



# Benin

## TEACHERS

SABER Country Report  
2012

### Policy Goals

#### 1. Setting clear expectations for teachers

The national curriculum sets expectations for what students are supposed to learn and teachers are supposed to do. There is no official guidance on teachers' use of time, which could help ensure that teachers are focused on tasks related to school improvement.

Emerging



#### 2. Attracting the best into teaching

Initial education standards for primary and secondary teachers are low relative to teachers in many higher-performing systems, and there are opportunities to improve working conditions.

Emerging



#### 3. Preparing teachers with useful training and experience

There are low standards for pre-service teachers, and induction programs are not offered to beginning teachers.

Latent



#### 4. Matching teachers' skills with students' needs

Teachers receive monetary bonuses to work in hard-to-staff schools, but there are no incentives for teachers to teach critical shortage subjects.

Latent



#### 5. Leading teachers with strong principals

There is a program to support the development of principals' leadership skills through supervised internships, but there are still opportunities to strengthen support to principals.

Emerging



#### 6. Monitoring teaching and learning

There are official systems in place to monitor teacher performance. Student achievement data are collected, but are not used to inform teaching or policy.

Established



#### 7. Supporting teachers to improve instruction

Teacher professional development is not required. Professional development activities that do occur include some activities that are associated with instructional improvement (e.g., participation in teacher networks).

Latent



#### 8. Motivating teachers to perform

Promotion opportunities are linked to performance, but there are not many mechanisms to hold teachers accountable.

Established



## Overview of SABER-Teachers

There is increasing interest across the globe in attracting, retaining, developing, and motivating great teachers. Student achievement has been found to correlate with economic and social progress (Hanushek & Woessmann 2007, 2009; Pritchett & Viarengo 2009; Campante & Glaeser 2009), and teachers are key: Recent studies have shown that teacher quality is the main school-based predictor of student achievement and that several consecutive years of outstanding teaching can offset the learning deficits of disadvantaged students (Hanushek & Rivkin 2010; Rivkin, et al. 2005; Nye et al. 2004; Rockoff 2004; Park & Hannum 2001; Sanders & Rivers 1996). However, achieving the right teacher policies to ensure that every classroom has a motivated, supported, and competent teacher remains a challenge, because evidence on the impacts of many teacher policies remains insufficient and scattered, the impact of many reforms depends on specific design features, and teacher policies can have very different impacts depending on the context and other education policies in place.

**A new tool, *SABER-Teachers*, aims to help fill this gap by collecting, analyzing, synthesizing, and disseminating comprehensive information on teacher policies in primary and secondary education systems around the world.** SABER-Teachers is a core component of SABER (Systems Approach for Better Education Results), an initiative launched by the Human Development Network of the World Bank. SABER collects information about different education systems' policy domains, analyzes it to identify common challenges and promising solutions, and makes it widely available to inform countries' decisions on where and how to invest in order to improve education quality.

**SABER-Teachers collects data on 10 core teacher policy areas to offer a comprehensive descriptive overview of the teacher policies that are in place in each participating education system (see Box 1).** Data are collected in each participating education system by a specialized consultant using a questionnaire that ensures comparability of information across different education systems. Data collection focuses on the rules and regulations governing teacher management systems. This information is compiled in a comparative database where interested stakeholders can access

detailed information organized along relevant categories that describe how different education systems manage their teacher force, as well as copies of supporting documents. The full database is available at the SABER-Teacher website.

### Box 1. Teacher policy areas for data collection

1. Requirements to enter and remain in teaching
2. Initial teacher education
3. Recruitment and employment
4. Teachers' workload and autonomy
5. Professional development
6. Compensation (salary and non-salary benefits)
7. Retirement rules and benefits
8. Monitoring and evaluation of teacher quality
9. Teacher representation and voice
10. School leadership

**To offer informed policy guidance, SABER-Teachers analyzes the information collected to assess the extent to which the teacher policies of an education system are aligned with those policies that the research evidence to date has shown to have a positive effect on student achievement.** SABER-Teachers analyzes the teacher policy data collected to assess each education system's progress in achieving eight teacher policy goals: 1. Setting clear expectations for teachers; 2. Attracting the best into teaching; 3. Preparing teachers with useful training and experience; 4. Matching teachers' skills with students' needs; 5. Leading teachers with strong principals; 6. Monitoring teaching and learning; 7. Supporting teachers to improve instruction; and 8. Motivating teachers to perform (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Eight teacher policy goals



