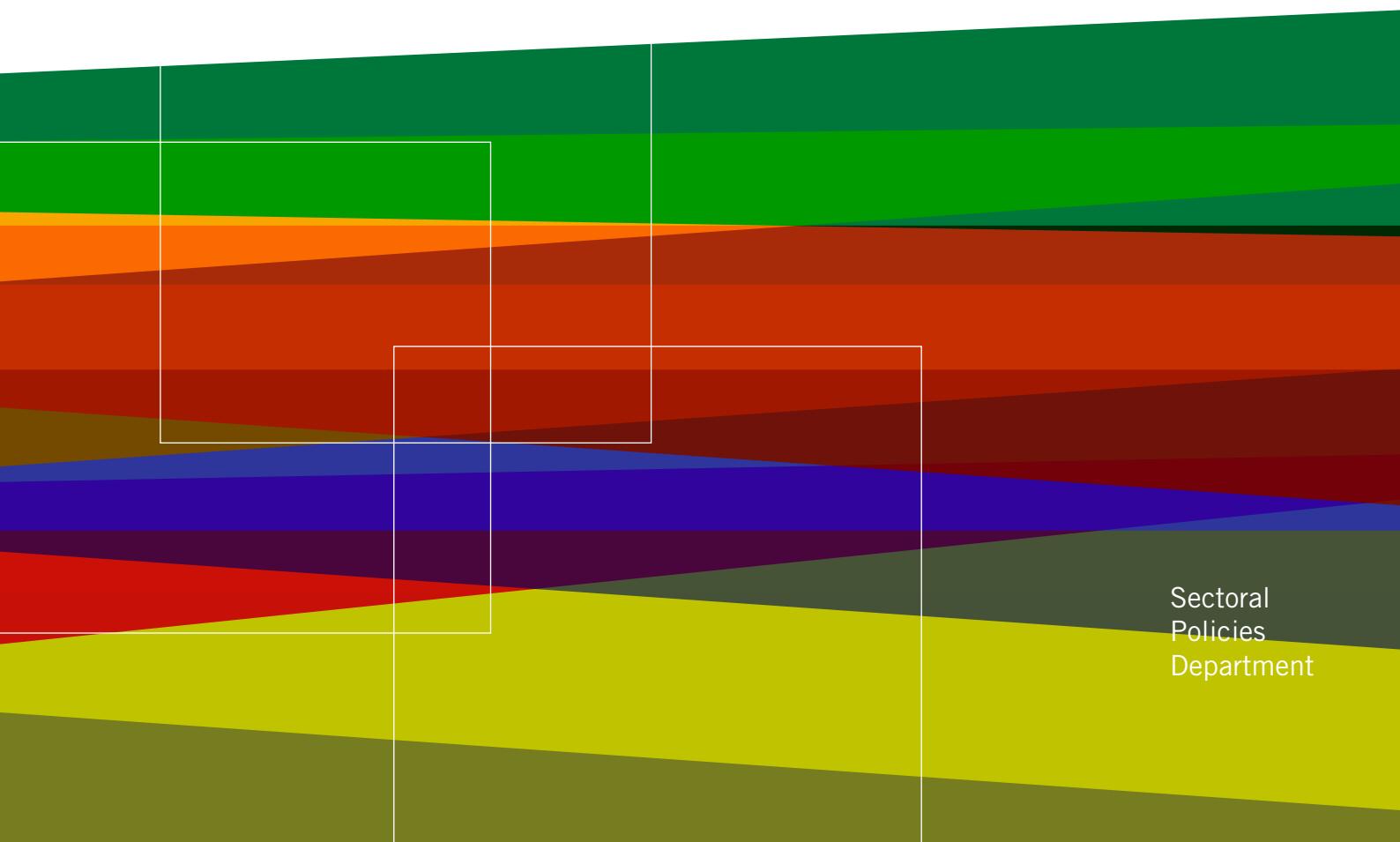




# Rural teachers in Africa: A report for ILO



# Rural teachers in Africa: A report for ILO

Prepared by the Centre for International Teacher Education

**International Labour Office**  
Geneva

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## **Abbreviations**

ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
CONFEMEN	Conference of Education Ministers of Francophone Countries (Conférence des ministres de l'Éducation des Etats et gouvernements de la Francophonie)
DEEP	Digital Education Enhancement Programme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GDP	gross domestic product
GEM/BEM	Girls and Boys Education Movement
ICT	information and communication technology
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	nongovernmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PASEC	CONFEMEN Programme for the Analysis of Education Systems (Programme d'Analyse des Systèmes Éducatifs de la CONFEMEN)
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SEAMEO	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization
TENI	Tackling Education Needs Inclusively
TESSA	Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa
TRIS	Teachers Rural Incentive Scheme
UIS	UNESCO Institute of Statistics
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas
WFP	World Food Programme

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## **1. Overview: Context and framework**

This chapter provides a context and framework for this report on teachers in rural areas of Africa. It sets the background for the report by suggesting that the debate about rural teachers needs to move beyond a deficit discourse in which the significant challenges besetting rural contexts overshadow the attempt to identify and work towards promising policy options. Such an approach, it argues, requires an integrated rural development approach in which education is a key component.

### **1.1. Beyond a deficit discourse**

The issue of teachers in rural areas is intimately connected to the broad challenge of rural development. Much of the analysis of rural development and rural education suggests a narrow negative deficit discourse. In this review we begin with the proposition that rural education and the context of rural teachers requires a framework that transcends such a view, as articulated by the following quote from the Ministerial Committee in South Africa:

Promoting rural development and schooling must go beyond “deficit” approaches. From the second half of the twentieth century, the literature on rural education tends to emphasise histories and structures that have created conditions and circumstances of “oppression”, “deprivation”, “disadvantage” and “deficit”. In similar deficit terminology, people in rural areas are often stereotyped in ways that emphasise their powerlessness: “rural peripheries” become the “dark side” of urban centres of “enlightenment”. While acknowledging the importance of history and quantitative factors, the committee believes that it is important to see beyond the numbers and negative “deficit” views to recognise the positive capabilities and assets of rural people and the inherent worth of indigenous knowledge and practices. A people-centred exploration of rural Africa opens up a wealth of indigenous knowledge in fields such as medicine, conservation, arts and culture (Department of Education, 2005, p. 3).

### **1.2. An integrated development approach**

To ensure that rural education is not pathologized and is part of a holistic development approach, it is necessary to take into account “the social, cultural, economic, environmental, and geographic realities that shape the lives of people all over the world” (United Nations, 2004, p. 1), with a broad range of actors (from international to local communities and individuals) playing a role to play in multisectoral projects, and with local and central development systems working in dynamic cooperation with each other so that local perspectives inform programme planning and execution at regional or national levels. Rural programme development may encompass a range of infrastructural activities and integrated services, including those where education development plays a major role in coordinating the efforts of other services to promote health development, transport arrangements and skills development linked to local economic projects (Jenks, 2004).

The Sustainable Development Goals are predicated on an integrated development approach, especially in communities that have little or no access to resources. An integrated development approach can only be achieved in rural areas if various services – including education, teacher development, transport, health and social services – are considered holistically. In such a context students are able to attend school in a safe and secure environment, and teachers are sufficiently trained to provide quality education, without suffering the constraints arising from factors such as ill health and the need to

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supplement their income. In many cases the school in a rural context is the hub of a range of development activities, as it may be the only site where learning can take place. Integrated service provision in isolated communities is central to achieving high levels of local participation in school affairs and supporting teachers in dealing with issues arising from the exigencies of rural life.

### **1.3. Defining “rural”**

It is essential that countries create accurate and up-to-date databases of relevant information to inform policy regarding the planning of educational facilities. However, the following comments illustrate that the practice of defining “urban” as distinct from “rural”, and classifying areas not “urban” as “rural”, cannot be the foundation for making policies that determine the distribution of educational facilities across a country.

It is apparent that the meaning of the term “rural” is fluid, as definitions are based on different variables that may be used singly or in concert with one another, such as geography, economics, demography or the availability of resources. Further, rural populations are not fixed, as migration today affects large swathes of people who migrate to cities within a country and to cities in different countries to seek work and improve their life chances. These migration patterns confound the governance and provision of facilities and services specifically for rural and resource-poor communities; for example, in South Africa the large influx of migrants into cities has led to a substantial impact on the provision of education and other public services in urban areas. At the same time, it has led to many underpopulated and poorly resourced schools in rural areas. However, low attendance in rural schools is not just caused by migration but could be due to other factors as well. In addition to the impact on service provision, migration also has personal consequences; for instance, a rural person may have strong connections to both urban and rural areas. Such multiple affiliations frame people’s vision of their educational needs, experiences and notions of schooling.

Nevertheless, as pointed out in the proceedings of a 2005 workshop organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), it is commonly assumed that rural areas comprise human settlements with small populations, that rural spaces are dominated by farms, forests, water, mountains or desert, and that agriculture – usually small-scale – is the main occupation of rural communities (FAO and IIEP-UNESCO, 2006, p. 23). Some definitions link rurality with poverty as many, if not most, rural communities face severe deprivations due to the scarce provision of facilities and services, including health and education, lowering educational and hence economic performance.

Communities in rural areas have diverse cultures and languages affected by settlement patterns over long periods, all of which continue to influence the agency of communities in rural areas in political affairs and hence access to economic and political freedoms.

These issues attest to the difficulty of providing a coherent definition of “rural” and an understanding of “who is a rural person”, and subsequently what data should inform policy formulation concerning the distribution of resources across a particular country. These uncertainties point to the need for countries to clarify their conceptions of “rural” before determining indicators that assess inequities across different regions based on settlement patterns and develop educational policies and programmes accordingly.

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## **1.4. Understanding teaching in a rural context**

It is helpful at this stage to sketch the broad context of teachers and teaching in rural areas of Africa. Although 70 per cent of Africa's population lives in rural areas (approximately 500 million people), it is these areas that are critically under-resourced with respect to qualified and experienced teachers. The challenge for recruiting teachers to and retaining them in rural areas is complex. A joint report of IIEP, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and FAO indicates that training more teachers will not solve the teacher problem in rural areas (FAO/IIEP/ADEA, 2006, p. 2). Simply stated, producing more teachers will not increase the availability of teachers in rural areas, nor will it impact the quality of teaching and learning in rural schools; currently, working conditions are too problematic to recruit and retain teachers in schools. A policy regime is needed for rural areas that assures teachers' rights and responsibilities, improves working conditions and increases well-being.

Resourcing schools with fully trained teachers has been a challenge for most countries, for both rural and urban areas. According to the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS), sub-Saharan Africa will need about 6.1 million teachers by the year 2030, of which 2.2 million will be new positions to be created. Pupil–teacher ratios in primary education in selected countries are presented in table 1.

The data in table 1 provide national level pupil–teacher ratios in the 10-year period 2003–2013, across selected countries in Africa. It illustrates that over the time period 2003–2013 changes in pupil–teacher ratios varied across the countries included in table 1, and is uneven within each country. Further, as in all cases where average data are used, the extremes are not apparent. For example, it is possible that some urban schools have very low pupil–teacher ratios while schools in rural areas have high pupil–teacher ratios. Further analysis and research are therefore required in order to have a clear picture.

Some evidence suggests high pupil–teacher ratios in rural areas. For example, in Uganda the average pupil–teacher ratio in rural areas is about 66:1 (ranging from 58:1 to 81:1) while it is 42:1 in the capital, Kampala. In Malawi the pupil–teacher ratio is 77:1 in rural areas compared to 44:1 in urban areas. This is indicative of the conditions and challenges facing teachers in rural areas (Mulkeen and Chen, 2008).

**Table 1. Pupil–teacher ratio in primary education in selected countries.**

Country	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Benin	62	52	47	44	...	45	45	46	44	44	44
Burundi	50	51	49	54	52	...	51	51	48	47	45
Cameroon	57	54	48	45	44	46	46	46	45	46	...
Chad	72	69	63	63	60	62	61	62	63	61	62
Democratic Republic of the Congo	...	...	...	...	38	39	37	37	37	35	37
Eritrea	47	47	48	47	48	43	39	38	41	41	40
Ethiopia	...	...	...	...	...	62	58	54	55	54	...
Ghana	31	32	34	35	32	32	33	...	31	33	32
Kenya	38	40	42	42	42	44	43	...	...	57	...
Rwanda	60	62	69	66	69	68	68	65	58	59	60
Uganda	52	50	50	49	50	50	49	49	48	...	46
United Republic of Tanzania	57	58	56	52	53	52	54	51	...	46	43

Source: Data from UIS.

## 1.5. Structure of the report

It is important at the outset to lay out a few qualifications pertaining to this report:

- Elements of policy related to the quality of education are highly context specific, so account will be taken of contextual variations that shape the nature of effective and visionary leadership and governance of schools, teacher accountability, quality of teaching, and teachers' access to initial and continuing school-based professional development and support.
- The focus of this review is on primary and secondary schooling rather than vocational education and training and tertiary education, though the latter will be considered where teachers are trained at the tertiary level, as is the case in South Africa.

The report is divided into three chapters:

- Chapter 1 outlines the context and framework of the report.
- Chapter 2 provides a review of selected aspects of teaching in rural areas, and considers the challenges and possible approaches to overcome them, covering three interrelated dimensions influencing teacher quality: teacher employment and working conditions (sections 2.1 to 2.5), the school environment (2.6), and teacher professional development (2.7).
- Chapter 3 outlines key policy recommendations regarding teachers and teaching in rural areas.

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## 2. Teaching and teachers in rural areas

This chapter reviews three interrelated policy dimensions that impact the work of teachers in rural areas and define the specific circumstances facing teachers in those areas, in particular poverty, isolation and poor facilities and services, which have made it essential for governments to develop a raft of policies to cope with such rural exigencies.

- Dimension 1 (sections 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5): The working environment and employment conditions in rural areas, including governance, measures of accountability, remuneration, incentives and rewards to attract teachers to work in schools in rural areas, and career progression.
- Dimension 2 (section 2.6): The consequences of poverty in rural areas, and particularly its effect on the school environment.
- Dimension 3 (section 2.7): Initial and continuing teacher training programmes that prepare teachers in schools in rural areas to meet the challenges that influence teaching practices and learning outcomes and sensitize them to the prevailing learning culture.

### 2.1. Employment conditions

Teachers who are dissatisfied with their jobs and are poorly motivated are not likely to perform well. The poor behaviour and performance of teachers is reported to have reached crisis levels in some countries. The key indicators of this are low and declining learning outcomes, high rates of teacher attrition and teacher absenteeism, low time-on-task, frequent strikes and other forms of industrial action, and widespread teacher misconduct. ... Improved incentives and working and living conditions for teachers should be a top priority in almost every country (Bennell, 2011, p. 4).

Bennell's conclusions regarding the consequences of working conditions in schools have been supported by a range of studies that indicate that they have a strong impact on the perceived status of the teaching profession, can influence recruitment and retention of high-quality candidates, and affect teacher motivation, morale and professional satisfaction (Bennell, 2004, 2011; Bennell and Akyeampong, 2007.)

A broad range of factors contribute to acceptable working conditions for teachers, including effective management, well-resourced schools and classrooms, government and parental support for the school, and, in addition, the right of teachers to:

- work autonomously;
- have responsibilities clearly delineated;
- work in a management and supervision regime that respects their autonomy;
- contribute to constructing, implementing and evaluating policies that assist them in providing a high level of professional service;
- foster the best learning environment for students and help achieve the highest learning outcomes;
- engage in collegial activities within the school team and interact regularly with students and parents;

- engage in professional development and other reflective activities as a regular part of their professional activities.(UNESCO, 2015).

Other rights deal with remuneration, hours of working, workload and a life balance that provides time for work and family and for community (ILO and UNESCO, 1966).

This section of the report deals specifically with remuneration and working conditions for teachers in rural areas.

### **2.1.1. Working conditions in rural areas**

It is generally assumed that working in rural schools is considerably more difficult and more demotivating than in urban schools because of poor living and working conditions. However, the findings from various country studies show that this is not necessarily always the case. Teachers who have grown up in rural areas frequently have strong social support networks in their community, and even if they are posted to another rural area, they are well adapted to village life. On the other hand, many university graduates are from urban backgrounds and therefore may find it difficult to adapt to living in rural areas and often resist being posted to rural schools. For instance, in the United Republic of Tanzania in 2003 nearly 2,000 out of 9,000 newly qualified teachers refused to be posted to their assigned schools (UNESCO, 2015).

Comments made by teachers in Africa (box 1) highlight the opportunities and constraints facing educators in selected countries and the key challenges they face daily in their communities, when travelling to school and in the classrooms, and how these affect their teaching practices and their students learning outcomes. It is encouraging to note that some are positive about their role as teachers and are supportive of reform in rural education in their countries to progress towards universal primary education.

#### **Box 1. Challenges facing teachers in Africa: Teachers' views**

##### **Uganda**

Facilities do not match enrolment, leading to overcrowded classrooms and high pupil–teacher ratios – a teacher may have to manage a class of 100-plus children for the whole day. Some teachers are underqualified; the numbers were overwhelming when the universal primary education programme started. But the government is rectifying this with in-service teacher training.

The curriculum needs overhauling into one that is more relevant to our society. Today, it is more exam oriented, so children are only taught to pass exams instead of learning to become people of character and integrity, and identifying talents to do things they love in future. We are producing people who will do jobs they are not passionate about, which erode performance instead of adding value. It would be great if the curriculum were revised to nurture children's talents and interests early on, because our current curriculum tends to encourage dependency on rote learning and memorization instead of nurturing children's creativity, critical thinking skills, and imagination, [qualities] which spark innovation.

