

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE NOTE 4

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR EDUCATION SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

1. Topic overview

What is capacity development?

Capacity development is fundamental to development cooperation and is highlighted within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is central to the support provided by the EU to help partner governments to achieve education outcomes and strengthen education systems. Capacity development has been a focus of development policy over the past 30 years, with literature developed over this time, giving various definitions, approaches, guidelines and critiques. EU guidance draws on the work of the OECD which defines capacity as “the ability of people, organisations and society to manage their affairs successfully”, and capacity development as the process by which they “unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time”.ⁱ Development agencies generally recognise the need for demand-driven models which prioritise local ownership and the capacity to plan and deliver programmes within national systems, rather than being driven by supply from external agencies. However, despite the various frameworks and tools available, capacity development is by its very nature a complex undertaking. This PGN looks at the specific implications of this for EU support to the education sector.ⁱⁱ

“Simply put, if capacity is the means to plan and achieve, then capacity development describes the ways to those means ... it must bring about transformation that is generated and sustained over time from within. Transformation of this kind goes beyond performing tasks; instead, it is more a matter of changing mindsets and attitudes.” *Capacity Development: a UNDP Primer, 2017.*

Different tools have been developed for the analysis of capacity and the planning of interventions, either broadly across the public sector, or within specific sectors, considering the role of state and non-state actors.

Summary

- Capacity development is a complex and lengthy process and needs to be locally driven. It focuses on individuals, organisations and the enabling environment.
- Assessing capacity should be part of broader sector analysis. This PGN offers a framework to consider capacity development needs for education system management and school-level functions.
- Capacity development strategies should be built into education systems and consider the best use and mix of technical cooperation inputs.

While the skills, knowledge, motivation and behaviour of **individuals** are critically important, their contribution depends greatly on the effectiveness of the organisations in (or with) which they work. In turn, organisations can only function well and deliver results if the **institutional or broader social and political environment** enables, rather than acts as a barrier to, change.

In the education sector, this broad framework provides a useful way to analyse the capacity development needs of an education system:

- **Enabling environment:** the rules, power relations, national culture and social norms which govern how the education system works. The enabling environment includes broader public sector management and reforms which will influence policy and service delivery within the education sector, including how responsibility, autonomy and accountability are set at different levels. At each level of the education system, the political economy and social norms will affect the incentives, behaviour and attitudes of different actors.
- **Organisational:** the mandate, functions and effectiveness of units within the education administration, including ministry of education departments, independent authorities, district education offices and schools. Education administrations perform specific functions which should ensure the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Organisational units need clear roles and responsibilities, and management practices,

i OECD DAC Network on Governance, *The Challenge of Capacity Development: Working Towards Good Practice*, 2006, p. 8-9 [http://www1.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=DAC/DAC/GOVNET\(2005\)5/REV1&docLanguage=En](http://www1.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=DAC/DAC/GOVNET(2005)5/REV1&docLanguage=En)

ii As for this TMS Reference Document more broadly, while this is relevant across the sector, the focus is on the school system, rather than post-secondary education.

processes and resources to enable them to perform these functions effectively. As part of this, they should “own” results; to operationalise policy and programme objectives, report on them and reward performance.

- **Individual:** the people within the system; the teachers, principals, managers and officials, as well as parents and students. The capacity of the education system depends on the skills, knowledge, motivation, attitudes and behaviour of the people within it. Policy and programmes should be appropriate to the capacity of those who are meant to implement them (especially teachers) and the needs of students. Individual actors in the system need to know what they are aiming for and understand their responsibilities.

A common critique has been that capacity development efforts have focused too much on technical solutions, relying on training and other inputs focused on individual skills and knowledge, without considering the broader enabling context, which may determine what is, or is not, possible. There is a recognition of complexity; despite the needs of governments and development agencies for user-friendly planning frameworks, capacity development is non-linear, adaptive and, at its heart, is about how people and organisations change and whether they buy in to proposed reforms.

In the education sector, the ultimate indicator of capacity is the equity and quality of teaching and learning in schools. The capacity of organisational units and individuals within them should be oriented to this, even if their specific contributions are quite specialised. Capacity development itself can be an objective within a sector strategy and should be institutionalised within existing system mechanisms (e.g. for performance management and staff development), so that it is sustainable and self-renewing.

