

Solomon Islands



TEACHERS

SABER Country Report
2014

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Policy Goals

1. Setting Clear Expectations for Teachers

Clear expectations have been established for what students should learn and what teachers should do in Solomon Islands.

Status

Established



2. Attracting the Best into Teaching

Existing policies on salary and career structure may appeal to talented candidates, but school conditions may serve as a deterrent. Creating a permanent alternative pathway to attract mid-career professionals could help increase the number of qualified teachers.

Established



3. Preparing Teachers with Useful Training and Experience

The minimum education qualification required to become a teacher is lower than that required by most effective education systems. However, pre-service training does offer some practical professional experience to teacher candidates.

Emerging



4. Matching Teachers' Skills with Students' Needs

While incentives for working in remote areas may equalize teacher availability between schools, no incentives exist to redress teacher shortages by subject.

Emerging



5. Leading Teachers with Strong Principals

Principals are required to monitor teacher performance and support teachers in improving instructional practice, but these school leaders lack the skills necessary to do so. Moreover, no policy mandates training for school principals.

Latent



6. Monitoring Teaching and Learning

While multiple mechanisms exist for monitoring teachers, and student assessments track student achievement at the national level, current assessments provide limited feedback to help teachers customize their instruction.

Established



7. Supporting Teachers to Improve Instruction

Teachers are not required to complete a minimum amount of professional development. There is no evidence that professional development in Solomon Islands is collaborative or that it focuses on instructional improvement.

Latent



8. Motivating Teachers to Perform

Promotion decisions are informed by teacher performance and teachers must meet minimum accountability requirements. Recent graduates (though not all recent hires) who become teachers also undergo a probation period.

Emerging



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 and Woessmann 2007, 2009; Pritchett and Viarengo 2009; Campante and Glaeser 2009). And teachers are the key: recent studies have shown that teacher quality is the main school-based predictor of student achievement; several consecutive years of outstanding teaching, moreover, can offset the learning deficits of disadvantaged students (Hanushek and Rivkin 2010; Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain 2005; Nye and Hedges 2004; Rockoff 2004; Park and Hannum 2001; Sanders and Rivers 1996). However, formulating appropriate teacher policies that ensure that every classroom has a motivated, supported, and competent teacher remains a challenge. 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 already in place.

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 of the World Bank's Education Global Practice. SABER collects information about the policy domains of different education systems, analyzes it to identify common challenges and promising solutions, and makes this information widely available to inform countries' decisions on where and how to invest in order to improve educational quality.

SABER-Teachers collects data on ten core areas of teacher policy to offer a comprehensive descriptive overview of the policies in place in each participating education system (box 1). Data are collected in each participating education system by a specialized consultant using a questionnaire, ensuring 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. Interested stakeholders can access the database for detailed information organized into categories that describe how different education systems manage their teaching force, as well as copies of supporting documents. The full database is available at the [SABER 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 these data to assess how well each system's teacher policies promote student achievement, based on the global evidence to date. Specifically, SABER-Teachers assesses each education system's progress in achieving eight teacher policy goals (box 2).

Box 2. Teacher Policy Goals for Evaluation

1. Setting clear expectations for teachers
2. Attracting the best into teaching
3. Preparing teachers with useful training
4. Matching teachers' skills with students' needs
5. Leading teachers with strong principals
6. Monitoring teaching and learning
7. Supporting teachers to improve instruction
8. Motivating teachers to perform

Figure 1. Eight Teacher Policy Goals



All high-performing education systems fulfill these eight teacher policy goals 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 research studies on teacher policies, as well as analysis of policies of top-performing and rapidly improving education systems. Three criteria were used to identify the teacher policy goals: they had to be (1) linked to student performance through empirical evidence; (2) a priority for resource allocation; and (3) actionable, meaning that they identify actions that 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 too little empirical evidence at present to allow for specific policy recommendations.

