leaders;

- Communicate effectively with all stakeholders to ensure the implementation of the induction programme for NTs;

- Monitor the implementation of the induction programme with School Leaders to ensure delivery of appropriate quality induction to NTs;

- Report highlights on the implementation of the induction programme to the Executive Secretary and give a copy to the Director of education at district level;

- Speak in favour of NTs wellbeing, especially at district level;

- Manage conflicts that arise in the implementation of the induction programme for NTs, that can't be solved at school level;

- Work with the stakeholders to develop action plans to respond to economic, social, educational needs related to CPD of NTs;

- Stimulate positive interaction among all stakeholders involved in the induction of NTs; and

- Provide helpful feedback to School Leaders related to the induction of NTs.

Attitudes:

In order to fulfil his/her responsibilities related to the induction of NTs, the SEI should

*<u>show</u>:

- Gender awareness

- Fairness

- Humbleness

- Trustfulness

- Self-confidence

- Accountability

- Integrity

- Commitment

- Growth mindset

- Empathy

*be:

- Approachable

- Role model

- Self-motivated

- Creative and innovative & Flexible to changes

District Director of Education Profile

Standard description:

In relation to the induction of NTs, the District Director of Education (DDE) is responsible for facilitating, organising and scheduling the process of recruitment and for the deployment of the NTs. Among many other responsibilities, the DDE should ensure quality of the NTs' induction programme. She/he pays attention to their well-being i.e., by paying the teachers' salaries on time, supporting (or speaking in favour of the support) accommodation and health insurance. They coordinate education activities at the district level in relation to NTs. They supervise the implementation and evaluation of the induction programme in their district.

NT mentor from pre-service teacher training institution

Standard description:

The NT mentor from pre-service in relation to the induction of NTs is responsible for the training of the SBM/SSL and the pre-service support to school-based induction (monitor the performance of NTs) during the induction period and evaluate their professional development at the end. They act as a role model in coaching for SBM/SSL and NTs. They can stimulate reflection and give feedback in positive way (on teaching activities). If needed, they give advice and inspire for alternative and innovative methods of actions in class practices. They are attentive and feel responsible for the well-being of the NT and the SBM/SSL. They set up trainings for SBMs/SSLs on mentoring with a focus on reflection and coaching techniques.

Competences:

Knowledge:

To fulfil its responsibilities related to the induction of NTs a NT mentor should **know/understand** the following:

*Professional Development:

- professional teacher development as a continuous process;
- the roles that different Education stakeholders play in the SBMP;
- the meaning and importance of the induction programme for NTs;
- an overview of teacher development opportunities;
- the process of effective communities of practice;
- effective and positive communicative strategies;
- the theory of growth mind-set;

- principles and theories of mentoring, coaching and reflection;

- facilitation techniques; and

- teacher performance (effective teaching – teacher standards) and performance assessment.

*Teaching & Learning:

- current primary curriculum and its provision (syllabi, weekly time allocation and subjects) across the different school levels;

- use of resources in learning and teaching (such as charts, ICT);

- importance of planning teaching and learning activities;

- different active teaching and learning methods;

- principles of time management;

- how to create a safe and rich learning environment;

- classroom management strategies;

- learner centred pedagogy and a competence-based approach;

- techniques for assessing learners, including giving feedback; and

- evidence-based literacy and numeracy in instructional practices.

Skills to train and coach SBMs/SSLs to guide and organise school-based CPD, and to promote reflection & skills to provide pre-service support to school-based induction (monitor the performance of NTs):

To fulfil its responsibilities related to the induction for NTs a NT mentor should **do** the following:

- plan, organise and facilitate training sessions;

- use different participatory techniques in facilitating training session;

- recognise the different emotional and professional needs and experiences of SBMs/SSLs/ NTs and adapt personal and professional actions appropriately;

- ask open-ended and investigating questions that help SBMs/SSLs understand their strengths and areas in need of improvement;

- stimulate self-reflection;

- offer helpful feedback;

- encourage SBMs/SSLs/NTs to provide fair, balanced, constructive (helpful), accurate (exact) and positive feedback on each other's teaching (coaching in group);

- stimulate SBMs/SSLs/NTs to take action for their own growth;

- helps to create a learning plan/action plan (current situation versus desired situation – road map);

- deal with resistance to change;

- help SBMs/SSLs to understand their responsibilities in the SBMP and induction of NTs;

- support SBMs/SSLs to identify strategies for addressing teachers' and NTs' areas of improvement and strategies for building on their strengths;

- give tips/advices for class practice, including alternative and/or innovative pedagogical techniques, to NTs and SBMs/SSLs regarding:

    o their teaching and learning activities;

    o their social/human relation skills;

    o behaviour in and outside the class; and

    o rights, responsibilities and duties.

- improvise local materials and teacher resources;

- use updated theories, ICT, media, policy documents, etc.

- communicate in a clear, inclusive and peaceful manner, using either the mother language or language of instruction;

- pre-service support to school-based induction (monitor the learning process of NTs);

- create a positive atmosphere; and

- mobilise resources for better teaching and learning.

Attitudes:

To fulfil its responsibilities related to the induction of NTs a NT mentor should:

- be communicative and friendly;

- be humble, accessible and patient;

- be positive and supportive;

- be flexible and open minded;

- have a growth mindset and enjoy continuous learning;

- show empathy for the well-being of NTs and SBMs/SSLs;

- be punctual, focused and accountable;

- be self-confident and trust-worthy (trustable);

- respect NTs' needs by providing an effective training to SBMs/SSLs;

- updated;

- a role model; and

- be a good listener to the needs of the NT.

Appendix 4: Competence profile of the Sector Education Inspector as coach of headteachers

Standard description:

In relation with coaching School Leaders in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), the Sector Education Officer is responsible for creating the conditions and opportunities for collaboration, sharing experiences and mutual learning. Simply bringing school leaders together doesn't guarantee professional development. Therefore, SEIs need to support school leaders in identifying their areas of improvement. Some conditions, such as focus and purpose, collaborative inquiry and accountability must be in place for collaboration, sharing knowledge and mutual learning to be productive and useful. The most important assignment of the SEI is therefore to ensure that all measures are taken for the required conditions to be met. They will focus on creating the conditions to support individual and collective learning among the school leaders through developing and/or identifying the opportunities for them to examine their existing beliefs and to challenge what they do with new ideas, new knowledge, new skills, and even new characters.

COMPETENCES

Knowledge:

In order to fulfil his/her responsibilities related to coaching school leaders in PLCs, the SEI should **KNOW/UNDERSTAND** the following:

- key enablers of effective PLC;
- standards of effective school leadership;
- theories and principles of coaching and reflection;
- gender equity in education;
- background to curriculum development, implementation and evaluation;
- strategies of monitoring PLC-sessions and resolutions;
- educational Policies and plans (Eg: ESSP, TDM policy, SBM framework, law on School General Assembly Committee, …);
- professional teacher development cycle;
- competence based teaching and learning approach;
- decision making process;
- duties and responsibilities of the SEI as a coach.

Skills:

In order to fulfil his/her responsibilities related to coaching school leaders in PLCs, the SEI should **DO** the following:

USE effective communication:

- communicate clearly and in peaceful manner;

- communicate respectfully and appropriately for each individual's level of understanding;

- create an environment that promotes effective communication;

- maximise positive communication to develop trust and to encourage School Leaders to try out things that they are not used to doing;

- identify and use appropriately different techniques (listening actively with empathy, summarising, responding) to increase positive, open-minded, respectful and peaceful communication; and

- use different gender-responsive communication strategies.