Assessing capacity in the education system

Education sector analysis (ESA)ⁱⁱⁱ is a key step in the development of an education sector plan (ESP) and associated programme design; capacity development should be integrated into this analysis.^{iv} An ESA can help identify bottlenecks to achieving sector objectives, providing a specific focus for more in-depth capacity assessments. The process of assessment can contribute to a common understanding of what needs to change within specific functions in the system. This should be part of a national process and is a basis on which to plan support from development partners.

A capacity assessment should consider whether specific education objectives can be achieved within the existing capacities of the system and what changes might be needed. The TMS Education Reference Document puts

forward a framework^v to understand education systems, describing how **system management** supports **school-level service delivery** to improve student learning:

- **System management** requires appropriate capacity for policy and planning, financial management, human resource management (HRM), quality assurance and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). These are functions which mainly relate to central ministry departments and their sub-national units (e.g. provincial or district level).
- **Schools** require capacity to implement policies to ensure good quality teaching and learning takes place, all children can participate, and communities and other stakeholders are engaged.

This framework is developed in Annex 1 to set out a checklist of issues to consider when assessing capacity for education system functions.^{vi} There are important dimensions which cut across these technical functions within an education system, such as the overall quality of leadership, the learning culture of an organisation and how knowledge is managed, shared, and used. Specific areas of reform will need capacity across a number of functions, particularly to ensure school-level improvements. Evaluations regularly show that despite changes in national system capacity, the key bottleneck is capacity at school and local levels to implement policy.

Drawing on the checklist in Annex 1, if a challenge is identified in the allocation and management of school funding to improve learning, then different functions may be strengthened to contribute to this. Analysis of **Public Financial Management (PFM)** and **school management** functions can focus on the institutional factors which determine whether decisions are equitable and transparent, the organisational roles and responsibilities and the extent to which these are understood and implemented, and the technical knowledge, skills and motivation of staff (and community members) to perform their respective tasks. Analysis of **quality assurance** systems should assess capacity to provide clear standards for schools and monitor and support their implementation. Analysis of **M&E** systems should assess capacity to provide timely data for system planning and budgeting, but also for school managers. These functions involve different administrative units and staff within a Ministry of Education, its sub-national organisation and schools, and potentially other central or sector ministries.

Another example could be where a sector strategy aims to address poor and variable **quality of teaching**, then analysis can focus on who is responsible for delivering **pre- and in-service professional development** and how this is done, whether their mandates are clear, resources are sufficient and well used, how assessment and other data are used,

iii See PGN 1 on Education Sector Analysis.

iv Guidance on institutional assessment linked to ESA is in preparation; see UNESCO IIEP in References and Further Reading section.

v Ref TMS Chapter 2 Education systems.

vi Annex 1 is included as a checklist of issues, primarily to inform EU Delegations' staff in understanding the sector context and planning support. This is not presented as a tool for broader use.

and whether trainers and managers, supervisors, and head teachers have the necessary skills and knowledge. The capacity of **school management** to support and provide pedagogical leadership and create a culture of peer support will also be important. It is also critical to understand the challenges which limit the capacity of teachers and their motivation and willingness to deliver better teaching or even to be in class. National **HRM systems**, linked to civil service reforms, will determine who enters the profession and their conditions of service. There is often significant variation in capacity between urban and rural schools, or schools in areas which face their own challenges.

The choice of approach and specific analytical tools will depend on the context and the needs of the sector. Realistically, a comprehensive assessment of capacity across the system may not be possible as a single short-term exercise, but rather should be built up over time. Assessment should focus on whether capacity exists at different levels to deliver necessary change to achieve policy objectives, particularly for better teaching and learning in schools. The assessment should also analyse external support to education and its contribution to capacity development. There are different tools and approaches to analyse capacity, focused on organisational and individual levels, the specific educational administration set up of ministries and their sub-national units and other educational authorities. These include stakeholder analysis, functional analysis, organisational needs assessments, training needs assessments, and tests of teacher knowledge and skills. To look at the enabling environment, analyses may have been conducted on which to draw; political economy analysis, analysis of social norms or other institutional analysis.

