

## ***Education Workforce Initiative: Country Report***

**Redesigning the Education  
Workforce**

**Ghana**

## The Need

Ghana's Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2018 to 2030 provides a roadmap for education development built around twelve key priorities. To deliver such an ambitious ESP, the Ghana Education Service (GES) – the agency under the Ministry of Education (MoE) responsible for implementing education policy – is undertaking institutional reform of its organization and human resources to ensure the appropriate structures and workforce are in place to support more effective delivery and improve learning outcomes.

The GES faces several key challenges to its current education workforce design, including the need for a greater focus on inclusion, learning, and accountability; some duplication of functions between districts and regions; inconsistency and inefficiencies of roles and structures; and the need for a more consistent and efficient approach to collecting and analyzing data.



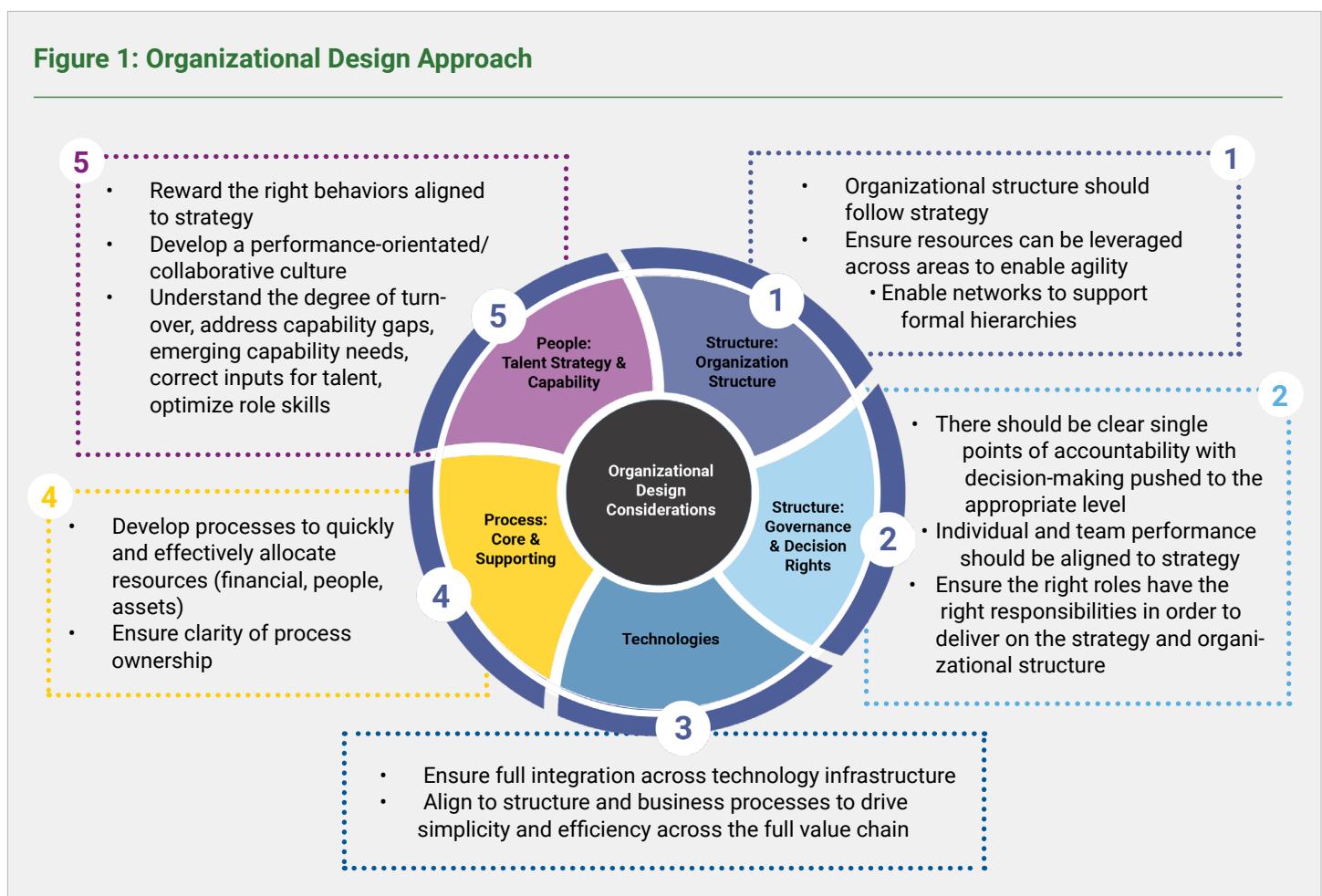
# Project Overview

Between March 2019 and September 2020, the Education Commission's Education Workforce Initiative (EWI), funded by UK Aid, partnered with PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Ghana, the Ghana MoE, and GES to support the existing GES institutional reform by collaborating on the redesign of the education workforce at all levels to support the successful delivery of the Education Strategic Plan.

The project aimed to agree critical workforce issues with frontline workers and develop a revised education workforce design—including organizational functions and structures and critical roles, competencies, and skills—to support the GES institutional reform and provide the structure from which the Ministry of Education and GES could best plan, manage, and support the workforce to deliver the ESP.

