

**What makes a 'good
teacher' and constitutes
'quality teaching': practitioner
perspectives from Rwandan
secondary schools**

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About the REAL Centre and Laterite:

The REAL Centre at the University of Cambridge pioneers research into overcoming barriers to education, such as poverty, gender, ethnicity, language, and disability, and promotes education as an engine for inclusive growth and sustainable development.

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Acronyms

DoS	Deans of Studies
ECT	Early Career Teacher
FDG	Focus Group Discussion
LCT	Late Career Teacher
TeacherTrs	Teacher Trainers
TrT	Trainee Teacher

Key messages

1. Developing a contextually sensitive understanding of what makes a good teacher and constitutes quality teaching from the perspectives of different stakeholders is important to implement successful reforms.
2. According to Rwandan secondary teachers, a 'good teacher': has qualifications and knowledge and an appropriate teacher disposition; enacts quality teaching through their classroom practices including: teacher preparedness and understanding the whole learner; and, having both immediate and long-term goals for their students.
3. Aspects of teacher quality perceived as being measurable and assessable include those associated with pre-lesson preparation, classroom practices and teacher characteristics.
4. According to Rwandan secondary teachers, feedback which helps improve teacher quality should be: focused predominately upon lesson planning; given by senior school staff; timely; and, delivered via discussion as well as outside of the classroom.

Introduction

Improving quality of teaching processes and the quality of teachers is central for raising school quality (Goldhaber, 2016). In fact, quality secondary schooling is essential to ensure young people gain the skills and self-efficacy needed to transition to work and succeed in life, these factors also facilitate personal, social, and economic transformation (Burchi, 2006).

This policy brief represents an attempt to bridge a gap in the literature regarding what makes a good teacher and quality teaching processes in Rwanda by bringing educators' voices into the conversation on what is meant by this construct. In this brief, we summarise findings from focus group discussions conducted with secondary school teachers in Rwanda as part of learning partner role in the Mastercard Foundation's Leaders in Teaching initiative. To date, the perspectives of secondary school educators have largely been missing from the literature on teaching quality, yielding a research-to-practice gap.

The aims of this policy brief are to:

- Present emerging findings on stakeholder perceptions of what makes a good teacher and quality teaching processes in Rwandan secondary schools.
- Highlight lessons from this data to inform policymakers.

Research approach

We draw on findings of 18 focus group discussions (FGDs) conducted with five groups of stakeholders, allowing for a multitude of different perspectives to emerge. Table 1 presents the type of stakeholder and number of participants in each focus group. Participants were selected via a two-element purposive sampling scheme, the first of which involved criterion sampling (Miles and Huberman, 1994), whereby educator groups belonging to either one of these groups: Trainee Teacher (TrT), Early Career Teacher (ECT), Late Career Teacher (LCT), Teacher Trainer (TeachersTrs), or Dean of Studies (DOS), were selected. The second purposive sampling scheme utilised maximum variation sampling (Miles and Huberman, 1994). This involved selecting

stakeholder groups from different provinces to maximise the range of perspectives investigated. One district was selected from each of the Eastern, Western, and Southern Provinces of Rwanda, which ensured geographic coverage. Specifically, the following four districts (of Rwanda's 30 districts) and one municipality (Kigali) were involved in the FGDs): The four districts were Gasabo (District of Kigali City); Kamonyi (Southern Province); Kayonza (Eastern Province) and Ngororero (Western Province).

Table 1: Type of stakeholder and number of participants in each focus group (n = 18)

Focus Group	Stakeholder Type	Group Size
1	Late Career Teachers	8
2	Deans of Studies	4
3	Early Career Teachers	3
4	Late Career Teachers	8
5	Early Career Teachers	4
6	Deans of Studies	4
7	Late Career Teachers	8
8	Teacher Trainers	4
9	Teacher Trainers	4
10	Teacher Trainers	4
11	Teacher Trainers	7
12	Late Career Teachers	8
13	Deans of Studies	3
14	Deans of Studies	2
15	Early Career Teachers	5
16	Early career Teachers	5
17	Trainee Teachers	7
18	Trainee Teachers	8
	Total	96

Research Questions

The objective of this study was to generate knowledge for policy makers working on secondary education in Rwanda and beyond. Specifically it aims to provide insight into contextualised understandings of teaching quality that can help inform measures of this construct as well as support to help improve both teaching and learning. The overarching research question driving this study was: What do stakeholders perceive are characteristics of a 'good teacher' and 'quality teaching' within the context of Rwandan secondary schools? In particular:

- What makes a good teacher?
- What are the most important aspects of teacher quality?
- What kind of feedback helps teachers improve the quality of their teaching?
- What aspects of teacher quality can be measured and assessed?