Assessments should cover the school and district levels, even if just a representative sample, in order to gauge how capacity at different levels of the administration has an impact on delivery at school, classroom and community levels. While assessments may focus on the public sector, non-state and private provision of schooling and other services can play an important role and should be considered. Situations of crisis, including war and natural disasters, will have a significant impact on capacity at different levels. Analysis might focus on how education systems cope with this and if disaster risk reduction plans are in place, and how well these plans function to maintain service provision during or after crisis.

Formulating a capacity development strategy

Capacity development is a central focus of external assistance to education. However, a critique has been that too much support has been donor and supply driven. There is broad consensus that to be effective and to bring about lasting change, any capacity development strategy needs to be demand driven with national leadership and ownership. Capacity development should be integrated within a sector plan, with an outline of what is required of

actors at each level to meet sector objectives. Education sector plans often include improved sector management as an objective. Ultimately, capacity development should be built into the way education systems function, whether as individual staff development, or organisational change and performance management.

Cambodia's Capacity Development Partnership Fund

(CDPF): alongside sector budget support, the EU contributes to the CDPF, with other development partners, which supports the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport's (MOEYS) Capacity Development Master Plan, focusing on key reform priorities (e.g. teacher and school principal development, school inspection, school management, student assessment). This fund, managed by UNICEF, works across departments at the central level and supports local delivery capacity, particularly in marginalised districts. The CDPF uses a range of approaches, including technical assistance, studies, mentoring, and partnerships with NGOs and other institutions.

Drawing on the above framework, a capacity development strategy should account for and work across the three levels and find the right entry points for change:

- **Enabling environment:** addressing barriers to change will require the engagement of actors / stakeholders across government and throughout the education system; fostering leadership and building consensus and buy in to a change process. Broader public sector reforms may set the framework for specific reforms in the sector, in terms of financial management, staff performance management and results monitoring and accountability. Increasing national capacity for research and using evidence and advocacy at different levels can play a role.
- **Organisational level:** capacity development strategies can focus on revising and strengthening departmental mandates, roles and responsibilities, ensuring the availability of financial and human resources, putting in place processes for operational planning and performance management, and tools/guidelines for information management and use. Evaluations indicate the need to give more attention to district and local-level capacity within education administrations, school management structures and communities.
- **Individual level:** strategies should address staff needs in terms of training, resources and the opportunities provided by new technology. Staff training needs to be sustained over time and linked to on-going coaching or mentoring. The performance of individuals will be influenced by organisational factors, but they will need to understand their own responsibilities and be able to perform them. This may require managing other demands, developing new skills, qualifications, and experience over time. Staff in key positions may not have the right profile, requiring training or new recruitment, identifying talent and encouraging merit-based career progression. Staff need to understand and buy into sector policy objectives and priorities, which may constitute a culture change and require specific training.

A capacity development strategy in education should focus on ESP priorities, and avoid overwhelming educational staff and organisations with too much change, through effective phasing. Some further considerations should include:

- **The use of national systems** for planning, implementing and education monitoring interventions is itself a capacity development response. Programme design and intervention logic should include clear capacity development outputs. This should build on existing capacity, empowering different actors to identify their own objectives and make decisions about how to use resources.
- **Capacity development should happen at scale** across the education system, even if there is a need to target specific needs (e.g. by location, function). To improve capacity across all schools is a significant challenge, which may require local solutions, working through district offices and civil society organisations (CSOs). CSOs and research organisations also need capacity to provide and use evidence on the outcomes of policy, and in their work with national and government partners to support education system management and delivery.
- **Capacity development is a complex process which happens over time.** Strategies should account for this with appropriate and realistic phasing, building on existing capacity and considering how change will happen, for instance through acquisition of skills and changing practice over time, building critical mass of support among staff and communities, and shifting the allocation of resources to new priorities. Capacity development is not a linear or predictable process. Programmes may need to learn and adapt in order to take opportunities and respond to needs.
- **The management of technical cooperation and capacity development interventions** should be led by and be accountable to government and national authorities, rather than through parallel donor systems. Aid to education is often provided in the form of technical cooperation, including local and international technical assistance. Lessons from what has or has not worked should be considered as part of a strategy (e.g. effective counterpart allocation, performance management, technical assistance procurement and recruitment, advisory vs management roles). The way technical assistance has been used may not have been effective, so ministries and donors should consider new approaches.
- **Strategies should ensure the best mix and use of inputs;** limiting the focus on ad hoc, short-term needs. A mix of locally appropriate inputs should be considered in planning, including the potential for innovative approaches. Careful consideration should be given to ensure workshops, training and other activities are systemic and do not have negative unplanned consequences (e.g. taking staff away from their jobs, creating perverse incentives through salary supplements). Strategies should aim for coherence

