EDOREN Thematic Research on “Identifying, Recruiting and Deploying Effective Teachers”

Phase 2 Literature Review: “How should the system be reformed to better ensure effective teachers are recruited and deployed to priority schools?”

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Executive Summary

This literature review is part of a wider piece of Thematic Research conducted by EDOREN (Education Data, Research and Evaluation in Nigeria initiative) on “Identifying, recruiting and deploying effective teachers”. This overall study is conducted by State Research Teams, consisting of education policymakers and academics from Kano and Kaduna State. To support this process, EDOREN’s is providing an overview of “policy options”, illustrated through different country examples, to improve teacher recruitment and deployment. By providing broad ideas, the aim is to stimulate discussion and debate within State Research Teams to get inspiration from other contexts, that can feed into their research.

Chapter 2: Current Recruitment and Deployment Processes

In chapter two, a brief description is provided of the current process to recruiting and deploying teachers in Northern Nigeria. This shows that while recruitment is officially structured around a state-based process of formal examinations and interviews, in practice it is dominated by local governments and influenced by pressures from local political elites. Unqualified teachers are employed based on their recommendations, passing off fake certificates or impersonating other teachers. All the while, there is little space for other actors, such as head teachers, to ensure adequate quality standards and ensure appropriate matching of candidates to each school’s needs. This suggests that the system would benefit from reform, for instance by making it more responsive to head teachers’ views, or by moving recruitment away from local government discretionary hiring and ensuring it moves towards a formal, test-based recruitment system.

This chapter also shows the impact that different recruitment systems have on deployment. When the state is responsible for recruitment and ‘blindly’ posts teachers to rural schools, this often leads to large levels of ‘refusals’. Moreover, it undermines the formal system, as teachers tend to use their informal influencing channels to get moved to a different location. When local governments select their own candidates (as has happened de-facto, in many states), this improves their overall amount of teachers employed, though this is often realised by recruiting locals who are unqualified to be teachers.

Chapter 3: Policy Options on Recruitment and Deployment

In chapter 3, we provide an overview of different policy options from around the world to improving recruitment and deployment. Notably, very different recommendations come out of each section.

To ensure recruitment of the best teachers, it often helps to centralise the system and adopt a structured, formal recruitment process. Such an application of an entry exam, an interview with scoring sheets, or a marked teacher classroom observation could be done at any of the three selection stages: at entry of a teacher training college, when applying for a teaching position, or during one’s probation in order to enter the teaching profession. The key is to offer clear and transparent minimum teacher competencies, avoid an informal system to dominate, and ensure the system is robust enough against external influences. Such political interference both undermines the quality of selection, and lowers teacher effectiveness by reducing their accountability to schools.

However, the deployment case suggest that the more centralised the system is, the more pronounced the disparities will be between urban and rural schools. Forced transfers rarely work, and can be damaging to teacher morale. Localising the system often leads to the most equitable deployment system, however it comes at the price of teacher effectiveness. More qualified teachers will apply for positions in urban areas, while rural schools will often end up with unqualified individuals. Alternatives to this system can work, but require significant financial investments on the side of the Ministry of Education. This often includes both a rural hardship scheme and the provision of teacher housing in localities that otherwise lack such amenities.
Chapter 4: Four Policy Options to Improving Recruitment and Deployment

The literature suggests that there is often a trade-off between policies focused on recruiting effective teachers, and ensuring more equitable deployment. Finding a balance between the two is thus crucial. We will present four different options here, focused on different ‘entry points’ to teacher selection. Note that these are offered only to stimulate discussion, and should not be seen as direct recommendations.

- **Option 1: Formalise the local recruitment system and adopt a rural teaching allowance**

  The first option is to rationalise the informal recruitment system that currently dominates recruitment. Under this reform, all primary teacher recruitment becomes formal responsibility of the Local Government. To improve the recruitment standard, Local Government Councils (LGCs) are required to have a designated ‘event’ where they conduct teacher selection. A state-SUBEB representative has to attend to ensure all standards are upheld. All head teachers from schools with proposed postings are also invited to take part in the teacher selection process. Other members, such as the Teacher Union and Governor’s representatives could also be invited as ‘observers’. To further benefit deployment, a rural teaching allowance should also be introduced based on a transparent rule (e.g. distance from the paved road). This amount should be significant and should increase the further away the rural posting is.

- **Option 2: Centralise the recruitment system to SUBEB; applicants indicate an LGA preference.**

  The option that is likely to allow selection of the best teachers would require centralising the recruitment process and making it the full responsibility of the SUBEB. To entice applicants to rural areas, an annual state-based recruitment campaign will clearly post the total number of positions that are available in each LGA. Applicants then have to apply to the state indicating a first, and second preference for LGA. Applicants are then required to conduct a standardised examination, a marked interview, and possibly also a small, graded, teaching demonstration, based on a set of pre-specified criteria of effective teaching. An overall grade is then given to each teacher. To further benefit those willing to teach in rural areas, points are added to applicants’ scores if they choose to teach in a rural LGA (and more points if it is a very rural LGA), while points are subtracted for applicants preferring to teach in an urban area (and more points are subtracted if it’s a very urban LGA, such as the capital). The state allocates individuals to LGAs based on their indicated preference, starting with the highest scoring teacher and moving down the line to cover everyone’s first choice. Remaining applicants who were lower-down and not selected for their first chosen LGA, are then offered places for their second choice LGA (if still available) or otherwise, another LGA with insufficient applicants. The list of recruited teachers is then provided to the LGEA, which will work together with all head teachers from schools with proposed postings, to jointly decide on the final school deployment.

- **Option 3: Recruitment becomes the joint responsibility of SUBEB and CoEs; loan-scholarships are provided to those willing to temporarily teach in the most rural communities.**

  A third policy option to improve teacher recruitment and deployment is through selection into teacher training. For this to work, SUBEB will have to set out the likely number of candidates it is will recruit in two years time. All state-level teacher training institutes are then provided with a cap on their NCE entry that is linked to to this recruitment targeted (or possibly an extra 15-20% higher to account for teacher dropout). They will only receive state funding for this select number of candidates. The SUBEB will place additional requirements on teacher training institutes to improve their selection criteria. Applicants are selected based on an overall score based on a standardised examination, a marked interview, and a small, graded teaching demonstration. To improve deployment, applicants willing to teach in a rural location are provided with a loan-scholarship that covers all their tuition fees and living expenses. This is turned into a grant when they graduate and have completed two years of teaching in a rural location. After two years, these teachers are allowed to select which of LGAs with outstanding teacher needs they wish to be transferred to.
At the end of the two year-cohort, the SUBEB will again test all applicants on standardised requirements. They then provide a large bonus to the college for every teacher coming out of the NCE programme that meets minimum teaching standards. This will further make sure colleges serious about selecting only the most capable candidates and possibly incentivises remedial education to take place. This test also doubles as the formal process to recruiting teachers (though external candidates are also able to apply during this time). Teachers are deployed to the LGEA on the basis of their stated preference and open vacancies. The LGEA then works with all head teachers from schools with open postings, to jointly decide on deployment.

**Option 4: Schools can recruit teachers on probation. These teachers have to pass a minimum teacher standards test within three years, which is administered annually by the State.**

The fourth policy option is to fully devolve recruitment and deployment processes to the school. Under this system, the SUBEB makes an assessment of the schools which most urgently need teachers, and the total number of recruits that are financially affordable. It then ‘grants’ such new positions directly to the school, which can start its own selection process. By recruiting local candidates, it will likely quickly fill the position, thus addressing overall teacher deployment disparities. However, to ensure more effective teachers are recruited, any new teaching recruit has to meet certain minimum teacher standards within three years of taking their ‘probationary’ post. This assessment is conducted annually by the state, which includes a standardised examination, a marked interview, and a small graded teaching demonstration, based on a set of pre-specified criteria of effective teaching. Those with an overall ‘pass’ mark are then promoted to the regular teaching service. If, after three years the teacher has still not passed, they are let go, and the school has to start recruitment of a replacement candidate.

*Chapter 5: How Best to Utilise Policy Options*

These four different policy options thus focus on different points of entry and with different emphases on recruitment or deployment. They also range from minor tweaks to the current system (e.g. formalising local recruitment and improving the current selection process of the teacher recruitment committee) to large overhauls (e.g. making schools responsible for their own recruitment). Yet, the hard work is still to be done; to meaningfully learn from these ideas, and adapt, combine or contrast them to find practical ideas that would best assist in the specific political, financial and administrative realities faced in by Kano and Kaduna.

To assist in this effort, Chapter 5 concludes with a simple framework to help members with their analysis. In starts with an overview of the different types of areas to get policy ideas from, followed by an assessment framework to assess which options would be technically optimal, while also politically and administratively feasible. It ends with a brief note on a potential reform process, following incremental experimentation and adaptation.

Overall, it is found that there is no one right way to improve teacher recruitment and deployment; there are likely many possible ways, and successful reforms often emerge as a hybrid of ideas. The key is to start experimenting with promising ideas, learn and adapt. EDOREN hopes that through this interactive research activity, the participating states comes one step closer to finding recommendations to reforming the system to better ensure effective teachers are recruited and deployed to priority schools.
1 Introduction

1.1 Use of This Paper

This literature review is part of a wider piece of Thematic Research conducted by EDOREN (Education Data, Research and Evaluation in Nigeria initiative) on “Identifying, recruiting and deploying effective teachers”. In line with other EDOREN activities, this is mainly focused on primary teachers in North-Western Nigeria. The study will address two major questions:

- **What types of teachers make for “more effective” teachers?**
- **How should the system be reformed to better ensure effective teachers are recruited and deployed to priority schools?**

This study is conducted by State Research Teams, consisting of state-based education policymakers (MoE/SUBE) and academics. The research is taking place in Kano and Kaduna states, with a team in both states that has won a study grant to implement the research. EDOREN’s role is to provide administrative oversight, hands-on technical support on research capacity, and to offer teams with innovative policy ideas from the international literature, that can feed into the research.

This literature review provides an example of EDOREN’s latter role, by providing the State Research Teams with an overview of international “policy options” to improving teacher recruitment and deployment. Each are discussed briefly and their effects are illustrated through country examples. Yet, this paper is not aimed at providing direct recommendations. Instead, it aims only to provide broad ideas to stimulate discussion and debate within State Research Teams in order to get inspiration from other contexts.

The hard work is left to the State Research Teams; to meaningfully learn from these ideas, and adapt, combine or contrast them to find practical ideas that would best assist in the specific political, financial and administrative realities faced by Kano and Kaduna State. To do so, each section will raise a number of particular questions, that aim to guide researchers and provide important areas for further investigation.