**The eight teacher policy goals are functions that all high-performing education systems fulfill to a certain extent in order to ensure that every classroom has a motivated, supported, and competent teacher.** These goals were identified through a review of evidence of research studies on teacher policies, and the analysis of policies of top-performing and rapidly improving education systems. Three criteria were used to identify them: teacher policy goals had to be (i) linked to student performance through empirical evidence, (ii) a priority for resource allocation, and (iii) actionable, that is, actions governments can take to improve education policy. The eight teacher policy goals exclude other objectives that countries might want to pursue to increase the effectiveness of their teachers, but on which there is to date insufficient empirical evidence to make specific policy recommendations.

**By classifying countries according to their performance on each of the eight teacher policy goals, SABER-Teachers can help diagnose the key challenges that countries face in ensuring they have effective teachers.** For each policy goal, the SABER-Teachers team identified policy levers (actions that governments can take to reach these goals) and indicators (which measure the extent to which governments are making effective use of these policy levers). Using these policy levers and indicators, SABER-Teachers classifies education systems' performance on each of the eight teacher policy goals using a four-category scale (latent, emerging, established, and advanced), which describes

the extent to which a given education system has in place teacher policies that are known to be related to improved student outcomes. The main objective of this assessment is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher policies of an education system and pinpoint possible areas for improvement. For a more detailed report on the eight teacher policy goals, policy levers and indicators, as well as the evidence base supporting them, see Vegas *et al.* (2012).

**The main focus of SABER-Teachers is on policy design, rather than on policy implementation.** SABER-Teachers analyzes the teacher policies formally adopted by education systems. However, policies “on the ground,” that is, policies as they are actually implemented, may differ quite substantially from policies as originally designed, and in fact they often do so, due to the political economy of the reform process, lack of capacity of the organizations in charge of implementing them, or the interaction between these policies and specific contextual factors. Since SABER-Teachers collects limited data on policy implementation, the assessment of teacher policies presented in this report needs to be complemented with detailed information that describes the actual configuration of teacher policies on the ground.

**This report presents results of the application of SABER-Teachers in Benin.** It describes Benin's performance in each of the eight teacher policy goals, alongside comparative information from education systems that have consistently scored high results in international student achievement tests and have participated in SABER-Teachers. Additional detailed descriptive information on Benin's and other education systems' teacher policies can be found on the SABER-Teachers website.

## Benin’s Teacher Policy System Results

### Goal 1: Setting clear expectations for teachers

Emerging ●●○○

Setting clear expectations for student and teacher performance is important to guide teachers’ daily work and align necessary resources to make sure that teachers can constantly improve instructional practice. In addition, clear expectations can help ensure there is coherence among different key aspects of the teaching profession, such as teachers’ initial education, professional development, and teacher appraisal.

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) clear expectations for what students should know and be able to do, and how teachers can help students reach these goals; (2) useful guidance on teachers’ use of time to be able to improve instruction at the school level.

**(1) In Benin, the tasks that teachers are expected to carry out are officially stipulated and there is a national curriculum with standards for what students must know and be able to do.** Benin has defined a set of standards to inform teachers of required subject content or to provide them with measurable indicators of learning. Having standards and goals in place helps to inform teachers about their role in relation to what should be achieved by students at different grades.

The statutory definition of teachers’ working time in Benin is defined as the number of teaching hours. However, regulations regarding the use of teachers’ work time include tasks outside of classroom teaching (e.g., taking part in internal evaluation activities of the school). At present, there are no expectations for what percent of teachers’ working time should be dedicated to teaching or for other necessary activities that may contribute to instructional improvement.

**(2) Benin has defined tasks for teachers related to instructional improvement.** Primary and secondary school teachers’ officially stipulated tasks outside the classroom include: mentoring or providing support to other teachers, collaborating on the school plan, and taking part in the internal evaluation system of the

school. Other activities of teachers could be expanded to include participating in the design of the curriculum.

