



Time to Teach

Teacher attendance and time on task
in primary schools

Zanzibar

Christine Han, Despina Karamperidou and Silvia Peirola

January 2021

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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)

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Foreword

Teachers play a key role in imparting knowledge to children. More than just conduits of information, they equip children with the tools to analyse, problem solve, and effectively use information – skills necessary to lead healthy and productive lives. However, many education systems in East and Southern Africa lack the capacity to prepare, support, motivate, and manage their teachers.

Over the past few decades, Zanzibar has implemented a number of policy reforms and made tremendous progress in expanding access to primary education. Yet, the quality of learning outcomes remains weak. One of the major factors hindering the provision of quality education is teacher absenteeism, which is a prevalent phenomenon across primary schools in Zanzibar. While many reasons for teacher absenteeism appear to be circumstantial, such as lack of reliable transport and bad climate conditions, some absences are hard to justify, such as when teachers fail to prepare for lessons. Teacher absenteeism directly affects the time and quality of the interaction between teachers and pupils, thus impacting pupils' learning and their acquisition of foundational skills, including literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional skills necessary to reach their full potential.

Ensuring equitable, accessible and quality education for all is a core pillar of Zanzibar's national strategy of becoming a middle-income country. Any hindrance to the development of adequate, reliable, and competent human capital has a negative impact on national development. Teacher absenteeism suggests ineffective use of public resources and has a negative effect on the entire school system. By lowering pupils' achievements, teacher absenteeism eventually causes much broader socio-economic losses.

We also hope the findings of the report will feed into future interventions of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training to ensure a competent and motivated teaching force for Zanzibar, but also to increase the opportunities for children to learn at school and improve their opportunities in life.

The Research Team
UNICEF Innocenti

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ASCEE	Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education Examinations
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CSEE	Certificate of Secondary Education Examinations
DEO	District education offices
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
EFA	Education for All
ESRF	Economic and Social Research Foundation (Tanzania)
FGDs	Focus group discussions
GER	Gross enrolment ratio
HDI	Human Development Index
IDIs	In-depth interviews
MKUZA	Zanzibar Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty
MoEVT	Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (Zanzibar)
MPI	Multi-dimensional poverty index
NER	Net enrolment ratio
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OECD	Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development
PCR	Pupil-classroom ratio
PTR	Pupil-teacher ratio
REO	Regional education office
RGoZ	Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar
SUMAIT	Abdul Rahman Al-Sumait Memorial University
SUZA	State University of Zanzibar
TC	Teacher Centre
TCA	Thematic content analysis
TCC	Teacher Training College
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
ZEDP	Zanzibar Education Development Plan

Executive summary

Study overview

Teacher absenteeism represents one of the major challenges for achieving universal learning in many developing countries, where teacher absence rates range from 3 to 27 per cent.¹ Due to lack of data and dedicated studies in the country, the actual rates of teacher absenteeism are not clear. Available research shows that teacher absenteeism is a prevalent phenomenon in Zanzibar. A 2015 project report focusing on quality instruction and learning environment shows that in a small number of primary schools visited, 41 per cent of teachers were absent from school, and only 30 per cent were in the classroom teaching at the time of the visit.² A 2013 survey conducted in 126 primary schools across Zanzibar found almost all schools in the sample experienced different types of teacher absenteeism, including absence from school, late arrival and absence from the classroom.³ While the stark numbers are available, the evidence base on which factors, policies and practices affect teacher attendance in Zanzibar, remains scant.

The Time to Teach (TTT) study aims to address this knowledge gap. The primary objective of the study is to collate and strengthen the evidence base on the various types and determinants of primary school teacher attendance and to provide practical recommendations for improving the design and implementation of teacher policies. Specifically, the study looks at four distinct dimensions of teacher attendance: (1) being in school; (2) being punctual (i.e. not arriving late/leaving early), (3) being in the classroom (while in school); and (4) spending sufficient time on task (while in the classroom).

TTT is a mixed-methods project, employing both qualitative and quantitative research tools. The study draws from national, system-wide, qualitative data collections and school observations, and a quantitative survey of 463 teachers working in 20 purposely selected primary schools.

Main findings

How frequently are teachers absent?

Only 2 per cent of teachers reported they had never been absent from school. More than 15 per cent of surveyed teachers reported being absent from school or being late or leaving from school early once a week or more, while 23 per cent of teachers reported missing class while being at school at the same rate. Reduced time spent on task while in the classroom, was reported by 21 per cent of surveyed teachers as occurring once a week or more.

Why are teachers absent?

Attending in-service training constitutes the single-most-common reason for teacher absenteeism from school in almost all schools, irrespective of school type or geographic location. Attending trainings is also a cause for teachers' lack of punctuality and a major cause for classroom absenteeism. A number of international development projects and interventions are providing important support to schools through training, causing absence from school. Insufficient training in language skills, content knowledge and teaching methods primarily affects teaching time while in the classroom.

Payment delays and low salary levels often lead teachers to be absent from school. To a lesser extent, insufficient salary could also affect teachers' punctuality, attendance in class and time on task while in the classroom mainly due to teachers' frustration and loss of motivation. Some teachers have resorted to

alternative employment, affecting teacher attendance in school, punctuality, classroom absenteeism and teaching time.

The provision of transport allowance represents the single-most-important factor that accounts for teacher's punctuality, especially in public schools. An insufficient transport allowance is linked to teacher absenteeism, especially in rural areas.

Subnational education actors' school visits could help in discouraging school absenteeism, late arrival, as well as reduced teaching time while in the classroom. However, the lack of formal authority and mandate of subnational education actors constitutes a barrier for them to take effective action against all types of teacher absenteeism.

Challenges related to community infrastructure are linked with different types of teacher absenteeism. The availability and reliability of transport and roads affects teachers' punctuality and attendance at school, but also attendance in the classroom due to teachers' exhaustion and stress caused by transport problems. The distance from teachers' residences to school and from residence to transport often causes teachers to delay or to be completely absent from school. In addition, climate conditions – particularly heavy rain – affects teachers' absence from school and punctuality, mainly because they exacerbate transport difficulties.

A head teacher's management and monitoring capacity has a direct impact on all four types of teacher absenteeism and in particular school absenteeism and lateness. In all selected schools, there are formal procedures to follow for reporting and sanctioning when teachers are absent from school or arrive late or leave early. However, sanctioning practices vary between public and private schools. Head teachers' supervision and monitoring capacity is also critical for discouraging classroom absenteeism and reduced teaching time when in the classroom.

High workload, which often results from high pupil-teacher ratios, is in general a demotivating factor for teachers, causing stress and frustration. Heavy workloads especially affect absence from the classroom as well as teaching time while in the classroom. Across all types of schools, pupils' attendance and health also have an impact on teacher absenteeism of certain types, including absence from school and the classroom, but most notably reduced time spent on teaching while in the classroom. In addition, infrastructural and material shortages are often considered to be directly responsible for certain types of teacher absenteeism, especially reduced teaching time, but also classroom absenteeism, to a lesser extent.

Personal and family reasons, including health issues as well as family obligations, such as bearing children and taking care of family members, are more likely to result in absence from school, but could also lead to lack of punctuality, absence from the classroom and reduced teaching time while in the classroom. Similarly, social obligations, which mainly include attending social events such as weddings and funerals, as well as religious activities, affect school attendance and punctuality.

What are the potential recommendations for policy making?

Ensure that in-service training does not conflict with teachers' training period. This should increase teacher motivation and the likelihood that teachers are well equipped to perform effectively in the classroom. As part of the rollout of the new Continuous Professional Development (CPD) framework, a Teacher Training Quality Assurance Board could also be established to streamline the entry requirements, course design and final assessments of teacher-training institutions, and systematically monitor and evaluate the results of teacher training. For pre-service training and work ethics should be included as part of the training.

Ensure the timely delivery of teacher salaries. This could be achieved by increasing pay points, especially in areas where teachers often have to travel for days to collect. Conducting a survey of salaries and allowances across the country – to better understand the living costs of different areas, and adjust the salary scale and distribution of transport allowance accordingly – is recommended to increase teacher attendance.

Ensure national and subnational education offices have sufficient financial resources and capacity to conduct school visits. At the central level, developing an annual plan and reassessing current school-inspection capacity could be an option to ensure school visits in both urban and rural areas. Providing technical training on education budgeting and programme implementation, including training on professional code of conduct, could enhance subnational monitoring, leading to increased teacher attendance.

Boost community monitoring capacity. This could be achieved through awareness-raising campaigns at the community level, targeting parents in both rural and urban areas. It is suggested to clarify the roles and functions of school committees in terms of supporting teacher attendance and providing relevant training to committee members.

Provide specific training for head teachers on management and leadership as well as on mentoring and coaching skills. Making this training a prerequisite for recruitment or promotion could be an option to ensure teacher management is enhanced, leading to better teacher motivation and attendance. For public schools, encouraging the adoption of 'log books' to systematically track teachers' classroom attendance and time on task while in the classroom could help in improving teacher attendance in the classroom and increase the time spent on teaching.

Make distribution of teachers across schools more equitable by prioritizing the deployment of teachers to schools that have higher PTRs than the national target of 40:1. This is likely to reduce the heavy workload of teachers and increase their motivation.

Strengthen inter-sectoral collaboration to address factors beyond the education system that affect teacher attendance, in particular in relation to health and infrastructure. Regarding health, providing health infrastructure and benefits to teachers and students is likely to increase teacher attendance. Conducting a mapping exercise of the current teacher-housing situation across the country could minimize the effect of long distance from teachers' residences to school.

Section 1: Introduction

1.1. Context and study rationale

Teacher absenteeism is one of the troubling obstacles on the path toward universal learning in many developing countries.⁴ Studies from across the developing world have found national averages of teacher absenteeism that range from 3 to 27 per cent.⁵ These national averages, however, often conceal even higher rates of absenteeism within countries, as well as variations in educational opportunities and outcomes, since teachers tend to be more frequently absent in poorer and more remote communities and schools.⁶

Teacher absenteeism is particularly prevalent in certain parts of Africa. A recent study by the World Bank found that between 15 and 45 per cent of all primary school teachers in seven sub-Saharan African countriesⁱ are absent from school, and between 23 and 57 per cent are absent from class on any given day.⁷ Such high rates of school and classroom absenteeism result in a serious waste of public funds. The same study estimates that, on average, the loss of teaching hours due to absenteeism corresponds to a waste of approximately 46 cents in every dollar invested in education, which is equivalent to an annual wastage of 1–3 per cent of GDP.⁸ Afrobarometer data, drawn from 36 African countries,⁹ also indicate that teacher absenteeism contributes to unequal education outcomes and confirms a strong association between high levels of teacher absenteeism and the presence of marginalised and vulnerable groups.

In the United Republic of Tanzania, Zanzibar (hereafter Zanzibar), due to lack of data and dedicated studies, the actual rates of teacher absenteeism are not clear. Available research shows that teacher absenteeism is a prevalent phenomenon across the country. A 2015 project report focusing on quality instruction and learning environment shows that in a small number of primary schools visited, 41 per cent of teachers were absent from school, and only 30 per cent were in the classroom teaching at the time of the visit.¹⁰ A 2013 survey conducted in 126 primary schools across Zanzibar found that almost all schools in the sample experienced different types of teacher absenteeism, including absence from school, absence from the classroom and late arrival.¹¹

Existing findings and mounting evidence regarding teacher absenteeism of different types point to governance, accountability and management issues. The magnitude and multifaceted nature of the problem suggest there is a pressing need to identify and address its underlying causes. Failure to do so will not only perpetuate the inefficient use of education resources, but more importantly, affect generations of children in their pursuit of knowledge and skills, and consequently, reduce their life opportunities.

1.2. Objectives

Policy makers and education stakeholders in Zanzibar are becoming increasingly aware of the negative consequences of teacher absenteeism. Nevertheless, the evidence base on how policies and practices, at various level of the education system, influence different dimensions of teacher attendance (school, classroom, and so on), remains limited. This lack of evidence contributes to difficulties in designing effective teacher-management policies to increase educators' motivations and opportunities to teach and successfully implement school governance reforms.¹²

The principal objective of the Time to Teach study is to generate and collate empirical evidence on the various types and determinants of primary school teacher absenteeism in the country and to provide practical recommendations for improving teacher-attendance rates. The study seeks to offer critical insights on factors at different levels of the education system that influence teacher attendance and to assist the

i Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda

policy and programmatic work of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, UNICEF Tanzania and other national and international education stakeholders.

More specifically, the study aims to:

- Understand the various forms of primary school teacher absenteeism (e.g. absence from school, classroom, teaching, etc.) and assess their prevalence in different regions, types of schools (e.g. public/private) and settings (e.g. rural/urban)
- Explore the issue of teacher absenteeism from a systemic perspective and to identify factors at different levels of the education system (national, subnational, community, school, and teacher) that affect teacher attendance, as well as teachers' capacity and motivation to teach up to standards
- Detect gaps in teacher policy and policy implementation linked to identified determinants of absenteeism and barriers to higher teacher-attendance rates
- Identify promising practices and provide actionable policy recommendations on increasing teachers' attendance as a means of improving learners' academic performance
- Increase awareness among national education policy makers, international organizations, and donors supporting education on the importance of well-designed teacher policies and the integration of the issue of teacher attendance into national education strategies, programs, and policy discussions

1.3. Data and methods

TTT is a mixed-methods project, that employs both qualitative and quantitative research tools. The study takes a systems approach toward explaining teacher absenteeism and examines the relevance of factors at various levels of the education system, including the national, subnational, community, school, and individual teacher levels. The study also evaluates whether factors outside of the education system have an important role to play in determining teacher attendance, and if so, what that role is.

In total, 20 primary schools were purposely selected based on the following three criteria: location (region/county), governance (public or private) and rurality (rural or urban). At each school, in-depth interviews (IDIs) were carried out with the head teacher, three teachers and a member of the school management board. A focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted with students, and a teacher survey was administered to all teachers who were present on the day of the (pre-announced) visit. National and subnational education officers, in charge of teacher monitoring, and teacher union representatives were also interviewed. In total, 653 individuals participated in the study.

1.4. Chapter organization

This report is structured as follows: Section 2 provides a short overview of Zanzibar's primary education system and teacher policies. It also critically reviews existing studies on teacher absenteeism in the country and highlights their limitations. Section 3 presents the methodology of the study and discusses the conceptual framework, sampling, instrument development, data collection and analysis as well as methodological limitations. Detailed findings are presented in Sections 4–5. The report ends with Section 6, where main conclusions are provided, followed by a series of practical and actionable policy recommendations.

Section 2: Country context

Zanzibar is a semi-autonomous territory of the United Republic of Tanzania, situated in the Indian Ocean, lying off the coast of Tanzania Mainland. Zanzibar consists of two large islands: Unguja, which is the most populated island and where the capital city is located; and Pemba Island, among many smaller islands. The official languages of Zanzibar are Kiswahili and English.¹³ Islam is the major religion in Zanzibar.¹⁴ According to the most recent census in 2012, the population of Zanzibar is around 1.3 million,¹⁵ accounting for around three per cent of the entire population of the United Republic of Tanzania. Zanzibar is divided into five administrative regions across the two major islands, namely, Urban/West (Mjini Magharibi), Central/South (Kusini Unguja), Unguja North (Kaskazini Unguja), Pemba South (Kusini Pemba) as well as Pemba North (Kaskazini Pemba). These five regions are further divided into 11 districts, 50 constituencies and 388 wards (shehias).¹⁶ It is suggested that almost half of Zanzibar's population resides in urban areas, resulting in very high population density.¹⁷

A former protectorate of the United Kingdom, Zanzibar merged with mainland Tanganyika in 1964, after a 3-month revolution during which the African majority overthrew the Arab ruling minority.¹⁸ The union was later renamed as the United Republic of Tanzania. Zanzibar remained semi-autonomous from the union and formed the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar (RGoZ). While the Union Government is responsible for a number of policy areas, including defence, foreign affairs, and fiscal and monetary policy, the RGoZ has the mandate of establishing its own development policy as well as internal affairs, including the provision and financing of education,¹⁹ with the exception of higher education.²⁰ The RGoZ is made up of the Revolutionary Council together with the House of Representatives. It has three branches of authorities, including the executive (President of Zanzibar), legislative (House of Representatives) and judiciary (Attorney General and Chief Justice).²¹

Zanzibar's per capita income currently stands at US\$899,²² below the threshold of US\$1,025 used for classifying countries into the low-income category. Zanzibar's economy is increasingly driven by the service sector and less by agriculture.²³ Tourism is a fast-growing sector in Zanzibar, contributing to around 40 per cent of Zanzibar's GDP,²⁴ while the agricultural sector accounts for 21–25 per cent.²⁵ The service sector represents the largest employer, hosting 42 per cent of Zanzibar's labour force.²⁶

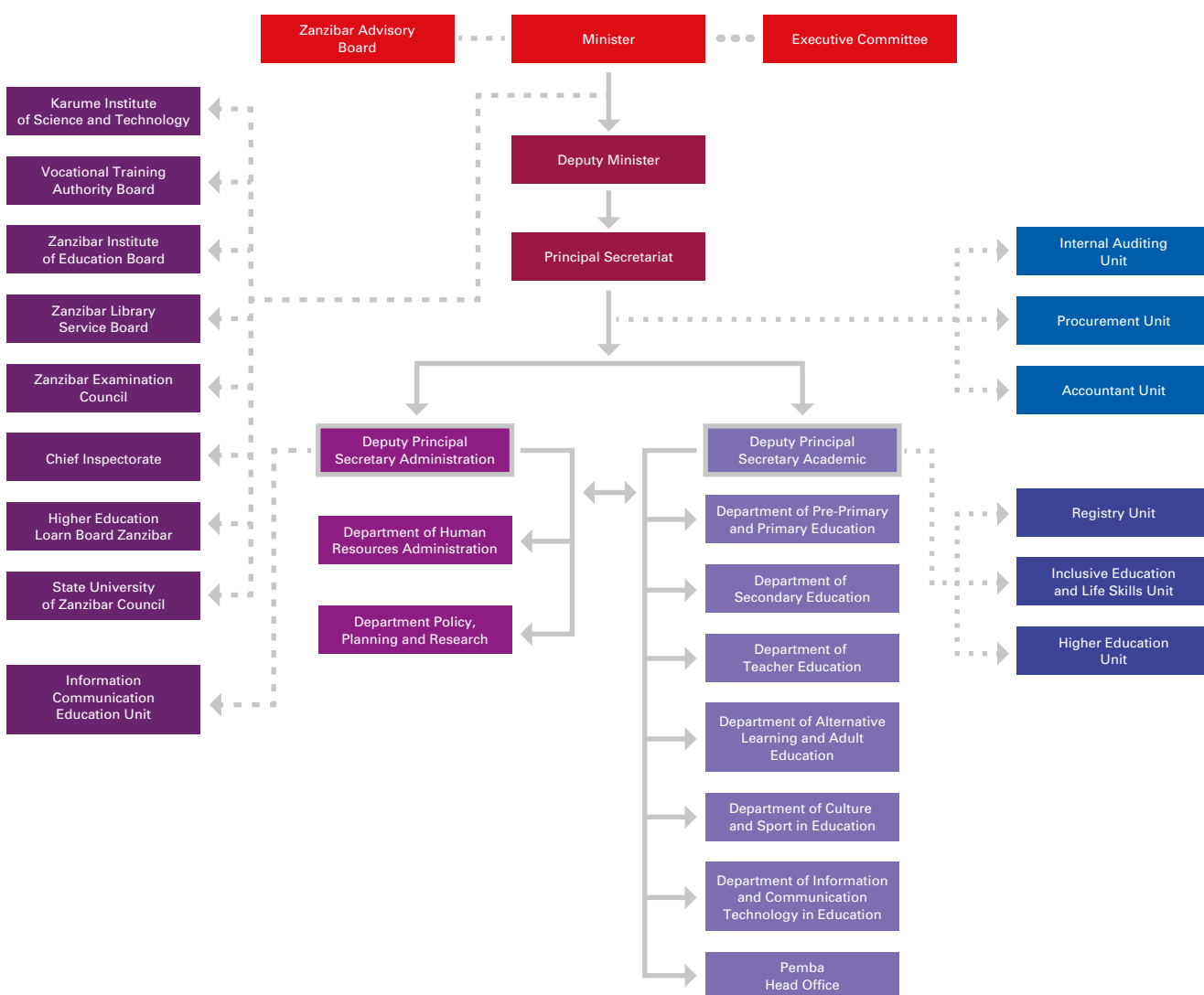
Zanzibar boasts an incredibly young population, with almost half of them below the age of 18.²⁷ Pemba has one of the highest fertility rates in the world, at 6.8 births per woman.²⁸ According to 2012 data,²⁹ the average life expectancy of Zanzibar's population is 65.7 years, which is significantly higher than that of Tanzania Mainland (61.7 years).³⁰ The average life expectancy for women in Zanzibar is 67.1 years, higher than men (63.3 years).³¹ To realize the aspiration of transforming the economy and achieving middle-income country status set out in its Vision 2020,³² Zanzibar has made important strides over the past decade, while challenges persist. Available data shows that, from 2010 to 2015, Zanzibar's poverty headcount ratio declined from 34.9 per cent to 30.4 per cent.³³ If measured by the multi-dimensional poverty index (MPI), the poverty rate declined from 43.3 per cent to 26.3 per cent during the same period.³⁴ However, despite positive aggregate poverty reduction achievements, significant disparities exist across districts.³⁵ With a Human Development Index (HDI) score of 0.538,³⁶ Tanzania remains in the low human development category,³⁷ and is one of the top 10 recipient countries of development assistance from countries of the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in sub-Saharan Africa, based on OECD's latest data for 2017.³⁸ Localized HDI scores show that Zanzibar is outperforming the mainland in terms of overall human development status.³⁹ However, available data shows significant disparities in human development performance across the five regions in Zanzibar.⁴⁰

2.1. Overview of Zanzibar’s primary education system and policy

2.1.1. Education governance structure

The provision of primary and secondary education falls under the responsibility of the RGoZ. The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) has the statutory power to develop education policy and implement education programmes,⁴¹ including budget preparation, school curriculum design, teacher training and school inspection, among others.⁴² The ministry is composed of eight departments, including the Department of Policy, Planning, and Research, Department of Pre-Primary and Lower Education and Department of Teacher Education (*see Figure 1*).⁴³ There are also various units and boards under the MoEVT, including the Office of the Chief Inspector of Schools. The MoEVT has a regional education office (REO) in each of the five regions and 10 district education offices (DEOs).⁴⁴

Figure 1: Organizational structure of MoEVT⁴⁵



Source: Murphy et al. 2016

School inspection in Zanzibar is centrally coordinated by the Office of the Chief Inspector of Schools, which is a semi-autonomous body under the MoEVT. There are various types of inspection, including standard inspections, follow-up inspections, subject inspections and incidental inspections.⁴⁶ The purpose and duration of each type of inspection vary. For instance, during a standard inspection, inspectors would be expected to observe teaching and learning standards and outcome, as well as school leadership and management, while a follow-up inspection aims to monitor the implementation of the recommendations provided to the school during the previous visit.⁴⁷ The law stipulates that each school should be inspected once a year while more inspections could take place whenever deemed necessary.⁴⁸ For primary schools, inspection reports shall be submitted to the district and regional commissioners' offices of the respective schools.⁴⁹ And while both public and private schools are inspected, private schools are not funded by the Government.⁵⁰ A number of challenges facing the school-inspection system in Zanzibar have been previously identified. First of all, it is suggested that the inspectors are centrally stationed and are far away from the schools to be visited.⁵¹ Secondly, inspectors are small in number compared to the growing number of schools, and lack relevant skills and knowledge to carry out inspection tasks.⁵² Finally, there is a major shortage of resources for inspectors to perform their functions.⁵³

At the school level, school-management committees exist, consisting of: the head teacher as secretary; a chairman appointed by the District Commissioner; two members appointed by the Sheba, two members appointed by the District Education Officer; and three members elected by the parents.⁵⁴ The school committee plays a key role in assisting with the management of schools and overseeing the delivery of education at the community level.⁵⁵ While the existence of school committees provides important support to the schools, it is pointed out that most school committees are not effective and that guidelines and trainings are needed for school committees to better serve school needs.⁵⁶ It was suggested that most school-management committees had exceeded the time they were supposed to be in power (five years) – in some schools the committees have existed since the schools were established.