STIMULATE learning:

- stimulate a 'growth mindset' and encourage lifelong learning;

- motivate participation in learning during and after PLC-sessions;

- lead innovation and change within the CoP;

- Create an atmosphere of curiosity to learn from good practices;

- facilitate the process of peer learning and sharing (ensure that Key Enablers are observed for effective CoP):

  o stimulate positive interaction among participants (relationships);

  o stimulate discussions that allow diversity in opinions;

  o stimulate collaborative inquiry (Collaboration; Collaborative inquiry);

  o support setting goals and plans (Purpose and focus);

  o focus on implementing the plans and meeting goals (Accountability); and

  o stimulate personal leadership (Leadership).

COACH:

- ask open-ended and probing questions that help School Leaders understand their strengths and areas of improvement;

- stimulate self-reflection after each PLC-session and come up with points of improvement in the future;

- facilitate evidence-based discussions;

- offer helpful feedback during and after the PLC-sessions;

- encourage School Leaders to provide fair, balanced, helpful, accurate and positive feedback on each other's contribution (coaching in group);

- stimulate School Leaders to act for their own growth;

- manage conflicts that arise between School Leaders and deal with resistance; and

- manage emotions arising among school leaders and between school leaders and the coach.

PLAN, MONITOR and EVALUATE CoP activities:

- demonstrate effective time management;

- coordinate the identification of School Leaders' needs in relation to leading their school;

- develop a schedule of PLC-sessions with the School Leaders;

- guide School Leaders to set the vision and mission of their school;

- guide School Leaders in monitoring and evaluating their School Improvement Plan based on PLC- resolutions;

- organise with the School Leaders the way of reporting internally on PLC-activities;

- report highlights of the PLC-session to the Mayor through the Executive Secretary and give a copy to the Director of Education at district level;

- identify schools with good practices to be visited by the PLC-members;

- organise peer school visits and peer reviews as an input for PLC-sessions;

- elaborate with School Leaders a sector education improvement plan based on the individual School Improvement Plans; and

- speak in favour of the implementation of resolutions that require the participation of other stakeholders.

Attitudes:

To fulfil his/her responsibilities related to coaching school leaders in PLCs, the SEI should **SHOW**:

- Gender sensitivity

- Fairness

- Humbleness

- Trustfulness

- Self-confidence

- Accountability

- Integrity

- Approachability (being easy to meet)

- Respectfulness (self-respect and respect of others)

- Empathy

- Role model

- Self-motivation

- Creativity and innovation

- Flexibility to changes

- Growth mindset

- Commitment

- Positive thinking

- Open mindedness

- Sensitivity to diversity

- Belief in collaborative learning (learning together)

Appendix 5: Lesson observation form with focus on inclusive education

Look at:	I saw…	I thought…
Decoration and resources: 1. Walls decorated? 2. Made by teachers, by pupils, etc? 3. Other materials in room? 4. Static or interactive materials? 5. Themes of the materials? 6. Are materials diverse? 7. Low-cost materials? 8. Mobile board?		
Layout and environment: 9. Desks in rows/groups? 10. Flexible, easy to change layout? 11. Areas in room for different activities? 12. Any adapted seating arrangements? 13. Enough space per pupil? 14. Accessibility?		
Teaching: 15. Teaching methods used? 16. Differentiation of lesson/methods for different learners? 17. Enthusiasm and energy? 18. Empathy with / listening to pupils? 19. Teacher's awareness of pupils' needs? 20. Use of teaching and learning materials? 21. Range of methods/pace during the lesson? 22. Gender-equal teaching? 23. Mastery of subject? 24. Lesson at right level of difficulty? 25. Behaviour management? 26. Classroom management? 27. Time management? 28. Language skills (language of instruction, clear voice)?		

Pupils:		
29. Are all learners engaged?		
30. Interaction with other pupils?		
31. Use of learning materials?		
32. Behaviour?		
33. Approach/attitude towards teacher?		
34. Gender balance in class?		
35. Gender-equal interactions?		
36. Self-presentation (self-confidence to interact in the class)?		
37. Freedom of expression? (similar to above)		

Source: UNESCO, 2014

Appendix 6: REB's lesson observation tool

LESSON EVALUATION SHEET

RWANDA EDUCATION BOARD (REB) (REVISED)

P.O. BOX 3817 KIGALI

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA

School name: …………………………… Teacher's name:.……………………………………………

Qualification:…………………… Experience:…….years; Class:……..………Number of learners:……out of……..

Number of learners with SEN:……………….

Subject:…………………..…………………Topic : ……………………………………….…….. Lesson nº…………

Period:…………………………….. Date:……..………………..

Pedagogic aspects to be evaluated	Comment
1. Preparation and Planning I. There is clear evidence that the lesson has been carefully planned with the aim that all students are challenged and engaged throughout the lesson. II. There are appropriate learning objectives which include competences. III. The teacher plans for the needs of learners with SEN.	
2. Lesson content I. There is clear evidence that the teacher has a good understanding of the curriculum content and competences. II. The teacher has applied his or her good under-standing successfully to help the learners to achieve appropriate objectives.	

3. Learners' engagement and progress I. All learners are actively engaged in the lesson, throughout the lesson and the time is used well. II. The needs of any learners with SEN are considered so that they are fully involved in the activities and the learning. III. Learners make important progress towards the learning objectives including competences and subject knowledge.	
4. Learner-centred methods enable all the learners to learn effectively I. Nearly all learners develop new knowledge and understanding, skills and competences, at a level appropriate to their ability. II. The methods used by the teacher lead to excellent learning. III. Nearly all learners including any learners with SEN achieve challenging learning objectives.	
5. Management of learners and learning environment I. The teacher creates a positive learning environment where learners are happy, motivated to learn, feel safe to ask questions, are not afraid of making mistakes and behave well. II. Learners respond to the teacher's questions and cooperate with all activities. III. The teacher knows the learners, addresses them by their names and uses praise frequently. IV. Display is used well and stimulating resources are managed and maintained effectively. V. The teacher takes account of the needs of all learners especially those with SEN.	

6. Assessment of learners' progress (formative and summative) I. The teacher systematically and effectively assesses the learning throughout the lesson. II. The teacher reacts and adapts the lesson accordingly and is able to judge how far the learning objectives have been achieved, including competences and skills. III. The teacher provides constructive feedback to learners so they know how to improve. IV. Learners are encouraged to reflect on their own understanding and ability to apply their knowledge and to support each other. V. Evidence that the teacher uses assessment to help with planning. VI. Assessment activities are fully inclusive for learners with SEN. VII. Appropriate records of formal assessments are maintained, and the teacher is aware of the learning needs of each student.	
7. The use of the medium of instruction and communication I. The teacher uses good English (P4 and above) and other media of instruction and develops the language skills of the learners at an appropriate level. II. Communication with the learners, including learners with SEN, is effective and language difficulties do not block learning. III. Learners are encouraged to contribute to the lesson and communicate with each other in the correct medium of instruction when working in groups.	

