2.1 Teacher Workforce Planning

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Rules: Teacher Workforce Planning

Includes rules on: **Teacher workforce planning**, **Deployment**, **Teachers in remote areas** and **Attraction and retention.**

Teacher workforce planning in Sierra Leone

- The Teaching Service strives to ensure the teacher workforce is right-sized, with the right number of qualified teachers and subject specialists (neither too many or too few) deployed in the country's schools, whether urban, rural or remote.
- School leaders are responsible for forecasting the demand for teachers for their schools.
- The TSC forecasts teacher recruitment demand for each coming school year based on information received from school leaders.
- Every five years the TSC and MBSSE forecast the demand for teachers for the next five years. TTCs use the forecasted demand to plan input and output of teacher students.

Deployment

- Deployment of teachers aims to meet the needs of schools and pupils for qualified teachers.
- Deployment procedures shall be fair, transparent, equitable and based on objective criteria.
- Deployment must ensure an equal distribution of qualified teachers based on teacher-student ratios and the need for subject specialists throughout the country in urban, rural and remote areas.
- It is the policy of TSC that compensation for relocation expenses will be provided for employer-initiated deployment.

Teachers in Remote Areas

- Teachers deployed in areas designated as remote/hardship shall be compensated and are eligible for special benefits such as scholarships.
- Deployment to schools in remote areas must not be applied as a punitive measure.

Attraction & Retention

- The TSC shall promote the teaching profession at least once a year through campaigns in senior secondary schools, universities and teacher training colleges using appropriate media.
- The TSC shall takes measures to make the teaching profession attractive by offering an attractive career path, good working conditions, and similar measures.

Process: How to forecast and report the demand for teachers at school level

At the end of each school year, school leaders must estimate the need for teachers at their schools for the next school year and for the following five years. The exercise applies many of the same criteria as national workforce forecasting (see below).

At school level it is a matter of simply counting: Who is expected to retire and when? Who will be promoted to a higher position and when? What is the expected increase or decrease in pupil population? How often on average (based on experience from previous years) will a teacher transfer to another school or leave the service? Etc.

The school leader must supply information on recruitment needs at their school to their TSC-DO by using a regular calculation based on the below criteria. The TSC-DO will aggregate the results at district level and submit it to TSC-HQ, which will then use information from all districts to forecast the need for recruiting teachers on a national scale.

To forecast school workforce demand, school leaders should apply the following criteria:

- Increase or decrease in the estimated number of pupils
- Teacher-pupil ratio
- Total population of required teachers based on teacher-pupil ratio
- Need for teachers with subject specialization for specializations in secondary schools
- Teachers who are expected to retire
- School leaders who are expected to retire or be promoted to the civil service, TSC, etc.
- Teachers who are expected to be promoted to school leader positions
- Estimation of teachers who will transfer to other schools (based on the trend from previous years).
- Estimation of teachers expected to separate from the service (based on the trend from

previous years).

Further reading: What is teacher workforce planning and why is it important?

One of the teaching service´s main responsibilities is to ensure that every class and grade in every school throughout the country is sufficiently staffed by qualified teachers who can deliver the scheduled lessons according to the curriculum and expected standards. When this is not possible, due to teacher illness or another unexpected incident, the school leader must ensure a temporary replacement.

Therefore, the teaching service at national, district and school level must assess teacher demand for the coming school year and for the next five years to ensure:

- an adequate supply of teachers from teacher training colleges
- adequate budget allocation to schools and districts
- timely recruitment in time for the start of the school year.

Workforce planning is essential to avoid being taken by surprise by major increases or decreases in demand resulting from changes to policies or regulations, teacher-student ratios, demographics or the number of children of school age.

When **deploying teachers**, the teaching service must aim to ensure an even distribution of qualified teachers, subject teachers and young teachers between urban, rural and remote areas. They must also aim to improve gender balance within the teaching service.

Effective workforce planning ensures the teaching service is **rightsized** with the right people inthe right place at the right time. Rightsizing ensures optimal cost-efficiency and effective use ofthe workforce, achieving the best possible result for the least cost. Inadequate planning andutilisation of the workforce is costly in the long run.

Workforce planning and forecasting requires cooperation across several educational institutions including: schools, district education and school authorities, TSC, MBSSE, MTHE, universities and teacher training collages, and labour market institutions. The Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) is based on the school census is an important source for the forecast of teachers.

Sierra Leone has a high turn-over of teachers and a high attrition rate. Improved workforce planning will enable the teaching service to plan systematically for attracting and retaining teachers for life-long or prolonged career.

Best Practice: General criteria for forecasting teacher workforce

MBSSE is overall responsible for forecasting the demand of teachers for national planning and budgeting, while TSC must forecast for annual recruitment and deployment.

The following criteria (estimations) can be applied to forecast the demand for teachers at national level:

- Teacher student ratio
- Population growth and annual increase of children in the school age
- Demographic changes (for instance people moving from rural areas to Freetown)
- Increase or decrease in dropout rate
- Increase or decrease of passing rates
- The need for qualified teachers at each level (pre-, grades 1-3, grades 4-6, etc.)
- The need for qualified subject teachers in different specialisations in secondary schools
- Promotions from teacher into school leader positions or into the civil service
- Turnover rate, including scheduled retirements, estimated separations from service, etc.

Best Practice: How to attract and retain teachers

An important part of Human Resource Planning in an area of shortage is to find ways of attracting and retaining staff. Sierra Leone is facing a shortage of qualified teachers and therefore needs to attract young people to enrol in teacher training colleges and subsequently opt for a career in the teaching service.

In order to encourage young people for the teaching profession the teaching service has a range of options including:

- Organise promotion activities regularly, preferably annually, at the end of each school year and before exams for coming graduates in secondary schools and teacher training colleges.
- Apply young people's means of communication, information and learning, such as social media.
- Explore and implement means of raising the status of the profession through media campaigns.
- Highlight the advantages of being a teacher:
  - Meaningful job impacting on the country's economy and progress, social conditions and poverty elimination, the future careers of pupils, etc.
  - The joy of working with children.
  - Opportunities for creativity in teaching.
  - Opportunities for pursuing and developing subject interests.
- Lay-out an attractive career path for teachers (from rural community school to UNESCO).
- Offer benefits to teachers if possible, such as housing, school meals, etc.
- Offer a good work environment, i.e. good facilities, common rooms for teachers, cleanliness, open and green spaces, proper classrooms which are not crammed, etc.
- Enhance best-practice leadership in schools.
- Ensure smooth administration of all HR processes pertaining to teachers.
- Promote a stimulating academic and learning environment for teachers.
- Provide insurance, a good pension scheme and similar benefits to teachers.