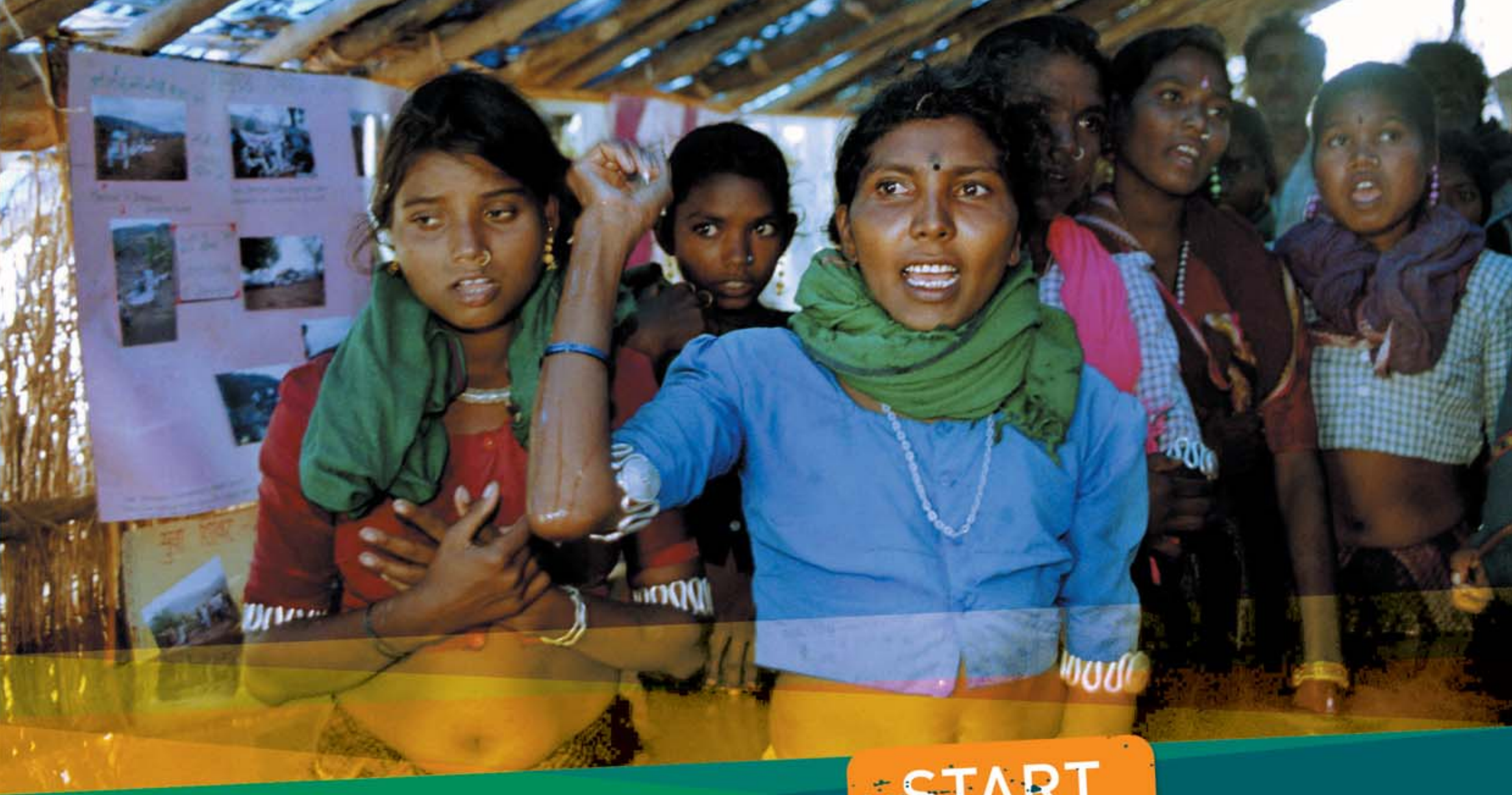

# START

**SIMPLE TOOLKIT**
FOR **ADVOCACY RESEARCH**
**TECHNIQUES**

VSO
Sharing skills
Changing lives

# CONTENTS

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Author: Lucy Tweedie

Editing: Lucia Fry; Rachel Bishop; Mary Sheridan, Stephen Nock

Design: VSO Creative Services

Country case-study examples: VSO Zambia, VSO Papua New Guinea, VSO Malawi, VSO Rwanda, VSO Guyana, VSO Nepal and VSO Maldives

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| AUSAID | Australian Aid for International Development |
| BEAMS | Basic Education Access Management Support Programme |
| CBO | Community-based organisation |
| CPD | Continuing Professional Development |
| CPCE | Cyril Potter College of Education |
| CSO | Civil society organisation |
| DFID | UK Government Department for International Development |
| EFA | Education For All |
| GCE | Global Campaign for Education |
| GEAP | Guyana Education Access Project |
| GTU | Guyana Teachers' Union |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| INGO | International non-governmental organisation |
| NCERD | National Council for Education Research and Development |
| NDOE | National Development of Education |
| NGO | Non-governmental organisation |
| PSC | Public Service Commission |
| PRSP | Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper |
| ReDO | Regional Education Development Officer |
| START | Simple Toolkit for Advocacy Research Techniques |
| SWOT | Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats |
| TSC | Teaching Service Commission |
| TLMs | Teaching and learning materials |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organisation |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| VSO | Voluntary Service Overseas |

Welcome to START, VSO's advocacy research toolkit, based on VSO's own experience of low-cost, non-academic professional research. Whether working as a VSO programme or partner, or simply an organisation that wants to put a development issue on the agenda, VSO believes that START will enable the user to set up and manage their own research for the purposes of advocacy.

START is based on VSO's own 'Valuing Teachers' project on teacher motivation in developing countries. Throughout the toolkit, examples of how the tools and methods were used during 'Valuing Teachers' will be shown in boxes in the text. You can use START to research any issue, but it is hoped that these examples will help clarify how it has been applied to a real project.

## WHAT IS 'VALUING TEACHERS'?

Teachers are the implementers of education reforms, yet before 'Valuing Teachers' there was scant research into what teachers themselves feel about their profession: what motivates them, what affects their morale, and what helps them perform well. VSO explored these issues through a simple participatory research process, involving teachers, volunteers and a range of education stakeholders. The aim was to find out national teachers' views about the profession in order to inform policy-making and implementation at both national and international levels.

Research has now been completed in eight countries: Zambia, Papua New Guinea, Malawi, Guyana, Rwanda, Nepal, Maldives and Pakistan, and findings from the first three countries – where the research was completed in 2003 – have been synthesised in a policy research report on teachers' motivation and morale entitled *What makes teachers tick?* which was referenced in the 2005 UNESCO Education for All Global Monitoring Report. The report sets out the case that the failure of policy-makers to take into account the voices and views of teachers in decision-making is having a detrimental effect on the effectiveness of reform and on the quality of education. VSO has used this research to make representations to donors and international institutions, with considerable success. For example, VSO accepted an invitation to give a seminar to World Bank staff in Washington in 2003, and accompanied the General Secretary of the Zambian National Union of Teachers on a lobbying trip to the 2004 IMF and World Bank Annual Meetings.

All members of the 'Valuing Teachers' team (programme managers in each of the eight country offices where the research was undertaken) are now developing and implementing advocacy strategies in order to take the findings from their research forward through national level lobbying, coalition building, campaigning activities and volunteer placements (for example in teachers' unions and education coalitions). Outcomes so far include:

- In Malawi, VSO worked with the Civil Society Coalition for Quality Basic Education to influence government policy, with the result that teachers' salaries were increased in 2003. Additionally, funds for teacher training and teaching and learning materials are now priority expenditure for the Ministry of Education and protected under the Poverty Reduction Strategy of Malawi.
- In the Maldives, VSO has entered into a partnership with the Ministry of Education to host a series of Valuing Teachers Steering Group meetings that will be looking at how the recommendations from the Valuing Teachers research in the Maldives can be implemented – with teachers and other stakeholders represented and active at every stage of the process.

- In Rwanda, the findings from the Valuing Teachers research were debated at the Ministry of Education's 2004 Education Sector Review and quoted in a Ministry of Education commissioned report on teacher development policies. VSO Rwanda is also developing a volunteer placement with the primary teachers' union, undertaking further research into closing the Education for All financing gap, and helping to build a new civil society Education for All coalition.
- In Zambia, following a joint VSO, Oxfam and Global Campaign for Education (GCE) report, *Undervaluing Teachers*, and a lobbying trip to the IMF and World Bank in late 2004, the Zambian Minister of Finance announced in early 2005 that it is to increase its education budget by 4% in an attempt to tackle the crippling teacher shortage crisis. The Minister announced plans to employ 5,000 new teachers and increase the public sector wage bill from 7.99% to 8.12% of GDP (a move previously blocked by an IMF loan condition, which dictated that the public sector wage bill should rise to no more than 8% of GDP. This policy was strongly criticised in the VSO/Oxfam/GCE report).

## WHAT IS ADVOCACY RESEARCH ALL ABOUT?

Advocacy is generally understood as a process that aims to bring about change in process, policy or practice, so that structural causes of poverty and disadvantage are reduced. There are many definitions of advocacy, but advocacy as understood by VSO is defined in the box below:

**VSO's definition of advocacy**

Advocacy challenges the root causes of poverty. It is about achieving equity and social justice through the empowerment of disadvantaged people, so that they can participate more directly in decision-making processes that affect their rights and their lives.

We will seek specific changes in policy, process and practice vital to the achievement of our development goals, concentrating initially on education and HIV and AIDS. We will identify these changes – in both developed and developing countries – through ongoing learning alongside our partners, volunteers and staff. We will draw on their voices and, in particular, the unique testimony of serving and returned volunteers, in seeking these changes. We will:

- work with a range of decision-makers and stakeholders, including national and local government, policy-making bodies, multilateral institutions, and private sector enterprises
- use the most appropriate ways of working on each issue, including influencing, constructive engagement, budget monitoring, working in networks, coalitions and alliances, capacity building with groups of disadvantaged people, media work, direct lobbying, policy research and public campaigning
- strengthen the ability of disadvantaged people to influence the decisions that affect their rights and their lives.

Advocacy can therefore be seen as an approach to development, with strategy being the defining characteristic of effective advocacy. It is a deliberate and planned process, and takes place around a policy position held by an organisation.

This position may or may not be evidence based, but it is increasingly the case that advocacy work should be based on evidence if it is to be taken seriously. Furthermore, many organisations, including VSO, want to base their advocacy as much as possible on the voices of those who are primarily affected by the issues. Indeed, if possible, it is desirable that advocacy work creates space or opportunities for those affected by the issues to advocate on their own behalf.

This is the underlying rationale for VSO in developing a toolkit for participatory advocacy research: START.

## WHY DO RESEARCH FOR ADVOCACY?

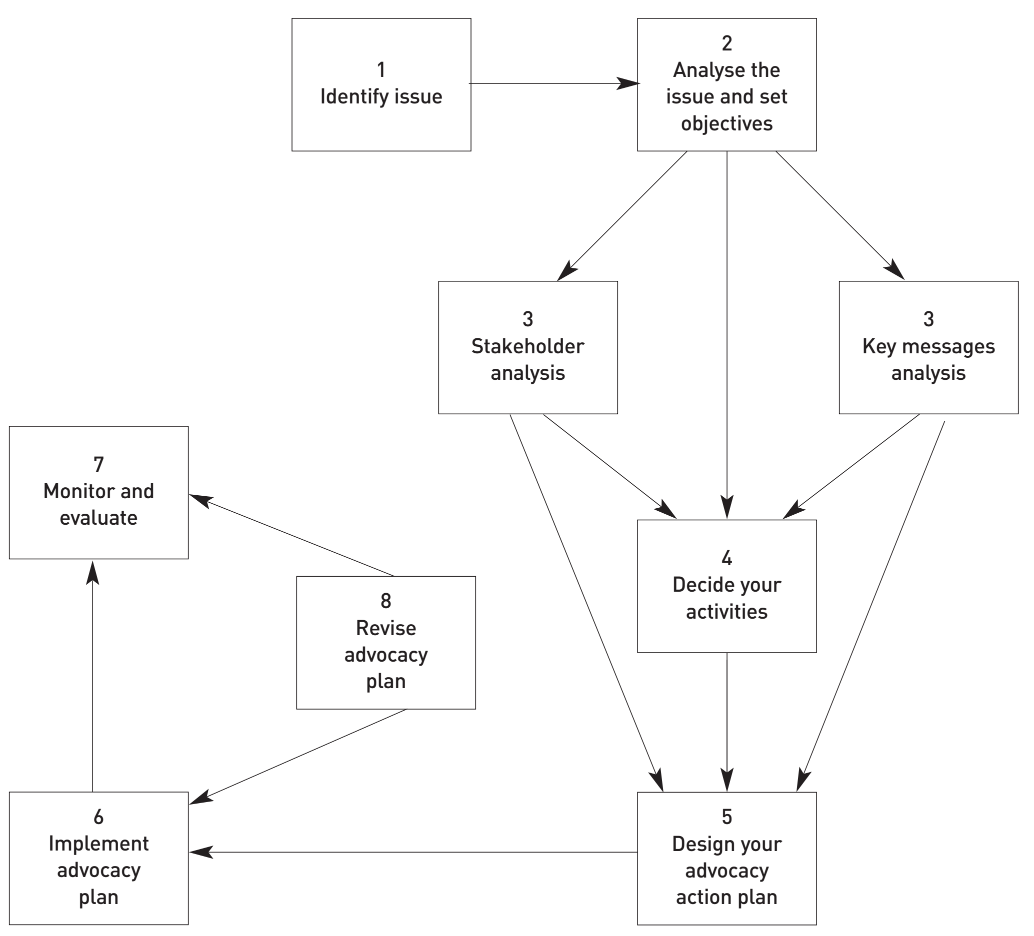
START should be used by organisations wishing to base their position on research. Research is important to gain a clear understanding of issues in the eyes of the people involved and to find out what they believe the solution to be. Good research should build understanding of causes and effects of development issues affecting poor people, and lead to the identification of solutions and recommendations for policy-makers.

To carry out research for advocacy purposes, there needs to be adequate capacity in the organisations wishing to advocate. START is designed to bridge the gap between research, policy analysis and reality. It provides organisations, individuals or communities with a user-friendly qualitative research methodology to inform their own advocacy initiatives on issues pertinent to the country where they work. It enables this research to be conducted in a participatory and empowering way.

## THE ADVOCACY CYCLE

As in many areas of development work, the development of an advocacy initiative generally takes the form of a planning 'cycle'. START is designed to help the user generate, analyse and use evidence at a number of stages of this cycle.

THE ADVOCACY CYCLE




*Source: adapted from Ian Chandler, Introduction to Advocacy course 2002*

It should be noted that this model is flexible and adaptable. How explicitly to follow these stages, the effort that is put into each stage, and how formally it is documented, will depend on the scale of the advocacy work and its context.

START will assist the organisation or researcher to move from step 1 to step 5 in the advocacy cycle as follows:

**STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE ISSUE**

There are a range of issues on which any organisation or individual can undertake advocacy, so a process must be followed to allow for the identification of an appropriate one. *START enables the user to do this in a participatory and empowering way, such that they have confidence in the validity of advocating on the issue.*

**STEP 2: ANALYSE THE ISSUE AND SET OBJECTIVES**

Having identified the problem or issue, the next step is to determine what the causes and effects of it are, in order to see what specific changes need to be brought about. *The START process of research and analysis enables the researcher to draw on a range of voices and views and synthesise them in such a way that solutions and recommendations emerge directly from the experience of the research participants. These are then written up into a research report.*

**STEP 3: DECIDE THE SPECIFIC MESSAGES AND AUDIENCE**

Having decided on the solutions or recommendations that need to be implemented to resolve the issue, the organisation or individual needs to refine these into specific messages to use when engaging with target audiences. *The answers to the questions: 'What specific decisions need to take place? What or who is influencing the decision-making processes? How can the decision be influenced?' will have been partly answered during the process of START, as it involves engaging with decision-makers through the process of research.*

**STEP 4: DECIDE THE ACTIVITIES (POLICY AND CAMPAIGNS)**

Based on the audiences the organisation wants to engage with, how will it try to influence them – what are the most appropriate activities to draw attention to the issue? Possibilities include publishing research; media work; public campaigning; coalition building; lobbying and insider influencing. This depends on the issue and objectives. *Following the START process will assist the user to determine the most appropriate activities, as it provides insights into the policy processes that the organisation aims to influence.*

**STEP 5: DESIGN THE ADVOCACY ACTION PLAN**

A written advocacy plan will set out the aims and objectives, the strategies and activities, the timeline and budgets. The written advocacy plan will be designed around achieving the recommendations identified through the START process.

**STEP 6: IMPLEMENT THE ADVOCACY PLAN**

Carry out the advocacy strategy.

**STEP 7: MONITOR AND EVALUATE**

What will be the success criteria (and what is the baseline) for the advocacy work? What indicators will be used?

