Microsoft

Partnerships and Local Capacity Building

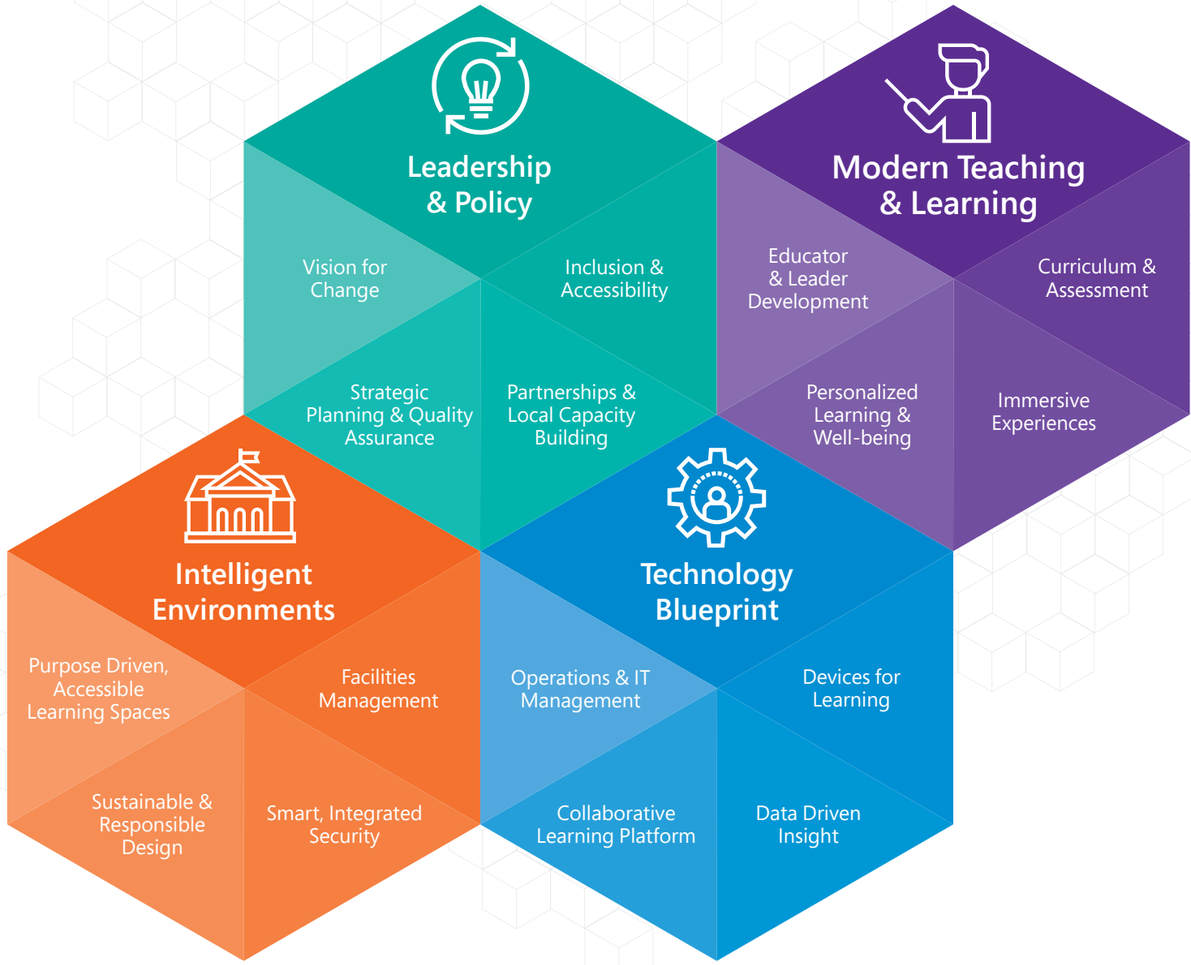
Education Transformation Framework

Partnerships
& Local Capacity Building

This paper examines one of the critical components of effective transformation in schools and education systems. Each paper is produced by an expert author, who presents a global perspective on their topic through current thinking and evidence from research and practice, as well as showcase examples. Together, the papers document the contributions of 'anytime, anywhere' approaches to K-12 learning and explore the potential of new technology for transforming learning outcomes for students and their communities.

