Education International

Oxfam Novib

Study of teachers' situation in Northern Uganda in the context of Quality Educators For All Project

In collaboration with Uganda National Teachers' Union (UNATU), Literacy and Basic Education (LABE), and Forum for African Women Educationalists Uganda Chapter (FAWEU)

Carol Anne Spreen (Ph.D) and Kwiri Kebba Topher (MSc EFS)

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Field research assistance on this project was also provided by: Kate Stanley, MPH/MPP, University of Virginia, and Esther Achakara, BA (SS), DipEd.

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We are extremely grateful to the principal respondents and key informants for their willingness to share their experiences, views, and opinions with us. We feel greatly indebted to the participants in all of the schools and districts who participated in the survey and interviews. Our main support and facilitating team are also sincerely thanked for their support and collaboration. We appreciate the support of the research assistants, Esther and Kate, for their active role in ensuring that adequate and accurate information was gathered and Christine for her assistance with school visits.

We would like to thank Educational International and Oxfam Novib for supporting us to conduct this study, and particularly Undarmaa Batsukh, Dennis Sinyolo and Mirjam Horstmeier for their encouragement, helpful feedback and constructive comments on the study.

We hope that this study shall go a long way in informing and facilitating the process of improving the quality of education for all in Uganda and particularly in the selected schools. We look forward to a stronger working relationship with the Quality-Ed project as we strive to contribute to the improvement of the quality of education in Uganda. All errors of omission are solely the responsibility of the study team.

List of Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CCT	Coordinating Centre Tutors
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DEO	District Education Officer
DIS	District Inspector of Schools
EFA	Education for All Initiative (UN/UNESCO)
EI	Education International
FAWEU	Forum for African Women Educationalists Uganda Chapter
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GRP	Gender Responsive Pedagogy
HIV/AIDS	Human Immune Virus
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
LABE	Literacy and Adult Basic Education
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports of Uganda
MTE	Mother Tongue Education (Local Languages Education)
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NTC	National Teachers College
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ONL	Oxfam Novib Netherlands
PIASCY	Presidential Initiative on Aids Strategy for Communication to Youth
Post-2015	Process to define the Future Global Development Framework
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PTC	Primary School Teachers College
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
Quality-Ed	Quality Educators for All Project
RDC	Resident District Commissioners
SMC	School Management Committee
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TAG	Teachers' Action for Girls
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
UNATU	Uganda National Teachers' Union
UNEB	Uganda National Examination Board
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
UPE	Universal Primary Education

Terminologies and References

- Competence Profile - study conducted to assess the basic knowledge of teachers in Ugandan primary schools before working to improve the quality therein
- Competency - a skill or knowledge set required for a specific profession
- Curriculum - a detailed outline of course content that includes both outputs and outcomes for each lesson
- Gender Parity – an equal representation of males and female in the context of education as pupils or teachers
- Gender Responsiveness or Sensitivity - a heightened awareness of empowering groups by gender, but also learning to blur the lines of traditional gender roles
- Life Skills - a social skills set necessary to function within the workplace or a peer group
- Parent Teacher Association Funds - collections of money from parents to school that are generally spent on materials for the classrooms, their renovation, or for teachers' professional development
- Parent Teacher - a teacher raised in the community who is qualified, but has not received a placement through the government
- Pedagogy – a written methods, preparatory instruction and training manual for a class that resembles a curriculum and a handbook combined
- Primary School (P1-P7) - the equivalent of American Elementary School and Middle School grades 1-7
- Professional Development - opportunities for teachers to increase knowledge and skills pertaining to teaching
- Roll-down Approach - a training process by which one teacher attends training and returns to their peers to then conduct training of their own
- Rural - schools at least a 20-minute drive from the centre of town
- School fees - tuition, which is illegal to charge in Ugandan public primary schools
- Secondary School - the equivalent of the last year of American Middle School and the entirety of High School
- Stakeholders - individuals involved in the creation, implementation or benefits of a programme or policy
- Tertiary Education – also known as post-secondary education, this is the American equivalent of Bachelors, Associates, or any Technical training post high-school diploma
- Universal Primary Education Goal 2: A Millennium Development Goal is that 100 per cent of children will complete P1-P7
- Urban - areas within a 20-minute drive of town centre

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Quality Educators for All Project (Quality-Ed) is a joint venture between Oxfam Novib (ONL), and Education International (EI) aimed at addressing the major and chronic crisis underlying the problems of access and quality in the public education system. The project aims to assist countries to achieve their Education for All (EFA) targets and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In Uganda, the project is being implemented in four target districts of Northern Uganda: Gulu, Apac, Amolatar, and Pader.

The purpose of this study was to provide information on the beginning levels of implementation of the Quality-Ed Project[1]. The study was designed to address the knowledge and experience, needs and concerns of teachers and administrators in the four target districts. Understanding about the Quality-Ed programme at this point are limited and primarily based on information provided by those who participated in the launch workshops and/or those who have received some of the teacher guides and manuals. Rather than evaluating implementation of the Quality-Ed programme, this study sought to identify what professional development, teaching, and support materials were needed for the next level of implementation. At this stage in the project, the study set out to establish whether teachers, administrators, and programme planners shared similar goals, understanding, and expectations in terms of the purpose and use of the Life Skills curriculum, gender-responsive pedagogy (GRP), competence profiles for primary teachers, and local languages in teaching and learning. The authors also investigated head teachers' understanding, support, and management of teachers, particularly in the development and expectations put forward for teachers in the Teacher Competence Profiles.

This study describes the challenges of quality teaching in Northern Uganda underscoring, first, the need for providing adequate basic teaching, learning, and living conditions (including school and classroom infrastructure, electricity and water, and housing for teachers); second, the need for adequate teaching and learning materials and resources (including textbooks, visual aids, teacher guides, learner support materials); third, increased frequency of and expanded professional development opportunities for teachers in rural and remote schools; and lastly, the need for better teacher deployment and appraisal systems that are aligned with better on-site and ongoing professional development mechanisms for teachers.

[1] *The authors recognise this time frame as the beginning of phase two (described in the project timeline) and acknowledge that while the project roll-out has been underway for two years, due to the indirect delivery of "roll-down" training and the lack of resources and limited distribution of teacher support materials, efforts to measure "impact" would be premature at this point.*

Constructing a portrait of primary school teachers in Northern Uganda is important for the Quality-Ed project (as well as policy makers, and other education actors) if it is to be understood how to ensure that training, support, and appraisal systems are relevant, targeted and meaningful to teachers working in unique contexts such as schools in Northern Uganda. Such understanding offers those responsible for providing a Quality Education for All an opportunity to look at the on-the-ground needs of teachers and how they can best engage in professional development activities that help improve schooling and, ultimately, learning opportunities for all children. In this study, the authors set out to investigate what teachers believe about themselves, their profession, and their learners; and how teachers perceive their particular work environment (that is characterised by recent war/conflict, limited resources, and communities around the schools that experience poverty and other social/cultural constraints); and what additional support mechanisms need to be in place for quality education in this context.

While the literature has made clear that teacher ideologies and perceptions are important and ought to be taken into account in the formation of professional development programmes, this is largely not occurring. It was also evident that, despite consensus on the importance of professional development in improving instructional practices, the distance (real and metaphorical) between the government, teacher training colleges, unions, and teachers in this region, has meant that few structures were in place to ensure that teachers who need the most support actually receive it. Findings from this study suggest that, particularly in the four target districts, the need for on-site and ongoing professional development programmes was acute since many of the primary schools visited were not only remote but were characterised by poverty, under-resourcing, and have been affected by conflict. The lack of basic resources and learning opportunities for teachers themselves highlights the need for well-targeted school-based interventions that also importantly involve teachers from the local context in their design and planning. The authors also observed many instances where greater fidelity to traditional practices at times conflicted with new curriculum and teaching methods such as life skills, gender responsiveness, use of local languages, and the introduction and use of information and communications technology (ICT) in education. Challenges in implementing "active" teaching and learning were confounded by a lack of material resources and poor and overcrowded classrooms.

The study also found significant gaps in the performance appraisal and support-supervision systems. The failure to align supervision and feedback with appraisal and incentive systems meant that many teachers saw little need to participate in professional development or upgrade their qualifications. These should be better aligned, more clearly written, and tied to the Teacher Competency Profile. Based on these findings, this report argues for stronger advocacy and public campaigns around new curricular ideas, specifically gender-responsive practices and gender equality (particularly with reference

to girls and women's rights). This should include promoting, training, and supporting female teachers and providing them with incentives to teach in the hardest-to-reach areas – these should be a priority area for future Quality-Ed initiatives and advocacy. This will go a long way in addressing girls' dropout rates and the promotion of gender-responsive teaching at the school level.

The authors also wish to underscore the importance of new pedagogies for teaching life skills, valuing diversity, and promoting social cohesion. In this particular region, the meaning of "rural and from the north" - and particularly its post-war/conflict context - underscores the isolation and vulnerability many teachers and students feel. Efforts to engage, motivate, and inspire both students and teachers through the promotion and recognition of local languages and life skills builds education for human dignity that ensures Quality Education for All. While the current study did not seek to evaluate the merits of the curriculum or active teaching and learning pedagogies, it did seek to understand the assumptions and challenges that teachers face when attempting to implement these reforms.

RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to best capture the context of the Quality-Ed project indicators and objectives, a myriad of methods were used to collect and triangulate the information on the ground with that from other sources. In total, 40 participating schools were surveyed, and 14 of these were visited for in-depth on-site interviews and observations.

The study consisted of both qualitative and quantitative data (surveys[2], interviews[3], focus groups, classroom observation guide[4], and document reviews) and concentrated on: 1) teacher characteristics, 2) teachers' professional development needs, 3) understanding of teacher competencies and use of the teacher competency profile, 4) promotion of life skills by teachers in line with the Life Skills Curriculum, knowledge and use of GRP as well as knowledge and attitudes around using local languages as a medium of instruction, 5) detailing the current teacher-deployment practices and working conditions, and 6) exploring teacher-support systems and continuing needs.

The research team distributed surveys to the head teacher of each school, and to between six and 10 teachers who were available when surveys were distributed. A total of 292 surveys were collected, coded, and analysed. In-depth qualitative interviews were also conducted with 36 study participants including: 13 head teachers, 19 classroom teachers, two union representatives, and two district officials. Purposive sampling was used for the interviews because information-rich respondents have a good sense of the purpose and status of the project. The Initiative Team and the Advisory Committee were also primary intelligence points and provided information on the relevant structures, related documents, and additional observations.

In addition to the survey findings, the qualitative school-based interviews and observations particularly aimed at capturing the deeper social characteristics of the school community - the diversity of its composition, its history, language, culture, traditions, and teachers' own beliefs and experiences (which are shared in the summary and conclusions at the end of the report). This in-depth descriptive research approach should illuminate the critical importance of historical and contextual understanding of what counts for teachers and what is needed to develop "quality educators" and also help shed light on the reservoir of knowledge and experience that already exists with teachers working in such communities.

[2] *See "Sample Teacher Survey" in Appendix 1.0*
[3] *See "Sample Teacher Interview Questions" in Appendix 2.0*
[4] *See "Sample Classroom Observation Guide" in Appendix 3.0*

CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Background of the Project

The Quality Educators for All (Quality-Ed) project is a joint initiative between Education International (EI) and Oxfam Novib (ONL). It is aimed at addressing the major and chronic crisis underlying the problems of access and quality in the public education system. The project aims to assist countries achieve their Education for All (EFA) targets and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In Uganda, Quality-Ed is working in partnership with the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWEU) Uganda Chapter, Literacy and Adult Basic Education (LABE) and Uganda National Teachers' Union (UNATU), hereafter referred to as the Initiative Team. This team works in close collaboration with the existing structures of the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) and Teacher Training institutes. The working committee includes representatives from the MoES – Department of Teacher Education, National Curriculum Development Centre, Kyambogo University, and the Directorate of Education Standards. The project also involves a multi-stakeholder partnership, both nationally and internationally. The major thrust of the project is to strengthen the Ugandan teaching force through an improved teacher professional development and support system which will contribute to the improvement of the quality of learning outcomes (broadly viewed) at the primary school level. The project has four major objectives:

1. To strengthen the capacity of Primary 1-Primary 3 teachers to improve and develop literacy skills among the learners.
2. -To increase the adoption and application of the Competence Profile, Life Skills Curriculum, promote local languages/mother tongue education, GRP and teacher performance management among the education actors, including coordinating centre tutors (CCTs), Pre-service Tutors, head teachers, parent teacher associations (PTAs), school management committees (SMCs), and teachers.
3. To support the continuous professional development of 480 head teachers, their deputies and 480 SMCs in performance management.
4. To document the effectiveness of the Quality-Ed methodology for the purposes of advocacy and sector-wide dissemination.

1.1 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE UGANDAN EDUCATION CONTEXT

Since 1997, the Ugandan education system has undergone a considerable transformation following the announcement of the MDGs and the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) (Yoga & Wandega, 2010). The primary school pupil population rose from 3.1 million in 1996 to to 8.3 million in 2012 (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2012a). The UPE push also involved the building of primary schools in mass numbers over the last 18 years. In 1996, for instance, Uganda had 8,531 primary schools. This increased to 14,179 in 2008 (Yoga & Wandega, 2010). While secondary and tertiary schools have not grown quite as quickly, they also expanded over the years to meet demand. Currently, Uganda spends 3.3 per cent of its GDP on education expenditures. Of this, 2.6 per cent is spent on teacher salaries, compared to neighbouring Kenya which spends 3.4 per cent on salaries alone (Pillay and Kasirye, 2006).

Over the last decade, Uganda has also substantially increased the number of teachers in its schools. Teacher numbers in government primary schools have increased from 82,148 in 2000 to 131,552 in 2012 (MoES, 2012a). According to the most recent estimates, 95.2 per cent of these teachers have the minimum qualifications necessary and 40 per cent are women but the problem is more one of distribution (MoES, 2012a) and the greatest lags are in the northern region which suffers because of its legacy of conflict. Concerns about safety and security mean that few teachers, especially women, want to move to or stay in the north. While there has clearly been a large increase in the number of government teachers nationally, this has not kept pace with the growing pupil population in the north.

This study is motivated by the fact that, in spite of the concerted efforts, determination and heavy investment by the government, civil society and the private sector, Uganda's primary education sub-sector continues to register poor learning outcomes. A 2012 report from the MoES stated that in 2011, only 47.3 per cent of male pupils and 48.5 per cent of female pupils had achieved the desired rating of proficiency in P3 (MoES, 2012a). In P6 in the same year, 42 per cent of boys reached proficiency, compared to 40.6 per cent of girls. Either way, pupils were not learning at the level expected by leadership (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2012a).This is a major concern for the Quality-Ed project stakeholders.

In order to improve education quality, the project partners have developed (and lobbied the Ministry to adopt) a Teacher Competence Profile which defines basic knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for primary school teachers to be effective. They also developed a *Life Skills Curriculum*, a *Gender Responsive Pedagogy Teachers' Handbook* and an *Implementation Strategy for Advocacy of Instruction in the Local Languages in Uganda*. The theory of change behind emphasising these areas is that the skills learned will help pupils to be better equipped for participation in society and

the workplace later in life. At a deeper level, the primary assumption in the Quality-Ed project approach is that in order to teach pupils these skills, teachers themselves must possess them.