between national, school and local-level inputs.

- **A clear monitoring framework is crucial** to keep the focus and incentives on concrete and achievable change processes at different levels of the system and provide an evidence base.
- **In crisis affected contexts,** the focus of capacity development and technical cooperation may be more focused on maintaining current staff and organisational capacity and building resilience. In such contexts, political economy and conflict analysis is an important starting point. Where crises result in displacement, capacity development may focus on change management (e.g. to cope with movement of teachers and students, language issues, disruption of services).

Taking the example given in the previous section, school-level capacity can be developed through provision of grant funding, with increasing autonomy over time for decision making, systems for community engagement and technical support to ensure resources are helping to improve learning. Capacity development could be provided through district teams, with appropriate guidance, sustained training and support for principals and school management committees. Full autonomy where there is limited capacity may be counter-productive but can be built up over time, with increasing funding and spending responsibility, self-evaluation and use of performance data and local innovation.

EU support to district-level capacity development in

Laos: As part of the new primary curriculum rollout in 2019, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) has introduced new in-service training, using a two-step cascade approach to train the trainers, who train the primary principals and teachers. Trainer teams are drawn from qualified staff across the system, at national and sub-national levels. EU budget support includes a variable tranche indicator to increase operational budgets to district education offices, alongside complementary support to train and accredit district Pedagogical Advisors. This aims to establish strong district teams with capacity and resources to support schools, principals and teachers on an on-going basis.

2. Key issues

EU support to education aims, wherever possible, to work through and strengthen national systems. Capacity development should therefore be an integral part of programme design. The provision of sector budget support (where eligible) aims to develop capacity by using national planning, financial management and monitoring systems. Typically, budget support will use indicators to focus on priority reform areas and may be supported with capacity development funding through complementary technical cooperation support. Where budget support

is not possible, other modalities, including technical cooperation interventions, also aim to develop capacity within the system, usually in a targeted sub-sector and/or function. The framework in Annex 1 can be a basis for planning and managing this kind of support.

As already highlighted, capacity development should be led and managed to the extent possible by national authorities and other stakeholders in the education system. Specific considerations for EU contributions to capacity development in education should include:

a) Policy dialogue and consensus building:

- Capacity assessments, as part of broader ESA and sector planning processes, can be a good entry point to and basis for dialogue linked to EU support. It is broadly felt that donors should not conduct their own, independent assessments, but contribute to and engage in nationally led ESA. EU Delegations could fund specific analysis, where there is demand, either as part of broader ESA and sector planning processes or linked to EU own programme formulation.
- Policy dialogue at technical levels, through engagement in working groups, annual reviews and other forums, can be a chance to contribute to analysis of sectoral capacity constraints, identifying priorities/strategies for capacity development and ensuring coordination between development partners. High-level political dialogue can play a role where there are more significant challenges within the enabling environment.
- EU support for research, or to local or school-level delivery through CSOs can provide a useful entry point to this dialogue. Equally, where the EU supports reform in other sectors or across the public sector (e.g. in PFM, governance) there may be important opportunities to support a stronger focus on the enabling institutional environment.

b) Programme identification and formulation:

