WHY IT MATTERS
A teacher’s responsibility is not simply to teach. Teachers must help students acquire the competencies to problem solve, analyze, focus on difficult tasks, think creatively, communicate, and work with others. Teachers have the responsibility to ensure that all children—each with their own challenges and potential—can learn effectively and have an enriching experience in school. Successful education systems have policies to attract, prepare, motivate, and support teachers in this challenging task. Unfortunately, despite good intentions, many countries are failing to do this. Students often sit in classrooms where they do not learn. Eventually they see no point in staying in school and drop out, having wasted the most important years for skills development. Governments and societies, meanwhile, will have used up scarce financial resources without achieving the learning outcomes and quality education they need.

OUR APPROACH
Successful education systems have teachers who are equipped with what they need to teach effectively and who are motivated to do their best. Ensuring this requires, first, that policies and systems designed to support teachers focus on improving what is happening in the classroom, and second, that there are human resource policies to develop a teacher workforce equipped and motivated to ensure learning. Teachers must be engaged and have the right skills and professional development opportunities to be effective. More importantly, they and society must internalize the immense responsibility teachers have and the immense impact teachers have on the young lives they interact with every day. The World Bank is working with countries to reform teacher professional development programs so that every classroom has a competent, empowered, and motivated teacher.
There is much at stake. An effective teacher impacts the lives of students by making it possible for them to learn and gain skills. An ineffective teacher not only wastes a precious year of potential learning, but also doesn’t give students what they need to go on and learn in subsequent years.

**OUR PRIORITIES:**

1. **Attract the best into teaching**
   Better selection and retention, alongside policies that transition ineffective teachers out of the teaching force, will have positive long-term effects on teacher quality.

2. **Motivate teachers to perform**
   Incentives are essential for effective teaching and can include rewarding teachers not only based on seniority but also on effectiveness. Incentives can also increase the prestige of teachers within the community.

3. **Improve metrics to support teaching**
   Learning assessments provide teachers with the information they need to better teach students at their own level. Nevertheless, most education systems do not assess learning.

4. **Support teachers’ professional development**
   Training needs to be a continuous process embedded into pre-service and in-service teacher training instead of one-off programs. Effective training must include practical techniques such as how to manage the classroom, engage students, reduce transition time, and effectively check student comprehension.

5. **Improve curriculum**
   The curriculum must be age appropriate and focus on the skills and knowledge that children need to learn. It’s important to allow schools and teachers to implement change in the classroom, including making use of technology to improve instruction and learning.