



Rwanda Education Board



TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

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This research study is jointly conducted by:
Rwanda Education Board, University of Rwanda –College of Education and VVOB

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Head Teacher competences' study takes place in the framework of the new VVOB multiyear program 2014-2016, and under the collaboration with the MINEDUC, whereby the operational partnership is elaborated through a joint action plan between REB-URCE-VVOB, which focuses on "Learning Outcomes in Primary Education"; this program is developing and implementing the in-service certification framework towards competent primary Head Teachers with regards of the Standards for effective School Leadership describing the domains to which the competences of school leaders are referring to and defining the required knowledge and skills per domain of the standard

This study provides an analysis of the current status of affairs on Head Teachers (HTs) competences in school leadership by identifying gaps or discrepancies between the current and the ideal situation of Head teachers to become competent school leaders. The study's results are also used to identify and pinpoint areas for improvement and professional development described in terms of knowledge and skills to be addressed in the modules to be developed for training Head Teachers to become competent School Leaders.

Hereunder first there will be given a description of the professional standards for school leaders. Afterwards, we describe in more detail the methodology of a triangulation assessment with a self-rate questionnaire of the Head teachers, a questionnaire for senior Teachers assessing their Head teachers, and an observation check-list for evidences of performance demonstrated by Head teacher; then illustrate the output from the interview conducted. We present the findings, conclude, and discuss the design and execution of a training for Head Teachers leading to a certificate of competence

2. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Professional School Leadership Standards describe the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes that school leaders must demonstrate if they are to provide effective school leadership and management, The Standards are an array of expectations and competencies with the area within which evidence will be accessed to measure the quality of the performance.

The standards reflect a commitment to ensure that all students have an opportunity to access quality learning and that all schools are administered, managed and led in a consistent way by competent professionals. The standards serves as a guideline for good practice in school leadership, School leaders know what is expected of them and make necessary effort to perform to the expectations. These standards will permit performance accountability and measurement against expectations.

The professional standards for school leaders are now incorporated into the new policy of the Teacher development management's department and disseminated by the School leadership & management Unit which is responsible for the quality of school management and leadership in Rwanda.

The table1 below describe briefly the domain of the standards for effective school leadership, in annex 1 the indicators per standard are defined

Table 1: standards for effective school leadership

STANDARDS FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP	
STANDARD 1: SETTING STRATEGIC DIRECTION	Building a vision and shared purpose for the school and its community is a fundamental responsibility of the school leader in order to inspire and motivate students and staff and to build trust. This vision should express the core educational values of the organization.
STANDARD 2: LEADING LEARNING	The role of a school leader is to ensure that all students learn effectively. This necessitates setting high expectations for all students and, by implication, all staff members. Creating a positive and safe learning environment and culture is fundamental to the role of the school leader.
STANDARD 3: LEADING TEACHING	The core responsibility of a school leader is to ensure that all students learn effectively. In order to do so, teaching must be of the highest possible standard and the school leader must create the environment, conditions and structures to support this.
STANDARD 4: MANAGEMENT THE SCHOOL AS AN ORGANIZATION	School leaders need to ensure that the school's structures, policies, people and resources are organized and managed in order to provide an effective and safe learning environment.
STANDARD 5: COMMUNITY AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	Improvements in the school and in the community are interdependent. School leaders should commit to engaging with parents and the school community in order to raise expectations and improve provision and student outcomes.

3. RESEARCH QUESTION

There are three main research questions that we want to address with this study and training needs assessment for this study, the following research questions are asked:

- How do Head teachers assess their competences as described on the school leadership standards? And which domain of the standard for self-improvement do they identify?
- How do teachers perceive their head teachers competences, especially in leading teaching and learning?
- Is there a significant difference between HTs self-assessment and evidences of performance demonstrated?

Based on the findings of this study, we want to draw conclusions and develop recommendations for professional development for Head teachers to become competent school leaders.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Data collection

30 Head teachers representing all the districts participated in this study which took place in October 2014 and among them 13 schools were initially selected to test the questionnaire, then right after the revised questionnaires were administrated to the remaining 17 schools with an additional questionnaire to the 5 most experienced teachers to rate their Head teachers' competences. In total 102 questionnaires were completed by the respondents with a response rate of 98%.