Focus group discussions were used to address these research questions because they can (1) empower participants due to a sense of group membership, helping them to feel safe to share information; (2) motivate more spontaneous responses and (3) yield a synergy that generates more data than can be obtained via individual interviews alone, as a result of the interactions that occur among the participants (Morgan, 2018).

Method

Focus group discussions were facilitated by a moderator (who led discussions) and assistant moderator (who took notes and supported with use of recording equipment). Two devices were used for recording discussions during the FGDs. English and Kinyarwanda versions of all materials were provided to facilitate participant understanding of topics discussed. Following transcription of FGDs and translations into English, constant comparison analysis was used to analyse the data (Glaser, 1965). Metathemes, themes, and subthemes were identified from responses via the following three steps: (a) Open coding (i.e., organising data into meaningful and labeled clusters); (b) Axial coding (grouping labels/codes into similar categories, then pooling and refining them); (c) Selective coding (framing codes within an informative narrative.) Content analysis was further used to determine the frequency of

metathemes, themes, and subthemes yielded by the constant comparison analysis (Berelson, 1952).

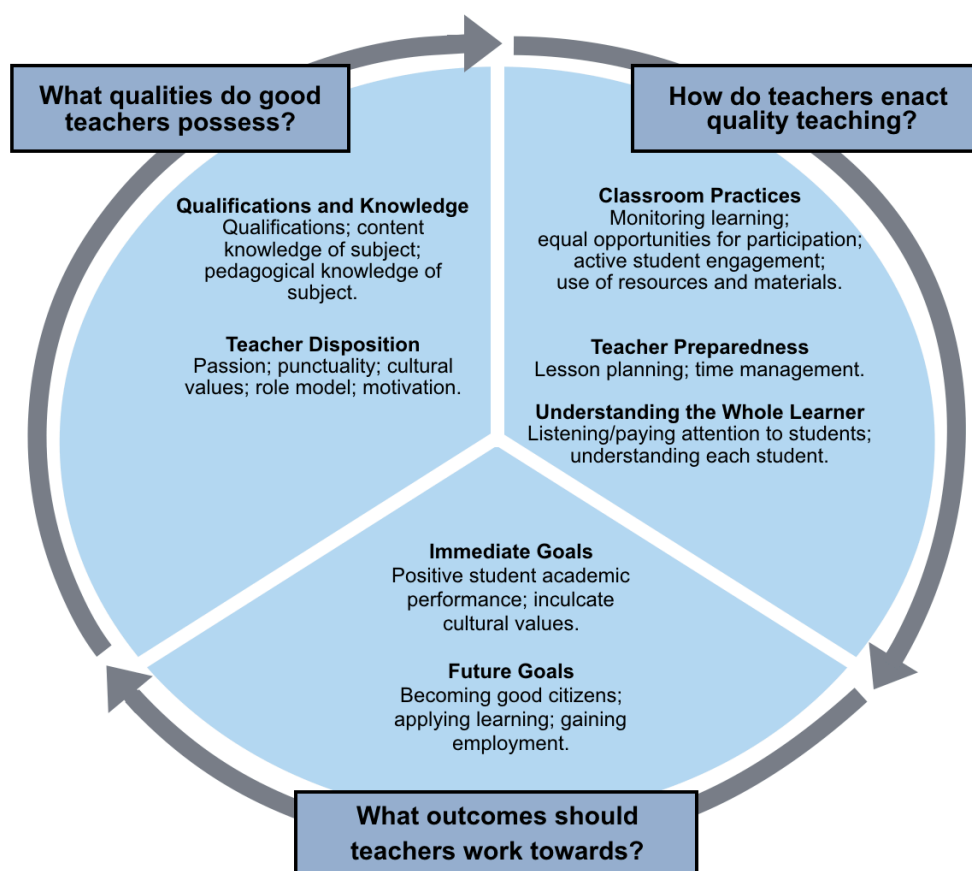
What makes a good teacher?

During focus group discussions, the following questions were explored:

- What qualities do good teachers possess?
- How do teachers enact quality teaching?
- Towards what outcomes should teachers work?

