



Building Change by Leading, Teaching and Learning Together in Rwanda

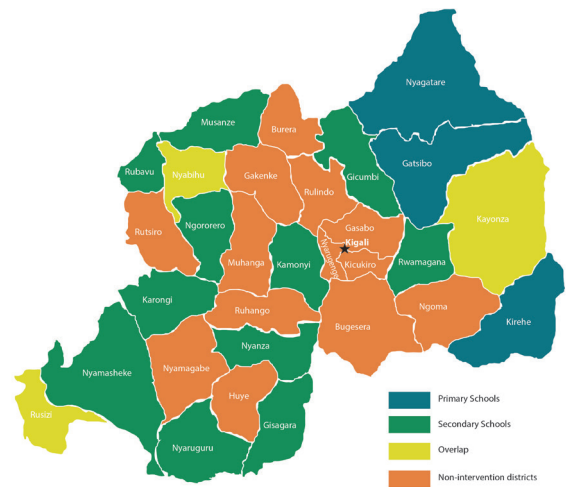
IMPACT REPORT

December 2021

Background

To support the Rwandan Ministry of Education in improving the quality of basic education in Rwanda, VVOB - Education for Development in partnership with the Rwanda Basic Education Board (REB) and the University of Rwanda College of Education (UR-CE) and with funding from the Mastercard Foundation, the Belgian government and the ELMA foundation, jointly implemented a programme called Leading, Learning and Teaching Together (LTLT)/**Umusemburo w'Ireme ry'Ubuguzi**. The LTLT programme ran from January 2017 till December 2021, covering all primary schools in six districts and all secondary schools in 14 districts (with 3 overlapping districts), reaching more than 1500 schools.

The main objective of the LTLT programme was to advance the implementation of the Competence Based Curriculum while supporting the improvement of learning outcomes in Mathematics and STEM in a gender responsive environment. To achieve this, the programme aimed to strengthen the competences of key education actors through improved Continuous Professional Development (CPD) support systems. The CPD support focused on two main modalities:



VVOB INTERVENTION MAP 2017 - 2021

- 1 Training programmes on Effective School Leadership and on Educational Mentorship and Coaching;
- 2 Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for headteachers and Communities of Practice (CoPs) for (new) teachers.

Actors that were directly targeted were: District Directors of Education (DDEs), District Education Officers (DEOs), Sector Education Inspectors (SEIs), Headteachers (HTs) and Deputy Headteachers (DHTs), School Based Mentors (SBMs), School Subject Leaders (SSLs) in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and Teacher Training College (TTC) tutors. Actors that were indirectly targeted include (new) teachers and students.

The programme's Theory of Change, which can be found in Annex 1, provides an overview of the programme's building blocks and the levels of intervention. Working from the top to the bottom, the intended changes of the LTLT programme are:

- 1 **Final change (learner level):** Improved learning, well-being, and a reduced gender gap.
- 2 **System change (school level):** An improved teaching and learning environment in schools.
- 3 **Change at the level of school actors:** Improved school leadership by headteachers and deputy headteachers and improved teaching by teachers.
- 4 **Change at the level of intermediaries:** Improved capacity of SEIs to support school leaders, improved capacity of DDEs and DEOs to support all school actors, improved capacity of SBMs, SSLs and TTC tutors to support teachers.
- 5 **Change at the level of CPD providers (REB, UR-CE and VVOB):** Improved capacity of VVOB, REB and UR-CE to develop CPD trajectories, to implement/deliver CPD trajectories and to monitor and evaluate CPD trajectories.