- The programme intervention logic should include clear objectives for capacity development and well-reasoned assumptions about the capacity of organisations and individual actors. It should also include broader institutional factors – how change will happen and over what timeframe. To the extent possible, programmes should be designed around existing capacity, aiming for incremental improvements, potentially building on successful intervention pilots and ensuring an equity focus (e.g. remote areas, gender).
- Joint funding with other donors and partners can provide impetus for more consistent and joined-up support. There may be existing or potential options for pooled funding for technical cooperation, which respond to government-led plans for capacity development. Partners should consider overall absorption capacity of educational units, where various

- development partner interventions work in parallel.
- The use of technical assistance and other technical cooperation inputs should empower actors in the system to bring about change (e.g. for planning, use of data, accountability, gender strategies), with terms of reference for any external technical assistance to include the transfer of technical expertise to national counterparts. A range of inputs should be considered, including research, institutional twinning, mentoring, on the job training and the use of information and evidence. These should contribute to how educational units (e.g. departments, districts) will function better (e.g. the use of learning assessment or other data to improve planning, use of resources and school performance).
- While recognising the need for international expertise, it is important to scope existing capacity within national higher education institutions, research, consultancy and community-based organisations, to undertake capacity development. Collaboration with higher education institutions or use of their personnel as advisors or consultants should be done through transparent institutional arrangements that strengthen the parent institution.

Institutional twinning to strengthen assessment in

Morocco: the EU has supported the strengthening of the student learning assessment system through its budget support, as well as with an institutional twinning between the “Instance Nationale d’Evaluation” (INE), responsible for national learning assessments, and the French Ministry of Education and CIEP (now France Education International). This support is complemented by technical assistance to the Ministry of Education for the set up of a remediation system at school level, to support children in acquiring the basic competencies at each level.

c) Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

- As part of a sector approach, EU support to capacity development in education should be part of a sector plan and its associated performance assessment framework and indicators. In the provision of budget support, strengthening the capacity of national M&E systems is a key area to consider, including how EMIS and other data systems are managed.
- Capacity development should target national needs rather than internal EU requirements and, as such, should ensure M&E is not purely extractive for upper levels of the system, but feeds adaptive management throughout the system, including schools and communities.
- Within a programme intervention logic/results chain, capacity development needs to be articulated as outputs that can be measured over time. Output indicators may be articulated in terms of improved capacity and systems, and may themselves incentivise or contribute to capacity development (e.g. for organisational changes, processes, results).