1.2 QUALITY-ED PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Since 2007, the Quality-Ed project grew from a concept devised between leaders and civil society into a large-scale effort to improve teacher quality for pupils in the primary schools of Northern Uganda. The project incorporates many aspects of teaching from teacher competency, evaluation and feedback, to new curricula on the subjects of local languages , life skills, and gender responsiveness. The collaborators have produced eight texts, conducted training, and hosted a workshop for educators in Kampala.

In their programme overview, the Initiative Team described the project in three stages

- **STAGE ONE:** laying the conceptual groundwork by developing a competence profile and introducing contemporary skills, attitudes, and knowledge into teacher training curricula
- **STAGE TWO:** providing support to local institutions for the education of teachers and teacher educators that is aligned with the competence profiles and curricula
- **STAGE THREE:** advocacy to mainstream project outputs in public services and institutions, including support for civic demands for quality education. (Education International, 2012).

Since 2007, when the pilot programmes in Uganda and Mali were first planned, implementation has continued to steadily progress. A teacher competency profile was compiled in 2010 to gather a sense of the primary teacher knowledge base and to provide the foundations for the development of the Life Skills Curriculum (Education International, 2012). The curriculum development was coordinated with the National Curriculum Development Centre and local non-government organisations (NGOs). It was then published in paperback format along with the competence profile and six other texts during 2011 and 2012. The decision was made to begin implementation through a series of regional workshops held in Mbarara, Mbale, Gulu, and Kampala to train, market, and provide texts for this curriculum[5]. Eight thousand copies of the Competence Profile, 8,500 copies of the Local Languages Education handbook,

[5] *Wajega 2011*

4,200 copies of the GRP booklet, and 8,500 copies of the paired Life Skills curriculum and Teacher Handbooks (Wajega, 2011) have been distributed. Two teachers from each participating school were selected to attend training on Life Skills, GRP, and Local Language teaching. The teachers received training guides, some limited teaching materials, and returned to their schools to share what they learned.

The model involved a roll-down training process by which the two teachers who attended the training were asked to teach their fellow teachers the skills needed in order to implement the new curricula. Where available, booklets and training manuals were stored in the 'library' (or book storeroom) upon return to the school.

This study summarises the findings of a baseline survey conducted prior to the start of Stage Two of the intervention. The baseline served to assess the conditions prevalent in the target areas before the start of interventions so that progress made throughout the project with respect to its targeted outcomes could be reliably measured.

CHAPTER 2

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to provide information on the beginning levels of the implementation of the Quality-Ed project. Specifically:

1. Use and understanding of the Teacher Competence Profile, Life Skills Curriculum, GRP and Local Languages Handbook in teaching and learning in the four target districts.
2. Head teachers' understanding, support, and management of competency skills in these schools.
3. Explore the needs of the existing professional development programmes, baseline classroom practices around the new Life Skills Curriculum and the GRP handbook.
4. The impact of poor working conditions on the delivery of quality teaching in Northern Uganda.

2.1 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in four targeted districts of Northern Uganda: Apac, Amolatar, Gulu, and Pader in the selected 40 Quality-Ed participating schools[6]. The schools were chosen by the Initiative Team based on the following factors:

- School with a cooperative school system
- Physically located suitably and accessibly to act as a learning centre
- Should already be participating in the Quality-Ed project
- Consider balancing gender leadership at the school level
- School should not be participating in similar project organised by other organisations in the country

The study consisted of both qualitative and quantitative data (surveys, interviews, focus groups, classroom observations, and document reviews)[7] and concentrated on: 1) teacher characteristics, 2) teachers' professional development needs, 3) understanding of

[6] *See List of surveyed school districts in Appendix 4.0*
[7] *See The Full Methodology in Appendix 5.0*

teacher competencies and use of the teacher competence profile, 4) promotion of life skills by teachers in line with the Life Skills Curriculum, knowledge and use of GRP as well as knowledge and attitudes around using local languages as a medium of instruction, 5) detailing the current teacher-deployment practices and working conditions, and 6) exploring teacher-support systems and continuing needs.

The research team distributed surveys to the head teacher of each school, and to between six and 10 teachers who were available when surveys were distributed. A total of 292 surveys were collected, coded and analysed. In-depth qualitative interviews were also conducted with 36 study participants including: 13 Head Teachers, 19 classroom teachers, two union representatives, and two district officials. Purposive sampling was used for the surveys and interviews because information-rich respondents have a good sense of the purpose and status of the project. The Initiative Team and the Advisory Committee were also primary sources of information, providing data on the relevant structures, related documents and additional observations.

In addition to the survey, the authors developed a qualitative element of the study that emphasised ethnographic approaches (interviews, observations and focus groups) – particularly examining the deeper social characteristics of the school communities - the diversity of a school's composition, its history, language, culture, traditions, and experiences. These qualitative approaches illuminated the critical importance of historical and contextual understanding of what counts and is needed to develop "quality educators" and also helped shed light on the reservoir of knowledge and experience that already exists within teachers in such communities.

CHAPTER 3

Key Survey Findings

The three primary indicators that form the study are teacher characteristics, professional development needs and working conditions, and teacher competence profile.

Almost all of the surveyed teachers (98.3 per cent) reported that they think it is important to promote life skills in learners. They said these life skills included mainly: assertiveness, effective communication, creative/critical thinking, self-esteem/confidence, self-awareness, decision making, HIV/AIDS awareness etc. However, only a small number (31 per cent) of teachers reported using such skills in their classrooms. In a later discussion on life skills, it became evident that these concepts are primarily taught as an integrated component of a particular subject rather than as a stand-alone topic.

It was also further ascertained that more than half of the teachers (56 per cent) and head teachers (54 per cent) had not received training in any gender-based pedagogy[8]. The survey also indicated that more than a half (54 per cent) of the surveyed teachers were not trained in the use of local languages in their teachings. Over a half of the teachers (55 per cent) and a high proportion (82 per cent) of head teachers recommended that teachers should be encouraged to teach in local languages. In later interviews, they explained that children in the lower primary levels understood their local language better and could relate to it more easily and most head teachers felt teaching in the local language would build a better foundation for learning.

In addition, it was also established that the majority (86 per cent) of the surveyed teachers had actually attended some form of professional development training. In fact, almost all (98 per cent) of the surveyed head teachers reportedly had attended such development training. The types of professional development training which were received by the teachers were mainly thematic curriculum (33 per cent) followed by proficiency in teaching/life skills (23 per cent).

A greater proportion of teachers (90 per cent) were also found to be fairly capable of making their own teaching materials, receiving an average rank of 3.34. Although a high proportion (85 per cent) of them reported challenges in developing their own teaching materials, they mainly attributed this to the fact that they had inadequate resources to make such teaching equipment/materials (67 per cent).

[8] *However, the follow-up interviews revealed that both life skills and gender-responsive teaching were mainly taught in the Primary Teachers Colleges (PTCs)/National Teachers Colleges (NTCs) and through the Coordinating Centre Tutors (CCTs) during teacher training. This, however, was not accurately articulated by the teachers and head teachers in the surveys*

The statistical survey findings revealed that about 56 per cent of the teachers and the same number of head teachers knew about the existing Teacher Competence profiles created by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES).

More than 66 per cent of the teachers and up to 88 per cent of the head teachers reported that they had received an administrative and pedagogical support in their current position. This support was identified as provided by the head teacher, CCTs, District Education Officer (DEO) and District Inspector of Schools (DIS), and MoES respectively.

In sum, the survey revealed that most teachers supported the ideas and approaches promoted by the Quality-Ed Initiative (specifically life skills, gender-responsive teaching, and teaching in local languages), yet the vast majority lacked adequate resources, handbooks, or additional training in these areas. Importantly, while teachers supported the implementation of the Life Skills curriculum and GRP, in practice they lacked the knowledge, resources, and experience to delve deeper applying these subjects.

3.1 TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS

The majority (71 per cent) of the teachers surveyed were males with only 29 per cent being females. This deficit of female teachers (particularly female head teachers) points to its subsequent negative impact on the education of girls. (There is ample research evidence to correlate the number of female teachers with girls' retention and achievement at school[9]).

The gendered dimensions of teacher qualifications, placement and in opportunities for ongoing professional development and training reflect the gender inequalities prevalent in wider Ugandan society. Training and professional development opportunities, even where they are nominally available equally to both men and women, are often much more easily taken up by men (who have more flexibility with their time and travel due to different familial obligations). Men also tended to be administrators – head teachers, deputy teachers, and district officials or senior teachers who were more frequently chosen to attend training than women. Such findings point not only to unequal access to training and professional development opportunities, but also to gender bias in postings and promotion procedures (particularly in the more rural and remote schools).

In order to enable greater numbers of women to be trained as teachers in Uganda, it is also important to ensure that the training received by both male and female teachers enables them to promote gender equality. In many classrooms, the behaviour of both female and male teachers may reproduce gender inequalities. In some of the school observations (in this case, where the head teacher was female), a robust approach to gender parity was observed, with teachers and head teachers assigning chores such as fetching water, cleaning classrooms, and cooking to both boys and girls. While the

[9] *Global Campaign for Education/RESULTS Education Fund (2011) Making it Rights: Ending the Crisis in Girls' Education*

interviews across all 14 schools revealed that most teachers are struggling with some deep-seated beliefs that boys are superior to girls, that they perform better than girls do, many are working to remedy that through the gender and life-skills approaches offered in the curriculum.

The expansion of education systems to provide universal access to fee-free basic education in Uganda provides an unprecedented opportunity to correct the gender imbalance that exists in Northern Uganda's most rural and remote areas which suffer from shortages of female teachers. In disaggregated data and from site observations, the authors found that schools with a female head teacher also had much higher numbers of female staff and proximity to a town usually corresponded with more female teachers at the school. In addition to hiring more female teachers, it is vital that governments ensure that female teachers receive adequate – and empowering – support and in-job training, to allow them to upgrade their qualifications in the longer term, as well as access to safe and affordable housing.

3.1.1 Teachers' qualifications

According to the head teacher survey (which asked for teacher qualification data), the majority of teachers in the Quality-Ed schools (456) had a Grade III qualification, with 336 males and only 120 females. Furthermore, as evidenced in Figure 1 below, it was also found that Gulu had the highest number of qualified Grade III teachers followed by Apac, Pader, and Amolatar with a small number of graduate teachers and diploma holders across the board. Importantly, Gulu is the most "urbanised" district in this sample with the added benefits that accompany and attract teachers (schools with electricity, water, housing, NGOs in close proximity). This distribution also reflects a limited number of more rural and remote teachers who are willing and/or unable to upgrade to higher levels of qualification.

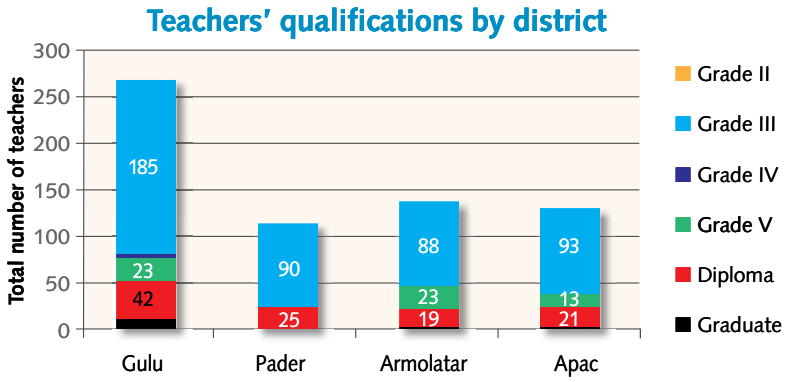

Figure 1: Teachers' qualifications by district in the selected schools

While almost all teachers are minimally qualified (98.6 per cent) from teacher training colleges, there is enough evidence in the findings – from the beliefs about teaching and learning that teachers continue to hold to their conventional classroom practices – to suggest that training standards in these institutions are not well-aligned with the latest curriculum, the specific needs of children and teachers in Northern Uganda, or with government policies. Assumptions about teaching abilities related to qualifications therefore mask the reality in many classrooms but also the disparities between regions, with poorer, rural northern areas generally faring the worst. Such assumptions fail to reveal how and why teachers make particular decisions about teaching pedagogy and practice in their classrooms.

Interviews with teachers revealed that their classroom practices, including their pedagogical choices, were in large part a factor of their ideologies and beliefs as well as the context of their schools. Teacher identities, their beliefs about themselves, their work, their pupils, the curriculum, and the environment in and immediately outside their school were all ingredients that informed their practice.

When the participants were asked why they became teachers and what made a "good teacher" given their particular circumstances, most teachers expressed a pride in their profession, an interest in giving back to their community (particularly after the struggle they witnessed under the insurgency), a love of children and of teaching, and having good role models in their previous teachers. Yet, many also felt the profession was declining and broader public and governmental support and recognition was lacking.

> *"I hate being a teacher. Despite qualifying as Grade III, I'm the poorest person I know. I became a teacher because I like young children and I want them to become better, but the challenges I face in life everyday make me hate teaching. Our salary is low, our working conditions are very poor, our classrooms are hectic with too many learners. All the time, your mind is worrying about these things."*

The majority of the survey respondents were teaching the upper primary classes. Perhaps, for teachers in the lower grade levels, the timing of the survey during school hours could have affected their participation (with younger children and much larger class sizes, leaving the classroom during teaching time to complete the survey was not a realistic option).

The majority of teacher respondents taught at P4-P7 levels (28-38 percent) with just 11-14 percent of respondents teaching grades P1-P3.

3.2. TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND NEEDS

In Uganda, the costs of professional development through further study, for example, is often borne by teachers – even where such study is required for them to reach the minimum qualification standards officially required to teach. When salaries are as low as they are, it is clear that the financial costs of further study – especially but not only when it is related to meeting minimum qualification standards – should be borne by the government and not by teachers themselves.

> *"Our professional development gate is very narrow. Study leave is very rigid and it is not available for all teachers. We have roll-down training and many newer teachers are not able to attend workshops. Student teachers (pre-service) are here to help but they are too new. The tutors don't even deliver good content – they have little materials to work with, too many schools and they leave us with nothing."*

Professional development and support systems for teachers play a large part in developing competencies and leveraging what knowledge or resources they secure for their classrooms. One of the most often mentioned desires (by 31 of 36 respondents in the teacher interviews) was for more training. Frequently, teachers are supportive of government policies, but they normally only receive a superficial introduction to the new reforms. This is one of the greatest challenges for the Quality-Ed project – offering and extending professional development that understands the attitudes and current skill levels of teachers and provide opportunities that would help in improving their competencies. According to those interviewed, teachers wished for more on-site refresher courses to expand on the knowledge they had gained in their teacher training colleges. Teachers strongly felt they should be involved in their own needs' assessments and in structuring and planning activities that affect their professional growth. On-site training was especially important for teachers in the more remote locations, because much training occurred in the major towns many kilometres away where few could attend.