4.2. Sampling schools

The table 2 shows schools from which the questionnaires were administrated

Table 2: Primary schools selected for the training assessment study

<i>Province</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Primary school</i>	<i>Province</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Primary school</i>
<i>East-Kigali</i>	<i>Kayonza</i>	<i>EP KAYONZA</i>	<i>North-West</i>	<i>Nyabihu</i>	<i>EP RUGAMBA</i>
	<i>Gatsibo</i>	<i>EP GATEGERO</i>		<i>Gakenke</i>	<i>EP NEMBA B</i>
	<i>Kirehe</i>	<i>EP GATARAMA</i>		<i>Musanze</i>	<i>EP BUKANE</i>
	<i>Gasabo</i>	<i>EP RWANKUBA</i>		<i>Rulindo</i>	<i>EP NYUNDO</i>
				<i>Kicukiro</i>	<i>EP NYAKABANDA</i>
		<i>Nyabihu</i>		<i>EP RUGAMBA</i>	
		<i>Gakenke</i>		<i>EP NEMBA B</i>	
<i>West-East+Kigali</i>	<i>Nyamasheke</i>	<i>Kivumu Primary School</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>Bugesera</i>	<i>EP KARERA</i>
	<i>Rutsiro</i>	<i>EP BYIMANA</i>		<i>Kamonyi</i>	<i>EP KANYINYA</i>
	<i>Huye</i>	<i>EP NGOMA</i>		<i>Nyanza</i>	<i>EP BUSASAMANA</i>
	<i>Nyarugenge</i>	<i>EP BIRYOGO</i>		<i>Ruhango</i>	<i>EP GAHENGARI</i>
	<i>Nyamasheke</i>	<i>Kivumu Primary School</i>			

4.3. Assessment tools

The design that this study utilized was a mixed methodology that included quantitative and qualitative research techniques. A 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was administered to both primary HTs and senior teachers. A questionnaire for Teachers was administrated to the 5 most experienced teachers from each school selected within the vicinity of the 13 TTCs to assess their Head teacher in school leadership competencies and a check list of evidence-based of competence provided to measure performance indicators per standards. In addition, an interview was conducted for more reflection on the current and needed level of proficiency and competency perceived by the HTs, Teachers as well as Students. From each school, a focus group interview was conducted with the 5 most experienced Teachers and Student representatives from P6 and P5, focusing on school leadership for teaching and learning.

5. FINDINGS

5.1. Standards for effective school leadership competences

The final questionnaire consists of 38 items. In annex 1 we describe in more detail the questionnaire scales that are depicted in the Standards for school leadership.

To assess the reliability of the instrument, we used the self-assessment data collected from 17 head teachers and 85 teachers. A reliability analysis of the five scales addressing the different domain of the standards, shows that all subscales are reliable, with Cronbach's Alpha values in between .978 and .997 for both teachers and HTs

Descriptive statistics and reliability coefficients can be found in table 3.

Table 3: Reliability, standard deviation and mean scores on school leadership standards

		HT	Teachers	Correlation coefficient of the Mean	HT	Teachers	HT	Teachers
	items						Reliability coefficients	
	N	Mean					α	
Standard 1	10	4.20	3.91	0.10	0.72	1.00	0.984	0.993
Standard 2	9	4.31	3.89	0.41	0.75	0.99	0.993	0.994
Standard 3	6	4.12	4.00	-0.34	0.73	0.90	0.987	0.997
Standard 4	7	4.27	3.72	0.13	0.68	1.08	0.984	0.984
Standard 5	6	4.25	3.84	0.73	0.71	0.97	0.978	0.987

When you compare the mean scores for HTs and Teachers, it shows a difference with Teachers scoring low than their HTs, and this difference is well indicated by the correlation coefficient of the mean score whereby there is a negative linear relationship (-.34) between HTs and teachers on standards 3 and weak linear relationship (.1) on standard 1, which means there are a controversial opinions from HTs self-rate and Teachers assessing HTs competences with the later rating consistently at lower rate HTs competencies.

