



Time to Teach

Teacher attendance and time on task in primary schools

Côte d'Ivoire

Carolina Albán Conto

October 2021

UNICEF OFFICE OF RESEARCH – INNOCENTI

The Office of Research – Innocenti is UNICEF’s dedicated research centre. It undertakes research on emerging or current issues in order to inform the strategic direction, policies and programmes of UNICEF and its partners, shape global debates on child rights and development, and inform the global research and policy agenda for all children, and particularly for the most vulnerable.

Office of Research – Innocenti publications are contributions to a global debate on children and may not necessarily reflect UNICEF policies or approaches.

The Office of Research – Innocenti receives financial support from the Government of Italy, while funding for specific projects is also provided by other governments, international institutions and private sources, including UNICEF National Committees.

The findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNICEF.

This paper has been peer reviewed both externally and within UNICEF.

The text has not been edited to official publications standards and UNICEF accepts no responsibility for errors.

Extracts from this publication may be freely reproduced with due acknowledgement. Requests to utilize larger portions or the full publication should be addressed to the Communications Unit at: Florence@unicef.org.

Any part of this publication may be freely reproduced if accompanied by the following citation: Albán Conto, C., *Time to Teach – Teacher attendance and time on task in primary schools in Côte d’Ivoire*, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti, Florence, 2021.

Correspondence should be addressed to:

UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti
Via degli Alfani, 58
50121 Florence, Italy

Tel: (+39) 055 20 330

Fax: (+39) 055 2033 220

florence@unicef.org

www.unicef-irc.org

twitter: @UNICEFInnocenti

[facebook.com/UnicefInnocenti](https://www.facebook.com/UnicefInnocenti)

© 2021 United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

Cover photo: ©UNICEF/UN0251512

Editorial production: Dali Mwangore, UNICEF Innocenti

Graphic design: Small World Stories

Time to Teach

Teacher attendance and time on task
in primary schools

Côte d'Ivoire

Carolina Albán Conto

October 2021

Acknowledgements

This report was produced by a team of researchers at the UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti. The study was managed by Matt Brossard, designed and coordinated by Despina Karamperidou and written by Carolina Albán Conto. Ximena Jativa supported the analysis of survey data. Silvia Peirolo, Matilde Rocca and Stefania Vindrola provided exceptional research assistance and Amparo Barrera and Lara Steffanizi offered invaluable administrative support to the team.

The research team acknowledge the guidance of Gunilla Olsson (Director, UNICEF Office of Research), Priscilla Idele (Deputy Director, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti) and the many UNICEF colleagues who helped with planning and drafting. The team is indebted to Cecilia Baldeh, Haleinta Bara Traore, Haritz Goya Lujambio (UNICEF WCARO), and Issa Coulibaly, Silue Zie and Rokia Toure (UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire) for their excellent comments and for facilitating in-country training and data collection.

Invaluable editorial and communications support was provided by Dale Rutstein, Sarah Marchant, Celine Little, Cristina Pizzolato, Angie Lee and Dali Mwagore (all UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti).

Specific thanks go to Dr. Severin Kouame and the rest of the Indigo Côte d'Ivoire team, who helped pilot and pre-test the Time to Teach instruments and headed data collection in multiple regions, counties and primary schools in Cote d'Ivoire.

The UNICEF Innocenti team also thank the peer reviewers Rassidy Oyeniran (Institut Pédagogique National de l'Enseignement Technique et Professionnel) and Melama Coulibaly (Université Virtuelle de Côte d'Ivoire) for their excellent comments on early drafts.

The research team is deeply indebted to the 324 study participants (teachers, head teachers, pupils, community representatives, national officials and subnational education officers), who generously shared their time, experience, and materials to this project.

Contents

Acknowledgements	4
Abbreviations	6
Executive summary	7
1. Introduction	11
Context and rationale	11
Conceptual framework and research design	16
Report structure	17
2. Key findings	18
Frequency of teacher absenteeism	18
Teachers' motivations for absenteeism	18
Associated factors from a systems perspective	22
3. Policy implications and recommendations	31
Education policies to address structural barriers	31
Monitoring, school management and governance to enhance system accountability	34
External conditions and inter-sectoral collaboration to ensure the well-being of teachers	35
References	37
Annex 1: Time to Teach in Côte d'Ivoire	41
Annex 2: Supplementary tables	43

Index of figures

Figure 1. Primary education indicators (2000–2019)	14
Figure 2. Frequency of teacher absenteeism	18
Figure 3. Primary motivations for teacher absenteeism	20
Figure 4. Characteristics and opinions of teachers on selected statements related to absenteeism, by level of analysis	23
Figure 5. Selected motivations by relevant teacher characteristics	29
Figure A1. Time to Teach framework	41

Index of tables

Table 1. Selected characteristics and teach opinions, by gender	30
Table A1. Motivations for teacher absenteeism by location, school governance	43
Table A2. Opinions of teachers, by location, school governance and level of analysis	44
Table A3. Recurrent absenteeism and selected teacher characteristics and perceptions, by level of analysis	46

Abbreviations

AIITICE	Association for the Integration of ICT in Education
CAFOP	Centres d'Animation et de Formation Pédagogique
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPE	Partenariat Mondial pour l'Éducation (Global Partnership for Education)
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
MEN	Ministry of Education

Executive summary

Study overview

Teacher absenteeism is one of the major obstacles to educational progress and learning, being a particularly serious problem in low-income countries and communities. According to the World Bank's Service Delivery Indicators (SDI) study, teacher absenteeism rates for the seven sub-Saharan African countries included in their analysis range from 15 to 45 per cent.¹

Although there is little empirical evidence on the incidence of teacher absenteeism in Côte d'Ivoire, it is estimated that this phenomenon is responsible for the loss of approximately 25 per cent of teaching time.² In the specific case of primary education, it is estimated that teacher absenteeism and other calendar delays are responsible for the loss of two months of courses per year on average.³

While Côte d'Ivoire has made great strides in improving access and quality in its education system, significant gaps in student learning and achievement remain. It is estimated that 8 out of 10 Ivorian children are not proficient in reading by the age of 10, and do not have enough math skills at the end of primary school.⁴

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Côte d'Ivoire was forced to close schools for nine weeks (46 days) in 2020⁵, with still immeasurable consequences for teaching modalities, teacher work, and student learning. In a scenario of no remediation and low mitigation effectiveness of school closures, the World Bank projects a 10 percentage point increase in the proportion of children globally who cannot read a simple text by the age of 10 which, for Côte d'Ivoire, could mean an increase of 82 to 92 per cent in learning poverty.⁶

Increasing instructional time and reducing teacher absenteeism are both effective⁷ and cost-efficient measures for improving learning outcomes. However, the challenges the pandemic imposes on education systems make teacher attendance even more relevant.

The Time to Teach (TTT) study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of teacher attendance in Côte d'Ivoire's primary schools. The study adapts a broad concept of teacher absenteeism which includes: (i) absence from school, (ii) lack of teacher punctuality, (iii) absence from the classroom, and (iv) reduction in the time dedicated to teaching. TTT uses a systemic analytical framework, exploring underpinning factors at five different levels of the education system: national, subnational, community, school, and teacher. The study draws on primary information collected from various stakeholders through interviews and focus group discussions, a survey of teachers, and structured and non-participant school observations.

- 1 Bold, Tessa, et al., 'What Do Teachers Know and Do? A report card on primary teachers in sub-Saharan Africa', Paper presented at the RISE Conference, University of Oxford, June 2016.
- 2 UNESCO, 'Financing Education in sub-Saharan Africa: Meeting the challenges of expansion, equity and quality', UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Montréal, Canada, 2011.
- 3 'Rapport d'État du Système Éducatif National de la Côte d'Ivoire: Pour une politique éducative plus inclusive et plus efficace', Gouvernement de la Côte d'Ivoire, UNICEF, Pôle de Dakar de IPE – UNESCO, 2016.
- 4 World Bank, 'Côte d'Ivoire Learning Poverty Brief', 2019; CONFEMEN – PASEC 2019, Qualité des Systèmes Éducatifs en Afrique Subsaharienne Francophone, 2020.
- 5 UNESCO's global monitoring of school closures caused by COVID-19.
- 6 World Bank, 'Learning Poverty in the Time of Covid-19: A crisis within a crisis', Brief Report 154660, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., December 2020.
- 7 Bernard et al. (2004) show that in French-speaking sub-Saharan African countries, teacher performance explains 27 per cent of variation in student achievement levels.

How prevalent is teacher absenteeism?

Measuring the incidence of teacher absenteeism is a complex exercise and limitations of this study do not allow for generalization of all primary school teachers in Côte d'Ivoire. However, self-reported data from the Time to Teach teacher survey shows that the most common absenteeism was a lack of punctuality and reduced teaching time, with the least frequent being absence from school.

- Four per cent of surveyed teachers reported having been absent from school on a recurring basis (i.e., at least once a week) during the 2018–2019 school year;⁸ 11 per cent arrived late or left early; 7 per cent were absent from the classroom; and 11 per cent reduced teaching time.
- Lack of punctuality, absence from class and reduction in teaching time were reported most frequently among public sector teachers. The latter form of absenteeism was more common in rural areas.
- In all forms of absenteeism, the proportion of teachers who reported never having been absent was greater than those who reported high recurrence. The proportion of teachers who reported never having been absent was higher in urban areas and private schools, except in school attendance where the difference was not statistically significant.

Why are teachers absent?

Top motivations reported by teachers for each type of absenteeism are :

- Health, family/community commitments, and official school affairs were the reasons most often reported for absence from school (the exact percentages are 80, 37 and 32 respectively).
- Health is also the top motivation for lack of punctuality (63 per cent of teachers), next are climate (47 per cent), remoteness (34 per cent), and family/community obligations (32 per cent).
- Once in school, the most common causes of classroom absence were administrative tasks (69 per cent), health issues (46 per cent), and official school affairs⁹ (38 per cent).
- In the classroom, surveyed teachers reported experiencing reduced time teaching due to health issues (41 per cent), student misconduct (38 per cent), and a lack of teaching and learning materials (31 per cent).

Further analysis suggests that:

- Although half of teachers have university/vocational degrees and most consider they have adequate skills and knowledge, access to training opportunities, especially in rural and public schools, is limited. A greater percentage of teachers in rural and public schools cited the need for training as a motivation for reducing teaching time. This aspect is key because the analysis shows that most qualified teachers are less likely to be absent from school on a recurring basis.
- Stakeholders recognize the effectiveness of measures for recording, monitoring, and sanctioning absenteeism. In particular, the proportion of teachers who admitted lack of punctuality was lower among those who said that measures taken by inspectors were effective in combating absenteeism. Although teachers recognized the regularity of school visits by inspectors and educational advisors, the higher incidence in private schools is noteworthy.
- Respondents' satisfaction with remuneration was low and difficulties in collecting salary and receiving payments on time were claimed, especially by rural and public school teachers. Moreover, recurrent lack of punctuality, classroom absenteeism, and reduction in teaching time was greater among teachers who had salary problems.

8 The surveys took place between May and June 2019. The school year began on 11 September 2018 and ended on 31 July 2019 meaning that the report of absenteeism covers almost the entire school year.

9 For example, trainings, workshops or seminars.

- Weather conditions are more frequently cited by rural and public school teachers as a reason for class absenteeism. One possible explanation is the aggravation of consequences of extreme climatic events when school infrastructure is poor. The association of adverse weather conditions with teachers' health conditions should also be considered.
- Health motivations for lack of punctuality were more common among public school teachers with female teachers more likely to invoke health reasons to explain their absences.
- Official school affairs in cases of school and classroom absence were more recurrent among public teachers. Administrative tasks as a reason for classroom absence were also more common among public school teachers.
- Lack of teaching and learning materials as a reason for classroom absenteeism and reduced time on task appeared more often among rural school teachers. It was also a more recurrent motivation for the reduction in teaching time among public school teachers. Teachers who admitted more incidents of absence from class were also more likely to suggest lack of materials.
- Student misbehaviour was a more common reason for reduction in teaching time among urban teachers and also related to the lower motivation of students reported by teachers in these zones.

How can teacher absenteeism be reduced?

This study identifies three priority areas for action to further reduce teacher absenteeism in its four forms: i) education policies; ii) external and inter-sectoral factors; and iii) monitoring, school management and governance.

The most relevant recommendations are:

- Strengthen the coverage and quality of teacher training programmes, especially in rural and public schools. It is important to promote programmes with practical components, focused on teachers' qualifications, needs, and experiences, linked to professional development opportunities.
- Raise awareness about the negative effects of teacher absence from the classroom and the reduction in teaching time, and design instruments for recording, monitoring and sanctioning these specific forms of absenteeism in an objective way. In addition to reviewing existing regulations to explicitly include these forms of absenteeism, training head teachers in school planning and management issues should be strengthened.
- Consider adapting school calendars – set uniformly at the national level – to regional climatic conditions. This measure could decrease absenteeism linked to extreme weather events, such as heavy rain and flooding, and positively improve the health of teachers and students.
- Improve the school and classroom environment and infrastructure. Priority should be given to initiatives providing schools, especially rural and public ones, with adequate learning and teaching materials, as these interventions have a more immediate and cost-effective impact. In the case of infrastructure, it is important to first evaluate the needs and then prioritize investment programmes focused on schools with the greatest need, ensuring their potential to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- Ensure that teachers, especially women and those in public schools, have good health conditions and access to health services. Assess their exposure to adverse sanitary and climatic conditions and to the incidence of endemic diseases in the school environment (also reaching out to students, families and the community).

- Consider alternatives to reduce teacher travel time to school. It is essential to evaluate context-specific measures, such as recruiting and training community teachers, providing housing nearer to schools, and providing subsidies or transportation assistance in a more targeted manner.
- Evaluate the working, health, and infrastructure conditions of teachers in Côte d'Ivoire from a gender perspective. This would help identify initiatives focused on female teachers such as safety measures, prevention programmes in health, distribution of hygiene products, and sanitary infrastructure.
- Foster teachers' motivation, evaluate performance incentives and implement strategies to improve the efficiency of the remuneration system focused mainly on rural and public schools; these are essential and highly cost-effective ways to combat teacher absenteeism and improve student learning and achievement.
- Technology can be an important aid in reducing absenteeism in areas such as monitoring and controlling teacher absenteeism, in-service training, teacher assignment and deployment, managing salaries and payments, and supplementing and supporting classroom activities. It is essential that the design and implementation of these measures involve the participation of teachers and that equitable access is ensured.

These measures become even more relevant in the context of COVID-19 and the challenges of the school system to adapt to the new reality of distance education.

1. Introduction

Context and rationale

Côte d'Ivoire is located on the southern coast of West Africa. It has 25 million inhabitants, 24 per cent of whom are of compulsory school age (6–16 years). There are five ethnic groups (Akan, Krou, Northern Mandé, Southern Mandé, and Gur) and approximately 70 national languages are spoken. French is the official and school language. Although Côte d'Ivoire is the world's leading exporter of cocoa and raw cashew nuts and has one of the largest economies in the region, the country has a high poverty rate (46 per cent in 2018: World Bank, World Development Indicators, 2019) and a low level of human development.¹⁰

The school system of Côte d'Ivoire is inherited from the French model¹¹ and consists of five levels: pre-school (for children between 3 and 5 years); primary (lasts six years and begins at age 6); secondary (consists of a first cycle of four years and a second cycle of three years that ends with the 'Baccalaureate' exam); technical and vocational education; and higher education.

There are three types of primary schools in Côte d'Ivoire: public non-profit schools administered by the Ministry of Education (MEN); private schools, which benefit from a greater degree of autonomy; and community schools, which respond mostly to the efforts of local communities in rural areas where there is a lack of public schools. The public system embraces between 85 and 90 per cent of the total number of students, mainly from low socioeconomic levels, and has a greater presence in disadvantaged territories when compared to private school system.

Although enrolment has improved considerably in recent years, the large number of children out of school remains a major problem as primary completion rate is only 84 per cent and secondary completion rate only 33 per cent (MENETFP/DSPS, 2021). Poor girls in rural areas need considerable attention as only 2 per cent are likely to complete their secondary education against 49 per cent of rich urban boys (AFD, 2018). Besides access, the quality of education is also a concern: 82 per cent of children at late primary age are not proficient in reading in Côte d'Ivoire (World Bank, 2019).

Côte d'Ivoire ranks among countries with the highest government expenditure for education in Africa (4.3 per cent of GDP in 2018: UNESCO, UIS, 2019). Forty per cent of expenditure is concentrated on primary schools, with salaries absorbing almost 90 per cent of the total primary and secondary budget (MENETFP, MESRS and Task Force, 2017). Despite this, the student–teacher ratio (42 students per teacher in primary public schools) remains one of the highest in sub-Saharan Africa at four percentage points above the regional average (MENETFP/DSPS, 2021 and UNESCO, eAtlas of Teachers, 2019).

In addition to state investments, Côte d'Ivoire records a significant flow of international cooperation funds for education, which reached a commitment of USD 208.5 million in 2019 (12 per cent of the total amount, equal to USD 1,671 million) (OECD, Stat.).

10 In 2018 Côte d'Ivoire ranked 170th (among 189 countries) on the UNDP Human Development Index (UNDP, Human Development Index, 2019) and scored 0.35 in The World Bank Human Capital Index (World Bank, Human Capital Index, 2019).