Organisations hosting training often conducted such training over holidays, and frequently for longer than a week. The extended time of training and limited resources generally meant that schools could only send between two and five teachers at a time and it is the male teachers who are seconded to go most of the time. According to interviewees, due to family obligations and traditions such as caring for children or the elderly, women were unable to travel and those who could go were more often male teachers. The attendee teachers were expected to return to teach their fellow teachers

about the subject of the training in a roll-down fashion. Ideally, everyone would learn the concepts, but fairly frequently this was not the case. Newer teachers missed in-service training and often only received roll-down training because schools often sent administrators or more senior teachers. Importantly, roll-down training was widely criticised because teachers were receiving information second (or third)-hand, and it was presented without support materials, teaching guides/manuals, or learning aids.

Importantly, due to the constant transfer of teachers, many of the teachers interviewed came from other districts where the Quality-Ed training had not been held.

While the majority (86 per cent) of the surveyed teachers had attended professional development training, the frequency and intensity of training was a major issue of concern. Most of them had either attended a one-week or three-day workshop which cannot be considered adequate to effectively impact on a teacher's professional development needs. Other types of training in areas of conflict management and HIV/AIDS are provided by other NGOs.

Interviews revealed that head teachers and senior teachers were primary recipients of training. Determining which teacher was sent on training was usually based on seniority, not grade level or teaching responsibilities or relevancy of the training. When possible, between two and five people per school were selected - depending on funding and specified needs. This also points to biases in the selection criteria with the participating teachers being mainly senior teachers. Interviews with a random sampling of teachers revealed that many of the junior teachers did not have opportunities to attend any training, particularly those that were long distances away and required funding, remuneration, and/or accommodation.

The professional development training received by most teachers in the survey was mainly focused on the thematic curriculum (33 per cent) as shown in Figure 2. This training was primarily targeted at the P1-P3 teachers and head teachers followed by proficiency in teaching Life Skills (23 per cent) or guidance and counselling/psychosocial support (21 per cent). However, other training received included Presidential Initiative on Aids Strategy for Communication to Youth (PIASCY), Quality-Ed training, Support to Girls Education under the Teachers' Action for Girls (TAG) of UNATU and the Girls Education project of FAWEU, in addition to workshops on games and sports.

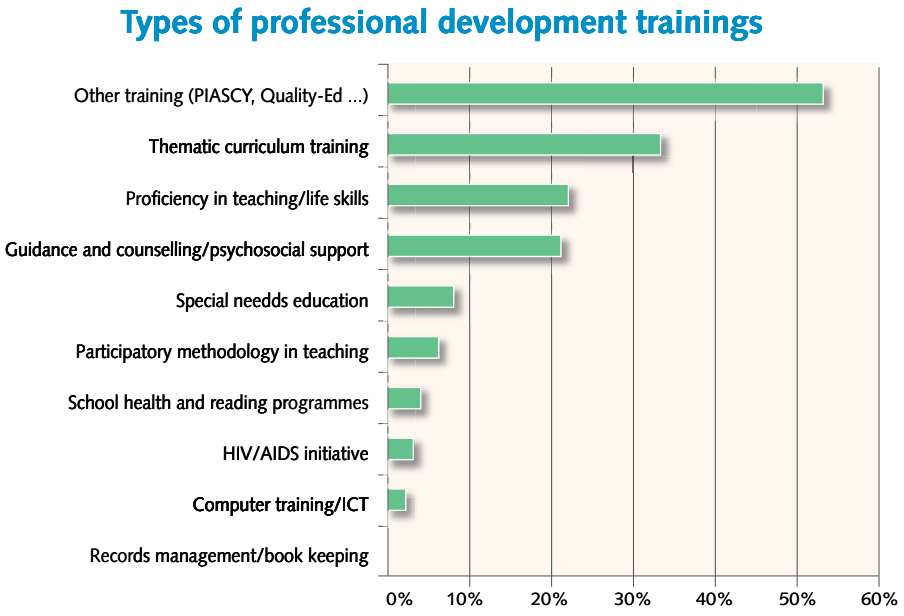

Figure 2: Professional development training received by teachers and head teachers

3.2.1 Impact of the Personal Development Programmes on Teachers' Professional Growth

Out of the 292 teachers who reportedly had attended some form of professional development courses, almost all of them (99 per cent) maintained that it was beneficial. According to the surveys and interviews, these development programmes have impacted positively on teachers' professional growth. This was evidenced by their easy articulation of new knowledge and skills in the various fields such as thematic curriculum, guidance, counselling/psychosocial support, special needs education, proficiency in teaching/life skills and more. In addition, their readiness and interest in receiving more professional development indicates that they felt these opportunities (when available) were valuable.

Other impacts of the professional development programme on the teachers' professional growth according to the survey respondents were that it:

- Created awareness among teachers regarding the various areas of training
- Built teachers' capacity to effectively teach and communicate with the learners
- Enabled acquisition of child-centred methods of teaching and handling of pupils who are vulnerable (special needs)
- Facilitated teachers to acquire more life skills and values that are helpful in their day-to-day practice as teachers

In contrast, classroom observations pointed to a poor articulation of the learned skills and their application in the teaching and learning process. Observations and follow-up interviews revealed lack of application or limited use of learned concepts.

The study also sheds light on the importance of tailor-made personal development training that identifies school-based needs and concerns and can track how training is linked to changes in practice. In addition, whether or not schools had designated space for staff rooms also seemed to make a difference - if teachers had a space to work together, they did; if not, they were less likely to do so.

Factors hindering teachers participation in professional development trainings

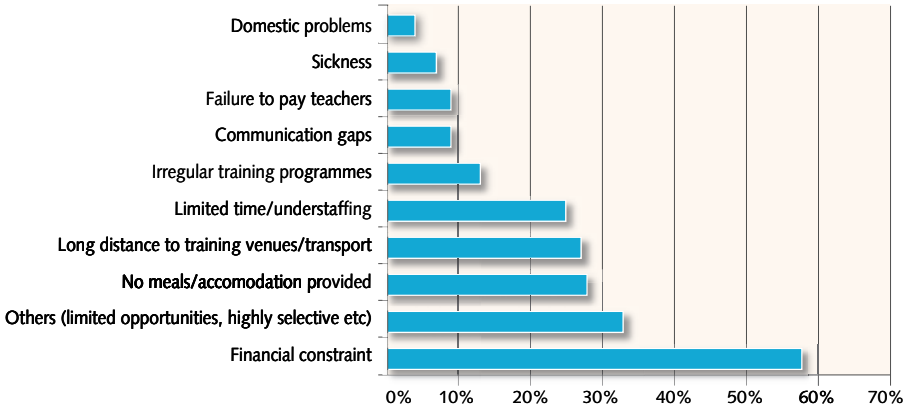

Figure 3: Factors hindering teachers' participation in professional development activities according to the surveyed teachers

In line with Figure 3, over half (57 per cent) of the surveyed teachers pointed out that lack of facilitation and motivation accompanied by financial constraints were the main factors hindering their participation in professional development activities. In addition to lack of accommodation and meals when such events are organised, long distances to training venues/lack of transport, limited time due to heavy workloads and under staffing (due to high teacher-pupil ratio) were also responsible for deterring teachers from participating in professional development activities.

It is worth noting that most teachers interviewed felt that upgrading skills or their degree would not have any significant impact on their salaries (except for head teachers). This was a clear lack of incentive to obtain higher degrees or pay for certificates. Another disincentive is that professional development training is costly to attend and not all teachers

are compensated. While a teacher could have a Grade III degree, continuing education would not necessarily boost their income nor help towards securing a position as a head teacher. When teachers do attend training during term-time, learning in the classroom often comes to a standstill due to an absence of substitute teachers and overloaded colleagues unable to take over their peer's classes.

However, more than half (28 per cent) of the teachers suggested that participation of other teachers in professional development training would be enhanced if the training was provided on-site. Financial support was cited as a motivating factory by 23 per cent, followed by training during holidays or weekends by 22 per cent.

Other factors that teachers indicated would enhance their participation in professional development activities were:

- Introducing more refresher courses
- Creating equal training opportunities
- Hiring enough teachers to reduce the workload to allow for time to attend such training
- Proper sensitisation of teachers on the usefulness of such activities
- Provision of allowances (e.g. transport allowance) and issuing of certificates of participation/attendance etc.
- Early communication on such training programmes to allow for timely preparation
- Nomination of different level teachers for training

3.3. TEACHER COMPETENCE PROFILES

Gaps in ongoing professional development are also related to the absence of a national framework that articulates teachers' professional standards at any given stage of their career ladder. An earlier report on the Teacher Competence Profile in Uganda observed, "Teachers employed by the government for the first time are considered as novice teachers, regardless of whether they have previous teaching experience, and promotion is not based on displaying defined competences. Teacher-support institutions tend to provide undifferentiated professional activities for teachers at different stages with distinct needs. Lacking a clear understanding of the competences that they need to demonstrate to advance in their careers, teachers are not able to plan their own professional development[10]."

The revised competence profile for primary teachers in 2007 will serve three critical purposes: 1) informing the design of pre- and in-service teacher training; 2) aligning the professional development of teachers with the competence profile; and 3) enabling

[10] *Quality Educators International Study, 2012, p.134*

teachers' career progression with particular concern for formalising teachers who currently work outside the normal scheme of service.

The current teacher competence profile has outlined the following domains of competences:

1. Knowledge - content knowledge, professional knowledge, emerging and contemporary knowledge, to help pupils acquire the subject content and to use this knowledge in everyday life and working situations.
2. Skills and Values - pedagogical and interpersonal skills and values to carry out professional responsibilities.
3. Collaboration and Teamwork - relationships with e.g. parents and colleagues that will assist teachers to do their work better.
4. Community Relations - teachers need to collaborate and network with members of the community to enhance community relations.
5. Reflection and Development - it is the responsibility of the teacher to work constantly on personal and professional development.
6. Research - doing research for more knowledge for self-improvement or institutional improvement.
7. Professional Ethics - the standards of behaviour expected from a particular profession. Teachers are expected to conform to the expected professional code of conduct.
8. Leadership - a competent teacher should exhibit leadership skills, such as presenting ideas, leading discussions and making decisions.

The survey established that out of the 292 respondents, a fair proportion (56 per cent) reported that they knew about the new Teacher Competence Profile for primary school teachers; likewise, 56 per cent of the 40 head teachers indicated that they were familiar with the Profile. However, while teachers knew about the Teacher Competency Profile, it was observed that the teachers only understood and could discuss a few aspects of the competencies, primarily focusing on knowledge and pedagogical competencies. Moreover, a detailed understanding or description of professional and contemporary knowledge and skills for research were found to be lacking.

Furthermore, according to the survey questions on teacher competence (Figure 4), four in 10 respondents suggested that teachers should be able to prepare lesson plans and schemes of work. Almost one in three (31 per cent) pointed out that teachers should be knowledgeable about the subject content and should be able to read and answer questions, and have the ability to use learning/teaching aids respectively.

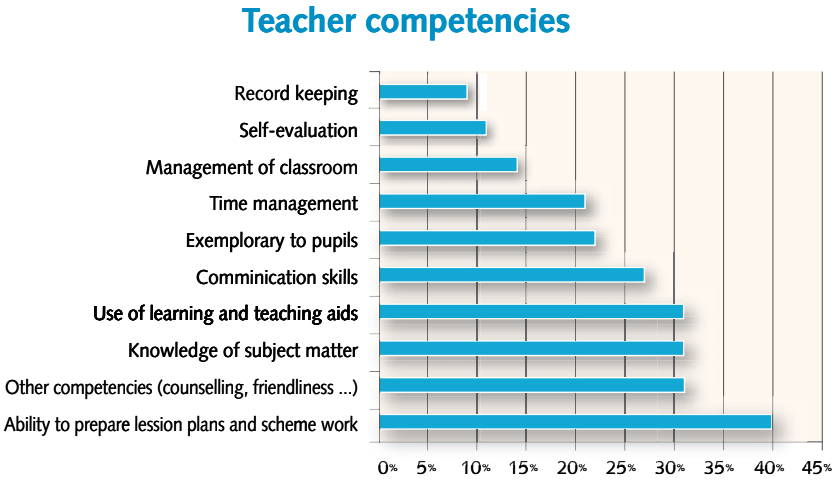

Figure 4: Various competencies that a teacher is required to exhibit, according to the surveyed teachers

3.3.1 Life Skills Curriculum

In the four target areas of Northern Uganda where the Quality-Ed project is being implemented, children have gone through the reintegration and socialisation process of returning from the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) insurgency and entered the public school system.

The Quality-Ed project places greater emphasis on the integration of life skills, gender equity, and the promotion of local languages central to facilitating pupils' transitions into stable, healthy, and positive communities. This curriculum, while helpful for most young Ugandans, is crucial in the northern region. The Quality-Ed curricular approach comes into being with the hope that pupils will be better able to engage in regular activities with their peers and in society overall. The integration of life skills in Ugandan education is not new.

The MoES incorporated life-skills' education into the education process for teachers at teaching colleges in the late 1990s. However, the Quality-Ed project seeks to incorporate these skills on a deeper level by removing some of the subtlety with which life skills has been taught in the past, favouring a more direct method that includes pupils learning the vocabulary as they learn the skills themselves. The Quality-Ed project seeks to deeply integrate life skills into the primary school curriculum. However, implementing that process asks teachers to make a significant leap between their knowledge and training on these topics in order to incorporate them into their lesson plans.

Almost all of the surveyed teachers (98.3 per cent) reported that they do promote life skills amongst learners through the lessons that are taught. The majority of the surveyed teachers (63 per cent) said they had been trained in life skills through their teacher training courses. In addition to the government, other civil society organisations (CSOs) also provide the training on life skills. It was also noted that over 94 per cent of all training lasts for less than 14 days. However, only one in four (25 per cent) reported to have been oriented on the new Life Skills curriculum.

The classroom observations of the Life Skills curriculum revealed that in terms of examining lesson plans and schemes, it was uniform for teachers to include "Life Skills" in their planning books yet the level of understanding of the key concepts in practice seemed to be lacking[11].

3.3.2 Gender-Responsive Pedagogy

Gender discrimination reflects the inequalities that exist in the wider society and is an issue that affects both female teachers and girls. For teachers, it means a lack of professional development opportunities, lack of mobility, and issues of safety and accommodation when teaching in remote areas.

Achieving gender parity includes many measures but in Northern Uganda's primary schools, the government has typically concentrated on the gender ratios of both pupils and teachers. For pupils in Gulu and Pader, the majority of schools boasted more female than male pupils in grades P1-P3. In grades P6-P7, the average ratio of females to males dropped to 1F : 1.35M in P7 and 1F:1.22M in P6. While the P6 values for pupils' enrolment are higher than boys at just under half of the schools, the overall effect on each district is still high. In Gulu, the P6 ratio was 1F:1.34M or about the same as the P7 level across both districts. Additionally in P7, both districts had schools with over 1F:2M ratios of males to females. The reasons for this breakdown were: lack of water at school, lack of sanitary equipment/materials, lack of female teachers, distance to school, child-locals, cultural preferences, and other duties at home.

This gender disparity is also a highly visible trend among teachers in rural schools. While schools in cities or larger towns have more of a 1:1 gender breakdown, those in the rural areas have an average ratio of approximately three male teachers for each female pupil[12].