**STEP 8: REVISE THE ADVOCACY PLAN**

Approaches to advocacy ar generally seen as fitting into either an 'insider' or 'outsider' approach. An 'insider' approach means that those advocating on a particular issue strategically plan to work within a system – by forming working relationships and partnerships with decision-makers and policy implementers. This contrasts with the more oppositional or confrontational 'outsider' approach such as street protests or marches. Good evidence, based on research, will assist the organisation to make decisions about their approach to advocacy.

## WHAT IS QUALITATIVE RESEARCH?

As noted above, START is a guide to conducting *qualitative* research. This type of research is extremely useful for advocacy on development issues, as it allows for the collection of rich, insightful data that highlights realities in the lives of people rather than pure facts and figures.

### QUANTITATIVE VERSUS QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

**QUANTITATIVE**

- quantity of data important – i.e. representative sample
- asks ‘How much?’
- data is numerical.

**QUALITATIVE**

- quality of data is important – i.e. rich data set from a small number of research participants
- asks ‘What?’ ‘How?’ ‘Why?’
- data is in the form of words (stories, opinions etc).

Qualitative research is more subjective than quantitative research and uses very different methods of collecting information, mainly individual, in-depth interviews and focus groups. The nature of this type of research is exploratory and open ended. There are four major methods used by qualitative researchers:

1. **OBSERVATION**
2. **ANALYSING TEXTS AND DOCUMENTS**
3. **INTERVIEWS**
4. **RECORDING AND TRANSCRIBING.**

The type of evidence produced from qualitative research is in the form of stories, opinions, anecdotes and case studies. Research participants are asked to respond to general questions, and an interviewer or group moderator probes and explores their responses to identify and define people’s perceptions, opinions and feelings about the topic or idea being discussed and to determine the degree of agreement that exists in the group. The quality of the findings from qualitative research is directly dependent on the skill, experience and sensitivity of the interviewer or group moderator. This is not to say that ‘amateurs’ will not be very effective, especially if they learn from their initial experiences.

**Case study: a ‘Valuing Teachers’ advocacy research project: Rwanda**

VSO Rwanda opted to become part of ‘Valuing Teachers’ in 2004. The research aimed to analyse teacher motivation in Rwanda. As in other countries the methodology used was primarily qualitative and participatory. Qualitative research ensured that the subjective perceptions of participants were represented accurately and truthfully. The participatory nature of the research encouraged input from all stakeholders, with specific reference to teachers.

However, the research was adapted to the specific context. Stakeholders within Rwanda’s education system were consulted to give input into the research process. For example, high-level stakeholders influenced the development of the research tools by identifying particular questions to ask or areas to focus on.

The qualitative analysis of the findings, as described in this toolkit, is explained as a multi-step process that aims to categorise factors and link them to possible solutions. This process allows for abstraction and simplification of a wide variety of factors, while still respecting the voices of the primary participants. The voices of participants are represented in the resulting report, both through direct quotes and through generalisations made during the analysis process.

## GROUND RULES FOR GOOD RESEARCH

**To qualify as social research an investigation needs to have clearly stated aims that:**

- relate to existing knowledge and needs
- are investigated within limitations imposed through time, money and opportunity.

**Research needs to:**

- contribute something new to knowledge, using precise and valid data
- be collected and used in a justifiable way
- produce findings from which generalisations can be made.

**The researcher needs to adopt an attitude and approach that:**

- is open minded and self-reflective
- recognises the rights and interests of research participants
- is cautious about claims based on the findings.

*Source: Martyn Denscombe, 2002*

## WHY IS THE TOOLKIT NECESSARY?

The idea of the START toolkit is to give users a comprehensive guide to carry out their own research to discover the reality and the problems around a particular sector or theme. It outlines the research process. Used for research at the outset of an advocacy initiative it enables the user to learn more about an area that a programme or partner organisation might wish to advocate on.

It can help to refine understanding of the complexity of the problem or issue, or to identify further information or solutions about an issue that may already have been identified by the individuals or communities concerned as an area where advocacy is needed to achieve policy change, policy implementation or changes in process or practice.

## WHO IS IT AIMED AT?

The toolkit is aimed at any individual or group that wants to carry out their own research to provide evidence for an advocacy initiative they are involved in. Maybe the user will already be aware of what the problems are and just needs evidence to back up their argument, to research what people believe the solutions are to a particular problem, or to inform where the focus of an advocacy initiative should be. Either way, it is aimed at anyone who would, under normal circumstances, feel they would not have the capacity (either time, people or funding) to become involved in research for advocacy initiatives.

## WHAT DOES START ENABLE THE USER TO DO?

The START toolkit is a set of guidelines, examples and advice broken down into comprehensible stages. Working through these stages, from carrying out the research through to writing a report, will provide basis of the user's advocacy strategy, covering the following areas:

- **defining the research question:** how to identify and refine the area to be investigated in more detail
- **carrying out a literature review:** what reading is necessary before the research is undertaken
- **setting up the research itinerary (logistics):** who to include, how many research participants, costs to expect
- **focus-group methodology:** an easy-to-use guide to conducting an interview with a specific group of people
- **conducting one-to-one interviews**

- **stakeholder analysis:** a guide to determining which stakeholders the research and subsequent advocacy activities should engage with
- **setting up workshops and round-table discussions:** including an example agenda and presentations
- **analysis of the research findings:** to discover themes and patterns
- **analysis of problems and solutions:** to enable the user to arrive at recommendations
- **advice, tips and planning advice:** on writing a policy report for use in advocacy work.

## WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF START COMPARED WITH OTHER RESEARCH METHODS?

- it is **comprehensive –** from setting up the initial research through to policy analysis
- it **breaks from the tradition** that only certain types of research projects or methodologies are 'valid'
- it is **quicker and more cost-effective** than traditional methods of research
- it is written **in basic, accessible language** as opposed to academic research jargon
- it takes the user through the **stages** in a clear and simple manner
- it gives plenty of **tips and examples** for the user
- it provides an **advocacy research method** that can be used in resource-poor environments; it does not require a sophisticated package for analysis (e.g. IT) or expensive training
- it has been **based on a live advocacy project –** 'Valuing Teachers'
- itallows **advocacy and conscientisation**[1] **to take place from the beginning.**

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF USING START FOR YOUR ORGANISATION?

- it provides your organisation with **experience of undertaking participatory research**
- **it provides your organisation with a position** on the issue you are working on
- it provides a platform for national **profile in the media**
- **it increases your voice** with policy-makers, donors and other civil society organisations
- it allows your organisation to offer up **experience and analysis** on your issue, to partner organisations or coalition members
- **it provides in-depth knowledge of systems and strategies** employed by actors involved in your issue – useful for strategic decision-making
- it can be **integrated into normal activities**
- it enhances your organisation's strategies to be demonstrably **tackling causes of disadvantage as well as symptoms**
- **it improves relationships with partners –** potential to build their capacity
- it helps identify **new partners**
- it provides ood potential to access **local or regional funding** for such a research project
- it provides good opportunity to **learn from advocacy research undertaken in other countries**
- **it increases your organisation's knowledge** of international policy dimensions and debates.

## WHAT DOES YOUR ORGANISATION NEED TO DO BEFORE USING START?

- Identify a researcher (not necessarily someone who has done research before, but someone who has the time and capacity to undertake the research)
- Ensure there is sufficient staff capacity to support the researcher through the process
- Be willing to engage with the in-country policy environment
- Be willing to use the research findings and to inform your existing programmes and practice
- Check that the political environment is such that research and advocacy is possible.

[1] 'Conscientisation' means becoming aware of the extent to which problems arise from the systematic discrimination against a social group (rather than an individual's inadequacies), which puts all members of the system as a whole at a disadvantage. This is the basis for action to overcome and dismantle the obstacles that have been holding them back. *Source: Gender and Development for Cambodia glossary: www.bigpond.com.kh/users/gad/glossary/gender.htm*

## WHAT DOES START NOT DO?

The START toolkit is not designed to be a guide to rigorous, academic research; in fact it is specifically designed to be a departure from the notion that research for advocacy purposes needs to be of academic standards. START takes as its initial premise that individuals or groups are often fearful of the world of 'research' and therefore lack confidence in carrying out research for themselves, or believe they need to employ expensive research consultants to do the job. This package shows that research can be adequately carried out by individuals or groups for a small fraction of the cost. This research process will also facilitate more ownership and engagement by the people involved, who are not only the researchers but may also become the advocates on the issue in question.

As noted above, START is not a guide to doing advocacy because there is already a plethora of advocacy toolkits available. However, the type of process it follows enables advocacy to take place within the research process itself.

*For further reading on advocacy and research, please see Appendix 1*

## WHO WILL BE THE MAIN USER OF START?

Having understood the purpose of START, the organisation or community wishing to undertake advocacy should identify an individual to lead on the research. This may be an employee of an organisation wishing to get involved in advocacy, or may be a researcher who has been contracted in to set up and conduct the research as a discrete project.

*See Appendix 2 for Terms of Reference set out for 'Valuing Teachers' researchers*

## POLICY RESEARCH AS CONCEPTUALISED IN START – OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE

Good practice in any research process involves the following steps:

1. **IDENTIFY INFLUENCES ON THE RESEARCH AREA**
2. **STATE THE RESEARCH QUESTION**
3. **REVIEW THE RELEVANT LITERATURE**
4. **SELECT THE APPROPRIATE APPROACH, DESIGN AND METHOD**
5. **CHOOSE THE STUDY POPULATION**
6. **COLLECT THE INFORMATION**
7. **ANALYSE AND INTERPRET THE INFORMATION DURING THE RESEARCH**
8. **DRAW CONCLUSIONS AND IDENTIFY SOLUTIONS**
9. **CROSS-REFERENCE SOLUTIONS WITH THE POLICY ENVIRONMENT**
10. **MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS**
11. **WRITE A REPORT BASED ON FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**
12. **DESIGN A DISSEMINATION STRATEGY FOR THE REPORT.**

START takes these elements of research and applies them as an empowering and action-learning tool. It is designed to be a simple process to gather information around a certain theme to be used either concurrently or later on in an advocacy initiative or campaign, based on the voices of those most affected by it – the primary respondents. The nature of the process means that advocacy on the issues raised can occur during the course of the research.

The START toolkit is outlined in a step-by-step process but it is worth noting that advocacy research does not necessarily take place in such a linear way. It is a process that is constantly evolving and the researcher keeps checking back on what information they have heard. START follows a number of different steps in the process of commencing research to report writing.

## GETTING STARTED

1. The first step for the user should be to look through the whole START document to gain a sense of the whole process and get a clear overview of what is contained within the toolkit. The flow diagram on the next page also gives an overview of the START concept.
2. The idea is simply to work through the guidance from the beginning, using the 'Valuing Teachers' examples given in boxes to clarify a particular point. These are designed to answer any questions the user may have about the process.
3. Read each chapter carefully before starting that particular stage of the research.
4. Adapt chapter advice for the specific research context.
5. Re-read the chapters after each stage to ensure each step has been followed thoroughly.

## FLOW DIAGRAM OF THE START RESEARCH PROCESS

START

↓

Literature review and defining research question

↓

Primary research participants

↓

Findings/factors

↓

Secondary research participants

↓

Findings/perceptions/problems

↓

Tertiary research participants

↓

Policy or implementation gaps
Problem trees/further analysis

↓

Workshop

↓

Disseminate findings, request feedback and build consensus about solutions/ways forward/recommendations

↓

Recommendations/analysis/report writing
Report copy-editing and design (including sourcing pictures and deciding a title)

↓

FINISH
(This is in fact the beginning of the next stage, when you would plan advocacy activities – lobbying, coalition building, campaigning, media work etc – to get your message across to your target)

Please note: The implementation of the research plan may not be as linear as this implies!

The START research process entails open, structured and semi-structured investigations with particular groups using participatory techniques such as focus groups, one-to-one interviews and other such methods. This enables the user or host organisation to identify important factors that need to be taken into account when planning to advocate on a particular development issue.

Overall, the idea of the START process is that the user is gradually building a picture, based on primary participants' views, that can be presented to secondary and tertiary participants after they have had the chance the chance to express their own views on the topic under investigation. This, if done in a planned and strategic way, constitutes the first stage of advocacy.

**Case study: an overview of the START process as used in VSO's 'Valuing Teachers' project**

The 'Valuing Teachers' research process entails listening to the views of teachers and head teachers (primary stakeholders) and other education stakeholders (secondary and tertiary stakeholders) through focus groups and one-to-one interviews, to identify factors influencing teacher motivation. This enables the researcher to gain insights into what teachers feel is the relationship between teacher motivation and education policy. This information is then analysed to identify themes and patterns to build up a picture of the most important factors affecting teachers in relation to their motivation. Following this, national education policy documents are analysed to identify gaps in policy and/or implementation and recommendations are needed to ensure that teacher motivation is properly supported. Before the final analysis of all the findings, it can be useful to hold a mixed stakeholder workshop with a selection of all levels of stakeholders. At this meeting, the researcher will share initial findings and seek feedback from stakeholders as a further information-gathering stage. It can also act as the first stage of solution and consensus building between the different stakeholders around the research problem.

The research period concludes with a policy round-table meeting with key stakeholders (tertiary stakeholders). This is the presentation of the final recommendations to senior decision-makers. Where possible it can act as a consensus-building exercise, and a means of involving senior stakeholders in giving feedback on the research findings before writing up the findings into a policy report.

On the basis of this report, and the opportunities and challenges identified through the research process, the VSO programme can proceed to advocate on issues affecting teacher motivation.

The process also works to keep the policy-level stakeholders informed and involved in a process that has started by asking teachers about their own views – it is a means by which to push the research and issues into the minds of the policy stakeholders. This is the bridge between research and the beginning of organised advocacy.

Please see Appendix 3 for an example of a suggested research process for Papua New Guinea.

# PREPARING TO DO THE RESEARCH

The researcher is now ready to start the planning and preparations for the research. The outline below will enable the researcher to consider the practical dimensions of the research project management.

## MANAGING OF THE WHOLE PROCESS

**Timing –** Timescales will differ for the research process depending on the size of the research initiative. However, it is wise to work out a rough timeline for the project at the outset. (It is also advisable to allow for unexpected delays that may occur.)
**Human resources –** numbers of people needed in the process need to be worked out in the planning stages.
**Financial resources –** all financial costs need to be worked out in the planning stages.

## SUGGESTED TIMESCALE

**Please note:** *The process can be shortened or lengthened but this example is a general but realistic estimate of the amount of time needed.*

- **4–5 weeks** to set up the research itinerary and conduct desk-based or preliminary research on policy context in-country (N.B. This may take longer depending on the length of time needed to receive the necessary permission from the relevant authorities)
- **3–4 weeks** field research with primary and secondary stakeholders
- **3–4 weeks** of research with tertiary stakeholders and careful analysis of findings, problems and solutions
- **1–2 weeks** to prepare preliminary findings, and plan presentation and agenda, for mixed stakeholder meeting
- **1–2 weeks** to hold additional meetings and complete analysis, including identification of gaps in policy for inclusion in report and later for advocacy
- **1–2 weeks** report planning with chapters with recommendations
- **1 week** for planning the specific chapters to cover the prevalent areas
- **4–6 weeks** writing to draft before feedback (less if full time)
- **4 weeks** for feedback/advice from stakeholders within your organisation
- **2–3 weeks** for final drafting
- **1–2 weeks** for final editing
- **4 weeks** for design and printing of report to ensure it is well presented before dissemination.

**Total number of weeks: 28–40** (or approximately 7–10 months).

## DEFINING THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The first stage of advocacy research in START is to identify the area that the researcher wants to look into in further detail. Once the user has identified this and clarified what area they are researching, they need to work out what specific question is being researched – what question do they want answered?

### PROCESS OF DEFINING THE RESEARCH QUESTION:

1. State the general issue or problem to be investigated.
2. Translate this into a question that can be researched: the question must be precise and unambiguous but open ended; and it must ask one major specific question (but can have some sub-questions).
3. Each concept in the question must be clearly defined.

**Case study: defining the research question for 'Valuing Teachers'**

When researching the attitude of teachers to their own profession and what motivates or demotivates them as in the 'Valuing Teachers' project, the overriding research question asked is:

**What are the factors that make teachers feel positively or negatively about their particular job?'**

Key policy questions for the 'Valuing Teachers' research:

- What are the critical factors influencing teacher motivation in developing countries? (To be identified through field-based research supported by any research that already exists.)
- What policy and/or implementation changes are required to enhance teacher motivation? (To be identified through field-based research and policy consultations.)

## BACKGROUND READING

The idea of reading before research begins is to inform the researcher of the main policies that are important or relevant to the topic and to inform the advocacy researcher of any other existing research, policy work or papers. This will also be useful later in the START process to compare the information gained during the research with what is written in the official policy documents; to learn whether it is in fact the implementation of policy rather than the policy itself that is the problem. This will be an important differentiation when it comes to the recommendations that come out of the research.

Once adequate background reading is complete, revisit the general research focus to check for relevance, in light of the reading, to the specific case.