By classifying countries according to their performance on each of the eight teacher policy goals, SABER-Teachers helps diagnose the key challenges to cultivating effective teachers. For each policy goal, the SABER-Teachers team identified policy levers (actions that governments can take to reach these goals) and indicators (that measure the extent to which governments are making effective use of these policy levers). Using these policy levers and indicators, SABER-Teachers classifies the progress of education systems toward achieving each of the eight teacher policy goals

using a four-tiered scale (latent, emerging, established, and advanced). The scale assesses the extent to which a given education system has put in place the type of teacher policies related to improved student outcomes (annex 1). 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 policy design, not policy implementation. SABER-Teachers analyzes the teacher policies formally adopted by a given education system. This type of analysis is an important first step toward strengthening the policy and institutional frameworks that policy makers control most directly and that influence how well a system functions. At the same time, policies “on the ground”—that is, policies as they are actually implemented—may differ quite substantially from policies as originally designed. In fact, they often do differ due to the political economy of the reform process, lack of capacity on the part of the organizations charged with implementing them, and/or the interaction between these policies and specific contextual factors. Since SABER-Teachers collects only limited data on policy implementation, the analysis of teacher policies presented in this report should ideally be complemented with other data-gathering efforts that focus on how well teacher policies are actually implemented on the ground.

This report presents results of the application of the SABER-Teachers tool in Solomon Islands. It describes the performance of Solomon Islands’ education system in achieving each of the eight teacher policy goals, alongside comparative information from education systems that have consistently scored highly on international student achievement tests and have participated in the SABER-Teachers initiative. Additional detailed descriptive information on the teacher policies of the education systems of Solomon Islands and other countries can be found on the [SABER-Teachers website](#).

Solomon Islands' Teacher Policy System Results

Goal 1: Setting clear expectations for teachers

Established ●●●○

Setting clear expectations for student and teacher performance is important for guiding teachers' daily work and aligning the resources necessary to help them constantly improve instructional practice. In addition, clear expectations can help ensure coherence among different key aspects of the teaching profession, such as initial teacher education, professional development, and teacher appraisal.

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers that school systems can use to reach goal one: (1) clear expectations for what students should know and be able to do; and (2) useful guidance on teachers' use of time in order to improve instruction at the school level.

(1) In Solomon Islands, the government has established what students should learn and what teachers should do. The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development is responsible for setting education goals and controlling the national curriculum. The National Curriculum Statement of 2011 provides a framework for meeting national learning and teaching expectations. In addition, individual syllabi by subject provide greater detail.

Teachers' tasks are officially stipulated. Consistent with the practice of some high-performing systems, these tasks go beyond classroom teaching and include supervising students, grading assessments, and standing in for absent teachers. While teacher tasks are clearly defined, however, there is no clear statement in the law as to what percentage of time teachers should allocate to any of these tasks, with the exception of classroom teaching. Without sufficient time to dedicate to

instructional improvement, teachers in Solomon Islands may not be able to complete the tasks expected of them.

(2) Guidance on teachers' use of time could focus more on setting expectations that improve instruction.

Teachers' working time in Solomon Islands is officially defined as the overall number of hours worked (as opposed to the number of hours spent at the school or in contact with students). Teachers are expected to work eight-hour days, and classroom teaching comprises less than 60 percent of their working time. Global experience suggests this definition may be conducive to learning because it recognizes the need to devote some time to non-teaching tasks, such as lesson planning, analysis of student work, professional development, and administrative duties. If teachers' non-teaching time is used productively, it can make teaching time much more effective and meaningful.

Non-teaching tasks related to instructional improvement, such as mentoring and collaborating with other teachers and conducting internal evaluations of learning at the school level, are officially required (table 1).

Successful education systems such as those of Ontario (Canada), Finland, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore, devote considerable time at the school level to instructional improvement activities, including collaborative teacher analysis of instructional practice, as well as mentoring and professional development (Darling-Hammond and Rothman 2011; Darling-Hammond 2010; Levin 2008). In addition, these systems tend to devote a smaller share of teachers' time to actual contact with students than do other systems, and a larger share to teacher collaboration, on-site professional development, and research on the effectiveness of teaching strategies. Japan, for example, devotes about 40 percent of teachers' working time to these types of activities, while Ontario currently devotes 30 percent (Darling-Hammond, and Rothman 2011).

Table 1. Teachers' Official School Improvement Tasks

	Mentor peers	Collaborate on school plan	Design the curriculum	Participate in school evaluations
Papua New Guinea				
Solomon Islands	✓	✓		✓
Samoa	✓	✓		✓
Philippines	✓	✓		✓
South Korea				
Singapore	✓	✓	✓	✓

Source: SABER-Teachers database.

