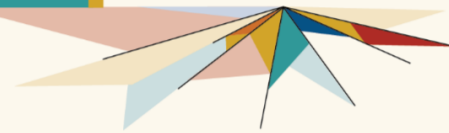


MOROCCO: Improving Teacher Effectiveness through Enhanced Teacher Education, Attraction, and Selection



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After many years of focusing on expanding access to education, Morocco has shifted its priorities toward quality, placing teacher policies and professionalization at the core of its reform agenda. This case study explores Morocco's ambitious efforts to improve teacher effectiveness through enhanced teacher education, attraction, and selection. Central to these reforms is a new 5-year initial teacher education (ITE) model, which emphasizes professional education and training tailored to the teaching profession. By examining the evolution of teacher education, the key components of the reform, and the enabling factors that have driven these changes, valuable insights are gained into how Morocco is working to enhance qualifications, improve teacher competency, and increase the overall attractiveness of the teaching profession. The preliminary outcomes and ongoing challenges provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact and future direction of these potentially transformative initiatives.

The Context

The structure of ITE in Morocco has undergone significant changes over the past two decades. Before 2012, prospective teachers enrolled in different institutions based on the level they intended to teach: Teacher Training Centers (Centres de Formation des Instituteurs, CFI) for primary school teachers, Regional Pedagogical Centers (Centres Pédagogiques Régionaux, CPR) for lower-secondary teachers, and Higher Teacher Training Centers (Écoles Normales Supérieures, ENS) for upper-secondary teachers. These programs lacked standardization and had short training durations, typically ranging from one to two years.

To address the lack of standardization and professionalization in ITE programs, the Regional Centers for Education and Training Professions (Centres Régionaux des Métiers de l'Éducation et de la Formation, CRMEF) were established in 2012. The CRMEF aimed to provide professional teacher education and training structured around three core competencies: academic, professional, and behavioral (see figure 1).

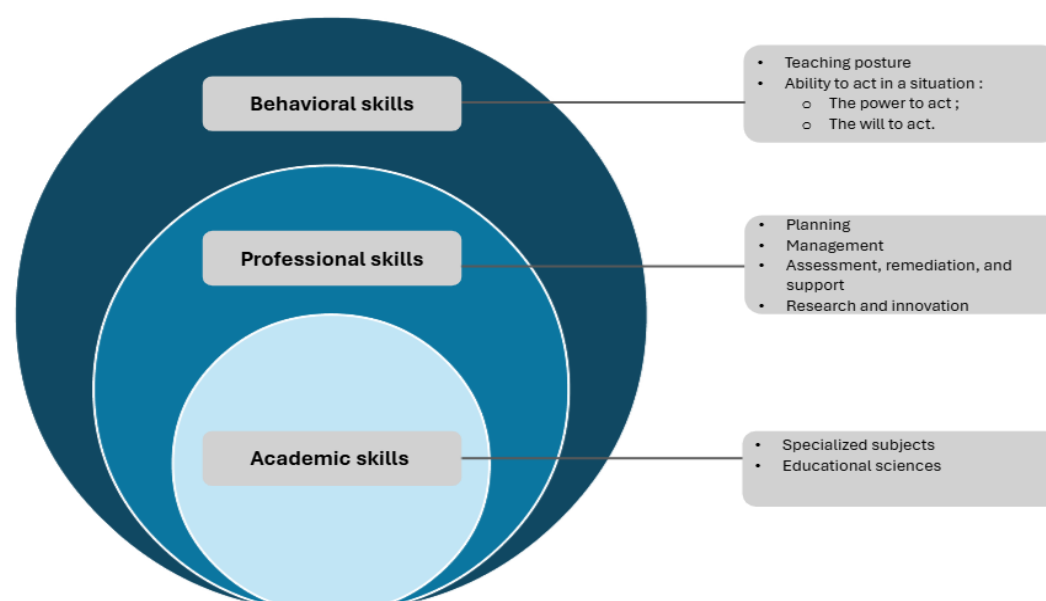
Despite the progress made by the creation of CRMEFs, the ITE programs offered by these centers still had three key challenges:

1. Difficulty attracting suitable high-caliber candidates.

2. Insufficient emphasis on psychosocial and behavioral competencies in the candidate selection process.
3. Limited student teacher knowledge of subject matter that they will teach, and a weak command of essential professional competencies.

To address these challenges, Morocco initiated a comprehensive reform of ITE. This reform included the design of a new system for teacher attraction and selection, university education and training, and teacher induction.¹ The goal was to produce better-qualified graduates while significantly increasing their numbers to meet the demands of an expanding education system.

Figure 1. ITE Competency Framework



Source: MENPS 2018.

Key Components of the Reform

The reform of ITE in Morocco introduced several key components aimed at enhancing the qualifications and increasing the number of teacher graduates. One of the most significant changes was the introduction of a new university degree program designed to complement the existing CRMEF training.

