

Enabling Teachers – Evidence Base



Enabling Teachers: The Evidence

A. Evidence Review for the Enabling Teachers Approach as a Whole

Save the Children introduced a new framework for evidence reviews in 2019 and Enabling Teachers was one of the first of the Common Approaches to use this framework. The Table below outlines the 6 areas included for which evidence was required and against which the Enabling Teachers was scored. Enabling Teachers was given a score between 1 and 6 (6 being the weakest and 1 being the strongest) for each area as to the quantity and quality of the evidence supporting the approach as a whole.

Table 1: Six Dimensions of Evidence

Effectiveness	Evidence that shows the extent to which an intervention does more good than harm when provided under the usual circumstances. Effectiveness is the “real world” equivalent of efficacy.
Scalability	Evidence that shows the demonstrated ability to reach greater numbers of children through the implementation of an approach at scale (e.g. district-wide or country-wide) in partnership with, or by, other actors.
Safety/Risk	Evidence that shows an intervention or program has investigated and knows how to mitigate potentially detrimental outcomes, whether directly or indirectly related to the approach.
Equity and Equality	Evidence that shows that the intervention reduces inequality and marginalization within a target population. The two dimensions of equity that must be addressed for all approaches are gender and wealth. If there is another dimension(s) of equity that is particularly salient then this should be included.
Acceptability	Evidence that shows the ability and willingness of the intended target population to engage with the intervention as intended, and whether any negative responses (and if so how mitigated).
Cost-effectiveness	Evidence of the cost involved in delivering specified outcomes, either in the form of cost per outcome (cost-effectiveness, e.g. cost per diarrheal incident avoided, cost per reduction in intra-family violence) or – if outcomes are translated into monetary values – a return on investment (cost-benefit analysis).

A literature review was then conducted against these six areas. The initial scoping found the following:

- The evidence that met the selection criteria was all from development contexts, there were **no studies from humanitarian contexts**.
- That there is a **great deal of evidence for ‘effectiveness’ but much less for ‘acceptability’ and ‘cost-effectiveness’**. No papers or evidence were found (in this scoping) of the evidence for ‘scalability’, ‘safety/risk’, and ‘equity and equality’.
- The **evidence for ‘effectiveness’ of the approach was strong and positive**, supporting the Enabling Teachers approach to TPD and teacher support. The strongest evidence available

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demonstrated strongly positive results for effectiveness. This was both for teacher quality and effectiveness, as well as student outcomes.

- The **evidence for ‘acceptability’ (one study) was strong but demonstrated mixed acceptability** among teachers. This in some ways substantiates Enabling Teachers as this study emphasises the need to reflect and discuss WITH teachers not about teachers. The paper demonstrated that teachers had mixed acceptance of their TPD experience, in particular in relation to different components and/or among different groups of teachers. This has been recently substantiated by a study conducted in partnership with IDS in our BRICE program, where teachers demonstrated preferences for certain aspects of the TPD approach.
- The **evidence on ‘cost-effectiveness’ (2 studies) was relatively rigorous but did not provide sufficient data to support** the cost-effectiveness of the approach. It did not provide strong evidence on the cost per outcome data, nor comparative on the cost-effectiveness over time or across different locations, it also did not seem to provide sufficient evidence of a positive financial return on the investment.

Overall, this review demonstrates that Enabling Teacher is an effective approach for supporting and improving teacher quality and children’s learning outcomes with a mixed acceptability of certain aspects or components of the approach but different groups/categories of teachers. However, much more evidence is needed in the areas of; cost-effectiveness, scalability, safety/risk, equity & equality and to some degree acceptability. In addition to these areas, much more and better research is needed from humanitarian contexts. This limitation is not due to weak or contrary evidence in these areas and context but simply due to a lack of sufficient and appropriate evidence.

B. Evidence Review for the Enabling Teachers 5 Principles

Prior to the review above the Enabling Teachers Common Approach has collected evidence to substantiate the 5 Principles on which the approach is founded. You can find this bank of evidence organised under each principle on the Enabling Teachers site [here](#). This provides a rating for the evidence under each area and whether it is weak, moderately secure, secure or highly secure, as well as a list of the documents that informed the assessment. Some highlights that are important to know are detailed below. Specific data on gender and inclusion is missing or weak across all areas of teacher support and development.