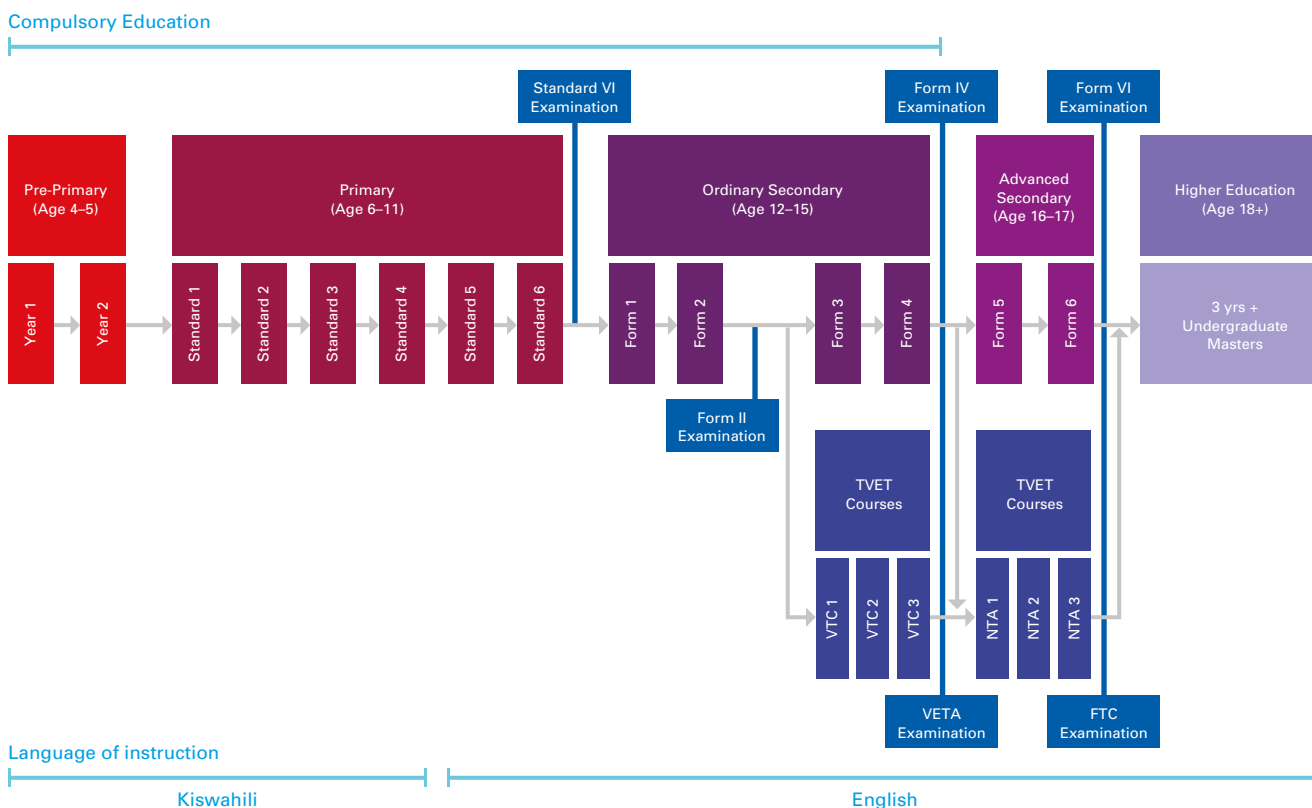
2.1.2. Education structure, policy and strategy

Over the past two decades, the RGoZ has made education a national priority. Zanzibar's Vision 2020 – a strategic document developed in 2000 – lays the foundation for Zanzibar's long-term development. In terms of education goals, Vision 2020 aims to achieve universal basic education by increasing primary school enrolment and transition rates. The RGoZ also committed to the Education for All (EFA) goals.⁵⁷ In 2002, the RGoZ adopted the Poverty Reduction Plan, followed by the Zanzibar Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty 2007–2010 (MKUZA I) and 2010–2015 (MKUZA II). In these documents, the RGoZ commits to ensuring equitable, accessible and quality education for all.⁵⁸

Against the backdrop of Vision 2020 and the poverty-reduction plans, Zanzibar's second education policy was introduced in 2006, following the first one in 1991 and the amended one in 1995. The Education Policy 2006 sets specific education objectives that contribute to achieving the overall mission of promoting "equitable access, quality education for all and promotion of life-long learning".⁵⁹ The Education Policy 2006 is operationalized through two subsequent plans, namely, the Zanzibar Education Development Plan 2008/09–2015/16 (ZEDP I) and 2017/18–2021/22 (ZEDP II).

The Education Policy 2006 also revised the Zanzibar education system. According to the Education Policy, the new education system shall follow a 2–6–4–2–3+ structure, i.e., two years of pre-primary education, six years of primary education, four years of secondary education (ordinary level), two years of secondary education (advanced level) and three years or more of higher education.⁶⁰ The Education Policy also lowered the entry age for primary level from seven to six,⁶¹ and included pre-primary education as compulsory, thus extending the duration of compulsory education from 10 years to 12 years, from pre-primary to Form 4.⁶² In addition, the 2006 Education Policy also requires the use of English as the language of instruction for mathematics and science from Standard 5, replacing Kiswahili for these two subjects.⁶³

Figure 2: Structure of the Zanzibar education system



Source: Adapted from MoEVT, Education Statistical Abstract 2016–2018

The RGoZ introduced free basic education soon after the 1964 revolution. However, it is argued that the quality of education in Zanzibar has been declining due to the expansion of access to education, which has resulted in increasing unemployment.⁶⁴ Moreover, despite education being free in principle, parents are still expected to make voluntary financial contributions to the school their children attend. Poverty also remains a hurdle for access to education for many school-aged children in Zanzibar.⁶⁵ In addition, while the MoEVT is tasked to ensure adequate school infrastructure and supply teaching and learning materials,⁶⁶ significant infrastructural and material shortages remain.⁶⁷ Following a policy change in January 2015, the practice of parental and community contribution has been abolished.⁶⁸ And the Government is expected to be fully responsible for removing school fees and meeting most of the infrastructural and material needs of schools, albeit with significant implementation challenges.⁶⁹

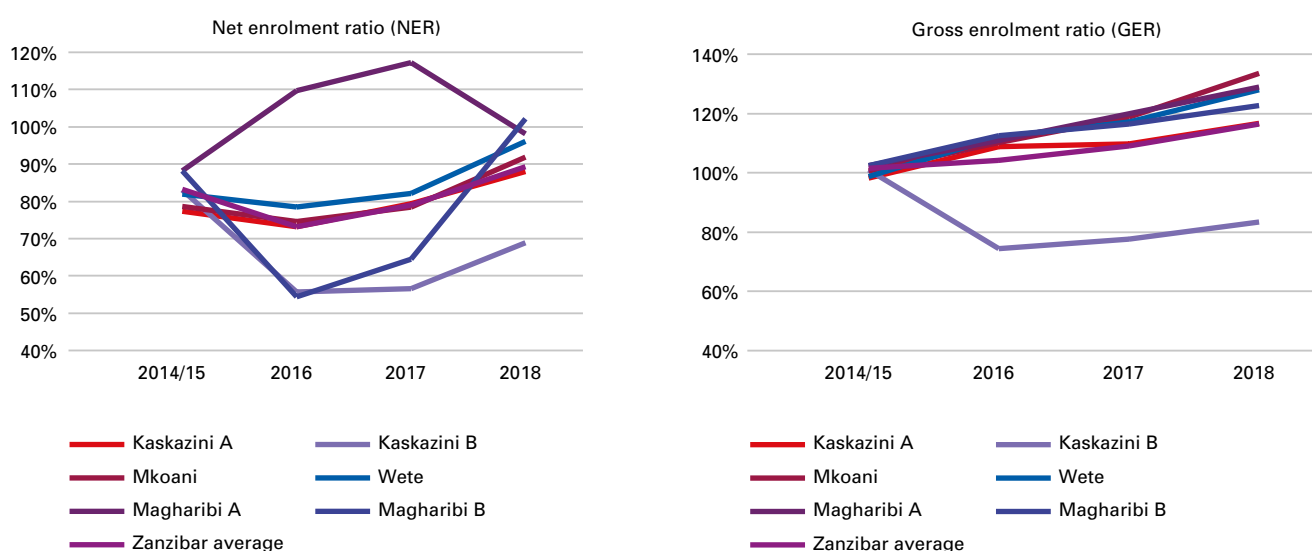
Education decentralization is currently ongoing, as per policy direction provided by the Education Policy 2006 and the MKUZA,⁷⁰ and in line with the 2014 Zanzibar Local Government Authority Act.⁷¹ It calls for devolution of education management to regional and district authorities while maintaining the role of facilitation and monitoring and evaluation at the central level.⁷² It is suggested that the planning for devolution would be a priority of the MoEVT during the first years of ZEDP II, including reviewing and updating guidelines and frameworks, and clarifying roles and responsibilities within the decentralization process.⁷³ However, existing studies point out that at the decentralized levels, decentralization modalities have not been well understood by REOs and DEOs.⁷⁴

2.1.3. Overview of primary education status in Zanzibar

Over the past few years, the RGoZ's education budget has remained stable, currently accounting for 18 per cent of total government budget, close to the internationally recommended target of 20 per cent.⁷⁵ Existing studies find that almost all children in Zanzibar enter primary school eventually, in spite of their age.⁷⁶ According to available data, from 1990 to 2015, the number of primary schools across Zanzibar increased almost three-fold, from 129 to 370, and the number of pupils enrolled in primary schools in Zanzibar more than doubled from 1990 to 2014, growing steadily at an average rate of 3 per cent annually.⁷⁷ Various sources point to the fact that the gross enrolment ratio (GER) at the primary level in Zanzibar has been hovering around 100 per cent for the past decade,⁷⁸ which indicates consistent demand for primary education and the relatively sufficient capacity of the Zanzibari primary system to enrol the eligible population. GERs for girls and boys are almost equal,⁷⁹ although some statistics suggest girls' GER is slightly higher than that of boys.⁸⁰ Net enrolment ratio (NER) at the primary level has been steadily rising since 2004/05, currently standing at 89.3 per cent,⁸¹ indicating increasing awareness on the part of parents to enrol their children at the right age.

However, a breakdown of the available data in recent years shows both common trends and disparities across major districts in terms of access to education. As the graphs below show, while the national average NER of Zanzibar is on an overall upward trend since 2014/2015, Magharibi A has seen a fall in NER over the past two years. Kaskazini B and Magharibi B both experienced a sharp decline in NER in 2016 before picking up again, while Kaskazini B remains far below the national average. Moreover, while the GER of most of the districts featured in the graphs has increased over the 2014/15–2018 period, Kaskazini B experienced a drop in GER in 2016 and has yet to catch up with other districts.

Figure 3: Primary NER and GER across major districts in Zanzibar, 2014/15–2018⁸²



Source: Author's illustration based on Zanzibar District Profiles (2017) and 2016–2018 Education Statistical Abstract

Existing literature suggests that one of the major challenges related to enrolment is late enrolment of children in remote areas due to family resources, lack of awareness of education policy, or distance from school to children's residences.⁸³ Dropout rates at the primary level have significantly declined over the past few years,⁸⁴ although pupils living in rural areas are still much more likely to drop out of school than their counterparts in urban areas,⁸⁵ and boys have higher dropout rates than girls.⁸⁶ Available data also shows persistent gender disparity in terms of completion rates. From 2003 to 2012, girls' completion rates are consistently higher than that of boys, which, according to some studies, is due to boys' truancy and engagement in child labour.⁸⁷ In more recent years, boys' promotion rates and survival rates at the primary level have been consistently lower than those of girls, according to latest statistics.⁸⁸

Shortage of classrooms is identified as one of the major challenges facing the Zanzibar primary education system.⁸⁹ Zanzibar currently has an average pupil-classroom ratio (PCR) of 57.4:1 for public primary schools,⁹⁰ much higher than the national target of 40:1,⁹¹ which has in fact increased over the past few years.⁹² For private schools, the current PCR is at a much lower level, 32.7:1. Significant regional disparities exist in terms of PCR. For instance, the latest data shows that the PCR of Magharibi A is 87.3:1 while that of Kati is 41.2:1.⁹³

In addition to a shortage of classrooms, the shortage of learning materials constitutes another challenge for primary education in Zanzibar. Latest data shows that across major subjects such as English, Kiswahili, mathematics, and science, the pupil-textbook ratio is around 3:1 for public school. It is higher for private schools, where the ratio can go up to 4:1 for mathematics and nearly 5:1 for science.⁹⁴ It is also indicated that Standard 5 and 6 pupils are the most deprived of learning materials.⁹⁵ A regional breakdown shows that the average pupil-textbook ratio is the highest for Magharibi A (around 5:1) while it is much lower for other districts such as Kati, Kusini and Wete.⁹⁶

In terms of pupil-teacher ratio (PTR), the latest data shows that at the primary level, the average PTR is 39.8 for public schools, and 18.9 for private schools,⁹⁷ both of which are within the national target 40:1,⁹⁸ while disparities exist across and within districts. For instance, in Micheweni District in Pemba, the average PTR for public schools is 69.4:1, while in Kaskazini B District of Unguja, it currently stands at 29.5:1.⁹⁹ Even within the same district, the PTR can vary to a significant extent across schools. For instance, within Kaskazini A District, available data shows that the PTR of different schools ranges from 13:1 to 61:1.¹⁰⁰ Overall, the PTRs and PCRs are much lower in private schools than in public schools in Zanzibar.¹⁰¹

Quality of learning outcomes also represents a major challenge in the large context of the expansion of primary education in Zanzibar, especially for public schools. Average Standard 6 examination scores of 2016–2018 show consistently weak average performance in mathematics for both public and private schools,¹⁰² which may have to do with poor mathematics learning results during earlier grades.¹⁰³ However, private schools have performed much better than public schools in all subjects in Standard 6 exams over the past few years, based on latest statistics.¹⁰⁴

2.2. Primary school teachers in Zanzibar

2.2.1. Teacher management and remuneration

Primary school teachers account for the absolute majority of teachers across all education levels in Zanzibar.¹⁰⁵ It is suggested that, overall, Zanzibar has sufficient numbers of teachers at the primary level,¹⁰⁶ and there has been a substantial increase in the proportion of qualified teachers at the primary level.¹⁰⁷ The latest data indicates that, at the primary level, by 2014, the total number of primary school teachers in Zanzibar is 7,352, 85 per cent of whom teach in public schools.¹⁰⁸ Over the past few years, data shows there has been a steady increase in the percentage of qualified teachers at the primary level, from 34.1 per cent in 2016 to 51.5 per cent in 2018,¹⁰⁹ and that female teachers represent the majority of the primary teaching force in Zanzibar.¹¹⁰

In Zanzibar, public school teachers are centrally recruited by the Government as permanent employees. Each year, the need for primary teachers will be solicited from the district level and sent to the Director of the Department of Administration and Personnel through the Director of Pre-Primary and Primary Education. It will then be submitted to and discussed by the Office of the Principal Secretary of the MoEVT and the President's Office before the final number of teachers is agreed upon. The Civil Service Commission is then responsible for recruiting teachers each year, based on the number of teachers needed. There are two major issues regarding the current teacher recruitment and deployment practice. Firstly, the degree of required participation of DEOs in the process of needs assessment and teacher deployment processes is unclear. Secondly, the role of the MoEVT in the teacher-recruitment process could be enhanced.¹¹¹

Public school teachers are paid according to fixed salary scales set by the Civil Service Commission,¹¹² and their starting salary level is determined by their qualifications and the actual salary increases annually based on a fixed increment.¹¹³ Table 2 below shows the starting and highest salary corresponding to different qualification levels, as of January 2016. Private schools are mostly run by non-government organizations (NGOs), with supervision from the Government, and they follow the same curriculum as public schools.¹¹⁴ Private schools, since they are not funded by the Government, are not subject to the same salary scales as their public school counterparts.

Table 1: Gross salary scales of civil service personnel of MoEVT¹¹⁵

Qualification	Monthly		Annual	
	Starting salaries (lowest, 1 year)	Highest salary (highest qualification, 10 years)	Starting	Highest
Certificate	150,000	224,000	1,800,000	2,688,000
Diploma	228,000	314,000	2,736,000	3,768,000
1st degree	321,000	584,000	3,852,000	7,008,000
Masters	598,000	894,000	7,176,000	10,728,000
PhD	914,000	1,094,000	10,968,000	13,128,000

Source: Murphy et al. 2016

Teacher salaries account for the bulk of education expenditure for the RGoZ.¹¹⁶ The RGoZ draws from both domestic resources and development partners' grant support to cover teacher salaries and personnel costs.¹¹⁷ The Education Policy 2006 identifies inadequate salaries for teachers as a major challenge for attracting and retaining qualified teachers, which also leads to teachers having side jobs and decreased morale.¹¹⁸ As a move to increase incentives for teachers, starting from 2017/18, the RGoZ increased the minimum monthly wage for teachers at the lowest level from 150,000 Tsh to 300,000 Tsh.¹¹⁹ However, the effect of such a salary increase on teacher motivation and performance has not been assessed.¹²⁰

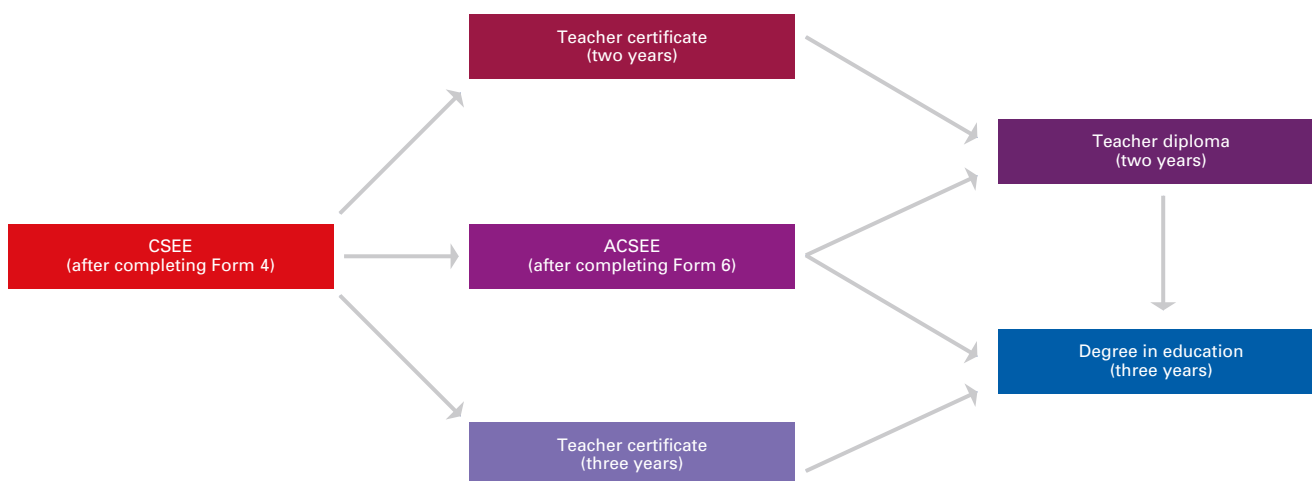
On top of their salaries, it is suggested that teachers receive a teacher allowance equal to 25 per cent and a housing allowance of 10 per cent of their salary.¹²¹ In terms of transport allowance, teachers used to receive TZS5,000 (US\$2.10) per month, or the actual cost incurred.¹²² However, according to interview results, transport allowance has been increased to TZS10,000 which is likely to be in line with the doubling of the monthly salary. Female teachers are entitled to three-month maternity leave as per labour law.¹²³

At the national level, there is a national teacher union called the Zanzibar Teachers Union (ZATU) which is active in promoting work ethics and a sense of responsibility among teachers. About half of all teachers in Zanzibar are members of ZATU. Union representation exists at all levels of the education system, from national level to regional, district and then down to the school level. It is suggested that although ZATU does not specifically tackle the issue of teacher absenteeism, it does play a role in motivating teachers, especially in their defence of teachers' rights, including professional development, salary increments and allowances.

2.2.2. Teacher education and in-service training

Regarding teacher education and pre-service training, in Zanzibar, there are three levels of teacher qualifications – certificate, diploma and degree – with certificate being the minimum teacher qualification. Primary teacher candidates are eligible to enter teacher training after obtaining the Certificate of Secondary Education Examinations (CSEE) following Form 4. The certificate programme lasts for two years.¹²⁴ A diploma is one level up from a certificate, which takes another two or three years of courses based on the candidate's education and qualification level at the time of entry. Depending on the specific subjects that the candidate is to specialize in, there could be higher requirements on the candidate's subject-specific knowledge.¹²⁵ Finally, candidates that wish to pursue a university degree in education are required to have either obtained the Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education Examinations (ASCEE) after Form 6, or having completed diploma-level training.

Figure 4: The different pathways of teacher education in Zanzibar



Source: Author's own illustration

It is suggested that the vast majority of primary teachers in Zanzibar possess relevant teaching qualifications.¹²⁶ Data from 2001 to 2013 shows that the number of untrained teachers (those without a certificate) has significantly decreased.¹²⁷ 2014 data shows the majority of all public primary school teachers in Zanzibar have received certificate-level training (74 per cent), 24 per cent of them possess a diploma and only 1 per cent have obtained a degree or even higher qualifications. The share of untrained public school teachers is very small, standing at 1 per cent.¹²⁸ However, existing literature has identified a major disparity between public and private schools in terms of teacher qualification. While the percentage of untrained teachers has decreased to a negligible number for public schools, untrained teachers still account for a significant part of the teaching force in private schools.¹²⁹

Currently there are four teacher-education providers in Zanzibar: the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA); Abdul Rahman Al-Sumait Memorial University (SUMAIT); and two teacher-training colleges (TCCs) – the Islamic College in Pemba and the Mazizini Islamic College in Unguja.¹³⁰ These teacher-education institutions offer certificate, diploma and degree courses.¹³¹ There is also an online modality offered by the Department of Teacher Education of the MoEVT, which offers Grade III A Certificate to untrained teachers.¹³² The courses offered by SUMAIT, on the other hand, mainly target school-management personnel, such as head teachers and deputy head teachers.¹³³

It is indicated that over the past decade, there is a trend towards removing certificate-level courses and focusing mainly on diploma and degree-level qualifications and subsuming all TTCs under SUZA.¹³⁴ For example, one major training institute, Nkrumah Teacher Training College, has been absorbed by the SUZA and subsequently ended the offering of certificate-level courses, focusing only on diploma and degree courses.¹³⁵ Some argue that the removal of certificate-level training and the increasing focus on diploma and degree presents a trade-off between theoretical and academic content with practical skills, because some of the practical skills offered at the certificate-level are not offered at the diploma and degree level.¹³⁶

Teachers also receive in-service training to upgrade their knowledge and skills. Teacher Centre (TCs) are mainly responsible for providing in-service training. There are currently 11 TCs operating across the two main islands of Zanzibar, including six in Unguja and five in Pemba, coordinated by the National Teacher Resource Centre.¹³⁷ These TCs not only organize training activities but also serve as platforms for teachers to meet and exchange experiences and ideas.¹³⁸ However, a 2013 survey found a significant portion of the Standard 6 teachers surveyed reported that they did not attend any in-service training during the three-year survey period, and that some teachers considered the in-service training they received as “reasonably effective” at best, if not wholly ineffective.¹³⁹ Moreover, opportunities to receive in-service training have not been equitable.¹⁴⁰

Lack of teacher-education standards and in-service training have been noted as major issues in various policy documents.¹⁴¹ It is suggested that there are still a number of untrained teachers in Zanzibar and the distance education course run by the Department of Teacher Education provides them with the opportunity to get relevant qualifications and then go back to teaching.¹⁴² Moreover, it has also been observed that there are lack of harmonized entry requirements and designs of courses across teacher-education institutions, making it difficult to determine the actual level of teachers’ knowledge and skills after they receive teaching credentials.¹⁴³ In view of these challenges, a competency-based Continuous Professional Development (CPD) framework has been developed for teachers of both public and private schools. It clarifies roles and responsibilities of different levels and proposes steps for introducing a teacher education management system. The CPD framework also seeks to streamline teacher-training standards and ensure all teachers reach satisfactory competency levels.