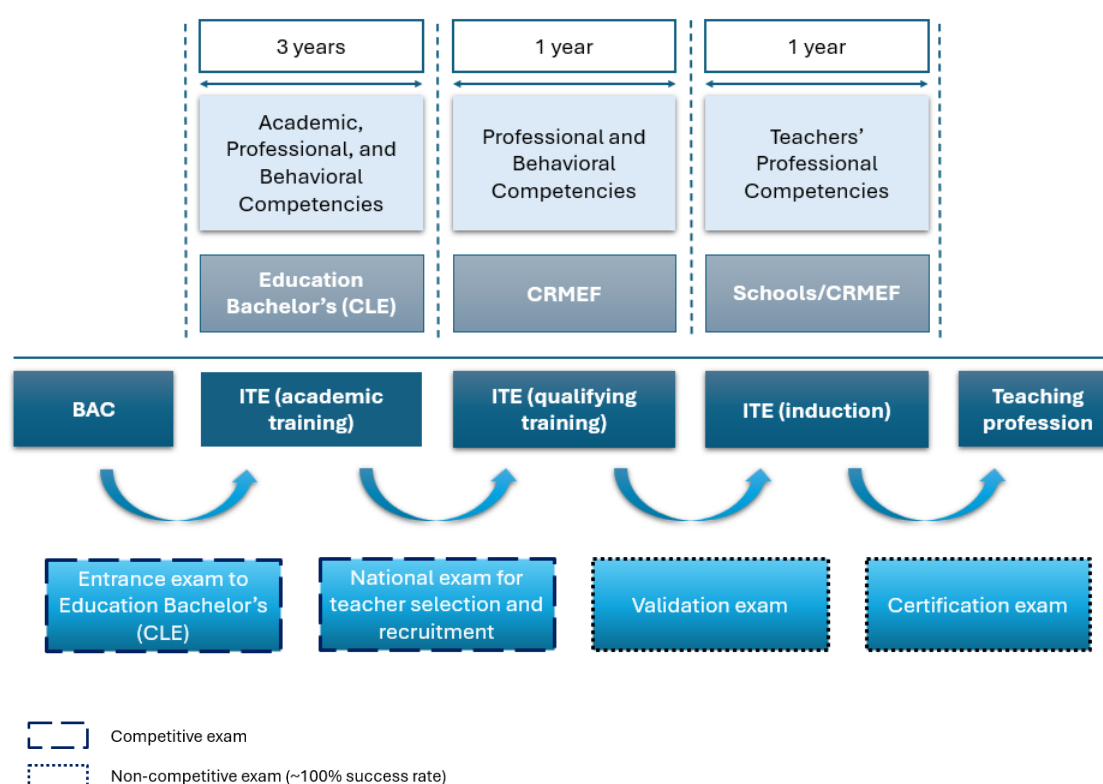
A New Education Bachelor's Degree Program

As part of the ITE reform, in 2018, the Ministry of National Education, Preschool and Sports (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, du Préscolaire et des Sports, MENPS) and the Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation (Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche Scientifique et de l'Innovation, (MESRI) introduced a new university program, the Cycle Licence d'Éducation (CLE), or Education Bachelor's program. This new program extended ITE from the previous two years to five years (figure 2).

¹ Teacher induction in Morocco refers to the second and final year of ITE managed by the CRMEFs, during which candidates are assigned to schools where they undertake a full-time internship, taking full responsibility for a classroom and receiving a civil servant starting salary.

The new Education Bachelor’s program includes 3-years at specific institutions affiliated with each university (a total of 12 nationwide), known as Écoles Normales Supérieures (ENS), as well as one institution called Faculté des Sciences de l’Éducation (FSE). Admission to these programs is open to baccalaureate holders and is based on (1) performance in relevant baccalaureate subjects, and (2) an interview to assess communication skills, motivation, and aptitude for the teaching profession.

Figure 2. Morocco’s New ITE Model



Source: World Bank based on discussions with the MENPS.

A key innovation of the Education Bachelor’s (CLE) program is its emphasis on behavioral and professional competencies essential to the teaching profession, in addition to strengthening academic expertise. While students delve into academic subjects related to their specialization (for example, French, Arabic, Amazigh, mathematics, or sciences), they also explore subjects related to education sciences such as didactics, pedagogy, developmental psychology, and sociology of education. Other innovative courses include modules on digital skills and personal development where students clarify and develop their personal and professional goals and learn how to manage their emotions. These courses often feature practical components in addition to traditional lectures, where students participate in activities such as presentations, mock classes, role-play, and small group debates. This approach allows them to deepen their knowledge and strengthen their interpersonal skills, particularly in communication.

In 2023, an additional module called Action Educative en Établissement Scolaire was introduced. This module provides students with hands-on professional experience within host

public schools starting in the first semester of the Education Bachelor's program, four hours a week.

While the Education Bachelor's program is currently being rolled out, the government has not yet made it mandatory for entering the teaching profession. Students with bachelor's degrees in fields other than education can still enroll directly in CRMEF to become teachers. This is partly due to the relatively low number of graduates to date, which is insufficient to fill all teacher vacancies. Additionally, the MENPS and MESRI aim to maintain competition between graduates of Education Bachelor's programs and candidates from other bachelor's programs to ensure the recruitment of the highest caliber candidates.