3. Case study

Source	Judith Chirwa, EU Delegation, Malawi; Carlton Aslett, Team Leader/Institutional Development Expert, ISEM-TA
Programme	Improving Secondary Education in Malawi (ISEM) (2017-2020, EUR 36,000,000). Supports the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) to strengthen secondary education. The project focuses on equity of access, quality of instruction, governance and capacity development of decentralised systems and actors.
Context and challenges	<p>Secondary education in Malawi faces significant equity and efficiency challenges, with low transition from primary to secondary schools and poor learning results. The national sector plan includes strategies to expand access to secondary, particularly through Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSS), which serve the most disadvantaged communities. To deliver quality education, a number of capacity and institutional challenges in the system of performance management at school and local level need to be addressed.</p> <p>Through MOEST-led interviews and focus group discussions at each of the level of the system, it was found that annual data collection contains critical gaps, does not satisfy users' needs and is not available for use for more than 12 months. Processes focussing on student performance and outcomes are limited or absent. There has been little or no training on the performance management system.</p> <p>The majority of education sector data originates from the school. Questionnaires are distributed annually for school completion with data input completed externally from the school. No reports or analysis are shared with schools. Most of the data fields focus on inputs; this captures aggregated grade and year data and does not allow for student-level data. The approach is costly and has never provided accurate, consistent, timely or relevant data.</p> <p>To address low levels of learning, there is a need to systemically capture student progress so teachers and their supervisors can adapt teaching and learning approaches. Teacher need to know how well students are progressing vis-à-vis the subject syllabus, the scheme of work for the period in question and specific lesson plans. This requires formative (continuous classroom) assessment practice, in addition to summative, end-of-term and year assessments.</p>
Action taken	<p>The project targets one district in each of the six regions, working through government systems to provide best opportunity to scale up to all districts/schools. The focus is on CDSS, recognised as the most disadvantaged. A Secondary Education Decentralisation Roadmap is under development, at the centre of which is the Performance Management System; a school-based system to capture, analyse and use performance data for individual students, teachers, classrooms and schools. The project is supporting MOEST to put this in place and develop system, process and human resource capacity. This requires knowledge and skills of system actors and transparency across and between levels.</p> <p>An example of this is the data capture process. School leadership, teachers, school management committee, parent-teacher association and community are aware of the data-capture requirements, and processes are being put in place to use data on a weekly and monthly basis. For instance, weekly teacher meetings review student attendance and monthly external oversight meetings review key school indicators. This ensures that demand for data is institutionalised and where data is not available, stakeholders know and may take action to correct what is missing.</p> <p>A school-based digital, on-line management tool linked to a national database was identified as a means for providing student data, capturing output as well as inputs, limiting the manipulation of data and allowing for frequent reporting of data for all users. The digital product is one component of the Performance Management System. Person-to-person processes are key; the reports generated will be used in dialogue between teachers, teachers and parents, teachers and supervisors, school leaders and school supervisors, sub-national actors and the ministry. This contributes to decision-making and adaptive management at each level.</p> <p>As part of its focus on school-level performance management, with a focus on learning, ISEM supports MOEST to develop the foundational skills of secondary school teachers, their understanding of the new secondary education curriculum, to better plan and deliver lessons, and continually assess their students so they may respond to individual students' needs. This focus on practical, classroom and school reform could be the basis for a continuous professional development system which could in time be aligned with the performance management system.</p>
Impact	It is too early to report on impact. Some emerging and promising areas include: greater autonomy and confidence of cluster centre schools to make decisions based upon knowledge and practice. In some schools qualitative and quantitative data are informing teachers' classroom practices based upon quality assurance.
Lessons learned	<p>The project has approached capacity development by working with different levels of the education system and building on its strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance is most effectively used to facilitate new skills and knowledge. Project activities are better planned and implemented by the appropriate system levels and actors; governed by the same management functions and rules as other secondary education activities, including monitoring, evaluation and learning. ISEM works with central departments to support districts, and Division, Region and District education authorities to support schools. • It is important to facilitate better collaboration between levels, including in the selection of trainers and training activities, and quality assurance processes (e.g. self and peer models of review through to end-user inclusion). • It is important to identify and use existing system capacity. For example, trainers are selected from within the system who demonstrate capacity and have good understanding of the drivers and limitations facing their colleagues. • The organisation of training and follow up is critical. In ISEM, building block skills are identified that enable beneficiaries to improve performance across their mandate and responsibilities. Training is focused on targeted objectives, divided into short training blocks, with succinct and accessible materials. Follow up includes reflective activities for school and office-based application. • Using and reinforcing existing practice from within the system builds legitimacy and buy in. ISEM has helped build the performance management system on the experience of good practice within Malawi, identified by inspectors, district managers, school head teachers, for example, the daily collection of data by schools, how some schools use student learning results or conduct classroom observation. In this way, reform is seen as home-grown and more sustainable.

4. References and further reading

There is a broad literature around capacity development approaches, with some education focused reviews and guidance. Selected references include:

European Commission, *Tools and Methods Series Guideline No.3 - Making Technical Cooperation More Effective*, 2009. https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/methodology-tools-and-methods-series-reforming-technical-cooperation-200903_en_2.pdf

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UNESCO IIEP, *Education Sector Analysis Guidelines: Analysis of the functioning and effectiveness of the educational administration*, Vol.3. (Not yet published). When available see: <https://poledakar.iiep.unesco.org/en/news/education-sector-analysis-new-methodological-guidelines>