2.3. Existing literature on teacher absenteeism in Zanzibar

2.3.1. Magnitude and drivers of teacher absenteeism

The currently effective Zanzibar Education Development Plan II recognizes the issues of teachers' absenteeism and lack of updated knowledge and skills to teach, and proposes the review and clarification of teacher incentives and professional-development opportunities.¹⁴⁴ Teacher quality remains a challenge facing primary education in Zanzibar. Primary teachers are expected to receive training and specialize in one of three subjects: humanities, mathematics and science, and Arabic/Islamic studies.¹⁴⁵ However, it is suggested that there is a persistent shortage of science and mathematics teachers.¹⁴⁶ In addition, lack of proficiency in the use of English as the language of instruction has also been identified as a major challenge facing teachers.¹⁴⁷ In addition, it occurs that the language of instruction and the language in which primary teachers are trained in certain subjects are not the same, resulting in teachers having difficulties explaining the content to pupils.¹⁴⁸

The magnitude and drivers of various types of teacher absenteeism in primary schools across Zanzibar are not clearly understood due to limited data and dedicated studies available.¹⁴⁹ Existing evidence suggests that teacher absenteeism is an issue of concern in Zanzibar. A qualitative study carried out by VSO in 2011 in three clusters in Zanzibar found many respondents were concerned about poor teacher motivation and attendance.¹⁵⁰ It found that teachers' lack of punctuality was an especially acute issue, which was caused by factors such as long distance, low transport allowance and inefficient teacher-deployment system. It is also found that teachers would take side jobs, resulting in absence from school.¹⁵¹ The report recommends that the role of head teachers and school management committees in monitoring and improve teacher attendance and performance be enhanced.¹⁵² While the report shows the existence of teacher absenteeism due to geographic limitations, it did not systematically explore the various factors that lead to teacher absenteeism across different settings in Zanzibar.

A 2015 World Bank study conducted as part of the Zanzibar Improving Student Prospect Project found that in 10 primary schools across Zanzibar, 41 per cent of all teachers were absent from school at the time of visit, and only 30 per cent were in the classroom teaching.¹⁵³ It also found out that a large percentage of schools visited had not received a school inspection in years, which could potentially be linked to lack of teacher accountability.¹⁵⁴ It also identified an acute shortage of teacher skills in mathematics and science.¹⁵⁵ However, given the small sample of primary schools and the lack of representativeness, the absence rates are not generalizable across the country. In addition, the study did not investigate the causes of various types of teacher absenteeism.

The 2013 SACMEQ IV survey, conducted in 126 primary schools covering 3,150 Standard 6 learners across Zanzibar, reveals that when asked about teacher behaviours, most head teacher respondents indicated that they had seen various types of teacher absenteeism and misconduct, ranging from absence from school, to drug abuse and sexual harassment. For instance, when asked about whether or not teachers have arrived late, only 0.8 per cent of head teachers answered "no", meaning almost all of the surveyed head teachers have encountered this phenomenon (*see Table 2*).

Table 2: Percentage of teacher behavioural problems reported by head teachers

Behavioural problems of teachers	'Never' occurs (%)
Teacher arrives late	0.8
Teacher absenteeism	9.0
Teacher to skip class	7.2
Teacher bullies pupils	12.2
Teacher sexually harasses fellow teacher	21.2
Teacher sexually harasses pupils	19.2
Teacher uses abusive language	15.7
Teacher drug abuse	32.5
Teacher alcohol abuse	34.0
Teacher health problem	9.6
Teacher conflict with parents	6.7

Source: SACMEQ IV (2016)

The SACMEQ IV responses show that three types of teacher absenteeism are particularly prevalent, namely, absenteeism from school, late arrival, absenteeism from the classroom. Teachers' misconduct such as bullying and use of abusive language indicate lack of classroom-management skills and relevant training on professional code of conduct. Other unacceptable behaviours, such as sexual harassment, and drug and alcohol abuse, signal an urgent need to put in place and enforce a teachers code of conduct and to provide training on professional behaviour and work ethics. Because of the quantitative nature of the study, the SACMEQ IV survey identified various types of teacher absenteeism and misconduct but did not reveal what factors had caused them.

While previous studies are useful in illustrating the issue of teacher absenteeism in Zanzibar, they have not explored the various factors that lead to different types of teacher absenteeism across different settings in Zanzibar. This is due to limitations in their sample size, geographic coverage, or research methods. In view of this knowledge gap, a more dedicated study is needed for a better understanding of the challenge, with a view to contributing to a more effective and efficient primary education system, and ultimately improving children's learning outcomes.

Section 3: Research approach and methodology

3.1. Teacher absenteeism: A multidimensional concept

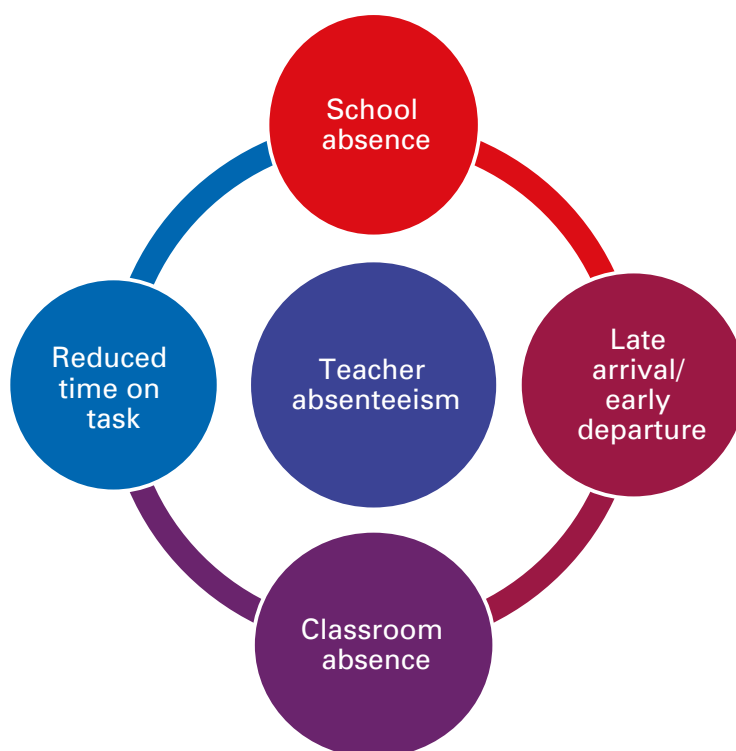
Policy makers and researchers have traditionally recognized one form of teacher absenteeism: absence of the teacher from school. Accordingly, in the past two decades, numerous programs have been implemented globally to increase teachers' school attendance as a means of improving student learning.¹⁵⁶

Several interventions aimed at improving teachers' school attendance have been found to be successful (especially when they couple monitoring systems with rewards).¹⁵⁷ However, few studies have so far established an association between increased teacher school attendance and student achievements.¹⁵⁸ This is due to the fact that teacher attendance in school does not necessarily mean teachers are actually in the classroom teaching or, when they are teaching, that they spend the required time on task.¹⁵⁹ Consequently, the relationship between teacher school attendance, motivation to teach, and time on task needs to be further unpacked in order to better understand learning mechanisms and outcomes.

While the Time to Teach study does not focus explicitly on learning outcomes, in defining teacher absenteeism, the research team relied on the assumption that in order for learning to occur, a number of minimal conditions, relating to the role of teachers in the learning process, need to be fulfilled. Specifically, teachers have to be in school, in the classroom and actively teaching. This led to the development of a multi-dimensional concept for teacher absenteeism (*see Figure 5*). The concept is in line with contemporary understandings of absenteeism that look beyond school absence¹⁶⁰ and recognizes four distinct forms of teacher absence: (1) absence from school; (2) absence of punctuality (late arrival and/or early departure from school); (3) absence from the classroom (while in school); and (4) reduced time-on-task (while in the classroom).

A multi-dimensional definition of teacher absenteeism has not been widely used in education-sector analysis where teacher-pupil ratio and share of qualified teachers have conventionally been used to represent educational inputs and human resources available for children, under the implicit assumption that employed teachers will be in school spending time for educational activities with students. A multi-dimensional definition of absenteeism can therefore help us classify and further unpack the various obstacles to effective learning and establish causal links between these obstacles and specific types of teacher absence. Factors that hinder teachers from achieving any form of attendance can have direct effects on quality learning time for students. It is therefore imperative that the drivers of each type of absenteeism are identified and corresponding policies to address the adverse effects of teacher absenteeism on learning are designed.

Figure 5: The multi-dimensional concept of teacher absenteeism



3.2. Understanding teacher absenteeism from a system's perspective

The determinants of multi-dimensional teacher absenteeism are likely to be situated at various levels of the education system. Consequently, developing a systemic analytical framework is a pre-requisite for understanding first, how factors within the education system combine to force teachers to be absent in various ways, and secondly, which policies can holistically address chronic teacher absences.

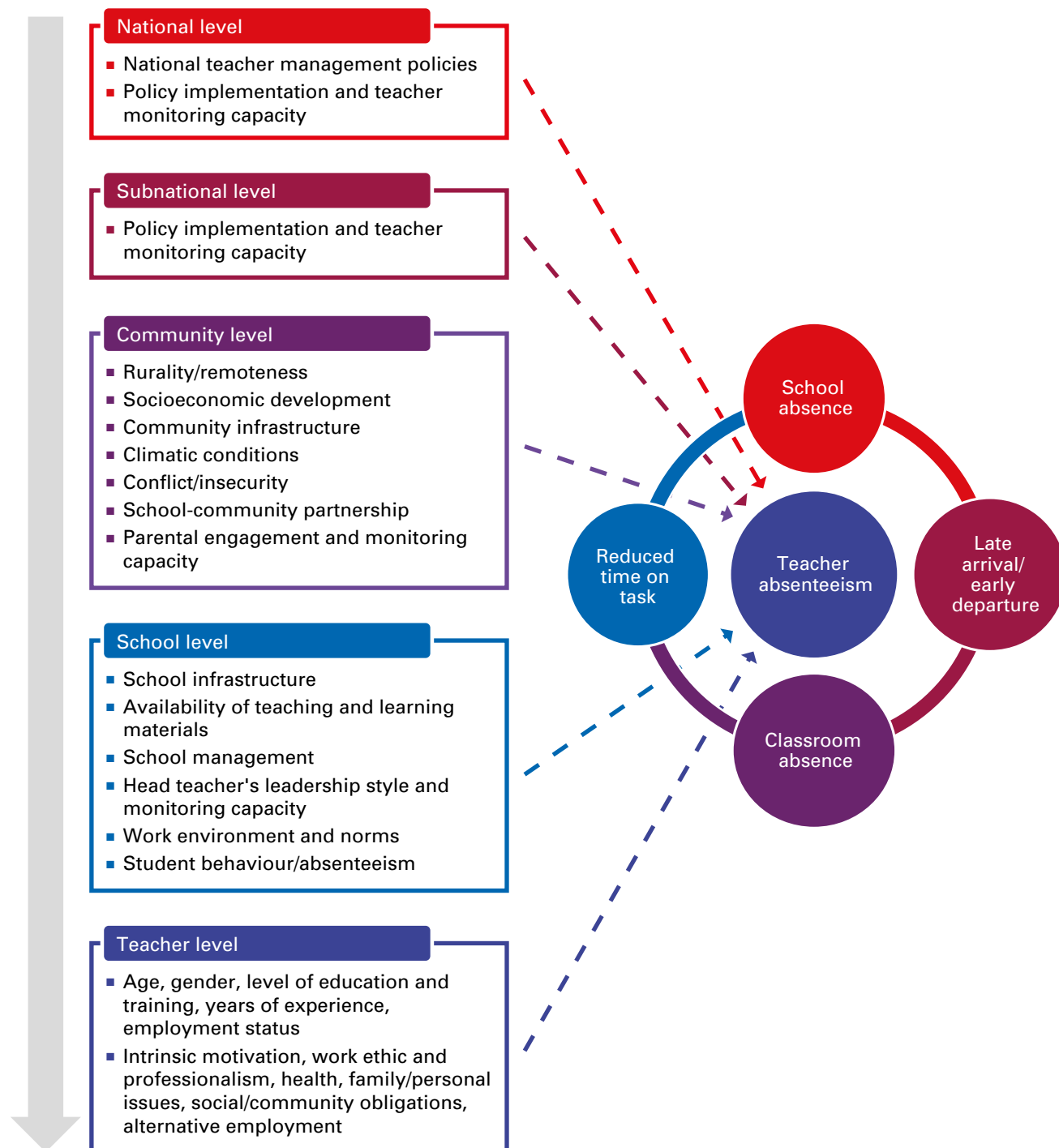
Based on a review of existing conceptual models of employee absenteeism in general and the literature on teacher absenteeism in particular, Guerrero et al. (2012, 2013)¹⁶¹ suggests there are three sets of factors that could affect teacher attendance/absenteeism: (i) teacher-level variables, (ii) school-level variables, and (iii) community-level variables. Two groups of teacher-level variables are considered: teachers' demographic variables such as age, gender and level of education; and teachers' school-related variables such as job satisfaction, opportunities for professional development, and work environment. School-level variables include organisational factors within the school, such as work norms, the head teacher's leadership style, but also teachers' administrative workload. Finally, community-level variables include factors such as remoteness, level of prosperity, and school-community partnerships.

The Time to Teach project adopts the Guerrero et al. 2012/2013 explanatory model with an important modification. The modification is to add two additional groups of variables that correspond to two distinct levels of the education system, the 'national' and the 'subnational', in order to test the impact of variables such as national and subnational teacher policy and policy-implementation capacity on the various types of teacher absenteeism. There is a proposed framework for the systemic analysis of multi-dimensional teacher absenteeism (see Figure 6).

A systemic view of the extent and effectiveness of teacher-management policies and practices, or their relationship with the various forms of teacher absenteeism and educational outcomes in developing

countries, is not well understood. This model is expected to facilitate untangling the relationship between policy provisions at the national/subnational level, policy and practice at the community and school level, and the role of other system stakeholders at various levels (e.g. teachers unions) on teacher attendance, and help us understand what kind of policy-implementation gaps exist, what kind of policies should be developed, and what kind of teacher-management reforms are needed.

Figure 6: The TTT explanatory model



Source: Adaptation of the work of Guerrero et al. (2012): Guerrero, G., Leon, J., Zapata, M., Sugimaru, C., & Cueto, S. (2012). What works to improve teacher attendance in developing countries?: A systematic review.

3.3. Study implementation

In Zanzibar, the Time to Teach study was implemented in consultation with the MoEVT and UNICEF Tanzania, and involved three complementary but separate processes.

Figure 7: Stages of implementation in Zanzibar



3.3.1. Sampling and instrument development

Following a series of consultation meetings with national partners, including MoEVT representatives, in July 2018, the research team developed a sampling strategy and designed the instruments for primary data collection.

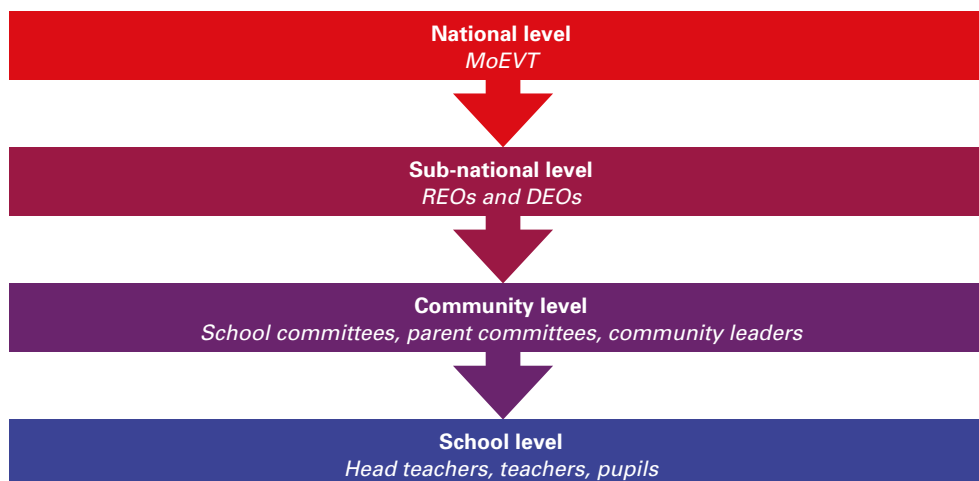
School and respondent selection involved purposive sampling techniques. School selection was assisted by the MoEVT and was based on three criteria: location, type of community (rural/urban) and school governance (public/private). In the end, 20 schools were selected across five regions in Zanzibar. The school sample includes a mix of rural and urban schools; a mix of government (public) and non-government (private and faith-based) schools (see Table 3). As the selected schools were assured complete confidentiality, their names are not mentioned in this report.

Table 3: School sample in Zanzibar

Island	Unguja						Pemba				
Region	South/Central		Urban/West		North		North Pemba		South Pemba		
School type	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Total
Urban			3	1			1		1	2	8
Rural	2		2		3	2	1		2		12
Total	2		6		5		2		5		20

In selecting respondents, the research team employed a number of criteria, including the respondents' unique position within the education system, expert knowledge, and personal characteristics (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Participants of the study by level of analysis



At the national level, the study targeted representatives from the MoEVT, whose portfolio was relevant to primary education and teacher management and monitoring. Respondents at the subnational level included DEOs and REOs, who were familiar with school governance and teacher-evaluation processes. Community respondents had an intimate knowledge of the selected schools and school staff, and in most cases served on school committees or village executive committees. In each selected school, the study targeted the head teacher (or in his/her absence the deputy head teacher/director of studies), three teachers and seven pupils. Teachers were selected on the basis of their individual characteristics, including age, gender, and years of experience. The goal of diversifying the teacher sample was to capture a wide range of unique teacher experiences related to absenteeism, shaped not only by the teacher's contextual circumstances, but also by their individual traits. Pupil selection was based on age and gender. In each school, seven pupils from the last two years of primary school (Standard 5 and 6, typically aged 10–13) participated in the study, in a balanced gender mix. To rule out selection bias and convenience sampling, children respondents were identified via lottery, based on gender balance and age considerations.

To collect data, the UNICEF Innocenti team designed a range of qualitative and quantitative tools, including in-depth interviews (IDIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and a pen-and-paper survey. Dedicated tools were used for each respondent group to reflect the participants' expert knowledge and unique perspective, and some were also modified for each type of school. The pen-and-paper survey was administered to all teachers present serving in the selected primary schools who were present on the day of the visit to supplement and triangulate teacher interview data. Finally, an observation tool was designed to record enumerators' observations on teacher absenteeism, teacher-pupil interaction, and teacher working relations during visits to selected schools.

Data-collection tools were shared with MoEVT and UNICEF Tanzania for feedback and review and were refined accordingly. The tools were then translated from English to Kiswahili and back-translated into English to ensure accuracy and consistency. The Innocenti team sought and received research ethics approval for the Time to Teach instruments and fieldwork protocols by the Health Media Lab (HML) and the Institutional Review Board of the Office for Human Research Protections in the US Department of Health and Human Services Research.¹⁶² Prior to field work, the national research team from the Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF) also obtained a research permit from the Second Vice-President's Office and Office of

the Chief Government Statistician, which guaranteed the researchers access to the selected enumeration areas. Table 4 summarizes the number of study participants in Zanzibar and specifies the data-collection tool administered to each respondent group.

Table 4: Number of participants in Zanzibar

Respondent type and data-collection method	Number of respondents
Head teachers (IDIs)	20
Teachers (IDIs)	60
Teachers (pen-and-paper survey)	463 (including the 60 that received IDIs)
Pupils (FGDs)	140
Community representatives (IDIs)	20
DEOs (IDIs)	5
REOs (IDIs)	2
MoEVT officials (IDIs)	3
Total number of respondents	653

3.3.2. Fieldwork preparation and data collection

A training of trainers was provided at the UNICEF ESARO offices in Nairobi, Kenya, on 26–27 June, 2018. The training was facilitated by UNICEF Innocenti and involved a representative of MoEVT and the team leader of the data-collection team from the ESRF. The training provided a comprehensive introduction of the Time to Teach study to partners, as well as its objectives, conceptual framework, methodology, sampling criteria, fieldwork protocols, as well as potential risks. Following the training of trainers, the team leader from ESRF provided training to enumerators during August 14–24, 2018. The training of enumerators was meant to familiarize the data-collection team with interview guides, the survey, as well as fieldwork protocols.

After the trainings, the ESRF data-collection team proceeded to pre-test the data-collection tools on 13 September, 2018 at one school in the Urban/West region in Zanzibar, which is not part of the actual sample. The objectives of the pre-testing were to assess the duration and flow of instrument administration, and the respondents' cognitive understanding of questions and key concepts. After the pilot, details on the findings of the pilot and suggested changes to the data-collection tools were shared with the UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti before the start of the main fieldwork. A debrief meeting followed, whereby the research team familiarized themselves with the final data-collection tools as approved by UNICEF. During the debrief meeting, the data-collection team was issued with all the necessary study materials. The data collection was undertaken between September and October 2018. The entire data-collection team was divided into three groups, each composed of one supervisor and three enumerators. Two groups were deployed to Unguja, and the third to Pemba. The three groups undertook IDIs and FGDs with community representatives, head teachers, teachers and pupils, as well as field observations, while IDIs at the ministry, regional and district level were conducted by ESRF researchers and co-team leaders.

3.3.3. Data analysis

Qualitative data

The multi-faceted data-generation strategy employed in the Zanzibar study facilitated the collection of a large amount of rich qualitative evidence, which ensured saturation and triangulation. The 130 IDIs and FGDs that were conducted with seven different education system actors were typically one hour in duration and were transcribed word for word. In cases where Kiswahili was used as language of intermediary, translation and back-translation was conducted. To systematically analyse and interpret the data, the research team employed the thematic content analysis (TCA) method. While content analysis is a broad methodology that can be applied in various ways, the approach adopted to draft this report is closer to the interpretive analysis of latent content with the use of a codebook that comes from the deductive reading of existing literature and the inductive reading of the transcripts.¹⁶³ Coding was done manually and assisted the organization of data into themes, and thereafter the analysis of the data with the use of frequency measurement and interpretive methods.

Quantitative data

The 463 pen-to-paper teacher surveys from the 20 schools were cleaned and compiled and information that could identify participants was removed. The main aims of the survey data analysis were to triangulate findings from the analysis of the interview and group discussion data, provide further insights across the 20 selected schools, and highlight variations between regions and school types.

3.4. Limitations and challenges

Like all studies relying on self-reported data and conducted under time and budget constraints, the Time to Teach study in Zanzibar is not free of methodological limitations. The three most significant challenges likely to have emerged during data collection are presented below, along with mitigation strategies employed to ensure accurate data interpretation and to minimize the impact on findings and conclusions.

3.4.1. Response bias

Enumerators were trained to communicate the objectives of the study in a non-threatening manner and clarify any misconceptions regarding the implications of voluntary participation. Enumerators also highlighted the principles of anonymity and confidentiality underpinning data collection and usage, stressing the right of participants to revoke consent and demand their testimonies to be disregarded and destroyed. And yet, response bias may have been a significant challenge, as absenteeism is a sensitive subject and, in some contexts, participants may have perceived the study as inquisitive or potentially threatening to their employment status. Under these conditions, three types of response bias seem especially likely: (1) selective memory, i.e., remembering or not remembering experiences or events; (2) telescoping, i.e., recalling events that occurred at one time as if they occurred at another time; and (3) downplaying, i.e., representing outcomes or events as less significant than is actually suggested from other data. These potential limitations have been taken into consideration when interpreting data. Systematic data triangulation was also undertaken across multiple sources to ensure the relevance and reliability of findings.

3.4.2. Selection bias

Selection bias may have also been an issue. The selection of interviewed teachers was based on a set of pre-determined criteria and was performed randomly among teachers sharing the same characteristics. However, it was limited to the teachers who were in school on the day of the visit. Additionally, the teacher survey was administered only to present teachers. This means that some of the frequently absent teachers may not have been interviewed or surveyed. To pre-empt this problem, none of the school visits were unannounced and teachers were informed about them well in advance. However, this does not exclude the possibility of built-in bias among those who eventually participated in the study.