Conclusion and feedback:

Strong points:

………
………
………
………

Areas for improvement:

………
………
………

Teacher's comments:

………
………
………
………

Observer's name: …………………………………………………………..

signature: …………………………………………………………

Teacher's name: …..………………………………………………….…..……

signature: ………………………………………………………………

Rubric to be used:	Outstanding	Good	Developing	Inadequate
1. Preparation and planning are effective	There is clear evidence that the lesson has been carefully planned with the aim that all students are challenged and engaged throughout the lesson In order to achieve appropriate learning objectives which include competences (knowledge, skills, values and attitudes) and cross-cutting issues. Specific and recorded strategies are planned to meet the needs of learners with SEN and gifted learners.	There is clear evidence of some planning; There are appropriate learning objectives; Activities/resources have been chosen to help learners achieve these objectives.	There is little evidence of planning and preparation; Learning objectives are not clear with perhaps just a title to the lesson; Standard resources have been used and activities have been chosen without careful thought. There is no evidence that the teacher has considered the learning needs of different learners.	There is no evidence of planning. As a result the lesson lacks structure and purpose.
2. Lesson content is relevant (useful) and appropriate including competences and cross-cutting issues	There is clear evidence that the teacher has a good understanding of the curriculum content and competences; The teacher has applied this understanding successfully to help the learners to achieve appropriate objectives.	There is evidence that the teacher has a good understanding of the curriculum content and some understanding of competences; The teacher has used this to set learning objectives.	The teacher does not demonstrate a clear understanding of the curriculum content OR There is no real attempt to develop the competences and skills of the learners.	There is evidence that the teacher does not properly understand the curriculum content for this topic and unit; The teacher pays no attention to the requirement to develop the competences and skills of the learners.

Criterion				
3. All learners, including those with SEN, are engaged in the lesson and make significant progress	All learners are actively engaged in the lesson, throughout the lesson and the time is used well; The needs of any learners with SEN are considered so that they are fully involved in the activities and the learning; Learners make significant progress towards the learning objectives including competences and subject knowledge.	Most of the learners are engaged for most of the lesson; The teacher tries to involve any learners with SEN and stretches the learning of gifted learners; Most learners complete assigned tasks and make good progress.	Not all learners are engaged in the lesson or there are large periods of time when learners are not "on-task"; There is little effort to include any learners with SEN or a disability or consider the needs of very able learners; Although there is some progress, this is limited for many learners.	Many learners are not engaged with the learning activities; The majority of learners make little or no progress.
4. Learner-centred methods are used to enable all the learners, including those with SEN, to learn effectively	The methods used by the teacher lead to excellent learning; Nearly all learners including any learners with SEN achieve challenging learning objectives; Nearly all learners develop new knowledge and understanding, skills and competences, at a level appropriate to their ability.	There are appropriate teaching activities for the leaning objectives; The majority of learners achieve appropriate learning objectives; The majority of learners can demonstrate that they have gained new knowledge and understanding, skills and competences.	The learning objectives are not clear or lack challenge; Many learners do not achieve the learning objectives; Many learners do **not** achieve the learning objectives or cannot demonstrate that they have gained new knowledge and understanding, skills and competences.	Few learners are able to demonstrate any important new learning or deeper understanding or have developed new skills or competences.

5. Management of learners and learning environment	The teacher creates a positive learning environment where learners are happy, motivated to learn, feel safe to ask questions, are not afraid of making mistakes and behave well; Learners respond to the teacher's questions and cooperate with all activities; The teacher knows the learners and addresses them by their names and uses praise frequently; Display is used well and stimulating resources are managed and maintained effectively; The teacher takes account of the needs of all learners especially those with SEN.	Learners are managed well and behaviour is good; Learners respond to the teacher's questions and cooperate with all activities; The teacher uses praise and knows the names of the majority of learners; There is some display and the available resources such as textbooks are used appropriately.	There is some poor behaviour which may not be managed well; Some learners do not want to contribute to the lesson; The teacher does not know the learners well and is unable to support them as individuals; Resources such as textbooks are used.	Learners seem inattentive and lack motivation; The teacher is easily angry and learners do not feel comfortable to ask questions and are fearful of making mistakes.

Criterion				
6. Assessment of learners' progress (formative and summative)	The teacher systematically and effectively assesses the learning throughout the lesson; The teacher reacts and adapts the lesson accordingly and is able to judge how far the learning objectives have been achieved, including competences and skills; Learners are encouraged to reflect on their own learning and to support each other; The teacher provides constructive feedback to learners so they know how to improve and there is evidence that the teacher uses assessment to help with planning; Assessment activities are inclusive for learners with SEN; Appropriate records of formal assessments are maintained and the teacher is aware of the needs of each student.	There is some monitoring of work and assessment of learning during the lesson; The teacher is broadly able to judge if the learning objectives are being achieved; General and some group or individual feedback is given to the class; At the end of the lesson the teacher is able to judge if the learning objectives have been achieved; There is a summary of the expected learning and some students demonstrate what they have learned; Records of formal assessments are maintained.	The teacher monitors the work of the learners and asks questions or sets exercises to assess the learning; The teacher does not adapt the lesson or reacts when learners are struggling; Marking is mostly used to indicate if the learner is right or wrong; Much of the assessment is checking the learners' ability to recall knowledge rather than understanding or application of knowledge; At the end of the lesson the teacher is unable to judge with any certainty if the learning objectives have been achieved; Learners with SEN have difficulty completing assessment activities because of the nature of their SEN; Records of formal assessments are maintained.	There is little assessment during the lesson; The teacher relies only on formal assessments to monitor the progress of the learners; The teacher considers that because the lesson was taught the learners have achieved the objectives; Records of formal assessments are not maintained.

7. The use of the medium of instruction and communication skills	The teacher uses good English (P4 and above) and other media of instruction and develops the language skills of the learners at an appropriate level; Communication with the learners, including learners with SEN, is effective and language difficulties do not hinder learning; Learners are encouraged to contribute to the lesson and communicate with each other in the correct medium of instruction when working in groups.	The teacher uses English (P4 and above) and other media of instruction throughout the lesson and encourages learners to use the medium of instruction; Communication with the learners, including learners with SEN, is mostly effective; All learners, including shy learners, are encouraged to contribute to the lesson and communicate with each other when working in groups.	The language skill of the teacher reduces learning unless the teacher uses Kinyarwanda; The teacher makes errors in the medium of instruction and is not able to effectively help learners with their language skills; Learners are encouraged to contribute to the lesson and communicate with each other when working in groups.	Communication difficulties significantly reduce learning; The low level of the language skill of the teacher blocks the correct use of the medium of instruction; Learners are not encouraged to contribute to the lesson.

Appendix 7: Information on the braille alphabet

This is braille – alphabet card

Braille is a system of raised dots used by blind people to read and write. It was invented in 1824 by the Frenchman Louis Braille. A braille "cell" is made up of six dots like a domino, with each letter using a different pattern. There are some short forms of common words.

To make numbers in braille we put this special numeral symbol .: before the letters **A** to **I** for numbers 1 to **9** so A = 1, B = 2 and so on. **J** is used for **zero**.

So **6** is the numeral symbol followed by the braille letter 'F' like this:

And the number **160** is like this:

RNIB supporting blind and partially sighted people

Reg charity no. 226227

Appendix 8: Strategic priorities in the ESSP 2018-2024

The vision of the ESSP is:

To ensure Rwandan citizens have sufficient and appropriate competencies (skills, knowledge and attitudes) to drive the continued social and economic transformation of the country

This vision is elaborated through **nine strategic priorities:**

1. Enhanced quality learning outcomes that are relevant to Rwanda's social and economic development.

2. Strengthened CPD and management of teachers across all levels of education in Rwanda.

3. Strengthened STEM across all levels of education in Rwanda to increase the relevance of education for urban and rural markets.

