

considered, both with respect to current collaborative efforts and potential new efforts that could support a more effective implementation.

## 4.8 Recommendations

- Further research could explore which countries use qualification agencies and/or recruitment agencies, and the process of their involvement. Although research confirms the important role of recruitment agencies in the migration story, more information is needed to understand their specific actions, the context of those actions and how these agencies might actively participate as stakeholders in the ethical migration and recruitment of teachers.
- Further research could also explore reasons for migration, including post-conflict/disaster situations, to inform the development of policy options.
- While the issue of the comparability of qualifications is an important one in the policy landscape, it is important to remember that teaching qualifications and teaching quality are not always synonymous. Also, in the developing country context, there are many unqualified teachers providing instruction. Further research could explore the true meaning of qualification with regard to educational quality, for traditional routes and alternative routes to teaching.

## Notes

- 1 The low uptake rate for the questionnaires, and the consequent potential impact on the validity of the findings of the survey due to sample size and selection bias, is noted.

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## 5. A continental teacher recruitment protocol in Africa: Key considerations from the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol

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### Abstract

*The recent review of the impact of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol (CTRP) by Ochs and Jackson (2009) has pointed out that the active international recruitment of teachers is a global issue that is not limited to Commonwealth countries. The review also found that, despite the recognition of the protocol, particularly at the 'highest international level', the majority of Commonwealth teachers remain uninformed and, as a result, are open to exploitation and unfair labour practices. This paper draws on the literature identifying the challenges and lessons in implementing the CTRP to initiate and explore the important debate on the development of a continental teacher mobility protocol for Africa. Taking note that the development of a recruitment protocol for Africa has recently been initiated by the African Union (Kaluba, 2010), this paper argues for the consideration of key issues to ensure that the recruitment protocol is uniquely African and addresses the unique challenges of the recruitment of teachers in Africa. The key issues include consideration of: the African identity, which is constituted by both geographical and cultural criteria, as well as rethinking the indigenised African situation beyond the confines of Eurocentric concepts and categories (Higgs and Keevy, 2009); moving from 'policy borrowing' to 'policy learning' as the mobility protocol is developed (Chakroun, 2010); gathering accurate data on teacher recruitment in Africa to inform the mobility protocol; recognising qualifications through qualifications frameworks in Africa (Samuels and Keevy, 2008); and increasing the professionalisation of teachers in Africa (Ochs, 2011).*

### Key words

Teacher, Recruitment, Migration, Commonwealth, Africa

### 5.1 Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Teacher migration is recognised as an increasing global phenomenon, including on the African continent. As was emphasised in the Symposium Statement of the Fifth Commonwealth Teachers' Research Symposium held in South Africa in 2010, 'many countries across the globe face severe current and future shortages and changes in teacher supply and demand' (Ochs, 2011: 5). This stark fact is confirmed by the recent review of the global demand for primary teachers conducted by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS, 2010), which finds that to replace teachers leaving the profession, 7.2 million new teachers are needed globally between 2008 and 2015. Among 99 countries that need to expand their teaching forces, 5.5 million teachers need to be recruited to cover not only 1.9 million additional posts to reach universal primary education (UPE), but also 3.6 million teachers in order to fill the posts of teachers leaving the profession (assuming an annual attrition rate of 5 per cent). According to the UIS, sub-Saharan African countries alone will need to recruit more than 2 million teachers in total to maintain today's teaching force and to make the extra effort to meet UPE. In North America and Western Europe, countries will need to replace about 1 million of today's teachers.

In order to address these shortages many countries are actively recruiting teachers, in many cases from more vulnerable small and developing states, either through bilateral

processes or by using recruitment agencies. While the migration of teachers, just as has been the case particularly with professionals in nursing (see Commonwealth Secretariat, 2005), remains the right of the individual and accepted in the increasingly globalised world, there is an enormous price to be paid by sending countries. These countries invest vast amounts in pre-service training that can last anything between 2.6 to 3.8 years for primary teachers and 2.9 to 4.1 years for secondary teachers in Commonwealth countries (Keevy and Jansen, 2010). Another important factor to consider is the potential exploitation of teachers in recruiting countries, more so when the recruitment takes place without governmental oversight.

For the 54 Commonwealth countries, the challenges associated with teacher migration were recognised in 2002, mainly in reaction to teacher loss experienced in the Caribbean region, and a Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol was adopted in 2004 (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2004). The key purpose of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol has been to:

... balance the right of teachers to migrate internationally, on a temporary or permanent basis, against the need to protect the integrity of national education systems and to prevent the exploitation of the scarce human resources of poor countries. The Protocol also seeks to safeguard the rights of recruited teachers and the conditions relating to their service in the recruiting country (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2004: 7).