Annex 1: Assessing capacity for education system management and service delivery

Systems	Institutional / enabling context	Organisational	Individual
SECTOR MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS			
Policy and strategic planning	<p>What is the constitutional, legal and regulatory framework for education and does it enable reform?</p> <p>Where and how is new education policy decided and does this build consensus?</p> <p>What roles have been located at decentralised levels and is there political support for this?</p> <p>Are there clear and agreed roles for government, the private sector and non-state actors in the provision of education?</p>	<p>Are there clearly-stated policy priorities and goals and how are these determined?</p> <p>Is there a sector plan (ESP) and who was involved in its development and appraisal?</p> <p>How well is research and evidence used in the policy and planning process?</p> <p>Do departmental/sub-national units have clear roles in delivering ESP results?</p>	<p>Are departmental staff aware of their responsibilities and do they have the profile and technical skills for sector analysis and planning?</p> <p>Are policymakers using the available analysis and evidence to make decisions?</p> <p>Are there opportunities to conduct research for staff within government, academic or other organisations?</p> <p>Which actors influence the policy, planning and budgeting process and what are their special interests?</p> <p>Are there champions of change that can represent marginalised groups?</p> <p>Do leaders of marginalised groups have the skills and access to policy dialogue?</p>
Public financial management	<p>What is driving the overall allocation of funding to education within government and what rules and norms determine how these education resources are used?</p> <p>How do broader PFM reforms impact on education, including the systems for accountability in the use of funds?</p> <p>How is non-state funding and investment in education managed and regulated?</p>	<p>Are departmental/sub-national roles in budget allocation and approval clear? Who authorises spending and what internal control systems are in place?</p> <p>What do financial reports cover and how often are they produced?</p> <p>Does spending in education promote learning and target those most in need?</p> <p>Is funding for schools transparent and does it reach them on time?</p>	<p>Do key staff in MOE and sub-national levels have the profile and skills for budget planning and expenditure management?</p> <p>Can individual actors (within and outside of government) influence resource allocation decisions to achieve change and focus on results?</p>
Human resource management systems	<p>Are there civil service reforms which have implications for recruitment, incentives, and management of personnel?</p> <p>Is there a culture of performance management and results focus among civil service and HRM more broadly? In education does, or could, this focus on quality of teaching and learning?</p> <p>What is the role of teacher unions and their relationship with authorities?</p>	<p>Are there effective and fair processes for recruitment, deployment, professional development and promotion of principals, teaching and non-teaching staff (and which central or sub-national units are responsible)?</p> <p>Is this based on analysis of teacher demand/supply?</p> <p>Is there a framework for setting teacher qualifications, training and accreditation and how well does it function?</p> <p>Are there processes for staff to be rewarded for good performance?</p>	<p>Are there staff with technical skills in departments for staff and teacher recruitment and management?</p> <p>Are staff in sub-national units clear about their roles in HRM and how to perform them?</p> <p>Are teachers and principals motivated?</p>
Quality assurance systems	<p>Is there a legal/regulatory framework for accountability in education?</p> <p>Is there a public debate around the quality of service delivery and in education is this focused on learning?</p> <p>Is the government open to the role of CSOs in monitoring the performance of the system?</p>	<p>Are responsible departments able to align curriculum development with materials, teacher training and examinations? Can they ensure quality teaching and learning materials are available for schools (e.g. including content, language)?</p> <p>What is the process for school inspection and support and how well does it work?</p> <p>Are there minimum service standards against which school quality is judged?</p> <p>Does this cover non-state schools?</p> <p>Are examination and assessments effective and how are results used?</p>	<p>Are supervisory staff at district level able to provide support to teachers, principals and school managers?</p> <p>Do school managers and school management committee (SMC) members use assessment and other data to report on their performance?</p> <p>Do district staff have the resources and skills to perform their functions?</p>