4. Enhanced use of ICT to transform teaching and learning, and to support the improvement of quality across all levels of education in Rwanda.

5. Increased access to education programmes, especially at pre-primary, secondary, TVET and higher education levels, in Rwanda.

6. Strengthened modern school infrastructure and facilities across all levels of education in Rwanda.

7. Equitable opportunities for all Rwandan children and young people at all levels of education.

8. More innovative and responsive research and development in relation to community challenges.

9. Strengthened governance and accountability across all levels of education in Rwanda.

Appendix 9: Description of each PLC session in action-oriented cycle

PLC-sessions	Timeline
Session 1: Planning	**March**

Objectives

- Sharing challenges/problems identified at school level by every school leader;
- Sharing findings from root causes and consequences of the Problems identified at their school level;
- Agreeing on one common problem to be solved as a priority;
- Identifying indicators of success, targets, initial situation, data to be collected… ;
- Selecting 2-3 strategies to try-out to address the PLC priority/ problem to be solved;
- Developing an implementation plan for the selected strategies to try-out (that is part of or aligns with the SIP).

Activities during the PLC

- Identify one PLC priority to be explored throughout the year;
- Analyse the priorities thoroughly and comprehensively;
- Brainstorming and selecting 2 or 3 more strategies to try outs;

- Indicate measures of success to observe the achievement of the PLC priorities;
- Develop an implementation plan to solve the identified PLC priorities/Problems at school level;
- Report the plc priority to both VVOB and District.

Resources

- School improvement plans
- Guidelines to identify a PLC priority
- Problem Tree template
- Measures of success template
- List of examples of challenges
- Implementation plan template

Follow-up

- Discuss the identified strategies with the SIP team and school community
- Write critical reflection on the role of the PLC in their professional development (for participants in CPD DESL)
- Trying out the 2-3 strategies
- Recording processes, challenges and lessons learnt

Session 2: Implementation follow-up session	May

Objectives

- Sharing experiences (success and challenges) from the tried-out strategies
- Identifying/developing the best strategies
- Developing a final implementation plan for the best strategies

Activities

- Share findings about the 2-3 different strategies tried out
- Discuss and/or identify/develop the best strategy (solution to address the PLC priorities)
- Develop a final implementation plan around the selected strategies customized for each school
- Develop measures of success for this implementation plan

Resources

- Template to record the try-outs
- Guidelines to identify/develop the best strategies
- Implementation plan template (including the measures of success template)

Follow-up

- Discussing selected strategies with the SIP team and school community
- Implementing the selected strategies

Session3: Review the implementation – *Session*	August

Objectives

- Sharing experiences from the re-tried out strategies
- Sharing lesson learnt from the peer learning visit conducted school level
- Agreed on the best strategy
- Developing a final implementation plan for the best strategies

Activities

- Share findings about the 2-3 different strategies
- Discuss and/or identify/develop the best strategy (solution to address the PLC priorities)
- Develop a final implementation plan around the selected strategies customized for each school
- Develop measures of success for this implementation plan

Resources

- Template to record the try-outs
- Guidelines to identify/develop the best strategies
- Implementation plan template (including the measures of success template)

Follow-up

- Discussing selected strategies with the SIP team and school community
- Implementing the selected strategies

Session 4: Reflection and Evaluation	October

Objectives

- Conduct an auto-evaluation both on the process and outcomes
- Document the lesson learnt and best practices
- Developing a dissemination plan for the best strategies

Activities

- Reflect on the action-oriented PLC cycle
- Record best practices
- Document lessons learnt to be included in e-portfolio (for SLs taking part in the CPD DESL)
- Enrich the detailed dissemination plan.

Resources

- Auto-evaluation template
- Template to record best practices & lessons learnt
- Dissemination plan template

Appendix 10: National Framework for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) of Headteachers

1. Background

Several studies recognize the importance of effective school leadership towards quality teaching and student learning outcomes. As school leadership is widely considered to be integral to the effectiveness of schools (Harris, 2013), the need for continuous professional development is seen as an important element in strengthening leadership in African schools and in enhancing schools' potential across the continent to deliver good education and promote school effectiveness and school improvement.

In Rwanda, like in other African countries, continuous professional development (CPD) for headteachers is needed for two major reasons. Firstly, headteachers are recruited and appointed with no prior training or formal education in school leadership roles (Bush et al., 2011). Secondly, many schools are often ineffective, delivering poor school and learning outcomes and persistently underperforming on many global school effectiveness and performance tables (Pont et al., 2008).

Research has shown that if implemented well, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) can be an effective form of professional development (Ingvarson et al., 2005; Vescio et al., 2008). They bridge the gap between theory, policy, and practice, focusing on practice. They provide opportunities for participants to break out of their isolation, create a forum for sharing and contribute to job satisfaction and motivation (Vande Walle & Fransen, 2017). The professional development that occurs within PLCs has been shown to hold great promise for improving school quality (Bush, 2018; Uworwabayeho et al., 2020; Vescio et al., 2008). School leaders learn from each other, work through the identification of problems and develop shared solutions. Additional research shows that participating in the PLC itself provides possible opportunities to hone leadership skills (Wilson, 2016). The research shows that PLCs offer the most practical opportunities for headteachers to apply and build on what was learned during their academic programmes.

In a multi-approach analysis on PLCs in sub-Saharan Africa, Soares et al. (2020) found that PLCs can be organized as standalone professional development initiatives or part of a broader professional development program. They found that the frequency, duration, and the size of PLC groups have a lot of variation, whereby in some countries PLCs varies from weekly to monthly; and the meeting duration varied from 30 minutes to 8 hours.

The same paper showed that in certain PLCs, the facilitator; who often undergoes prior training; is in charge of guiding the technical conversation, whereas in others, the facilitator is in charge of administrative duties such as taking attendance, registering notes, scheduling meetings etc. While the facilitator plays in some cases both roles, or where there is no designated facilitator and teachers in a PLC take turns in facilitation responsibilities. Lastly, some PLCs there may or may not involve specialist input in subject/pedagogical knowledge to enhance the technical discussion. Additionally, some PLCs provide incentives from financial incentives, such as a travel stipend, to professional incentives, such as professional development credit in Ghana. The amount of structure and prescriptiveness in the materials used to lead PLC meetings varied.

Kools & Stoll (2016) define a Professional Learning Community (PLC) as *"an inclusive and mutually supportive group of people with a collaborative, reflective, and growth-oriented approach towards investigating and learning more about their practice in order to improve all students' learning"*. A PLC is defined as a group of educators that meets regularly, shares expertise, and works collaboratively to improve teaching skills and the academic performance of students. Further, glossary of education reform suggests that PLCs serve to two broad purposes: (1) improving the skills and knowledge of educators through collaborative study, expertise exchange, and professional dialogue, and (2) improving the educational aspirations, achievement, and attainment of students through stronger leadership and teaching (The Glossary of Education Reform, 2014). PLCs, while sometimes describing professional development for teachers, here refer to the professional development of headteachers.