3.4.3. Representativeness of survey data

Finally, the research team recognizes that due to the small size of the TTT survey sample (N=463) it is difficult to draw statistically significant conclusions, make generalizable claims and ensure the internal and external validity of quantitative findings. The TTT survey data can only provide a snapshot of issues surrounding teacher absenteeism in selected schools rather than a comprehensive view of the situation across all schools in Zanzibar. For this reason, the majority of findings reported in subsequent Sections depend on the systematic analysis of qualitative data for which saturation has been achieved.

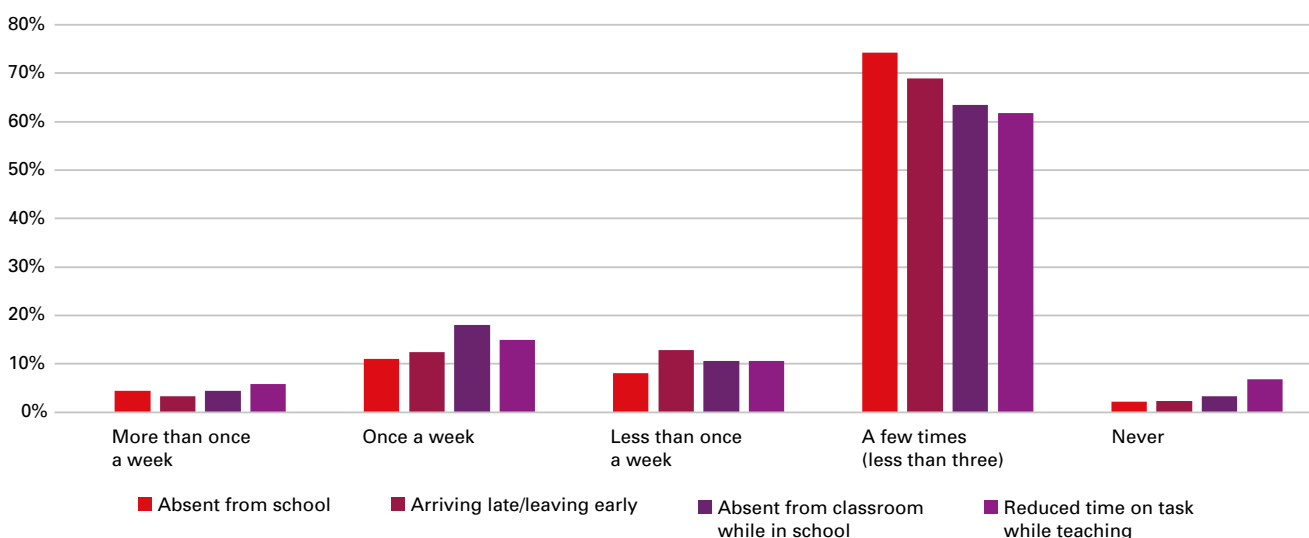
Section 4: Factors affecting teacher absenteeism in Zanzibar

4.1. Prevalence of teacher absenteeism in Zanzibar

Although the aim of the Time to Teach study in Zanzibar is not to systematically assess the magnitude of teacher absenteeism in Zanzibar, the study does reveal that teacher absenteeism is a prevalent issue in the country and survey results from around 400 valid self-reported responses from teachers in the 20 schools provide an idea of the magnitude of different types of teacher absenteeism in Zanzibar.

Since the teacher sample is drawn from purposely selected schools, they do not represent the entire teaching force. However, in the absence of a more dedicated survey, they provide an indication of the magnitude of teacher absenteeism of various types in Zanzibar. Survey results show that when asked whether each type of teacher absenteeism has occurred to the respondent since the start of the school year, the percentage of responses that indicate the event has never happened is extremely small. Just 2 per cent of teachers responded: "Never," when asked about whether or not they had been absent from school or late, or left early from school. When it comes to being absent from the classroom, 3 per cent of respondents indicated this had never happened to them. Seven per cent of respondents said they had never been in the classroom but not teaching. When asked about the frequency of different types of absenteeism, more than 60 per cent of respondents reported they had experienced school absence, late arrival/early departure, classroom absence and reduced teaching time at least "a few times" since the start of the school year (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: "Since the start of the school year how often has this happened to you?" Self-reported frequency of four types of teacher absenteeism



4.2. National-level factors of teacher absenteeism

Summary

The removal of parents' voluntary financial contributions to schools in 2015¹⁶⁴ has significantly reduced the financial burden on the parents.¹⁶⁵ Together with a series of awareness-raising campaigns, it has increased children's access to school. Despite these achievements, qualitative data has revealed some side effects of this policy change.

Firstly, according to some respondents, the removal of all fees from parents has created an accountability issue where many parents transfer the responsibility of education fully to the schools and have become less engaged in their children's education.

Secondly, while under the free-education policy, the Government is expected to cover all primary school fees and provide financial and material support, there are areas where the Government has fallen short. Qualitative data suggests that the majority of schools in the sample, irrespective of school type or geographic location, have received financial and material support directly from the ministry, including teaching and learning materials, infrastructure building and rehabilitation, and payments of utilities. While for some schools, such support has been helpful in motivating teachers and improving school performance, the provision of teaching and learning materials has not been sufficient for other schools, mainly private ones. It also indicates, especially among public schools, that parents and the community still need to provide financial and material support to schools in order to maintain day-to-day management.

Thirdly, with the increasing number of pupils enrolled as a result of the free-education policy, teacher recruitment and teacher deployment have become a challenge. Many respondents raised the issue of an insufficient number of teachers in general and the shortage of teachers in certain subjects. These issues exist in schools of all types and geographic locations but appear to be more frequently mentioned by participants from Pemba. This might have to do with the high fertility rate in Pemba that results in high enrolment of school-aged children as well as difficulties in deploying teachers to remote areas.¹⁶⁶ In addition, many respondents, especially those in Unguja, voiced the need to relocate teachers closer to their residences.

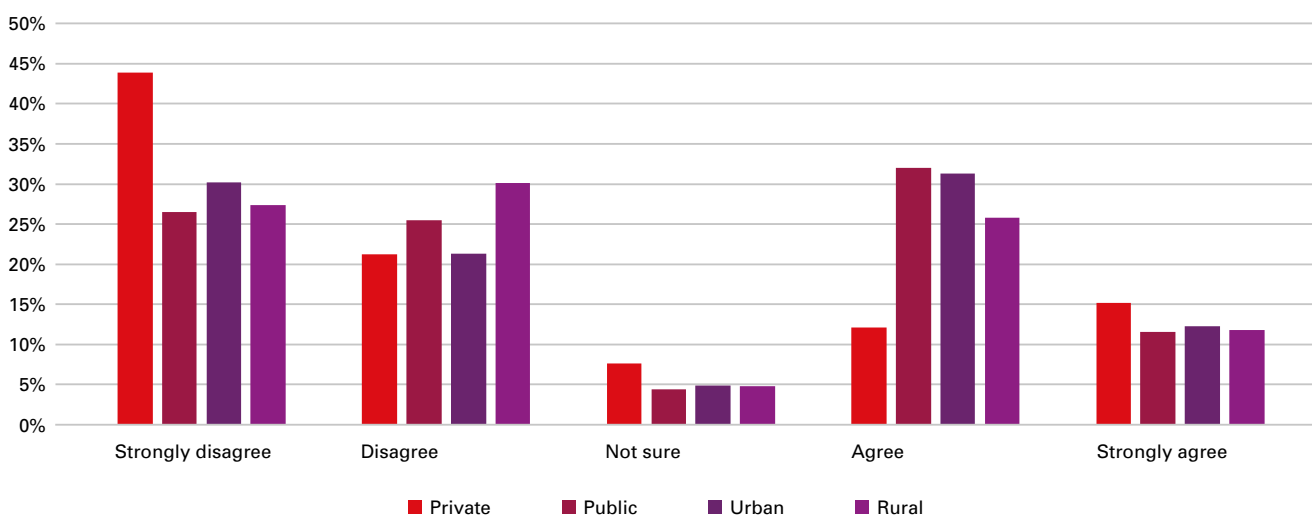
It is evident from qualitative data that the MoEVT and the President's Office have taken various policy measures in recent years to improve teacher motivation and teacher attendance, through salary increments, transport allowances, training and education opportunities, and closer monitoring. All these measures have impacted teacher absenteeism of various forms, both positively and negatively. At the same time, a number of teacher policy-implementation gaps have been identified, ranging from delays in the provision of teaching and learning materials, to delays in bus fare and salary payments. More specifically, four themes related to national-level policy measures and policy implementation gaps have emerged, which have a direct impact on specific types of teacher absenteeism, including:

- Remuneration and financial incentives for teachers, which affect school attendance, punctuality, classroom attendance and time on task while in the classroom, mainly through their impact on teachers' motivation.
- Transport allowance and loans, which is the single most frequently mentioned determinant of teachers' punctuality. It includes both inadequacy of transport allowance and delays in allowance payment. In some cases, it can also affect teachers' school attendance.
- Trainings and official duties as required by the ministry, which represent the most common reason for teacher absenteeism from school. It also affects teachers' punctuality and attendance in the classroom while at school.
- National-level engagement and monitoring capacity, including visits to schools by national officials, programmes to strengthen head teachers' monitoring capacity, and the provision of teaching and learning materials, affects teacher school absenteeism

4.2.1. Remuneration and financial incentives for teachers

Starting from 2017/2018, the RGoZ increased the minimum wage for civil servants from TZS150,000 to TZS300,000 (US\$181) a month.¹⁶⁷ This policy change is reflected in interviews with various respondents. However, survey data shows that not all teachers have benefited from the salary increase. While the majority of respondents who provided valid responses to the question fall under the category of TZS301,000–400,000, data shows that 27 per cent of them are still receiving less than TZS300,000 per month. Quantitative data shows low salary is not only an issue for public schools but also private schools. Breaking down the data by school type, it is clear low salary is a particularly acute issue for teachers in private schools, where 65 per cent of respondents disagree or strongly disagree with the statement: “I am happy with my salary as a teacher,” compared to 53 per cent of public school teachers.

Figure 10: Percentages of responses to survey statement: “I am happy with my salary as a teacher.” Urban-rural and public-private variations



Interview data shows that respondents’ opinions are divided on the issue of salary and salary increments. The majority of respondents, most of whom work in public schools, are positive about salary increments that the RGoZ has implemented, suggesting that having a stable income from being a teacher has allowed them to significantly improve their living standards. This is not evident in private schools as they are not subject to such a government policy change. Respondents suggested that the increased salary had played an important role in motivating teachers and increasing teacher attendance in general. In addition to salary increments, some suggested the MoEVT also guaranteed bank loans and higher-education loans to teachers. And in a small number of cases – mostly in urban schools – teachers are rewarded for pupils’ good performance in national exams, which serves as an important financial incentive for teachers to work more effectively. However, these practices exist only in a few schools.

However, it is clear from qualitative data that many respondents are not content with the salary increase, considering it still insufficient to meet their needs. This is supported by quantitative data from the survey. When asked whether or not teachers think their total earnings as a teacher are enough to cover their monthly household expenditures, the vast majority of teachers responded: “No,” regardless of school type or geographic location. In some cases, low salary has even made some teachers decide to leave the teaching profession. While low salary is considered one of the major challenges faced by teachers in all types of schools and geographic locations of the sample, interview results reveal it is especially acute for

teachers in urban areas, where respondents suggested the salary they received did not reflect the real cost of living. This may have to do with the higher unemployment rate and higher living costs in urban areas compared with rural areas.¹⁶⁸

Besides the low salary level, respondents also frequently pointed out a major policy-implementation gap related to salary: delays in salary payment. This appears to be a more prominent challenge for schools in rural areas of Unguja, most of which are public schools, although they exist in some private schools in the region as well. Moreover, there are cases where teachers are still being paid below the minimum wage standard.

Low salary levels and payment delays often lead to specific types of teacher absenteeism, including absence from school, when teachers do not have enough money for their daily subsistence. For instance, one teacher from an urban private school in West Unguja said: “Low amount of monthly salary might be among the cause (for school absence). Once a teacher has spent the salary – which does not suffice family basic needs – the teacher cannot leave the family starve and go to teach. He will strive to find other means to get money to serve her/his family instead of going to teach.”

To a lesser extent, insufficient salary could also affect teachers’ punctuality, attendance in classroom and time on task while in the classroom, mainly due to teachers’ frustration and loss of motivation. For example, a teacher from an urban private school in West Unguja suggested: “It may happen when the teacher enters the class, talks to pupils something different from the subject matter instead of the lesson supposed to be taught at that particular time. This can be due to lack of motivation and low remuneration, which is insufficient. More than that, a teacher does well in class, but she/he develops a negative attitude due to the poor motivation and peanut salary.”

Given persistent poverty and the low salaries, teachers in many cases have resorted to alternative employment. The specific types of alternative economic activities mentioned by respondents include: farming and fishing, running small businesses and engaging in tourism. In Zanzibar, having alternative income-generating activities is generally not a frequently reported event although it does exist across different school types and geographic locations. Survey data shows that among all valid responses, 11 per cent of teachers admit they have income from activities other than teaching, and the percentage of having alternative jobs is higher among teachers in private schools than those in public schools, which again shows that low salary is a more acute challenge for private school teachers than for public school teachers.

Alternative income-generating activities affect teacher attendance in school and punctuality, especially during harvest season for those that engage in farming. It also affects classroom absenteeism and teaching time, as teachers usually stay up late to work on their side jobs, which makes them tired and distracted while in school and in classroom. For instance, a head teacher from a rural public school in West Unguja said: “You know teachers should rest after their lessons but sometimes they do not. For example, one day a teacher was found asleep inside the class. Pupils were surprised and became restless. Later on, I realised that after school hours she normally engages with her private economic activities until midnight. When you ask such kind of teacher, she will say she was in the class while in reality, she didn’t teach anything.”

“My father was an electrician who worked with the Zanzibar Electricity Company in the ‘80s so this inspired me to be an electrician. When at home, I am able to earn 30,000 to 40,000 in three to four hours by being an electrician. Meanwhile, as a teacher, my salary was 1,500 shillings, therefore I decided to opt being an electrician and retired teaching.”

– Community representative, Urban/West Unguja

4.2.2. Transport allowance and loans

According to various respondents, the MoEVT currently provides TZS10,000 as transport allowance to teachers, doubling the amount that the MoEVT used to provide.¹⁶⁹ While the specific criteria for disbursing transport allowance are not clear, qualitative data shows that it primarily depends on the distance from teachers' residences to the school, and that it is granted first and foremost to teachers that live far away from school and then to others, depending on funding availability. This, according to some respondents, would exclude teachers that live in urban areas, given the relatively reliable transport in urban areas. Survey data confirms this practice, where it shows that among all valid responses, almost 40 per cent of teachers in rural areas have received transport allowances where only 2 per cent in urban areas have received such benefit. Some also suggest that instead of granting bus fares, many teachers who lived far away from their work station have been transferred to schools closer to their home, thus reducing their need for transport allowance.

Qualitative data suggests the Government's transport allowance appears to have mainly benefited teachers in public schools, improving their motivation and attendance in general, as private schools do not enjoy such a benefit from the Government and they usually have special buses for teachers, which helps ensure their attendance at school. However, many respondents showed their dissatisfaction with this policy. They either consider the transport allowance insufficient, arguing that the transport allowance is too small compared to the actual transport costs, in both urban and rural areas, or they pointed out that transport allowance is not provided to all teachers in need. In some cases, the failure to assess all teachers' financial needs and grant them bus fares accordingly has led some teachers to be absent from school, especially those in rural areas. In addition to insufficient transport allowance, there is also one major challenge related to the implementation of the transport allowance policy, which is primarily related to delays in the provision of bus fares. Qualitative data suggests this is a more prominent challenge for public schools in rural areas of Unguja. However, the reason is not clear.

The provision of transport allowance represents the single most important factor that accounts for teachers' punctuality. Respondents frequently attribute their lateness to the lack of transport allowance available. This is especially pronounced in public schools of the sample, as private schools are not entitled to such a benefit and they usually have special buses for teachers, which help mitigate the challenge of lack of punctuality. It could also be due to the strict rules and regulations against late arrival and early departure that private schools are already following.

4.2.3. Trainings and official duties

Intuitively and, according to some respondents, teachers at private schools tend to possess higher qualifications compared to public schools because private schools impose higher standards and provides higher pay. However, this is not supported by the qualitative data of this study or by existing literature. Qualitative data shows that the lack of training exists in both public and private schools across Zanzibar.

Many respondents across all types of schools and geographic locations spoke positively of the trainings that teachers have received from the MoEVT, considering it as a major incentive for teachers in general, which also plays an important role in improving teachers' knowledge and skills and helping teachers to more effectively deliver knowledge to pupils. According to qualitative data, it is suggested that the MoEVT allows teachers to participate in further studies two years after they start the teaching job. Others, however, voiced their dissatisfaction with the training and education opportunities provided by the MoEVT. They mainly argue that the current training provided to teachers is not sufficient, especially regular in-service training.

Attending courses either at TCs or other educational institutes constitutes the single most common reason for teacher absenteeism from school. According to respondents, most of these consist of in-service training required by the ministry. This occurs to almost all schools in the sample, irrespective of school type or geographic location. From interview results, it is not clear how long exactly teachers are usually away from school to attend such training and workshops, although this may vary according to different types of

training courses. On the flipside, some consider the opportunity to receive training an important incentive for teachers to attend school regularly. Despite this positive view, it does not seem to offset the negative effect that training has had on school attendance.

In addition to school absenteeism, attending trainings is also a cause for teachers' lack of punctuality in a few cases, and a major cause for classroom absenteeism, regardless of school type or geographic location. More specifically, attending training within the school premises accounts for a most frequently mentioned reason for classroom absenteeism.

Interview data from the majority of selected schools suggests that teachers have gone through relevant training programmes or have relevant teaching credentials. At the same time, it indicates that some teachers, especially those in rural schools, require more education and training. Survey data shows that, when asked to evaluate whether or not they are provided with access to training opportunities, among all valid responses, 74 per cent of teachers from public schools responded positively, whereas only 40 per cent of private school teachers responded positively, suggesting there is a relative shortage of professional development opportunities for private school teachers during their posting. However, this may have to do with their already relatively high qualifications.

Besides the need to attend trainings, a less frequently mentioned determinant of teacher absenteeism, according to interview results, is the need to fulfil official duties, which contributes to absence from school, lack of punctuality and absence from the classroom while in school. According to many respondents, attending meetings and following up on administrative issues at the ministry, or participating in national-level activities constitute some of the main reasons for their absence from school and lack of punctuality. For instance, the data collection for this study coincided with a period of identity card registration for residents in Zanzibar, so teachers were away from school or late to school because they were renewing their identity cards. Also, school grounds were used for this purpose. Other official obligations that could carry teachers away from school include participating in meetings at the ministry and attending national events such as sport games and celebrations. According to qualitative data, these are more likely to occur at public schools in the sample regardless of geographic location. Performing official duties also constitutes a reason for teachers' absence from the classroom, although to a much lesser extent. For instance, it was mentioned that in a very small number of cases, teachers were asked to complete school statistics forms required by the MoEVT while in school, instead of being in the classroom.

4.2.4. National-level engagement and monitoring capacity

In most schools in the sample, regardless of school type or geographic location, there is a certain degree of direct engagement and monitoring from national education officials with a view to improving teacher attendance. For instance, MoEVT officials would make school visits during which they would check teacher and pupils attendance and performance and provide advice and guidance. Qualitative data shows that national officials' visits tend to occur more frequently in schools in urban areas. This is probably due to proximity and ease of transport compared with schools located in rural areas.

From a national official perspective, teacher school absenteeism has significantly decreased nationwide in recent years, primarily due to some policy measures that the MoEVT has introduced that aim to enhance monitoring. One such measure is a head teacher capacity-building programme that helps improve head teachers' management and monitoring capacities. In fact, the role of head teachers in monitoring teacher absenteeism is very much emphasized by national officials during the interviews. According to national-level officials, the head teacher training programme has been effective in improving head teachers' management and monitoring capacity against teacher absenteeism. In addition, it is suggested that head teachers are granted a "responsibility allowance" of TZS40,000 per month with a view to motivating them. However, such head teacher capacity-building programmes and financial incentives were not frequently mentioned in interviews with other types of respondents, thus raising questions about the real impact of such a programme. This is corroborated by another study that found the head teachers interviewed had not received any formal training for their role.¹⁷⁰

“Maybe there is one thing that has occurred in our country, there is this issue of devolution, which has not helped us anyhow in our school because the ministry was helping us with money for water and electricity payment. After devolution, we were told that the money was sent to the municipal and we didn’t get it. We organized a meeting, where we asked the teachers where we would get the money. Until now, we are telling students to bring brooms so that we can sell so that we can pay the money.”

– Community representative, rural public school, North Unguja

A major issue related to national engagement and monitoring is related to the implementation of the decentralization policy, which, according to interview results, has created some confusion among some stakeholders, impacting their engagement and monitoring capacity. For instance, some suggested that since the implementation of decentralization, it has become unclear who the school should draw support from, as some of the responsibilities have been devolved to REOs and DEOs but some have not.

A second issue involves cross-departmental coordination, which directly impacts national-level actors’ monitoring capacity. For instance, a national official pointed out the structural challenge within the Ministry that impedes their ability to monitor schools:

“The Ministry of Education has several departments. School quality assurance is one of the departments. As a department we have limits. We do quality assurance and write reports. But who implements what we have indicated in the reports is another department. Again, we may be intending to visit schools but the funds are provided by another department. Sometimes it takes longer time to have the funds released.”

A third factor that hinders national engagement and monitoring is shortage of funding, which was an issue raised by a number of national and subnational-level officials. This has resulted in the limited capacity to recruit sufficient numbers of teachers, and provide adequate school infrastructure and teacher training. Funding constraints are also a major challenge to ministry officials’ school visits. Some suggested that the limited financial capacity of the MoEVT does not allow all schools to be visited.

Qualitative data shows that one of the measures the MoEVT has taken against teacher absenteeism is disciplinary actions against teachers that have poor attendance records, including giving warnings and demanding explanation letters. It is suggested that the MoEVT has developed strict regulations regarding teacher attendance. For instance, in some districts such as Urban West of Unguja, absenteeism-related dismissal has been exercised towards some teachers. However, such regulations are not strongly reflected in qualitative data. Other measures at the national level are more of a preventative nature, involving holding meetings with head teachers to ensure close monitoring at the school level; conducting awareness-raising campaigns that help improve teacher motivation and teacher attendance; and issuing letters of recognition to teachers that perform well as an incentive.

4.3. Subnational-level factors of teacher absenteeism

Summary

The study looks at the role of three types of subnational-level actors involved in education affairs, namely, REOs, DEOs as well as school inspectors. It has found that across all schools in the sample, there is always a certain degree of engagement of subnational-level education actors in school affairs, irrespective of school type or geographic location. Across all 20 schools, most respondents consider subnational actors' engagement positive and useful for motivating teachers.

Qualitative data reveals that in terms of the specific types of engagement in school affairs, REOs and DEOs are mainly responsible for: identifying challenges such as infrastructural and material shortages; monitoring teacher and pupils' performance; providing guidance and problem solutions; and offering financial and material support to schools, such as teaching and learning materials and school infrastructure.

As for school inspectors, most respondents do not seem to distinguish between various types of school inspection that exist. Qualitative data shows that inspectors' role is mainly to visit schools regularly and inspect various aspects of school affairs, including academic, infrastructural and administrative. For instance, they are expected to help identify school infrastructure challenges and management issues, check teacher and pupils attendance, and provide technical support to teachers in improving their teaching methods. Usually, at the end of their inspection, school inspectors would convene a staff meeting to share their findings to teachers and the head teacher and provide advice and guidance. They would then report their findings to the Chief Inspector and the Principal Secretary of the MoEVT of Zanzibar.