Benin could strengthen its statutory definition of teachers’ working time to incorporate additional tasks outside of teaching hours. Many high-performing systems (e.g., Japan and Singapore) have statutory definitions that include either the overall number of working hours or at least the overall number of hours teachers spend at school.

**Figure 2. Teachers’ official tasks related to school improvement**

	Benin	Cote d’Ivoire	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore
Mentor peers	✓		✓		✓
Collaborate on school plan	✓		✓	✓	✓
Design the curriculum			✓		✓
Participate in school evaluation	✓		✓		✓

Source: SABER-Teachers data.

## Goal 2: Attracting the best into teaching

### Emerging ●●○○

The structure and characteristics of the teaching career can make it more or less attractive for talented individuals to decide to become teachers. Talented people may be more inclined to become teachers if they see that entry requirements are on par with those of well-regarded professions, if compensation and working conditions are adequate, and if there are attractive career opportunities for them to develop as professionals.

SABER-Teachers considers four policy levers school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) minimum requirements to enter the teaching profession; (2) competitive pay; (3) appealing working conditions; and (4) attractive career opportunities.

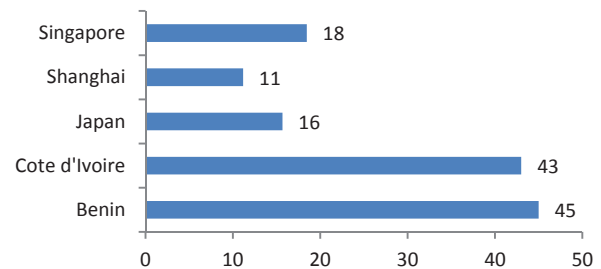
**(1) Initial education standards for primary and secondary teachers in Benin are low relative to standards in high-performing systems.** Low minimum education standards could signal teaching as a less attractive profession relative to other professions. Both primary and secondary education teachers are trained at the ISCED 4A level, meaning that their qualifications are awarded for completing pre-degree foundation courses or short vocational or technical programs.

**(2) Teacher pay in Benin varies according to performance, teachers' educational attainment, and seniority.** Moreover, there are some incentives to enter the profession, such as monetary bonuses, pay for overtime, paid annual leave time, and retirement benefits. Teacher pay sends a strong signal to qualified teacher candidates about the status of the profession vis-à-vis other career possibilities.

**(3) There is limited data collected on the quality of working conditions, making them hard to assess.** The student-teacher ratio in Benin was last reported at 45:1, which is considered high (World Bank 2012). In many high-performing education systems, student-teacher ratios are below 30:1. Data are not available on the share of schools that comply with infrastructure standards in Benin, making it difficult to assess how working conditions may affect the quality of teacher entrants.

**(4) Career opportunities may not be appealing enough to attract talented individuals to the teaching profession.** Most education systems offer teachers the possibility of being promoted to principal positions at some point in their careers. In addition to these “vertical” promotions, most high-performing education systems offer teachers the possibility of “horizontal” promotions, to academic positions that allow them to grow professionally as teachers and yet remain closely connected to instruction, instead of moving up to managerial positions (OECD 2012, Darling-Hammond 2010). In Benin, policies allow for teachers to apply for school administration posts (such as school principals) but not for academic leadership positions. Teachers' advancement opportunities are officially linked to their performance, which (if implemented as intended) may help to attract talented applicants into the profession.

**Figure 3. Student-teacher ratio, primary school**



Source: SABER-Teachers data; World Bank (2010).



### Goal 3: Preparing teachers with useful training and experience

#### Latent ●○○○

Equipping teachers with the skills they need to succeed in the classroom is crucial. To be successful, teachers need subject matter and pedagogic knowledge, as well as classroom management skills and lots of teaching practice. Adequate preparation puts all teachers on an equal footing, giving them a common framework to improve their practice.

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) minimum standards for pre-service training programs; (2) required classroom experience for all teachers.

**(1) In Benin, teacher initial education takes place at the ISCED 4A level, which is below many advanced education systems.** Virtually all high-performing countries, for instance, require that teachers have an educational level equivalent to ISCED 5A (a bachelor’s degree), and some systems, such as Finland, require in addition a research-based master’s degree (OECD 2011). In Benin, primary and secondary school teachers are considered qualified to teach after completing the equivalent of a two-year vocational course (Baccalauréat). Candidates enter teacher training programs courses after completion of secondary school.

