

## Unit 6: Teachers

“The quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers” contains some truth but education systems support and can improve *teaching*. In this unit we examine the relationships between teachers and the systems of which they are part.

Education systems must effectively recruit, train, deploy, motivate and professionally develop their workforces in order to address the challenge of quality education for all. Teachers need leadership and support to be effective and to serve learners with a wide range of needs. ‘Teacher quality’ is therefore a result of a complex interplay of systemic and individual-level factors and is challenging to conceptualise and to measure. For example, observable indicators of teacher quality (like many other educational ‘inputs’) typically show only very limited predictive power in empirical modelling exercises.

In sub-Saharan Africa in particular, shortages of teachers and limitations of quality present a major challenge. Strengthening and reform of the education workforce in any particular context can be controversial and requires navigation of political economy as well as potentially new resources, data and management.

After completing the unit, students should:

- Understand the difficulties of defining and assessing teacher quality and the limitations of specific approaches to this
- Understand the importance of limitations of teacher supply (number and quality) in relation to the ‘learning crisis’ and the pursuit of SDG4 and the trade-offs that result from this in particular contexts
- Understand the importance of political economy with respect to systemic reform where the education workforce is concerned

### Required Readings

Bruns, Barbara, and Javier Luque. 2014. *Great teachers: How to raise student learning in Latin America and the Caribbean*. World Bank Publications.

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Azam, Mehtabul, and Geeta Gandhi Kingdon. "Assessing teacher quality in India." *Journal of Development Economics* 117 (2015): 74-83.

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Bold, Tessa, et al. "Enrollment without learning: Teacher effort, knowledge, and skill in primary schools in Africa." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 31.4 (2017): 185-204.

<https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/jep.31.4.185>

## Further Readings

Aslam, Monazza, Shenila Rawal, and Geeta Kingdon. "The Political Economy of Teachers in South Asia." *Handbook of Education Systems in South Asia* (2019): 1-23. [https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-981-15-0032-9\\_20](https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-981-15-0032-9_20)

Bau, N. and Das, J. 2020. "Teacher Value Added in a Low-Income Country." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 12 (1): 62-96.DOI: 10.1257/pol.20170243. <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/pol.20170243>

Buhl-Wiggers, J., Kerwin, J.T., Smith, J.A., and Thornton, R. 2018. Teacher effectiveness in Africa: Longitudinal and causal estimates. International Growth Centre. S-89238-UGA-1, <https://www.theigc.org/publication/teacher-effectiveness-in-africa-longitudinal-and-causal-estimates/>

de Ree, J., Muralidharan, K., Pradhan, M. and Rogers, H. 2016. Double for Nothing? Experimental Evidence on the Impact of an Unconditional Teacher Salary Increase on Student Performance in Indonesia. NBER Working Paper series. <https://doi.org/10.3386/w21806>

Education Commission. 2019. Transforming the Education Workforce: Learning Teams for a Learning Generation. New York: Education Commission. <https://educationcommission.org/transformingtheeducationworkforce/>

Hwa, Y. and Pritchett, L. 2021. Teacher Careers in Education Systems That Are Coherent for Learning: Choose and Curate Toward Commitment to Capable and Committed Teachers (5Cs). Research on Improving Systems of Education (RISE). [https://doi.org/10.35489/BSG-RISE-Misc\\_2021/02](https://doi.org/10.35489/BSG-RISE-Misc_2021/02)

Huang, A.R., Revina, S., Fillaili, R., and Akhmadi. 2020. The Struggle to Recruit Good Teachers in Indonesia: Institutional and Social Dysfunctions. RISE Working Paper Series. 20/041. [https://doi.org/10.35489/BSG-RISE-WP\\_2020/041](https://doi.org/10.35489/BSG-RISE-WP_2020/041)