Using findings from the base-, mid- and endline evaluation conducted in the 14 districts of the secondary education programme, (https://rwanda.vvob.org/sites/rwanda/files/vvob_ltl_t_endline_evaluation_report_nov21_0.pdf) as well as monitoring data that was collected during the implementation of the overall programme, this report presents the programme's contribution to three main themes:

- Improved school leadership
- Improved Educational mentorship and coaching
- Improved Teaching and learning environment

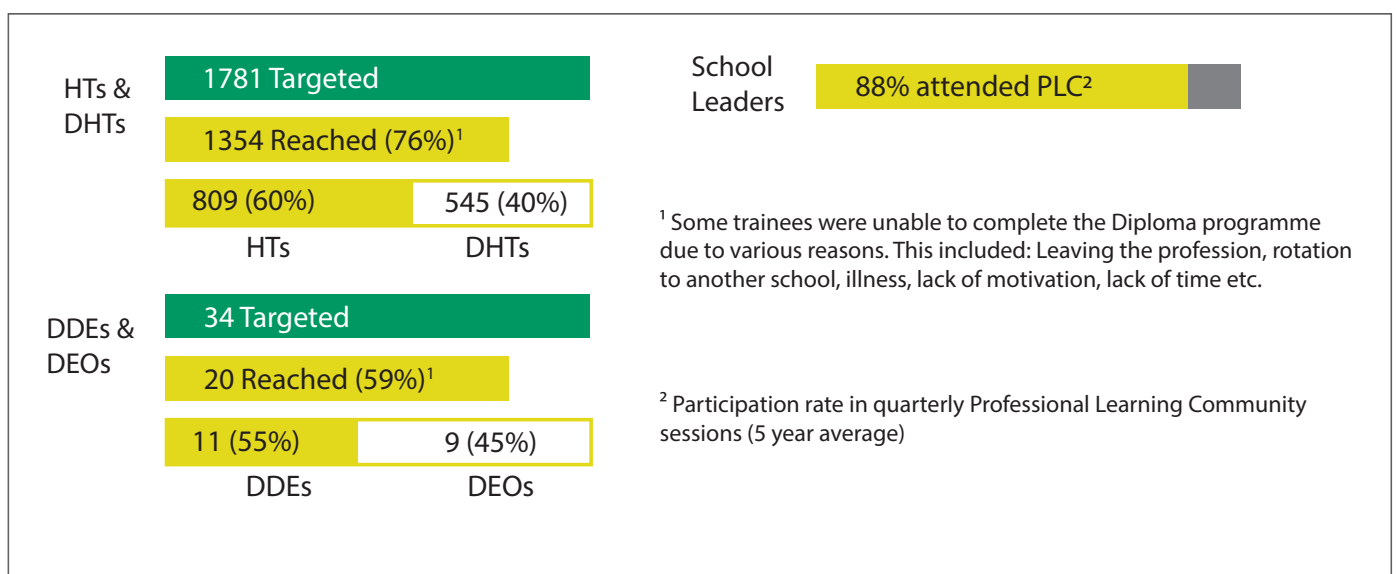
1. Improved school leadership

International literature identifies effective leadership as a critical factor in raising the achievement of learners¹. Not only can school leaders have a large impact on creating a more conducive teaching environment, effective school leaders are also able to contribute to improved student learning results, especially in schools that serve disadvantaged students².

To support school leaders in becoming more effective leaders, school leaders, District Directors of Education (DDEs)

and District Education Officers (DEOs) from 17 districts were offered a Diploma programme in Effective School Leadership. School leaders also participated in quarterly Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) at sector level. By the end of 2021, **76%** of the targeted school leaders and **59%** of the targeted DDEs and DEOs had completed the Diploma programme. Over the five years, a great majority of the school leaders also participated in PLC sessions, with an average participation rate of **88%** across the quarterly sessions.