1.2 Methodology

This paper is based on a brief scoping and synthesis of two bodies of literature. The first relates to research that captures Nigeria’s current educational institutions, organisational arrangements, and processes. This is used to provide a broad overview of the current teacher recruitment and deployment processes and their related challenges. The second body relates to the international literature on teacher recruitment and deployment. Selection of papers here were focused on identifying and assessing a range of policy options that could possibly be utilised in a Nigerian context. As such, priority was given to policy examples from sub-Saharan Africa, though this paper also incorporates select findings from Latin America and India.

1.3 Overview

In chapter 2, we will provide a summary of the recruitment and deployment process in Northern Nigeria, and provide a brief overview of the main challenges faced. Chapter 3 then provides policy options from different developing countries around the world on how to improve recruitment and deployment processes. Chapter 4 proposes four potential policy options for Nigeria. Chapter 5 then changes tack slightly and provides a framework for analysis on how best to adapt and tailor such policy options to the local context in Kano and Kaduna, offer meaningful and realistic policy recommendations and start the gradual process to experiment with incremental policy reform.
2 Recruitment and Deployment Processes in Northern Nigeria

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is trying to set out the current recruitment and deployment processes in Northern Nigeria. This will rely on a synthesis of findings from the literature in four states: Kwara, Jigawa, Katsina and Kaduna.

It is difficult to describe Nigeria’s recruitment processes in detail, as the exact roles and responsibilities differ somewhat between States. Moreover, there is a strong difference between the formal procedures stipulated in laws and regulations, and the actual recruitment and deployment procedures most commonly observed. In practice, there are three main ways in which a teacher can be recruited:

1. Formal teacher recruitment and deployment process (through SUBEB);
2. Informal teacher replacement process (through local government);
3. Temporary teachers recruited through the Federal Teachers Scheme.

Each will now be discussed in turn. Here, we will describe both the overall recruitment and deployment process, the main actors responsible and the main challenges identified. This will set the tone for the next chapter in identifying which policy options can best address the major challenges faced by the system.

2.2 Formal teacher recruitment and deployment process (through SUBEB)

Formally speaking, the recruitment of all primary teachers is the responsibility of the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB).1 In the past, Local Government Councils (LGCs) secretaries were also allowed to appoint certain local, unqualified teachers, but only in the lowest Salary Grades (Grade 2 to 6). However, it is now a formal prerequisite that any newly recruited teacher has a minimum of an NCE (National Certificate of Education) qualification. As any NCE teacher has to come in at a minimum of Salary Grade 7, this places SUBEB squarely in charge of all recruitment (ESSPIN, 2009).

The assessment of teacher needs is often done by SUBEB alone, and based only on the data collected by the LGEA. This sometimes includes specific requests from head teachers, but mainly relates to filling establishments in official policy guidelines; primarily the pupil-to-qualified teacher ratio (Thomas, 2011). As such, there is a clear lack of consultation from the schools’ head teachers.

SUBEB then holds an examination for all potential recruits, including teacher applicants to both Primary Schools and Junior Secondary Schools (JSS). This would normally be done once per year, but varied depending on the number of vacancies posted.2 The examination date would be advertised through print media, radio and television. No vacancy details are advertised, but potential recruits are often required to submit or bring an application letter to the examination. The examination itself tends to be a written examination, and for successful candidates, an interview. In addition, the recruitment process also aims to check the authenticity of any NCE or other degree certificates. Teachers cannot formally indicate a location preference for their school’s location or the grades or subjects they wish to teach (Thomas, 2011).

The formal teacher recruitment and deployment processes also differed slightly between States:

(a) In Kwara, the initial selection process follows the steps described above. Afterwards, SUBEB is solely responsible for posting successfully recruited candidates to schools. Where possible,

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1 Following the National Policy on Education (NPE) and the State Universal Basic Education (UBE) acts of 1999.
2 In many states, such a formal assessment has not taken place since 2007 (see below).
teachers are posted to their home LG, and matched to a school’s qualification and specialism needs. In practice, however, there were many complaints that posted teachers’ profile did not match school requirements. It was also noted that the highest scoring teachers in SUBEB’s examination were posted to JSS, irrespective of suitability or personal preference. (Thomas, 2011).

(b) In Jigawa, the recruitment process follows closely the process described above. However, after SUBEB selects to teachers, they are then posted to a specific LG, where deployment to the school is led by the Local Government Education Authority (LGEA). Given that LGEAs are responsible for monitoring and recording each schools’ teacher needs, they could be well placed to match teachers’ preferences and specialism to individual schools. (Thomas, 2011).

(c) For Katsina, no direct SUBEB recruitment was recorded, and both recruitment and deployment was the responsibility of the LGEA. The formal recruitment system consisted of the LGEA advertising positions and inviting applications from qualified candidates. “Suitable candidates are shortlisted for interviews and if successful, are issued with appointment letters. However, interested candidates may also submit prospective applications to the LGA”. No consideration was given to individual requests (Watts and Allsop, 2015).

(d) In Kaduna, SUBEB also played no direct role. Instead, teacher recruitment is the responsibility of the LGEA, which works with a recruitment committee made up of representatives of the various government stakeholders, teachers unions, communities and faith-based groups” (Watts and Allsop, 2015). The official recruitment process here involves “a call for applications, short listing of qualified applicants, oral and written interviews, verification of candidates’ credentials, and finally, issuance of employment letters. Protocols covering appointments are clear and well understood”. No consideration was given to individual requests. (Watts and Allsop, 2015).

**Discussion Point: What is the Formal Recruitment and Deployment System?**

Consider your state (Kano or Kaduna) to describe the formal recruitment and deployment system:

- Which government department is officially responsible for recruiting primary teachers? Which other actors are also formally part of the process?
- What does the official recruitment process look like?
- Which government department is officially responsible for deploying primary teachers to schools? Which other actors are also formally part of the process?
- What does the official deployment process look like?

**Major Challenges**

The most important challenge to the formal system described above, it is that this recruitment and deployment process is often overlooked or underutilised in favour of more informal, local recruitment (see below). However, there are also a number of other challenges that are worth noting here:

- Head teachers have no direct input into the overall selection, or deployment of teachers. As such, they cannot ensure only the most effective teachers are selected or ensure that the teacher posted to their school best matches the school’s requirements (Thomas, 2011).
• This has contributed to limited oversight from schools to prevent recruitment of ineffective teachers, and also ensured teacher postings are sometimes poorly matched to the school needs.

• Candidates also have no formal input into their posting. Teachers cannot formally indicate a location preference for their school’s location or the grades or subjects they wish to teach. If they do not like their posting (e.g. avoid a rural posting), they cannot rely on any formal process, but instead have to rely on their informal (political) connections. For those without such connections, such teachers are more disappointed and more likely to drop out of teaching (ESSPIN, 2009).

• This lack of input is also a missed opportunity for assessing teachers’ willingness in the recruitment process, in order to improve deployment to priority schools (see section 4.3).

• Despite considerable challenges to attract teachers to specific rural schools, there are no specific incentive schemes or scholarship programmes to attract teachers to rural areas. As such, the system is insufficiently addressing deployment issues.

Discussion Point: What are the major challenges?

Consider your state (Kano or Kaduna) to describe the major challenges to the formal recruitment and deployment system:

• What elements of the official recruitment system work, and which ones do not work?

• What have been the major consequences of the official recruitment system’s failings?

• What elements of the official deployment system work, and which ones do not work?

• What have been the major consequences of the official deployment system’s failings?

2.3 Informal teacher replacement process through local government

In practice, the formal recruitment process described above is often not not utilised. This is because LGCs are often reluctant to give up their recruitment authority to the state, and prefer to employ their own, unqualified locals, to qualified “foreigners”. (ESSPIN, 2009). For that reason, they often block SUBEB from initiating new recruitment rounds.³

Local governments then have two main ways to conduct their own recruitment. The first way is to rely on their ability to recruit Salary Grade 1-6 teachers, by appointing unqualified teachers.⁴ This has resulted in a very large number of unqualified teachers being appointed, especially in Northern States (ESSPIN, 2009).

The second, and most common way that LGs conduct their own recruitment is by focusing on teacher ‘replacement’ instead of recruitment. LGCs are allowed to take responsibility for replacing staff that has retired or died, and this process is classified different in the system, and therefore does not have to follow the same, formal recruitment process (ESSPIN, 2009). Using informal teacher ‘replacement’ mechanisms has become the main method of teacher recruitment in all four states analysed here. For instance, Watts and Allsop (2015) mention that no new, formal recruitment rounds have taken place in Katsina since 2007,

³ SUBEB pays primary teachers’ salaries by deducting funds from each Local Government’s allocations. Because it’s the LG’s money, they can prevent giving the SUBEB permission to post any new teacher establishments (Thomas, 2011).

⁴ While this is technically not permitted under the NEP, informally this is seen as acceptable if no better candidate can be found.
and in Kaduna since 2010. After this period, both recruitment and deployment have happened on an *ad hoc* basis, which resulted in deteriorated teacher selection and considerable variation in deployment outcomes.

The states analysed also reported different informal teacher recruitment and deployment processes:

a) In Kwara, an informal ‘sharing’ of teacher recruitment between SUBEB and LG was used. As explained by one LGEA “if there were, say, 20 vacancies, SUBEB would fill 17 vacancies through their normal procedure and allow the LGEA to recommend candidates for the remaining three vacancies. This should be considered as an unofficial practice and it has been suggested subsequently that such practices no longer take place.” (Thomas, 2011).

b) In Katsina, the process has also been described as ‘mixed’. At times, vacancies in primary schools were filled following the formal process (written applications plus interviews), while other times this was dominated by external influencing or ‘godfathering’ (involving officials at various levels).

c) In Kaduna, there has been no systematic recruitment of primary teachers since 2010, and the process is *ad hoc*, focused on replacement alone. The informal process thus dominates entirely, resulting in much greater susceptibility to political pressures (see below) (Watts and Allsop, 2015).

**Discussion Point: What is the Informal Recruitment and Deployment System?**

Consider your state (Kano or Kaduna) to describe the *informal* recruitment and deployment system:

- Which government department is *actually* leading the recruitment of primary teachers? Which other actors are also influencing this behaviour?
- What does the real recruitment process look like?
- Which government department is *actually* leading the deployment of primary teachers to schools? Which other actors are influencing this behaviour?
- What does the official deployment process look like?

**Major Challenges**

As the recruitment process has become less based on formal interviews, it has instead relied more on pressures from elites, traditional rulers and politicians. According to one SUBEB director, LGA chairmen ‘handed out teaching jobs to their friends’, most of whom unqualified (Bennell et al, 2014). One LGEA officer reported a threat to have their Education Secretary removed from office if they did not comply with certain posting requests. This has a number of implications:

- Teachers are appointed with inappropriate qualifications, and many do not hold the required NCE or have only passed the Senior Secondary School Examination. (Watts and Allsop, 2015).
- ‘Politically appointed’ teachers are often less effective than others, because they are less accountable to the school’s head teacher and the wider education system. For example, one Head Teacher from Katsina mentioned: “Most of these politicians’ candidates are not even interested in the teaching job. They just want the salary, you won’t even see them coming to school and you can’t report them. Those that want to do the job and have the qualification are not employed”. (Watts and Allsop, 2015).
Unqualified teachers with political connections often use fake certificates, or impersonate other teachers to get employment. This further undermines trust in teacher certificates and the wider system of teacher recruitment (Watts and Allsop, 2015).