However there is a positive linear relationship on Standard 5, it seems both HTs and Teachers are likely to perceive at high rate the school leaders competences on community and parental involvement

5.2. Statistical significance of the mean scores

Table 4: significance level of the mean scores

	HT	Teachers	Statistical significance of the Mean per Standard (p-value)	
	Mean			
Standard 1	4.20	3.91	0.003	significant*
Standard 2	4.31	3.89	3.900	n.s
Standard 3	4.12	4.00	0.310	n.s
Standard 4	4.27	3.72	6.250	n.s
Standard 5	4.25	3.84	0.00007	significant*

Note-- n.s not significant; * $p < .05$ =significant

With a confidence level of 95%,for standard 1 and standard 2 the p-value respectively indicates there is a statistically significance results with only 0.3% and 0.007% chance that the connection between the mean scores are the result of chance or error, this is small to be scientifically relevant.

For standard 3 there is no statistical significant with a probability of .310 that the relationship between the mean scores can be due to random chance alone.

5.3. The observation check-list

The other important result of this study was emanating from the observation check-list for evidences of performance demonstrated by Head teacher as illustrated by the table 5 below.

Table 5: Observation check-list

	Observation check-list	
	%	
	Demonstrated	Not demonstrated
Standard 1	61.0%	39.0%
Standard 2	57.9%	42.1%
Standard 3	64.1%	35.9%
Standard 4	74.1%	25.9%
Standard 5	88.2%	11.8%

Table 5 shows that head teachers demonstrated their competencies at 61%, whereas the competencies were not demonstrated at 39% for the first standard. The situation was alarming for the second standard whereby school head teachers demonstrated their competencies at only 57.9% and did not demonstrate them at 42.1%.

However, on standard five, it appears that things are better as school head teachers are demonstrating their competencies at 88.2% and did not demonstrate at 11.8%. At the same time, for standard 4, head teachers demonstrated their competencies at 74.1% and did not demonstrate at 25.9%.

5.4. Data comparison from HTs and Teachers

The comparability of information collected through observation and information collected through questionnaires has been well explored. For each domain of the standards, the extent of agreement/ disagreement between HTs and teachers questionnaires was compared and analyzed with the results from observation.

The analysis of data from the two Assessment tools reveals that the HTs opinions from the questionnaires were not matching with competences demonstrated from the observation check-list; As per the statistics indicated (See table 6 below), the HTs claim to demonstrate a significant leadership competence per each domain of the standard, with only a small portion of respondents disagreeing or entirely disagreeing with statement pertaining to the professional standards. This suggests that perceptions of HT towards their own leadership competences are far from the reality. This is quite similar to opinions of teachers that also seem to be different from the findings from observation checklist. The possible explanation of this discrepancy would be that teachers do not feel comfortable to negatively criticize their head teachers.

Table 6: Opinions from HTs and Teachers on school leadership competences

	HTs	T	HTs	T	HTs	T	HTs	T	HTs	T	HTs	T	HTs	T
	Mean		SD		Entirely Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Entirely Disagree	
Std1	4.20	3.91	0.72	1.00	35.3%	30.5%	52.4%	45.6%	9.4%	11.4%	2.9%	9.8%	0.0%	2.7%
Std2	4.31	3.89	0.75	0.99	43.8%	26.9%	47.7%	50.2%	4.6%	10.8%	3.3%	8.9%	0.7%	3.1%
Std3	4.12	4.00	0.73	0.90	29.4%	29.2%	57.8%	52.0%	8.8%	9.4%	2.9%	8.6%	1.0%	0.8%
Std4	4.27	3.72	0.68	1.08	38.7%	24.5%	52.1%	44.0%	6.7%	14.8%	2.5%	12.6%	0.0%	4.0%
Std5	4.25	3.84	0.71	0.97	39.2%	24.9%	48.0%	47.8%	10.8%	14.1%	2.0%	12.2%	0.0%	1.0%

5.5. Interview guide

In addition to the quantitative data collected from the questionnaires, we have also conducted a focused interview to collect qualitative data from head teachers.

The interview was conducted within the scope of the standards to illustrate the current and needed level of proficiency and competency perceived by the HTs, Teachers as well as Students. From each school, a focus group interview was conducted with the 5 most experienced Teachers and Student representatives from P6 and P5, focusing on school leadership for teaching and learning.