Combining Financial Incentives and Practical Experience

A persistent challenge in the Moroccan education system has been attracting high-caliber candidates with strong academic backgrounds and a genuine interest in the teaching profession. To address this, a tripartite agreement was signed in June 2022 between the Ministry of National Education, Preschool, and Sports (MENPS), the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), and the Ministry of Higher Education (MESRI). This agreement introduced a groundbreaking financial incentive as part of the Action Educative en Établissement Scolaire module (AEES). All students enrolled in the Education Bachelor's program receive a monthly stipend of 1,000 MAD (approximately US\$100) as compensation for participating in a service-learning program in schools. Given that this stipend is approximately one-third of the national minimum wage, it is a significant draw for candidates, especially those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds or remote regions. No other bachelor's degree in Morocco currently offers such financial support from the first year of study, making this policy a significant step forward in elevating the teaching profession's status.

Beyond its financial appeal, the AEES module offers a practical component, allowing students to gain hands-on experience in a school environment starting in their first semester. This replaces the previous internship model, which only took place in the last semester of the bachelor's degree. Students dedicate four hours per week over the school year, across all three years of study, to perform a range of tasks including support for administrative, academic, pedagogical, and extracurricular activities, all in exchange for their monthly stipend.

By combining financial incentive with early school immersion, the AEES module not only enhances the appeal of the Education Bachelor's program but also ensures that prospective teachers are familiar with the realities of the school and the classroom. It also provides support to host schools.

From Novice Student Teacher to Certified Professional

To officially enter the teaching profession in the public system, university graduates, including those with the Education Bachelor's program and other degree holders, must apply and be accepted into a CRMEF. This process involves a competitive national examination² that evaluates candidates based on three components: (1) a written test on academic knowledge, (2) an oral test assessing pedagogical abilities, and (3) more recently and under review, an assessment of

² While the validation and certification examinations shown in figure 2 are designed to assess students before entering their induction year and the profession, respectively, these are low-stake examinations that are granted to nearly all students who complete their academic requirements. In contrast, the entrance examination to the CRMEF is highly competitive and serves as the primary determinant of candidates' ability to become a teacher.

socioemotional skills through a situational judgment test (called “Test Métier Enseignant”). While Education Bachelor’s program students are automatically pre-selected to take the initial written test, they still compete against tens of thousands of candidates from other degree programs who are also eligible to apply.

Candidates who pass the national examination for entry into a CRMEF embark on a qualifying training program spanning two academic years. The first year includes both theoretical instruction and practical training through an internship during the academic year.³ Students receive a monthly stipend of approximately 1,400 MAD (US\$140) during this first year. After this period, candidates must pass a training validation examination before they can be assigned to a school for an induction period of one academic year.

As a cornerstone of Morocco’s ITE model, CRMEF training plays a vital role in bridging academic preparation with professional readiness. While the Education Bachelor’s (CLE) program focuses primarily on academic foundations—including in education sciences, pedagogy, and didactics—CRMEF training is designed to professionalize future teachers by equipping them with the practical skills necessary for effective classroom practice.

Enhancing Teacher Recruitment Through a New Socioemotional Test

In response to the insufficient emphasis on candidates’ psychosocial and behavioral competencies in the ITE selection process, the MENPS and MESRI introduced the Test Métier Enseignant (TME) in the CRMEF entrance examination.⁴ The TME is a behavioral and technical assessment designed to measure teacher candidates’ socioemotional skills and personality traits. It takes the form of a situational judgment test (SJT). Unlike traditional evaluation methods that rely on self-reported skills, the SJT presents candidates with contextualized scenarios reflecting real-world challenges or ambiguous situations they may encounter in the classroom or at school. Candidates are asked to evaluate potential behavioral responses. Rather than focusing on a single “correct” answer, the TME assesses a range of behavioral skills relevant to the teaching profession.⁵

This testing approach does not require prior teaching experience or subject-specific knowledge, making the test both equitable and effective. SJTs tests have gained popularity due to their high validity, cost-effectiveness, and positive applicant reactions, particularly when adapted for prospective teachers. Research shows that they are less costly than screening interview methods, are more predictive, and account for more variance in final on-the-job performance scores than personality or ability tests (Al Hasmi and Klassen 2019; Klassen and Rushby 2019; Whelpley 2014).

³ In practice, the first year of qualifying training within CRMEFs was often reduced from 9 to 6 months due to delays caused by late selection and budgetary approvals related to the Finance Law.

⁴ The TME was collaboratively designed by Oxford University and national experts under a technical assistance project led by the World Bank and funded by the UK’s Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office.

⁵ The TME underwent rigorous pilot testing before rollout. Between 2020 and 2021, the Ministry of Education assembled a working group of teachers, principals, and inspectors to adapt the SJT model for Morocco’s context. Initial trials with 300 novice teachers in early 2022 produced promising results, prompting the expansion of the test with additional items. The TME was first introduced experimentally in the December 2022 recruitment process and was rolled out nationwide in 2023. It remains under review before a decision on its weight in candidates’ overall score. Currently, the test does not contribute directly to candidates’ overall scores, but exceptional performance is rewarded with a bonus, and it is expected to become a more integral component of the teacher recruitment scoring system in the future.