**Box 2. Best Practice: Pre-service teacher qualifications in Singapore**

Singapore has multiple programs for becoming a teacher, ranging from a one-year postgraduate program after completion of a BA degree to a minimum of a two-year diploma program after completion of secondary school. Pre-service programs are rigorous and include education studies, curriculum studies, subject knowledge, a practicum, and language enrichment skills training (Ministry of Education Singapore 2012).

**(2) Teacher trainees are required to gain classroom experience in initial teacher education programs, but there are no formal induction or mentoring programs.** Research has shown that practical experience is an important factor in teaching quality—either through

direct classroom engagement or mentoring programs (Darling-Hammond 2000). Teacher trainees in Benin are required to have between six and 12 months of classroom experience. The more teachers try out their pedagogical theories, subject matter knowledge, and classroom management skills on a group of students, the better prepared they will be for their job.

**Figure 4. Required classroom experience, secondary school teachers**

	Benin	Cote d’Ivoire	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore
6 months or less					
12 months or less	✓	✓		✓	
12-24 months					✓
More than 24 months			✓		

Source: SABER-Teachers data.

**Goal 4: Matching teachers’ skills with students’ needs**

**Latent ●○○○**

Ensuring that teachers work in schools where their skills are most needed is important for equity and efficiency. First, it is a way of ensuring teachers are distributed as efficiently as possible, making sure that there are no shortages of qualified teachers at any given grade, education level, or subject. Second, it is a means of ensuring all students in a school system have an equal opportunity to learn. Without purposeful allocation systems, it is likely that teachers will gravitate towards schools serving better-off students or located in more desirable areas, deepening inequalities in the system.

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) incentives for teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools; and (2) incentives for teachers to teach critical shortage areas.

**(1) In Benin, monetary bonuses are offered to teachers for teaching in hard-to-staff schools. Teaching experience is the only factor considered when deciding transfer priorities.** Attracting effective teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools, which may serve students from disadvantaged populations, is a challenge for many countries. Getting qualified teachers often requires a complex set of incentives.

**(2) Benin has not identified critical shortage subjects (though they exist), and there are no incentives for teachers to focus on them.** In high-performing and rapidly improving systems, various incentives exist to attract talented professionals to teach critical shortage subjects.

**Box 3. Best Practice: Mississippi, USA**

The Mississippi Department of Education has worked to identify critical shortages areas and offers incentives to teachers to teach these subjects, including: more benefits, higher salary, and forgiveness of student loans. Such incentives can draw quality teachers who would otherwise not teach these subject areas (Mississippi Department of Education 2012).

**Figure 5. Incentives for teachers to teach in hard-to-staff schools**

	Benin	Cote d'Ivoire	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore
Better chances of promotion				✓	
Higher basic salary			✓		
Monetary bonus	✓		✓	✓	
Subsidized education				✓	
Housing support			✓		

Source: SABER-Teachers data.

Note: Singapore has no specific incentives to attract qualified teachers to hard-to-staff schools, but it does have a centrally-managed teacher deployment system that ensures an equitable and efficient distribution of teachers.

## Goal 5: Leading teachers with strong principals

### Emerging ●●○○

The quality of school heads is an important predictor of student learning. Capable principals can act as instructional leaders, providing direction and support to the improvement of instructional practice at the school level. In addition, capable principals can help attract and retain competent teachers.

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) education system’s investment in developing qualified school leaders; (2) decision-making authority for school principals to support and improve instructional practice.

**(1) In Benin, there is a program to support the development of principals’ leadership skills through supervised internships.** Principals’ leadership skills can be developed through supported work experience or through specific training courses. High-performing systems such as Japan, South Korea, Shanghai, and Singapore require the participation of applicants to principal positions in specific coursework and/or a specialized internship or mentoring program aimed at developing essential leadership skills (OECD, 2012; Darling-Hammond 2010). In Benin, principals are required to have a minimum of 10 years’ professional teaching experience, but there are no minimum education requirements. Mechanisms to attract competent individuals to principal positions, such as performance rewards, are absent in Benin. Instead, the Ministry of Education, at the national level, is responsible for hiring principals.

