

Chapter 3.2

TEACHER MOTIVATION, COMPENSATION AND WORKING CONDITIONS

MAIN OBJECTIVES

- **To adequately compensate and recognize the efforts of teachers, with regard to prevailing conditions.**
- **To support the re-establishment of a proper and ongoing system of educator payment.**
- **To enable adequately compensated educators to provide a quality educational service.**
- **To provide teachers with the necessary support and physical conditions to enhance their performance and motivation.**

CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

Teachers are the most important factor in determining the quality of education that children receive. As such, governments have a responsibility to ensure that teachers perform to the best of their abilities. To do this, governments must pay attention to a number of factors that affect teachers' performance. Teacher compensation is a critical, but not the only factor in teacher motivation; it constitutes both a formal and a social recognition of their work. Educators may be compensated through salaries or other cash payments, food, training, or special assistance such as shelter, transport or agricultural support. If staff are not paid, they will not

teach regularly or will leave the profession; if compensation is irregular, or frequently withheld, teacher motivation may be affected. Therefore, an established teacher compensation system helps to stabilize the education system and decreases teacher absenteeism and turnover. As discussed in the *Guidebook, Chapter 3.4, 'Teacher training: teaching and learning methods'*, compensation protects the investment made in teacher training programmes, especially those that focus on relevant and meaningful sensitization, methodology and new topic areas where trained teachers are usually difficult to find.

In addition to compensation, teachers are motivated by a range of other factors including:

- Dedication to the profession and teaching children.
- Success in the classroom – professional rewards of seeing children achieve.
- Status in their communities from exercising a respected profession.
- Training and mentoring, particularly recognized and certificated in-service training.
- Appropriate working conditions – including issues such as the number of hours taught each week; the number of students in the classroom, support of the head-teacher, availability of teaching and learning materials, parental involvement and support, clear school policies and guidelines and the physical condition of the learning space/classroom.
- The prospect of promotion and career advancement.

In situations of emergency, the challenges of teacher compensation, motivation and working conditions become more complex. Frequently, government systems break down and education budgets – many of which were limited before the emergency – are

reduced even further. Therefore, although the government is responsible for paying teachers, salaries may be in arrears, and as a result of the economic disruption, there may be a lack of a tax base to pay teachers. Returnee teachers who were employed by the government in a specific region before the conflict may be unable to access their salaries in the areas to which they return (see also the [Guidebook, Chapter 3.1, 'Identification, selection and recruitment of teachers and education workers'](#)). Teachers often do not receive any form of compensation for months. Initially teachers may work voluntarily, but they will quickly want some form of remuneration for their services. Therefore, there is a need to establish a compensation/incentive system as soon as possible and unless this is prioritized, there will be high levels of turnover as teachers leave the profession in search of other employment. Where necessary (to support their families), teachers may take on other work in addition to teaching, reducing standards and teacher attendance.

At the same time, teachers may work in increasingly difficult conditions with overcrowded classes, no educational materials and in schools where the buildings have been damaged or destroyed. Often they will be forced to teach in temporary or open-air classrooms with a severe lack of resources. They may be targeted by armed groups or there may be insecurity that decreases their motivation. Teachers in insecure areas may experience high levels of stress due to the insecurity – they may have witnessed atrocities; or family members, students or colleagues may have been killed or are missing. They may also have to deal with traumatized and disturbed students.

In such situations, governments will often turn to the international community for support in providing educational assistance to displaced and war-affected populations. Even when such assistance is provided, however, governments must still play

a role in the provision of education to their citizens and to refugees in their country.¹ United Nations agencies and NGOs may support educational initiatives as an interim measure to supplement the government's efforts, but coordination may be difficult, especially where distances are considerable, or when communications are disrupted. Issues such as compensation of refugee or IDP teachers have an impact on local economies and can create tensions among government educators if, for example, displaced teachers receive a higher salary or have better working conditions. Compensation scales of international organizations can also have a long-term impact on national education budgets. Therefore, government educational authorities must be involved in the development of emergency education programmes to avoid later, unintended consequences.

Often, in refugee situations, little financial support will come from the asylum or home government to pay for education programmes. Therefore, these are often partially or completely supported by the international community. Refugee teachers will likely receive 'incentives' rather than 'salaries' as it is recognized that they are not being fully compensated for their services. There will be a need to harmonize teacher compensation with that of other relief workers. Salaries should not exceed those of local teachers in the host country or teacher salary scales in the country of origin (this rule may not be practicable where the education system in the emergency-affected country is not functioning properly). This is to avoid disparities between groups, the provocation of tensions and the creation of unsustainable funding arrangements.