Goal 2: Attracting the best into teaching

Established ●●●○

The structure and characteristics of a teaching career make it more or less attractive to talented individuals. These people may be more inclined to become teachers if they see that entry requirements are on par with those of well-regarded professions, compensation and working conditions are adequate, and attractive professional development opportunities exist.

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

(1) In Solomon Islands, teachers are required to have only a minimal level of postsecondary education.

Teachers must complete at a minimum a one-year certification program or an undergraduate diploma specific to teaching in order to become a permanent teacher in the country (MEHRD 2011c).

In addition, a person without teacher training but with vocational training or a diploma or degree in certain subject areas (e.g., business, agriculture, science, or theology) may enter the teaching profession provisionally as either a teacher-in-training or an untrained teacher. Such candidates must have a

minimum of one year of postsecondary studies in a relevant topic, but may lack formal teacher training. While this policy may temporarily redress teacher shortages, global experience suggests that such teachers would perform better if they had a proscribed pathway to becoming effective teachers. Ultimately, the system will likely to need to attract more qualified candidates. Although the Certificate in Teaching Primary (CTP) Program appears to have targeted this group, it was not developed as a permanent pathway (Thompson 2010). Building on this program with the goal of providing these teachers adequate training and reflection time could improve the quality of their teaching.

(2) Teacher pay may be appealing to talented candidates.

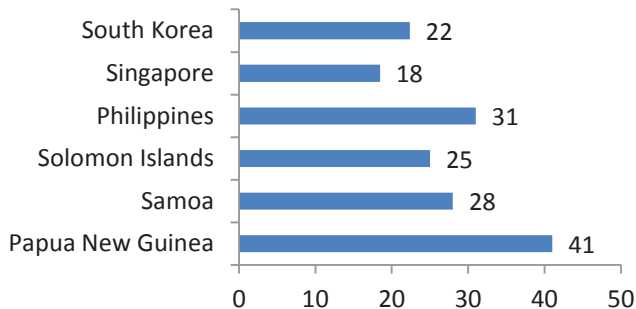
While relative teacher compensation is one of the most difficult indicators to evaluate globally, there is some evidence that Solomon Islands offers competitive pay. The minimum monthly teacher salary in the country is SI\$ 1,259 (US\$ 174), and the maximum, SI\$ 5,243 (US\$ 726). The minimum starting salary is approximately 106 percent of per capita GDP. According to policy, teacher performance evaluations and recommendations affect subsequent pay and promotion decisions. By making pay and career opportunities more meritocratic, these policies may render the teaching profession more attractive to highly motivated candidates.

(3) Working conditions may be sufficiently appealing to attract talented individuals to the teaching profession.

Working conditions can play an important role in the decision to become a teacher. Talented candidates who have opportunities in other professions may be discouraged from becoming teachers if working conditions are unpleasant. Solomon Islands has enacted national infrastructure requirements for its education system and its "whole-school" inspection includes questions on school infrastructure. Unfortunately, it is unclear whether inspections to assess school quality are conducted in all schools. The country also lacks data on what percentage of schools meet these infrastructure requirements. These findings could indicate that school infrastructure is not monitored closely enough to ensure that all schools meet minimum requirements.

Another indicator of teacher working conditions—student-teacher ratios—are somewhat higher in Solomon Islands than in well-performing international education systems, which typically have 30 students per teacher in primary school and 20 in secondary school. The respective ratios in Solomon Islands are 25:1 and 24:1 (figure 2).

Figure 2. Student-Teacher Ratios, Primary School



Sources: SABER-Teachers database; UNESCO Institute of Statistics.

(4) Opportunities for career advancement may appeal to talented individuals. Teachers in most education systems have the opportunity to be promoted to the position of principal at some point in their careers. In addition to these “vertical” promotions, most high-performing education systems also offer “horizontal” promotions to academic positions that allow teachers to grow professionally, yet remain closely connected to instruction, instead of moving to managerial positions (OECD 2012; Darling-Hammond 2010).