**(2) Principals in Benin are explicitly expected to provide support and guidance to teachers for the improvement of instructional practice.** Once education systems get talented candidates to become principals, they need to structure their time to focus on improving instruction (OECD 2012, Barber & Mourshed 2007). High-performing education systems such as Finland, Ontario, and Singapore think of their principals as instructional leaders. Principals are expected to be knowledgeable in teaching and curriculum matters, as well as to provide guidance and support to teachers. They evaluate teachers, provide feedback, assess the school’s needs for professional development, and direct

instructional resources to where they are most needed (Darling-Hammond & Rothman 2011). In Benin, there are official specifications regarding the role of school principals, and principals are explicitly required to evaluate teacher performance, a common task of principals in many higher-performing systems.

**Figure 6. Mechanisms to support the development of principals’ leadership skills**

	Benin	Cote d’Ivoire	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore
Courses or other training requirements				✓	✓
Participation in mentoring or internship program	✓		✓		✓

Source: SABER-Teachers data.



## Goal 6: Monitoring teaching and learning

Established ●●●○

Assessing how well teachers are teaching and whether students are learning is essential to devise strategies for improving teaching and learning. First, identifying low-performing teachers and students is critical for education systems to be able to provide struggling classrooms with adequate support to improve. Second, teacher and student evaluation also helps identify good practices which can be shared across the system to improve school performance.

SABER-Teachers considers three policy levers school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) availability of data on student achievement in order to inform teaching and policy; (2) adequate systems to monitor teacher performance; (3) multiple mechanisms to evaluate teacher performance.

**(1) In Benin, student achievement data are collected at the national level through exams.** All high-performing education systems ensure that there are enough student data to inform teaching and policy. These data ensure that three main functions are fulfilled: (1) There is a system to collect relevant and complete data on student achievement regularly; (2) There is a mechanism for public authorities to access these to inform policy; and (3) There is a mechanism to feed these data back to the school level, so that teachers can use the data to improve classroom practice. In Benin, national student assessments are administered to students after completion of grades six, 10, and 13. These assessments are sample-based, rather than covering all students, and student learning data are not be linked to teacher information. While the information collected through the national assessments may be useful for diagnosing the overall performance of the system, because it covers only a sample of schools it may not help the government to identify the schools and teachers that need additional support, nor help most teachers to evaluate and adjust their own practice.

**(2) Teachers in Benin are required to participate in both internal and external evaluations.** Many high-performing systems have multiple mechanisms in place to monitor teachers, including internal evaluations. High-performing countries often have multiple systems for managing teacher information, with teachers assigned individual identification numbers that allow countries to track their performance over time. This is one additional way of ensuring teacher accountability.

**(3) In Benin, teachers are assessed based on their knowledge of the subject matter they teach, their methods for assessing students in the classroom, and the academic achievement of their students.** Research suggests that no single method of evaluating teacher performance is fail-safe. Most high-performing systems conduct teacher evaluations using a multiplicity of mechanisms of data collection and varied criteria for assessment (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Criteria to evaluate teacher performance

	Benin	Cote d'Ivoire	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore
Subject matter knowledge	✓	✓	✓		✓
Teaching methods		✓	✓	✓	✓
Student assessment methods	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Students' academic achievement	✓			✓	

Source: SABER-Teachers data.

### Goal 7: Supporting teachers to improve instruction

Latent ●○○○

Support systems are necessary to help improve instruction at the school level. To improve instructional practice continuously, teachers and schools need to be able to analyze specific challenges they face in classroom teaching, have access to information on best practices to address these challenges, and receive specific external support tailored to their needs.

SABER-Teachers considers three policy levers school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) availability of opportunities for teacher professional development; (2) teacher professional development activities that are collaborative and focused on instructional improvement; (3) assignment of teacher professional development based on perceived needs.

**(1) In Benin, teachers are not required to participate in professional development activities, but there is an education advisor in each district office that oversees professional development activities (Figure 8).** National authorities are responsible for teacher development when it occurs, but teachers sometimes have to pay for the costs of professional development activities. Given that professional development is not required, it is unclear to what extent teachers benefit from the available opportunities for additional training.