##### **Angola**

Our biggest problem is overcrowding. The war left us without enough classrooms and teachers. We are much luckier than the rural areas, where teaching takes place under trees. Lubango remained in government hands throughout the war and its schools never closed. The greatest pressure on us is the population influx caused by the war. It continues to put pressure on facilities. Some of our classes are based in an abandoned chapel in another part of the city, and that is really unsatisfactory because it creates disparities.

We have children who come to school on an empty stomach and others who bring lunch. Last year, we allowed a trader to sell snacks in the playground during breaks, but that just made matters worse. Because of the huge differences in the incomes of the parents, we can only ask them to contribute about 300 kwanzas (US\$3 in 2011) per term for materials, which leaves us unable to provide textbooks for everyone.

During the war – and since – the government has been able to draw on only a very limited pool of qualified teachers. It has recruited thousands of people who only have a grade 8 or, at best, grade 10 education. Even the qualified teachers, such as myself, use methods that date from colonial times.

It is a very exciting time to be a teacher in Angola. Our country is racing to catch up and we are made very aware of the crucial role of the teaching profession in building a nation of active citizens.

#### **Ghana**

The focus in teaching has shifted to providing quality education, particularly to out-of-school children, girls, orphans and children with special needs. But, this is a challenge, especially in rural areas like the one I live and work in. I decided to move into my school's local community, to be closer to the children and their families. I want to be a teacher even after school hours have closed.

Although English is the official language of Ghana, it is an everyday educational challenge for teachers and students. Exams, assessments, the curriculum and teaching are in English. But most students in my class are Dagomba and rarely speak English anywhere else but the classroom.

In addition, we have very crowded classrooms because our school is too small. I have 61 students in my one class, making child-centred learning very difficult to achieve.

We also have very few facilities to support our students' learning. We are now living within a global village, but children in northern Ghana are being excluded. Most of our students have never seen a computer, but according to the curriculum are meant to study information and communication technology (ICT).

The other challenge is attracting teachers to our community. Because this is a rural village, with no social amenities or electricity, it is very difficult to attract teachers. Even those who are posted here by the government simply do not come, because I also put a lot of pressure and expectations on our teachers to perform [in my role as assistant head teacher].

#### **Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire**

The country has rehabilitated many schools, decentralized and renewed the school administration system, and started giving free schoolbooks. New teachers' colleges were set up. Parents' management committees were given more responsibilities. Appeals were made to international bodies ... for school canteens.

Teachers often have to travel a long way to their schools, and the cost of transport is high. The vehicles are crowded and the journey uncomfortable. Salaries have not kept up with the rise in the cost of living. Professionally, there is a problem that we have been trained in new methods but the teaching material has not caught up with the change.

#### **Juba, South Sudan**

I live more than 4 kilometres away from the school and there is no transport. All the classes are overcrowded, making it difficult to teach and to get children to focus on their lessons. Some of the children, who have returned from the north to South Sudan, only speak Arabic, so teaching and making them understand is an uphill task. There is also a shortage of teaching material and textbooks for the students. Often, students arrive late to class, which disrupts lessons. In addition, as the school has no boundary wall and is not fenced, vehicles drive through the compound, which further distracts the children. Last, despite the rising cost of living, teacher salaries are still low.

Source: Cummins, 2011.

### **2.1.2. Remuneration**

Remuneration levels are set nationally to take account of qualifications and other factors such as length of service. In general these are established in relation to:

- national income levels, usually measured in gross domestic product (GDP) per capita;
- minimum living standards in very poor countries;
- a comparison with other professions requiring similar qualifications, length of training, knowledge, skills and responsibilities;
- education authorities' fiscal or revenue capacity (UNESCO, 2015).

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Evidence within the last decade points to salary as a key factor (though not the only one) in the success of high-performing education systems (UNESCO, 2015). Conversely, there is a loss of prestige for the teaching profession where teacher salaries are not perceived as commensurate with levels of education, training and responsibilities. Salaries that do not achieve even the basic household poverty line in very low-income countries result in teacher recruitment difficulties, absenteeism and low teacher performance.

The increase in student numbers in recent decades has resulted in a shortage of teachers. Consequently, some governments have embarked on increasing the number of teachers; one strategy has been to engage youths as contract teachers and/or community teachers who may be offered training from a few weeks to three or four years. (See section 2.6 on teacher professional development).

Contract teachers feel aggrieved by their status. Findings from Benin, for example, reveal that the policy of contract teachers has led to a more embittered teaching force. Hiring lesser paid contract teachers was seen as undermining one of the basic elements of teacher identity in Benin: that of being a respected civil servant with a decent steady salary, job security and high social status. “Teachers felt betrayed by the state and as a consequence engaged in a host of negative behaviours, such as absenteeism and moonlighting,” says Fyfe, in an ILO working paper (Fyfe, 2007).

Diverse salaries among the various categories of teachers are commonly observed in a large number of African countries, irrespective of geographical region or language. UIS data illustrate both the extreme variety of average salaries among developing countries and the disparity of salaries, sometimes quite pronounced, within countries, according to teacher categories and qualifications (UIS, 2011).<sup>1</sup> In Francophone countries in Africa the categories are (a) teachers who are civil servants; (b) contract teachers; and (c) community teachers (paid directly by the national government or individual communities). In Anglophone countries in Africa, the categories are (a) “qualified” teachers who have received pedagogic training; and (c) “non-qualified” teachers.

Using the most recent data available for 34 sub-Saharan African countries during the period 2003–2009 (the year varying by country), the average cost of primary teacher salaries in sub-Saharan Africa was 4.1 times the GDP per capita, while the average costs of lower and upper secondary teacher salaries were estimated at 6.3 and 7.2 times the GDP per capita, respectively. As expected, the cost of teacher salaries increases with the education level. Also, the data show that there are significant differences between countries in the remuneration of teachers; the average remuneration of primary teachers varied from slightly less than 1 multiple of the GDP per capita in the Congo to nearly 8 times the GDP per capita in Burundi. In secondary education, teacher remuneration varied from 2 times the GDP per capita in the Congo to approximately 11.5 times the GDP per capita in Malawi at the lower secondary level, and from nearly 2.5 times the GDP per capita in the Congo to about 12 times the GDP per capita in Burundi at the upper secondary level (UIS, 2011, p.48).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See also UIS website: Teachers statistics, available at <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/teachers-statistics.aspx>.

<sup>2</sup> These average salaries are substantially lower than the statutory salaries of primary and lower and upper secondary education teachers worldwide. On average, the ratio of teacher salaries to GDP per capita in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries is 1.2, 1.2 and 1.3 respectively for primary, lower secondary and upper secondary teachers.

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Differences arise across countries due to the different proportions of contract or civil service teachers (usually fully trained) employed. Taking examples from Francophone Africa, the vast majority of primary school teachers in Mali in 2008 were contract or community teachers (48 per cent and 31 per cent respectively), and only 21 per cent were civil service teachers. On the other hand, Côte d'Ivoire (2007) and Burundi (2005) had mostly civil service teachers (86 per cent and 88 per cent respectively). Among Anglophone countries, Malawi and Rwanda in 2008 had mostly qualified teachers in primary schools (92 per cent for both countries), compared to 68 per cent in Uganda (2007) (UIS, 2011, pp. 51-52).

### ***2.1.3. Consequences of low pay and poor working conditions***

A recent study of teachers' pay and conditions of service in the United Republic of Tanzania indicates the scale of the problems arising from low pay, poor working conditions and inefficient administration systems in developing countries (Lyimo, 2010). It explored the consequences of teachers' low payment levels on teachers' attitudes and behaviours and on students' learning in Moshi rural district. Interviews with 30 teachers at five public secondary schools in Moshi revealed that:

- Teachers engage in other economic activities in order to earn extra income to supplement their salaries, even during class hours.
- Low salary and delays in the payment of teachers' allowances lead to teachers being accorded low status.
- Teacher absenteeism affects instructional activities and disrupts students' learning.
- A number of teachers have dropped from the teaching profession and opted for better-paying professions.
- The shortage of teachers affects students' learning.
- Some teachers established private instruction centres.
- Some teachers fail to cover the syllabus because of spending time following up on their salary or related payments and participating in teachers' strikes (Lyimo, 2014).

Lyimo concludes that if this situation is to be remedied, the welfare of teachers needs to be significantly improved, primarily through the provision of adequate salaries that are paid on time. Teacher benefits, for example leave and transfer allowances, need to be clarified, known to all, and made available on time.

These findings support Mulkeen's (2010) study regarding absenteeism: in every country included in a World Bank study of Anglophone teachers, some degree of teacher absence was reported. The impact on students' learning can be very significant; a study in Zambia showed that an increase of 5 per cent in teacher absence reduced learning by 4–8 per cent of average gains over the year. Absenteeism also undermines confidence in

public schooling, and is one of the drivers of the growth of low-cost private schools. (A discussion on teacher absenteeism is included in section 2.3 on teacher accountability).

## **2.2. Teacher recruitment, deployment, retention and career development**

Information on the teacher numbers within and across countries in Africa indicates that the employment of teachers is neither efficient nor equitable. Many attempts are being made to address this through various recruitment and deployment strategies.

This section of the report discusses teacher recruitment, deployment and retention, highlighting different strategies to ensure that teacher shortages in rural contexts are addressed, especially in schools serving disadvantaged communities. In this regard it is evident that teacher shortages cannot be relieved merely through supplying more teachers, but that various incentives must be offered to counter the unwillingness of teachers to live and work in rural areas. Incentive regimes for recruitment, deployment and retention are multiple and varied, as the information in box 2 shows.

### **Box 2. Strategies to ensure equitable distribution of teachers in South-East Asia**

Countries in the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) have adopted a number of creative incentives to ensure teachers are deployed where they are needed: creation of special teacher positions for very remote areas (such as the mobile teacher programme in the Philippines); award systems or other incentives to attract teachers to underserved communities (housing allowance in Lao People's Democratic Republic); special stipends for some subject areas or funding for projects (in Viet Nam); education stipends in exchange for agreed postings in remote areas (Indonesia and Lao People's Democratic Republic); awards and prizes (China, the Philippines, Viet Nam); expanding multi-grade classrooms in small school districts (Indonesia and Lao People's Democratic Republic); and local hiring, in-service training close to workplaces and providing simple, transparent information for local-level managers about deployment needs (colour-coding schemes in Philippines).

Source: UNESCO, 2015, p. 73, box 3.8.

### **2.2.1. Increasing the presence of female teachers in rural areas**

Data reveal far-reaching and continuing differences in the employment of women and men in rural areas.<sup>3</sup> Studies have pointed to various factors behind the shortage of female teachers, primarily relating to lifestyle, health and safety in homes and schools. Attempts to engage more women as teachers in rural areas have not made significant inroads to redress shortages. According to Mitchell and Yang (2012), the intractability of these shortages is due to a general lack of understanding of women teachers' activities in schools and in the community. This in turn has led to shortcomings in policies linked to the deployment of women teachers, both in relation to rural education and to girls' education more broadly. In a review of women teachers' attitudes towards working in rural areas, Mitchell and Yang report that women maintain that teaching in rural areas carries too many burdens. Besides having to cope with their domestic chores, more onerous because of poor facilities and services, they often carry responsibilities for male

<sup>3</sup> See UIS website: Percentage of female teachers by teaching level of education, available at <http://data UIS.unesco.org/index.aspx?queryid=178&lang=en>.

teachers who engage in additional economic activities. Poor housing, the lack of sanitary facilities and insecurity were high on their list of difficult working circumstances. So housing and toilets are key considerations in deployment incentives for women teachers. Box 3 gives an example from Ghana of difficulties faced in deploying teachers to rural areas.

#### **Box 3. Ghana: Difficulties in deploying teachers to rural areas**

Although Ghana is well on its way to middle-income country status – access to basic education has doubled in the last 15 years and State spending on basic education has more than tripled in the last ten years – it is estimated that between 300,000 and 800,000 children of primary school age, especially in the northern rural regions, are out of school. It is also in these areas that the largest number of untrained teachers may be found. The deployment and retention of teachers, especially female teachers, remains an acute problem in Ghana. Casely-Hayford's study (2008) of teachers in rural areas across six remote rural districts in Ghana found that districts found it difficult to send newly qualified and "young" teachers to rural areas because they were unable to ensure their security, and that female teachers who had worked in deprived rural areas for more than ten years were often married to someone from the community. District officials indicated that female teachers were being protected from being posted to rural areas, where they may marry a man below their social standing. District officials suggested that the opportunity to find a suitable marriage partner for newly qualified female teachers was a strong factor in posting them to towns rather than to rural areas.

In around 2005, district education offices in Ghana began recruiting untrained "pupil teachers". These were mostly men who had finished secondary school but had not had any formal training as teachers. Districts sponsored some pupil teachers to attend teacher training colleges. Although the government initially sought to limit the number of pupil teachers recruited by districts, the acute shortage of teachers in these areas led to the policy being relaxed. Many female teachers did not qualify to be pupil teachers due to their poor performance in the final year of school, so this strategy made little impact on the low numbers of female teachers in rural areas.

The research suggests that the four main factors that deterred female teachers from being deployed to rural areas were: the limited opportunities to find a future husband; the poor social and economic conditions (lack of water, sanitation, electricity); insecurity (risk of rape and violence); and the lack of professional development and equal opportunity for advancement.

Source: Casely-Hayford, 2008.

#### **2.2.2. Local recruitment**

A dominant view in the literature is that teachers who are from a rural area are more likely to remain there. The literature suggests that such teachers have a stronger commitment to contribute to the improvement of their communities, are more readily accepted by the school and the community, and are key to forging links between the school and its broader community. Teachers who originate from the area in which the school is located are also likely to have family in the area, may have an established social network, are familiar with local languages and customs, and are less likely to experience the social isolation that comes with being an outsider. Teachers in Gambia, for example, expressed a desire to be closer to home than to urban areas (Mulkeen, 2010, p. 58). The recruitment of unqualified teachers from within the local community combined with pathways for professional qualification appears to be a viable way to build local capacity and to staff rural schools. In Malawi, rural schools are often staffed by volunteers, many of whom are then trained by teacher training colleges established by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that operate for the sole purpose of training rural teachers (Mulkeen, 2010). A recruitment strategy that targets young people who have completed high school, and who elect to remain in the rural area, to embark on a teacher training programme may have dividends that would benefit the rural community. Box 4 gives an example from Lesotho of local hiring of teachers.

However, a teaching qualification is often a pathway out of a rural area. Qualified teachers from rural areas are therefore likely to leave in search of a more comfortable urban life and the opportunity for greater economic mobility.

#### **Box 4. Hiring teachers locally in Lesotho**

Lesotho has opted for a local hiring system and not a central deployment system. The school applies to the central government for a post to be granted, usually based on student numbers. Once the post is allocated to the school, the school management committee will advertise and select the teacher for the school, and the school largely controls the hiring process. In effect, although posts are advertised, many schools tend to have a person in mind for the position. In many instances a local hire is preferred and this may often result in a local unqualified person being preferred to a qualified "outsider". According to Mulkeen and Chen (2008), 51 per cent of rural teachers are unqualified compared to 24 per cent in more urban areas. Another consequence of the hiring system is the growth in the number of volunteer teachers in rural schools. Often local people with a secondary school education but no job (usually females) volunteer to teach in local schools in the hope that they may eventually obtain full-time work at the school. While this has value for the school, the system sets up potential conflict when a volunteer is not chosen for a vacant position.

Sources: Mulkeen and Chen, 2008, pp. 18–20.

The Tackling Education Needs Inclusively (TENI) project in rural schools in northern Ghana trained volunteers to teach in schools. Findings indicate the benefits of employing volunteers in schools, particularly when they reside in the community in which the school is located. However, it is worth noting that volunteers require high levels of support from the principal and the school management team during their probation and training (Associates for Change, 2014). They also need additional training if their teaching practices are to change from rule-bound teaching, founded on their own experiences as students when they were taught, to active, experiential, practice-based learning. The evaluators of the volunteer project in Ghana (described in box 5) propose that countries prepare a professional development and training plan for untrained teachers serving in schools. Further, the education department should regularize the engagement of volunteers, using it as a preparatory ground for their entry into the first stage of the teaching profession, as pupil teachers with the prospects of further training at colleges of education.

#### **Box 5. Tackling Education Needs Inclusively (TENI) in Ghana**

The Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO Ghana) has been supporting the Tackling Education Needs Inclusively (TENI) project that takes place in rural areas. Volunteers and student teachers are used to improve pupils' performance and attendance. An evaluation comparing teaching practices of volunteer and non-volunteer teachers explored in what ways these two groups of novice teachers added value in schools and classrooms.

The non-volunteer teachers comprised staff engaged by the Ghana Education Service as either trained or pupil teachers. The volunteer teacher group included community volunteer teachers, national youth employment personnel, national service personnel and national service volunteers having educational qualifications ranging from senior high school certificates to undergraduate degrees or higher.

Community volunteers were usually engaged in local schools, often without any formal contract and with very limited, if any, pre-service orientation prior to deployment. Most had an affinity with the communities and were completely conversant with the local language. In all but one district the majority of the volunteer teachers observed were males.

It was found that the greatest value addition volunteer teachers were making was their ability to provide a regular and dependable body of teachers to prevent schools from being closed down due to a shortage of teaching staff. They were also being relied upon by head teachers because of the high rates of absenteeism among trained teachers. School and classroom observations indicated positive and negative features of the practices of volunteer and pupil teachers compared to those of trained teachers. Among the positive features, volunteer teachers supported pupils with learning challenges and had a more nurturing approach towards their pupils compared to the trained teachers; they engaged pupils in extracurricular activities and promoted community-school relationships; and they offered extra classes after school hours or during vacation, whereas non-volunteer teachers not resident in the school communities were often

inaccessible to their pupils after school. Interviewees at the training college indicated that volunteer teachers in remote or deprived areas had a greater intrinsic motivation to perform and deliver in the classroom due to their sense of loyalty to the community. However, it was apparent that volunteer and pupil teachers used low-order strategies in teaching reading skills, whereas trained teachers were more skilled in lesson delivery. In addition, volunteers found it difficult to access training, complete coursework and attend college.