Public, Private, and Community Partnerships for Employability

Public-Private Educational Partnerships (PPEPs) are contractual relationships between governments and private sector entities, but more importantly, they are catalysts for systemic change. PPEPs mobilize individuals, organizations, and communities, tapping the power of education. They combine transformational leadership, shared goals, and community values to create educational access, equity, outcomes, quality and ethical choices. Digital technologies are an integral strategy in this transformation, driven by a 'community for innovation' that harnesses the human imagination and creativity for changing lives, organizations, communities and nations. PPEPs are also pillars of social, cultural and economic empowerment in the developing world.



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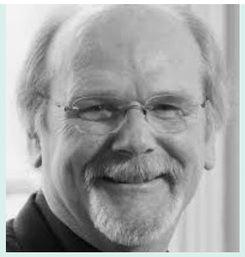

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What is the Education Transformation Framework?

The Microsoft Education Transformation Framework helps fast track system-wide transformation by summarizing decades of quality research. It includes a library of supporting materials for transformation, each underpinned by an executive summary and an academic whitepaper detailing global evidence. This provides a short-cut to best practice, speeding up transformation and avoiding the mistakes of the past. Microsoft also offers technology architectures and collaborative workshops to suit your needs.

Why are we seeing more partnerships?

The primary rationale for developing PPEPs in education is to expand equitable access to schooling and improve educational outcomes, particularly for marginalized groups.

A catalyst for community growth

The private sector growth in primary and secondary education has been significant in recent years. Despite governments remaining the primary financiers, a substantial share of worldwide primary and secondary education is delivered by private agents.[1] From 1991-2002, private primary education grew by 58% from 39 to 62 million. During the same period, public enrollment grew by only 10% from 484 to 530 million.[2] Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and South Asia were the fastest growing regions of private provision of education.[3]

The evidence for private provision of education is positive. More rigorous evidence is needed, but it is increasingly clear that partnerships in which the private sector is the operator and the public sector is the financier result in increased enrollment and cost efficiencies.[4] Contracting and subsidy arrangements can enhance quality and expand access, if coupled with sound quality assurance mechanisms, appropriate teacher training and school improvement initiatives.[5]

The catalyst for individual, community and societal growth and development is education. Moreover, the growth of PPEPs has made significant impacts on communities across the globe for developing and developed countries.[6] The primary rationale for developing PPEPs in education is to expand equitable access to schooling and improve educational outcomes, particularly for underserved and marginalized groups.[7] Within this, schools are focused on increasing access (enrollments), improving educational outcomes, reducing educational inequality, and reducing costs to create sustainability and efficiencies.

How do they work?

The most common PPEPs are government–private provider contracts, in which the government procures education services of a defined quality and at an agreed price from a specific provider.[8] Some common PPEP examples are vouchers, subsidies, outsourced private management and operations and major capital investments in infrastructure, as well as entire schools – private finance initiatives.[9]

Technology not only serves to create better, faster service to the citizens, it also acts as a facilitator between public and private partnerships.

Within the PPEP landscape, the global adoption and deployment of digital technologies and related innovations are empowering educational capacity building partnerships.[10] Technologies, in and of themselves, are simply tools – yet very powerful tools for driving critical community development, infrastructure, and PPEP processes, services, efficiencies and impacts.[11]

Technology not only serves to create better, faster service to the citizens, it also acts as a facilitator between public and private partnerships.[12] Technology can significantly impact effectiveness, efficiency, and the citizen-centric focus of government services and programs.[13]

1 Lewin & Sayed, 2005.
2 UNESCO, 2007.
3 Ibid.
4 Patrinos et al., 2009.
5 Ibid.
6 UNESCO, 2007.
7 Patrinos et al., 2009.
8 Taylor, 2003.
9 Chakrabarti & Peterson, 2008; Hsieh & Urquiola, 2006; Kingdon, 2007; LaRocque & Patrinos, 2006; World Bank, 2006.
10 Cavanaugh, McCarthy, & East, 2014; Olcott, 2009, 2009a, 2009b, 2013.
11 NASCIO, 2006; Olcott, 1997; World Economic Forum, 2013.
12 NASCIO, 2006.
13 Ibid.