Both teachers and head teachers were surveyed to determine whether they had been trained on GRP. The results indicate that more than half of the teachers (56 per cent)

[11] *Abstract from Life Skills Curriculum examples in Appendix 6.0*

[12] *These gender-based ratios were calculated from data collected in the Pader and Gulu districts in northern Uganda. Only two of the 10 schools used for these statistics were considered urban by the research team; the third urban school's data is still to be received.*

and head teachers (54 per cent) had not been trained on any GRP, but instead had heard about GRP from their peers. Perhaps complementing the Quality-Ed training, FAWEU had conducted more localised training through the *Girl Child Education Project* that was in line with its organisational mission and these were described as very effective by participants. It was also found that, as with the life-skills' training, those who accessed gender-responsiveness training did so during their training in teaching college or with the FAWEU. Advocacy for girls and gender equity should be expanded but it also must go beyond teacher training and classroom practice and extend to the community.

The GRP handbook for teachers was developed with the understanding that change would not be instantaneous, but according to the interviews the Quality-Ed program brought about was instrumental in raising gender awareness in schools.

The handbook not only describes the theory behind what teachers are expected to do, but also gives guidance on what to do to make sure that their school is gender responsive. In terms of implementation of gender responsiveness in classrooms, most teachers (64 per cent) who had been trained in this approach were attempting implementation. This was done by alternatively involving both boys and girls in the lesson, having both boys and girls share desks, and requiring both boys and girls to participate in gendered activities. Teachers expressed their support and understanding of gender-responsive practices in their classrooms. Some additional activities included gender-neutral access to sports, sweeping, fetching water, and even public speaking. Some teachers expanded GRP to involve class prefects of both genders in order to promote women in roles of leadership.

Applying gender responsiveness across the entire school requires being proactive. In order to do this, schools have to provide an environment that facilitates learning for both boys and girls. In addition to teaching practices and parity in terms of access to activities such as providing opportunities for girls and boys to participate in leadership roles such as class prefect, this must also include having adequate latrines for both girls and boys.

> *"First, you need to start with the parents in the community. Parents need to be made aware."*

3.3.3 Use of Local Languages/Mother Tongue Education

With significant linguistic differences in the languages utilised across Uganda, writing a curriculum in local languages for P1-P3 will mean that each linguistic group will need its own curriculum for the lower primary pupils. For the transition year (P4) and upper primary, the English curriculum should remain as it is, but it needs to be revised by adding in more detailed explanations of how to directly bring life skills into each lesson. One of the complaints frequently heard by native speakers of the local languages was that the material for teaching using the local language as a medium

of instruction was largely unavailable, and when it was, it was poorly translated and that they had to re-write or edit many of the materials.

The survey found that more than a half (54 per cent) of the teachers were untrained on the use of local languages for teaching (and only 46 per cent were trained): although a higher proportion of the head teachers reportedly had been trained. It should be noted however that teaching in the local language as a medium of instruction is encouraged in the lower classes (P1-P3) where the thematic curriculum is taught (and most of the respondents were upper primary teachers). At the upper primary levels, local languages are encouraged to be taught as subjects although even this was not happening in all the schools surveyed. As this was a relatively new policy, training teachers to teach using the local language has not been fully integrated into teacher preparation. In addition, many teachers felt that due to frequent school transfers, there was also limited motivation for teachers to take on local languages as teaching subjects as they did not know where they will be placed and will move frequently as transfers to other schools are made.

According to Figure 5, 49 per cent of teachers in Amolatar answered that they do not use their local language in their teaching followed by 48 per cent in Apac, 45 per cent in Pader, and 44 per cent in Gulu. The district with the highest non-use of local languages was Gulu with 56 per cent versus 51 per cent in Amolatar, followed by 55 per cent in Pader versus 52 per cent in Apac.

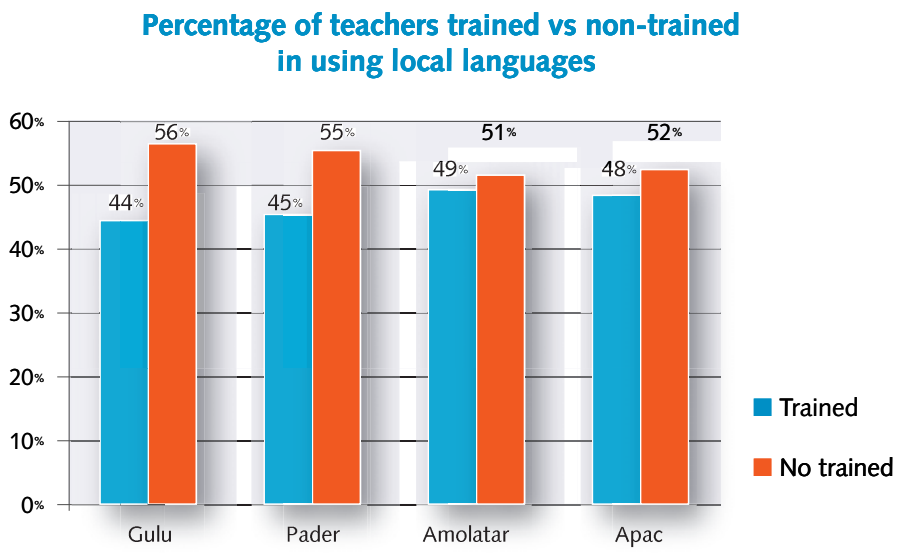

Figure 5: Percentage of trained versus untrained teachers in using local languages/mother tongue in teaching in the four project districts

More than a half of the teachers (55 per cent) and a high proportion (82 per cent) of the head teachers suggested that teachers should be encouraged to teach in local languages, especially at the lower level. According to them, this was mainly because children in the lower primary understand the local language and relate to it well; explanations regarding the subject matter can also be made much easier. Other reasons why teachers should be encouraged to teach in local languages are:

- A child should be taught from known to unknown
- Allow for lower classes which cannot speak English to understand the subjects better
- To improve their local languages

It was also observed that due to a diversity of languages in Uganda, the use of local languages in teaching will greatly bias pupils from other regions in the same class, especially for those schools in an urban setting.

The main challenges of teaching and learning using the local language, as observed by 39 per cent of respondents, was inadequacy or lack of reference books for the local language, followed by 34 per cent who suggested that learners will have problems speaking/writing English words, respectively. Children may fail to catch up with the Uganda National Examination Board's (UNEB) requirements since examinations are set in English. Other challenges to mother tongue education (MTE) are conflicts with parents who prefer English because of its connection with job skills.

3.3.4 Knowledge of Learner-Centred or "Active" Teaching Methods

Most of the interviews revealed that the teachers are supportive of active teaching and prefer to use learner-centred techniques. They recognised that, given the context that they were teaching in, understanding and building connections to learners was critically important.

When asked to name some of the most difficult aspects of teaching, many teachers responded that teaching students with special learning needs (or "slow learners") with such large class sizes was a major problem. While this study did not delve deeper into teachers' perceptions about addressing special needs learners, many teachers were aware of the diversity of needs of their learners and the challenges they face in addressing different needs given the large class sizes and lack of resources to do so.

Teachers from one of the focus groups discussed their class sizes which ranged from 140 in a P4 class to 80 in a P5 class and all concurred that "*It's time consuming to reach every pupil!*"

Another added, *"Now I focus on the weak ones and concentrate on them. Those who are in the middle stay there and those who are fast get more feedback when I check their work."*

Overcrowding, theft, lack of resources, and the composition of the student population all affect the way programmes targeting curriculum change and teacher professional development can occur. Resources such as the curriculum and handbooks that go along with the Quality-Ed project are valuable to both teachers and therefore their students, but that can be lost if teachers do not have access to or utilise these resources. Since only approximately 23 per cent of teachers reported using any materials to prepare for class, concrete details and specific learning goals are lost in the process. Furthermore, it was revealed that teachers' knowledge of learner-centred teaching methods was relatively high as was reported by over 96 per cent of the respondents with an average rank of 3.7. Some of the learner-centred techniques/methods according to the surveyed teachers included: guided group discussion, demonstration, practical/experimentation, group work, drama/role play, storytelling, exposure etc. Similarly, some of the more specific teaching strategies and activities that were described during the interviews were: wall-words, wall sentences, role play, dramatisation, explanation, think/pair/share, incorporating the community and surroundings areas in lessons.

3.3.5 Thematic Curriculum

The Quality-Ed project was designed to directly address the local languages, life skills, and gender parity issues in the thematic curriculum prepared by the MoES. Since each school uses the Thematic Curriculum as the basis to prepare for each lesson, including life skills, gender parity, and local languages will require intense lobbying and awareness raising by the project (because it would require the National Curriculum Development Centre and MoES to rewrite and integrate these into each lesson). Moreover, the production of a new thematic curriculum would also need to devote time to translation of the P1-P3 materials to help facilitate teachers using local languages, in order to allow for consistent education in districts with multiple language groups.

According to the respondents a significant number of surveyed teachers (66 per cent) had heard about the thematic curriculum, with a fair proportion (58 per cent) reportedly trained in this curriculum. Only slightly more than half (52 per cent) had actually seen the thematic curriculum, in addition to about a third (31 per cent) who had used it. This is because the thematic curriculum is aimed at the lower primary level, hence the seemingly low usage of the thematic curriculum. Not all teachers are supposed to teach the thematic curriculum.

Furthermore, those who had reported that they were familiar with the thematic curriculum learned about it mainly in their respective schools and from training

provided by their CCTs and government bodies (such as MoES, DEO, etc) respectively. The survey results indicated that, on average, the thematic curriculum training was deemed "adequate" according to about 76 per cent of teachers who had attended. However, worryingly, nearly a quarter of the surveyed teachers (24 per cent) said the training was "not adequate". With up to 84 per cent of all the training taking less than two weeks, the training was mainly non-residential and conducted in a participatory manner.

3.3.6 Production of Teaching Materials

In interviews and classroom observations, teacher-developed materials were the primary source for information. According to the survey data, most teachers felt they were fairly capable of making their own teaching materials (as was reported by about 90 per cent of teachers with an average rank of 3.34). However, resources for producing these materials (beyond poster-board for basic charts) were not available. Many teachers also said they lacked the time and while some materials were available they were too expensive for the school to purchase.

According to the survey, while a high proportion (85 per cent) of the teachers reported challenges in developing own teaching materials, they mainly attributed it to the fact that there were inadequate materials to make such teaching materials (67 per cent), followed by more than a quarter (28 per cent) who pointed out that financial constraints greatly limited them from purchasing some of the materials. Teachers also identified other challenges in developing their own teaching materials including:

- Limited time to make the teaching materials, due to work overload
- Inadequate storage facilities for the materials made
- Knowledge gaps such as inability to draw detailed pictures
- Inadequate reference books
- Lack of sufficient content support materials

While most expressed high levels of frustration with the lack of teacher support materials and visual learning aids, even those who produced their own materials felt that the poor classroom conditions prevented them from adequately using them. Some complained that there was no point in even making charts since they could not display them anywhere. A teacher explained:

"I never use any charts or visuals because there are no walls to hang them on."

3.4 TEACHER DEPLOYMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Teachers' working conditions vary greatly depending on their location in urban or rural areas. These conditions impact on teachers' access to housing options, electricity, and their ability to be integrated into the broader community. Housing issues are compounded the further teachers and schools are from urban areas; in the more remote areas, most teachers live closer to, if not on, the school grounds. Since the government pays teachers a relatively low salary (at about USh200,000/month), travelling to work in rural schools using hired transport is less feasible by the kilometre.

Schools further out of town also tended to have worse teaching and learning conditions: they had few female teachers, and limited access to communication, transportation, and electricity. In town, schools tended to have better facilities, more female teachers, and teachers were able to rent accommodation nearby. Teachers in less remote areas were also able to get to and from school using public or local transportation and able to access news and information (some of which are used for teaching) from sources other than radios, and connect with friends and family via mobile phones more regularly. While electricity was still uncommon at the vast majority of schools, schools closer to town enjoyed more alternatives within walking distance (e.g. occasional access to solar panels for charging electronics and watching news on televisions in urban centres). The proximity to NGOs and the recognition that other schools (both nearby and in Kampala) had better facilities such as electricity, a school bus, computers and internet, a staff room, and newly painted classrooms with windows and doors appeared to demoralise and deflate teachers.

The majority of teachers rent accommodation when teaching in rural areas. While a few SMCs assist with these expenses, many do not. Through renting, teachers are not incentivised to upgrade their own accommodation to include electricity, solar energy, or even latrines. Importantly, positive relations and support from the SMC and the community at large can make a significant difference in the quality of life and living conditions for teachers. Learning the local language is not incentivised by the prospect of having to move to another area for their next placement.

Teachers reported that there were also numerous demands on their time. Head teachers, in particular, reported that they were required to assist visitors during the day, often during their own teaching time. Conducting business with visitors is nearly impossible to do simultaneously with teaching, and often resulted in periods where no teaching at all would occur. Head teachers' duties also called for them to be available to assist other colleagues, observe the work of their peers, and host District Education Office observers three times a term.

Based on our observations and interviews, we learned that many teachers arrive at school an hour or more early each day and remained at school until 5p.m. (or later)

helping with remedial classes for pupils preparing for their P7 exams. During site visits, teachers were observed in school until after 6p.m., engaged with pupils' activities or completing assessments or drafting their lesson plans. With work hours expanding to improve test scores, teachers had little time for earning much-needed extra money or for growing their own food. This clearly shows immense teacher dedication and commitment to pupils and to the profession, but also how these demands and time commitment are incredibly challenging.

In addition, the lack of midday meals for both teachers and learners is yet another difficulty. A meal during school-time is critical for children's retention and attention at school as well as teachers' motivation to teach. Research suggests that schools with feeding programmes had a higher pupil retention rate and normally performed well compared to those without (Mutenyo, 2010) In this survey, over half (54 per cent) of the schools were providing meals for students only, with Amolatar having the highest proportion of schools providing meals followed by Gulu, Pader, and Apac districts respectively as shown in Figure 6.

The majority of head teachers (68 per cent) also said that meals are not free of charge. According to teacher interviews, free meals at school are more common for teachers where the PTA was contributing towards their breakfast and lunch. However, parents contribute towards the cost of meals for the pupils. It was further noted that the school budget was raised/allocated through the school's finance committee, and mainly raised through UPE funds and contributions from some parents.

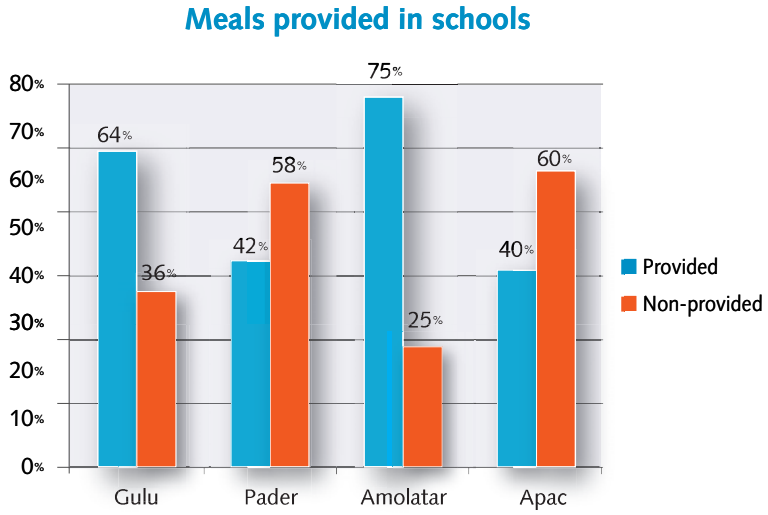

Figure 6: Meals provided in schools in four project districts

3.4.1 Terms of Employment

According to Figure 7, there are 546 teachers on the staff list within all the selected schools with an expected teacher ceiling of 684. This clearly depicts a short fall of 20.2 per cent in the number of teachers currently on the staff list. It was also noted that there was almost three times more male teachers than female teachers on the staff list, a clear indication of the inadequate number of female teachers in the schools.