Source: Associates for Change, 2014.

### **2.2.3. Sound employment relationships**

Greater recourse to contractual teachers in place of civil service or permanently employed teachers has been promoted on grounds of increased access to education for out-of-school children and cost savings for financially strapped public budgets. This is especially the case in rural areas, where community teachers, contract teachers, or private school teachers are more prevalent and work under conditions very different from public service status teachers.

There are many potential savings from such a policy, including lowered initial teacher preparation costs, but by far the largest savings come from lower teacher salaries, which represent up to 90 per cent or more of recurrent (non-capital/infrastructure) expenses in government education budgets. Within the last decade, researchers have documented a great divide between the salaries and benefits of civil service, permanently employed teachers and contractual, paraprofessional and community teachers (as the policy-makers who put the systems in place desired and expected). The gaps range from one tenth to one half of permanent teacher salaries in Francophone West African and other countries. In 2010, community teachers earned on average one sixth to one third the salary of civil service teachers in Chad. The average salary for a qualified permanent primary school teacher in Benin was more than twice that of a contract teacher and 8 times that of community teachers still being employed, while civil service teachers in secondary schools earned as much as 10 times the amount of temporary teachers who make up the vast majority of all secondary teaching staff (ILO UNESCO 2015). Civil service teachers in primary and secondary schools earn on average 2 and one third times respectively the salary of contract teachers in Niger as a ratio of GDP per capita. (UIS, 2011)

Although seemingly beneficial for tight public sector budgets, the low salaries of contract teachers, as do low salaries for any type of teacher, can hide other financial and educational costs. Low salaries often oblige teachers to “moonlight” or search for secondary income sources, outside teaching or where possible within, for example through private tutoring of students. Such secondary activities reduce teacher preparation and teaching time, and may be a source of teacher absenteeism from classrooms, itself widely touted as a major factor in poor learning outcomes. Private tutoring has reportedly led to significant abuses of paid teaching time, not to mention considerable additional costs for parents, and unequal opportunities for those who cannot afford private tuition.

Arguments made in support of greater flexibility in teaching employment status in developing countries rely in part on evidence that the lowered costs of engaging contractual, paraprofessional or community teachers is justified by student results at a par with or sometimes at higher levels than for students taught by civil service or permanently engaged teachers with longer initial education and training programmes and better job security. Evidence from a number of countries suggests the opposite. In Togo, 60 per cent of students in the second year of primary school and 76 per cent of those in the fifth year of primary school are taught by civil service teachers, while 27 per cent and 9 per cent respectively are taught by voluntary teachers engaged by communities, with or

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without government subsidies. Results of pupils' test scores show that those taught by voluntary teachers in the fifth year perform less well than those taught by non-voluntary teachers, with as much as 18 per cent difference in results. Though not conclusive, some evidence from Niger, which is in its 15th year of a contractual teacher policy, suggests that student results are negatively impacted when a school is staffed entirely by contract teachers, but positively affected by a mixed staffing arrangement in which less than 50 per cent are contract teachers (Ratteree, 2015).

#### **2.2.4. Incentives**

Varied professional development, career progression, and financial and non-financial incentives are used to encourage teachers to work in rural areas. These include:

- rewarding service in hard-to-staff schools with accelerated progression along the career and salary path;
- tying education subsidies to mandatory placements in rural or remote areas;
- applying fast-track programmes that give teachers identified as future leaders access to master's programmes or training in education management after a minimum period of service in a hard-to-staff school;
- selecting and training students who are motivated to serve in rural or remote areas;
- recruiting and training students from rural or remote communities;
- facilitating professional development for rural education workers;
- providing access to distance education and continuing professional development, including distance programmes using smart phones, e-readers or laptops and mobile Internet connection to improve academic or education management qualifications;
- waiving fees to distance education programmes;
- offering study leave;
- providing housing and/or transport;
- providing financial incentives;
- fostering interaction between urban and rural education workers. (UNESCO, 2015, p. 72).

Examples of these incentives are discussed below.

##### *Non-financial incentives*

Non-financial incentives include the provision of goods and services that do not entail direct financial transfers. The most common of these include the provision of accommodation. The provision of housing as a successful incentive relies on the quality of the accommodation and the accessibility, which must be balanced against the cost to government in providing such an incentive. In some remote areas, NGOs and community

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organizations have provided limited housing. Box 6 describes examples of housing provision as an incentive to attract teachers to rural areas.

<b>Box 6. Malawi and Mozambique: Teachers' housing</b>
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In Malawi, education management information system data reveal a strong association between the availability of housing in an area and the presence of female teachers in the school. In a study conducted on attrition of primary school teachers in Uganda, provision of housing is considered to be a key factor in ensuring teacher retention, especially in rural areas (Mulkeen, 2005). Currently 15 per cent of the school facilities grants is allocated to the building of teachers' houses.

In Mozambique, the Ministry of Education does not normally provide housing, except for the director's house at some schools. In addition, some NGOs and even local communities have built houses for teachers in an attempt to make rural locations more attractive. In Lesotho, too, teacher housing is not normally provided, but some NGOs and community groups have provided accommodation. The Government of Lesotho has provided a limited number of houses to secondary school teachers in remote areas, but not to primary school teachers (Adedeji and Olaniyan, 2011).

### *Financial incentives*

Various countries offer financial incentives to attract teachers to schools located in areas where they will experience some kind of adversity. These include a salary top-up, housing allowances, annual or monthly bonuses and hardship allowances. They are usually linked to qualifications and the location or classification of a school. They also include remuneration for working in rural areas, including cost of travel, given the remoteness of many rural schools. According to Mandina (2012), a retention allowance should be pegged at 60 per cent of basic salary as a means of boosting motivation and morale among teachers in rural areas of Zimbabwe.

Poor targeting seems to be a key problem of the Lesotho incentive scheme. While teachers in highland areas receive incentive benefits, teachers in remote areas of the lowlands do not (Mulkeen, 2010). Incentives are not linked to the type of teacher required, for example in scarce skills subjects.

A 2012 advert from the Ministry of Education and Training for qualified teachers in Lesotho offered the following financial incentives: a transport allowance of 500 maloti (LSL), a housing allowance of LSL250 and a communication allowance of LSL250 per month (approximately US\$76 per month, up from US\$47 per month). The advert was targeted specifically at qualified teachers in "difficult" schools. In addition, a "hardship" allowance was to be paid to principals of schools in hardship areas. A list of the difficult schools where vacancies existed accompanied the advert, but the criteria used to define difficult or hardship schools were not evident. However, the districts named in the advert covered both lowland and highland areas. The payments were to be made on a quarterly basis. The advert signalled a policy change from that recorded by Mulkeen (2010), whereby teachers in rural mountain areas were paid a flat hardship fee of approximately US\$47 per month, around 10 per cent of what a qualified teacher with a diploma might earn, and teachers in lowland areas did not receive any allowance.

Box 7 gives examples of special allowances offered in selected African countries.

#### **Box 7. Special allowances in selected African countries**

##### **Gambia**

Gambia introduced a special allowance in 2006 to attract and retain teachers located in schools classified as hardship schools. The hardship allowance is reported to be having the desired effect of encouraging teachers to take up posts in schools in difficult areas. In a survey of student teachers in Gambia College in 2007, 24 per cent reported that they would choose to work in a hardship position where the additional payment was available, and 65 per cent said that if posted to a hardship school, they would take up the post. By 2007, 24 per cent of the existing teachers in selected regions had requested transfers to hardship posts, with negligible numbers applying for transfers in the opposite direction (Mulkeen, 2010, p. 50).

##### **Mozambique**

In Mozambique, schools are placed into four categories ranging from urban to isolated and remote rural schools. Teachers are paid a bonus depending on the location of the school and their qualification. For unqualified or lowly qualified teachers, there is no bonus. However, substantive bonuses are paid to teachers who teach double shifts. Because double-shift schools are located in high-density urban areas, the outcome is that highly qualified urban teachers are the main beneficiaries of the bonus system (Mulkeen and Chen, 2008, p. 22). Although the Ministry of Education does not provide housing for teachers in rural areas, some rural schools offer a house for the principal. In addition, some NGOs have constructed houses in an effort to make rural posts more attractive.

##### **Rwanda**

The Government of Rwanda provides subsidized loans to trained teachers working in hard-to-reach areas. The vast majority of teachers in such areas have participated in the programme, making a minimum monthly contribution of 5 per cent of their salary, with members allowed to borrow up to 5 times their savings (Bennell and Ntagaramba, 2008).

Box 8 indicates the range of implementation challenges that arise when governments introduce incentives. These relate to the amount of the incentives offered and how teachers are targeted (South Africa) and the substantial funds required to provide adequate incentives (Guinea-Bissau).

#### **Box 8. Incentives to teach in rural areas in South Africa and Guinea-Bissau**

##### **South Africa**

A complex mesh of factors has plagued the recruitment and deployment of teachers to rural areas in South Africa (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005). Consequently the Department of Basic Education committed itself to the Teachers Rural Incentive Scheme (TRIS), targeted at rural teachers and teachers who taught mathematics and science in these areas (Government Gazette 30678, 18 January 2008). In an evaluation of TRIS in North West province, Poti et al. (2014) found that 16 per cent of teachers surveyed had transferred to the area because of the incentive scheme, 45 per cent said that they wanted to relocate to an urban area and 73 per cent said that they needed more incentives in order to continue working in a rural area. In addition, 80 per cent said that they did not experience unfavourable conditions that caused them to be absent or late, and 67 per cent said that they had the necessary resources for effective teaching and learning. Areas of teacher dissatisfaction with TRIS included the fact that it was not inflation linked; the methods used to calculate remoteness of a school required revision; TRIS payments were sometimes late; and TRIS payments should be made monthly and not annually (Poti et al., pp. 800–802).

##### **Guinea-Bissau: Sectoral policy 2012–2020**

In Guinea-Bissau, 61 per cent of the population lives in rural areas, in which 82 per cent of young people (aged 7 to 24 years) are not attending school. In order to improve and strengthen the education system in rural Guinea-Bissau, a sectoral policy is being implemented for the period 2012–2020. This plan for the education sector includes providing a bonus for teachers in remote or isolated areas; doubling the appointment of teachers to a permanent post by 2020;

recruiting 700 trained teachers for 2020; improving apprenticeships by providing improved learning materials; and enhancing community schools, including the madrasas,<sup>4</sup> through public supervision (Pôle de Dakar/UNESCO-BREDA, 2013).

In 2010, public expenditure on initial training was CFA70 million, whereas the government plans to spend CFA568 million by 2020.

### *Mandatory placements*

The mandatory placement of teachers to boost teaching numbers in rural areas is employed to compel (usually) novice teachers to take up employment for fixed periods of time. In Eritrea, the Ministry of Education deploys novice teachers to specific schools as part of their national service (box 9).

#### **Box 9. National service in Eritrea**

In Eritrea, the government assigns teachers to one of six regions and to specific schools, strictly depending on student numbers. Young teachers who start their careers as part of national service are sent to the most difficult schools. By 2004–2005, the association between teacher and student numbers was strong in all six regions and pupil–teacher ratios were at acceptable levels, ranging from 30:1 to 53:1.

Source: Mulkeen, 2010.

### **2.2.5. Career development**

Career paths allow for progression and development for the duration of a teacher's career. In general, well-performing and poorly performing teachers get promoted together, as promotion criteria are based largely on qualifications and years of service. Career progression is intimately connected to recruitment, deployment and retention, and is often stymied by ineffective implementation. For example, continuing professional development programmes are commonly used for promotion purposes and so must be available to all teachers equally. However, this may not be the case in rural areas, blocking progress in careers (ILO and UNESCO, 1966; ILO, 212, p. 26).

Progression may be “horizontal” or “vertical”. The former is associated with added responsibilities in schools (for example, increased management responsibilities, mentoring and support of novice teachers and volunteers) and the latter relates to positions in the various tiers of administration. It is possible that horizontal career progression through promotion is constrained in one- or two-teacher schools, as there are only one or two posts in the school, unlike the range of management and subject specializations in larger schools. It could be argued that progression should take into account the additional work required when teaching in multigrade classes and taking responsibility for managing the school, which is time consuming, even in small schools.

Promotion linked to completing a continuing professional development programme is common but not available to teachers who work far away from in-service training centres. A new teacher development policy in Ghana, described in box 10, endorsed by all key stakeholders, attempts to ensure that promotion is founded on teachers'

<sup>4</sup> A madrasa is a specific type of religious school for the study of the Islamic religion.

accomplishments, thereby creating new incentives for teacher growth and improvements in quality education.

#### **Box 10. Evidence-based promotion in Ghana**

Ghana's teacher development policy replaces promotion on the basis of years of experience with evidence-based promotion under a new career structure that is intended to motivate teachers to improve their instructional practices. The new structure aims at enhancing the social status of teaching and is based on clearly defined competencies. For example, to become a principal teacher, a teacher is expected to be able to mentor other teachers and implement strategies that lead to improvements in teaching and learning. Teachers' portfolios have to include evidence of their teaching practices and their methods of supporting students who are the most disadvantaged to support applications for promotion. Participation in in-service training is also linked to career advancement.

Through creating new structures that are transparent, the new policy sets out to ensure that teachers are confident that their achievements are duly recognized and rewarded. New career levels provide a basis for mapping salaries to job responsibilities in the classroom and school. Teachers may choose or be recommended for a career path in education management only after they have demonstrated their capacity for improving education quality, along with management and leadership competence.

Source: Ghana Ministry of Education, 2012a, in GMR EFA report, 2015.

## **2.3. Teacher accountability**

The principle that ensures that teachers are accountable for their performance and the quality of their teaching is crucial in the provision of quality teaching and learning. At the same time, the education system has a responsibility to ensure that teachers are provided with support. It will be argued in this section that teacher accountability is part of a process of ensuring systemic reforms in the education system, in which all involved stakeholders are held accountable and are committed to cooperative governance and to protecting education as a public good. Various factors can be associated with teacher accountability, such as their attendance record or punctuality, the quality of their teaching and their successful mediation of school–community relations. This section discusses teacher accountability in relation to several aspects, including inspection and codes of conduct.

### **2.3.1. Teacher code of conduct**

The International Labour Organization (ILO) *Handbook of good human resource practices in the teaching profession* (2012) outlines the desirable elements of a teacher "code of conduct". A code of conduct is a set of principles, actions and standards of behaviour that define how members of a group, in this case teachers, will conduct themselves in their work (and in work-related activities) (Van Nuland and Poisson, 2009). A code of conduct defines core standards of the practice of teaching and guides professional judgment and practice (Teaching Council, 2011). Ideally, the code should be used as a tool for ensuring that teachers are held accountable in their professional roles; if they deviate from those expectations, it can be used as a basis for deciding appropriate discipline and sanctions. Organizations such as the ILO and UNESCO have been strong proponents of the code of conduct as a response to reports of teacher misconduct that have been reported from different parts of Africa. In addition, a code of conduct can act as a resource for guiding teachers in managing ethical issues in daily practice (Campbell, 2000).

In many contexts, however, it is difficult to clearly mark where teachers' accountability to the community starts and ends. In rural areas where communities and professionals live and work in close proximity, a clear division of personal and professional life for those in the teaching profession can be very difficult to achieve, as the code of conduct cannot operate in isolation from wider society. In addition, teachers in rural areas may sometimes possess power within, and command a lot of respect from, the communities they serve. In such cases, it is easy for teachers to be elevated and seen as beyond reproach. Where this is the case, the teachers' conduct outside the school can affect their role as teachers. Therefore, the role of the code of conduct goes beyond the classroom or school. Any behaviour that brings into reproach the teaching profession, whether inside or outside the school, is considered a breach of their expected standards of behaviour. Box 11 presents an example from Zimbabwe.

Though codes of conduct are intended to address issues of misconduct, the implementation of such codes has been impeded by a number of factors. In rural areas teachers might work in small teams, often working alongside the community, meaning that accountability is often based on trust between the teacher and the community. The community has to trust that the teacher will deliver as expected. Also, there is the challenge of adequate training and awareness of teachers on the codes, and the lack of infrastructure and resources to monitor the teachers.

#### **Box 11. Teacher misconduct and teacher codes of conduct in Zimbabwe**

According to Leach (2003), while at policy levels clear guidelines exist for teachers in practice, teaching in Zimbabwe is still fraught with teacher misconduct. Leach observes that the problem occurs both at macro level (central government) and at micro level (community and front-line service delivery). At community level there is a lack of awareness relating to issues of teacher sexual abuse of pupils, or of misconduct related to teacher misuse and mismanagement of resources, including absenteeism. In some cultures teachers might be respected and may thus not be challenged if they misbehave. Communities, school management committees and parent-teacher associations often lack information on the rules regarding teacher misconduct, and how misconduct may be defined and dealt with when it arises.

#### **2.3.2. District or area education offices**

In addition to deploying teachers and allocating other forms of resources to rural areas, the district or area level of governance plays a key role in the inspection of schools and monitoring of teachers in rural areas. Mulkeen (2005) and Glewwe, Holla and Kremer (2008) observe that in most cases teachers in rural areas do not have the support that would help them improve on their practice compared to their counterparts in urban areas. Teachers are less likely to be visited by inspectors, so teacher absenteeism is a much bigger problem than in urban areas. District-level inspectors and evaluators have to schedule visits to schools to monitor teachers in practice and the general conditions in which teaching takes place. However, for most rural schools such inspections do not happen often or regularly, owing to a lack of resources such as transport and accommodation for inspectors. In some cases the inspection shortfall is due to lack of human resources, as there may be too few inspectors at district level to provide the required service. In addition, changes may not occur following inspections because reports are not filed about the initial visit, and so follow-up visits do not take place. In such cases teachers and even inspectors may not take inspections seriously.

