## Teacher workforce issues and remedies

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<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>Remedial Options</th>
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| **Supply:** Absence / inadequate projections of need. | Absence of workforce need projections by subject, geography and gender.| • Work force planning projections which monitor teacher attrition and wastage and forecast need and feed this through to teacher education institutions.  
• Teacher matching algorithm’s – which match teacher preference with school location. |
| **Supply:** Teacher education institutions prioritise filling places – over national teacher need (e.g. general rather than subject specific teacher qualifications) leading to oversupply in some areas and shortage in others. | Mis-aligned incentives to fill places rather than respond to national need. Possibly further driven by autonomy / privatisation of teacher training institutions. | • Integrated systems which incentivise teacher education output to align with national projected needs by section, gender and subject.  
• Strengthened collaboration between ministries: e.g. planning, finance, basic education, higher education, teacher service commission etc. |
| **Supply:** Teacher production is below the rate needed to respond to student expansion / retirement / attrition. | • Rapid system expansion – e.g. universal basic education.  
• Inaccurate / absence of sound teacher projections. | • ‘Blended’ classroom assistant based pathways to becoming a classroom teacher (i.e. move away from front ended college based teacher education – towards balance between campus and school based learning).  
• Extend optional retirement age. |
| **Supply:** Insufficient uptake / lower calibre students seeking to enter teaching. | • Insufficient secondary output.  
• Teaching unattractive option in comparison to other HE / Market opportunities.  
• Market competition for best graduates. | • Invest in secondary education – increase graduation rates.  
• Develop career structures which can attract and retain most suitable – focus on balance between starting salary and salary progression.  
• Incentives to target shortage areas e.g. maths & languages.  
• Targeted public information campaigns. |
| **Supply:** Expansive curriculum subject offer proves difficult to staff | • Excessive numbers of subjects specified/ stated options within the curriculum. | • Rationalise curriculum – e.g. integrated / modularised science / humanities.  
• Simplify options / specify teaching time by both subject and teacher. |
| **Deployment/Utilisation:** Imbalance in teacher distribution particularly between rural and urban areas leads to variations in teacher utilisation rate, and student access to subject specialist teachers | • Personal preference – many teachers prefer urban locations e.g. because of upbringing, access to services, linguistic differences etc. | • Use computer algorithms to better match individual preference to school location. (Thus ensuring those willing to serve in rural areas are positively advantaged in a mass recruitment process).  
• Incentivise rural postings – e.g. by providing accommodation / travel |
which has both serious financial and learning implications.

Three factors are central to teacher utilisation; the teaching load expected of a teacher, the number of subjects in a curriculum, and the way in which schools are organized into classes.

There are two main approaches to teacher deployment: (i) a centralised approach where national or regional education authorities deploy teachers; (ii) a decentralised approach where schools are given the authority to recruit.

The development of IT HR systems.

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<tr>
<th>Deployment/Utilisation: Overstaffing</th>
<th>Deployment/Utilisation: Under staffing</th>
<th>Quality/Effectiveness: Teacher Education – Poor quality pre-service</th>
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</table>
| ● Teacher drift to urban areas      | ● Sparse population densities / low school uptake mean small classes. | ● Pre-Service Education lacks relevance.  
 ● **Insufficient input from classroom teachers in mentoring new recruits.**  
 ● Poor induction process.  
 ● CPD focus is weakly linked to feedback from student learning assessments.  
 ● CPD is weakly integrated into career progression. |
|                                     | ● HR system insufficiently sensitive to match individual preferences to local need. | ● **Invest in pre-service education.**  
 ● Adapt training to capacity of student intake e.g. provide in remedial modules etc.  
 ● Strengthen feedback loops between student diagnostic learning assessment and teacher education.  
 ● Better infuse practicing teacher knowledge into the teacher induction and improvement process. |
| ● Career and CPD opportunities better in urban locations. | ● Weak HR information systems. | ● Strenthen HR systems that recognise personal preference and reward service in challenging posts.  
 ● Multi grade teaching where population densities are low (recognising effective multi-grade teaching requires high skill levels which needs to be reflected in teacher education)  
 ● Double shifting can be used when classrooms or qualified teachers are in short supply. |
| ● Improve status and CPD service to rural areas.  
 ● Recognise service in rural areas in career progression process. | ● HR systems that recognise subject specific distribution and use geographic information systems to display teacher deployment on maps. |  
 ● Decentralise authority for teacher selection to school level.  
 ● Deploy matching algorithms in centralised teacher selection processes. |
| ● Weak HR information systems. |  |  
 ● Double shifting can be used when classrooms or qualified teachers are in short supply. |
| Quality/Effectiveness: Teacher Absenteeism – High levels of teacher absence undermine investments in in-service CPD. | • Irregular payment.  
• Low morale.  
• Terms and conditions allow discretionary leave days.  
• CPD and other duties (e.g. election management) conducted during school hours. | • HR systems that incentivise excellence (not just qualification) & address teacher absence.  
• Use electronic wage transfer / phone banking.  
• Link teacher attendance feedback to payroll management.  
• Revise employment terms to reduce incidence of teachers taken out of classrooms for official business.  
• Engage with teacher unions to promote teaching as a profession.  
• Strengthen teacher support, supervision and CPD.  
• Include head teachers in instructional design work.  
• Do not expect head teachers to solve all issues of teacher absenteeism on their own. |
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<td>Teacher / Headteacher Supervision</td>
<td>• Weak / or punitive school supervision.</td>
<td>• Implement regular school supervision visits that move beyond check list compliance to engage the headteacher and teachers in setting personal and school objectives for improvement and support in the delivery of these.</td>
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Based on: Mulkeen, A. (2010), MUSTER and the blog [The Learning crisis is a teaching crisis](https://www.theteachingcrisis.net)