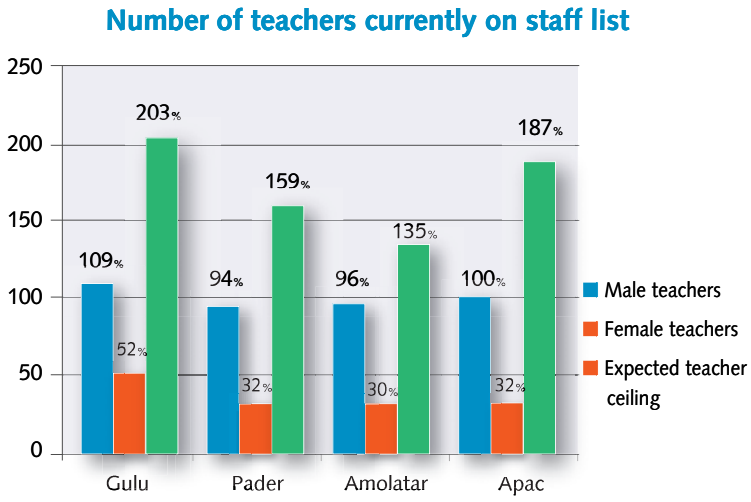

Figure 7: Number of teachers on the staff list by gender, according to the surveyed schools in four project districts

Figure 7 illustrates that Amolatar was the only district that came close to fulfilling the teacher ceiling with the current teachers on the payroll. The significant gap can be seen in the districts of Gulu and Apac.

The survey revealed that very high proportions (94 per cent) of the teachers were permanently employed while only four per cent were employed temporarily. Almost all of the teachers (97 per cent, approximately 610 teachers) had received letters of appointment.

Another government policy that impacts staffing and teacher deployment and, in effect, their professional opportunities is the policy of transferring teachers approximately every three years. Based on our interviews, this constant transitioning was seen as positive by some teachers wishing to move from their current school (largely because of its poor condition), but the policy was challenging for those wishing to remain in a school for a longer period of time in order to "become part of the school community", "buy land", or build and invest in a home. During the validation meeting on 10 May 2013, it was

noted that deployment is based on the teacher ceiling in a given school. More teachers are deployed at upper primary level, often leaving a heavy workload for a few lower primary teachers. This, they suggested in interviews, is a direct result of many teachers avoiding the thematic curriculum.

Between 2010 and 2012, a total of 142 teachers had left their schools. This was mainly attributed to normal transfers and retirements. However, there were also rare cases of disciplinary action against or dismissal of teachers, and others who merely decided to move elsewhere due to delayed and low salaries and poor working conditions. Figure 8 also further illustrates that the trend at which teachers have been leaving schools in the past three years has been on the rise, with a 45 per cent increase in departing male teachers between 2010 and 2012. It is worth noting that there is no similar trend in the female teachers leaving the profession.

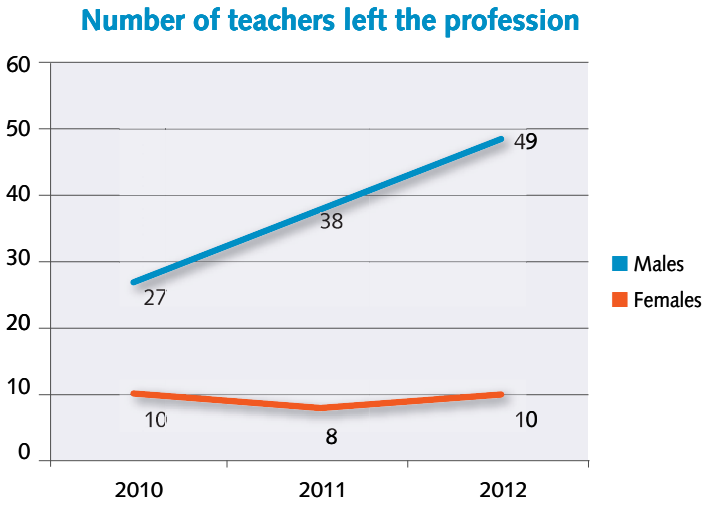

Figure 8: Number of teachers left the profession in the past three years

Hence, teacher deployment policies must also take into consideration gender dynamics. Subsequently there are number of challenges facing the teachers either on a daily basis or during a certain period of time i.e. the distance to and from school. According to interviews, male teachers preferred to be deployed in rural areas near their homes from where they can monitor their personal work with ease. Whereas, female teachers reported that, because they are married to working partners (e.g. civil servants), they usually prefer to be deployed in the urban centres. Female teachers, particularly those who are unmarried, who are teaching in rural areas should be given incentives (allowances) so that they can be motivated to teach in rural settings as well.

3.4.2 Pupil:Teacher Ratios

Overall enrolment in the schools in this study varied from 640 pupils across the four grades to over 1500 pupils and the effects of these large populations of pupils and generally low numbers of teachers (averaging 15 per school) was evident. Uganda's MoES recommends a classroom pupil-teacher ratio of 50 pupils per teacher for P1-P3 and 53 pupils per teacher for P4-P7 (MoES, 2012).

Students in class without desks or finished wall

While the 50:1 pupil-teacher ratio is not necessarily an ideal, it does work towards the understanding that smaller classes result in higher pupil outcomes. In fact, smaller class sizes, particularly in high-need areas with limited resources, can produce substantial improvement in early learning and the effect of small class sizes on the achievement of disadvantaged and special needs children can be significant. In Gulu and Pader, the average class size for each class visited ranged quite widely, but the most striking numbers were those of P1-P3 with a pupil-teacher ratio of 94.1:1, 135.2:1, and 145:1 respectively . Average enrolment in the P7 classes was 73 pupils, and while these pupils had different teachers for each subject, only one teacher at a time was present in the classroom. Struggling with so many pupils creates a gap between what a teacher is expected to do and what s/he is actually able to do. Class sizes and adequate teacher provisioning must be more closely monitored.

There were 35,888 pupils enrolled in the four surveyed districts during 2013 as illustrated in Figure 9. Just over half (50.36 per cent) were females, with more females than males enrolled, especially in the lower and middle primary classes (P1-P5). In the upper primary classes (P6-P7), there were more males enrolled than females, a clear indication of higher dropout rates among the females in the upper classes.

Pupil : Teacher ratio

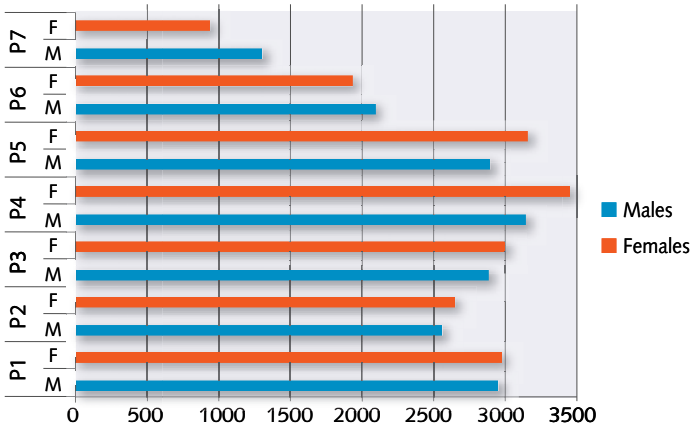

Figure 9: Total enrolment by class and gender within the sampled schools in all four districts (Overall enrolment in all four districts = 35,888 pupils)

As indicated in Table 1, the pupil:teacher ratio remains high across all the selected schools. Within schools, it was highest among the lower primary classes (85:1 for P1, 68:1 for P2, 77:1 for P3) and middle primary (77:1 for P4 and P5 each). This is at variance with the acceptable standard ratio of 52:1 set by the MoES. However, the pupil:teacher ratio for P7 in all four districts was on average 35:1, indicating a considerable drop-out rate over time in all districts based on their P1-P2 enrolment levels.

Pupil : Teacher ratio

Districts	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
Amolatar	52:1	46:1	70:1	76:1	87:1	59:1	28:1
Apac	63:1	51:1	57:1	60:1	58:1	47:1	36:1
Gulu	94:1	71:1	91:1	75:1	64:1	58:1	32:1
Pader	105:1	85:1	82:1	74:1	79:1	60:1	41:1

Table 1: Pupil:Teacher ratio by class and district

3.4.3 School and Classroom Facilities/Infrastructure

Ugandan primary schools vary greatly between the central and southern regions and those of the north but, generally, physical structures do exist with brick and mortar walls and tin (or aluminium) corrugated roofing. In classrooms, pupils sit in rows of desks with seats for three pupils a piece, or on the floor. Classrooms have doorways at the front of the class and some schools have doors and windows.

The survey findings indicate that all the schools featured had head teachers' offices, black boards, chalk, and senior female teachers; however, less than five per cent of all the schools had computers, a school phone, photocopier, school nurse, computer laboratory, or main hall. No school reported having a science lab. It was also further noted that only 30 per cent of the schools had staffrooms for teachers but most of these were classrooms converted into staff rooms. Only 22 per cent of schools had first aid kits, clearly posing a health threat to the learners since there are no school nurses available and hospitals and clinics were to be found some distance from the schools. Figure 10 illustrates the percentage of facilities available for schools in the four districts of Northern Uganda.

Without these basic necessities becoming available in the most rural and remote school environments, one would have to be sceptical about opportunities for quality in teaching and learning. The significance of these inputs matter is widely articulated in literature (Spreen and Ngundi, 2012; Van der Pol, Apkabie, Belkachla, 2010; Sikoyo, 2010; Nicolai and Triplehorn, 2003; Hamakawa and Randal, 2008; Barrett, 2009). And as one teacher passionately described, the intersection of these measures with issues of resources, enrolment, and poverty greatly impacts on his classroom and his ability to teach.

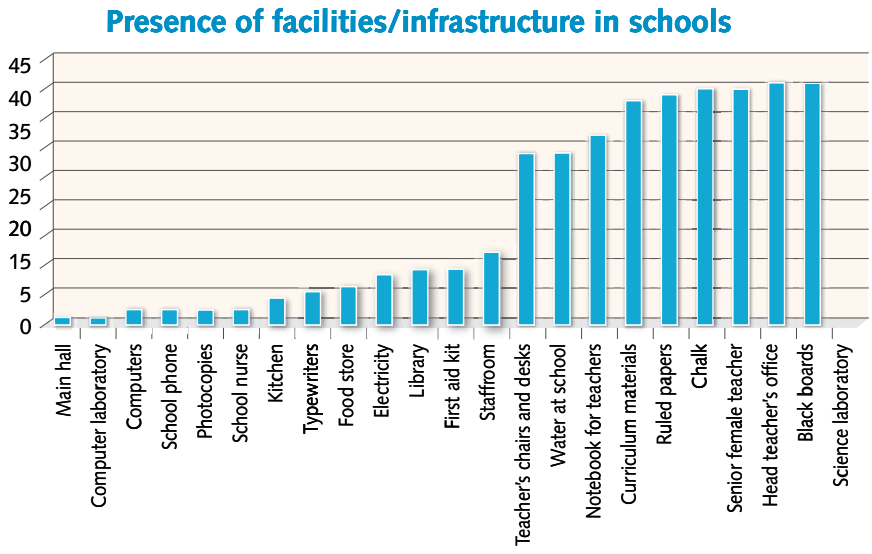

Figure 10: Presence of facilities/infrastructure in schools in the four project districts of Northern Uganda

Most schools in the northern districts of Pader and Gulu have a specific administration area with rooms for both the head teacher and the deputy head teacher. School grounds generally consist of a flat open field used for physical education and breaks, pit latrine blocks for boys and girls, and water collection tanks in various states of functionality. Only one school visited had access to electricity, and a few others had solar panels that helped to provide lighting to pupils after hours or to charge mobile phones for teachers.

During Uganda's UPE drive, many buildings were erected as classrooms, but different classrooms do not provide the same space for pupils to learn. In some classrooms, a door may be hanging on one hinge and cannot be locked, the chalkboard is usually full of writing that cannot be completely erased from previous lessons making it near impossible to read from anywhere but the front few rows, and only about half of the pupils have their thin newspaper-covered notebooks.

All except one of the 14 schools visited had desks in their classrooms, but in some of them, the desks and the cemented-in black board were the only physical objects present. The difference between locked and unlocked classrooms was immense. Visual aids, cabinets, and loose chairs often outfitted locked classrooms, while those without locking doors and grated windows inevitably had nothing beyond desks. It was repeatedly mentioned that the schools were open to theft by the communities in which they were located. When asked why the doors did not all have locks, one teacher dryly replied simply, "Padlocks are in the market".

Overcrowded classrooms, particularly in the lower primary classrooms, were a huge challenge across all the schools. The curriculum stresses active participation, but this is very hard to accomplish for teachers given the large class sizes. Each class that was observed had pupils participating during the lectures, but generally there were only a few pupils who would speak up. Individual feedback is also hampered by class sizes.

It was also established that the textbook-pupil ratio in the lower primary level was high with up to 16 pupils sharing one book at P1 level and 11 pupils sharing one book in P2 classes. The upper primary classes (P5) both had a relatively lower ratio with up to five pupils sharing one book at a time. This is a clear indication of a shortage of textbooks within the schools to match with the increasingly high pupil enrolment.

A slight contradiction was found between the reported number of books in the head teacher surveys and what was observed in classrooms and explained by the teachers. Over 94 per cent of the head teachers said that the learners do not have to pay in any way for textbooks they receive and a significant proportion (97 per cent) of head teachers also reported that teachers get access to teaching guides about their subject matter, with only three per cent suggesting otherwise. Furthermore, the head teacher survey indicated that a total of 39,837 different textbooks were currently available in the selected schools (with the highest proportion being English textbooks (8,455), Maths

(8,442), Science (8,276), and Social Studies (5,291) respectively. Yet, there were very few new books and the number of overall books in the classroom were very low and storage facilities for the books were virtually absent in the majority of the schools. Just under half of the head teachers (47 per cent) suggested that teachers use visual aids in the classrooms. In addition, most of the head teachers (95 per cent) said their school acquired textbooks through the government and less than three per cent suggested that donors/NGOs provided text books. The textbooks that were found included mainly English, Maths, Science, and Social Studies.

3.4.4 Accommodation of Teachers at School

Based on the interview data, the biggest challenges teachers faced was the lack of accommodation or, when available, its inadequacy. When accommodation is not available, teachers walk or bike long distances (three-12km) to school. Most of the schools visited had no access to any type of transportation (taxis, buses, motorbikes). Bicycles were the most common mode of transportation for teachers, when the weather conditions permitted.