11 Côte d'Ivoire was a French colony until independence in 1960.

HIGHLIGHTS

Côte d'Ivoire



Annual population growth rate of **2.6%**

24% of population is of compulsory school age (6–16 years)

ECONOMY

World's leading exporter of cocoa and raw cashew nuts, Côte d'Ivoire is one of the fastest growing economies in the west African region, registering an average GDP growth of 8% per year since 2011 (WB-WDI)

SOCIAL INCLUSION

After having experienced a growth of 10% to 51% between 1985 and 2011, the poverty rate was set at

46.3% in 2018 (WB-WDI)



HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Ranks 170th on the Human Development Index. Registers a 15+ literacy rate of 47% and 8.9 expected education years (UNDP, 2019; UNESCO-UIS, 2019)

EDUCATION

Public education system absorbs 85–90 per cent of students, who are mainly from poor households

Only **62%** of children complete **primary education**, and **13%** complete **secondary school** (UNESCO-UIS database)

Only **2%** of girls in rural schools are likely to complete their secondary education (UNICEF, 2017a)

Student–teacher ratio (42 students per teacher in primary) one of the highest in sub-Saharan Africa (UNESCO, eAtlas of Teachers, 2019)

12% of primary school teachers have no professional training, 13% received less than six months of initial training, and 48% received only one year of training (CONFEMEN, 2020)

82% of children are not proficient in reading by the age of 10 (WB, 2019)

83% of students do not have sufficient math skills at the end of primary school (CONFEMEN, 2020)

Students spend an average of six years less in the classroom than students in emerging countries (WB, 2017)

Teacher absenteeism might be responsible for approximately 25% of teaching/learning time lost (UNESCO, 2013)

The shortage of teachers is compounded by their low qualifications and insufficient training (Universalia, 2018). According to the PASEC2019 report,¹² 12 per cent of primary school teachers in Côte d'Ivoire have no professional training, 13 per cent received less than six months of initial training, and 48 per cent received only one year of training (CONFEMEN 2020).¹³ Part of this problem is explained by low capacity, budget restrictions and degradation of training centres (CAFOP), as well as a low rate of attractiveness to highly qualified professionals.

Although there is little evidence on the incidence of primary school teacher absenteeism, it is estimated this phenomenon is responsible for the loss of approximately 25 per cent of teaching/learning time in Côte d'Ivoire (UNESCO, 2013). In conjunction with student absenteeism and delays in the school calendar, it causes an average loss of two months per school year (RESEN, 2016). It is estimated that 82 per cent of Ivoirian children are not proficient in reading by the age of 10 (World Bank, 2019) and that 83 per cent of students do not have sufficient math skills at the end of primary school (CONFEMEN 2020). Students in Côte d'Ivoire spend an average of six years less in the classroom than students in emerging countries with research showing that effective instructional time is closely related to school progress and the ability to learn (Morisset, 2017).

In 2020, schools in Côte d'Ivoire were closed for nine weeks (46 days) because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although there is no precise measure of the effect of these closures on students' learning, recent World Bank estimates predict a 10 percentage point increase in the proportion of children worldwide who cannot read a simple text by the age of 10 (World Bank, 2020a). Prior to the pandemic, this proportion was 82 per cent in Côte d'Ivoire (World Bank, 2019).

In response to this situation, the Ministry of Education, Technical Education and Vocational Training developed an ambitious COVID-19 response plan with three components: i) emergency strategies to mitigate the effect of school closures on learning, ii) a detailed gradual school reopening plan, and iii) a national distance education and training long-term strategy defining a legal framework, access conditions, intervention modalities, actors involved, evaluation mechanisms, and information management systems (MENETFP, 2020).

The emergency remote education strategy focused on increasing delivery modalities and improving communication channels with families to ensure all students were reached, even in rural or underserved areas. Households were provided with radios and teachers with cell phone service and credit (GPE, 2020). The '[Mon École à la Maison](#)' pedagogical resource platform was developed with teaching materials for pre-school, primary, middle, and high school students via television, radio, web TV and a free SMS-based access modality (UNICEF, 2020).

A survey conducted by Innovations for Poverty Action in June 2020 found that while schools were closed, about 70 per cent of primary and secondary school children devoted time to home schooling, although only 20 per cent spent more than 10 hours a week on these activities. Seven out of 10 children who reported continuing their education at home did so through books and printed materials (IPA, 2020).

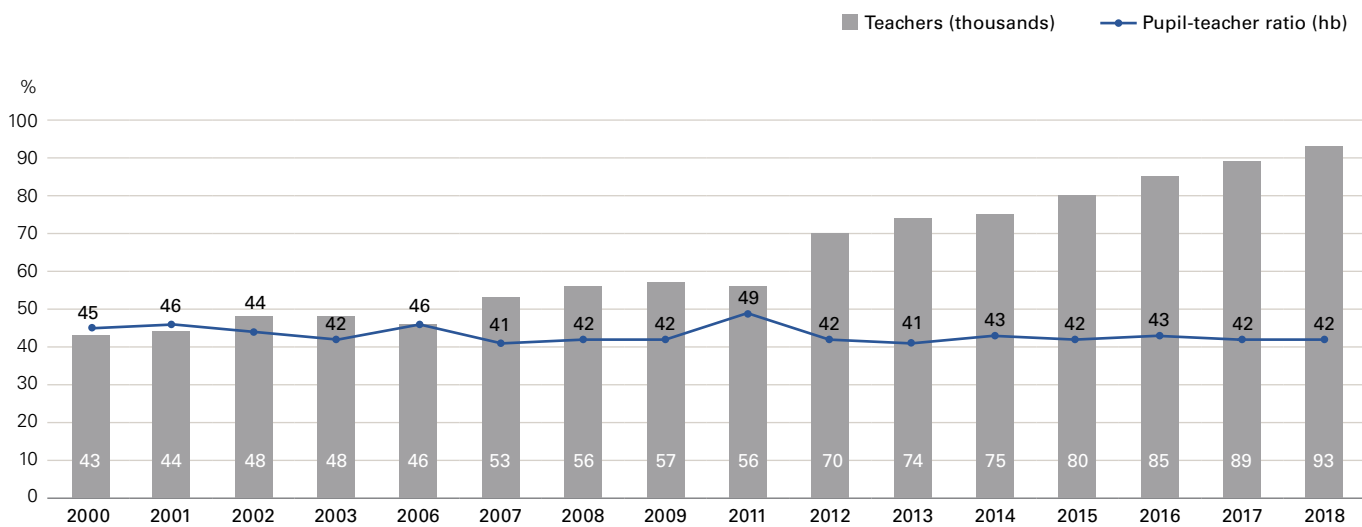
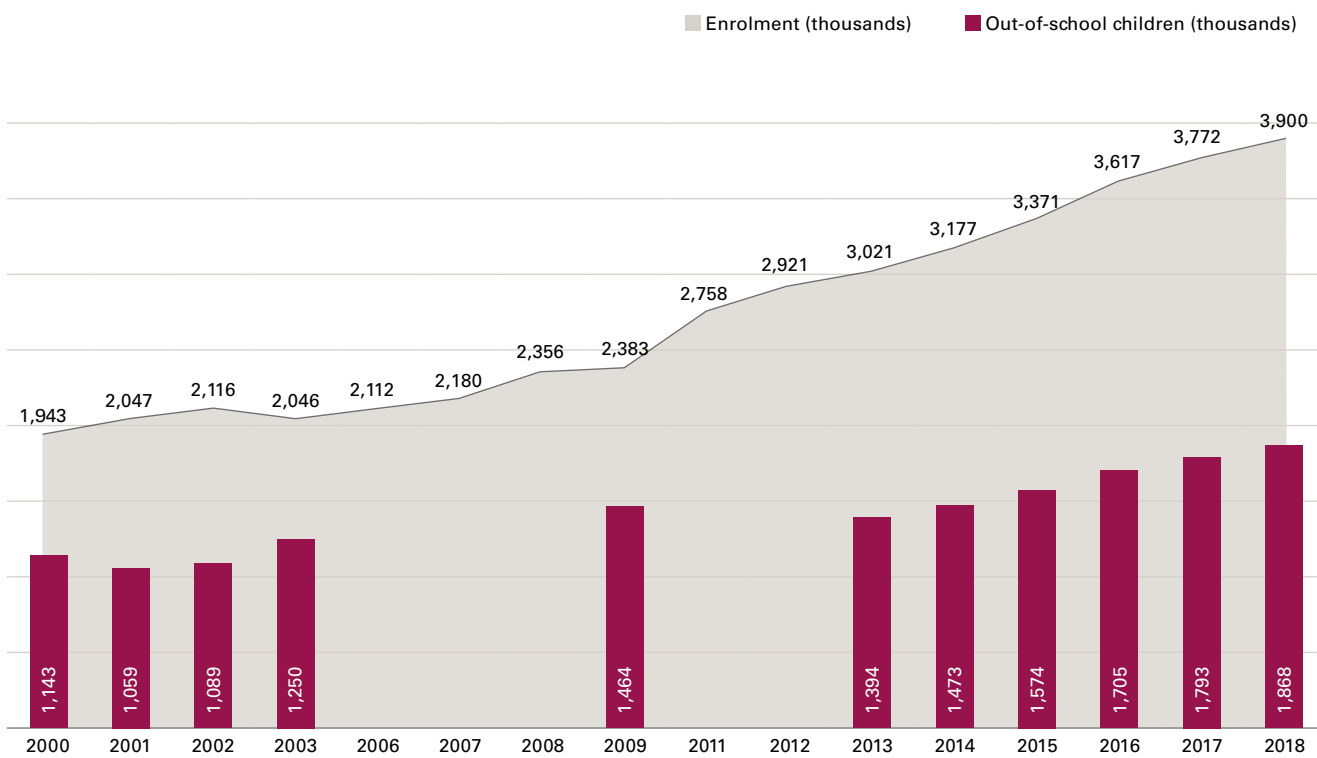
COVID-19 may exacerbate teacher absenteeism in Côte d'Ivoire due to the increased risk of illness and also by affecting attendance and instructional time in distance programmes. There is risk through the indirect impact of limited access to quality digital infrastructure, poor training in digital teaching skills, the increased workload, and an increase in family care responsibilities.

The Time to Teach (TTT) study is a research initiative aiming to address knowledge gaps relating to the structural motivations and factors associated with primary school teacher absenteeism in Côte d'Ivoire.

12 Programme d'Analyse des Systèmes Éducatifs de la CONFEMEN.

13 The official duration of an initial teacher training is two years.

Figure 1. Primary education indicators (2000–2019)



Note: Pupil-teacher ratio represents the average number of pupils per teacher in primary schools.

Box 1. Recent developments and teacher policies in Côte d'Ivoire

During the last decade, Côte d'Ivoire has made remarkable progress in recovering and strengthening its education system after a period of major economic and political crises. Efforts have been made to expand education supply and the country has achieved a significant increase in access to basic education and an important reduction in the percentage of out of school children. Between 2012 and 2018, more than 8,000 primary classrooms were constructed and rehabilitated (Universalia, 2019), resulting in an increase in the number of children attending primary school of 34 per cent. At the same time, the number of teachers has doubled.

These advances have been possible due to the implementation of a significant number of reforms set out in the most recent National Education Plans.

Plans d'actions à moyen terme (MENETFP and MESRS, 2011)

- Curriculum reform based on a competency-based pedagogic approach, review of teacher manuals and facilitation of their use, and significant increase in the availability of learning materials.
- Restoring and upgrading the initial teacher training capacity through the construction and rehabilitation of training centres, 'Centres d'Animation et de Formation Pédagogique' (CAFOP); creating additional places for teachers; improving the quality and availability of in-service training; and allocating an item in the national budget for this purpose.
- Reforming teacher recruitment and remuneration; introducing multi-skilled teachers; revising the profile of primary school teachers; increasing the use of assistant teachers; and widely recruiting assistant teachers for primary education.
- Improving the management of teachers and expenditures; better connecting teacher deployment from local level needs; training school principals, subnational officials, and inspectors; and building capacity in the collection and management of current sector data.

Plan décennal éducation et formation 2016–2025 (MENETFP, MESRS and Task Force, 2017)

- Developing a school construction and rehabilitation programme with the goal of building 3,000 new classrooms per year and prioritizing low-density populated areas. Implement education offers and training alternatives for out-of-school children by creating 30,000 places in bridge classes in primary schools for the 10–13-year-old population and vocational trainings for the 14–16-year-olds, through the systematic organization of remediation courses for children with difficulties to progress and the improvement of apprenticeship programmes for older children.
- The integration of communitarian and Muslim schools into the formal system and better framing the provision of private primary education, to ensure quality and compliance with national standards.
- Adaptation of teacher recruitment with the goal of allocating an average of 6,600 teachers per year to public primary schools; widespread hiring of assistant teachers for the period of the 10-year plan; gradual replacement of communitarian school facilitators; a strategy to incentivize the recruitment and retention of women in the teaching profession, particularly in areas with low enrolment of girls; a programme to select the best students at the entrance at CAFOP, and the adoption of a new system for teacher deployment, based on the regional level.
- Extending the network of CAFOP to each of the country's 31 regions (currently there are only 16) and upgrading initial training to make it more practical; increasing the number of internships and sandwich courses; and adopting a competency-based approach.
- Development of better standards of evaluation and monitoring to allow, among other aspects, follow-up on teacher absences; to temporarily reorganize service delivery; and to ensure that hours of absence are systematically made up for, prioritizing replacement possibilities in the classes at the beginning of the cycle.

Research objectives

Research and policy on teacher absenteeism have traditionally focused on teacher attendance in schools, forgetting that effective presence of teachers in the educational institution is only a first step in a school's progress and student learning.

The Time to Teach (TTT) study in Côte d'Ivoire primary schools is built on a foundation that both school progress and learning largely depend on the fulfilment of four minimum teacher-related conditions: being present in the school; keeping to the set schedule; being present in the classroom; and devoting set time to teaching. This framework allows the development of a more comprehensive concept of absenteeism, represented in four ways: 1) absence from school; 2) absence of punctuality; 3) absence from the classroom; and 4) reduced time on task.

TTT uses a multilevel teacher attendance model to analyse factors associated with each of the four forms of teacher absenteeism presented above. Although this framework has been relatively underused in education sector analyses, it provides a systemic view of the scope and effectiveness of teaching policies and practices, their relationship with absenteeism, and their possible effects on school progress and learning (UNICEF, 2017b).

The key objectives of the study are to:

- Understand the various forms of primary school teacher absenteeism and assess their incidence in Côte d'Ivoire;
- Identify the motivations and key factors associated with primary school teacher attendance and time on task from a systemic and multilevel perspective;
- Examine commonalities and differences in teacher absenteeism among population subgroups;
- Detect gaps and barriers to improved teacher attendance and identify promising policies and improved practices.

Conceptual framework and research design

The specificities of the TTT study in Côte d'Ivoire primary schools are twofold. First, it examines an expanded concept of absenteeism which, in addition to the traditional definitions of teacher attendance and punctuality, adds those of class presence and teaching time. Second, a systemic view of the motivations and factors associated with absenteeism that considers aspects related to the national, subnational, community, school, and teacher levels is assessed.

The study employs both qualitative and quantitative research tools to collect a unique set of primary data and information from teachers and other relevant stakeholders of the system. Twenty schools were visited in six locations in the north (locality of Korhogo, Poro Region), centre (locality of Bouaké, Region of Gbèkè), north-west (locality of Odienné, Kabadougou Region), east (locality of Bondoukou, Region of Gontougo), south (autonomous District of Abidjan, Lagoon Region) and south-west (locality of Soubré, District of Bas-Sassandra). These schools were selected using data following two criteria and provided by the Ministry of Education: type of governance (public, private, and communitarian) and location (urban, peri-urban, and rural).

The study employed three types of collection tools: i) in-depth interviews (IDI) and focus groups with head teachers, teachers, students, community representatives, subnational officials, and national level staff (reaching 246 individuals in total); ii) a pen-and-paper survey administered to all teachers present in the selected primary schools on the date of visit; and iii) an observation tool to record enumerators' observations during visits.¹⁴ The field data collection operation took place between May and June 2019.

14 The different tools were adapted for each respondent group to reflect the participants' expert knowledge, unique perspective, and type of school. They were revised after getting feedback from the MEN and UNICEF Côte d'Ivoire and received a research ethics approval from the Health Media Lab (HML) Research and Ethics Institutional Review Board (IRB).

TTT – CÔTE D'IVOIRE



20 head teachers, 118 teachers, 142 students, 19 community representatives, 20 sub-national officials, 5 national level staff

The analysis focused on three key aspects for a better understanding of teacher absenteeism: incidence, motivation, and associated factors. To measure incidence, the TTT survey asked teachers to report their frequency of each of the four forms of absenteeism since the beginning of the school year. Since the 2018–2019 school year began on September 11 and ended on July 31, and data collection took place in May–June 2019, this measure of absenteeism incidence covers almost the entire school year.

Although five response categories were possible (never, a few times – i.e. less than three, less than once a week, once a week, more than once a week), most analysis focused on recurring absences; that is to say, at least once a week.¹⁵ To capture teachers' motivations and potential associated factors, surveys also looked at the reasons given by teachers to explain each form of absenteeism and their perceptions of the functioning of schools and the role of different actors (inspectors, principals, teachers, parents, the community, and students).

This information was complemented by stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and observation of schools in order to investigate in-depth, the systemic roots of absenteeism from five levels of aggregation: national, subnational, community, school, and student. More details on the conceptual framework and research design of TTT Côte d'Ivoire are presented in Annex 1.

Report structure

This report is structured as follows: Section 2 presents key findings on the incidence, motivation, and factors associated with teacher absenteeism in primary schools in Côte d'Ivoire. Section 3 discusses the primary policy implications and provides recommendations for designing promising practices aimed at improving teacher attendance and time on task.

¹⁵ This definition includes two categories of response to the question asked in the survey: once a week and more than once a week.

2. Key findings

Frequency of teacher absenteeism

According to teachers' responses, the most common forms of absenteeism were lack of punctuality and reduced time on task, with 11 per cent of teachers reporting that they had arrived late/departed early or reduced teaching time at least once a week since the beginning of the school year.