An Induction Phase to Bridge Academic Preparation and Professional Practice

The induction program, which became a mandatory component of the CRMEF program in 2018, aims to bridge the gap between theoretical preparation and professional practice, equipping student teachers with practical skills in advance of official certification as teachers. During the induction year (second year at CRMEF), student teachers assume the role of trainee-teachers (Enseignants stagiaires), taking full responsibility for one or multiple classrooms and receiving a civil servant starting salary of around 5,000 MAD (approximately US\$500) per month. In addition to their teaching responsibilities, trainees engage in the following activities throughout the induction year:

- **Distance learning modules:** These cover topics such as academic guidance, educational inclusion, and remote instruction.
- **Workshops:** Trainees participate in 60 hours of workshops during school breaks at their respective CRMEF, where they share experiences, receive feedback, and address any challenges they may face with their trainers and peers.
- **Action-research project.** Trainees prepare and present an action-research project at the CRMEF.

Trainee-teachers are expected to receive three types of support during their induction year:

1. Administrative support provided by the host school principal.
2. Pedagogical guidance offered by a pedagogical inspector.
3. Coaching delivered by an experienced teacher designated by the host school principal.

The induction year concludes with a certification examination, marking the transition of trainees to the status of statutory teaching staff within the Regional Training and Education Academy (Académie régionale d'éducation et de formation, AREF).⁶

A Tripartite Convention to Enhance ITE Capacity and Attractiveness

In 2022, an agreement was signed between the MEF, MESRI, and MENPS, with a total budget of 4 billion MAD (US\$400 million) over 5 years. This agreement aims to significantly expand the capacity of higher education institutions (ENS and FSE) and increase the attractiveness of the Education Bachelor's program. Besides introducing financial incentives to attract better candidates, the agreement's key goal is to rapidly scale the supply of graduates from the Education Bachelor's program. The aim is to make this program the main pathway for recruiting future primary and secondary school teachers, based on the expected high performance of Education Bachelor's program graduates compared to those holding other types of degrees in the teaching profession.

The tripartite convention outlined two major objectives:

⁶ AREFs are decentralized public institutions in each region of Morocco operating under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education, Preschool and Sports (MENPS), and responsible for implementing education policies at the regional level. They oversee the management of schools, teacher recruitment and training, budget allocation, and the monitoring of education quality and school infrastructure.

1. To expand ENS infrastructure and recruit sufficient personnel (teaching and administrative staff) to accommodate 50,000 student teachers by 2025, enabling the training of 18,000 to 20,000 new teacher candidates annually. This involves substantial investments in the construction and equipping of existing and new educational institutions, as well as the creation of 888 additional budgetary positions, covering faculty and research positions, along with administrative and technical roles. It also includes the payment of overtime hours for instructors.
2. To establish master's and PhD programs in education research, enhancing the quality of teacher training and faculty expertise in this area. This involves the establishment of master's and doctoral programs in teaching methods and educational sciences at ENS institutions in several cities across Morocco.

These efforts have already yielded significant results. Since the adoption of the tripartite convention in 2022, the number of admitted Education Bachelor's program students tripled in just one year, from 3,114 in 2021/22 to 10,119 in 2022/23. By 2023/24, the number of admitted students reached 16,804, a fivefold increase. The MENPS and MESRI's target is for 80 percent of CRMEF graduates to be Education Bachelor's program graduates by 2028. This proportion has been steadily increasing, with 3.0 percent of CRMEF candidates coming from Education Bachelor's programs in 2021, 7.1 percent in 2022, and 9.6 percent in 2023 (MENPS 2024).

Enabling Factors

A combination of key factors has made the recent changes in the ITE model in Morocco possible.

An Urgent Need for Qualified Teachers

A significant expansion in the number of students enrolled in Morocco's public education system, combined with the mass retirement of nearly half of the public-school teaching workforce, created an urgent need for new, qualified teachers. By the 2016–17 school year, the demand for teachers had reached a record high. The number of teaching staff dropped from 222,736 in the 2015–16 academic year to 210,367 in 2016–17 (a 6 percent drop) due to a wave of retirements, while the number of students (in primary and secondary schools) rose from 5.82 million to 5.95 million (a 2 percent increase) during the same period (CSEFRS and INE 2021). This pressing need for recruitment presented an opportunity to improve the quality of teaching by attracting, selecting, and training better-qualified candidates in upcoming hiring phases.