Discussion Point: What are the major challenges?

Consider your state (Kano or Kaduna) to describe the major challenges to the informal recruitment and deployment system:

- What elements of the real recruitment system work, and which ones do not work?
- What have been the major consequences of the real recruitment system’s failings?
- What elements of the real deployment system work, and which ones do not work?
- What have been the major consequences of the real deployment system’s failings?

2.4 Temporary Teachers Recruited through the Federal Teachers Scheme.

Besides the recruitment process occurring in each state, there is also a Federal initiative focused on teacher recruitment. This “Federal Teachers’ Scheme” was launched in 2006 to increase the share of NCE-trained teachers recruited to public schools. In this process, the Federal Ministry of Education (FME), the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and the SUBEBs collaborate to employ recent NCE graduates to teach in primary and junior secondary schools for two years (UBEC 2014). It helps to alleviate the major funding constraint on recruiting teachers at the State and LGA levels by offering additional federal funding for teacher recruitment, while also providing recently-qualified teachers with temporary jobs and teaching experience.

However, this recruitment is temporary and teachers’ salaries would eventually need to be taken on by local governments following the programme’s two-year period. For this reason, many FTS teachers have difficulty in finding subsequent employment and struggle to be absorbed into the permanent teaching workforce (Humphreys and Crawford, 2014).

Thomas (2011) reports that this system recruits about 1,000 teachers every two years. The Federal Teachers Scheme (FTS) is restricted to NCE holders. This is generally enforced, though after some concerns about the standard of candidates, Kwara state is now involved in the selection process to ensure this is strictly enforced.

Teachers recruited through the FTS are often paid at a lower rate than state-recruited teachers. This has also been a reason why many FTS teachers do not remain in their post for the full two years; when SUBEB advertises its own funded posts, holders of FTS-funded appointments tend to apply. Yet, at times, teachers re-apply for an FTS appointment, and are thus FTS teachers for longer than 2 years (Thomas, 2011).

A new federal scheme to recruit teachers was also introduced in December 2015 by President Muhammadu Buhari. While the exact details are still unclear, this system is called “N-Power Teacher Corps” and aims to engage and train 500,000 young unemployed graduates. It is a volunteering programme of a 2-year duration, and thus very comparable to the FTS. Participants will provide teaching, instructional, and advisory solutions in 4 key areas. The 4 main focus areas are in primary and secondary education,

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5 This scheme is implemented under the MDG Project and financed through the Debt Relief Grants.
6 Thomas (2011) notes that in 2010, for Jigawa, this was N10,000 for an FTS teacher, versus N15,535 for a state-based teacher.
agriculture, public health and community education (civic and adult education). It is unclear whether the conventional FTS scheme is subsumed under this programme, or whether both will run side-by-side.\(^7\)

### Discussion Point: What are the implications of the Federal Teaching Scheme for your State?

Consider your state (Kano or Kaduna) to describe what the implications are of a Federal Teaching Scheme for your State.

- How does the FTS’ recruitment and deployment process differ from that at the State level?
- To what extent do federal and State recruitment complement each other? How do they conflict?
- What is the best role for a federal organisation (like FME/UBEC) to support primary teacher recruitment and deployment at the state?

### 2.5 Summary and Implications

A brief description of the current process to recruiting and deploying teachers in Northern Nigeria suggests that the system is faced with considerable challenges, that are contributing to the perpetuation of low-quality teaching in Nigeria’s education system.

This chapter shows that while recruitment is officially structured around a state-based process of formal examinations and interviews, in practice it is dominated by local governments and heavily influenced by pressures from local political elites. Unqualified teachers are employed based on their recommendations, passing off fake certificates or impersonating other teachers. All the while, there is little space for other actors, such as head teachers, to ensure adequate quality standards and ensure appropriate matching of candidates to each school’s needs. This suggests that the system would benefit from reform, for instance by making it more responsive to head teachers’ views, or by moving recruitment away from local government discretionary hiring and ensuring it moves towards a formal, test-based recruitment system.

This chapter also shows the impact that different recruitment systems have on deployment. When the state is responsible for recruitment and ‘blindly’ posts teachers to rural schools, this often leads to large levels of ‘refusals’. Moreover, it undermines the formal system, as teachers tend to use their informal influencing channels to get moved to a different location. When local governments select their own candidates (as has happened de-facto, in many states), this improves their overall amount of teachers employed, though this is often realised by recruiting locals who are unqualified to be teachers.\(^8\)

We will return to this issue in the next chapter, but note here that this means that deployment cannot be considered as an afterthought. In order to assure teachers are also deployed to rural, hard-to-staff schools, we need to make sure that the system either explicitly recruits teachers based on a willingness to teach in such schools, or otherwise provides sufficient incentives or scholarships to entice teachers to go there.

\(^7\) [https://www.naij.com/853295-no-youwin-federal-government-launches-n-power.html](https://www.naij.com/853295-no-youwin-federal-government-launches-n-power.html)

\(^8\) This is a common finding, that is also reflected in the case of Lesotho (see next chapter).
3 Policy Options on Recruitment and Deployment Processes

In this chapter, we will provide an overview of international policy options for improving recruitment and deployment processes. We will begin with recruitment, and describe a conceptual framework with three potential ‘screening points’ of effective teachers, followed by policy options on each one of these screening points. Afterwards, we consider deployment processes, and describe the three main teacher deployment systems around the world. This section then highlights common policy options to improve deployment to priority schools: forced transfer, incentives and targeted recruitment.

3.1 Recruitment

To improve teacher effectiveness, better recruitment – the selection of the most appropriate candidate for the job - is crucial. It can be difficult to spot which person provides the best teaching, and teacher certification alone is often insufficient (Steenbergen and Hill, 2016). For that reason, offering greater attention to the process by which teachers are selected provides one of the most important roles to raising the effectiveness of the teaching workforce (Staiger, 2010).

3.1.1 Conceptual Framework: Three Points of Teacher Selection

Figure 3.1 introduces a broad framework of the possible ways to improve teacher recruitment, based on Bruns et al (2015). This highlights the most common trajectory to becoming a teacher, and along the way offers the three key stages at which the system can assess and select teachers with specific characteristics.

Firstly, after secondary school, individuals apply to get their teaching certification from a teacher training institute. This offers the first screening opportunity: allowing only those to enter teacher training who are meet priority criteria (e.g. being academically gifted, most motivated, or willing to teach in rural areas).

Secondly, because all primary teachers are formally obligated to have a teaching degree, another point of screening is from teacher education and into the initial years of teaching, often on a probationary period. The challenge here is how to select the best teacher from all those who have a teaching certification. This includes the wider process (e.g. through a formal examination and interview) to assess if teachers meet certain formal teacher capacity standards, and how best to prioritise amongst different teachers.

The third process to teacher selection is less common. This relates to the period between teaching on probation, and joining the teaching profession. This offers another means to improving selection, by allowing the conduct of teacher competency assessments after a person has been teaching for a while.

Figure 3.1 Three Points of Selection for Teacher Recruitment

Source: adapted from Bruns et al (2015)
In the following sections, we will go through each of these three ‘screening points’, and provide examples of policy options from the international literature, what their effect was on improving recruitment. Most of these are taken from the seminal 2015 reports: “Great Teachers - How to raise student learning in Latin America and the Caribbean”, by Barbara Bruns and others.

### 3.1.2 Raising Selectivity of Teacher Education

The decision of who to accept into teacher training institutes has a strong bearing of who the teachers of the future will be. If the quality of those who apply to teacher training colleges is low, that also means that it may be more difficult for a College of Education (CoE) to transfer vital teaching skills. (Bruns et al, 2015).

In Northern Nigeria, the quality of applicants to teacher training institutes is often low. The main reason for this is that the profession is deemed unattractive, because the pay is regarded as too low (Watts and Allsop, 2015). Students often only enrol for the NCE because they failed to be admitted for other courses (Allsop and Howard 2009), and few have the "genuine desire to become teachers" (Akinbote 2007).

This does not mean that Colleges of Education (CoE) have any trouble in filling their courses. Indeed, many are heavily oversubscribed. In some cases, NCE applicants do not even comply with selection criteria, and are only allowed entry by presenting fake qualifications (Dunne et al, 2014). In Niger, this led to excessively large classrooms; lecture halls designed for 400–600 students were found to host classes twice or three times this size. Such overcrowding also strongly undermines teaching quality (Dunne et al, 2014).

Many people often point to the large need for teachers to justify over-enrolment in CoEs. However, training more teachers does not lead to increased recruitment. The state can only afford to recruit a certain amount of teachers. Most states thus end up training more teachers than they can recruit. For example, in Katsina, between 2008 and 2013, an annual average of 2,000 NCE teachers graduated, but only 900 teachers were recruited – so only 45% of teachers were absorbed into the system (Bennel et al, 2014).

In sum, greater teacher education selectivity (e.g. ensuring only the most qualified or motivated applicants are allowed to enter the CoE) can lead to better teacher training by reducing overcrowding, while also raising the share of teachers trained that end up recruited (Bennel et al, 2014; Steenbergen and Hill, 2016).

We will use policy examples of three main strategies used to raising the selectivity of teacher education:

- Raising student entry standards into Colleges of Education;
- Raising the standards of Colleges of Education through accreditation;
- Creating special financial incentives to attract top students, or a specific type of students.

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*This is because CoEs are heavily reliant on student tuition fees for revenue and so have an incentive to increase student intake beyond their capacity (Bennell et al, 2014; Steenbergen and Hill, 2016).*
1. Raising student entry standards into Colleges of Education

**Peru.** In the 1990s, Peru saw a large expansion of government-funded non-university teacher training institutes, called Institutos Superiores Pedagógicos (ISPs). Enrolment in ISPs was initially marginal. Yet, within one decade, 235 ISPs were established, and ISPs represented over 75% of all teacher education enrolment (Piscoya, 2004). Yet, there also were serious concerns raised about both the quality of teachers coming out of these ISPs, and the large number of graduates the ISPs produced, which could not be absorbed by the system. The Ministry of Education found that only 22% of institutes exhibited “optimum” levels of quality (Sánchez, 2006). Similarly, one study found that “every year about 30,000 teachers graduate from pre-service training institutions, whereas only about 3,100 are needed per year to serve new enrollments and 3,700 to cover for those who retire” (Peru, Consejo Nacional de Educación 2006).