Although the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol is not a legally enforceable agreement, Commonwealth member countries have been encouraged to develop supporting national policies and strategies that will contribute to the implementation of the protocol. Included in the 54 Commonwealth member states are 18 African countries, some of which actively participated in the development of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol – namely Lesotho, Mauritius, Nigeria, Seychelles, South Africa and Zambia. Taking note of the contribution of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol within the Commonwealth context, and recognising that African countries beyond those that are Commonwealth members were experiencing difficulties in managing teacher migration, the African Union initiated the development of a draft Continental Teacher Recruitment Protocol in Africa at the end of 2009 (Kaluba, 2010). The envisaged purpose of the African Protocol would be to:

... protect national education systems from unchecked teachers in terms of technical eligibility, previous professional registration status and recognition of teacher qualifications. It aims to protect [African] member states from unethical teacher recruitment practices by recruiting agencies (Kaluba, 2010: 46).

This paper draws on the challenges and lessons identified from the review of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol (Ochs and Jackson, 2009), including also the specific work on the comparability of teacher qualifications (Morrow and Keevy, 2006; Keevy and Jansen, 2010), while also considering the deliberations that took place at the five previous Commonwealth teacher research symposia. In particular, the paper is concerned with the extent to which the proposed Continental Teacher Recruitment Protocol in Africa is a policy borrowed from the Commonwealth, as opposed to a policy that may include lessons from elsewhere, but remains an African instrument to address an African problem. In effect this paper questions whether the development of a Continental Teacher Recruitment Protocol in Africa is the best way in which to protect national education systems and member states from unethical teacher recruitment practices.

## **5.2 Learning from the experiences of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol**

Before considering the relevance and nature of the proposed Continental Teacher Recruitment Protocol in Africa, it is necessary to first consider the lessons associated with

the implementation of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol between 2004 and 2009. In this regard the following key observations stand out.

First, there is the importance of context: as noted by Ochs and Jackson (2009: x) in their review of the implementation of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol ‘a central factor in the implementation of the [Commonwealth] Protocol was the issue of context’. Referring to examples such as national social and security policy, migration legislation, organisation of education systems and unregulated industries, Ochs and Jackson make the point that context impacts directly on the scale and nature of teacher recruitment. Second, it is apparent that the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol had achieved relatively low levels of awareness among key stakeholders, including teachers. In their study, Ochs and Jackson found that 82.5 per cent of interviewees were completely unaware of the protocol. Another important finding from the review was that countries, in particular ministries of education, were not capturing data on teacher movement, recruiting agencies and recruited teachers.

Many of the findings of the Ochs and Jackson study were confirmed in a complementary study conducted by Keevy and Jansen (2010) focusing on the transferability of teacher qualifications in the Commonwealth. The findings confirmed the limited data on foreign teachers, as well as that agreeing with Ochs and Jackson’s observation that ‘the issue of qualifications and comparability of qualifications remains a challenge to the effective deployment of teachers’ (Ochs and Jackson, 2009: 74). Keevy and Jansen’s study also found that the teacher qualifications in each country varied based on the context of each:

The unique context of each country located within its specific historical trajectory will, over years, have contributed to significant interventions and approaches to qualifications design and professional regulation of the teacher profession. This critical factor needs to be borne in mind as comparisons are drawn across participating [Commonwealth] countries (Keevy and Jansen, 2010: 49).

Jansen (in Ochs, 2011: 13) makes a similar point about context, although referring specifically to our understanding of qualifications and the manner in which teaching and learning takes place when he asks: ‘what does it mean to talk about qualifications when you are blind to context?’ The importance of context is also supported by Spreen (in Ochs, 2011: 15), who states that ‘we have big problems to fix that have a lot to do with inequality and social justice around educational outcomes... we cannot just ignore those things in thinking about how we qualify and certify’.