Strong Political Commitment

Simultaneously, Morocco demonstrated a strong political commitment, not only to expanding but also improving the quality of the education system. In 2015, the government launched an ambitious reform agenda outlined in the 2015–2030 Strategic Vision, “For a School of Equity, Quality, and Promotion of the Individual and Society”, which places teachers at the heart of its reforms, recognizing them as the most critical factor for improving educational outcomes in schools, as highlighted in Lever 9 of the vision (CSEFRS 2015). The design of a New Development Model (NDM) in 2021 further reinforced this commitment. The NDM played a significant role in shaping the 2022–26 “Feuille de Route”, a roadmap structured around 12 priorities, which builds on the 2015–2030 vision. Notably, it includes a dedicated area on teachers, comprising three objectives (MENPS 2022):

1. Outstanding, practice-oriented teacher education and training.

2. Improved working conditions for teachers.
3. An incentivizing and rewarding career management system.

Increased Public Investment in Education

The commitment to improving teacher effectiveness has been bolstered by consistent increases in public investment in education over the past decade. The Government of Morocco has invested a considerable amount of public funds to finance its education system, with education spending growing at a faster rate than GDP—rising from 4.7 percent to 5.7 percent of GDP between 2017 and 2024. By comparison, high-income countries spend an average of 4.8 percent of GDP on education, while middle-income countries allocate approximately 3.6 percent.⁷ Notably, salary expenditures account for 76 percent of total education spending, further demonstrating Morocco's dedication to supporting its teachers (MEF 2023).

Preliminary Outcomes

The preliminary outcomes indicate that the introduction of the Education Bachelor's program (CLE) has significantly enhanced the attractiveness of the teaching profession, enrolled candidates with higher academic performance, and strengthened ITE through a multidisciplinary curriculum. These findings are based on quantitative data collected by the MENPS and MESRI, as well as a qualitative perception study conducted by the World Bank in collaboration with MENPS.

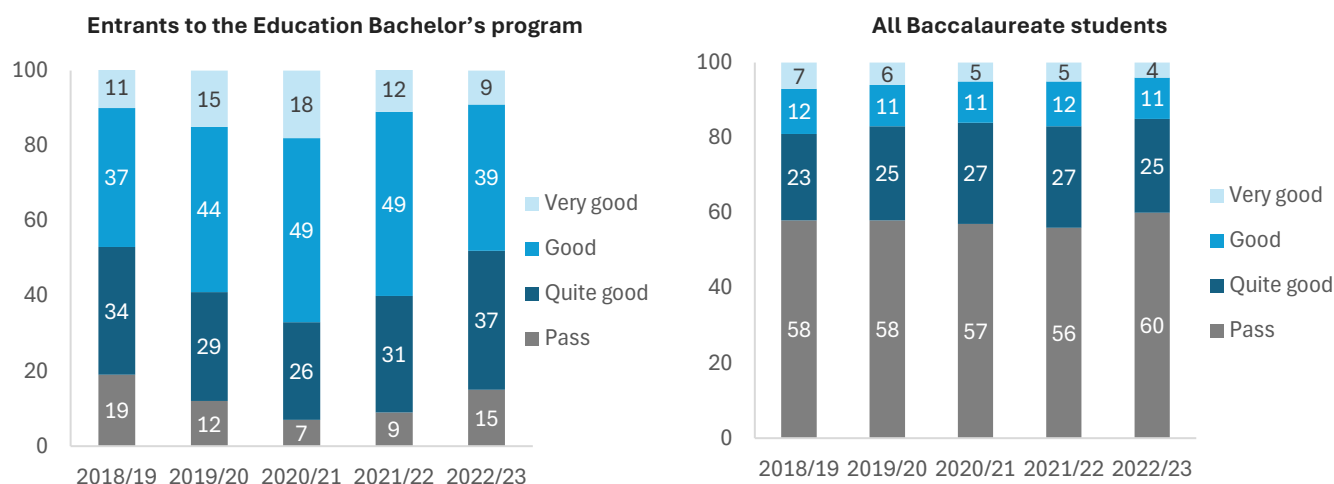
ITE Has Become More Attractive

The introduction of the Education Bachelor's program, combined with the monthly stipend of the AEES module and other key aspects of the ITE, has enhanced the appeal of the teaching profession. This has supported the rapid expansion of the education system. As illustrated in figures 3 and 4, since its inception, the Education Bachelor's program has attracted candidates with higher academic achievement. Nearly half of the applicants to the program (48 percent) achieved a Baccalaureate distinction of "Good" or "Very Good." By comparison, across all Baccalaureate students, fewer than 20 percent achieved distinctions of "Good" or higher. This suggests that the teaching profession has become a more attractive career option for students with strong academic achievement.

Even as the Education Bachelor's (CLE) program rapidly scaled up—tripling its intake between the 2021/22 and 2022/23 academic years and increasing it fivefold between the 2021/22 and 2023/24 academic years—the proportion of CLE students with a BAC distinction has remained high. Initially, this proportion increased from 81 percent in the first year of the CLE program (2018/19) to 91 percent in the academic year before the tripartite convention was signed (2021/22). However, due to the program's expansion and higher student intake, it slightly decreased to 80 percent by 2023/24, returning to its pre-CLE level but with a significantly higher absolute number of students. The CLE degree has successfully broadened access while generally maintaining the academic performance of its candidates.