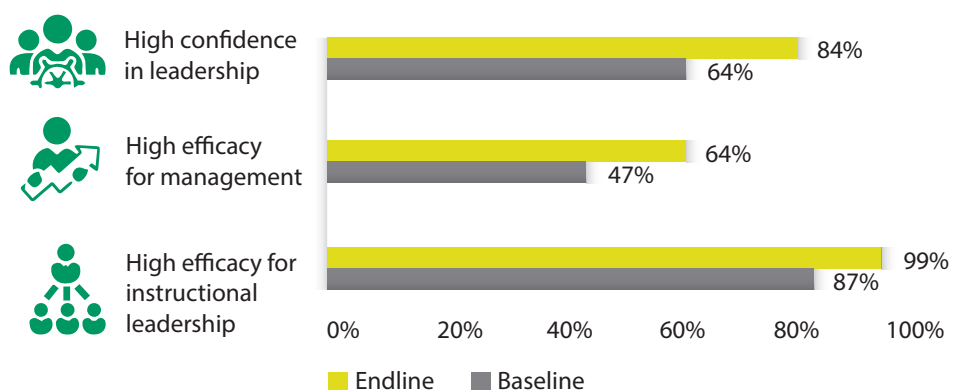
Number of School Leaders, headteachers, deputy headteachers and district officials reached through the LTLT programme



Changes in competences of school leaders

By participating in the Diploma programme and in PLC sessions, school leaders were expected to improve their school leadership competences. The endline evaluation of the programme in secondary education shows that school leaders have indeed improved their competences. The share of school leaders that reported high efficacy in their instructional leadership and management skills and high confidence to lead their schools, increased from baseline to endline.

School leaders report higher efficacy and confidence to lead their schools



¹ Robinson, Loyd and Rowe, 2008. The Impact of Leadership on Student Outcomes: An Analysis of the Differential Effects of Leadership Types. Educational Administration Quarterly, 44(5)

² Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2008). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership. School Leadership and Management, 28, 27-42. doi:10.1080/13632430701800060

School leaders themselves, but also other actors, especially those that work closely with school leaders, describe a strong and positive change in attitudes and skills after training.

Before I was overloaded by my job as a school leader because I didn't know how to prioritize, or even share responsibilities with others. But now, I don't do everything at the same time, I do prioritize, and delegate when necessary and I am not still overloaded which made me more satisfied in my job as a Headteacher."

Headteacher, Male, Karongi 1

Nowadays many activities are being done by the school leaders my involvement has reduced. They have become more responsible and are more willing to do things on their own."

SEI, Female, Rwamagana

Before, the head and deputy Headteacher did not understand the importance of CPD and they wouldn't let us mentors have time with the fellow teachers. But now, that they have been trained and they are really supportive."

SBM, Female, Kamonyi.

There is a lot of change due to the training and advice given to the school management, because previously the school leader was announcing certain things in a commanding manner, but now there is a sitting and listening to different ideas on how things can be done and I think it helps everyone to understand satisfied with the decision because we have taken it together."

Member of PSTA, Gicumbi district

There are a lot of changes in the school's leadership and management. The number of meetings was increased, the way school leaders communicate and engage with teachers has improved and the school support for teaching has also improved. . . The way our headteacher engages with school staff and teachers has improved. Due to this, teachers feel free to talk and raise their issue. While I'm not completely sure, I attribute these changes to being trained on leadership."

STEM Teacher, Female, Nyanza

Changes in leadership practices

In interviews that were conducted at endline, many school leaders reported a change in leadership style as a direct result of their participation in the Diploma Programme. The biggest change noted is that they now engage more with other teachers and staff at their school than previously. Many Headteachers realised that they needed to trust their staff more and that it is not necessary for them to be responsible for all decisions

or carry out all management activities on their own. The training helped school leaders to fully understand the responsibilities of their staff. As a result of this shift in perspective, many noted that their jobs have become easier, and that staff are more engaged and responsive because of these changes. Most also reported an increase in confidence and satisfaction in their work as a result.

In learning, there is power delegation, whoever can do something, he/she takes that responsibility and performs it, if I am around or not. I feel safe because everyone at school can fulfill school responsibility on my behalf and then I monitor what has been done. Sharing leadership has reduced my tasks and has increased the communication between all of us within the school."