Across different stakeholder groups, some key themes emerged in relation to these questions, which are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Metathemes and themes extracted from responses to the three questions pertaining to what makes a good teacher.



What qualities do good teachers possess?

Good teachers hold the right **Qualifications and Knowledge** and have the appropriate **Teacher Disposition**.

Qualifications and Knowledge

There was overwhelming consensus that a good teacher in the context of secondary schooling should hold the appropriate **qualifications**, such as teachers who either majored in education or have a degree/diploma. A clear emphasis was also placed on the importance of teachers being qualified in the subject area they teach: “Teaching what the teacher majored in, is indeed essential” [ECT]. The importance of teachers holding a “qualification from an authorised institution” [ECT] was further raised by participants. LCTs clarified that it is “not essential for teacher to have a PhD in order to deliver the content”, but a first degree is essential. This debate was also rich among

TrTs who believed that a degree/diploma is important and emphasised that “a teacher should be teaching the subject he/she majored in”.

All five stakeholder groups noted the importance of a teacher having at least adequate and, in some cases, vast **content knowledge of the subject taught**.

“It means that one may have a degree/diploma but without knowledge on what he/she teaches. What is important is having knowledge that complements the degree/diploma they have so that they can deliver deep or enough knowledge to the students.” [LCT].

In addition, seven of the FGDs—representing TrTs, LCTs, and TeacherTrs—discussed the importance of teachers having **pedagogical knowledge of the subject taught**, which entails that teachers...

“should have different strategies of teaching to identify the best strategy which will help students understand. You have to change the strategy because there are a lot of teaching methodologies” [TeacherTr].

Teacher Disposition

The dimension of teacher disposition encompassed **passion, punctuality, cultural values, role model** and **motivation**.

Passion was the most prevalent sub-theme, mentioned by 15 of the 18 FGDs, as exemplified here:

“Another aspect I want is passion for the job. A good teacher should love his job and do well even when he is not under supervision. As they always say, teaching is a vocation so we should love our job regardless of its outcomes”. [ECT]

Punctuality was also a prevalent theme, which emerged in 12 of the 18 FGDs. Most stakeholders contributed to the discussion in this area. For example, an ECT discussed issues of teachers arriving on time:

“It means that if class starts at 7:20 am, the teacher must arrive at school on time so that by that time, s/he will be in class. Otherwise, if s/he is late, s/he will waste some minutes of class period. Consequently, as these wasted minutes multiply over a certain time or perhaps weeks, the class will fall behind or end up failing to cover the curriculum simply because s/he did not come to work on time...”

All stakeholder groups, except DoS, mentioned the importance of teachers having **cultural values**, which overwhelmingly referred to respect for Rwandan culture. For example, this was prominent when TeacherTrs were discussing foreign teachers and how they must understand the culture, otherwise “S/he might be able to teach well but without culture and values of Rwandese, that would be of no use in return”.

Participants across eight of the FGDs also noted that good teachers must be **role models**, and that they must be “exemplary in his/her behaviours and character” [TrT]. Slightly less than one half of the FGDs pointed out the important role of a teacher being **motivated** to teach. While all five stakeholder groups mentioned this theme, LCTs provided the most discussion:

“...the lesson is not delivered well when the teacher is lazy. One must be motivated and show that he/she has the will to do the job”. [LCT]

How do teachers enact quality teaching?

Teachers identified desirable actions to deliver quality teaching under three themes: **classroom practices**, **teacher preparedness** and **understanding the whole learner**.

Classroom practices

This dimension refers to what the stakeholders perceived as practices that good teachers undertake in the classroom. Here, issues of **monitoring learning**, the

provision of **equal opportunities for participation, active student engagement** and **use of resources and materials**, were raised.

Discussed by all five stakeholder groups across 13 of the FGDs, teachers noted the need for continually **monitoring student learning**:

“When the teacher gives his students many evaluations or exercises, it motivates students to work harder. But when you just go in class and teach without evaluating them, you won’t know if they have even understood or if they remember what you taught them. But when you do it often, it motivates them to work harder and to understand what you taught them. That is what I can add; the teacher must also emphasise on evaluating his students”. [ECT]

In 12 of the FGDs, participants articulated that good teachers provide **equal opportunities for participation** “giving equal chances to all children” [TrT], “Letting all students participate in their learning” [DoS], and “Helping every child according to their capacity” [DoS]. The stakeholders discussed equality in terms of gender and various forms of disability (e.g., physical disability, learning disability). One TrT explained,

“In class, there are girls, boys and the category of those with learning difficulties such as students with speaking disability; we teach them too. Also, there may be a student in class who doesn’t have arms. This student can see but s/he can’t write with arms so the teacher must wait for her/him as s/he writes with toes. ...Those are some desired aspects for teacher quality”. [TrT].

