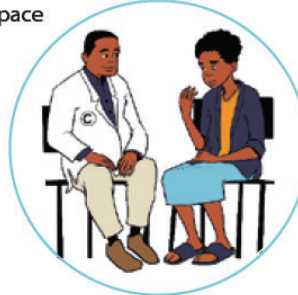# CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE IN EDUCATIONAL MENTORSHIP AND COACHING

Explore

Allow and Give Space

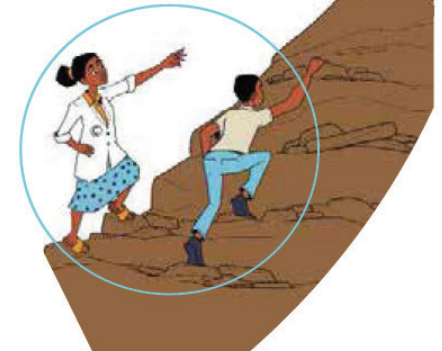Inspire

Relax and Keep your Sense of Humour

Appreciate and Reinforce

Challenge

Confront and Stay Connected

Study Manual

6th edition

Module 1

Coaching and Mentoring for Professional Development of Head Teachers and Teachers

April 2023

UNIVERSITY *of* RWANDA

vvob
education for development

REB | RWANDA BASIC EDUCATION BOARD

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE IN EDUCATIONAL MENTORSHIP AND COACHING (CPD - CEMC)

MODULE 1
COACHING AND MENTORING FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF HEADTEACHERS AND TEACHERS

STUDY MANUAL

VERSION 6

APRIL 2023

LIST OF ACRONYMS

- ➤ **ALACT:** Action Looking Awareness Creating Trial

- ➤ **CBC:** Competence Based Curriculum

- ➤ **CPD:** Continuous Professional Development

- ➤ **CoP:** Community of Practice

- ➤ **DCC:** District Continuous Professional Development Committee

- ➤ **DDE:** District Director of Education

- ➤ **DHTS:** Deputy Headteacher in charge of Studies

- ➤ **DL:** Distance Learning

- ➤ **ESSP:** Education Sector Strategic Plan

- ➤ **GROW:** Goal Reality Options Will

- ➤ **GRROW:** Goal Reality Resources Options Will

- ➤ **HT:** Headteacher

- ➤ **NT:** New Teacher

- ➤ **OSKAR:** Outcome Scaling Know-how & resources Affirm & action Review

- ➤ **PP:** Policy Priority

- ➤ **PDSI:** Plan Do See & Improve

- ➤ **REB:** Rwanda Education Board

- ➤ **SBI:** School Based In-service training

- ➤ **SBM:** School Based Mentor

- ➤ **SBMPF:** School Based Mentorship Programme Framework

- ➤ **SEI:** Sector Education Officer

- ➤ **SMART:** Specific Measurable Actionable or Achievable Realistic Time-bound

- ➤ **SSL:** School Subject Leader

- ➤ **TGROW:** Topic Goal Reality Options Will

- ➤ **TDM:** Teacher Development and Management

- ➤ **TDMP:** Teacher Development and Management Policy

- ➤ **TTC:** Teacher Training College

- ➤ **UR-CE:** University of Rwanda – College of Education

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

MODULE 1

COACHING AND MENTORING FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF HEADTEACHERS AND TEACHERS

The education sector in Rwanda is changing rapidly, school leadership has become more complex and district, sector education officials as well as school (head)teachers and students are constantly involved in the processes of change. On a regular basis, there are new policies to be implemented, new technologies, innovative approaches to teaching and learning, and many other changes within the educational environment. As an educational leader (SBM, SEI, DEO & DDE) you can play a pivotal role in including these changes in your school, sector or district. Educational leaders, like SBM, SEI, DEO and DDE, can create a supportive environment for change and invest time and other resources in quality professional learning opportunities for all staff – teachers, school leaders and support staff – starting from their induction period.

This first module intends to help you as educational leaders to reflect on the role you play and equip you with the competences to coach, mentor, and stimulate peer learning at school, sector and district levels.

This module is divided into 5 units namely:

1) Professional development of headteachers and teachers;

2) Assessing teachers' professional development needs and setting goals;

3) Common CPD activities in education;

4) Communities of practice for headteachers and teachers; and

5) Coaching and mentoring in education.

The first unit, **professional development of headteachers and teachers**, looks at the concepts of continuous professional development (CPD) in education, how to organise effective CPD and establish a reflective practice in education, highlight current policies, programmes, and plans related to CPD for teachers and school leaders in Rwanda and discuss stakeholders involved in CPD for (head)teachers and their roles.

The second unit, **assessing teachers' professional development needs and setting goals**, discusses how to know which professional development needs exist among teachers and how to plan for these.

The third unit, **common CPD activities in education**, gets a closer look at the most commonly used CPD activities in education in Rwanda: lesson observation, school visit and other peer learning visits between and within schools.

The fourth unit, **communities of practice for headteachers and teachers**, will look at the concept of a community of practice (CoP) and a Professional Learning Community (PLC), discuss the advantages of a CoP/PLC for CPD of (head)teachers and how to facilitate a CoP or PLC.

Finally, the fifth unit, **coaching and mentoring in education**, will discuss the concepts of coaching and mentoring in education, suggest practical coaching conversations, explore the concept of induction of new (head)teachers including induction approaches and practices, stakeholders involved in (head)teacher induction and their role, the importance of induction and its effective strategies.

To facilitate the readability of this Module the term teacher is often used for both headteachers and teachers.

Module learning outcomes

By the end of this module you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate understanding of professional development for teachers and headteachers

2. Analyse effective ways for CPD in education;

3. Describe the professional development cycle of teachers;

4. Demonstrate understanding of current policies, programmes, and plans related to CPD for teachers and school leaders in Rwanda;

5. Identify stakeholders involved in CPD for (head)teachers and their roles;

6. Identify the benefits and the barriers of reflection;

7. Develop the strategies to overcome barriers to reflection;

8. Develop a culture of self-assessment and reflection;

9. Assess teachers' professional development needs;

10. Apply appropriate tools for monitoring and evaluating teacher's individual and school CPD plans;

11. Conduct and reflect on a lesson observation;

12. Describe the process of lesson study, a specific way of working in a CoP;

13. Conduct and reflect on a school visit;

14. Demonstrate understanding of the meaning and purpose of a community of practice /professional learning community;

15. Apply key enablers of and for an effective CoP or PLC;

16. Initiate an effective CoP or PLC;

17. Facilitate CoP or PLC sessions;

18. Explain the concept of coaching and mentoring in education;

19. Conduct coaching conversations;

20. Explain the concept of induction of new (head)teachers;

21. Explore the importance of (head)teacher induction;

22. Identify stakeholders involved in (head)teacher induction and their roles;

23. Analyse existing practices in inducting new (head)teachers;

24. Set up or plan effective teacher induction at your school.

UNIT ONE

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF HEADTEACHERS AND TEACHERS

Introduction

Quality of education depends on many factors, but teachers and school leaders are the two most important actors in improving it. That is why priority is given to teacher professional development and effective school leadership. Evidence shows that teacher professional development improves teaching and learning, and effective school leadership is required for the professional development of teachers (Robinson et al, 2008; Leithwood et al, 2008; Hattie, 2009; Glewwe et al., 2011). In order to improve the quality of education, the following key questions form the themes of this unit:

- What is continuous professional development?

- How does professional development take place?

- What do we know about best professional learning practices?

- What is the most helpful environment for professional development?

Unit learning outcomes

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate understanding of professional development for Teachers and Headteachers

2. Analyse effective ways for CPD in education;

3. Describe the professional development cycle of teachers;

4. Identify stakeholders involved in CPD for (head)teachers and their roles;

5. Use the 'What model' to reflect on daily CPD activities;

6. Identify the benefits and the barriers of reflection;

7. Develop the strategies to overcome barriers to reflection;

8. Develop a culture of self-assessment and reflection.

Section 1.1: Introduction to CPD in Education

This section defines the concept of CPD in education and shows the importance of CPD to teaching and student learning, the current policies, programmes and plans related to CPD for (head)teachers.

> **Activity 1**
> What is Continuous Professional Development according to you?

1.1.1. What is CPD in education?

There are different definitions of CPD in education. Some definitions are more detailed than others. Generally speaking, CPD includes all forms of learning that enable individuals to improve their own practices; it is a process of continuous growth within a profession.

Rwanda Basic Education Board (REB) uses the following definition for CPD: **Continuous professional development** 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 resource for CPD (REB, 2018).

Building on REB's definition, we suggest using a more detailed definition of CPD in education: **Continuous professional development** means learning continuously throughout one's career to improve performance. CPD is a term that covers all formal, non-formal and informal professional learning experiences over the duration of a teacher's career**.** Non-formal and formal professional learning experiences are organised CPD-activities. The difference between both is that formal activities lead to a certification.

Informal CPD activities are those activities by which teachers learn in a less organised way, e.g., a teacher learning how to use a given teaching aid just because he/she has seen it being used by a peer. It has no formalities; it is not organised.

1.1.2. Importance of CPD in Education

> **Activity 2**
> Why is CPD necessary for teachers and how can they benefit from it?.

The education sector in Rwanda is rapidly changing with new policies, new technologies and didactic approaches to be implemented. Expectations from school leaders and teachers are changing as well. Therefore it is important that school leaders create a supportive environment and invest time and other resources in quality professional learning opportunities for all staff -teachers, school leaders and support staff- starting from their induction period.

A school is a **learning organisation or community**; a place where beliefs, values and norms of employees support sustained learning; where a "learning atmosphere", "learning culture" or "learning climate" is created; and where "learning to learn" is essential for everyone involved (OCED, 2016; 2). It also connects work-based learning and external learning (e.g., workshops or courses), to make sure that professional learning is as practical and useful as possible.

Not only school leadership is demanding, **teaching is also a complex profession** (Nieto, 2014) and pre-service teacher education is rarely enough to provide all knowledge and skills necessary to successful teaching. An important part can be learned only on the job (e.g., assessing student's work, including the creation and scoring of teacher-made test; writing informative reports to parents about their children's progress and communicating more generally with parents) (Britton E. & al, 2000). So, there is an important role for schools in providing an environment where New Teachers (NTs) can learn the job and succeed as teachers and where all teachers -also experienced teachers- can continue their learning.

Furthermore, research has shown that **teachers' professional development can have a positive impact on student performance and teachers' practice**. Guskey, (2003) for example, writes that high-quality CPD is a central element in improving education. The way teachers teach has an effect on the way their learners learn.

Apart from the fact that leading a school and teaching are complex professions, an effective teacher is the most important factor in producing high levels of student achievement. Therefore, it is important that teachers should have the opportunity to continuously learn throughout their career. This ongoing process of professional development, teacher collaboration and lifelong learning starts in pre-service education as shown in figure 1:
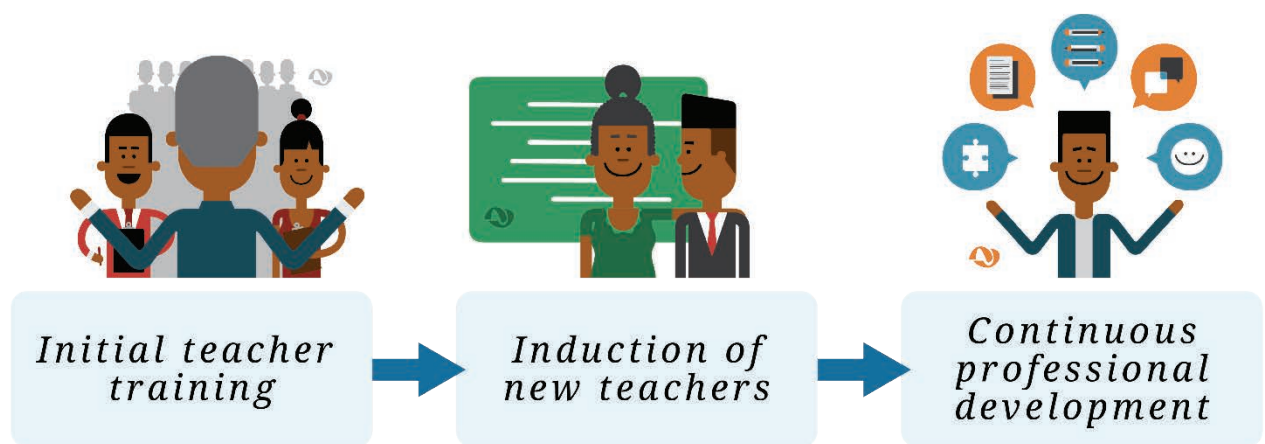
Figure 1: Teacher professional development process (adapted from Jones (2003)

Professional development can be started by the teacher's own needs (individually focused), organisational needs/school's requirements (school focused) or institutional needs (local/national authority focused, e.g. the School Improvement Plan), but always with the intention to improve teaching and learning practices. A school could for example request all SBMs and SSLs to learn more about coaching skills with the intention that they coach their fellow teachers afterwards.

Schools that are not concerned by the professional development of their staff usually lose their best people. So, professional development **motivates teachers to stay on the job** and recruitment benefits from it. Finally, it **contributes to a positive mindset** where people feel valued and motivated and supports a continuous process of whole school improvement.

Section 1.2: CPD in Education

In this section you will discover the characteristics of effective CPD in education. You will also explore different CPD activities, look at the teacher professional development cycle and the different stakeholders involved.

1.2.1. Characteristics of effective CPD in Education

Effective CPD is about learning opportunities that should engage and motivate (head)teachers; opportunities that will support (head)teachers to reflect upon and develop their own practice. It is about their desire to develop professionally from a **growth mindset**. People with a growth mindset believe that their learning and intelligence can grow with time and experience. Basic capacities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and professional growth.
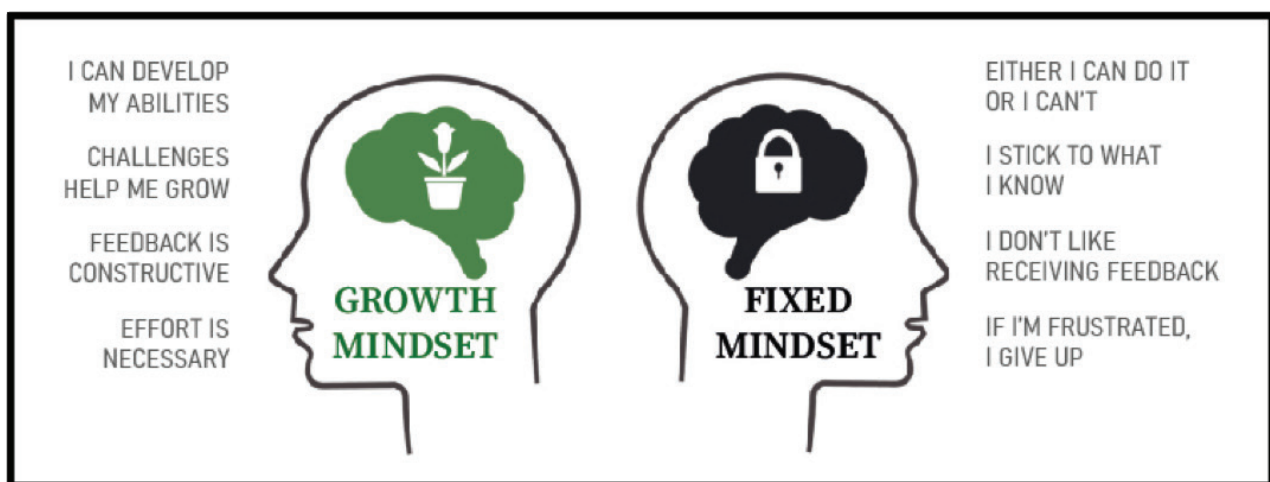
Figure 2: Growth mindset vs. fixed mindset

It is also about empowering (head)teachers so that they are prepared for change. In order to achieve this, it is essential that you think about how adults learn. Learning can either be formal, non-formal, and informal. One can also think of learning in vertical dimensions (knowing more and new learning experiences) and horizontal dimensions (the same knowledge applied in different contexts, deeper understanding) (Budd & Early, 2007; 16). Therefore, teachers and headteachers don't always have to learn new things to develop professionally, but at some level they will be changing practices. Understanding those differences, purposes and contexts will facilitate you in the identification of providing appropriate CPD for your fellow teachers or headteachers.

When you provide CPD activities, you also need to take into account motivation, personality, self-esteem and roles outside the school that your fellow teachers or headteachers have. Moreover, it is important that schools develop **a culture of continuous improvement**. Each school should become a place where the environment promotes professional development and provides a culture of lifelong learning for all. We should make each of our schools a place where teachers dare to take risk, look for and try out new ideas and strategies, and discuss their work openly; a school where teachers like collaborating with and learning from each other. Therefore, the most appropriate model of thinking about professional development is one based on **experiential learning** (Kolb learning cycle Figure 3). This model underlines the importance of workplace learning and learning by doing, sharing, reviewing and applying.
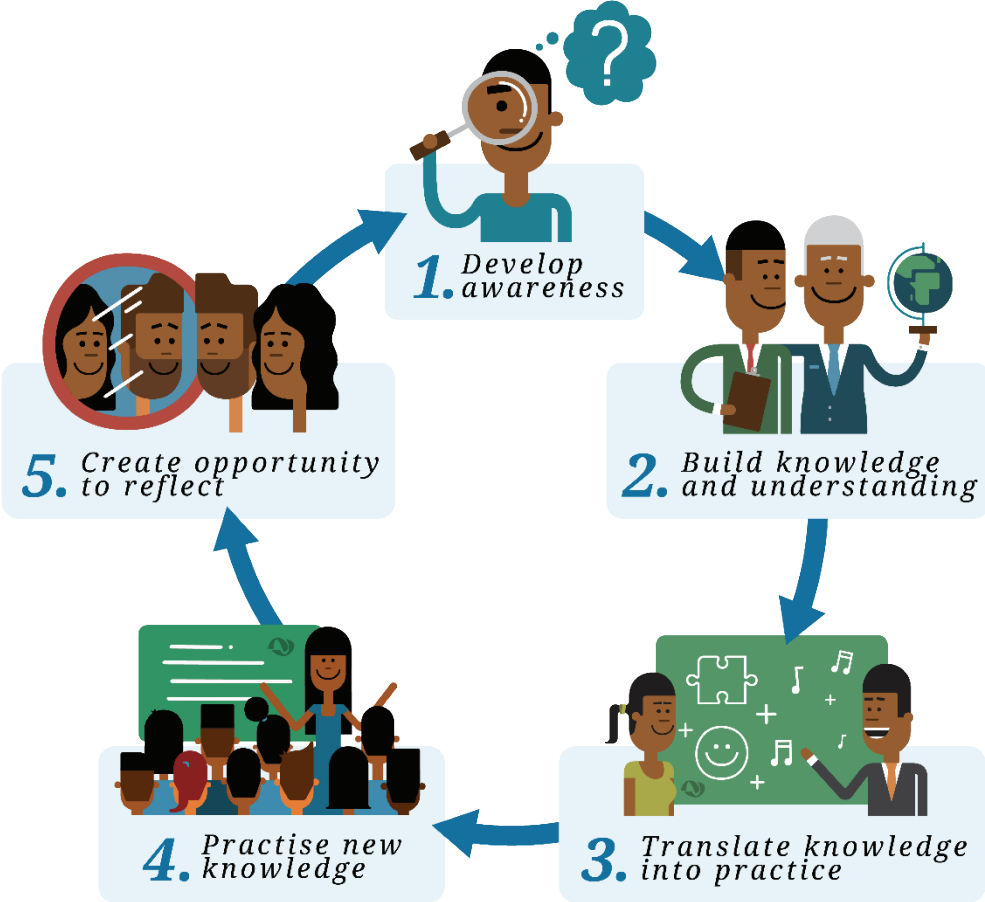
Figure 3: Kolb Learning Cycle (Timperley et. al, 2007)

Since learning is a **process**, CPD should provide all the steps between awareness and reflection. Effective CPD is more than only developing awareness and building knowledge and understanding. In order to create real and sustainable change, CPD needs to pay attention to all elements of the learning cycle. It also needs to focus on translating knowledge into practice, applying 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. Methods that have been considered to be more effective in these stages are coaching, mentoring, shadowing (the act of following/observing someone) and working together in Communities of Practice.

Effective CPD takes the individual through four stages:

Stage 1: unconscious incompetence: when someone is doing something wrong and he/she doesn't know he/she is doing it wrong;

Stage 2: conscious incompetence: when someone is doing something wrong, but he/she knows he/she is doing it wrong;

Stage 3: conscious competence: it is when someone is doing something right, but he/she has to consciously focus on doing it in the right way; and

Stage 4: unconscious competence: it is when the individual has enough experience with the skill that he/she can perform it so easily they do it unconsciously.

For example, unconscious incompetence says, "I was not aware that I should ask open ended questions in class", and conscious incompetence says, "I know I should do this, but I am not very good at it;" while conscious competence says, "When I pay attention, I actually can do it, I can ask open ended questions in class" then ultimately reach the level of unconscious competence that says, "I do this right, almost automatically" (see figure 4). Real change in practice requires that the person moves from comfort (ignorance) over insecurity (resistance) to confidence and security with the new practice (Howell & Fleischman, 1982).
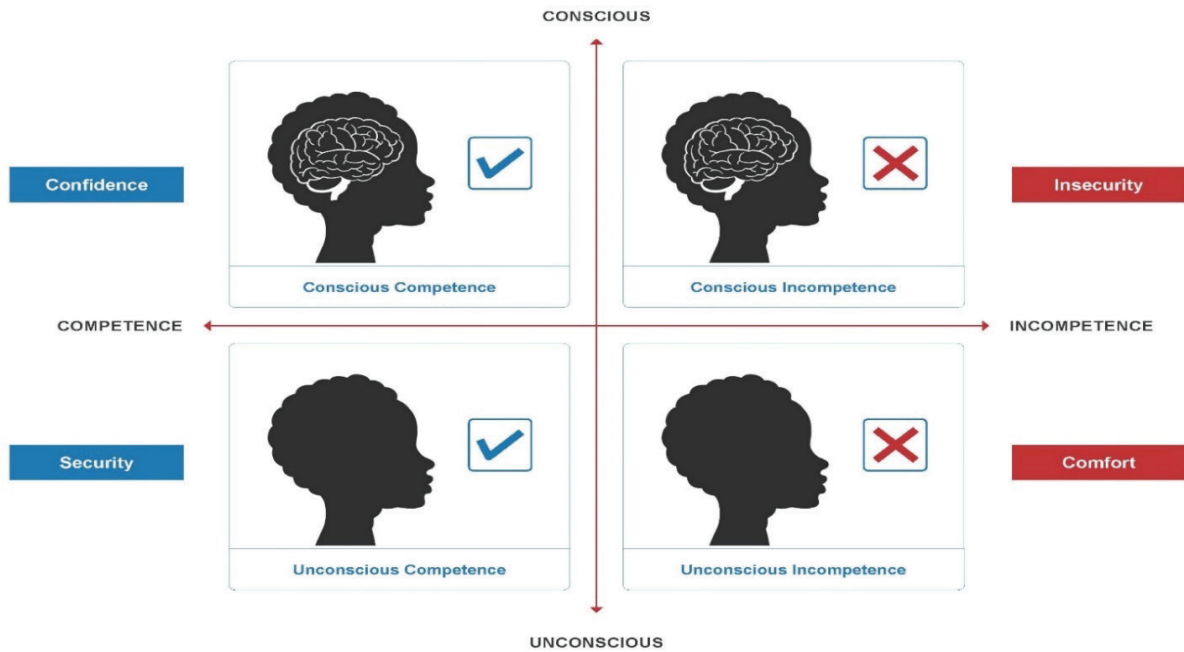
Figure 4: From unconscious to conscious learning (Howell & Fleischman, 1982)

Moreover, effective CPD identifies specific objectives as well as challenging and appropriate content. And this should be linked to the needs that are identified in school CPD Plan as part of a School Improvement Plan. More detailed information on how to conduct a CPD needs analysis and translate this into a plan is provided later in this module.

In summary, effective CPD-activities are learning opportunities that:

- Engage and motivate teachers;
- Support teachers to reflect upon and develop their own practice;
- Create opportunities that satisfy the (head)teachers' desire to develop professionally and improve, in line with the school improvement plan;
- Reflect and promote the growth mind-set;
- Empower the colleagues to prepare for change;
- Consider different contexts (settings) in which learning takes place (vertical & horizontal dimensions);
- Consider interests, personality, self-esteem and your fellow teachers' roles outside the school;
- Develop a culture of continuous improvement: teachers take initiative, search for and try out new ideas and strategies, and discuss their work openly (awareness to reflect on implementation); and
- Take the individual through the four stages of competence as explained in figure 4 above.

1.2.2. CPD activities in education

When thinking about CPD, many people think automatically about training. However, there are many different CPD activities. Depending on the needs of your fellow teachers or headteachers, other CPD activities may be more effective to help teachers take all the steps in the Kolb Learning Cycle (Figure 3).

> **Activity 3**
> Write down some examples of CPD activities you know.

Examples of CPD activities in education include:

- Peer lesson observations and helpful (constructive) feedback
- Discussions and sharing good practices
- Reflection/self-evaluation
- Communities of practice
- Model lesson
- Lesson study (micro teaching)
- Team teaching
- Developing and adapting new instructional/learning materials
- Rotating roles/jobs
- Structured feedback from students
- Self-study
- Training and workshop
- Study tours and field visits
- Coaching
- Mentoring
- Job shadowing (it gives an opportunity to observe or "shadow" someone doing their job to gain a better understanding of the role)

Activity 4

Refer to the CPD-activities listed above and answer the following questions:

- a) Which CPD activities that you know and have experienced/used in your school/sector?
- b) Which CPD activities that you know but haven't used in your school/sector?
- c) Which CPD activities that you don't know at all?
- d) Out of the CPD activities that you have experienced (either because you organised it or because you participated in it) in your school/sector, which ones were very beneficial and how?

Some of these CPD activities will be explored in depth in other Units of this Module. This will include a detailed description of the CPD activity as well as clear guidance on how SBMs and sector and district officials can support and facilitate these CPD activities.

Special attention will be given to CPD activities that facilitate peer-learning and collaboration. A number of studies have explored teacher collaboration and mutual support as approaches to raising teacher performance (Veenam, et al., 1998; Smith, 1999; Beatty, 2000; Day, et al., 2002). Providing teachers with opportunities to reflect on their teaching and to engage in dialogue about it with other teachers helps building motivation and commitment (Day, et al., 2002).

Furthermore, teachers learning from each other through observing lessons, working together on real school improvement problems, drawing on best practice in developing solutions, feedback, taking part in coaching and mentoring is considered by many teachers the most effective way to improve their practice (Rhodes, et al, 2004).

Finally, these studies emphasise the importance of teachers learning with and from other teachers, the importance of school support in improving teacher practices as a result of professional development and encouraging schools to become learning organisation or learning communities.

1.2.3. Teacher professional development cycle

Activity 5

Think back of your starting days as a teacher. How were your learning needs different from the learning needs you have today?

Teacher professional development takes place in stages. A new teacher has other learning needs than an experienced teacher. It is important to know this in order to identify appropriate CPD activities. Figure 5 demonstrates the evolution of teachers throughout their career in terms of skills acquired per stage.
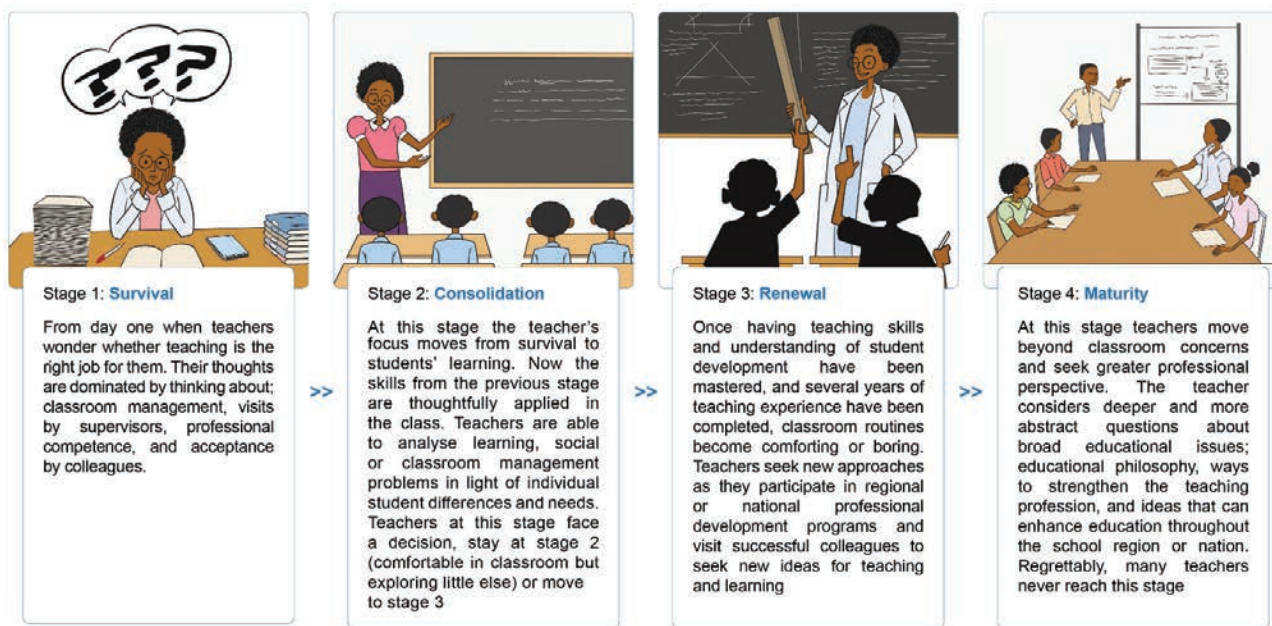
Figure 5: Stages of teacher development (Sadker & Sadker, 2003)

1.2.4 Stakeholders involved in CPD in education in Rwanda

Activity 6

In small groups, describe the roles and responsibilities of these stakeholders: Sector Education Inspectors (SEI), District Directors of Education (DDE), School Based Mentors (SBMs), School Subject Leaders (SSLs), Headteachers (HT), and Deputy Headteachers (DHT).