**Case study: pre-research reading for 'Valuing Teachers'**

The pre-research background reading for 'Valuing Teachers' is designed to inform the researcher or research project coordinator of the main policy situation surrounding teachers and education in the country concerned. It also helps to identify key stakeholders and clarify their positions regarding teachers. Typically, a researcher would investigate the following:

- What policy documents exist?
- What academic or other commissioned research papers already exist on the topic, or related topics?
- What gaps exist in the literature?
- What are the main debates around education in the country?
- What is the current situation with education reforms in the country in question?
- Who are the main education donors in-country?
- What national education strategies exist?
- Are any international institutions (e.g. World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF) working in the country at present?
- Has there been any media focus on education or teacher-specific issues in the country?
- What teacher unions are there and how active are they?
- What other NGOs or CBOs are working in education? Does any coalition exist?

## STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Once the pre-research reading is underway it is important to analyse of the different stakeholders related to the area that will be researched. This initially helps the researcher to determine which are the relevant primary, secondary and tertiary stakeholders for the chosen issue. It should also be revisited when planning the advocacy strategy on the issue.

### WHAT IS STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS?

A stakeholder analysis is a technique used to identify and assess the importance of key people, groups of people, or institutions that affect or are affected by the research or advocacy initiative.

### WHY USE IT?

Use a stakeholder analysis to:

- identify people, groups, and institutions that affect, or are affected by, the subject under research (either positively or negatively)
- anticipate the kind of influence, positive or negative, these groups will have on the research initiative
- develop strategies to gain the most effective support and involvement possible for the research initiative and reduce any obstacles to the research process.

### WHEN TO USE IT?

This is a useful tool at a number of stages for planning research and advocacy activities. Ideally, the researcher should conduct a stakeholder analysis in the early stages of planning the research for advocacy and again when they are planning the advocacy strategy.

Develop a **stakeholder analysis matrix** like the one below:

### STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS MATRIX

| Stakeholder | Stakeholder interest(s) in the project | Assessment of impact | Potential strategies for obtaining support or reducing obstacles |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

1. Organise group brainstorming with some key contacts and staff from the organisation. Identify all the people, groups, and institutions that affect, or are affected by, the subject under research and list them in the column under 'Stakeholder'.
2. Once all potential stakeholders are listed, review the list and identify the specific interests these stakeholders have in the project. Consider issues like: the project's benefit(s) to the stakeholder; the changes that the project might require the stakeholder to make; and the project activities that might cause damage or conflict for the stakeholder. Record these under the column 'Stakeholder interest(s) in the project'.
3. Now review each stakeholder listed in column one. Ask the question: how important are the stakeholder's interests to the success of the proposed advocacy research project? Consider the role the key stakeholder must play for the project to be successful, and the likelihood that the stakeholder will play this role; the likelihood and impact of a stakeholder's negative response to the project.

   Assign A for extremely important, B for fairly important, and C for not very important. Record these letters in the column entitled 'Assessment of impact'.

4. The final step is both part of the stakeholder analysis for the research process but will also be useful in beginning the advocacy strategy. It allows the researcher to consider the kinds of things that are necessary to get stakeholder support and reduce opposition. Consider the best way to approach each of the stakeholders. What kind of information will they need? How important is it to involve the different stakeholders in the planning process? Are there other groups or individuals that might influence the stakeholder to support the research initiative? Record these strategies for obtaining support or reducing obstacles to the project in the last column in the matrix.

**Alternative:** If this process seems too complicated, other possible methods are to:

- make a brainstorm chart listing the different people/organisations related to the particular sector or issue
- colour code the different names according to high importance/low importance/ally/target)
- draw connecting lines between the different groups.

Strategies to find out more about who the stakeholders are include:

- identifying a key individual within the major institutions who you can trust, and ask them to guide you
- consulting NGOs and INGOs in the area of work
- speaking to a related union representative
- consulting bibliographies of relevant documents.

## IDENTIFYING THE DIFFERENT RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Using the stakeholder analysis, the researcher will now need to identify which stakeholders they need to elicit information from for the research. It may be that the researcher will need to interview all stakeholders but on other occasions they may choose a selection. In making this selection they will need to ensure that they are able to consider the views both of those affected by the chosen policy issue, and those who are affecting it.

For the purpose of this research toolkit the different research participants are broken into three distinct groups:

1. **primary – those who are currently mainly affected by the policy issue**
2. **secondary – those who both affect and are affected by the policy issue**
3. **tertiary – those who are affecting the policy issue.**

**Case study: different research participants for 'Valuing Teachers', based on stakeholder analysis**

From the preliminary desk and policy research about national teachers and the education system in the country of research, certain groups can be identified as important and relevant to the issue of teachers and their motivation and morale. The list below is typical of research participants for a 'Valuing Teachers' research project:

**Primary research participants**
- National teachers
- VSO volunteer teachers
- Head teachers

**Secondary research participants**
- School Boards of Management
- Provincial/District Education Officers
- Inspectors
- Local MPs if available

**Tertiary research participants**
- National education officials from the Ministry of Education (different divisions where appropriate)
- Academics
- Bilateral donors (such as DFID and USAID).
- International financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF
- Other NGOs and INGOs
- Civil society organisations
- Unions

## CHOOSING YOUR RESEARCH METHOD

A selection of methods can be used to gather information from the three types of research participants. The choice of methods will be chosen according to the number of participants that the researcher wishes to engage, and will be influenced by practicalities such as location and availability of participants.

**Case study: methods used for different research participants in 'Valuing Teachers'**

| PRIMARY RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS | RESEARCH METHODS | OBJECTIVES |
|---|---|---|
| Teachers | Focus groups<br>One-to-one semi-structured Interviews<br>Questionnaires | Information gathering around the research questions – key issues and factors affecting teacher motivation from the teachers themselves |
| Head teachers | One-to-one interviews | Information gathering around the research questions – key issues and factors affecting teacher motivation |
| Volunteers | One-to-one interviews<br>Questionnaires | Information gathering around the research questions – key issues and factors affecting teacher motivation – witness and testimony views |
| Parents and students (where possible) | | Information gathering around the research questions – key issues and factors affecting teacher motivation |
| **SECONDARY RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS** | **RESEARCH METHODS** | **OBJECTIVES** |
| Regional officials | One-to-one interviews<br>Questionnaires | Information gathering around the research questions – key issues and factors affecting teacher motivation<br>Cross-reference with views from the primary (1) group.<br><br>Mediation<br><br>Consensus building |
| Inspectors | One-to-one interviews<br>Questionnaires | |
| Political figures | One-to-one interviews<br>Questionnaires | |
| Governors | One-to-one interviews<br>Questionnaires | |
| **TERTIARY RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS** | **RESEARCH METHODS** | **OBJECTIVES** |
| Academics | One-to-one interviews<br>Round-table workshops<br><br>Focus group discussions/workshops where feasible<br><br>Round-table structured discussions and workshops | Cross-reference with findings<br><br>Mediation<br><br>Consensus building<br><br>To identify problems<br><br>To identify solutions |
| Ministry of Education | | |
| Ex-teachers | | |
| Unions | | |
| NGOs | | |
| Donors | | |
| Journalists | | |

## ADVOCACY AS PART OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS: INTERACTION BETWEEN RESEARCHERS AND DECISION-MAKERS

There is a variety of options for deciding when to get in contact with the senior decision-makers influencing the issue under research. Possible points in the process are generally as follows:

- before developing the research (and could consult them for ideas, priorities)
- concurrent with developing the research design (to involve them in the design and to get them 'on board')
- during the collection or analysis of the research data (as informants or participants in the research itself)
- following completion and initial documentation of the research
- once the research findings have been documented and a report is available.

*Source: Adapted from Managing Health Systems Research, Indra Pathmanathan.*

The choice of when to contact them, and how to keep them involved in the work, should be based on a judgement of:

- how the research findings are most likely to be seen as relevant and to be used
- what sort of input the researcher or organisation wants from the senior decision-makers during the research process
- what national or international policy milestones in development are relevant to the issue in the country concerned. (These should be found out at the outset of the START process.)

This aspect of the research process, as conceptualised here, highlights the way in which research itself can be considered a form of advocacy. However, as with all advocacy work, any interaction with key decision-makers or other influential people in an advocacy capacity, rather than just as an information-gathering exercise, needs to be well planned and strategic.

## SETTING UP THE RESEARCH ITINERARY

Having looked closely at the context for the research and advocacy, and analysed the key stakeholders, the START user should be ready to proceed to the practical steps of setting up the research.

### POINTER QUESTIONS FOR SETTING UP THE RESEARCH

In setting up the research itinerary there are a few points that the researcher needs to think about:

- Is there any particular type of permission that needs to be sought from the relevant authorities to carry out the research? It is very important to find this out at the outset as it could take time to receive permission from the relevant authorities.
- Who are the different groups of people that need to be consulted to that are relevant to the issue? These are the stakeholders as described above – for any decision or action, a stakeholder is anyone who is affected by, or can influence, that decision or action.
- Whose views need to be represented in the research? This may not just be the people who are affected by a particular issue but also those affecting the policies or implementation of policies surrounding the identified issue.
- Is there anyone in the country in question who already has a special interest or knowledge about the research topic?
- How many of each group of stakeholders need to be included in the research?
- What sort of advance information should be given to the research participants about the research being undertaken? This could be a concept note or a description of the issue as identified at the outset of the research.
- What people and time capacity need to be costed into the design of the itinerary?

**Case study: setting up the research itinerary for 'Valuing Teachers'**

This is the general process followed by VSO programmes planning the 'Valuing Teachers' research:

- Establish and organise any permissions for external research from department of Ministry of Education in-country
- Confirm schools to be included in the research (Set up focus groups in at least six schools around the country. Focus groups should, where possible, be conducted in separate gender groups to allow for distinct issues to be identified.)
- Identify and contact relevant stakeholders (primary, secondary and tertiary) based on the results of the stakeholder analysis
- Send any research participants advance information with concept note and reply slip
- Set up meetings with all the stakeholders for research itinerary (it may be that during the research process other names are given as well)
- Book transport and hotels where necessary
- Invite stakeholders to stakeholder workshop for end of the research period for dissemination of findings
- Carry out research – 4/5 weeks minimum.

## INFORMING PARTICIPANTS ABOUT THE RESEARCH

When setting up the research itinerary, it is important to give the possible research participants a clear idea of what they are agreeing to get involved with. For this purpose, it will be useful to have written a concept note describing the research project. It is also useful in orienting the research participants around the topic. (The researcher could also include a consent form for the research participants to sign – as a method of getting informed consent for being involved in the research.)

The type of information that must be given to potential research subjects to aid informed consent is as follows:

- purpose of the study and the justification for it
- permission obtained from the relevant authority (include the letter sent), if relevant in each case
- simple description and explanation of the study
- research procedures
- the right to withdraw at any time
- formal confirmation that information will be kept confidential
- a return slip for participants to give consent
- who to contact for more information and explanation if necessary.

**Case study: concept note about the 'Valuing Teachers' project sent to the different research participants**

**VSO's 'Valuing Teachers' project**

VSO supports education in developing countries as a crucial plank of any country's successful development. A major determinant of enhanced educational experience and improved outcomes is the **quality of teaching**. VSO's experience tells us that the motivation of teachers is an important factor in ensuring that children receive an effective, relevant and empowering education. Teachers are the deliverers of education, from which new knowledge, skills and values flow.

Yet teaching quality in developing countries is variable. VSO volunteers in a number of countries have reported problems with teacher motivation: high levels of absenteeism; inability to prepare lessons and schemes of work; failure to set and mark homework; inadequate discipline and dependence on outmoded teaching methodologies. In other countries, teachers continue to perform well in difficult circumstances, but seek what opportunities they can to leave the profession, or change jobs frequently, resulting in high turnover and a lack of consistency in the teaching profession. These problems run deepest where disadvantage is greater, and especially so in rural areas.

The reasons for this are complex. VSO's preliminary research suggested that initiatives such as curriculum reform, introduction of new methodologies and even the provision of more resources and training may not on their own be the answer to the problem of poor teaching. Indeed, these and other attempts to improve the quality of education can lead to 'innovation overload', resulting in teacher resistance and failure of these initiatives. Research further suggests that teachers' motivation is a significant determinant of the quality of their teaching, and that current policy trends have not taken sufficient account of the support they require to fulfil this pivotal role.

VSO's advocacy initiative, 'Valuing Teachers', will address both the causes and effects of poor teacher motivation in disadvantaged communities. Working with VSO volunteers and their colleagues, participatory research will be used to explore in depth the issues affecting teachers' motivation and morale in the South. Project outputs to date include country-specific reports on teachers' motivation in Zambia, Papua New Guinea, Malawi, Guyana and Rwanda together with a VSO position paper on teachers, *'What Makes Teachers Tick?'*, published in October 2002. These reports are being used as a basis for working with policy-makers at national and international levels, supported by strategic volunteer and returned volunteer actions and media work.

By addressing these issues, VSO hopes to bring about change such that:
- teacher motivation is increased in the drive for quality education
- pupils receive an education which is relevant, meaningful and meets their basic educational needs
- pupils' educational attainment is improved
- community confidence in education increases, leading to higher enrolment and decrease in drop-outs from school.

## SENDING LETTERS TO RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS IN THE RESEARCH ITINERARY

Along with the concept note, the researchers should send a letter to the research participants, inviting them to take part in the project. This needs to give a clear explanation about the research project. Depending on the specific context it may be more effective to visit participants in person. Obviously this is affected by time and resource capacity.

A letter needs to include certain specific information:

- what group or organisation the researcher belongs to
- a short description of the work of the group or organisation that the researcher belongs to
- details of why the research is being planned
- who the research will involve and what sorts of methods will be used
- what will happen with the findings of the research
- an invitation to take part in the research/a meeting/policy discussion on a specific date (needs a reply slip)
- the concept note to be attached to this letter.

**Case study: sample letter for 'Valuing Teachers' in Zambia**

Dear

We are writing to you from VSO's programme office in Lusaka to ask for your help. You may know that VSO is an international development charity working through volunteers, which has worked in Zambia and approximately 58 other developing countries since 1958. For the majority of this time we have placed education volunteers at various levels of the education system in Zambia. As an organisation our volunteers work at all levels – in schools, at district and provincial levels and at national and international policy levels.

We would like to inform you that VSO will be conducting policy research in June and July 2001 on the factors that influence teacher motivation. VSO wishes to build on its experience of working alongside Zambian educators to inform national and international policy on Education for All. The research will involve group discussions with teachers as well as interviews with important policy-makers and commentators. Initial findings will be shared at a presentation on 31st July 2001.

We would, therefore, be extremely grateful if the policy researcher being employed by VSO could be granted an interview with you on 10th July. She will interview you on the role of teachers, their needs and motivations and obstacles to improving teacher motivation.

VSO would also be greatly honoured if you would agree to attend the presentation and open discussion on 31st July, at which VSO will share initial findings and invite comment and contributions to the identification of policy solutions which could be implemented in individual countries and internationally.

The results of this research will be used to inform policy-makers in Zambia, as well as international policy-makers such the UK government's Department for International Development, UNESCO and the World Bank. You and your team will be sent a copy of the report that will be written as a result of the research.

We do hope you will be able to make the meeting and will look forward to hearing about your contributions.

*Yours sincerely,*

**KAPEMBWA MUSENDA**
Education Programme Manager, VSO Zambia

## WORKING OUT COSTS

The START user and their organisation will need to work out the costs that will be involved in the research process. This needs to include:

- remuneration and expenses of those involved in the research
- costs of travel and accommodation in the research itinerary
- administration costs – letters and postage/photocopying/telephone calls
- possible travel allowances for policy-makers
- room booking for meetings if necessary
- production of reports and leaflets about the findings of the research
- allowances for the researchers carrying out the research
- costs of hosting a workshop with stakeholders.

**Case study: costs involved in 'Valuing Teachers' research process**

**Time implications**
100% of a volunteer researcher for at least six months.
20% of a programme manager's time during the researcher contract.
10% of a programme manager's time to pursue advocacy strategy (for a period of up to three years).

**Cost implications**
Costs will be incurred from the following expenditure:
- 7 – 10 month researcher contract
- telephone charges
- travel and accommodation for the researcher (and programme officer, if accompanying) during the field research
- provision of drinks, food, small gifts for focus group research participants
- room booking and catering for policy round-table meeting
- sitting allowances or per diems for stakeholders attending policy round-table meeting
- design and print of report
- profile-raising materials (stickers, posters, radio adverts)
- national launch of a report (e.g. refreshments, venue, music/stunts/dancers, photocopying of a report, journalist expenses, travel expense of attending volunteers and colleagues, video hire)
- allowance for researcher or staff member of a partner organisation carrying out research
- expenses (accommodation, food etc.) and travel for researcher/partner staff member
- paying for in-country advocacy training – especially skill gaps e.g. public campaigning, media work
- joint workshops with advocacy partners
- exchange visit to another programme
- participation in regional learning workshop.

## METHODOLOGIES FOR DOING THE RESEARCH

As described, the researcher can use a variety of research techniques according to the topic and respondent. This chapter gives more comprehensive guidance on the different techniques that can be applied.

### FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

A focus group is a useful way to elicit information from the research participants, facilitated by the researcher. It is essentially an open and flexible discussion, and works by building and communicating consensus around a particular topic. It is based on group decision-making and problem-solving.