What are the impacts?

The private management and operations of schools have shown moderate impacts on increasing enrollments, outcomes and reducing costs; and strong evidence for reducing inequalities provided the intervention is targeted. Private finance initiatives (capital construction projects) to upgrade existing schools or build new schools have had low-to-moderate impacts on enrollments and outcomes, with strong results for reducing educational inequalities. Furthermore, the 20-30 year contacts reduce costs for governments with ultimate transfer of ownership of these schools to the public sector.

Patrinos et al. further suggest that different government-private sector contracts impact key educational outcomes differently – outcomes such as flexibility, quality criteria, risk-sharing and competition.[14] Private management of schools has significant effects on flexibility and quality criteria, for example, and low impact on risk-sharing and competition. Vouchers have a moderate effect on flexibility and low effect on risk-sharing; but a significant effect on quality criteria and competition by challenging public schools to improve quality in response to universal school choice by students/parents. Subsidies have had a moderate effect on flexibility, quality criteria and risk sharing; and low effect on completion. Finally, and similarly to its impacts on educational objectives, private finance initiatives have the greatest positive effect on risk-sharing by reducing the necessary government capital costs for schools over the long-term – 20 plus years.

In examining the four main educational objectives of PPEPs (increasing enrollments, improving educational outcomes, reducing educational inequality, and reducing costs), the evidence suggests that government vouchers and subsidies can produce moderate to strong positive results.[15] Voucher programs tend to be more successful than government subsidies.

Despite controversies surrounding the use of voucher systems (government purchasing places in private schools), Columbia's targeted voucher program provided places to 100,000 students from poor families. Many rigorous evaluations of this program have shown the program to be successful.[16] Although the empirical research for vouchers has been positive, there have been exceptions. Chile's voucher program is mixed and controversial – some studies reflecting positive changes, others arguing that the selection process and methodologies employed lacked adequate sampling and measurement instrumentation validity and reliability.[17]

In examining the four main educational objectives of PPEPs, evidence suggests that government vouchers and subsidies can produce moderate to strong positive results.

14 Patrinos et al., 2009.
15 Latham, 2005; LaRocque & Patrinos, 2006; World Bank, 2003, 2006.
16 Angrist, Bettinger, Bloom & King, 2002; Angrist, Bettinger, & Kremer, 2006.
17 Hsieh & Urquiola, 2006.

Should your school form a partnership?

By deregulating secondary education, Senegal and Tanzania were able to open up private provision… with a positive correlation with enrollment.

What are the benefits of PPEPs?

The arguments for PPEPs[18] include:

- **Competitive quality** – By having the private sector competing for public sector students there is an incentive for public sector providers to increase educational quality.
- **Flexibility** – PPEP contracts can often be more flexible than most public sector, government managed arrangements.
- **Service level agreements** – The government's competitive bidding process allows for defining specific requirements for the quality of educational services to be provided.
- **Reduced risk** – PPEP contracts inherently are predicated on risk-sharing between government and the private sector.

These PPEP elements can also provide the increased choice that comes with taking advantage of specialized private sector expertise and skills. It can also allow schools to side-step the bureaucratic barriers in the public sector, such as inflexible salary scales and unionized protections.

Indeed, for government policymakers, contracting PPEPs is an attractive compromise between government delivery and privatization. Moreover, governments can maintain accountability for all providers, target services and initiatives towards marginalized groups, and even secure long-term benefits and efficiencies from major school capital construction under private finance contracts.[19]

What is the research and practice?

The table published here provides an overview of the various contracts that can be arranged with private sector providers. The aggregate body of research and evidence for PPEPs is extensive and beyond the scope of this paper. In general, however, PPEPs have been effective across the globe.[20] For example, by deregulating secondary education Senegal and Tanzania were able to open up private provision. The deregulation was done at low cost with a positive correlation with enrollment.

For government policymakers, contracting PPEPs is an attractive compromise between government delivery and privatization.