Teachers in Solomon Islands can be promoted to master teacher positions or can apply for principal positions. Neither position can be acquired simply through seniority: teachers must apply for the positions and are selected based on the quality of their past work. By making advancement meritocratic, this policy may make the profession more attractive to career-oriented professionals and encourage teachers to compete by performing well in their current positions.

Goal 3: Preparing teachers with useful training and experience

Emerging ●●○○

It is crucial to equip teachers with the skills that they need to succeed in the classroom. Success requires subject matter and pedagogic knowledge, as well as classroom management skills and a great deal of teaching practice. Good preparation puts all teachers on an equal footing, giving them a common framework for improving their instructional practice.

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

(1) As noted earlier, initial teacher education requirements are slightly lower than those of the most successful education systems. Virtually all high-performing countries require that teachers have the educational equivalent of ISCED 5A (a research-oriented bachelor’s degree). Certain systems, such as that of Finland, also require a research-based master’s degree (OECD 2011). The equivalent level of teacher training for primary school teachers in Solomon Islands, however, is the somewhat inferior ISCED 5B (table 2).

Table 2. Required Educational Level of Primary School Teachers

	At or below ISCED 4A	ISCED 5B	ISCED 5A	Above ISCED 5A
Papua New Guinea		✓		
Solomon Islands		✓		
Samoa		✓		
Philippines			✓	
Singapore			✓	
South Korea			✓	

Source: SABER-Teachers database.

(2) Most teachers have some practical classroom experience before entering the profession. Practical experience is a critical factor in the preparedness of

teachers upon entry. The more teachers are able to try out their pedagogical theories, subject-matter knowledge, and classroom management skills, the better prepared they are for their careers. Most high-performing systems require teacher entrants to have considerable classroom experience before becoming independent teachers; some of these systems also provide mentoring and support during teachers' first and even second year on the job (Darling-Hammond 2010; Ingersoll 2007). While no law in Solomon Islands compels teacher preparation programs to include practical experience, the main teacher training institution in the country requires students to take part in a six-week teaching experience program over their two-year course of study (School of Education 2011). By contrast, certain systems integrate over a year of classroom experience into pre-service training.

Many successful systems offer induction programs for teachers during their first year of teaching. During the mandatory one-year probationary period in Solomon Islands, however, there is no formal induction program. New teachers do have a lighter teaching load (80 percent of the standard load), which gives them more time to prepare and improve their teaching, but they do not receive any structured guidance or mentoring during that year (MEHRD 2011).

Goal 4: Matching teachers' skills with students' needs

Emerging ●●○○

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

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers that school systems can use to reach goal four: (1) incentives for

teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools; and (2) incentives for teachers to teach subjects in which there is a critical shortage of instructors.

(1) Mechanisms exist to address teacher shortages in hard-to-staff schools. Attracting effective teachers to hard-to-staff schools (schools that are in disadvantaged locations or serve underprivileged populations) is a challenge for many countries and often requires a specific set of incentives. In Solomon Islands, teachers can receive monetary bonuses and housing (inducement) allowances for working in remote areas. Many education systems offer similar incentives for teaching in hard-to-staff schools. Some examples are highlighted in table 3.

Table 3. Incentives for Teachers to Teach in Hard-to-Staff Schools

	Promotion	Higher basic salary in hard-to-staff schools	Monetary bonus	Subsidized education	Housing support
Papua New Guinea			✓		
Solomon Islands			✓		✓
Samoa			✓		✓
Philippines			✓		
Singapore					
South Korea	✓				✓

Source: SABER-Teachers database.

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

(2) No policies are in place to either monitor subjects in which there is a shortage of teachers or to redress such shortages. Most education systems have at least some subjects in which there is a critical shortage of teachers, that is, too few teachers to meet students' needs. Successful systems develop policies and incentives that encourage teachers to teach these subjects. Monetary bonuses, scholarships, and career opportunities are all examples of these incentives. In Solomon Islands, however, no subjects are identified as critical-shortage subjects and no inducements exist to attract teachers to any particular subject. In countries where entry into the

teaching profession is highly competitive, such as Singapore and South Korea, the volume of candidates reduces the need for incentives. Yet even in Singapore, entry into pre-service programs is regulated in order to match education system needs (table 4).