According to the discussions, a quality teacher also **actively engages students in learning** by providing an environment in which active learning takes place: “Encouraging students to participate in their learning activities” [ECT] and “Encouraging students to participate in asking questions and answering questions” [LCT]. Relatedly, 11 of the FGDs, representing all five stakeholder groups, expressed the importance of teachers facilitating group work for students.

Eight of the FGDs pointed out the effective **use of resources and materials** as critical to the delivery of good quality teaching. In an elaborate discussion, one of the LCTs expanded that such materials can be divided into two categories:

“There are materials we consider as notebooks... a teacher should have notebooks, textbooks, books for references, teacher’s book and students’ books. That is Category 1. Category 2 comprises teaching aids... My colleague earlier said about improvisation however, at a point, improvisation becomes impossible. You cannot fabricate chloric acid, that is impossible... I, therefore, suggest that, to improve teacher quality, there should be laboratories which are well equipped”.

This teacher then went on to highlight the hierarchy in the education sector, in which many schools are very well equipped with computers while a child in a village has no idea of a computer. The teacher elaborated on the potential of technology and concluded that “technology is also essential and trainings focusing on the use of technology... Thus, to have quality work, computers are essential, and it is in line with the country’s aspiration”.

Teacher preparedness

The dimension of teacher preparedness encompassed **lesson planning** and **time management**.

The importance of **lesson planning** was recognised by all five stakeholder groups. An ECT noted:

“Although we are teachers, we continue to study relentlessly. When one plans a lesson, it helps her/him to deliver an updated content to students. I may refuse to plan, thinking that I already know the content but when I start teaching, I realise that I had forgotten it but when I plan the lesson, I deliver all the content accordingly”. [ECT].

All five stakeholder groups further noted that a quality teacher not only **plans** to use resources and materials in the classroom but also actually “Us[es] teaching aids s/he prepared” [ECT].

Discussed by all five stakeholder groups across nine of the FGDs was **time management**, in terms of executing the lesson plan within the allotted class period; that is, “Covering the curriculum on time” [ECT] was important.

Understanding the whole learner

This dimension entailed **listening/paying attention to students** and **understanding each student**. Seven of the FGDs, involving all stakeholder groups except the TrTs, believed that it was necessary for teachers to monitor the well-being of their students by “listening to students” [LCT] and “Paying attention to children’s concerns” [ECT]. Five of the FGDs, involving all stakeholder groups except the TrTs, stressed the importance of teachers “Being familiar with students (counselling, motivator)” [TrT] and “Knowing children’s living” [TrT]. With respect to the latter, a LCT explained:

“a teacher should be able to identify the child’s mood/situation. The conditions of a child will help a teacher to establish the reasons to why the child is not understanding the teacher’s lesson. For example, if a student comes to school but you realise that his or her parents had a fight the last night. It is very hard to engage that student in a lesson. Therefore, a teacher is required to first identify problems of every student”. [LCT].

What outcomes should be desired by a teacher?

Participants here focused on both **immediate goals** and **future goals**. **Immediate goals** related to **positive student academic performance**, which was by far the most prevalent: “in order to identify teacher quality, there must be student performance” [TeacherTr]. Nine of the FGDs, across all stakeholder groups, believed that it was necessary for teachers to **inculcate cultural values** in their students by “encouraging children to have cultural values and know the forbidden acts” [TrT].

Additionally, participants focused on **future goals**, such as **students becoming capable of applying learning** (representing 12 of the FGDs), “If the teacher was able to transform students, they should be able to apply what they learned in real life” [TeacherTr]. Representing seven of the FGDs across all stakeholder groups, except the DoS, participants stressed the notion of students **becoming good citizens**: “Ability of the child to contribute to the country’s development” [ECT]. Representing six of the FGDs, across all stakeholder groups, **gaining employment** was a valued outcome, representing “Students that can compete at the job market” [DoS] and the “Ability of a student to create a job” [ECT].

What are the most important aspects of a good teacher and quality teaching?