The interview gives us more insight on HTs performance and how their competences are perceived by Teachers and students per each domain of the standards whereby the HTs have to indicate the initial situation of the school; define the desired situation set; describe strategies for the school improvement; highlight main achievement and finally enumerate challenges in terms of skills and knowledge to become competent school leader

The table 7 below summarize the interview’s results from Head teachers

Table 7: interview guide results

	<i>Initial Situation</i>	<i>Set situation</i>	<i>Strategies for improving schools</i>	<i>School achievements</i>	<i>Measures</i>
STANDARD 1 :SETTING THE SCHOOL DIRECTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No strategic plan, - no clear and shared strategic plan, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strategic plan-for construction, building vision, mission and objectives, - Search for direction - Collaboration with stakeholders, increasing knowledge in school governance, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following the strategic plan, - working hand in hand with parents and local authorities - Having termly and yearly plan. Setting objectives and measures to be achieved. - Monitoring the implementation of plans. - Improvement of physical school environment , School collaboration, executing planned activities, commitment and controlling informal groups, - Having disciplined students and making learners do more exercises and home work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New building, laptop, fenced the school, painting school buildings and establishment of school garden, - establishment of school plan, Put up measures for monitoring plans’ execution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making priorities, - making follow up to parents who do support their children, - looking for sponsorship, - learning from others, - organize trainings, workshops, - change the mindset of parents - Increasing school resources

	<i>Initial Situation</i>	<i>Set situation</i>	<i>Strategies for improving schools</i>	<i>School achievements</i>	<i>Measures</i>
STANDARD 2: LEADING THE LEARNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low performance of students - indiscipline of learners - Lack of school materials. - Poor enrollment and few students attended regularly - lack of motivation for students, - Dropout of students, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reinforcing existing program, - building new schools, - increasing school materials, - teaching aids and number of teachers, - teaching methods were changed, - emphasis on effective learning based on zero gender segregation, - Advocated for school new building construction and sensitized parents to send children to school, - monitoring and evaluation of teaching, - Identification of students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Looking for teaching aids to improve learning of science and English, - clear and vivid expectations for all learners - creation of positive learning environment, making rules and regulations for the school in collaboration with PTA, - Many tests at the end of the week, - Improve quality of learning - Making attendance for ever day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - children are no longer late to school, , - Improvement of performance, - Increased enrollment, - number of children attending school greatly increased, - reduction of dropout rate, - Follow-up of students attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting with parents and PTC, - parents' sensitization, - making follow up to parents who do not support their children, - Increasing school materials, training teachers - Meeting with parents, Study trips, - Change of teaching system, - Collaboration with PTA and local authorities. - Building classes, - Motivation to well performers, - Using teachers to ensure discipline, - Discussing with students on their way of learning

	<i>Initial Situation</i>	<i>Set situation</i>	<i>Strategies for improving schools</i>	<i>School achievements</i>	<i>Measures</i>
STANDARD 3: LEADING THE TEACHING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Few committed teachers, - a large number of non-qualified teachers, - poor teaching due to lack of teaching aids, - Variety of teaching methods were not used, - teachers were coming late or missing class due to long distance to and from the school, - teachers were not active, - teachers are not motivated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recruitment of qualified teachers, - increasing teaching aids, - change of teaching methods, - creation of better academic teaching and learning, - recruitment of teacher living nearby school, - training teachers and making available teaching aids, - motivation and trainings to teachers, - increased trainings for teachers, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperation, seminars and teachers choosing what they are capable to teach, - provision to teachers necessities and improving working conditions - recruitment of teachers living in school vicinity, - Teachers' assessment and class visit, - visit teachers and help them to improve, - Rewarding best performers, - Trainings in teaching methods, - Private candidates' examinations and English trainings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching /learning is effective, - increase in number of qualified teachers, - Seminars and trainings are organized, - teachers use group work as teaching method, - necessities were provided to teachers but not in a desired situation, - teachers are no longer late nor absent, - availability of teaching materials, classroom visits, giving food to teachers - meeting with teachers and being aware of their teaching needs, - teachers improve English as medium of instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not applying professorate system, - teach on Saturday, - teachers' trainings and buying teaching materials, - study trips, - helping unqualified teachers in pedagogical skills, - recruitment of qualified teachers, - organizing class visits, encouraging teachers to make their own teaching aids