Table 5.1 gives an overview of the main initial teacher qualifications offered across the 35 participating Commonwealth countries. The Keevy and Jansen study notes that, largely due to the Commonwealth legacy in these countries, there are also some commonalities for example with regard to the level and duration of qualifications, the qualification types and,

**Table 5.1 Qualifications across participating countries**

Qualification type	Qualification	Average duration (years, full-time equivalent)	Average practical component (weeks)	Percentage of countries that offer the qualification
Academic	Bachelor Degree	3.43	0.71	60
Professional	Diploma in Education	2.07	15.2	46
	Certificate in Education	2.08	11.5	46
	Bachelor Degree in Education	3.57	15.8	74
	Graduate Diploma in Education	1.20	10.2	14
	Associate Degree in Education	2.13	12.5	14
	Postgraduate Diploma in Education	1.00	9.5	17
	Postgraduate Certificate in Education	1.9	16.5	9

Source: adapted from Keevy and Jansen, 2010.

importantly, also a common weakness across the countries when it comes to professional requirements (only eight of the 35 participating Commonwealth countries were found to be enforcing comprehensive professional requirements).

In considering the preliminary findings of both the Ochs and Jackson (2009) and Keevy and Jansen (2010) studies, the Commonwealth Steering Committee on Teacher Qualifications and Professional Recognition, which met at Stoke Rochford Hall, Lincolnshire, United Kingdom, on 8 April 2009, made several recommendations. Among others, it was recommended that the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol be extended to provide for the right of safe passage and return to the country of origin of teachers when the recruiting country becomes engaged in conflict. It was also emphasised that existing data management systems should be strengthened. Ministers were urged to support efforts to advocate and disseminate the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol, particularly among teachers and teacher organisations. Guidelines to support the design of induction and orientation courses were proposed. In an attempt to strengthen the implementation of the protocol, the Steering Committee supported the Ochs and Jackson proposal for the establishment of a dedicated unit as a:

... mechanism to address the non-adherence of countries, teachers, recruitment agencies and ministries as well as to share good practices within and beyond the teaching profession (Ochs and Jackson, 2009: xi).

Ministries of education were also encouraged to identify a focal point to deal with all matters relating to the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol. The Commonwealth Secretariat was encouraged to bring its comparative advantage concerning the protocol to the global discourse, including to the Task Force on Teachers established by UNESCO. With regard to the study on qualifications, the Steering Committee (later renamed as the Working Group on Teacher Recruitment) proposed that the comparability table of initial teacher qualifications be updated and reviewed on a regular basis in order to make longitudinal and updated data on teacher qualifications available to member states. The committee also proposed that the development of professional competency standards for Commonwealth teachers be seriously considered, including the active collaboration of teaching councils (Keevy and Jansen, 2010).

In June 2010, a Commonwealth Advisory Council on Teacher Mobility, Recruitment and Migration was established to provide guidance and advice to the Commonwealth Secretariat on the monitoring and implementation of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol. The Advisory Council supported the earlier proposals that a strategy was necessary to raise awareness of the protocol through the proposed focal points, and that more needed to be done to strengthen the information base on teacher mobility and migration. The council also proposed that examples of good practice be distilled and, importantly, that strategies be explored to 'model legislation' for operationalising the protocol in source and recruiting countries. Other important recommendations of the council included a call to countries to create, expedite and report on effective implementation of a regulatory framework for recruiters and recruiting agencies in accordance with the provisions of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol and relevant international standards. A consideration of the feasibility of a Commonwealth and/or global quality standard of agencies that agree to and conduct their business in accordance with the principles of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol was suggested. Governments were encouraged to collaborate with teacher organisations in the implementation of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol, and also to engage in bilateral/multilateral agreements on teacher migration as it relates to the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol. Lastly, the council proposed the development of professional teacher standards through mutually agreed qualifications frameworks, in accordance with the provisions of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol to encourage cross-border recognition and transferability of teacher qualifications and the professional registration of teachers (Degazon-Johnson, 2010b).

Reflecting on the experiences that relate to the implementation of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol as outlined above, the following key observations stand out and may be considered during the development of the proposed Continental Teacher Recruitment Protocol for Africa:

- *Context matters.* Context impacts on the scale and nature of teacher recruitment, the recognition and comparability of teacher qualifications, as well as the extent to which the teaching profession is regulated. In the case of teacher qualifications, it is evident that the common English legacy shared by Commonwealth member states has resulted in several commonalities with regard to levels, duration and qualification types.
- *Professionalisation matters.* Research shows significant weaknesses across the Commonwealth in terms of the level of professionalisation, including the establishment and role of professional councils, continuing professional development and even criminal record screening.
- *Enforceability matters.* The extent to which a broad non-enforceable political agreement, such as a protocol for teacher recruitment, can be enforced by member states has clearly been a limiting factor. This is confirmed by the recommendation of the Commonwealth Advisory Council on Teacher Mobility, Recruitment and Migration for ‘model legislation’ to be developed to operationalise the protocol, as well as the call on countries to create regulatory frameworks for teacher recruitment.
- *Advocacy matters.* Closely linked to the point on enforceability, it is recognised that a protocol of this nature, one that is not enforceable, requires strong and continuing advocacy to improve awareness, not only with ministries but also with the teachers themselves.
- *Collaboration matters.* The process of developing the CTRP is exemplary in the extent to which it has been able to draw on different levels and experiences from member states. Through the establishment of interim committees to oversee the protocol, to the ongoing involvement of senior government officials, including regular reporting to the ministers of education through the Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CCEM), there has been a continued emphasis on collaboration. An area identified as a weakness has been the limited extent to which teacher professional and employment organisations and recruitment agencies have been involved.
- *Data matter.* The Commonwealth experience clearly shows that data on teacher migration and recruitment are limited at best and that data management systems require strengthening.
- *Oversight matters.* The role of the Commonwealth Secretariat, the now disbanded Steering Committee on Teacher Qualifications and Professional Registration and the recently established Commonwealth Advisory Council on Teacher Mobility, Recruitment and Migration, cannot be underestimated. The additional call for a ‘dedicated unit’ to monitor non-adherence, as well as the identification of country focal points, all point towards the need for strong and effective oversight mechanisms, more so in the African context where many countries do not have the capacity to effectively monitor teacher supply and demand.

### 5.3 The meaning of an African approach: policy learning and an African philosophy

We could go ahead and apply the learning experiences of the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol, as identified in the section above, to the proposed Continental Teacher Recruitment Protocol in Africa. This learning will undoubtedly be of great value and will strengthen the African Protocol right at its point of conception. The problem is that such application would sidestep the most important aspect of the proposed African protocol, namely what makes the protocol African? Stated differently, we may ask: How can a policy borrowed from the Commonwealth be effective in the African context? A

distinction between policy borrowing, ranging from reforms that are imposed to those that are voluntarily sought or accepted, and policy learning that ‘puts a strong emphasis on the development of national capacities to lead the design and implementation of... reforms’ (Chakroun, 2010: 204) provides a basis for responding to this question.

It is useful to consider the development of the Continental Teacher Recruitment Protocol in Africa as a policy-learning activity, and draw on a study by Chakroun (2010) on policy learning in the context of national qualifications frameworks. In the study he suggests that two dimensions of policy learning need to be considered: i) individual learning that emphasises participation in peer learning and contribution to policy-making processes, based on the assumption that involvement in policy learning increases the expertise of the individual policy-makers; and ii) organisational learning through which individual learning can be channelled to generate and sustain changes at the wider institutional level. An important emphasis is placed on learning from one’s own experiences and through peer learning, as opposed to the direct importation of best practice from elsewhere:

[Peer learning] focuses on the capacity of policy-makers in specific countries to learn from their own experience and from that of other countries in ways that strive for a deeper understanding of policy problems and processes than what is provided by simply seeking and implementing best practice (Chakroun, 2010: 205).

A number of useful considerations come to the fore if we follow the application of the policy-learning model to the development and implementation of national qualifications frameworks as outlined by Chakroun (*ibid.*). The following observations stand out:

- The involvement of social partners and other stakeholders is important and greatly improves contextual specificity. The reluctance of social partners to become involved in some parts of the world, such as the Mediterranean region, as opposed to the widespread involvement in other parts, such as in the broader European context, needs to be considered.
- Reference to sources of best practice (in Chakroun’s example this is the European Qualifications Framework, while in the context of this paper it is the Continental Teacher Recruitment Protocol), while pragmatic and understandable, has several potential negative consequences. This approach limits the extent to which countries are able to preserve the coherence and integrity of national systems, as well as the extent to which stakeholders are able to discuss and understand specific national contexts and problems. This, in turn, reduces the understanding, leadership and ownership of the policy itself.
- Technical assistance often leads to the development of literature that is not embedded in national contexts, more so in countries where limited available resources restrict policy autonomy. It is apparent that the donor community has become accustomed to this approach and it may be difficult to change existing practices.