Headteacher, Female, Musanze 1.

Yes, I experienced changes in job satisfaction. Before I took all the responsibilities that are supposed to be shared and the work was a lot, I was overloaded by work. But, when I started working with others, my work became easy to perform which increased my job satisfaction."

Headteacher, Male, Nyanza 1.

Deputy Headteachers also reported similar changes in their leadership approaches, with a few noting that these changes have made their work easier and more efficient. In addition, while noting increased confidence and satisfaction with their work as a result

of these changes, they were also more likely to mention that they were either actively looking or would leave their position for a better paying position, whereas this was not brought up in any of the Headteacher interviews.

I started working more closely with teachers, we are planning everything together, and this is increasing the way we communicate and help each other at school. . . . When I started working closely with teachers and delegating responsibilities my workload reduced and it is even easy to achieve the set goals as more teachers feel more involved."

Deputy Headteacher, Male, Nyanza.

Yes, there is a big change because the school leaders and staff are no longer working in competition or directing what they must do like before. Today, they do an open discussion, they collaborate, and they learn from each other, they no longer feel fearful to express their weakness among each other. This helps them to have clear meetings and discuss the needs and opportunities in CPD."

SEI, Male, Ngoroero.

Before I used to take decisions on my own, but after the training I learned the importance of a shared decision with the objective of improving the school. The impact of all this is that I have been able to get along with the community around the school by increasing community engagement."

Headteacher, Male, Rubavu 2.

Main conclusions: School leadership

- Through the LTLT programme, almost 1,400 school leaders, headteachers and deputy headteachers, and 22 district officials were trained in Effective School Leadership.
- A great majority of school leaders also took part in Professional Learning Communities at sector level.
- After training, school leaders exhibit more confidence in their leadership skills.
- After training, school leaders feel more capable to lead their schools as instructional leaders and effectively manage their schools.
- Other actors, especially those that work closely with the school leader, also note strong and positive changes in school leader attitudes, skills and practices.
- Changed attitudes and confidence have resulted in improved leadership practices; school leaders more often share responsibilities and delegate tasks, work more efficiently and are generally more satisfied with their jobs.



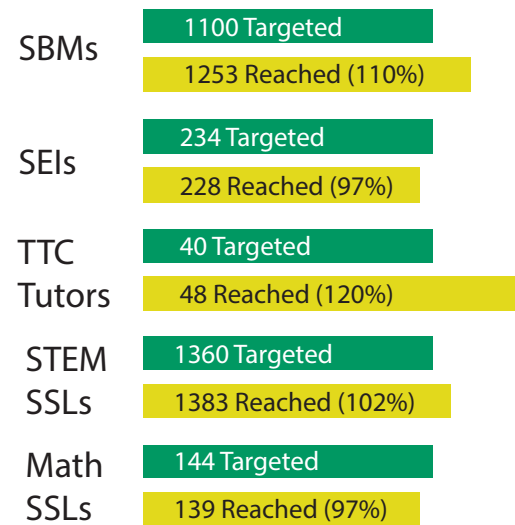
2. Improved Educational Mentorship and Coaching

To create a school environment that is conducive for teaching, learning and leadership, the Leading, Teaching and Learning Together (LTLT) programme targeted several intermediary education actors that were identified as crucial in the support of teachers and school leaders, these were: School-Based Mentors (SBMs), School Subject Leaders in STEM and Maths (SSLs), Sector Education Inspectors (SEIs) and Teacher Training College (TTC) tutors.

Coaching, mentoring and peer-networking, are considered the most valuable CPD-activities in raising the effectiveness of professional development (Harrison et al, 2006). To improve the capacities of SBMs, STEM and Math SSLs, SEIs and TTC tutors to coach and mentor teachers and school leaders, and consequently contribute to the overall quality of education, they were offered a Certificate programme in Educational Mentorship and Coaching (SBMs, SEIs and TTC tutors) or Educational Mentorship and Coaching in STEM (STEM SSLs – secondary education) and Math (Math SSLs – primary education).