Teacher monitoring in rural areas may be difficult for a number of reasons. For instance, school heads may have to travel for long distances to district offices to attend to administrative issues. In Uganda (box 12) and Zambia, for example, the head teachers in rural areas are responsible for arranging salary increments and adjustments for teachers.

In some cases they also have to take pay for school employees from the district offices. During such times teachers are left unsupervised for days if not weeks.

#### **Box 12. Teacher monitoring and accountability in Uganda**

Mulkeen (2005) showed that in most countries, monitoring teachers in remote areas is challenging. In Uganda, the study showed that it was difficult to monitor and administer discipline to teacher in rural areas. Such a lack of organized supervision has resulted in teachers being lax about their responsibilities. This relaxed atmosphere often results in abuse of their positions and even the resources they have. In addition, it was noted that teacher discipline is often limited by awkward systems for dealing with difficulties. In Uganda, teachers who misbehave are given a warning by the head teacher. If they reoffend they receive a formal warning from the inspector of schools, and finally the case is referred to the district service commission. Poor communication with rural schools can make these procedures slow, and the length of time taken to respond to problems consequently weakens their intended impact. It was also found that in some cases teachers who misbehave are transferred to rural areas as some kind of punishment. However, in the face of weak monitoring and disciplinary structures, the practice of moving teachers who misbehave to rural areas may only result in more misbehaviour, further undermining the quality of education being provided in rural areas where the standards may already be low.

## **2.4. Teacher performance: Evaluation and appraisal**

While the above section has considered accountability in the form of discipline and teacher responsibility, managing teachers and delivering quality education is more than just about creating a system that polices teacher behaviour in such matters as attendance. Rather, it is about delivering quality, which should include ensuring that teachers perform to the expected standards. Such a performance evaluation is beyond the scope and ability of the community and school management committee, particularly in rural areas.

Among the key aspects of teacher management and quality assurance in education is the development of a systematic approach to assessing teacher performance. Duflo and Hanna (2005) suggest that linking performance to remuneration can be a useful way of ensuring that teachers deliver, while Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) argue that having established mechanisms will ensure continuity of performance and make teachers feel supported.

Box 13 presents a historical perspective of the development of teacher appraisal in South Africa, while box 14 considers structured inspections in Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

#### **Box 13. Teacher appraisal in South Africa**

According to Bisschoff and Mathye (2009), in South Africa teacher performance management has gone through a number of changes and phases since the 1994 elections, following which the new government decided to discard the inspection structures from the previous regime. The Department of Education accordingly introduced the Developmental Appraisal System, followed by the Whole School Development System and the Whole School Evaluation System. That was later developed into the Performance Measurement System and finally the Integrated Quality Management System, which is now standard practice in South African schools. The Developmental Appraisal System aims to appraise individual teachers in a transparent manner; following self-evaluation, the teacher discusses the outcomes with the development support group at every school. The Whole School Evaluation System focuses on evaluating the school's efficiency in general. The Performance Measurement System on the other hand evaluates individual teachers for salary progression, grade, appointment affirmation, rewards and incentives (ELRC Collective Agreement 8, 2003: Section A). Bisschoff and Mathye (2009) observe that all these policies (Developmental Appraisal System, Whole School Evaluation System and Performance Measurement System) were faced with implementation problems in the relevant province owing to the manner in which they were introduced to school-based teachers (Daniels, 2007, p. 5; see also De Clerq,

2008, on the implementation readiness of the majority of schools). When the Integrated Quality Management System was advocated, it was a way of stepping back and reflecting collectively on the enacted policies. The Department of Education thought that for quality to exist in the system, different structures needed to be in place as a way of ensuring continuous improvement. The successful implementation of this system hinged upon the introduction of appropriate structures in schools, such as the school development teams and development support groups (ELRC Collective Agreement 8, 2003: Section 3). However, it should be noted here that this was a national policy, and it is not clear how the assessment was conducted in rural areas.

#### **Box 14. Structured inspections in Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania**

Structured and timed inspections can provide the basis for improved service provision. As illustrated above, inspections tend to be seen merely as visits to a number of schools in some areas. In Uganda, the aspiration has been to visit each school at least once a year. The result has been an improvement in teacher performance and presence in schools. It is yet to be seen whether this results is due to the increase in the frequency of inspections. Nonetheless, the result is encouraging, as it shows that a system can be put in place that leads to positive outcomes in rural areas. In the United Republic of Tanzania, inspection of each school is required at least once or twice every two years. In districts where the number of schools is small, all schools are inspected yearly. In districts with more than 80 schools, 50 per cent of schools have to be inspected. Though attempts are made to inspect all schools, particularly in rural areas, some schools in rural areas are less likely to be inspected due to lack of transport, geographical and locational factors, and financial difficulties (Hedges, 2002). However, of significance here is the plan and efforts put in place to inspect schools.

While there have been research standards and accountability in rural education provision in Africa, most research has focused on highlighting the limitations and barriers to effective monitoring of teachers' performance and adherence to standards and accountability, rather than on what is currently being done to monitor teachers in rural areas and what is or is not effective. Research on rural teachers in the United States of America (Harmon et al., 2007) and Latin America (Rogers and Vegas, 2009) suggests that strengthened standards and accountability in rural education improves teacher attendance, teacher-parent relationships and student outcomes.

## **2.5. Governance**

This section discusses the governance of education, focusing on rural areas.

### **2.5.1. Decentralization: The challenges and possibilities**

Alongside, and to some extent preceding, a decade of calls for universal education under the Education for All initiative and the Millennium Development Goals (set in 2000) were efforts to address finance and other resource management to ensure efficient and appropriate utilization of resources in the delivery of education. Arguably, the worst-affected parts in the provision of education in most African States are rural areas. As stated by UNESCO (2009), education provision is affected like any other service provision by wider political conditions in any given State. The forms of governance and their structures determine the effectiveness of education provision. The involvement of grass-roots organizations and communities in school governance is determined by how much citizens are given rights and responsibilities to contribute. Among the major outcomes of the Millennium Development Goals and World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies in improving management of education was the call made to decentralize the governance of education to local levels.

Although decentralization in Africa is not new, the meanings and expectations of what it should look like may be new and complicated. Decentralization is shaped by the wider sociopolitical and economic contexts in which it takes place (Crook, 2003). Decentralization can often become an end in itself rather than as a means to ensuring delivery of good education services to rural areas. This is because when tied to aid or imposed by external sources, decentralization can be implemented without cognisance of the needs of local communities (Olowu and Wunsch, 2004), even though the publicly stated rationale is to strengthen existing and potential community involvement in school governance (World Bank, 2014).

Most countries – including Ghana, Madagascar, Morocco, Niger and Uganda – have decentralized the governance of education to local levels, with district- and school-level managers assuming the responsibilities for delivery and administration of school resources (Antonowicz et al., 2010).

In contexts where the role of professionals is shaped by “traditional” concepts of governance, whereby professionals are seen as “experts” and thus to be trusted in their actions, calls for community involvement in the governance of schools and education can be a challenge. This is because community involvement in governance requires a shift in the way that community members view professionals and their roles, and vice versa. The World Bank (2014) has observed that in some cases that though decentralization is hailed as central to developing effective political, social and economic reforms, it does not necessarily lead to increased efficiency, empowerment and transparency. Lack of infrastructure, both political and material, also makes it difficult to provide decentralized education services to rural areas (Weidman and DePietro-Jurand, 2011). Box 15 summarizes mixed experiences with decentralization of education in Africa.

#### **Box 15. Education decentralization: Mixed evidence**

In some countries, elements of decentralization are visible and have in places been moderately successful. For instance in Nigeria, decentralization has also come with policies of privatization of education. In this context, federal government policies have worked to decentralize power to local levels, for example through delegation of responsibility to schools to manage budgets and to recruit teachers. Some schools have also introduced fees, which act as a revenue stream to run schools and finance projects. In addition, there has been a growth in privately run or community-run schools (Geo-Jaja, 2006). In Uganda, which is lauded as a success story of decentralization, policies have aimed to enable local communities to manage schools, including in the areas of financial management and daily administration. It remains unclear, however, how communities are involved at local level, for example with regard to constitutions or guidelines on how community representatives are selected. In some communities people who are seen as influential and vocal on community issues may be elected to serve on the committee.

#### **2.5.2. Involving subnational tiers of governance in rural education**

In providing support for rural education, the district level is often the hub on which effective delivery of education hinges. Poor organization and staffing at this level often means that primary provision of education in rural areas becomes ineffective (Word Bank, 2014). Decentralized, district-level administrations provide funds mostly for infrastructure, posting teachers to schools and ensuring proper use of resources. In Ghana, the district level designs strategies for keeping teachers in rural areas (Gershberg and Winkler, 2003), while in Uganda, district-level governance provides inspections to schools, including rural schools. Box 16 looks at one aspect of district-level governance: implementation of capitation grants.

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**Box 16. District governance in rural areas: District-level implementation of capitation grants**

A good illustration of how decentralization occurs can be seen in the financial support and capitation grants given to schools to support fees for disadvantaged families and parents in rural areas. According to Antonowicz et al. (2010), in Ghana, Madagascar, Sierra Leone and Uganda schools have some discretionary spending power to make decisions about who receives such support. Financial support for rural communities in the form of grants is allocated to district education offices, which run separate bank accounts for each school in the district. In Madagascar, such financial grants are directed from the Ministry of Education to schools via payments made to regional education offices; the school management committees then collect the payments from local district post offices. For remote schools, the cost of travelling to collect the grant is sometimes equivalent to the grant itself, with implications for access to such resources. In Sierra Leone, financial support is paid via the local government offices, which in turn pay the schools under their jurisdiction.

While district governance may result in inefficiencies in administration and demotivation of teachers, locally managed schools do not always fare better (box 17).

**Box 17. Local-level school governance in rural areas**

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, just under one fifth of schools are under State control, with the remainder run and organized by non-State actors such as churches and NGOs. The non-State actors therefore provide the infrastructure and the resources needed in running a school, while State involvement is mostly in the form of providing teacher salaries. The process of paying teachers is long and arduous. Payments to provinces are issued to the provincial education offices, which in turn have to draw the money and then instruct payment to individual schools. Money is transferred to each school via an established network of administrators, who then have to deliver the salaries to the head teachers, who then have to pay their teachers. According to Brannely (2012), the process is long and can result in delays ranging from two days to three weeks, becoming a demotivating factor for teachers. This process is exacerbated by the lack of infrastructure in the country as a whole due to political instability.

### **2.5.3. Social partner involvement in local school governance**

This section reviews strategies for social partner involvement in local school governance.

### **2.5.4. School management committee and parent-teacher association**

School-level governance involves the roles played by the wider community and those played by the teachers as professionals in running the school, as manifested in the form of the school management committee and the parent-teacher association. The school management committee is responsible for appointing and assessing teachers and managing school budgets. In general terms, this level of governance involves school heads and their assistants and community representatives. The school management committee has to work in liaison with and be accountable to the parent-teacher association and the district education offices (Khanal, 2011). In Uganda, for example, school management committees are responsible for managing school finances, dealing with disciplinary issues and investigating problems. They also oversee school refurbishment and construction.

Parent-teacher associations and school management committees may become vehicles for wider community involvement in governance. In some countries, for example Ethiopia, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, parent-teacher associations are responsible for making decisions on the purchase of educational

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materials, such as textbooks and stationery. However, in Ethiopia and the United Republic of Tanzania they are less likely to be involved in the recruitment and firing of teachers, as such remits are often the responsibility of the school management committee and the district-level educational offices. In Uganda, lauded as a decentralization success, and in countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal, community-level involvement also often comes in the form of donations of resources, which may be equivalent (for example grants), or in kind (for example textbooks, human resources, school supplies, equipment, food, fuel and labour), and may be in the form of assistance in the construction of the school.

### **2.5.5. Managing schools in remote and marginalized rural areas**

The number of teachers relative to students in Africa is generally very low, resulting in high pupil–teacher ratios. According to UNESCO (2011), the average African ratio is higher than 40:1. In 2006 more than 60 per cent of sub-Saharan African countries had more than 40 pupils per teacher. Some countries, including Chad, Mozambique and Rwanda, had ratios exceeding 60:1. There is a wide disparity within countries; for example, in Nigeria, the ratio is much higher in the Northern Region than in the other regions in the south of the country (UNESCO, 2011).

Multigrade classes have the potential to increase student enrolment in remote areas by offering a larger range of grades in schools (Little, 2004). UNESCO Institute for Statistics data<sup>5</sup> suggest that in some countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo, at least 10 per cent of students study in multigrade classrooms. In Chad, almost half of students are taught in such classrooms (UNESCO, 2014).

However, a study of multigrade schools in South Africa found there was little support for teachers engaged in multigrade teaching at national, provincial and school levels (Centre for Education Policy Development, 2011). This is in spite of the extent of multigrade classes in South Africa – 27 per cent of public schools (6,600) have multigrade classes and these are situated mainly in rural areas

The successful operation of multigrade methods is dependent on school managers and teachers who are skilled in handling multigrade classes and the availability of appropriate teaching materials (Mulkeen and Higgins, 2009). School managers must decide on the grouping of classes – by language if there are two languages of learning and teaching, or by grade level.

A United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) multigrade project in Viet Nam illustrates the role of districts in planning school clusters and multigrade classes. The project operates at three levels of the system: at district level with multigrade demonstration schools, at regional level with principal cluster schools, and in multigrade schools in villages (IIEP UNICEF, 1995).

In remote areas school clustering is used as a means of streamlining administration, optimizing resources in poorly served areas, and improving teaching and learning practices through cooperative group learning. Experienced teachers based at schools within or outside the cluster can be appointed to facilitate learning by mentoring novices and underqualified or untrained teachers. For example, the All Children in School project

<sup>5</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics data on teachers:  
<http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/teachers-statistics.aspx>.

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in Myanmar (IIEP UNICEF, 1995) provided school support through clusters for teacher training that exchanged information and shared resources.

## **2.6. School environment**

School leadership, in partnership with other stakeholders, is responsible for creating and nurturing a school environment that is safe, fit for purpose and able to sustain good-quality education. Obstacles to achieving this in many rural areas across Africa stem from high and enduring levels of poverty that impact key aspects of the school environment – both the material and the learning cultures. Furthermore, poverty poses particular challenges for indigent communities, as poor living conditions may compromise children's health and well-being due to poor nutrition, limited access to medical facilities and child labour.

### **2.6.1. The material environment**

A school in a rural area – “A square peg in a round hole” (Odora Hoppers, 1997).

Odora Hoppers' (1997) powerful metaphor of the “square peg”, the westernized school, clashing with the “round” structures characteristic of buildings in rural areas, refers not only to the architecture of school buildings but also, more cogently, to the pedagogic frames and general rhythms of school practices that feature in school systems globally.

This discussion on the material environment begins by considering attempts to elaborate on acceptable norms and standards for school infrastructure and services in schools as these refer to school grounds, school hygiene and safety, and the space allocated to various teaching requirements such as libraries, laboratories, and recreational facilities. Descriptions of various community-driven projects follow, which depict the importance of participatory planning so that schools offer teachers suitable working conditions as well as catering to the learning needs of the school community.

#### Norms and standards for school infrastructure

In the planning of new schools representative teacher opinion should be consulted. In providing new or additional accommodation for an existing school the staff of the school concerned should be consulted (ILO and UNESCO, 1966, p. 110).

Many schools in developing countries are poorly designed and constructed. Facilities are often badly laid out, are either too hot or too cold, or are dark, unhygienic, inaccessible, dangerous and generally not conducive to effective teaching and learning. These problems are not only the outcome of a lack of resources but also due to inappropriate standards, a lack of imagination, a poor understanding of the links between infrastructure provision and education delivery, and an incorrect perception that doing things differently is going to increase costs. Good design does not have to cost more – in fact it should improve overall value for money as well as making the whole school environment more welcoming and a place where teachers are supported and learning is encouraged (UNESCO, 2015).

It is indeed the case that the school and working environments improve both the quantity and quality of schooling. A World Bank study (2004) found that infrastructure and the supply of resources to schools over a 15-year period impacted positively on enrolment in basic education, which increased by over 10 per cent compared to 15 years previously. The data showed that gains in educational outputs were directly linked to

better school quality, manifested in improved infrastructure and greater availability of school supplies (World Bank, 2004). But the costs of infrastructural projects that provide suitable and safe learning environments is huge; in sub-Saharan Africa the challenge of providing sufficient and appropriate primary education facilities to meet the Education for All target of universal primary education was estimated up to US\$30 billion in 2003 (Bonner et al., 2011).

The educational infrastructure having the most impact varies from school to school and includes the provision of facilities such as classrooms, outdoor learning and play areas, furniture, water and sanitation, administration buildings, storage, cooking and boarding facilities. The ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers, 1966, calls for school premises that are maintained, and that are safe and attractive in overall design and functional in layout. School facilities should lend themselves to effective teaching, and to utilization for extracurricular activities and, especially in rural areas, as a community centre; they should be constructed in accordance with established sanitary standards and with a view to durability, adaptability, and economic maintenance (ILO and UNESCO, 1966).