	<i>Initial Situation</i>	<i>Set situation</i>	<i>Strategies for improving schools</i>	<i>School achievements</i>	<i>Measures</i>
STANDARD 4: MANAGEMENT THE SCHOOLS AS AN ORGANISATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some school had no head teacher, - no school organization, - poor school management, - no management, - no proper records for school, - not well managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School management organization, - improve school income and financial facilities, - collaboration with parents - started making records of school programs, - field trip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperation and share responsibilities, - establishment of PTC, - ensure school structures, policies, people and resources - Collaboration with teachers and parents in school management and decision making, - regular meetings with school community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong collaboration, - school is better organized, - fulfilling responsibilities, - PTC works well, policies and departmental organization were established, - professionalism in management was improved through trainings, - Parents and teachers are actively involved in school management and decision making, - Teamwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More collaboration with parents, - Reading books of school management and looking for explanations from colleagues. - Study trips, - attending trainings in school management,

	<i>Initial Situation</i>	<i>Set situation</i>	<i>Strategies for improving schools</i>	<i>School achievements</i>	<i>Measures</i>
STANDARD 5: COMMUNITY AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good partnership, but community was not involved, - parents were actively involved, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reinforcement of partnership, - community involvement was increased, - reinforcement of partnership, - encourage parents to invest in the education of their children, - encouragement to parents to participate in school programs and management, - Sensitization of parents and local community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working hand in hand with parents and local authorities. - Establishing parents committees and meeting with parents once in term, showing to parents their role in the development of the school, - Strengthen PTA committee and involving parents in decision making, - encouragement of parents to actively participate in the education of their children, meeting with parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progressive parental involvement - Frequent meeting and elected parents committee. - Parents participate in school activities, - PTA are active and parents participate in school decision making, - parents are involved in school programs, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organize frequent meetings with parents, - sensitizing parents, to convince resistant parents, - collaboration with PTA to sensitize parents who let their children drop out school, - work closely with parents,

5.6. Interview Results from HTs responses

To gather additional information on the training needs of primary school leaders in Rwanda, this study also used qualitative methods in the data collection. As stated above, from each selected schools, the researchers conducted interview with school headteacher. They also conducted a series of focus groups interviews with more experienced teachers as well as with students. The following discusses qualitative findings from each category of participants in the interview.

The results were analyzed thematically and were presented and interpreted in accordance with four themes namely situation before the appointment of the headteacher, the current situation, strategies and measures taken to improve leadership and the achievements after these measures . These themes were applicable to each professional standard.

Initial situation of the school

With regard to the situation before the appointment, most interviewed headteachers reported that the school had no vision, very few agreed that there was a strategic plan although it was not clear. The continued saying that students demonstrated low achievement and the level of students' discipline was very low. It turns out that schools experienced poor enrollment and few students attended lessons due mainly to the lack of motivation.

With regard to the teaching and learning standard, headteachers concurred that some teachers used to come late or to be absent from their schools. This bad behavior is mainly due to the fact that some of teachers travel long distance to and from their respective schools. School headteachers added that school were suffering from poor teaching due to the lack of teaching aids and teachers who were using traditional teaching methods.

On the school's organization aspect, some schools had no headteachers and school were led by one of the teachers. They finally reported that schools had good partnership, even though the community was not entirely involved and parents were not actively participating in their childrens' education.

Strategies for improving schools

Headteachers also reported about the situation after their appointment. They mentioned that the school vision was jointly elaborated with the school leadership staffs and reported a high collaboration with stakeholders.

Headteachers also talked about the strategies put in place to improve their leadership. These include following the strategic plan, working hand in hand with parents and local authorities, having termly and annual plan as well as setting objectives to be achieved. They mentioned the following strategies: implementation of plans, improvement of school environment, commitment in controlling informal groups and maintaining students discipline and encouraging learners do more exercises and home works.