- 1 Countries that are signatories to the 1951 *Convention relating to the status of refugees* have an obligation to admit refugees to the compulsory stage of education alongside nationals, but in many impoverished countries, schools in the refugee-receiving areas cannot accommodate them. Governments therefore facilitate the provision of refugee education by other providers such as NGOs, often funded by UNHCR and bilateral donors.

As repatriation/return approaches, the government will need to reassume responsibility for teachers' salaries. Educational authorities must consider how the system will absorb new/more teachers and how/whether the education budget can accommodate the increase.

This chapter is specifically focused on issues related to teacher motivation, compensation and working conditions. Readers are encouraged to also review the *Guidebook, Chapter 2.6, 'Learning spaces and school facilities'*, *Chapter 3.4, 'Teacher training: teaching and learning methods'*, *Chapter 4.8, 'Textbooks, educational materials and teaching aids'* and *Chapter 5.5, 'Community participation'*, since each of these issues also has an effect on teacher motivation and working conditions.

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES



Summary of suggested strategies

Teacher motivation, compensation and working conditions

1. **Conduct, coordinate or facilitate a survey of teacher remuneration and conditions of work in the emergency-affected populations, prepare a budget for government teacher salaries and develop a policy on remuneration by other education providers.**

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2. **Consider non-monetary forms of support that can be provided to increase teachers' motivation, in addition to salaries/cash payments.**
 3. **Consider initiatives to encourage community support of teachers.**
 4. **Review financial control systems related to teacher payment.**
 5. **In situations where teachers or educated people have fled persecution, ensure that payroll lists cannot be used as a means of identifying and targeting individuals.**

Guidance notes

1. **Conduct, coordinate or facilitate a survey of teacher remuneration and conditions of work in the emergency-affected populations, prepare a budget for government teacher salaries and develop a policy on remuneration by other education providers.**

(See also the 'Tools and resources' section: '[INEE minimum standards](#)' for more information on teachers' salaries and working conditions.)

- Review the government pay scale, and current levels of payment, for teachers and other education workers in emergency-affected areas.

- Are teachers leaving the schools? Why? Are they getting more pay elsewhere? If so, how much?
- What are teachers' other sources of income? Can these be enhanced or can the pay scale be adjusted upwards?
- Payment or compensation scales should take into account policies of non-discrimination by gender, ethnic or religious group, or disability, i.e. equal pay for equal work. Make sure that the system of payment is based on:
 - Qualifications.
 - Training.
 - Previous teaching experience (if this can be validated).
- Does the pay scale allow unqualified teachers to qualify for higher salaries once they are trained?
- Determine short-, medium- and long-term impacts of teacher compensation scales (See also the [Guidebook, Chapter 3.1, 'Identification, selection and recruitment of teachers and education workers'](#) and [Chapter 5.8, 'Budget and financial management'](#).)
 - Calculate the overall impact on the education budget of changing the pay scale and/or hiring additional teachers. As the number of qualified teachers increases, the budget will increase accordingly and new funds must be made available.
 - Consider the long-range implications of salary scales. A low salary scale can be adjusted upwards, while a high salary scale can only be lowered with great difficulty.
- Determine whether there are sufficient funds available to pay government teachers affected by emergency or post-conflict conditions.
- If necessary, seek outside support – from the United Nations, World Bank, bilateral donors.

TEACHER SALARIES IN RECONSTRUCTION

The single largest cost item in any education system is the salary bill for teachers, accounting for more than 70 per cent of recurrent spending in most developing countries. Across these countries, there is wide variation in average annual salaries, typically ranging from 0.6 to 9.6 times per capita gross domestic product (GDP). An appropriate target for developing country ministries of education by 2015 is 3.5 times per capita GDP, as this is a sustainable level of expenditure. Because the average level of teacher salaries is a very politically sensitive issue, the pace at which that target figure may be reached will vary from country to country.

For countries below the target, where average salaries need to be raised, the political dynamics are easier. Given the positive impact on system quality such a change could have, it would be desirable to implement such a reform as quickly as possible. Unlike other parameters (such as lowering the pupil-teacher ratio, which requires additional classroom construction), it is also technically possible to implement an upward salary adjustment almost immediately. And, given the political popularity of such a move, implementing it sooner rather than later could help consolidate support for a reform programme as a whole.

The major constraint to this particular reform is fiscal sustainability, not political opposition. But as countries' adoption of needed reforms, such as salary adjustment, would constitute a credible plan for EFA attainment, it is justifiable that any resulting financing gaps would be supported by international donors.

It is essential that such a reform be implemented in an intelligent manner that would maximize the positive impact on schooling quality — for example, by establishing new and higher standards, weeding out the weakest performers, introducing a structure of incentives to reward performance, and putting in place stringent processes for new teacher selection.