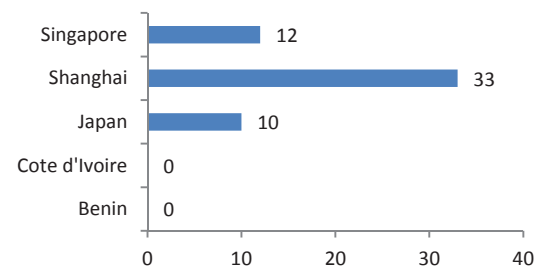
**(2) Teacher professional development in Benin includes teacher observation visits to schools and participation in teacher networks, an activity that may improve teacher effectiveness.** For instance, primary teachers are required to gather in their district every two weeks to discuss how to improve classroom instruction. Research suggests that the most effective teacher professional development is collaborative and provides opportunities for the in-school analysis of instructional practice, as opposed to being limited to one-time workshops or conferences. For instance, effective teacher development activities may include observation visits to other schools, participation in teacher networks, or participation in school networks.

**(3) Teacher professional development is formally assigned based on perceived needs.** Assigning professional development to teachers when they score low on performance evaluations can be one way of improving instructional practice. In that way, teacher professional development can be targeted to the needs of specific teachers, rather than being deployed to all teachers regardless of their needs.

#### Box 4. Best Practice, Japan lesson study system

Japan has a unique professional development system that uses a lesson study approach. Teachers work together in small groups and collaborate with one another. They meet regularly to discuss learning goals, develop actual classroom activities, and observe how their plans work in practice. They then report on their performance so that other teachers can benefit (Colinson et al. 2001).

Figure 8. Required or suggested days of teacher professional development per year



Source: SABER-Teachers data; training requirements based on an eight-hour school day.

### Goal 8: Motivating teachers to perform

#### Established ●●●○

Adequate mechanisms for motivating teachers are a way for school systems to signal their seriousness in achieving education goals, make the teaching career attractive to competent individuals, and reward good performance while ensuring accountability.

SABER-Teachers considers three policy levers school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) linking career opportunities to teachers’ performance; (2) having mechanisms to hold teachers accountable; (3) linking teacher compensation to performance.

**(1) Official policies link teacher promotion opportunities in Benin to teacher performance evaluations, and open-ended appointments are informed by performance history.** There is a mandatory probation period of at least two years before they are granted open-ended appointments, and official policy stipulates that performance on the job factors into whether teachers receive this type of appointment.

**(2) There are few mechanisms in place to hold teachers in Benin accountable.** Requiring teachers to meet some standards to remain in the teaching profession can facilitate the removal of ineffective teachers. One minimum standard is consistent teacher attendance. Research in both developed and developing countries indicates that teacher absenteeism can reach high levels, worsening student outcomes (Chaudhury et al. 2005; Herrmann & Rockoff 2009; Miller, Murnane & Willett 2008; Rogers & Vegas 2009). Education systems can encourage teacher attendance by taking it into account in teacher evaluations, providing teachers with incentives to be present in school, and dismissing teachers if they are consistently absent. In Benin, policy specifies that teachers can be dismissed for misconduct (not specified), which does not necessarily include absenteeism, child abuse, or incompetence. At present, primary and secondary education teachers are not required to participate in professional development activities, but teachers are required to participate in annual external performance reviews.

**(3) In Benin, teacher compensation is officially linked to performance as assessed through performance evaluations.** Performance reviews in Benin carry salary implications, but high-performing teachers do not receive monetary bonuses for good individual performance. Linking either longer-term compensation or shorter-term bonuses to teacher performance can be one way to improve teacher performance, if the system has in place an adequate system of performance evaluation.

**Figure 9. Requirements to remain in the profession, primary and secondary school teachers**

	Benin	Cote d'Ivoire	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore
<i>Primary school teachers:</i>					
Professional development		✓		✓	
Performance evaluations	✓			✓	✓
<i>Secondary school teachers:</i>					
Professional development		✓		✓	
Performance evaluations	✓			✓	✓

Source: SABER-Teachers data.

