

**TEACHER MOTIVATION IN  
TANZANIA AND OTHER  
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN  
COUNTRIES**

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# Introduction

The most critical finding that emerges from this study is that very sizeable proportions of primary school teachers, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, have low levels of job satisfaction and are poorly motivated. Many tens of millions of children are, therefore, not being taught properly and are not receiving even a minimally acceptable education.

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A considerable amount of research has been conducted on what makes the 'effective' teacher. And yet, the focus to date of policy reform in most countries has been on improving learning outcomes through a better allocation of resources, more accountability, curriculum reforms and refined assessment systems, and better pre- and in-service teacher training.

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However, the limited impact of many of these interventions has forced politicians and policymakers to focus increasingly on the needs of teachers themselves.

The literature on teacher motivation and incentives in developed countries has many common or similar themes with the very much more limited literature on this subject in low-income developing countries.

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The unavoidable conclusion is that most schooling systems are faced with what amounts to a teacher motivation crisis, which has far reaching implications for the education Millennium Development Goals for basic education and for development as a whole.

The study has addressed the following four main questions:

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- To what extent is there a problem of poor motivation among teachers in sub-Saharan Africa ?
- If so, what are the main reasons for poor teacher motivation?
- How do poor motivation and incentives affect teacher performance and the overall effectiveness of national education systems?
- What should be done to ensure that teachers are adequately motivated?

# Research methods

-The main source of information for this research project is the 12 country case studies. Core set of 10-20 interviews with key education stakeholders, the collection of all relevant documentation, and the analysis of statistical data relating to teacher motivation and incentives. Common set of key individuals from the Ministry of Education,

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teacher trade union(s), education NGOs, academic researchers and aid donors was interviewed in each country.

# Teacher motivation levels and trends

There appear to be mounting concerns that unacceptably high proportions of teachers working in public school systems in many low income developing countries (LIDCs) are poorly motivated due to a combination of low morale and job satisfaction, poor incentives, and inadequate controls, and other behavioural sanctions.

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A potential crisis in the teaching profession threatens the ability of national governments to reach internationally agreed targets to expand and improve education. In many developing countries, the teaching force is demoralized and fractured”

# Causes of teacher demotivation

- The politicization of the education system has also resulted in a proliferation of schools with untrained teachers and a lack of resources to cater for expanded enrolments.
- Teachers now have to cope with much increased workload with the introduction of UPE at the same time that the resources to deal with this increased workload have been strained.

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- Career progression opportunities remain limited in most countries, which mean that a teacher's salary increases by relatively little over time. Promotion criteria are also still based largely on qualifications and years of service. Consequently, both good and bad teachers get promoted together.
- Teachers are seriously underpaid and this,

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more than anything else, is the key factor undermining teacher morale and motivation.

**-Competence; a teacher may be highly committed to the attainment of the school's learning goals, but she may lack the necessary competencies to teach effectively, which ultimately becomes demoralizing and demotivating.**

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- Poor working environment(learning and teaching materials)
- Teacher management; Teacher motivation depends critically on effective management, particularly at the school level. If systems and structures set up to manage and support teachers are dysfunctional, teachers are likely to lose their sense of professional responsibility and commitment.

# Impact on schooling

All the country case studies conclude that poor teacher motivation and inadequate incentives have far-reaching adverse impacts on the behaviour and overall performance of primary school teachers and thus learning outcomes.

-the major staffing challenge for public education systems in most low-income countries remains how to achieve an equitable spatial distribution of teachers between rural and

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urban areas.

- High rates of teacher attrition through resignations are a key indicator of low levels of teacher job satisfaction and motivation
- low pay forces teachers to find additional sources of income. Secondary income activities create divided attention and loyalty to teaching and impact negatively on the quality of schooling.

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**-Behaviour and performance of teachers, which relate directly to low levels of job satisfaction and motivation. Poor professional behaviour (lateness, absenteeism, laziness) seriously compromises schooling quality and learning outcomes.**

- Industrial action or the threat of industrial action among teachers is common in most of the

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case study countries. Increasingly frequent official and unofficial strikes are a clear signal of growing levels of dissatisfaction with pay and other conditions of service.

# What should be done?

Major improvements in the incentives for teachers in rural areas; housing, water, electricity, rural allowances to attract and retain teachers to hard- to-staff rural schools.

-teachers' pay should be significantly increased as most primary school teachers, particularly in relatively high-cost urban centres, are simply unable to meet their basic household

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needs. As a result, many of them are forced to find other sources of income.

- Attractive career structures for primary school teachers need to be urgently introduced in most countries with regular promotions based on clearly specified and transparent performance-related criteria.

- Teacher accountability to school management and to parents and the community as a whole

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be increased.

-more effective teacher trade unions,  
and workplace programmes related to HIV/AIDS.