Teaching and Learning

With regards to teaching and learning standard, a large number of headteachers interviewed mentioned the responsibility for raising the quality of teaching and learning and for pupil's achievements by looking for teaching aids, improving teaching and learning science and English, creating positive learning environment and ensuring that rules and regulations for the schools are in place and respected. Head teachers also stated that they increased tests at the end of the week and ensured that attendance every day was made. In a bid to increase the students' achievement, head teachers reported that they took following strategies: recruitment of teachers living in the vicinity of the school, visiting teachers and providing constructive feedback, rewarding teachers and students who were performing well, training teachers in teaching methods and in English and helping private candidates sit for national examination for upgrading.

Head teachers stressed that they reinforced existing programmes, built new schools, increased availability of school materials, teaching aids and number of teachers and recruited qualified teachers and encouraged them to live nearby the school. They also pointed out that they changed teaching methods, emphasizing effective learning based on zero gender segregation and taking responsibility to sensitize parents on their role in supporting their children. They recognized to have taken initiative to motivate and provide teachers with appropriate trainings. The school headteachers also recognised to have provided professional leadership and management for their schools improving school income and financial facilities, improving collaboration with parents, making records of school programmes and organizing field trips for their teachers.

Managing the school as an organization

In terms of organizing the school, headteachers said that they established PTCs and ensured school structures and policies are respected, organized regular meetings with school community and ensured that collaboration with teachers and parents is powerful and that parents committee is established and meetings are organized. Strengthening PTA committee and involving parents and teachers in decision making, encouraging parents to actively participate in the education of their children.

School main achievements

Headteachers also talked about their achievements including new building, laptops, fenced schools, painting school building and establishment of school garden, setting the school vision and monitoring plans execution. They were proud that children were no longer late. Headteachers were also happy that their performance was improving, enrollment was increased, number of students attending school greatly increased and dropout rate reduced. Parents' participation in decision making was intensified.

5.7. Interview results from Teachers

The interviews generally revolved around issues related to the help teachers received from their headteachers, the extent to which teachers help the school to achieve its vision, the extent to which the headteachers provide teachers with facilities and some suggestions for the schools to improve their management for increasing student achievement. With regards to the help received from the headteachers, teachers expressed guidance and advices, providing teaching aids and materials on time. Teachers felt comfortable when supported by the Headteacher particularly when one of them loses a relative. One teacher discussed how their Headteacher rewarded teachers who do performed well their duties, providing bonus for extra hours.

In terms to the extent to which teachers help the school to achieve its vision, most of teachers expressed collaboration, sociability, school materials well kept, and meeting as a community to handle challenges, through performance contract. They reported to strive towards being effective teachers working hard, using teaching aids, developing relationships, working as a team and sharing ideas ,

Teachers also made a point about the facilities provided to them and explained that materials are not enough and not appropriate, especially for upper primary level, where one book is shared by more than one student. They are complaining that the head teachers are not showing any initiative to fill the gap, particularly for ICT which not accessible by everybody.

Teachers made some suggestions to improve school leadership; their suggestions included among others full inclusion in the decision-making process and decision to be made in the whole group.

The other suggestions mentioned by teachers encompass staff development, enough and appropriate teaching aids, building new classes, provide canteen for teachers and safe drinking water. The following are other suggestions from teachers: involving learners and teachers in school management, involving parents, providing extra-courses, facilitating teachers living nearby the school, increasing the number of meetings (not only one a term), involvement of local community in the school leadership and management, collaboration with all stakeholders and creating suggestion boxes. Other teachers made claims about borrowing textbooks and use them at home

5.8. Interviews results from students

Concerning the question to know how students help to achieve the schools vision, the participants frequently expressed resentment that they do not know whether there is any vision at their schools. When asked what they do to help achieve school mission, students overwhelmingly mentioned that they strived to work hard, to make revisions of their lessons to obey rules and regulations of the school.

With regards to materials provided, students stated that materials are accessible and appropriate but not enough; books are not enough and the school does not have computers. They went on to say that they were not allowed to bring their textbooks home simply because they don't want it to get lost or damaged.

About the help they give or they receive from colleagues, students stated that they helped their colleagues in advising and motivating them to work hard, to respect others, to commit themselves to study, not being late or absent from school, to participate in debates and to read after class.