Drawing on the policy framework for CPD (**annex 1**), organising and facilitating CPD in schools is not the responsibility of headteachers alone. SBMs, SEIs, DEO and DDE also have a role to play. So, what is your role as an SBM, SEI, DEO or DDE in the professional development of (head)teachers? REB's key strategy to deliver CPD at the school level is through the School-based Mentoring Programme (SBMP). This framework describes SBM's responsibilities and those of other stakeholders involved in school based CPD as shown in **annex 2**. It shows how you can contribute to effective CPD in your school and hence to the implementation of the School Improvement Plan which gives guidance to CPD needs.

REB underlines that good teachers are, by definition, reflective practitioners, they never give up on

Section 1.3: Reflection in Education

improving their practice, challenge and question themselves, and look for new and improved ways of working so that all their learners are enabled to make the best possible progress. Thus, reflection is about learning to perform better. Reflection is a key concept in CPD in general and in coaching conversations in particular. As an SBM, you have been assigned to promote reflection in your school, and as a SEI, DEO and DDE you are invited to do the same in the schools and in your sector and district. This section will help you to develop a deep understanding of the concept of reflection in education, its importance, benefits and barriers together with strategies to overcome them. It will also provide you with an easy model that you can use to effectively practice reflection, explore and learn from your experiences. The model can be used for self-reflection and to help your fellow teacher to reflect. Please note that there are many models for reflection. You might already use another model. That is fine. All reflection models take a similar approach. Use the model that works best for you.

Reflection means thinking about something you experienced or what you have done individually or as a group and learn from the experience with an aim of improvement.

Reflection is composed of three main elements (Jasper, 2003):

1. A situation (**E**xperiences) that happened;

2. The **R**eflection that enables you to learn from those experiences;

3. The **A**ctions taken as a result of what you learned from those experiences.

These three elements can be summarised as Experience – Reflection – Action (ERA) as indicated in the "cycle of reflection" in figure 6 below:
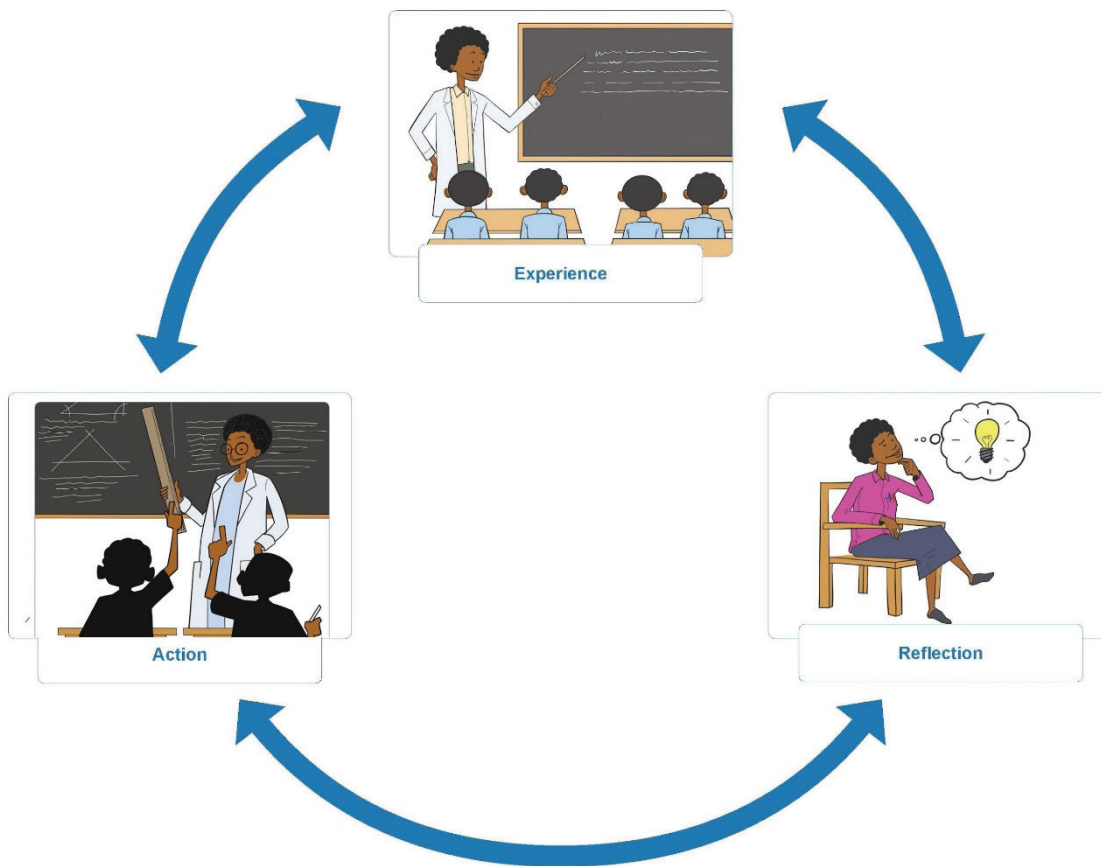
Figure 6: ERA cycle (Bassot, 2016)

Reflection is sometimes called personal reflection, self-review, self-awareness, self-critique, self-appraisal and self-assessment. Reflection is mainly focused on self-development. Reflection is a valuable method that uses learning from our past, assesses where we are now, and searches for ways to improve.

1.3.1. Models of reflection: WHAT model

Various experts have produced different reflection models to help people use reflection more actively and effectively. These models of reflection can be used in different situations, depending on the purpose. Some of these models are more structured and detailed than others, but all provide a framework for teachers to explore and learn from their experiences. These include Borton's "What model", ALACT model, Kolb's model of experiential learning, and Gibbs's reflective cycle model.

You will examine the WHAT model in detail to determine how you can use it as a tool to practice and promote reflection in your school, sector or district. You will find details about other models in **annex 3**.

BORTON'S WHAT MODEL:
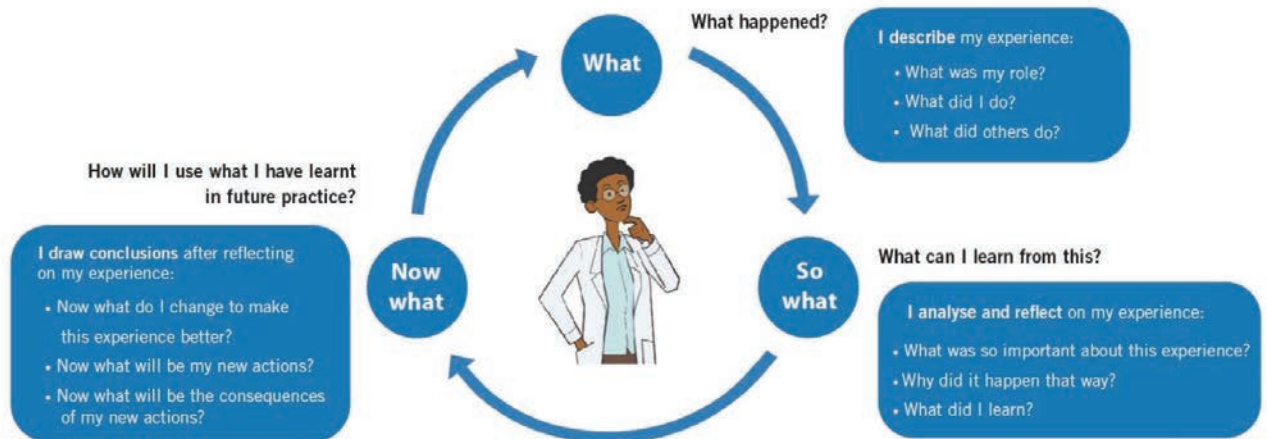
Figure 7: Terry Borton's reflective model (1970), as adapted by Rolfe et al. (2001)

Borton's "WHAT model"

The "What?" model is a very simple model that offers a very flexible process for using reflection, and especially for getting started and experimenting with the concept. It consists of 3 questions to make you think (Rolfe, G. et al., 2001):

1. **What?** - What happened? I *describe* my experience: What was my role? What did I do? What did others do? How do I know? What data do I have?

2. **So what?** - What can I learn from this? I *analyse and reflect* on my experience using the data available: What was so important about this experience? Why did it happen that way? What did I learn?

3. **Now what?** - How will I use what I have learnt in future practice? I *conclude* after reflecting on my experience: Now, what do I change to make this experience better? Now, what will be my new actions? Now, what will be the consequences of my new actions?

Activity 7

Read the comic and try to recognise the 3 steps of the WHAT model.

   a)   What did Mutoni experience? What happened during her lesson?

   b)   What did Mutoni learn from this experience?

   c)   What did Mutoni decide to do after the lessons she learnt?

MUTONI IS A TEACHER. SHE HAS BEEN TEACHING LOWER SECONDARY FOR OVER 10 YEARS.

SHE IS IRRITATED ABOUT A STUDENT NAMED MUGISHA.

NEXT DAY IN THE MORNING...

SHE REALISED THAT HER IRRITATION WITH MUGISHA HAS BEEN BUILDING UP OVER SEVERAL LESSONS. MUGISHA HAS BEEN PASSIVE IN CLASS BUT MUTONI DOESN'T KNOW WHY.
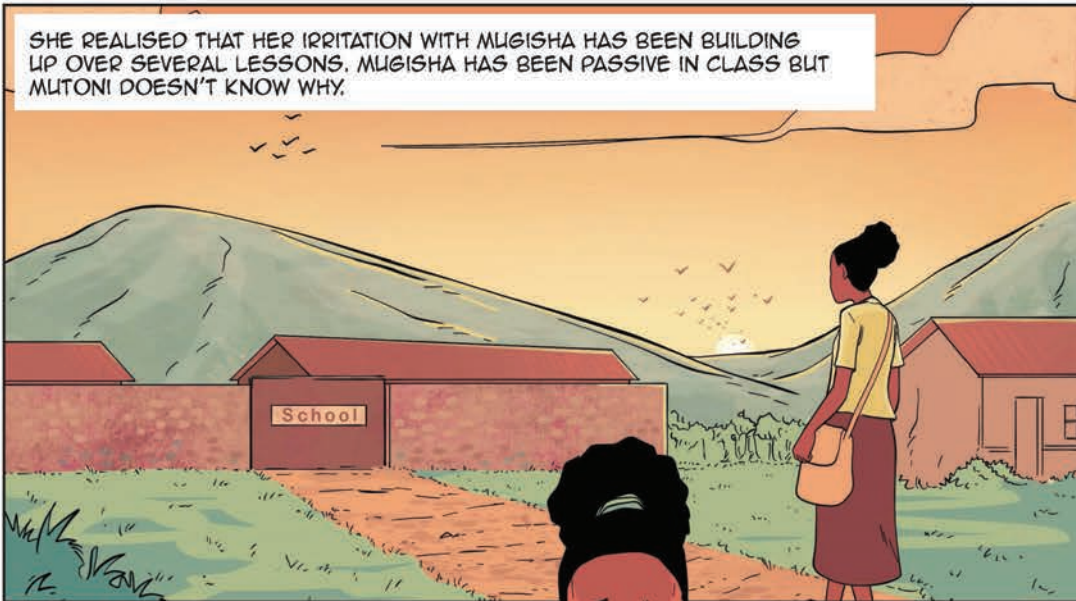
SHE ASSUMED MUGISHA WAS MISBEHAVING BECAUSE HE WASN'T INTERESTED. THAT PERCEIVED LACK OF INTEREST CAUSED HER TO FEEL IRRITATED.
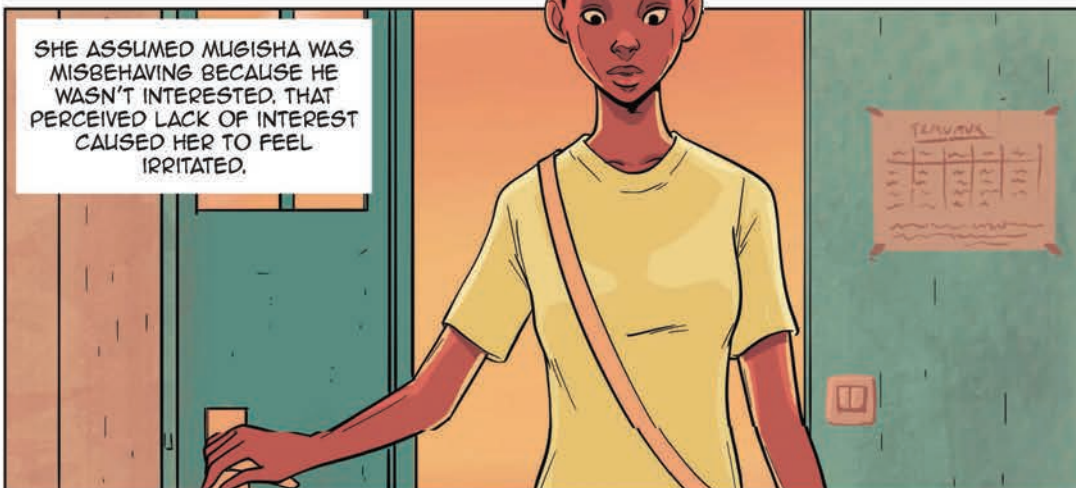
HER SELF-REFLECTION MADE HER AWARE THAT IT WAS HER OWN IRRITATION THAT INFLUENCED HER BEHAVIOR TOWARD MUGISHA. HER RESPONSE PROBABLY CAUSED HIM TO BE EVEN LESS MOTIVATED IN CLASS. SHE REALISED SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHY MUGISHA IS BEHAVING THIS WAY LATELY.
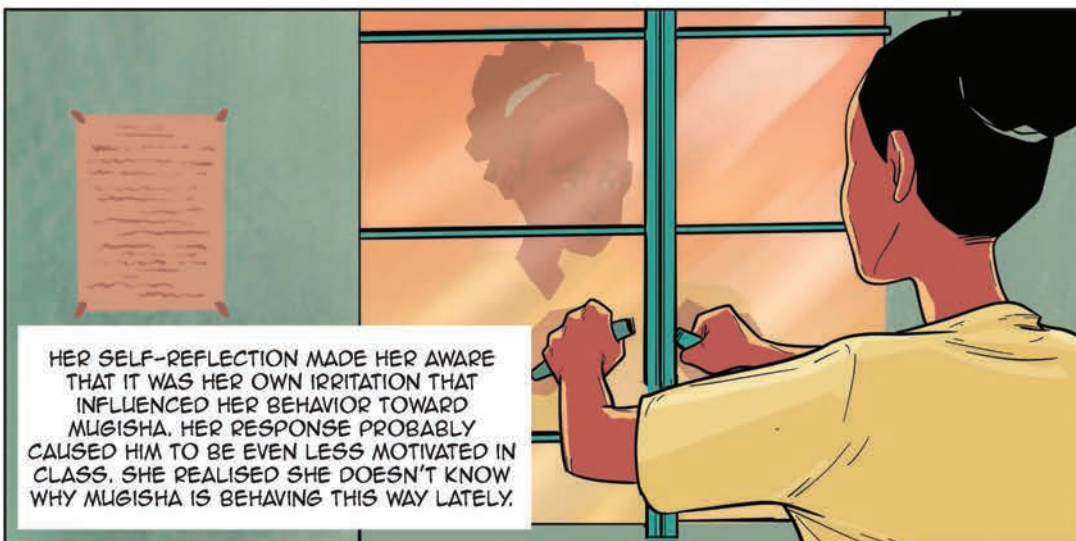
THROUGH THIS REFLECTION SHE BECAME AWARE OF HER OWN FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS, AND HOW THEY LED TO A NEGATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH MUGISHA. THE SITUATION ONLY SEEMS TO BE GETTING WORSE. MUTONI WANTS TO FIND A WAY TO CHANGE HER RELATIONSHIP WITH MUGISHA.

SHE WANTS TO FIND A SOLUTION TO BUILD UP A MOTIVATING RELATIONSHIP WITH MUGISHA AND GET HIM ENGAGED AGAIN.

SHE NEEDS TO FIND A WAY TO END THE ESCALATION. MUTONI NEEDS IDEAS ON HOW TO CHANGE HER PRACTICE! SHE TAKES HER MANUAL FOR THE COURSE,"FOUNDATION OF EDUCATION" AND GOES TO THE CHAPTER ON TEACHER STUDENT RELATIONSHIP.
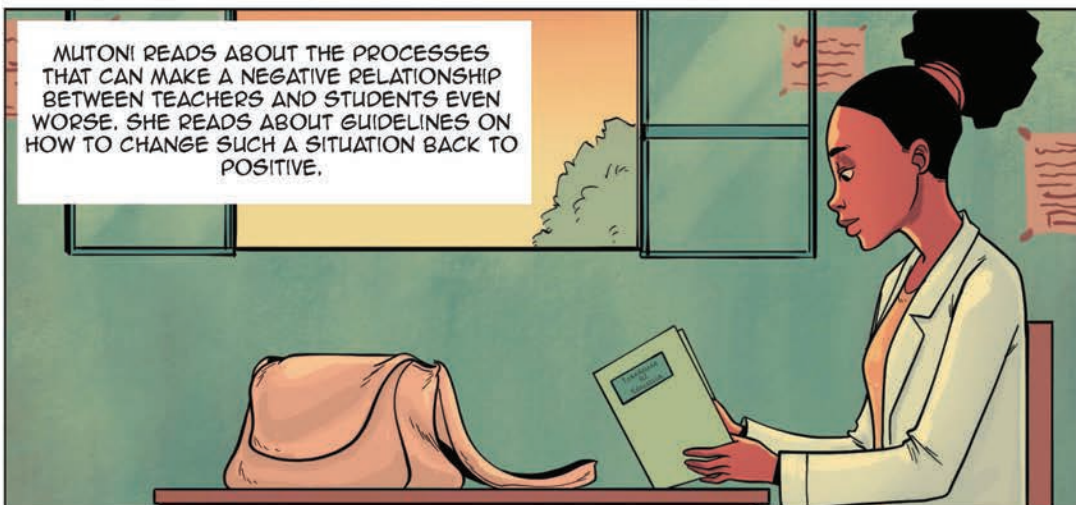
MUTONI READS ABOUT THE PROCESSES THAT CAN MAKE A NEGATIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS AND STUDENTS EVEN WORSE. SHE READS ABOUT GUIDELINES ON HOW TO CHANGE SUCH A SITUATION BACK TO POSITIVE.

THE GUIDELINES SUGGEST TO SHOW MORE EMPATHY TO THE STUDENT AND TO RESPOND MORE POSITIVELY, GIVING THE STUDENT MORE COMPLIMENTS. SHE COMPARES THESE GUIDELINES WITH HER IMPULSE TO BE EVEN MORE STRICT ON MUGISHA AND REPRIMAND HIM.

SHE NOTES DOWN HER RESOLUTIONS. SHE WILL TRY TO UNDERSTAND HOW MUGISHA FEELS AND OFFER HIM SUPPORT AND POSITIVE FEEDBACK.
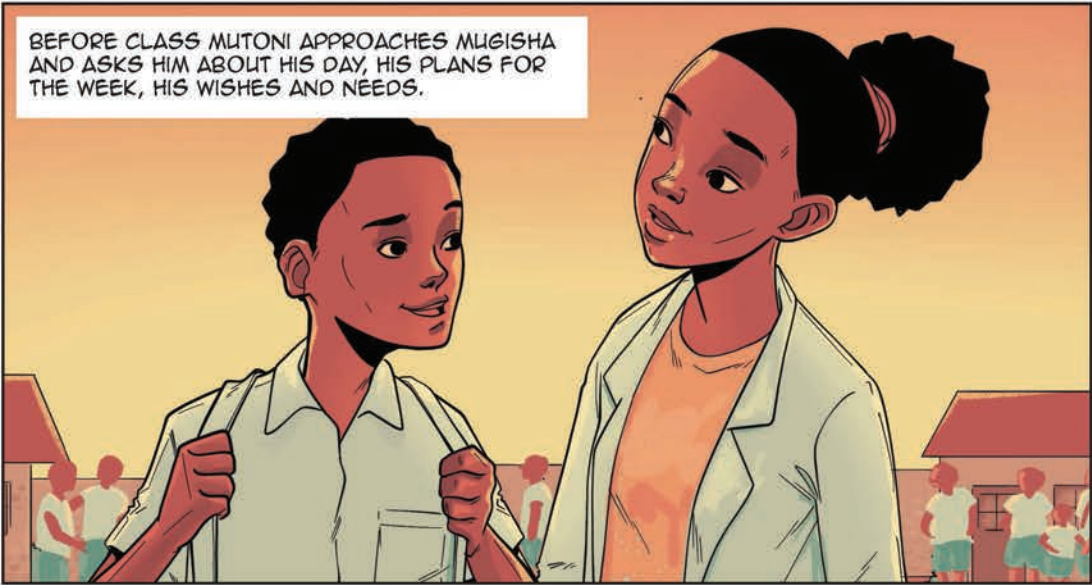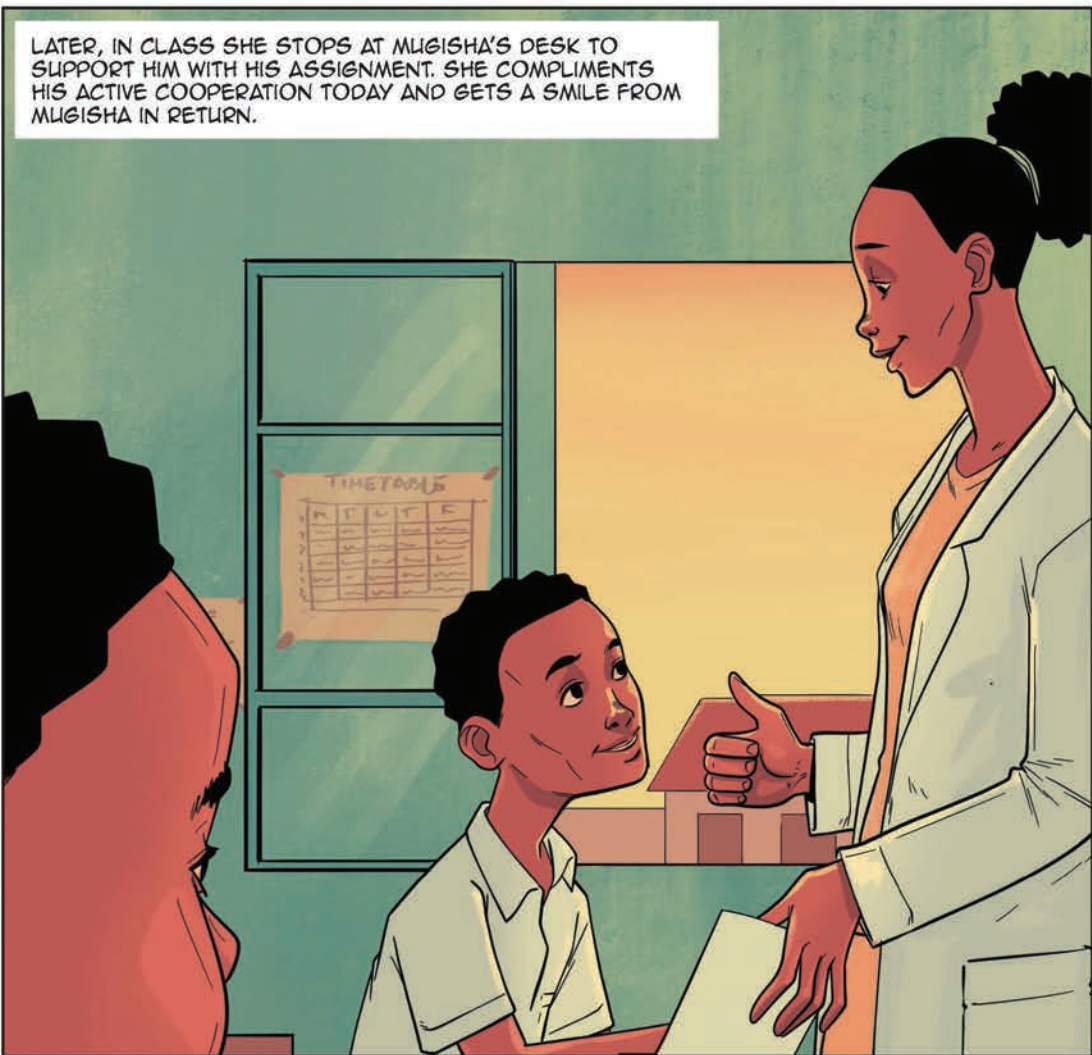
The **WHAT model can also be applied when you do a lesson observation** for one of your fellow teachers and you are helping the teacher to reflect on his/her lesson:

1. What happened?

Let the teacher who just gave the lesson tell what s/he has done during the lesson, both the things that went well and the things that didn't go so well. See the lesson step by step and most important of all, it is the teacher talking, not the observer!

2. What can the teacher learn from this?

After the teacher has identified which areas need improvement, s/he needs to think about why it happened that way. What is so important about that experience? What can the teacher learn from this experience?

3. How will the teacher use what s/he learnt in future practice? End the reflection by letting the teacher formulate his/her intentions for the next lesson. What will be the consequences of the teacher's new approach?

To conclude, REB requires that at the end of each lesson, a teacher should think about what learners have understood. Teachers should also think about what learners found difficult, so they can help learners during the next lesson. Teachers should evaluate their teaching after every lesson by thinking about what went well in the lesson, what didn't go well, and what the learners learnt. Teachers can then improve their teaching next time. By doing so, teachers can address learning needs of the learners and reduce learning gaps and drop out.

Not only lesson observations, but **all CPD activities require regular reflection**. To facilitate regular reflection, a simple template has been developed to guide you through the reflection steps. You can find the template in **annex 4**.

Below you can find **an example of an SBM reflecting on a CoP session he/she facilitated.**

WHAT model	Reflection notes
WHAT? What happened? I describe my and other's experience and actions: • What was my role? • What did I do? • What did others do? • What data do I have? (How do I know?)	On 01/03/2021 I (SBM) organised and facilitated a CoP session at GS Lola. I played the role of the facilitator in which I started by welcoming CoP members, facilitating the sharing of expectations from the day's session and setting of housekeeping rules. I then reminded all members of the topic of our current CoP cycle: integrating outdoor activities and IT tools in mathematics lessons to increase student engagement. I facilitated the discussion on the last session's resolutions. Members discussed what they tried out as per agreed resolutions, lessons to be learnt were drawn and a plan for try-outs was drafted (we agreed on strategies to be tried out in the coming two weeks). Most of the CoP (4/6 of the CoP) members actively participated in the discussions. The reporter shared a summary of resolutions taken and after that the members discussed how the session went and highlighted areas that needed improvement for future sessions.
SO WHAT? What can I learn from this? I analyse and reflect on my experience: • What was so important about this experience? • Why did it happen that way? • What did I learn?	The CoP session was in general well conducted. Most of the people collaborated to actively discuss the resolutions for the next implementation try out. However, 2 members didn't participate actively. I didn't engage every person to give his/her opinion and went with only those who were very active.

