Leapfrog in Education Workforce:
South Korea’s Experience and Education Workforce Initiative

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South Korea’s achievement of both sustained economic development and democracy is mainly due to its investment in people.
Teachers were at the heart of the remarkable performance of Korean students.

Proportion of top 5% students aspiring to become teachers (PISA 2015)

Korean students’ average scores of reading, math and science on top in PISA
South Korea leapfrogged in 3rd Industrial Revolution, but is now facing daunting challenges in 4th industrial revolution.

From Mass Production System

1st 1784
mechanical production
steam power energy

2nd 1870
mass production
electrical energy

Toward Mass Customization System

3rd 1969
electronics
IT

4th Today
artificial intelligence
AI
big data
Education system geared towards mass production system has dropped students’ happiness and teachers’ self-efficacy.

Korean students are not happy despite high Math Scores

Korean teachers are losing self-efficacy despite high salaries
Korea’s Experience shows developing countries should leapfrog to massively provide personalized learning experience for all children.

From Mass Production to Mass Personalization

- Learn to Test → Learn to Learn
- Shallow Learning → Deep Learning
- Vertical Learning → Horizontal Learning
Teacher education and training to harness education technology and learning science for high-touch and high-tech learning is the key.

**Best results with “High-Touch and High-Tech” Learning**

- **High-Touch**
  - (Project-Based Learning)
  - With Teachers

- **High-Tech**
  - (Adoptive Learning)
  - With AI and Mobiles

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Bloom’s Taxonomy:

- **Remember**
- **Understand**
- **Apply**
- **Analyze**
- **Evaluate**
- **Create**
As Korea transformed itself from aid recipient to donor in 2009, rather than repeating the knowledge transfer like Peabody Project, it should work together with other developing countries to leapfrog global education.

**Peabody Project in 1956-1962**

- Peabody College for Teachers transferred advanced knowledge and practices in teacher education and training from the US to Korea
  - 39 advisors or consultants stayed in Korea about two years to work on programs to improve teacher education including curriculum and textbook development
  - 82 Korean teachers, school principals, supervisors, and researchers were sent to Peabody to participate in training or degree courses with scholarships.
- This program nurtured many national and local educational leaders, who actively transformed and modernized Korea’s educational system.
As even education workforce in an exemplary country like Korea cannot meet demands by students and the society, international community should take action in collectively designing and strengthening education workforce.

**Education Workforce Initiative (EWI)**

- EWI aims to develop concrete options for policy makers to design and strengthen an education workforce to meet the changing demands of the 21st century and to improve learning outcomes.

- EWI will bring fresh thinking and new approaches to workforce design and implementation by drawing on evidence from in-depth case studies on how education workforce reform is implemented and examples of innovation.
EWI complements the existing UNESCO International Task Force for 2030. It focuses on a limited set of priorities in depth to address key gaps, involve new actors, and create a strong platform for country implementation.

Expected Outcomes of EWI

• **An Education Workforce Report:** This will include a review of recent evidence, lessons from other sectors, and in-depth examples of effective education workforce reform or innovative approaches.

• **A series of country-specific proposals of education workforce reform:** These will be co-developed with policymakers in three EWI countries (Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Vietnam), in collaboration with local research partners and other actors who will help sustain the reforms in the longer term.

  • The initiative aims to build local and international capacity in education workforce reform.
THANK YOU!