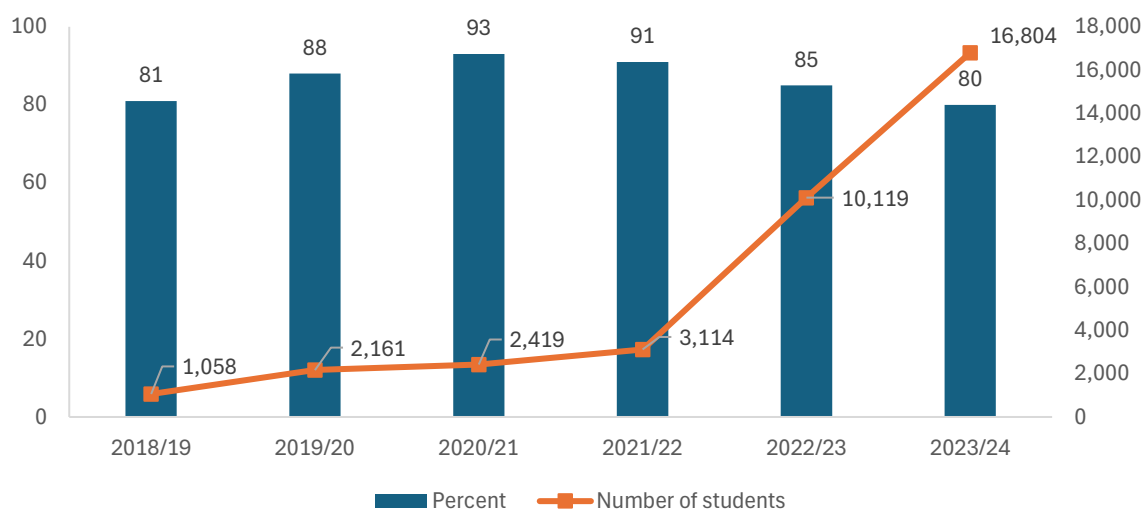
⁷ These are 2022 averages retrieved from the World Bank Databank using data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS).

Figure 3. Distribution of BAC Grades



Source: World Bank based on MENPS data.

Figure 4. Number of Education Bachelor's Program Students and Percentage Achieving Baccalaureate Distinctions



Source: World Bank based on MENPS data.

A qualitative perception study revealed that the new Education Bachelor's Program (CLE) fosters a stronger sense of belonging and purpose among students (World Bank and MENPS unpublished). These students participate in extracurricular activities, join clubs, and engage in collaborative projects during their studies—opportunities that are relatively rare in Moroccan universities. Students who initially pursued other university degrees and later switched to a CLE program were drawn by the more personalized education and training, increased support, and structured environment offered at ENSs and FSE. The monthly stipend further strengthened the program's appeal by significantly alleviating financial barriers to pursuing higher education. Additionally, the pre-selection guarantee for the competitive entrance examination to CRMEFs added another layer of attraction to the program. Directors of ENSs have reported noticeable improvements in students' profiles since 2018, with the ability to attract students with a solid

academic background and a strong conviction about their choice to pursue teaching as a vocation rather than merely a job path—an outcome that was uncommon prior to the reform.

The Education Bachelor’s Program Prepares Graduates Well for the CRMEF Entrance Examination

Data from CRMEF entrance examinations reveal significant differences between the success rate of graduates from Education Bachelor’s programs and other undergraduate programs. For example, in 2023, the overall admission rate into CRMEF was 10.5 percent of applicants to the primary education program and 14.1 percent of applicants to the secondary education program, while the admission rate for Education Bachelor’s program graduates was 39 percent for the primary education program and 54 percent for the secondary education program. However, the higher academic caliber (as shown by their Baccaalaureate scores before entering university) may in part be driving this difference in CRMEF entrance examination results.

To better assess the effectiveness of the Education Bachelor’s program in boosting overall academic, pedagogic, and socioemotional knowledge and skills in the teaching workforce, a statistical analysis was conducted using the CRMEF applicants database.⁸ The analysis included data for primary and secondary teachers in 2023, due to lack of comprehensive information for both primary and secondary in other years. A statistical model was used to determine the correlation between holding an Education Bachelor’s degree and CRMEF application examination outcomes, controlling for age, sex, region of application, Baccaalaureate honors, and undergraduate honors. The correlation coefficient captures differences in outcomes after accounting for prior sociodemographic and academic differences of applicants.

The results show that applicants to CRMEF primary education who hold an Education Bachelor’s degree are 2.4 times more likely to be admitted than those with other undergraduate degrees. For secondary education, Education Bachelor’s degree holding applicants are 2.8 times more likely to be admitted to CRMEF than holders of other undergraduate degrees.⁹

Overall, the Education Bachelor’s program appears to provide prospective teachers with a set of skills recognized in the CRMEF examination. However, the admission rate of Education Bachelor’s program graduates to CRMEF is far from the 80 percent target set by the MENPS and MESRI, creating uncertainty for new entrants. Nonetheless, the alignment of the Education Bachelor’s program with the CRMEF entrance examination highlights the quality of this program and demonstrates strong support for building a comprehensive ITE model in Morocco.