The survey indicated that about 58 per cent of the surveyed teachers and 81 per cent of head teachers were accommodated within the school. This means that a significant proportion of teachers (42 per cent) are currently not accommodated within the schools, thereby partly affecting their attendance.

Furthermore, a fairly high proportion (74 per cent) of the teachers are not entitled to any type of allowance/incentive apart from salary, with just one in four (26 per cent) reportedly entitled to such incentives. According to the surveyed teachers, incentives included: a "hard-to-reach allowance" for working in remote schools or food allowance, with some suggesting that selected PTAs offer "top ups".

3.4.5 Factors Affecting Teachers' Attendance

Both teachers and head teachers were asked to identify some of the factors which affected their attendance. They highlighted that poor/lack of accommodation within or near the schools as the ultimate cause of teachers' absenteeism, followed by a lack of transport and the difficulties associated with cycling to work, particularly during the rainy season, as significant challenges. On top of it all, other factors that were found to be affecting the teachers' attendances included: poor relations between parents/school; sickness, domestic problems; delay in salary payments or the distance to travel to receive the salary; insecurity, hostility from parents/community members.

3.4.6 Costs of Education

While public education is free in Uganda, it is only so in theory. The "hidden costs" of education such as "development and PTA fees" include the need for learners to purchase their own textbooks and scripts, and the costs of paying "parent support to teachers". These costs burden poor communities and parents, and often act as a barrier to schooling for children living there. While both school fees and PTA and development funds were not legal at the beginning of UPE in 1997, PTA funds are now very common and families incur many additional expenses to send their pupils to school.

> *For example, whereas PTA fees cost USh5,000-USh10,000 (US$2-US$4) per term, they do not include the community paid teachers, teacher-lunch programmes, and other fees that are required of parents.*

Most of the 39 head teachers surveyed (97 per cent) admitted that there were user fees/other fees paid to the school by children/families. Most of these fees included development fee/fund and examination fees, PTA fees (usually USh5,000 per term), church contributions (limited to a few), boarding fees (for schools with a boarding section), food fee, payment to the security guard, contributions towards construction of teachers' houses, and collection of local materials for building, labour, and many more.

While communities may lack funds to assist teachers directly, they provided assistance through building teacher housing, labouring on teacher farms, and additional funding for teachers' lunches. Of the 14 schools visited, two provided teachers' lunches that were paid for by parents above and beyond the PTA fees (one additional school had meals made by community members for sale to pupils and teachers). These community based market solutions for a governmental failure to provide adequate provisioning shows that while parents and communities value teachers beyond their salaries, different communities supported teachers at different levels and through different means.

In some ways, the varied degree of value that communities placed on education was portrayed not only by the willingness to pay extra fees, but by the extent to which they could support teachers non-monetarily through service and donations.

PTAs also hire community members or 'parent teachers' to help fill the gap between the number of teachers needed in a school, and the number of teachers provided by the government.

While school supplies are often unavailable or purchased from the school, pupils are also sent home from school for attending without proper materials, clothing or footwear (uniforms are traditionally required at both public and private institutions at a cost of approximately USh15,000). Transportation costs to school vary, and most pupils walk long distances to school. Many would also consider the opportunity costs seen by parents of children going to school as preventing them from working at home, earning money, or learning a trade as an apprentice.

While over half (59 per cent) of the 41 head teachers surveyed reported that all their teachers were paid by the government, over 40 per cent suggested that their teachers are paid through the PTA.

The head teachers were also found to be the ones responsible for buying teaching materials using the UPE fund. Any other delegated teacher was also allowed to buy teaching materials, although quite a number of the head teachers said the government usually buys such materials using UPE funds. It was also further established that teachers have an input into decisions about what is purchased, as confirmed by over 98 per cent of all the head teachers surveyed.

> *While the above mentioned fees include many of the costs of education, most administrators, policymakers and teachers when asked about school fees would say, "There are none".*

3.4.7 Community Conditions

Aside from the general poor conditions in rural and remote areas, teachers face another challenge in their classrooms attributed to the regions that endured conflict in the past.

One concern for many teachers was the number of orphaned children. When discussing orphans in Africa, the HIV/AIDS pandemic comes to the forefront of discussion, but the number of orphans in Gulu and Pader is particularly high due to those regions' proximity to the hot spots of fighting during the insurgency. Some schools

themselves had been used as barracks during the heat of the fighting. At one of the Gulu schools, one in five pupils was an orphan. Orphaned children are often far more malnourished, lack school supplies (and PTA fees), uniforms, or a strict attention to their studies (De Wagt and Connolly, 2005). As teachers explained, the war traumatised people and now many students have no parents and have higher responsibilities at home. Many orphans cannot go to school because they have to provide everything for themselves. In some schools, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Friends of Orphans, War Child, and other NGOs host training on avoiding corporal punishment, counselling, and working with special needs students. Additionally, some NGOs assisted the orphans and past soldiers by withdrawing them from class to participate in group counselling and by delivering notebooks, uniforms and other supplies. Related to the Life Skills curriculum, some teachers requested facilities and equipment to help ease their stress.

Issues of ethnicity and its effect on the conflict also have to be recognised in the life-skills and learner-centred approaches, as there is powerful evidence to suggest that discrimination and promotion of ethnic division in schools have been a significant factor in the causes of violent conflict.

These problems, though not clearly part of teacher competencies, directly align with the challenges in implementing the Quality-Ed programme. Beyond the government's work to improve education, NGOs and communities are frequently asked to step in to help bolster the efforts of the Ugandan government to provide resources, as well as more primary school opportunities for students and professional development opportunities for teachers who are facing these extreme challenges.

3.5 TEACHER SUPPORT MECHANISMS

The primary method for teachers to learn and develop as professionals was through conversations with their fellow teachers and through training sessions run in the school by CCTs. Mostly, teachers appeared to collaborate often, sharing information, team-teaching, and visiting each other's classrooms. A number of teachers indicated that they worked on scheme and lesson plans together, particularly when it came to planning the thematic curriculum. In the absence of a staffroom, less effort was made to share information and effective teaching methodologies. This was particularly true of teachers who did not live in the school grounds' housing or lived farther away. The more teachers lived at the school, the more they bounced ideas off each other and asked questions about involvement. Training provides an important background, but these areas of dialogue and planning on-site in staffrooms seemed to improve teachers' understanding of the curriculum and their ability to link it to changes in practice.

CCTs were utilised when present at a school, but less so when they were not on-site as many visited from PTCs which were generally further away. Ongoing on-site

support from CCTs, including the distribution of manuals and materials, were also important factors. Where CCTs were on-site and when they were linked with development partners to share materials and information, teachers felt their needs were beginning to be addressed. When available, teachers acknowledged that the CCTs provided training, visited their classrooms, and made suggestions for improvement. Other schools (that did not have a CCT on-site) however, complained that the CCTs did not visit frequently, did not understand the specific needs or concerns at the school level, and the support they offered was inadequate. This suggests the need to strengthen and/or build the relationship between the CCTs, schools and other development partners to produce more integrated and productive school-based professional development opportunities. Additionally, CCTs' effectiveness improved at schools with staffrooms because it encouraged more sharing of ideas and working on lesson plans together with other teachers.

Another factor influencing the professional development of teachers working to improve their capacity is that they rarely received feedback. According to the interviewed teachers, "some head teachers and colleagues would provide feedback to peers", but most of the time the observations were often undertaken by NGOs and the DEOs who "rarely provided feedback" to teachers based on their observations to engance to support teacher performance. Yet, there was no evidence of files or documentation that this was being done or shared with teachers.

In this way, school-based opportunities to evaluate and give feedback to teachers were lost. With more feedback on what teachers are doing well and what they can do to improve, the formal process that is linked to the Teacher Competence Profile can become more useful to all parties involved.

For the Quality-Ed project, incentivising a change in behaviour through observations and appraisals may be challenging, but it will also be more beneficial to teachers in the long run. By developing a feedback and observation process linked to the competence profile (or indicators that evolve out of this report) that more thoughtfully probes teachers about their decisions and actions, more teachers can learn to think constructively and critically about their own work and learn to improve their teaching through observational input and self-reflection. As it now stands, feedback mechanisms through observation and appraisal are minimally impactful.

3.5.1 Supervision and Feedback Mechanisms of Teachers

The survey findings also revealed that the existing mechanisms for supervision and feedback on teachers' performance are mainly for monitoring purposes: use of appraisal forms, supervision records form, checking and approving of lesson plans and schemes of work by head teachers, continuous teachers' assessment, and daily attendance book for teachers, head teachers' observations of lessons in classrooms etc.

It was also observed that the staff appraisal process involves filling in forms where the head teacher inserts comments and sends them to the DEO. However, the DEO's and personnel department's comments are usually not seen by the teachers and copies of the forms are not returned to the respective teachers. Appraisals are mostly done for promotion purposes and not linked to part of an ongoing performance management process.

Almost all (99 per cent) of the 292 teachers surveyed reported that they had undergone a form of supervision and had been given feedback on their performance. Slightly more than a half of them stated that they are often supervised and given feedback on their performance during each term, followed by 37 per cent who were supervised on a monthly basis, with a smaller proportion (12 per cent) of the teachers were being supervised annually as seen in Figure 12.

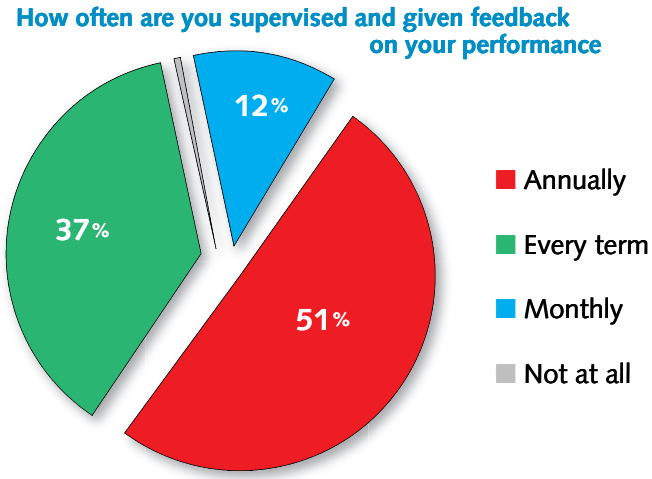

Figure 12: How often are you supervised and given feedback on your performance?

The majority (86 per cent) of the 292 teachers who were surveyed pointed out that they are often supervised by their head teacher, with 39 per cent suggesting that the DIS also supervised them, followed by CCTs (33 per cent) and others (SMCs/PTA) (21 per cent) respectively.

According to the survey, supervision impacts on teachers' professional needs mainly through improving on the teachers' performance (57 per cent). Supervision also helps to identify and improve on the weak areas of the teachers' work from time to time.

Other impacts of supervision on teachers' professional development include:

- Being able to plan, prepare, and teach effectively
- Assisting in promotion and boosting self-esteem
- Building confidence and changings moral behaviour of the teacher
- Making classroom control easier due to regular supervision and feedback
- Devising regular schemes of work and lesson plans
- Creating a sense of commitment, reducing teachers' absenteeism
- Confirming a teacher's professionalisation

Despite opportunities for positive professional development, teachers indicated several ways of improving supervision feedback including providing regular (face-to-face) supervision and feedback (42 per cent). Other suggestions (all offered by less than 10 per cent of respondents) included:

- Refresher courses on supervision, including addressing the weak areas and using collegial correcting of mistakes and not abusing or demeaning the supervisee
- Providing counselling and guidance services related to trauma
- Increased facilitation of transportation for the CCT supervisors
- Implementing what has been discussed between the supervisor and the teachers
- Introduction of filing and record-keeping systems
- Including information about levels of competence of the learners in that class in their evaluation forms
- Increasing the number of inspectors and supervisors
- Timely feedback, friendly supervisors
- Token of appreciation given to best performers
- Using schemes and lesson plans; following time table
- Using SMS messages in giving feedback
- Giving written report to the teacher
- Make the feedback available with concrete action plans

Over 66 per cent of the teachers and up to 88 per cent of the head teachers had received administrative and instructional support. This support was provided to the teachers mainly by the head teacher, CCTs, DEO and DIS, and MoES respectively. Meanwhile, the head teachers received such administrative/pedagogical support mainly from the DEO and CCTs, as well as the DIS, MoES, and NGOs.

Noticeably, the receipt of administrative and pedagogical support by the teachers was seen to be highest in the district of Apac (82 per cent), followed by Amolatar (78 per cent), Gulu (55 per cent), and Pader (54 per cent) as illustrated in Figure 13.

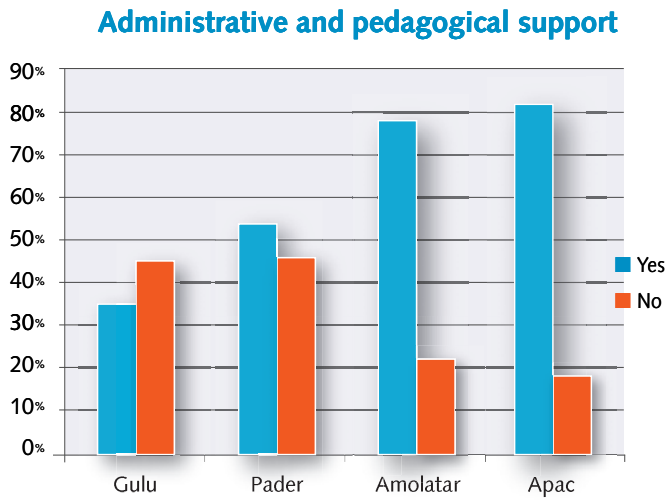

Figure 13: Receipt of administrative and pedagogical support by teachers

Furthermore, when asked as to whether they had received any kind of support from the head teachers, inspectors and CCTs, a very high proportion (88 per cent) of the 292 surveyed teachers agreed that they had indeed received such support. On the other hand, almost all (98 per cent) of the head teachers surveyed said they had received support from the inspectors and the CCTs[14]. It was also reported by over 84 per cent of the surveyed teachers that the head teachers provided such support less than four times in a term.

Yet, interviews revealed that while support was received, it was primarily in terms of advice or lesson planning or curriculum alignment, but not usually resources or materials, assistance with teaching workload, or specific assistance carrying out activities.

When the teachers were asked to rate the level of support (by frequency of visit) received from head teachers, inspectors and CCTs, 49 per cent rated it above average and the remainder average or below. However, a majority (58 per cent) of the teachers considered support when received to be above average, clearly implying a level fairness, but this calls for more improvement in the frequency of support provided.

[14] *See for more detailed support received from the head teachers in Appendix 7.0*

They also suggested that they received "support" from elsewhere, including from their fellow teachers, PTAs, sub-county chief/local government, Resident District Commissioners (RDC) among others.

3.5.2 Role of SMC in Schools

The SMC is also another channel of support in the school infrastructure. According to 42 per cent of the surveyed teachers, the SMC's main role was the provision of accommodation/construction of teachers' buildings in the school. One in four teachers (26 per cent) said the SMC has a mandate to mobilise the community/parents to support teachers, provide counselling and guidance to teachers, and lobby for school development programmes. Findings from the surveyed head teachers were also completely in support of the SMC's roles.