Typically, a focus group interview will consist of the following:

- a warm-up activity to relax the research participants, enable them to get to know each other (if necessary) and get them thinking about the broad topic or issue in question
- some structured exercises that address the more specific research questions directly
- a freer discussion in which the research participants are able to offer opinions and feelings, and can make links to other issues that they feel are relevant.

**Case study: description of focus group methodology used for 'Valuing Teachers'**

**Objective**
To find out the teachers' own perceptions about their profession, the causes for de-motivation and their ideas for solutions.

**Organisation**
Invite 6–8 teachers of the same gender to a free and undisturbed classroom or a space under a tree etc. Round chairs arrangement. Plan 1.5 hours. The head teacher should be aware of the focus group, but not involved.

**Materials needed**
Tape recorder, tape (2 hours), flipchart, marker pens, post-it notes, coloured paper.

**Introduction**
Briefly introduce the participants
Inform them of recordings/confidentiality
Ground rules (one person speaking at a time, respect opinions/views, all responses confidential by all present)
Research objective
Distribute drinks and or snacks.

**Activity 1**

| | |
|---|---|
| Objective: | To encourage teachers to think about their perception of their job satisfaction/motivation; a warming-up exercise) |
| Time: | 10–15 minutes |
| Question: | Sit together with one of your colleagues and discuss your working day from hour to hour. Note down on your own sheets: What really made you happy/gave you job satisfaction and what did really demoralise you? |
| Moderator: | Sits with every group for 2/3 minutes and takes in answer sheet. |

**Activity 2**

| | |
|---|---|
| Objective: | To find out teacher perception on the characteristics and the reasons for being a well-motivated teacher |
| Time: | 10–15 minutes |
| Question: | What characteristics does a well-motivated, happy teacher have? How do they seem? |
| Moderator: | Notes them on a flipchart (reasons in red, characteristics in blue). |

**Activity 3**

| | |
|---|---|
| Objective: | To find out the (main) causes for teacher demotivation from the teachers' perspective and their view of solutions |
| Time: | 50+ minutes |
| Question: | What makes teachers unhappy and demotivated in the different areas of their life, i.e. in class, in school, in personal life, education office, educational level. Rank the different reasons according to importance. |
| Moderator: | Facilitates the ranking, prompts for reasons of why those given are the most important/not important. Leads discussion on to solutions/what could be done about it. |
| Closing: | Summarise what has been said in the discussions and ask teachers whether it is a true perception of the current situation of teachers and to find out if anybody has anything else to add. |

*For a full description of focus group discussion methodology used in Guyana research please see Appendix 4*

## ONE-TO-ONE INTERVIEWS

One-to-one interviews between a researcher and an individual stakeholder allow for a deeper exploration by the researcher around the themes in the research issue.

The researcher is able to follow up an area related to the research questions in more detail than is possible in the focus groups. If they are unstructured then the researcher must let the research, and those being researched, lead the questions and direction of the conversation and not keep moving back to their own perceptions of what they think about the particular issue or to a rigid set of questions.

Carrying out one-to-one interviews with the different stakeholders is a useful way to compare and contrast what different stakeholders perceive to be the problem around a certain issue and who they perceive to be responsible.

**Please note:** *There is a difference between an in-depth interview around a particular point with a focus group participant, and a semi-structured interview with another type of stakeholder. In the latter, the researcher might want to start with some generic questions around the research question, but be open enough to pursue other avenues as they arise.*

The following offers the researcher a step-by-step guide to conducting an effective interview.

**Preparation**

- Make sure the research question is clear
- Make a checklist of questions to ask.

**Introduction**

- Introduce yourself
- State clearly the purpose of the interview
- Ask if the respondent has time to discuss the topic or if it is necessary to arrange another meeting
- Give assurances about the confidentiality of the information gained from the interview (ask permission for any quotes or names to be used in the report).

**Conducting the interview**

- Begin with a neutral question. Do not begin with anything confrontational
- Use open-ended questions so that the respondent can define the direction of the answer
- Express only one idea in each question in order not to confuse the respondent
- Avoid yes/no questions because they can stop the flow of information
- Ask the question 'why?' around a topic
- Beware of influencing answers or leading the respondent. For example, don't ask 'Don't you think...?'
- Be sure you have clearly understood the answer. If not, ask the respondent to repeat the answer.

**Closing the interview**

- Keep the interview short – not more than an hour
- Summarise the main points at the end of the interview as you have understood them and ask the respondent if the summary reflects what was said
- Ask the respondent if they have any questions
- Thank the respondent for their time and trouble
- Provide feedback/make available the report or summary of the report at the end of the process.

*Source: Adapted from Qualitative Research – Interviewing, SB Rifkin*

**Case study: one-to-one interviews for 'Valuing Teachers'**

In the 'Valuing Teachers' research it was useful to ask the secondary stakeholders about their perceptions of teacher motivation, whether it was good or bad and the factors affecting it either way in an open and non-confrontational way. It was interesting to compare these answers with those given by the teachers and other stakeholders at school level. It was then possible to focus on, for example, teacher management (cited by teachers as a key problem) from the eyes of district or provincial education officers and elicit solutions.

## QUESTIONNAIRES

Questionnaires are a useful method of information-gathering to complement the other methods described in this toolkit. They are particularly good for profiling the research participants, allowing the researcher to differentiate between the views of participants from different backgrounds, genders or experience.

Different ways questionnaires can be used within the research project:

- They can either be sent out to the research participants before they take part in the research, in which case they are a useful method of getting the informant to start to think about the area that is being researched.
- They can be given to the research participants after they have participated in other research methods, enabling the researcher to gather further details around specific areas/issues (research participants can write details in the questionnaire in confidence that they may not have been happy talking about face to face or with other colleagues/people in the room).
- They can be a useful way to collect quotes for the report to highlight issues (only with the consent of the respondent.
- They gather information that can then be represented quantitatively, i.e. 70 % of teachers agree that...

The purpose and timing of the questionnaire influences how the questions should be phrased and the answers used. For instance, quantitative information should be gathered BEFORE the consensus-building activities of a focus group discussions.

The researcher needs to think carefully what additional information they are hoping to get by including questionnaires in the list of methods to be applied in the research because questionnaires do generate more work and not necessarily any richer information than can be gathered through the other methods described in START.

*For examples of questions from questionnaires please see Appendix 5*

**Please note:** *It is also important to keep to a few central questions and to use quantitative data sparingly*

**Case study: 'Valuing Teachers' methodology and representation of voice**

'Valuing Teachers' aims to build consensus to communicate teachers' perceptions as a unified voice. Quantitative data contrasts with this because it shows different perceptions of teachers – and perhaps in showing this kind of 'division' among teachers there is a risk of undermining the overall wish for unity in the voice. For instance, when we say '70% of teachers thought x' then what did the other 30% think? Is it the opposite? Or many other tangential things? In the case of 'Valuing Teachers', questionnaire-based data is used sparingly and carefully so as to communicate a unified voice or teachers' general perceptions.

If the questionnaires are to be sent in advance of the research to the participants, it is important to enclose a letter, as described previously, thanking the research participants for their involvement and also explaining what the researcher expects the specific respondent or stakeholder to do with the questionnaires. It is also advisable to have the research participants sign and return an informed consent form.

**Please note:** *If questionnaires are going to be confidential, this may affect the types of answers the respondent will give.*

**Case study: example of letter and questions used in 'Valuing Teachers' research**

Questionnaire for teachers in Papua New Guinea

Dear All

Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in the focus group sessions and/or one-to-one interviews and for your contributions to this confidential but important research on how teachers can feel motivated and valued in their profession. There are no right or wrong answers; I would just like to hear your views and your own experiences. Your help is very much appreciated.

Below are a few questions asking you what your feelings are about being a teacher. These will be the types of questions I will be asking you when I meet you. If you feel you have the time, please answer any questions you can, drawing on your personal experience as a teacher in Papua New Guinea. Any extra information you can give me is greatly appreciated and I will collect any completed questionnaires and extra information when I meet you. All questionnaires will be confidential.

Looking forward to meeting you all and also hearing your views.

Thank you so much again for all your help.

*Best wishes*

**LUCY TWEEDIE**
Senior Advocacy Officer, VSO

**Questions:**

1. What do you think would help you to be a better teacher?
2. How good or bad is your morale/motivation?
3. What are the main factors affecting your morale/motivation as a teacher?
4. In what ways does your motivation affect your teaching performance?
5. What would improve your motivation and morale as a teacher?

## WORKSHOPS OR MEETINGS

As part of the research it may be useful to hold a mixed stakeholder workshop with different stakeholders relating to the research. At such a meeting, the researcher can share initial findings and seek feedback from stakeholders as further information gathering. It can also act as the first stage of solution and consensus building between the different stakeholders around the research problem.

The purpose of a mixed stakeholder workshop is:

- to present the preliminary findings of the research from the primary research participants
- to cross-reference findings from the research with views from participants in the workshop to work towards solutions to the problems highlighted in the research
- to discover any further avenues for research needed around the topic
- to promote dialogue among stakeholders surrounding participants' issues.

**Please note:** *The mixed stakeholder workshop is* **optional**. *It is up to the discretion of the researcher (and the organisation) to decide whether there is a need to hold this. It depends on whether sufficient stakeholders have participated and been consulted during the research process.*

## FINDING FUTURE ADVOCATES DURING THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Because the START research process allows for advocacy and conscientisation to take place from the outset, it is important to keep the different research participants informed of the findings either through dissemination of the research report or summary, or through the media. It is also advisable to note the names of the research participants (primary, secondary and tertiary) who are willing to be advocates around the issue in the future. Furthermore, through the research process, it will become clear (as described in the stakeholder analysis section) who will be particular allies and targets for the future advocacy strategy.

### HINTS AND TIPS

- The researcher should keep a file for 'contacts' throughout the START process.
- Identify people within the file who would be interested in advocacy.
- Ask and keep a list of how people like to be contacted – phone, visit, email.
- Keep in touch – be proactive, set up meetings, hold events, keep these people interested and involve these people in the related advocacy strategy.

# DOCUMENTING THE RESEARCH

To cut down on the time needed at the end of the research to collate all the findings, the researcher should find a way to document the responses and stories heard. The researcher will also find it useful to record their own observations and impressions throughout the research process. This chapter suggests a variety of ways to collate the findings (coupled with examples in the appendices). As in all chapters the researcher should adapt the methods as appropriate.

**Please note:** *Data from the some of the methodologies suggested in this toolkit, such as surveys and questionnaires, can be coded and analysed quantitatively using the Microsoft Access computer programme. However, caution should be exercised when deciding whether or not to do this as much of the richness of the responses would be lost. If the researcher follows the steps suggested in this chapter it shouldn't be necessary to use this type of package.*

## WRITING UP INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

A number of ways of documenting research are suggested below. These are designed to make it easier for the researcher to analyse the data and draw conclusions.

### INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP NOTES

These record the detailed information that comes out of the activities. They are used to compile summary tally charts and/or tabulations of findings.

**Please note:** *These are also the main source of the quotes for the report. The researcher should remember to highlight these for future reference.*

### COLLATION OF FACTORS (TALLY CHARTS AND TABULATIONS)

As well as in-depth notes it is suggested that the researcher starts to build up patterns and themes through the use of tally charts and tabulations. This is what is required for the analysis stages that are covered in Chapter 7. Listed below are the categories of information that must be included:

TALLY CHARTS ARE USED TO RECORD:
- all groups' responses
- disaggregation of gender or other groups i.e. rural/urban
- categorisation of factors and themes.

TABULATIONS ARE USED TO RECORD:
- the respondents' priorities
- attributed responsibility per factor given
- the respondents' solutions.

### COMBINED TALLY CHART WITH TABULATION:

It is possible to combine the tally chart with the tabulation chart to be a concise representation of the responses and the researcher's own impressions. This represents a good amount of the information contained in the notes, in an easy visual style.

Even in the open discussions and interviews, certain factors will come out. By the end of the research, the main priority factors should be showing themselves – compare this daily and then weekly.

As written above, the method the researcher chooses is at their own discretion but the following elements are critical:

- factor categorisation into themes
- factor importance (prioritisation)
- problem identification
- researcher's impressions
- participants' impressions of who is responsible.

### WRITING UP PER DAY OF RESEARCH

Depending on the different research methods used on any particular day it is recommended that the researcher completes daily write-ups to capture what was said on that particular day.

This can be in the form of:

- case study write-ups per research site (e.g. school or college)
- verbatim notes from one-to-one interviews
- filling in of tally chart and tables of findings from the focus groups – listing the factors, problems and solutions as cited by the research participants (as shown in the examples below)
- 'own impression' notes made by the researcher.

**Case study: guidance for 'Valuing Teachers' researchers on writing up research**

Ensure that you have the following information from each school visited:

- description of school and environment
- make-up of focus group
- results of the different activities
- factors highlighted by each group in answer to questions for focus group activities (activity 1/2/3)
- factors ranked according to the importance the affecting areas/reasons and suggested solutions where given (i.e. national/school/class/office/personal) or whatever affecting areas the primary research participants agree on
- Other notes and observations made by the researcher while the group discussions are going on – often holds important information around the factors written on the ranking exercise
- Notes on own impressions
- Any extra points made by individuals after the focus groups.

The researcher may also wish to write up the individual activities as follows:

**Case study: example write-up of activity 1 for 'Valuing Teachers'**

**Activity 1**
Asked the research participants to sit together in pairs and think about the things that made them feel good or bad during their working day (12–15 minutes)

**What makes teacher feel good/happy/motivated during their working day?**

**Group A**
- students' behaviour when it is good/less social problems
- good administration
- punctuality of students and other teaching staff
- good teaching facilities
- good staff houses
- good working environment like staff room/library
- good and enough teaching aids and materials to teach with.

**Group B**
- helping children
- smiling students
- meeting other teachers
- students doing what you expected them to do e.g. homework or work parade
- test papers, work sheets etc left for typing/photocopying are done
- allowances paid on time.

## ON GOING COLLATION OF FINDINGS

### TALLY CHARTS

The idea of doing a tally chart and tabulation of the different findings is to start to see which factors relating to the research question are coming out as important to the research participants. It is therefore advisable to note in both a tally chart and table the different factors being cited in the focus groups at the end of each day or as often as possible (see example below). To do this:

- look at what were the main issues from each day or period
- group issues cited into factor categorisations (see below for 'Valuing Teachers' example)
- start to build up a list of the most important factors from each day
- first, start up a tally chart for the week to include all the main factors coming out per day and mark up how often a factor is cited each day (for weighting of importance) and to start to see priority areas for later analysis of problems (see below)
- each activity may reveal additional issues that cannot be incorporated in a previously recorded factor. If so, add additional factor categories to the bottom of the tally chart.

**Case study: advice to 'Valuing Teachers' researchers on how to define factors**

The first stage in this analysis is to group areas cited into particular factor categorisations (i.e. 'not enough teaching resources/blackboards' etc. would go under: TLMs. 'Unhygienic bathroom facilities', 'leaking roofs', 'no photocopiers' would go under: Working conditions etc.). In the table below, these factors are listed in the left-hand column. They are not necessarily the factors as identified verbatim by the teachers. As described earlier, the researcher has already done one level of analysis – grouping the areas as cited by teachers into some categories from the outset allows for a 'head start' on collation for the analysis that can be done in the field

## EXAMPLE OF 'VALUING TEACHERS' TALLY CHART

| Factors | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Disaggregation of research participants into geographical area and sex (primary participants) | Urban | | Rural | | Total |
| | Female | Male | Female | Male | |
| TLMs | II | | I | I | 4 |
| Working conditions | II | I | | | 3 |
| Promotional prospects | IIII | I | I | I | 7 |
| Pay (living costs) | IIIII | III | I | II | 10 |
| Training | IIIIIII | I | I | IIIII | 15 |
| Divisional – teacher communications re: decisions | I | II | | II | 5 |
| Administrative support (management) | II | | | I | 3 |
| Workload (understaffing) | II | I | I | IIII | 8 |
| Belief in education | | | | | 0 |
| Divisional support – no voice | I | | I | | 2 |
| Housing allowance unfairly calculated (grade) | | I | | I | 2 |

This is an easy way to start to see priority areas that need to be discussed with the secondary and tertiary participant groups. This table can be added to with columns for the different secondary and tertiary participant responses as the researcher includes them in the research.

## EXAMPLE OF TALLY CHART SHOWING FACTORS DISAGGREGATED BY STAKEHOLDER, GENDER AND REGION

| Factors | Disaggregation of the research participants' responses into area and sex (primary research participants) | | | | Disaggregation of the research participants' responses into area and sex (secondary research participants) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Urban | | Rural | | Urban | | Rural | |
| | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male |
| TLMs | II | | I | I | I | III | III | IIIII |
| Working conditions | II | I | | | III | | I | |
| Promotional prospects | IIII | I | I | I | | | | |
| Pay (living costs) | IIIII | III | I | II | | | | |
| Training | IIIIIIII | I | I | IIIII | III | II | IIII | III |
| Divisional – teacher communications re: decisions | I | II | | II | | I | | |
| Administrative support (management) | II | | | I | | | II | |
| Workload (understaffing) | II | I | I | IIII | | | | |
| Belief in education | | | | | | | | |
| Housing allowance unfairly calculated (grade) | | I | | I | | | | |
| Teachers are never in classroom | | | | IIIII | IIIIIII | | | |

## TABULATION

It is important from the outset to build up more detailed information or narrative on the reasons and factors according to the different stakeholders. These are taken from the information heard during the discussions in the focus groups (researcher's own notes) and also from the one-to-one interviews. Obviously the nature of the way the information is communicated means that it is harder to 'tabulate' or 'quantify' and should only be done this way in conjunction with researcher's notes in order not to lose important information.