The next most frequent was absence from the classroom (7 per cent) and the last, was absence from school by only 4 per cent. Both lack of punctuality and absence from the classroom were reported more often by public sector teachers (see Figure 2). There was a greater report of reduced teaching time among teachers in rural areas.¹⁶

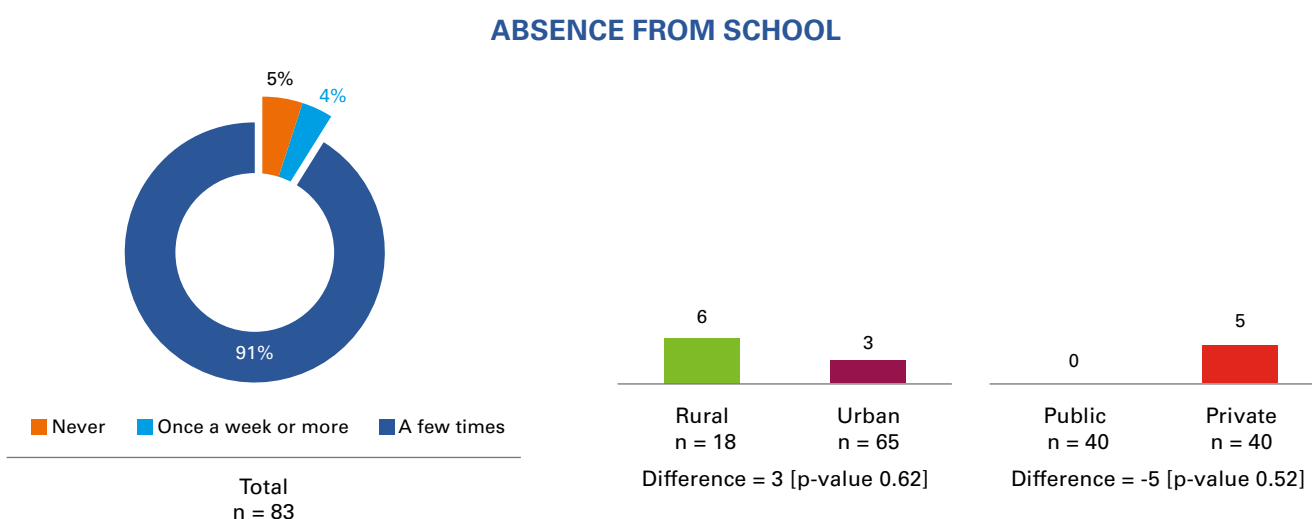
A significant percentage of teachers reported being absent a few times during the school year (i.e., less than once a week or sometimes): 91 per cent for absence from school; 77 per cent for lack of punctuality; 81 per cent for absence from class; and 73 per cent for reduced teaching time.

The proportion of teachers who reported never being absent was not negligible, especially in regard to lack of punctuality and absence from the classroom (12 per cent) and reducing teaching time (16 per cent). In all three cases, this proportion was higher among teachers in urban and private schools (see Figure 2).¹⁷

Teachers' motivations for absenteeism

Health, family/community reasons, and official school affairs were the reasons most often reported by surveyed teachers for their absence from school. Health was mentioned by 80 per cent in the case of school absenteeism, reaching almost 90 per cent among rural school teachers and 82 per cent among those in public schools.¹⁸ Family/community obligations were reported by 37 per cent of teachers and official school affairs by 32 per cent. Official school affairs were more common among public school teachers (47 per cent) than private school teachers (21 per cent) (see Figure 3, Annex 2, Table A1).

Figure 2. Frequency of teacher absenteeism

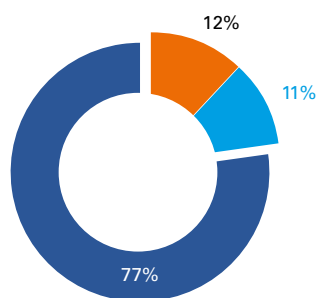


16 As specified in Annex 2, differences between subgroups (private/public or urban/rural) are only reported when they are statistically significant and at least a 90 per cent confidence level.

17 The percentage of teachers who have never been absent from school is 5 per cent and the rural/urban and public/private differences are not statistically significant.

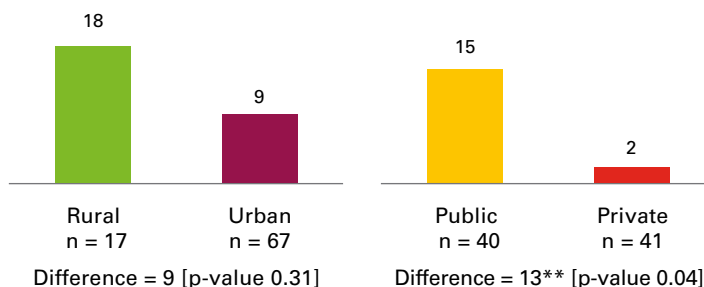
18 Differences with respect to urban and private school teachers are not statistically significant.

LACK OF PUNCTUALITY

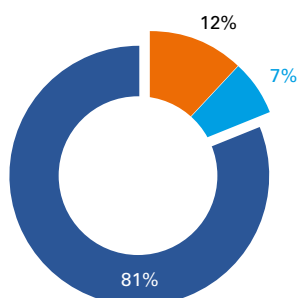


Never Once a week or more A few times

Total
n = 84

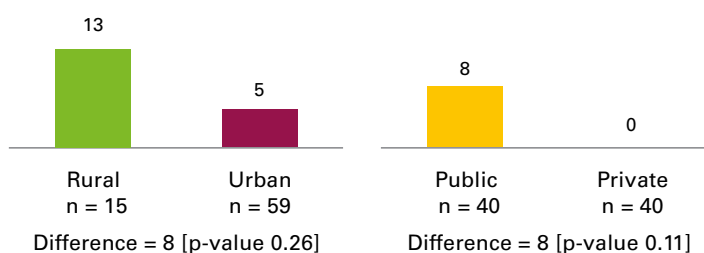


ABSENCE FROM THE CLASSROOM

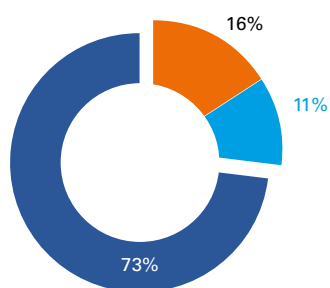


Never Once a week or more A few times

Total
n = 74

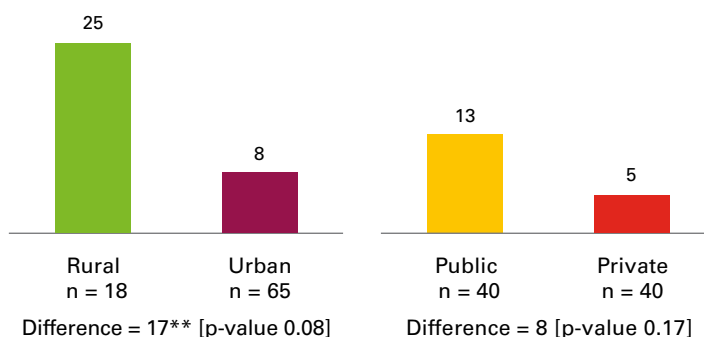


REDUCED TIME-ON-TASK



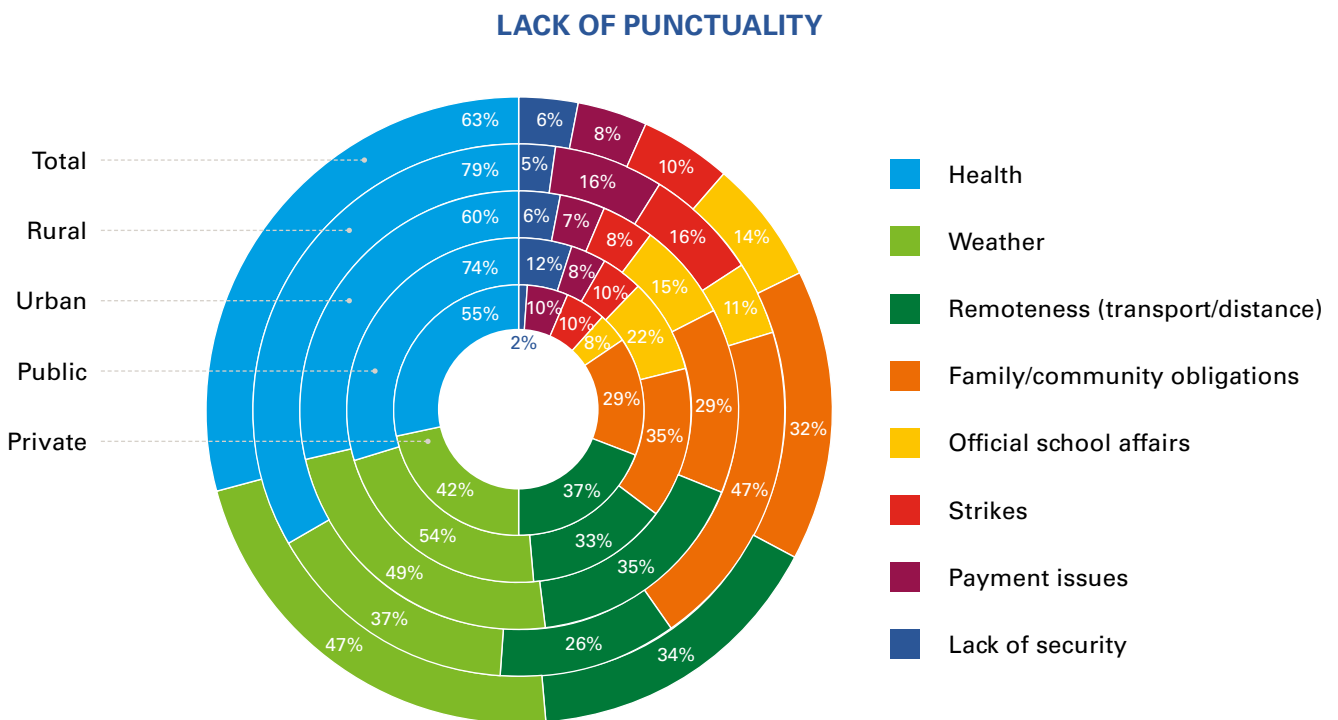
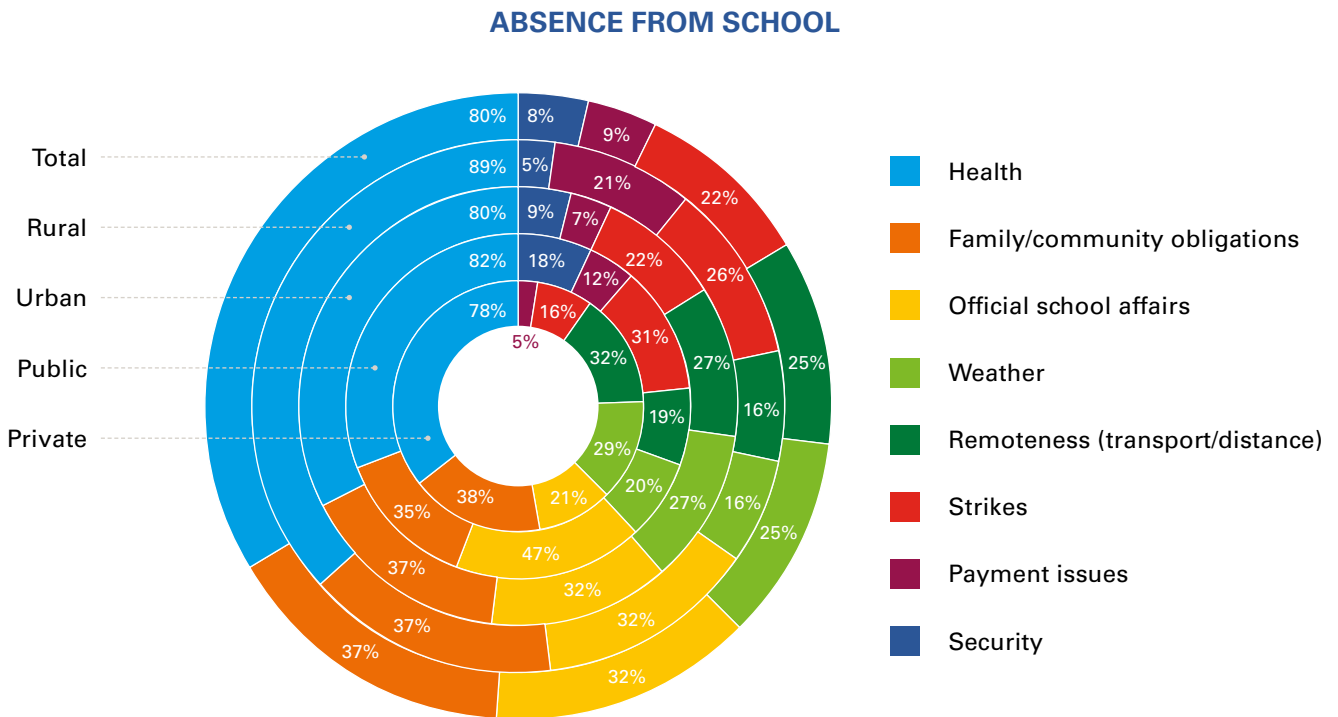
Never Once a week or more A few times

Total
n = 85

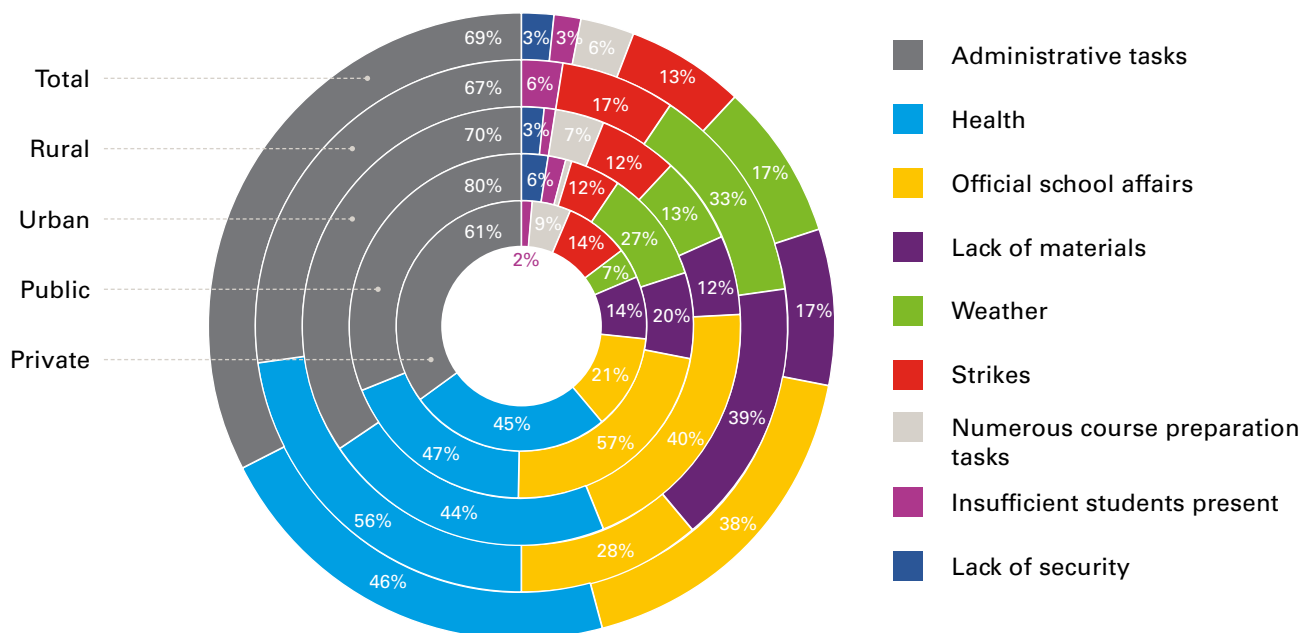


Note: Percentages indicate the proportion of teachers who report never being absent or being absent at least once a week since the beginning of the school year on average. The graphs on the left represent the responses of all teachers surveyed. On the right, the bar graphs represent the percentage of teachers who claim to be absent at least once a week on average by sub-groups: rural-urban and public-private (in this case, community schoolteachers are excluded). The differences between the subgroups are expressed in percentage points. Stars indicate confidence level at *10 per cent, **5 per cent, ***1 per cent and p-values represent the probability that the difference between the two subgroups is zero.

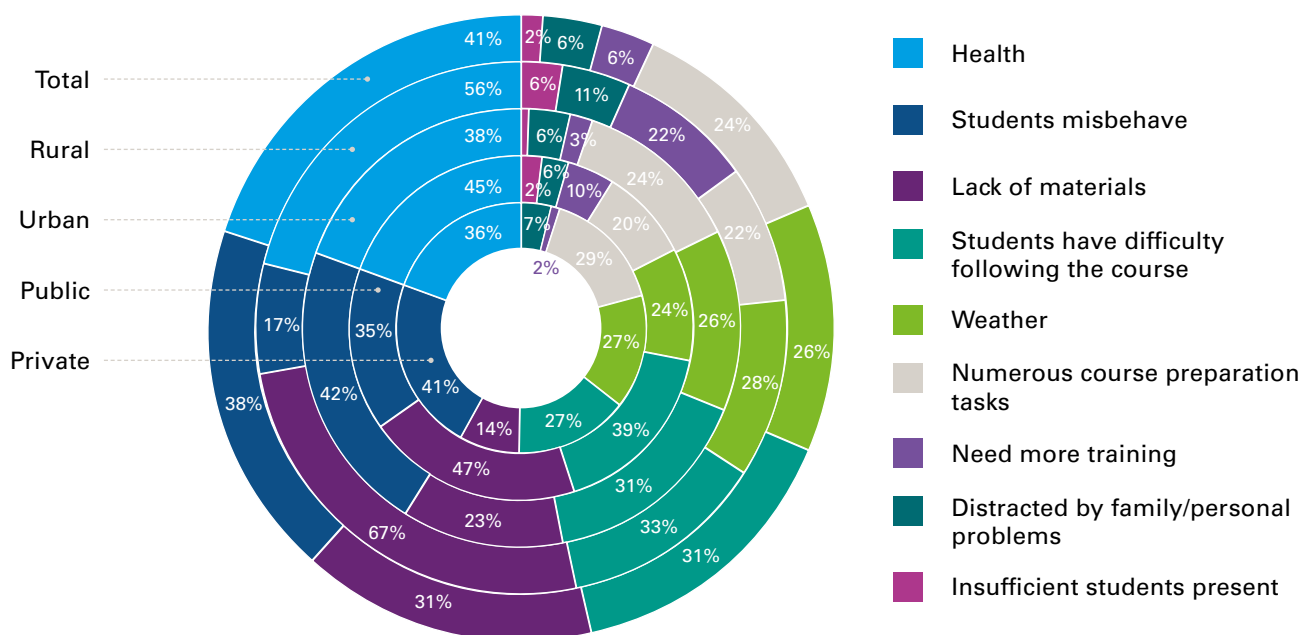
Figure 3. Primary motivations for teacher absenteeism



ABSENCE FROM THE CLASSROOM



TEACHING TIME



Note: Percentages indicate the proportion of teachers who specify each of the formulated reasons for absenteeism. The outer circumferences represent the responses of all teachers, followed by rural school teachers, urban school teachers, public school teachers, and private school teachers. Number of observations for total percentages are: absence from school 112; lack of punctuality 115; absence from the classroom 107; and reduced time on task 108. Annex 2 (Table A1) presents supplementary tables with the results of statistical tests of differences between sub-groups with the corresponding p-values and number of observations.