By the end of 2021, **114%** of the targeted SBMs, **97%** of the targeted SEIs and **120%** of the targeted TTC tutors had successfully completed the training programme in Educational Mentorship and Coaching. In turn, **101%** of the targeted STEM and **97%** of the targeted Math SSLs had successfully completed the training programme in Educational Mentorship and Coaching in STEM and/or Maths. Overall, more actors were reached with the training programmes than was initially planned.

Number of intermediaries reached through the LTLT programme

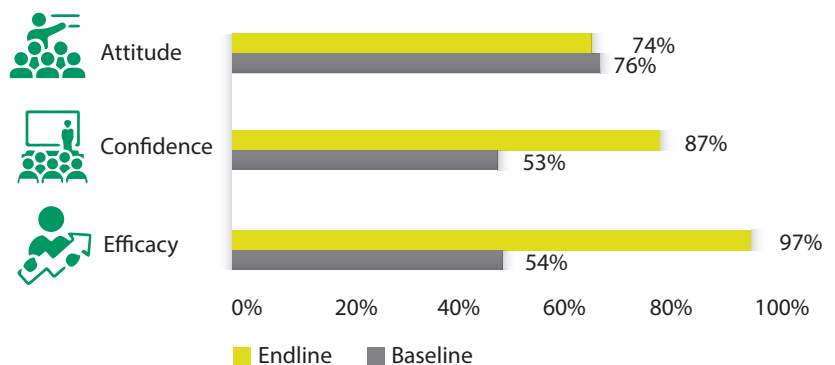


Changes in competences of intermediaries

The endline evaluation of the programme in secondary education shows that participation in the Certificate programme had effects on self-reported Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of SBMs, STEM SSLs and SEIs. Comparing to the baseline findings, SBMs and STEM SSLs report improved coaching and mentoring skills and report more positive attitudes, more confidence and more efficacy in their coaching and mentoring skills at endline.

Taking part in the training has particularly boosted their confidence as this has increased by **34** percentage points for SBMs and **38** percentage points for STEM SSLs. After training, both SBMs and STEM SSLs exhibit more positive attitudes about new teachers, less often supporting the notion that they should teach well from the first day on the job, and they feel more able to support colleagues with teaching challenges. STEM SSLs also show great improvements in their confidence to deliver induction programmes for new STEM teachers.

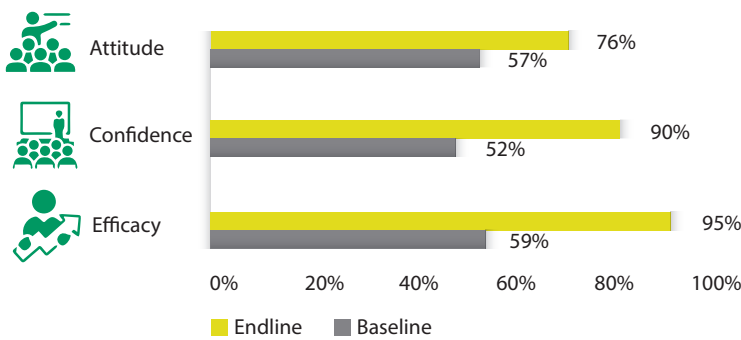
Improved attitudes, confidence and efficacy for mentoring and coaching among SBMs



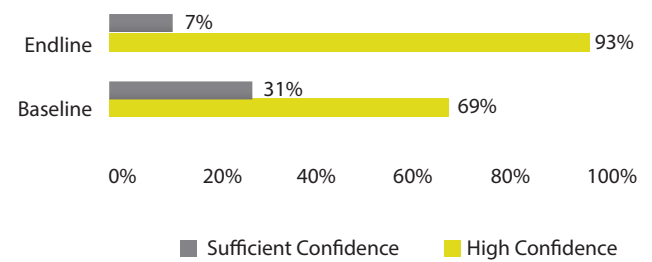
I would say that the program helped a lot and changed how I support teachers. Before, I didn't have skills to support teachers and when a teacher used to ask me a question, I used to answer them right away and leave without providing enough time to pay attention to them so that I can understand their concern and help them to sort it out appropriately. Now, when a teacher has a problem, we discuss the problem and try to resolve it."
SBM, Male, Rusizi.