To respond to these challenges, in 2007 the Ministry of Education established a unified national standard for admission into ISPs. This admission had two stages. Firstly, there was a national stage, implemented by the National Ministry of Education. Here, all applicants were given a multiple choice test to assess general knowledge, logical thinking, maths and communication skills. Secondly, there was a regional stage, overseen by the provincial education authorities. For this, candidates’ vocation, personality and specialised knowledge was evaluated through a written test and an interview. To be admitted into a teacher training institute, applicants needed to obtain a minimum score of 70% for both stages (Bruns et al, 2015).

Establishing national intake standards had a very strong, immediate effect on teacher training enrolments, reducing enrolment in teacher education programs from 38,000 in 2006 to about 12,000 in 2008 (much closer to Peru’s actual recruitment needs). It also strongly effected the overall quality of teaching graduates in the years following, which scored considerably higher in terms of subject knowledge (Bruns et al, 2015).

While effective, this admission process faced considerable (political) opposition. Many rural ISPs were faced with closure, as they struggled to fill their programmes with qualified candidates. The reform was also challenged by Peru’s indigenous communities, which held that the teaching force would be less culturally diverse as a result of the higher entry standards. The Ministry of Education thus had to reverse certain elements of the reform, resulting in a hybrid system where the National Government sets the national admissions guidelines, while institutions are responsible for carrying out the intake processes.

By 2012, all institutions were again given responsibility over entry through their own entry examinations. However, this test still had to cover all the same elements as in the two-staged assessment. To prevent teacher oversupply, the Ministry of Education gave all training institutes an annual enrolment cap, based on the projected number of teachers needed and affordable to be recruited. As a result, while ISP teacher quality intake was less closely monitored, it was still much better than before the reform. Moreover, total enrolment was considerably reduced, and now closely in line with the teacher needs (Bruns et al, 2015).

This suggests raising student entry is a powerful tool that can improve teacher quality, and align teacher supply and teacher demand. However, it can also be controversial and politically challenging to adopt.

2. Raising the standards of Colleges of Education through accreditation

The previous section noted how the last decades saw a rapid growth of CoEs. This is often to due to a combined political appeal of ‘tackling education needs’ and ‘generating jobs’ in a specific locality (Grindle, 2004). Many CoEs produce a large number of under-prepared teachers that cannot be absorbed into the system due to financial constraints. Yet, due to their political importance, they also cannot be closed down. In this case, the example of Chile shows how a government can still improve teacher education through a national teacher education quality assurance system, designed to certify, monitor, and improve CoEs.
Chile. In 2006, Chile introduced a mandatory accreditation system for teaching programmes. However, given the political difficulty to enforce such a system and shut down low-performing teaching institutes, they imposed this system through student financing. From that point onwards, students were allowed only to obtain a government loan or scholarship for teacher education from an accredited teaching programme.

It took some time for this national accreditation system to show results. However, especially in its later years, the total share of nonaccredited teacher education programmes reduced considerably, from 30% in 2011, to only 5% in 2013 (Chile, Consejo Nacional de Educación 2011). Most importantly, accreditation standards had a very significant result on student enrolment decisions. Only three years after the system was introduced in 2006, enrolment shifted from 77% in nonaccredited programmes (23% in accredited programmes), to only 34% in nonaccredited programmes (66% in accredited programmes).

The case of Chile thus shows the importance of combining supply-side reforms (college accreditation) with demand-side reforms (providing student finance only for accredited institutions).

3. Creating special financial incentives to attract top students, or a specific type of students.

A final method to improve student entry is by targeting a specific group of students. In Columbia, this was used to attract top students. A similar process can also be used to further deployment, by attracting those willing to teach in rural areas. Section 3.2.4 provides an example from Nigeria of this kind.

Columbia. In Columbia, it is common to conduct an overall university admission test. From this, applicants with the top 10% highest scores were offered a special scholarship to study teacher education. This programme included a loan to cover tuition fees for the total duration of the degree, which would be forgiven in its entirely once students complete their degree. In 2012, the government allocated over US$70 million to cover over 6,000 students in the programme.

While expensive, this programme has resulted in a large increase in the willingness to teach. Moreover, by having a number of cohorts that are academically much stronger, it has also provided an important signal to other students. Because pupils now have to compete with other better-qualified candidates to apply, it has even attracted more academically gifted candidates for the non-scholarship positions. The programme thus had a strong effect on the quality of all applicants (Bruns et al, 2015).

While providing financial incentives to attract top students may be expensive, they do attract better students. They can even raise the standard of other applicants, by signalling a higher quality-standard expected of all applicants. This raises overall intake quality for the whole teacher training institute.

Discussion Point: Raising Selectivity of Teacher Training

Consider your state (Kano or Kaduna).

• What are the major reasons that weak or poorly motivated student-teachers are allowed entry?

• Which of these examples would best help address this issue in your state?

• Why would some of these examples not work in your state?
3.1.3 Raising Standards of Hiring Teachers

The second point of screening is from teacher education into the initial years of teaching. The challenge here is how to select the best teacher from all those who have a teaching certification. This requires a clear standard on what capabilities are formally expected of teachers, and a transparent process to assessing if any teacher meets such standards (e.g. through a formal examination and interview).

This area is crucial for Northern Nigeria to consider, given the many indications that a large share of NCE graduates are insufficiently prepared to teach and lack vital subject knowledge and teaching skills (Cameron, 2014; Dunne et al, 2014 and Bennell et al, 2014, De et al, 2016). For instance, one respondent from Katsina mentioned that “there are some teachers that cannot read out their names even though they have an NCE” (De et al, 2016). As such, the NCE provides insufficient basis for selection. Moreover, shown in the previous chapter, the current recruitment process is often deeply flawed. It fails to select the most appropriate candidates due to its informal process that is heavily influenced by external political pressures.

The literature points to two main ideas to raising the standards to hiring teachers:

- Introduce a targeted recruitment campaign to attract specific teaching candidates
- Adopting a formal, centralised and test-based recruitment system.

1. Introduce a targeted recruitment campaign to attract specific teaching candidates

To select the right candidates, suitable candidates have to apply for a teaching position. It is important to provide the appropriate conditions to entice high-quality candidates to apply to a teaching position. The most obvious way to do so is by raising the position’s salary. For instance, Dal Bo et al (2013) find that when considering a civil servant job in Mexico, higher wages attract more qualified applicants. However, this is often not possible, and will unlikely be feasible for Nigeria given its current fiscal challenges related to lower oil prices. Yet, there are also non-financial ways to attract specific teaching candidates by designing a targeted recruitment campaign to attract specific candidates. The case of Zambia offers such an example.

Zambia. In 2010, the Government of Zambia launched a new programme to create a new civil service position called the Community Health Assistant (CHA) to address staff shortages in rural areas. While lowly paid, this position offers agents an entry point into the civil service. Moreover, by providing access to extensive in-service training, it also allowed members to advance more rapidly to higher-ranked positions within the Ministry of Health (Ashraf et al, 2015).

To assess the best way to attract appropriate candidates, an experiment was conducted with two different recruitment campaigns. In half of participating local governments, recruitment posters were focused on career incentives. This listed the opportunity to move up the civil-service career ladder, and illustrated a number of potential next positions (e.g. nurse, clinical officer or doctor). This campaign poster summarised this with the slogan: “Become a community health worker to gain skills and boost your career!”. In the other half of local governments, recruitment posters were focused on social duties. This was presented as an opportunity to contribute to one’s community and “gain the skills you need to prevent illness and promote health for your family and neighbours”. The summary slogan here was “Want to serve your community? Become a community health worker!”. The study found that different campaigns had a significant effect on the type of individuals who applied. When tested before selection, members of the first group (career ambitions) scored considerably better in

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an entry examination. Even while conducting their work, they performed much better in their position as CHA than did the second group (social duties). Crucially, the performance gap between the two groups was only explainable up to 40% by observable characteristics (such as level of education and test scores). The remaining 60% difference in performance was due to unobservable traits. Hence, the first group was simply more motivated and career-focused, which is often difficult to pick up in any examination (next section), but can be reached through an appropriate campaign.

Recruitment campaign design offer another important mechanism to improve recruitment. By tailoring a message to attract a specific group of applicants, it offers a non-financial mechanism to attract different individuals who may have certain desirable, but un-observeable characteristics (such as a career focus).

2. Adopting a formal, centralised and test-based recruitment system.

At the heart of any appropriate teacher recruitment system is a process of meritocratic selection based on teachers’ skills and competencies. The question is what this system should look like, and at what level this selection is most appropriate. Chapter 2 finds that excessive local discretion is often linked to political interference. This suggest significantly more effective teachers would be recruited by moving away from local government discretionary hiring and towards a formal, test-based recruitment system. The case of Mexico provides an important example of the importance of shifting recruitment systems.

**Mexico.** In 2008, the Mexican government required all new civil service teachers to be hired by states on the basis of their performance on a national test. This examination covers both subject knowledge and pedagogical skills related to the teacher’s education level and discipline they will teach. This offered a big difference from the previous system of teacher hiring through non-transparent processes controlled by state-level committees dominated by the teachers’ union.

As states gradually rolled out this system, Estrada (2013) was able to assess the impact of the reform by comparing schools that received a test-hired teacher versus those receiving a traditionally hired teacher. Even within a relatively short (one-year) period, he showed that introducing a test-based teacher into a school can have a very large effects on student learning. These teacher were associated with a student’s increase of .78 SD in Spanish and a .66 standard deviation (SD) in maths scores, which are very large effects.

Estrade further notes that the difference in performance cannot be explained only in terms of the teacher’s test scores. Even those test-based teachers with similar scores to traditionally hired teachers outperform them in schools. This emphasises the importance of teacher accountability. If a teacher knows they are politically appointed (as was often the case in Mexico’s traditional recruitment system), they are less accountable to the head teacher, and may thus have lower attendance and less motivation to perform.

The case of Mexico emphasizes the broader importance of enforcing a recruitment system based on a formal and transparent process (such as a national examination). Such teachers are much more effective, both due to their competency and because they are more accountable to the overall education system.

**Discussion Point: Raising Standards of Hiring Teachers**

Consider your state (Kano or Kaduna).

- What are the major reasons that weak or poorly motivated teachers are allowed entry?
- How could a recruitment campaign best be used to attract effective teachers?
- Would a formalised test-based recruitment system help address this issue in your state? What would it look like?
3.1.4 Raising Requirements to Passing Teacher Probation

The final process to teacher selection is to improve selection after teachers start teaching on probation, but before they join the teaching profession. In Nigeria, primary teachers are initially appointed on a two-year probationary period, but this is mainly a formality. Except for serious misconduct, all teachers progress without difficulty beyond this period (ESSPIN, 2009). However, a probationary period could offer another important method to improving teaching selection, as shown by an interesting new proposal from India.