Health was also the top motivation for lack of punctuality (63 per cent), next were climate (47 per cent), remoteness (34 per cent) and family/community obligations (32 per cent). Health reasons are more common among public school teachers, 74 per cent compared to 55 per cent in the case of private school teachers.

Once in school, the most common motivations for classroom absence were administrative tasks (69 per cent), health issues (46 per cent), official school affairs¹⁹ (38 per cent) and lack of teaching and learning materials (17 per cent). Administrative tasks and official school affairs were more frequently reported by public school teachers (80 per cent and 57 per cent respectively), compared to private school teachers (61 per cent and 21 per cent). Lack of materials was more common among rural school teachers (39 per cent compared to 12 per cent).

In the classroom, surveyed teachers reported experiencing reduced time teaching mainly due to health issues (41 per cent), student misconduct (38 per cent), lack of teaching and learning materials (31 per cent) and students' difficulties in following the course (31 per cent). Student misbehaviour was a highly prevalent motivation in urban areas (42 per cent compared to 17 per cent in rural) while the lack of materials was more common among those in rural and public schools, with an incidence of 67 per cent and 47 per cent respectively (compared to 23 per cent in the case of urban teachers and 14 per cent among private teachers).

Associated factors from a systems perspective

National level

Teachers' working conditions are a sensitive and determining aspect of teachers' suitability, motivation and absenteeism.

Stakeholder interviews found a clear recognition of the role of **qualifications and good pre- and in-service training** on teacher performance, engagement, and self-esteem. The majority of teachers surveyed stated having adequate teaching skills knowledge (85 per cent), with half holding tertiary or vocational training (see Figure 4). Among this last group, recurrent school and class absenteeism was less frequently reported (see Annex 2, Table A3). However, some affirmed having access to training, especially those in rural schools (17 per cent compared to 47 per cent in urban schools) and public schools (59 per cent compared to 21 per cent in private schools) (see Annex 2, Table A2). This result coincides with a greater percentage of teachers in rural and public schools citing the need for training as a motivation in reducing teaching time (see Figure 3, Annex 2, Table A1).

"There are several factors, but the first factor is related to the teacher: his motivation but also his level of competence, the mastery of the subject he teaches."

– Testimony of a national official when asked about factors explaining teacher absenteeism.

It is recognized that efforts have been made to improve in this regard, particularly through strengthening the CAFOP and implementing virtual training programmes. However, public school teachers accept there are weaknesses in this area and would like to see more regular and appropriate training opportunities offered on pedagogy, effective teaching techniques, classroom management, and lesson planning. For headteachers, teachers' training requires greater capacity for planning and adapting classes in order to make up for absences.

A second aspect mentioned in interviews is the role of **good recruitment practices** as a means of guaranteeing attendance and reducing monitoring pressure. Respondents recognized the importance of maintaining the completion of secondary education as the minimum required entering level for teachers. However, both school directors and subnational authorities highlighted the lack of candidates with this qualification in some regions where there is a strong need to increase staff numbers.

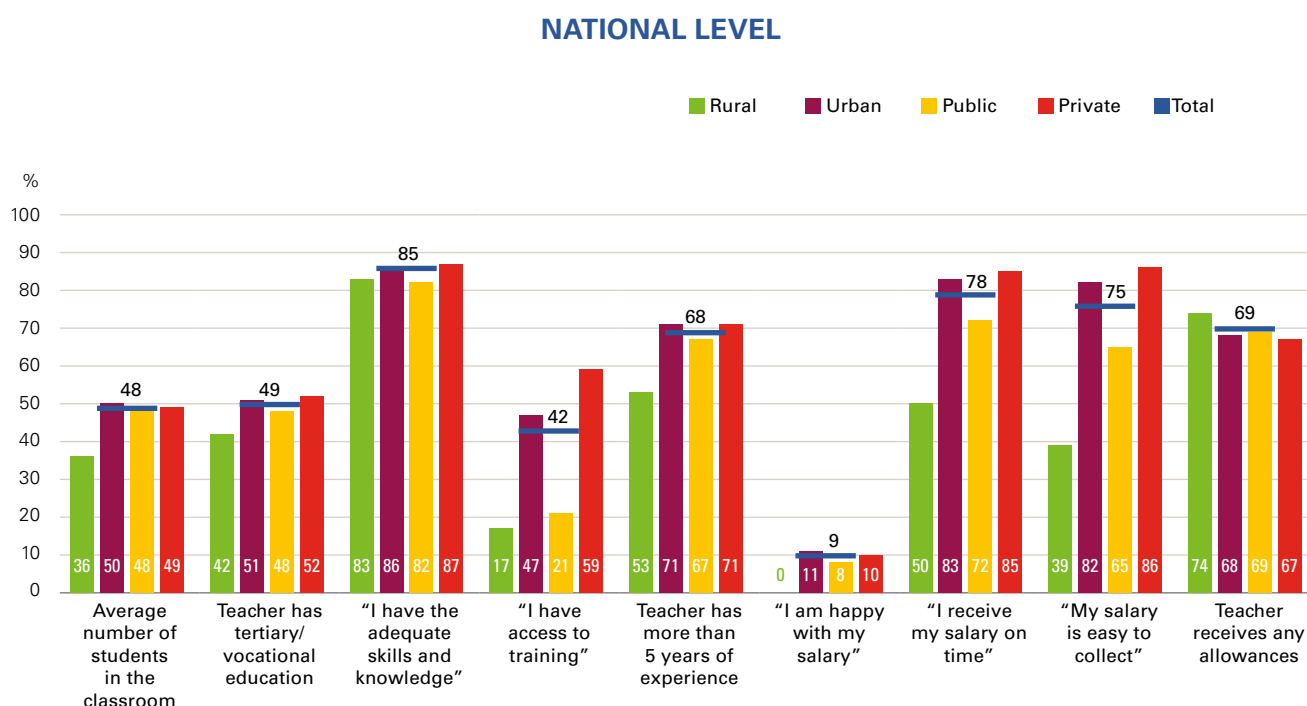
Teachers also expressed dissatisfaction with their **salaries and living standards** and suggest that a reassessment of the remuneration conditions could improve attendance. This is consistent with literature from Côte d'Ivoire indicating that primary and secondary teachers in public schools tended to consider a salary increase a crucial factor in improving their well-being and motivation to teach (Somda and Oteme,

19 For example, trainings, workshops or seminars.

2021). Although most teachers in the TTT survey recognized the government's efforts to improve housing and transportation subsidies,²⁰ they also stressed the lack of indexed salary updates for all public employees and delays in payments. Indeed, some teachers in rural areas mentioned having to travel long distances to claim their remuneration and noted the absence of payment points. Dissatisfaction with salaries is not only an issue for public teachers; interviewees also mentioned that sometimes private school teachers were paid below the legal minimum although they admitted there was greater variability in this sector.

Teacher surveys corroborated this result with only 9 per cent of respondents satisfied with their remuneration and a higher proportion of teachers in rural areas and public schools reporting difficulties in collecting their salary and experiencing payment delays (see Figure 4, Annex 2, Table A2). Although less than 10 per cent of teachers listed payment issues as a motivation for absence from school and lack of punctuality, variation according to the type of school is significant. Among teachers in rural schools, the proportion of those who said these are a motivation for being absent from school was just over 20 per cent while among those in urban schools, they represented 7 per cent (see Annex 2, Table A1). The proportion of those who regularly arrive late/leave early, are absent from the classroom, or who reduce teaching time was significantly lower among those who do not have issues collecting and receiving their salary on time.

Figure 4. Characteristics and opinions of teachers on selected statements related to absenteeism, by level of analysis

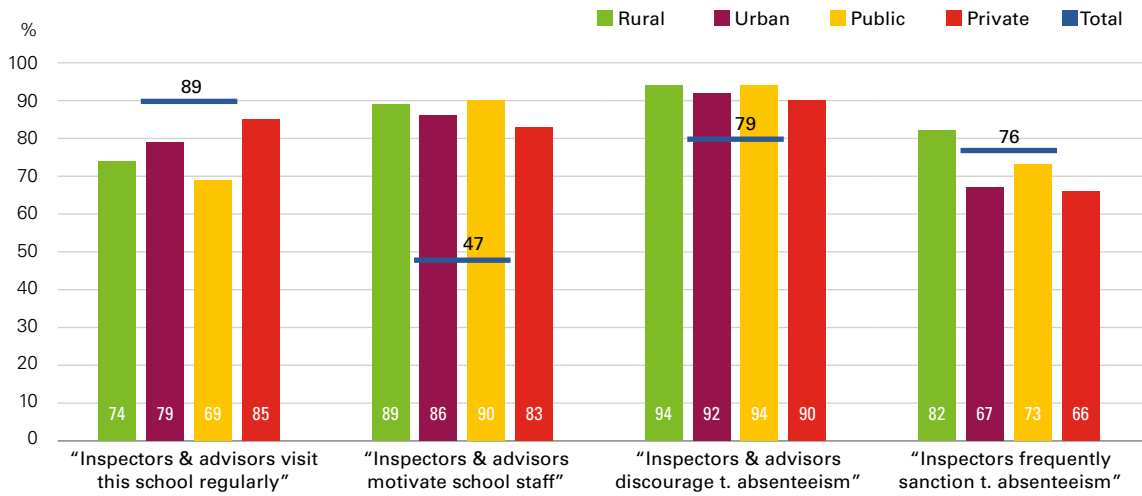


Note (applicable to all figures in this and the following page): These figures represent characteristics and levels of agreement of surveyed teachers with some of more than 30 statements related to the education system and to absenteeism (e.g., job satisfaction, training opportunities, school and work environment, the work of the head teacher and school inspectors). The percentages indicate the proportion of teachers who agree or strongly agree with the statements indicated. Results are included for all teachers and for those in rural, urban, public and private schools. Annex 2 (Table A2) presents supplementary tables with the results of statistical tests of differences between subgroups.

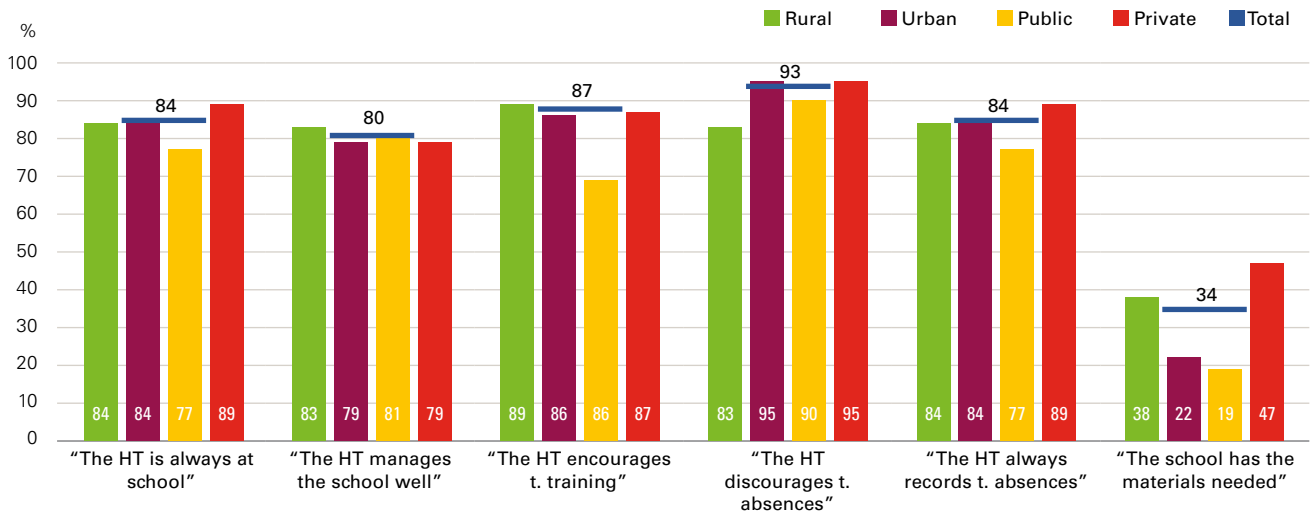
1= Absolute number. HT= head teacher. t. = teacher

20 This point refers mainly to the agreement on revaluation of teacher allowances as a result of union negotiations that took place at the beginning of 2019.

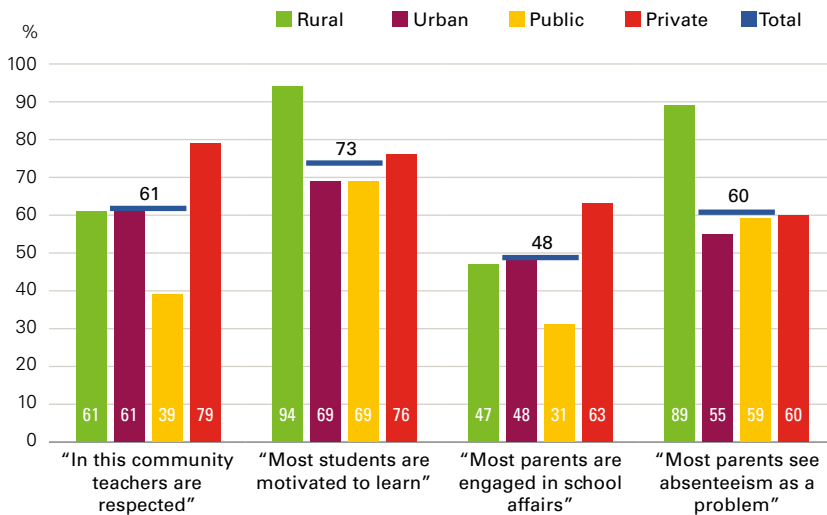
SUBNATIONAL LEVEL



SCHOOL LEVEL



COMMUNITY LEVEL



TEACHER LEVEL



Teachers attributed the improvement in their working conditions to the active **role of unions** and the effectiveness of **strikes**. In particular, this relates to the payment of delayed salaries, agreed to as a result of the 2019 mobilizations, the increase in transportation and housing allowances, and the unblocking of promotions. However, it is possible the eventual long-term positive effects of strikes on attendance (via improved teacher conditions) will be offset by increased absenteeism in order to participate in strikes and by the transport and security difficulties generated when such mobilizations take place.

The surveys found that the proportion of teachers who mentioned strikes as a motivation for school absenteeism was higher among those working in public schools (31 per cent compared to 16 per cent in private ones) (see *Annex 2, Table A1*). This result suggests a possible relationship with the working conditions of public sector teachers but also a greater risk of increasing inequity against the instructional time of pupils attending these schools.

Subnational level

While nationally promoted measures are critical to improving teacher attendance, subnational entities play a key role in their implementation.

Both interviews and teacher surveys revealed a positive appreciation of the commitment of **educational advisors and inspectors**. Stakeholders recognized that they make regular visits to schools; and give support on pedagogical issues²¹ and concrete advice to overcome difficulties in programme implementation and other aspects of school life. Additionally, they play an important role in motivating teachers and are key to identifying irregularities and raising awareness when necessary, including in regard to teacher absences. Recognition of the regularity of visits by educational inspectors and advisors is higher among private school teachers (85 per cent compared to 69 per cent of public school teachers) (see *Annex 2, Table A2*).

“ [He told me] you have to emphasize on the girls. In our country, we need to work for girls and Muslims don't take much notice of women, so we need to attract more girls to school.”

–Testimony of a teacher of the Islamic Cultural Institute of Abidjan, referring to the role of education advisors

Educational advisors are recognized for their knowledge and experience in the education sector. As many have also been teachers, they understand the challenges of the profession; the importance of encouraging teachers to rethink and update their pedagogical practices regularly; the urgency of quality in-service training; and the need to harmonize teaching methods.

Inspectors are recognized for their supervisory role in both private and public schools, and play a key part in monitoring and enforcing sanctions when teacher absences are not justified. They sensitize teachers on the relevance of assiduity, punctuality, and teaching quality, and give feedback on class

performance and train directors to record and register absences and teacher progress tracking sheets. Head teachers mentioned the improvement in the function of inspectors in Côte d'Ivoire as a consequence of the recent significant increase in the number of inspectors. Subnational stakeholders, however, pointed out the need to consider assigning more of the budget towards school visits and seeking solutions to transport shortages so these can be carried out as expected.²² Survey results suggest that the proportion of teachers who arrive late/leave early is lower among those who believe inspectors and advisors effectively discourage absenteeism (9 per cent compared to 33 per cent), which supports the positive effect these measures may have on teacher punctuality (see *Annex 2, Table A3*).

21 Specific examples mentioned by the interviewers include training in the application of new teaching and learning tools, workshops and educational days.

22 For example, a head teacher of the rural province of Soubré referred to the improvement in the regularity of inspector visits following the purchase of a vehicle for the regional inspection office, financed as part of an emergency project, in support of basic education (Projet d'urgence d'appui à l'Éducation de bas, PUAEB).

Community level

Teacher attendance also depends on several external and contextual factors including climate conditions, local infrastructure, and the social recognition of teaching.

The relationship between **weather** and teacher attendance appears repeatedly in both surveys and interviews, with teachers making explicit reference to the difficulties preventing them from attending school, arriving on time, and carrying out planned classroom activities when heavy rains and high temperatures occur.

Weather incidents influence absenteeism in at least three ways. The most direct is travel time to school, especially when the local transportation infrastructure is of low quality. Information given by surveyed teachers consistently shows a higher average travel time to school during the rainy season when weather conditions make travel more difficult, mainly because of heavy rains and flooding.

The second is health, as extreme climate events may be associated with diseases resulting from insufficient clean air, safe drinking water, food and secure shelter (UNECA, 2011). Interviewed teachers mentioned extreme tiredness, the risk of dehydration, the increase in mosquitoes (and subsequent risk of malaria and similar endemic tropical diseases), and respiratory infections such as 'flu and asthma due to peak temperatures, rain or the cold.