18 Patrinos et al., 2009.
19 Ibid.
20 Patrinos et al., 2009; UNESCO, 2007; World Bank, 2003.

Types of PPEP contracts

What governments contract for	What governments buy
Management, professional, support services (Inputs)	School management (financial and human resources management); support services (meals and transportation); professional services (teacher training, curriculum design, textbook delivery, quality assurance, and supplemental services.
Operational services (Process)	The education of students, financial and human resources management, professional services and building maintenance.
Education services (Outputs)	Student places in private schools by contracting with schools to enroll specific students (Voucher and subsidies to poor and marginalized students)
Facility availability (Inputs)	Infrastructure and building maintenance
Facility availability and education services (both inputs and outputs)	Infrastructure combined with services (operational and building maintenance

Source: Adapted from World Bank 2006

Steps for making the transition to PPEP

1 Vision Making

Create a visual image and an ideal state of affairs in the future for your educational environment. (Not to be confused with planning, the vision is your goal.) The vision must be communicated effectively in ways that will be embraced by your followership and all stakeholders – policymakers, teachers, school leaders, parents, students, partner stakeholders and the community.[21]

A vision coupled with subsequent planning and shared goals becomes your roadmap for the future. Government agencies and ministries partnering with a foreign private organization can collaborate in nurturing the vision and even refining the basic image.

Ultimately your school or agency is responsible for visualizing a future educational environment that recognizes your values, social norms, and cultural considerations. Your vision must evolve and meet local and national needs.[22]

21 Yukl, 2013.
22 World Economic Forum, 2013; Yukl, 2013.

A vision coupled with subsequent planning and shared goals becomes your roadmap for the future.

Three areas of leadership (transformational, shared leadership, and situational leadership) collectively bring a range of effective models and strategies to meet the inherently complex development of PPEPs.

2 Leadership

'Managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right thing.'[23] School transformation needs visionary leaders and competent managers. A leader crafts the vision, selects a guiding coalition (senior planning team), identifies shared goals, allocates resources and serves as the organizational ambassador for communicating the PPEP vision to followers and stakeholders.

There are theoretical areas of leadership that may align with the goals of PPEPs. First is Burns' theory of transformational leadership.[24] In essence, transformational leadership focuses on shared goals that have the broadest positive impact on society, followers, and stakeholders. Burns argues that transformational leadership is essentially moral leadership. Bass and Riggio expanded Burn's theory to apply transformational leadership to organizations.[25]

A second theory that is receiving greater consideration is shared leadership theory.[26] Shared leadership theory is based on the premise that the days of the single individual, all-knowing leader are over. The complexities of today's educational and business environments make leadership increasingly exigent, placing unrealistic demands on heroic leaders.[27]

Conger and Pearce defined shared leadership as 'A dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both.'[28]

According to Conger and Pearce, the influence process often involves peer, or lateral, influence and at other times involves upward or downward hierarchical influence.

Perhaps in simple terms, this may be viewed as a flattening of the organizational command structure whilst dispersing greater responsibility for organizational goals across the organization; not simply the CEO or President sending commands down to senior managers who then pass them on to subordinates. A variation of this appears obvious for PPEPs. A shared leadership model among government, private sector partners, community representatives, educational managers, teachers and other stakeholders may reinforce the inherent flexibility seen as a major attribute of PPEPs.

A third area of leadership theory that has relevance to PPEPs is contingency or situational leadership. Yukl and Hickman provide a detailed analysis of the key situational approaches to leadership.[29] The basic idea is that a leader adapts his or her leadership style based on the dynamics, goals, and complexities of the situation. Most situational leadership theories take into account the balance between people focus versus task focus. Hersey and Blanchard's situational theory also integrates the maturity level of followers that leaders must consider when applying specific strategies of leadership and change management.[30]

A leader crafts the vision, selects a guiding coalition, identifies shared goals, allocates resources and serves as the ambassador of your PPEP vision.