In South Africa, poor conditions of schools and inadequate services led to protests coordinated by Equal Education, a rights-based NGO. This resulted in the gazetting of legally binding Norms and Standards for School Infrastructure in 2013. These require every school to have water, electricity, Internet, working toilets, safe classrooms with a maximum of 40 learners, security, and thereafter libraries, laboratories and sports facilities. Further, water, electricity, classrooms, toilets and fencing should be provided within 10 years and the remainder by 2030 (Equal Education, 2015).

In some countries building programmes are devolved to local levels, placing responsibilities on school leadership, teachers and parents to spearhead infrastructural developments (box 18). Teachers and communities may take responsibility for:

- planning the development;
- identifying the roles of the school and community;
- deciding how they will be supported to fulfil their roles;
- assessing the need for community members to be trained in basic maintenance skills;
- identifying infrastructure priorities at each school and how these fit into the overall school planning process;

It is uncertain whether these increased responsibilities will be factored into teachers' incentive schemes or rewards, and how teachers' will be able to accommodate additional duties in their school agenda.

School building has been linked to entrepreneurial programmes and skills training, as in the case of school building schemes in Malawi and Kenya (box 18).

#### **Box 18. Community schools projects in Malawi and Kenya**

The Malawi Primary Community Schools Project standardized basic building technologies that are cost-effective and environmentally appropriate for rural communities such as; stabilized soil blocks; hollow concrete blocks; interlocking concrete blocks; and burnt bricks. Communities decide on what skills reside in the community for both construction work

and contribution to the school curriculum. Typically, communities engage in some of the construction activities and choose the layout of the schools from three possible layout designs. Even though contractors are chosen by public tender, community contractors are engaged for part of the contract. These are community members who organize themselves into a contracting group and are trained to cost a small contract and implement it (Breakell, 2000).

Under the School Improvement Grants Programme in Kenya, 4,686 primary schools have received grants totalling £47 million (US\$75 in 2011). School committees are supported to develop school infrastructure development plans, which they implement using their grants. Capacity building has been at the core of the programme and in a period of four years a total of 23,430 members of school management and infrastructure committees have received training to ensure that they have the skills to develop their school infrastructure development plans and manage their resources effectively and transparently within the programme guidelines. This has been done at a cost of 8 per cent of the value of grants disbursed (Bonner et al., 2011).

### *Boarding schools*

Merging schools to create a comprehensive school with boarding facilities is seen as a cost-effective way of ensuring students in rural areas are enrolled in schools that have adequate facilities to ensure their well-being and satisfy their learning needs.

But under what circumstances is the removal of children from their homes justified? Dielteens (2015) maintains that boarding schools can infringe parental and child rights, especially when young children are taken from their homes. Balancing the State's right to ensure compulsory education against parental rights or family rights is extremely difficult.

In fact, there are many potential risks to learners and their families intrinsic to the process of creating boarding school accommodation as a means of increasing access, including:

- lack of adequate care due to poor resources and trained personnel in the hostel;
- worsening the economic status of the family through the removal of a child whose help with household chores is essential to the household's well-being;
- preventing parents from participating in school governance..

A province in South Africa complements the establishment of hostels with increased transport. Regional officials are responsible for making decisions regarding their provision (box 19).

#### **Box 19. Facilitating access and retention in secondary schools in South Africa**

A provincial department of education in South Africa, the Free State Department of Education, has three flagship projects: hostels, transport and nutrition. To achieve economies of scale and to reduce the number of multigrade classes, the province is closing many small schools. Pupils from these schools are offered places in hostels, or are provided with bus transport to the nearest school. The management of these schemes has been devolved to district level, and funds are transferred to districts for this purpose. (NEEDU, 2012.).

### **2.6.2. *The learning culture of a school***

A school should be a space where learning is valued and where all pupils and teachers feel supported and valued. The essential elements of the school vision, crafted by all stakeholders and managed by strong leadership, should incorporate values of

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tolerance, inclusion and equity at all levels and in all activities, and the protection of vulnerable groups in the promotion of a culture of equality (UNESCO, 2015).

In reality, those ideals are seldom met. In all communities relations across social structures reflect deep divisions, rooted in differences in gender, class, language, clan, and more recently, the arrival of large numbers of new migrants and their status. Poverty continues to split communities into “haves” and “have-nots”. All of these factors undermine schooling in manifold ways.

Inclusivity as a target carries various costs and different strategies for diverse groups of potentially marginalized pupils. For instance, ensuring the disabled have equitable access to school requires the possible remodelling of schools to make them accessible, the provision of specialized support and equipment in the classroom, and ensuring that teachers attend specialized programmes addressing inequities of access and barriers to learning. IN addition, various strategies have been used to extend access to potentially marginalized groups, including children speaking different languages, those engaging in domestic or wage labour, and girls facing barriers to entering schools. Among the approaches has been the introduction of school feeding programmes, with the aim of encouraging parents to enrol their children into school if children are fed. Also, it is commonly agreed that the provision of food ensures better learning, as children may be more receptive to learning if they are properly nourished. In some cases schools are required to introduce a range of activities to meet the needs of migrant children, who may face such challenges as culture and language. The extra activities may take the form of catch-up classes for children who may have missed classes, and language lessons for children for whom the language of instruction may not be their first language.

This section examines coping strategies and interventions, relevant to rural schools that have been created by State educational authorities and communities to provide a tolerant, inclusive and supportive school environments.

#### *School feeding*

A World Bank report (2012) assessed the multiple benefits of school feeding on enrolment and attendance, children’s ability to learn and reducing the gender gap. Despite expectations of improvements, in practice, the gains were often modest, but arguably important. Research has shown that the first three years of life are the critical period for establishing a child’s nutritional status. After that, it is very difficult to catch up, even if schoolchildren are provided with specially fortified snacks. In addition, learning is linked to so many variables, from the number of books to the size of the classroom and its facilities, that even extra food may not help students enough that they show measurable gains. The report concludes: “One thing is for sure, in countries where underweight children are the norm and stunting is common, helping a household feed all its members is itself a valuable activity, regardless of whether or not they are in school.” Box 20 gives an example of school feeding programme in Niger.

<b>Box 20. School feeding in Niger</b>
<p>In Niger, the school feeding programme is linked with nutritional interventions: meals provided to schoolchildren are fortified with micronutrients and vitamins. School feeding also helps local production through local purchases of beans, peas, millet and sorghum from small producers. These purchases help to improve the income of small farmers and boost production. In collaboration with the FAO, vegetable gardens have also been set up to support the school canteens. The World Food Programme (WFP) plans to assist more than 2,000 rural schools in Niger by 2016 (Hounkanli, 2014).</p>

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But school feeding programmes are only as good as the distribution systems that get the food to the village and then into the hands of students. A review of the government school nutrition programme in South Africa pointed out the following challenges during its implementation:

- lack of adequate infrastructure to implement the programme;
- non-delivery of the food and other related products;
- delays in the delivery of food and other related products;
- some meals provided are regarded as not healthy and tasty;
- centralization of the programme at the provincial departments of education (Department of Basic Education, 2008).

A strategy that is potentially more sustainable than the provision of meals or snacks is to create school gardens in villages. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has seriously considered this option and has developed a programme that should be operational in the near future. The programme is to be run under the auspices of its agricultural programme and is a further example of the need for integrating programmes aiming at reducing poverty and education provision in isolated rural communities (box 21).

#### **Box 21. NEPAD Home-Grown School Feeding Programme**

Most countries in Africa and the world over have had some form of a school feeding, school health, or school nutrition programme. Unfortunately many of these initiatives have been underfunded and have lacked skilled management, and have thus not been taken to scale or proved sustainable.

With this reality and recognition, coupled with the obvious statistics of staggering child hunger and malnutrition and low school enrolment levels, especially for girls, the challenge was due for renewed attention. Consequently, Africa's leadership, through the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), agreed in 2003 that the education, health and nutrition of young children had to be the centrepiece for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other targets.

To move this agenda forward, NEPAD, under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, teamed up with the WFP and other partners to develop the Home-Grown School Feeding Programme, which would address the needs and growth of the local small farmers while providing nutritious meals for pupils and improving enrolment and retention in schools. This agenda has since grown into a widely recognized initiative that has extended beyond the borders of the initial 12 pilot countries, thanks to the addition of partners such as the Global Child Nutrition Foundation, the World Bank, the Partnership for Child Development and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which have joined hands to cohesively deal with the issue.

Through the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, investment plans at the country level have greatly improved the allocation of resources for food security, nutrition and child development during the last decade. The strong working relationship between the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and the Global Child Nutrition Foundation is expected to greatly strengthen delivery, with the incorporation of the Foundation's sustainable school feeding technical assistance into home-grown and home-made solutions. The Home-Grown School Feeding Programme also dovetails with such global initiatives as Scaling Up Nutrition, 1,000 Days, Feed the Future, and the annual Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security, launched in October 2010 by the African Union Chair.

<https://www.nepad.org/content/home-grown-school-feeding-win-win-children-and-smallholder-farmers>

Creating school gardens as teaching tools in agricultural techniques in Côte d'Ivoire had contradictory outcomes – improved learning on the one hand but child labour on the other (Fofana, 2014).

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### *Gender inequities among teachers and students*

Across sub-Saharan Africa, the enrolment and retention of girls in school is lower than that of boys. The under-representation of girls tends to be greatest in rural areas and among the most disadvantaged communities. While a number of measures can be shown to have an impact on the retention of girls in school, one of the important factors is the presence of female teachers in the school, which ostensibly helps to make the school environment a safer place for girls. Many girls in Africa are forced to drop out of schools because school administrators are insensitive to gender issues, including sexual abuse and intimidation. In addition, the presence of females in positions of responsibility and leadership in schools is an important factor in creating gender role models (Mulkeen and Chen, 2008).<sup>6</sup>

The unequal representation of teachers in rural and urban areas is illustrated by data presented in Mulkeen and Chen, 2008 (table 2). Data indicate strong geographical patterns in the presence of female teachers; generally there were more female teachers in urban areas, and a higher proportion of male teachers in the most remote areas. This was true even in Lesotho, where the majority of teachers were female. The data also illustrate the substantial differences in school teaching environments and school performance levels across and within countries' rural and urban areas. Findings illustrate that:

- there are fewer qualified teachers in rural areas in at least four of the five study countries;
- pupil-teacher ratios are higher in rural schools than in urban schools in three of four countries;
- student performance in rural schools is consistently lower in Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) results;
- there are fewer women teachers in rural areas across all the countries.

Unfortunately the data are incomplete, preventing a full understanding of the inequities defining schools in rural areas.

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<sup>6</sup> See also Morocco Foundation: <http://www.morocco-foundation.org/who-we-are>.

**Table 2. Summary of rural–urban differences in five African countries**

	Lesotho	Malawi	Mozambique	Uganda	United Republic of Tanzania
Teacher qualifications	In lowland areas, 24% of teachers are unqualified; in mountain areas, 51% are unqualified	Data available do not suggest differences in rural–urban spread (more detailed categorization might clarify this)	Significant differences between and within provinces, e.g. in Maputo city 8% are untrained, in Manica province 58% are untrained	Some mainly rural and insecure areas have many vacancies and use untrained teachers	Better qualified teachers are found in urban areas, e.g. grade A teachers in Dar es Salaam = 68%, and in Lindi 39%
Pupil–teacher ratio and pupil–qualified teacher ratio	Not much variation in pupil–teacher ratios	Average pupil–teacher ratio: rural 77, urban 44; even bigger differences in some remote zones, e.g. Kalulu 139	Pupil–teacher ratio in Maputo is 54, and in Manica 67; pupil–qualified teacher ratio is 59 in Maputo, 162 in Manica	Average pupil–teacher ratio is 56	Average pupil–teacher ratio is 58, Dar es Salaam is 53, Kigoma is 74
Student performance	Repetition rates are higher and SACMEQ test results are lower in rural schools	SACMEQ results for reading and maths are lower in rural schools	While school exam results do not show differences, SACMEQ reading and maths results are lower in rural schools	SACMEQ results for reading and maths are lower in rural schools	SACMEQ results for reading and maths are lower in rural schools
Teacher gender	Almost 80% of teachers are female; even in mountain areas they account for 70%	82% of urban teachers are female, and 31% of rural teachers	Approximately 80% of teachers are female; female teachers are reluctant to accept postings to rural schools	It is difficult to attract and retain females at remote rural schools	Concentration of female teachers in urban schools, scarcity in rural schools

Source: Mulkeen and Chen, 2008, p. 12.

Countries have tried various means of attempting to encourage secondary school girls to re-enter school (box 22).

**Box 22. Gambia and Kenya: Reintegrating girls into school**

In Gambia, the Re-Entry Programme for Girls, initiated by the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, reaches girls who have dropped out, providing extensive guidance and counselling services for each participant. The Hope for Teenage Mothers organization in Kenya gives teenage mothers access to economic and educational opportunities through formal education, vocational training and skills building (Yasunaga, 2014).

Arguably, a more intensive, holistic strategy founded on introducing and training community activists into girls' education programmes, for example through the UNICEF Girls and Boys Education Movement, is more sustainable. This is founded on notions of empowerment, participation and inclusivity to improve the well-being of students, by giving them opportunities to develop appropriate skills and access to information (box 23).

### **Box 23. UNICEF: Girls and Boys Education Movement**

The Girls Education Movement was first introduced in Uganda in 2001, followed by a launch in South Africa in 2002, where it is known as the Girls and Boys Education Movement (GEM/BEM). In South Africa GEM/BEM clubs are organized in schools and run by learners, with support from the school management, the Department of Basic Education and UNICEF.

GEM/BEM provides children and young people with a platform to make the best of their potential. It gives them access to skills and information, helps them to mobilize their communities to support the rights of girls and boys, and provides a space where they can discuss issues that matter to them.

GEM/BEM has flourished, with more than 300,000 learners from over 5,000 schools participating in the programme. In 2011, the clubs promoted education and HIV prevention by organizing back-to-school and awareness drives on HIV counselling and testing. An estimated half a million girls and boys were reached through these activities. In addition, 60 "Gimmers" and "Bimmers" participated in the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to raise awareness of the impact of climate change on children in South Africa.

([http://www.unicef.org/southafrica/voices\\_8419.htm](http://www.unicef.org/southafrica/voices_8419.htm))

### *Violence*

Violence against girls is rampant across Africa and is a direct cause of inequitable access, not only to education posts but also too many opportunities available mostly to men. Inequitable access can be due to a host of causes stemming from traditional, religious and cultural practices that historically have skewed power relations in communities and disempowered women. A recent study of learners in rural parts of Limpopo province in South Africa suggests that sexual exploitation is rife and that traditional rural communities seemingly choose silence as a way to deal with such instances.

Consequently, stopping violence is fundamental to ensuring a responsive learning culture. This must begin in the school, with the support of teachers and teachers' unions, as illustrated by Kenya's Stop Violence against Girls in School project (box 24).

### **Box 24. Stopping violence against girls in school in Kenya**

Working directly with teachers' unions can build support for taking action against teachers who violate codes of conduct. In Kenya, the Stop Violence against Girls in School advocacy team collaborated with the Teachers' Service Commission, the Ministry of Education, the Kenya National Union of Teachers and the Children's Department to draft a parliamentary bill based on a 2010 Teachers' Service Commission circular on sexual abuse. The bill aims to reinforce procedures for reporting incidences of abuse or violence carried out by teachers, and to ensure that convicted teachers are not simply transferred to other schools. The circular states, moreover, that any failure to report or attempt to cover up an incident would lead to disciplinary action (UNESCO, 2014, p. 270).

In recent decades, a critical issue is supporting children who are emerging from conflicts, as they require high levels of care and support to ensure that they overcome the traumas they have experienced and that they are able to access education. Projects initiated by War Child indicate the difficulties of achieving these ends where communities face dire poverty and fragmentation. They have found it necessary to implement far-reaching projects that may cover support to children, to schools already offering education to marginalized children, and to families requiring financial support to begin entrepreneurial activities (box 25).

#### **Box 25. War Child: Operations in conflict zones**

"A UK charity, War Child, gives help directly to outcast children in conflict zones, those without homes, education or support of any kind, using local people to work in four war-torn countries – Iraq, Afghanistan, Uganda and the DRC. But nowhere is the aftermath of war felt more strongly than in the DRC, barely recovering from the deadliest conflict since the Second World War. Seven years of bloody fighting caused more than five million deaths, half of them children. It is bottom of the 187 countries on the UN's Human Development Index. In Kinshasa alone perhaps 20,000 children now live on the streets – some of them orphans, some driven out by impoverished or abusive parents, others desperately seeking a way to feed themselves. For girls that invariably means prostitution. A War Child survey of 315 Tshangu street girls found that 79 per cent were under 18 and 6 per cent under 12; 70 per cent had only primary education or none; 57 per cent had been raped, many by soldiers or policemen; and 42 per cent had become pregnant, of whom two thirds had had illegal abortions.

"The War Child centre employs three nurses, six social workers, teachers of reading, writing and other basic skills, and lessons are mandatory. It seeks to reunite the street girls with parents, pays for them to go to school or receive vocational training, or to hospitals when necessary. More broadly, War Child works with other NGOs in Kinshasa to tell them of the street girls' plight through radio, television, community activities and meetings with ministers" (Fletcher, 2011).

#### *Health*

Critical health issues across Africa, including the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS and malaria, disease outbreaks such as the recent occurrence of Ebola virus disease, and the developmental consequences of malnutrition, directly and indirectly affect millions of children, including through early mortality of parents and other caregivers. Growing numbers of orphans and vulnerable children threaten the stability and school opportunities of students and teachers as they are drawn into intensive caregiving roles. In Ghana, poor health is the most common reason given for early transfer. In Uganda, the policy is that teachers with health problems should be posted to schools near medical facilities (Mulkeen and Chen, 2008).