NOW WHAT?	I learned that collaboration is needed for a successful CoP. Next time, I will make sure that every COP member speaks and gives his/her ideas on the situation and resolutions. This will ensure the active participation of all members, show that everyone is important and it will improve the resolutions taken to solve the challenge discussed in the CoP session.
How will I use what I have learnt in future practice? I draw conclusions after reflecting on my experience: • What do I change to make this experience better? • What will be my new actions? • What will be the consequences of my new actions?	

Another example of an SBM who conducted a coaching conversation and reflects on it:

WHAT model	Reflection notes
WHAT? What happened? I describe my and other's experience and actions: • What was my role? • What did I do? • What did others do? • What data do I have? (How do I know?)	Mr. Benjamin, a teacher of English at my school came to me with a request to have a brief conversation on a professional challenge he was experiencing. As a coach, I accepted to have a coaching conversation with him (the coachee). In the conversation the coachee told me his challenge in engaging his learners to have open class discussions in English. I used the GRROW model and the coaching skills to guide him to identify a professional goal for himself. He also identified available resources that can help him in his efforts to become more competent in engaging students in open discussion. Lastly, he identified the possible options among which he chose one to be immediately tried out.

SO WHAT?
 	
What can I learn from this?
 	
I analyse and reflect on my experience:
 	
   •   What was so important about this experience?
   •   Why did it happen that way?
   •   What did I learn?
	The conversation was carried out in a friendly atmosphere. We had a good relationship. I encouraged him to speak openly and feel comfortable with me as we are colleagues in the same profession.
	
	The conversation followed all the steps of the GRROW model. However, I forgot to help him to make a plan on how he will implement the chosen option. The 'Will' step was forgotten maybe due to the pressure of time on my side as I had a class and it was almost time to start.
	
	I asked some great questions that stimulated the coachee's reflection.
	
	I learned that a coaching conversation should be planned in a time where time constraints and other disturbances are controlled or at least limited.

NOW WHAT?
 	
How will I use what I have learnt in future practice?
 	
I draw conclusions after reflecting on my experience:
 	
   •   What do I change to make this experience better?
   •   What will be my new actions?
   •   What will be the consequences of my new actions?
	From the experience, in the future, I will be more prepared and will take into consideration time constraints.
	Another coaching conversation will be better conducted: questioning will be even improved even more and all steps of the GRROW model will be followed.

An example of an SEI/DDE or DEO who conducted a school visit and reflected on it:

WHAT model	Reflection notes
What happened? I describe my and other's experience and actions: • What was my role? • What did I do? • What did others do? • What data do I have? (How do I know?)	On 04/03/2021 I (SEI/DDE/DDO) organised and conducted a school visit at GS KIRWA. The focus of the visit was to check the implementation of CBC in teaching and learning. The headteacher had invited some teachers to the meeting. After the Headteacher's welcome remarks, I explained the purpose and focus of the school visit and invited members present to share their expectations. Members shared their experiences, their try-outs, what they were doing well, what didn't go well and the way forward. From the 10 lesson observation reports provided by the headteacher and experiences shared by the teachers present, it was noted that a good number of teachers (15 out of 23) at the school have progressively adopted the CBC in their teaching and learning. Eight teachers still have difficulties in implementing the CBC especially in lesson preparation, delivery and assessment. The resolutions taken were read to the participants, and we unanimously agreed on the way forward including the next school visit to check on the progress of the resolutions.
What can I learn from this? I analyse and reflect on my experience: • What was so important about this experience? • Why did it happen that way? • What did I learn?	I observed that the progress of CBC implementation was moving on well. The teacher's mindset is changing towards engaging learners actively in learning activities. I realised that I did not communicate the focus of the school visit to the headteacher ahead of time and the sharing about CBC implementation in teaching and learning process was not supported with detailed data. Also, clear examples of how crosscutting issues and generic competences are integrated in lessons were still missing. While reading out the resolutions, I observed that some teachers were not involved.

NOW WHAT?	I learnt that the focus of the school visit has to be clearly communicated to all targeted people. I also learnt that the focus of the school visit should be specific enough so that it enables participants to provide detailed and relevant data regarding the focus of the visit. The more specific the focus of the visit and the available data, the more actionable the resolutions for further action will be. Possibly a reflection tool could be helpful to engage all participants in the meeting in the reflection process.
How will I use what I have learnt in future practice?	
I draw conclusions after reflecting on my experience:	
• What do I change to make this experience better? • What will be my new actions? • What will be the consequences of my new actions?	I also realised that I could use more participatory methods to trigger inputs from all participants in the meeting to ensure joint buy in into the resolutions. To enrich my own learning in conducting fruitful school visits, I could ask headteacher and teachers for feedback on the results and process of the visit. A tool could be useful.

1.3.2. Importance of reflection

There are many **benefits** to reflection in education.

1) Reflection helps you understand your own strengths and identify areas of improvement. Once you know these, you can better plan for the development of your competences.

2) Reflection contributes to personal fulfilment and happiness, because you understand yourself more objectively. It enables clearer thinking and reduces your emotional point of view.

3) Reflection is practical and lets you learn from a real situation/experience. It leads you to practical solutions, not some difficult idea.

4) Because reflection is so practical, it will motivate you to use it more often. The more you practice reflection, the better you get at it and improve your teaching and your learner's outcomes.

Reflection also helps teachers to develop a critical attitude and to update knowledge and skills (Westberg & Hilliard, 2001). Reflection helps teachers to make sense of challenging and complicated practice, reminding us that learning is never ending (Chapman et al., 2008).

1.3.3. Barriers to reflection

> **Activity 8**
>
> How often do you reflect on your teaching practice or your task as an SBM/SEI/DDE/DEO? What keeps you from reflecting more on your practice?

Despite different benefits, there are barriers that may prevent or limit the effective use of reflection in the CPD process. Those barriers are:

1) Lack of time to do reflection. Teachers often have full teaching timetable and a lot of teaching hours and, reflection requires some quality time (Johns & Freshwater, 2005);

2) Lack of motivation to engage in reflection;

3) Psychological barrier or the fear of being criticised;

4) Some teachers might not know how to do reflection, and may hesitate to document experiences and emotions (Workforce Support, 2010);

5) Some teachers believe reflection is too difficult and that they are not skilled enough to do it (White et al., 2009).

1.3.4. Strategies to overcome reflection barriers

> **Activity 9**
>
> Think about the strategies to overcome the identified barriers and discuss your ideas.

Some of the **strategies** to overcome the barriers to reflection are suggested below (Johns & Freshwater, 2005):

1) Make reflection part of the CPD plan at your school and set time for it;

2) Invite your (deputy) headteacher to encourage the teaching staff. As a school leader yourself, motivate your colleagues to become experts through reflection;

3) Build a relationship of trust and positive collaboration so your colleagues feel comfortable reflecting on their challenges (see module 2 unit 1);

4) As a leader, introduce and promote reflection by practicing it yourself and being a role model for your colleagues; and

5) Step by step, expose your colleagues to various activities involving reflection to enable them to change their resistance against reflection.

6) Show colleagues evidence of improvements made at class, school or sector level due to reflections and the use of data.

To conclude, the environment for teaching and learning about reflection is important. As stated by Mann and her co-researchers (2009), if the school culture and environment do not value and support reflection as a **learning strategy**, the teachers will not use it. Its possible benefit may be lost which will result in negative experiences with reflection.

Reflection is not an exercise you just do only one time. It should be combined with other strategies to stimulate lifelong learning and improvement. Teachers who are convinced about the benefits of reflection will grow and become the best in their field and through their teaching influence as many people as possible. Teachers need to be open and comfortable to criticism as it will only improve their professional experiences. The same applies to headteachers.

Section 1.4 : Common Mistakes and Misunderstandings

Over the past cohorts, trainees have often made similar mistakes or have misunderstood the course content in the same way. To help you avoid making the same mistakes, they have been listed and corrected in the following table:

Common mistake / misunderstanding	Correction
Reflection is done for some specific CPD activities like CoPs sessions.	Reflection is not just for some CPD activities, it's done for all CPD activities conducted or any teaching and learning activity.
Reflection is about the behaviour or actions of others/teachers.	Reflection is about your own behaviour not the actions of others. Don't reflect on the actions of others, look at your own actions/behaviour and reflect on it to improve and learn from it.
Continuous professional development is done through formal continuous professional development activities like CoP, coaching and mentoring, in-service training, or short courses.	Continuous professional development is not limited to formal activities like coaching and mentoring or in-service training only. It is any activity that can help teachers to grow professionally (lesson observation, lesson study, school visit, meetings). It can be a formally organised activity (like the ones mentioned above) or an informally organised activity (like a casual conversation with a colleague, marking learners' activities, quizzes, exams). It can be done in groups or individually.
CPD activities are the same as teachers' meetings.	CPD activities are different from normal staff meetings. They should be conducted in a free and equal sharing of ideas and leadership. CPD activities should be planned regularly and need to be intentional (not for the sake of complying with school/district guidelines). They target teachers' growth and should be based on identified professional development needs in line with the School Improvement Plan.
Induction is an occasional briefing of new teachers on the school environment and the teaching profession.	Induction is a continuous process of professional support throughout the first 2 years of teaching (called the induction period).

Further reading

In the Annexes of Module 1 you will find further readings and tools relevant to the content of this unit. Some annexes are compulsory reading: you must read these annexes. Others are optional: you can decide to read them or not.

Compulsory readings:

- Annex 2: Stakeholders involved in School-Based CPD and induction of NTs in Rwanda

- Annex 4: Report template for a reflection

Optional readings:

- Annex 1: Policy framework for CPD for (head)teachers

- Annex 3: Reflection models (ALACT Model; Kolb's model); Gibb's reflective cycle)

UNIT TWO
ASSESSING TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND SETTING GOALS

Introduction

Professional development on the job (induction and CPD) can be started by the teacher's own needs, the school's requirements and/or institutional needs (local/national authority focused). Therefore, professional development activities will be different for new teachers (NTs), junior, master or senior teachers.

In this unit you will discover how to guide teachers in the identification of their professional development needs. Teachers' professional needs are work-related needs, gaps or challenges that a teacher would like to solve to become better in his/her profession.

Examples:

- How learners' background and current knowledge skills and attitudes inform learning.

- Abilities to engage learners during instructions.

- Abilities to participate in school based CPDs, sector and district educational activities.

If teachers' professional needs are addressed, they develop into minor and major skills which also turn into competences (skills, knowledge and attitudes). The same applies to headteachers.

Unit learning outcomes

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

1. Identify teacher's professional development needs;

2. Assess teachers' professional development needs;

3. Apply appropriate tools for monitoring and evaluating teacher's individual and school CPD plans.

Section 2.1: Identifying Teacher Professional Development Needs

For the assessment of teachers' professional development needs it is important to identify and to have a common understanding of the competences (skills, knowledge and attitudes) that teachers need to have in order to teach (more) effectively. Criteria of effective teaching (teacher competences) in Rwanda are described in the Rwandan National Teacher CPD Framework (2019). Teachers can use the self-assessment tool in **annex 5** to have a better understanding of their professional development needs. The School Improvement Plan can also give guidance to identify institutional needs (e.g. as a school we want to implement play based learning, but currently we lack the capacity to do so).

Identification of professional development needs can be performed for individual teachers or groups of teachers. For a group of teachers, you can organise a meeting. How to conduct this meeting is described in session 28 in REB's School-Based CPD Manual I. Analysing student outcomes/data and lesson observations can also be used for identifying a teacher's development needs.

Activity 10

Part 1: In small groups, brainstorm on:

- Which professional competences should teachers have?
- What development needs might teachers have, which he/she can meet by him/herself or with the support of school administration?

Part 2: Read **annex 5** "Self-assessment of teacher competences". Identify the 3 domains of teacher's competences.

Part 3 (for SBMs only):

- Fill in "domain 2, pedagogical aspect 4: learner-centred methods enable all learners to learn effectively" of Annex 5. Fill this in as a teacher, reflecting on your own teacher practice. Be honest with yourself!
- Does this tool help you to see where you have gaps in your teaching that can be addressed through CPD?

Part 3 (for SEI/DEO/DDE): Can the School Leadership Assessment tool be used as a tool to identify needs of a headteacher? How?

Section 2.2: Setting Goals and Actions at Teacher Level

Following their professional development needs assessment, teachers give priority to the teacher competences (**annex 5**) they wish/need to develop and formulate SMART objectives as part of their individual CPD plan. If teachers have similar needs a school CPD plan will be developed.

An individual or school CPD plan is written and regularly reviewed with the support of an educational leader (HTs, DOS/DHT, SSL, HoD and SBM).

SMART stands for:

> ***S**pecific: it should identify specific actions that will take place;
>
> ***M**easurable: it should be possible to measure the objective;
>
> ***A**chievable: the objective should be realistic and achievable;
>
> ***R**elevant: the objective should be useful to the school/teacher;
>
> ***T**ime-bound: the objective should specify the time frame in which it will be achieved.

Table 1: Example of a SMART school CPD objective

Specific	By the end of school year 2020, **all STEM teachers** in our school will be capable and confident to include **student-led experiments** in their lessons.
	This objective is specific since it clearly states which teachers are the target of this CPD objective: all STEM teachers in that school. It is also specific about what teaching methodology will be the main focus of the CPD for these teachers: student-led experiments.
Measurable	By the end of school year 2020, **all** STEM teachers in our school will be **capable and confident** to include student-led experiment in their subjects.
	The CPD objective is measurable because it states how many teachers will be the target of the CPD: all teachers who teach STEM subjects. Also, it is measurable because it mentions what elements will be evaluated to determine if the CPD objective was reached: the capability and confidence of the teachers who will receive the CPD.

Achievable	By the end of school year 2020, all STEM teachers in our school will be capable and confident to include student-led experiment in their subjects.
	To know if the CPD objective is achievable you need to know its context. If this objective is written at the end of school year 2019, then it seems very achievable to have all STEM teachers go through CPD activities to be able to teach using student-led experiments. However, if the objective is set in term 2 of school year 2020, then it is much less likely to be achieved. The same reasoning can apply to the number of the teacher that will receive the CPD or the complexity of the topic of the CPD.
Relevant	By the end of school year 2020, all STEM teachers in our school will be capable and confident to include student-led experiment in their subjects.
	To know if the CPD objective is useful you need to know its context. If this objective is written based on the assessment and analysis of the STEM teachers' professional development needs, then it is useful. If it is not something that comes from the needs of the teachers, connected to students' results or the School Improvement Plan, then it might not be that useful.
Time-bound	**By the end of school year 2020**, all STEM teachers in our school will be capable and confident to include student-led experiment in their subjects. This objective is time-bound because it mentions the deadline by when it needs to be achieved: end of school year 2020.

Source: UR-CE CPD Diploma in Effective School Leadership, 2018 - Adapted for this CPD Certificate Programme

2.2.1. How to identify CPD activities?

In unit 1 of this module you discovered the characteristics of effective CPD for (head)teachers. Those criteria allow you, after identifying the professional development needs and objectives, to select appropriate CPD activities.

Besides those characteristics, it is also important to understand that teacher professional development takes place in stages as described in figure 8. Knowing this will help you to identify appropriate learning activities.

Key elements of the professional life cycle
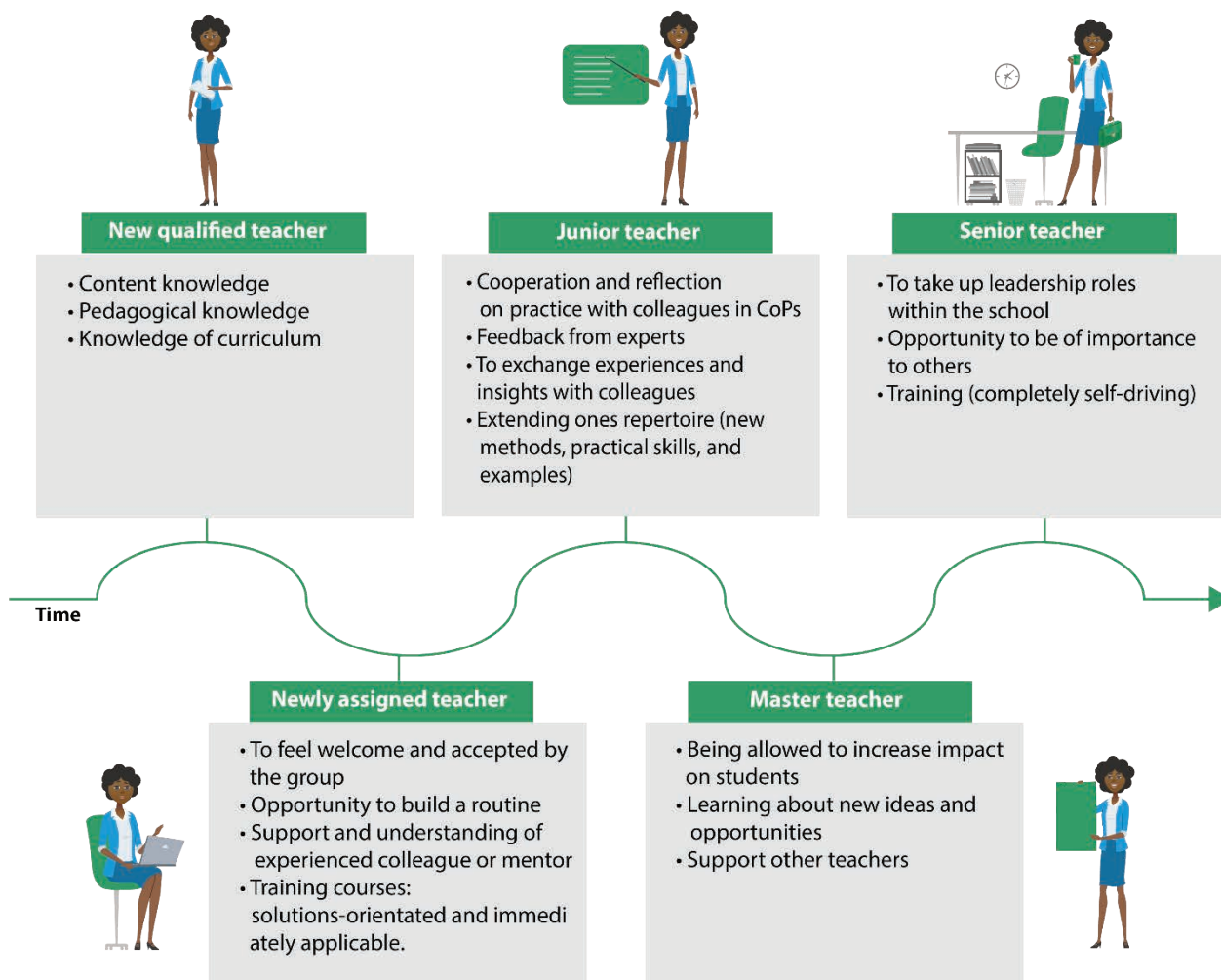
Figure 8: Key elements of the professional life cycle (Steffy & Wolfe, 2001) – illustrated by VVOB Rwanda

Figure 8 shows that teachers continuously engage in learning and that their professional development needs change as they move through a professional life cycle. It starts with the teacher training, continues with induction, leads to becoming a junior teacher, a master teacher and finally reaches a stage of senior teacher.

2.2.2. An individual teacher's or school CPD plan

A **CPD plan** is a set of CPD activities designed to help teachers to plan, put in action and review their professional development. It can be used by new teachers (NTs) during their induction and by other teachers as part of school-based CPD. Depending on the purpose (development needs) a CPD plan might cover a school year, a semester or term.

Teachers should be supported to write and review their plans by leaders in school (HTs, DHTs, SBMs and SSLs) and their peers (REB, 2018). For NTs support will be provided by the in-school NT mentor (SBM, SSL or DOS/DHTS). Based on the CPD plans of the teachers (developed from individual needs assessment), the SBM develops a school CPD plan. The school CPD plan is discussed with the school leaders and will form a part of the SIP (REB, 2020). The template that is used for an individual CPD plan or a school CPD plan can be found in **annex 6**.

The development of an individual teacher CPD plan should be completed by the end of first month of term 1, or as soon as possible at the start of each school year.

Teachers should also collect evidence of their CPD activities and impact. As they become more experienced using plans teachers will need less support, and be more able to support others (REB, 2018).

An individual teacher's or school CPD plan should include:

1. Teacher(s) professional development needs assessment

2. SMART objectives

3. Plan of CPD activities

4. Resources/support needed for the CPD activities

5. Means of verification and deadlines

Those elements should be documented and evidenced, for example based on notes from meetings or lesson observations (REB, 2018).

A CPD plan should help teachers to fulfil the goals of their performance contract in terms of learning and support: What do I need to learn/develop to reach the goals set in my performance contract? The CPD plan should assist the school to improve according to the objectives set in the School Improvement Plan.

Guiding questions for teachers:

- What are your professional development goals for this term/year in terms of Teacher Competences? (Based on the self-assessment tool)

- What actions will you take to achieve your professional development goals? (What, where and when?) Identify for each target competence (maximum 3 per term) several activities that will lead to improving that competence. Those CPD activities need to be SMART. Identify also which CPD activity will be for informal (formative evaluation) or formal (summative evaluation) assessment (see reporting requirements)

- How will you get there? What are the support and resources needed to achieve your goals?

- Who will be responsible for which activities?

- By when do you want to complete these activities?

- How will you know if you are successful (means of verification: which data will you use)? What will success look like? What will you be able to do at the end of this term/semester/year? How will you monitor your progress and how often?

- How do your goals relate to the School Improvement Plan? What is the link between your goals and addressing learning needs of all learners (reduce learning gaps and reduce drop out)?

Note: The Teacher Competences are organised into 3 domains: Professional knowledge; Professional practice; and Professional ethics, attitudes and behaviours. Under each domain there are standards, with 7 standards in total. Under each standard there are competences, with 20 competences in total (**annex 6**) (REB, 2018; 11).

Good teaching is much more than a collection of separate parts. Teachers' practice is a 'whole' which reflects their beliefs, knowledge and values; their relationships with their learners; and the classrooms, schools and communities where they work. In reality, the domains, standards and competences are all part of the 'whole' of teaching. However, breaking them down into parts can help us to think about, identify and improve teachers' competence (REB, 2018; 12).

Table 2: Example of a teacher's individual CPD plan

CPD plan: Teacher Jean (NT in English)

Targeted Competence 1 & Expected level to be achieved

Competence 4.2.: Assess students' learning and give regular and practical feedback – Basic

SMART goal: By the end of term 1 in school year 2021-2022, I will be able to use formative and summative assessment activities for assessing students' English level.

CPD activity: – what (type of activity) – where (place) – type of reporting (formal/informal)	Support/resource needed	Deadline	Responsible person	How will I know if I am successful? (means of verification)
1. **Discussion/brainstorm** with SBM to identify 2 formative and 2 summative assessment activities/strategies for assessing students' English level – in school during a lunch break – informal report	• SBM • Handbook on assessment techniques for languages	31 January 2022	NT Jean	Report of the discussion with the SBM and assessment ideas added in portfolio
2. **Practice** the identified activities first and then the SBM will **observe a lesson** – in school during an English lesson – formal report	• Assessment activities • SBM • Lesson observation form	10 February 2022	NT Jean SBM	Written feedback of the SBM and personal reflection reports (practice and lesson observation)
3. **Analyse** the students' data and **reflect** on the assessment activities – in school after classes – formal report	• SBM • Students' assessment records	29 February 2022	NT Jean SBM	Analysis report of the assessment records for each student and personal reflection report

Source: REB, 2018 – Adapted for this CPD Certificate Programme

CPD plan: Teacher Jean (NT in English)

Targeted Competence 1 & Expected level to be achieved

Competence 4.2.: Assess students' learning and give regular and practical feedback – Basic

SMART goal: By the end of term 1 in school year 2021-2022, I will be able to use formative and summative assessment activities for assessing students' English level.

CPD activity: – what (type of activity) – where (place) – type of reporting (formal/informal)	Support/resource needed	Deadline	Responsible person	How will I know if I am successful? (means of verification)
1. Coaching /Mentoring: **Conversation/discussion/brainstorm** with SBM to identify 2 formative and 2 summative assessment activities/strategies for assessing students' English level – in school during a lunch break – informal report	• SBM • Handbook on assessment techniques for languages	31 January 2022	NT Jean	Report of the /conversation/ discussion with the SBM and assessment ideas added in portfolio
2. **Practice and lesson observation:** Implementing the identified activities first and then the SBM will **observe a lesson** to provide feedback and support– in school during an English lesson – formal report	• Assessment activities • SBM • Lesson observation form	10 February 2022	NT Jean SBM	Written feedback of the SBM and personal reflection reports (practice and lesson observation)
3. Reflection: **Analyse** the students' data and **reflect** on the assessment activities – in school after classes – formal report	• SBM • Students' assessment records	29 February 2022	NT Jean SBM	Reflection report: Analysis report of the assessment records for each student and personal reflection report

Activity 11

In pairs, building on the gained knowledge of how to design a CPD plan: choose 1 teacher competence and put it into an action plan for a teacher whose professional development needs have been assessed. Examples of CPD activities are listed in unit 1 of this module.

2.2.3. Monitoring and evaluation of a CPD plan

Table 2 presents a template of a CPD plan, including the review of it. The frequency of the review of a CPD plan depends on the needs of the individual teacher or the request from school management. For new teachers the proposed induction programme suggests 3 plan reviews. For the other teachers at least 1 review should be done.

Teachers may use the review to adapt their CPD plan and assess if additional support is needed. In the case of NTs this review of progress and set targets is an activity done with the support of the NT mentors. For the other teachers it is done with the support of the SBM or (D)HT.

Based on his/her observations and by looking back at the results of his/her learning needs assessment, the teacher adapts his/her CPD plan in terms of competences and goals to target, activities, resources and data to measure success. The same process of review applies to a joint CPD plan for a team of teachers.

Table 3 describes some activities of a School Improvement Plan related to the professional development of (head)teachers and their proposed reporting requirements. Depending on the purpose of the activity the recipient of the report will be different: a formal (summative assessment) or informal (formative assessment) purpose.

Table 3: Proposed reporting requirements for CPD activities of (head)teachers

Key activities for the CPD of (head)teachers		Tool	Completed by …	Frequency	Analysed by …	Recipient of the report
1	Assessing Teachers' development needs	Teacher Development Needs Assessment tool (**annex 5**)	Individual teacher(s)	1/year	Individual teacher(s) with his/her mentor/SBM	– Individual teacher(s) & SBM/NT-mentor – Common needs of team of teachers are shared with the HT

2	Designing a teacher or school CPD plan	Teacher or school CPD plan (**annex 6**)	Individual teacher(s) with the support of his/her mentor/ SBM	1/year	SBM	– Individual teacher(s) & SBM/NT-mentor – A joint CPD plan for a team of teachers is shared with the HT and informs a SIP
3	Conducting a lesson observation	REB's lesson observation template (**annex 7**)	In-school mentor	For each planned lesson observation	NT mentor	NT and his/her mentors
4	Conducting a school visit	Guiding questions and observation tool (unit 3)	(D)HT	For each planned school visit	Participants at the school visit	Participants at the school visit
5	Conducting a CoP session	Guidelines (unit 4)	CoP members	For each planned CoP session	CoP members	CoP members and (D)HT

The activities listed in table 4 concern the proposed M&E activities for the CPD activities listed in table 3.

Table 4: Proposed M&E activities for CPD activities of (head)teachers

	M&E activities	Tool	Completed by …	Frequency	Analysed by …	Recipient of the report
1	Reviewing a teacher or school CPD plan	Teacher or school CPD plan (**annex 6**)	– Individual NT with his/her NT mentor (in-school NT mentor) – Individual teacher(s) with the support of the SBM	– 3/year for NT – 2 or 3/ year for other teachers	– Individual NT with his/her NT mentors (in-school NT mentor) – Individual teacher(s) with the support of the SBM	– Individual NT and his/her in-school NT mentor – Individual teacher(s)

2	Monitoring the proposed Induction Pro-gramme	Monitoring Guide for Induction of New Teachers (**annex 15**) Monitoring Guide for Induction of New Head-teachers (**annex 16**)	SBM, HT, SEI, DEO, DDE, TTC	During each visit by TTC mentor, SEI	Induction stakeholders	NT and his/her mentors, (D)HT, SEO, SCC, DDE, DCC & REB
3	Monitoring of a CoP session	Rubric used for assign-ment 2 of the CPD certif-icate pro-gramme)	SBM/SSL	For each planned COP	CoP members	CoP members
4	Observing in-school NT mentor's prac-tices related to a lesson observation	Monitoring Guide for Induction of New Teachers (**annex 15**)	NT mentor from TTC	3/year (during each visit of a NT men-tor from TTC)	NT mentor from TTC	In-school NT mentor & his/her supervisor (HT)
5	Evaluation of TTC support to new teachers' induction	Monitoring Guide for Induction of New Teachers (**annex 15):** Guiding ques-tions	NT & NT mentor from TTC	3/years	TTC DoS	NT and his/her mentors, HT and SEO

Section 2.3: Common Mistakes and Misunderstandings

Over the past cohorts, trainees have often made similar mistakes or have misunderstood the course content in the same way. To help you avoid making the same mistakes, they have been listed and corrected in the following table:

Common mistake / misunderstanding	Correction
Only beginning or new teachers have professional development needs. Established teachers have enough skills and experience, and therefore have no need for professional development.	Every teacher has professional development needs, not just the beginning teachers. Teaching is a difficult profession and, as society evolves, all teachers have professional development needs to be competent/to be updated with society's needs (for example: ICT in teaching).
Once I have collected the professional development needs of some teachers at my school, I can develop a CPD plan for the entire school and all teachers.	You cannot develop a school CPD plan based on the professional development needs of just a few teachers. All teachers need to do an individual needs assessment so that actual data informs the school CPD plan.
The goals and activities in the school CPD plan apply to all teachers.	No, not all goals and activities in the school CPD plan apply to all teachers. Some activities in the school CPD plan will apply to all teachers where other activities focus on the needs of a specific group of teachers (for example new teachers).
There is no need for an individual CPD plan, the school CPD plan developed by the SBM is enough.	Each teacher must have an individual CPD plan and common professional development needs are grouped in a school CPD plan that sets development goals for a relevant group of teachers (for example: within the same subject, department, level, etc). The school CPD plan should have a clear link with the School Improvement Plan.