These three areas of leadership (transformational, shared leadership, and situational leadership) collectively bring a range of effective models and strategies to meet the inherently complex development and management of multi-national PPEPs. Moreover, the leadership styles and strategies employed must be adaptive to the social, cultural, economic, motivational and ethnic norms of where leadership must be exercised in the host country. In all effective PPEPs, the discussion of leadership begins with the ministry and partner organization within the context of the vision, strategic plan, and strategies for achieving common goals.

23 Bennis & Nanus, 1985.
24 Burns, 2010.
25 Bass and Riggio, 2010.
26 Kocolowski, 2010; Pearce, Conger & Locke, 2007.
27 Kocolowski, 2010; Yukl, 2013.
28 Conger and Pearce, 2003, p. 1.
29 Yukl, 2013; Hickman, 2010.
30 Yukl, 2013.

Innovation is not technology. It is new policies, processes, procedures, curriculum, pedagogical practices and more.

3 Leading Change

One of the misconceptions about developing PPEPs is that the partnership is essentially new and should be driven by a formal planning process rather than a change management process. The problem with this view is that while the partnership may be 'new,' the actual contractual services and product innovations employed are built around expanding, refining, and streamlining existing educational services and functions. This is the essence of school transformation. Without question, leading change and formal planning are inter-related; however, there are differences that should be considered.

For example, the composition of a sound planning team is most often comprised of key members of the organization from all levels. This team may include a select few external representatives but the planning process is focused on maintaining the status quo goals and objectives of the organization.[31]

Conversely, a guiding coalition team for leading change will include senior leaders from the organization and external stakeholder organizations with a focus on reinventing the organization [and partnership] – new goals, new ideas, new innovations, and new strategies and processes for affecting transformational change. Leaders must build trust, model authentic and ethical standards, must communicate effectively, and be a role model for their followers.

Does this suggest that government leaders approach PPEPs by deciding to engage either a planning team or a change management team? No. What it means is that leading change and organizational planning have some distinct differences in purposes and strategies that often include different players for different purposes. Leading change and strategic planning teams can co-exist and complement the complex process of building flexible and responsive PPEPs.

Kotter's framework for leading change is a globally reputable process and is included in the appendix in abbreviated format for consideration by both ministries and private partners in PPEPs.[32]

Why is differentiation of leading change and strategic planning processes important? First, human beings are naturally resistant to change and gravitate towards preserving the status quo. This is often true even when the change process suggests a new benefits continuum that appears obvious. People have an aversion to ambiguity and the unknown – hence, they often would rather continue the status quo simply because they know how to survive (not necessarily thrive) in that environment.

We seldom see revolutionary and radical strategic plans in education. Most plans build off the previous period and only tamper with changes in rhetoric that more often than not do not result in systemic changes in practice.

> You need many leaders promoting and communicating the change process, benefits, and strategies to achieve the vision of shared leadership.

Secondly, if you choose to use one major team for both processes, selection of the actors becomes critical. In a PPEP it is not just one government leader and one private partner CEO sounding the call to change and to support a new vision. You need many leaders promoting and communicating the change process, benefits, and strategies to achieve that vision – shared leadership. Finally, this is exponentially important when the outside private provider is a foreign entity because they will be viewed initially as an 'outsider' that must demonstrate their value and commitment to education in the host nation's culture, society and education sector.

31 Kotter, 2012; Yukl, 2013.
32 Kotter 2012.

4 Innovation

The digital revolution has created three myths that often create a collective amnesia among educators. The first is that innovation is synonymous with technology. Innovation, in fact, exists along a continuum that includes much more than just hardware and software.[33] Innovation is thinking and creativity. Innovation is new policies, processes, procedures, curriculum, pedagogical practices and more. Moreover, using by-lines such as building a 'culture of innovation' or a 'culture of technology' is not only doublespeak – it is misleading and insulting for many cultures with minimal familiarity with the theories of organizational culture and core values.

The term 'culture' in most African, Asian, and Latin societies communicates an inherent link between culture, language, social norms, rituals and symbols reflective of that society. Perhaps most important is the connection between language and culture. Foreign providers will never understand the culture unless they understand the link between language and culture. School transformation requires a synergy of the entire community – educators, government and ministry leaders, students, faculty, private providers, social service organizations, religious leaders, parents, and more. Indeed, what we should be developing in PPEPs are 'communities for innovation' that collectively embrace innovation in all its guises and creative capacities.