A key feature of this work was that it used an organization design approach (see Figure 1). This involves a step-by-step analysis of a system—its structure, processes, and people—to identify how to best support the implementation of a particular strategy. It aims to integrate the overarching structures, processes, management of performance, and the recruitment, support, and development of human capacity to align with the most important system outcomes and channel all the organization's efforts into achieving them.

**Figure 1: Organizational Design Approach**



# Project Description



## Significant stakeholder engagement undertaken from the outset.

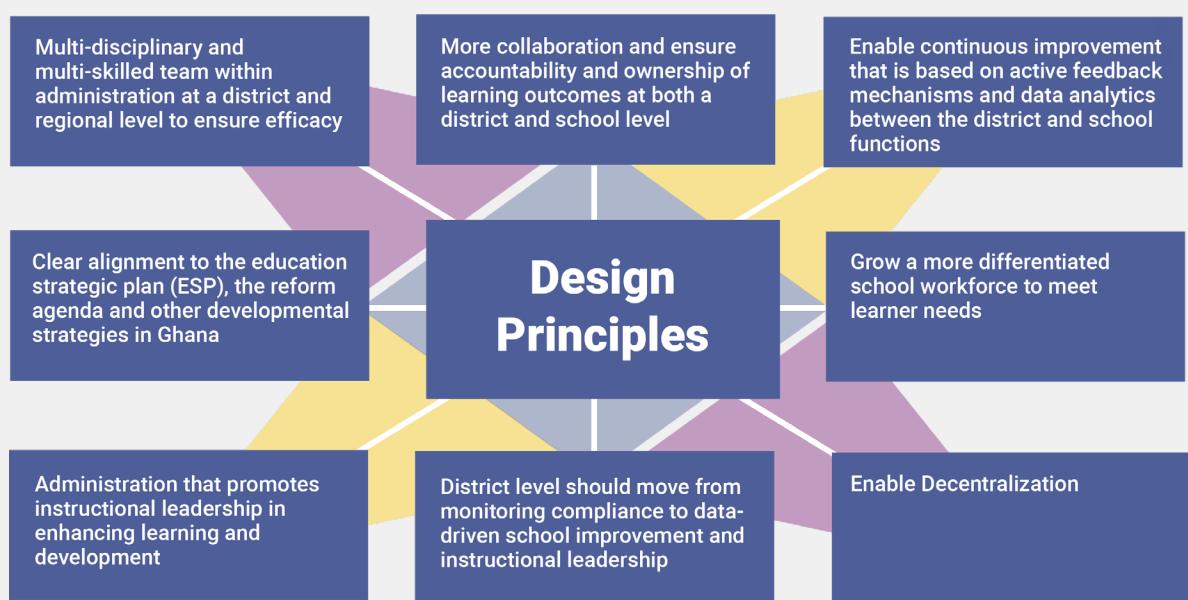
Engagement with the Minister of Education and stakeholders at all levels in the system from the outset was key to identifying the challenges and opportunities around organizational structure and functions; structures and roles; accountability and governance; culture and behaviors; and technology. A series of nine regional and district workshops were held in a variety of contexts to ensure an understanding of the reality on the ground—these included

regional and district officers and co-ordinators, supervisors, headteachers and teachers. Interviews were held with representatives from the GES, Ministry of Education, the Reform Secretariat, National Teaching Council, and development partners. A review of key workforce data, human resource policies, and education sector reports was also undertaken.