Considering the importance of policy learning, also in the development of the Continental Teacher Recruitment Protocol in Africa, it is necessary to carefully consider what meaning we attach to the adjective ‘African’. As pointed out by Higgs and Keevy (2009), African philosophy can be based on both geographical and cultural criteria: some authors, such as Mudimbe (1988) and Hountondji (1985) regard an intellectual product as African simply because it is produced or promoted by Africans; in the case of the cultural criterion, authors such as Gyekye (1996) regard an intellectual product as African if it directs attention to issues concerning the theoretical or conceptual underpinning of African culture. Higgs and Keevy (2009: 692) suggest a ‘both/and’ approach that avoids the preoccupation with definitions:

In citing these two polarised views as to what constitutes being ‘African’, we would like to suggest that a distinctively African identity is not constituted by either/or, but rather by both/and. That is, both geographical and cultural factors constitute an African identity in that these factors are necessary constituents of the experience of

being ‘African’, and therefore also of understanding what could be an ‘African philosophy’.

Central to the issue of philosophy in Africa is the question of relevance and usefulness, and the ability to contribute to political, economic, ethical and general upliftment. Pragmatism and the ability to render a ‘service’ are also important, as well as effective contribution to the amelioration of the lived and existing human condition. The deconstruction of the colonial discourse and the demise of European hegemony that requires us to rethink the African situation beyond the confines of Eurocentric concepts and categories (Serequeberhan, 1994) is another important factor, although this does not preclude us from relating Africa to its external community, including the West and Europe. Hountondji (2002: 139) describes the space wherein critical discussion and reflection on African issues can take place as follows:

... an autonomous space where the themes explored would no longer be a distant echo of those developed by Western knowledge, but the direct or indirect expression of Africa’s own preoccupations.

Higgs and Keevy (2009: 699) stated that ‘Qualifications frameworks in Africa should not be a reflection of Europe in Africa’. Applying this to the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol, it may be fair to argue that the Continental Teacher Recruitment Protocol in Africa should not be a reflection of the Commonwealth in Africa.

## 5.4 Thoughts on the proposed African Continental Teacher Recruitment Protocol

In the introduction to this paper the question was raised: is the development of a Continental Teacher Recruitment Protocol in Africa the best way in which to protect national education systems and the member states from unethical teacher recruitment practices? Considering that the development of an African Protocol has already been initiated by the African Union (AU) (Kaluba, 2010), and taking note of the key learnings experienced from the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol, as well as the cautionary notes against policy borrowing and the need for a truly African instrument, there are two concerns that come to the fore.

First, it is not entirely clear whether an Africa teacher recruitment protocol will be able to enhance quality considering the huge disparities both in terms of teacher qualifications and conditions of service. This is highlighted by the following statistics:

- Mali: 44 per cent of primary school teachers are unqualified, most teachers are trained for 90 days, the pupil-teacher ratio is 54:1 (Sinyolo in Degazon-Johnson, 2010a)
- Uganda: 14 per cent of teachers are unqualified, the pupil-teacher ratio is 90:1 in the north (Sinyolo in Degazon-Johnson, 2010a)
- Liberia: this is a post-conflict country, 40 per cent of teachers are trained, low teacher salaries (US\$70–81 per month) (Sinyolo in Degazon-Johnson, 2010a)
- Namibia: 92 per cent of teachers in the capital are qualified, while only 40 per cent in the rural north are qualified (Ratterree in Degazon-Johnson, 2010a)
- South Africa: 89 per cent of teachers have a professional teaching qualification (Parker in Ochs, 2011)

Primary teacher recruitment trends across the world show that recruitment needs in sub-Saharan Africa are very high compared to the rest of the world, and are largely driven by the need for primary teachers required to meet the goals of universal primary education (see Table 5.2).

Considering the paucity of data on teacher recruitment, as has been previously mentioned in this paper, and possibly more so in the case of Africa, the recruitment trends in isolation do not provide sufficient evidence that the protection of national education systems and

**Table 5.2 Regional figures: global demand for primary teachers**

Region	Stock in 2008 (000s)	Teachers needed in 2015 (000s)	Absolute change in stock (000s)
Arab States	1,899	2,148	250
Central and Eastern Europe	1,122	1,123	1
Central Asia	330	328	-2
East Asia and Pacific	10,119	8,723	-1,396
Latin America/Caribbean	2,919	2,542	-376
North America/West Europe	3,727	3,810	84
South and West Asia	4,970	4,836	-134
Sub-Saharan Africa	2,835	3,851	1,017
World	27,920	27,363	-558