The third channel is the aggravation of the poor condition of school infrastructure during extreme weather episodes: shoddy, leaking roofs; poor drainage; the lack of ventilation, fans or air conditioning; an insufficient number of classrooms; and the lack of electricity and light. According to interviewees, these factors encourage the early termination of classes and could explain the higher incidence of climate-driven motivation in classroom absenteeism. Rural teachers surveyed accounted for 33 per cent compared to 13 per cent in urban schools, and public schools for 27 per cent compared to 7 per cent of private schools (see *Annex 2, Table A1*).

In terms of **local infrastructure**, a high number of rural communities lack access to basic water, sanitation, electricity services, and nearby health centres. As interviews found, these deficiencies often translate to and combine with quality issues in school infrastructure, discouraging teacher motivation and performance and increasing the likelihood of absenteeism due to a greater risk of illness, climate adverse effects, or lack of security. Of note is that female teachers are more responsive to both health and safety motivations, despite being more satisfied with their work and more dissatisfied with their absences (see *Table 1*).

"When it rains a lot, we teachers who live outside Koumassi cannot come. Sometimes the rain makes the river rise and everything floods and even those who live nearby cannot come."

– Testimony of a teacher from a public urban school in Koumassi.

"The problem of the climate here is very serious because all of us, including myself, have fallen victim to it. This camp is in a depression and we don't have drinking water or a well so we have water from when it rains and that is a joke. It makes us all sick."

– Testimony of a head teacher from a communitarian rural school in Soubré when asked about climate conditions in his community.

"Even when the teacher is in the classroom, when it starts raining, the noise is so loud that you can hear nothing. Everything becomes very dark and as we do not have light; we cannot work. Sometimes it's so hot that we have to go sit under the mango sticks to breathe for 15 or 20 minutes."

– Testimony of a teacher from a public urban school in Odiéne.

"There is no ventilation in my class, and my class is overcrowded. Many students don't bathe so you can imagine when it's that hot! We all end up exhausted, me and the students."

– Testimony of a teacher in an Abidjan urban public school.

"We don't have drinking water here, but we depend on the rain and if it doesn't rain, the teachers and children can't take a bath and can't drink so they get sick. How will they go to school then?"

– Testimony from a community representative from the urban department of Bondoukou.

Social recognition of their work has been widely pointed out in the literature as one of the most significant non-monetary incentives in teacher motivation and effort (Ukki, 2013). By the nature of their profession, teachers are highly sensitive to the commitment in education of the community, parents and students (Kremer et al., 2009), and teacher success requires their respect and involvement. The TTT survey revealed that on average, 61 per cent of teachers acknowledged the community's respect for their work and 73 per cent saw their students as motivated to learn, although only a little fewer than half recognized parents' commitment in school affairs (see Figure 4).

It is remarkable how the views of public and private school teachers differed in these respects (see Annex 2, Table A2). Survey findings revealed teachers in private schools who claimed to feel respected by the community were more numerous (79 per cent compared to 39 per cent in public school). Some public sector stakeholders from rural areas affirmed in interviews that the community questioned the value of non-religious education and the role of the teacher when they did not belong to the community.

However, the proportion of teachers who believed their students were motivated to learn was higher in rural areas (94 per cent compared to 69 per cent in urban areas). Rural school teachers considered parents were more concerned about teacher absenteeism than urban parents (89 per cent compared to 55 per cent), which could indicate a greater problem of absenteeism in this context. The participation of children in farm work and its effects on school dropout and underachievement have been widely documented in Côte d'Ivoire (International Cocoa Initiative, 2019). According to TTT interviews and surveys, teachers in private schools perceived parents to be more committed in school affairs than those from public schools (see Annex 2, Table A2).

"We have noted a lack of interest in the school, particularly among the Muslim community. In fact, most parents bring their children to school because of the Arabic language but most do not attach importance to school and boycott our teachers because they do not teach the Koran and because we also want more schooling for girls compared to previous years."

– Testimony of a subnational level official from Poro.

School level

The school also plays an essential role in motivating teachers and managing absences. Issues such as the leadership of head teachers, the adequate handling and planning of teachers' responsibilities and workload, and the material conditions of teaching (school infrastructure, teaching, learning materials) are fundamental to avoiding teacher absenteeism.

Most teachers surveyed had a positive opinion on the **role of head teachers** and highlighted their presence in the school, particularly those from private schools; their support for teacher training; their good management skills; and their role in preventing and discouraging absenteeism, which is more marked in urban schools (see Figure 4, Annex 2, Table A2). However, the interviews showed that head teachers focused mostly on school absenteeism and lack of punctuality, devoting less effort to classroom absenteeism and time on task.

Interviews found there was a relatively homogeneous procedure for managing school absences and lack of punctuality among head teachers, characterized by three stages: 1) recording leave, absences, and arrival and departure times in a notebook, 2) calling attention to teachers when there are failures, and 3) informing inspectors when cases are recurrent.

"Our teacher is always present. Sometimes he is not present because he is called by the director or from the inspection or because there is a meeting. If one arrives and the teacher is in the principal's office or at the inspector's, they leave us homework. But that is boring. Once he had to travel to the training in the village and then his brother came to replace him until the next day he arrived."

– Testimony of a student from a rural school in Soubré

"In the book of absence, teachers can put the reason for their absence, the duration, but when it is more than one day I have to inform the inspector."

– Testimony of a head teacher from an urban private school in Bouaké.

Another school-related element standing out among the top motivations for absenteeism in its four forms is **official school affairs, administrative tasks and heavy workload**.²³ Both official school affairs and administrative tasks are more recurrent among public school teachers than those in private schools (*see Annex 2, Table A1*).

In interviews, some students stated that being in the classroom without an instructor bored, demotivated and discouraged them, increasing their likelihood of misbehaviour. Student misconduct is the second reason cited by teachers to explain reduction in teaching time, highlighting the relationship between these variables (demotivation of students, misbehaviour, and teacher absenteeism) can occur in both directions of causality and is therefore difficult to unravel. As mentioned above, both student misbehaviour and motivation are more problematic in urban areas, possibly related to the higher number of students per class reported by teachers in this setting (50 compared to 36 by rural teachers, as illustrated in Annex 2, Table A2), and well above 42, the number of students per teacher reported in official statistics (UNESCO-UIS, 2018).

Finally, as mentioned earlier, quality school infrastructure and good materials in the classroom are necessary for the optimal exercise of teaching. This is often cited as a reason teachers are temporarily absent from the classroom and reducing teaching time. The proportion of teachers regularly absent from the classroom was 12 percentage points lower among those who stated they had good materials (*see Annex 2, Table A3*).²⁴ The lack of teaching and learning materials, both as a motivation of absenteeism and a prevalent issue, is more common among rural and public school teachers than in urban and private schools (*see Annex 2, Tables A1 and A2*).

Although the relationship between school infrastructure and absence from school and lack of punctuality is more difficult to explain, some possible linkages are health (addressed below) and safety motivations. Lack of security is a motivation mostly formulated among public school teachers (*see Annex 2, Table A1*) and female teachers (*see Table 1*).

Teacher level

The literature investigating cause of absence from work among various professions highlights the relevance of health (mental and physical), family and community obligations, and work satisfaction (ILO, 2016). Teachers in Côte d'Ivoire are no exception (Somda and Oteme, 2021). The TTT survey confirms that **health** ranks among the top reasons for various forms of absenteeism and is mentioned repeatedly by stakeholders interviewed, especially by students. In addition, the case studies show

"Our teacher is always present. Sometimes he is not present because he is called by the director or from the inspection or because there is a meeting. If one arrives and the teacher is in the principal's office or at the inspector's, they leave us homework. But that is boring. Once he had to travel to the training in the village and then his brother came to replace him until the next day he arrived."

– Testimony of a student from a rural school in Soubré

"Our teacher often tells us that he goes to the inspection office so he cannot come and then he gives us exercises. The last time Mr. *** had a lot of homework to correct so he didn't come."

– Testimony of a student from an urban private school in Logokaha.

"At the level of inspection, the problem encountered is the lack of facilities and teaching materials (tables, chairs, boards). Sometimes there are teachers who have to leave to go to the nearby toilet in the call center. Meanwhile, the students misbehave"

– Testimony of a subnational inspector.

"My teacher often comes but sometimes, if she is very sick, she tells the head teacher and he replaces her. I have a friend from another class who says her teacher was also absent once because she wasn't feeling well."

– Testimony of a student from a public urban school in Abobo.

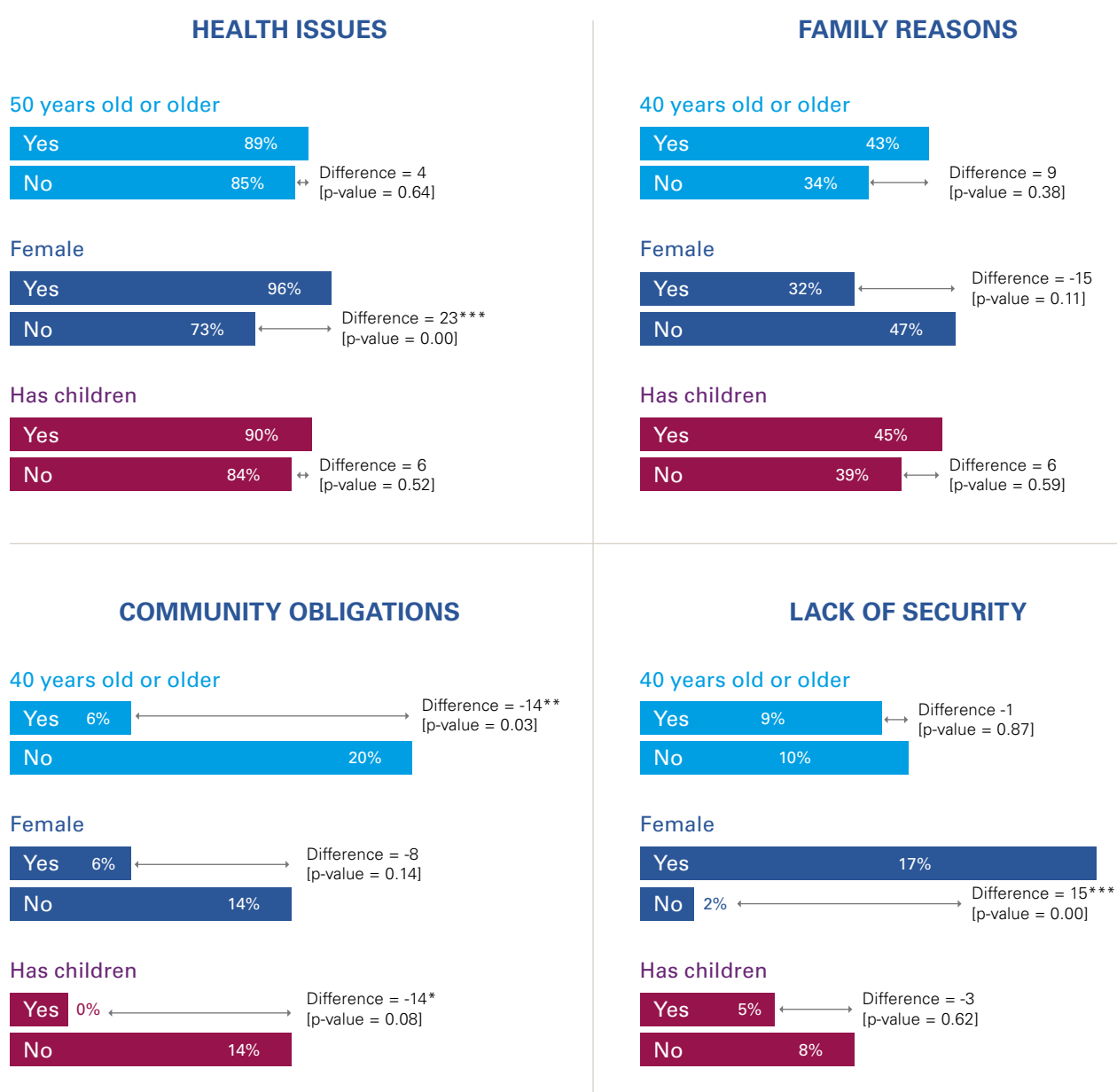
²³ Class preparation tasks and grading of assignments.

²⁴ The proportion of teachers regularly absent from the classroom is 4 per cent among those who state having sufficient teaching and learning materials and 16 per cent among those who state they do not.

that many schools and communities, especially rural ones, lack basic water and sanitation services and do not have health care centres nearby.

According to teacher surveys, female teachers are 23 percentage points more likely to invoke health motivations to explain their absences. Other characteristics, such as age and parental status do not correlate with these motivations (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Selected motivations by relevant teacher characteristics



Note: The percentage of teachers indicating health issues, family reasons, community obligations or lack of security as motivations for at least one form of absenteeism by age group, gender and childbearing status. Differences between the subgroups are expressed in percentage points. Stars indicate confidence level at *10 per cent, **5 per cent, and ***1 per cent and p-values represent the probability that the difference between the two subgroups is zero

Family and community life reasons also appeared repeatedly in teacher surveys and student focus groups as a motivation for school absenteeism and a lack of punctuality. Interviews suggested events such as illness of close relatives, burials, and ritual celebrations such as funerals and marriages were such factors. According to the surveys, younger teachers (under 40 years old) and teachers with children were 14 percentage points more likely to invoke community obligations as motivations for absenteeism (see Figure 5). Gender was not correlated, either with family or for community reasons.

Finally, the relationship between attendance and **job satisfaction and motivation** was often raised by interviewees. Teachers repeatedly cited a sense of pride, commitment and passion associated with their role in educating children. Surveys corroborated this result, showing that 86 per cent of teachers were satisfied with their jobs and 81 per cent felt upset when they had to be absent or could not deliver their course (see Figure 4). Moreover, teachers satisfied with their job were less likely to be absent from class and those who felt upset were less likely to be absent from the school (see Annex 2, Table A3). Female teachers were more prone than male teachers to admit they were satisfied with their job (94 per cent compared to 80 per cent) and feel upset when they must be absent from school or cannot teach (90 per cent compared to 75) (see Table 1).

Although this result is positive and encouraging, it is important to deepen the understanding of its intrinsic and external drivers and risks factors. The literature shows that teacher motivation is a complex issue, strongly correlated to working conditions and school environment. A high level of teacher commitment may well be an indicator of successful management and good practices, as a mitigating factor to the effect of poor resources, school organizational conditions and leadership practices (UNESCO-IICBA, 2017). The second case represents a risk for the well-being of teachers, students, and the school system.

“Sometimes our teacher is absent because if there is a funeral in his village or, for example, the festivities and he does not come.”

– Testimony of a student from an urban private school in Cocody.

“Our teacher, even if he has lost a member of his family, will come for a while and then leave. He will leave us at 10 o'clock [schools usually start at 8 am].”

– Testimony of a student from an urban private school in Kahanso.

“My profession is my greatest satisfaction and pride. It's the results at the end of the year, not necessarily the exams in class. When you take a child at the beginning of the year, who really couldn't read and write, and at the end of the year the child can speak, the child can read, the child goes to the next class and you see that the child is fine, it's very exciting. I always say it, personally, even if the parent doesn't say thank you, you're glad to see that you've helped someone.”

– Testimony of a teacher from a private urban school in Abidjan.

Table 1. Selected characteristics and teach opinions, by gender

	Male	Female		
	Proportion (%)		Difference	p-value
Teacher has tertiary/vocational training	51	46	-5	0.62
Teacher has more than 5 years of experience	70	65	-5	0.58
“I have access to training”	39	48	9	0.34
“In this community teachers are respected”	62	61	-1	0.93
“The working environment in this school is good”	70	83	13	0.12
“I am happy with my salary”	7	13	6	0.29
“I am satisfied with the job”	80	94	14**	0.02
“I feel upset when I am absent or unable to teach”	75	90	15**	0.03

Note: These figures represent some characteristics and the level of agreement of surveyed teachers with some of more than 30 statements related to the education system and absenteeism (e.g., job satisfaction, training opportunities, school and work environment, the work of the head teacher and school inspectors). Percentages indicate the proportion of teachers who have the characteristic or agree and strongly agree with the statements indicated. The differences between male and female teachers are expressed in percentage points. Stars indicate confidence level at *10 per cent, **5 per cent, ***1 per cent and p-values represent the probability that the difference between the two subgroups is zero.

3. Policy implications and recommendations

While Côte d'Ivoire has made great progress in improving access to and quality of its education system, significant gaps remain in ensuring learning and student achievement. Increasing teacher and student contact time by reducing teacher absenteeism is one of the most cost-effective measures to achieve better results (World Bank, 2018). This section identifies concrete recommendations to increase teacher attendance in its four forms in Côte d'Ivoire. These are grouped into three areas: i) monitoring, school management and governance; ii) education policies; and iii) external and inter-sectoral factors.

Education policies to address structural barriers

Education policies are the heart of the teaching profession. Efforts to improve teacher recruitment practices, training, motivation, and the quality of the school environment are essential to positively impact attendance.

- **Recruiting** well-qualified teachers who meet the minimum requirement for full secondary education appears to be a key factor in reducing absenteeism and ensuring the quality of teaching. However, new challenges arising from the large expansion of primary education and the difficult recruitment and retention of suitable teachers in remote areas requires special attention. In the face of these difficulties, teacher training takes an even more prominent role.
- The interviews and surveys implemented as part of the study suggest a positive relationship between **teacher training** and school attendance and a lack of training opportunities, especially in rural and public schools. Initial and continuous training is an effective solution to the lack of highly qualified candidates, especially in some regions of the country. It is also a good way to ensure quality of teaching in the face of the massive recruitment of assistant teachers announced by the Ministry of Education for the next years. It is important to ensure that continuing education programmes are linked to teachers' career opportunities (status, promotion or salary conditions), and that they are targeted according to teachers' qualifications, experience and needs.

Recent research identified positive results of in-classroom and virtual teacher training and mentoring programmes (Brunette, 2019; Cilliers et al., 2019; Kotse, 2019). The need for practical training, focused on the application of theoretical knowledge to daily and local problems, appears repeatedly in interviews and focus group discussions. Training programmes involving in-class teaching practice are associated with positive learning outcomes because they allow for more interactions between teachers; improve the quality of the teacher–student relationship; allow educators to better connect with the community; and enhance new intrinsic motivation. In addition, they facilitate logistical aspects like teacher travel, workload, and absences (Gallego et al., 2018; Popova et al., 2018).