When trying to collate the factors that come out of in-depth discussions in focus groups or interviews (such as Activity 3 in the 'Valuing Teachers' focus group methodology, see page 26) it is also useful to tabulate the factors cited by the research participants to capture the more in-depth information that comes out of the many discussions. This can be done from the first day of the research and can be added to until the end of the research process or a different table can be used per focus group. This allows the researcher to:

- see any different themes and patterns that may start to emerge
- see where the primary stakeholders (and other groups if focus groups are held with secondary and tertiary groups of stakeholders) perceive the responsible parties to be
- cut down unnecessary collation work at the end of the research prior to analysis.

Depending on the researcher's schedule and preference, tabulations can be done per research activity or groups of research activities. The larger the grouping represented, the more general the information becomes.

## EXAMPLE OF TABULATION OF FINDINGS FROM 'VALUING TEACHERS' FOCUS GROUP ACTIVITY 3

| Factors | Who do the research participants feel is most responsible (national/office administration/school/class/other)? | | | | Solutions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | National | Office admin. | School | Class | Other | |
| TLMs | | | Curriculum material not available/ insufficient aids and materials | | | |
| Housing conditions | When boarding duty not paid | Poor living conditions. No provision for basic needs – houses | | | | |
| Training | | | | | | |
| Entitlements | Entitlements not paid on time. Salaries overlooked for years | | | | | |
| Bad administration | Bad organisation and running of school, no daily programmes. Negative approach to subordinates | | | | | |

One way to capture the details is to write out each research session. A less rich but still useful table can be built up over the entire course of the research, based on the notes taken during each period to combine summary of findings with impressions. An example is shown in the table on the next page.

**Please note:** *This type of recording is easiest on a computer. Alternatively it could be compiled by hand or the researcher can keep the participants' sheets or post-it notes from focus group methodologies*

**Case study: using the participants' own written contributions in 'Valuing Teachers'**

Another way to aggregate findings is to structure the activity so that participants themselves make notes. In some 'Valuing Teachers' research activities, the participants write the major factors affecting their motivation onto post-it notes and place them into a pre-prepared chart which arranges the factors according to their source. Then, these same post-it notes can be used to prepare problem trees during the analysis phase. The advantage of writing out factors for each focus group discussion would be that in the problem tree, it would be easier to see the general priorities of teachers.

For example:
If only one focus group discussion listed 'loans for housing needed' – that would appear as one post-it note on the problem tree. However, if five focus groups said 'TLMs' that would appear as five post-it notes on the problem tree, and its relative importance among teachers' problems would be clear.

## EXAMPLE FROM 'VALUING TEACHERS' OF A WAY TO TABULATE THE MAIN FINDINGS FROM ACTIVITY 3 OF THE FOCUS GROUP METHODOLOGY

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">What makes you happy at school? What motivates teachers?</th></tr>
<tr><th>Group 1 (Female group)</th><th>Group 2 (Male group)</th><th>Group 3 (Male group)</th></tr>
<tr><td>• Parents visiting teachers/school to find out about their child's interest<br>• Good and comfortable living conditions for teachers<br>• Sufficient salary<br>• Students interests – doing homework, passing exams<br>• Students showing respect for teachers and fellow students<br>• Students obeying teachers</td><td>• Salary<br>• Conditions in which they are working<br>• Self-discipline of students<br>• Being a well-qualified teacher<br>• Cooperation from both the students and other teachers<br>• Good results from students</td><td>• Application on the students' part<br>• Sufficient texts<br>• Appropriate resources<br>• Challenge to teaching, e.g. how to take a difficult subject and present it so the students understand<br>• The head teacher – decision-making and relationships<br>• Rewards and praise<br>• Good living conditions<br>• Introducing a new perspective<br>• Support from the Department of Education<br>• Students who want to learn and excel</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">What are the characteristics of a motivated teacher? How do you know when a teacher is happy?</th></tr>
<tr><th>Group 1 (Female group)</th><th>Group 2 (Male group)</th><th>Group 3 (Male group)</th></tr>
<tr><td>• Keeps records in order<br>• Mode of dress<br>• Facial expressions<br>• Love for children<br>• How the teachers respond to the students<br>• Interested in learning of student's welfare, e.g. reasons for not learning, not being on time, poor behaviour<br>• Assists children at all times</td><td>• They work harder<br>• Give extra classes for free<br>• Try to help students that are below average<br>• Friendly<br>• Try to make sure that the concepts are transferred clearly</td><td>• Punctuality<br>• Dedication<br>• Enthusiasm<br>• Involved (busy) – active in curriculum and co-curricular in the community<br>• Presentation of dress (appearance)<br>• Creative in teaching approaches<br>• Good motivator<br>• Has a good relationship with staff, students and the community<br>• A good role model (practice what they preach)<br>• Enjoy what they do every day<br>• Pride in their job</td></tr>
</table>

## ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH

The whole purpose of the research and the report is to identify primary stakeholders priority areas of concern relating to the area under study. These can be organised into themes from which, in turn, conclusions and recommendations are drawn.

The analysis goes beyond the respondents' own words and individual comments by moving to more general and abstract levels of thinking or communicating. It is important to note that analysing to this level does not need to lose sight of what the research participants said.

This section uses the 'Valuing Teachers' experience and findings to demonstrate key principles for the analysis stages of the START process. While the guidance contained here is specific to 'Valuing Teachers', the methods of condensing information and identifying themes and patterns can be used for any theme, and then be translated into recommendations based on the policy context or its implementation in the form of a report that then can be prioritised for an advocacy strategy.

## PURPOSE OF START ANALYSIS

This chapter on research analysis is designed to take the researcher through the process of identifying solutions around the example issue of teacher motivation. By going through a clearly defined process, as outlined below, it ensures the analysis is based on the primary stakeholders' views.

## STAGES OF START ANALYSIS

Each stage is broken down into specific headings for clarity:

**ACTIVITY**
**PURPOSE**
**INSTRUCTIONS**
**CONCLUSIONS AND ANALYSIS.**

### FLOW DIAGRAM FOR STAGES 1 – 10 OF THE START ANALYSIS PROCESS

Stage 1:
Organise data to identify factors causing demotivation and motivation

↓

Stage 2:
Arrange demotivating and motivating factors according to causes and effects

↓

Stage 3: Organise demotivating factors into underlying themes

↓

Stage 4: Organise motivating factors into underlying themes

↓

Stage 5: Model the change process involved in motivating teachers

↓

Stage 6:
Analyse specific solutions attributed to different levels of the education system

↓

Stage 7: Analyse teachers' own solutions

↓

Stage 8:
Second level solutions (deeper analysis of stage 7 by researcher) –
moving towards practical solutions

↓

Stage 9: Solution theme – group the suggested practical solutions from stage 8
according to the groups in stage 4 (motivating factors – themes)

↓

Stage 10: Solution mapping

## STAGE 1: ORGANISE DATA TO IDENTIFY FACTORS CAUSING DEMOTIVATION AND MOTIVATION

### ACTIVITY

Review or compile tally chart of the main factors causing demotivation, as cited by the primary stakeholders – the teachers and heads.

### PURPOSE

To organise the data into factors, if not already done during the research process.

### EXAMPLE:

| | Males | % | Females | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| TLMs | 20 | 25 | 15 | 20 |
| Working conditions | 15 | 20 | 8 | 10 |
| Promotional prospects | 10 | 14 | 20 | 25 |
| Pay (living costs) | 8 | 10 | 10 | 14 |

### INSTRUCTIONS

See tally chart instructions.

### CONCLUSION AND ANALYSIS

This will identify the main factors that teachers in the focus group discussions cited as demotivating and will give a sense of how important these factors are relative to one another.

Draw up a similar tally chart, but this time for factors causing motivation.

## STAGE 2: ARRANGE DEMOTIVATING AND MOTIVATING FACTORS ACCORDING TO CAUSES AND EFFECTS

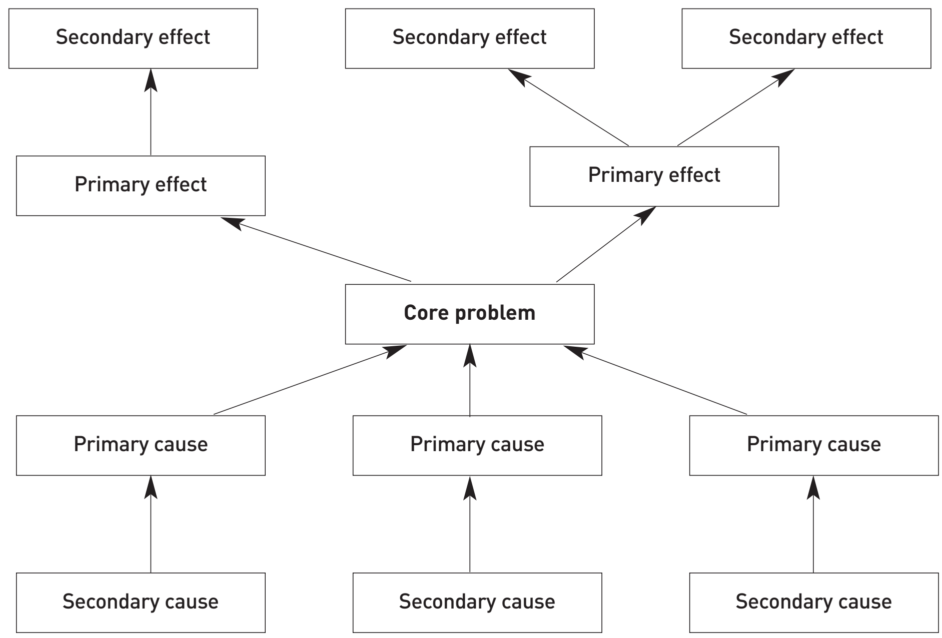
### ACTIVITY

Problem tree using factors that arose in the focus group discussions.

### PURPOSE

To organise the factors that teachers say demotivate them according to causal links between the factors and the underlying causes, or themes, into a problem tree analysis.

PROBLEM TREES




## MAKING A PROBLEM TREE

- List all the central factors that come out of the research process as arranged via the tally chart or table. Problems need to be carefully identified (or have been identified from the participants in the research to date). They should be existing problems as described by the different respondents. The problem is an existing negative situation, it is not the absence of a solution.

- Identify core problems and determine which of these problems are the 'causes' or roots in the problem tree; and which are the 'effects' or the leaves of the problem tree.

- Arrange in hierarchy/link up both the leaves and the roots to look at how the causes link up with the effects. Also start to look at which are the primary and which are the secondary causes and effects around a specific 'problem'.

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Take the issues that teachers have cited in the focus group discussions and interviews (these may or may not be in categories according to the different levels within the education system, i.e. school/regional/national/community).

2. Take one of the specific factors. From this factor (as cited by the teachers) and start to trace and link any related factors, placing underlying causes below it and effects above.

3. Continue to do this, linking up the factors given by teachers up and down in the form of a loose 'cause and effect' problem tree.

**Please note:** *Where possible work with another person who can act as facilitator to ask questions about the different factors and how and why they link up. Note down any explanations coming out of the discussions when doing this activity*

### CONCLUSIONS AND ANALYSIS

This exercise will have allowed for organisation of the factors into the equivalent of a problem tree analysis. When looking over the main areas of the completed demotivating factor tree, the way in which the factors are ordered on the tree will form particular themes (i.e. leadership etc.) and be attributable at this point to a level within the education system (i.e. school/regional etc.).

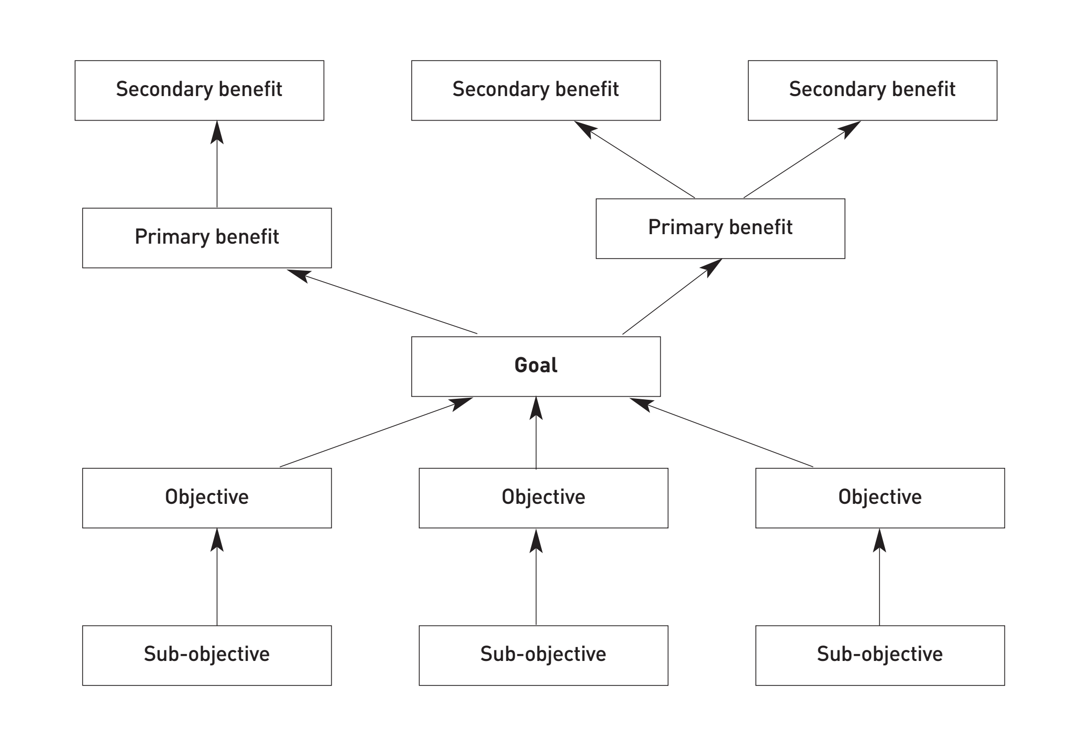
## EXAMPLE: FACTORS GIVEN BY SOME OF THE TEACHERS INVOLVED IN THE VALUING TEACHERS RESEARCH

- inability as leader
- expectations without tools
- lack of appreciation
- not valued for their role
- overall lack of powers
- lack of professionalism
- lack of in service training
- lack of access to training opportunities.

This, with analysis, will lead on to the demotivating factors – underlying themes – Stage 3.

You can then turn this exercise on its head by doing the same exercise again, but this time plotting the causes and effects of the factors that motivate teachers. It may be useful to try to turn the problem tree into a solution tree, turning the problem into a goal (so the goal here would be 'motivated teachers' or 'better quality teaching and learning'). The diagram below illustrates how a solution tree could be arranged:

SOLUTION TREES



## STAGE 3: ORGANISE DEMOTIVATING FACTORS INTO UNDERLYING THEMES

### ACTIVITY

To order the main demotivating factors that came out in Stage 2 into underlying themes and to link these with where they can be attributed to in the education system.

### PURPOSE

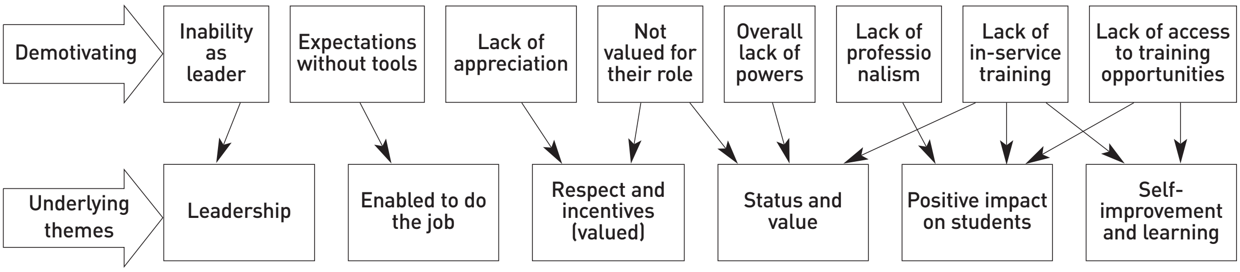
To start to gain a clearer idea of the general problem areas and themes that are leading to teacher demotivation from teachers' own views and voices. (The analysis allows for the inclusion of secondary stakeholders' views into the analysis stage of teacher voice.)

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Look over the factors given by teachers in the problem tree in Stage 2 and look at how these factors can be classified. Then decide which level within the education system the underlying causal theme relates to (i.e. school level/regional level etc.). For example:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Leadership | - relates to - | school level and regional level |
| Status | - relates to - | community and national |
| Planning & allocation | - relates to - | regional and national |
| Budgets | - relates to - | regional and national. |

2) Also classify the demotivating factors given by teachers in the problem tree in Stage 2 as in terms of teachers needs. For example:




### CONCLUSION AND ANALYSIS

This exercise is not a crucial stage in the analysis process. It is, however, useful to start to analyse where the problems that teachers cite as demotivating can be attributed to within the education system. It also starts to highlight what the general themes concerning teachers' needs are.