In Rwanda, schools in the same sector are performing differently: some are performing well while others are performing poorly. This is an indication that schools are still working in isolation and the culture of collective responsibility is still lacking. Headteachers should be concerned not only about their own schools and students' performance but also about the performance of nearby schools. PLCs can be a solution to this problem by strengthening collaboration and peer learning among headteachers within the same sector. Newly recruited or unexperienced school leaders will learn from experienced school leaders.

Reference will be made to two good examples of CPD support of school leadership through PLCs of headteachers in Rwanda.

First, VVOB in collaboration with REB and the University of Rwanda – College of Education, recognizing that offering trainings to school leaders without provision of after training support would not be sufficient, initiated PLCs to complement the Diploma Programme in Effective School Leadership. These PLCs are facilitated by SEIs after completing the Certificate Program in Educational Mentorship and Coaching. A full PLC cycle takes one year, with one PLC session organized per quarter. Each session is intended to be part of an action-oriented cycle designed to identify school and sector challenges, develop school improvement plans (SIPs) that are aligned with the Sector Education Improvement Plan (SEIP), engage school leaders in sharing best practices and reflecting on and disseminating best practices in school leadership.

The other example is the support of Building Learning Foundation (BLF). BLF established Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) since 2018 as part of its overarching Leadership for Learning strategy which aimed at establishing a self-led system where highly performing headteachers can improve the performance of exceptionally underperforming ones in their districts and sectors. In each district and sector, high-performing headteachers are selected and appointed as National Leaders of Learning (NLLs) and Local Leaders of Learning (LLLs). The selection criteria for NLLs and LLLs include having quality school improvement plan (SIP) in place which is understood and can be explained by stakeholders , improving pupils' learning outcomes and performance of the school including a competent headteacher for 5 years or more for NLLs or 3 years and more for LLLs, how the school works closely with the community including parents and local community leaders and the capacity as well as the willingness of a headteacher to develop self and others.

It is with this regard that Rwanda Basic Education Board (REB) in collaboration with its partners (DPs) in education is committed to promoting Professional Learning Communities of headteachers as part of their Continuous Professional Development (CPD). This framework is designed to provide provision of key aspects needed for effective implementation of professional development of headteachers. It includes the operational definition of PLC, the structure, how they should be facilitated, conditions for successful PLCs, financial implications, and monitoring and evaluation.

2. Definition of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

PLCs can serve an important function for Continuous Professional Development (CPD). In their review of empirical research on PLCs, Nguyen et al. (2021) found that PLCs are considered as a network, a space, an approach, and a process. Which are defined as following:

- PLC as a **network** of individuals (e.g., teachers, headteachers). These individuals share a common interest in learning and teaching and a desire for collaborative improvement around student learning and school improvement. This network functions ideally based on equal sharing and collaboration. The members in a PLC network have a degree of professional interdependence.

- PLC as a **space** for professional learning. PLCs may be present in physical and/or virtual spaces. Such spaces tend to be deliberately organized with the aim of promoting collaborative enquiry, professional dialogue, and other collaborative activities. These can be organized around a specific topic or set of topics.

- PLC as an **approach** to or strategy for professional development.

- PLC as a **process** of establishing a collaborative environment to promote learning for teachers and headteachers. In some cases, the PLC may follow a specific process, strategically identifying challenges, proposing solutions, practicing these solutions, and reflecting on that change. Others may follow other approaches and processes.
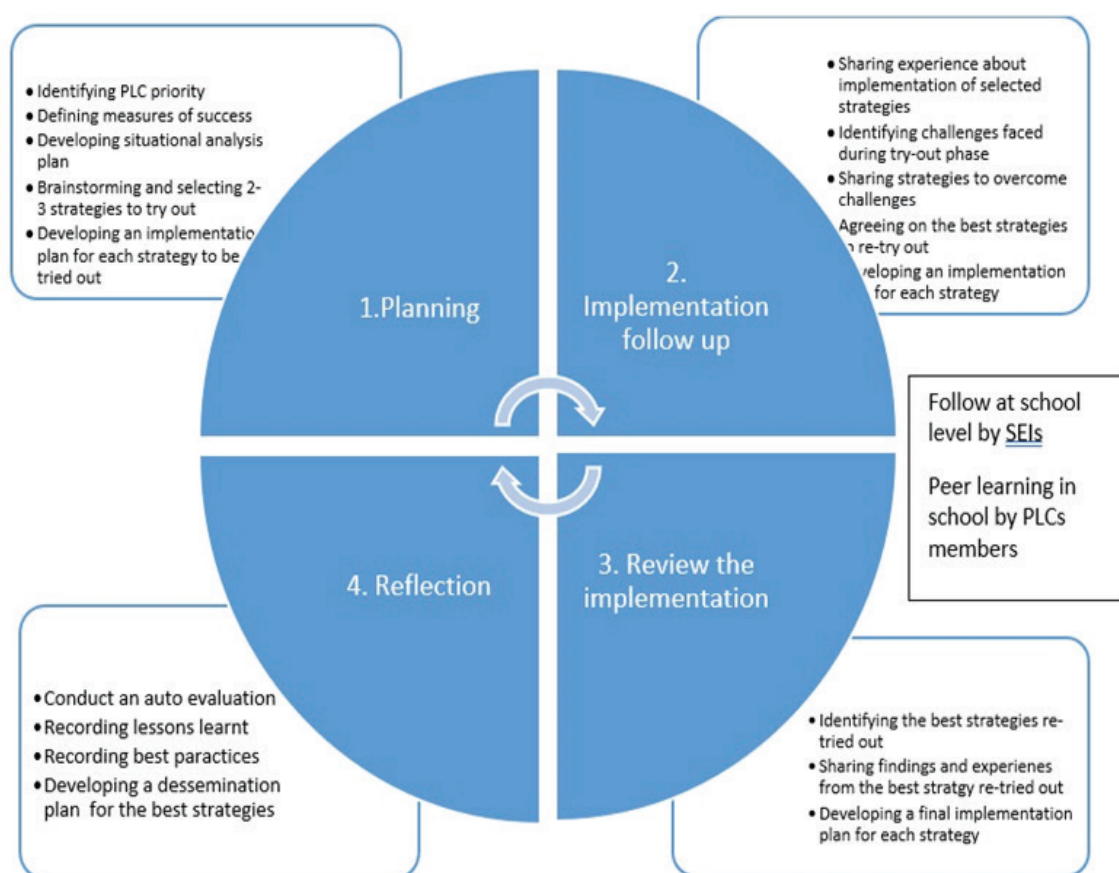
In this framework, PLCs are defined as *a platform where headteachers meet regularly, to share expertise, experiences, challenges, and learning, and works collaboratively to improve school leadership practices, which leads to effective teaching and learning and ultimately to improved student learning outcomes.*

3. PLC structure

Based on previous and on-going experiences in Rwanda, this framework proposes three categories of PLCs namely structured PLCs, Semi-structured PLCs, and unstructured PLCs. The implementation of PLC sessions will depend on the selected structure of the PLCs.

A. Structured PLCs

These are compulsory PLCs facilitated by Sector Education Inspectors (SEIs). The sessions shall be organized on quarterly basis and shall take place in schools on rotational basis. At the end of each session members agree upon actions to be accomplished before the next session. These PLCs shall focus on School Improvement Planning, and the discussions will be structured in an action-oriented cycle: *identification, planning, review,* and *reflection* (see Figure below). These structured PLCs can be stand-alone through the provision of guidelines, or they may be part of a professional development initiative.