Health and HIV/AIDS concerns also contribute to teachers' unwillingness to work in rural schools. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the world. In 2013, an estimated 24.7 million people were living with HIV, accounting for 71 per cent of the global total. In the same year, there were an estimated 1.5 million new HIV infections and 1.1 million AIDS-related deaths. HIV prevalence for the region is 4.7 per cent but varies greatly between subregions within sub-Saharan Africa as well as within individual countries. Swaziland has the highest HIV prevalence of any country worldwide (27.4 per cent), while South Africa has the largest actual numbers of people living with HIV – 5.9 million. By comparison, HIV prevalence in West and East Africa is low to moderate, ranging from 0.5 per cent in Senegal to 6 per cent in Kenya. As of 2011, HIV had infected at least 10 per cent of the population in Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe (AVERT, 2013). For teachers using antiretroviral treatment, reliable access to medical facilities is even more critical, leading to a preference for posting to urban centres to allow them access to medical services. This situation further emphasizes the rural–urban divide.

In Ghana, poor health is the most common reason given for early transfer. In Uganda, the policy is that teachers with health problems should be posted to schools near medical facilities (Mulkeen and Chen, 2008).

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### *Countering child labour*

Universal access to education, and particularly to free and compulsory education of good quality secured until the minimum age for entry to employment, is a critical factor in the struggle against the economic exploitation of children (UNESCO, 2016). Many rural children are denied education as they cannot be relieved from their responsibilities in their homes, such as collecting wood and water, or from wage labour to bring income to the household. In addition, schooling may be disrupted, sporadically or persistently, by seasonal migration. A study in the northern province of South Africa revealed that hidden aspects of labour in the household can be the most exploitative, and paradoxically the most commonly accepted by society as a family matter. Such attitudes towards child labour compound the difficulties of investigating the nature and extent of domestic labour and its impact on school attendance (Gordon, Karlsson and Masipa, 2002).

All forms of child labour, whether carried out in the home, in the community or as wage labour, effectively push children out of school and into work at an early age. Evidence suggests that child labour and school participation are incompatible, and that the more onerous the labour, the greater the impact on schooling. Child labour is essentially an outcome of poverty. Therefore getting working children into school requires more flexible and responsive education systems and improved learning environments. Many children living in vulnerable families leave school before completing their basic education because households cannot afford the opportunity and direct costs of keeping them at school. It is possible that some form of incentive to those families living in abject poverty will free children from the burden of earning a living, and in that regard basic education must be free and accessible to all, including children who are, or were, working.

Findings from other countries in Africa have shown the essential role of partnerships in dealing with child labour. Teacher organizations and statutory school governing bodies or school management teams can play a decisive role in the dissemination of information on child labour, and additionally, in tracking infringements and supporting enforcement strategies. The ILO and UNICEF have produced materials for teachers to support them in dealing with children drawn into work (UNESCO, 2016).

Coupled with the establishment of the policies and laws to abolish wage labour for children is the need to ensure access to education at a level that meets the needs of the students. Second-chance schools, exemplified by those created by the development organization, Building Resources Across Communities (BRAC)<sup>7</sup>, provide formal schooling opportunities to young children, youths and adults who have never accessed school, or who have left before completing their basic education. Many of these offer non-formal skills training, especially for income-generating projects.

Strategies in improving access to education also include minimizing the direct and indirect costs associated with schooling and providing additional incentives for attendance, such as school feeding programmes or conditional cash transfers to improve attendance and performance. Ensuring availability of schools, resources and trained teachers needs to go hand in hand with efforts to tackle cost barriers to access.

<sup>7</sup> BRAC, known formerly as the Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee and then as the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee and now Building Resources Across Communities. (BRAC, <http://www.brac.net>)

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In addition, school attendance can be improved by adjusting the school calendar to some short seasonal peaks in agricultural labour demand, but the principle remains that children below the minimum working age should be in school rather than in the field, and engagement in hazardous activities must not be allowed for anyone below the age of 18. Furthermore, education should be relevant to the needs of its students and the community. In rural communities this is possible by including skills and knowledge for sustainable rural development in the curriculum, for example through approaches such as the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools, promoted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

Ministries of education and member-based organizations representing teachers and other stakeholders have an important role to play in addressing the challenges faced by rural children and eliminating child labour. Under the Education for All initiative, every country must systematically and effectively monitor progress towards the Education for All goals, including school attendance. This provides an excellent opportunity to monitor children who are missing from school because of child labour.

However, levels of child labour remain at intolerably high levels. In Uganda, for example, an estimated 16 per cent of children are engaged in child labour, which is a significant cause of school drop-out. During 2013–2014, the interagency Understanding Children’s Work project (ILO, UNICEF and World Bank), together with the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, undertook an assessment of child labour, education and youth employment challenges and identified key issues requiring action:<sup>8</sup>

- increasing school coverage, particularly in outlying areas where child labour rates are high;
- reducing direct costs that parents must bear in the form of non-tuition dues and levies, school books, uniforms and other items;
- addressing large class sizes;
- scaling up second-chance learning opportunities through transitional education to reach former working children and other out-of-school children;
- expansion of social protection, which was recognized as a factor in reducing child labour;
- awareness raising as part of efforts to build a broad consensus for change, given that public awareness about what constitutes child labour and its cost to children and society remains limited, and communication efforts are needed at both national and local levels;
- engaging a broad range of social actors in social mobilization efforts against child labour. Social actors, including trade unions, employers’ organizations, NGOs, faith-based organizations, teachers and the mass media, have important roles to play in a broader societal effort against child labour at both national and local community levels.

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<sup>8</sup> The Understanding Children’s Work (UCW) programme is an inter-agency research cooperation initiative involving the International Labour Organisation (ILO), UNICEF and the World Bank. Available at: <http://www.ucw-project.org>

Social actors, including trade unions, employers' organizations, NGOs, faith-based organizations, teachers and the mass media, have essential roles to play in a broader societal effort against child labour at national and local community levels (ILO, 2015b).

### **2.6.3. Pre-school care and learning opportunities**

The presence of sustainable early childhood development programmes is of immeasurable benefit to the overall school environment, as it not only increases children's learning potential but also frees women for work by providing them with safe options for child care. For instance, a broadly based, participatory programme in Mozambique under the care of volunteer teachers led to increased enrolment in school (box 26).

#### **Box 26. Save the Children's Early Childhood Development Programme in Mozambique**

The programme aims to improve children's cognitive, social and physical development through community-based pre-school centres, under the care of volunteer teachers selected by communities, to support children's transition to primary school. Daily literacy circles include sharing news, reading aloud, and engaging in alphabet activities, rhymes and other routines that stimulate language and communication skills, as well as thinking and reasoning. At the end of the two-year programme, 5–9-year-olds who had attended pre-schools were 24 per cent more likely to be enrolled in primary school compared with children who had not participated in the programme (Martinez, Naudeau and Pereira, 2012).

An added benefit of early childhood development programmes is the attendant improvement of the health of children by giving children basic health treatments, such as deworming (Aboud, Hossain and O'Gara, 2008). Comprehensive programmes typically integrate parenting support, nutrition and health care services and education. Evaluations of such large-scale programmes indicate that children in low- and middle-income countries benefit from early intervention programmes. The programmes reviewed demonstrated some overarching similarities by:

- targeting children and parents in low-income families;
- aiming to benefit large numbers of children;
- including a mix of different services and children from a range of ages;
- fostering community involvement and encouraging the beneficiaries of the programme to become agents of change themselves;
- developing sustainable early childhood development centres and including early childhood development training;
- creating a cadre of specialists and teachers that can be drawn into basic education (ILO, 2014).

Countries in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean have adopted a great variety of approaches when building early childhood development centres: in Morocco, each province has a pre-school resource centre providing continuing education and pedagogic support to teachers; and in Kenya, early childhood education staff in workplace-based centres benefit from enterprise leave and funding for professional development opportunities in official early childhood education networks (UNICEF, 2014, Chapter 7).

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#### **2.6.4. Comprehensive strategies: Building community partnerships**

Different environments, even in poverty-stricken contexts, are still able to support students and teachers in notable ways. Improving the school environment requires sourcing adequate resources and additionally strengthening community involvement in school affairs. This model underpins the actions of various multi-sectoral, integrated approaches, including partnerships between various State departments, NGOs and the private sector to create programmes that enforce and realize children's rights to education through meeting teachers' needs – both professional and lifestyle – as well as the education rights of the broader community.

One example is UNICEF's Safe and Caring Child-Friendly Schools project in sub-Saharan Africa (see box 27 for an example of implementation in South Africa). The project rests on a rights-based approach and the full participation of the community and teachers in order to translate children's rights into classroom practice and school management. The six pillars of the project framework aim at increasing the knowledge and capacity of school communities to build safe, caring and child-friendly schools.

A safe, caring and child-friendly school is defined as:

- a rights-based and inclusive school;
- an effective school that provides quality education;
- a safe, protective and supportive school;
- a health-promoting and health-seeking school;
- a gender-sensitive school that promotes equity and equality;
- a school that builds and has linkages and partnerships with the community.

These six characteristics are necessary and interdependent conditions for the success of the project in creating a child-friendly school, and are supported by the following elements of the school environment:

- the physical and psychosocial environment;
- the learners, educators, community and parents;
- peer support mechanisms for learners and educators;
- the curriculum, learning materials, norms and standards;
- the school management and the learning processes and structures;
- the outcomes for the learners, the educators, the school and the community.

Clearly, the teacher is central to establishing a safe, caring and child-friendly school, and this again raises issues around career development, salary, incentives and rewards for teachers participating in initiatives that take them outside the roles and responsibilities that usually define teachers' work (UNICEF, 2008).

### **Box 27. Implementing safe and caring child-friendly schools**

In South Africa, UNICEF is working closely with the National Department of Basic Education and with civil society to develop holistic models for dramatically improving schools. The models are part of the Safe and Caring Child-Friendly Schools framework – a set of six principles to transform schools by providing quality education, safety and access to education for girls, orphans and other vulnerable children. UNICEF has been supporting the Safe and Caring Child-Friendly Schools programme in South Africa for several years, and by 2010, 820 of the most disadvantaged schools were implementing it. A 2011 evaluation noted that child-friendly principles had been fully integrated into the national Caring and Support for Teaching and Learning framework, which will help to ensure the sustainability and scale up of the safe, caring and child-friendly school concept nationwide. Over 9,000 schools, with around 6 million students, will be reached. The National Department of Basic Education has used the child-friendly school principles as the basis for developing and implementing its Social Cohesion Toolkit (UNICEF, 2008).

## **2.7. Teacher professional development**

Quality teaching rests on a foundation of a sufficient number of well-trained teachers able to promote learning in an environment that meets their rights, professional needs and well-being. Teacher professional development is central to achieving quality teaching, and indeed has been the object of many interventions in recent years. Teacher professional development programmes encompass initial teacher education, induction and monitoring, and continuing professional development that takes place throughout the career of a teacher, and is particularly important for untrained or undertrained teachers.

This section of the report describes initial teacher education qualifications and adaptations to meet teaching and learning needs in rural areas, including different access routes and curriculum content changes, and the use of different media in promoting training opportunities.<sup>9</sup> The section concludes with a brief overview of strategies that have been found useful in enhancing the effectiveness of teacher professional development in rural areas.

### **2.7.1. Qualification programmes for teachers for rural areas**

In recent years there has been a fundamental shift in the provision of professional development programmes, from college-based programmes founded on practical classroom experience to university-driven programmes rich in theory and accompanied by a teacher practicum (UNESCO, 2015a; UNESCO, 2014). Initial teacher education may be a three-year or four-year post-school tertiary qualification that can be studied full time, part time or using one of a variety of distance education programmes on offer. Shorter programmes that are discussed below have been introduced in many countries to overcome teacher shortages; these usually allow underqualified or untrained teachers to become employed at schools as contract workers or volunteers while they undergo training. Teacher experience is integral to all initial teacher education programmes, but the time spent at schools differs widely, as a recent study in South Africa illustrated (Rusznyak and Bertram, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> The discussion omits teacher professional development for agriculture, which is beyond the scope of this report, as the elements of an agricultural programme cover a range of topics not covered, such as the rural economy of a country and its dependence at local and country levels on agricultural production.

### *Teacher qualifications*

Transitioning from college-based teaching certificates to full degree professional qualifications is motivated by the view that a degree improves the status and quality of teachers as professionals. Teacher professional development programmes may be located in regional centres or in satellite centres in rural districts. These different locations may boost or limit access to teacher professional development. In South Africa, for example, the change in qualification from certificates to degrees and the accompanying closure of teacher training colleges resulted in many rural students being denied access to a teacher qualification (box 28).

#### **Box 28. Exchanging teaching certificates for graduate degrees in South Africa**

In South Africa, racially segregated teacher education colleges situated throughout the country were closed after the election of the democratic government in 1994 in an attempt to raise the quality of the teacher education programmes produced by apartheid institutions. Teacher education certificates fell away and were replaced by degree programmes, now provided by a relatively small number of universities, most of which are located in urban areas. The closure of the teacher education colleges, many of which were situated in rural areas, led to a substantial drop in the number of young rural students, especially women, entering the profession. Current initial teacher education programmes follow a four-year education programme, or a one-year certificate subsequent to completion of a bachelor's degree. Bursaries are now offered to students from rural areas to augment the supply of teachers in rural areas (Gordon, 2009).

In contrast to the South African experience, establishing teachers' centres in rural districts in Malawi led to a considerable reduction of its teacher shortage (box 29). This programme enabled trainees to remain at home during training at the colleges. By 2011, 564 newly qualified teachers were posted to rural primary schools, an additional 750 were in training and 1,420 children were receiving remedial lessons.

#### **Box 29. Teacher centres in rural areas in Malawi**

In Malawi, community teachers are recruited into the government's second-chance basic education programme led by tutors from government teacher training colleges that have been established in rural areas. They participate in weekly training and planning sessions and receive more intensive training in both content and teaching methods during holidays.

Thirty-month cycle training programmes emphasize the integration of theory and subject content, the practical application of teaching skills, student-led research and reflection, community outreach and social development. Opportunities for teaching experience are provided during initial college-based training and one year of teaching practice. The training programmes place a strong emphasis on supporting the needs of all learners, including learners at risk, and establishing community-based projects such as school gardens to support vulnerable children. The trainees return to the college for the seventh and eighth periods – for reflection, specialization and preparation for final examinations. On graduation, the new teachers are expected to work effectively in rural areas, making use of teaching and learning materials produced from locally available resources.

In a recent evaluation of the programme, 72 per cent of trainees identified the school practice component as the area of study that most prepared them for teaching in rural areas. The evaluation concluded that the strong practical orientation of the programme provided better preparation than the more theoretical approach offered in government colleges (DeStefano, 2013; Development Aid from People to People, 2013; Mambo, 2011; UNICEF, 2014).

As outlined in section 2.2 of this report, there is a significant backlog in the provision of qualified teachers in Africa, and the higher proportion of these shortages is in schools in rural areas. The following discussion describes attempts to boost teacher numbers by offering youth employment opportunities as poorly paid contract workers or volunteers. This may be coupled with on-site training, as incumbents have little or no training.

Policies regulating access to training have to balance criteria relating to students' level of education and the need to reduce teacher shortages. Revising minimum entry requirements upwards or downwards offers opportunities and constraints to new entrants. Demanding higher entry qualifications may be an effective strategy for attracting the best-qualified students to enter the teaching profession but may reduce diversity in teacher recruitment and impact equity concerns, as it will curtail entry from students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds or from minority language communities. It may also have negative budgetary implications, as better-qualified candidates may command higher salaries (UNESCO, 2015). On the other hand, prioritizing entry to students from local communities (many of whom only have secondary school certificates) may lead to poor teaching practices, as they do not have appropriate pedagogic skills and have not attained adequate levels of subject content.

A determining factor in assessing the relative strength of each of these approaches is whether they influence teachers' commitment to living in rural areas. Wolforth (1997) claims that the advantages of training prospective teachers selected from the local communities outweigh the benefits of importing teachers who have already received their training; "foreign" teachers may be unable to immerse themselves in local culture and may not know the local language(s). On the other hand, on-site training validates teachers' own cultural values and may even build on their existing strengths, such as fluency in local language(s) and understanding community values and cultural practices. It is for these reasons that Wolforth maintains that it is crucial that training for rural schools should take place on site rather than in a location where reinforcement from the local milieu is impossible (Wolforth, 1997, p. 10). Nevertheless, the current lack of experienced personnel necessitates that experienced teachers have to be brought in to schools in rural areas as mentors and to teach scarce subjects, so successful recruitment practices depend on balancing the shortages with inexperienced and experienced personnel. The following examples exemplify this point of view and underscore the importance of continuing training for underqualified or untrained teachers and sensitizing all teachers to the exigencies of rural life.

Box 30 describes programmes that allow local youths in South Sudan to enter the teaching profession without first attaining a teacher's qualification. In South Sudan it was found that young women left the profession after training to seek better-paid jobs, even though the programme concentrated on their well-being, through advocacy and financial and material incentives. These findings are of concern, as they illustrate that training on its own cannot overcome macro structural constraints.

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**Box 30. Encouraging secondary school girls to go into teaching in South Sudan**

In South Sudan, less than 1 per cent of girls complete secondary school. The Gender Equity through Education programme provided financial and material incentives to over 4,500 girls to complete secondary school and to train young women graduates to enter the teaching profession. In addition, schools with no female teachers were encouraged to identify a mentor for girls – a local woman who could come to the school regularly to discuss questions, concerns and ideas with girls. Communications materials with positive messages about women teachers and their role in the newly independent country were developed to reach young women. The programme distributed kits containing sanitary pads, developed and distributed learning materials, and supported other government programmes aimed at increasing gender equity in education. The programme achieved significant success, and teachers and school personnel showed a greater awareness of girls' needs. The provision of stipends in particular was linked to a substantial increase in the retention of girls in secondary schools. However, about one in five girls said they planned to pursue a career other than in teaching, partly because of the low status of the profession. Many sectors pay higher salaries, so teaching is seen as a stepping stone towards other jobs or post-secondary education opportunities (UNESCO, 2014, p. 235).