As long as I designed CPD goals the monitoring and evaluation will be easy.	For the monitoring and evaluation of the CPD activities, the CPD goals need to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic & Timebound).
The school CPD plan is the responsibility of the SBM and the school administration.	The school CPD plan requires the involvement of all teachers including the SBM and the school management. If it is only developed by the SBM and the school administration it will not be accepted and followed by all teachers.

Further reading

In the Annexes of Module 1 you will find further readings and tools relevant to the content of this unit. Some annexes are compulsory reading: you must read these annexes. Others are optional: you can decide to read them or not.

Compulsory readings:

- Annex 5: Teacher competences (professional needs self-assessment)

- Annex 6: Template CPD plan

- Annex 7: REB's lesson observation tool

Optional readings:

- Annex 8: Guidelines on lesson preparation and teaching under physical

- Annex 9: Guidelines on lesson preparation for remote teaching and learning

UNIT THREE
COMMON CPD ACTIVITIES IN EDUCATION

Introduction

This unit presents common types of professional development activities in which SBMs and SEIs can play a meaningful role. Based on research on effective ways for teacher professional development and current practices in Rwanda the following activities have been selected:

- Lesson observation
- School visit
- Encouraging peer visits between and within schools

The use of coaching, mentoring and Communities of Practice as effective CPD activities will be discussed in separate units.

Unit learning outcomes

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

1. Conduct and reflect on a lesson observation;
2. Conduct and reflect on a school visit.
3. Guide peer visits between and within schools

Section 3.1: Lesson Observation

Lesson or classroom observation is one of the many activities you can use for the CPD of teachers. It is also used more formally for monitoring and evaluating teaching quality. It is a common source of evidence in providing feedback to teachers and promoting learning about teaching.

To summarise, observation of teaching leads to improvement and professional development. It is a way to improve teachers' skills and to strengthen the activities in classrooms. Moreover, in Rwanda, lesson observations are formal assessment strategies of teachers' performance (making a judgment about the person observed). In this section we focus on the value of lesson observation for professional development.

Activity 12

- In small groups or in plenary answer following questions:
- Have you ever been observed while you were teaching? Who observed you? How did you feel about it?
- What can you learn from observing another teacher teaching?
- Can you explain why a lesson observation is a valuable form of CPD?
- Based on your answers could you describe what the purpose of a lesson observation is?

Activity 13

In plenary by using a green (I agree) or red (I do not agree) card, share your opinion on following statements:

- A lesson observation makes meaningful distinctions between individual teachers.
- A lesson observation is unreliable (not worthy of trust) and subjective (not objective).
- An informal lesson observation is useless.
- A lesson observation should be conducted by a senior staff only.
- A lesson observation is about measuring how effectively teachers are teaching their learners to master specific curriculum goals

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3.1.1. Preparing a lesson observation

Lesson observations are most successful when they have a **specific focus**; for example, the use of time, learner's involvement, clear setting of lesson objectives, use of assessment, teacher versus learner talk, questioning, implementation of a new teaching technique or using appropriate teaching resources in engaging learning in the lesson.

Therefore, a **planning conversation** (observation preparation meeting) should be organised to decide on the focus of the observation, how data will be collected and how the observer will interact within the classroom. This planning conversation should be complete and answer the following questions:

- What are the objectives of that lesson and is there a lesson plan: What are you planning to teach? What do you expect learners to know and apply as outcomes of this lesson? Which key unit does this lesson address? How is it related to previous lessons? How is it related to the CBC?

- In what way will the lesson be taught? What will you be doing in the different parts of the lesson? What will the learners be doing?

- What teaching competence should the observer focus on (based on the observed teacher's self-assessment and CPD plan)? What does the teacher want to learn and how can the observer help with this?

- How will the presence of the observer be explained to the learners?

- Where will the observer sit?

- What evidence will the observer see to know that all students understand and are learning?

- Should there be some time at the end of the lesson for the observer to talk to the students about what they have learned (Dunne & Villani, 2007; 66; Dean, 2003; 68)?

So, the main challenges for an SBM/SSL/other observer in this planning conversation is to support the teacher to make their intentions for the lesson explicit, to describe how they will know that each student learns and to explain the relationship between teaching behaviour, expected student behaviour, lesson objectives, and desired outcomes (Dunne & Villani, 2007; 65) and to agree on the learning focus the teacher has (what does the teacher want to learn from this observation).

Table 5 to 9 provides the observer a checklist on what to do before, during and after the lesson observation.

Table 5: Checklist for the observer (before the observation)

> **Before the lesson observation:**
> – I create a comfortable, safe and friendly atmosphere, that focuses on learning. I clarify that this observation is not part of teacher's assessment.
> – I work with teachers to identify their critical needs for support and coaching. I use this as a starting point for the observation and learning. The observation can also lead to identification of learning needs.
> – We jointly agree on a clear learning and observation focus.
> – We agree on the **observation tool** (or part of a tool) that will be used.
> – I ask permission of the teacher to make some video recordings with the phone of the teacher which will be mainly used for the refection meeting/debriefing after class observation.

3.1.2. Conducting a lesson observation

At the start of the lesson observation, the observed teacher provides the observer a copy of his/her lesson plan. During the lesson observation, it is important to focus on the agreed observation criteria (teacher competences). However, other issues may arise that become targets or areas for review.

In order to make effective use of observation, you need to decide how to make a record of the information you aim to collect. Currently the strategy used for data gathering during a lesson observation by inspectors, TTC principals and SEIs is a combination of a checklist and a narrative summary.

Since your role is to facilitate CPD and not to evaluate your fellow teachers, you won't need to grade your colleagues, only provide comments and feedback. Within your school you can agree on a report format with your fellow teachers and school management or use the template provided in **annex 7**.

Below some additional tips:

■ Data collection by a peer can be biased (unfair) because of an observer's own belief about teaching and learning (REB, 2017). Observers interpret what they see as 'a lecture', 'an innovation', 'traditional method' and so on. The experience and level of expertise of the observer influences what is seen and what is missed and what is thought to be important (Gosling, 2002). Personal relationships and peer pressure can also have an impact. This is why using data collection tools is advised to be more objective (Richards & Farrel, 2011; 97).

- To introduce lesson observations at your school, you could start by organising a session with your colleagues to explain the observation tool and to practice using the observation tool. All teachers could watch the same video of a teacher teaching and individually fill in the observation tool. Afterwards you can organise a discussion with your colleagues to understand how everyone used the tool and interpreted some observed competences.

- It is important to expand your idea of what can be observed and what evidence can be collected. For example: student feedback, assessment processes, student learning outcomes, learning materials and so on (Gosling, 2002).

- Audio and video recordings of a lesson can provide a more exact record of a lesson than checklists and observation forms (Richards & Farrel, 2011; 97). Additionally, it gives the observed teacher a better starting point for reflection as the teacher can see in the recording what the observer has seen. By watching the video together, the teacher might better identify points for improvement. Always ask permission of the teacher to make some short video recordings, which will be only used for refection after class observation. You could use the phone of the teacher if available. This way the teacher remains the owner of the footage.

Table 6: Checklist for the observer (during the lesson observation)

> **During the lesson observation:**
> - I create a comfortable, safe and friendly atmosphere, that focuses on sharing, inter-action and learning.
> - I use the **observation tool** to observe.
> - I observe the teacher's approach in relation to the learners' actions (verbal and non-verbal).
> - I write down what I have seen/heard (observations), not interpretations or judge-ments.
> - I record short video clips that show good practices, but that also have potential for improvement.
> - I am focused and present.

Table 7: Checklist for the observer (after the lesson observation)

> **After the lesson observation:**
>
> - – I thank the teacher for the observation.
> - – We agree on a moment to discuss the observation soon after the observation.
> - – I look through my notes (observations) and identify:
>   - o Positive and good examples of the focus of observation
>   - o Opportunities to expand/improve on the focus of observation.
> - – I select video clips that have most potential for learning on the agreed observation focus.

3.1.3. Conducting a reflection and debriefing of the lesson observation

The third step of lesson observation is reflection aimed at understanding what you observed or thought you observed (Richards & Farrel, 2011; 91-92). This reflection and debriefing are needed to give the observed teacher the opportunity to share his/her impression of the lesson, to draw lessons and reflect on what it means.

Teaching is a complex and dynamic activity. During a lesson, many things happen at the same time. So, it is not possible to observe all of them (nor is it possible for the teacher to reflect on all of them) and therefore you set the focus of the observation in advance. In addition, some of the aspects like classroom behaviour are not directly observable such as the degree of interest by students in the topic of the lesson, problems that occurred that might not have been visible to an observer, or decisions teachers made during a lesson. And even if aspects are observable you may not be able to tell whether this is an indication of confusion or of interest.

Start by asking the observed teacher to give his/her own impression of the lesson first. *Are you satisfied with your own teaching? If yes, why? If not, why?*

It is important that this self-reflection takes place before the observer provides his/her feedback. The better the teacher is able to self-reflect; the easier the observer's task to provide feedback will be. If video recordings were used, watch these together. Teachers will be able to reflect better and identify possible gaps based on the video rather than reflect based on memory.

Next is the observer's feedback. Remember that the observed teacher is your colleague, so the feedback provided during a reflection/debriefing conversation should be concrete, helpful and help the teacher to grow. During this reflection conversation you can fall back on your coaching skills, such as appreciate and reinforce or confront and stay connected, to engage your colleague.

Furthermore, this conversation should focus on clarifying and interpreting information obtained from the observation in order to learn more about how the teacher approaches his/her teaching (Richards & Farrel, 2011; 96). When giving feedback on an observed lesson, the observer will comment on observations and interpretations of observations:

- Observations: behaviour of the observed teacher, his/her content knowledge, use of TLMs and use of teaching methods.

- Interpretations of observations: "I have the impression you were unhappy with the students in the back but chose not to act…", "I feel like you went very quickly through a part of the lesson for some reason…", …

Have a conversation with the observed teacher on these observations and interpretations of observations. But keep focus! Especially when you have identified many opportunities for improvement, it is good to keep focusing on the objectives set before the lesson observation: what did the teacher want to learn? Additional focus could come from an equity perspective (are all learners learning?), from the School Improvement Plan, …

Conclude with findings and ask the observed teacher to put into words another possible behaviour to improve his/her teaching performance. What does he/she want to do differently next time?

Possible questions (TESSA, n.d.) for this reflecting conversation are:

- What were the main strengths and weaknesses of the lesson?

- Did all the pupils learn what you wanted them to learn?

- Did you satisfy the pupils' needs?

- Was the lesson at an appropriate level of difficulty?

- Were all pupils involved in the lesson? Did the lesson stimulate their interest in the subject?

- Did you prepare sufficiently for the lesson?

- Do you need to reteach any aspect of the lesson?

- What would be a suitable follow-up to the lesson?

- Could you have used alternative teaching strategies?

- Which strategies from this lesson will you use again? Why?

Keep in mind that the lesson observation and debriefing are CPD activities. As an observer you help the teacher learn. During the debriefing you can apply coaching skills as described in Unit5.

After you have conducted a debriefing interview, it is important that you reflect on your own role during observation and debriefing. Use the WHAT reflection model but also ask feedback from the teacher you have observed.

If due to unforeseen circumstances you are not able to have a reflection/debriefing discussion, you can invite the observed teacher to do a self-evaluation (by using the cycle of reflection) and exchange views on it during the next meeting.

Table 8: Checklist for the observer (during the debriefing conversation)

During the debriefing/support conversation:

- I thank the teacher for the observation.
- I take time for the conversation and remain focused.
- In case of video: We jointly watch video clips
- I invite teachers to self-assess and state what they are satisfied with and what they are not satisfied about, regarding to the selected objective.
- I share observations where relevant.
- I ask deepening questions. I relate the learners' wellbeing and involvement to the teacher's actions.
- I help teachers to keep focus and reflect deeply on what was observed. I am specific and use concrete examples that I have observed (action teachers and effect on learners).
- I invite teachers to suggest how to change/adjust.
- I help teachers to come to a specific and feasible way forward.
- I ask teachers what support they need for the next steps.
- I link the observation to further opportunities for professional development:
    - I share and jointly discuss guides such as videos, lesson plans, …
    - teachers get the opportunity to try out the suggested adjusted approaches
    - teachers can observe a good practice of a peer (in school or district) who is more experienced in this area (e.g. this teacher is good in asking open ended questions)
    - teachers can collaborate with other teachers to jointly learn more about selected topics
- I ask teachers how the debriefing/support conversation was experienced. "Can something be improved in my approach?" "What should happen during the next observation and discussion, to make it a more worthwhile learning experience for you?"

Table 9: Checklist for the observer (after the debriefing/support conversation)

After the debriefing/support conversation:

– I create opportunities and timing for teachers to try out/practice new approaches.

– I link the observation to further opportunities for professional development:

o I share and jointly discuss guides such as videos, lesson plans, …

o teachers get the opportunity to try out the suggested adjusted approaches

o teachers can observe a good practice of a peer (in school or district) who is more experienced in this area (e.g. this teacher is good in asking open ended questions)

o teachers can collaborate with other teachers to jointly learn more about selected topics

– I follow-up implementation of what was agreed upon.

– I encourage and celebrate teachers' achievement.

– I reflect on my debriefing/support conversation using the WHAT model.

3.1.4. Supporting teachers to develop lesson plans under preventive measures

Given exceptional circumstances, lessons will need to be organised online/remotely or in class but restricted by preventive health measures. Preparing a lesson that will be taught online or will be taught in class but with physical restrictions requires some innovation. As teachers might struggle to prepare such lessons, as a leader within the school you are best placed to offer them support. In **annex 8** and **annex 9** you will find instructions on how to prepare a lesson for teaching under physical distancing and other preventive measures as well as for remote/online teaching and learning.

Section 3.2: School Visit

A School visit gives SEIs a great opportunity for the CPD of headteachers. It is also used more formally for monitoring and evaluating school. It is a common source of evidence in providing feedback to headteachers and promoting school improvement.

SEIs can help schools and teachers to implement new practices via supporting them on site, at the school. This can be a follow up of a training or a resolution in a PLC. It is not meant as an assessment, but as further professional development. The visit can include a class observation, a meeting with one or more teachers, with the school leaders. It all depends on the learning needs of the school

Sector and district officers visiting schools, can apply the same steps as SBMs will apply to lesson observations (Section 3.1).

3.2.1. Preparing for a school visit

Agree on the focus of the visit with the headteacher. What support does the headteacher or school need? This can be related to the School Improvement Plan or to any of the five standards for effective school leadership.

Based on the focus an observation tool can be developed and agreed upon. Table 10 gives an example of such a tool. The School Leadership Assessment tool can also be used.

Read 3.1.1 for other points of attention.

3.2.2. Conducting the school visit

It is important to keep in mind that school visits have a supportive nature and are part of CPD. Create a safe and respectful environment where headteachers can express and share their opinions, challenges and ideas.

- Focus on observing and interacting with key people.
- Collect good practices.
- Stimulate input and reflections from teachers,
- Stimulate input and reflections from school leaders,

Read 3.1.2 for other points of attention.

3.2.3. Conducting a reflection and debriefing of the school visit

Take the time to have a debriefing conversation with the headteacher in which observations and reflections are shared, good practices are acknowledged and steps for further improvement are identified. It is important to provide helpful feedback. You can apply coaching skills as described in Unit 5.

Using notes from the observation tool, and discussions, a report for the visit can be made. This report will also be used to assess progress of the implementation of the resolutions agreed upon with the concerned school.

After you have conducted a school visit and debriefing, it is important that you reflect on your own role during the school visit and debriefing). Use the WHAT reflection model but also ask feedback from the headteacher you have visited.

Read 3.1.3 for other points of attention.

Table 10: Observation tool for a school visit

Identify the strengths and areas of improvement regarding the 5 standards of effective school leadership		
Standards of effective school leadership	Evidence of strengths	Evidence of areas of improvement
Creating strategic direction of the school: a) Does the school have a shared core mission, vision and values? b) Does the school have planning documents such as a school improvement plan and an action plan for the current school year? c) Is there evidence that school plans are monitored and evaluated?		
Creating strategic direction of the school: a) Does the school have a shared core mission, vision and values? b) Does the school have planning documents such as a school improvement plan and an action plan for the current school year? c) Is there evidence that school plans are monitored and evaluated?		

Leading learning: a) What approaches and strategies has the school put in place to identify the learning needs for each learner? b) What practices are put in place by the school to ensure that all the learning needs and expectations for each learner are met? c) How does the school deal with the current challenges to meet the identified needs? d) How does the school create a helpful/suitable learning environment (infrastructure, learning materials, security/safety, hygiene and sanitation)? e) Is the school environment inclusive for learners with special educational needs? What are evidences showing this?		
Leading teaching/training: a) Are the professional learning needs for each teacher set? b) What are the available internal procedures to support staff to improve teaching and learning? c) Does the school have a CPD plan? What is the link with the SIP? d) Does the school have an SBM? e) How much time is allocated for the SBM to organise and conduct CPD activities at the school level? f) Which CPD activities were conducted since the last PLC session?		

Managing the school as an organisation: a) Has the school developed an organisational structure that informs; his/her duties, responsibilities and horizontal and vertical relationships? b) What are the available financial, personal and materials resources? (well-planned and managed inventory (a detailed list of all the items in stock) books for resources, budget plan, budget implementation reports, and staff appraisal reports); c) What are the available resources that contribute to the effective management of the school? *(audit practices, self-evaluation, etc.).*		
Working with parents, others and the wider community: a) How are the parents and community involved in the management of the school? (School General Assembly and its committee, School General Assembly Audit Committee…) b) Is there evidence that parents and community participation structures are operational *(minutes of meetings, audits reports,…)*? c) What are the shared responsibilities of the parents and the community participation structures in the management of the school? d) What are the available mechanisms to attract educational stakeholders for partnership to increase student learning? (MoU, school open days, …)		

Section 3.3: Encouraging Peer Visits between and within Schools

CPD of (head)teachers is more effective when it is done in a collaborative way (Brodie, 2013). Later in this module we will focus on one way of collaboration among (head)teachers: Communities of Practice (CoP) and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). School and class visits are another way of peer learning. In this section we will mention two types of peer learning visits.

a) Peer lesson observation

b) Peer school visits

This section provides the SBM and SEI with some guidelines on how to encourage, plan, conduct and reflect on such visits.

3.3.1. Peer lesson observations

What?

Teachers can learn from each other by visiting each other's class. Sometime the observer has a clear learning need which the observer wants to see in the observed class. Sometime the teacher in the observed class has a learning need and asks the observer to help. Both ways are great peer-learning.

Your role?

The SBM, supported by the headteacher, can create opportunities for teachers to do peer-observation and encourage this. An SBM can also be the observer, not to assess the teacher, not to inspect, but to jointly learn something about an identified challenge. The SBM and school leader create an enabling environment for peer learning.

For such peer visits to be effective for CPD, they need to have focus. Below are some steps to take.

a. The observer is the learner:

1) Does teacher A like **what a peer teacher B is doing** in her/his classroom? Help teacher A to arrange a visit to teacher B's class.

2) Help teacher A to identify a clear learning goal first: what is it teacher A wants to observe and learn?

3) Teacher A visits teacher B and observes how teacher B is applying a specific action point,

approach, technology, ….

4) Teacher A checks how it impacts on the well-being, involvement and participation in learning of the learners.

5) After the observation, teacher A and B discuss remaining questions. Teacher A indicates what was learnt.

b. The observed teacher is the learner:

1) Would Teacher A like a **colleague's input** on what teacher A is doing? Help teacher A to arrange a visit by teacher B to teacher A's class. Teacher A invites teacher B to come to A's class.

2) Help teacher A to identify a clear learning goal first. What should teacher B look at in teacher A's class? Teacher A's interaction with children? The effect of teacher A on the well-being, involvement and participation in learning of some specific children? The application of learning through play?

3) After the observation, teacher A asks what teacher B has observed. What can teacher A learn from this? Can teacher B inspire teacher A with some next steps?

3.3.2. Peer school visits

What?

This is the visit from one school to another school to observe good practices, different approaches and interact with peers to enrich their own practice. This could be limited to headteachers visiting a school or a delegation from a school.

If during the planning of the PLC sessions the decision has been taken to organise the sessions on a rotating basis in the schools of the PLC members, the option can be taken to organise school visits concurrently with the PLC sessions. In this option each PLC session would be preceded by a school visit.

Your role?

As an SEI you can encourage such visits and help to plan, conduct and reflect on such visits. The PLC can be a good starting point.

Plan for a school visit

PLC members can decide during the planning of the PLC sessions to organise school visits. Those visits can serve different purposes respecting the school improvement plan (SIP) of the PLC members. For each visit specific goal(s) should be identified as well as how to monitor and evaluate the visit. A particular focus of a school visit can be the monitoring of teaching and learning practices for a specific subject and grade. The observation collected throughout the visit can then be used to inform a specific topic on the agenda of a PLC session. The option can also be taken to have one common goal for all the school visits: observing the strengths and areas of improvement to enrich and/or monitor a SIP.

The following guiding questions can help to plan a school visit:

- What are the practices we want to see?
- What do we expect to learn from this visit?
- Who do we want to talk with?
- What are the questions we want to ask?
- Who will provide feedback at the end of the visit?

Conducting and reflecting on a school visit

Throughout the school visit PLC members will have the opportunity to observe several things and exchange with school community members. To facilitate the collection of this information and to maximise the learning from it, PLC members can use an observation tool. This kind of tool is also very helpful in minimising the bias (unfair way) and subjectivity (not objective) since it is applied to all schools visited and helps members to provide objective and helpful feedback to their colleagues. The tool used depends on the learning focus of the visit.

After conducting the school visit, it is important to provide helpful feedback.

This feedback can be given during the PLC session following the visit or the next PLC session. Using notes from the observation tool, PLC members provide feedback and come up with a report for the visit. This report will also be used to assess progress for the implementation of the resolutions agreed upon for the concerned school.

Section 3.4: Common Mistakes and Misunderstandings

Over the past cohorts, trainees have often made similar mistakes or have misunderstood the course content in the same way. To help you avoid making the same mistakes, they have been listed and corrected in the following table:

Common mistake / misunderstanding	Correction
The observer pays attention to all aspects of the lesson during a lesson observation.	Each lesson observation must have a specific focus that is agreed between the teacher to be observed and the observer. This focus should be based on the teacher's professional development needs.
Lesson observation is only about observing a teacher who is delivering a lesson.	A lesson observation ALWAYS consists of 3 parts: a pre-lesson observation conversation, the lesson observation and a post-lesson observation conversation.
The post-lesson observation conversation merely helps the observer to provide feedback to the observed teacher.	The post-lesson observation conversation is the key moment for the observed teacher to reflect; the observer's (SBM, TTC Tutor, SEI) role is not to simply give feedback but to ask critical questions that further help the observed teacher to reflect.

Further reading

In the Annexes of Module 1 you will find further readings and tools relevant to the content of this unit. Some annexes are compulsory reading: you must read these annexes. Others are optional: you can decide to read them or not.

Compulsory readings:

- Annex 7: REB's lesson observation tool

Optional readings:

- Annex 8: Guidelines on lesson preparation and teaching under physical
- Annex 9: Guidelines on lesson preparation for remote teaching and learning

UNIT FOUR
COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Introduction

Peer-networking is considered a general term for two or more individuals working together to improve information exchange, sharing of good practices, and the organisation of mutual support and learning (Key et al., 2006). In practice this can be achieved through Communities of Practice (CoP) or Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and related activities such as Lesson Study. Also other CPD activities such as mentoring activities, coaching conversations, peer assessment and feedback through lesson observation and school visits, and informal discussions build on peer-learning.

In this unit you will learn more about CoPs and PLCs, about how they can be facilitated and how these networks can even promote other CPD activities. You will develop the competences to initiate and effectively sustain CoPs/PLCs for the effective professional development of teachers/headteachers.

Please note that you might come across other definitions of CoP and PLCs. You might see CoP or PLC facilitation guidelines that look a bit different from what is suggested in this unit. But all of these definitions and guidelines have one thing in common: CoPs and PLCs are a group of peers who learn with and from each other. They do this through a process of reflection and by doing so, improve their practice. Feel free to use the models and guidelines that work best for you.

Unit learning outcomes

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate understanding of the meaning and purpose of a community of practice /professional learning community;

2. Apply key enablers for an effective CoP and PLC;

3. Create an effective CoPs or PLC;

4. Facilitate CoP or PLC sessions; and

5. Describe the process of lesson study as a specific way of working in a CoP.

Section 4.1: Meaning and the Purpose of a Community of Practice and a Professional Learning Community

In this section you will learn about the meaning and purpose of a CoP for teachers /PLC for headteachers.

4.1.1. Meaning of CoP and PLC

Activity 14

In groups of 4, discuss and answer the following questions:

A.   CoPs or PLCs in your school/sector/district

   •   Do you have PLCs in your sector/ district or CoPs in your school?

   •   If not, what are the challenges to set up PLCs or CoPs and how could they be overcome?

   •   If yes, what PLCs or CoPs do you have in your school? What is going well and what are challenges do you face?

B.   In your opinion, what makes a COP or PLC different from a regular staff meeting?

A community of practice/professional learning community is a group of colleagues who meet regularly to discuss their work. They think of solutions to challenges and share good practice (REB, 2017). CoPs and PLCs are not staff meetings. The major difference is that the objective of a CoP and PLC is professional development. This is done by together questioning and reflecting on one's practice. In CoPs and PLCs the agenda is set by the members.

There are other terms used which refer to the same concept as professional learning community and community of practice: School-based In-Service Training (SBI)and a professional learning network (PLN).

Community of practice/professional learning community – a learning partnership among people who find it useful to learn from and with each other on a particular domain. They use each other's experience of practice as a learning resource and they join forces in making sense of and solving challenges they face individually or collectively (Wenger et al, 2011).

REB uses the terms professional learning community and community of practice depending on the members engaging in peer learning. Teachers meet in communities of practice and headteachers meet in professional learning communities.

4.1.2. Purpose of a CoP and PLC

> **Activity 15**
>
> In pairs, discuss the following situation and answer related questions:
>
> SBM: Teachers regularly meet to exchange on their teaching practice, either informally or on a voluntary basis. They don't necessarily report to their headteacher on the issues discussed and resolutions they have decided. They only involve their headteacher when the issue goes beyond their classroom practice.
>
> SEI (DEO/DDE): Headteachers of some neighbouring schools in your sector often meet in an informal way. They exchange some of the challenges they are faced with and give each other tips and tricks. There is no real report of the meeting, but there is a good understanding and a lot of trust. They only contact the SEI when they experience issues beyond their control.
>
> - As SBM/SEI/DEO/DDE do you find these initiatives/meetings important? Why?

CoPs/PLCs contribute to continuous professional development in different ways (Bolam, et al., 2005; Kools & Stoll, 2016; Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2008):

- They contribute to solve practical issues and connecting pedagogical practice with subject content knowledge;

- They allow new headteachers/teachers to share innovative ideas with experienced ones;

- They allow experienced headteachers/teachers to mentor the novice;

- They help in integrating innovations and changes to improve teaching and learning practice;

- They increase headteacher/teacher confidence;

- They help to improve on teaching and learning outcomes and therefore help implement the School Improvement Plan;

- They promote learning from each other;

- They give the opportunity to update knowledge and to improve educational leadership, teaching and research skills.

