

STRENGTHS

The Evaluation and Assessment Framework

- There is a strong political will to strengthen evaluation and assessment in the school system
- There are some common references to provide the basis for evaluation and assessment
- There is an emergent focus on equity and inclusion among national goals for education
- There are a range of tools provided at the central level to support evaluation and assessment
- The principle of transparency in monitoring and publishing results is established

Student Assessment

- Assessment is seen as part of the professional role of teachers
- Student assessment has an external dimension
- There are assessment innovations associated with the *New Opportunities* initiative
- There are efforts to meet the needs of a diverse student population and there is a growing focus on data and results

Teacher Appraisal

- There is strong political will and a growing consensus around the need to strengthen teacher appraisal
- Teacher appraisal procedures are rooted in some good principles
- Teaching standards have been developed to guide the appraisal process
- There are articulations between teacher appraisal and school evaluation

School Evaluation

- External school evaluation is becoming well established and embodies a number of features of best practice
- A relationship has been established between self and external evaluation
- School leadership is promoted in school evaluation
- Schools benefit from some follow-up and inspections are themselves evaluated

Education System Evaluation

- An Education Indicators Framework is well established
- There is a new concern for framing system evaluation in relation to educational targets
- Student performance data are part of system monitoring
- The qualitative analysis of thematic reports provides valuable information for system monitoring

CHALLENGES

The Evaluation and Assessment Framework

- The evaluation and assessment framework needs to be completed and made coherent
- There is room to strengthen the improvement function of evaluation and assessment
- It is unclear that the students are at the centre of the evaluation and assessment framework
- There is a narrow understanding of the purposes of evaluation and assessment and some reluctance to exercise professional judgment across the system
- There is a need to strengthen competencies for evaluation and assessment throughout the system
- There are challenges in the implementation of some evaluation and assessment initiatives

Student Assessment

- Formative student assessment is stronger in policies than in classroom practices
- Moderation of marks is focused on procedures rather than on outcomes of learning or shared understandings of standards
- Student assessment is used as a controlling mechanism as well as a learning process
- Data are gathered, but not subject to interrogation or secondary analysis
- Some strands of secondary education are not supported by external assessment

Teacher Appraisal

- There is insufficient focus on the improvement of teaching practice
- The extent of externality in teacher appraisal is limited

- There is a tension between school-level teacher appraisal and national-level consequences
- Competencies for teacher appraisal are still underdeveloped
- School leadership could play a stronger role in fostering teacher appraisal and feedback cultures

School Evaluation

- There is a need to strengthen a culture of improvement and improve the focus on learning and teaching
- School self-evaluation requires to be strengthened
- There is a need to build competence in the techniques of evaluation
- The impact of external evaluation is limited
- There are concerns related to the implementation of school director appraisal

Education System Evaluation

- There is little emphasis on the evaluation of the education system and there are some information gaps at the system level
- There are challenges in the ability to monitor student outcomes over time and across schools
- System-level information is not fully exploited

POINTERS FOR FUTURE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The Evaluation and Assessment Framework

- Consolidate the evaluation and assessment framework
- A key principle is to place the students at the centre of the evaluation and assessment framework
- There should be greater emphasis on the improvement function of evaluation and assessment
- Strengthen some of the components of the evaluation and assessment framework
- Further develop some articulations within the evaluation and assessment framework
- Significantly invest in evaluation and assessment capacity development across the school system

Student Assessment

- Develop the quality of feedback to learners to strengthen formative assessment practice
- Use the Learning Goals project to focus on examples of student work to support better moderation and greater teacher professional collaboration around student learning
- Ensure that assessment is relevant and responsive to students with special educational needs
- Build on the attention paid to results to generate richer data
- Make greater use of external assessment as support for moderation and teacher professional development

Teacher Appraisal

- Ensure the centrality of teaching standards and refocus teacher appraisal on improvement
- Strengthen career progression appraisal and enhance the capacity of evaluators to make reliable summative judgements
- Ensure links between developmental appraisal and career-progression appraisal
- Enhance and support the role of school leaders in teacher appraisal
- Develop longer term planning for the implementation of teacher appraisal

School Evaluation

- Establish the focus for evaluation as being to improve learning and teaching and student outcomes
- Improve the alignment between external and self-evaluation and raise the profile of school self-evaluation
- Improve the acceptability and impact of external inspection
- Ensure school leaders receive appropriate feedback on their performance

Education System Evaluation

- Raise the profile of system evaluation and prioritise efforts to meet information needs for national monitoring
- Explore ways to more reliably track educational outcomes over time and across schools
- Optimise the reporting and use of system-level data

FURTHER READING

This summary of strengths, challenges and recommendations is drawn from *OECD Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education: Portugal*, published in April 2012.

The full Country Review report and further information about the OECD Review on Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks for Improving School Outcomes are available on the project's website: www.oecd.org/edu/evaluationpolicy.