All stakeholder groups were required to discuss different aspects of ‘teacher quality’, a term which they noted as encompassing both the *quality of the teacher* and the *teaching*. During FGDs they were further asked to rank the importance of aspects discussed as:

- (a) the foundations of teacher quality,
- (b) desirable for teacher quality, and
- (c) non-essential for teacher quality.

It is important to highlight that these aspects were not limited to those discussed in relation to the preceding question in the focus group discussion. Given this, a new element was noted by participants. We distinguish this element through green font.

Figure 3 provides an overview of the key findings.

Figure 3: Aspects of teacher quality ranked by importance, according to teachers.

Foundations and Desirable Aspects of Teacher Quality
Qualifications and knowledge Teacher disposition Classroom practices Understanding the whole learner Assessing student performance
Non-Essential Aspects of Teacher Quality
Teacher's appearance Handwriting

Foundations and desirable aspects of teacher quality

Qualifications and knowledge, classroom practices, teacher disposition, understanding the whole learner and **assessing student performance** were identified as the qualities and actions that make up the key foundations for teacher quality. While most of these aspects aligned with responses for question 1, **assessing student performance**, arose as an additional aspect of teacher quality. Interestingly, these themes were also all identified as desirable aspects of teacher quality. The overlap between aspects that the stakeholder groups believe form the foundations of teacher quality and aspects that they believe are desirable for teacher quality suggests that FGD participants did not discriminate between these two levels of importance. That is, across the five FGD stakeholder groups, these two elements (i.e., foundations and desirable aspects of teacher quality) were being treated almost synonymously.

Qualifications and knowledge and **teacher disposition** have been elaborated previously under 'What makes a good teacher?' whereas **classroom practices** and **understanding the whole learner** were discussed under 'How do teachers enact quality teaching?' **Assessing student performance**, as noted, was an important new aspect linked to **classroom practices** which is discussed below.

Assessing student performance

Six of the FGDs, involving all stakeholder groups except the TeacherTrs, emphasised continually **assessing student performance** so that they can “test whether what he/she taught was understood” [TrT]. Student achievement, which represents academic performance, was discussed in nearly one third of the FGDs, generating conversation in all stakeholder groups. For example, a LCT provided the following powerful comment regarding the importance of assessing students:

“I think what should be evaluated is children's performance. If the teacher has delivered the lesson well, there should be an examination prepared by someone else to see whether the students have understood it. That would also prove the teacher quality because it would show that he/she knows what he/she does and the lesson he/she delivered has been helpful to students”. [LCT].

Non-essential aspects of teacher quality

Among all the FGDs, numerous aspects of quality teaching which were deemed non-essential were also identified, such as not being able to memorise information, not being able to draw, sociability, ability to sing, religion, nationality, having transport, finances, posture, age, driving license, marital status, and work experience. However, there were two major recurring themes, as follows:

- **Handwriting** [9 FGDs; ECTs, LCTs, DoS]
 - *“As for the non-essential aspects, we mostly agreed on teacher having a good handwriting”. [DoS].*
 - *“He or she can have or not have a neat handwriting, but that cannot stop him or her from being a good teacher”. [ECT].*
 - *“Also, we have seen that teacher’s handwriting is a non-essential aspect because he/she can even use ICT tools to present the content”. [ECT].*
- **Appearance** [8 FGDs; All five stakeholder groups]
 - *“Being good looking (beauty)” [LCT].*
 - *“Size of a teacher” [DoS].*

- “Dressing very smart” [ECT].
- “Appearance” [TeacherTr].
- “Good physical appearance (nice outfit)” [TrT].

What kind of feedback helps teachers improve the quality of their teaching?

Stakeholders were asked to discuss the kind of feedback that helps teachers improve their teaching with reference to five sub-questions:

- (1) What feedback should be given?
- (2) Who should give the feedback?
- (3) How should feedback be given?
- (4) When should feedback be given?
- (5) Where should feedback be given?

Table 2: Stakeholder responses on what feedback helps teachers improve their teaching

What?	Who?	How?	When?	Where?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson planning • Use of resources and materials • Assessment approaches • Classroom practices • Lesson delivery • Passion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors of Studies • Headteachers • Any stakeholder • Fellow teachers • Self-feedback • Student representative(s) • Mentors • Rwandan Education Board officials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion • Collaboration • Constructive feedback • Positive feedback/praise • Individual feedback • Friendly/conversational • Planned/formal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside of classroom

What feedback should be given?