## Evidence and thought leadership from the *Transforming the Education Workforce* report used to inform the opportunities for change.

This included primary research conducted by Arizona State University, the Open University, and Education Development Trust on the current and future opportunities for the education workforce at school and district levels in Ghana, and drew on the perspectives of students, teachers, school leaders, and district officials. It was supplemented with global evidence and thought leadership on good practice functions and roles at each level in the system (see section on Innovation and Expected Results). The evidence and thought leadership supported drafting of a set of design principles (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2: GES Design Principles**



## Iterative co-design undertaken with the GES.

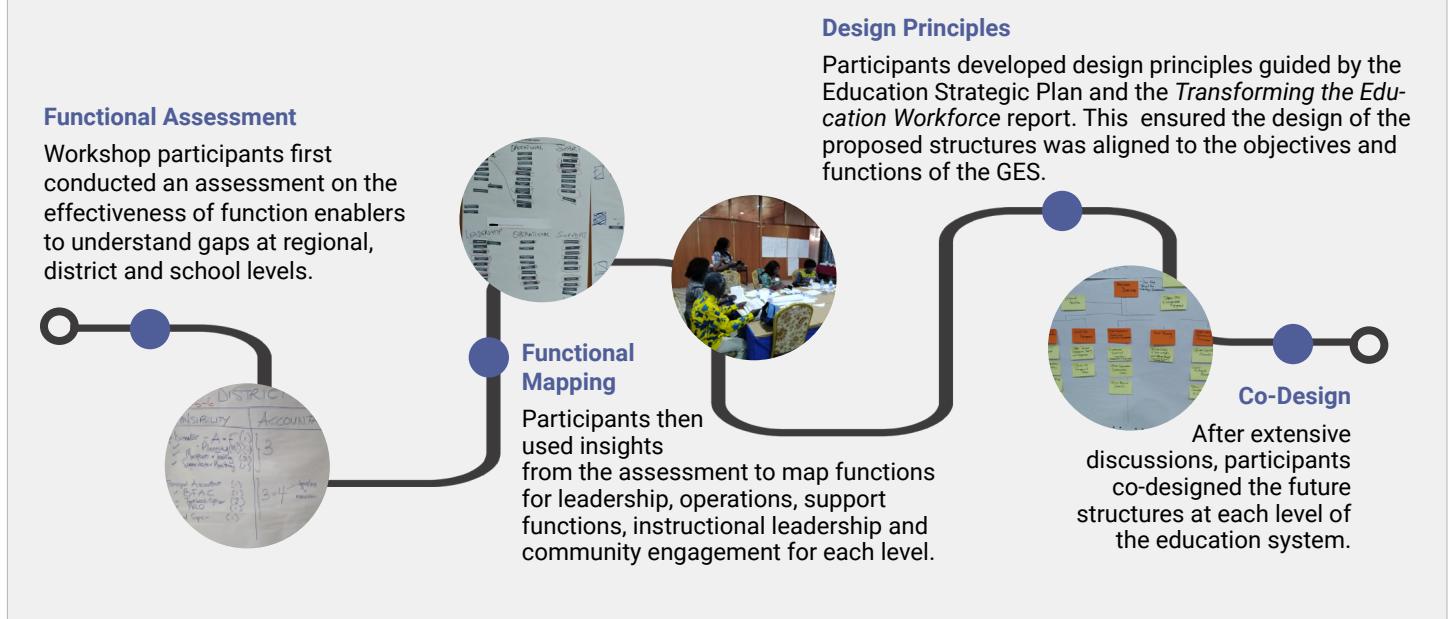
The approach took GES on a journey to co-create an organization design that supported their institutional reform (see Figure 3). This was a collaborative and iterative process that involved a series of workshops to review stakeholder feedback on current challenges; undertake functional assessment and mapping; agree on design principles; present and discuss options for the new functional design; and finally agree on a future design. The design was then shared with key stakeholders, such as teacher unions and development partners, and discussed with more than 100 regional and district education stakeholders.