## STAGE 4: ORGANISE MOTIVATING FACTORS INTO UNDERLYING THEMES

### ACTIVITY

To order the main motivating factors that came out in Stage 2 into underlying themes and to look at what the underlying themes of those factors are.

### PURPOSE

To order the motivating factors given by teachers. To cross check what the underlying motivating themes are with the previous stages of the (underlying) demotivating themes.

**INSTRUCTIOS**

1. Group all the positive factors given by teachers into similar areas. For example:

   **A**
- being asked and valued
- workload evenly shared
- involved in discussions.

   **B**
- good working conditions
- manageable class sizes
- good resources.

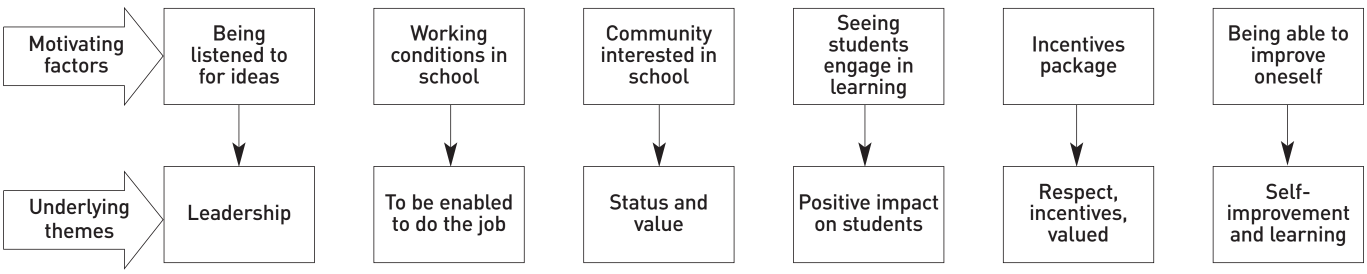
   **C**
- student interest for learning
- student trust
- good results from students
- ability to impart knowledge.

2. Once this grouping has been completed, write next to each grouped set of factors what these factors are actually alluding to.

**A** = Being listened to for ideas
**B** = Working conditions in schools
**C** = Seeing students engage in learning

3. Refer to the problem/solution tree analysis for motivating factors done in Stage 2 to help you understand the links between the different factors and themes.

4. And finally in this section, analyse these factors one level further again by fitting these factors into the underlying 'teachers' needs themes' that were identified as the final part of Stage 3. For example:




*See Appendix 6 for a fully worked-up example*

**CONCLUSION AND ANALYSIS**

Now that the underlying themes have been identified, they can be cross-referenced to see whether they correspond. The researcher should expect them to correspond quite closely, but some differences may emerge.

The themes can now be analysed as the main areas that the solutions should be addressing to motivate teachers.

## STAGE 5: MODEL THE CHANGE PROCESS INVOLVED IN MOTIVATING TEACHERS

### ACTIVITY

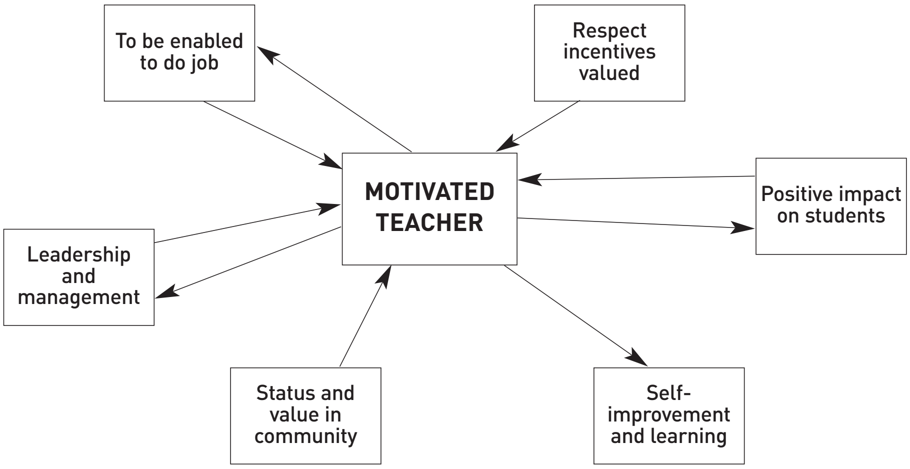
To order the factors according to what teachers need to be motivated in terms of **inputs** and **outputs**.

### PURPOSE

To understand more clearly the dynamic relationship between teacher motivation and performance.

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Take all the underlying themes that came out of the analysis in Stages 3 and 4 and place them round a card with **'motivated teacher'** written on it. For example:




2. Some of these themes can be classified as input, some as outputs and some as both. Based on the analysis so far, and the impressions and own analysis of the researcher, it is possible to draw arrows pointing in or out from the central card to clarify what support teachers need and what results will be generated if they get it.

### CONCLUSION AND ANALYSIS

By going through this process it becomes clear what teachers need for better outputs as a teacher. It will be particularly helpful for drawing conclusions when writing up the research into the report, as it allows the researcher to demonstrate why teacher motivation is a critical issue that deserves the attention of policy-makers.

For example, in this case it is possible to see that, based on the analysis of the findings, that if teachers are given:

**Inputs** Respect and incentives
Are enabled to do the job through adequate resources and training
Have good leadership and management in the education system
Are given status and are valued by those around them

...then the effect will be that the teachers will:

**Outputs** Feel able to get on with the job
Be better managers and leaders themselves
Improve their work and teaching
Have a positive impact on students

... all of which will ultimately lead to better performance and quality of teaching in their roles.

## STAGE 6: ANALYSE SPECIFIC SOLUTIONS ATTRIBUTED TO DIFFERENT LEVELS OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

### ACTIVITY

1. To order the solution factors given by teachers and other stakeholders according to the different categories in the education system i.e. personal, classroom, school, community, regional and national.
2. To group the different solutions suggested by teachers into similar themes.

### PURPOSE

1. To group the solution factors together to move, at a later stage, to practical solutions.
2. To analyse where the responsibility for realising the solutions lies within the education system.

### INSTRUCTIONS

Put the solution factors, as given by teachers and other stakeholders, into lists according to where the responsibility lies (as in the grid below).

| National | Regional | Community | School | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

**Please note:** *The solution factors given by teachers may, at first, appear to fall under one category (i.e. at school level) but can actually, on further reflection and analysis of the issues that have come out during the research, be attributed to actors or institutions further up the education system. For example, teachers may feel that poor management by head teachers has a negative impact on their motivation, which would seem to be a school-level problem with a school-level solution. However, the researcher may have further information from secondary and tertiary stakeholders to suggest that head teachers are not trained adequately, implying a need for action at regional or national level to improve the situation.*

### CONCLUSION AND ANALYSIS

This stage is to ensure that teachers' own views about what the solutions should be are not lost in the analysis process.

## STAGE 7: ANALYSE OF TEACHERS' OWN SOLUTIONS

### ACTIVITY

To analyse the different groups of solutions given by teachers into more specific solutions that are applicable to the education system.

### PURPOSE

This stage helps to move to practical solutions that can feed into the analysis for recommendations at a later stage.

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Look at the solution themes that were grouped together in Stage 6 and placed in the different education areas grid (i.e. personal/classroom/school/regional/national).
2. Think through what could be a possible solution to each group of similar solutions given by the teachers in Stage 6.
3. On top of the factors from Stage 6 use a different column in a table or different coloured card or post-it note to record the first-level solution.

For example:
**CLASSROOM LEVEL**

| Factors (what the teachers said) STAGE 6 | First-level solution STAGE 7 | Second-level solutions - moving towards practical solutions STAGE 8 | Solution theme STAGE 9 |
|---|---|---|---|
| • School needs links with the community<br>• Parents need to be more involved in supporting schools, e.g. include them as resource persons in school<br>• Provide clear guidelines to parents regarding acceptable behaviour when they visit schools | • School makes good links with community (analysis) | | |

## STAGE 8: SECOND LEVEL-SOLUTIONS (DEEPER ANALYSIS OF STAGE 7 BY RESEARCHER) – MOVING TOWARDS PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS AND STAGE 9: SOLUTION THEME – GROUP THE SUGGESTED PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS FROM STAGE 8 ACCORDING TO THE GROUPS IN STAGE 4 (MOTIVATING FACTORS – THEMES)

**ACTIVITY**
To analyse the solutions further in order to find practical solutions and to fit these within a specific motivational theme. This involves analysis by the researcher of all that was heard during the research process from all stakeholders.

**PURPOSE**
To move from the analysis of the solutions given by teachers to practical solutions that fit within one of the underlying motivational themes that emerged in Stage 4 so that solutions address these.

**INSTRUCTIONS**
1. Look over the grid of solution themes and using different coloured cards or post-it notes, stick the most appropriate underlying themes of motivation on top of each pile of factors from Stages 6 and 7 i.e. Value And Respect or Leadership And Management for where the headings fit best.

**Please note:** *It may be that the themes from Stage 4 are not exactly appropriate. It is fine to adapt the wording where necessary. For example:*

| First-level solution: Stage 6 | Solution Theme: Stage 9 (taken from the 'underlying themes of motivation' Stage 4) |
|---|---|
| School discipline | LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT |
| Communication and representation | LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT |

2. When working through the different stages of analysis for the different solutions from Stages 6, 7 and 9 it may be useful to go through one further stage to give more details of what is involved.

3. Between school discipline and the solution theme of **'leadership and management'** it is worth looking at a middle level practical solution (stage 8):

| First-level solution: Stage 6 | Moving towards practical solutions: Stage 8 (Concrete suggestion level) | Solution theme: Stage 9 |
|---|---|---|
| Stronger community links<br>School and community compact | Involving the community in planning and implementation linked to PTA or school boards<br>Interacting with community | VALUE & RESPECT<br>RELATIONSHIP BUILDING AND COMMUNICATION |
| School discipline | Enabling the head teacher through training<br>Support from head teacher<br>Teachers' involvement in school policy planning, being listened to | LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT |

This extra level (Moving towards practical solutions – Stage 8) is about identifying the changes needed to enable the first-level solution to be realised i.e. 'how' can the problems highlighted be solved? It can help to see whether the solutions proposed are feasible and what additional things may be needed to address the problems or gaps identified.

## STAGE 10: SOLUTION MAPPING

### ACTIVITY
To recap on how the identified solution themes meet the needs of the problems cited by teachers.

### PURPOSE
To test whether solutions fit and cover the problems.

### INSTRUCTIONS
Start by placing the solution themes at the bottom of a sheet of paper, e.g. '**leadership and management**'. Above these, place the specific solutions identified in Stages 8 and 9, working up to check that they address the factors identified in the earlier stages. It will then be possible to see whether some solution themes interact with others to address factors. Draw lines in between the different factors where they will affect or will need to treat another issue or solution.

The end of each line is the higher-level solution and the 'leap of analysis' comes from drawing conclusions to how various solutions could be addressed at the different levels (local, regional, national, international).

To test solutions against the underlying problems (those of the research participants' solutions as well as those from further analysis by the researcher) it may be useful to use some criteria questions for testing whether a solution is appropriate or not. These could include:

- **does the solution address the underlying cause?**
- **can the solution be reached within a reasonable timeframe? (e.g. up to five years)**
- **does the solution reflect what the research participants said?**
- **is it affordable/realistic? Would donors fund it?**
- **is it politically feasible? (e.g. it is not worth suggesting changing the language policy of the entire education system if it relates to the political situation in-country)**
- **does it fit with current donor agendas/international policy context?**
- **are there any potential allies within or outside government who would be interested in working together towards this solution?**

## FINAL POLICY ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION

It is recommended that the research process concludes with a policy round-table meeting, involving key stakeholders (mainly tertiary stakeholders). This is for the presentation of the findings and solutions to senior decision-makers. The purpose of the meeting is to:

- brief research participants and other stakeholders on the policy advocacy project
- build consensus between the different stakeholders that the problem or issue is a priority
- share findings of the research undertaken around the identified problem
- identify opportunities and threats to improving the situation outlined in the research
- involve a range of stakeholders in responding to the research findings and recommendations before moving on to write up the findings into a policy report
- promote dialogue among stakeholders surrounding participants' issues
- consider ways forward with the different actors for a change in policy or practice
- identify potential allies and targets for the advocacy strategy
- elicit endorsements, commitments and pledges to action on the issue
- put the research project and findings in international policy context, where relevant
- identify up-coming activities where the research can be of use.

**Case study: example objectives from a 'Valuing Teachers' policy round table discussion**

Objectives of Papua New Guinea policy round-table forum, with National Department of Education officials and key stakeholders:

- to brief research participants on VSO's 'Valuing Teachers' international policy advocacy project
- to share findings on causes and effects of fragile teacher motivation internationally and in Papua New Guinea
- to identify opportunities and threats to improving teachers' situation in Papua New Guinea
- to consider ways forward in tackling the threats to improving teachers' situation in Papua New Guinea.

### WHOM TO INVITE?

It is up to the organisation to decide whom to invite. This will depend on the context and objectives of the work. Some questions to consider are:

- what combination of stakeholders would work well?
- is it advisable for the round table to represent one interest group or a range?
- how easy or difficult would it be to manage the different interests that are anticipated?
- is the organisation prepared for managing conflicting views at the meeting?
- what level of awareness do the stakeholders have? Are pre-meetings advisable to brief those with competing positions on the researching organisation's approach and agenda?

## REFERRING TO INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

It is important to place the research in policy context. For this reason it is suggested that the researcher revisits the original reading around the topic. The researcher should draw on specific policy commitments that relate to the research topic and findings, and highlight these during their presentation. This serves three purposes:

- It establishes a clear reason for the research in the mind of the audience
- It adds weight and urgency to the relevance of the issue
- It signposts the way forward for an advocacy strategy.

**Case study: 'Valuing Teachers' in policy context – Zambia**

**GLOBAL POLICY CONTEXT**
- Education For All Commitments, Dakar 2000
- Millennium Development Goals on Education: universal primary completion by 2015; gender parity in education by 2005
- EFA Fast-Track Initiative, 2002
- Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development

**NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT**
- Free Basic Education Policy
- National Education Strategy
- Higher Indebted Poor Countries Initiative

## ESTABLISHING LEGITIMACY FOR INVOLVEMENT IN THE ISSUE

It is crucial to communicate the reasons why the organisation commissioning or doing the research is engaged in the issue in question. Background information on the organisation's work and links with the issue should be highlighted at the outset of any presentation of the work.

**Case study: rationale for VSO Zambia involvement in 'Valuing Teachers'**

Extract from VSO Zambia invitation to 'Valuing Teachers' workshop:
'In working with their Zambian colleagues, VSO volunteers have found that low levels of teacher motivation are a critical constraint on the quality of education in Zambia. Our research has aimed to explore the specific causes of this situation in Zambia, and to propose specific changes in policy by donors, international financial institutions, national government and civil society so that teacher motivation can be improved.'

## DESIGNING THE AGENDA FOR POLICY ROUND TABLE

When drawing up the agenda for the meeting, it is important to consider what key messages the organisation or researcher wants to get across and what information or views are sought from the group. These will be agreed beforehand between researcher and other staff from the organisation leading the research. The agenda can then be structured accordingly.

## Case study: Policy round-table plan for ‘Valuing Teachers’ in Papua New Guinea

| Session | Time | Facilitator | Note-taker | Key VSO message |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Introductions | 20min | Chair | | |
| VTs policy concept; feedback from desk-based research and from Zambia; questions | 20min | Chair | | Teacher motivation is a problem and has effect on education quality. |
| Feedback from PNG research: summary of situation and effects; questions | 20min | Chair | | As above. |
| **Activity 1 Solution analysis**<br>a) Participants given problem statement (and quote). Participants to do a SWOT analysis on NDOE’s ability to address the problem<br>b) Plenary discussion of above<br>c) Any immediate suggestions for solutions of problem? | 30min<br><br>30min | <br><br>Chair | | There are systemic and financial obstacles to the solving of problems in PNG education. Some solutions can be found within financial constraints. |
| **Activity 2 Discussion of external financial barriers**<br>a) Whole group to draw up a mind-map of influentials on funding for educational development in PNG<br>b) In pairs, each discuss one influential and identify what that influential should do to better contribute to educational development in PNG | <br>15min<br><br>15min | | | External financial constraints can be managed and influenced. There is a need for greater communication and coordination between agencies on the matter of education reform. |
| **Activity 3 Brief discussion of systemic issues identified in SWOT** | 20min | | | Q: Is there a need for a root and branch overhaul of the education system? There are alternatives. |
| VSO future role in advocating on teacher issues: national and international<br><br>Discussion/questions | 10min | Chair | | VSO will continue to advocate on teacher issues in PNG.<br>VSO wants to be a partner in education reform dialogue.<br>Action will take place in the North as well as PNG. |

**Please note:** *The ‘key messages’ column is for use by the host organisation and researcher only and is useful for the process of advocacy*

*Please see Appendix 7 for another example of a policy round-table agenda*

## THE PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The process outlined in START enables the researcher to identify and analyse problems, causes and solutions relating to a specific issue of concern to the host organisation. This information can best be communicated in the form of a policy research report. The report communicates the priority issues that need to be addressed, and cross-references these with existing or forthcoming policies, projects or initiatives in order to come up with recommendations for change.