Some high- and middle-income countries have developed systems that recruit top-level tertiary graduates as teachers directly from higher education. These alternative entry routes, first begun in the United States of America with the Teach for America programme, aim at recruiting university graduates who are motivated to teach in disadvantaged urban and rural schools. The programme provides them with limited initial training and induction prior to beginning teaching. These programmes have spread to several other OECD and Latin American countries. Independent reviews of the Teach for America programme have shown that the recruits are as effective in achieving learning outcomes based on standardized tests as other similarly untrained teachers, but not as effective as certified beginning teachers who have undergone traditional teacher education preparation, underscoring the importance of solid foundational teaching skills. Moreover, 50 per cent of these young people leave teaching after two years and 80 per cent after three years, an even higher ratio than the average attrition rates in the United States. This high turnover rate is costly in terms of stable learning environments for disadvantaged pupils and the added recruitment costs to the educational authorities that employ them (Vasquez Heilig and Jez, 2014).

A recent substantive review describes appropriate training strategies for undertrained and untrained teachers (Orr et al., 2013). Although directed at programmes for underqualified or untrained teachers, its findings have broader applicability to the effectiveness of all teacher professional development targeting teachers in rural areas.

The scope of the review was broad, considering interventions with untrained or undertrained school teachers from low- or middle-income country settings in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Oceania. Various factors (setting, contextual factors, barriers, facilitators and the reported views of stakeholders) are taken into account to gain an understanding of the impact of the strategies used in particular contexts and their range of applicability. The authors found that effective teacher training depended on programmes that combined various strategies, including:

- ensuring the regularity of untrained or undertrained teachers' engagement in attending classes;
- providing face-to-face workshops and classroom support;
- ensuring proximity between the classroom and the sites where strategies took place;

- 
- focusing workshops and self-study modules on discussions of practice and enhancement of knowledge of subject and pedagogic content, supported by well-produced resources and appropriate use of ICT;
  - ensuring the quality of tutors through proper briefing and training, illustrating the need for coaching by highly qualified, experienced and expert coaches;
  - employing competent, experienced teachers from the underqualified or untrained teachers' own schools in a mentor role;
  - recognizing that effective interventions might need to last for several years;
  - gaining support for the interventions from school management and external administration;
  - balancing the burden of study and workshop attendance with the underqualified or untrained teachers' work, family and community commitments;
  - recognizing the stimuli to classroom improvement, including critical reflection, within the specific contexts in which the underqualified or untrained teachers work.

In summing up their findings, Orr et al. (2013) highlight that significant variations in context, learning strategies and lengths of interventions made it virtually impossible to accurately determine the ways in which initial teacher education influences teaching practices and learner performance. Consequently they point out that it is imperative to consider unique contextual features within each intervention in order to forecast its potential impact.

### ***2.7.2. Curriculum content of teacher professional development programmes for rural education***

In recent years there has been a consolidation of views on the core elements of teacher professional development programmes, for example that they should include, as a minimum subject content, pedagogic knowledge and subject pedagogy. According to Naylor and Sayed (2014), initial teacher education curriculum frameworks should maintain a balance between paying attention to local teaching conditions and school environments on the one hand, and managing alignment with national education policies, including language policies, on the other hand. The courses offered by the teacher training colleges run by Humana People to People – a global network of aid agencies in over 40 countries on five continents – exemplifies an approach to prepare student teachers for living and teaching in remote communities. Trainees are taught practical and social skills, and are encouraged to carry out research in surrounding communities on strategies for teaching and working in rural areas, and to produce teaching and learning aids out of locally available materials. They learn about local development issues and partner with nearby schools for experience in classroom teaching, extracurricular activities and community outreach. They spend a full school year in teaching practice; a pair of trainees takes responsibility for a class and are assisted and supervised by a mentor at the primary school and the tutors at the college (Humana People to People, 2014).

### *Indigenous knowledge*

Odora Hoppers emphasizes that rural communities can be active partners in development and should not be seen as passive, backward, and generally incapable entities. She argues that through being defined and compared using Western norms, rural communities are seen as “the other” and consequently not able to participate on equal grounds in seeking alternative and perhaps liberating frameworks (Odora Hoppers, 1997, p. 2).

A corollary of recognizing the inherent capabilities and assets of rural people is respect for indigenous knowledge, which may be endemic in particular rural communities. School curricula can include knowledge rooted in community practices; for example, science and maths curricula can extend students’ and teachers’ notions of the history of knowledge in rural communities by illustrating alternative ways of thinking about knowledge (Gerdes, 1988; Hewson, 2014).

Gerdes demonstrates alternative constructions of Euclidean geometrical ideas developed from the traditional culture of Mozambique. He promotes the importance of indigenous knowledge in teaching in rural communities as a means of valuing community knowledge structure and establishing the educational power of these mathematical constructions (box 31).

#### **Box 31. Including local content in school curricula in Mozambique**

One of the innovations introduced into basic education in Mozambique is the time allocated to the local curriculum within the national curriculum. Introducing a local curriculum enables communities to identify themselves with the importance of schooling and allows children to find meaning in what they learn with respect to their life in their community.

The national curriculum allocates 20 per cent of the time given to teaching each subject to deal in an integrated manner with topics identified by the local communities as relevant to the children’s lives, their families and their community. The school is responsible for developing learning activities and producing booklets so that these topics are integrated into the school curriculum (Dhorsan and Chachuaio, 2009).

### *Leadership and management*

A priority in teacher professional development is to include courses on managing schools. A ministerial study team in South Africa found that among the attributes of schools resilient to difficult circumstances was strong organizational capacity, including leadership and management, and professionalism (Christie et al., 2007).

### *Learning in an appropriate language*

There are strong indications from language development studies that children must learn in their home languages to promote learning. Initial teacher education should provide skills to cope with bilingual language situations, where indigenous languages or dialects prevail. This requires that initial teacher education, in at least the basic education phase, provides for a bilingual approach that ensures continued teaching in a child’s mother tongue alongside the introduction of a second language, ideally throughout the primary grades (UNICEF, 2014).

This approach has been difficult to introduce in sub-Saharan Africa due to the legacy of colonial language policies, whereby the language of learning and teaching was the language of the colonial governments – English, French or Portuguese. These remain the language used in commerce and senior and tertiary education and so are favoured as

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the language of learning and teaching by parents, even in junior primary classes, who maintain that their children will be empowered if they speak these languages well. However, their use as languages of learning and teaching in the junior grades –and beyond—presents problems: levels of literacy are generally low in many disadvantaged areas, particularly in isolated rural areas, because there is limited access to and use of reading materials in all languages. Consequently local teachers who have not attended formal initial teacher education programmes are unlikely to be proficient in the colonial language and this impedes their teaching in all subjects and across all grades and subjects, not only in language classes. Interventions to improve levels of literacy require easily accessible written materials and access to libraries. According to Ebiwolote (2010), there are few libraries in rural areas of Nigeria due to limited government funding for infrastructure, Internet connections and personnel skilled to run libraries. It is likely that these same difficulties occur in most rural areas across Africa.

### **2.7.3. Teacher education in post-conflict and post-disaster contexts**

Teachers working in post-conflict and post-disaster contexts require appropriate training, based on the attributes of the specific context in which they are working, and reflecting both student and teacher needs. If possible, education authorities should coordinate the design and implementation of teacher education activities; where this is not possible, guidance and coordination may be provided by an interagency coordination committee. Training in the following may also be necessary:

- codes of conduct for teachers, including condemnation of gender-based violence against learners;
- disaster risk reduction and conflict prevention;
- psychosocial development and support, including for teachers working with children in trauma, and working with displaced communities;
- principles and perspectives of human rights and humanitarian law, and how these interface with learners' needs and the responsibilities of teachers, learners, communities and education authorities (UNESCO, 2015).

### **2.7.4. Induction and mentoring**

Effective induction programmes may improve teachers' motivational levels and effectiveness and lessen the attrition of teachers from schools in rural areas (Bennell, 2004; Bennell and Akyeampong, 2007).

Yiga (2015) describes details of an induction programme for secondary school teachers located in an urban district of Uganda, which has different tiers of operation. This project delegated the responsibility for teacher induction programmes to different tiers of governance:

- school based (the school is responsible for supporting a new teacher);
- teacher or community based (teachers' unions provide support programmes);
- municipality or cluster based (municipalities or school clusters implement induction programmes), whereby a number of schools work together to promote the professional development of the teachers within the cluster;

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- cooperation between schools and teacher education institutions (Yiga, 2015, p. 88).

Yiga recommends that well-qualified mentors and seasoned teachers are appointed to serve as induction facilitators and mentors, and that they receive incentives in the form of a salary increment or special stipends for this work.

### **2.7.5. Continuing professional development**

There are strong links between opportunities for professional development, teacher motivation, self-confidence, teacher effectiveness and efficacy, with consequences for overall job satisfaction. It is these issues that affirm continuing professional development as a professional right: teachers should have access to and responsibility for undertaking ongoing professional development linked to agreed teacher educator standards and should undergo regular appraisals linked to these standards and to their continuing professional development plans (ILO and UNESCO, 1966, paragraph 95.3). Continuing professional development interventions differ in many ways but require coordination at school, district or cluster level (box 32).

#### **Box 32. Selected continuing professional development interventions**

In Malawi, Uganda and Zambia, support services use a network of local centres where much of the continuing professional development is provided. Zambia has a particularly sophisticated three-tier support structure, with school-level in-service education and training committees, zonal centres and district centres.

In Gambia and Lesotho, the provision of support relies on mobile support staff at local schools (“cluster monitors” in Gambia, “district resource teachers” in Lesotho). In Liberia, provision of continuing professional development is carried out locally by NGOs. In Uganda, a network of coordinating tutors provides support through centres serving a cluster of schools.

In Zanzibar (United Republic of Tanzania), the management of each training centre is empowered to identify training needs locally, and to organize events to meet those needs, often drawing on expertise from secondary teachers. In Malawi, groups of secondary schools are combined into clusters and given a budget (US\$100 in 2007) per term to facilitate meetings between schools to consider matters such as HIV, gender, management and curriculum (Mulkeen, 2010).

While local provision of continuing professional development allows greater coverage and permits teachers from local schools to meet and share experiences, offering support in individual schools provides facilitators and trainers with greater opportunities to observe teachers and offer one-on-one support.

The value of intensive in-school training is demonstrated in a project in Namibian schools aimed at developing English language pedagogic skills. O’Sullivan (2001) points to the following general strategies that improved the effectiveness of the programme:

- school-based and school-focused programmes;
- based on teachers’ needs related to classroom realities;
- provides a series of courses rather than one-shot courses;
- teachers given opportunities to try out new skills in the classroom;
- adequate supervision and follow-up.

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Another worthwhile endeavour for teachers in rural areas is to promote collegiality through the formation of communities of practice and professional learning communities in school clusters in order to encourage discussion and hence self-reflection (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Vescio, Ross and Adams, 2008).

#### **2.7.6. Training early childhood development teachers**

Stimulating early childhood development is essential to reverse the effects of poverty and early deprivation and maximize the development of a child's innate potential. Therefore, the need to support early childhood development practitioners is acute in sub-Saharan Africa because of the massive underprovision of early childhood development facilities (ILO, 2014). Successful programmes offer a range of activities that cover health and cognitive development as well as home care. An example is the Ntataise programme, which operates in rural areas and on farms in South Africa. Activities include play sessions for children and their parents to encourage parents and caregivers to learn more about child developmental stages, early stimulation and child care. Ntataise facilitators assist communities with advice on child nutrition, health, immunization and birth registration and refer parents to local government services. Where necessary, they make follow-up visits to the homes of those parents and caregivers who require additional support (Ntataise, 2013).

Targeted funding is urgently needed to develop and resource early childhood development sites, to train early childhood development practitioners and to establish teacher centres in rural and remote areas that specialize in early childhood development training programmes.

#### **2.7.7. Distance education and the use of open educational resources**

Distance education programmes using a variety of media have proliferated in recent years, with many targeting disadvantaged urban and rural schools. They include various media but the most common use print and e-learning materials, though there are a number of instances of programmes using radio. Information and communication tools are becoming increasingly portable, flexible and powerful, and numerous studies point to the potential of these new technologies as learning tools. Radio and e-learning are both possibilities for use in schools and campus-based residential courses, but radio is arguably the medium most useful for isolated communities, until the time when there is greater Internet access and support for communication technologies in rural areas. The following discussion provides details of the media used in various distance education programmes and their scope in addressing teacher training challenges.

##### *Using open educational resources in training*

There is a view that open educational resources, including ICT, offer opportunities to enrich the pedagogic toolkit of teacher educators and teachers in hitherto undreamt-of ways (box 33). For instance, Moon (2010) in his analysis of the TESSA research programme concludes that the revolution in communication technologies provides an opportunity to reassess the forms and modes of teacher development, particularly in rural areas. In the next few years, the opportunity and entitlement for education and training can be enhanced if the revolution in communication technologies is, in an evolving way, built into play and practice around teacher education. Unlike other interventions, which are limited in their ability to move to scale, distance education has the positive characteristic of potentially being able to work to scale, creating a new architecture for teacher development (Moon, 2010).

Even though there is substantial growth of the use of ICT in teaching teachers, paper-based programmes are still relevant for developing countries because of the limited spread of Internet facilities in rural areas. A distance education programme in Malawi provides three weeks of orientation to selected trainees, after which they are deployed to schools in the zones where they were recruited. They spend two years at their assigned schools while completing and mailing in self-guided learning modules to a tutor from the local teacher training college. Local tutors support student teachers and mentoring is provided in schools (UNESCO, 2014).

### Box 33. Examples of ICT initiatives

**Digital Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP).** DEEP has developed a range of initiatives for primary teachers in schools in remote rural areas that serve underprivileged communities faced with severe infrastructure problems in Bangladesh, Egypt, South Africa, Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania. The aim of the programme is to develop teachers' pedagogic skills in literacy, numeracy and science through the provision of resources and use of various e-learning and digital technologies, including laptop computers and DEEP CDs. Teachers are given appropriate website addresses to access a wide variety of relevant information (Leach, Shumi and Power, 2005).

**National Teachers' Institute, Nigeria.** The National Teachers' Institute is a well-established institution with over 800 study centres across the region. Recognizing the urgent need to provide more routes into teaching, the National Teachers' Institute has developed a new fast-track Pivotal Teacher Training Programme, which annually trains over 30,000 teachers. The course lasts 18 months and includes 15 months of preparation using National Teachers' Institute open and distance learning resources and a three-month internship. This is not seen as a terminal teaching qualification and those graduating are encouraged to follow a school-based course to achieve the National Certificate of Education, which is the nominal national three-year route into teaching. What is of particular interest in the Nigerian context is the way in which the Pivotal Teacher Training Programme curriculum has been aligned to facilitate the move from initial into school-based in-service training (<http://www.nti-nigeria.org/>).

**Open University of Sudan.** The Open University of Sudan (OUS) is a public university based in [Khartoum, Sudan](#) that provides bachelor and postgraduate courses to students, including teachers and student teachers, through distance education. A wide range of courses is on offer that make use of written materials, radio and television. Regional study centres are being established. With improvements in connectivity there are sufficient users in urban areas to make an online offering sustainable in the short term and in the long term will allow access to rural communities (<http://www.ous.edu.sd/en/>).

**African Virtual University.** The African Virtual University, a teacher education initiative based in Nairobi, uses open educational resources both in and across the curriculum, with a particular focus on mathematics and science education. A third programme for self-learning on peace and conflict resolution will be developed. Delivery is at universities in 27 partner institutions in 21 countries, including nine Francophone countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal); three Lusophone countries (Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique); and nine Anglophone countries (Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania). A pilot study demonstrated that the multimedia approach adopted – using e-learning, CD-ROMs and print – helps a greater number of student teachers to access and benefit from the programme, as the combination overrides the technological gap between institutions and countries. There is no information on access by teachers in rural schools (<http://www.avu.org/>).

**Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) project.** This consortium includes international and national institutions in nine sub-Saharan African countries and provides resources to support the development of school-based teacher education programmes in audio and other media presented in four languages. Some of the learning sites target rural women, such as the Malawi Access into Teaching Scholarship project, which offers women a chance to enter a teaching career via a one-year distance learning upgrade course. This includes classroom experience through a teaching assistant placement in a local primary school, supported by a mentor from the school's teaching staff (<http://www.tessaprogramme.org/>).

### *Possibilities for using radio programmes in rural communities*

Interactive radio programming has been used since the 1970s to deliver basic education to underserved groups. Well-designed programming improves learning and narrows achievement gaps for disadvantaged children, particularly those in isolated or underserved settings (UNESCO, 2014).

It is also a powerful advocacy medium in rural areas because most, if not all, communities have access to national or community radio. It is the most interactive medium available, as local communities can develop their own programmes to advertise local events or run talk shows on various educational matters. Programmes have been used to respond to trauma from conflicts, or even to stimulate violence, as occurred in Rwanda.<sup>10</sup>

After the Rwandan genocide, “hate radio” gave rise to an antidote, *Love Radio*, a transmedia documentary about reconciliation in post-genocide Rwanda. Episodes attempt to show the complexity of resolution and the (messy) voyage towards healing.<sup>11</sup>

The projects described in box 34 indicate the ways in which radio development programmes can support teachers attempting to cope with large, under-resourced classes, thus improving their working conditions. These programmes indicate possibilities of successful integration of radio into teaching but do not describe teacher preparation to cope with radio, either in classroom management or in working interactively with their students when progressing through the programmes.