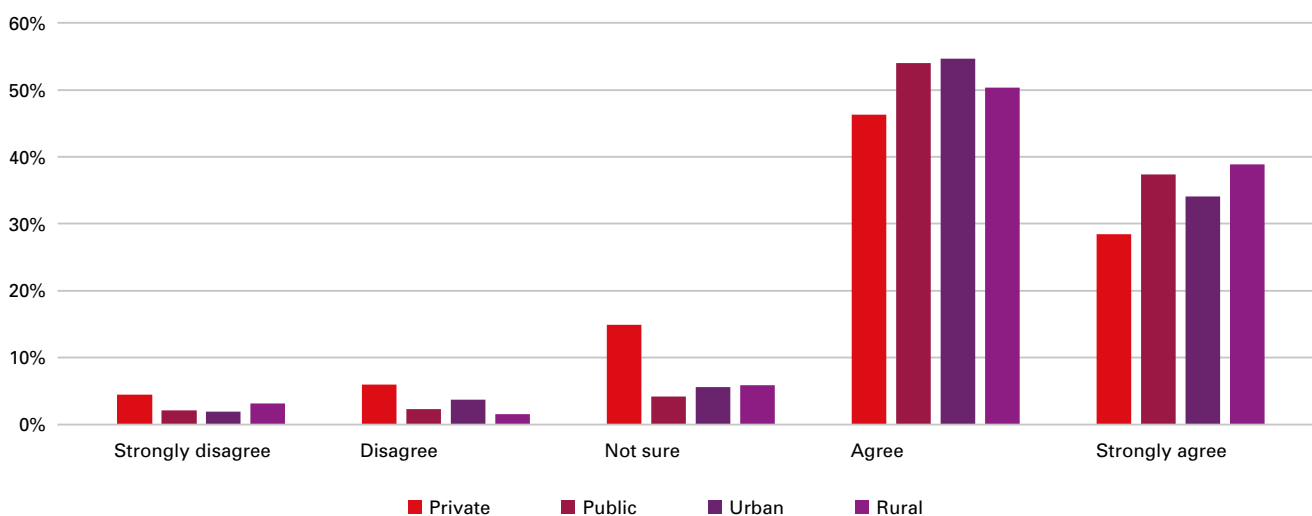
Subnational education actors' engagement and monitoring capacity is not only key to holding teachers accountable to their work and improving school performance in general, but also directly linked to different types of teacher absenteeism. More specifically, there are two aspects of subnational education actors' role that have a direct impact on teacher absenteeism:

- Subnational education actors' school visits, which in themselves already help discourage school absenteeism, late arrival as well as reduced teaching time while in the classroom. However, the number and frequency of such visits vary from school to school.
- Subnational education actors' capacity to monitor and discourage teacher absenteeism, including through monthly attendance records submitted by head teachers, or during school visits. These are mainly linked to school absenteeism, punctuality and time on task while in class. The lack of formal authority and mandate of subnational education actors, however, constitutes a barrier for them to take effective action against teacher absenteeism.

4.3.1. Subnational education actors' school visits

Teacher survey results indicate strong involvement and engagement of subnational education actors across the country. Among all valid responses, more than 75 per cent of teachers from both public and private school, agree or strongly agree that “school inspectors and academic advisers visit this school regularly” (see Figure 11). This high rate is also consistent in rural and urban areas involved in the study.

Figure 11: Percentages of responses to survey question: “Do school inspectors and academic advisers visit the school regularly?” Urban-rural and private-public variations



It is clear from qualitative data that subnational education actors' visits to schools and their meaningful engagement in school-related matters already serve as a useful tool for discouraging teacher absenteeism. Many respondents pointed out that the simple fact that inspectors visit schools already helps increase teacher attendance and teacher motivation in general. What a head teacher from a rural private school in North Unguja said about the impact of inspectors' visits on teachers can illustrate this:

“It has more positive impact on my teachers because when they see inspectors they get a bit scared and this pushes them to work more. This is because they know [an] inspection will be coming and [an] inspection report will be given to the headmaster. So this pushes them to work hard.”

More specifically, Interview data shows that subnational education actor's visits themselves more frequently help discourage teachers' school absenteeism and late arrival to school. A teacher from a rural public school in South Unguja suggested: “When inspectors come, they usually come early. So teachers also are supposed to come early, which reduces this problem of teachers coming late.”

Interview data suggests that subnational education officers would often make surprise visits to schools, which helps discourage teacher absenteeism because teachers would avoid being absent or coming late, knowing that subnational education officers would make unannounced visits on any work day. It is also mentioned by some respondents that teachers are fearful of inspectors' visits and that they avoid reducing teaching time while in the classroom, knowing inspectors will visit the school. Qualitative data suggests it is mostly in public schools that school inspectors play such a role.

However, the frequency and number of times of such visits by subnational education actors are not uniform across all 20 schools in the sample. In most schools in the sample, respondents suggested that REOs and DEOs would visit the schools from time to time, although the frequency of their visits is not always clearly indicated. For instance, some district education officers suggest that they visit each school in the district at least once a month to follow up on school matters. However, it is not evident from interview data whether all districts have adopted such practice. When it comes to school inspection by inspectors, the frequency across the schools in the sample ranges from one to four times a year. However, according to interview results, in a few cases, school inspection can take place as frequently as one to two times a month, but in others, no inspection has taken place for a prolonged period of time. Qualitative data does not indicate any link between the frequency of school inspection and school type or geographic location. Although some respondents suggest urban schools are more regularly visited by inspectors and other education officers than rural schools, this pattern is not shown in the qualitative data.

“To further the campaign against teachers’ absenteeism, I’ve begun to sit and discuss with teachers on the latter, where when I visit the school, I sign in the attendance register, which is used by the teachers. Once I get to sign as the first to sign, it acts as motivation, because when they arrive and sign, they realize that I’ve been the first to arrive and sign before them.”

– DEO, Urban/West Unguja

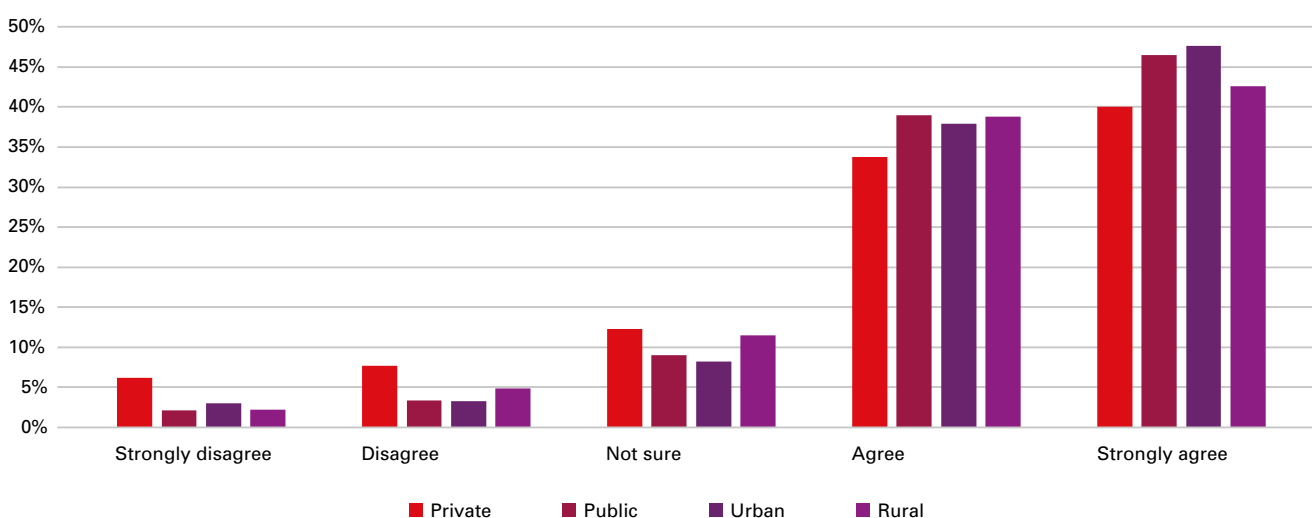
Some respondents, especially those in Unguja, raised the issue of insufficient numbers of visits made by subnational education actors to the schools. This might result from the fact that, currently, there is only one national-level inspectorate that is tasked with inspecting all schools in Zanzibar. School inspectors are expected to operate in both islands. Given the limited capacity and resources of inspectors, including limited transport, not all schools can be inspected regularly. Some respondents suggest that in Zanzibar, zonal centres have been established where there are inspectors operating only in a given zone, which has helped inspectors increase efficiency and effectiveness of inspection to some extent. However, it is clear the frequency of and available resources for school inspection remain challenges.

Another issue related to the limited number of visits is subnational education actors’ resource challenges. For example, according to REOs and DEOs, they face multiple constraints that hinder their monitoring capacity, including heavy workload, lack of funding lack of transport and even cash to purchase fuel for vehicles. Such financial and material challenges mainly exist in schools located in Unguja. The various capacity constraints have probably resulted in the low number of school visits by subnational education actors.

4.3.2. Subnational education actors' monitoring capacity of teacher absenteeism

It is clear that data from the majority of the schools in the sample, regardless of school type or geographic location, show positive feedback from respondents about subnational education actors' role in monitoring and discouraging teacher absenteeism. Survey data show the large majority of teachers agree or strongly agree with the statement: "School inspectors and academic advisers heavily discourage teacher absenteeism," with no significant differences between public (86 per cent) and private (74 per cent), or urban (86 per cent) and rural (81 per cent).

Figure 12: Percentages of responses to survey statement: "School inspectors and academic advisers heavily discourage teacher absenteeism." Urban-rural and private-public variations



According to interview results, subnational education actors play an important role in discouraging school absenteeism and lack of punctuality through close monitoring and school inspection. It is suggested that the REOs and DEOs collect teacher attendance records from school management on a monthly basis, from which they would identify teachers that are frequently absent from school and those that lack punctuality. In addition, during their school visits, subnational education actors check teacher attendance records and follow up on teachers that are frequently absent from school or late to work. These teachers usually receive verbal warnings and advice from education officers and school inspectors. Some respondents suggest such verbal sanction has been effective in reducing school absenteeism and late arrival. In addition to verbal warnings and advice, subnational education officers and school inspectors request explanation letters from frequently absent teachers to account for their behaviour. Another aspect of their role is more of a preventative nature, involving providing verbal motivation and inspiration to teachers and insisting on good attendance during their visits to the schools. It is also suggested that during their visits, REOs and DEOs involve school committees and school management to discuss school-related issues, including school absence and punctuality. Some respondents say they fully owe improvements of teachers' school attendance to the strong and effective monitoring of subnational education actors.

Subnational education actors also play a role in discouraging reduced teaching time while teachers are in the classroom. Without any record of teachers' attendance, the monitoring of teaching time usually takes place during school visits, where education officers observe teaching activities and verbally motivate teachers to dedicate the planned time to teaching. And it is suggested that school inspectors also check pupils' exercise books to see whether they have been taught according to the lesson plan. Qualitative data shows

it is mostly in public schools that the role of subnational education actors in discouraging reduced teaching time is evident. This may have to do with the already-strict rules put in place against teacher absenteeism and various types of teacher misconduct in private schools.

Beyond verbally discouraging teacher absenteeism, interview results show a very small number of cases where subnational education actors have taken concrete actions to sanction teacher absenteeism, including refusing to grant bus fares to frequently absent teachers. This, however, does not appear to be an established practice for all regions and districts across Zanzibar. In most cases, subnational education actors discourage teacher absenteeism only by emphasizing the importance of teachers' ethics and morale at staff meetings and demanding letters from absent teachers to explain their absence.

Interview data reveals a fundamental constraint faced by all subnational level actors is their lack of authority and mandate to take measures against teacher absenteeism. According to REOs and DEOs, their mandate is to "advise", rather than making any decisions about absent teachers. In some cases, their level of authority is so weak that head teachers even bypass the REOs and DEOs and report teacher absenteeism cases directly to the ministry. In addition, the REOs and DEOs do not have the mandate or authority to dismiss teachers in case of misconduct. It is up to the ministry to terminate contracts with teachers, as the ministry is the formal employer of teachers.

It is the same case for school inspectors. It is beyond the inspectors' mandate to take actions against teacher absenteeism. Instead, school inspectors are only responsible for identifying instances of teacher absenteeism and reporting to DEOs, REOs and national-level authorities.

Another reason for subnational offices' lack of action raised by some respondents is the fact that there is the culture of 'knowing each other' embedded in the Zanzibar society. This weakens subnational offices' willingness to take measures against teacher absenteeism. Such close interpersonal relationships prevent subnational education offices from being impartial and effective in taking actions against individual teachers for fear this may come back to them.

Although respondents' feedback on the role of subnational education actors is largely positive, qualitative data has revealed some negative experiences with subnational engagement, which discourages school staff. Most of them are related to school inspectors' professional behaviour, especially in the urban west district of Unguja. For example, when commenting on the role of school inspectors, one head teacher pointed out: "Their support is adequate, since they advise us, but sometimes they come as soldiers blaming us for the shortcomings, and sometimes report differently from their observation at the school. This discourages us."

"Unfortunately, I can say that we are toothless. Our duty is just to advise, inform and instruct. What we can do is to alert them and inform them that if they cannot work in our region they'll be transferred, we shall produce report about you at the ministry and you'll be transferred to another region.

What happens is that once the head teacher writes a letter, he produces it to the principal secretary or to the director of the responsible ministry. We're just given a copy of it or it just passes. Differing from us, head teachers have more mandates to advise to deduce the teachers' salary. We are just advisers; we do not have much mandate as it is in the mainland Tanzania.

We are now waiting for the devolution, which [has] started. It might give us mandate to make many decisions regarding teachers."

– REO, Urban/West Unguja

4.4. Community-level factors of teacher absenteeism

Summary

The 20 schools selected for this study are located in 20 different communities across Zanzibar that are of diverse geographic characteristics and socio-economic statuses, including 11 in rural areas and nine in urban areas. The rural communities involved in this study mainly engage in fishing, small-scale farming and livestock keeping, whereas those in urban areas primarily depend on small businesses and agricultural activities. According to respondents, the economic conditions of these communities range from poor to moderate, and economic inequality exists within some communities, regardless of rural or urban. Some of these communities have functioning infrastructure, including water, electricity, roads and health centres, while in others, such basic social services are described as either unavailable, unreliable or unaffordable to the poor. This holds true for both urban and rural areas involved in the study. Because of the Zanzibar Government's free-primary-education policy, most of the primary school-aged children of these communities go to school, although it is pointed out that dropout exists mainly due to poverty, health issues or lack of support from parents. Child labour and child marriage prevail in many of these communities regardless of geographic location, which also cause children to be frequently absent from school or even drop out of school at a young age.

Data from the field reveals that across all the selected schools of the study, lack of cooperation from some parents is considered a major challenge and demotivating factor for teachers, although this could take various forms, from being absent from parents' meetings and failing to follow up on their children's learning progress, to completely discouraging children from attending school. According to survey data, on average, 33 per cent of teachers that provided valid responses did not think parents valued education. This rate is much higher in rural areas than urban areas. According to many respondents, parents' engagement in children's schooling and learning is, to a large extent, predicated on their economic situation, overall level of education, awareness of the importance of education, and respect for the teaching profession. Qualitative data shows that, besides parents, other types of community actors – community leaders, local politicians, school committees and even local businesses – generally play a positive role in discussing school matters, providing material and non-material support to schools, and encouraging school performance. However, interview data found little evidence that community members in Zanzibar provided any financial and material support specifically to encourage teacher attendance.

Against this backdrop, at the community level, two major themes have emerged that are directly linked to different types of teacher absenteeism:

- Community infrastructure and climate conditions. More specifically, they can be broken down into three inter-linked factors:
 - Availability and reliability of transport and roads, which mainly affects teachers' punctuality and attendance at school, but also attendance in classroom due to teachers' exhaustion and stress caused by transport problems
 - Distance from teachers' residences to school and/or from residences to transport, including the availability of teacher housing nearby, often causing teachers to delay or to be completely absent from school
 - Climate conditions, mainly heavy rain – especially during the rainy season – most frequently affecting teachers' absence from school and punctuality, mainly because they exacerbate transport difficulties. It especially impacts teachers that live far away from the school. There are also cases where heavy rain affects teachers' attendance in class while in school due to lack of quality school infrastructure and pupil absenteeism
- Community engagement and monitoring capacity plays a role in discouraging teachers' absence from school and lateness/early departure, although to a lesser extent.

4.4.1. Community infrastructure and climate conditions

Availability and reliability of transport and roads

Beyond being a general challenge to teachers, qualitative data suggests the availability and reliability of means of transport and roads is an important determinant of certain types of teacher absenteeism, namely, absence from school and punctuality. In fact, according to qualitative data, transport is the most frequently cited reason for teachers' late arrival to school. Self-reported quantitative data also shows transport is one of the major reasons for teachers' lack of punctuality. Most of the selected schools experience transport problems, regardless of geographic area or school type. Survey data below shows transport issues affect teachers in rural areas more than those in urban areas. However, there are a few exceptions where transport does not seem to pose a big problem to teacher attendance. These schools, mostly urban, are either centrally located with access to quality transport, or they are boarding schools where teachers live in the school compound.

Interview data reveals the issue of transport has multiple dimensions. One of the most frequently cited is the lack of transport availability, which causes teachers to either delay or to be absent from school. Data shows this occurs to schools in both urban and rural areas. In many cases, the number of transport options is very limited. Once teachers miss the only bus that goes to the school, they have no other means to come to school, and fail to come to school on time. However, it is also possible that the available transport options are not viable. For instance, many respondents complain that the buses are always full.

Another scenario is lack of more direct transport options and that teachers have to board multiple buses in order to go to work, causing delay. As one teacher from a rural private school in North Unguja said: "Shortage of transport also contributes to teachers' absence because a teacher can use three buses from here to town. For example, in the past we used to board two buses to town – one to Bububu and the other one to town. But now, we have to take three buses – one to Bububu, the other one to Darajani, and third one [to] Mwera. So a teacher reaches school at around 9:45 a.m."

While qualitative data shows that the issue of transport availability exists in both rural and urban areas across Zanzibar, some believe it is a more prominent determinant of teacher absenteeism in rural areas such as the northern and southern areas, than urban areas.

Another dimension of the transport challenge is **reliability** of public transport, which exists among schools in both rural and urban areas, according to interview results. Reliability includes both punctuality and quality aspects. In terms of quality, some respondents suggest the school buses will sometimes break down on the way to school, or run out of fuel, causing teachers to be absent from school.

However, the more common reliability issue appears to be lack of punctuality. This is often regarded by respondents as something circumstantial, which is out of their control. A district officer from North Unguja said: "Again, we should remember that teachers use public transport, not private. She/he has bus fare but the transport facility owner is the one who schedules the service. The owner knows at what time he will start aboding the passengers and at what time will the facility be at which bus station. The teacher might arrive early at the bus station, but still the bus comes late, thus causing the teacher to delay at work."

"The attendance in urban is better than that of rural areas. With regard, that many teachers here in Zanzibar stay in urban areas out of the fact that there are schools in rural villages as well. Out of all these areas, they need transport to reach their destination. The northern areas and the southern areas are a bit out of reach and marginalized, while here in the urban, transport is easy and available, making it easier to arrive at schools. This is the biggest source of high absenteeism in rural areas compared to urban areas."

– District officer, Urban/West Unguja

Given the unreliability of public transport, some respondents suggest they have resorted to alternative means of transport, such as hiring a motorcycle. While according to some, hiring a motorcycle will reduce the chances of being late at school, the sustainability of such an alternative can be a challenge for teachers, because for many of them, spending TZS2,000 per trip is not really an affordable solution for the long run.

It is noteworthy that all the private schools in the sample have dedicated school buses for teachers, which, according to respondents, significantly reduces the possibility of teachers being absent from school or being late. However, the same issue of transport reliability exists in private schools, sometimes causing teachers to delay arriving at work.

Besides means of transport, poor road conditions are an important factor that cause transport problems. In many of the communities of this study, poor road conditions are a barrier for teachers to access school or public transport, causing them to be **absent from school** or **late for work**. According to some respondents, sometimes the road conditions are so challenging that public transport does not even pass through. For example, a teacher from an urban public school in West Unguja said: "Many teachers in this school live very far from school and there isn't reliable transport due to poor infrastructure. The road is rough, making transporters not to send their city vans in this route."

In terms of road conditions, the rural-urban disparity is not evident; both urban and rural schools experience the challenge of poor road quality, according to qualitative data.

Qualitative data suggests the transport challenge in general is a demotivating factor for teachers. Beyond deterring teachers from being at school and being punctual, the exhaustion and stress from long travels can result in other types of teacher absenteeism, including absence from the classroom and not being on task while in the classroom.

Distance from school and transport

Distance from teachers' homes to school and/or to public transport emerged as another important theme from qualitative data. Living far from the school or having to go a long distance to access public transport appears to be a major cause for teachers' lack of punctuality across most schools in the sample, irrespective of school type or geographic location, it is also a cause for teacher absenteeism to a certain extent, mostly in urban schools. The instances of being absent or late may be significantly reduced if quality transport is available and road conditions are fine. However, in the case of Zanzibar, long distance, coupled with lack of quality transport and roads, exacerbates the problem of teacher absenteeism, especially absence from school and punctuality. And when analysing interview results, it is also found that respondents always make direct links between remoteness and transport and infrastructure challenges.

Therefore, the challenge of distance is closely related to and should be examined in the context of transport and infrastructural deficit. According to some, the challenge of remoteness adds to the difficulty of transport and increases the chances of teachers' absence from school and late arrival.

For instance, when asked about the role of distance on teacher attendance, a DEO said: "There is such a case, which makes a teacher fail to attend school, not due to absenteeism, but due to transport problem, where during the morning, they aboard two different buses from an urban area heading to the south district. Such teachers might come three times per week, and on the fourth day they feel tired. Thus, distance has a large contribution on affecting teachers' attendance."

Survey data shows remoteness and transport issues affect teachers in public schools more than those in private schools. This is mainly due to the fact that in private schools, there is usually a special bus for teachers, whereas this is not the case for public school teachers.

It is important to note that there are two aspects to the challenge of remoteness: one is long distance from the teacher's residence to school, the other is long distance from the teacher's residence to the nearest public transport. While most of the respondents suggest long distance from their home to school represents a major barrier for them to be present at school or to be punctual, a few point out that access to the nearest public transport could be another challenge that is not to be overlooked. This is an issue for teachers in both rural and urban areas across Zanzibar, but is more frequently mentioned by respondents in rural areas. For instance, according to a teacher from a rural public school in North Unguja: "Teachers in this school arrive late compared to other schools because we are ... remote and many teachers come from town. About 90 per cent of the teachers in this school live in town areas. Teachers experience transport difficulties and the location of school is also far away from the main road, making teachers ... walk for more than half an hour after getting off the bus."

A school case study of the Urban/West region also finds that: "Another challenge facing teachers is poor transport services while coming to school and going back home. There is no public transport near the school, and thus some teachers walk about three to five kilometres on foot to catch a bus".

On the other hand, qualitative data shows that staying close to the school is a major motivating factor for teachers in general terms, as they are exempted from having to spend long hours to go to work every day.

Given the role of distance in contributing to/reducing teacher absenteeism, the availability of teacher housing near the school thus becomes key. In more than half of the schools in the sample, most of which are public and/or located in rural areas, some issues have been revealed with teacher housing that represent a major challenge for teachers in general, but also directly contribute to their lack of punctuality. Firstly, many selected schools do not have teacher houses available. This includes mainly public schools in both urban and rural areas. According to national-level officials, while housing is expected to be provided to all teachers, financial constraints have been a major barrier. Secondly, some schools suggested teacher housing is available but not enough. And lastly, some houses are either too old or too broken and thus need repair and rehabilitation. According to national officials, the plan to provide quality housing to all teachers has been on the table but has not been an easy task due to the ministry's budgetary constraints.

"When I compare to schools that I had in the past, I am happier working here because I live near the school. Therefore, I have no problems related to transport. For example, at my former school, I used to wake up very early but I still arrived at school late."

– Teacher, urban public school, Urban/West Unguja

Climate conditions

Qualitative data shows climate conditions, mainly heavy rain, affect almost all selected schools in Zanzibar, causing four types of teacher absenteeism, namely, absence from school, punctuality, absence from the classroom and reduced time on teaching while in the classroom, irrespective of school type or geographic location. More specifically, absence from school and lack of punctuality are the two most frequently mentioned consequences of bad weather, according to interview responses.

In terms of the effects of climate conditions on teacher absenteeism from school, it is suggested the rainy season, which usually lasts from March to May, is largely responsible for the hike in school absence. It is also a major cause for pupil absenteeism.

Qualitative data shows climate conditions affect school absenteeism and punctuality mainly through transport. It is shown that there is a causal relationship between heavy rain and reduced transport availability and deteriorated road conditions, which leads to either absence from school or late arrival to school.