Continuing education can also be promoted through distance programmes using digital tools (e.g., video), television, or radio. Such initiatives may require less travel and absenteeism from class, are easily scalable, and can have high impact at lower cost (Marchetta and Dilly, 2019). However, unless all teachers, including those with connectivity difficulties, can benefit from remote learning opportunities, education inequalities will deepen as marginalized and remote communities are more frequently served by less qualified teachers. One example is the Teacher Education in sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) initiative, offering teacher training programmes to teachers in sub-Saharan Africa,²⁵ including Côte d'Ivoire, and providing locally adapted resources developed by a network of teachers from different countries (Acquah, 2019; Stutchbury et al., 2019).

Distance education and the learning opportunities offered by technological tools in emergent settings have become more visible because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Training teachers in the skills needed to maintain an active role in the creation and implementation of these solutions is of vital importance. This includes training in the use but also developing programmes to foster pedagogical skills in remote, online, and blended learning; and nurturing communication and the skills related to the creation and adaptation of content and materials (World Bank, 2020b).

25 <www.tessafrica.net/>

Various experiences within developing countries show that the success of training programmes largely depends on linking these programmes to teachers' professional development (e.g., through norms, standards, plans, and roadmaps).²⁶ Teachers also require an ability to integrate these new tools and methods of learning into their classroom practices or teaching routines (USAID, 2011).²⁷ It is essential that these programmes be part of a comprehensive short-, medium-, and long-term response strategy preparing teachers to address the learning crisis caused by school closures and build on systems and experiences already in place in the country.

CAFOP are key players in the strategy to train primary schools in ICT skills and remote learning pedagogies. Thanks to the education ICT strategy launched in 2012 (Decree No. 201–894) CAFOP's primary teacher training programmes began to include these competencies. However, the effectiveness of these programmes requires greater efforts in terms of equipment and informative resources, and the availability of more reference persons in training institutions (ADEA, 2014).²⁸ It is therefore critical to ensure all CAFOP in the country have the technical capacity to provide these programmes to new teachers, without excluding the possibility of offering in-service programmes to those already practicing.

- The **quality of the school environment** is fundamental in explaining teacher attendance, performance, and educational achievement. At the same time, it is one of the factors of greatest divergence between regions, rural and urban areas, and type of school (public, private, and community), especially when combined with poor local infrastructure and extreme climate events.

Since the end of the 2010–2011 crisis, an ambitious school and classroom construction and renovation plan has been implemented. According to the PASEC 2019 report, Côte d'Ivoire's school infrastructure ranks below the average of 14 other African countries evaluated. The same study found that only 7 per cent of Ivorian primary students had a library at their school (CONFEMEN, 2020). Assessing the sufficiency and quality of school infrastructure is key, bearing in mind the particularities of each school context such as deficiencies in local infrastructure and the risk of extreme weather events.

- Investment in school infrastructure is highly expensive and requires a significant operating budget. Recent evaluations have found positive results on teaching and learning outcomes only when they are carried out in a well-focused manner, that is, in the most deficient environments (Borkum and Linder, 2012; Newman et al., 2002; Linden and Ryan, 2017). It is strongly recommended to prioritize schools in remote areas, vulnerable contexts, zones with greater exposure to adverse weather events (heavy rain and flooding) and with high class density. The climate resilience²⁹ of the school infrastructure is a key factor in the planning of new buildings and renovations to be implemented in the country.

Initiatives to provide schools with **learning and teaching materials** have a greater return on cost-effectiveness. They can be key to improving class absenteeism and teaching time, especially in rural and public schools where these issues appear to be more prevalent (Burde and Linder, 2013).³⁰ Technological solutions can be offered to complement and support teachers' classroom activities, such as detailed lesson plans (e.g., South Africa), content guides (e.g., Pakistan), and pedagogical guidelines to facilitate the incorporation of digital materials into traditional practices (Beg et al., 2019; Kotze et al., 2016; Piper et al., 2018).

The COVID-19 pandemic calls for particular attention to these aspects. First, the post-COVID-19 context requires the adaptation of infrastructure that considers the biosecurity measures necessary for a safe return to school (e.g., social distancing, ventilation, sanitary infrastructures, etc.). The development of alternative measures to reduce the high density of classes (e.g., construction and adaptation of new classrooms, modification of calendars and schedules) is key.

26 The UNESCO ICT Competency Standards for Teachers, for example, provides a framework that helps teachers identify and assess their competencies in the use of technology in three stages: technological literacy, knowledge deepening, and knowledge creation (UNESCO, 2008).

27 A strategy to achieve integration of ICT in teachers' daily activities is the use of micro-teaching techniques, which allow teachers to correct mistakes, gain confidence and perfect their lessons individually with the support of the trainer and their peers. This type of training is offered, for example, at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Brazzaville or in FASTEF schools in the Republic of Congo (Barry, 2012).

28 Poor access to ICT in teacher training institutions is a widespread problem in several Francophone African countries, as noted by the PanAf Observatory (PanAfrican Research Agenda on the Pedagogical Integration of ICT in Africa) (PanAf, 2011).

29 Climate-resilient infrastructure is defined as that which is planned, designed, built, and operated in a way that anticipates, prepares for, and adapts to changing climate conditions (OECD, 2018).

30 A concrete example could be initiatives for teachers, students and the community to produce school texts and books.

Second, access to quality digital infrastructure and connectivity at the national level and not only in schools remains an issue, especially as remote learning takes place outside the school. Although the government has implemented an e-governance initiative (e-Gov) and has set out to make ICT a tool for the country's development, only 36 per cent of the population has internet access.³¹ This shows that significant challenges persist in achieving capacity to adequately provide a distance education model through online platforms and applications.³²

Decree No. 2012–894 of 19 September 2012 provides for the consideration of ICTE³³ in pre-school, primary and secondary education and marks a decisive turning point in the government's commitment to the use of ICT in education. However, challenges remain in terms of capacity building and improving access to ICT tools to different actors in the education system, including computer equipment, the development of teaching materials (e.g., digital libraries), and high-quality connectivity (ADEA, 2014).

Among the strategies to be considered is to encourage the private sector's association with the various ICTE programmes. One consideration is to strengthen the Ivorian Association for the Integration of ICT in Education (AIITICE), an association of teachers, professors, trainers and ICT industry professionals created to support the technical ministries of basic and higher education in the implementation of the e-Education policy at all levels (ADEA, 2014).³⁴

Although teachers surveyed and interviewed in this study reported that they were highly satisfied in their jobs, they also stated that they were dissatisfied with their salaries and reported problems with easy and timely collection. **Delays and problems with payments** can have a great impact on job satisfaction, jeopardizing the expectation of stability and social respect of the profession and can negatively impact the performance of teachers and students (Bold et al., 2018; Dolton and Marcenaro, 2011; Harris-Van Keuren and Silova, 2015; Sargent and Hannum, 2005). Findings clearly signal a positive association between these issues and teacher absenteeism in three of its forms. Further analysis is needed to understand the specificities of the Ivorian teacher payroll system. However, studies focusing on civil servants in similar contexts revealed that a major part of the problem was due to cash payments. Therefore, it is important to improve financial inclusion, banking penetration, and the adoption of virtual systems such as mobile money (Blumenstock et al., 2015). Southern Sudan, for example, has implemented an electronic payroll system allowing teachers to be paid in the schools themselves (Evans and Yuan, 2018).

In view of the possible risk to public finances and the education system secondary to COVID-19, it is very important to protect teachers' salaries. Even if schools are closed, children's learning should not cease and in fact, requires greater commitment from teachers who should continue to be paid in an adequate, timely, and easy way.

- **Teacher motivation** is an irreplaceable factor in the attendance equation, so fostering teacher effort is a serious challenge for all education systems. While TTT surveys revealed teacher satisfaction with work was high in Côte d'Ivoire, it is key to better understanding the determinants of this outcome in order to distinguish intrinsic from external motivational aspects (such as working conditions and school environment). This exercise will help to understand and improve the incentive scheme associated with the teaching profession, seeking a design that allows for a suitable balance between financial and social rewards and the demand for high performance.

In the face of COVID-19's latent threat to health, the pressure to develop new skills (adapted to remote learning modalities), the additional effort to recover learning quickly, and financial and professional uncertainty, it is essential to protect teachers' jobs and assess support and coaching needs. Consideration should also be given to re-evaluating workloads, taking into account new administrative, preparation (World Bank, 2020b) and support tasks in addition to teaching time, which tend to increase under remote learning modalities (World Bank, 2021).

31 International Telecommunication Union, ITU World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Database.

32 In addition, in 2019 the number of fixed broadband subscribers was 0.84 per 100 people, compared to 14.78 at the global level, 0.45 per 100 people for Sub-Saharan African countries and 2.84 per 100 people for lower middle-income countries (International Telecommunication Union, ITU World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Database).

33 Information and Communication Technologies for Education.

34 This association develops monthly morning meetings about ICT in education.

Performance incentives to improve attendance should be evaluated since the four forms of absenteeism imply actions within the capacity of teachers that are also observable and measurable. Experiences from developing countries show that financial incentives, professional rewards, and accountability pressures can be an effective and efficient measure (in terms of cost-effectiveness) in addressing teacher absenteeism and improving student learning and achievement.³⁵ Rather than high-risk incentives, studies have shown that by simply linking assessments and diagnostic information (in this case on teacher absenteeism) it is possible to improve learning outcomes (Andrabi et al., 2015; De Hoyos et al., 2017).

Monitoring, school management and governance to enhance system accountability

As identified throughout this report, the issue of teacher absenteeism is a challenge for the education system in general and its solution based on the involvement and liability of the various actors within it.

- Findings presented in Section 2 show an effective relationship between **registration, monitoring, and inspection** measures and teacher absenteeism. This result is consistent with recent literature showing that information about teacher performance improves accountability to the community, parents, and students and facilitates school management (Banerjee et al., 2010; Lassibille et al., 2010; Barr et al., 2012; Duflo et al., 2012; Gertler et al., 2012; Beasley et al., 2017; Lichand and Wolf, 2021).

In addition to having a direct impact on teacher absenteeism, effective monitoring of teacher attendance and time on task increases both the actual and perceived benefits of school participation and improves school quality by reinforcing system accountability. In a recent study, Lichand and Wolf (2021) found that monitoring teachers in Côte d'Ivoire directly as well as through parents increased teacher attendance and improved student attendance. However, too much pressure (a combination of the two strategies: direct and parental monitoring) could have a negative effect (increased absenteeism), especially for teachers whose intrinsic motivation was higher.

TTT surveys and interviews showed that existing formal monitoring mechanisms were limited to school absenteeism and punctuality and did not address classroom absenteeism or reduced time on task. Therefore, it would be important to raise awareness among actors in charge of teacher monitoring of the significance of these other forms of absenteeism too. It is also worth noting that the result demonstrates a need to strengthen the impact of visits by inspectors and advisors in public schools.

Equally important is assessing the feasibility of combining existing monitoring tools (focused on surveillance and sanctions) with an incentive system that compensates for their punitive nature. There is ample evidence in favour of the effectiveness of such schemes in similar contexts that can be analysed and potentially replicated in Côte d'Ivoire (Duflo et al., 2012; Behrman et al., 2015; Duflo et al., 2015; Barrera-Osorio and Dhushyanth, 2017).

The expansion of digital technologies and internet access in the country is an issue worth exploring its potential impact and cost effectiveness. Mobile technologies, geolocation, or video cameras can be allies of the various actors within the system and improve unity between modalities. Importantly, in order to be effective and not discourage teachers, the implementation of this type of measure must always have the agreement and participation of teachers. Equitable access must be ensured so that the use of technology-based monitoring mechanisms does not increase already existing infrastructure gaps between regions and further exacerbate inequalities.

Successful examples of technological initiatives to monitor, control, and discourage teacher absenteeism have been developed in Brazil,³⁶ Haiti (World Bank, 2015),³⁷ India (Nedungadi et al., 2018)³⁸ and Pakistan

35 Countries with examples of implementing this type of initiative include Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Vietnam, and Zambia (UNESCO-IICBA, 2017; World Bank, 2017).

36 A system of 'swipe cards' to record teachers' entries and exits from class.

37 Provision of smartphones to school principals to record teachers' absences.

38 Peer educational monitoring and support programme by tablets.

(Ansari, 2018).³⁹ Their replicability deserves close attention but their success depends on the active participation of teachers in design and implementation and on the implementation of complementary measures to promote support for teachers' personal and professional development. These initiatives have become more important in the context of COVID-19 as complementary strategies to the face-to-face surveillance and monitoring implemented with limited coverage and feasibility effects.

- In addition, **skills of head teachers** and their commitment to promoting attendance play a crucial role in the timely management and correction of absenteeism. This includes engagement with the professional development of teachers and in mentoring, planning and effective timetabling practices, workload management, substitution policies and other strategies to mitigate the impact of the absence of teachers on student outcomes.

To make progress in building and developing these skills, specialized management and leadership training is needed for all principals and future principals. The literature shows that improving principal effectiveness has the potential to influence whole-of-school performance by producing greater benefits than some targeted interventions. Intensive, multi-faceted interventions to train principals in management are also shown to be cost-effective compared to initiatives such as class size reduction, which are more difficult to promote at scale (Evans, 2017).

- Regarding **school governance**, there are school management committees (Comité de Gestion des Etablissements Scolaires, COGES) in almost all communities in Côte d'Ivoire. Parents, teachers and head teachers work together in the promotion and better functioning of the establishment,⁴⁰ but their role in preventing and combating teacher absenteeism was not highlighted by study participants. It would be illuminating to learn more about the operation, functioning, results and challenges of these entities. In other developing countries, enabling local stakeholders to participate in their school's decision making has been found to have positive effects, not only on teacher performance but also on student learning and education outcomes, efficiency, and more balanced decision-making (Blimpo et al., 2015; Duflo et al., 2015; Gertler et al., 2012; Lassibille et al., 2010).

External conditions and inter-sectoral collaboration to ensure the well-being of teachers

Teacher well-being is a key aspect in the fight against absenteeism. The TTT study confirmed the significance of such aspects as weather, distance, and access to school, and health.

- **Weather** is a recurrent motivation for teacher absenteeism due to its direct impact on travel to school, its indirect effect on teachers' health, and for increasing the risk of absenteeism from the classroom and reducing instructional time when combined with poor-quality school infrastructure. While climate change is a structural issue in Côte d'Ivoire, it is necessary to consider measures that can mitigate its impact on school absenteeism and performance (Bekkouche et al., 2019). In addition to initiatives to improve the health conditions of teachers and the climatic resilience of school infrastructure, one measure to assess is the adaptation of school calendars, set uniformly at the national level regional climatic conditions.
- The time, effort, and risk of a **long journey to school** is immediate and affects the motivation and attendance of teachers. Measures such as recruiting and training community teachers, providing housing near schools, and providing remoteness stipends and transportation allowances or assistance can all be highly effective in shortening travel time to school (Burde et al., 2013; Barrera-Osorio et al., 2017; Duflo, 2001; Kazianga et al., 2012). It is desirable to assess accurately the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of these different options for more remote schools.

It would also be relevant to evaluate planning processes for teacher placement and deployment in schools and to consider the collection and use of geospatial data to improve the accuracy of these processes.

³⁹ Provision of tablets with a biometric device to inspectors.

⁴⁰ Some functions of these entities are in helping improve the school environment, contributing to the development and supervision of pupils and teachers, and proposing solutions to teacher management problems (Decree 2012-488 7/06).

Ecuador, Malawi, Kenya and Peru, for example, have implemented school mapping (using Geographic Information Systems, GIS) to improve the process of planning and deploying teachers to remote schools and better identify teacher location. It also helps them rank schools according to their most notable characteristics. This information is essential in designing incentives for mobility and distance, setting school and community priorities, and monitoring and tracking teacher absenteeism and other indicators of educational performance (Asim et al., 2017; Acqua, 2019; Mulaku and Nyadimo, 2011).

- The **health of teachers** is a key factor in combating absenteeism, especially regarding climatic factors and sanitary conditions and poor access to health services in rural and remote areas. According to the PASEC2019 report, only 15 per cent of end-of-primary students in Côte d'Ivoire attended schools that had a nurse or first aid supplies (CONFEMEN, 2020). The incidence of disease in the education system, as evidenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, illustrates the vulnerability of school environments if they are not properly adapted in terms of sanitation, hygiene, and biosecurity. These conditions must be assessed, monitored and guaranteed with the support of the Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene and the respective national and subnational entities. Prevention and awareness activities in schools is highly recommended, as they also reach students, families, and the community. Special attention should be paid to the health situation of public school and female teachers.

It is also essential that the mental health and social and psychological well-being of teachers are not overlooked. Ongoing support from principals, inspectors, and advisors, as well as specific measures such as structured peer support groups, are needed. The involvement of teachers' unions and professional groups in discussing and proposing these strategies is also essential (World Bank, 2020b).

Female teachers are more likely to report health and lack of security motivations to explain absenteeism, despite reporting greater job satisfaction and discomfort with absenteeism and reduced teaching time. This finding is in line with recent literature that finds women are more vulnerable to lack of adequate infrastructure (clean water, sanitation and toilet facilities, safety, etc.) and more often attend health services in their childbearing years (Jenkins, 2019; Newman et al., 2002).⁴¹ Although the interviewed stakeholders agreed that Côte d'Ivoire had made significant efforts to feminize the teaching body⁴² in order to improve girls' educational outcomes,⁴³ the surveys revealed there were no differences between male and female teachers in key variables.⁴⁴ For these efforts to be effective, it is key to take into account the specific needs women face in carrying out their work. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed a higher vulnerability of women in increased caregiving responsibilities due to the health crisis and the closure of childcare facilities and schools worldwide (UNICEF, 2021).⁴⁵

It is crucial to evaluate the working, health and infrastructure conditions of teachers in Côte d'Ivoire from a **gender perspective** in order to identify initiatives focused on women such as prevention programmes in health, distribution of hygiene products, and improvement of infrastructure to ensure safety and sanitary conditions.

Finally, it is important to highlight two themes that cut across the three dimensions mentioned above. First, it is vital not to neglect the quality of non-public provision of education services including policies and programmes aimed at improving teacher conditions, absenteeism, inspection and school management and governance. Second, given that teacher absenteeism is an issue that transcends different levels of the education system, curbing its incidence and mitigating its effects requires consideration of complementary actions on different fronts. This implies also exploring the interrelationships between possible interventions and prioritizing the most effective, scalable, sustainable and cost-effective ones.