This is arguably the most challenging area of the whole process. It requires high-level thinking and knowledge of the policy environment relating to the research area. It is also important to note that the final recommendations are a further 'jump' from the final analysis stages.

**Case study: extract from the 'Valuing Teachers' Malawi report**

'This is a key period for education in Malawi. Stakeholders and policy implementers need to assess the impact of Free Primary Education (FPE) and the various programmes set up to respond to the increase in community demand for primary and secondary schooling. This must be set against a background of increasing food shortages and the scourge of HIV and AIDS. However, key policy documents are in place. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) covers all major aspects of educational reform, including those that affect teachers. Budgets are now activity-based and drawn up against the goals of the PRSP. It is not too late to listen to teachers, prioritise their areas of concern and to act.

From May to June 2002, VSO Malawi carried out research on the issue of teacher morale and motivation. Working on the assumption that the motivation of teachers directly affects the quality of education delivery, VSO sought to identify the factors that affect teachers' motivation. This report sets out the priorities for action by all education stakeholders in Malawi'.

### HINTS AND TIPS

Leave plenty of time for writing the report including organising the quotes of the different stakeholders to highlight points throughout the text.

Make sure the report is planned well – both the report as a whole and also each chapter.
Do a clear timeline and outline of the chapters then add the quotes. If time permits, start writing early, then go back to the policy or check the different interviews once the writing is underway – it is easier to see where any extra 'gaps' are this way.

## TIMING FOR REPORT WRITING

Writing up the report can be time-consuming, so it is essential that sufficient time is allowed for the researcher to do this.

**Case study: Report writing timetable – guidance given to 'Valuing Teachers' researchers**

- **1–2 weeks** to hold additional meetings and complete analysis, including identification of gaps in policy for inclusion in report and later for advocacy
- **1–2 weeks** report planning with chapters with recommendations
- **1 week** for planning the specific chapters to cover the prevalent areas
- **4–6 weeks** writing to draft before feedback (less if full time)
- **4 weeks** for feedback/advice from stakeholders within your organisation
- **2–3 weeks** for final drafting
- **1–2 weeks** for final editing
- **4 weeks** for design and printing of report to ensure it is well presented before dissemination.

## TURNING THE ANALYSIS 'STAGES' INTO A POLICY REPORT

At the end of the research process the researcher will have tables that summarise factors emerging from the research, as well as possible solutions and solution themes. These tables form the basis for the report. In principle, the process of report writing involves turning the contents of these tables into a narrative and argument leading to recommendations with clear links between them, supported by quotes and other detail where deemed necessary.

It is important to bear in mind that there is a clear distinction between a *solution* and a *recommendation.*

- The **solution** is a desired outcome or fix to the problem
- A **recommendation** suggests how this can be realised and by whom.

*To see a draft of recommendations based on findings, please see Appendix 8*

## REVIEWING POLICY CONTEXT AND IDENTIFYING GAPS

In order for the recommendations to be relevant to policy-makers, it is important to tailor them to the specific policy context. The researcher must be able to state which policies are already in existence that could help to provide solutions to the problems, whether they are being effectively implemented, and to be able to propose new policies if appropriate. The following questions may help the researcher to analyse the policies:

- In an ideal world, what policies would provide partial or complete solutions to the problems identified by the primary stakeholders?
- What policies are already in existence to meet this need?
- Which solutions are not met by the current policy frameworks?
- Why are the gaps there?
- If policies are in existence that meet the identified need, are they being implemented?
- Where are the 'blockages' in the system that prevent implementation?
- What needs to change to allow for implementation?

**Please note:** *This process may reveal the need for the researcher to gather further information about policy-makers' intentions, so allow time to set up further interviews during this stage. It should not be necessary to go back to primary respondents.*

**Case study: Analysing the policy in 'Valuing Teachers' Rwanda research**

In 'Valuing Teachers' in Rwanda, the policy documents talk about 'teacher issues' explicitly, but what teachers actually say pertains to many other areas of policy. This became clear through the analysis of what teachers say with what is discussed by the other stakeholders – i.e. management issues, decentralisation, accountability.

## CROSS-REFERENCING PROPOSED SOLUTIONS WITH POLICY COMMITMENTS TO FORMULATE RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher should work through each proposed solution to see whether there is a corresponding policy commitment that would allow the solution to be realised. For each solution, the researcher should ask the questions as shown in the table.

| YES | NO |
|---|---|
| 1. What gaps in implementation and why? | 1. What gaps in policy? |
| 2. Address gaps/constraints – what can be done for the 'whys'? | 2. Address gaps/constraints in policy – what can be done for the 'whys'? |
| 3. How can it be changed – underlying causes? | 3. How can it be changed – underlying causes – what policies needed? |
| 4. Solutions and recommendations | 4. Solutions and recommendations |

**Case study: table of comparison of research findings and policy directions from VSO Guyana**

| Teachers' needs/findings of research | Recommendations and strategies in existing policy | Possible constraints New/additional recommendations |
|---|---|---|
| Continued professional development | BEAMS Teacher supply and demand: Continued professional development:<br>• 'Trained teachers without further education should devote any spare time and energies they have to the professional development through further education, generally through the bachelor's level or even through the master's level.' | Perceived value of CPD needs to be enhanced. Teachers are expected to participate but there is no incentive to do so as it is not recognised in the current promotional system. Only academic education is given any value. Suitable CPD can increase the motivation levels of teachers. |
| Continued professional development | BEAMS Teacher supply and demand: Career path for education managers:<br>• 'It is recommended that a bifurcated professional educator career path development program be established, with one stream involving a teaching career and the other stream involving a career in education management.' | The split in appointment of personnel in the education sector between the TSC and PSC complicates the promotion system and appointments, particularly into those institutions which provide support to the teachers, i.e. NCERD, regional learning resource centres.<br><br>This situation must be reviewed and, if necessary, changed through the correct procedures. It is only in this way that such bottlenecks in the system will be removed. |
| Initial teacher training | PRSP<br>• 'There will be a conscious effort to reverse the percentage of untrained teachers...measures will include ... (ii) the expansion of distance education training centres to cover the 10 administrative regions.' | Ensure that there are sufficient human and capital resources present prior to the expansion of the training centres. Too often, teachers have to make do as systems are put in place. It is important not to create a 'cart before the horse' situation. |

## TESTING SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The solution mapping stage of analysis should have tested what is necessary for a policy argument. A final check may be advisable, however, and can be carried out by answering the following questions:

- Does the recommendation match the analysed underlying needs and themes (from Stages 1–5) as well as the original problem?
- Have the questions 'Why?' and 'How?' been applied to come up with the solution and recommendation?
- Does one recommendation cover or address more than one problem?
- Have the solutions and recommendations to the problems addressed their underlying causes as well as effects?
- Are there actors or groups of actors within the system whose remit or responsibility could better respond to the issue than the current status quo?

**Case study: advice to researchers writing 'Valuing Teachers' national reports**

When planning the writing of the report:

- Establish why VSO is interested in teachers in the country context
- Have clear, well-argued positions treating the themes discovered
- Use quotes to highlight a point and VSO quotes where necessary from volunteers or partners as added testimony where necessary or apt
- Break the chapters into the subject areas relating to the recommendations
- Be truthful but not too confrontational
- Aim for approximately 35 pages at font size 12
- Always keep in mind the issues directly related to the recommendations
- Stay closely within the original research parameters.

## PLANNING AN ADVOCACY STRATEGY

Once the report has been finalised it will form the basis for the planning of the advocacy strategy. The ways in which START can help at different stages of the cycle are described below.

### STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE ISSUE

This has been identified through the research and it is now evidence based.

### STEP 2: ANALYSE THE ISSUE AND SET OBJECTIVES

This START process means that the organisation should be clear about what it is that needs to change to influence policy, process or practice in a positive way around the particular issue. Some possible causes of the problem should now also be clear from carrying out the START process of research and analysis. So from this, the objectives that need to be set should be clear; and also what the organisation is aiming to do or change through their advocacy work.

### STEP 3: DECIDE THE SPECIFIC MESSAGES AND AUDIENCE

The answers to the questions: 'What or who is influencing the decision? How can the decision be influenced?' (stakeholder analysis and situational analysis) will have been partly answered during the process of START. In this step, the organisation needs to decide which specific recommendations from the report it wants to focus on for its advocacy strategy and create 'policy' asks or messages accordingly.

**STEP 4: DECIDE THE ACTIVITIES (POLICY AND CAMPAIGNS)**
Based on the audiences that the organisation wants to engage with, how will it try and influence them? Will this be a launch and lobbying first or a big campaign splash? This depends on the issue and objectives (e.g. publishing research/media work/coalition building/lobbying) and the political context within which the organisation is working. The process of the research may have given the researcher or organisation valuable information for deciding the most suitable activities, what relevant milestones are coming up, what coalitions exist, what the media is like in relation to the issue etc.

**STEP 5: DESIGN THE ADVOCACY ACTION PLAN**
A written advocacy plan will set out the aims and objectives, the strategies and activities, the timeline, budgets, success criteria, milestones, outcome, and impact indicators (for monitoring and evaluation purposes at step 7).

**STEP 6: IMPLEMENT THE ADVOCACY PLAN**
Carry out the advocacy strategy.

**STEP 7: MONITOR AND EVALUATE**
After you have begun to carry out the advocacy plan, it is vital to assess at regular intervals the effectiveness of the advocacy activities. As well as remembering to record details of lobbying meetings, coalition meetings and successful campaigning activities, it is extremely useful every few months to revisit your objectives, success criteria, milestones, outcome, and impact indicators – to see which have been met, and which have yet to be met. This can be done verbally in a meeting (but make sure someone is taking notes) or by one person alone. It is always better to have as many people as are involved in the advocacy project as possible – especially people from organisations involved in any coalition your advocacy project might be part of – involved at this stage, so that all can learn from successes and mistakes.

**STEP 8: REVISE THE ADVOCACY PLAN**
Once you have analysed what worked well and what didn't, you are then in a very good position to start planning the next phase of the advocacy plan – perhaps doing more of what worked well and less of what didn't. This stage should ideally take place at the same time or immediately after the monitoring and evaluation meeting, so that learnings are fresh in people's minds.

It is important to note that this process is not strictly linear. Some steps may work in parallel with another, and the whole process is cyclical. There are many tools available to aid the planning of post-research advocacy activities, some of which are listed in Appendix 1.

**Case study: Advice to 'Valuing Teachers' programmes for the pre-planning stages of an advocacy strategy**

Consider the following questions as you begin planning the advocacy strategy:

- Which recommendations do you wish to prioritise?
- What is the target for the advocacy for each recommendation?
- Who are your allies? These may be within government as well as outside
- What methods will you use to achieve change?
- What important decision-making milestones are coming up that you could focus your advocacy efforts around?
- What timescales are appropriate for advocating on different recommendations; short-, medium- or long-term focus?

The researcher's job is now over, and the focus of the effort will shift to achieving the desired changes identified. The host organisation can proceed with confidence that their advocacy is based on evidence and expresses the voices of those directly affected by the issue. The research process has also included other key stakeholders, including those who have influence over the issue. This means that the report is relevant, timely and balanced, and the recommendations are based on policy realities and are therefore credible and pertinent.

VSO hopes that START meets the needs of organisations that have chosen to use it, and welcomes feedback or suggestions on how it can be improved. Please contact the Programme Learning and Advocacy Department at the following address, if you have any comments.

**VSO Programme Learning and Advocacy Department**
317 Putney Bridge Road
London SW15 2PN
UK
0044 208 780 7686
**www.vso.org.uk**
**advocacy@vso.org.uk**

Lucy Tweedie
2004

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Rifkin, SB, *Qualitative Research Methods: Qualitative Research – Interviewing*, **www.guidestarco.com/Qualitative-and-Quantitative-Survey-Research.htm**, Copyright 2003, GuideStar Communications

**www.bigpond.com.kh/users/gad/glossary/gender.htm**

All internet addresses accessed April 2005

## APPENDIX 1: GENERAL READING ON ADVOCACY AND RESEARCH

**Tools for Policy Impact: A Handbook for Researchers** Daniel Start and Ingie Hovland, Overseas Development Institute, 2004. This online handbook from the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) presents tools for using evidence and research to influence policy. It targets civil society organisations, advocacy groups, and research institutes and university departments. The tools include research methods, communication approaches and models for understanding how policy is developed and influenced. The key points of each tool or technique are described, and links are provided to relevant training materials. **www.odi.org.uk/RAPID/Publications/Index.html**

**The Campaigning Handbook (2nd Edition)** Mark Lattimer, DSC; 2000, Paperback 413pp. This is the second edition of this book which tells ordinary citizens how they can make changes in society by campaigning, lobbying, direct action and protesting. There is a new section on the Human Rights Act and campaigning on the internet.

**The Advocacy Sourcebook: Frameworks for Planning, Action & Reflection** Valerie Miller & Jane Covey, 1997, Institute for Development Research (IDR), Boston USA $75.00. The Advocacy Sourcebook contains a broad range of frameworks and concepts that vary in complexity and scope. In addition to referencing case studies of successful advocacy efforts throughout the world, it provides strategies for assessing public policy systems, increasing organisational capacity-building, and measuring the impact of individual advocacy campaigns. **www.jsi.com/idr/pubs.htm**

**Policy Influence by Development NGOs: A Vehicle for Strengthening Civil Society** Valerie Miller, IDR Reports, Volume 11.5, 1994. Available for free on-line at **www.jsi.com/idr/web%20reports/html/11-5.html**

**Finding Out Fast: Investigative skills for policy and development** Edited by Alan Thomas, Joanna Chataway and Marc Wuyts, Sage Publications. Available for purchase at **www.sagepub.com/book.aspx?pid=6664**

**Advocacy Tools and Guidelines: Promoting Policy Change A Resource Manual for CARE Program Managers** Sofia Sprechmann and Emily Pelton, January 2001. A resource manual written for CARE aimed at CARE programme managers and others interested in advocacy strategies. This manual provides a step-by-step guide for planning advocacy initiatives, as well as advice for successful implementation. **www.careinternational.org.uk/reports/governance.html**

**Working For Change in Education – A Handbook for Planning Advocacy** Save The Children, 2000. £7.50, ISBN 1 84187 034. This handbook is for any group seeking to bring about improvements in the education provided for children, especially community groups, policy and research institutes, and non-governmental organisations. It is a practical guide on how to do advocacy on education from local through to national and international levels and is also a valuable resource that is relevant for anyone interested in advocacy work in any sector. **www.savethechildren.org.uk/scuk/jsp/resources/details.jsp?id=609&group=resources&section=publication&subsection=details**

All internet addresses accessed February 2005

## APPENDIX 2: SAMPLE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR FIELD RESEARCHER INVOLVED WITH 'VALUING TEACHERS'

### TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR FIELD RESEARCHER FOR 'VALUING TEACHERS' INITIATIVE

#### REPORTING TO
[Responsible Programme Officer's name]

#### MAIN INTERNAL CONTACTS
Lucy Tweedie (Senior Advocacy Officer) and Lucia Fry (Senior Policy Adviser)

#### CONTEXT
VSO has over 45 years of experience of working in education, and supports a great diversity of education placements. VSO is keen to build on this experience to begin to influence the policy context in which our education programmes operate. To this end, we are now working on a three-year advocacy initiative that aims to improve the situation of teachers by working at policy level both nationally and internationally to reduce obstacles to their motivation.

VSO has recently published research papers in conjunction with three VSO country programmes (Zambia, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Guyana, Maldives and Malawi), which identify priority issues affecting teacher motivation at country level and which propose recommendations for changes in policy or practice. These research papers will be used to influence policy-makers at national level, and have also been used as the basis for the publication of VSO Education Position Paper report on teachers in 2002 entitled *What makes teachers tick?* These different reports are based on the experience of VSO volunteers, their colleagues and employer, as well as the views of education stakeholders and civil society organisations.

#### PURPOSE
- To facilitate a series of focus group meetings to enable teachers to identify factors affecting their motivation
- To conduct interviews with regional officials such as provincial education officers on factors affecting teacher motivation
- To seek VSO volunteers' views on factors affecting national teacher motivation.

#### END RESULTS
A written report summarising findings from field research, including researcher's impressions, quotes from teachers and regional education officials, and (if appropriate) detailing the researcher's views on possible solutions to problems of poor teacher motivation.

#### ACTIVITIES
The researcher will be required to undertake the following activities:

1. Become familiar with VSO country programme: partners/employers; education programme; Country Strategic Plan
2. Become familiar with education policy context in-country: Ministry of Education strategies; budget allocations; national education fora; teacher training institutions; civil society organisations etc.
3. Conduct survey of VSO volunteers on teacher motivation and its impact on performance
4. Set up focus groups in at least six schools around the country. These should be in schools where VSO volunteers work or have worked. Focus groups should, where possible, be conducted in separate gender groups to allow for distinct issues to be identified
5. Conduct focus groups, using (and adapting where appropriate) methodology used in Zambia, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Guyana, Maldives and Malawi, advised by VSO advocacy officer

6. Interview head teachers, VSO volunteers, and regional education officials, using (and adapting where appropriate) questions used in Zambia and Papua New Guinea
7. Prepare research findings (draft) following directions in START
8. If time within the contract, set up (and attend?) consultation meetings with key education stakeholders.