For instance, when commenting on school absenteeism, one teacher suggested:

“During rainy season, most teachers do not attend school. This happens not only to teachers, but also to pupils. During rainy season, the situation becomes so tense in such a way that pupils fail to cross flooding rivers and some temporary ponds which emerge along the roads. Transport becomes a big problem, for instance, you can wait until 10 a.m. without seeing any public transport.”

– Teacher, rural public school, West Unguja

Not surprisingly, interview data shows that teachers living far away from the school are most affected by the effects of bad weather, as one head teacher from an urban public school in West Unguja stated: “Some days, transport become so difficult due to the shortage of energy or weather. Therefore, some teachers, especially those who live far away from school ... [are] absent from school for fearing to come to school too late as well as fearing of insecurity due to heavy rain.”

“During heavy rains, the school infrastructure is not good to contain the situation, where some rainwater enters some classes through the roof and windows. This makes some teachers not to enter such classes until the rain stops.”

– Teacher, urban private school, South Pemba

Qualitative data shows climate conditions affect teachers’ absenteeism from class via two mechanisms. The first is increased pupil absenteeism. A few respondents suggest that when it rains, pupil absenteeism increases, which makes teachers decide not to enter the classroom. For instance, according to a teacher from a rural public school in North Unguja: “Sometimes weather can be another reason hindering teachers from teaching. For example, once it rains, school attendance drops. This makes some teachers avoid ... entering classes to teach materials which they will have to re-teach.”

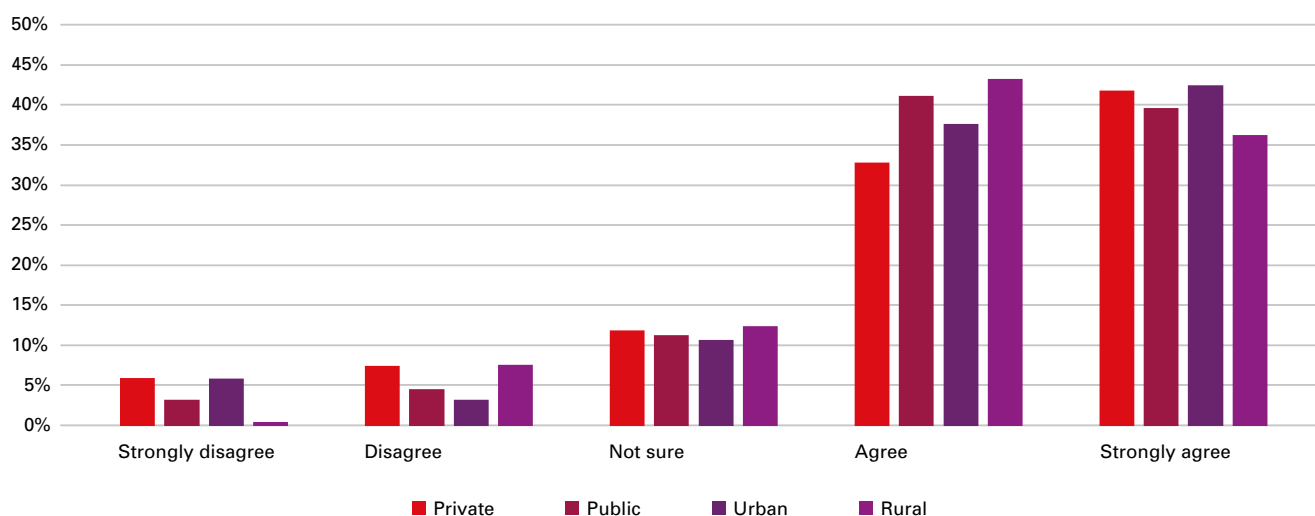
The other mechanism is the lack of rain-proof school infrastructure. For instance, there are cases where rain enters the classroom, making it impossible for teachers and pupils to stay inside. This has occurred to a few schools of different types across different geographic locations of Zanzibar. However, qualitative data shows the infrastructure of private schools in the sample are in better condition than that of public schools.

Finally, bad weather also affects teaching activities while teachers are in the classroom, as heavy rain and heavy wind break down communication between the teacher and pupils. This is usually because in Zanzibar, schools have iron roofs, which make loud noises during heavy rain. This could force teachers to stop teaching while in the classroom, according to some respondents. Moreover, heavy rain causes flooding into the classroom or power outages, which halts teaching activities while teachers are present in the classroom.

4.4.2. Community engagement and monitoring capacity

Interview results show that community engagement and monitoring play an important role in combating teacher absenteeism, especially two types of teacher absenteeism: school absenteeism and punctuality. The large majority of teachers participating in the survey agree or strongly agree with the statement: “Parents view teacher absences as a problem,” with no significant differences between public (81 per cent) and private (75 per cent) or urban (80 per cent) and rural (79 per cent) (see *Figure 13*).

Figure 13: Percentages of responses to survey statement: “Parents view teacher absences as a problem.” Urban-rural and private-public variations



Many respondents discussed the role of community in general terms, suggesting that parents, community leaders and school committees have a role to play in following up on teacher attendance. This is more evident in public schools than private, most of which are found to be in urban areas in Unguja. This is probably due to the fact that in private schools, there are usually strict rules and regulations against teacher absenteeism and a stronger sanctioning system. Especially, according to respondents, the school committees have a formal role to play in discouraging teacher absenteeism. It is shown that school committees monitor teacher absenteeism and bring the issue to discussion at committee meetings. They then feed the information back to the school management or to the district office for action.

With regard to community leaders, there are a few cases where they would help identify the issue of school absenteeism and discuss this issue with school management. Community leaders and parents sometimes give warnings, through the school committee, to those teachers that are absent from school. Community members also play an active role in identifying the issue of lateness and discuss this issue with the school committee or school management.

4.5. School-level factors of teacher absenteeism

Summary

Qualitative data reveals that the majority of schools in the sample experience infrastructural deficits, while in only a few schools, especially urban or private schools, the infrastructure is considered to be either adequate or in a good state. Based on field work observations, in most schools – both in urban and rural areas – libraries and science labs are not available. The majority of the schools in the sample – both rural and urban – experience classroom over-crowdedness, citing high pupil-teacher ratio as a challenge. The shortage of computers, desks and school fences, however, is more likely to occur to rural schools than urban ones, while only rural schools in the sample have experienced the lack of electricity. Both qualitative and quantitative data suggests school infrastructure conditions are better in private schools than public schools, especially those located in urban areas, which usually have all basic infrastructure available and are well-functioning. Shortage of teaching and learning materials presents another major challenge for most of the schools in the sample, except for a few urban schools. This includes lack of textbooks, exercise books and teaching aids. It was found that in some selected schools, three or four pupils had to share one textbook, but in more extreme cases the pupil-textbook ratio could go up to 10:1, significantly impacting quality teaching and learning.

Pupil absenteeism exists in almost all selected schools, irrespective of school type or geographic location. According to qualitative data, the causes of pupil absenteeism mainly include: social events such as weddings and funerals, especially on Fridays; distance from home to school; bad weather; health problems such as sickness or hunger; house chores; and child labour, especially during harvest season. The relationship between teachers and pupils is found to be generally positive, although corporal punishment exists, which seems to be demotivating for some pupils. Across all schools in the sample, the working relations between teachers are largely described as congenial and cooperative, which is often mentioned as a major motivating factor for teachers.

In most selected schools, both teachers and head teachers acknowledge that school absenteeism and delays occur to head teachers, mainly due to head teachers' official obligations – meetings at the DEO, REO or the ministry, trainings, health issues, social events, long distance from residence to school, or personal affairs. However, head teacher absenteeism is described by almost all respondents as an occasional event that can be justified. In half of the selected schools, regardless of school type and geographic location, teachers receive certain kinds of incentives as reward for good performance, ranging from verbal praises, recognition letters, to free trips and financial benefits such as bus fare and cash. However, it is not clear whether this reward system is well established or on an ad hoc basis. And there is little evidence of schools providing financial and material support to teachers to improve teacher attendance of any type.

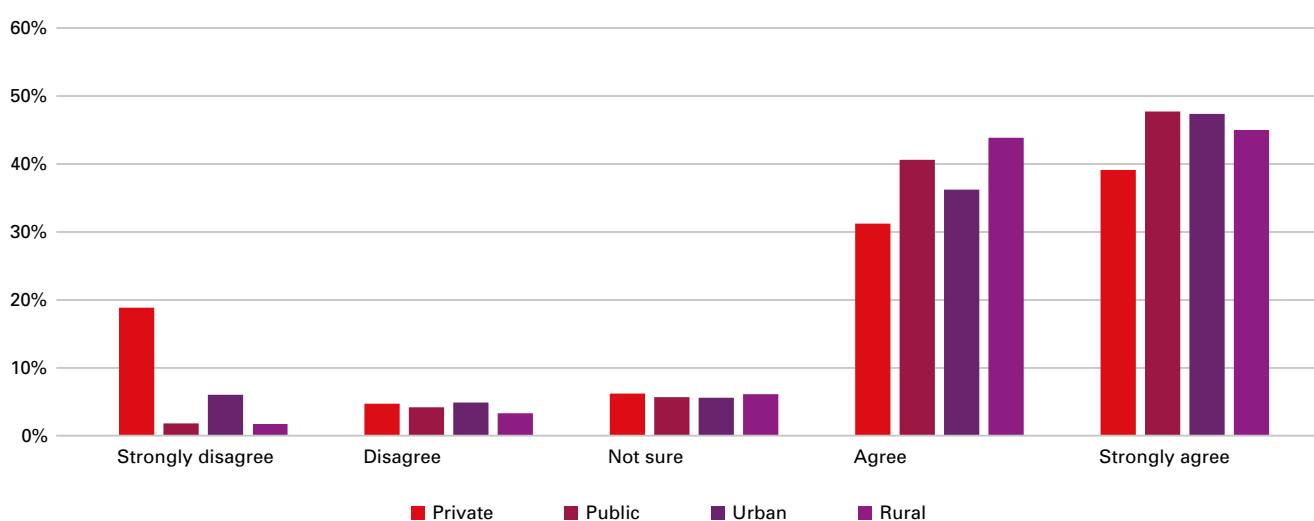
Based on qualitative results, it can be concluded that at the school level, five main themes directly contribute to different types of teacher absenteeism:

- Head teacher's management and monitoring capacity, including the capacity to monitor teacher absenteeism of various types, to provide material support to teachers as well as to oversee and manage teachers' period shifts. These have a direct impact on all four types of teacher absenteeism.
- Teachers' workload, which in many cases is a result of the high pupil-teacher ratio, has a direct impact on classroom absenteeism and teaching time while in the classroom; it can also lead to absence from school.
- Pupils' attendance, health, behaviour and performance, which affects teachers' attendance at school and in the classroom, but more importantly, teaching time while in the classroom.
- Availability of quality infrastructure and teaching and learning materials, which especially impacts teaching time, but also classroom absenteeism to a lesser extent.
- International development projects and interventions supported by development partners, which mainly aims at improving teachers' knowledge and skills. These could be linked to school absenteeism.

4.5.1. Head teacher's management and monitoring capacity

Across most schools in the sample, teachers describe the head teacher as collaborative and motivating, usually involving teachers in decision-making and supporting teacher development. Survey data shows more than 80 per cent of teachers across different school types and geographic locations consider the head teacher to be supportive of teachers' involvement in decision-making and have good management skills (see Figure 14). Teachers in urban areas and those in public schools tend to be more satisfied with the feedback they get from the head teacher, as opposed to those in rural or private schools.

Figure 14: Percentages of responses to survey statement: "The head teacher supports teacher involvement in school decision making." Rural-urban and private-public variations



Across all selected schools, both qualitative and quantitative data shows the head teacher (or the school management in the case of some private schools) plays the most critical role in monitoring and discouraging teacher absenteeism in all forms.

In all selected schools, there is a mechanism in place for monitoring teacher absenteeism although the actual approach slightly varies from school to school. The head teacher usually keeps an attendance book to track teachers' attendance in school and punctuality every day, where teachers are required to write down their names and the time at which they arrive and depart. The head teacher compiles and submits the attendance records to the district office on a monthly basis. However, interview data suggests that, in some cases, there is more than one type of teacher-attendance record. For instance, it is shown that in some schools, both urban and rural, there is a time book or registration book that specifically records teachers' arrival and departure time and an attendance book that keeps track of teacher attendance at school on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. In a few cases, there is also a permission book, which keeps a record of the permission the head teacher grants to teachers in the event of sickness or other emergencies. According to various respondents, public schools are required to submit teacher-attendance reports to the district office every month, whereas this requirement does not apply to private schools because teacher management in private schools does not fall under the jurisdiction of the MoEVT. Despite these monitoring mechanisms in place, there is only one case identified through interviews where a head teacher provides a bus fare to encourage teacher attendance at school.

Survey data confirms this by showing that the large majority of respondents agree or strongly agree with the statements: “The head teacher heavily discourages teacher absences,” and “The head teacher always records teacher absences,” regardless of school type or geographic location.

Figure 15: Percentages of responses to survey statement: “The head teacher heavily discourages teacher absences.” Rural-urban and public-private variations

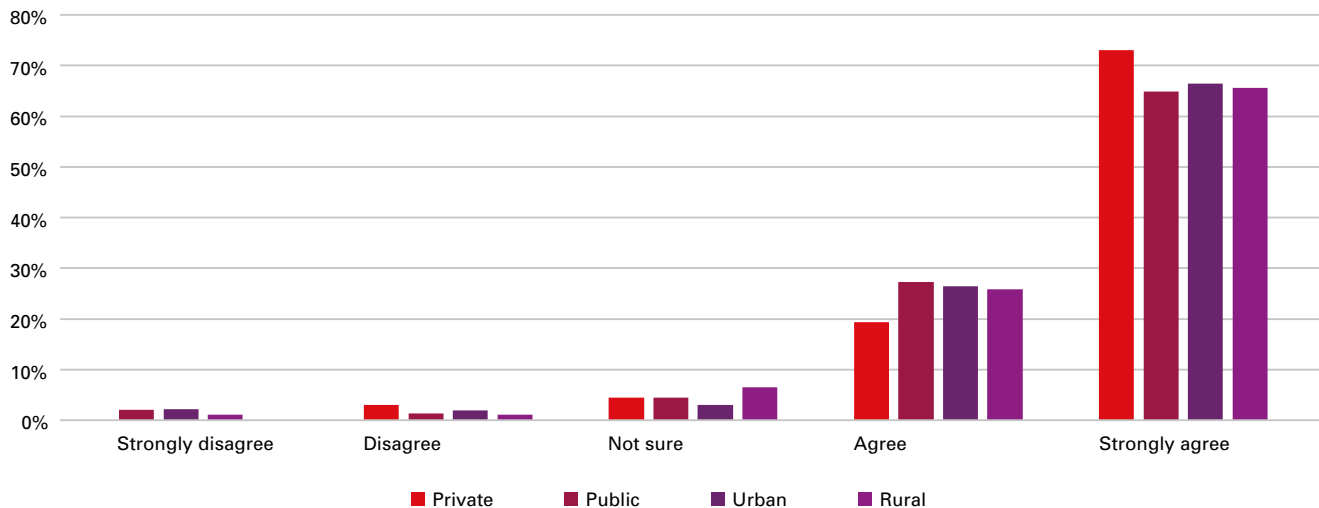
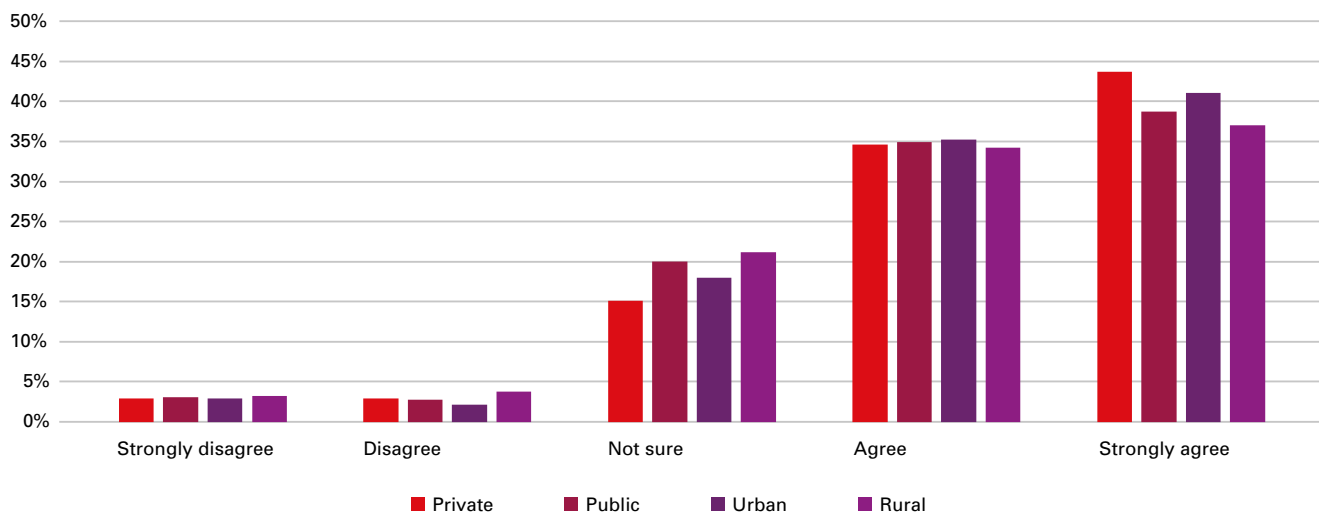


Figure 16: Percentages of responses to survey statement: “The head teacher always records teacher absences.” Rural-urban and public-private variations



In terms of sanctioning mechanisms, interview data shows that in all schools there are formal procedures to follow for reporting and sanctioning regular school absenteeism and lateness. Normally the absent teacher first receives a verbal warning and is sometimes asked to produce a written document that explains his/her behaviour. If he/she repeats the same behaviour, it will be followed by a written warning and a record will thus be created in his/her file. In the case of public schools, if such behaviour persists, the absent teacher will be reported to the district education office by the head teacher for further action. However, in most public schools, regardless of geographic location, it is suggested the head teacher tends to settle the case at the school level without having to report it to the REO and DEO. Existing measures employed by public school head teachers normally include: asking for verbal or written explanations; providing advice to the absent teacher; and giving verbal and written warnings. Usually, no further measures are taken beyond these, while in private schools, repeated misconduct leads to dismissal. The response by a head teacher illustrates such a widespread practice in public schools:

“No, I have not yet sanctioned them. What I have done is to warn them because under normal circumstances, it is good to sit with those who make mistakes and warn them instead of punishing them.”

– Teacher, rural public school, North Unguja

In addition to monitoring absence from school and punctuality, respondents also consider head teachers' supervision and monitoring capacity in general as critical for discouraging classroom absenteeism and reduced teaching time when in the classroom. More specifically, a head teacher's failure to oversee and coordinate teachers' shifts could result in teachers' absence from the classroom. This is because respondents across different schools complain that some teachers' failure to keep track of time during a class causes other teachers' absence from the classroom. One teacher from an urban public school in West Unguja said: “It can happen that a teacher is in the school and it is time to go to the classroom, only to find that there is another teacher in the same class. Hence she has to come back to the office to do other assignments.”

“The private schools are far better in performance than the public schools. The variation is due to supervision. The private school teachers are aware that there is someone behind assessing them, while for the public schools, once a teacher misbehaves, he/she has to be warned verbally, and second warning is through writing him a warning letter. (Then) the educational officer has to warn him, which is quite a long process. On the side of private schools, just one mistake is likely to cause a teacher's dismissal, and the employer might look for another employee.”

– DEO, Urban/West Unguja

In most public schools, there is little evidence pointing to any well-established mechanism for monitoring and sanctioning classroom absenteeism and teaching time. However, in private schools, there are sometimes class monitors that are tasked specifically with monitoring teachers' classroom attendance and teaching time, using a “log book” for instance. The head teacher also checks pupils' progress and syllabus coverage to understand whether teachers have spent time on teaching as planned. In addition, private schools in the sample have set up stricter rules that prevent teachers from such types of misconduct, including forbidding the use of cell phones in the classroom.

Interview data highlights significant differences in sanctioning practice between public and private schools. While for public schools, the sanction of a teacher involves a lengthy bureaucratic reporting process from the school management to the district and then to the regional and national level, in private schools, the head teachers' supervision is much stricter and sanction process much faster. For example, it is suggested that in private schools, misbehaving teachers are usually warned three times before being dismissed, while across all public schools in the sample, no case of dismissal was ever mentioned by any respondent. It is thus clear that in private schools, leadership and management style tend to be more impersonal and rule-based than that of public schools, and monitoring and sanction system better established and enforced.

As pointed out by some respondents, the main barrier to effective school leadership and monitoring is the existence of friendly personal ties in Zanzibar between teachers and the head teacher, or high authorities. “Knowing each other”, in the words of many respondents, hinders impartial and effective management and sanction. For example, one district education officer pointed out: “There are some head teachers who hide the misconducts of their subordinates to create a sense of relations and togetherness with them.”

There are also cases where reporting the absentee might not lead to any result due to personal ties, as one DEO put it:

“Let me frankly say that here in Zanzibar, there is a problem of ‘muhalī’, which means knowing each other. Once you are in good relation with someone, you cannot take any action against him/her. It affects much because sometimes the head teacher reports to the ministry concerning the misbehaviours of teachers, but no action is taken against them, as there is a sort of relations. Here in Zanzibar we are so much affected by this relation problem because it is a small area where many people know each other. Unless someone is too much misbehaved, measures will not be taken against her/him.”

4.5.2. Teachers’ workload

Across all schools in the sample, heavy workload is cited as a general challenge for teachers but also a direct cause of certain types of teacher absenteeism. The most frequently mentioned types of workload include: marking pupils’ exercise books; teaching large numbers of pupils and class periods; attending school meetings; and performing administrative tasks. It is clear from qualitative data that workload affects especially absence from the classroom, as well as teaching time while in the classroom.

“There is shortage of teachers so the workload per teacher is heavy, to the extent that sometimes a teacher decides to postpone teaching in order to mark pupils’ exercise books or prepares his/her work. For example, personally I teach Standard 4, where I have three classes, and I also teach grade 6, where I have another three classes. I do not have time to rest; always I am occupied. It reaches a point where I decide what to do and what not because I cannot do everything.”

– Teacher, rural public school, North Pemba

More specifically, the most frequently mentioned types of workload causing teachers’ absence from the classroom include: attending school meetings; being assigned with administrative tasks such as filing statistical forms; being tired from teaching too many periods, marking pupils’ exercise books; accompanying visitors; and other school activities such as cleaning and preparing for sport games. These reasons apply to schools of all types and geographic locations. It is clear from qualitative data that in many cases, such high workload is a direct result of shortage of teachers and high PTRs, which is a common challenge in many schools in the sample, especially public schools. For example, the large number of pupils necessitates that teachers spend extra time entering pupils’ exam results into the computer system, instead of teaching in class. A teacher from an urban public school in West Unguja said: “It might happen that the teacher is at school but not in class teaching because of the meeting in the office. For example, we once had trial examinations with Standard 4 and 6. After marking, the teacher did not attend class to teach, as he was busy entering data in the computer. The results were urgently needed. This was a heavy task as the number of Standard 4 are more than 900, while Standard 6 are 648. Under such circumstances, the teacher was at school but not teaching.”

In addition to high PTRs, according to some respondents, there is clear instruction from district-level education offices that teachers should not be asked to do administrative tasks during class periods. This suggests it is the head teacher's responsibility to ensure teachers' workload does not result in absenteeism.

When it comes to being in the classroom but not teaching, interview results show the most common reason is the need to mark a large number of pupils' exercise books or exams. The account of one head teacher about teachers' workload is illustrative:

"For instance, there are teachers who have 38 periods. Some might be tired and exhausted and need time to rest. Moreover, there are morning tests conducted daily to the classes which are to sit for national examination, particularly Standard 4 and Standard 6. Such reasons are likely to cause teachers be in classes but do not teach, because they can also be busy marking the tests during lessons."

– Teacher, urban public school, North Pemba

High workload – which often results from high pupil-teacher ratio – is, in general, a demotivating factor for teachers, causing stress and frustration. According to some respondents, in a few cases, teachers miss scheduled class or are absent from school altogether knowing he/she will have to teach a large number of pupils in one classroom.

4.5.3. Pupils' attendance, health, behaviour and performance

Across all types of schools, pupils' attendance, health, behaviour and performance have an impact on teacher absenteeism of certain types, including absence from school and the classroom, but most notably reduced time spent on teaching while in the classroom.