**India.** A small campaign is underway to formalise an interesting new recruitment system in India (Muralidharan, 2015). This is based on three findings in recent years regarding teacher recruitment:

Firstly, teachers are more accurately evaluated once they are teaching. Classroom observation, student surveys and principals’ perceptions all perform much better in predicting a teacher’s capacity to improve student learning than traditional measures such as graduate degrees or teaching certificates (Grossman et al, 2013; Kane & Staiger, 2011; Jacob & Lefgren, 2008). This also better allows the assessment of non-observeable teacher characteristics such as career focus, (as described in the Zambia case above) but also leadership, perseverance and critical thinking (Muralidharan, 2015).

Secondly, recruiting temporary “contract teachers” can significantly improve learning outcomes in primary schools. One study found such teachers were at least as effective as regular teachers with more formal training credentials. Because these teachers are more accountable to the school, they are also much less likely to be absent (18% for contract teachers versus 27% for traditional teachers). Hence, “contract teachers were able to more than make up for their lower levels education, training, and experience with higher levels of effort”. (Muralidharan and Sundararaman, 2013)

Thirdly, centralised recruitment together with most teachers’ preference to be deployed to urban areas has resulted in large teacher disparities throughout the country. To improve this situation for hard-to-staff schools, there is a strong case to make for local hiring of staff.

Putting these three items together, Muralidharan (2015) advocates for a system where each teacher is directly employed by the school on a contract-basis for up to three years, giving priority to local candidates. The local government will then conduct annual in-school assessments of their teaching skills, and verify the teacher’s effectiveness through classroom observations and principal surveys. Once a year, teachers can get promoted to the regular teacher service if they are found to meet the minimum teaching requirements. If, after three years they still do not meet the minimum teaching requirements, the teacher is let go, and a replacement contract teacher is recruited instead.

While this system is not yet implemented, it is increasingly considered as a serious option in India because it strikes a crucial balance between recruitment and deployment. Local recruitment can provide an important mechanism to ensure equitable deployment, while regional post-hoc assessments offers a strong selection mechanism to recruiting the most effective teachers.

**Discussion Point: Raising Requirements to Passing Teacher Probation**

Consider your state (Kano or Kaduna).

- What is the current probation system like?
- What would a successful probationary system look like?
- What chance is there for using a probation system to improve recruitment of effective teachers?
3.2 Deployment

It is not sufficient to focus on recruitment alone. Almost all countries in Sub-Saharan Africa find it difficult to achieve an equitable deployment of teachers, with the poorest and least developed areas experiencing the greatest difficulty in teacher supply (UIS 2006). As teachers have a preference to teach in urban areas, the most capable and qualified teachers often end up there. As a result, rural schools end up with fewer, and less qualified teachers than urban schools (Steenbergen and Hill, 2016). For that reason, Ministries of Education needs to take a proactive stand and take deployment concerns seriously. This section provides examples of such policy options for deployment, using case studies from sub-Saharan Africa.

3.2.1 Conceptual Framework: Three Teacher Deployment Systems

In their influential report, "Teachers for Rural Schools", Mulkeen and Chen (2008) describe three broad approaches to teacher deployment, illustrated below in figure 3.2. The first is centralised planning, where the Ministry of Education directly assigns teachers to schools on the basis of school needs. The second system involves a decentralised modality, where local government are tasked with deploying teachers to specific schools (after recruitment has been completed at central level), or responsible for both recruitment and deployment. The third system involves school-based recruitment. Here, teachers directly apply for a job in a specific location, thus avoiding the need for any teacher distribution system.

Figure 3.2 Three Teacher Deployment Systems

Centrally Planned System. Most countries in sub-Saharan Africa initially relied on a centralised teacher distribution system. This has the advantage of appearing straightforward, by basing it on a neutral policy target such as a 'Pupil-Teacher Ratio'. For instance, if this is 40:1, the overall teacher need is calculated based on each school’s projected number of pupils, divided by 40. The number of new teachers to be deployed to a school is then simply calculated by taking the overall needed teachers minus the current stock. By posting all teachers ‘blindly’ (i.e. without subjective matching on teacher preferences), this system is also seen to be more transparent and less subject to political interference or other local pressures.

A disadvantage of a centralised system is that it depends heavily on the quality of information they receive from schools. If this is incorrect (as is often the case), so will the projections. It also leads to large delays in recruitment; it often takes over a year for the education statistics to be updated, and then another year to complete the recruitment drive and deployment to schools. As such, if a teacher drops out of a school, it often takes at least two years to replace such individuals under this system (Mulkeen and Chen, 2008). The major weakness, however, is that it is often practically impossible to implement the deployment plan. Because teachers prefer to live in urban areas, they often circumvent the Ministry of Education’s posting by “claiming fictitious health problems, exploiting poor record keeping, or just failing to take their assigned posting” (Hedges 2000). As such, this system often ends up leading to a large difference between formal postings and the real positions taken up by teachers, and perpetuates regional disparities (Mulkeen, 2009).
**Decentralised Systems.** To be more responsive to the needs of schools and teachers, many countries in sub-Saharan Africa have (partly) decentralised their recruitment and deployment to local government. This is either done in a two-stage system, where central authorities deploy teachers to a district, and the district authorities deployed teachers to specific schools. Alternatively, local government is made fully responsible for all hiring, distribution and transfer of teachers. The more local, the more flexible and responsive it tends to be to schools’ needs. Local Governments are often much better aware of the specific needs and requirements faced by head teachers, and can thus assure better matching (Mulkeen, 2009).

However, decentralised systems are also more vulnerable to external pressures and political interference, especially for districts with weak administrative capacity. This has implications for recruitment, as local ties make it easier to favour specific candidates (those with political connections, friends or relatives) over more qualified candidates. It also has deployment implications. Closer proximity of teachers to administrators means teachers are better able to put pressure on the system to be transferred to a preferred (i.e. urban) location, leading to continued teacher disparities within a district (Mulkeen and Chen, 2008).

**School-Based Recruitment.** When schools are allowed to recruit their own teachers, there is no need for a teacher deployment system. Instead, teachers directly apply for a specific school, and schools will only select teachers who will accept the position. It also gives each school’s head teacher the best ability to select those candidates that match the school’s broader teaching requirements. As shown in Lesotho (see 3.2.4 below), this system often ensures that most schools can fill their teaching posts, thus being the most successful in improving equitable teacher deployment across the country. However, this system also leads to the best qualified teachers to get the most desirable (i.e. urban) jobs. More rural schools have to rely on local teachers, who often have lower or no qualifications.

### Discussion Point: Three Teacher Deployment Systems

Consider your state (Kano or Kaduna).

- Which of these systems best describes your state’s deployment process?
- Are you experiencing the same or other benefits and challenges in your deployment process?

Based on this conceptual framework and the international literature, there are three main methods used to improve deployment to priority schools: forced transfer, incentives and targeted recruitment. We will now use examples from different African countries to illustrate the effect of each of these options.

#### 3.2.2 Forced Transfer for Teachers to Remote Areas

**South Africa.** In an effort to equalise teacher deployment, South Africa issued a large campaign in the late 1990s to relocate more teachers to rural areas (Göttelmann-Duret and Hogan, 1998). While this appeared to be a low-cost method to improve education outcomes, it failed to notably reduce teacher disparities, while severely damaging teacher morale and leading to high staff turnover. Most teachers were not willing to move, and a large number of key (science and maths) teachers decided to leave teaching instead (Garson, 1998). Moreover, the number of graduates choosing to apply to teaching also reduced heavily because it was considered a less appealing profession “where one is likely to be redeployed or moved” (Samuel 2002). Because on such failings, South Africa mostly ended its redeployment campaign.

The case of South Africa highlights the major limitation of using forced transfers as a policy, and reflects the potential danger of any system that insufficiently takes into consideration its teacher’s preferences.
Eritrea. The country of Eritrea is one of the few where a system of forced teacher transfer is effective. It uses a two-stage deployment system, where teachers are assigned to one of six regions, which then allocate teachers to a school. No teacher is given a choice of location, and deployment is strictly enforced. Eritrea has a very even teacher deployment as a result.

Eritrea shows that only some states are likely able to implement forced transfers. Moreover, teachers are more likely to accept a rural post if they see it as a temporary step on a path to a more desirable job.

Discussion Point: Forced Transfers for Teachers to Remote Areas

Consider your state (Kano or Kaduna).

• What have been your challenges with forced transfer?
• Can any of the examples used here be made to work in the state? Why or why not?

3.2.3 Providing Incentives for Teachers in Remote Areas

There is a strong acknowledgement in most Ministries of Education that forced transfer alone will not address deployment issues. For that reason, many countries have attempted to make working in rural areas more attractive by offering designated incentives (Mulkeen 2009). Two incentives are commonly provided. The first relates to financial incentives, often in the shape of a designated ‘rural hardship allowance’. The second constitutes of in-kind incentives, such as housing. Examples of both are given below.

1. Rural Teaching Allowances

Financial incentives are widely used to attract and retain teachers in rural schools, but in most cases have limited impact. For instance, Zambia provides a 20% bonus, and Uganda has a 30% bonus for primary teachers in hard to reach areas. Yet, both times these were unsuccessful to attract many teachers into rural areas, as the amount offered was generally considered to be too low (Mulkeen and Chen, 2008). The case of The Gambia offers a powerful example to show that the right financial incentives can provide change.

The Gambia. To attract qualified teachers to hardship posts, The Gambia introduced a special allowance in 2006 for anyone teaching in a school that is more than 3 km from the main road. This hardship allowance equated to an additional 30% of a teacher’s salary, but went up to 35% and 40% as the schools were further removed from the main road. As a result, by 2007, 24% of qualified teachers had requested to be transferred to the most remote locations to receive an increase in their salary. Moreover, 65% of student teachers were reported to now take up the post if selected to a hardship school. However, such a system was also very expensive, and thus reduced the overall amount of teachers The Gambia could recruit.

The Gambia’s case highlights two general lessons about the use of incentives. Firstly, incentives need to be substantial in size to outweigh the social and economic cost of living in an isolated area. Secondly, there needs to be a fair system of classifying schools, ideally one that distinguishes between different degrees of remoteness. More general classifications often fail because they provide bonuses to teachers working in small towns, while providing relatively little extra to teachers in the most isolated schools (Mulkeen, 2009).

This suggests that financial incentives can attract teachers to rural areas. However, it also implies that the associated cost of such a policy will be so large that many countries will not be able to afford it.
2. Teacher Housing

**Malawi.** The other major strategy to improving deployment relates to the provision of teacher housing. In Malawi, this was often considered to be an absolute prerequisite for a teacher to accept the post. This is because many rural areas are largely dependent on subsistence farming, and thus lack any private market for housing. Teachers would have to build a house themselves, or accept the basic facilities available in rural areas, which many qualified teachers reported to be unwilling to do. For that reason, one district officer reported that “if you send one where there is no house, they come back and you are forced to put them somewhere else” (Mulkeen, 2009). Absence of housing was particularly important to female teachers, who were worried about safety concerns without adequate residence. For that reason, Malawi’s education data show a strong correlation between the availability of housing in an area and the presence of female teachers in the school.