## Job descriptions developed for all key roles.

These included purpose, responsibilities, accountabilities, key performance indicators, competencies, and skills for each role. These will serve as an objective guide for assigning roles based on capabilities and developing staff capacity to deliver assigned responsibilities.



**Figure 3: Co-design Workshop Journey**



## A significant transition and change management effort will be required for implementation.

A multi-year implementation plan has been put together including: change management and stakeholder engagement; strategic workforce planning; transition planning for migration to the new organizational design; deployment, training and continuous professional development of staff; and monitoring implementation and evaluating impact. Delivery of this plan will be key to success. Learning from the process of reform will also be extremely important as so few system reforms of this scale have been implemented.

# Innovation and Expected Results

## Spotlight on Innovation



The new education workforce design integrates elements of a learning team approach as outlined in the *Transforming the Education Workforce* report (see Box). It includes:

- Greater differentiation in the role of the teacher to ensure sufficient specialist knowledge reaches the most marginalized. This could be through the introduction of subject specialists or special needs roles.
- A deputy headteacher, where necessary, to increase the capacity of school leadership. This, together with administration support, can help the school leadership team focus on instructional leadership.
- Inclusion roles to increase school capacity to diagnose barriers to learning in the school, develop targeted solutions, and monitor their implementation.
- Community relations liaison officer to strengthen engagement with the school's community, including parents and caregivers, and support coordinated learner welfare.
- District shifts from a focus on using data for compliance to using data accountability, for learning and school improvement.

### Box: A Learning Team Approach

A learning team approach was put forward in the *Transforming the Education Workforce* report as an alternative way of considering the education workforce needed to support learning.

Learning teams are groups of professionals led by teachers that collaborate inside the classroom, within schools, districts, and even at national levels to ensure learning for all. They can include a variety of professionals—qualified teachers, education support personnel, leadership and management, and health and welfare specialists. Learning teams also engage the community and parents to draw on local knowledge and support. Learning teams will be different in every context and at every level in the system.

A learning team approach provides a new lens on existing workforce challenges and is based on the concept of professionalism that leverages the collective capacity of a group as opposed to solely developing the skills of individuals to improve effectiveness. It focuses on building the “social capital” of the workforce in addition to the “human capital.” Learning teams collectively leverage a variety of expertise and experience to focus on improving the learning and inclusion of all students and continually learn themselves.

## Expected Results

The redesigned education workforce will result in a more efficient, aligned and coherent structure with new functions at all levels in the system. Key shifts from the previous workforce design include:

- Reorganization of functions to deliver pre-tertiary education policies that enable all children to have a good quality education.
- A separate function for school management, leadership and accountability to enable greater accountability and good governance.
- An ICT/ edtech function to oversee technology for planning, management and enhancing teaching and learning.
- A refocused research, monitoring and evaluation function to ensure standardized processes for defining, collecting, analyzing, storing, accessing and utilizing relevant data to drive policy planning and implementation for improved learning outcomes.
- Support roles to free up senior leadership time to focus more on instructional leadership.
- Extended inclusive education beyond special education to include culture, girl child and safe schools and to address barriers to access and learning.
- Including a community liaison officer to ensure community engagement and participation at school level.

Senior Management from both the Ministry of Education and GES approved the new workforce design. The Minister sees this as one of the most important items on his menu of reforms. The GES Director General echoed this sentiment, indicating the importance of this reform and its strong alignment with the GES vision of the future of the organization.