⁸ The CRMEF applicants database includes, among other applicant information: (1) individual characteristics (candidate gender, age, and marital status); (2) academic profile (Baccaalaureate profile, Baccaalaureate honors, undergraduate degree type and major, and undergraduate honors); (3) application profile (region and year of application), and (4) teacher profile (specialty demanded). This database was linked with a database including the results of applicants for each of the three competencies assessed, one of which (the Test Metier d’Enseignant) had no impact on the final score. The database includes (1) the final score in the written test, oral test, and TME, and (2) the CRMEF admission status.

⁹ CRMEF applicants to primary education holding an Education Bachelor’s degree scored 0.18 standard deviations higher than those holding other undergraduate degrees on the written test, 0.33 standard deviations higher on the oral test, and 0.28 standard deviations higher on the TME. For secondary education, applicants holding an Education Bachelor’s degree scored 0.20 standard deviations higher on the written test, 0.23 standard deviations on the oral test, and 0.09 standard deviations on the TME. The results account for sociodemographic and academic background.

Strengthened ITE Through a Multidisciplinary Curriculum

The qualitative perception survey revealed that ENS instructors, directors, and students highly commend the Education Bachelor's program curriculum for effectively integrating theoretical and practical components (World Bank and MENPS unpublished). They particularly appreciate the inclusion of modules on communication, digital skills, and teaching methods, which are considered essential for preparing prospective teachers. The AEES module, a cornerstone of the Education Bachelor's program, was lauded for providing students with valuable hands-on experience during their studies, thereby bridging the gap between theoretical learning and classroom applications. Students noted that the AEES module helped them embrace and grasp the reality of the teaching profession from the very beginning of their studies. ENS instructors (teacher educators) observed noticeable improvements in students' attitudes and approaches as a result. ENS instructors and directors also consider that their involvement in the design of the reform contributed to its success. They praised the collaborative efforts between both ENS and FSE and the MENPS in developing ITE program content that meets Morocco's needs.

Ongoing Challenges

While there have been early successes in the ITE reform, the qualitative perception study has revealed several ongoing challenges.

Inefficiencies in the Selection Process

One significant flaw in the design of the Education Bachelor's program is the timing of the entrance examination, which takes place in October, after most other university entrance examinations. This timing issue often results in the Education Bachelor's program being viewed as a last resort, leading to the recruitment of less motivated candidates. ENS instructors noted that some students enroll in the Education Bachelor's program only because they were unable to secure a place in other institutions and often leave after their first year if they are accepted elsewhere the following year. This misalignment in the timing of the examination results in adverse selection, which proves costly for the system. The Government may be investing in students who chose the Education Bachelor's program by default or who are primarily motivated by the 1,000 MAD allowance, only to have them change career paths once other opportunities arise. Moreover, the current selection process, which includes an oral test typically lasting between 3 and 7 minutes due to the high volume of candidates, is often seen as inadequate for assessing teaching potential. Education Bachelor's program instructors and directors express concerns that these evaluations may be too short to assess students' soft skills, which is the primary objective of this test. The subjective nature of the test and the misalignment between the content of the test and the students' major within the Education Bachelor's program (Amazigh or bilingual French and Arabic) for primary school teachers can strongly disadvantage candidates, diluting the accuracy and fairness of the selection process.

Inefficiencies in the CRMEF selection process were also noted, particularly regarding the timing of the entrance examination, which is scheduled to be held in October. Since graduates of the Education Bachelors program (CLE) complete their studies in June, the four-month gap creates a period of uncertainty that can prompt many to pursue alternative degrees or seek employment in private schools. The latter phenomenon may be more pronounced in urban areas where private schools are more prominent. As a result, the system risks losing candidates, often the most qualified, to other opportunities before the entrance exam even takes place, undermining the pipeline of prospective highly qualified public school teachers.

Limited Career Prospects

The qualitative perception study revealed other concerns among Education Bachelor's students. Although the strong focus of the degree on preparing for the teaching profession makes it attractive to many, it may limit students' alternative career options beyond teaching. This creates a higher opportunity cost for Education Bachelor's program students compared to those enrolled in other university degrees who remain eligible for the CRMEF entrance examination but also have more flexibility to pursue other career paths. Education Bachelor's graduates are being screened twice to the profession (before the undergraduate degree and before entering the CRMEF), which could be considered an inefficient policy in the long term.

One way to reduce this opportunity cost for Education Bachelor's program students would be to lower the barriers to their entry into the CRMEFs, giving them priority entry. Currently, the CRMEF entrance examination is skewed toward the written test, which may not allow Education Bachelor's program students to showcase the soft skills they have spent considerable time developing, thus limiting their ability to differentiate themselves from other candidates.

Consequently, career uncertainty emerged as a recurring theme in the qualitative perception study, with students expressing anxiety over the lack of guaranteed employment after completing three years of specialized education and training. Concerns about the future also extend to working conditions, including overcrowded classrooms, low salaries, and uncertainties regarding location of assignments, especially in remote and rural areas, which can be another source of anxiety making the Education Bachelors program less attractive.

