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Implementation Guidelines A Blueprint and Toolkit for School-Based Teacher Development: Secondary

PILOT PHASE





Implementation Guidelines – Pilot Phase

A Blueprint and Toolkit for
School-Based Teacher Development: Secondary



Acknowledgements

The *Blueprint and Toolkit for School-Based Teacher Development* was developed following the experience of a number of school-based teacher development programmes. Three sources were of particular importance:

The Commonwealth of Learning is grateful to Dr Caroline Pontefract for permission to use elements of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) School-Based Teacher Development (SBTD) Programme.

The Teacher Education in-Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) programme, one of the first major open educational resources (OER) for teacher education, is an important source of OER content that has been adapted for the Blueprint and Toolkit.

The TESS-India programme, which built on the TESSA experience, has also been an important source, particularly for the Key Resources section.

Introduction

Many professions rely on work-based approaches for professional development. In medicine, law and architecture, for example, “learning on the job” is an explicit part of initial and career-long education and training.

In teaching, recognition of the importance of school-based approaches has been a less central part of professional life. Many teachers still see professional improvement as something that happens away from the school, through occasional in-service courses. However, attitudes around this are beginning to change and for a number of reasons.

Firstly, the evidence increasingly shows the “out of school” approach has little impact on raising learner achievement. Section 2 of the Blueprint and Toolkit explores this concern in more detail. Secondly, as you will know, in many countries, regions and localities it is proving costly and logistically difficult to arrange effective out-of-school courses. The geography of some areas is a deterrent. Thirdly, the expanding number of teachers poses a challenge. In the coming years, the expansion expected in secondary numbers will make organising robust out-of-school development opportunities almost impossible.

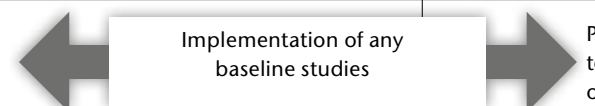
The Blueprint and Toolkit requires the co-ordinated involvement of key stakeholders. Sections 2 and 3 of the Blueprint discuss the roles of stakeholders in some detail. The Implementation Framework set out on the next page builds on this discussion to create a week-by-week guide for implementation.

The Framework includes two important organising ideas. Firstly, there has been a lot of discussion over the years about the problems of “top down” implementation planning. The Framework has an approach

that is both “top down” and “bottom up”. Yes, it is important to have political and senior administrative leadership. But it is also important that teachers feel ownership for the professional development processes they participate in. Secondly, there can be dangers in “micromanaging” the process. School principals and teachers, with support, should feel that they are taking responsibility for what happens in the school.



WEEK	POLICY SUPPORT	EXTERNAL SUPPORT	SCHOOL IMPLEMENTATION	NOTES
-3	Check national policy documentation in place Check district- and school-level awareness of policy documentation	Principal/head teacher meetings with external support staff Check school support timetable in place Check all schools have Toolkit	Principal/head teacher meetings with teachers about SBTD implementation Distribution of Toolkit	
-2	Senior political or senior administrative speech/ statement to teachers and parents	Check any school pairing/clustering is in place	Principals/head teachers explain 'Certificate of Completion'	
-1	Online message encouraging schools and teachers from policy leaders	Make operative any online support	Principal/head teacher takes lead on use of online support	
1			Respond to Question 1	
2			Respond to Question 2	
3		Support visit to school (I) and/or school cluster meetings	Respond to Question 3	
4			} Respond to Question 4 Teacher meeting to discuss progress	
5		Support staff meeting to discuss implementation (I)		
6			Respond to Question 5	
7			} Respond to Question 6	
8	Progress report to senior political and/or administrative leader	Support visit to school (II) and/or school cluster meetings		
9			} Respond to Question 7 Teacher meeting to discuss progress	
10		Support staff meeting to discuss ongoing implementation (II)		
11				
12				
13			Respond to Question 8	
14		Final support visit to school (III) and/or school cluster meetings	Respond to Question 9	
15			Respond to Question 10	
+1		Collation of data on teacher SBTD successful completion		
+2	Final report on SBTD programme successful completion data	Formal presentations of Certificates of Completion Ongoing: Advising schools and teachers of future development targets		



Commentary on Framework

Policy Support (from Ministerial and/or Administrative Leaders)

The Blueprint stresses the importance of clear policy leadership to support the SBTD programme. Ideally there should be some clear statement of policy that is distributed to schools and teachers. The Framework on page 2 shows that schools and teachers should be aware of this in advance of the implementation phase. A clear message from political/administrative leaders can also be important. Building professional competence at the school base justifies high-level support. But the Framework suggests that local implementers will need to report to policy leaders at an interim point and on completion of the programme.

External Support

Most school systems have some form of external support. The extent of the support will vary from one context to another, but external support staff have a valuable role in preparing schools for the SBTD programme. Where possible, external support staff can:

- facilitate local group meetings of school principals/head teachers in advance of the programme;
- arrange any support sessions that external staff can provide to the school: the framework suggests that three such visits could be planned;
- set up any school pairings or clusters to provide inter-school collaboration as part of the programme;

- set out the ways the pairing/clustering could be used; and
- establish any online support for schools and teachers.

There are four further important dimensions to local, external school support. The first is working with schools to establish formal recognition of the work done by the teachers. In a number of places around the world, this has taken the form of a “Certificate of Completion”. To achieve this, teachers need to keep a record of the activities they complete as part of the programme. This record will then be checked by senior school staff (and perhaps by external support staff) at the end of the programme. The Certificate of Completion approach is simple to carry out and a formal ceremony can enhance the importance of the programme.

Secondly, in some contexts, the use of baseline studies helps inform any evaluation about the successes or failings, of a programme. There is a need to identify what change is hoped for and anticipated following the training programme. An instrument is then created (questionnaires or interviews, for example) that is administered prior to and after the training. In this short SBTD programme, the change will most likely relate to teacher attitudes. A baseline study of attitudes before and after the programme could be of value. However, baseline studies need technical expertise to ensure authenticity. Bringing in such expertise might not be possible in a pilot phase.

Thirdly, irrespective of the use of baseline

studies, collection of data is important. There needs to be a robust database that records the number of schools and teachers involved, including the number of teachers successfully completing the programme. Attention will also have to be given to non-completing teachers and schools where many teachers failed to complete. Some investigation of the causes of non-completion will also be important.

Fourthly, external support staff can advise on future professional development targets. This may well be worked out in the context of local and regional targets for professional development.

School Implementation

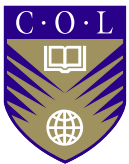
The programme is focused on development within the school. School leaders (principals/head teachers) and other leaders in the school have a significant role to play. They can:

1. prepare staff for the programme through staff meetings and advocacy;
2. establish any team structure through which the programme might be implemented (e.g. subject departments in a secondary school);
3. make sure staff are aware of the record of progress they need to keep;
4. explain any local procedures for “Certificates of Completion” or other types of award;
5. monitor the progress of implementation; informally (through discussions with individuals or groups of teachers) and formally (through meetings during implementation);
6. keep data on teacher completion;
7. provide feedback to programme organisers on how the programme could be improved in the future;
8. organise any school-based events or

9. play a major role in setting individual, group and school targets for future professional development; and
10. make sure parents/carers are aware of the commitment teachers are giving to professional improvement.



Individuals and groups of teachers might allocate different time frames to different parts of the programme. Previous experience suggests that everyone should work to common start and finish times. The Framework on page 2 suggests which questions could be covered across a 15-week period. This is not prescriptive, but it should be noted that Questions 6 and 7 have the most activities and so will require more time than other parts of the programme.



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