#### **Box 34. Interactive radio programmes**

**Guinea.** In Guinea, the Fundamental Quality and Equity Levels project builds on traditions of storytelling and song to encourage children to read and speak French. Rural pupils who participated in the programme scored as high or almost as high as their urban counterparts on French tests (USAID, 2006).

**Zanzibar.** An early childhood project in Zanzibar (United Republic of Tanzania), the Radio Instruction to Strengthen Education project was established in 2006 to develop and pilot models for extending early childhood education to underserved communities. By 2010 it was reaching over 20,000 children on the islands of Pemba and Unguja. The project uses interactive radio instruction to build children’s foundation skills and prepare them for primary school, using games, songs, stories and problem-solving activities linked to the Zanzibar curriculum. An evaluation in 2008 found that children who had received interactive radio instruction, whether in non-formal or formal settings, had greater overall learning gains than children in formal classrooms who had not received radio instruction. Overall, learning gains, relative to the control group, were 12 per cent higher for the non-formal group and 15 per cent higher for the formal group. Results also showed greater learning gains for children from Pemba communities, which have lower incomes, lower adult literacy, and poorer access to health and social services than those in Unguja (USAID and Education Development Centre, 2009).

Radio can also support education in fragile States to reach large numbers of children and provide second-chance education to returning refugees and out-of-school youths. For

<sup>10</sup> The ease with which radio can be used for the good can breed the opposite. In June 1993 a new radio station called Radio-Television Libre des Mille Collines (RTLMC) began broadcasting in Rwanda. The station was rowdy and used street language to entice people to hatred. There were disc jockeys, pop music and phone-ins designed to appeal to the unemployed, the delinquents and the gangs of thugs in the militia. In a largely illiterate population, the radio station soon had a very large audience who found it immensely entertaining (Rwanda stories).

<sup>11</sup> <http://endgenocide.org/learn/past-genocides/the-rwandan-genocide/>.

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example, between 2006 and 2011, the South Sudan Interactive Radio Instruction project enrolled over 473,000 pupils through Learning Village audio lessons targeting grades 1 to 4. Half-hour lessons are linked to the national curriculum and include instruction in English, local language literacy, mathematics, and life skills elements, such as HIV/AIDS and landmine risk awareness. In addition, the project has reached 55,000 out-of-school youths with 180 audio lessons offering the primary school curriculum, together with civics, health and English language content, via a non-formal accelerated learning programme.

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### **3. Conclusion and recommendations**

Target 4.c of the Sustainable Development Goals calls for: “By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small-island developing States.” In relation to this target, the Education 2030 Framework for Action states that governments should “make teaching an attractive, first-choice profession with continuing training and development by improving teachers’ professional status, working conditions and support, and should strengthen policy dialogue mechanisms with teacher organizations” (UNESCO, 2015).

While there is a stronger focus on teachers in the new education development agenda, there is a lack of focus on the specificity of teachers in rural areas. And to realize many of the commitments made in the above declarations, there is a need to pay particular attention to the needs of teachers in rural areas, as this report argues. In that respect, a key recommendation emerging from this report is to address policies on rural teachers in a holistic and integrated manner, as many of the challenges and solutions relating to rural education are interrelated. This section begins with recommendations on the issues covered in this report followed by an outline of an integrated and holistic strategy that attempts to take account of students’ different educational needs, from early childhood development to secondary grades. The report concludes with a proviso that the disjunction between policy formulation and implementation will continue to undermine efforts to improve teaching in rural areas unless there is political will and capacity to act in a climate of trust, participation and consensus.

#### **3.1. Approaches to improving working conditions**

Improving conditions of service and working conditions for teachers in rural areas requires a transformed policy regime founded on teachers’ rights and responsibilities. Further, effective administration depends on access to a comprehensive database that provides up-to-date information on the supply and demand for teachers across the system and the financial costs of human resources, infrastructure and equipment.

##### **3.1.1. Rights and incentives**

A new perspective of teachers’ rights is needed that takes account of actual working conditions and allows for the allocation of appropriate rewards and incentives that are based on the experiences of teachers working in rural schools (see below for a discussion on rewards and incentives). This is particularly important for women teaching in rural areas, as many have to cope with difficult lifestyle options, particularly when schools serve marginalized communities.

##### **3.1.2. Providing accurate databases**

The importance of teacher remuneration and teacher utilization cannot be overstated; as drivers of teacher costs they hold the key to developing affordable and sustainable policies across many aspects of policy.

Policy development and assessment rest on reliable and up-to-date information, but in many countries there is a dearth of information dealing with rural teachers and schools (see comments above on the difficulties associated with creating databases that disaggregate rural and urban data). According to a working paper on expenditure (Fyfe, 2007), data are needed on a new set of indicators that will provide a fuller picture of the

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school system and variations across the system so that decision-makers are able to monitor and support programmes that provide access to quality education.

In particular there is a need for a calculation of expenditure per school-aged child in the population as a percentage of GNP per capita as a better way of seeing how much resources are being committed to every child in the country. Additionally, measures of teacher salaries as a share of GNP per capita need to be supplemented by indicators of teacher salaries as a multiple of the absolute poverty level – a “teacher poverty index”. Better measures of “teaching costs” need to incorporate the full professional role of teachers such as course planning, marking, meetings with parents, etc. We need better measures of teacher effectiveness in relation to learning outcomes that is, after all, the ultimate benefit of the education process, rather than simple system expansion (Fyfe, 2007, p. 17).

This requires a nuanced classification of data that considers the contextual features of schools across countries, especially the variables delineating the marginalized, vulnerable and disadvantaged regions.

### **3.1.3. Systemic improvements**

Besides the implementation of procedures to collect data, the reviews of country practices indicate the following requirements:

- At national level, comprehensive policies are needed that take account of teachers’ working conditions and levels of remuneration, founded on ILO guidelines that elaborate teachers’ rights pertaining to their professional duties and, more broadly, to their well-being (ILO and UNESCO, 1966).
- At district offices, regulations regarding local-level planning must take account of the learning needs of the school community and the working conditions of teachers so that district and regional officials develop appropriate ways of supporting teachers located in remote areas. One possibility is to foster networking and cooperative clustering endeavours between schools and district offices where schools are situated in isolated areas, particularly where poverty levels are high.
- At local level, policies that encourage meaningful community participation are needed to facilitate teaching and learning and improve the material conditions and learning culture of schools.

### **3.1.4. Improving the efficiency of the remuneration system**

Besides clarifying the regulations covering remuneration, it is essential that payments are made on time and efficiently, as slow payment systems lead to low morale, high levels of absenteeism, difficulties in deploying and retaining well-trained teachers and ultimately to teachers leaving the profession.

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## **3.2. Incentives to enhance recruitment, deployment and retention**

### **3.2.1. Targeting**

A critical problem with the provision of incentives is to target incentives appropriately, but country examples indicate that their success in attracting and retaining teachers depends on whether incentives offered are able to satisfy the unique challenging conditions in schools, such as attracting experienced teachers of scarce subjects, or expanding the number of women teachers. Career incentives, such as accelerated promotion for teachers who serve in rural communities, could be considered as well.

### **3.2.2. Gaming and unintended effects**

The payment of incentives can be tricky, as policy cannot anticipate all the numerous ways in which individuals may thwart policy objectives. For example, the issuing of fake marriage licences or medical certificates to avoid deployment have purportedly been used in some instances. The *Handbook of good human resource practices in the teaching profession* points to the use of financial incentives, good housing and subsidized travel costs as key incentives (ILO, 2012, p. 26). The handbook also points to the example of China, where teachers committed to teaching in rural areas receive free training for three years (ILO, 2012, p. 79). However, these options are recognized to be expensive and not easily implementable.

### **3.2.3. Monitoring**

Incentive schemes should outweigh the negative conditions and perceptions associated with teaching in a rural school. It has been found that incentive schemes are likely to achieve greater success with close community monitoring and cooperation.

### **3.2.4. A balanced approach**

A combination of monetary and non-monetary incentives may make incentive schemes more attractive. However, the packages offered to teachers require a thorough understanding of contextual and cultural practices within communities.

Whilst not commonly discussed in the literature, rewards can ensure that teachers are available for remote and rural school postings. Rewards offered to teachers may include accelerated opportunities for career advancement, subsidized further education opportunities and prizes for teachers, especially those teaching in rural areas. It is important, however, to ensure that incentives are applied equitably, otherwise they may be contested.

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## **3.3. Teacher governance**

There is no clear-cut evidence regarding best practices on teacher governance, as the roles and responsibilities devolved to local levels are closely dependent on the governance system adopted in the country. Aspects to consider include:

- clarifying the exact balance between centralization and decentralization in terms of defining the responsibilities of diverse tiers of governance;

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- identifying the roles of different ministries in supporting effective educational governance and administration and the creation of structures that enable interministerial cooperation;
  - clearly demarcating roles and responsibilities of key actors;
  - drawing communities into decision-making at school levels, particularly when supported by well-functioning district tiers of governance;
  - providing financial capitation grants and other grants to counter disadvantages in improving the effectiveness of governance systems and the means of capacitating implementation agents to administer these;
  - creating effective social partnerships, including teachers and their representative associations and organizations, local NGOs, and government departments such as health and agriculture;
  - modifying school management systems at district and local levels to support teacher governance and promote teacher development programmes located in teacher development centres and community learning centres.

### **3.4. Teacher performance and evaluation**

Several recommendations regarding teacher performance and evaluation have been suggested above, including teacher participation in decisions regarding regulations governing those functions, and adequate remuneration. In addition, it is important to ensure that:

- there is a balance between the appraisal and evaluation functions of teacher performance systems;
- the working conditions of teachers support effective teaching;
- there are appropriately qualified officials to provide professional support to teachers, and any system of inspection involves adequately trained inspectors who are able to provide support and monitor teacher performance;
- national and regional deployment and retention data are used to reduce inequities between different regions;
- budgeting and planning – for both financial and human resources for inspections for rural schools – are included in all annual plans;
- dates are set for annual inspection of rural schools, with staff annual appraisals possibly incorporated in such visits.

### **3.5. School environment**

The school environment, both its material features and its learning culture, together with teachers' conditions of service, affect teacher motivational levels and are therefore important elements in improving learning and teaching conditions in schools in rural areas. This involves several considerations, including the following.

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- Norms and standards regarding school infrastructure, the provision of services and facilities, and human resources capable of administering these should accord with recognized standards of safety, security and learning conditions.
  - An integrated approach should be adopted to school improvements, whereby the school communities play a role in enhancing the learning environment through various means, such as the introduction of effective safety and security programmes and sourcing teaching aides from the community.
  - Infrastructural innovations are needed to counter climate change, taking lessons from projects that have adopted various technologies to provide power to schools cheaply and make use of various sanitation technologies through the efficient use of sparse water reserves. These are particularly apposite in rural areas beset by droughts, where infrastructural shortages and low population densities require creative innovations to ensure schools are safe and hygienic.

All of these require new specializations and competences for teachers.

### **3.6. Enhancing teacher professional development interventions in rural areas**

Teacher professional development for schools in rural areas should be aligned to programmes that take cognisance of the contextual characteristics of schools, enabling student teachers to graduate not only with an understanding of education theories and practice but also with sensitivity towards rural community lifestyles and their vision for education. The following suggestions attempt to improve the quality of teacher training while retaining a balance between generally accepted outcomes of training on the one hand and adaptations to meet rural challenges on the other.

#### **3.6.1. A course dedicated to preparing teachers for rural posts**

The question arises whether initial teacher education programmes should include courses or specializations in teaching in rural areas. A range of possible inclusions discussed above are managing small schools and school clusters, teaching multigrade classes, coping with the disjuncture between students' chronological ages and learning levels (where students may require remediation in foundational skills), preparing student teachers to understand the particular attributes of communities such as language and culture, and understanding the balance between teachers' responsibilities in the classroom on the one hand and as supporters and facilitators in health and welfare matters on the other. A prerequisite to preparing student teachers for rural postings is compulsory experiential teaching in rural areas, including participation in community school projects or activities. Curricula and pedagogical materials aimed at rural lifestyles could also be considered to relate learning to rural experiences.

#### **3.6.2. Increasing access into teacher training**

Equity of access to teaching remains a challenge for all youths but particularly for women in many communities; the profile of teachers presented above indicate that gender bias still denies women access to teaching in rural areas. In addition, high levels of poverty prevent youths from entering the teaching profession, as they cannot afford to pay the fees for full-time or part-time study. Some countries have found that bursaries act

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as incentives to increase access but for many countries the number of bursaries offered to disadvantaged youths tends to be constrained by insufficient funds.

Projects across many regions in developing countries illustrate that teacher shortages in schools in rural and other disadvantaged areas can be reduced by offering short-term teacher training programmes that give local volunteers and underqualified or untrained teachers access to formal professional qualifications.

### **3.6.3. Upgrading the qualifications of underqualified and unqualified teachers**

It is apparent that little or no introduction to theories in pedagogy and no additional training in subject content hamper good teaching practices among underqualified or untrained teachers. This highlights the importance of providing well-conceived training programmes for underqualified or untrained teachers and ensuring that such programmes are aligned to formal qualifications.

### **3.6.4. Proliferating sites of learning**

Establishing teacher centres and college and university satellites in local zonal centres can reduce training costs for initial teacher education and continuing professional development and support collegiality among teachers in rural areas. Such projects can also aim at actively recruiting teacher training candidates from rural communities.

### **3.6.5. Strengthening early childhood development provision**

It is essential to ameliorate the poor learning foundation of students from disadvantaged backgrounds by expanding access to early childhood development. However, adding early childhood development training to already overburdened and often underfunded teaching institutions will rest on the availability of sufficient funds, suitable training programmes, school infrastructure and other resources to support early childhood development, as well as finding sufficiently trained experts to lead this venture. Clearly this is a long-term objective that will have to be carefully planned and monitored.

### **3.6.6. Enhancing school community relations**

Many of the programmes outlined above have illustrated the positive outcomes of involving communities in school affairs. These recommendations are derived from a range of initiatives that include community stakeholders as:

- active participants in school development;
- school aides in classrooms, particularly in early childhood development centres and in the primary grades;
- partners in creating curricula that include aspects of community knowledge that support their aspirations and visions of education;

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- co-founders and partners in various programmes aligned to education such as health, safety, infrastructure, and the provision of facilities and services to schools.

### **3.7. Realizing equity: A holistic approach**

Education in rural areas is integral to a holistic development approach that recognizes the profound differences in the context of rural schools compared to their urban counterparts, particularly those concerning social and cultural relations, the economic potential of rural areas and, in many rural areas, a historical legacy of neglect resulting in limited facilities and services, including the provision of education. Schooling has to accommodate these differences if equity goals in performance are to be met. This may require realigning the shape of the education system to accommodate the demographics and educational needs of students and the broader school community.

Such a reconfiguration should prioritize areas of great need, such as early childhood development, schooling for out-of-school or poorly trained youths to access secondary schools, and addressing the scarcity of teachers and learning resources through sharing resources by clustering and merging schools. Furthermore, augmenting access to secondary schools is essential in marginalized and disadvantaged communities, and this may be possible in rural areas by judiciously placing schools near transport routes or in towns. Even though this report has pointed out the adversities associated with boarding schools and hostel accommodation, these may be needed for learners who live too far away from a school. It is possible that large “nodal” secondary schools can offer rural youths a wide range of subject specializations in schools that are equipped with learning resources that may not be affordable in many rural schools, such as laboratories, ITC, libraries and sport facilities.

A transformed educational landscape requires that teachers be equipped to meet new challenges.

This report has concentrated on formal schooling up to and including the secondary phase. It is essential that further research is conducted to ascertain the scope of skills-based and vocational education programmes in ensuring that education is a pathway to appropriate livelihoods in rural areas and that this research considers the possibilities afforded by public-private partnerships in facilitating vocational education. A special focus is agriculture, given that most communities in rural areas engage in agricultural activities.

### **3.8. From policy to implementation**

Programmes and projects discussed throughout the report have been implemented either by governments or by individuals or agencies. However, one issue remains paramount, notably a disjuncture between policy formulation and implementation, which often prevents ventures from succeeding. Thus the recommendations require a number of important and necessary conditions to be considered for effective implementation. These are listed below, though the list is not exhaustive.

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### **3.8.1. Political will**

Political will coupled with a progressive bureaucracy invested in change is necessary for effective implementation. Political will is demonstrated in leadership that places transformative rural education at the heart of system wide reform focused on improving education quality. Such leadership needs to work across government to develop proactive strategies of education redistribution in favour of the marginalized.

### **3.8.2. Shared consensus and participation**

For the sake of policy efficacy key stakeholders need to be committed to and involved in policy efforts to promote social cohesion so that rural communities are not considered to be side-lined from mainstream schooling. To this end it is necessary to develop dialogue forums and consultative roundtables. These would inform the creation of a robust policy framework that includes a detailed and adequately funded plan for the implementation of a range of actions that address the issues noted in this report. And in that regard, the voice and agency of social movements and civil society organizations is crucial to holding government, institutions, companies and other actors to account.

### **3.8.3. Capacity**

Realizing laudable policy intentions relies on the aggregate capacity of the system to manage and monitor. Aggregate system capacity rests on the knowledge, skills and dispositions of actors, which include national, provincial and district officials, school leaders and teachers, and school governing body members. The propensity to act and to implement requires targeted and focused professional development programmes that empower these actors.

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