It is clear that CPD is more effective when it is done in a collaborative way. Your contribution in PLC/CoP in your district/ sector/school gives you the opportunity to take up your role as an educational leader. Participating in a PLC /COP may help you to guide and inspire your headteachers/teachers to learn together, develop professionally and improve their work. CoPs/PLCs are successful and productive when you support them. It is worth mentioning that successful CoPs/PLCs are key instruments in school improvement. In the next section, you are going to explore various conditions that enable COPs/PLCs to be successful.

Section 4.2: Key Enablers of an Effective CoP and PLC

> **Activity 16**
> Describe the factors for a successful CoP or PLC.

There are conditions for a Co and PLC to be effective. These conditions are called **key enablers** (Katz et al., 2009). They include purpose and focus, relationships, collaboration, inquiry, leadership and accountability. Below is the description of those key enablers.

1. Purpose and focus

To be effective and successful, a CoP or PLC needs 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 where you do not want to be.

Indicators:

The members of a CoP or PLC have for example decided to solve certain education challenges like 'improving learning outcomes and reducing repetition', 'reading comprehension', 'objective assessment within CBC', 'integration of ICT in teaching', etc.;

- During a set period, the CoP or PLC will focus on this chosen topic and is not distracted by other affairs;

- Each meeting has a defined purpose; and

- At the end of the meeting, participants conclude and evaluate whether the objective of the meeting was achieved.

2. Relationships

Relationships allow people to work together, create a common language and a sense of shared responsibility. They facilitate communication and sharing of the information about members' expertise. Relationships also develop openness between people to trust one another; and trust is a key condition for productive relationships.

Indicators:

- CoP and PLC members don't hesitate to share information: best practices, failures, strengths and weaknesses; and

- CoP and PLC members demonstrate trust and respect for each other: they speak honestly, create transparency, don't judge on right or wrong, do as they promise, keep commitments and listen first.

3. Collaboration

Collaboration means much more than relationships. Collaboration is an intensive interaction that engages educational leaders or educators to share their practices and to debate. This kind of collaboration allows people to solve the problems of teaching, building commitment through group understanding, solve issues of mutual concern, and spread innovation beyond individuals.

Indicators:

- CoP and PLC members participate in a shared planning of the CoP or PLC, based on a shared vision to solve the issues the group focuses on;

- CoP and PLC members work together and/or divide labour;

- CoP and PLC members expect that they will give help and advice, concern and sympathy to one another while respecting each other's autonomy;

- CoP and PLC members make aspects of their work accessible to others and expose their ideas and intentions to one another; and

- CoP and PLC members visit each other's class or school.

4. Inquiry (learning by asking questions)

Conditions for improving learning and teaching are strengthened when teachers together question teaching habits, examine teaching and learning, find ways to acknowledge and respond to differences and conflicts, and engage in supporting each other's professional growth.

Indicators:

- CoP and PLC members carefully analyse issues before possible solutions are discussed. For this, they collect and analyse relevant data;

- CoP and PLC members don't take the first answers for granted but try to go deeper;

- CoP and PLC members ask open questions; and

- CoP and PLC members apply listening and summarising skills.

5. Leadership

Headteachers in cooperation with SBMs should show leadership by encouraging and motivating teachers to participate in CoPs, setting and monitoring the agenda, creating a culture that supports collaborative learning, promoting enquiry and building capacity. In addition, headteachers must provide support to CoPs, such as adjusting teachers' timetables, providing resources and a space for the CoPs. SEIs, with support DDE and DEO, have the same role regarding the participation of headteachers in PLCs.

However, CoPs and PLCs also require distributed leadership. This means that not just one member is the leader of the CoP or PLC, but many members, both male and female, take up leadership functions such as setting the agenda, developing resources, coordinating group activities, supporting colleagues' learning, etc.

Indicators:

- CoP and PLC members divide roles and responsibilities when organising and sustaining the CoP or PLC;

- CoP and PLC members divide roles and responsibilities related to specific expertise linked to the actual issue that is solved in that period of time; and

- Leadership and other tasks are assigned during CoP or PLC sessions.

6. Accountability

Both external and internal accountability play a role in how change happens. *External* accountability in CoPs/PLCs means being open and transparent in showing policy makers and the public what they are doing and how well it is working. *Internal* accountability is a process of using evidence to identify priorities for change, evaluate the impact of decisions, understand students' academic standing, set up improvement plans, as well as monitor and assure progress (VVOB, 2017).

Indicators:

- CoP and PLC members, if needed or asked for, explain to each other why they act as they do; and

- CoP and PLC members hold each other accountable for complying with agreements that were made together.

Section 4.3: Establishing and Facilitating CoPs and PLCs

4.3.1. Setting up CoPs/PLCs and preparing the agenda

Activity 17

In groups, answer the following questions on CoP or PLC:

- Is there a CoP or PLC in your school or sector?
- Who sets them up? Who prepares the agenda? Is there a link with the school improvement plan?
- How can you motivate members to participate, if they have limited time and resources?
- How can you convince CoP or PLC members to share their failures?
- What should be the frequency of CoP or PLC sessions?
- How can you create time for CoP or PLC sessions?
- Who is responsible for the follow-up on action points identified in the CoP or PLC sessions?
- Who should be the members of a CoP or PLC?
- Are CoPs/PLCs only for new teachers/headteachers?

You can find inspiration in your manual to some of the questions.

In plenary, share the differences observed and come up with a common understanding on the functioning and modalities of CoPs and PLCs.

In Rwanda, CoPs for teachers at school level have been introduced by REB with the support of JICA. The approach for CoPs is the same as the approach for PLCs of headteachers at sector level, implemented with the support of VVOB. The activities held during those sessions are based on the needs of the participants. So, a CoP for teachers is started by a trained SBM, SSL or even a teacher, and a PLC for headteachers is initiated by an SEI, or even by headteachers. The agenda is set by CoP and PLC members.

4.3.2. Motivating members to attend and actively participate in CoPs and PLCs

There are useful ways to motivate teachers and headteachers to actively engage in CoPs or PLCs. Those are:

- Members discuss and work on what they find useful and important for them;
- They can deal with concrete issues related to classroom practice;
- CoP and PLCs sessions take place within/close to the school/sector at a convenient time;

- CoPs and PLCs provide CoP and PLC members with concrete tools to improve their practice (lessons plan developed, resources developed, problems solved, adjusted attitudes…);

- SEIs easily and frequently meet their headteachers through PLCs and can collect needed data from the schools and/or communicate with the schools;

- CoPs and PLCs build trust among members and improve the growth attitude in a school;

- CoPs and PLCs help members to collect and use data on topics relevant to them and the selected focus of the CoP or PLC.

- CoPs and PLCs contribute to the implementation of the School Improvement Plan and address equity issues in school by analysing existing or gathered data.

4.3.3. Frequency of CoP and PLC-cycles

Time for teachers and headteachers to participate in CoPs or PLCs should be scheduled during the school calendar, as a part of the school or sector CPD plan. CoP and PLC sessions can take place during the immediate pre- and post-term periods to minimise taking up too much (head)teacher time. Teaching timetables can be organised in such a way that teachers have some time during the school week to have a CoP session. A successful CoP requires that its members come together regularly. The necessary quality of discussions, step by step gains in knowledge and sustainable effects on teaching and learning are only achieved when members meet regularly.

Suggested frequency of CoP and PLC cycles:

- For SBMs and teachers: two completed CoP cycles per school year

- For SEIs and headteachers: one completed PLC cycle per school year

4.3.4. Follow-up on action points made in a CoP and PLC session

Every CoP member is accountable for the success of the CoP cycle. As challenges in teaching and learning are analysed and possible solutions are discussed in the first CoP phase, the try-out of these solutions is **assigned to specific members of the CoP**. These members try out the possible solutions and then report back in the next CoP session. The same applies to PLCs.

4.3.5. Grouping of CoPs and PLCs

Depending on the issues the CoP is trying to solve, different ways of grouping are possible. CoPs are started to deal with challenges that teachers are facing. Basically, every combination is possible as long as the participants have the same need and can resolve the problem together. CoPs for teachers are organised within a school and usually bring together teachers who teach **the same subject** (e.g. all STEM teachers), or teachers who teach **the same grades** (e.g. all P5 teachers), or teachers that face **the same challenge** or **want to learn the same new didactic approach** (e.g. all teachers who want to start implementing learning through Play).

CoPs for teachers can be organised between schools as well. Some schools would do best to team up with neighbouring schools. Inter-school CoPs can be a very effective way to exchange ideas and align organisational cultures between schools. CoPs between schools will also work best if it can be a clear objective to mix better performing with less performing schools. CoPs between schools can also be a solution for teachers who don't have a peer at the same school, e.g. if there is only 1 pre-primary teacher, this teacher might benefit from being in a CoP between schools.

PLCs for headteachers are organised at sector level. If the sector is small, it could also be organised at district level.

4.3.6. People who benefit from a CoP or PLC

CoPs should consist of a mixture of **new and experienced teachers**, as both have their particular learning needs and expertise. New teachers can learn from experienced teachers on how to deal with specific learner- difficulties and use tried-and-tested resources. Experienced teachers can benefit from these interactions, as it requires them to make their own thinking clear. This can help to reflect on their own teaching. Experienced teachers can also learn from new ideas, interests and technologies that new teachers can bring into the CoP.

The same goes for headteachers in a PLC. Both **new and experienced headteachers** benefit from the reflection and exchange on challenges in school leadership and management.

Gender responsiveness: CoPs and PLCs should ensure the equitable participation of women and men. Therefore, facilitators should do this by (1) setting an agenda that includes both women's and men's interests, (2) using methods that increase the active participation of women and men, (3) ensuring that women and men can express their opinion and listen to and respect each other's experiences and views, (4) creating an atmosphere in which both sexes feel respected, safe and encouraged to share and to interact, (5) facilitating good communication practices in which misunderstandings, insults, criticisms and demands are accepted and resolved, (6) planning CoPs and PLCs at times that accommodate all members.

4.3.7. Structure and content of a CoP cycle and CoP Phases

Each school year, teachers who are members of a CoP go through two or more CoP cycles together. **In the course of a CoP cycle the members analyse challenges, find solutions and share their findings within their school. A CoP cycle is only completed once a solution has been found for the priority challenges that the members set.**

One complete CoP cycle consists of at least 3 phases. Each phase will take at least 1 but possibly more sessions, as many as necessary to find relevant information and effective solutions for an identified priority challenge.

The first CoP phase can take more than one session because it might take time to collect enough data about the selected priority challenge and to properly analyse the challenge to be able to brainstorm possible solutions. The middle CoP phase can take many sessions until an adequate solution has been found for the existing challenge. The last CoP phase most likely will only take one session. Each CoP phase has specific outputs with concrete actions to be accomplished before the next session takes place.

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 9: The CoP cycle

1. First CoP Phase: identification, analysis and planning

During the first CoP phase the members will identify all challenges they face in teaching and learning, the implementation of the CBC and/or their induction as new teachers. They will first classify these priorities into three areas:

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

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

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

Then they will give priority to the challenges that are in their direct and indirect control and select about 2 challenges that will be the focus of that CoP cycle. The members will collect more information and data on these priority challenges and analyse these data (How do we know this is a problem? How often does it happen? Why is this a problem? Do we need more data about this problem?). If information is not available during the meeting, members can agree to collect more information and reconvene to analyse this information.

Once the problem is analysed sufficiently, members will discuss possible solutions. After a discussion of possible solutions, the members will plan activities to overcome the challenges.

After this CoP session, each member will go back to their teaching timetable and implement the planned activities to overcome the challenges. The members who are implementing the activities will take notes on how their try-outs went so it can be discussed during the next CoP session.

2. Middle CoP Phase: reflection and consolidation

During this next CoP phase, the members will reflect on the tried-out approaches. The members who tried out their activities will share the results (using data!). The group will discuss and analyse the data. The group will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the tried-out approach and reflect on its effectiveness.

If the 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.

If the try-outs however were not successful, the group will analyse the challenge on a deeper level using the 'WHAT model' for reflection. Following this analysis, they will discuss new possible solutions and plan for a second try-out. As long as the tried-out approaches don't give the expected results, the CoP members will repeat this middle session. Only when the members have found an effective solution for their priority challenges will they continue to discuss and plan efforts to make their lessons learnt visible and concrete.

After the CoP session, if the try-outs were successful, each member will go back to their teaching timetable and implement the actions they planned. Making the lessons learnt visible and concrete can take on different forms such as developing teaching and learning materials, writing a case study, developing a new assessment tool, writing a story of change, etc. If the try-outs were not successful, after the CoP session, each member will go back to their teaching timetable and implement the second try-out activities to overcome the challenges. The members who are implementing these activities will take notes on how their second try-outs went so it can be discussed during the next CoP session.

The number of CoP sessions needed for this phase will depend on how difficult it is to resolve the priority challenges. The topics will be discussed until the challenges have been resolved, which will close the cycle and start a new one.

3. Last CoP Phase: dissemination (sharing) and evaluation

In the last CoP phase, members will share and review the visible and concrete outputs (final products) of their lessons learnt. With these outputs ready 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 full CoP cycle, the members will reflect on the effectiveness of the action-oriented CoP cycle and discuss how to make the next cycle even better.

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

See **annex 10** for a one-page overview of each CoP phase. **Annex 12** gives a CoP reporting template. Additionally, in **annex 13** you will find more information on the different stakeholders involved in CoPs.

4.3.8. Structure and content of a PLC cycle

The approach of a PLC cycle is not different from the one for CoP. A PLC cycle also follows a problem-solving structure as described below. The problem-solving structure includes a process of identification, planning, review, reflection and dissemination. Each phase can take one or more sessions, e.g. during the identification phase a first session can focus on identifying a priority need, then participants might take time in each school to collect data on the problem, then participants meet again (session 2) to analyse the data and explore the problem deeper. Implementation is organised in each school in between the sessions.

Hereafter, a brief outline of each of the PLC sessions is given. The PLC sessions are described in more detail in the **annex 11**. Each PLC session will last 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 PLC cycle

- Evaluating the results of the actions to address the priorities.
- Recording lessons learnt and practices.
- Plan dissemination of results.

4. Reflection

1. Planning
- Identifying priorities.
- Defining measures of success.
- Brainstorming and selecting two to three strategies to try out.
- Discuss the implementation plan for each strategy.

- Identifying the best strategies re-tried out.
- Sharing findings and experiences from the best strategy re-tried out.
- Developing a final implementation plan for each strategy.

3. Review the implementation

2. Implementation follow-up
- Sharing experiences.
- Identifying challenges faced during try-outs.
- Sharing strategies to overcome challenges.
- Agreeing on strategies to re-try out.
- Discuss the implementation plan for each strategy.

Figure 10: Structure for action-oriented cycle of PLC phases

1. Planning phase

During the first session of the school year, PLC members will 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.

2. Phase 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.

3. Phase 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.

4. Reflection phase

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 document and disseminate these lessons learned and practices with others.

4.3.9. Guidelines to establish and facilitate a CoP and PLC

This part provides you with concrete guidelines on how to conduct a CoP or PLC session based on the 6 key enablers (Katz et al., 2009). CoPs and PLCs need to be well organised and facilitated. Simply bringing teachers or headteachers together does not guarantee growth and development. It can also lead to a situation in which everybody agrees that the way things are being done is satisfactory, in which case nothing will change.

Once the SEI/SBM has identified the PLC and CoP members, he/she formally communicates to them to attend the first PLC or CoP cycle. This communication should be supported by the sector official/headteacher. The SEI/SBM communicates by using the available resources and explains the purpose of a PLC or CoP.

Every CoP and PLC session will go through the same five steps. Each Step might look a bit different depending on the session in the CoP or PLC cycle. These five steps to conduct a PLC or CoP session are provided below. An effective PLC or CoP session should not exceed 90 min. To capture the main points discussed during a CoP or PLC, you can use the report template in **annex 12**.

Step 1: Introduction to a CoP or PLC session

- Welcome the members of the CoP or PLC

- Explain/remind the purpose of a CoP or PLC

- Set/remind housekeeping rules

Step 2: Assign roles and responsibilities for leading the CoP or PLC session

- Members divide the roles among each other:

    o Facilitator

    o Note taker

    o Timekeeper

Step 3: Set the agenda of the CoP or PLC session

- Members agree on the priority topics on the agenda (max. 2 priorities). In phase 1 the agenda will include the identification of priority challenges, and analysis of the available data. In phase 2 will focus on the discussion of solutions.

- Members share their expectations

Step 4: Discuss, analyse and make resolutions

This is where the core discussions of the CoP or PLC meeting take place. In session 1 members will discuss and analyse the priority challenges, including analysis of available data, and members plan try-outs. In session 2 members will share, discuss and analyse try-outs, again using data. They will record lessons learnt and plan consolidation activities. In session 3 members discuss and plan sharing activities.

In this part of the meeting, members can also conduct other activities, besides group discussions. This could be a presentation, a lesson observation, a lesson study, a video analysis, or anything that members have decided to do in pursuit of finding answers to the selected priority challenge.

Step 5: Closing and reflection

- Members share feedback on the CoP or PLC session

- Note taker summarises the resolutions of the CoP or PLC session

- Members evaluate the CoP or PLC session

- Members plan the date of the next CoP or PLC session

4.3.9. Gender considerations when facilitating a CoP and PLC

When facilitating a CoP or PLC session you have to:

- Ensure both men and women are assigned tasks/roles. It would be very unfortunate in the 21st century to see men contributing to various discussions and having women who behave like bystanders.

- Ensure that both men and women have equal opportunities to share their views. Indeed, as the CoP or PLC organiser you should ensure there is gender equality and gender equity during interactions.

- Encourage men and women as well as people with disabilities to participate in the following up on the implementation of CoP or PLC resolutions.

In fact, all members of the community regardless of their sex, origin, physical appearance, political or religious affiliation, and so on, need to take an active part in CoP sessions. By doing so, those members will feel valued, and as a result, they will own CoP or PLC resolutions and will strive to implement them without fail.

4.3.10. Challenges when facilitating a CoP and PLC

Experience teaches us that facilitating an effective CoP or PLC is not easy and it requires practice for both the SBM/SEI as the members of the CoP or PLC. These are the common challenges/mistakes you need to pay extra attention to when you start a CoP or PLC cycle for the first time:

- Not enough time is spent to fully analyse a challenge and collect relevant data; the group too quickly moves to finding solutions and misses some important elements in understanding the challenge;

- A priority topic is chosen that is not within the control of the members (for example teachers who want to resolve a challenge regarding school feeding);

- Resolutions to try out are not specifically assigned to one of the members, so no one feels really responsible;

- There is no clear deadline or timing set for the different try-out and activities;

- There is no time set for each of the five steps in a CoP or PLC session, so the timekeeper can't follow up;

- The agenda is not set by the members but imposed by the school leadership or SBM/SEI;

- At the end of the session, the members don't evaluate how the CoP/PLC session went and therefore don't learn anything to improve in the next CoP or PLC session;

- Every CoP or PLC session new challenges are solved instead of finishing an entire CoP or PLC cycle where you analyse, try out solutions, learn lessons, make these lessons visual and share them with your fellow teachers;

- A CoP or PLC is seen as a staff meeting and doesn't focus on challenges in teaching and learning, nor follows the steps of a CoP or PLC session.

4.3.11. Facilitating a CoP or PLC online/remotely

Given exceptional circumstances, it may not always be possible to organise a CoP or PLC face-to-face at the school. If this is the case, it can be done remotely/online. To ensure an efficient and effective CoP/PLC session can take place, good planning is required.

Below you can find guidelines on how to conduct an online CoP or PLC session:

1) Inform the headteacher about the intention to organise a CoP or PLC.

2) Call every member on the phone to justify the need for CoP or PLC, to motivate them, to have members agree on the date, the time of the meeting and the platform to be used.

3) Plan to meet with them using either: WhatsApp group discussion, Zoom meeting, Webex meeting, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet or any other platform that you and your colleagues can easily access. Given the context, WhatsApp group discussion may be the most available.

4) On the agreed date once all CoP or PLC members have logged into one of the platforms, follow the CoP or PLC steps as indicated in your course. To avoid boring people or losing members along the way if connection is cut off, it might be best to stick to one priority topic for discussion.

5) Make sure a decision or resolution is taken before the end of the meeting together with the responsible person, the timeline and the deadlines.

6) Document the minutes of the CoP or PLC and share them with your CoP or PLC members. Afterwards reflect on how it went and consider how you can improve facilitation of an online CoP or PLC. Report to the headteacher using an email or any other platform agreed with the headteacher.

7) Store your reports in a CoP or PLC folder on your computer so you are able to retrieve them when necessary. After they are safely stored on your computer you can upload them to your portfolio.

Section 4.4: Lesson Study a Specific Way Of Working in a COP[1]

In lesson study, teachers systematically work with their colleagues to examine and improve their teaching. So, lesson study naturally creates a CoP environment and an opportunity for reflective practice and peer learning. That is why it is mentioned in this unit, which focuses on CoPs and PLCs. A group of teachers going through lesson study automatically form a CoP. Lesson study is an effective way of doing CPD.

This section will lead you through the different stages of a lesson study and how to conduct it effectively.

This section builds on the following resources: Phase III CBC Induction Training from REB and SIIQS-JICA, the Working paper for STEPSAM2 Project for the MINEDUC of Cambodia and the article 'The teaching gap: Best ideas from the world's teachers for improving education in the classroom'.

4.4.1. What is a lesson study?

Lesson study is a research-based collaborative professional development process in schools that aims at investigating best teaching and learning methods. It came from Japan. What you research together are classroom activities and lessons, thus it is called "lesson study." It aims at investigating the best teaching and learning method for children in each school. In lesson study, teachers research how a teacher's action and facilitation are effective to help learners in live lessons, and then report on the results so that other teachers can benefit from it.

All schools in Japan organise lesson studies and all teachers are engaged in it. Apart from that, sectors and districts also organise sector-level and district-level lesson studies to provide teachers with professional development opportunities. It is currently practised by the teachers not only in Japan, but also in the USA, the UK, and many African countries (including Rwanda). The teachers involved in lesson studies in those countries have been improving their teaching through collaborative reflection.

Nature of lesson study

In lesson study, teachers go through a cyclic process as shown in figure 11, consisting of "topic selection", "lesson design", "micro teaching", "Lesson delivery", and "reflection". A lesson study is endless. It encourages the teacher's Continuous Professional Development (CPD). In conducting a lesson study, a group of teachers meet regularly over a long period of time, at least several months. It makes teachers lifelong learners.

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1 The section has been written with the support of JICA.
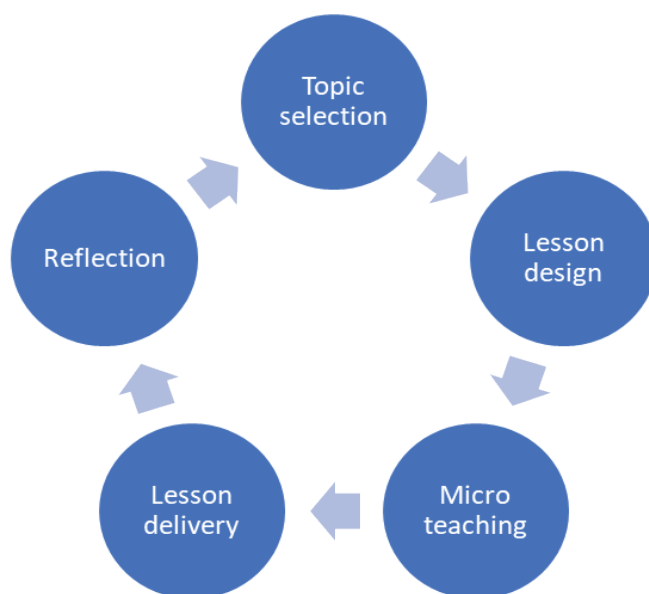
Figure 11: Cycle of a lesson study

A lesson study can be divided into five stages. Each stage has specific activities as shown in table 11.

Table 11: Five stages of lesson study

Stage	Activity
Stage 1: Topic selection	Determines the topic to be dealt with in the lesson study. Lesson study is organised to investigate and create the best teaching and learning approach for learners. Lesson topics are usually selected from learning problems that learners currently face in their classroom. While identifying problems, teachers describe the problem, based on available data.
Stage 2: Lesson Design	Includes a lot of activities that require at least a few weeks, such as: conducting a study on the contents to teach, preparing a lesson timetable and a lesson plan, discussing the lesson plan with colleagues.
Stage 3: Micro-teaching	Provides opportunity for a teacher to demonstrate teaching a lesson thereby practicing in advance. The lesson plan is revised after practicing.
Stage 4: Lesson delivery	A teacher delivers the lesson and other lesson study team members observe it and later share feedback.
Stage 5: Reflection	Teachers look back at how the lesson was conducted and discuss how they can improve the quality of teaching and learning processes based on observations. Encourages each teacher to individually make use of the lessons learnt in the lesson study and improve his/her own teaching.

Before starting a lesson study, each school needs to form a lesson study group (which is then actually a Community of Practice) that includes the relevant teachers in the school. Teachers who teach similar subjects usually form a lesson study group so that they can easily help each other. Table 12 shows the expected members of a lesson study team and the roles of members.

Activity 18

Discuss the following questions:

- What are the differences between lesson study and lesson observation?
- What are the advantages of focusing on "student's learning" in improving our teaching?
- What do you think are the differences between the comments on a lesson when you focus on "teaching" instead of on "teachers"?

Table 12: Lesson study team members and their roles

	Lesson study team member	**Roles to play**
1.	Headteacher/ D/ HT-in charge of studies	Organising and supervising a lesson study
2.	Lesson study group leader selected by team members	Facilitating discussion before and after the lessons
3.	SBM	Providing technical inputs for both group leaders and teachers
4.	Teachers	Preparing lesson plans, conducting and observing the lessons, discussing the lessons

Source: REB and SIIQS-JICA, 2017

4.4.2. Lesson study processes

Stage 1: Topic selection

A lesson study group needs to determine the research topic at first. It is usually one of the teaching and learning problems or issues that teachers and or students currently face in their teaching-learning process. A group leader usually facilitates the discussion for the lesson study topic selection.

An often-used method to select a topic is to work with post-its/note papers. Each teacher writes down several teaching and learning challenges he/she is dealing with. All teachers' post-its are put up and the most mentioned challenge is selected as the topic that will be researched.

There are two types of approaches while identifying teaching and learning problems. The first approach is to discuss cross-curricular issues which are common challenges for most teachers in school. Instructional language problems, organisation of group work in a large size classroom and questioning techniques are examples. It is generally suitable for primary school teachers.

The second approach is to find a solution for specific lesson contents of learning. All subjects usually contain topics that most students performed on poorly. Or some teachers have difficulties teaching a certain topic. In those cases, lesson study is utilised to improve how such specific contents can be taught. Mainly secondary school teachers will benefit from this approach.

Since lesson study is a research activity to find the better learning and teaching approaches in each school, the discussion targets are limited to learning and teaching related problems and issues so that teachers can consider their solutions by themselves as teaching professionals. The topics are always in a teacher's area of control. While identifying teaching and learning problems, teachers also collect and use data to answer questions such as "What do we know about this problem?", "Why is it a problem?", "How do we know?", …
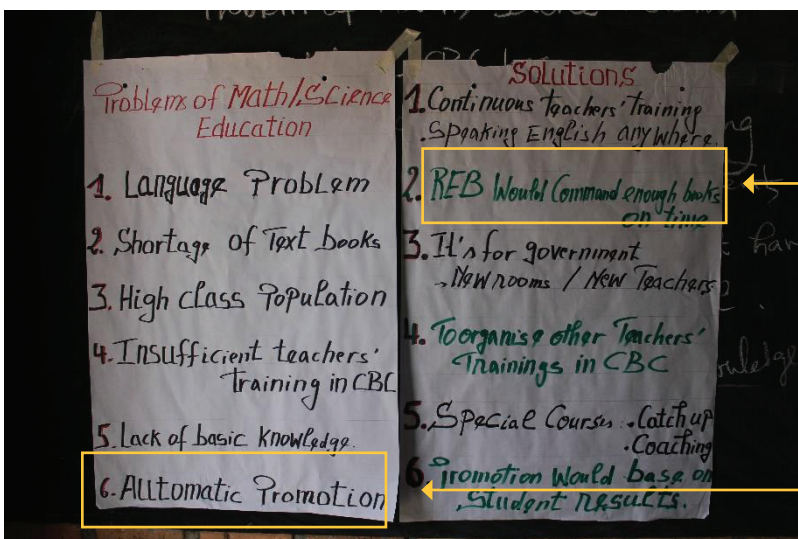
Solution is not relevant because it comes from outside.