In a few cases, when a pupil falls sick, the respective teacher has to take him/her to the nearby hospital, thus causing absence from school. Pupils' sickness also causes absence from the classroom, as some teachers mentioned that the teacher would take care of that pupil instead of entering the classroom. In addition, pupil absenteeism and misbehaviour could also cause classroom absenteeism. For instance, as one head teacher from an urban public school in West Unguja suggested, when commenting on the reasons for classroom absenteeism:

"Some pupils are very naughty in some classrooms in the school in such a way that a teacher fails to control such classes. Otherwise corporal punishment is applied to control them. Therefore, this makes the teacher lose interest in teaching his or her lesson in such a class. For example, the pupils fight each other and make chaos in the classroom."

However, the most frequently cited types of teacher absenteeism as a result of pupils' absenteeism, health, behaviour and performance is reduced teaching time while in the classroom. For example, respondents indicate there are cases where pupils become sick, tired or misbehave, causing the teacher to stop teaching and deal with the situation while in the classroom. Based on qualitative data, a more important cause of reduced teaching time is pupil absenteeism, which includes pupil absenteeism from school and delays to arriving at school. This occurs to almost all schools in the sample, regardless of school type or geographic location. It is frequently mentioned that if there are pupils absent or late for any reason, the teacher will be compelled to repeat the same topic to make sure all pupils progress at the same speed, thus reducing the time that should have been spent on teaching new topics. This ultimately affects teachers' work plans and pupils' learning progress and results. Pupil absenteeism also has other effects on teachers. As mentioned

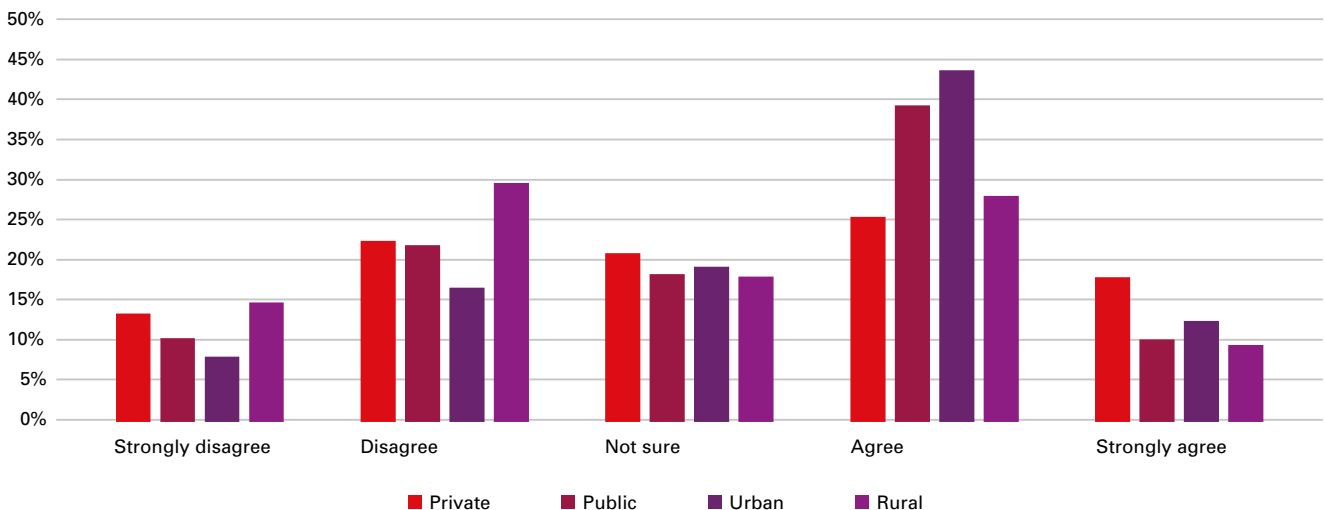
by many teachers, pupil absenteeism leads to lowered performance of pupils, which in turn constitutes a demotivating factor for teachers.

“Absenteeism affects pupils’ performance due to the fact that they miss some of the topics or sub topics, which others are taught in their absence. This is likely to cause them to fail in their national examinations. Not only that, absenteeism affects also the teacher. It prevents the teacher from attaining the teaching target, as he/she will be lagging behind to assist the absentees. Worse more, absenteeism distorts the class average and makes the teachers irresponsible.”
 – Teacher, urban public school, North Pemba

4.5.4. Availability of quality infrastructure and teaching and learning materials

As aforementioned, most schools in the sample experience infrastructural deficit and/or shortage of teaching and learning materials, although to varying degrees. Survey data shows the challenge might be more acute in rural areas and in private schools than in urban and public schools. When asked about the adequacy of teaching materials available, 44 per cent of respondents from rural areas either “disagree” or “strongly disagree” that they have enough teaching materials at their disposal, as opposed to 25 per cent from urban areas. This rate goes up to 36 per cent for private school teachers while it is significantly lower for public school teachers (32 per cent), which indicates that teaching and learning-material shortage appears to be a more prominent challenge for teachers in private schools than for those in public schools.

Figure 17: Survey question: “Do teachers at this school have the teaching materials they need to teach?” Response rates by geographic location and school type



Beyond being a general challenge to schools in Zanzibar, infrastructural and material shortages are often considered to be directly responsible for certain types of teacher absenteeism, especially reduced teaching time, but also classroom absenteeism to a lesser extent.

First of all, it is found that in a few cases, infrastructure- and material-related issues can cause classroom absenteeism. These cases could include: seeking toilet elsewhere; the need to fix infrastructure problems; merging of classes due to classroom shortage; and lack of textbooks and teaching aids. However, the more common consequences of infrastructural and material challenges is reduced teaching time.

According to qualitative data, the reasons that can cause teachers to spend less time teaching as planned while in the classroom include: poor school infrastructure easily affected by bad weather; lack of teaching aids and textbooks; disturbances from outside due to lack of school fence; and other practical challenges such as power outage. These reasons exist across almost all schools in the sample, regardless of school type or geographic location. For example, it is suggested that due to shortages of teaching and learning materials, sometimes teachers have to share teaching aids, which results in not teaching while in the classroom.

“Due to the shortage of teaching facilities, it might occur that once a teacher needs them, at the very same time they are in use by another teacher. Under such circumstances, the teacher will likely be in class but not teaching.”

– Teacher, urban private school, West Unguja

4.5.5. International development projects and interventions

In Zanzibar, a number of international development projects and interventions are providing important support to schools through training, as well as material provisions. One such project and intervention frequently mentioned by respondents is called Tusome Pamoja, or Let's Read Together, supported by USAID and implemented by RTI International. It is a five-year project starting from 2016.¹⁷¹ The project operates in five regions across Tanzania, including the two islands of Zanzibar.¹⁷² According to the project's profile, the main objective of Tusome Pamoja is to improve early-grade reading, writing and arithmetic skills, or the so-called '3Rs', mainly targeting Standards 1–4. It also aims to improve teacher skills and behaviour, and community engagement in education.¹⁷³ The beneficiaries of this project include both teachers and pupils. Tusome Pamoja is one of USAID's flagship activities in Tanzania in the field of education,¹⁷⁴ and with a total budget of US\$67 million, represents one of USAID's top activities from 2016 to 2018 in terms of annual commitment.¹⁷⁵ According to respondents, being able to receive training from the Tusome Pamoja project is itself a motivating factor for teachers. However, in some cases, it was mentioned that participating in training provided by the Tusome Pamoja project causes absence from school.

4.6. Teacher-level factors of teacher absenteeism

Summary

Qualitative data shows that all teachers interviewed for the study, without exception, expressed passion for the teaching profession, citing “helping children succeed in life”, “being respected by the community” and “contributing to the society and the nation” as sources of pride and satisfaction. However, other types of respondents suggested differently. Some head teachers, community representatives, national officials and district education officers for instance, indicated there was a deficit of teacher commitment in Zanzibar. Beyond teachers’ belief in the intrinsic value of education and teaching, interview results show that other important sources of teacher motivation include the income and stability that come with the job, as well as the availability of opportunities to upgrade teachers’ knowledge and skills.

Although teacher statistics from the 20 selected schools are not representative of the entire primary teaching force in Zanzibar, they do reveal a number of realities. The 20 selected schools currently employ a total of 655 teachers. Most of them are female. This reflects the national average where female teachers account for the majority of primary teachers in the country. Survey data shows that the majority of female teachers participating in the survey teach in urban areas, which is also consistent with previous findings.¹⁷⁶

Survey data also shows that 61 per cent of surveyed teachers have completed secondary education and 19 per cent tertiary education, while the remaining 3 per cent are at the primary level or below. In terms of variations between different school types and geographic areas, it is found that teachers that have completed secondary education consistently account for the largest proportion for all types of schools and in all different geographic locations, as the table below shows. However, for public schools, the percentage of teachers having completed tertiary education is much higher than that of private schools. Another observation is that the percentage of teachers with primary education or below is lower for public schools compared to private schools in the sample. These might be a reflection of the qualification and professional-development challenges faced by private school teachers described in Section 2.

When it comes to teacher qualification, data exists for 553 of the total 655 teachers. It shows that less than half of the respondents hold a teaching certificate. Less than 50 per cent of respondents possess a diploma, and a small percentage of them hold a degree. The proportions of teachers in rural areas holding a diploma and a degree are larger than those of urban areas. For public schools in the sample, 47 per cent of the teachers possess a diploma, which is higher than the national average as of 2014 (24 per cent). This could be a result of the purposive sampling of this study, which does not represent the entire teaching force in Zanzibar. It may also be a result of the steady increase of diploma-level teachers over the years.¹⁷⁷ Teacher statistics also show a major difference between public and private schools in the sample: the percentage of teachers holding a degree in private schools is much higher than that of public schools.

The findings on teacher education and qualification levels are not conclusive. As the teachers involved in the sample are not representative of the entire teacher population in Zanzibar, and that the data is largely self-reported, such statistical results can only be treated as indicative and cannot be generalized beyond the sample itself. What can be learned is that teachers’ education levels and qualifications represent a challenge for schools across Zanzibar, regardless of school type and geographic location.

Based on both qualitative and quantitative data, several factors related to teachers' personal characteristics have emerged, which are clearly and directly linked to specific types of teacher absenteeism. These include:

- Personal and family reasons, which mainly include health issues of teachers themselves as well as family obligations such as bearing children and taking care of family members. These are more likely to result in absence from school, but could also lead to lack of punctuality, absence from the classroom and reduced teaching time while in the classroom.
- Social obligations, which mainly include attending social events such as weddings and funerals, as well as religious activities, affecting school attendance and punctuality.
- Intrinsic motivation and work ethics, which could affect teachers' attendance at school and punctuality to a certain extent, but more importantly, attendance in classroom and time on task while in the classroom.
- Teachers' competencies, including language skills, content knowledge and teaching methods – including the use of corporal punishment – primarily affecting teaching time while in the classroom.

4.6.1. Personal and family reasons

Both qualitative and quantitative data shows that at the individual teacher-level, the most frequently mentioned reasons for teacher absenteeism of different types are health-related, and they have occurred to teachers from all schools in the sample. In most cases, however, respondents did not indicate which specific types of health issues teachers were referring to. Available information shows they could range from pregnancy-related complications to fatigue in general.

In terms of rural/urban, public/private and male/female variations in the effect of health on teacher absenteeism, survey data shows that response rates are consistently higher in rural, public and female categories across four types of teacher absenteeism: absence from school, lack of punctuality, absence from the classroom, and reduced time on task while in the classroom.

Both qualitative and quantitative data clearly indicates that health issues are the most frequently reported cause for school absenteeism, and they affect all schools in the sample regardless of school type and geographic location. In addition to teachers' own health problems, interview results show various family obligations can also cause teachers' absence from school, across almost all schools in the sample. These usually include maternity leave, looking after young children and old parents, and taking care of other relatives that are sick or injured.

Interview data shows teachers' own health issues and family obligations are also frequently mentioned causes for teachers' lack of punctuality. For instance, beyond generic descriptions of health issues, many respondents specifically mentioned pregnancy-related challenges as a cause for delay to work, as pregnant teachers sometimes have to visit the hospital before coming to school. The specific family obligations that affect punctuality are similar to those that affect school absenteeism. However, a particular one mentioned by a few respondents is female teachers' need to breastfeed their children, causing them to either delay arriving to work or depart early. Qualitative data reveals that late arrival or early departure caused by health-related problems and family obligations occurs to schools of all types and geographic locations.

Qualitative data suggests teachers' own health problems are also a major cause for their absence from the classroom and reduced teaching time, and this applies to nearly all schools in the sample. While respondents described the specific health issues affecting classroom absence in a quite generic way, a good number of them mentioned tiredness and fatigue as the main reason affecting teaching time while in the classroom. According to respondents, this mainly results from the heavy workload that teachers usually have, and it mostly affects teachers in public schools, most of which are located in Pemba. While falling sick might not be something that teachers intend to do, some – including a head teacher from a rural public school in West Unguja pointed out that still being in the classroom while being sick is something that could be avoided:

“It happens that a teacher is sick and unable to teach at the same time she does not want others to realize that she did not teach, thus entering the class without teaching as a trick. I always tell them if someone is sick it’s better to report in order to find someone to fill the gap.”

– Head teacher, rural public school, West Unguja

Family reasons also affect classroom absenteeism and teaching time in many schools in the sample that are of different types and geographic locations, but mostly across various districts in Unguja. However, instead of discussing family duties such as taking care of family members, many respondents brought up a particular type of family reason that causes teachers to be stressed and distracted at work: conflict between family members.

It was suggested that, in Zanzibar, as a culturally determined and socially accepted norm, the responsibility of taking care of the household mainly falls on female members of the society, as in many other societies across the world. As a result, female teachers' attendance is more likely to be affected due to family duties:

“On the side of teachers' attendance, here are some teachers with poor performance but there are specific reasons for that. For example, most of our teachers are women, and there are many reasons for their absenteeism, like maternity leave. Policy wise, you cannot say that otherwise they shouldn't be employed. However, in the real situation, this has an effect. When the child is ill, it is difficult for the father to attend to her, but the mother.”

– An REO

Maternity leave in Zanzibar is protected by law and teachers are entitled to three months of maternity leave. The fact that female teachers account for the majority of the teaching force in Zanzibar schools implies that female teachers' absenteeism has a greater impact on pupils' learning.

4.6.2. Social obligations

Teachers' social obligations directly affect three types of teacher absenteeism: school absenteeism, punctuality and classroom absenteeism. The most frequently mentioned social obligations include attending funerals and weddings, and religious activities to a lesser extent. Qualitative data suggests that across all types of schools and geographic locations, school absenteeism is the most frequently mentioned type of teacher absenteeism resulting from teachers' social obligations. In addition, it is shown that teachers' punctuality is also affected by teachers' social obligations, but this is more likely to occur to public schools than private ones, due to the stronger monitoring and sanctioning system of the latter.

"The teacher is a member of society from which the social interaction is unavoidable among the people such as funeral and wedding occasions. Therefore, these issues do affect [a] teacher in his/her society and ought to participate accordingly to obey the culture of his/her society."

– Head teacher, urban public school, Urban/West Unguja

According to many respondents, in Zanzibar, attending social events is considered an obligation that is culturally required and thus impossible to disregard. The Zanzibar tradition would require that, for instance, whenever there is a funeral, not only should the relatives of the deceased attend, but also neighbours and friends. It is thus socially accepted and considered by many as a legitimate reason for teachers to be absent. As a result, according to respondents, teachers usually ask and get permission from the head teacher to attend social events:

"In accordance with the habit of Zanzibar people, we live as brothers. When someone dies, even when you are not closely related, but he is your neighbour, he is your brother. Likewise, on the side of weddings, it is the same. These social reasons lead to plenty of permissions."

– An REO

However, private schools in the sample appear to have stricter rules in terms of granting teachers permission for such social events. Some private schools only allow teachers to leave when it is a funeral of blood relative, rather than friends and neighbours:

"Permission to attend social matters is granted only when necessary. For example, a teacher is granted a permission to attend burial of a parent, or of any person of blood relations. Apart from that, it is not allowed. For example, permission is neither granted for a friend nor a neighbour."

– Teacher, urban private school, West Unguja

In terms of the timing of social events in Zanzibar, it was specifically mentioned by some respondents that wedding ceremonies in Zanzibar are usually held in March, August and December. And according to many respondents, Friday is when most social and religious events take place in Zanzibar and is thus the day when absenteeism is mostly likely to occur.

4.6.3. Intrinsic motivation and work ethics

Interview data reveals that teachers' lack of passion for the profession and poor professional conduct are also factors contributing to various types of teacher absenteeism, primarily classroom absenteeism and teaching time while in class. They also affect school absenteeism and punctuality, but to a much lesser extent.

According to school-management-committee members, head teachers and teachers across schools of different types, mainly public schools across different geographic locations, teachers' strong commitment to their job, their sense of responsibility towards the pupils and respect for a school's rules and regulations are important qualities that contribute to their school attendance and punctuality.

However, subnational-level respondents tend to hold a different opinion. In fact, a number of district education officers consider teachers' weak commitment to the profession and lack of professional behaviour a major cause for their school absenteeism and lack of punctuality.

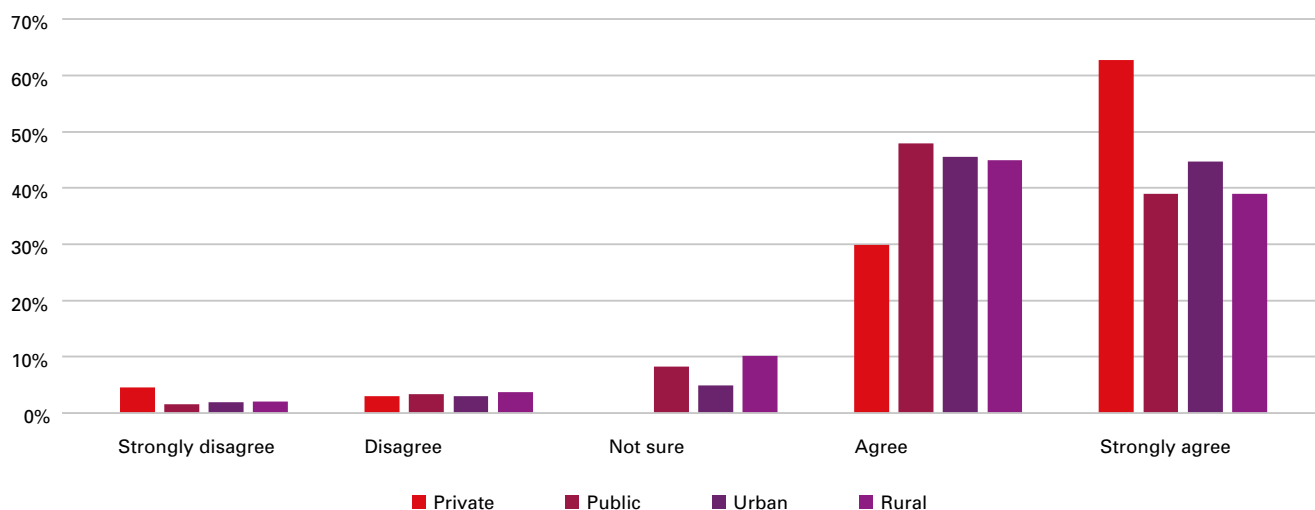
Lack of intrinsic motivation and professionalism are more frequently reported by respondents as important factors of classroom absenteeism and teaching time while in the classroom. There are a small number of positive cases where respondents consider teachers' strong commitment to their job to have contributed to classroom attendance and fulfilment of teaching time, saying "teachers are committed", "teachers work hard" and even that teachers' religious values are contributing factors.

However, qualitative data shows that, especially in public schools of the sample, there are respondents that consider teachers' lack of commitment and professionalism as one of the main reasons for teachers' classroom absenteeism. Frequently reported issues include "lack of seriousness", "talking with fellow teachers on private issues", "chatting on their mobile phones", "lack of proper preparation for lessons" and "doing their own business". Reduced teaching time while in class as a result of lack of motivation and work ethics also occurs, mainly to public schools across different geographic locations of Zanzibar. More specifically, it was reported that teachers would be talking to their colleague in the classroom or playing with their smart phones, instead of teaching. However, one of the most frequently mentioned reasons for being in the classroom but not teaching full time is teachers' failure to fully prepare for the lessons. This, as some respondents suggested, may have been due to a lack of interest, commitment or professional behaviour of teachers in general.

4.6.4. Teachers' competencies

Teachers' knowledge and skills are also important factors closely linked to specific types of teacher absenteeism. As aforementioned, in all selected schools, most teachers have received at least secondary-level education as well as relevant training qualifications such as a certificate or diploma. Survey data show that more than 80 per cent of teachers who participated in the survey agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "I have the knowledge and skills needed to teach well," with no significant differences between public (87 per cent) and private (93 per cent), or urban (90 per cent) and rural (84 per cent).

Figure 18: Percentages of responses to survey statement: “I have the knowledge and skills needed to teach well.” Urban-rural and public-private variations



However, teachers' competencies remain a challenge for schools of different types and in different geographic locations. According to interview results, in a very small number of cases, teachers miss classes while in the school due to lack of knowledge on the particular topic or subject. However, the more frequently mentioned types of teacher absenteeism as a result of teachers' knowledge and skills gap is reduced teaching time while in the classroom.

Interview results show that the lack of content knowledge would contribute to reduced teaching time while the teacher is in the classroom, and this has occurred only to public schools in the sample. More specifically, respondents suggested that because of lack of training to teach certain lessons, some teachers would still be in the classroom but shorten the teaching time due to lack of knowledge on the topic. However, the study was not designed in a way that captures specifically to what extent teachers lack which kind of content knowledge.

Section 5: Bringing everything together: Commonalities and variations across different contexts

5.1. Summary

Over the past decade, the RGoZ has made important progress in implementing the free-education policy and achieving better learning outcomes by increasing educational inputs and instituting a series of education-policy changes and reform. Targeted efforts have also been made to address issues concerning teacher motivation, including increasing teachers' minimum salary and other benefits. However, persistent challenges at different levels of the education system continue to affect the teaching force in Zanzibar. The Time to Teach study in Zanzibar focuses specifically on the issue of teacher absenteeism in primary schools. It distinguishes between four types of teacher absenteeism and aims to identify the specific factors of each type of teacher absenteeism in the context of Zanzibar. It also highlights the role of various education stakeholders, including the MoEVT, REOs, DEOs, communities as well as head teachers in discouraging teacher absenteeism of different types. This study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the various challenges faced by teachers, especially the systemic issues that affect teachers' attendance and motivation, with a view to providing evidence-based and constructive policy recommendations to relevant education stakeholders in Zanzibar.

The selection of the 20 schools of this study follows a pre-defined qualitative sampling frame that covers two main types of schools in Zanzibar: public and private, as well as two major geographic areas across the two islands: rural and urban. Based on the analysis of determinants of four types of teacher absenteeism across five levels of the education system, some common themes have emerged across different types of schools and geographic locations, as well as some evident variations among them.

5.2. Commonalities across the selected schools

Based on the analysis, it has become clear that the schools in the sample share many similar experiences which play an important role in curbing different types of teacher absenteeism, including having supportive head teachers, being monitored and supported by the national and subnational education actors, having systems in place at the school level that tracks teachers' school attendance and punctuality, as well as benefiting substantively from international development projects. However, some common challenges across the schools also emerged, including infrastructural and material shortages and pupil absenteeism. In addition, all of the schools are affected by the lack of quality transport in the communities and harsh climate conditions such as heavy rain. These challenges directly lead to various types of teacher absenteeism.

Data from the field also shows that some of the experiences and challenges that individual teachers are facing are quite similar across the board. For instance, teachers from all types of schools and geographic areas expressed strong belief in the value of education. However, they are often discouraged by the low salary levels, lack of transport allowances and lack of training opportunities, which not only affects their motivation in general but also their attendance. In addition, most teachers across the schools in the sample consider their workload to be too heavy, which is also a demotivating factor leading to different types of teacher absenteeism. Last but not least, common personal issues and social obligations such as health problems, family duties as well as attending funerals and weddings, also affect their attendance.

5.3. Variations across the selected schools

Despite the common experiences and challenges that affect teacher absenteeism, the analysis from previous Sections shows very important variations across different types of schools, different geographic locations and teachers with different personal traits.