The other roles of the SMC include:

- Approval of school finance budgets, and teachers' welfare
- Budget around the PTA money for other programmes
- Monitoring the utilisation of UPE funds, manage government funds
- Ensure security within the school, smooth running of the school
- Ensure teachers follow code of conduct
- Ensure there are enough teachers available to teach in the school
- Ensuring discipline at school, and among teachers and pupils
- Link school to the district

The main challenges faced by the SMCs, according to the surveyed head teachers, were the inadequacy of funds to carry out the development activities within the school, disunity among the SMC, in addition to poor coordination. Survey respondents also described a failure of the SMCs to unite parents and teachers for school development activities, issues over land disputes, and slow decision making compounded by a lack of cooperation among the members.

CHAPTER 4

Conclusions and Recommendations

The presentation and analysis of this study show that teachers in Northern Ugandan primary schools work under complicated and often difficult circumstances. Challenging conditions such as limited resources, crowded and restrictive classrooms, and often long travel distances to and from school by both learners and teachers put pressure on the limited time for covering the required official curriculum. Previous research on the impact of poverty and rurality on education has emphasised the challenges of rurality as revolving around household resources, school resources, and also hunger and malnutrition (Roscigno and Crowley, 2001).

Complicating the work of the teachers in Northern Uganda was the post-conflict context in which they taught. This study highlights that not all rural/northern schools are equal; the community around a school, the school's accessibility, visibility, and leadership all exert some subtle influence on the support to teachers and resourcing for schools. Inadequate housing, lack of transportation for teachers, limited teaching and learning materials, and poor classroom conditions also contributed to a lack of necessary working conditions to promote quality schooling.

The findings from this study demonstrate that these conditions are a constant reality that frames and often limits quality education in myriad ways such as impacting the levels of hope for and motivation around learning, as well as how teachers and learners identify and define themselves outside of policies, practices and debates in education. These problems, though not clearly part of teacher competencies, directly align with the challenges in implementing the Quality-Ed project. Beyond government's work to improve education, NGOs and communities are frequently asked to step in to help bolster the efforts of the Ugandan government to provide more primary school opportunities for pupils and professional development opportunities for teachers who are facing these extreme challenges. While this is not the scope of the Quality-Ed project, these must be attended to concurrently within the main thrust of the project.

Quality Education for All through teachers' pre- and in-service professional development needs to be increased in Uganda. Governments should work with NGOs and donors to ensure teachers are provided with an adequate length and quality of professional development activities that address limited resources and enable teachers to deliver quality education. UNATU, international donors, and NGOs working in Northern Uganda should encourage the Ugandan government to be more ambitious about the funding and adequate provisioning of schools (including teacher accommodation, infrastructure, and material resources); the length and quality of training (by offering

incentives and qualifications and salaries commensurate with teachers' skills and knowledge); and the establishment of on-site and ongoing support structures that are aligned with teacher competencies.

Finally, building quality educators is dependent on successful teacher professional development opportunities and adequate resources. The study recommends that the:

- Effective professional development should be ongoing, include training, practice and feedback, and provide adequate time and follow-up support. Successful teacher training programmes involve teachers in learning activities that are similar to those they will use with their pupils. They must also encourage school-based structures that foster the development of teachers' learning communities/opportunities to share, plan, and work together.

- Teacher development (whether provided by government or NGOs) needs to be linked with the wider goals of school and system reform, and with appraisal and feedback practices such as the competence profile. While this is underway, the competence profile remains separate from teachers' understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Moreover, the document itself is not user-friendly for teachers who are just trying to wade through the new curriculum and new teaching methods. Better visuals and more elaboration of the different competencies and links between these and particular teaching and instructional strategies would go a long way in making the competencies more concrete and therefore applicable.

- There is a need to re-examine the structures and practices that link the Life Skills, Gender Responsive Pedagogy, and teaching in local languages/mother tongue education to the thematic curriculum, and to examine better ways to more explicitly map out the links across these different training and service providers so teachers understand their importance. Moreover, all of these different training approaches must provide more room for teachers to take time to learn deeply, and understand how to employ learner-centred, interdisciplinary and integrated approaches in the core areas of curriculum and assessment. Training should focus on enabling teachers to assess and meet the needs of individual children, rather than on generic categories of 'problem children', and on increasing their confidence to apply inclusive practices to their work. Teachers and their unions must be involved in the design and roll-out of such programmes.

- Well-structured and well-resourced induction programmes must be devised and implemented to support new and beginning teachers in their transition to full teaching responsibilities. From teachers' needs expressed in the sample schools, it is clear that the minimum professional teacher training qualifications are not

sufficient to promote quality teaching and learning. For beginning teachers, positive measures include typically receiving a reduced workload, mentoring by experienced teachers, and continued formal instruction. This is particularly important given the expansion of the teaching force in Uganda over the last five to 10 years.

- Pre-service and in-service teacher training colleges should coordinate their training and continuing professional development programmes so that newly qualified teachers and existing employed teachers are able to benefit from knowledge of new methodologies and content, and so that the Ugandan government is able to deliver the same quality of education across the country.
- Targeted training should be organised for female, disabled, and ethnic minority teachers to compensate for the qualification disparities with other teachers. Such in-service training should be coordinated to ensure that it is relevant to local needs and that teachers in all areas of a country receive a similar quality of training.
- Lastly, adequate resources, and improved material conditions and physical infrastructure should be ensured.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1 : **Sample Teacher Survey**

SECTION A: BASIC INFORMATION

1. Name of school: .....

2. Government Aided: ..... Private Owned: .....

Sub County: ..... Parish: ..... District: .....

3. Responsibility (tick what is appropriate):

❏ Classroom Teacher ❏ Head Teacher

❏ Deputy Head/Teacher ❏ Other (specify)

4. Gender of respondent: ❏ Male ❏ Female

5. Subjects that you teach: .....

SECTION B: TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL NEEDS

1.How many teachers are on your staff list according to gender?

Number Male	Number Female	Total	Expected teacher ceiling

2.What is your qualification?

Graduate Diploma in Primary training Education	Grade V	Grade IV	Grade III	Grade II	Licensed	Other

3. Have you attended any professional development training? Yes / No
   If yes, fill in the table below:

Type/s of training	Duration of training in days	Training provided by (indicate whether govt, NGO or private sector)

4. If you have attended training, do you consider the training as beneficial or not?

   ❑ Yes ❑ No

5. How has the professional development training impacted on your professional growth?

   .....

   .....

   .....

6. What factors hinder/facilitate your participation in professional development activities?

Hindering factors	Enhancing factors

7. What can be done to enhance teachers' participation in professional development activities?

   .....

   .....

   .....

8. Mention the various competencies that a teacher is required to exhibit?

   a. .....

   b. .....

9. Do you have knowledge of the existing Teacher Competence Profile of the Ministry of Education and Sports?

❑ Yes ❑ No

If yes, how did you get the information? Tick the appropriate

❑ Ministry ❑ DEO ❑ Head Teacher ❑ NGO

10. What are the existing mechanisms for supervision and feedback on your performance as a teacher?

.....

.....

.....

11. Have you undergone any form of supervision and been given feedback on your performance?

❑ Yes ❑ No

12. How often are you supervised and given feedback on your performance?

❑ Annually ❑ Every Term ❑ Monthly ❑ Not at all

13. Who supervises you? .....

14. How does the supervision impact on your professional needs as a teacher?

.....

.....

.....

15. How can the supervision feedback mechanisms be improved?

.....

.....

.....

16. A) Have you heard about or seen, used, been trained on the thematic curriculum?
If you have more than one answer, tick the appropriate

❑ Seen ❑ Heard ❑ Used ❑ Trained

- If seen, from where? .....
- If trained, by whom? .....
- If trained, what was the duration of the training? .....
- What was the form of the training? .....
- Who provided the training? .....
- How adequate was the training? Rank from 0-5 and tick the appropriate

❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5

B) Do you teach life skills to the learners? ❑ Yes ❑ No

If yes, mention some of the life skills that you have taught the learners. Have you seen, heard, used, been trained on the Life Skills' curriculum for Primary teachers in Uganda?

❑ Seen ❑ Heard ❑ Used ❑ Trained

- If seen, from where? .....
- If trained, by whom? .....
- If trained, what was the duration of the training? .....
- What was the form of the training? .....
- Who provided the training? .....
- How adequate was the training? Rank from 0-5 and tick the appropriate

❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5

17.Have you trained on gender-based pedagogy? ❑ Yes ❑ No

If yes, where and by whom and for how long?

Where	Trained by	Duration of training

18. Are you trained to teach using the mother tongue? ❑ Yes ❑ No

If yes, where and by whom and for how long?

Where	Trained by	Duration of training

19. Should teachers be encouraged to teach in the mother tongue? ❑ Yes ❑ No

If yes, why?

.....

.....

.....

If no, why not?

.....

.....

.....

20. What are the challenges of teaching and learning using the mother tongue?

.....

.....

.....

21. Rate your knowledge of learner-centred teaching methods (Rank from 0-5 and tick the appropriate)

❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5

22. Give examples of some of the learner-centred techniques/methods

.....

.....

.....

23. Rate your capacity to produce own teaching materials (on a scale of 0-5 and tick the appropriate)

❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5

24. Do you have any challenges in developing your own teaching materials?

❑ Yes ❑ No

If yes, what are the challenges?

.....

.....

.....

SECTION C: TEACHER DEPLOYMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS

1. What are your terms of employment? (tick the appropriate)

❑ Permanent ❑ Contract ❑ Temporary ❑ Other

2. Do you have an appointment letter? ❑ Yes ❑ No

3. How many teachers have left the school in the last three years?

2010	2011	2012	Reasons for leaving

4. What are the factors affecting teacher attendance?

.....

.....

.....

5. Are you accommodated at school? ❑ Yes ❑ No

6. Are you entitled to any type of incentive or allowance apart from salary?

❑ Yes ❑ No

If yes, what is the form of incentive or allowance?

.....

.....

.....

7. Are there enough female teachers in the school? ❑ Yes ❑ No

If no, what are the reasons?

.....

.....

.....

SECTION D: TEACHER SUPPORT MECHANISMS

1. Do you receive any administrative and pedagogical support? ❑ Yes ❑ No

If yes, who provides this support?

.....

.....

.....

2. Do you receive any kind of support from the head teacher, inspectors and CCT?

❑ Yes ❑ No

If yes, what type of support and how many times last year?

Source of support	Type of support	Number of times
Head teacher		
CCT		
Inspector		

3. How do you rate the support on a scale of 1-5? Tick the appropriate

❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5

4. Where else do you receive administrative and pedagogical support from?

.....

.....

.....

5. Is there a SMC for the school? ❑ Yes ❑ No

6. What is their role in relation to teacher support?

.....

.....

.....

7. What teacher support interventions have they undertaken over the last year?

.....

.....

.....

8. What challenges do they have in planning, organising and implementing school-based teacher support interventions?

.....

.....

.....

APPENDIX 2 : **Sample Teacher Interview**

I. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Name: ..... Gender: .....

Grade levels taught: ..... Years teaching: .....

Training/Qualification levels: .....

1. Where did you train for your teaching certificate?
2. Where are you originally from? And what is your home language?
3. Where do you live now in relation to the school? (Is housing provided?)
4. What languages do you speak? (What languages are you expected to use in class? Do you strictly go by this language policy, or do you use other languages in class?)

II. TEACHER KNOWLEDGE AND WORKING CONDITIONS

1. Why did you become a teacher?
2. How long have you been teaching? What is your area of specialisation?
3. How would you rate yourself (on a scale of 1-5) on the following:
   - content knowledge (relationship of curriculum with learning needs)
   - pedagogical knowledge (child-friendly approaches, phasing methods, use of teaching aids, etc.)
   - professional knowledge (laws, rights and responsibilities of teachers)
   - contemporary knowledge (current issues, trends, debates in education
4. How did you end up teaching in this school? How long have you been at this school?
5. Do you plan to continue teaching in this school? For how long?
6. What classes and other subject areas do you teach and have you taught before?
7. Briefly, describe your experience teaching in this school.
   - What do you like most about teaching in this particular school and context?
   - What are the greatest challenges about teaching and working in this environment
8. What social services, amenities, etc. are available to you and the school community around the school (clinics, post, transportation, public service offices)?
9. Do you consider poverty or the war to have had an effect on your learners today? If so, how?

III. CLASSROOM RESOURCES

10. Do you have enough textbooks and/or learning materials for use in your class?
11. Do you have chalk, pens/pencils, paper, notebooks, textbooks (dates), other materials (tape, glue, scissors, rulers, protractors)?
12. Do you produce your own teaching materials? If so, please describe (get a copy if possible).
13. Do you use any visual aids in your classrooms? Is pupils' work visible in the classroom?
14. How often do you use other materials outside your primary manual for teaching?
15. Do you use lesson plans/class notes? Do you write plans on the board? How often (if possible, get examples)?
16. How many books are present in the school library? What type of technology exists in the school (computers, phones, typewriters, radios)? Does the school have a photocopying machine? If so, how old is it? Who can use the machine? What type of technology exists in each classroom?

IV. CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

17. Have you heard about or seen, used, and/or been trained on the new thematic curriculum?
18. Ask about each: Life-long learning, gender parity, mother-tongue language instruction (Circle each list that applies).

Seen	Heard	Used	Trained
Life Skills	Life Skills	Life Skills	Life Skills
Gender	Gender	Gender	Gender
Mother-tongue	Mother-tongue	Mother-tongue	Mother-tongue
All	All	All	All

19. Who conducted your training above?
20.- What, if any, materials were you given about these curriculums?

Life Skills	Curriculum	Teacher Handbook	Other
Gender			
Mother-tongue			

21. Who provided the materials above?
22. Do all of your peers have these materials, too?
23. What do you think of learner-centred and interactive approaches suggested in this curriculum?
24. What do you consider the greatest challenge(s) to your use of interactive (learner-centred strategies) in your class?

V. ON LIFE SKILLS

25. What does life-skills learning mean to you? Do you think teaching Life Skills is important? How to interact?
26. Life Skills is not a stand-alone curriculum. Give examples of how you incorporate/integrate the five Life Skills' themes across the curriculum:
    - Knowing and living with oneself:
    - Knowing and living with others:
    - Making effective decisions:
    - World of work:
    - Becoming good leaders:
27. Describe or give examples of how you teach any of the following life skills: *Self-esteem, Assertiveness, Coping with emotion/stress, Empathy, Friendship formation, Managing peer relationships, Negotiation, Non-violent conflict resolution, Effective communication, Cooperation, Decision-making/problem solving, Critical/Creative thinking, Application*
28. What skills do learners most easily grasp (which are they most engaged in/performing best)? Which are the most challenging for learners?
29. Is it easy for you to teach in this way? Why or why not? Which theme is the hardest to teach? Why? (For instance, how do learners engage with concepts such as self-esteem, self-awareness, or issues like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) – do they find it difficult to discuss, silly, or irrelevant? How do they react? Do you find that a challenge?)
30. Do you use the Teachers' Handbook? Does it help you to understand the content better? Y/N Do you use all/most/some/none of the suggested activities in the handbook (e.g. role play, debate, hot seat, drama)? Have these activities been "successful"? How/how not?
31. How do you know learners understand the material? (What kids of assessment do you use?) What does learner success look like in this curriculum?
32. Are you grading learners in life skills? If so, how?
33. What is needed to teach these themes around life skills better?