Public provision of housing is thus an important mechanism to attract teachers to rural areas. However, it is also very expensive, both in initial building and in maintenance cost. For that reason, very few countries are able to provide housing for all teachers. In Malawi, teaching housing was provided for less than 25% of teachers. Some of such housing was even temporary, and in poor condition (Mulkeen, 2009).

Malawi shows that public housing is not just an incentive, it is often considered to be an absolute minimum requirement for any teacher to accept a post. However, it is also very expensive to ensure.

**Discussion Point: Providing Incentives for Teachers in Remote Areas**

Consider your state (Kano or Kaduna).

- What incentives are provided in your state to teachers deployed to the remotest areas?
- How difficult is it to find housing in the remotest areas? Is this a major policy problem?
- What would be needed to attract individuals to request being transferred to a remote location?

3.2.4 Targeted Recruitment of Teachers for Remote Areas

A third strategy aims to improve deployment by targeting recruitment of student teachers within their own region. This assumes that their direct links to the community will make a teacher more willing to remain in such rural settings, and so no additional financial incentives need to be provided. Moreover, because they already live in these communities, public housing is also not required (Craig, Kraft, and du Plessis 1998). Three cases such targeted recruitment are provided here: Lesotho, through school-based recruitment, and Zambia, through a recruitment system that takes teachers’ preferences seriously, and Nigeria, through a female teacher training scholarship programme.

**Lesotho.** The country of Lesotho has a very distinct recruitment and deployment process. Here, the Ministry of Education “grants” teacher establishments to schools in response to their pupil enrolment and available funding. Once an post is created, the school management committee can select the teacher to fill the position. The official papers for this teacher are then sent to the Teacher Service Commission for ratification, after which the central government will start payment of the teacher’s salary.

As a result of this school-based recruitment system, there is no longer a problem with teachers refusing their postings, as individuals unwilling to work in rural areas do not apply for posts in those areas. For that reason, Lesotho has one of the most equitable teacher distributions in sub-Saharan Africa (Mulkeen and Chen, 2009). In addition, this system has encouraged volunteer teachers to apply to teach in rural schools,
in the hope that when a position arises, they are employed. Such free labour has provided important school support, but can occasionally end in tension when a job is awarded to another person (Mulkeen, 2009).

This local system also has a number of challenges. It is more open to local influence than a central deployment system. While posts are advertised, schools often already have a person in mind when they begin the selection process. There is also a strong preference for local candidates, so that external, qualified teachers have been rejected in communities in place for a local, unqualified teacher. Because it is harder to find qualified local teachers, this system exacerbates quality differences between urban and rural schools. For instance, the school census data reveals only 24% of teachers in urban (lowland) areas are unqualified, compared with 51% in rural (mountain) areas. A final difficulty of this system is that it becomes challenging for the Ministry of Education to transfer teachers from schools where enrolment is in decline, to other needy schools. School authorities often prevent any teachers from being transferred out (Mulkeen, 2009).

The case of Lesotho suggests that school-based recruitment offers a low-cost model to ensure sufficient teachers are deployed to rural areas. However, this strategy often comes at the expense of teacher quality, and results in more local interference and more unqualified teachers employed in rural areas.

Zambia. The recruitment and deployment system of Zambia incorporates some elements of centralised planning, and some elements of individual choice. Every year, all posts are nationally advertised in newspapers, radio and television, together with the overall number of posts available in each district. Candidates are asked to apply district to the district in which they wish to work, while encouraging applications to rural districts, as candidates will have a higher probability of being employed here.

A central meeting is then organised by the national Ministry of Education, bringing together all district officers to determine which candidates are selected and deployed. This can take up to two weeks. The meeting is further monitored by observers from the teacher union and Zambia’s president’s office. After agreeing on the overall selection, each district draws from the overall pool of teachers who applied to their own district. Then, some applicants who were not selected for their chosen district are then offered places for districts that have insufficient applicants.

This system was able to partly improve deployment to hardship districts. This is because teachers are more likely to accept a post in a rural location if they have explicitly chosen to apply there. As a result, in 2006, for instance, out of 1,116 teachers recruited in the first round (many of which to hardship districts), only 83 failed to report to school (7%).

The case of Zambia suggests that asking teachers to directly apply to hardship locations works better than blind posting. Moreover, enticing teachers to apply to hardship posts by stressing the higher probability of employment can (partly) improve deployment problems.

Nigeria (Bauchi, Katsina, Niger and Sokoto). A final example, closer to home, aims to improve deployment by sponsoring individuals for teacher training based on their willingness to teach in rural areas. The ‘Female Teacher Trainee Scholarship Scheme’ (FTTSS) offers scholarships to women in rural areas to train for the NCE at a state CoE, on condition that they teach in a rural school for two years after completing their training. States pledge to adopt additional student teachers, employ all new graduates and to deploy all graduates to their home villages. The scheme has operated in Bauchi, Katsina, Niger and Sokoto since 2008 and expanded to Zamfara in 2012.

The impact of the FTTSS on improving deployment has been mixed. Over 7,800 women were awarded such scholarships across the five states, and 84% of such trainees expressed the intention to teach in a rural school for 2 years after graduation. Most FTTSS graduates were recruited, mostly to rural localities, though in some cases in Niger state, graduates were also posted to non-rural schools. (Dunne et al, 2014).
Yet, a sample of tracked FTTSS students suggest that very few teachers graduate within four years (45% of FTTSS students in Bauchi, 17% in Niger). Low pass rates were partly due to academic ability (students teachers thought courses were too difficult, lacked study skills and English proficiency), and partly reflected poor selection (some student teachers did not have the minimum qualifications to meet selection criteria). Personal and political interests were also cited as factors influencing FTTSS candidate selection. The FTTSS programme thus raises questions whether teacher training is the best place to start in order to improve deployment. Indeed, many non-FTTSS teacher graduates were also from rural areas, yet were often not selected to teach (due to teacher oversupply) (Bennell et al., 2014). It may thus be easier to sponsor those graduates, than train unqualified individuals. As such, the project’s evaluation concluded that instead of training “the processes from graduation to deployment need specific attention” (Dunne et al., 2014).

The FTTSS shows that a targeted recruitment scheme for rural applicants can improve teachers’ willingness to teach in hardship locations. However, this is often best realised by better selection of teacher graduates, rather than sponsoring new, unqualified individuals to train as teachers.

Discussion Point: Providing Incentives for Teachers in Remote Areas

Consider your state (Kano or Kaduna).

- How could the system better recruit those who want to work in the most remote areas?
- What would be the benefits and challenges to recruiting locally only?

3.3 Summary and Implications

This chapter has provided an overview of different policy options to improving recruitment and deployment. Notably, very different recommendations came out of each section.

The first section showed that to ensure recruitment of the best teachers, it often makes sense to centralise the system and adopt a structured, formal recruitment process based on transparent principles. Such an application of an entry exam, an interview with scoring sheets, or a marked teacher classroom observation could be done at any of the three selection stages: at entry of a teacher training college, when applying for a teaching position, or during one’s probation in order to enter the teaching profession. The key is to offer clear and transparent minimum teacher competencies, avoid an informal system to dominate, and ensure the system is robust enough against external influences (such as political interference), which undermine both the quality of selection, and lower teacher effectiveness by reducing their accountability to schools.

However, the deployment case suggest that the more centralised the system is, the more pronounced the disparities will be between urban and rural schools. Forced transfers rarely work, and can be damaging to teacher morale. Localising the system often leads to the most equitable deployment system, however it comes at the price of teacher effectiveness. More qualified teachers will apply for positions in urban areas, while rural schools will often end up with unqualified individuals. Alternatives to this system can work, but require significant financial investments on the side of the Ministry of Education. This often includes both a rural hardship scheme and the provision of teacher housing in localities that otherwise lack such amenities.

As such, there is often a trade-off between policies focused on recruiting effective teachers, and ensuring more equitable deployment. Finding a balance between the two is thus crucial. The next chapter will try to do so, by building on these findings and combining them with the findings from chapter 2 to provide four broad, potential policy options to improve both recruitment and deployment.
4 Putting It All Together: Four Policy Options

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we will put together the findings from Nigeria’s current recruitment and deployment processes described in chapter 2 with the various policy options described in chapter 3. We will initially offer four broad policy ideas. This tries to find a way to best balance the trade-off between systems focused on improving recruitment (selecting effective teachers) and deployment (equitable division of teachers).

4.2 Four Policy Options

When considering options for policy reform, it is both easy to be too cautious and only propose reforms that are feasible, but do not fundamentally improve any outcome, or to be too radical and end up with completely unrealistic suggestions. For that reason, we will present four different options here, ranging from least to most reformist. Note however, that these are offered only as suggestions to stimulate discussion, and should not be seen as direct recommendations. For that reason, we will present four different options here, ranging from least to most reformist. Note however, that these are offered only as suggestions to stimulate discussion, and should not be seen as direct recommendations. It is vital that each of these options are analysed in more detail (see below). The most appropriate reform in Kano and Kaduna may be some hybrid of these suggestions, or may even end up being a fifth policy option that focuses on another reform area.

- **Option 1: Formalise the local recruitment system and adopt a rural teaching allowance.**

  The most straightforward policy option to improving the current system is to ‘work with the grain’ (Levy, 2014) and try to rationalise the informal, local recruitment system that is currently dominating recruitment. Under this reform, all primary teacher recruitment becomes formal responsibility of the Local Government. To improve the recruitment standard, the process has to follow certain minimum requirements set out by the state. To enforce this system, and improve its transparency, Local Government Councils (LGCs) are required to have a designated ‘event’ where they conduct the teacher selection, organised by the Local Government Education Adviser (LGEA). A state-SUBEB representative has to attend to ensure all processes are respected. All head teachers from schools with proposed postings are also invited to take part in the teacher selection process. Other members, such as the Teacher Union and Governor’s representatives could also be invited as ‘observers’ to ensure that the system is implemented fairly.

  Selection at local government level is likely to privilege local candidates, thus benefitting deployment. However, by having a system that enforces minimum standards, there may still be fewer qualified candidates in particular hardship locations. For that reason, a rural teaching allowance should also be introduced that is based on a transparent rule (e.g. distance from the paved road). This amount should be significant (a minimum of +30% extra salary) and increase for more rural postings (+40% to 50% extra as a posting is more rural). A clear ‘zoning’ map should be developed to clearly explain these rules to teachers. This rule should be uniform across the state and financed at the state level (to avoid penalising rural areas).

  This system will likely be most politically tenable, and will improve teacher selection. However, by drawing from a local pool, the most effective teachers will still likely go to urban areas. The rural teaching allowance, while popular with all stakeholders, may be financially unaffordable for states to cover.

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11 This policy takes elements of Peru’s hybrid selection process (section 3.1.2), Zambia’s recruitment “workshops” that ensure transparency through external observers (section 3.2.4), and findings from The Gambia about incentives (section 3.2.3).
• Option 2: Centralise the recruitment system to SUBEB; applicants indicate an LGA preference.