A second myth that has evolved is the axiom that technology is synonymous with progress. Olcott raised this issue in the open and distance learning international community.[34] Digital technologies create a vast continuum of creative teaching and learning tools for the educative process. They also create a range of social and ethical issues that until recently have been on the periphery of education. The European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies to the European Commission captures this changing landscape in education as a result of digital technologies.[35]

The development of effective PPEPs needs to have this dialogue about the 'downside' of digital technologies. The ethical issues are extensive and range from cyber-bullying, privacy, security, and the digital divide to online addiction, racist speech and content, and loss of personal identity and content in social media environments such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc.[36] Moreover, it equally important that these issues are discussed within the context of the social, cultural and normative values of the educational system of the host nation.

A third myth that has emerged is that open and distance learning (ODL) is synonymous with online teaching and learning. Open and distance learning today continues to employ a range of technologies including audio, print, video and other multi-media formats in creative

> The development of effective PPEPs needs to have this dialogue about the 'downside' of digital technologies, such as bullying, privacy and security.

and innovative delivery modes. This is important given the capacity of ODL systems to enhance access to education at all levels globally, including the sharing and delivery of Open Educational Resources (OERs) and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).[37]

33 Rogers, 2003; Olcott, Dratwa, Parkin, Schmalzried & Duart, 2014.
34 Olcott, 1997.
35 EGE, 2012.
36 EGE, 2010; 2014.
37 Olcott, 2013, 2013a, 2013b, 2012, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c.

Making it work

The rebuttal to the public
inefficiency, cost, and un
is often neutralized
leaders actually spe me
school and participa e
educational enterprise.

Reconciling the language of education and business

We have heard the common criticisms of the private sector and the public sector. Corporations only care about profits, and public agencies are inefficient, expensive and overly protected by unions. In fact, Peter Drucker states the primary purpose of business is not profit – but to create and retain a customer.[38] Drucker does go on to state, however, that the first responsibility of business is profit because the society entrusts the 'corporation' to serve legitimate needs of society. Interestingly, this sounds much like the supportive rhetoric for the public sector and the delivery of public goods that serve the majority of the people.

The rebuttal to the public sector's inefficiency, cost, and unionization is often neutralized when business leaders actually spend some time in a school and participate in the educational enterprise. An anonymous private sector CEO once commented to the author that if we paid those educators in our system that were most important, we would be paying the highest salaries to primary teachers K-6 and the least to university professors.

This is perhaps an overstatement, but the point is not lost on the importance of all educators and their contributions to students and societies.

> In PPEPs there is one common value to which both partners must commit: The power of education to transform lives, communities, institutions, and nations.

Common to an analysis of most social organizations, these criticisms contain an element of truth. This raises one of the most critical aspects of facilitating an effective and visionary PPEP: bridging the communication gap by educating each other (the partners) about the business and education sector in the host country. This is a process that requires the commitment of both parties, government and the private sector provider, throughout the partnership.

In PPEPs there is one common value to which both partners must commit: The power of education to transform lives, communities, institutions, and nations. The mistake most PPEPs make is presuming that these differences between education and business do not matter. On the contrary, developing a clear understanding of one's partners will bring greater contributions to the partnership in the long-term because everyone is at least on the same chapter if not the same page. As the old adage goes, you never have a second chance to make a first impression.

Finding the right partner for long-term success

The ministry sets the parameters for procurement and contracts. In the bidding process for services, what criteria does your ministry use for selection? When considering a major foreign provider to deliver technology services, hardware, and software, many government organizations have entered into partnerships with private providers that could offer first level services – meeting short-term immediate priority needs.

However, after a short period it becomes apparent that long-term strategies of the private provider to provide value-added services are limited. What options do you have now? Start over, institute another bidding process for services, or muddle through with the current provider? So what attributes should you look for in your technology services provider?