Rapid Expansion of the Education Bachelor's Program

Despite substantial investments allocated by the tripartite convention, the rapid growth in student enrollment in Education Bachelor's programs has strained resources, stretched the capacity of both instructors and students, and ultimately affecting teaching and learning quality. Insufficient physical infrastructure has exacerbated these challenges, with institutions struggling to accommodate the surge in enrollment. ENS instructors participating in the qualitative perception study expressed concerns about overcrowded classrooms, sometimes hosting more than 100 students, which undermined teaching effectiveness, particularly in subjects requiring small-group interactions, such as teaching methods and language instruction. To accommodate the increased student population in Education Bachelor's programs, the number of in-person instructional hours has in some cases been reduced.

The rise in the number of student teachers has led to an imbalance between the number of instructors and training needs, resulting in a shortage of qualified instructors in ENS and FSE, particularly in specialized fields such as pedagogy and teaching methods. ENS directors highlighted the difficulty of recruiting experienced instructors, which has led to competition between institutions for the few available candidates. The shortage of qualified instructors has forced institutions to rely on part-time instructors or doctoral students to meet the demand.

Professionalization in CRMEF is Undermined by Foundational Gaps

Although graduates of the Education Bachelor's (CLE) program tend to perform better on the CRMEF entrance examination than their non-CLE peers and often possess stronger interpersonal and soft skills, CRMEF instructors report academic shortcomings among this group, particularly in STEM subjects. Compared to strong candidates from other academic backgrounds, CLE

graduates can display only surface-level disciplinary knowledge, as their curriculum prioritizes breadth over depth, and content pedagogic knowledge over content knowledge. This creates a challenge for CRMEFs, which must fill foundational academic gaps within a single year, limiting the time available for the program's core objective: professionalizing future teachers.

This remediation burden ultimately undermines the effectiveness of the CRMEF training. Instead of concentrating on classroom preparedness and hands-on practice, instructors and directors report that a substantial share of the program is spent revisiting academic fundamentals. Participants emphasized that, although CRMEF and CLE curricula are formally aligned, improvements are still needed at the CLE level to ensure graduates are adequately prepared.

A Need for Greater Coordination Among Key Stakeholders

Coordination challenges have emerged as a recurring issue among the various stakeholders involved in ITE, affecting the efficiency and effectiveness of the ITE programs. One key challenge is the limited coordination and planning with schools designated to host Education Bachelor's program students as part of the AEES module (usually based on proximity to ITE centers). This has made it difficult for some schools to manage student placement and supervision effectively, particularly for those schools experiencing high demand (with up to 10 students per day). Some Education Bachelor's students reported disorganization regarding their roles during this module, with some school directors either refusing to assign tasks or giving them tasks unrelated to their academic goals. This lack of clarity can hinder students' ability to fully benefit from the in-school experience. Likewise, the schools themselves are not fully realizing the benefit of classroom assistance from the student teachers.

Moreover, the induction year, intended to be a cornerstone of student teachers' preparation within CRMEFs, also suffers from this lack of coordination among stakeholders (teacher educators, mentor teachers, inspectors, and school directors). As a result, student teachers often do not receive adequate supervision from teacher educators, mentor teachers, and inspectors during this critical year, nor do they continue their studies at their CRMEF during school breaks. In fact, the qualitative study revealed that support from the academic team at CRMEF during that period is often at the discretion of the student teachers and the CRMEF teacher educators and is conducted through informal means of communication such as text messages.

Key Takeaways

Morocco's experience with a new ITE model highlights several important insights:

1. ***Offering a degree specifically designed for the teaching profession, combined with service-learning in schools and a stipend, can enhance teacher selection, recruitment, and preparation.*** This approach attracts high-caliber candidates, including those from low-income backgrounds, by providing a clear professional identity and better preparation through a mixture of theoretical and practical education.
2. ***Reforming the selection process for ITE can attract more qualified and motivated candidates.*** While the selection process for the new Education Bachelor's program is still under development, monitoring and analyzing student intake and outcomes can help to identify better ways to attract and select high-caliber students. In Morocco's case, this

includes adjusting the timing of the entrance examination and ensuring objectivity and fairness in the interview process (oral test).

3. **Feedback loops between ITE institutions and government departments can help to address student teachers' needs and meet workforce demand.** By collecting information on ITE program outcomes and student teachers' concerns, such as future employment—particularly the uncertainty in Morocco's case surrounding acceptance into a CRMEF program after completing the Education Bachelor's program—policies can be adjusted to better respond to these needs. It may be necessary to provide guarantees or support for progressing through certification requirements, or adjust ITE curricula, and to ensure that candidates are identified as suitable for teaching early in the process.
4. **Expanding career opportunities and highlighting general and transferable skills of Education Bachelor's program graduates could enhance the program's attractiveness and mitigate career uncertainty.** Options include providing master's level studies in related or different fields and clearly defining the general and transferable skills acquired through the Education Bachelor's program.

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