The option that is likely to allow selection of the best teachers would require centralising the recruitment process (or enforcing the current formal process) and making it the full responsibility of the SUBEB.

To entice applicants to rural areas, an annual state-based recruitment campaign will clearly post the total number of positions that are available in each LGA. This will also stress that preference is given to those applicants who apply to the most rural LGAs areas. Applicants then have to apply to the state indicating a first, and second preference for LGA.

All applicants are then required to conduct a standardised examination, a marked interview, and possibly also a small, graded, teaching demonstration, based on a set of pre-specified criteria of effective teaching. An overall grade is then given to each teacher. To further benefit those willing to teach in rural areas, points are added to applicants’ scores if they choose to teach in a rural LGA (and more points if it is a very rural LGA), while points are subtracted for applicants preferring to teach in an urban area (and more points are subtracted if it’s a very urban LGA, such as the capital).

After this adjustment, all teachers are ranked from highest to lowest scoring. The state allocates individuals to LGAs based on their indicated preference, starting with the highest scoring teacher and moving down the line to cover everyone’s first choice. Remaining applicants who were lower-down and not selected for their first chosen LGA, are then offered places for their second choice LGA (if still available) or otherwise, another LGA with insufficient applicants. Such offers are reported back to teachers, together with their rank in the overall state test. The teacher can choose to either accept or reject the offer. If rejected, no other offer is provided, but a member lower down on the list is offered the position. The list of recruited teachers is then provided to the LGEA, which will work together with all head teachers from schools with proposed postings, to jointly decide on the final school deployment.

This system places the most emphasis on teacher competency, and will thus likely improve selection. It also offers a very ‘fair’ and transparent recruitment and deployment system, that does not require large financial contributions. However, it severely reduces the (informal) powers of local government, and prevents them from influencing the selection or choosing ‘locals’ only (as deployment is driven by teachers’ applications entirely). It may also be cumbersome to implement at state level, and it is uncertain if this system can fill hardship locations without additional incentives.

• Option 3: Recruitment becomes the joint responsibility of SUBEB and CoEs; loan-scholarships are provided to those willing to temporarily teach in the most rural communities.

This policy option focuses on the entry into teacher training as the main selection method to improving teacher recruitment and deployment.

Under this system, the SUBEB sets out the likely number of candidates it is willing to recruit in two years time. All state-level teacher training institutes (TTIs), including the College of Education, and any potential Federal Teaching College or University, are provided with a cap on their NCE entry that is directly linked to this recruitment targeted (e.g. possibly an extra 15-20% higher to account for teacher dropout). They will only receive state funding for this select number of candidates. To disincentivise extra enrolment, these schools will also face a (financial) penalty if they exceed their enrolment cap.

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12 This policy is largely based on Mexico’s test-based system (section 3.1.3) and Zambia’s teacher deployment system (secton 3.2.4).
13 This policy is largely based on the case of Peru (see section 3.1.2), together with Columbia’s loan-scholarship scheme (see 3.1.2) and the targeted recruitment of the Female Teacher Training Scholarship Scheme (see 3.1.4).
14 In case of multiple teacher teacher colleges, an internal allocation formula of entrants has to be overseen by SUBEB or MoE.
15 Though by maintaining the overall allocation, and reducing enrolment, per-student funding will increase significantly.
The SUBEB and MoE will also place additional requirements on teacher training institutes to improve and enforce their selection criteria. All applicants are required to conduct a standardised examination, a marked interview, and possibly also a small, graded, teaching demonstration, based on a set of pre-specified criteria of effective teaching. All candidates are ranked from best to worst, and starting from the highest-ranking candidates, all designated positions are filled until the enrolment cap is met.

To improve deployment to rural areas, applicants who are willing to teach in a rural location for two years are provided with a loan-scholarship that covers all their tuition fees and living expenses. This is turned into a grant when they graduate and have completed two years of teaching in a rural location. After these two years, these teachers are further allowed to have a first-choice in selecting which of LGAs with outstanding teacher needs they wish to be transferred to.

At the end of the two year-cohort, the SUBEB and MoE will again test all applicants on these standardised requirements. They then provide a large bonus to the college for every teacher coming out of the NCE programme that meets minimum teaching standards. This will further make sure the colleges are serious about selecting only the most capable candidates and likely incentivises remedial education to take place. This test also doubles as the formal process to recruiting teachers (though external candidates are also able to apply during this time). Teachers are deployed to the LGEA on the basis of their stated preference and open vacancies. The LGEA will then work together with all head teachers from schools with proposed postings, to jointly decide on the final school deployment.

This system provides an appealing solution by closely aligning the demand and supply of teacher graduates, while simultaneously stimulating improved teacher training through improved selection, monitoring and assessment. It also reduces the informal powers of local government (and may thus be politically tricky), but may be popular for student teachers by raising their likelihood of employment. The loan-scholarship is a cost-effective way to stimulate deployment to rural areas, and faces relatively little risk as it turns into a grant only when students have completed their initial two years of teaching.

• Option 4: Schools can recruit teachers on probation. These teachers have to pass a minimum teacher standards test within three years, which is administered annually by the State.\(^{16}\)

The most radical suggestion is to fully devolve recruitment and deployment processes to the school.

Under this system, the SUBEB makes an assessment of the schools which most urgently need teachers, and the total number of recruits that are financially affordable. It then ‘grants’ such a new position directly to the school, which can start its own selection process. By recruiting local candidates, it will likely quickly fill the position, thus addressing overall teacher deployment disparities. However, it also raises the risk of recruiting a large number of unqualified candidates.

To counter this, a post-hoc state assessment process is proposed. This requires that any new teaching recruit has to meet certain minimum teacher standards within three years of taking their ‘probationary’ post. This assessment is conducted annually by the state, which includes a standardised examination, a marked interview, and possibly also a small, graded, teaching demonstration, based on a set of pre-specified criteria of effective teaching. An overall grade is then given to each teacher. Those with an overall ‘pass’ mark are then promoted to the regular teaching service. If, after three years the teacher has still not passed, they are let go, and the school has to start recruitment of a replacement candidate.

This system thus places the burden of upgrading a teacher’s skills on the teacher and the school’s head teacher. This will make them take other exercises (e.g. in-service teacher training, and classroom support)

\(^{16}\) This policy is based on Lesotho’s recruitment (section 3.2.4), together with an assessment proposal from India (section 3.1.4)
more seriously. It is also possibly well-combined with revisions to the LGEA inspectorate, so that it is used as a gradually ‘support system’ to preparing these new teachers to meet the minimum teacher standards.

School-based recruitment offers a very cost-effective manner to improve deployment. Moreover, the focus on in-school teacher assessments follows latest findings on how best to identify effective teachers. Yet, this system also largely overhauls the conventional recruitment and places significant extra burdens on the head teacher. As such, this is often considered to be too radical of a reform in many countries.

Discussion Point: Four Policy Options

Consider your state (Kano or Kaduna).

- Go through each of the examples, and highlight the elements that might work in your state. Why might these be effective, and how would they be made to work?
- Go through each of the examples, and highlight the elements that will likely not work in your state. Why is that so? What does that teach us about what policy elements have to be avoided?
- What would be a fifth option, that provides a meaningful solution to tackle recruitment and deployment? What are the benefits and challenges to this approach?

4.3 Summary and Implications

This chapter has proposed four different policy options, focusing on different points of entry and with different emphases on recruitment or deployment. They also range from minor tweaks to the current system (e.g. formalising local recruitment by changing the composition and selection process of the teacher recruitment committee) to large overhauls (e.g. making schools responsible for their own recruitment).

In general, all options include some mechanism of standardised examination process, though this can occur at different stages of the selection process. All four options also offer a way to attract teachers to hardship locations, either through rural teaching incentives, stressing the higher likelihood of employment in these areas, or through targeted recruitment. All could work, though in different degrees, and some are much more expensive than others. Lastly, all systems also require a stronger SUBEB to determine which LGAs and which schools need new teachers, and how many new positions are fiscally feasible to create. This stresses the need for greater clarity and openness in how such allocations are made. Moreover, it also means that the data on which such projections are based (both in terms of school needs, and in terms of recruitment affordable) is vital, and should receive extra attention.

As mentioned in the introduction, these are just policy ideas, taken from the international literature. It is difficult to tell how feasible these are. For that reason, the next section offers a simple model that takes this assessment forward and guides the participant to how best to analyse which policy option is most feasible, and how best to proceed.
5 How Best to Utilise Policy Options

The analysis in the chapters preceding are all considered to be vital inputs into the research set out to do by the State Research Teams in Kano and Kaduna. Based on this, their findings in the first phase of the research, and their broader understanding of the system, such policy ideas can now meaningfully be analysed, adapted, combined or contrasted to find practical ideas that would best assist in the specific political, financial and administrative realities faced by Kano and Kaduna State.

This section provides a simple framework to help members with their analysis. In starts with an overview of the different types of areas to get policy ideas from, followed by an assessment framework to assess which options would be technically optimal, while also politically and administratively feasible. We end with a brief note on a potential reform process, following incremental experimentation and adaptation.

5.1 Where to Get Policy Ideas From

After identifying a policy challenge (say, the ineffective recruitment and deployment of teachers), it is important to find new and innovative ideas that provide the basis for recommendations to government. However, it is also important to consider what sources are used for policy ideas. In Figure 5.1, we present a stylised model from Andrews et al (2016) that plots different sources of information on two dimensions: vertically, it reflects whether the idea ‘works’ and is thus technically feasible to reach its aimed objectives (e.g. will it improve recruitment and deployment?). Horizontally, this reflects the extent to which an idea is administratively and politically feasible in a given context (e.g. would the SUBEB be able to implement this proposal, and would the Commissioner for Education approve?). Figure 5.1 reflects the different positions across four such sources of information: existing practice, latent practice, positive deviance and external best practice. We will now briefly discuss each of these in turn.

Figure 5.1. The Design Space: Where Do We Get Ideas From?

The first source of information relates to ‘existing practice’. As it is currently being used, this is clearly administratively and politically feasible, though it will likely have certain key challenges that prevent it from being technically feasible (and are the reason the assessment is often conducted in the first place).

Simply by considering the current practices, likely ideas will start appearing on how possibly to address the challenges faced in the process, known as ‘latent practice’. For instance, in chapter 2, we saw that there were a number of small changes that can be made relatively easily (e.g. involve the headteachers more in the selection and deployment process). By working closely within the system, such a reform is still highly administratively and politically feasible. It will also move us slightly closer to a technically desired option, though certain deeper institutional constraints will not be addressed.