Teacher Motivation and Wellbeing

- The evidence that links/correlates teacher motivation and wellbeing and its impact on teacher quality and learning outcomes is growing but more is needed.
- The evidence is secure that in order to improve teachers' motivation, sense of ownership and accountability, teachers' voices should be systematically consulted and taken into account in educational planning and M&E processes.

Teacher Competences

- There is moderately secure evidence of the benefits of developing highly contextualized TPD curriculum content, aligned to national educational priorities and jointly agreed by targeted teachers, head-teachers, etc.
- There is secure evidence for the development of less competencies over a longer time period as an effective strategy to increase teachers' knowledge assimilation and transfer of learning into the workplace.
- The evidence is secure that we need to ensure a focus on developing a small number of teaching competencies to increase the probability of their successful acquisition. However, there are conflicting findings surrounding the use of competencies as a way of assessing teachers.
- The evidence is highly secure that TPD can be enhanced by teacher self-evaluation. Encouraging teachers' self-assessment can also be an effective tool to develop reflective skills.

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TPD Course

- There is secure evidence of TPD that includes a combination of expert-led, peer-led and self-directed activities, which have recorded high rates of success, but no studies specifically assess the 20-30-50 model.
- The evidence is moderately secure that TPD is most effective when it moves from expert-led one-off training to continuous professional development that includes a combination of self-directed, peer learning and coaching.
- The evidence is secure that on-going professional development is more effective in leading to improved teaching. On-going TPD is more likely to result in teacher change, with opportunities for teachers to implement their findings in their classrooms.
- The evidence is secure that self-directed activities have the potential to enhance the usefulness of TPD for teachers and consequently increase ownership and sustainability. However, some evidence indicates that self-directed activities may be most beneficial for more experienced teachers and that for self-directed activities to be effective, teachers' need to be self-motivated.
- The evidence is secure that effective peer support can improve learning outcomes.
- The evidence is highly secure for having a mix of cluster- and school-based training.
- There is limited evidence on the effectiveness of digital components/technology in TPD programs, particularly in fragile contexts.

Education Leaders/Officials and Systems

- The evidence is moderately secure that engaging officials in the course development or approval will increase national relevance, ownership, and accountability. This is because there is scarce empirical evidence from developing and humanitarian contexts.
- The evidence collected is rated as moderately secure. While there is abundant evidence on the benefit of involving highly skilled educational leaders in TPD programmes, there is less evidence (from development and humanitarian contexts) on the correlation between their participation in capacity-building trainings and improved learning outcomes.
- The evidence for conducting blended leadership professional development activities to develop school leaders' ability to support their teachers throughout the cycle is secure.
- The evidence is moderately secure for strengthening national TPD policies and the systems that supports teachers and holds them accountable. This strategy cannot be rated as secure as a means to improve the impact of TPD programmes, since there exists scarce robust studies from developing and humanitarian contexts which assess the impact of specific capacity-building interventions at a governmental level.
- There is a shortage of teachers globally and especially female teachers. The insufficient numbers of female teachers is particularly challenging in certain contexts especially those affected by conflict/crisis.

The areas where evidence is weak/has gaps are the ones that we encourage new projects to consider as part of their research agenda. Ideally including research questions that could address the gaps and contribute to learning in these areas. Some of these research questions are below:

- How cost-effective is a blended TPD model versus a series of one-off trainings? How cost-effective is a TPD model at scale?
 - Sub Question: How does this vary by gender, age, group, location of teacher?
- What components of the TPD module are most 'acceptable' to teachers and why? How could acceptability be enhanced?
 - Sub Question: How does this vary by gender, age, group, location of teacher?
- How effective is TPD on improving gender sensitivity and inclusion for teachers and students?

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- How effective is Enabling Teachers in humanitarian contexts? How does this differ by context or stage/phase of crisis?