The course I attended has changed how I support STEM teachers. Before, the support I gave was not sufficient because I lacked the knowledge. But, after being trained it increased. Before mentoring and coaching wasn't done properly, we had no guidance, and we did not know how it should be done. Now, due to the training, we know what it is, how to do it and, as a result, we see improved quality of teaching."
STEM SSL, Male, Gicumbi.

Improved attitudes, confidence and efficacy for mentoring and coaching among STEM SSLs



SEIs are more confident to coach and mentor Headteachers



Similarly, improvements in capacity are also noted for SEIs. The share of SEIs that has a high confidence to coach and mentor headteachers has increased from **69%** at baseline to **93%** at endline, implying a **24** percentage point increase compared to the baseline measure, when a majority of the SEIs had already been trained. SEIs have especially made big strides in working together more effectively with headteachers by providing more tailored support and delegating leadership to headteachers.

Findings from interviews with SEIs indicate that the problem-solving skills gained through their participation in the course was the most useful to their work.

The Certificate Programme in Educational Mentorship and Coaching has been very useful because I gained different skills that I had never studied in class. We were trained about school leadership and this helps me to know how I will support schools in my sector. When I visit schools I check if they have mission and vision, I also look at school leadership and their teaching strategies, I look at how school leaders collaborate with parents, and when I find that the school is not working well I know how I should support them.”

SEI, Female, Nyamasheke.

SWOT analysis, which contains the problem tree. This is because I was not familiar with gathering in meetings and discussing our problems, identifying the opportunities we have that can help us solve them, or identifying what we are capable and incapable of solving. Thus, this the part of the course still sticks with me because I apply it almost daily.”

SEI, Male, Ngororero.

Main conclusions: Educational Mentorship and Coaching

- Through the LTLT programme, 1,253 SBMs, 253 SEIs, 48 TTC tutors and 1,383 STEM and Math SSLs were trained in Educational Mentorship and Coaching.
- After training, SBMs, STEM SSLs and SEIs exhibit more positive attitudes, more confidence and more efficacy in their coaching and mentoring skills.
- The training has particularly boosted their confidence to coach and mentor teachers and school leaders.
- After training, SBMs, feel more able to support teachers with various teaching challenges and provide more adequate support to new teachers.
- After training, SEIs work together more effectively with headteachers, provide more tailored support to schools and more often delegate leadership to headteachers.

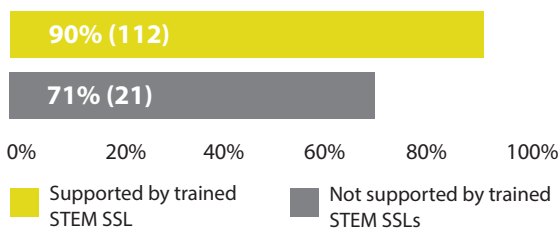
3. Improved teaching and learning environment

Collaboration is about the interaction of two or more people resulting in something greater than what would be achieved through solitary actions. Building on this notion, the Leading, Teaching and Learning Together (LTLT) programme trained multiple actors in one school and sector, each with their own roles and responsibilities, on similar skillsets, with the assumption that this would amplify the effects of individual training.