The third category of ‘positive deviance’ relates to ideas that are already being acted upon in the local context (and are thus often administratively and politically feasible), while also yielding the same positive
results (addressing the policy issue). However, these ideas are only exhibited in a small part of the system and thus ‘deviate from the norm’ (Marsh et al. 2004). One example could be one of a local government which has developed a system to attract and recruit better teachers than its neighbouring LGAs. This could then offer a very important source of inspiration for the wider education system, as it is both effective and functional within the local context.

The fourth, and most common option, is based around ‘external based practice’; find an example from another country that has ‘solved’ this problem and recommend it as a solution. Indeed, chapter 3 and 4 provide a key example in this. This is so common, that countries often have many strategic plans that closely resemble global “best practice” (Andrew, Pritchett and Woolcock, 2012). However, this does not mean that by adopting such policy ambitions that outcomes will improve (see Box 1 for the case of procurement in Uganda). This is often because these ‘best practice’ policies are seen to be too complicated to implement, or do not have the wider backing from other stakeholders in government. As such, as show in Figure 5.1, they are often not administratively and politically feasible in the given context. This reflects the danger of international best practice. It is tempting to take a solution from somewhere and transplant it into a different context. However, this often does not work. Instead, such policy only ends up ‘masking’ a government’s poor performance to the outside world. This provides a case where pushing for the best, evidence-based, technical solution may not lead to the most effective policy generation, but “facilitates the perpetuation of disfunction” (Andrews, Pritchett and Woolcock, 2012).

Box 1: The Case of Uganda’s Procurement Regulation based on “International Best Practice”

In the late 1990s, Uganda was faced with a serious procurement problem. After a number of high-level scandals, it asked a group of consultants to recommend the most appropriate system to follow. This was conducted, and eventually a highly ambitious bill was passed, following the highest international standards of procurement law. Indeed, Global Integrity gave Uganda 98/100 points for the quality of its legal framework; higher than any other country in the world. However, in practice, the government did not actually improve its procurement-performance very much. The same informal practices continued and service-delivery did not markedly improve over the next decade. Hence, problems persisted despite the ‘solutions’ that were meant to address them (Andrews and Bategeka, 2013).

In sum, it is important to be aware of the benefits and limitations of different types of policy ideas. Ideally, we would try to look within the local context for cases of ‘positive deviance’ that offer solutions that are known to be administratively and politically feasible. However, such ideas are not always widely available. This leaves the option of looking ambitiously at local practices, and thinking creatively how to make these more effective (latent practice), or looking at international evidence (external best practice), and trying to find a way to tailor this to the specific administrative and political local conditions. In many cases, the best solutions provide a mixture of all of four elements. The key then, is to try to find the ‘hybrid’ option that is technically most promising, while also being administratively and politically fitting. While chapter 4 offers some ‘technical’ ideas, these now have to be tailored to local context. The next section provides a method to assess such policy options to do so.

5.2 A Framework for Assessment – The Three A’s

There are many different frameworks and methodologies to assess policy options. Here we propose a simplified model based on three key factors: Authority, Ability and Acceptance (Andrews et al, 2015).
1. Authority (Political Feasibility)

Authority refers to the political support needed to initiate the reform. Different political actors will prefer different reforms, and some reforms are more contentious than others. For that reason, it is important to identify who are the main sources of formal authority and influence (e.g. Governor, Commissioner, or SUBEB chairman). There may also be informal sources of authority (e.g. the influencing role of local politicans and traditional leaders currently influencing recruitment processes).

One way to conduct such an exercise is to do a ‘stakeholder analysis’ through a series of interviews with all relevant individuals. In this process, the first aim is to identify how interested each institutional stakeholder is in a particular reform; which do they believe it is most feasible, which are they most in support of? A hypothetical case is given in table 5.1, showing some in favour of a particular reform (as indicated with plus signs), some are opposed (minus signs) and others are neutral. We will thus likely find that different actors have very different preferences on how to improve recruitment and deployment. It may also immediately reflect which options are not politically feasible (e.g. in this hypothetical case, no actors besides head teachers are supportive of moving towards school-based recruitment).

Table 5.1. Example of a Stakeholder Analysis across the Four Policy Options

| Scenario | Current system (informal recruitment, driven by LGAs). | Option 1: Formalise local recruitment system, rural teacher allowance. | Option 2: Centralise recruitment to SUBEB; applicants indicate LGA preference. | Option 3: Recruitment driven by teacher training entry; scholarships for those willing to teach in rural areas. | Option 4: Schools recruit teachers on probation, have 3 years to pass minimum standards test. |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Governor | No change | ( + ) | ( + ) | ( + ) | ( - ) | ( - ) |
| Commissioner/Ministry of Finance | No change | ( - - ) | ( + ) | ( - ) | ( - ) |
| Commissioner/Ministry of Education | No change | ( ++ ) | ( ++ ) | ( + ) | ( - ) |
| SUBEB | No change | ( - ) | ( +++ ) | ( + ) | ( - ) |
| Local Government | No change | ( +++ ) | ( - - ) | ( - - - ) | ( - ) |
| Colleges of Education | No change | No change | No change | ( + + ) | No change |
| Head Teachers | No change | ( - ) | ( + ) | ( + ) | ( + + ) |
| Qualified Teachers | No change | ( + ) | ( +++ ) | ( ++ ) | ( - ) |

A second aim of a stakeholder analysis is to assess how influential each of the various stakeholders are in initiating any proposed reform. For instance, local Governments have influence, but could possibly be overruled on recruitment reform by SUBEB and the Education Commissioner, if they choose to do so.

Putting these two together, the two areas (influence and interest) can form a ‘stakeholder analysis matrix’. Figure 5.2 provides the hypothetical case, based on policy option 1. This shows that the main players (the upper quadrants) are divided on the proposal, with some in favour; some opposed. This suggests that in hypothetical case, this option is recommended, it will have to rely on the top-right actors as ‘advocates’. Top-left actors still require convincing, or require an adaption to the policy in order to appease them. The bottom part reflects potential support and resistance for implementation (see ‘acceptance’ below).
2. ‘Ability’ (Financial and Administrative Feasibility)

Ability relates to the practical side of policy reform. This is made up of financial costs (affordability), and broader administrative support needed for implementation.

Firstly, are all of the policy options financially feasible, or are there certain options (e.g. introducing a rural teaching allowance) which would be prohibitively expensive? While such options could be costed out, this can also be initially assessed through interviews with key financial actors. For instance, what are the views of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget, and the budget unit of the respective implementation agencies (e.g. SUBEB) regarding the affordability of various proposals? Another possible way is to focus on a pilot of a specific policy option, and see what are the resource requirements here, which agency is expected to finance this, and would they be able to afford such an exercise?

Secondly, any reform would also require the administrative time, effort and skills needed to start such an intervention. Again, here it is helpful to think about it in terms of a pilot. Which key agents need to ‘work’ on any opening engagement? Which institutions do they need to come from? Are any specific policy options more administratively difficult to implement than others?

Both elements thus allow us to assess different key components that need to be in place in order to initiate any reform. If any particular intervention is far more difficult to implement, it is much less likely to be a successful model for reform (Andrews et al, 2015).

3. Acceptance (Willingness to Implement)

Acceptance reflects the likely support or opposition from who are affected by the reform (e.g. LGEAs, head teachers, teachers). Some types of reform are more controversial for front-office personnel than others. For instance, a forced transfer to a rural school is difficult to implement, while teachers are likely to support receiving additional funds through a rural teaching allowance. Without sufficient acceptance, the policy will likely fail to be implemented; it will be undermined from within (e.g. forced deployment to rural schools).

Part of the analysis of ‘acceptance’ can thus be done through a stakeholder analysis (see the bottom quadrants in figure 5.2). However, not all head teachers or teachers share the same view. For that reason, it may also be important to think which policy is most straightforward, and easiest to communicate to front-office personnel. In case of lower acceptance, what would be needed to best convince such actors of the importance of this particular policy reform?

Overall Reform Space

Putting all three elements together, and summarising each with potential of ‘high’, ‘medium’ or ‘low’ reform space provides us with a helpful tool to quickly see which reform is most plausible. A hypothetical
case summarising the four policy options is offered in Table 5.2. Here, based on the stakeholder analysis (see table 5.1) clear differences appear in terms of ‘authority’. Based on financial cost and administrative complexity of the options described, a similar pattern emerges for ‘ability’. Yet, slightly different options turn out to be most acceptable of the four. This suggests that in its current form, one option has low overall chance for reform, two have a medium-chance, and one is most promising. Based on this (hypothetical!) example, this suggests the Research Team should recommend policy option 2 to the government, and further develop this idea forward (e.g. by designing a specific pilot on how this can be done).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Current system (informal recruitment, driven by LGAs)</th>
<th>Option 1: Formalise local recruitment system, rural teacher allowance.</th>
<th>Option 2: Centralise recruitment to SUBEB; applicants indicate LGA preference.</th>
<th>Option 3: Recruitment driven by teacher training entry; scholarships for those willing to teach in rural areas.</th>
<th>Option 4: Schools recruit teachers on probation, have 3 years to pass minimum standards test.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reform Space (High, Medium, Low)</td>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>No change</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>No change</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>No change</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chance for Reform?</td>
<td>No change</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 Taking Your First Step: Trying it out and Learning

As was mentioned in the introduction of this paper, it is relatively straightforward to identify policy ideas to address a particular problem (as this paper shows). It is much harder to meaningfully learn from these ideas, and adapt, combine or contrast them to find practical solutions that would best assist with the challenges faced by the local political, financial and administrative realities. This is the major challenge up ahead for the State Research Teams in Kano and Kaduna.

This paper provided a number of policy ideas, and a methodology to help assess the feasibility of such ideas. However, no such analysis can provide the perfect recommendation. Indeed, the international policy research literature suggests that it is vital not to try to design the perfect system in one go. This is because there are often too many uncertainties to take into consideration, and implementation of such a system would be too difficult (Andrews et al, 2012).

Instead, it is much better to identify a suitable entry point (based on the conducted policy assessment), and start small. Try to test this system out in the real world, quickly evaluate, revise the pilot, and test again to better meet its objectives. (Andrews et al, 2016). Such an iterative and experimental process will likely offer the best way to fit a new proposal into the much-needed context-specific reform. As shown in section 5.1, just because a proposal ‘works’ in one country, does not mean it will work in the next. Moreover, starting small often offers the most feasible way to generate reform space. Taking the model from section 5.2, authority for reform will always be restricted at first (when politicians may still be sceptical of a new idea), but this grows as the idea has proven itself (allowing for further reform). Similarly, ability and acceptance for a civil service to implement a reform also often emerges on-the-job, as the implementing agency gradually learns how best to improve the system, and starts to appreciate the benefits that accrue from it.

In sum, there is no one right way to do so, and successful reforms often emerge as a hybrid of ideas. The key is to start experimenting with promising ideas, learn and adapt. EDOREN hopes that through this interactive research activity, the participating states comes one step closer to finding recommendations to reforming the system to better ensure effective teachers are recruited and deployed to priority schools.
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