FGD participants identified six elements of teaching that they believed should be subjected to feedback to improve their quality of teaching (See Table 2). Of these, **lesson planning**—represented by seven FGDs—was the most prevalent, with all five stakeholder groups expressing belief that feedback should be provided on this aspect of teaching. Another popular element that provoked the interest of all the stakeholder

groups except the LCTs was the **use of resources and materials**, discussed by five FGDs.

Who should give feedback?

Nine of the FGDs—representing all stakeholder groups except LCTs—identified that the **DoS** should provide feedback. This was followed closely by **Headteachers** (discussed in 8 FGDs), who were mentioned by all stakeholder groups except TrTs. Interestingly, six of the FGDs, comprising all stakeholder groups except TrTs, believed that **any stakeholder** can provide feedback to teachers in order to help them improve the quality of their teaching.

How should feedback be given?

By far the most common mode of feedback identified was via **discussion**, which involved all five stakeholder groups across exactly two thirds of the FGDs:

“No, I would prefer a face-to-face conversation. Sometimes teacher may not respond well to a formal letter”. [TrT].

“Spoken feedback is better than written one”. [LCT].

“It is better to discuss instead of sending to him or her a written feedback for him or her to improve”. [TeacherTr].

“We usually deliver it in the conversation we have with teachers”. [DoS].

Another mode that was considered important by all five stakeholder groups was via **collaboration**, which represented exactly one half of the FGDs. All stakeholder groups except the TrTs discussed the importance of providing **constructive feedback** and **positive feedback/praise**, representing eight and six of the FGDs, respectively. All stakeholder groups except the TeacherTrs, which involved five of the FGDs, extolled the virtues of feedback being provided on an **individual basis**—with ECTs, TeacherTrs and DoS discussing the importance of feedback being given that is **friendly/conversational**, and the LCTs and DoS emphasising that the feedback

provided is both **formal and planned in advance**. Interestingly, the DoS considered all six modes of feedback to be important, with the ECTs and LCTs considering five modes to be essential.

When and where should feedback be given?

TrTs and the TeacherTrs, representing three FGDs, discussed the importance of feedback being provided **as soon as possible** after the observation has been made. Finally, in terms of **where** the feedback should be given, according to the ECTs, LCTs, TeacherTrs, and DoS, representing five FGDs, this feedback should take place **outside the classroom**, as illustrated in the two quotations below:

“It should be delivered right after the observation when one still remembers what did not go well”. [TeacherTr].

“I mean, he wouldn’t say it in front of students. You go to the staff room, sit down and he gives his feedback depending on the weak points he observed”. [ECT].

What aspects of a good teacher and quality teaching can be measured and assessed?

The following three metathemes emerged that captured what the stakeholders considered to be aspects of teacher quality that can and should be assessed: Pre-lesson evaluation, classroom practices, and teacher characteristics (See Table 3). As seen below, several themes which emerged aligned with previous aspects of teacher quality raised in relation to question 1.

Table 3: Stakeholder perceptions of measurable and assessable aspects of a good teacher and quality teaching.

Pre-Lesson Evaluation	Classroom Practices	Teacher Characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson planning • Age- and level-appropriate planning • Objective(s)/goal(s) of the lesson clearly specified • Diaries evaluated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess student performance • Use student achievement • Lesson consistent with lesson plan • Use of resources and materials • Lesson follows the curriculum • Active student participation • Classroom management • Time management • Gives assignments • Checks attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content knowledge of subject taught • Teacher disposition-attitude and mood

Pre-lesson evaluation

We already know from previous sections that all five stakeholder groups not only considered **lesson planning** to be an important part of how teachers enact quality teaching, but also that it was a component of teaching for which feedback should be given. Consistent with these findings, all five stakeholder groups in all 16 FGDs deemed lesson planning to be an aspect of quality teaching that can be assessed. As declared by a LCT:

“I think they should evaluate if the teacher has planned the lesson well before going to class. It is important to plan the lesson. Otherwise, going to class without a lesson plan might lead to doing nothing. I think it should be evaluated whether the teacher has a lesson plan before going in class to deliver it.” [LCT].

As part of the evaluation of the lesson plan, some of the stakeholders discussed the importance of the content reflected in the lesson plan being both **age- and level-appropriate** and that the **objective(s)/goal(s) of the lesson** should be specified clearly (specifically ECTs and DoS). Another component of pre-lesson evaluation that

emerged was the importance of **evaluating the diaries** (specifically among TrTs and DoS). As one DoS revealed, “I double-check class diaries”.