Table 4. Incentives for Teachers to Teach Critical-Shortage Subjects

	Promotion	Higher basic salary	Monetary bonus	Subsidized education	Housing support
Papua New Guinea					
Solomon Islands					
Samoa				✓	
Philippines		✓	✓		
Singapore					
South Korea					

Source: SABER-Teachers database.

Note: Singapore instead directly controls how many candidates enter pre-service training by subject.

Goal 5: Leading teachers with strong principals

Latent ●○○○

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

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

(1) Leadership training programs for the professional development of principals are limited in Solomon Islands. Research from high-performing education systems suggests that principals can develop leadership skills through supported work experience or specific

training courses. For example, the systems of Japan, South Korea, Shanghai (China), and Singapore all require that applicants for principal positions participate in specific coursework and/or a specialized internship or mentoring program designed to develop essential leadership skills (OECD 2012; Darling-Hammond 2010) (table 5).

Table 5. Mechanisms that Support the Development of Principals' Leadership Skills

	Courses or other training requirements	Mentoring or internship program
Papua New Guinea	✓	✓
Solomon Islands		
Samoa		✓
Philippines	✓	✓
Singapore	✓	✓
South Korea	✓	

Source: SABER-Teachers database.

Principals in Solomon Islands are not required to meet any requirements beyond those required of teachers. No specific training mechanisms currently exist to ensure that principals develop the skills needed to act as instructional leaders. Specialized coursework, ongoing principal-specific training, mentoring, and peer-learning groups could help principals lead their staffs based on best practices.

(2) School leaders in Solomon Islands are expected to work towards improved professional practice. Once education systems have qualified principals, they need to focus on improving instruction (OECD 2013; Barber and Mourshed 2007). High-performing education systems such as those of Finland, Ontario (Canada), and Singapore consider their principals to be instructional leaders: they are expected to be knowledgeable in teaching and curriculum matters, as well as to provide guidance and support to teachers. Principals in these systems evaluate teachers, provide feedback, assess their schools' needs for professional development, and direct instructional resources where they are most needed (Darling-Hammond and Rothman 2011).

In Solomon Islands, principals are responsible for ensuring that “proper and effective teaching is taking place in the school” (MEHRD 2011c). Accordingly, they are expected to evaluate teachers and help them improve their instructional practices. Principals are also expected to provide support for teacher education programs, as well as fulfill administrative duties and teach half-time.

Goal 6: Monitoring teaching and learning

Established ●●●○

It is essential to assess how well teachers are teaching and whether students are learning in order to devise strategies to improve both processes. First, education systems must identify poorly performing teachers and students before they can provide struggling classrooms with adequate support. Second, teacher and student evaluations help identify good practices, which can be shared across the system to improve school performance.

SABER-Teachers considers three policy levers that school systems can use to reach goal six: (1) availability of data on student achievement; (2) adequate systems for monitoring teacher performance; and (3) multiple mechanisms for evaluating teacher performance.

(1) In Solomon Islands, systems are in place to assess student learning; these systems can be used to improve teacher policies, but not necessarily teaching. All high-performing education systems monitor student performance to inform teaching and teacher policies, but they do so in very different ways. They may conduct large-scale system-wide assessments, student evaluations (by teachers), or employ other standardized student learning methods. Regardless of the mechanisms they use, high-performing systems ensure that three main functions are fulfilled:

1. The education system collects complete and relevant student achievement data on a regular basis.
2. Public authorities have access to these data and use them to inform policy making.
3. A feedback mechanism shares these data and relevant analyses at the school level, where teachers use them to improve their instructional practice.

Several standardized assessments are used in Solomon Islands. Students must take examinations to continue in their studies past Form Three, lower secondary school, and Form Six. Since the main purpose of these exams is to regulate student progression through the school system, their results may not be comparable across years. The Standardized Test of Achievement (SISTA), is administered every two years to a sample of 10-to-14-year-old students. This test is intended to monitor the quality of education provided by the school system over time and may help inform education policy, as its results are made available to policy makers.

SISTA results are also made available to schools. Because it is a sample-based assessment, however, the data do not enhance teachers’ knowledge of their own students. In some education systems, such as that of Ontario (Canada), student assessment results are reported to teachers and broken down by knowledge area. The level of achievement of each teacher’s students are then compared to local and national averages. This procedure helps teachers identify topics that may require additional teaching time or help them change how they teach a specific topic.

