

Supporting School-Based In-Service Training in Rwandan Secondary Schools

INTRODUCTION

Recently Rwanda Education Board (REB) worked to create a new and innovative Competence-Based Curriculum (CBC), which was launched in 2015 and implemented in 2016. Education Development Center (EDC) through the Akazi Kanoze 2 (AK2) Project supported the curriculum development process when the AK2 work readiness program was integrated into the CBC. As part of REB's orientation on the CBC at the sector level, they helped schools and teachers to develop a strategy for School-Based In-service Training (SBI). The SBI is a peer-learning training model that encourages teachers and administrators to share skills and knowledge they learn in trainings with other teachers.



AK2 TRAINING

AK2 agreed to support REB in CBC training and SBI monitoring by planning and implementing a training workshop for a cohort of science, mathematics, and entrepreneurship teachers from eleven districts in Kigali and the Southern province. Prior to the training, AK2 conducted a needs assessment which showed that while all teachers had received training from REB on the CBC and had begun to internalize and execute some of the learner-based teaching methods, they were struggling to move their lessons beyond the lowest levels of learning on Bloom's Taxonomy.

The training focused on helping teachers understand how students learn and what makes an effective teacher, and equipped teachers to plan and facilitate CBC lessons and SBI trainings at their schools. Feedback from the trainings was very positive and the teachers particularly appreciated the video material. Participants noted that they wished the training was longer to allow time for teacher practice and also expressed a desire for further follow-up school visits, additional training resources, and support for future trainings.



Recommendations for Expanding and Improving CBC Training:



Coordination of training: At school, sector, and district levels



Assessment: Need to cover formative and summative assessment



Time for collaboration: Teachers need time to plan and reflect as they learn.



Video modules: An effective way for teachers to keep training



Resources: Teachers need materials that show best practices in relevant contexts



Evidence: Need to collect evidence from field on instructional practices

MONITORING OF SBI PILOT SCHOOLS

In addition to conducting the CBC training, EDC, along with our implementing partners Frontiers, Health Poverty Action (HPA), and AVSI, visited nine pilot schools to monitor and support the institutionalization of SBI. The visits affirmed that the training had been effective and nearly every school was actively holding SBI trainings.

Challenges in Implementing Regular SBI Trainings:



Lack of time: Teachers have many competing priorities and few free periods which overlap making it difficult to find training time



Incentivization: Motivating teachers to do more work than they are already doing without compensation is a major barrier

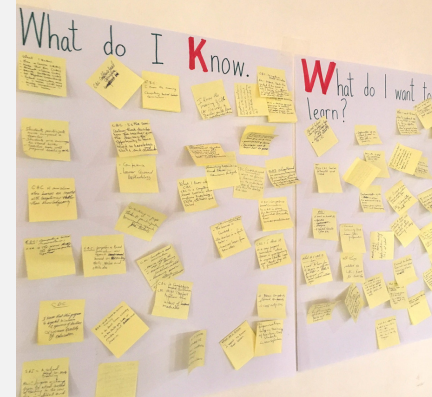


Lack of budget: Not having a transportation budget limits schools from exchanging ideas or conducting teacher observations with other schools

Despite these challenges, the majority of teachers and Deans of Studies (DOSs) demonstrated that they were motivated to implement the CBC and SBI in their schools. Action needs to be taken to ensure that this motivation is not lost and SBI is institutionalized in schools.

Recommendations for Institutionalizing SBI:

- **Refresher trainings:** Schools unanimously expressed a need for refresher trainings to solidify the knowledge they gained in the initial trainings on topics such as: formative assessment, using data to inform instructional decisions, teaching with local materials etc.
- **Offer continuous materials/resources:** Teachers need regular access to digital materials/resources to use in their classrooms. In particular, the Teachers Community of Practice (TCOP) website is a key resource.
- **Determine appropriate teacher incentives:** Schools could include continuous professional development (CPD) in their budget, could use awards/certificates, or could make room during the school-day for teacher training.
- **Conduct effective monitoring visits:** Monitoring officials must be trained on SBI and they should maintain records of SBI progress and plans. Exchange visits between schools would also be useful.



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