- Identifying PLC priority
- Defining measures of success
- Developing situational analysis plan
- Brainstorming and selecting 2-3 strategies to try out
- Developing an implementation plan for each strategy to be tried out

1. Planning

2. Implementation follow up
- Sharing experience about implementation of selected strategies
- Identifying challenges faced during try-out phase
- Sharing strategies to overcome challenges
- Agreeing on the best strategies to re-try out
- Developing an implementation for each strategy

Follow at school level by SEIs

Peer learning in school by PLCs members

4. Reflection
- Conduct an auto evaluation
- Recording lessons learnt
- Recording best paractices
- Developing a dessemination plan for the best strategies

3. Review the implementation
- Identifying the best strategies re-tried out
- Sharing findings and experienes from the best stratgy re-tried out
- Developing a final implementation plan for each strategy

B. Semi-structured PLCs

These PLCs will be facilitated by a selected/trained HT, such as a LLL or NLL. They will be organized on monthly basis and will include topics planned from district level PLCs and other topics that are important to their geographical context. The role of the facilitator is threefold: First, they work closely with DEOs or SEIs for the capacity building of other headteachers in the district/sector. They work with headteachers to support their leadership development in priority areas, with a focus on Rwanda's Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) priorities. Secondly, they create a culture of continuous improvement within and between schools, particularly, focusing on challenges affecting school leadership in Rwanda. Lastly, they monitor the implementation of PLC actions and use data to inform the next PLC meeting. The sessions can take place in schools and on rotational basis.

C. Unstructured PLCs

For these PLCs, headteachers identify their learning needs, the focus, and objectives of their learning. They can be organized whenever needed and facilitated by any headteacher as agreed upon. An example of such PLCs is a visit of a good performing school by PLC members.

PLC priorities to be discussed during the PLC sessions will be selected by headteachers themselves based on available data with the purpose of improving teaching and learning and ultimately students' learning outcomes. Reference will be made to the Sector Education Improvement Plans, the five professional standards for effective school leadership, national policies, and strategies such as the ESSP and other sources of data which highlight the school leadership challenges in the sector. After identifying these priorities, headteachers will deeply analyse them and come up with strategies to address the identified priorities at the school level before the next PLC session.

In preparation for PLCs sessions, HTs need to know the status of a variety of issues and the situation of the school. Headteachers should come to every PLC session with data showing how the identified challenges are being addressed for the purpose of improving teaching and learning. Every sector should have a plan that clearly shows what will be done throughout the year and this plan is shared with district for support, monitoring and evaluation. Depending on the needs, Deputy Headteachers and/or other education stakeholders can be invited to the PLC sessions of headteachers.

4. Conditions for successful PLCs

For an effective PLC session, certain conditions can help facilitate successful discussions and activities (Katz et al., 2009; Wenger et al., 2011).

1. Purpose and focus

As noted in the definition, PLCs serve a specific purpose. PLCs are true to their core purpose of learning and should avoid being a general dissemination channel to headteachers. This purpose is supported by the PLC principles.

Headteachers learn from each other; they are self-motivated and set their own agenda; they act on the learning that takes place; they are supported by specific resources; they build a culture of continuous improvement. PLC members define the purpose of each session and allocate enough time to the issue being discussed. At the end of the session, they should be able to establish whether or not they achieved their objectives. Following the session, actions should be taken back at the school and a review of how these actions may or may not have led to school level change should be reviewed at the next PLC.

PLC sessions will be goal-driven exchanges facilitated and guided by SEIs or an appointed Local Leader of Learning as they have expertise in the area of school leadership. PLC member activities will be driven by shared roles or responsibilities rather than on general educational goals or theories. That is, discussions should have an applied purpose though it is recognized that some discussions may refer to various leadership approaches. The purpose and priorities that will serve as a focus for PLCs are commonly agreed upon as per PLC members individual needs.

2. Relationships

During a PLC session, members share information openly, including successes and failures, and they trust and respect each other. Some of the information shared could be sensitive, which means that confidentiality is important for PLCs members. Having strong trusted networks facilitates PLC discussions.

3. Collaboration

PLC members engage in intensive interactions where they present their beliefs and best practices to investigate, explore, reflect together, and adopt. It is expected that they will work together collaborating to identify challenges and jointly create solutions.

4. Inquiry

PLCs are enquiry- and evidence-driven, focused on the development and implementation of solutions for specific issues in the context of schools within the sector. Members collectively question teaching and leadership routines, examine teaching and learning and engage in supporting each other's professional growth. Inquiry is the process by which the collaborative network can identify challenges and create solutions to common challenges.

5. Leadership

PLC members share roles and responsibilities in the session, i.e., setting agenda, leading on specific tasks. Similar to the overall school leadership approach, leadership is shared and distributed among the members. However, each session should have a leader to drive the meeting agenda and ensure there is a productive outcome from the session. As noted above, that leader could be an SEI, LLL or another HT.

6. Accountability

PLC members hold each other accountable for agreed upon decisions and targets set in the sessions. This accountability is demonstrated during the reflection sessions where members can pose questions, discuss reasons for successes or failures and provide support so that each member can be successful and grow.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Different education stakeholders at different levels in the education system will be involved in the PLC support for sustainability purposes. The following are the roles and responsibilities shared from the school level to national level.

A. Headteachers

The headteacher's roles and responsibilities in the PLCs include but not limited to:

- Attend PLC sessions

- Share knowledge, skills, and resources with other school actors

- Provide required data such as termly and annual student achievement data (both school-based assessment & national exam results)

- Lead PLC sessions when requested

- Host a PLC sessions at their schools when requested.

- Implement at school level the strategies agreed upon in PLCs.

B. Sector Education Inspector

The Sector Education Inspector's roles and responsibilities in the PLCs include but not limited to:

- Lead PLC sessions including priority identification and elaboration of its annual plan

- Facilitate PLC sessions on regular basis at least quarterly

- Monitor implementation of and the strategies agreed upon in PLCs

- Link headteachers with difficulties to the good performing schools for mutual support.

C. District Director of Education

The District Director of Education's roles and responsibilities in the PLCs include but not limited to:

- Be aware of PLCs activities in the district

- Visit PLC sessions and provide support for their effective implementation.

D. Rwanda Basic Education Board

The REB roles and responsibilities in the PLCs include but not limited to:

- Visit PLCs sessions to monitor their implementation and provide constructive feedback

- Identify and coordinate partners who support PLCs

6. **Financial and time implications for PLCs**

Headteachers are responsible for their own professional development.   As such, they shall ensure that they schedule for a PLC with their peers. The cost of attending or hosting PLCs shall be covered by the headteachers. In working together, headteachers with the support of SEIs shall decide on a best strategy to ensure that PLCs are financially sustainable.

7. **Monitoring and evaluation (M& E) of PLCs**

To achieve the goal of the PLCs, it is important to monitor and evaluate the implementation. M&E reports will be analysed by different education actors mainly REB & Districts and sector education officials and appropriate measures will be taken based on lessons learned to improve school leadership practices. Reference is made to the rubric for monitoring the implementation of PLCs in Appendix 11.

Appendix 11: Rubric for evaluating Professional Learning Communities sessions

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), when implemented effectively should lead to improved school leadership practices at the school level and eventually to improved teaching and learning. This rubric is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of PLC sessions. It includes two parts: PLC session evaluation and an evaluation of PLC implementation at the sector level.