(2) Internal and external systems are in place to evaluate teacher performance in Solomon Islands. Teacher evaluations are conducted on three levels: self-evaluation, principal evaluations, and external evaluations by school authorities. These evaluations can help identify areas of improvement for teachers.

(3) Multiple criteria are used to evaluate teacher performance. Research suggests that no single method of evaluating teacher performance is fail-safe. Most high-performing systems conduct teacher evaluations using multiple data collection mechanisms and varied assessment criteria (table 6). Ideally, a comprehensive teacher evaluation framework combines student results, teachers’ portfolios, classroom observations, and student/parent feedback. International experience and research both indicate that none of these approaches taken separately produce a balanced and objective evaluation of teacher performance.

Table 6. Criteria for Evaluating Teacher Performance

	Subject matter knowledge	Teaching methods	Student assessment methods	Students' academic achievement
Papua New Guinea	✓	✓	✓	
Solomon Islands	✓	✓	✓	✓
Samoa	✓	✓	✓	✓
Philippines	✓	✓	✓	✓
Singapore	✓	✓	✓	
South Korea	✓	✓	✓	

Source: SABER-Teachers database.

In Solomon Islands, principals are required to conduct teacher appraisals twice a year (MEHRD 2011c). Teachers sometimes undergo external evaluations as well, but this occurs only when: an employment contract has expired, a teacher's performance has been rated unsatisfactory, or a special request is made. The teacher appraisal form does explicitly require that a teacher's knowledge, teaching methods, assessment methods, and student achievement be considered, which generally help evaluators gain a more nuanced understanding of the teacher's strengths and weaknesses. In addition, the inspectorate appraisal handbook mentions that teachers are assessed on the basis of professional attributes, professional skills, and classroom observation.

Goal 7: Supporting teachers to improve instruction

Latent ●○○○

Support systems help improve instruction at the school level. In order to continually improve their practices, teachers and schools need to be able to analyze the specific challenges they face in classroom teaching, to access information on best practices for addressing these challenges, and to receive specific external support tailored to their needs.

SABER-Teachers considers three policy levers that school systems can use to reach goal seven: (1) opportunities

for teacher professional development; (2) collaborative professional development that focuses on improving instruction; (3) assignment of professional development training on the basis of perceived need.

(1) Teachers are not required to complete a minimum amount of professional development on an annual basis. Although the Teacher Training and Development Division of the Ministry of Education is responsible for providing teacher professional development, teachers are not expected to complete any particular duration of training each year. Other education systems make such continuing education an annual requirement for teachers, with the goal of encouraging them to continually improve their craft (table 7).

Table 7. Recommended/Required Duration of Professional Development for Primary School Teachers

	Unknown/ Undefined	1 to 5 days	6 to 9 days	10 or more days
Papua New Guinea	✓			
Solomon Islands	✓			
Samoa	✓			
Philippines	✓			
South Korea		✓		
Singapore				✓

Source: SABER-Teachers database; Darling-Hammond (2010).

When governments bear the financial cost of this development, they ensure that teachers receive all the help that they need, not the help that they can afford. While the Teacher Training and Development Division, other education authorities, and schools all receive funding for professional development in Solomon Islands, some of the cost of training courses are nevertheless borne by teachers themselves.

(2) There is no evidence that Solomon Islands uses the most effective methods of professional development.

Research suggests that effective teacher professional development is collaborative and provides opportunities for in-school analysis of instructional practice. As mentioned earlier, high-performing education systems such as those of Japan and the city of Ontario, Canada, devote as much as 30 percent of teachers' school time to professional development and instructional

improvement activities. These activities include observation visits to other schools and participation in teacher or school networks, as well engaging in research, mentoring, and/or coaching (table 8). Available documentation does not suggest that any of these methods are used in Solomon Islands.

Table 8. Types of Professional Teacher Development

	Observation visits	Teacher networks	School networks	Research	Mentoring/coaching
Papua New Guinea					
Solomon Islands					
Samoa					
Philippines	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
South Korea		✓		✓	✓
Singapore	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Source: SABER-Teachers database; Darling-Hammond (2010).