**SOFT SKILLS NEEDED FOR RESEARCHER IN THE 'VALUING TEACHERS' PROJECT**

This is not a quantitative study – the information that is to be collected throughout the process is to find out how people feel, why they feel this, what can be done to change it in their different opinions as teachers, provincial or national education officers or unions.

**SOFT SKILLS NEEDED**

- general understanding of education systems
- good 'people' skills
- ability to facilitate groups
- socially and culturally sensitive
- able to pick up on politically sensitive atmospheres
- good listener
- non-judgemental and open to new information
- interested in listening to different points of view
- ability to process the information they hear in the focus groups.

## APPENDIX 3: EXAMPLE OF SUGGESTED RESEARCH PROCESS WITH THE DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS AS USED IN 'VALUING TEACHERS' PAPUA NEW GUINEA

1. In-country desk-based research: national education plans; budgets; academic papers; DFID or AUSAID sector strategies (some to be done from VSO UK). This will provide background context such as levels of qualification among teachers, teacher attrition, gender ratios, career structures, distribution of teachers (rural/urban) etc. Provides quantitative background information.

2. Semi-structured interviews with key research participants, to include:

   - Ministry of Education officials – national, regional, local
   - Teacher training and support institutions
   - CSOs working in education
   - INGOs working in education
   - Education academics
   - Other key players identified by VSO Programme Office
   - Teachers and head teachers.

   Provides overview of key issues. (The researcher can conduct focus groups or workshops with these research participants where possible and if felt necessary.)

3. Focus group interviews (6–10) with volunteers' teacher colleagues (gender sensitive). Selection of focus group locations to reflect profile of disadvantage in the country and VSO programme. Use of participant problem analysis techniques. Provides qualitative and quantitative data (what and why).

4. In-depth interviews with individual teachers, head teachers, volunteers, and any of the key research participants listed in point 2 above. Allows for deeper exploration of 'why' questions.

5. Questionnaires for all research participants (possibly more – all volunteers to select one colleague?). Provides quantitative information. Allows for exploration of sensitive issues e.g. salary levels.

6. Consult key policy-makers in structured meeting together with VSO country director or appropriate programme officer. Shares preliminary findings, identifies further problems or solutions, engenders ownership and consensus over the issues. Allows key players to begin to contribute to development of policy or implementation solutions.

## APPENDIX 4: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION METHODOLOGY USED IN GUYANA RESEARCH

**INTRODUCTION**
Explain the purpose of the research and why VSO is doing it. Use concept note outline and the following:

Presently, VSO Guyana is reviewing the impact of past and serving volunteers with a view to improving future volunteer placement relevance to Guyana. Linked to this is research into the factors that influence teacher motivation and performance. Teachers are pivotal to implementation of education reform yet there is scant research into what teachers themselves feel about their profession, what affects their morale, and what will help them perform well.

**TITLE: MAKING TEACHERS COUNT: VOICES AND VIEWS FROM THE CLASSROOM**

**AIM**
To explore the issues affecting teacher motivation and morale to increase performance in schools to the benefit of the students. The research aims to ascertain the level of teacher motivation and identify the critical factors influencing it.

**KEY QUESTIONS FOR THE RESEARCH**
- What effect does teacher motivation have on performance?
- What are the critical factors influencing teacher motivation in Guyana?
- What changes are required to enhance teacher motivation?

Give personal background also, and of any addition facilitators.
Ask participants to introduce themselves.

**QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED DURING FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS**
- What makes you feel good/happy/motivated?
- What makes you feel bad/sad/demotivated?
- What are the characteristics of a motivated teacher?
- What motivates teachers?
- What are the causes of teacher demotivation?
- What are the solutions for addressing teacher demotivation?
- How do motivation levels change over time?

**ACTIVITIES**

**ACTIVITY 1: (20 MINUTES)**
- **What makes you feel good/happy/motivated?**

Ask participants to work in pairs and think about things that make them feel good during their working day. E.g. when a pupil suddenly understands a new concept.
List them on notepaper.

- **What motivates teachers?**

Extend personal experience to teachers in general. E.g. good working environment.

- **What are the characteristics of a motivated teacher?**

Ask participants what characteristics a happy teacher has. How do you know when a teacher is happy/motivated? E.g. punctual, good tempered.

**Please note:** *Comments on flip chart. If participants have difficulties, ask them to think of adjectives/adverbs to describe motivated teachers.*

**ACTIVITY 2: (10 MINUTES)**

- **What is your level of motivation at present?**

Give each participant a slip of paper and ask them to write in their own level of motivation using the following scale: Highly motivated/Fairly motivated/Slightly demotivated/ Very demotivated.

**ACTIVITY 3: (45 MINUTES)**

- What are the causes of teacher demotivation?
- What are the solutions for addressing teacher demotivation?

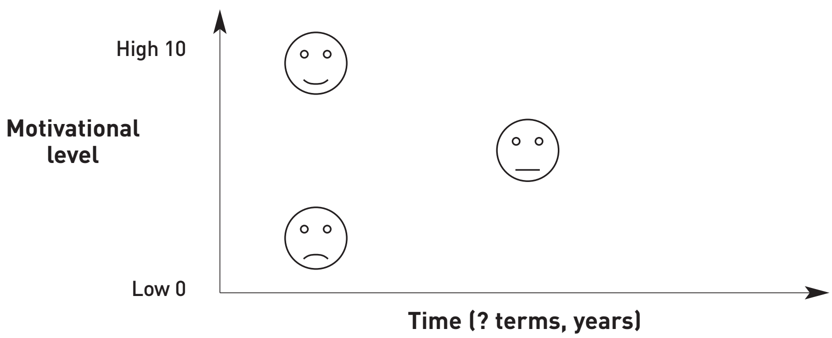
Give each participant a number of post-it notes on which to write down the causes of teacher demotivation (one per post-it note).
What makes you sad/demotivates/demoralises you in your work?
Group the issues into specific levels to identify the 'source' of the demotivation, e.g. personal/classroom/school/regional education office/national.
Within each of these categories, ask the participants to rank the issues in order of importance.
Extend this to draw out solutions to each of the main issues mentioned.

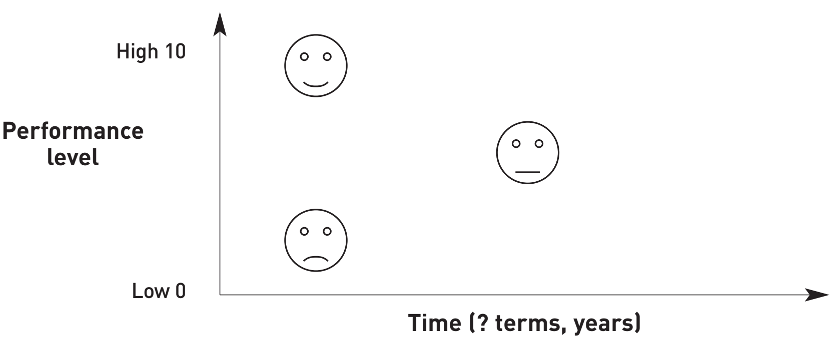
**ACTIVITY 4: (15 MINUTES)**

Motivation and performance timeline

- **How do motivation levels change over time?**
- **How do motivation levels link to performance level?**

Ask teachers to think back over their teaching career and think about their motivation levels. Ask them to map it on a timeline to show changes in motivation (you can use faces with different expressions to demonstrate this).




- On the timeline ask participants to note in training years, time out etc.
- Repeat for performance level over time.

**ACTIVITY 5: (5 MINUTES)**
Profile sheet
Ask participants to complete the profile sheet. *See Appendix 5*

**CLOSING**
Summarise the main points that have come out of the discussions and ask teachers whether it is the correct perception.

Thank the participants.

## APPENDIX 5: QUESTIONNAIRES FROM THE GUYANA RESEARCH

## QUESTIONS FOR PROFILE SHEET:

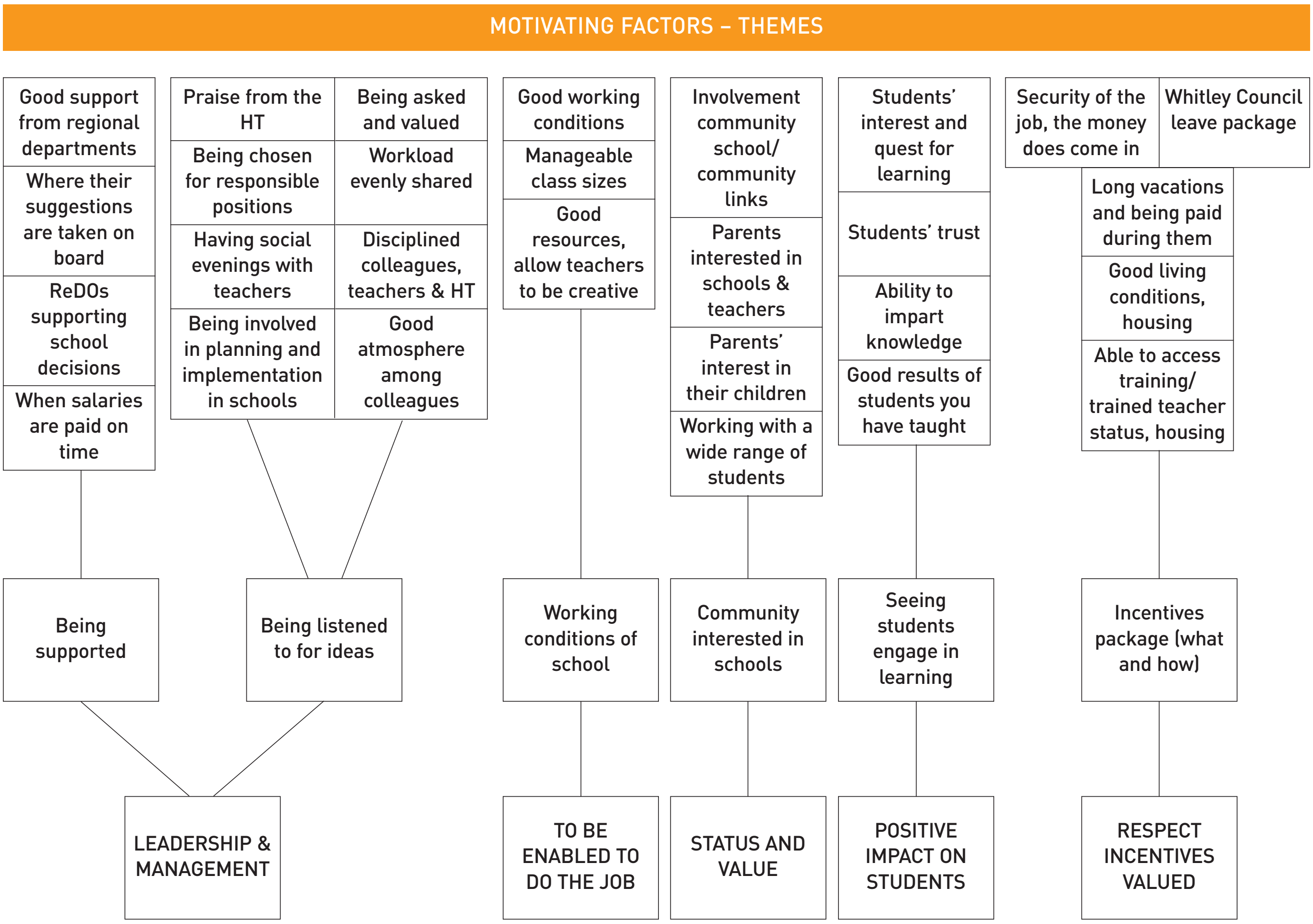
**A) FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS IN GUYANA RESEARCH**

- What education region do you teach in?
- Gender
- Age
- What is your current teaching status? (Trained/untrained; qualified/unqualified; permanent/temporary; graduate/non-graduate).
- How many years have you been teaching for?
- How many schools have you taught in?
- What level do you teach at? (Nursery; primary; secondary; other).
- What were your reasons for becoming a teacher?
- Would you make the same choice again?
- What three things would help you be a better teacher? (Rank them 1,2,3 with 1 being the most important).
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years' time?
- Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?

**B) VSO VOLUNTEERS IN GUYANA**

- What is your role? (Teacher in a school; teacher trainer – e.g. CPCE, GEAP; lecturer – e.g. University of Guyana; other).
- How long have you been in-country? (number of months)
- Would you consider the teachers that you work with to be motivated? Please explain.
- How do you think they consider themselves?
- What do you think demotivates them? (Please try to list in order of priority if possible.)
- What things do you think would help in the motivation of teachers? (Please try to list in order of priority if possible.)
- What do you think are the reasons for teacher absenteeism? (Please try to list in order of priority if possible.)
- What do you think are the reasons for teachers leaving the profession? (Please try to list in order of priority if possible.)
- Do you as a volunteer have any impact on the motivation of teachers? Please explain.
- Is there any way VSO Guyana could have an influence on the motivation of teachers? (Please try to list in order of priority if possible.) If so, how?
- Can you identify individuals or groups of colleagues who would be willing/useful to participate in this research? Please list names and designation for further reference.

## APPENDIX 6: MOTIVATING FACTORS ARRANGED INTO THEMES FROM GUYANA RESEARCH



## APPENDIX 7: DRAFT AGENDA FOR POLICY ROUND TABLE

**'VALUING TEACHERS' GUYANA**
24th September 2003
Cara Inn

| | |
|---|---|
| 9.00am | Welcome |
| 9.15am | 'Valuing Teachers'<br>• As an international initiative<br>• *'What makes teachers tick?'*<br><br>Teachers' Voice |
| 9.30am | 'Valuing Teachers' Guyana: Presentation of<br>• Research methodology<br>• Research findings<br>• Question time<br><br>Teachers' voice |
| 10.00am | Break |
| 10.15am | 'Valuing Teachers' Guyana<br>• Recommendations<br>• Question time |
| 10.45am | Discussion forum – the way forward<br>• Are there any surprises in the findings?<br>• What value does the education system place on teachers at the policy level?<br>• What value does the education system place on teachers at the implementation/practice level?<br>• What opportunities and challenges exist in meeting the needs of the teachers?<br>• Who plays a role in taking the issues forward?<br>• What actions need to be taken to ensure teachers' views are included in the decision-making processes that determine education policy in Guyana? |
| 11.15am | Feedback from discussion groups<br>Question time |
| 11.45am | Possible role for VSO Guyana in supporting the education sector |
| 12.15pm | Lunch |

# APPENDIX 8: DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON RESEARCH FINDINGS

| To be enabled to do the job | Good management and leadership | Being valued as stakeholders in the education sector | Being respected as professionals |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| • Having conducive learning environments to work in<br>• Having sufficient resources<br>• Suitable allocation of teachers (quantity and quality) | • Being listened to<br>• Being supported | • Positive representations<br>• Positive communications and relationships with the community | • Suitable promotion and incentives system<br>• Being recognised and valued for contributions<br>• Suitable representation by line managers<br>• Improved working conditions |
| Recommendations:<br>- Review channels of distribution of resources to schools<br>- Budgets need to be given to the school level to enable more autonomy to support the effective management of the school on a daily basis<br>- Establish effective systems for monitoring budget planning and administration<br>- TSC to review the guidelines used for the allocation of teachers<br>- Secondments taking teachers away from the classroom must be avoided | Recommendations:<br>- Need to create stronger competition for jobs in the system<br>- Review the application/appoint-ment criteria and include a more performance-related criteria<br>- Effective appraisal system and equal opportunities needed at all levels<br>- Ensure disciplinary procedures are in place and remove ineffective personnel from all levels of the system<br>- Need to develop positions that bring 'regional trainers' into the pay scale<br>- Capacity building needs to include more promotional levels and positions<br>- Need to develop a system of continued professional development that works alongside the promotion levels | Recommendations:<br>- Ministry of Education, regional education committees and GTU to ensure positive stories are presented in the media<br>- The Ministry of Education, regional education committees and GTU to work in collaboration to create a positive climate<br>- Develop an effective information sharing mechanism/commun-ications channel throughout the education sector<br>- Establish mechanisms by which communities can play a central role in improving the quality of education<br>- Sensitise communities of reform taking place and expected benefits, in addition to the role they play<br>- Donor agencies need to highlight the strengths of the education system<br>- National curriculum needs to listen to schools and communities | Recommendations:<br>- Ministry of Education to review the promotion system<br>- Promotion system to include experience and performance<br>- Increase salaries to introduce incremental increases into the pay scale<br>- Rural allowance scale needs reviewing. Variable scale is needed to recognise true levels of 'remoteness'<br>- Review the role and effectiveness of the TSC<br>- Establish mechanisms by which teachers are listened to and are involved in decisions at all levels<br>- Donor agencies need to ensure teachers are involved during consultations and decision-making processes |

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