

Staff

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Country Director, Zambia

Date

June 22, 2018

IPA Zambia Co-Hosts Event on the Allocation of Teachers across Public Schools

On June 22, IPA and the International Growth Centre (IGC), in collaboration with the Zambian Ministry of General Education (MoGE), hosted a policy dissemination event on results from a study titled “The Allocation of Teachers across Public Schools in Zambia” led by Torsten Figueiredo Walter (London School of Economics). The event was attended by 30 stakeholders including representatives from the MoGE and members of civil society.

IGC Country Director, Dr. Anand Rajaram, provided opening remarks highlighting the importance of understanding the allocation of teachers as they are a key input in determining development outcomes. This study was therefore timely as it provided key insights into understanding where a key government input—teachers in this case—were located and, more importantly, provided possible solutions to solving the misallocation problem.

Torsten reported large staffing inequities across public schools. While 10 percent of public primary school pupils attend schools with a pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) below 30 pupils per teacher, 16 percent of pupils—approximately 475,000 children—go to schools with PTR above 80. Imbalances are largely concentrated within rather than across districts and are linked to administrative challenges in teacher workforce management, including uneven enforcement of the MoGE’s staffing guidelines, weak deployment and transfer policies, payroll mismatch, and inadequate budgeting of teaching positions, meaning teachers are not being effectively deployed, retained, and transferred where they might be needed. Results showed that districts with larger differences in PTR between schools show a lower pupil performance at the 2017 national grade 7 exams compared to districts with smaller PTR differences between schools, suggesting PTR dispersion is not only worrisome in terms of inequity, but may also contribute to lower overall educational outcomes.

During the discussion, MoGE officials noted that the persisting challenge of teacher allocation may be due in part to payroll mismatches. Other solutions that still need to be explored include whether there are cost-effective approaches that can be used to retain teachers in rural areas. IPA Zambia Country Director, Carlos Acero, closed the event by highlighting potential areas for efficiency gains.

City

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Zambia