(3) Teacher professional development is formally assigned based on perceived need. Providing the same professional development to all teachers is an inefficient way to improve instructional practice. By assigning professional development based on performance evaluations, teachers receive the specific guidance that they need to improve. In Solomon Islands, principals can assign professional development based on teacher evaluations, and unsatisfactory evaluations can result in being assigned a supervisor.

Goal 8: Motivating teachers to perform

Emerging ●●○○

Mechanisms that adequately motivate teachers enable school systems to signal their seriousness in achieving education goals, make a teaching career attractive to competent individuals, and reward good performance while ensuring accountability.

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

(1) Promotion and probation may help motivate teachers in Solomon Islands. Teachers do not automatically receive increased pay and responsibility based only on seniority or qualifications; promotions are also based on past performance reviews. New teachers are also subject to a one-year probation period after graduation (MEHRD 2011c). According to policy, probationers are subject to evaluations during their first year of teaching and can be dismissed if they are deemed unfit for the profession. Probation periods can be useful for selecting competent teachers early on or identifying new employees in need of support. While experienced teachers are generally expected to perform more quickly when changing jobs, recent graduates may need greater support. However, given that teachers are hired for a specific number of years, the expiry of term contracts may motivate teachers in the same way.

(2) Minimum expectations of teacher behavior are in place. Requiring teachers to meet certain standards in order to remain in the profession can facilitate the removal of ineffective and/or dangerous teachers. SABER-Teachers measures whether teachers may be dismissed for misconduct, child abuse, absenteeism, and poor performance. In Solomon Islands, education authorities may terminate a teacher who is not performing at the expected standard, shows willful disregard of the Teacher Handbook, is guilty of misconduct, or is considered unfit or incapable of fulfilling his or her duties. Teachers can also be dismissed if they fail their annual performance evaluations.

(3) Teacher compensation is linked to teacher performance at the school level. In Solomon Islands, performance reviews inform promotions, which in turn affect salaries. By not strictly tying salaries to years of experience, teachers may have greater motivation to improve their teaching.

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Annex 1: SABER-Teachers Ratings

The SABER-Teachers team has identified policy levers (actions that governments can take) and indicators (that measure the extent to which governments are making effective use of these policy levers) for each of the eight policy goals referenced in this country report. For example, for Teacher Policy Goal 1, Setting Clear Expectations for Teachers, the SABER-Teachers team has identified the following policy levers and indicators:

Table A1.1 Setting Clear Expectations for Teachers

Policy Levers	Indicators
A. Are there clear expectations for teachers?	1. Are there standards for what students must know and be able to do?
	2. Are the tasks that teachers are expected to carry out officially stipulated?
B. Is there useful guidance on the use of teachers' working time?	1. Are teachers' official tasks related to instructional improvement?
	2. Does the statutory definition of working time for primary school teachers recognize non-teaching hours?
	3. What is the share of working time allocated to teaching for primary school teachers?

Each goal is defined in the first paragraph of the section relating to that goal in the country report. Policy levers for achieving that goal are identified in the second paragraph. The remaining text in each section provides details about the indicators that measure each of the levers.

Using the policy levers and indicators, the SABER-Teachers tool evaluates the performance of an education system on each of the eight teacher policy goals using a four-tiered scale (latent, emerging, established, and advanced) that describes the extent to which the system has put in place teacher policies associated with improved student outcomes.

This four-tiered rating system represents a continuum of education systems, from education systems with no teacher policies at all (or, in some cases, policies that are detrimental to the encouragement of learning) to more comprehensive, developed systems with teacher policies oriented toward learning. SABER-Teacher ratings can be defined in the following manner:

- **Advanced**—Systems that are rated “advanced” on a particular policy goal have put in place multiple policies conducive to learning for each policy lever used to achieve that goal.
- **Established**—“Established” systems have at least one policy and/or law in place that uses those policy levers.
- **Emerging**—“Emerging” systems have only some appropriate policies in place to achieve the policy goal.
- **Latent**—“Latent” systems have no or few teacher policies.

See Vegas et al. (2012) for more details about these definitions and a detailed review of the policy levers and indicators used by SABER-Teachers.

For more information regarding SABER-Teachers methodology, please contact: HelpdeskTP@worldbank.org.

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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