41 The average age of surveyed female teachers is 39 years old.

42 According to official statistics, in 2019, 32% of primary school teachers in Côte d'Ivoire were women (UNESCO-UIS).

43 Although 50 per cent of the population between the ages of 5 and 9 in Côte d'Ivoire is female (United Nations Population Division's World Population Prospects 2020), girls represent the 48.8 per cent of the pupils who start primary school and the 46 per cent of those who complete the cycle (CONFEMEN, 2020).

44 Such as qualifications, experience, access to training opportunities, perception of respect from the community, and work environment.

45 An example of concrete steps in this direction is the possible adaptation of training modules such as the Caring for the Caregiver (CFC) programme developed by UNICEF to support the emotional well-being of frontline caregivers/parents, with a focus on vulnerable caregivers.

References

- Acquah, S., and Nyaaba, M., 'Access, Use and Challenges of Adopting TESSA Science OER by Basic School Science Teachers in Ghana', *European Journal of Research and Reflection in Educational Sciences*, vol.7, no. 12, 2019.
- Ansari A., 'Sindh School Monitoring System', Background note for South Asia Education Report, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., 2018.
- Agence Française de Développement, 'Côte d'Ivoire Girls are Pushing Open the Doors of School', www.afd.fr/en/actualites/grand-angle/cote-divoire-girls-are-pushing-open-doors-school, accessed July 2020.
- Asim, S., et al., 'Moving Teachers to Malawi's Remote Communities: A data driven approach to teacher deployment', Policy Research Working Paper 8253, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., 2017.
- Association Pour le Développement de l'Éducation en Afrique, *Intégration des TIC Dans les Systèmes D'Éducation et de Formation en Afrique: Tunisie*, ADEA, Côte d'Ivoire, 6 June 2014, <https://www.adeanet.org/fr/publications/integration-des-tic-dans-les-systemes-d-education-et-de-formation-en-afrique>
- Andrabi, T., et al., 'Report Cards: The impact of providing school and child test scores on educational markets', Policy Research Working Paper 7226, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., 2015.
- Banerjee, Abhijit, and Esther Duflo, 'Addressing Absence', *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2006, pp. 117–132.
- Banerjee, Abhijit, et al., 'Pitfalls of Participatory Programs: Evidence from a randomized evaluation in education in India', *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, vol. 2., no. 1, 2010, pp. 1–30.
- Barr, Abigail, et al., 'Information and Collective Action in the Community Monitoring of Schools: Field and lab experimental evidence from Uganda', Unpublished manuscript, University of Nottingham, U.K., 2012.
- Barrera-Osorio, Felipe, and Raju Dhushyanth, 'Teacher Performance Pay: Experimental evidence from Pakistan', *Journal of Public Economics*, vol. 148, 2017, pp. 75–91.
- Barry, Abdoulaye, 'Les TIC dans la Formation des Enseignants en Afrique', in 'Intégration Pédagogique des TIC : Succès et défis de 100+ écoles Africaines', IDRC, Ottawa, Canada, 2012.
- Beasley, E., and Huillery, E., 'Willing but Unable: Short-term experimental evidence on parent empowerment and school quality', Working Paper 8125, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., January 2017
- Beg S. A. et al., 'Beyond the Basics: Improving post-primary content Delivery through classroom technology', National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 25704, NBER, Cambridge, MA., 2019.
- Bekkouche, Y., Kenneth Hounbedjiy, and Oswald Koussihouede, 'Learning in the Rain: Rainy days and academic performance in sub-Saharan Africa', Working Paper, 2019.
- Behrman, Jere R., et al., 'Aligning Learning Incentives of Students and Teachers: Results from a social experiment in Mexican high schools', *Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 123, no. 2, 2015, pp. 325–364.
- Bernard, J.-M., Tiya B.K., and Vianou, K., *Profils Enseignants et Qualité de l'Éducation Primaire en Afrique Subsaharienne Francophone: Bilan et perspectives de dix années de recherche du PASEC*, PASEC/CONFEMEN, Dakar, Sénégal, 2004.
- Blimpo, Moussa Pouguintimpo, David Evans, and Nathalie Lahire, 'Parental Human Capital and Effective School Management: Evidence from The Gambia (English)', Policy Research Working Paper 7238, Impact Evaluation Series, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., 2015, accessed July 2020. documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/923441468191341801/Parental-human-capital-and-effective-school
- Blumenstock, J., et al., 'Promises and Pitfalls of Mobile Money in Afghanistan: Evidence from a randomized control trial', Proceedings of the Seventh International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies Development, Association for Computing Machinery, Singapore, May 2015.
- Bold, Tessa, et al., 'What Do Teachers Know and Do? A report card on primary teachers in sub-Saharan Africa', Paper presented at the RISE Conference, University of Oxford, June 2016.
- Bold, Tessa, et al. 'Experimental Evidence on Scaling Up Education Reforms in Kenya', *Journal of Public Economics*, vol. 168(C), 2018, pp. 1–20.
- Borkum, Evan, Fang He, and Leigh L. Linden, 'The Effects of School Libraries on Language Skills: Evidence from a randomized controlled trial in India', Working Paper 18183, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA., 2012.
- Brunette T., 'Technology Enhanced Coaching Improves Quality of Feedback in Uganda. SharEd: RTI International's shared resources for international education, 2019.

Burde, Dana, and Leigh L. Linden, 'Bringing Education to Afghan Girls: A randomized controlled trial of village-based schools', *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, vol. 5, no. 3, 2013, pp. 27–40.

Cilliers, J., et al., 'How to Improve Teaching Practice? An experimental comparison of centralized training and in-classroom coaching', *Journal of Human Resources*, vol 55, no. 3, 2019, pp. 926-962.

CONFEMEN – PASEC 2019, *Qualité des Systèmes Éducatifs en Afrique Subsaharienne Francophone*, 2020, <https://www.confemen.org/rapport-international-pasec2019/>

de Hoyos, Rafael E., et al. 'The Impact of an Accountability Intervention with Diagnostic Feedback: Evidence from Mexico', *Economics of Education Review*, vol. 58, 2017, pp. 123–40.

Dolton, Peter, and Oscar Marcenaro-Gutierrez, '2013 Global Teacher Status Index', Varkey Foundation, Surrey, U.K. <www.globalteacherprize.org/media/2787/2013globalteacherstatusindex.pdf>

Duflo, Esther, 'Schooling and Labor Market Consequences of School Construction in Indonesia: Evidence from an unusual policy experiment', *American Economic Review*, vol. 91, no. 4, 2001, pp. 795–813.

Duflo, Esther, Rema Hanna, and Stephen P. Ryan, 'Incentives Work: Getting teachers to come to school', *American Economic Review*, vol. 102, no. 4, 2012, pp. 1241–1278.

Duflo, Esther, Pascaline Dupas, and Michael Kremer, 'School Governance, Teacher Incentives, and Pupil–Teacher Ratios: Experimental evidence from Kenyan primary schools', *Journal of Public Economics*, vol. 123, 2015, pp. 92–110.

Evans, David, 'Are Good School Principals Born or Can They Be Made?' 27 June 2017

Development Impact Blog. World Bank, 2017, <<https://blogs.worldbank.org/impactevaluations/are-good-school-principals-born-or-can-they-be-made>>, accessed March 2021.

Evans, David, Fei Yuan, and Deon Filmer, 'Are Teachers in Africa Poorly Paid? Evidence from 15 countries', Policy Research Working Paper 9358, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., 2020.

Gavas, Mikaela, 'Strategic Reset: How bilateral development agencies are changing in the COVID-19 era', 8 December 2020, blog post, Center for Global Development (CGD) 2020, <<https://www.cgdev.org/blog/strategic-reset-how-bilateral-development-agencies-are-changing-covid-19-era>>, accessed March 2021.

Gallego, Francisco, Emma Näslund-Hadley, and Mariana Alfonso, 'Tailoring Instruction to Improve Mathematics Skills in Pre-schools: A randomized evaluation', IDB Publications Working Papers 8869, Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, D.C, 2020.

Glewwe, Paul, Nauman Ilias, and Michael Kremer, 'Teacher Incentives', *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, vol. 2, no. 3, 2010, pp. 205–27.

Gertler, Paul, Harry Patrinos, and Eduardo Rodríguez-Oreggia, 'Parental Empowerment in Mexico: Randomized experiment of the "Apoyos a la Gestión Escolar (AGE)" in rural primary schools in Mexico', Preliminary Draft, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., August 2012.

Global Partnership for Education, 'Note de Couverture de la Requête d'un Financement Accélééré COVID-19', 7 April 2020, www.globalpartnership.org/fr/content/note-de-couverture-de-la-requete-de-financement-accelere-covid-19-coronavirus.

Guerrero, Gabriela, et al., 'What Works to Improve Teacher Attendance in Developing Countries? A systematic review', EPPICentre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London, U.K., 2012,

<<https://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/Portals/0/PDF%20reviews%20and%20summaries/Teacher%20attendance%202012Guerrero.pdf?ver=2013-03-07-143834-057>>, accessed July 2020.

Guerrero, Gabriela, et al., 'Getting Teachers Back to the Classroom: A systematic review on what works to improve teacher attendance in developing countries', *Journal of Development Effectiveness*, vol. 5, no. 4, 2013, pp. 466–488, <www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/19439342.2013.864695>, accessed July 2020.

Harris-Van Keuren, Christine, and Iveta Silova, 'Implementing EFA Strategy No. 9: The evolution of the status of the teaching profession (2000–2015) and the impact on the quality of education in developing countries, three case studies', Education for All Global Monitoring Report Background Paper ED/EFA/MRT/2015/PI/08, United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Paris, 2015.

International Cocoa Initiative, 'Education Quality and Child Labour: Evidence from cocoa-growing communities in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana', ICI, Geneva, Switzerland, 2019, <https://cocoainitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Education-quality-and-child-labour-evidence-from-C%C3%B4te-dIvoire-and-Ghana_June2019.pdf>, accessed July 2020.

International Labour Organization, 'Workplace Stress: A collective challenge', ILO, Geneva, Switzerland, 2016, <www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---safework/documents/publication/wcms_466547.pdf>, accessed July 2020.

- Innovations for Poverty Action, 'Analyse de l'Enquête RECOVR en Côte d'Ivoire', IPA, New Haven, CT, USA, <www.poverty-action.org/sites/default/files/Cote%20d%27Ivoire%20RECOVR%20Survey%20Analysis_French.pdf>, 2020.
- Jenkins, Robert. , 'Why We Need More Female Teachers Across All Levels of Education', UNICEF Blog, 4 October 2019, <<https://blogs.unicef.org/blog/need-more-female-teachers-across-levels-education/>>, accessed 21 January 2021.
- Karsenti, T., Toure, K., and Ngamo, S., *Agenda Panafricain de Recherche sur L'Intégration Pédagogique des TIC*, International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada, December 2007.
- Kazianga, Harounan, Damien de Walque, and Harold Alderman, 'Educational and Child Labour Impacts of Two Food-for-Education Schemes: Evidence from a randomised trial in rural Burkina Faso', *Journal of African Economies*, vol. 21, no. 5, 2012, pp. 723–760.
- Kotze, J, Fleisch, B., Taylor, S., 'Alternative Forms of Early Grade Instructional Coaching: Emerging evidence from field experiments in South Africa', *International Journal of Educational Development*, vol. 66, 2019, pp. 203–213.
- Kremer, Michael, et al., 'Teacher Absence in India: A snapshot', *Journal of the European Economic Association*, vol. 3, nos. 2–3, 2005, pp. 658–67.
- Kremer, Michael, Edward Miguel, and Rebecca Thornton, 'Incentives to Learn', *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, vol. 91, no. 3, 2009, pp. 537–556
- Lassibille, Gérard, et al., 'Managing for Results in Primary Education in Madagascar: Evaluating the impact of selected workflow interventions', *The World Bank Economic Review*, vol. 24, no. 2, 2010, pp. 303–329.
- Lichand, G., and Wolf, S., 'Arm-Wrestling in the Classroom: The non-monotonic Effects of monitoring teachers', University of Zurich, Department of Economics, Working Paper 357, Zurich, Switzerland, 2021.
- Linden, L., Dhushyanth Raju, and Stephen P. Ryan, 'Delivering Education to the Underserved Through a Public-Private Partnership Program in Pakistan', National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 23870, Cambridge, MA., USA, September 2017.
- Marchetta Francesca and Tom Dilly, 'Supporting Education in Africa: Challenges and opportunities for the impact investor', FERDI Report, p. 349, September 2019.
- MENETFP and MESRS, 'Plans d'Actions à Moyen Terme – PAMT (2012–2014)', 2011.
- MENETFP and DSPTS, 'Rapport d'Analyse Statistique du Système Éducatif Ivoirien 2016–2017.
- MENETFP and DSPTS, 'Statistiques scolaires de poche, 2020-2021', 2021.
- MENETFP, MESRS and Task Force. Plan Sectorial Education/Formation (2016–2025)
- MENETFP, 'Plan de Réponse du Secteur Éducation-Formation Contre le COVID-19', April 2020.
- Morisset, Jacques, 'What's Behind Poor Education Outcomes in Côte d'Ivoire?' World Bank Blog Post, 2 February 2017, <<https://blogs.worldbank.org/nasiliza/what-s-behind-poor-education-outcomes-in-cote-d-ivoire>>, accessed July 2020.
- Mulaku, Galcano Canny, and Nyadimo, E., 'GIS in Education Planning: The Kenyan school mapping project', *Survey Review* 43:323, 2011, pp. 567–578.
- Nedungadi, P., Mulki, K., and Raman, R., 'Improving Educational Outcomes and Reducing Absenteeism at Remote Villages with Mobile Technology and WhatsApp: Findings from rural India', *Education and Information Technologies*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2018, pp. 113–127.
- Newman, John, et al., 'An Impact Evaluation of Education, Health, and Water Supply Investments by the Bolivian Social Investment Fund', *World Bank Economic Review*, vol. 16, no. 2, 2002, pp. 241–274.
- Nhampossa, Lucia Jose; Octavio Medina Pedreira and Marina Bassi. 2019. Education Service Delivery in Mozambique: A Second Round of the Service Delivery Indicators Survey (English). Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group. Consulted in July 2020 at: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/811891562864504006/Education-Service-Delivery-in-Mozambique-A-Second-Round-of-the-Service-Delivery-Indicators-Survey>
- OECD, 'Climate-Resilient Infrastructure', Environment Policy Paper no. 14, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Paris, 2018. <www.oecd.org/environment/cc/policy-perspectives-climate-resilient-infrastructure.pdf>.
- Piper B, et al., 'Effectiveness of Teachers' Guides in the Global South: Scripting, learning outcomes, and classroom utilization', RTI Press Publication, no. OP-0053-1805, Research Triangle Park, N.C., U.S.A, 2018.
- Popova, Anna, et al., 'Teacher Professional Development around the World: The gap between evidence and practice', Policy Research Working Paper 8572, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., 2018. <<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/30324>>

'Rapport d'État du Système Éducatif National de la Côte d'Ivoire: Pour une politique éducative plus inclusive et plus efficace', Gouvernement de la Côte d'Ivoire, UNICEF, Pôle de Dakar de IPE – UNESCO, 2016.

Sargent, T, and Hannum, E., 'Keeping Teachers Happy: Job satisfaction among primary school teachers in rural Northwest China', *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 49, no. 2, 2005, pp. 173–204.

Somda, K., and Oteme, A., 'Etude Qualitative des Déterminants du Bien- Être et de la Détresse Psychologique au Travail des Enseignants Ivoiriens du Secondaire et du Primaire Public', Ziglôbitha, Revue des Arts, Linguistique, Littérature & Civilisations, no. 2. 2021, pp.5-22.

Stutchbury, K., Chamberlain, L., and Amos, S., 'Supporting Professional Development through MOOCs: The TESSA experience', Pan-Commonwealth Forum 9, 2019.

Ukki, Maryam N., 'Non-Financial Incentives and Teachers in Public Secondary School in Zanzibar', Research dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Science in Human Resource Management, Mzumbe University, Dar es Salaam Campus College, Tanzania, 2013.

UNECA, 'Climate Change and Health Across Africa: Issues and options', African Climate Policy Center Working paper 20, November 2011, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

UNESCO, 'ICT Competency Standards for Teachers', Policy Framework, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Paris, France, 2008.

UNESCO, 'Financing Education in sub-Saharan Africa: Meeting the challenges of expansion, equity and quality', UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Montréal, Canada, 2011. <<https://doi.org/10.15220/978-92-9189-079-2-en>>

UNESCO, 'Renforcement des Capacites des Encadreurs Pédagogiques et Formation Continue des Enseignants', 2013.

UNESCO-IICBA, 'Teacher Support and Motivation Framework for Africa: Emerging patterns', UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2017.

UNESCO-UIS database. UNESCO Institute of Statistics. <http://data.uis.unesco.org/>, accessed October 2021.

UNICEF, 'Côte d'Ivoire Country Programme 2017–2020: Programme effectiveness, 2017a, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/836379>

UNICEF, 'Time to Teach: A study on the determinants of teacher absenteeism in sub-Saharan Africa', 2017b, <[https://www.unicef-irc.org/files/upload/documents/TTT%20-%20Research%20proposal%20\(2\).pdf](https://www.unicef-irc.org/files/upload/documents/TTT%20-%20Research%20proposal%20(2).pdf)>, accessed July 2020.

UNICEF, 'COVID-19 Case Study Côte d'Ivoire – Opening schools up better', 29 July 2020, <www.corecommitments.unicef.org/kp/case-study--cote-d%27ivoire-%2829-july-2020%29.pdf>.

UNICEF, 'Caring for Caregivers During the COVID-19 Crisis', <www.unicef.org/media/84131/file/CFC-COVID-19.pdf>

Universalia, 'Summative GPE Country Program Evaluation', Batch 2, Country 3: Côte d'Ivoire. Final Evaluation Report, August 2018, Universalia Management Group, Quebec, Canada. <www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/2018-10-gpe-evaluation-report-cote-divoire.pdf>

World Bank, 'Haiti: Can Smartphones Make Schools Better? From Evidence to Policy Note', The World Bank, Washington, D.C., 2015.