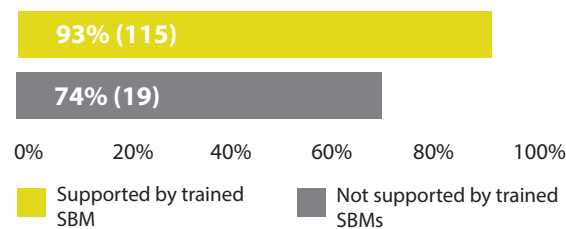
The endline evaluation of the programme in secondary education shows that there is a positive effect of having more than one trained school actor on confidence and efficacy. Having a trained School-Based Mentor (SBM) and STEM School Subject Leader (STEM SSL) in the same school has for instance increased the confidence of SBMs and STEM SSLs by 19 percentage points as compared to training only one of the two.

Effects of training SBM and STEM SSL on confidence to coach and mentor

% with high confidence to coach and mentor



% with high confidence to coach and mentor



Source: SSL and SBM Quantitative Survey



Before we used to prepare the the School Improvement Plan in order to have something to submit, so it wasn't as descriptive as it is now, with some operations not included, but after completing the Diploma programme, we understand the importance of having a School Improvement Plan that is well developed and does not skip or leave out important activities to guide your actions."

Head Teacher, Male, Rwamagana 2.



Changes in Continuous Professional Development

The endline evaluation further shows the LTL programme has also had a positive effect on how CPD is organised at school and sector level and there are indications that this is related to

training multiple actors. In particular, training the school leader is crucial for ensuring changes are followed through. Four main changes are observed:



CPD is more institutionalized

- Schools more often have a plan for CPD at their schools.
- CPD activities are more likely to be timetabled.
- Communities of Practice are formed at school level.
- Professional Learning Communities are formed at sector level.

“Before, the head and deputy Headteacher did not understand the importance of CPD and they wouldn't let us mentors have time with the fellow teachers. But now that they have been trained and they are really supportive.”
SBM, Female, Kamonyi.



CPD is more inclusive

- More teachers, especially new teachers, report to participate in different CPD activities including on Teaching Practice and Pedagogy, Content Knowledge and, Behaviour and Class Management.
- More schools report to have a formal induction program for new teachers.

“The deputy Headteacher observes my lessons every two weeks and evaluates me, and I think that among the points that are put on teachers' performance contract, these ones of lesson observation come first. The SBM also gave me feedback mainly about the teaching practice and where to improve, he visits me every Friday because that is the day I have a debate with my students, so he comes to see how I planned it, how I lead it and how I support students.” **NQT, Male, Gisagara.**



CPD activities are more frequent and regular

- More teachers participate in Community of Practice sessions
- More headteachers and deputy headteachers participate in regular Professional Learning Communities sessions.
- The frequency of coaching and mentoring sessions has increased, with more school leaders indicating that they take place on a monthly or weekly basis.

“I was able to participate in different activities like trainings and CoPs. There is a change because now we are receiving more trainings comparing to before.”
STEM Teacher, Male, Gicumbi.