This is not related to learning and teaching problems happening in classrooms.

Stage 2: Lesson design

Team members prepare a lesson to study. They first decide on the lesson title according to the topic and the available timetable for the lesson delivery. Then, choose the teacher who demonstrates the lesson.

"Lesson design" does not simply mean preparing lesson plans, but includes a variety of activities that often take a few weeks to complete the cycle. The lesson study team develops the lesson plan and teaching materials together. The demonstrator is the primary person in charge of the preparation. But he or she is not left alone, because the research topic is for all group members who decided on it together. Plan time to meet for the discussion on how to design the lesson. The recommended procedure and tasks of lesson planning are shown in Table 13.

The teachers at the 'Starting Level' just focus on the teaching in one single lesson plan, while those at the 'Advanced Level' take into consideration the relationship between lessons, and the status of learners. The teachers who have just started a Lesson study may begin with the 'Starting Level', and step by step shift to the 'Advanced Level'. It is expected that all teachers will become "advanced" soon after conducting Lesson studies for several years.

Table 13: Procedure and tasks in the planning stage

Step	Tasks of Teachers	
	Starting Level	Advanced Level
1	**[Assigning a teacher]**	
	A lesson study team has decided to assign a teacher to be in charge of a lesson and decide the dates for meetings and lesson implementation as well as the lesson topic.	Same as the starting level.
2	**[Preparing a lesson study]**	
	The assigned teacher conducts a study on the contents and prepares a lesson plan.	The assigned teacher conducts a study on the curriculum structure as well as the contents and analyses the learners' level of understanding about the taught contents. Then he/she prepares a lesson plan together with a teaching plan of the unit.

3	**[Discussing on the lesson plan]**	
	The lesson study team examines if the lesson plan can be expected to lead to the desired learning outcomes. A trial lesson can be conducted within the lesson study team.	The lesson study team closely examines the lesson plan: if it can be expected to lead to the desired learning outcomes; if there is a clear relationship between the previous and successful lessons; if the level and methods of teaching match the status of the learners; and so on. A trial lesson can be conducted in this step if necessary.

Source: Adapted from Ministry of Education in Cambodia and JICA, 2011

Stage 3: Micro teaching

Micro teaching is about rehearsing a lesson by teaching fellow teachers so as to be able to show the best possible performance during the actual lesson delivery. If the teacher has not well prepared the lesson, the lesson fails and the lesson study team does not learn much from the lesson study.

Micro-teaching is a lesson practice technique conducted for small number of learners. In most cases, it is a role play and peers in your lesson study group are requested to act as students who have problems specifically on the topic that was decided.

A debriefing session must be held soon after the micro-teaching practice. At this stage, the lesson preparation is not completed yet. There is still room for improvement. Team members who attended as learners are once more professional teachers who give helpful comments and advice to the teacher-demonstrator. DoS and SBM are also expected to lead the session to improve the lesson quality of the research lesson.

Based on the comments and advice, the lesson study team revises and finalises the lesson plan and teaching materials. It is recommended to repeat the micro-teaching until the lesson quality meets the expectations formulated at the start of the lesson study.

Stage 4: Lesson delivery and its observation

After finalising the lesson plan, the lesson study team members get together in a classroom to observe how the assigned teacher gives the lesson, and what and how the learners learn or do not learn in the lesson. The teacher conducts the lesson based on the jointly prepared lesson plan in the previous stage.

The attention points include at least the following aspects:

- The level of achievement of objectives;

- The effectiveness and appropriateness of activities;

- The development of learners' critical thinking.

Many other points to assess the teaching and learning can be considered.

Learner-centred lesson observation

If we are aiming at realising "learner-centred education" in all classrooms, our way of lesson observation should also be learner-centred so that the process and level of learning is placed at the centre of discussion in assessing the effectiveness of teaching. Novice observers tend to pay attention to the teacher, but the lesson observers are encouraged to take note of "what and how the learners learn in the lesson'" as much as possible. This information about learners will be compulsory to think of how teaching and learning can be improved in a learner-centred manner.

Comments of novice (new/beginner) observers and learner-centred observers in a post-lesson discussion are captured in the following table.

Table 14: Typical examples of comments given by lesson observers

Observers	Typical examples of comments
Novice (new/beginner) observers	- The teacher should have taught in this way. - That instruction should be changed in this way. - The teacher should have made learners do this. - The learners were very active in the lesson. (without any evidence or mention of learners' concrete act)
Learner-centred observers	- The learners responded to that instruction in this way. - This and that learner made this kind of errors/mistakes in that activity. - In a group discussion, he had a talk with her to deepen his understanding.

Source: Adapted from Ministry of Education in Cambodia and JICA, 2011

Instructions for the teacher who delivers the lesson

The following instructions may help the teacher who delivers the lesson:

- Pay more attention to the learners and their learning than to the lesson plan. Give the lesson without being too limited by the lesson plan.
- Ignore observers as if they are not present in the classroom.
- Relax. Remember that this lesson is not for your evaluation, but for providing opportunities for you and your colleagues to develop teaching methods.

Instruction for the observers

The following instructions may be helpful for observers:

- Pay attention to the quality of current teaching and learning taking place in the lesson, rather than to how much it follows the lesson plan.
- Try to get up from the chair or bench for close observation of the learners. But do not talk to the learners or chat with other observers at any time.
- Take detailed notes of the lesson to include what statements the learners make, what interactions are taking place, how the learners make and correct mistakes, and so on, to give useful comments during the discussion held at the end of the lesson.

Stage 5: Reflective discussion on the lesson

After the lesson delivery and observation, there will be a post-lesson discussion for the teacher giving the lesson to improve his/her lesson and adjust the used teaching methodology, as well as for other teachers to learn how to further improve their own lessons. For this purpose, the participants are advised to follow the rules and the procedure below (table 15 and 16). The role that the facilitator plays is quite important because how much the participants can learn from lesson study depends on the quality of support in the post-lesson discussion.

Table 15: General rules

1.	The comments must be based on specific examples observed during the lesson delivery
2.	The suggestions must (i) specify the issues necessary to improve, and (ii) be accompanied with other suggestions (i.e., 'If I teach it, I would …').
3.	The focus of discussion must be on the improvement of the 'teaching and learning process', and so any criticism on the teacher is not allowed.
4.	The discussion must be recorded and filed for future reference. The leader of the lesson study team will share the recorded discussion to the team members.

Source: Adapted from Ministry of Education in Cambodia and JICA, 2011

Table 16: Procedure of the post-lesson reflection

	Activity	Note for Facilitators
1	Assignment of one facilitator and one secretary	The teacher who conducted the lesson should not be the facilitator or the secretary.
2	The teachers' review of the lesson	• Start with the reflection of the teacher who conducted the lesson. • Support the teacher to explain the points to which he/she has given particular attention or with which he/she has faced difficulties in the planning stage.
3	Discussion about the lesson	
	• Good points	• Help each participant to make at least one statement. • Ask each participant to give examples that are useful to the point that he/she considers done well . • Try to create a good atmosphere for discussion.
	• Points necessary to improve with other suggestions	• Help each participant to make at least one statement. • Try to focus on 'how we can help all students to learn more'. • Facilitate the discussion between the participants, not just between the teacher and the participants.
4	Summary of the discussion	• Wrap up the results of discussion and look back to the important lessons learnt from the discussion for all the participants to improve their own teaching.

Source: Adapted from Ministry of Education in Cambodia and JICA, 2011

Making a report on lesson study

A report on lesson study conducted is required in order to document the lessons learnt in lesson study. The final lesson plan and teaching materials which reflect the observation results are the most valuable products in this report in order to improve upcoming lessons in your schools.

It summarises the teaching methods that you have discussed and considered as effective for your learners but not applied in the actual research lesson.

These different ideas are also important to be included in the report. The school can use these reports not only to show as evidence of lesson study implementation for others, but also to see the progress of lesson improvement over the years in the school.

Instructions for the school administration

There should be a helpful environment to objectively evaluate the lesson improvement with lesson study as a tool. For this purpose, the headteachers and DoS should put change into the care of the teachers, encourage them to talk with each other about the changes they have achieved, and pay more attention to those changes when evaluating the teachers. Such initiatives will lead to both collaboration and friendly competition among the teachers for lesson improvement.

What is to be done next?

When the whole process of lesson study is completed, then move on to the planning stage again for the next cycle of lesson study. Have a meeting to assign another teacher who will conduct a lesson and let him/her start preparation. Improvement is a continuous process. It normally takes a few years for the improvement to be visible (Stigler, J. W. and Hiebert, J. 1999).

4.4.3. Effective lesson study

Purposeful facilitation for quality discussion

When you organise a post-lesson discussion, you may be surprised by the number and variety of comments and suggestions that the participants give to improve the lesson. However, if you are aiming at improving the quality of discussion, please check whether these comments are:

- Helpful not only for the teacher who implemented the lesson but also for all other participants;

- Applicable not only to the observed lesson but also to other lessons, and

- Supporting active discussion among the participants.

Purposeful facilitation leads to deepened discussion and resolved disagreements between the participants.

> **Activity 19**
> Consider the following example and discuss how you would resolve the disagreement between the participants as a facilitator:
> **Observer A:** I think this activity (question, instruction, etc.,) should be changed to something different.
> **Observer B:** I do not think so. This activity (question, instruction, etc.,) is OK. It does not need to be changed.

To resolve this problem, it is probably good to consider how well we observe learners. The figure below

shows an example to resolve this kind of disagreement. What is important in this case is to make decisions based on the observation of learners (and other learners' based data) in front of us.
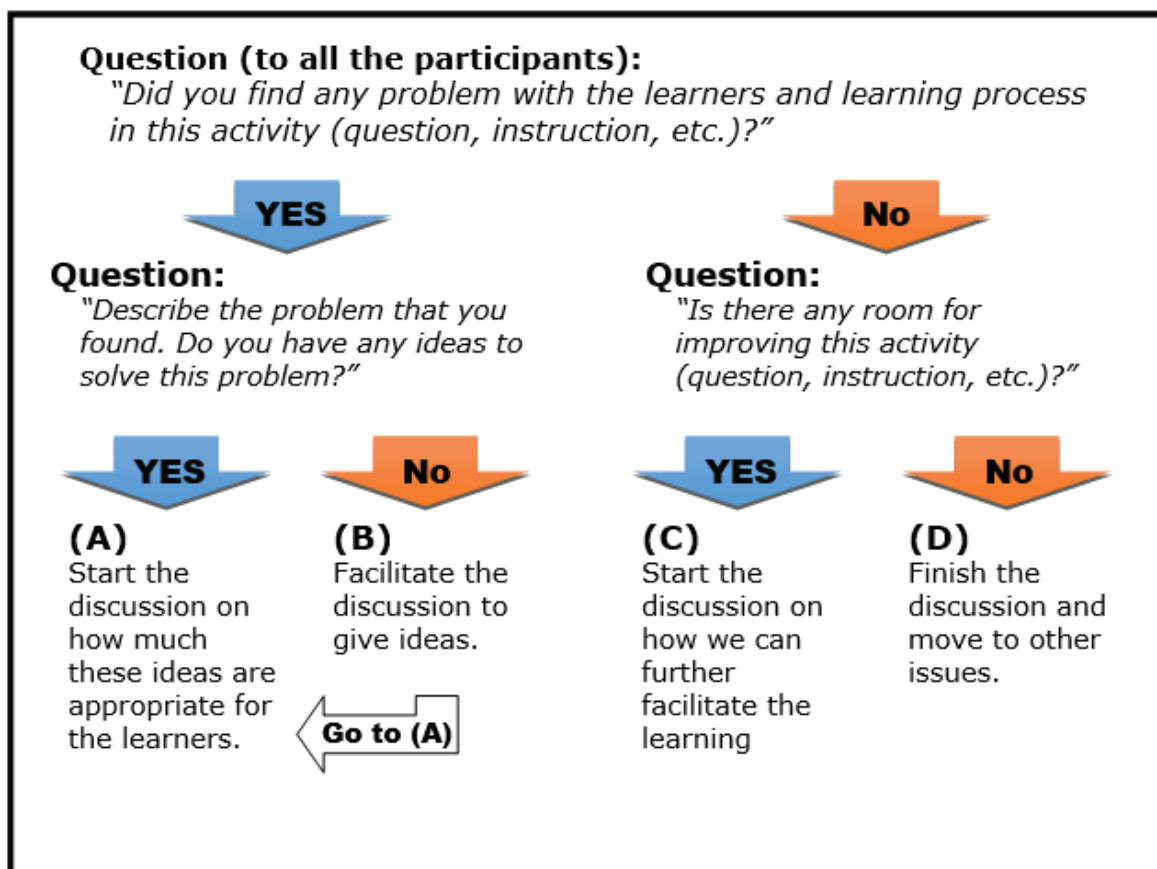
Figure 12: Sample case of effective facilitation (Ministry of Education in Cambodia & JICA, 2011)

Setting the timetable of lesson study

Frequency

It is recommended that each lesson study team goes through one cycle of lesson study per term. Each school can start a lesson study with one lesson study team for one subject, and then progressively expands the lesson study to other subjects. Make a small step and continue to move forward.

Guidance for the school administration

Past experience suggests that the leadership of school administration is a key to the successful implementation of lesson study. Headteachers are expected to discuss with the DoS and the leader of each lesson study group in order to share the tasks to fulfil such as:

- Who will contact each lesson study group member to get together?

- Who will take responsibility to plan the date, time and venue of each meeting?

- Who will assign, or will be assigned as, the lesson-giver and the facilitator?

- Who will make a report?

4.4.4. Advantages of lesson study

A lesson study supports teachers to develop their competences. It is particularly designed to put together Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) since it focuses on lesson research. PCK is a core competence of teachers and their ability to produce the most effective pedagogic approach to teach subject content, according to a learner's level and learning needs. Teachers include their pedagogical knowledge (what they know about teaching) and assessment knowledge (what they know about learners) to their subject content knowledge (what they know about what they teach) to make the best of their lessons.

PCK is a synthetic ability that is unique to every teacher, it cannot be developed separately. Teachers need to perform in real life situations on their own. It does not simply transfer from one to other teachers. Teachers have to be given enough professional development time to be proficient.

A lesson study creates an environment needed for PCK mastery. Summarised, a lesson study will support teachers:

- To develop a need-based, custom-made professional development programme based on teachers' or learners' weaknesses.

- To provide active learning opportunity to perform in a live classroom.

- To develop research ability to identify and evaluate learning and teaching problems, and to find solutions.

- To practice competence-based assessment by assessing one's performance in real classroom situation (self and peer assessment).

- To create a culture of reflective practice in which the teachers learn from self-reflection, from each other, and from the students, for their professional development and lifelong learning.

Over the past cohorts, trainees have often made similar mistakes or have misunderstood the course content in the same way. To help you avoid making the same mistakes, they have been listed and corrected in the

Section 4.4: Common Mistakes and Misunderstandings

following table:

Common mistake / misunderstanding	Correction
A CoP phase, session and a CoP cycle are the same thing. You can use either word to mean the same.	A CoP or PLC phase, session and a CoP or PLC cycle are three very different things but closely related. A CoP cycle is made of three CoP phases, and each phase is made up of various CoP sessions aiming to solve an identified professional challenge. A CoP cycle is a process where you discuss and solve teaching and learning challenges with your fellow teachers/headteachers. Because teaching and learning challenges are complex, to be able to find solutions you will need at least three CoP or PLC sessions (covering all phases) to reach the solution, but often you will need more sessions, e.g. you might need a session solely for analysing the problem, based on all the information you have collected. Different CoP or PLC sessions are phases in solving the same problems, coming together and trying out the implementation of solutions decided until the problem is solved. When the problem is solved it is the end of the cycle.
A CoP or PLC session is a meeting where teachers/ headteachers solve all their problems.	A CoP or PLC session is not a regular meeting but a CPD activity. Only professional challenges within teachers' control are handled in CoPs or PLCs; other challenges can be discussed in other ways but not in CoP or PLC (for example, they can be discussed within staff meetings).
A reflection is not always needed in a CoP or PLC if the CoP or PLC session went smoothly.	Each CoP or PLC session always ends with the reflection of members on how the CoP or PLC went (part of the CoP or PLC report) and after the CoP or PLC session is ended the SBM/SIE reflects by him/herself how he/she facilitated the CoP or PLC and what he/she wants to do differently next time (part of a reflection report for the SBM's portfolio/SEI).

Further reading

In the Annexes of Module 1 you will find further readings and tools relevant to the content of this unit. Some annexes are compulsory reading: you must read these annexes. Others are optional: you can decide to read them or not.

Compulsory readings:

- For SEI/DEO/DDE: Annex 11: Description of each PLC phase in action oriented cycle

- Annex 12: Reflection report for a COP cycle

- Annex 13: Stakeholders in CoPs/PLC and their roles

Optional readings:

- Annex 10: CoP phases overview

UNIT FIVE
COACHING AND MENTORING IN EDUCATION

Introduction

In this unit, you will discover the concepts of coaching and mentoring in detail. Furthermore, you will be introduced to the specific professional support for new (head)teachers' induction.

Unit learning outcomes

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

1. Explain the concept of coaching and mentoring in education;

2. Conduct coaching conversations;

3. Explain the concept of induction of new teachers;

4. Explore the importance of teacher induction;

5. Identify stakeholders involved in teacher induction and their roles;

6. Analyse existing practices in inducting new teachers;

7. Set up or plan effective teacher induction at your school.

Section 5.1: Coaching in Education

Coaching is a form of professional development whereby the coach helps the coachee (= the learner in the process) to learn and achieve goals set by the coachee. A coach facilitates learning without giving expert advice or solutions, but rather by helping the coachee reflect and take next steps in the coachee's learning process.

In this section, coaching models and seven skills for effective coaching conversation will be discussed. A specific focus will be put on the GRROW model.

5.1.1. Models of coaching: GRROW model

> **Activity 20**
>
> - Watch the video of the fox and the owl.
> - Write down the key elements you notice that make this coaching conversation different from any other conversation you might have with a colleague/friend/family member.
> - Read the GRROW model and identify which elements were used in your conversation and which ones were left out.

Effective coaching will require you to structure and shape your coaching conversations. There are many models of coaching such as GRROW, GROW, TGROW and OSKAR. For this module you will examine one model in detail, **the GRROW model[1]**.

However, before you can start coaching there are some **coaching principles** you need to keep in mind. These principles are valid whenever you take up the role of coach, no matter what coaching model is used.

- In coaching, both parties (coachee and coach) are equal.
- The coaching relationship is based on truth, openness and trust.
- As a coach you have a positive growth mindset and believe the coachee is capable.
- As a coach you will not judge.
- As a coach, always address your coachee as a 'whole' person. Don't focus on specific elements of the coachee's behaviour or attitude; see the coachee fully.
- The coachee decides on the topic of the conversation.

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[1] For more information on the other coaching models we refer to the e-book, "Skills and Models, Coaching Skills" (http://www.free-management-ebooks.com/dldebk-pdf/fme-coaching-skills-models.pdf).

Figure 13: GRROW model developed by Whitmore (1996), with the addition of the 'R' by Clement (2017)

In the description of the model, the term coach applies to both SEI (**annex 18**) and SBM and the coachee is a teacher or headteacher.

Like most coaching models, the GRROW model considers that the coach is not an expert in the coachee's situation. He/she is there to facilitate the coachee(s) to choose the best way to overcome their challenge.

The **GRROW model** consists of five elements, present in each coaching conversation[2]. The 5 elements are not covered in a fixed order, where you go from element 1 to element 2 and so on. The model is flexible, and the coach moves freely between the 5 elements in the conversation:

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2   Clement, J. (2017) &Ramakrishnan, S., (2013)

1) **Goal** – explore the objective, desired result: **what do you want to achieve?**

First, 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,... Keep in mind that **it's always about the coachee's behaviour** and not about someone else's behaviour. As a coach, you need to **find out what the coachee really wants**. You need to help the coachee to get his/her goal very clear; because it may happen that a coachee identifies a goal and that there is another goal behind this goal. This process of reaching a concrete goal together requires attention and finding the right words. Sometimes it is good to go back to the reality to understand what the goal is about. A **goal needs to be positively stated** (not *'I don't want to be or do this and that anymore'* but *'I'd like this or that'*).

Some questions to help the coachee find his/her goal are:

- What would you like to accomplish?
- What do you want to change or do differently?
- What would the benefits be if you achieved this goal?
- What outcome would be perfect?
- When will you really be satisfied?
- Describe what the perfect situation looks like.

2) **Reality** – explore the challenge, the current reality and its context: **what is happening now?**

In this phase the coachee is asked to **describe his/her current reality**. This helps 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". It is also important that the coach does this without judging to ensure honesty. As a coach you will spend quite some time exploring the reality, but as you do this, keep in mind to concentrate on possible ways to develop solutions for the future. Stay positive!

Some questions to clarify the current reality may include:

- What progress have you made up to now?
- What bothers you the most?
- How do others experience the challenge?
- What is working well right now?

- How are things going at the moment?

- Where do you think that things are going wrong?

- How does all that fit together, exactly?

- What is missing?

- Can you give a concrete example?

- What is your opinion?

- How did that make you feel?

- What did you do next?

- Is that a fact or your interpretation of reality?

- What was the reaction of others?

- How do you know? (This question stimulates the coachee to refer to facts or data and can be relevant to each of the questions above.)

These questions are usually much more telling than the question "What is wrong?". The answers from the coachee may (in)directly indicate possible options and resources.

3) Resources – explore the available talents, skills and means: **Who or what can help?**

In this phase the coachee is asked to **think about possible resources** already available 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. A coach always encourages his/her coachee to do it on his/her own.

The basic question in this phase is: what resources can you (coachee) use to overcome your challenge?

This question can be asked in many ways:

- What could help you?

- Where could you find this help?

- Who could help you?

- What can be helpful for you?

- Where can you find information?

- What are you good at that could help you in this situation?

- What skill of yours has helped you before in similar situations?

- What competence have you seen other people use in similar situations?

- How do your colleagues react in a similar situation? What lesson can you learn from this situation?

4) **Options** – explore what can help the coachee to overcome his/her challenge and reach his/her goal: **What can/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.

The coach would need to create an environment in which the participants feel safe enough to express their thoughts and ideas without limitation or fear of judgment from the coach.

Questions in this phase can include:

- What steps can you take?
- Can you think of an original approach to this situation?
- What are the options?
- What do you need to stop doing in order to achieve this goal?
- What do you think you need to do to get a better result (or closer to your goal)?
- What else could you do?
- If there were no limits, what could be done?
- What are the options outside of your comfort zone (comfort zone: situation in which you feel at ease and can easily manage)?
- What options would your mentor/role model think of?
- If it wasn't your brain that delivered the solution but your heart, what would the solution be?
- What would you do if you were the headteacher?

5) **Will** – take decision and agree on action plan: **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. In other words, the coachee needs to make her/his own choices, without any pressure. The coaching conversation must end with a SMART plan.

Useful questions to ask here include:

- What will you do now, and when? What else will you do?
- Will this action meet your goal?
- What could stop you from moving forward? How will you overcome this?

- How can you keep yourself motivated?
- How satisfied are you with your chosen way forward?
- What would make you even more committed to reach your goal?
- How will you know if you're successful?

Finally, both the coach and the coachee, should fix a date to review the coachee's progress. This will provide some accountability and allow for a change in approach if the original plan isn't working.

To conclude, the GRROW model helps to remind you about what is really important in your conversation. The order of the different phases/elements is not fixed. For example, in some conversations a coachee can start by raising a challenge which needs to be explored in more detail before an effective goal is set. In the beginning, when you first start using 'coaching', it might feel uncomfortable or difficult. Just keep practicing! The main thing is to focus on the goal of your coachee, show interest and stimulate reflection. So, do not be discouraged or worried if you skip an element/phase during the conversation.

Activity 21

Watch the video of the coaching conversation. Write down which elements of the GRROW model you noticed in the conversation.

Some examples of coaching conversations:

An example of a coaching conversation (in a general life setting):

Coach: What is your goal?

Coachee: I want to gain some weight.

Coach: How does that look like?

Coachee: My skin will look better. My clothes will fit better. I will look healthier.

Coach: This seems important for you. Why is it important for you?

Coachee: I realise I don't eat very healthy. I don't have a lot of energy. That is so annoying.

Coach: It seems like your goal is to become healthier, so you have more energy.

Coachee: Yes, if I eat healthier and maybe exercise a bit more…

In this part you can see how the coach helps the coachee to define the **goal**. The goal first mentioned by the coachee is not the actual goal. The coach helps the coachee to unpack and find the essence. This part already touches on **Reality** (no exercise, not eating healthy) and on **Options** (eat healthier, do more exercise, …). These parts will be further unpacked in the rest of the conversation.

> *An example of a coaching conversation (In education setting):*
>
> Coach: Looking back at what we observed today, what would you like to achieve?
>
> Coachee: I want the children to be more open.
>
> Coach: How does that look like?
>
> Coachee: Well, they could answer my questions. And they should feel not so shy.
>
> Coach: Explain a bit, what do you mean with shy?
>
> Coachee: They say very little. It is as if they don't feel safe in my class!
>
> Coach: This seems important for you. Why is it important for you?
>
> Coachee: I want them to feel comfortable. This will improve their well-being. I know they learn more when they feel well.
>
> Coach: What have you already tried before? How did that go?
>
> Coachee: I tried to find materials that the learners find interesting. They could bring their toys from home. That was nice. We had so much fun. But, today, that lesson we just looked at, no, I am not happy. I can see the learners don't feel well.
>
> Coach: So, when the learners could bring their toys, that had a positive impact on their well-being. But you say you are not happy with what just happened. Shall we have a look again? Maybe we can focus on what you are doing and saying in this lesson?
>
> In this part you can see how the coach helps the coachee, a pre-primary teacher, to define the **goal**. The coach also explores the **Resources** while appreciating and reinforcing what is already going well. The coach is helping the coachee to reflect on the coachee's own behaviour. The coach uses active listening strategies, such summarising, repeating and paraphrasing.

5.1.2. Skills for effective coaching conversation

In the previous section you saw that in order to coach effectively it is important to structure your conversations. But this is not enough. Coaching starts from a strong belief in the ability of the coachee to grow and to deal with problem situations in a new and better way. The coachee has to be trusted as someone who is willing to learn and has more capacity than he/she has ever shown or then he/she even knows he/she has. It is all about having a growth mind-set and showing interest. Moreover, to coach well you need to possess certain skills to conduct these conversations. Here are seven (7) basic skills that can be used with GRROW model have been identified.

The description of each skill come from the book *Coach and inspire* by Clement (2017). These skills include:

1) Explore

2) Appreciate and reinforce

3) Confront and stay connected

4) Challenge

5) Inspire

6) Allow and give space

7) Relax and keep your sense of humour

In this section we will see how to activate those skills. They are presented separately, but keep in mind that they are all connected with each other. For example, the skill to appreciate and reinforce forms the basis for connected confrontation, challenge and inspiration.

As a coach you learn how to effectively use the seven basic skills and you will slowly be able to build up a climate of trust and openness in which the coachee will be more prepared to take greater risks. In the descriptions of the skills for effective coaching, the term coach refers to you as SBM or SEI coaching one person or a group and the term coachee applies on a teacher or headteacher.

When conducting a coaching conversation you can use the template in **annex 14** that will help you through the conversation using the GRROW model and the 7 coaching skills.
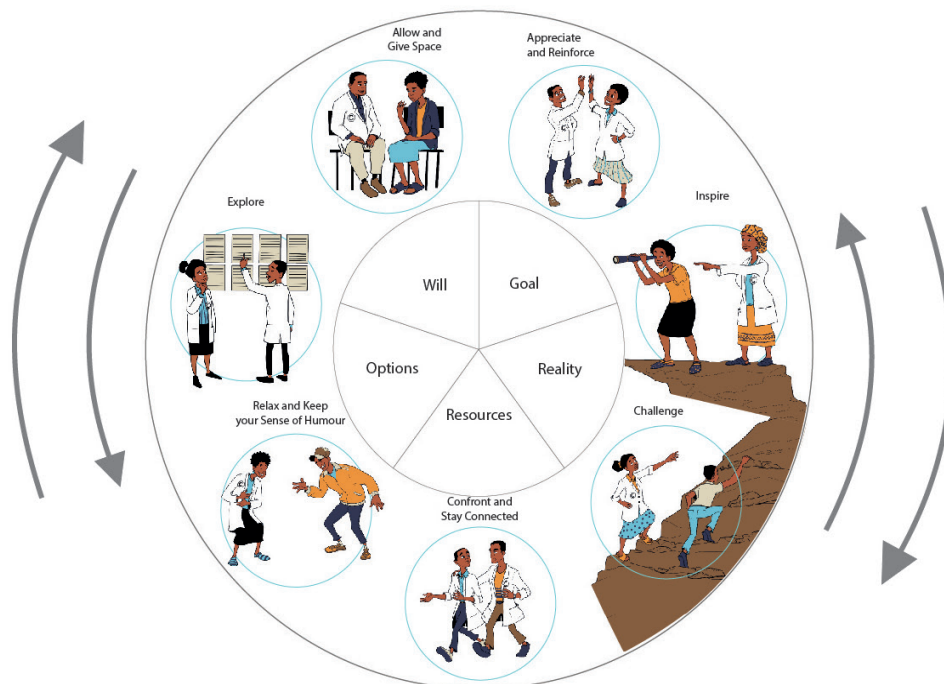
Figure 14: The GRROW model and the seven coaching skills

i. Explore

One of the basic skills of a coach is his/her ability to help others to explore. Firstly, coaching means "investigation": coach and coachee explore the origins and nature of the challenge. They discover together the key questions which need to be answered. They listen actively to the other person's comments and look carefully at the topic under discussion. They explore the circumstances, the possibilities, the expectations and wishes.