Thereafter, the students were asked to make suggestions about some of the ways in which the school could improve, the majority of students recommended discussing with teachers, being provided remedial teaching sessions during holidays emphasizing on the most difficult subjects and being given more textbooks to be used both at and out of school premises. They advised teachers to share responsibilities with students and be transparent to all learners. They requested to the school leaders to organize students extra curricula activities, they also suggested organizing school visits to other schools.

6. CONCLUSION

The primary focus of this study was to assess training needs of Headteachers in order to prepare for their training that will equip and develop school headteachers with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitude to become competent leaders to lead schools efficiently and effectively. Through the leadership training process, participants will reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, and develop goals for improvement to become more effective in their professional role as school leaders. Training needs were assessed on the basis of the standards for effective School Leadership describing the domains to which the competences of school leaders are referring to and describing the required knowledge and skills per domain of the standard.

These standards are (1) setting strategic direction; (2) leading learning; (3) leading teaching; (4) leading the school as an organization; (5) community and parental involvement.

This study utilized a mixed methods approach to explore school leadership practices. It used questionnaires administered to both head teachers and teachers and conducted interviews and focus group interview with head teachers, teachers and students from primary schools within the vicinity of school of excellence in each district in Rwanda. The study also used observation method more robust triangulation of findings

As stated earlier, findings from quantitative study revealed discrepancies between teachers and their school leaders whereby teachers were likely to rate their headteachers lower when HT self-assessed higher. The other important result of this study was emanating from the observation check-list for evidences of performance demonstrated by the headteacher. The analysis of data from the two assessment tools revealed that the opinions from the questionnaires were not matching with competences demonstrated from the observation check-list. This suggests that perceptions of HT towards their own leadership competences are far from the reality.

In summary, the findings described above from the qualitative study suggest consistency with the results from the survey. The information gathered in the survey, the focus groups and the observation consistently confirms that there is a great difference between the reality and the desired situation.

Findings from quantitative study were consistent with findings from interview where in many cases headteachers stated to accomplish adequately certain tasks, for instance to set and communicate school vision or to provide teaching and learning materials, whereas students explained that they did not know whether the school had the vision.

During focus group interviews students and teachers had in common certain views, they continually stated that there was not enough teaching and learning materials, that community was not fully involved in school management; that teachers and students were not sharing ideas; that both teachers and students were not involved in decision making process. A common concern from the majority of respondents (students and teachers) was also consistent with evidence based practices from observation checklist.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

During the study an attempt was made to determine needs and necessity of training courses for the primary school teachers. Findings suggest that there is a need for the provision of specific school leadership training to respond to the broadened roles and responsibilities of primary school leaders. The fact that most of those school leaders do have a teaching background does not mean they necessarily have the skills required for leading schools.

The standard is a public statement which sets out what headteachers are expected to know, understand and do to become competent school leader. The strength of the standard will be in its implementation through ownership and engagement by the profession. Although professional standards are always fully interdependent, integrated and with no hierarchy implied, some areas could be preferred areas of training, namely leading school as an organization and leading teaching and learning.

Both findings from the survey and the focus group participants highlight that headteachers need knowledge and skills in setting and communicating the vision. Therefore, more emphasis should be put on this aspect during the training.

With regard to suitable training methods, blended methods of learning are encouraged. Participants will be given the opportunity to go back to their respective institutions and reflect on what they have been trained in, with a view to ascertaining their knowledge and skills acquired during training.

8. REFERENCES

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9. ANNEX

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

The instrument includes a 5-point Likert scale, where items are scored (measured) from 1 to 5.

Assigning a 1 to a specific item indicates that you entirely disagree with the item, while a score of 5 indicates that you entirely agree with the item (*1- Entirely disagree; 2-Disagree; 3- Neutral; 4-Agree; 5- Entirely agree*).The items describe various aspects of Headteachers' practices within a school in accordance with Headteachers' professional standards. **Therefore, you are requested to indicate** to which extent you agree with the item by ticking the number that reflects your opinion(s).

