



Key themes for implementing human resource management information systems (HRMIS)

Summary

Implementation of Human Resource Management Information Systems (HRMIS) can play a leading role in improving management of teachers by establishing efficient and accessible online systems to manage payroll, service records and teacher transfer and other teacher management processes.

Implementing HRIS is a large undertaking that can be broken down into smaller parts, to tackle one step at a time. Many of the success factors identified below are focused on establishing preparedness and developing an implementation plan that includes certain aspects. This will go a long way to ensuring the success of the implementation.

Evidence from reviews of two states that have invested in developing HRMIS highlights common lessons which are critical to successful implementation of these systems. This information note sets out these lessons, highlighting issues experienced by the states, practical solutions and the need for effective planning and an incremental approach to underpin successful implementation of HRMIS.

Senior Management Support

Senior management's interest and enthusiasm about the HRIS shows that they value the benefits that will be reaped from the HRIS. Since senior management are responsible for management and leadership of staffs, and an HRIS can assist HR in aligning with those objectives, their support for the implementation will likely be related to this alignment in some way. Adoption of HRMIS requires high level mandates and support from both political and administrative leaders both within and outside of the Department of Education. Strong leadership can be a vehicle for advocacy for a change in organisational attitudes and culture across the system. This change depends on the consistent and coherent commitment of education sector personnel to technology assisted management of human resources. Advocacy, adequate equipment and basic training to ensure ease in the use of

technology especially at decentralized levels is critical to the introduction and sustainability of a working HRMIS. Equipment and training to change culture involves significant financial resources.

Senior management support is also essential for the redistribution of day-to-day HR responsibilities during the implementation timeframe. A fully-implemented HRIS will likely eliminate some of those time-consuming day-to-day manual activities, and so it is a matter of getting over that "hump". Rather than allowing individuals competition time preventing them from devoting effort to the HRIS implementation. Senior management commitment will be essential to help reduce or eliminate this risk.

Legislative and policy support

The introduction of effective HRMIS depends on strong support from legislation and policy relating to teacher management. Equally, the systems themselves have the potential to provide support for policy on improving teacher quality.

Involvement of Key Education Stakeholders

Involve all main education stakeholders early in the implementation process to assist in defining the requirements and desired outputs, such as reporting and interfaces. Depending on the nature of the HRIS being implemented, Ministry Payroll, IT bodies, Finance department, Training, Recruiting, and teachers unions may be potential stakeholders. It is best to identify who the key stakeholders are early in the process and encourage their participation. Implementation of an HRIS implies change to existing processes, and early involvement of stakeholders serves to heighten their buy-in to the HRIS, cooperation and acceptance of that change.

Establish a Dedicated Team

Setting up a committee or entrusting an individual with the task of leading the initial conceptualization of a comprehensive system is essential. For widespread support, the communication of this initial design to the broader department of education leadership as well as practitioners across the system is essential. It is important to ensure the involvement of as many stakeholders as possible during the different stages of development of a state HRMIS. Overall, the committee or individual should be responsible for progress toward the final design according to the set of rules and suggestions provided by the different stakeholders.

Ongoing Training, Support and Advocacy

Adoption of HRMIS requires a change in organisational attitudes and culture. This change depends on constant advocacy and training which can involve significant resources. The experience of one state highlights the value of online training and video conferencing in facilitating successful deployment of the systems and reducing the costs of support.

Horizontal sharing

An annual opportunity to share experiences and knowledge with other states is very beneficial. There is likely to be some benefit to states petitioning the national MHRD/RMSA to facilitate horizontal sharing of systems, processes and experiences.

Time Budgeted for the Implementation

A significant amount of effort is involved in migrating from an existing solution or system, such as a paper based system, to a new HRIS. Staffs will be involved in designing the HRIS, learning the new software and testing. Budget support for all phases of implementation is essential and having excess funds available in case of exceeding cost is required. Typically software implementations will reserve 15% of budget for anticipated cost increase due to unforeseen issue such as further changes required to the system or delays in rollout. In addition the availability of funds when required is essential. It is important to carefully plan implementation to coincide with releases of available funds.

Consultation during initial development

Setting up advocacy forums and a committee are essential in the initial stages of development of state HRMIS and can ensure involvement of as many stakeholders as possible. However, a smaller group should be established to expedite the final design according to a set of rules once input has been provided by the initial, larger committee.

Outsourcing development

Developing HRMIS requires professional expertise. Outsourcing the work gives access to the relevant specialist skills to ensure quality, and avoids the situation where any team become custodians or authorities of the system, so promoting ownership of the system by other departments. This development also needs to ensure compatibility between how data is coded in different systems. The National Informatics Centre (NIC) can provide a

viable option for this outsourcing, while some states have developed their own systems. It is important throughout the process of establishing a HRMIS, for the technology experts to work with the sector leaders that have content experience and expertise.

Phased and flexible implementation

States need to take a realistic, phased approach to establishing HRMIS, getting the system operational in stages rather than waiting until they have the perfect system ready to implement. Under a phased approach basic data may be entered as soon as possible so the system can be used for critical functions at the earliest opportunity, with further data and functionality added in later phases. Legacy data also needs to be integrated. It should be anticipated that staff will make errors in data entry during initial implementation, which need to be corrected. Rules should be gradually tightened to remove malpractice.

Integration into a single platform

States should develop early plans for integrating systems for teacher management into a single platform. The new platform must be compatible with the needs of the Department of Education. Plans should also be made for ensuring the Department of Education uses the platform. Robust data standards will help ensure the integration of different modules.

U-DISE data

U-DISE presents some constraints for states. There are challenges to accessing historic data because it stores each year's data in a separate database. The coding of schools and teachers is not consistent year to year as it is linked to the geographic location and not permanent as it should be. Many states are now operating systems which collect data throughout the year. Data is then exported to U-DISE for annual reporting from systems such as HRIS. This helps ensure good data standards are maintained at the state level and that data is consistent in all systems.

Support from RMSA-TCA

RMSA-TCA is supporting the development of HRMIS through initiatives that include:

- Assisting states to improve and integrate their existing systems including at sub-state level;
- Showcasing best practice between states to guide standards, assistance and policy advice;
- Assisting NUEPA to make U-DISE a proper relational and operational database.

Openness to Change

Embracing the change involved in an implementation in part relies on confidence in the solution to meet the needs of the Department of Education and associated stakeholders, which can be addressed through the definition of requirements and the BPO. Preparedness for change opens the doors of thinking to creative solutions and reporting possibilities, which can actually increase the success of an implementation beyond original expectations. Promote openness to change throughout the steps identified above.