## SABER Teachers Policy Options

### Goal 1. Setting Clear Expectations for Teachers

The national curriculum sets expectations for what students are supposed to learn and teachers are supposed to do. There is no official guidance on teachers' use of time, which could help ensure that teachers are focused on tasks related to school improvement.

- Revise the statutory definition of teacher's working time to include the overall number of hours teachers spend at the school. In accordance with the practice in higher-performing systems, this definition should include both time in the classroom as well as time spent on nonteaching activities, such as tasks related to improving instruction. Such activities might include: providing support to other teachers, collaborating on school plans, or designing the curriculum, all tasks that could contribute to instructional improvement of the school.
- Set expectations for what percentage of teachers' working time should be dedicated to teaching and what percentage should be used for other necessary activities that may contribute to instructional improvement.

### Goal 2. Attracting the Best into Teaching

Career opportunities could be strengthened to attract talented individuals to the profession.

- Strengthen initial education standards for primary and secondary education teachers. Establishing more substantial degree programs to qualify for entering the profession is one way to signal teaching as a more valued profession.
- Improve data collected on teachers' working conditions. Understanding teachers' working environments is imperative to understanding teacher's classroom needs and improving the quality of teaching.

### Goal 3. Preparing Teachers with Useful Training and Experience

Primary and secondary teacher initial education takes place at the ISCED 4A level, which is below that of many education systems.

- Pre-service teacher training could be strengthened by introducing a formal mentoring or induction program.
- Strengthen opportunities for new teachers to develop practical classroom experience. The more teachers try out their pedagogical theories, subject matter knowledge, and classroom management skills on a group of students, the better prepared they will be for their job.

### Goal 4. Matching Teachers' Skills with Students' Needs

There are untapped incentives to get teachers to work in hard-to-staff areas where living conditions are less attractive and to teach critical shortage subjects.

- Provide more incentives to teachers to teach and work in hard-to-staff schools. Incentives could include: promotion, higher salary, scholarships for education, or housing.
- Identify subject areas in which there may be a shortage of qualified teachers who are willing to teach particular subjects, and provide incentives to teachers willing and qualified to teach those subjects.

### Goal 5. Leading Teachers with Strong Principals

There is a program to support the development of principals' leadership skills through supervised internships, but there are still opportunities to strengthen support to principals.

- Strengthen requirements for becoming a principal. Such qualifications may include having minimum educational qualifications equivalent to a bachelor's degree and/ or designing specific coursework for individuals interested in working as a school principal.

- Consider monetary bonuses or increased pay, which are other ways to attract qualified individuals to principal positions.
- Require primary and secondary school teachers to participate in professional development as a requisite to remain in the profession.

### Goal 6. Monitoring Teaching and Learning

There are systems in place to monitor teacher performance that rely on multiple criteria. Student achievement data are collected, but are not used to inform policy or teachers' classroom instruction.

- Make use of student achievement data collected from annual exams. Use outcomes of these data to determine educational needs.
- Provide results of student achievement data to school principals, so they may know how their school performs relative to other schools. If data can be made available to teachers, use the data to inform teachers about student performance and to help teachers improve their own instruction.

### Goal 7. Supporting Teachers to Improve Instruction

In Benin, neither primary nor secondary school teachers are required to participate in teacher professional development activities.

- Set a required number of days for teachers to participate in professional development activities throughout the school year.
- Offer professional development activities in which teachers can learn from one another and improve their classroom instruction. Research suggests that the most effective teacher professional development is collaborative and provides opportunities for the in-school analysis of instructional practice, as opposed to being limited to one-time workshops or conferences.
- Eliminate any costs teachers may have to pay for participating in professional development activities.

### Goal 8. Motivating Teachers to Perform

Promotion opportunities are linked to performance, but there are not many mechanisms to hold teachers accountable.



## Acknowledgements

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The **Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER)** initiative produces comparative data and knowledge on education policies and institutions, with the aim of helping countries systematically strengthen their education systems. SABER evaluates the quality of education policies against evidence-based global standards, using new diagnostic tools and detailed policy data. The SABER country reports give all parties with a stake in educational results—from administrators, teachers, and parents to policymakers and business people—an accessible, objective snapshot showing how well the policies of their country's education system are oriented toward ensuring that all children and youth learn.

This report focuses specifically on policies in the area of teacher policies.

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