VI. ON MOTHER TONGUE

34. Should teachers be encouraged to teach in the mother tongue? Why/why not?
35. Which do you use? All/most/some of the time?
36. Do you feel adequately trained to teach in the mother tongue to all pupils? What other support would you need?

VII. ON GENDER

37. What is the gender curriculum's purpose to you?
38. Do you feel gender parity can be taught in school? If so, can you give examples of whether or how you have tried to do this?
39. What is hard to teach about this? In discussing gender, do you often have to touch on difficult issues such as gender-based violence, PTSD, sexual abuse, HIV, sexuality? (For example, do you ever link "assertiveness" and "saying no" to issues girls face with sexual harassment or Gender-Based Violence?) Are these things considered "taboo" in your community?
40. Are there any unintended consequences of teaching about gender?

VIII.PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING

41. When was the last time you attended a workshop, in-service training, or course to improve your teaching work? Who provided the course?
42. How satisfied were you with what you learned?
43. Was it relevant to the issues you deal with on a daily basis?
44. Do you continue to use any strategies you learned there?
45. What else would help make teaching in this way more effective?
46. What do you do to prepare for class? When/do you develop assessments? Do you ever evaluate what you taught (how the lesson went)?
47. How common is it for you to consult your colleagues over using these new teaching strategies?
48. Have you ever sat in on another teacher's lesson? Has any teacher or your head teacher ever sat in on your class lesson? What was the purpose - to give you feedback or monitoring? Explain.
49. What (if any) support does your head teacher, administrator, or DEO offer to you, your colleagues, or school?
50. What areas, if any, of your daily work do you feel you need the greatest assistance with?

51. Where would you go to get this assistance?
52. Is there a local teacher advisory centre/station? What does the centre do?
53. If so, how many times have you been to the teacher advisory centre? Why? Was the experience positive/beneficial?

IX. TEACHER SUPPORT

54. Describe any training and support you've had from:
    - Government
    - Private
    - NGOs
    - Teachers' Union
55. Are there any curriculum or policy changes that you are aware of in the last few years?
56. What are they?
57. Has your teaching changed since these changes have been put in place? And how?
58. How do you get to know when there are new curriculum or policy changes? Have any of the teachers/union delegates whom you know been involved in policy making or decisions about the new curriculum?
59. Do you feel valued and your views, opinions, and expertise appreciated by Ministry officials who make policy about your work? How and why?
60. Do you feel there is a place to ask for changes in this policy once it has been implemented? (For example, if something isn't working, what do you do?) If you don't have the skills (for example, in the local mother tongue language where you teach), then where do you turn?

X. CONCLUSION

61. Why do you think learners are performing poorly in the northern region of Uganda? Why are they performing poorly at this school (same/different reasons)?
62. What attention/support/initiatives (are you aware of) that are designed to improve learner performance? Have any of these been helpful? Why/why not? What has been most/least helpful?
63. Do you have any additional questions or comments for the Quality Educators' project staff or policymakers?

APPENDIX 3 :
Sample Classroom Observation Guide

Teacher lesson and support profile: .....

What are your (teacher's) plans for this class? .....

How is the Life Skills curriculum involved today? .....

Do you have a lesson plan? (Copy/photo?): ❑ Yes ❑ No

Goals for self? .....

Goals for pupils? .....

Curriculum available in hard copy for teacher, or the teacher handbook companion?

❑ Yes ❑ No

Any training attended? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Do you bring it to class? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ Sometimes

When you prepare for a lesson, do you personally need help understanding what do you do?

.....

.....

.....

Do you ever prepare lessons in collaboration with other teachers? ❑ Yes ❑ No

How does being in Northern Uganda affect your work? And your pupils?

.....

.....

.....

Do you currently assess the Life Skills curriculum in your pupils? How?

.....

.....

.....

What is the hardest part of teaching the Life Skills curriculum in your classroom?

.....

.....

.....

Classroom activity description:

❏ of teachers ..... ❏ of pupils present .....

❏ of pupils absent..... ❏ of pupils who leave during class.....

❏ of desks ..... ❏ average of pupils per desk .....

❏ of textbooks ..... Date of book .....

Pupils/book in class .....

Layout of Classroom: Classroom Schema (include desks, teacher, blackboard, windows, doors, light if electricity, clock, etc.)

❏ of notebooks..... ❏ of pupils note-taking?.....

❏ toilettes nearby ..... ❏ of clean water sources at school .....

What do pupils produce in class?

.....
.....
.....

What is their homework?

.....
.....
.....

Lesson organisation explained to pupils?	❑ Yes	❑ No
Curriculum visible in class?	❑ Yes	❑ No
Curriculum actually referenced in lesson?	❑ Yes	❑ No
Teacher grades class work during class?	❑ Yes	❑ No

What is generally turned in for class work?

.....
.....
.....

If any, per cent of class turning in .....
Is there afterschool homework/help?

.....
.....
.....

How do pupils get to school?

.....
.....
.....

Other Observations:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX 4 : List of surveyed school districts

PROVINCE	DISTRICT	TYPE OF OBSERVATION
AMOLATAR	Alemere Muntu Aputi Acanoryema Awelo Namasale	Survey
APAC	Acungi Inomo Chamwente Owinyi Bung Awila Chakali Kidilani Ayumi Owang	Survey
GULU	Awach Ps Pokwero Ps Paicho Ps Patiko prison Bunyikweyo Kweyo Ps Palenga Ps Lakwatomer Ps Awere Ps Acet Ps Kasubi Ps Karo Ps Mary Immaculate	Interview and Survey
PADER	Olwonguu PaderKilak Ogago PajuleLacani Wanduku Lacekocot Laguti Acholibur Wiliwili St. Kizito Puranga	Interview and Survey

APPENDIX 5 : Complete Research Methodology

◆ DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND TOOLS

The study used both qualitative and quantitative techniques for gathering the views, opinions, and experiences of the beneficiaries. Facts and figures were documented in the survey, and interviews and observations were collected for purposes of triangulation. The primary data sources were study group participants comprising teachers and head teachers from the selected schools in the four different districts. Data from teachers and head teachers was collected through surveys and interviews, classroom observations, and focus groups. Instructional observations during selected lessons were carried out to observe for the life skills, GRP and local-languages instruction.

Additionally, the study developed a set of indicators that can frame future professional development and monitoring activities. The research approach was holistic and encompassed a broad approach to teacher professional development including: teacher needs/beliefs and practices, working conditions, and teacher support structures. Survey findings were triangulated with information from interviews and focus group discussions and from the document analysis (including a previous needs assessment and project studies) to derive benchmarks. Report findings will then be used to develop a set of indicators that can be used to track teacher progress and measure the impact of professional development initiatives over the duration of the project.

◆ DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Checklists of information to be sought were prepared to guide the document review exercise. Policy documents, curriculum implementation strategies and training manuals were particularly useful in obtaining an overview of the project and identifying areas from which further information should be obtained through other techniques. They also served to provide some details of the needs and facts for each survey item. In addition, several Quality-Ed project reports and previously conducted needs assessments, workshop evaluations and meeting agenda items were used as a baseline to deepen our focus and analysis. Teacher lesson plans, teaching schemes, and pupils' work were also photographed on site and reviewed and included as evidence of implementation and understanding of new curricular approaches.

◆ SURVEY

Survey questionnaires were developed and distributed to teachers and head teachers in all of the 40 project schools. In total, 292 surveys were collected. Those surveyed were teachers, head teachers, and deputy heads.

The survey questionnaires helped to describe the areas of most interest to the Quality-Ed project: school environment, teacher knowledge, teacher professional development, and implementation of the Life Skills curriculum, use of GRP, and teaching using the local language. Surveys began shortly after arrival at each school, and while the survey for the head teacher was conducted privately in their office, the other surveys were distributed amongst available teachers for them to complete with the assistance and clarification of the survey team. Teachers completed the surveys during normal business hours at their school. In total, 252 teachers and 40 head teachers completed the survey[15].

◆ SITE VISITS

The qualitative aspect of the research included visits to 14 schools in the districts of Gulu and Pader (six and eight schools respectively) for classroom observations and interviews. The in-depth site visits were a minimum of a half-day long and allowed for the stakeholder interviews, classroom and school activity observations, focus groups as well as (on occasion) the distribution to and collection of the survey from deputy and head teachers. The qualitative interviews and classroom observations in the Pader and Gulu districts provide rich descriptions and narratives about the teachers' lives and working conditions, (and, specifically, in their own words) details of their schools, classrooms and teaching experiences, that further illuminate issues captured in the surveys, some of which are shared throughout this report.

Each site (including school grounds, classrooms, offices, pupils' work and teacher lessons) was photographed during researcher visits allowing for in-session classroom observations. Grounds and amenities were assessed during field visits through quick mapping exercises[16].

[15] *See Appendix 1.0*
[16] *See Appendix 4.0*

◆ STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

A total of 36 interviews were conducted with 19 teachers, 13 head teachers and/or their deputies, two union and two District Education Officers (DEOs) to establish more detailed contextual realities and enable participants to comment more extensively on issues, concerns and understanding about professional development needs and teacher competencies. In doing so, we attempted to establish whether there was a disconnect between teachers' own perceptions of themselves, their work and the learners, and the way they conduct their classes. Additionally, these interviews sought to learn more about the unique learning environment facing teachers in Northern Uganda, and how it impacts on their effective use of these new approaches to teaching.

Teachers were asked to share samples of their lesson plans and schemes of work. Apart from teachers, interviews were conducted with education officials at the MoES headquarters, as well as with officials at the district level. Interviews were transcribed, coded, and analysed according to emerging themes and topical issues that were raised in previous Quality-Ed report findings. Interview data was critical in providing first-hand information to clarify understandings and needs around professional development. These interviews provided key stakeholders an opportunity to provide feedback on the Quality-Ed programmes and to prioritise the future policies they hoped to see[17].

◆ FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Focus groups were conducted with a total of 12 teachers at two schools in Gulu. The study team identified specific teachers with interest in or knowledge of the Quality-Ed project and or Life Skills curriculum. A focus group interview protocol and checklist was developed and used to make sure all the key issues were addressed with each specified focus group.

◆ CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS AND FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS

Observations of teaching and classrooms allowed for the research team to have a better window into the level of curriculum implementation, teaching practices, support needs, availability of materials and textbooks, and general working conditions of teachers. Through understanding just what environment pupils are learning in and how their teachers act, there will be better understanding of feasibility measures.

[17] *See Appendix 2.0*

Visits were made in approximately 20 classrooms, using the classroom observation checklist and data recording sheet. Each observer mapped classroom layout, teacher positions, flow of lectures, desk layouts, and noted pupils' behaviour during the lessons. The number of pupils, books, desks and whether or not there were windows were also noted. Assessing the level of resources, textbooks, and/or manipulative available for lessons and especially teachers' use of visual aids was helpful in looking at teachers' working conditions. Where lesson plans and schemas were available, they were photographed and reviewed to provide the most detailed picture possible of what was occurring in class.

◆ DATA QUALITY CONTROL, PROCESSING, AND ANALYSIS

The processing of impressions and observations from the field visits occurred concurrently with data collection at the start of activities where the consultants checked for significations of messages, completeness, and consistency of the information returned on a daily basis. Quantitative data was coded, entered, cleaned, and analysed using a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and themed and reference-checked with interviewees and project staff. The notes from focus group discussions were typed and subjected to content and factual analysis to derive descriptive summaries and key quotations, which were later used to explain the peculiarities in the quantitative data as well as complement it. The validation meeting also provided useful inputs in clarifying the findings.

APPENDIX 6 : Abstract from Life Skills Curriculum

EXAMPLE 1

The lesson plan written by the teacher shows that pupils should be able to learn life skills, critical thinking, problem solving and friendship".

TASK

In this lesson, the pupils are asked to come up to the board and draw shapes they just learned. The teacher calls on one pupil to come and draw a triangle. The first pupil come to the board and draws a rectangle. After being told "good try", he returns to his desk and another pupil comes to the board to try again. He also draws a rectangle. The teacher again indicates that it is the wrong answer. The boy returns to his seat. The next pupil, a girl, comes to the board and properly draws a triangle for the class. All pupils repeat in unison after her.

OBSERVATION

In this example, the teacher asks children to recognise shapes, but does not make them think critically about which of the other images on the board actually connects with the one their teacher is asking for. They are also not encouraged to assist their peers in the moment to work towards the right answer. In addition, the teacher does not recognise or praise the girl for getting the correct answer. In this example, the teacher has missed teaching her pupils life skills or employing a gender-responsive approach.

EXAMPLE 2: TEACHER HANDBOOK FOR TEACHING LIFE SKILLS

TASK

To engage children in thinking more critically about their answers and those of others

"Teacher:	*Who is the President of Uganda?*
Pupil (Oryem):	*Mwai Kibaki*
Teacher:	*Class, is Oryem correct?*
All:	*No*
Teacher:	*Who is Mwai Kibaki?*
Pupil (Akech):	*Mwai Kibaki is the President of Kenya*
Teacher:	*Class, don't you think that the answer Akech has given tells us that Oryem is partly right? Oryem, it is true Kibaki is a President but not the President of Uganda. Who is the President of Uganda?*

Oryem puts up his hand again and is selected to answer.

Oryem:	*Yoweri Museveni*
Teacher:	*That is very good, Oryem, you are totally right. Class, who is the President of Uganda?*
Class:	*Yoweri Museveni*

When pupils give answers, teachers need to ask them to verify, support, explain, or give examples and this automatically develops their critical thinking skills."

OBSERVATIONS

The above example included in the Teacher Manual (which the teachers in these schools did not have), provides an alternative example of life skills practice and demonstrates how teachers can probe for connections and correct answers. Unfortunately, in most classrooms visited by the research team, these strategies were rarely or, if at all, only subtly demonstrated. Lacking access to the manual and to concrete examples, teachers failed to include many of the key understandings behind the life skills curriculum or explain how connections to life skills were being utilised.

APPENDIX 7 : List of support provided by different stakeholders

Support provided by head teachers

- Approval of scheme of work and lesson plans
- Support supervision
- Provision of books, pens
- Conducting meetings, provision of information
- Guidance and counselling and professional work
- Helping teachers with medical bills
- Provision of learning aid materials, learning materials such as textbooks, lesson plan books
- Welfare of teachers
- Assistance in the use of proper methods of teaching and interpretation of curriculum

Support provided by CCT

- Counselling and guidance of teachers
- Encouraging and appreciating teachers for their work
- General supervision
- Guidance in methods of training and management
- Inspection and support supervision
- Monitoring of school and organising workshops
- Provision of teachers' resource book
- Training on curriculum changes

Support provided by inspectors

- Mainly inspections and general supervision
- Encouragement
- Provision of learning materials
- Advice on appropriate teaching methods
- Inspecting and correcting of the don'ts
- Supervision and training on new methods of teaching

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