Explore

The basic attitude of the coach is: "I am curious" (Clement, 2017, p. 30). Exploring is a skill which can be used at almost any point in a conversation. It is an important step for learning. True learning usually has its roots in careful exploration. This process of exploration is contrary to our natural desire to remove a problem as quickly as possible and therefore providing immediate advice. To explore, a coach can use different techniques or approaches: active listening, asking questions and sharing feelings and inviting the coachee to do so too. These techniques/approaches are described below.

Active listening

> **Activity 22**
> Watch the animation on listening skills, listen carefully and write down what you experienced as being difficult.

Active listening is an essential part of having a helpful conversation. It is fundamental to the whole coaching process. (Team FME, 2013). As a coach you need to listen carefully to what your coachee is saying and feeling. You also need to listen to how he/she is saying things. So, you listen to the tone and rhythm of your coachee's talk. In addition, you are interested in what your coachee is not saying because people don't always say everything that is happening. Therefore, it is important that you listen for small changes in voice, avoiding of questions or a change in subject. So, let your coachee know what you are really hearing and ask if there is something more he/she wants to say (ICA, 2015).

Activity 23

Step 1: (2 min.): Watch the video on coaching conversation.

Step 2 (per 2): Coach – coachee (4 min.)

- Write down the story reported by the coachee

- List the questions asked by the coach. Did you observe some moments of silence? If yes or no, what do you think about it?

Step 3: Feedback (2 min)

- Reflect on the role of the coach in the conversation: What went well? What did you find to be difficult?

- What made you to have the impression that the coach was listening and interested? What was a good question or action? What would you (if you were the coach) have done differently?

How to listen actively:

1) Listen attentively and **remove all distractions**: give your coachee your complete attention. Avoid interruptions, distracting behaviours and keep anything distracting out of view. Phones for example can be a particular distraction. Don't bring your phone to the coaching conversation;

2) **Paraphrase or summarise what the coachee says**: by doing this you test your understanding of what the coachee said in your own words. If you repeat it with a questioning tone, you encourage the coachee to correct you if you missed the point. It is part of the process by which coach and coachee step by step find each other's understanding during the phase of exploration. By using this technique, you also show the coachee you have been listening actively and attentively;

3) **Check perceptions (points of view) or acknowledge feelings (listen to your coachee's signs and sounds)**: perception checking is about feelings. It is about what your coachee expresses through the tone of his/her voice. As a coach you can miss many of the emotional elements of a conversation if you are not listening to what is not being said. Non-verbal communication is a big part of communication. Feelings will help you to use all information more effectively and will guide you as coach to shape and share useful feedback. Here again, give your coachee the opportunity to confirm or disagree with your reflections of his/her feelings (ICA, 2015; Team FME, 2013);

4) **Acknowledge what the person is saying with verbal and non-verbal responses**. Respond with "yes" "yes," "really?", "mmh", "OK" or "I see" and give appropriate eye contact (REB-VVOB, 2016). This demonstrates to your coachee that you are following what he/she is saying. You need to listen carefully to know when to use those signal words.

In addition to those abilities, you should also show empathy and not judge. When you value your coachee and accept his/her feelings you will be able to show empathy more. In the end, your judgements and opinions are about yourself and your own life journey (ICA, 2015). Active listening requires you to put your own concerns, attitudes and ideas to one side and focus on those of your coachee. This demonstrates the coachee that you are giving him/her full attention (Team FME, 2013). Therefore, it is essential as a coach that you allow your coachee to present the whole picture so that he/she shows the his/her full ideas on how to solve the issue facing him/her. In other words, as a coach you need to make sure you don't react quickly with suggestions and solutions. As an SBM for example you need to guide your colleague-teachers into reflective thoughts about their own teaching practices. And by allowing several seconds of silence before asking a question or giving feedback you will ensure that your coachee has said all they want to. Moments of silence are moments of thinking.

Moreover, active listening will enable you to give helpful feedback during the coaching process (see appreciate and reinforce & confront and stay connected).

Asking questions

Asking questions is a key instrument in the process of exploring. It allows you as coach to explore problems and objectives. It helps your coachee to reflect on his/her challenge and possible means by which it can be solved. It also guides you, as a coach, in providing feedback to the coachee. So, what are good questions? Commonly there are two types of questions you can use that are different in character and usage: closed and open questions.

Closed questions

There are two definitions that are used to describe closed questions. (1) A common definition: A question that can be answered with either a single word or a short phrase. So, 'How old are you?' and 'Where do you live?' are closed questions. (2) A more limiting definition: A question that can be answered with either 'yes' or 'no'. By this definition 'Are you happy?' and 'Is Kigali the capital city of Rwanda?' are closed questions, whilst 'What time is it?' and 'How old are you?' are not. In order to have a common understanding, we use the definition of REB, a combination of both definitions: **closed questions have short, fixed answers.**

Closed questions have the following characteristics:

- They give you facts;
- They are easy to answer;
- They are quick to answer.

To sum up, **they stimulate focus and clarity**. Some examples of good closed questions in a coaching conversation:

- Do you agree with that?
- What gets your preference, this one or that one?
- Can you imagine yourself doing this?

Open questions

Effective questions are often open. They invite the coachee to give an answer with explanation. REB defines an open question as follows: an open question has more than one answer and can produce a lot of information.

Open questions have the following characteristics:

- They ask the respondent to think and reflect;
- The responses give you opinions and feelings of the coachee;
- They hand control of the conversation to the coachee.

Open questions begin usually with: what, why, when, where, who, how? But, keep in mind that why-questions often have undesired effects. The word "why" seems (consciously or unconsciously) to make people defend themselves. This is usually related to the manner and tone in which "why" questions are asked. Another good way is a question that invites the coachee to describe, rather than forcing him/her to analyse or defend himself/herself. Looking at the characteristics of open questions, good open questions are:

- Questions which stimulate more precise observations and description:

    - How did you react to these comments?
    - How did you decide to act?
    - What was the result of your action?
    - How do you know?

- Questions which naturally follow from what the coachee has experienced:

    - What exactly is it that makes you so happy?
    - What did you conclude from all this?
    - How did you do it last time?

- Questions that are focused:

    - "How did that meeting go today?" instead of "How did the things go today?"

- Questions on facts and feelings:

    - What happened exactly?

    - What did they do?

    - How did that affect you?

    - What exactly caused your resistance?

    - How do you know?

- Questions for more detailed clarification:

    - I don't understand you fully, tell me more about it?

    - That surprises me. What makes you think like that?

- Questions that continue from provided answers:

    - If a coachee says, "But that's not really the point", you can ask "So, what is the real point"?

    - If a coachee says, "I am certain", you can ask "Tell me what makes you so certain?"

- Questions that need concrete examples:

    - If a coachee says, "Nothing much happened" on your question "How was the meeting?", you can ask, "What do you mean? What was decided? …"

    - If a coachee says, "There is still no clear agreement" you can ask, "What kind of agreement did you expect?" (Clement, 2017, pp.40-48).

Sharing feelings and inviting the coachee to do so as well

Openness about feelings strengthens mutual commitment to the coaching conversation and builds trust between the coach and the coachee. Feelings are an important part of life and colour our professional and personal experiences. When a coachee faces a challenge and is looking for solutions, reflecting about the feelings attached to this challenge cannot be left out.

Ask the coachee in a direct way about his/her feelings in response to a particular situation he/she experienced, or even about the feelings of others. Some examples: "How did you feel when your headteacher said that?", "Can you describe how you will feel when you reach your goal?" and "That really got to you, didn't it?"

Challenges when you explore

As a coach, you are also just a human being. That means that sometimes you may not give full attention and things distract you from being an active listener when your coachee talks. Our attention tends to fail us in three most common circumstances:

1. in your mind you are thinking about something else that is important to you, not connected to what the coachee is explaining,

2. in your mind you are already thinking about a solution for the coachee's problem or

3. in your mind you are judging the coachee's way of thinking and believe he/she is looking at things the wrong way.

In such a situation you need to realise that you are losing your attention and you need to refocus on the coachee. To refocus back on the coachee and his/her story, you can use a *multiple message*. A multiple message is a message that wants to say two things at the same time that are different yet connected. In this case you would name your obstacle that caused you to lose your attention AND show your interest in the coachee. For example: *Coachee is explaining his challenge in teaching English and is struggling to find solutions. In the meantime, the coach is thinking of possible solutions to the coachee's challenge, but she can't just start listing possible solutions because she wants the coachee to come these solutions himself. To stop herself from thinking of different solutions the coach says: "I already have some ideas about how you might deal with that, but I am firstly interested to hear what you would do. Tell me your ideas and I will later tell you mine." The coach is able to focus on the coachee again, instead of thinking of solutions after saying this.*

Opinions can and will be different between you and your coachee. That is totally normal. The multiple approach helps to create a space in which true dialogue can grow with a respectful change of views.

ii. Appreciate and reinforce – supportive feedback

If you want to get the best out of your fellow teachers or headteachers, you need to **reinforce everything that is going well and appreciate every improvement**. You need to **create a helpful learning climate** in order to increase their willingness to learn and change. Appreciation, confirmation and support are the basis of trust into a working and learning relationship. They are the foundation of coaching. In other words, if (head)teachers feel supported, if they receive confirmation, if they are appreciated for their efforts, a climate is created in which they are prepared to give the very best of themselves. This kind of environment **prepare people to take risks and makes them feel ready to receive corrective feedback**. So, if people can build on a basis of appreciation and reinforcement then critical, demanding and direct feedback become all the stronger.

Appreciate and Reinforce

To conclude, the skill to appreciate and reinforce has a lot of advantages in supporting adults learning or professional development:

- Stimulate the learning process;
- Work on a relation of trust;
- Encourage self-confidence;
- Strengthen engagement;
- Stimulate to move out of the comfort-zone;
- Create openness for feedback.

If you wish to promote a helpful learning environment, you should **be giving and genuine** (you mean what say) with your appreciation and reinforcement. Moreover, to be effective your appreciation or reinforcement should **be concrete**, **small** (do not use big words as 'always' and 'the best') and **given immediately** (direct related to a specific event). You might not find this evident in the beginning. So, you will need to give some extra attention to it and practice. Don't forget that an appreciation is given about someone's behaviour which is changeable. It is not about the person.

Activity 24

Think of two colleagues at your school who you really appreciate. Write down the appreciation that you will give them.

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iii.   Confront and stay connected – confrontational feedback

As a coach you may notice certain things during a coaching conversation which may give you cause for concern. You can keep silent if you are sure that the coachee is so unhappy with the situation in question that it would disturb the entire coaching process. In all other circumstances it is better to immediately tell the coachee what you are thinking, even though this might come as something of a shock. If you fail to do this, the result might be that you are no longer able to give open attention to the coaching conversation. Moreover 'difficult' messages that are not communicated often become a source of mistrust. So, corrective feedback and criticism give the coachee the **opportunity to learn from external observations, emotional reactions and interpretations associated with his/her behaviour**.

Confront and Stay Connected

People are open for this kind of feedback when they experience enough appreciation and support; if people feel appreciated and valued, they get even curious about the comments and criticism of others. Furthermore, giving feedback is not about "being right" or "being wrong". To conclude, expressing disagreements in a helpful way is important in order to continue the conversation and to ensure a trusting relationship.

Activity 25

Think about a situation in the past where you actually wanted to give some feedback (and confront) but for some reason you didn't. Write down the feedback you would have given.

Notice:

-    It can help to start with saying why you were afraid to give that person feedback.
-    Do not use the words: 'always' and 'never'. Be specific!

It's not easy to accept or give criticism. It is often seen as an attack on the person. Therefore, it is **important to focus on the behaviour and not the person**. As every criticism is a hidden wish, expressing things as wishes and desires often makes it easier to find options and solutions. Keep also in mind that critical feedback is a gift, even though in first instance it is not always experienced as such. In the future, the coachee is often grateful that the coach was prepared to keep a mirror to his/her face. You give feedback because you believe the other person deserves it. Refusing to give feedback means you are taking away an opportunity to learn from the coachee. So be courageous and practice giving feedback (Clement, 2017). For example: *The coachee explains how she punished a student by yelling at him and sending him to the headteacher's office. The coachee isn't upset about the punishment she chose but she is upset about the headteacher's response to her afterwards. The coach frowns and confronts the coachee on her behaviour but stays connected: "I don't think it's necessary or even okay to yell at a student. As an experienced teacher I'm sure that you have other techniques that are more appropriate to deal with these kind of situations."*

Why do we keep our critical comments to ourselves?

We are concerned about the person, his/her reaction (e.g., afraid that he/she might criticise us in return), afraid to lose trust and hope to maintain our relationship. Formulating a **multiple message** can help: a message about the relationship AND a confrontational message related to concrete facts (current behaviour). For example: "I don't want to hurt your feelings or lose your trust, but I don't think that this approach will work." We call this type of feedback as 'connected confrontation': we confront the coachee with our criticism and we stay connected to his/her feelings and concerns. This approach is both supportive and corrective.

The key in **giving confrontational feedback** can be summarised as follow:

- Do it immediately and stay connected (show interest in the reaction and the feelings of the coachee).

- Be concrete: focus on the process, the product or the actions but never on the person.

- Express your own feelings and doubts about expressing critical feedback.

- Do not formulate feedback as a question if it is meant as a message. For example, "Don't you think it might be better to look for a different way of doing this?" instead "My fear is that things will go wrong if you continue like this". Feedback is feedback, not a fake question.

- Do not go into discussion. Many people have the habit to defend themselves immediately when they receive critical feedback. Listen attentively to any disagreement from your coachee. Keep in mind that most people don't want as much to be right, as they want to be heard.

- Take care of the relationship.

iv.   Challenge

Many people would like to realise more than what they are currently achieving. They are not using a part of their capacities. Therefore, it is essential to challenge them. By challenging your coachee you can **stimulate him/her to cross barriers**. By crossing these barriers, the coachee develops new strengths.

Challenge

The ability to challenge or stimulate people to cross new barriers, to break through the limits which they have set for themselves, to encourage self-confidence, is one of the most powerful tools available for the coach. How can you realise this?

How can you challenge?

You can challenge someone by:

- **Encouraging self-confidence** by supporting coachees to separate the personal level from the behavioural level. People frequently interpret their difficulties as something personal: "I am not doing well" becomes "I am not good enough". As coach, you need to make it clear to the coachee that he/she as a person and his/her behaviour are not the same thing.

- The coachee is a good and capable person, but some decisions he/she made or how he/she acted can be changed. That is what you are reflecting on, not the person. When you shift an issue from the personal level to the behavioural level, it becomes a practical issue and is just a matter of finding the right approach. To challenge, possible comments of the coach are: *"I would also be frustrated if that happened to me, but how can we advance? Maybe it is your fault and maybe it isn't, but that is not the point: wouldn't it be better to try out and find the most effective way out of the situation."*

- **Finding signs of hidden resources** in your coachee. Often your coachee doesn't see some of his/her own strengths and talents. As a coach you can see these hidden resources easier. Every time you see a hidden resource, present it to your coachee, name it clearly. For example: *"I hear you have a talent to bring people together…"* or *"From your stories I see you can handle stress well…"* followed by *"How could you use the same talents in this situation?"*

- **Increasing areas of responsibility**, discussing the areas where the coachee would like to take more responsibility or have a greater influence. Help your coachee to activate and increase his/her ability to respond in given situations. For example: *"What would you like to discuss with your headteacher?"* or *"What are you no longer going to allow?", "What is your role in implementing this part of the School Improvement Plan?"*

Keep in mind that if you want to challenge people, you will also need to give them appreciation and support them. Coaching achieves its maximum effect if the coach appreciates and reinforces, and at the same time dares to be confrontational and challenging (Clement, 2017; 94).

v.   Inspire

Coaching is inspirational. It is not just about finding quick solutions to specific problems. It is a starting point for new development and outlooks.

Inspire

Problems often do not go away because people involved continue to look at the problem in the same way, again and again. **Changing the way people look at things** can be a starting point for a completely different approach and sometimes offer a much simpler way of solving the problem situation. How can you help people to open their eyes, to find new and creative ways of handling challenges, to explore different approaches… to conclude, **how can you inspire?**

- **Use the coachee's own interests**: it is about asking inspiring questions, questions about what really drives and motivates the coachee. You can even

ask for visual descriptions to make ideas more real. Possible questions include:

- What really interests you?
- What would energise you?
- How would you change things if you were in charge?
- If there were no limits, what would you do?
- When would you really be satisfied; not just a little but fully?
- If it wasn't your mind but your heart deciding; what direction would you take?

- **Explore inspiring experiences**: it is about focusing on what went well, the coachee's successes, and his/her feelings related to those successes. It is in these experiences, events or achievements that you will often find hidden resources of the coachee. Possible questions after the coachee has shared a successful experience include:

  - What did you feel? How did you experience it?
  - How was this experience different from others?
  - What skills and talents did you use then? Could you use these same skills and talents now?
  - How can you transfer this successful method to your current situation?

- **Change the point of view**: it is about inviting the coachee to look at his/her challenge/problem situation/resources/solutions/action from another perspective. Possible questions include:

  - How do you think the others will look at this?
  - How would other colleagues deal with this?
  - If we ask, 'how can we solve this' instead of asking 'who is right', how might that change things?
  - This may seem like a disadvantage now, but what are the hidden advantages in it?
  - From which perspective is this problem not a problem at all?
  - What will all of this mean a few years from now?
  - How does this look like from the perspective of the objectives from the School Improvement Plan?
  - Which choices require more courage, but could be more successful?
  - What choices would you make if you were forced to decide on the basis of what is important rather than what is easy?

- What wishes might be hidden in the criticism of your headteacher?

- **Encouraging innovation and creativity**: it is about inviting the coachee to try out new solutions, to do something "out of the ordinary". It is also about giving support to the coachee to overcome his/her fear or other feelings in dealing with new approaches. Possible questions include:

  - What would be a completely different approach in this situation?
  - What kind of things would your colleagues never expect you to say at the start of a meeting?
  - What image do you associate in your mind with this idea?
  - Describe your objective to me and tell me about the things you associate with that objective.
  - Let's try and find at least five different approaches to deal with this problem.
  - What is the craziest idea you can think of? What are the valuable elements in this crazy idea?

As a coach it is okay to **give inspiring advice when it is appropriate**. However, since coaching aims to strengthen the coachee's ability to respond by finding his/her own solutions, there are some rules when you want to provide advice. First, ask your coachee if he/she is interested to hear your advice. Only provide it if they welcome it. Additionally, once you have provided your advice, reflect together with your coachee on the usefulness of that advice. Make sure that the coachee makes the advice his/her own. For example, by asking the coachee: "Do you find this advice useful? Which elements in this idea can you use in your own situation? Does it inspire you to any new ideas of your own?"

Please note: to challenge and to inspire are skills that are often mixed up. The easy way to keep it apart:

- A person constructs his/her own barriers of what he/she is able to do … as a coach you CHALLENGE the coachee to break through these self-made barriers and be more confident;

- A person often sees his/her reality through his own fixed perspective … as a coach you INSPIRE the coachee to see his/her reality from a different point of view and be more creative.

vi.   Allow and give space

Enthusiasm, creativity, self-confidence and a whole range of other fine qualities are not always immediately available or accessible. Sometimes other feelings are blocking the path: disappointment, fear, anger, resistance, indifference …

How should a coach respond to these "hindering" feelings? (Clement, 2017, p. 109). Feelings are a normal part of life. In fact, there are no positive and negative feelings. The only difference is

Allow and Give Space

how (un)comfortable we feel when dealing with these feelings.

It is important to keep this in mind and to think beyond the 'category' these feelings belong to. The relationship of feelings is more interesting: disappointment means that someone has positive expectations and struggling to take a decision means that someone cares a lot about the outcome.

So, although there are many feelings that make us feel uncomfortable, we know from experience that it doesn't work to reject particular feelings. Feelings do not disappear, simply because they are rejected. Therefore, it is important to allow them, to know their existence. **You don't need to accept or reject the feelings, just allow them**. By giving those feelings the necessary space, they will make room for new experiences. Once exposed, these uncomfortable feelings relax. So, as a coach it is important that you **take enough time to explore the feelings that block the coachee**. To take time to listen carefully to the coachee's answer and explore further if necessary. **Keep repeating this process until you see that the uncomfortable feeling is step by step being reduced in a natural manner.**

Possible questions include:

- You seem reluctant to try out new approaches. Are you afraid? What makes you afraid to try them out?

- You seem disappointed. Is that right? What is the reason for your disappointment?

- You sound unhappy. Am I hearing that correctly? What exactly makes you unhappy?

- How can you describe your feelings so that they are helpful both for you and for the people around you?

The ability to explore and allow "difficult" feelings is a valuable coaching skill, but not easy to apply. If people become more skilled at expressing their concerns and doubts, they will also become more confident in their approach towards new ideas and more skilled in joining the differences between old approaches and new approaches. So, the challenge is to give a proper place to these feelings, so that they have room to express themselves freely and become important steps in the learning process (Clement, 2017; pp. 126-127).

Relax and Keep Your Sense of Humour

vii.   Relax and keep your sense of humour

As a coach you need to create a relaxing learning

environment. You don't do this by asking the coachee to relax but by being relaxed yourself. If you relax as a coach, the coachee relaxes as well.

But how? It is about:

- Show a lot of encouragement and reinforcement:

    - Believe in the capacity of your coachee, focus on his/her strengths and find ways to build further on these foundations (growth mindset).

    - Non-verbal: looking at someone in an appreciative and supportive manner helps that person to relax.

- **Breathing in a deep and relaxed manner**. Even without saying a word, your relaxed breathing says to the coachee: "There is a problem, but we will find our way out of it. Let's look at how we can move forward". Breathing in a relaxed way has some physical benefits. The supply of oxygen to your brain is increased, it helps to slow down your heart rate, relaxes your muscles, makes you more aware of yourself and your surroundings and your thoughts seem clearer.

- **Humour breaks tensions** and puts a different perspective on a situation.

- Allowing moments of silence

To sum up, the creation of a relaxed atmosphere for the coaching conversation is a silent skill, a skill without words. You create a mental image of the other person as someone who is capable of success. And you bring lightness into the situation by breathing freely and deeply. The atmosphere you create this way, makes learning easier for the coachee.

Activity 26

Conduct a coaching conversation following the GRROW model

Step 1: individually (5 min.)

Think about a concrete challenge that you are facing now in your work and write it down.

Step 2: coach and coachee (the rest of members to act as observers) (10 min.)

-       Coachee: tell your story (challenge);

-       Coach: practice your coaching using the five elements of GRROW and the coaching skills;

-       It might be good to select one of the elements on which the coach will focus. This will help the coach to practice this specific element.

-       Observers: the whole group observes the conversation and takes notes to give feedback to the coach. Write down any good questions you heard and the elements of the GRROW model you recognised. Do not make eye-contact nor interrupt the conversation.

Step 3: Feedback on the coaching conversation (10 min.)

- Questions asked by the observer to the coachee: Did you feel understood? What felt as a good action? Was there a specific question that helped you the most?

- Questions asked by the observer to the coach: What went well? What was difficult? Were you able to   stay focused?

- The group's feedback to the coach should be based on the following questions: Did the coach explore the situation well? Did the coach use the 5 elements of the GRROW model? Or, if the conversation focused on one of the elements, was this element explored well? What were good questions? Which skills were used?

- Switch roles and repeat the activity starting from step 2 (2 times). Possibly, focus on other elements of the GRROW model.

Section 5.2: Mentoring in Education

This section will deal with types of mentoring, qualities of mentor teachers, the process of mentoring, common challenges with mentoring programmes and their solutions and the importance of mentoring in education among others.

5.2.1. Types of mentoring

Activity 27

Using the mind map below, write inside six characteristics you think an ideal/perfect mentor should have.
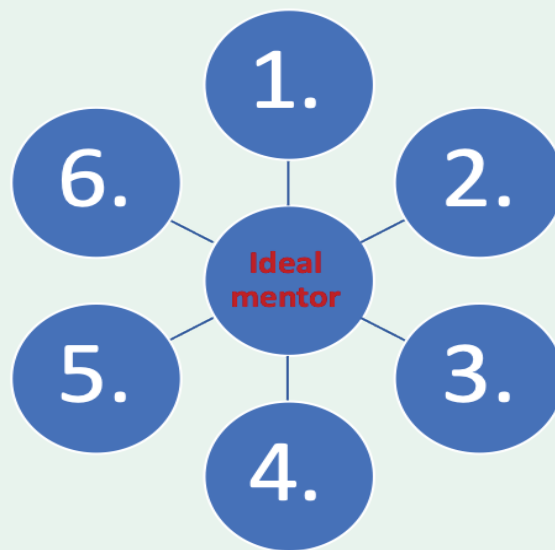
Mentoring is often divided into two types (Buell, 2004):

o **Informal** mentoring relationships develop on their own, such as when a person approaches a possible mentor and that person agrees to form a mentoring relationship.

o **Formal** mentoring relationships refer to agreed relationships, in which the organisation supervises and guides the mentoring programme in order to promote employee growth.

5.2.2. Qualities and responsibilities of mentor teachers

The **Professional Standards for School Based Mentors** were developed by REB. Their aim is to provide School Based Mentors (SBMs) - and those who support their work – with a shared vision of the attitudes, skills, knowledge and practices of effective mentors. The development of the standards has been informed by the lessons learned from Rwanda's prior experiences with mentoring programmes.

The Professional Standards represent **a perfect goal** that all SBMs should try to reach. The associated values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and practices as **observable behaviours and actions**.

The Professional Standards are organised according to the primary **responsibilities** of the SBM:

1) Assist teachers in improving their language skills in English;

2) Organise professional development activities as needed;

3) Support teachers in improving their pedagogy for competence-based teaching and learning;

4) Stimulate reflection and facilitate feedback on the quality of teaching and learning at school.

Each of the standards requires competences that the SBM needs to develop to be effective. These competences are described below and further divided into knowledge and skills. The attitudes of the SBM are also important to ensure that he/she can accomplish his/her work well. Attitudes are shown at the end of the four standards.
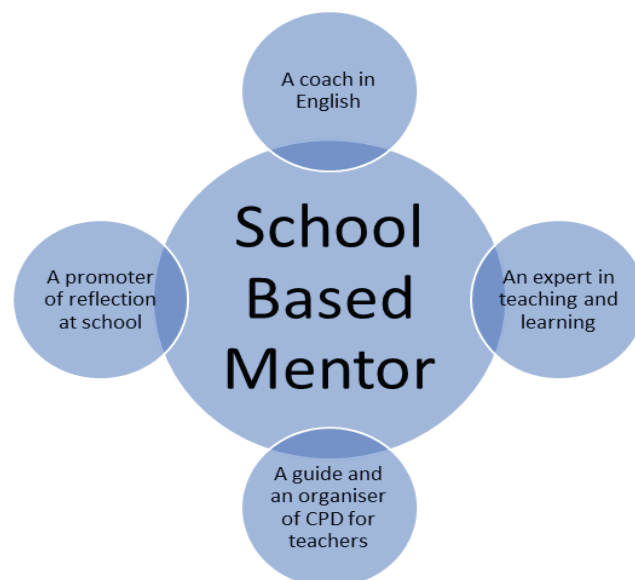
Figure 15: The primary responsibilities of the SBM

SBMs have a half-time timetable (15 hours), allowing half-time for mentoring responsibilities.

In addition, the Headteacher arranges for two-hours on the timetable for SBMs to use in providing school-level CPD. A minimum of 3 periods/120 minutes per week should be made available for all teachers to participate in CPD for both English language and teaching methodology.