The PLC session evaluation

The six enabling factors for effective PLCs are used as indicators to assess PLC sessions. It will be used by the PLC facilitator or other relevant stakeholder to assess the effectiveness of a PLC session. At the conclusion of each session, the facilitator must fill out this rubric, highlighting areas that need improvement for the subsequent session.

Indicators	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	NEEDS IM-PROVEMENT	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
1. Purpose and focus	All PLC members demonstrate understanding of the purpose and objective of each session and allocate enough time to the matter. PLC members share a common understanding on improving the children's learning	Some PLC members demonstrate understanding of the purpose and objective of some sessions and allocate time to the matter.	PLC members never demonstrate understanding of the purpose and objective of each session and allocate enough time to the matter.	Explanation of PLC members on the purpose and focus.
2.Relationships	All PLC members share information openly, including successes and failures, and they trust and respect each other.	Some PLC members share information openly, including successes and failures, and they somehow trust and respect each other.	PLC members never share success stories and failure openly. They do not trust and respect each other.	Interaction of PLCs members in the session PLC meeting actions

3. Collaboration	All PLC members engage in intensive interactions where they present their beliefs and practices to investigation and practice.	Some PLC members engage in interactions. They present their beliefs and practices to investigation and practice.	PLC members never engage in interactions. They never present their beliefs and practices to investigation and practice.	PLC sessions minutes.
4.Inquiry	All PLC members collectively question teaching and leadership routines, examine teaching and learning and engage in supporting each other's professional growth.	Some PLC members collectively question teaching and leadership routines, examine teaching and learning and engage in supporting each other's professional growth.	PLC members never question teaching and leadership routines, examine teaching and learning and engage in supporting each other's professional growth.	PLC sessions minutes. Feedback provided in the PLC sessions.
5. Leadership	PLC members assume leadership roles within the PLC, e.g., setting the agenda, leading on specific tasks.	Some PLC members assume leadership roles within the PLC, e.g., setting the agenda, leading on specific tasks.	Very few PLC members assume leadership roles within the PLC, e.g., setting the agenda, leading on specific tasks. Decision making is limited to very few influential members.	PLC sessions minutes.
6. Accountability	PLC members hold each other accountable for implementing the decisions taken and ensuring the functionality of the PLC.	Some PLC members hold each other accountable for implementing the decisions taken and ensuring the functionality of the PLC.	PLC members do not hold each other accountable for implementing the decisions taken and ensuring the functionality of the PLC.	List of those who do not implement decisions taken in PLC. PLC sessions minutes.

Evaluation of PLC implementation at the sector level

This rubric serves to monitor the implementation of PLCs at the sector level. It may be used by district education authorities, REB, and any other relevant stakeholders interested in promoting PLC. The evaluation can be conducted at the end of an academic year and include areas that need improvement for the subsequent year.

Indicators	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVE-MENT	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
PLC session Plan	The sector has a plan for structured PLC sessions (quarterly) and plans for semi-structured and unstructured PLCs.	The sector has a plan for structured PLC sessions (quarterly).	The sector does not have a plan for PLC sessions.	PLC session plan
Session attendance	All members attended all PLC sessions including structured semi-structured PLC session and at least two unstructured PLC sessions are organized in a term.	More than 80% of members attended all sessions and least one unstructured PLCs is organized per term.	Below 80% of members attended all sessions.	Attendance list in all PLC sessions organized
PLC session recorded	All PLC sessions are recorded and shared with relevant stakeholders.	More than 80% of the planned sessions have meeting minutes	Below 80% of the planned sessions have meeting minutes	Availability of PLC session minute.
PLC priorities implementation at school level	The sector has recorded at least 2 priorities that are successfully addressed through PLC.	The sector has recorded at least one priority successfully addressed through PLC.	No tangible achievement is observed.	PLC report at the end of the learning cycle.

Appendix 12: Guidance for peer learning school visit

To improve school leadership practices, it is important for headteachers to observe each other's practices in an unstructured PLC format. This guidance is designed to support PLC members (including the hosting team) prepare and conduct effective peer learning school visits. In this guidance hosting team is referred to as the team from the school being visited by other PLC members.

Stages	Topic	Description
BEFORE THE VISIT	**Preparation of the visit**	During the session, PLC members should agree on the school to visit next. To ensure that the session is focused, PLC members shall set the objectives of the visit and highlight the priorities to be addressed.
	Expected result of the visit	Peer learning: PLC members will learn school leadership practices in relation to the objectives of the visit.
	Preparation of individual interest areas from the visit	Each PLC member will prepare individual learning interests related to the objectives of the visit for further understanding of the practice.
	Preparation of the logistics	Both visiting team and hosting team will prepare needed logistics.
DURING THE VISIT	**Exploration of school leadership practices.**	The hosting school will facilitate the exploration of school leadership practices.
	Peer exchange session	After the exploration, the peers will meet to discuss, exchange and document lessons learnt about school leadership practices. The facilitator will ensure that the 6 enabling conditions for successful PLCs are fulfilled. PLC members will agree on a strategy to implement in their schools and report on this in the next PLC session.

Appendix 13: Multiple Choice Questions for Module 4

Unit 1

1) Which of the following statements related to effective CPD is not correct?

   A. The most effective means for promoting professional learning within the school is through regular classroom observation, feedback and lesson study.

   B. The most effective means for promoting professional learning within the school is through regular trainings by outside experts.

   C. School leaders should have a thorough understanding of what makes CPD effective

   D. Not all teachers have the same needs for CPD.

   E. None of the above

2) Which of the following is not a criterion for effective CPD as discussed in the CPD Diploma Programme?

   A. is process oriented

   B. is rooted in reflection

   C. leads to a certificate

   D. involves collaboration

   E. requires ownership

3) Which of the following is not a criterion for effective CPD as discussed in the CPD Diploma Programme?

   A. involves producing and constructing

   B. is context specific

   C. uses ICT

   D. involves collaboration

   E. is focused on specific objectives identified in the SIP

4) Which of the following statements related to Timperley's learning cycle is not correct?

A. Effective CPD should start with raising awareness about the topic

B. Effective CPD should allow time for translating knowledge into practice

C. Trainings and workshops are good methods to raise awareness about new topics.

D. A training should pay attention to all stages of the learning cycle

E. Coaching, mentoring, shadowing and collaboratively working together in Communities of Practice are good methods to practice new knowledge and skills.

5) Which of the following statements related to the professional life cycle of teachers is not correct?

A. During the novice or teacher training stage, professional development should focus on acquiring content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge.

B. Not every teacher reaches the final stage of mastery

C. Teachers who have achieved the mastery stage don't really need professional development anymore

D. New teachers who are at the apprentice stage benefit the most from a mentor teacher

E. A teacher can revert in the cycle, for example when teaching a new subject

6) Which of the following statements related to induction is not correct?

A. Induction can help to reduce the turnover rate among teachers.

B. Induction should take at least one year

C. Induction can include coaching, mentoring and taking part in a Community of Practice

D. Induction is best done by the headteacher or deputy headteacher

E. None of the above

7) Which of the following is not part of the proposed induction programme in Rwandan schools?

A. mentoring

B. training in ICT use for teaching and learning

C. being part of a Community of Practice

D. taking part in seminars and trainings at the sector and district level

E. support by TTC Tutors

8) Which of the following suggestions to conduct supervision of teaching in a time-efficient way is not recommended?