- Do your homework. It is vital to do your research on the potential partner before, not after, you establish a contractual partnership. Research your partner organization, it's culture, language, history, current partners, partnership record, financial stability, and how the organization is perceived in their own country. What do they bring to the table that you need in the short-term and possibly the long term?
- Check their track record. Does the provider have a proven success record (experience) working in foreign countries and specifically in foreign educational systems?
- Find a cultural fit. Is the private provider known for cultural and social sensitivity to the values of the host country? Moreover, does the provider do its homework about the business and educational norms of working in your country? Why does a specific private provider want to do business in your country with your ministry?
- Evaluate their expertise. If your preferred contract is for technology hardware, software, and related support infrastructure services, does the private provider bring the additional expertise in planning, curriculum development, assessment, quality assurance, personalized learning environments, open and distance learning, and evaluation?
- Enquire about support. If you are procuring hardware, software and teaching tools, does your potential provider offer a comprehensive staff development and teacher training program? Is it a continuous professional development program so that upgrades and 'just in time' training is available to your staff and teachers? Is training, hardware maintenance and upgrades part of the contractual purchase of services?
- Compare their future with yours. Does the private provider bring the visionary leadership to drive effective educational change? Do they have a framework for school transformation and the roles that technology play in leading systemic change?
- Look for long-haul reliability. Does your potential private provider have a long-term vision for school transformation? Are they willing to commit contractually and with resources to realizing this long-term vision for school transformation (5-10 years)? Does your potential partner offer a reinvestment strategy of resources back into the partnership? Is building a 'community for innovation' in the plan?
- Watch for language barriers. Does your partner have the expertise and linguistic skills to create and/or translate educational materials into your national language? This is different than technology manuals for using computers, mobile devices, smart phones, etc. This is specific to curriculum, staff development, and product training.
- Establish trust. Can you build a high level of trust with this potential partner? Partnership 'fit' is important and initial communications may provide you a tone of whether this particular partner is the right partner to work with you. If your potential partner is from an English speaking country, does your potential partner bring a translator fluent in your language and other staff with language skills to the initial negotiations and interviews? The signs for future trust are often subtle yet powerful indicators of partnership potential.
- Negotiate flexibility. Your ministry is making serious decision to partner with a foreign provider that must be considered from all contingencies. Despite extensive negotiations, research, trust and impact potential, you may find as the partnership evolves that it is not working. It is essential in the contractual agreement to have a well formulated exit strategy for terminating or phasing out the partnership.

Quick guide to choosing the right partner

Track record	Vision	Technology	Cultural
• Proven success? • Good partnership history?	• Shared values and vision? • Long-term commitment?	• Understanding of tech and education? • Comprehensive training?	• Able to localize materials and approaches? • Mutual trust?

38 Drucker, 1973.

Developing your own change strategy

Guiding Questions for Public-Private Education Partnerships

- Which strong and agile teams are required for a dynamic education landscape?
- What is the process for enlisting trusted partners for ongoing partnerships?
- How are you developing digital content, assessments and learning environments?
- What is the process for enlisting community involvement?
- Is the strategy in place, sustainable, scalable?
- Are teacher education programs preparing teachers for new learning environments?

Technologies schools can use to support change

Although no particular software, service or hardware is recommended in this paper, it is acknowledged that technology can act as a facilitator between public and private partnerships. This is shown to significant improve effectiveness, efficiency and the citizen-centric focus of government services and programs.

Additional Resources

- Attracting Investors to African Public-Private Partnerships: A Project Preparation Guide. 2009. World Bank Group and Infrastructure Consortium for Africa.
- Granting and Renegotiating Infrastructure Concessions, Doing It Right. 2004. Guasch, J. L. Washington DC: The World Bank Institute.
- The Guide to Guidance, How to Prepare, Procure and Deliver PPP Projects. July, 2011. Luxembourg: European Investment Bank.
- A Guidebook on Public-Private Partnership in Infrastructure. June, 2009. Bangkok: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. United Nations.
- Guidelines for Successful Public – Private Partnerships. March, 2003. Brussels: European Commission, Directorate-General Regional Policy.
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- OECD Principles for Private Sector Participation in Infrastructure. 2007. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
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30 For example, see the Assessment for Learning Resource Bank, Education Bureau (2013a)

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