School Based Mentor as a **COACH IN ENGLISH**

Standard description:

The school-based mentor acts as a coach in English to assist all teachers to improve the quality of their English-language skills for use as a language of instruction. School Based Mentors encourage the use and improvement of English in the whole school. Moreover, they facilitate teachers' use of English self-study materials to assist peers to improve their English proficiency. Finally, they make sure that English resources are freely available for teachers.

Competences:

Knowledge:

In order to be a coach in English, the SBM should **know/understand** the following:

- core principles and barriers of learning in a second language;
- effective teaching strategies and specific methods for the English subject, including communicative English;
- English as language of instruction (listening, speaking, reading and writing, vocabulary, grammar, etc.);
- different kinds of assessment tools to identify the level of English of their peers; YEAR 3
- an overview of self-study materials (e.g., the developed REB-materials); YEAR 1
- an overview of English literature (textbook, novels, etc.);
- theories and principles of mentoring, coaching and reflection.

Skills:

In order to be a coach in English, the SBM should **do** the following:

* Encourage teachers to improve their English:
- listen to the teaching and learning concerns of teachers and also of Newly Qualified Teachers (NTs);
- create a safe learning environment;
- encourage and motivate school staff to 'learn by doing' and to speak English regularly in school;
- encourage school staff not to fear making mistakes when using English, but to learn from them;
- use assessment tools to identify the level of English of their peers;
- organise training on English language skills in collaboration with School Subject Leaders (SSLs) based on the specific needs of her/his peers;

- facilitate activities to help teachers progress to more advanced levels of English and share the developed self-study materials;

* Encourage teachers to improve English of their learners at school:
- organise activities such as discussions, conversations, debates, drama, competitions in English;
- stimulate a reading culture of English literature;
- explain the importance of using English to the school community;
- serve as an English language and pedagogical resource for teachers;
- provide answers to questions teachers have and offer to proofread teaching-related documents (textbooks, class dictionaries etc.);
- give feedback and stimulate reflection or encourage reflection at school;
- demonstrate effective teaching strategies for English as a medium of instruction and help other teachers to use them in their lessons;
- encourage members of the school community to practice English and to support learners' language development at home and at school.

School Based Mentor as an EXPERT IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

Standard description:

The SBM is a role model in current teaching and learning practices, therefore school based mentors need to be experts in teaching and learning. They are informed and inspired by innovations in education. They are continuously looking to improve their teaching. They show personal leadership in professional development, which makes them role models for other teachers in CPD. They support teachers in improving their pedagogy through coordinating CPD activities for all teachers.

Competences:

Knowledge:

In order to be an expert in teaching and learning, the SBM has **to know/understand** the following:
- current 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 set up a safe and rich learning environment;

- classroom management strategies;
- learner centred pedagogy and a competence-based approach;
- techniques for assessing learners, including giving feedback;
- evidence-based literacy and numeracy in instructional practices.

Skills:

To be an expert in teaching and learning, the SBM should do the following:

* Skills for expert teacher:

- reflect on teaching and learning and adapt teaching practice accordingly;
- develop schemes of work for every school year and each term;
- develop an appropriate/comprehensive lesson plan:
  - o develop learning objectives which are targeted, specific and measurable;
  - o make appropriate teaching and learning resources or can select existing teaching and learning aids which fits with the learning objectives;
  - o apply teaching methods to a variety of topics/subjects;
  - o align learning activities and assessment with learning objectives in the competence-based curriculum;
  - o plan activities in lessons that ensure all learners meet learning objectives;
  - o use assessment to modify plans;
- assess learners to ensure that they meet set learning objectives;
- apply classroom management strategies (such as seating arrangement, management of indiscipline cases);
- work closely with parents;
- provide positive feedback to learners;
- apply evidence-based literacy and numeracy instructional practices;
- using ICT in teaching practice;

* Skills to support teachers in their continuous professional development as a teacher:

- reflect on the teaching and learning process; use self-reflection and encourage others to do the same;
- lead/facilitate discussion;
- participate in peer learning sessions;
- justify teaching methods (can give reasons for their use);
- the ability to peer-teaching (co-teaching);
- coach teachers and also NTs.

School Based Mentor as a GUIDE AND AN ORGANISER OF CPD FOR TEACHERS

Standard description:

The School Based Mentor acts as a guide and an organiser of CPD for teachers. School Based Mentors (SBMs) promote a helpful environment at school to continually improve teaching and learning. Therefore, they build good formal and informal interactions with teachers, the school administration and external stakeholders. SBMs also promote the development of teachers in order to improve students' learning and to improve the school as a learning organisation. Moreover, they organise CPD-activities in school and set up learning communities to encourage best practice such as peer lesson observations; demonstration lessons; sharing ideas; discussions on effective teaching, best practices and challenges, etc. In addition, they 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 (such as SSLs and Heads of Departments).

Competences:

Knowledge:

To be a guide and an organiser of CPD for teachers, the SBM should **know/understand** the following:

- professional teacher development as a continuous process;
- leadership and management structures within school;
- the roles that different Education stakeholders play in the SBMP;
- the meaning and importance of the induction programme for NTs;
- the process of effective communities of practice;
- principles and theories of mentoring, coaching and reflection.
- the needs of new teachers
- the link between the School Improvement Plan and the school CPD plan.

Skills

To be a guide and an organiser of CPD for teachers, the SBM should **do** the following:

USE effective communication:

- communicate in a clear, inclusive and peaceful manner, using either the mother language or language of instruction;
- communicate appropriately according to the person to whom you are talking to;
- communicate respectfully and appropriately according to the position of the different stakeholders in his/her work;
- maximise positive communication to develop trust and to encourage colleagues to try out things that they are not used to doing;
- use a variety of techniques (listening carefully and with empathy, summarising, responding) to increase positive, open-minded, respectful and peaceful communication at school;
- use gender sensitive language

STIMULATE learning:
- stimulate a 'growth mindset' (i.e., motivated for self-appraisal and determine personal development);motivate formal and informal participation in learning especially on topics related to the objectives of the SIP
- facilitate the process of peer learning and sharing:
    - o stimulate positive interaction among participants;
    - o share information on teaching and learning.
    - o stimulate collaborative inquiry (group reflection);
    - o support setting goals and plans;
    - o focus on implementing the plans and meeting goals;
    - o stimulate personal leadership;
- encourage teachers to improve their Kinyarwanda;
- encourage teachers to improve Kinyarwanda of their learners at school.

CREATE positive relationships between people:
- build unity and a common purpose on teaching and learning among teachers;
- introduce NTs to colleagues and learners;
- facilitate connection between NTs and fellow teachers.

COACH:
- respond to the different emotional and professional needs and experiences of colleagues (NT, junior, senior and master teachers) and adapt personal and professional actions appropriately;
- ask open-ended and probing questions that help teachers understand their strengths and areas in need of improvement;
- stimulate self-reflection and the use of relevant data;
- offer helpful feedback;
- encourage peers to provide honest, balanced, helpful, exact and positive feedback on each other's teaching (coaching in group);
- stimulate mentees to take action for their own growth;
- manage conflicts that arise between CoPs members;
- deal with resistance to change.

PLAN, MONITOR and EVALUATE CPD-activities:
- develop a meaningful CPD plan in line with the SIP;
- demonstrate effective time management;
- identify the needs of teaching staff;
- identify the specific needs of NTs;
- identify short and medium-term goals for teaching staff and also NTs;
- develop a schedule for CPD plan implementation, evaluation and improvement;
- report on CPD-activities to school administration;
- report on the progress of NTs.

School Based Mentor as a PROMOTER OF REFLECTION AT SCHOOL

Standard description:

The school based mentor as a promoter of reflection at school stimulates reflection and facilitates giving of feedback on the quality of teaching and learning at school. Therefore, school based mentors need to demonstrate and promote reflection in school. They also 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 stimulate the capacity for continuous professional development of all teachers in the school.

Competences:

Knowledge:

To be a promoter of reflection at school, the SBM should **know/understand** the following:

- effective and positive communication strategies;
- the theory of growth mindset;
- principles and theories of coaching, mentoring and reflection.

Skills:

To be a promoter of reflection at school, the SBM should **do** the following:

- reflect on his/her practice as a teacher and school-based mentor, and identify strengths and weaknesses;
- encourage teachers and also NTs to reflect on their own teaching practices to find their own strengths and interests;
- support teachers and also NTs to improve their teaching practices focusing on building on strengths and overcoming weaknesses;
- encourage a school culture of continuous professional development;
- encourage teachers and colleagues to observe their peers and provide helpful feedback on their teaching practices;
- encourage teachers to use and to be open to helpful feedback to adjust their teaching practices;
- identify strategies for addressing teachers' and NTs' areas of improvement and strategies for building on their strengths;
- give advice and inspiration for other possible and innovative pedagogical methods (in the class);
- organise, when necessary, extra training courses based on the specific needs and concerns of teachers in collaboration with School Subject Leaders.

School Based Mentor's **ATTITUDES**

An effective SBMs should:

- believe in the strength of improving school together;
- 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;
- respect teacher's confidentiality;
- respect authority and his/her supervisors;
- show empathy for the well-being of teachers and also NTs;
- be punctual and focused;
- be self-confident and trust-worthy;
- be a role model;
- be supportive and willing to speak English with others regularly;
- be willing to learn and share experiences with colleagues;
- be willing to share information about school regulations;
- be willing to make time and listen to the job worries of NTs;
- respect NTs' needs by providing an effective induction; and
- consider school culture and available resources in school in planning teaching and learning activities.

5.2.3. Mentoring process

> **Activity 28**
>
> Think about one case of mentoring you experienced (either as a mentor or a mentee):
>
> 1. Write down the steps it went through from the beginning to the end; and
> 2. Discuss the challenges you faced and how they were overcome.

Here we will describe the 5 key steps in the mentoring process for mentors. Both the mentor and the mentee can take initiative in any of these steps.

Step 1 — Understand what your mentee is looking for from you

The first part of the mentor's process is to try and understand how you can be of help to your mentee. This means you need to have a clear understanding of the mentee's goals and objectives and then finding the gaps where you as mentor can help.

Step 2 — Help your mentee shape his/her goal(s)

Mentors bring their experience to help the mentee. Mentors are valuable because they have taken the mentee's path before. The mentor can look at their own experience in the past and understand where they could have responded better, smarter or different.

This understanding should help determine the mentee's goal(s); aiming higher or lower or help them understand exactly what they might be looking to do.

Step 3 — Keep your mentee accountable

Should a mentor be responsible for keeping the mentee accountable? The mentor doesn't need to act like a parent, nor be strict about it, but checking in with the mentee and focusing on how they are moving forward is an essential part of being a good mentor. After all, that is what separates a mentor from someone who just provides information.

Step 4 — Provide feedback and suggestions for progress

At every stage of the mentorship, the mentor should provide feedback and suggestions. This is the part of the process that makes the mentee reflect and shift their approach, which is what creates better results than what the mentee could have achieved alone. Stimulate the mentee to collect, analyse and use information (data) when taking next steps or when reflecting on progress.

Step 5 — Conclude the mentoring relationship when it is time

Saying goodbye to a mentee can be difficult, but their life changes as does yours. There comes a time in a mentorship when your experience, and advice are mostly exhausted. When this time comes, just be available to the mentee when he/she needs your advice; and consider if there is another mentor who can help your mentee to more progress.

None of these steps are difficult to understand. It is the implementation of the mentoring process that is sometimes challenging. A mentoring process that matches the needs of the mentee is the key to mentoring success — for mentoring programme coordinators, for mentors and for mentees.

5.2.4. Importance of mentoring in education

Mentoring is an important CPD activity in education as it contributes to the professional growth of the teacher. There are many advantages of mentoring in education and these include, but are not limited to the following:

- Mentoring helps and supports the NT.

- It contributes to a good organisation and administration of the school, because if the NT feels at home quickly, he/she will be more productive.

- It shows the school's priority in welcoming NTs and accepting them into the school community.

- It is a helpful way of showing the value of a good experience and sharing it.

- A way of investing in the future by improving the school for people who come after.

- Effective mentoring inspires others who will continue the role of mentor in the future, to care for the school.

- A mentor increases his/her understanding of the school and the way it works. This is useful in itself and particularly useful if you have a management role or wish to prepare for one.

- It practises useful skills including respect, negotiating and making clear agreements about relationships.

- It helps with the implementation of the SIP.

5.2.5. Comparing coaching and mentoring

Activity 29
Draw a table to show the similarities and difference between mentoring and coaching. Then check your ideas with the content provided in the manual.

Both coaching and mentoring are activities associated with the support of individual learning and development. It is a one-to-one relationship where the coach/mentor aims to support his/her coachee/mentee in his/her personal and professional growth.

Both coaching and mentoring concern all categories of (head)teachers, beginning and senior (head) teachers.

We can also observe that coaching is a more structured way of working through conversations and that mentors have multiple roles. Mentors can be counsellors, problem solvers or help their mentees in finding solutionsto their challenges.. Coaches on the other hand are more seen in the role of helping their coachees in finding solutions by themselves. So, while mentoring you can also coach.

Table 17: Difference between mentoring and coaching

Mentoring	Coaching
• Mentoring is a **time-bound** professional learning relationship that lasts for a shorter time.	• Coaching is also a **time-bound** professional learning relationship **but over a longer period of time**.
• In mentoring an **experienced education practitioner** provides support to a (new) one (mentee) or a group of (new) practitioners (mentees) with the purpose to **acquire best practices** and **grow** in their profession.	• In coaching an education practitioner with **appropriate competences inspires** another one or group of education practitioners **in need to maximise their professional capacities** through initial and follow-up **conversations.**
• In mentoring, the learning goals are set by both the mentee and the mentor.	• In coaching, the learning **goals** are **set by the coachee**. The coach only helps to get them very clear.
• **In mentoring the aim is** to assure that the mentee has all the required competences and know how to perform their best.	• **In coaching the aim is** to support the coachee to find his/her own solutions to challenges rather than teaching him/her. The primary focus is to support the coachee to become a stronger and more capable problem solver.
• Mentoring is an essential element of **new teachers' induction**.	

5.2.6. Mentoring and coaching in the Rwandan context

Mentoring aims at supporting the professional growth of the mentee(s). In Rwanda, mentorship applies to pre- and in-service teacher education. For instance, in Teacher Training Colleges (TTC) and UR-CE, students receive support from their tutors or lecturers, and class teachers during their internship. In schools, the SBM, Deputy Headteacher in charge of Studies (DHTS) or a school subject leader (SSL) are assigned this responsibility towards new teachers (NT). Depending on the area of specialisation, an NT Mentor will be the SBM, the DHTS or the SSL (in-school mentor). It can involve one mentee or a group of mentees. For the other teachers and headteachers there are no specific roles when it comes to mentoring. As a mentor of a new teacher, you can have a discussion on a (educational) topic or a challenge the (new) teacher or headteacher is facing.

In Rwanda, SEIs support headteachers in networks to overcome their challenges in leadership (PLCs). The SBM can do the same by organising a community of practice (CoP) to support teachers in finding their own solutions to different challenges they encounter in their teaching and learning practices. In these CoPs/PLCs, as well as when SEIs conduct support visits to schools or when SBMs conduct lesson observations, coaching can be a very powerful way of helping (head)teachers finding their solutions for the experienced challenges. (head)teachers can equally support each other by conducting individual coaching conversations.

Activity 30: Specify (with a tick: √) whether the activity refers to coaching, mentoring or both:	Coaching	Mentoring
Supporting someone to identify steps in his/her growth		
Supervising a teacher teaching		
Helping a teacher to find different options to identified problems		
In a pre-lesson observation help teachers to identify their learning focus		
Understanding of good teaching, learning and leadership practices		
Guiding a new teacher on how to assess		
Guiding a teacher on how to include ICT in his/her teaching		
Helping individuals to find solutions to problems by themselves		
Supporting teachers to include crosscutting issues in CBC implementation		
Supporting a teacher to develop a lesson plan		
Supporting a teacher to solve a problem he/she has with parents of his/her students		

5.2.7. Barriers to effective coaching and mentoring

Activity 31

Coaching and mentoring are key to support headteachers and teachers in their professional growth, but obstacles may rise. Suggest key obstacles/barriers that may hinder the effective coaching and mentoring.

Barriers to effective coaching and mentoring include the following:

- Difficulty of the coachee/mentee to clearly express his/her challenges
- Fear of the mentee/coachee to openly express his/her challenges
- Resistance to change
- The coachee/mentee does not want to receive or ask any support
- Lack of understanding of the value of coaching/mentoring
- Lack of resources
- Lack of top-down support
- Overdependence of mentor/coach or mentee/coachee
- Conflicting relationship
- Lack of motivation

All in all, depending on the purpose of the discussion, as an SBM/SEI/TTC tutor you will either be coaching or mentoring; helping to overcome challenges, e.g., exchanging on practices while giving advice and guidance. As a coach you can give advice but firstly you act as a facilitator helping the coachee(s) to decide on the best option of their own choice.

5.2.8. Mentoring and coaching online/remotely

Given exceptional circumstances, it may not always be possible to coach and mentor fellow teachers using face to face method. If this is the case, it can be done remotely/online. To ensure efficient and effective coaching and mentoring, a good planning is required for such activities.

Below you can find guidelines on how to conduct an online mentoring/coaching conversation:

1) Coaching and mentoring conversations are part of a school CPD plan and approved by the school leadership. Therefore, the school should support remote/online coaching and mentoring when required and if possible. It is very important to ensure all the facilities/tools needed are available at the required time, such as a computer, smartphone, airtime, internet bundles and a conducive environment for the conversation.

2) The appropriate applications should have been installed or downloaded such as Skype, WhatsApp, Videos, Zoom, Webex, Microsoft Teams, etc.

3) The mentoring or coaching conversation should be planned at a convenient time and place for both the coachee/coach or mentee/mentor (quiet environment with good internet/telephone reception).

Section 5.3: Induction of New Teachers

New teachers' professional learning needs are different from those of experienced staff. Their induction is an important first step in ensuring that new colleagues can grow professionally with an impact upon change and learning within their classrooms at the earliest possible opportunity (Rhodes C. & al, 2004). This section will explore the concept of new teachers' induction, its importance and the different approaches used. You will also explore your responsibilities related to the induction of new teachers and those of other stakeholders.

5.3.1. Who are new teachers?

According to the Teacher Development and Management (TDM) Policy in Rwanda (draft), New Teachers are defined as teachers in the first 3 years of their career: *the key to keeping teachers, especially teachers in the beginning years of their career, is to provide a strong system of professional support that can quickly solve job-related challenges and increase commitment to teaching. All **beginning teachers – defined as teachers in the first 3 years of their career**, will receive systematic professional support from their headteachers, mentors and school inspectors specially trained for this purpose.* (MINEDUC, 2015)

Regarding the planned transfer of secondary teachers to primary education, we consider also Newly Assigned Teachers as New Teachers. To conclude, **New Teachers (NTs) are Newly Qualified Teacher and Newly Assigned Teachers:**

Newly Qualified teachers (NQTs) are Newly Appointed Teachers in the first 3 years of their teaching career.

Newly Assigned Teachers (NATs) are teachers teaching for a maximum of three years in their newly assigned school.

> **Activity 32**
> Think back to your induction and write down what you remember your worries were when you arrived at your new school.

Looking at the Rwandan context, we observe, as shown in Table 14, that Rwandan NTs face some common difficulties. Those problems are probably familiar to you, but regardless of the quality of the pre-service training, NTs did not get the opportunity to learn how to deal with those problems before they started to teach. During their internships or teaching practice, there were always one or more experienced teachers to support them.

Despite that those problems are common among teachers, it is important to do an individual needs assessment for every NT. More in-depth information on how to conduct a needs assessment is provided under unit 2.

Table 18: Top 5 professional development needs of 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.

Source: Training Session TTC Tutors, 2019-2020

People learn from their mistakes. Therefore, it is important to create a work environment whereby NTs feel safe to express their doubts and feelings related to their teaching. Those feelings can vary and develop from very motivated to discouraged and even ideas of quitting the profession. As you support the NTs in their integration and professional development, you need to be aware that learning to teach is a lifelong journey. Areas of improvement, commonly named as weaknesses or failures, allow people to grow. They must be considered as a starting point in someone's growing process and not as poor performance. If NTs have some difficulties, support needs to be provided in order to overcome those challenges. This vision on support can also be used for other teachers.

Activity 33

List in the table below:

- three common difficulties new teachers face;
- possible reasons and consequences for these difficulties;
- possible strategies (in terms of activities) to overcome those difficulties based on the reasons and consequences listed.

Difficulties	Reasons	Consequences	Strategies

Regarding those characteristics, induction becomes an element for developing the conditions that make schools good places for all teachers to work and learn.

5.3.2 . Importance of induction of new teachers

As you experienced, the beginning years of teaching are special in a teacher's career, different from what has happened before and what comes after; everything is new for new teachers: *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 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 have an initiation process into the teaching profession.

Teaching is a complex profession and pre-service teacher education is rarely enough to provide all knowledge and skills necessary to successful teaching. A big part can be acquired only on the job (e.g., assessing student's work including making and scoring of teacher-made test; writing informative reports to parents about their children's progress and communicating more generally with parents) (Britton et al., 2000). This means that it is necessary for schools to provide an environment where NTs can further learn the job and succeed as teachers.

Research (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Wang et al, 2008) has shown that quality induction has not only a

positive impact on keeping NTs in their job, but also on their classroom teaching practices and the learning outcomes of their students.

Apart from the fact that teaching is complex, an effective teacher is the most important factor in producing consistently high levels of student achievement. Therefore, teachers must have the opportunity to learn throughout their careers, and that process begins with those newest to the profession (Harry K.W & al, 2005). Induction programmes should therefore be part of a school-wide strategy on teacher professional development, teacher collaboration and lifelong learning. Furthermore, induction presents an opportunity for experienced teachers to analyse and share their expertise, furthering their own professional development.

Finally, the induction of new teachers is in line with the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2018/19-2022/23 that states that school-based mentoring must be provided to NQTs: "*Newly Qualified teachers, trainers and lecturers will participate in school/institution-based coaching and mentoring schemes for the first two years of their career*" (MINEDUC, 2017).

5.3.3 .Induction approaches

The draft of Rwandan 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, teachers will have to demonstrate that they are reaching the professional teacher standards. Upon successful completion of the probation, a teacher will have full entry to the teaching profession. The probation period is stated in article 14 of the Teacher Statutes, Official Gazette no 48 of 28/11/2016: "*Every newly appointed teacher is subjected to a probation period of twelve (12) months where his/her immediate supervisor evaluates his/her performance in terms of his/her professional capacities, qualities and behaviours.*"

5.3.4. Induction programmes

> **Activity 34**
> In small groups, brainstorm and answer the following questions: What are the main services and activities you have to provide a NT in an effective induction programme?
> In plenary, share the answers of your group work.

There are different types of induction programmes depending on the context and the induction approach. Mentoring is an essential element in many induction programmes but mentoring alone is not enough. It must be part of bigger support.

An **induction programme** is whole of activities provided to new teachers in order to support their learning and development. Based on research, evidence on effective ways for CPD, elements and success factors of induction and aligned with the priorities and strategies of the Government of Rwanda, the following **five main activities** are proposed for the induction programme in Rwandan **schools**.

1) Mentoring activities:

For the purpose of this programme, 2 forms of mentoring are considered at school level:

- <u>One-to-one mentoring</u>: one "in-school NT mentor" (SBM, SLL or DHTS) meets with one NT at a time.

- <u>Group mentoring</u>: one "in-school NT mentor" meets with multiple NTs at a time. This can be done when NTs have a common or similar goal. Group mentoring is especially effective in situations where time and mentoring resources are low.

Examples of mentoring activities:

- Joint lesson planning;
- NT observes mentor's teaching;
- NT observes fellow teachers: observing a teacher teaching the same subject or grade; observing a teacher teaching another subject or grade;
- Mentor observes NT's teaching;
- Analysing students' work and results on assessments;
- Analysing marking and record keeping systems;
- Discussing teaching and learning issues, not focused on a specific lesson;
- Suggesting and discussing teaching and classroom management techniques.

Mentoring activities are chosen based on NT's individual CPD-plan.

2) Community of Practice (CoP): NTs and more experienced teachers, teaching the same

subject (depending on the size of the school) meet to discuss their work. They think of solutions to the challenges they share in teaching and learning and share good practices. Activities/try-outs that can be undertaken as part of a CoP-cycle are:

- Collaborative (joint) lesson preparation;
- Lesson study/observation;
- Analysing students' work and results on assessments;
- Analysing marking and record keeping systems;
- Developing strategies for teaching learners with special educational needs (SEN).

3) Seminars/trainings on topics of concern to NTs

Trainings address the professional development needs of the teachers of the school (example: integrating cross-cutting themes into your lesson, assessing group work, etc). They are a part of the school CPD plan and can be organised at school, sector or district level.

4) Support from pre-service teacher training institutions to NT's induction includes the following activities:

- TTC tutor observing NT's teaching;

- Analysing students' work and results on assessments;

- Reviewing NT CPD-plan (review progress and set targets);

- Monitoring the implementation of the induction programme.

5) Coaching:

The NT receives coaching 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:

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

Table 19: Induction activities

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

Literature shows that (Feiman-Nemser S. et al, 2012) induction of NTs has value when there is an appropriate assignment for the new teachers a collaborative school culture or professional learning community where administrators, teachers and parents share:

- A vision on the school's mission and good teaching practice;

- An understanding that teaching is a complex job and learning to teach well takes time, collaboration, and ongoing professional development;

- An understanding that the school must provide for teachers' serious learning just as it provides for students' serious learning;

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

Those shared understandings are not present in most schools. They must be cultivated and one way to do this is through induction. Havin an induction programme opens conversations about how to develop the practice of new teachers. This gives experienced teachers a good reason to discuss teaching and learning, and at least initially a safe focus that is outside of their own practice (Feiman-Nemser et al., 2007; 2).

Annex 15 and annex 16 can help you to monitor induction activities for teachers and headteachers in your school or sector.

5.3.5 Stakeholders involved in the induction of new teachers

Now that you have more information about induction, who will have advantages from it, approaches and activities, it is time to look in more detail at your responsibilities. You already received an introduction to it in combination with your responsibilities for CPD of (head)teachers. Furthermore, in the previous subsection you received a first explanation of your responsibilities in concrete induction activities. Those different responsibilities have been identified based on professional standards as part of a competence profile. The Standards allow you to understand clearly what is expected of you as an SBM and SEI in the support of adult learning in general and new teachers in particular. In **annex 17** you will find the competence profile of different stakeholders related to the induction of NTs.

Section 5.4: Common Mistakes and Misunderstandings

Over the past cohorts, trainees have often made similar mistakes or have misunderstood the course content in the same way. To help you avoid making the same mistakes, they have been listed and corrected in the following table:

Common mistake / misunderstanding	Correction
Coaching is about providing advice or a solution to someone's challenge.	Coaching is not providing advice but it is guiding the coachee who presented to you his/her challenge using GRROW model and coaching skills until the coachee find him/herself approaches to solve the challenge he/she is facing.
Coaching and mentoring are the same.	Coaching is different from mentoring. Mentoring is done by a mentor who has a lot of experience in teaching and shares that experience with a less experienced teacher by guiding and advising him/her. Coaching is done by a coach who supports both experienced and new teachers, not by advising and guiding but by asking questions that help the coachee to be aware of his/her behaviour and actions, to learn from reflection and direct his/her own learning.
In every coaching conversation, to be a good coach I need to apply all 7 coaching skills.	You do not need to use all 7 coaching skills in one conversation. A conversation needs to be natural and feel comfortable; it is not a role play.
In a coaching conversation we will stay focused on the coachee's challenge so he/she can find a solution for it.	In a coaching conversation you always need to explore and understand the challenge of the coachee first, but as soon as possible you ask the coachee what his/her goal is. Let the coachee formulate a positive goal. That will encourage him/her to find solutions to achieve this positive goal instead of keeping your mind in the negativity of the challenge. Note that the focus or initial goal mentioned by the coachee might change during the exploration phase (see example mentioned in 5.1.1.).

Only struggling new teachers need to be given an induction.	Every new teacher and teachers with several years of teaching experience who have changed schools, need an induction. Even an experienced teacher who is transferred from another school needs to be inducted on the school's procedures, the school environment, meet the colleagues, etc.

Further reading

In the Annexes of Module 1 you will find further readings and tools relevant to the content of this unit. Some annexes are compulsory reading: you must read these annexes. Others are optional: you can decide to read them or not.

Compulsory readings:

- Annex 14: Report template for a coaching conversation
- Annex 15: Monitoring Guide for Induction of New Teachers
- Annex 16: Monitoring Guide for Induction of New Headteachers
- Annex 18: Competence profile of the Sector Education Inspector as a coach of headteachers

Optional readings:

- Annex 17: Competence profiles of stakeholders involved in the induction of NTs

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