Classroom practices

Linked to the metatheme of **classroom practices**, the notion of evaluating teaching quality through students was an important component of lesson evaluation. Four stakeholder groups emphasised evaluating the extent to which teachers **assessed student performance** via formative evaluation (9 FGDs representing all stakeholder groups except LCTs) and used **student achievement** on both classroom examinations and national examinations (10 FGDs representing all groups except TrTs) as an indicator of teacher quality. According to the FGD participants, it was important that the delivery of the **lesson was consistent with the lesson plan** (13 FGDs representing all stakeholder groups), that **resources and materials** were used (6 FGDs representing all stakeholder groups except DoS) and that the **lesson followed the curriculum** (5 FGDs representing all stakeholder groups except TrTs). Other prominent themes that emerged from discussions included the teacher continuously encouraging **active student participation** (5 FGDs representing all stakeholder groups except TrTs), and the teacher displaying both good **classroom management** (5 FGDs representing all stakeholder groups except LCTs and TeacherTrs) and **time management** (5 FGDs representing all stakeholder groups). Teachers also mentioned assessing whether the teacher **gave assignments** for students to undertake (4 FGDs representing all stakeholder groups except TrTs and TeacherTrs) and **checked the attendance** of her/his students (3 FGDs representing all stakeholder groups except ECTs and TeacherTrs).

Teacher characteristics

The stakeholders believed that the teacher’s **content knowledge of the subject taught** should be assessed (7 FGDs representing all stakeholder groups except TrTs and DoS), as exemplified by the following two quotations: “I think what should be evaluated is the teacher’s understanding of the lesson he or she is delivering.” [LCT] and “Also, we have to examine whether the teacher has knowledge of the content he/she teaches” [DoS]. In addition, some of the stakeholders discussed the importance of evaluating **teacher disposition** (7 FGDs representing all stakeholder

groups except ECTs and LCTs). Teacher disposition, within this context, includes a teacher's **attitude**, for example, "Another aspect is attitude" [TeacherTr]), and **mood**.

"Thus, I would evaluate whether he/she is truly in the mood of teaching.

There are teachers who are in class, but they are also thinking about their other businesses" [TrT].

Lessons for policy

(1) Understanding what makes a good teacher and constitutes quality teaching from the perspective of teachers and other key stakeholders in Rwanda is important for developing context relevant policies.

Because teachers have the best understanding of what affects how they teach, when researching what makes a good teacher and quality teaching in Rwanda and elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, the voices of these major stakeholders are needed to understand their perspectives. Such voices would prevent a top-down approach to assessing teachers, which is too frequently the case where the definitions of a good teacher and teaching quality are set exclusively by policymakers. Our analysis highlights the potential of FGDs containing a diverse set of stakeholders for shedding light on new issues related to quality teaching which that can inform effective policy development. Caution, however, should be exercised in generalising the findings to all secondary schools in Rwanda.

(2) Teacher disposition emerged as a central factor in perceptions of quality teaching.

Teacher disposition emerged as a key theme linked to participants' perceptions of quality teaching. Specifically, passion, punctuality, having cultural values, being a good role model and being motivated were regarded as important aspects of this construct. Participants also felt that aspects of teacher disposition should be measured and assessed, notably teachers' attitudes and mood during lessons. While some dimensions of teacher disposition including punctuality and teacher attitudes have been highlighted within literature (e.g., Tao, 2016), assessments and measurements

of teaching typically exclude such factors. The Rwandan Ministry of Education lesson evaluation tool—developed to assess teaching quality in many schools, grade levels and subject areas—for example does not include an assessment of appropriate teacher disposition (Ministry of Education Rwanda, n.d.). As seen by responses, teacher disposition is deemed as an important component of teacher evaluation. The consideration of this emergent indicator of teaching quality in teacher discourse as well as future revisions of evaluation tools could help better align teachers’ perceptions with policymakers’ expectations.

(3) Teacher feedback is essential for improving teaching quality.

In relation to feedback that helps improve teaching quality, the most prevalent themes that arose amongst teachers were its focus upon lesson planning and it being given by senior school staff, notably DoS and head teachers. Teachers also felt that feedback was most effective when it was timely and delivered via discussion and outside of the classroom. Findings pertaining to teacher feedback are especially useful for head teachers and other educators who are responsible for the development of teachers. These findings also have implications for the mentoring of teachers.

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