**"The EWI program has given us deep insight in adopting an organizational approach to diagnosing education workforce issues and how to effectively align strategy to structure, people capabilities, systems, and policies in enabling improved learning outcomes. A key feature of the EWI work which makes it very relevant is the approach to work which is to define and align the interventions to our internal transformation priorities."**

**- Director, Human Resource Management & Development, Ghana Education Service**

## *Responding to the COVID-19 crisis*

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One of the unexpected results from the design work was the opportunity to rapidly consider the implications of COVID-19 on the workforce and suggest elements of the design that could be brought forward to support the response to the crisis. The following elements have not yet been implemented, but suggestions include:

- **Teachers will need to adapt their teaching** to incorporate remote teaching strategies and community-based approaches for small communities. When schools re-open, they will need to be informed on implementing health and safety guidelines such as social distancing, handwashing and the identification of COVID-19 symptoms.
- **Introduce Community Liaison Officers to serve as the conduit between the school and community**, providing learning materials, access to information and the mobilization of resources (e.g. food parcels, health-care, grants). The role could include identification of vulnerable students and the inclusion and well-being of girls. They also could assist with the return of all students when school resumes. Where the need is great and schools and districts do not have the capacity to fulfill this role, these tasks could be undertaken by community workers, trained education volunteers, members of community-based organizations, the national service program, or community health workers.
- **Greater cross-sectoral collaboration is required** at all levels in the system, for example between the GES and the Ghana Health Service to ensure safe school re-opening and between school leaders and community-based services to ensure critical services are able to continue.
- **Key members of the workforce can be cross-trained** to manage absenteeism of teachers in vulnerable categories or those infected. School leadership and district officers should identify critical job functions and positions and plan for alternative coverage by cross-training staff.
- **The workforce can play an advocacy role.** The workforce should be advocates for disease prevention and control at home, in school, and in their community by disseminating information about how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus.
- **Working as learning teams** as outlined above could help facilitate collaboration between parents, schools and the community to support learning. The roles and expectations of each team member should be clearly outlined and coordinated with regular communication and support. Learning teams at school level can then begin to work as **school networks and harness system leaders** to exchange evidence and knowledge about effective instruction and management as schools rapidly test new approaches and assess whether they work.

**"EWI has provided technical support for the redesign of the workforce of the largest employer on government's payroll. A change in the workforce of the GES will affect government's budget directly. This program will impact the planning of labor to plan for the nation."**

**- Director, Human Resource Management  
& Development, Ghana Education Service**

**"The Education Workforce Initiative has given us the opportunity to work with PwC who has brought in a research and design approach outside of the education sector but very relevant to identifying the issues confronting GES."**

- Director General, Ghana Education Service

## Lessons Learned

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- **Smart engagement with the system** – EWI worked with the Minister of Education, the leadership of the GES, and other key decision makers from the beginning and in line with Ministry strategy, navigating the political economy of the system well to ensure buy-in of the work. Consequently, the GES considered the project as their own and were deeply engaged in co-designing the reform. They set up a GES Working Group headed by the HR Director and including GES management to work with the EWI team.
- **Adaption to country needs** – EWI was flexible in its approach and planned the scope of work with the GES to ensure a gap was being filled and that the work aligned with existing institutional reform the GES was undertaking. This included the team re-scoping their work at the outset to meet the needs of the GES, responding to additional requests, and the opportunity to extend the detailed design to the regional and national levels.
- **Engagement with teacher unions and the wider education workforce** – EWI engaged with teacher unions through Education International, involving them in regional and district stakeholder meetings and obtaining their feedback on the design outputs. It is essential to continue this engagement.
- **ICT/ Edtech** – The advent of COVID-19 highlighted the need to integrate ICT and Edtech into the GES delivery and management structure, rather than it being a standalone function.

## Moving Forward

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The design is only the first step in moving towards workforce reform. The next phase of transition, further stakeholder engagement, and change management will be critical for implementation. To be successful, the reform will need to be well integrated and sequenced with the other reforms taking place in Ghana. Given the pioneering nature of this reform and its system-wide approach, it will be extremely important to learn from the process as well as the results of implementing reform.



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