1. Low salary appears to be a more serious challenge for teachers in urban areas than rural areas, given the relatively high living cost of urban areas. Since it is mostly teachers in rural areas that are entitled to transport allowance, low transport allowance affects teachers in rural areas more than those in urban areas, and public schools more than private schools. Since private schools are not state-funded, and are therefore not subject to the Government's salary scales or benefits, private school teachers are generally found to be underpaid. Instances of having alternative employment to supplement their income is thus more frequent among private school teachers than those in public schools. Delays in salary and allowance payment appear to be more frequently reported by respondents in Unguja than those in Pemba, especially those in public schools in rural areas of Unguja, which deserves further investigation.
2. Although many teachers consider the training they have received to be insufficient, this appears to be a more prominent challenge among private school teachers than those in public schools. This, however, might be due to the already relatively high qualifications of private school teachers compared with their public school counterparts. However, public school teachers are more likely to demonstrate lack of professionalism and work ethics than private school teachers, which is likely to be a result of the relatively strong governance system in private schools, but also lack of training on work ethics among public school teachers. Corporal punishment was more frequently reported by respondents across different districts in Unguja than in Pemba.
3. Regarding national-level monitoring capacities, it appears that urban schools tend to receive visits from MoEVT officials more frequently than rural schools, which is probably due to the relative proximity of urban schools and ease of transport in urban areas.
4. Although school inspectors and REOs and DEOs play an important role in discouraging teacher absenteeism of various types, their role is more useful for public schools than private schools. This could be due to the already-strong monitoring system in place against teacher absenteeism at the school level in private schools. Another explanation could be that private school teachers in principle are not accountable to the Government since they are not government employees. Therefore, the visits and inspection conducted by government actors do not have such a strong effect on their attendance than on their public school counterparts. The issue of insufficient number of visits and financial constraints of subnational education actors seems more acute in Unguja, and the cases of lack of professional behaviour of school inspectors exist especially in the Urban/West region of Unguja.
5. Parents' awareness of and engagement in education in general is found to be higher in urban areas than rural areas. However, in terms of quality of teaching, parents' awareness appears to have a stronger effect on teachers in urban areas and those in private schools more than their counterparts in rural as well as public schools. Public schools in urban areas in Unguja are found to have more engaged communities in school affairs. Regarding the role of school committees, public schools in general tend to have school committees that are more engaged than those of private schools, likely due to the already-strong monitoring system of private schools.
6. In terms of school-level monitoring, it is found that in public schools, the monitoring system is only capable of capturing two types of teacher absenteeism, namely, school absenteeism and punctuality. The mechanism is more sophisticated in private schools, where it is able to capture classroom attendance as well as time on task while in class. In addition, it is evident that private schools have both established and practised stricter sanction measures, including dismissal after

three warnings. Public schools tend to settle cases of teacher misconduct privately, and instances of dismissal have rarely occurred. However, teachers from rural and public schools tend to be more satisfied with head teachers' feedback on their work than their counterparts in urban and private settings.

7. Public school teachers are more likely to be affected by long distance and transport challenges than their counterparts in private schools, since in private schools there is usually a special school bus for teachers. Schools in rural areas are also more likely to be affected by being remote and through lack of community infrastructure such as roads and means of transport. The availability of quality teacher housing in the school vicinity thus appears to have a more significant effect on teachers' attendance at public schools as well as schools in rural areas.
8. While infrastructural and material challenges exist across all schools in the sample, they appear to be more acute in rural areas as well as in public schools. However, although private schools enjoy overall better infrastructure than public schools, teachers in private schools tend to be more seriously affected by the shortage of teaching and learning material than their counterparts in public schools. This is because private schools operate without financial and material support from the Government, and therefore do not receive teaching and learning materials from the MoEVT, and are thus more prone to the shortage of teaching and learning materials.
9. Pupils' hunger tends to be a more prominent issue in schools in rural areas and public schools, which is likely to be related to the relatively higher poverty rates in rural areas.
10. Although teachers across the board are affected by personal issues, family duties and social obligations, health problems were more frequently reported by teachers in rural areas, those in public schools or female teachers. Female teachers have unique family obligations, including breastfeeding and taking care of the household, as is widely accepted in Zanzibari society. Given the relatively strong rules set for attending various social events by private schools, fulfilling social obligations affects public school teachers more than their counterparts in private schools.
11. The two islands also experience some divergent challenges. While shortage of teachers appears to be a more prominent issue in Pemba, the main challenge facing Unguja appears to be the relocation of teachers closer to their residence.

The analysis also clearly demonstrates that some factors at different levels of the education system interact and reinforce one another. For instance, for public school teachers, the lack of transport options and long distance at the community level are exacerbated by the inadequacy and delays in transport allowance. In addition, although the various trainings provided by the Government have received positive feedback, there remain competency gaps that affect teachers' ability to fulfil their duties. Lastly, the gradual removal of certificate-level courses providing training on work ethics has a direct effect on teachers' professional behaviour.

Table 5 maps out all the major factors of each type of teacher absenteeism at each level of the education system based on the conceptual frame of the study and the analysis of data from the field. The ones highlighted in the darker colour are the most frequently mentioned factors for each type of teacher absenteeism based on both qualitative and quantitative data across all levels. It can be seen that for each type of teacher absenteeism, there are multiple factors involving different levels of the education system.

Table 5: Summary of factors associated with different types of teacher absenteeism, by level of analysis

Factors by level of education system	School absenteeism	Late arrival/ early departure	Classroom absenteeism	Reduced time on task
National level				
Remuneration and financial incentives				
Transport allowance and loans				
Trainings and official duties				
National-level engagement and monitoring capacity				
Subnational level				
School visits				
Capacity to monitor and discourage teacher absenteeism				
Community level				
Availability and reliability of transport and roads				
Distance from residence to school/nearest transport				
Climate conditions				
Community engagement and monitoring capacity				
School level				
Head teacher's management and monitoring capacity				
Teachers' workload				
Pupils' attendance, health, behaviour and performance				
Availability of quality infrastructure and teaching and learning materials				
International development projects and interventions				
Teacher level				
Personal and family reasons				
Social obligations				
Intrinsic motivation and work ethics				
Teachers' competencies				

Section 6: Addressing teacher absenteeism: Conclusions and policy recommendations

The Time to Teach study in Zanzibar seeks to identify major themes and factors at each level of the education system that contribute to specific types of teacher absenteeism. The goal, however, is not to identify which type of teacher absenteeism deserves more attention than others, or to point out which level of authority in the education system ought to take on more responsibility to address this challenge. This study shows that all types of teacher absenteeism lead to reduced teaching time and affect the quality of teaching and learning. Analysis based on qualitative and quantitative data from the field reveals that teacher absenteeism of various types results from multiple factors situated at different levels of the education system, from the individual teacher level, to the community level and to the national level. Factors at the same level and across different levels of the education system can be inter-connected with one another. It is therefore crucial to tackle all types of teacher absenteeism altogether from a system's perspective, an approach that involves all education stakeholders and sometimes even goes beyond the mandate of education actors.

Based on this understanding and drawing from the analysis in previous Sections, three major conclusions have been drawn, which cut across different types of teacher absenteeism and cover 12 specific policy challenges that ought to be addressed. Specific policy recommendations are provided following each policy challenge.

Conclusion 1: Specific teacher policies and policy-implementation gaps have a direct impact on teacher absenteeism

Policy challenge 1

There is consensus among teachers that the recent increase of minimum salary and transport allowance has been helpful for them to a certain extent. However, from teachers' perspectives, the current salary level and transport allowance are still far from meeting their daily needs. In many cases, this is exacerbated by delays in payment and leads to teachers taking alternative jobs to fill in their income gaps. Data from the field also shows there are still teachers receiving less than the minimum salary. Teachers, especially those working in urban areas, or at private schools, are underpaid, and those in urban areas or public schools in particular, are affected by insufficient transport allowance. The challenges of delays in salary and allowance payment are more acute in public schools in rural areas of Unguja.

Policy recommendations:

- It is necessary to identify which teachers at which schools are still receiving less than the minimum salary and make sure all teachers from public schools benefit from the salary increment.
- Although private schools operate outside the MoEVT's auspice, given the important role private schools are playing in responding to the increasing demand for primary education and boosting learning outcomes, it is necessary to set mandatory minimum salary standards for private school teachers.
- Given the especially acute challenge of insufficient salary and transport allowance for teachers in urban areas, there is a need to conduct a survey of salaries and allowances across the country, to better understand the living costs of different areas, and adjust the salary scale and distribution of transport allowance accordingly based on the actual needs.

- There is need to address the issue of payment delays, especially in public schools in rural areas of Unguja. Since the REOs and DEOs will be in charge of education budgets, as part of the decentralization process, it is important to budget sufficiently for transport allowance in the planning phase and secure the funding from the MoEVT.

Policy challenge 2

Teacher recruitment and deployment policy have a direct effect on teacher absenteeism. Although overall speaking, the number of primary teachers in Zanzibar is considered sufficient, the deployment of teachers currently does not meet the needs of all schools. In the context of increasing enrolment, the shortage of teachers and high PTRs in many schools directly lead to heavy workload of teachers, which results in teacher absenteeism of various types. This is especially pronounced in public schools. In addition, the failure to deploy and relocate teachers closer to their residence or provide quality housing to teachers that are recruited from afar has an evident impact on teacher motivation and attendance. Distance from teachers' residences to school affects teachers from public schools and those from urban areas more than their counterparts in rural areas and private schools. And the lack of quality teacher housing is a major demotivating factor for teachers in public schools as well as rural areas.

Policy recommendations:

- Given the high PTRs in many schools, especially public schools, it is suggested that the MoEVT prioritize the deployment of teachers to schools that have higher PTRs than the national target of 40:1, in close consultation with relevant DEOs.
- To optimize the distribution and utilization of teacher housing, it is recommended that the Government conduct a mapping exercise of the current teacher-housing situation across the country. Priority could be given to public schools in rural areas when it comes to rehabilitation of existing housing and construction of new houses.
- To minimize the effect of long distances from teachers' residences to schools, it is suggested that teachers be recruited locally and deployed to schools close to their residence. An alternative is to pilot the provision of special buses for teachers in public schools, including those in both urban and rural areas.
- Since the decentralization plan is still being rolled out, it is unclear which level of authority will be responsible for recruiting and deploying teachers. However, it is important that REOs and DEOs actively participate in assessing the need for teachers and work with the MoEVT to optimize teacher-recruitment and deployment plans for their respective localities.

Policy challenge 3

In Zanzibar, there is a pre-service and in-service training system for teachers. However, the current timing of in-service training appears to conflict with teaching periods in many cases, which leads to teachers' absence from school and from the classroom. In addition, there are currently a number of issues concerning the pre-service and in-service training. Firstly, many suggest the current training system does not take into account teachers' own preferences for certain subjects; nor does it assess teachers' actual training needs. Secondly, there is currently no follow-up system that monitors or evaluates the actual training results. In addition, the gradual removal of certificate-level courses has resulted in the lack of more practical skills and work ethics of teachers, as these are some of the areas of training provided only at the certificate level. Last but not least, the entry requirements and course design at various TTCs do not seem to follow set standards, which makes it difficult to ensure that all teachers reach the expected level of knowledge and skills after they graduate.

Policy recommendations:

- For in-service training, it is important to make sure the time of the training does not conflict with teachers' teaching periods. The training can be scheduled either on weekends or after school hours. Or the head teacher should make sure there are always other teachers who can cover for those that have gone for the trainings during working hours.
- It is important to set up needs-based selection criteria for teachers to receive in-service training, including the need for training in certain languages or subjects. The head teacher should play an active role in identifying the specific training needs of individual teachers and recommending in-service training opportunities to teachers accordingly.
- At the central level, the new CPD framework can play an instrumental role in monitoring and providing quality control to all teacher-training courses at universities, TTCs and TCs. In rolling out this new framework, a Teacher Training Quality Assurance Board could be established, which would streamline the entry requirements, course design and final assessments of teacher-training institutions, and systematically monitor and evaluate the results of teacher training. This could help guarantee that teachers have actually acquired and used the knowledge and skills in their job.
- For pre-service training, although there is a trend towards removing certificate-level courses, the practical skills taught at the certificate-level should be kept and included in diploma courses, including work ethics. In addition, the minimum entry requirements of certificate-, diploma- and degree-level courses should be standardized and applied to all institutions that offer pre-service teacher trainings, as well as the course design and assessment criteria. This is to ensure teachers all reach a certain level of qualification once they graduate.

Policy challenge 4

Since the total removal of school fees, the MoEVT is expected to provide for all infrastructural and material needs of public schools. However, it is clear from the study that infrastructural and material shortage remains a major challenge hindering teacher attendance and quality teaching and learning in most schools, ranging from lack of classrooms, desks and chairs and electricity to shortage of textbooks and teaching aids. It also remains unclear for school and community-level education actors who should be responsible for providing infrastructure and material support as part of the decentralization process.

Policy recommendations:

- For public schools to reach the national target of 40:1 PCR, more classrooms need to be constructed. There is also an evident need for sufficient numbers of chairs and desks, stable power supply, libraries, science labs and computers in many schools, especially public schools and schools in rural areas. A rapid assessment of infrastructural and material needs could be conducted for all public primary schools in the country. According to the results of such an assessment, dedicated budgets and programmes could be set up to better address such needs.
- Since poor road conditions and lack of reliable transport in many areas across the country are major challenges for teachers, especially those in public schools and in rural areas, it is recommended that the provision of dedicated school buses could be piloted in some rural public schools, and the feasibility of such an initiative assessed, before it can be scaled up.
- Under the free-education policy, the Government is responsible for ensuring quality infrastructure and adequate teaching and learning materials provided to all public schools. In the context of decentralization, it is therefore necessary for REOs and DEOs to take infrastructural and material needs of all schools into account in the education budget-planning phase, and make sure to strategically engage development partners in providing education infrastructure and material support.

- Since private schools do not receive teaching and learning materials from the Government, it is important for private school management to prioritize the procurement of teaching and learning materials based on the school budget.
- Coordination and communication between the national and subnational education offices and the school and communities are crucial, with a view to clarifying the different roles and responsibilities of different education authorities in providing infrastructural and material support during the decentralization process.

Policy challenge 5

Although head teachers play a key role in discouraging teacher absenteeism, there appears to be lack of rules and regulations and teacher code of conduct at the central level for public school teachers, as most cases of teacher misconduct are settled between the teacher of concern and the head teacher, without a transparent sanctioning process. Even when the cases of misconduct are reported to the subnational or national level, there appears to be minimum consequence. This teacher-monitoring and sanctioning system in public schools is too loose to hold teachers accountable to their behaviour. However, in private schools in the sample, there is usually a stricter and more rules-based system in place that monitors and sanctions teachers in case of misconduct.

Policy recommendations:

- At the ministry level, there is need to develop specific rules and regulations to be applied at the school level for the monitoring of teachers, including a specific sanctioning system for different types of teacher misconduct. Having such rules and regulations in place at the central level will help overcome the challenge of personal ties trumping sanctions.
- To strengthen the teaching force, there is also a need for a code of conduct for teachers, including rules for professional behaviour and work ethics. The code of conduct could be integrated into the pre-service and in-service training. New teachers should all receive mandatory training on the code of conduct before entering the job. Existing teachers should also receive such training as part of the requirement to continue their job.

Conclusion 2: Engagement and monitoring at different levels of the education system are all indispensable

Policy challenge 6

It is evident that at the school level, the head teacher or school management plays the most critical role in discouraging various types of teacher absenteeism. In all schools, there are monitoring systems in place that track specific types of teacher absenteeism, such as a “registration book” or “time book” that records school attendance and punctuality. However, in public schools, the existing systems are unable to capture other types of teacher absenteeism, whereas private schools have taken a step further in tracking classroom absenteeism and time on task while in class. There are also stricter rules and sanction systems in place against teacher misconduct at private schools than at public schools, and it is clear that the prevalence of “personal ties” prevents the latter from exercising any meaningful sanction against teachers. In many cases, teachers’ heavy workload has led to different forms of teacher absenteeism, which is partly due to mismanagement by head teachers.

Policy recommendations:

- Going beyond monitoring school absenteeism and punctuality, public schools could learn from the practice of private schools, including the use of “log books” to systematically track classroom attendance and time on task while in the classroom. This should be included as part of a head teacher’s job description.
- To avoid interpersonal relationships and nepotism interfering with impartial management of teachers, it is recommended that head teachers be recruited and relocated from outside the community.
- Specific training for head teachers on teacher management should be enhanced, which includes monitoring and sanctioning of different types of teacher absenteeism, as well as managing teachers’ workload and teaching periods.
- In view of the key role of head teachers in providing professional support, and in line with the policy directions in the new CPD framework, capacity building for head teachers should be enhanced with a focus on mentoring and coaching skills.

Policy challenge 7

At the community level, parents and school committees’, among other community actors, play an important part in supporting the head teacher as well as motivating teachers. Beyond monitoring teachers’ school absenteeism and punctuality, their most important role lies in guaranteeing the quality of teaching and learning, through parents’ follow-up on children’s learning, and school committees’ monitoring of teachers’ lesson preparation and pupils’ exercise books, among others. However, in general, the lack of parents’ awareness and engagement seems to be a more acute challenge in rural areas than urban areas. Because of low levels of education or lack of awareness, and as one of the fallouts of the free-education policy, parents’ engagement in children’s learning falls short, which constitutes a major factor impeding effective teaching and learning. This is especially evident for private schools and schools in urban areas. It is also clear that some school committees are playing an active role in curbing various types of teacher absenteeism, especially public schools, while others are not.

Policy recommendations:

- Awareness campaigns on the importance of education would be powerful tools to mobilize participation of parents in children’s learning. The ministry, subnational education offices, as well as school committees all have a role to play in raising awareness of parents from both rural and urban areas.
- Given the important role that school committees could play in motivating teachers and discouraging teacher absenteeism, the roles and functions of school committees should be clarified. Regular school visits and follow-ups on school affairs should be included as some of the main tasks, as well as the role in identifying issues related to teacher absenteeism of various forms and feeding the information back to the REOs and DEOs. In this connection, relevant training should be provided to school committee members in order for them to better understand and fulfil their role. This would be especially useful for private schools.

Policy challenge 8

With regard to the role of REOs, DEOs and school inspectors, it is clear they perform a variety of functions to support school management and school performance. Their visits to schools themselves provide an incentive for teachers to be in school and be on time. And their active engagement in monitoring teacher-attendance records and providing technical and material support also helps improve teacher attendance and performance. Subnational education actors’ role in discouraging different types of teacher absenteeism is

more manifest in public schools than private ones because the latter have already established strict rules and sanctions against teacher misconduct. However, the main challenge facing these subnational education actors is lack of a formal mandate to sanction teachers in case of misconduct, as well as financial constraints that prevent them from visiting and inspecting all schools on a more regular basis.

Policy recommendations:

- Given the financial constraints of REOs and DEOs, especially those in Unguja, sufficient education budgets should be planned for conducting school visits each year, especially budgets for vehicles and fuel. In addition, school visits should be officially included as part of an education officer's work plan and job description.
- The frequency of school inspection should be regulated and increased, making sure that all schools are inspected at least twice a year, as stipulated in the legislation. Given the increasing number of schools over the past decade, there is a need to reassess school-inspection capacity and the need to recruit and train more school inspectors in the years to come.
- It is important to provide technical training on school inspection as well as training on professional code of conduct to school inspectors so they can better perform their functions.
- In the context of decentralization, there might be more authority granted to REOs and DEOs to sanction teachers in case of misconduct. In this case, there should be rules and regulations in place regarding monitoring and sanctioning.

Policy challenge 9

At the national level, besides visits conducted by MoEVT officials to schools – which help deter teacher absenteeism – the MoEVT has also taken a number of measures to address teacher absenteeism of various types, including providing training to head teachers with a view to enhancing their monitoring capacity, and ensuring the provision of teaching and learning materials. However, there are a number of challenges at the ministry level. First of all, ministry officials tend to visit urban schools more often than rural schools. Secondly, there is lack of clarity on the roles and responsibilities of different education actors in the context of decentralization. Lastly, the lack of cross-departmental coordination at the central level hinders national actors' monitoring and implementation capacity, including the shortage of funding, which affects the ministry's financing to schools as well as their monitoring capacity.

Policy recommendations:

- It might be useful for the MoEVT to develop an annual plan for school visits, making sure both rural and urban areas are covered.
- It is important for MoEVT to communicate and clarify the monitoring roles and responsibilities to education actors at different levels as part of the decentralization process.
- Regarding structural issues at the ministry level, there should be better coordination among different departments across the MoEVT. In the context of decentralization, if budget power and programme implementation were to be devolved to subnational levels, it would be necessary to carry out capacity-building programmes for REOs and DEOs on education budgeting and programme implementation.

Conclusion 3: To fully address teacher absenteeism, it is necessary to go beyond the education system

Policy challenge 10

It is clear from field data that teachers across the board are affected by health issues, a leading cause of teacher absenteeism of various types. They include both teachers' own health as well as that of their family members. In addition, pupils' health is also a concern, which not only affects pupils' own learning, but also teacher absenteeism of various forms. The lack of health facilities in some communities present to be a significant challenge for all community members, including teachers and pupils. Available data shows that the RGoZ's current health spending, which accounts for 8 per cent of total government budget, is below the international target of 15 per cent.¹⁷⁸ Therefore, addressing public health challenges in Zanzibar is urgent and key to combatting teacher absenteeism.

Policy recommendations:

- Given the prevalence of health challenges that the Zanzibari teaching force is facing, a key first step for the Government might be to increase health spending as a percentage of government budget from the current 8 per cent. It would be useful to draw on existing data and studies on the current public health situation in Zanzibar and identify specific health challenges to address. This would also include building health infrastructure and providing healthcare benefits to teachers and children.
- Addressing health challenges would necessarily involve actors beyond the education system, including the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and other health authorities, but also other ministries, agencies and external partners engaged in the health sector. Government-wide dialogue and discussions should take place to tackle health-related challenges faced by teachers and pupils.

Policy challenge 11

Another example of the need to engage non-education actors is infrastructure. The analysis shows that infrastructural challenges in the communities, including lack of quality roads, have a direct impact on teacher absenteeism. School infrastructure challenges such as lack of sufficient and quality classrooms, absence of libraries and science labs, shortage of power and water supply, make it difficult for teachers and pupils to perform to their best capacity. The fact that 89 per cent of Zanzibar's infrastructure financing needs are met by development partners¹⁷⁹ suggests development partners have a key role to play in supporting Zanzibar's infrastructure sector, including education infrastructure.

Policy recommendations:

- To meet infrastructure needs, the participation of other non-education actors becomes important, including the Ministry of Infrastructure, Communication and Transport, the Ministry of Water, Construction, Energy and Land, as well as other authorities and partners that are providing infrastructure support to the primary education sector of Zanzibar.
- The MoEVT should work with the Ministry of Finance and Planning to actively and strategically engage various development partners in providing education infrastructure financing, while avoiding fully relying on development assistance.

Policy challenge 12

Last but not least, although according to available data, Zanzibar's aid dependency ratio has significantly declined over the past decade,¹⁸⁰ development partners are still playing an important role in supporting key sectors in Zanzibar, including education as well as health and infrastructure. For instance, the USAID's Tusome Pamoja project has shown positive results in improving teachers' knowledge and skills. China is the single-most important development partner of Zanzibar, currently providing 30 per cent of all development assistance received by the country, mainly focusing on infrastructure development.¹⁸¹ Support from Arab states has also been substantial, accounting for a total of 17 per cent of all development assistance to Zanzibar.¹⁸² It is therefore important for Zanzibar to engage both traditional and emerging development partners in addressing various challenges related to teacher absenteeism.

Policy recommendations:

- Building on the positive results of capacity-building programmes such as Tusome Pamoja, it is crucial for the MoEVT to replicate and scale up the success of such programmes across more schools on the two islands. This could be done with continued support from development partners but could also be drawn from the Government's own education budget.
- There is also huge scope to engage emerging development partners in financing for education projects. For instance, given the already strong infrastructure support from China, there is opportunity to engage China in providing more social infrastructure, including education-related infrastructure.
- Given that foreign affairs are a union matter, it is crucial for the RGoZ to work with the union and strategically engage various development partners in providing support to the education sector.

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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)

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