Monitoring and evaluation systems	<p>What demand is there across government, and society more broadly, for information on education programmes and results? How is this communicated and used?</p> <p>In what ways does broader political economy stimulate or block the provision of information?</p> <p>Is there a government ICT/digital policy which includes use of data for M&E?</p>	<p>Is there a framework of SMART indicators, how was it agreed, and does it represent ESP priorities?</p> <p>Does the EMIS function well, produce timely and relevant reports?</p> <p>How is information used at different levels and what action is taken?</p> <p>Are there sufficient staff and appropriate technology in central and sub-national offices to collect and manage data?</p>	<p>Do staff at central and sub-national levels have the technical skills and the necessary equipment or software?</p> <p>Are specialist staff contracted to support data systems and analysis?</p> <p>Are senior decision makers able to use data and analysis?</p>
SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEMS			
School management and leadership systems	<p>Are communities broadly empowered to play a role in local development and resource use for services, and hold providers accountable? How does this apply to schools?</p> <p>Who owns and run non-state schools (community, private, other organisations)? What are their interests and is there and guiding regulation?</p>	<p>What autonomy do schools and principals have over resources and decisions?</p> <p>Do school management committees have a clear role and is their composition fair and representative of the community?</p> <p>Do schools receive funds for the implementation of school improvement plans? Are they implemented effectively?</p> <p>Are school principals well supported?</p> <p>How does school leadership and community engagement vary, particularly for disadvantaged areas?</p>	<p>Do principals and management staff understand their roles (as instructional leaders and in financial and administrative management) and do they have the experience and skills?</p> <p>Do SMC, community members and parents understand their roles, and do they have the skills and support they need (especially in disadvantaged areas)?</p> <p>Are parents and community members aware of their rights, able to voice their concerns and participate in school management?</p>
Teaching quality	<p>Are there social and economic challenges which make it hard to recruit teachers in certain areas or which limit their attendance?</p> <p>What are the established social expectations of teachers, their role and how they are accountable to parents, communities and education authorities?</p> <p>Is there a clear policy around national languages and their use within education?</p>	<p>Are there clear and achievable standards for teachers and for teacher trainers (qualifications, knowledge, skills)?</p> <p>What is the standard of pre-service professional development for teachers?</p> <p>How often do teachers receive in-service professional development and who/where is this provided (e.g. teacher training institutions, district teams)?</p> <p>Is there school-based observation, mentoring and peer support for teachers?</p> <p>Is there data and analysis on teacher attendance and time spent teaching?</p>	<p>Do national and sub-national staff have the skills and resources to manage teacher professional development?</p> <p>Are teachers clear what is expected of them (curriculum content, pedagogy, assessment) and are they able to implement this?</p> <p>Are principals, school managers, and local supervisors able to support teachers effectively and regularly?</p> <p>Do teachers have the resources and time needed to support each other?</p>
School materials & other inputs	<p>Does education policy and resource allocation ensure equity in provision of school materials and inputs, offsetting broader social and economic disadvantages?</p> <p>Is the system of procurement transparent and fair, focused on the quality of learning materials and good value for money?</p>	<p>Which departments/units are in charge of procurement and getting textbooks and other materials to schools? What role does the private sector play?</p> <p>What books and other materials are available in schools, are they of good quality and are they being used effectively?</p> <p>Is technology being used in schools for teaching and learning? Is this only in better resourced schools?</p>	<p>Do staff in national and sub-national units understand their roles and have the right skills to ensure books and other teaching and learning materials reach schools?</p> <p>Are teachers (especially in more remote or disadvantaged schools) able to access technology to support their work and use this in their teaching?</p>
Safe and appropriate school environments	<p>Is there a recognition of broad child protection challenges and the specific risks to girls, ethnic minorities, children with disabilities, or other groups?</p> <p>Are there crises (e.g. conflicts, natural disasters or extreme weather) which put schools, teachers and students at risk?</p> <p>Are national systems for Disaster Risk Reduction in place and how does this affect education and schools?</p>	<p>Are there appropriate policies and systems for child protection in schools and are they implemented?</p> <p>Are there agreed standards for a safe learning environment (including for girls, children with disabilities)?</p> <p>Which administrative units are in charge of planning, building and maintaining school infrastructure?</p> <p>Are poor facilities, distance and unsafe journeys affecting school attendance?</p> <p>Are schools built to safe standards, for example to mitigate the risks of earthquakes and flooding? Are there adequate water and gender-segregated sanitation facilities?</p>	<p>Do staff at national, sub-national and school level understand their roles and the processes for school building and maintenance?</p> <p>Are school staff trained on awareness of and skills to address conflict and environmental/climate crises?</p> <p>Do community, SMC members and CSO staff have the knowledge and skills to influence/demand that standards are met?</p> <p>Are communities expected and able to contribute to maintain and improve the school environment and the safety of students?</p>