**Source:** UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2010.

unethical teacher recruitment practices is a problem in Africa. In order to make an informed decision on this matter, it is proposed that cross-border teacher migration in Africa is first scrutinised to determine the existing challenges and trends. To assume that the challenges experienced in the Commonwealth, mainly in response to teacher loss in small states, is necessarily the case throughout Africa, has to be tested. If this were the case, the call for a continental instrument would have been made earlier and with much more urgency. It may also be prudent to draw on the experiences of the 18 African countries that are Commonwealth member states, while also representing the different regional economic communities in Africa, and then expanding the research to other countries. In this regard, Kenya stands out as one of only a handful of countries across the world that deliberately produces a greater number of teachers than it needs in order to benefit from remittances, and that undoubtedly has wide experience in the field of recruitment practices. On the other hand, teachers in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo have migrated as a result of conflict in their countries; Zimbabwean teachers seek work in South Africa; and teachers in Uganda move from the state to the private sector, not because wages are higher but because standards are.

The second concern is that if there is sufficient evidence and consensus that Africa may indeed benefit from a teacher recruitment protocol, then we need to be very careful how we go about its development. As pointed out by Chakroun (2010) and Higgs and Keevy (2009) in the previous section, there are several pitfalls to avoid when learning from best practices from other contexts. At this stage it is not evident that the African Union has approached the development of the proposed Continental Teacher Recruitment Protocol in Africa with the necessary caution when it comes to policy learning and recognition of the African context. In particular, the homogeneity of Commonwealth countries due to the same colonial legacy, as opposed to the lack of homogeneity among African countries due to English, French, Dutch, Arabic and Portuguese legacies, suggests that the African protocol cannot simply be a reflection of the Commonwealth in Africa.

The following factors may be considered during the development of the African protocol in order to avoid direct policy borrowing from the Commonwealth, while also recognising the African context:

- Regions in Africa have elements of homogeneity and function well through the regional economic communities (RECs): the Southern African Development Community, Economic Community of West African States and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa. It is proposed that the RECs be supported by the AU to increase harmonisation of education systems, but also to consider the existing recruitment trends and strategies through which they are being managed.
- The involvement of social partners and other stakeholders is crucial. While it is recognised that many African countries may not have fully functional professional associations, and even where the associations exist they may be antipathetic towards

participatory policy-making processes, the majority have employment/union associations. It is proposed that these associations and a broad range of stakeholders be involved at the outset of the process.

- The growing understandings of qualifications frameworks, particularly the extent to which the frameworks are African (Keevy, 2011; Higgs and Keevy, 2009; Samuels and Keevy, 2008), can support the transferability and cross-border recognition of teacher qualifications in Africa.
- Advocacy of the proposed African protocol to teachers, ministries and other stakeholders must be taken seriously and sufficient financial and human resources from governments and development partners must be committed to this purpose.
- The extent to which the African protocol should be enforceable must be given consideration. While it is accepted that a continental initiative driven by the AU will always be voluntary, it may be sensible to consider enforceable national and REC processes, as well as bilateral and multilateral processes, at the outset that will embed the proposed protocol within national policies.
- Oversight mechanisms dedicated to the proposed African protocol should be considered. These could take the form of AU-level committees, but could also be constituted on regional levels. The inclusion of a development partner that is already active on the Continent is also an option, but this will have to be carefully managed to avoid the concerns raised by Chakroun (2010) regarding disregard for local contexts.
- Above all, the African protocol must adhere to the principles of relevance, usefulness, pragmatism, contribution to upliftment, service rendering and the amelioration of the lived and existing human condition in Africa.

## 5.5 Concluding comments

The development of a Continental Teacher Recruitment Protocol in Africa based on the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol seems to be a good idea, despite the fact that the Commonwealth protocol has had limited impact and that the majority of ministries and teachers remain unaware of its existence. This is also despite the fact that significant resources have been invested into the Commonwealth process since 2004, and the considerable efforts that have been made to involve social partners and other stakeholders. Maybe it is too early to evaluate the impact of the Commonwealth protocol; maybe better advocacy, greater enforcement, better data and more effective oversight will result in a tipping point being reached with considerable impact to follow afterwards. The point is that the effectiveness of the Commonwealth protocol remains to be determined, despite its noble intentions. Should the Africa protocol reflect the Commonwealth process? Not necessarily. If, however, it becomes evident that the rights of teachers to migrate internationally need to be balanced against the need to protect the integrity of national systems and to prevent the exploitation of this scarce human resource in Africa, an African protocol may be an option. This decision will have to be based on identified challenges and trends regarding cross-border teacher migration in Africa, should take into account the principles of policy learning and, more importantly, should recognise the context as distinctively African.

## Notes

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