World Bank, 'Results in Education for All Children (REACH)', 2017 Annual Report, The World Bank, Washington, D.C.

World Bank, 'World Development Report: Learning to realize education's promise', The World Bank, Washington, D.C., 2018.

World Bank, 'Côte d'Ivoire Learning Poverty Brief', 2019, SSA AFC2 CIVLPBRIEF.pdf (worldbank.org)

World Bank, 'Learning Poverty in the Time of Covid-19: A crisis within a crisis', Brief Report 154660, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., December 2020. <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/163871606851736436/learning-poverty-in-the-time-of-covid-19-a-crisis-within-a-crisis>

World Bank, 'La Cote d'Ivoire Face à la COVID-19: Quel impact de la crise sur les entreprises et les ménages', Economic Updates and Modelling, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., August 2020. <<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34559?show=full&locale-attribute=fr>>

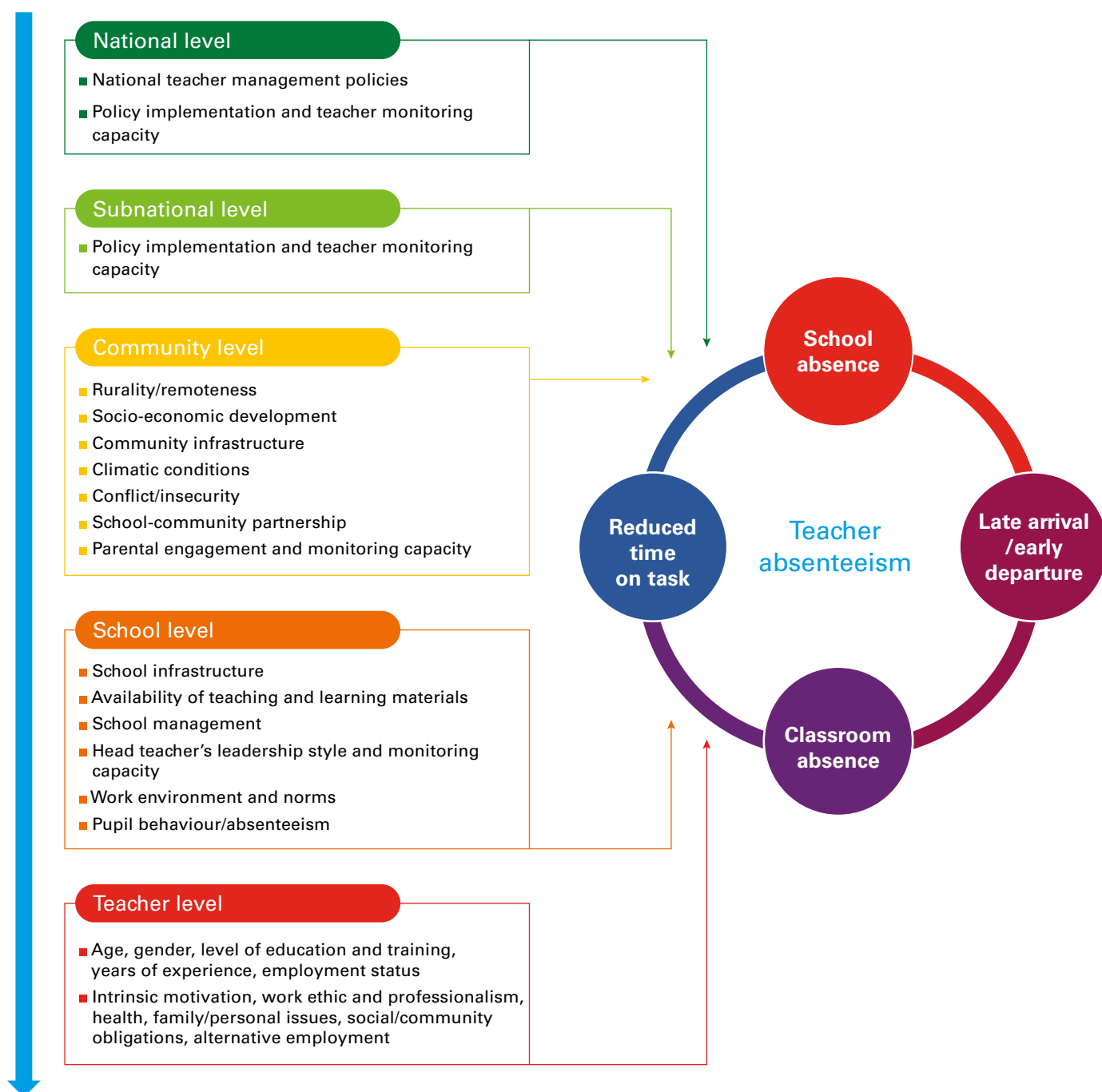
World Bank, 'Three Principles to Support Teacher Effectiveness During Covid-19', Teachers' Thematic Group Policy Note, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., May 2020. <<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/33775>>

Annex 1: Time to Teach in Côte d'Ivoire

Conceptual framework

Figure A1 represents the explanatory model used in the TTT Côte d'Ivoire study based on a five-level systemic analysis (right). This model, adopted from the explanatory model of teacher attendance in Guerrero et al. (2012, 2013), helps to better understand both the bottleneck of absenteeism and its relationship to progress in education and effective learning.

Figure A1. Time to Teach framework



Data collection and analysis methods

The study has two main sources of data: the survey of teachers and interviews with various stakeholders in the system. In the first case, a total of 118 pen-to-paper surveys were collected, cleaned, and compiled, removing any information that could identify participants. The surveys analysed were composed as follows:

- 16 per cent were from rural areas, 80 per cent from urban areas and 4 per cent from peri-urban areas (peri-urban surveys were added to urban ones).
- 44 per cent of public schools, 53 per cent of private schools and 2 per cent of community schools (community surveys were excluded from the public–private comparative analyses). It should be noted that there were zero surveys of private schools in rural areas.
- 45 per cent were women, with an average age of 39 years (minimum 25 years and maximum 60 years).

The comparative analysis of survey data by different levels of aggregation (urban/rural, public/private) and teacher characteristics is limited to those cases where the differences between the subgroups are statistically significant at a confidence level of at least 90 per cent.

Interviews and focus group discussions were typically one hour in duration and were transcribed word-for-word and analysed in the original language (French) using thematic content analysis. Coding was done manually and data organized into themes.

Study limitations

The quantitative analysis and teacher survey of the TTT Côte d'Ivoire study, which resemble studies using cross-sectional and non-experimental research designs, have some limitations that must be considered for proper interpretation of the results. The four most important are:

Self-reporting and response bias: Despite efforts made in the field research⁴⁶ there is risk that responses might be biased to some extent as teacher absenteeism is typically perceived as a negative behaviour that could potentially threaten teachers' employment status. In addition, typical problems of self-reporting surveys may have arisen, such as selective memory, telescoping, or differentiated weighting of events with respect to their true significance.

Survey representativeness and selection bias: The main unit of analysis was a group of 20 schools selected on the basis of regional diversity, school governance (public/private/community) and location (urban/rural). Once the schools were defined, all teachers present on the day of the visit were surveyed and three teachers were interviewed. As schools were not selected in a probabilistic manner, the information and data collected are not generalizable and do not allow any valid statistical inference. In addition, the number of survey respondents (118 in surveys), although important, is small and may affect the accuracy of any population estimate and limit the disaggregation of the analyses. Finally, there is the possibility of selection bias as respondents were selected among individuals present in schools on the day of the visit. Therefore, they may tend to over-represent those with higher attendance and other specific characteristics also related to teacher absenteeism.

Non-response bias: There was a significant percentage of non-response in the teacher survey to questions about recurrence of the different types of absenteeism: 31 per cent for absence from school, 30 per cent for lack of punctuality, 39 per cent for classroom absenteeism and 29 per cent for reduction of teaching time. In addition to limiting the number of observations, this circumstance can lead to a bias in results if present but non-responding teachers differ significantly from those who respond.

Despite these limitations, which compromise the statistical validity of the quantitative findings presented in this report, the diversity and depth of the qualitative information gathered and analysed here, provide a robust account of the factors underpinning teacher absenteeism in Côte d'Ivoire.

⁴⁶ Including training to communicate the objectives of the study clearly, emphasizing the voluntary nature of participation, clarifying any misconceptions about possible consequences, and emphasizing the principles of anonymity and confidentiality of data collection and use.

Annex 2: Supplementary tables

Table A1. Motivations for teacher absenteeism by location, school governance

	Rural	Urban	Difference	p-value	Public	Private	Difference	p-value
	Proportion (%)				Proportion (%)			
ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL								
Health	89	78	11	0.28	82	78	4	0.54
Family/community obligations	37	37	0	0.97	35	38	-3	0.70
Official school affairs	32	32	0	0.95	47	21	26***	0.00
Weather	16	27	-11	0.31	20	29	-9	0.25
Remoteness (transport/distance)	16	27	-11	0.30	19	32	-13	0.13
Strikes	26	22	4	0.65	31	16	15**	0.05
Payment issues	21	7	14*	0.06	12	5	7	0.18
Lack of security	5	9	-4	0.63	18	0	18***	0.00
N	19	93			51	58		
LACK OF PUNCTUALITY								
Health	79	60	19	0.13	74	55	19**	0.04
Weather	37	49	-12	0.34	54	42	12	0.21
Remoteness	26	35	-9	0.45	33	37	-4	0.67
Family/community obligations	47	33	14	0.16	35	29	6	0.37
Official school affairs	11	15	-4	0.64	22	8	14**	0.04
Strikes	16	8	8	0.32	10	10	0	0.96
Payment issues	16	7	9	0.21	8	10	-2	0.73
Lack of security	5	6	-1	0.87	12	2	10*	0.02
N	19	96			50	62		
ABSENSE FROM THE CLASSROOM								
Administrative tasks	67	70	-3	0.80	80	61	19**	0.04
Health	56	44	12	0.37	47	45	2	0.82
Official school affairs	28	40	-12	0.32	57	21	36***	0.00
Lack of materials	39	12	27***	0.01	20	14	6	0.41
Strikes	17	12	5	0.63	12	14	-2	0.76
Weather	33	13	20**	0.04	27	7	20***	0.01
Numerous course preparation tasks	0	7	-7	0.26	2	9	-7	0.13
Insufficient students present	6	2	4	0.44	4	2	2	0.49
Lack of security	0	3	-3	0.43	2	2	0	0.06
N	18	89			49	56		

	Rural	Urban	Difference	p-value	Public	Private	Difference	p-value
	Proportion (%)				Proportion (%)			
REDUCED TIME ON TASK								
Health	56	38	18	0.16	45	36	9	0.34
Students misbehave	17	42	-25**	0.04	35	41	-6	0.51
Lack of materials	67	23	44***	0.00	47	14	33***	0.00
Students have difficulty following the course	33	31	2	0.85	39	27	12	0.19
Weather	28	26	2	0.85	24	27	-3	0.79
Numerous course preparation tasks	22	24	-2	0.84	20	29	-9	0.34
Need more training	22	3	19***	0.00	10	2	8*	0.06
Distracted by family/ personal problems	11	6	5	0.39	6	7	-1	0.84
N	18	90			49	56		

Note: The percentages represent the proportion of teachers who attribute absence from school, late arrival/early departure, absence from class, and reduced teaching time to low motivation. The question was stated as follows: "What are the main reasons that cause you to be absent in various ways? Choose up to three answers (multiple choice possible)". The different columns express differences in percentage points. Stars indicate confidence level at *10 per cent, **5 per cent, and ***1 per cent and the p-value columns represent the probability of occurrence that the difference between the two groups is zero. Categories are sorted in descending order by the overall frequency.

Table A2. Opinions of teachers, by location, school governance and level of analysis

	Rural	Urban	Difference	p-value	Public	Private	Difference	p-value
	Proportion (%)				Proportion (%)			
NATIONAL LEVEL								
Average number of students in the classroom ¹	36	50	-15***	0.00	48	49	-1	0.93
Teacher has tertiary/ vocational education	42	51	-8	0.51	48	52	-4	0.65
"I have the adequate skills and knowledge"	83	86	-2	0.81	82	87	-5	0.44
"I have access to training"	17	47	-31**	0.02	21	59	-38***	0.00
Teacher has more than 5 years of experience	53	71	-19	0.11	67	71	-4	0.68
"I am happy with my salary"	0	11	-11	0.13	8	10	-2	0.75
"I receive my salary on time"	50	83	-33***	0.00	72	85	-13*	0.09
"It is easy to collect my salary"	39	82	-43***	0.00	65	86	-21***	0.01
Teacher receives any allowances	74	68	6	0.61	69	67	3	0.77

	Rural	Urban	Difference	p-value	Public	Private	Difference	p-value
	Proportion (%)				Proportion (%)			
SUBNATIONAL LEVEL								
"Inspectors and advisors visit this school regularly"	74	79	-5	0.64	69	85	-16**	0.04
"Inspectors and advisors motivate and inspire school staff"	89	86	3	0.77	90	83	7	0.31
"Inspectors and advisors discourage teacher absenteeism"	94	92	3	0.68	94	90	4	0.40
"Inspectors frequently sanction teacher absenteeism"	82	67	15	0.21	73	66	7	0.43
COMMUNITY LEVEL								
"In this community teachers are respected"	61	61	0	1.00	39	79	-40***	0.00
"Most students are motivated to learn"	94	69	25**	0.03	69	76	-7	0.40
"Most parents are engaged in school affairs"	47	48	-1	0.93	31	63	-32***	0.00
"Most parents see absenteeism as a problem"	89	55	34***	0.01	59	60	-2	0.87
SCHOOL LEVEL								
"The head teachers is always at school"	84	84	1	0.95	77	89	-12*	0.09
"The head teachers manages the school and the teachers well"	83	79	4	0.70	81	79	2	0.79
"The head teachers encourages teacher training"	89	86	2	0.78	86	87	-1	0.93
"The head teachers discourages teacher absences"	83	95	-12*	0.08	90	95	-5	0.32
"The head teacher always records teacher absences"	71	83	12	0.23	78	83	-5	0.51
"The school has the materials needed for class"	22	37	-15	0.24	19	47	-28***	0.00
TEACHER LEVEL								
"I am satisfied with my job"	79	88	-9	0.30	85	87	-3	0.68
"I feel upset when I am absent or unable to teach"	78	82	4	0.68	89	77	-12	0.11
N	18	93			49	59		

Note: The percentages represent the proportion of teachers who agree or strongly agree with the statements in the rows. The 'difference' columns express differences in percentage points. Stars indicate confidence level at *10 per cent, **5 per cent, and ***1 per cent, and the p-value columns represent the probability of occurrence that the difference between the two subgroups is zero. ¹Absolute numbers.

Table A3. Recurrent absenteeism and selected teacher characteristics and perceptions, by level of analysis

		Absent from school	Lack of punctuality	Absence from the classroom	Reduced time on task
		Proportion (% , except the p-values)			
TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS					
Has tertiary/vocational education	No	7	9	12	12
	Yes	0	10	3	7
	Difference	7*	-1	9	5
	p-value	0.08	0.89	0.12	0.48
Has more than 5 years of experience	No	4	13	8	11
	Yes	0	5	0	11
	Difference	4	8	8	0
	p-value	0.39	0.31	0.25	0.99
Receives any allowances	No	0	15	12	15
	Yes	5	9	4	8
	Difference	-5	6	8	7
	p-value	0.21	0.41	0.23	0.35
Has more than 42 students (national average, 2018 UNESCO-UIS) per class	No	4	13	7	15
	Yes	3	6	6	5
	Difference	-1	7	1	10
	p-value	0.69	0.31	0.88	0.15
TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS					
National level					
"I receive my salary on time" or "It is easy to collect my salary"	Disagree	6	24	21	33
	Agree	3	7	2	4
	Difference	3	17*	19***	29***
	p-value	0.58	0.06	0.00	0.00
Subnational level					
"Inspectors and advisors discourage teacher absenteeism"	Disagree	0	33	0	17
	Agree	4	9	7	11
	Difference	-4	24*	7	6
	p-value	0.62	0.07	0.49	0.65
"Inspectors frequently sanction teacher absenteeism"	Disagree	0	19	10	7
	Agree	6	7	6	11
	Difference	-6	12	4	4
	p-value	0.20	0.12	0.60	0.60

		Absent from school	Lack of punctuality	Absence from the classroom	Reduced time on task
		Proportion (% , except the p-values)			
Community level					
"Most parents see absenteeism as a problem"	Disagree	3	13	10	8
	Agree	4	10	5	14
	Difference	-1	3	5	6
	p-value	0.79	0.68	0.40	0.42
School level					
"The head teacher discourages teacher absences"	Disagree	0	14	0	17
	Agree	4	11	7	10
	Difference	-4	4	-7	7
	p-value	0.60	0.76	0.54	0.63
"The head teacher always records teacher absences"	Disagree	6	15	8	8
	Agree	3	10	7	12
	Difference	3	5	1	-4
	p-value	0.56	0.61	0.92	0.66
"The school has the materials needed for class"	Disagree	2	11	16	9
	Agree	8	11	4	15
	Difference	-7	0	12*	-6
	p-value	0.16	0.96	0.07	0.43
Teacher level					
"I am satisfied with the job"	Disagree	0	10	18	8
	Agree	4	11	5	11
	Difference	-4	-1	13*	-3
	p-value	0.54	0.94	0.10	0.79
"I feel upset when I am absent or unable to teach"	Disagree	13	18	18	14
	Agree	2	10	5	10
	Diff.	12**	8	13	4
	p-value	0.03	0.43	0.13	0.67
N		83	84	74	85

Note: Percentages indicate the proportion of teachers who report recurrent absences (once a week or more) based on characteristics and agreement/disagreement with row statements. The 'differences' columns express differences in percentage points. Stars indicate confidence level at *10 per cent, **5 per cent, and ***1 per cent, and the p-value columns represent the probability of occurrence that the difference between the two groups is zero.

for every child, answers

UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti

Via degli Alfani, 58 – 50121

Florence, Italy

Tel: (+39) 055 20 330

Fax: (+39) 055 2033 220

florence@unicef.org

www.unicef-irc.org

twitter: @UNICEFInnocenti

facebook.com/UnicefInnocenti

© 2021 United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

unicef 
Office of Research – Innocenti