CPD is more useful

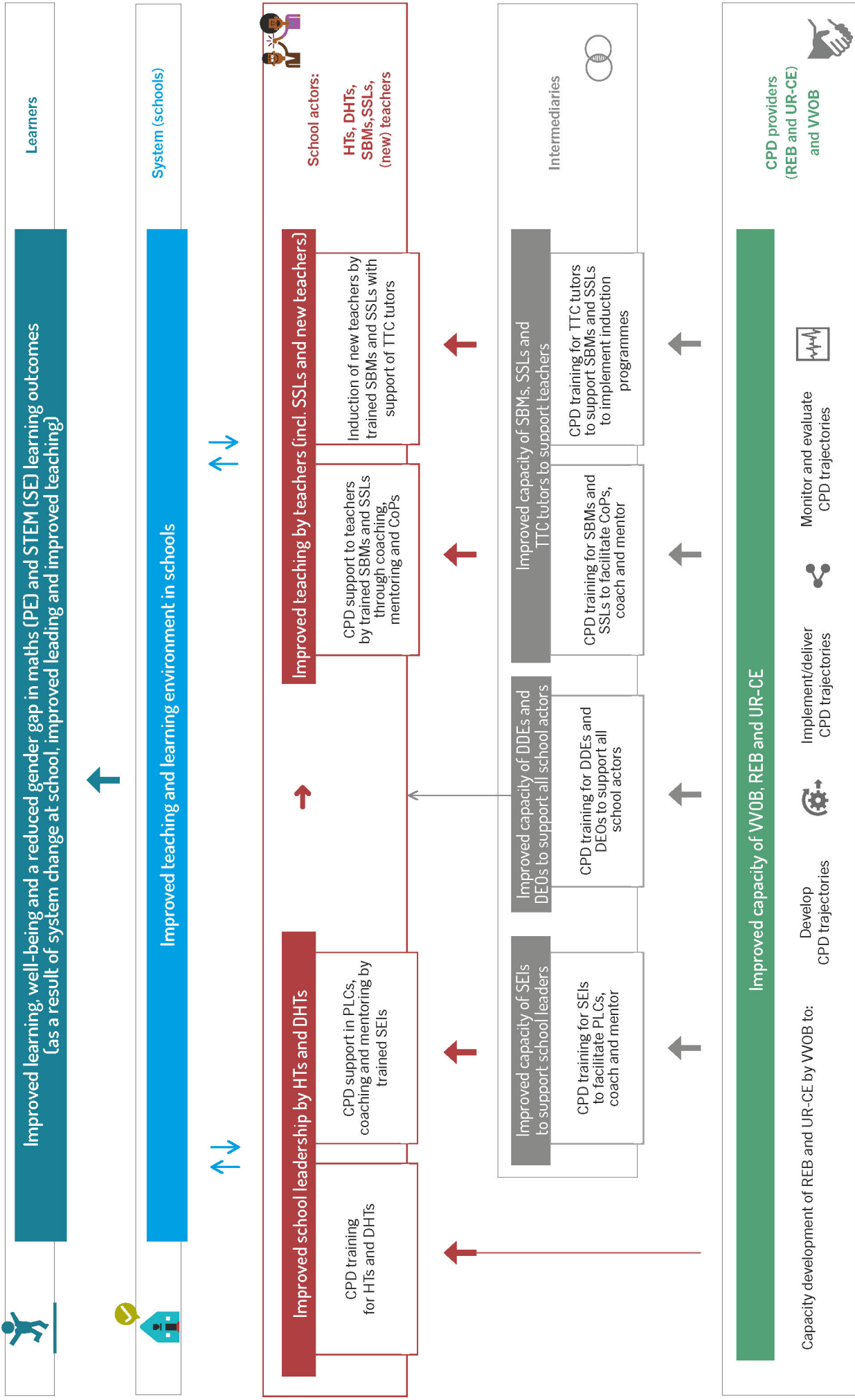
- SEIs report that PLCs have become more useful for achieving sector education priorities
- CPD is more needs-based
- Coaching and mentoring sessions are more structured

“Coaching looks more professional than how it was before. Now I listen to them to know what they really want. We have built a strong relationship and good communication, which makes it easier and professional. It is better because there is trust and respect and teachers are more open and honest in communicating with me and others.” **SBM, Male, Rwamagana.**

Main conclusions: Teaching and Learning environment

- Training more than one actor in a school and/or sector on a similar skill set has been important for further boosting the confidence and skills of different school actors.
- Training more than one actor at school and/or sector level results in more accountability and responsibility; roles and tasks are taken more seriously and there is a shift from proforma to meaningful behaviour.
- Four major changes are noted in how Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is organised at school and sector level when different actors are trained:
 1. CPD is more institutionalized;
 2. CPD is more inclusive;
 3. CPD is more frequent and regular;
 4. CPD is more useful

Annex 1. Theory of Change for the Leading, Teaching and Learning Together program





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