A. Observing parts of a lesson

B. Encourage lesson observations by colleagues

C. Having long feedback discussions listing all points for improvement

D. Having short informal conversations with teachers about their teaching

E. Delegate the supervision of teaching to the school-based mentor

9) Which of the following statements related to learner-centred pedagogy is not correct?

A. Lecturing has no part in a learner-centred lesson

B. A learner-centred lesson should always have some group work

C. In a learner-centred lesson, there is room for the interests of learners

D. Good teacher questions that stimulate thinking and involve all learners are part of a learner-centred pedagogy

E. None of the above

10) Which of the following is not a characteristic of good feedback?

A. Good feedback should be timely

B. Good feedback should start from observations

C. Good feedback should include positive elements and points for improvement

D. Good feedback should be exhaustive

E. Good feedback ends with giving advice

11) Which of the following is not a characteristic of good feedback?

A. Good feedback should focus on the task, not the person

B. Good feedback starts from clear objectives

C. Good feedback should be a two-way conversation

D. Good feedback is best given in a written form

E. Good feedback starts from careful observations

12) Which of the following statements related to coaching is not correct?

A. A coach can be any professional with expertise in coaching.

B. A coach is best someone from the same field of expertise as the coachee

C. Effective coaching includes advice to the coachee on how to overcome the challenges

D. Successful coaching should include more than one coaching conversation

E. Coaching can be part of an induction programme

13) Which of the following steps is not part of the GRROW model for coaching?

A. Resources

B. Reality

C. Options

D. Goal

E. Relaxing

14) Which of the following statements related to Communities of Practice is not correct?

A. Communities of Practice are based on the idea that people learn better in groups

B. Members of a Community of Practice should have the same goal

C. Reflection on practice is a key element of a Community of Practice

D. Communities of Practice are best organised per subject specialisation

E. Communities of Practice are based on the idea that people learn more from observing and practising than by listening to lectures.

15) Which of the following elements is not a key enabler of Communities of Practice?

   A.   Inquiry

   B.   Leadership

   C.   Accountability

   D.   Shared purpose

   E.   Mentoring

16) Which of the following elements is not a key enabler of Communities of Practice?

   A.   Inclusiveness

   B.   Accountability

   C.   Collaboration

   D.   Shared Purpose

   E.   Relationships

17) Which of the following is not a good way for school leaders to support Communities of Practice?

   A.   Creating awareness about CoPs

   B.   Creating links between different CoPs within the school

   C.   Making membership of a CoP compulsory for all teachers

   D.   Monitoring and evaluating the results of a CoP

   E.   Creating favourable conditions for a CoP such as time and a place to meet

18) Which of the following is not an example of formative assessment?

   A.   End of trimester exam

   B.   Short quiz

   C.   Assignments

   D.   Homework

   E.   Group activity followed by presentation by each group

19) Which of the following elements should not be assessed in competence-based learning?

    A. Knowledge

    B. Understanding

    C. Practical skills

    D. Attitudes and values

    E. All the above should be assessed

20) As a school leader, it is important to recognise during short class observations whether there is a conducive learning environment. Which of the following is not a good indicator for a conducive learning environment?

    A. Students are alert

    B. Students ask many questions

    C. Students work in close collaboration

    D. Students are silent when a teacher asks a question

    E. Students work in silence on individual exercises

21) Which of the following statements explains best the meaning of the hidden curriculum?

    A. The written syllabus

    B. A set of prescribed learning outcomes

    C. A formal document that details the content that s

    D. A series of student experiences in and out the school

    E. All of the above

22) Which of the following is a generic competence according to the competence-based framework?

    A. Creativity and innovation

    B. Environmental protection

    C. ICT proficiency

    D. Science and Technology

    E. All of the above

23) Which of the following aspects should be taken into consideration by school leaders when following up on curriculum implementation?

   A. Crosscutting issues are incorporated into the scheme of the work

   B. Didactic planning corresponds to the intended learning outcomes of the curriculum

   C. Parents education level

   D. Teacher is the only source of knowledge in the classroom

   E. All of the above

24) Which of the following strategies is a preventive method for dealing with disruptive student behaviour?

   A. Corporal punishment

   B. Justice focuses on establishing guilt

   C. Guidance and counselling

   D. Calling parents when a student misbehaves

   E. Organise a meeting with the concerned students to discuss the problems

25) Which of the following strategies are effective ways of providing feedback to teachers?

   A. Begin with positive points about the lesson to build self-confidence;

   B. Schedule the feedback session as soon as possible after the lesson;

   C. Give general feedback, rather than focusing on specific situations during the lesson.

   D. Tell the teacher what they should or shouldn't do in the next lesson

   E. All the above

26) Which of the following statements related to coaching and mentoring is not correct?

   A. coaching and mentoring improve teamwork and collaboration

   B. coaching and mentoring do not concern experienced teachers

   C. coaching and mentoring enable experiential learning

   D. coaching and mentoring are process oriented

   E. coaching and mentoring are methods of CPD

27) Which of the following is a good strategy to promote inclusive education in Communities of Practice (COPs) in a school?

   A. As a team, plan and implement a community or school activity to raise awareness on inclusive education.

   B. By grouping students with various impairments in their own classrooms.

   C. By assigning strategic responsibilities to female teachers.

   D. By organising weekly meetings to share good teaching practices

   E. All the above

28) Which of the following statements relates best to the stage of "conscious incompetence" in the process of learning new skills?

   A. I do this right, almost automatically

   B. When I pay attention, I can actually do it

   C. I know I should do this, but I can't

   D. I was not aware about it

   E. I still feel insecure doing it

29) Which of the following statements relates best to the stage of "unconscious competence" in the process of learning new skills?

   A. I do this right, almost automatically

   B. When I pay attention, I can actually do it

   C. I know I should do this, but I can't

   D. I was not aware about it

   E. I still feel insecure doing it

Unit 2

30) Which of the following statements related to the involvement of parents and the wider community in the school is not correct?

   A.   The main reason to involve parents and the wider community is to raise additional funds for the school

   B.   Involving parents and the wider community can reduce absenteeism and dropouts among learners

   C.   Even illiterate parents can support their children in their education

   D.   Schools can serve as centres for community learning events

   E.   High performing schools in Rwanda tend to have more involved parents

31) Which of the following statements related to the involvement of parents and the wider community in the school is not correct?

   A.   It is not necessary to involve all parents as some of them are not interested in their children's education.

   B.   The main purpose of involving parents is to raise funds for the school.

   C.   It is the school's responsibility to help parents to support their children with their education.

   D.   Parents who are illiterate cannot do much to support their children at school.

   E.   The school executive committee meetings are the best instrument to involve parents in the school.

   F.   A child's education is the sole responsibility of schools.

   G.   Many parents are illiterate and can't really do much to support the education of their children

32) Which of the following is not one of the six types of community and parental involvement that schools can use according to Epstein's model?

   A.   Parenting.

   B.   Communicating

   C.   Volunteering

   D.   Learning at Home

   E.   Fundraising

33) Which of the following is not an official role ((Official Gazette n° 31 of 30/07/2012) of the SGAC?

A. To formulate the vision of the school in accordance with its mission;

B. To appoint and remove members of the school executive committee;

C. To submit meeting reports to the Sector authorities with a copy thereof to the Executive Secretary of the Cell in which the school is located;

D. to develop the School Improvement Plan of the school;

E. to approve the annual budget of the school.

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