STANDARD 1: SETTING STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Building a vision and shared purpose for the school and its community is a fundamental responsibility of the school leader in order to inspire and motivate students and staff and to build trust. This vision should express the core educational values of the organization.	1. Entirely disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Entirely agree
1. I create a clear, compelling vision, mission and values, tied to students' wellbeing and learning achievements	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2. I provide a school mission with a clear sense of direction for all stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
3. I communicate this vision, mission and values in a way that gains stakeholders' understanding and commitment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4. I hold myself to high level of accountability for aligning actions and words to the school vision	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5. I establish a solid atmosphere of trust among all members of the school community	<input type="checkbox"/>				
6. I have developed school planning documents (like the school improvement plan) in line with the school vision	<input type="checkbox"/>				
7. I ensure the implementation of plans by a continuous process of monitoring and evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
8. I institutionalize the values, norms, and practices that promote a shared sense of responsibility among all school community members for maintaining a safe and productive learning environment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
9. I established a comprehensive system for whole school goal-setting and measurement of success	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Additional comments or remarks?					

STANDARDS 2: LEADING LEARNING

The role of a school leader is to ensure that all students learn effectively. This necessitates setting high expectations for all students and, by implication, all staff members. Creating a positive and safe learning environment and culture is fundamental to the role of the school leader.	1. Entirely disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Entirely agree
1. I expect from both teachers and students excellent performance in accordance with the values, vision and mission of the school	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2. I create a culture of ongoing reflection, learning, and improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
3. I frequently talk with teachers, students and community about student achievement goals and progress.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4. I create networks of peers to support ongoing learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5. I encourage extracurricular activities for students' socio-cultural, physical growth.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
6. I use data to identify student learning trends and adjust our school strategies to increase student achievement to this.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
7. I set strategies which secure high standards of student behaviour and attendance.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
8. I establish rules and regulations for students and make sure they are clearly understood and agreed upon.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
9. I create a safe, secure, orderly and purposeful school learning environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Additional comments or remarks?					

STANDARDS 3: LEADING TEACHING

The core responsibility of a school leader is to ensure that all students learn effectively. In order to do so, teaching must be of the highest possible standard and the school leader must create the environment, conditions and structures to support this.	1. Entirely disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Entirely agree
1. I identify an improvement pathway for each teacher and can sequence the steps on the pathway and monitor progress	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2. I support teachers in using effective instructional strategies to meet students' diverse learning needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
3. I regularly assesses student learning and ensure the provision of specific, timely feedback to teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4. I have established a continuous professional development system in my school	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5. I am consistently committed to instructional improvement in regular walk-throughs and formal observations.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
6. I ensure that the school's physical environment is conducive for teaching and learning to take place	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Additional comments or remarks?					

STANDARDS 4: MANAGEMENT THE SCHOOL AS AN ORGANIZATION

School leaders need to ensure that the school’s structures, policies, people and resources are organized and managed in order to provide an effective and safe learning environment.	1. Entirely disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Entirely agree
1. I collaborate with school community to creatively maximize and align school budget in order to increase student achievement.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2. I advocate for increased resources; I work with school community to identify and secure additional resources;	<input type="checkbox"/>				
3. I proactively sustain relationships with current and potential partners and continually assess and realign resources	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4. I use delegation as a tool to distribute and develop leadership.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5. I create systems to ensure that facility and equipment needs are continually assessed and proactively addressed.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
6. I create a culture in which continuous learning, reflection, and collaboration is everyone’s responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/>				
7. I engage members of the school community in designing, implementing, and revising operational systems, policies, and procedures.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Additional comments or remarks?					

STANDARDS 5: COMMUNITY AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Improvements in the school and in the community are interdependent. School leaders should commit to engaging with parents and the school community in order to raise expectations and improve provision and student outcomes.	1. Entirely disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Entirely agree
1. I create school-wide culture of shared and distributed leadership across all stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
2. I consistently engage parents, students and community as active partners in attaining the school’s learning goals	<input type="checkbox"/>				
3. I communicate with and influence community outside of the school and parents regarding education issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
4. I create school-wide culture in which all parties make themselves accessible and approachable to parents, students, and community members.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
5. I proactively engage full school community and external community to meet students’ diverse needs	<input type="checkbox"/>				
6. I share best practices with other schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Additional comments or remarks?					