The size of the upward adjustment, which is very significant in some cases, raises obvious questions about the realism of assuming that such a change could be implemented for one segment of the civil service in isolation.





Because raising average salaries can be expected to improve the quality of the teaching force as well as reduce absenteeism, stimulate greater accountability for teaching effectiveness, and create incentives for high performance or deployment to remote areas, it is considered a quality improvement in countries with salaries currently below the target.

For countries with teacher salaries above the target level of 3.5 times per capita GDP, the adjustment downward is considered an efficiency improvement. Since it is legally and politically impossible in most contexts to reduce the salaries of civil servants, this reform must be implemented in an especially gradual way. It should be assumed that a new cadre of teachers is recruited at the pace of new classroom construction and paid at the target level of 3.5 times the per capita GDP, and that all recruitment of higher-paid civil-service teachers is suspended. A number of countries in francophone Africa and elsewhere have in fact implemented such a reform in teacher contracting and have generally found no shortage of well-qualified candidates willing to work at the lower salary level, suggesting that the higher salary is not (or is no longer) an efficiency wage in these economies. However, the longer-term impact of this reform on teacher motivation and performance and student learning, as well as its political sustainability, are still open questions and merit further research.

Incumbent teachers should continue to be paid on their current salary scale, but over time their weight in the overall salary bill will diminish through retirement. Thus, the average salary will approach the target level.

Source: Adapted from [Bruns et al. \(2003: 74-75\)](#)

- Develop a policy for remuneration by other education providers, e.g. NGOs.
- Coordinate pay scales with the organizations involved. (See also the [‘Tools and resources’](#) section for ideas on how NGOs can support education in emergencies, and the [Guidebook, Chapter 5.10, ‘Donor relations and funding mechanisms’](#).)

- Inform outside agencies of the government's pay scale.
- In refugee situations, is there a government or refugee camp salary scale in place?
 - How do the salaries of teachers/facilitators and educational staff compare to those of local, government teachers?
 - How do salaries compare to those of teachers in the refugees' home country? (This will have an impact on their eventual return.)
 - When developing a salary scale for refugee teachers, the base wage should not be less than the earnings of unskilled labour and petty traders in order to avoid teacher turnover. If the salary or incentives are too high, however, a precedent may be set that prevents the government and NGOs from implementing services in the future, and may deter repatriation.
 - Ideally, salary scales in the education and health sectors (the two largest employers in crisis situations) should be the same to avoid strikes and riots later.
 - Wherever possible, it is better to delay the establishment of a monetary increase every year and explore alternatives such as the provision of tools, seeds or rucksacks to teachers
- In some instances, three pay scales must be developed to accommodate hiring:
 - Members of the emergency-affected community.
 - Local professionals from the area.
 - Skilled professionals from outside the immediate area who are hired because of their special expertise, e.g. secondary education teachers or teachers who work with children with disabilities.
- Education systems are typically the largest employers in areas of conflict. For this reason, such employment should benefit as many people as possible.



TEACHER PAYMENTS IN REFUGEE SITUATIONS

In Tanzania, a single simple pay scale was adopted for refugee and Tanzanian educators. The payment matrix included a modest pay scale for refugee staff (who also benefited from relief assistance such as free food, health care and shelter), a slightly higher pay scale for locally recruited national staff (to compensate for their not receiving relief assistance) and a significantly higher pay scale for staff recruited from the capital, who had to relocate and perhaps maintain two homes.

Over seven years, Liberian refugee teachers in Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire slowly increased their salaries to US\$80 per month. Upon repatriation, however, the Liberian government could only pay US\$10 per month, which created a disincentive to repatriate and for those who did return, a disincentive to continue teaching – further disrupting the education of the children.

Source: [Sinclair \(2002\)](#) and Julian Watson, personal communication

- Educators should not have more than one job.
- Women, especially those who are single with children, should be considered for teaching and non-teaching jobs.

2. Consider non-monetary forms of support that can be provided to increase teachers' motivation, in addition to salaries/cash payments.

There are a number of alternative sources of incentives and support:

- In-service training to support teachers in their task and provide necessary motivation.
- Mentoring systems to support teachers.
- Other, non-cash incentives, such as food or housing allowances.

- Bicycles, if distances are great between teachers' homes and their schools.
- Improvements in working conditions (see also the *Guidebook, Chapter 2.6, 'Learning spaces and school facilities'* and *Chapter 4.8, 'Textbooks, educational materials and teaching aids'*).
 - How many children are in the classroom? Are there systems in place to evaluate whether classrooms are overcrowded, and what can be done to assist teachers who have too many students (e.g. hiring additional teachers, hiring classroom aids or engaging community volunteers)?
 - What are the physical conditions in which teachers work? Are classrooms large enough to accommodate all the children comfortably? What can be done to improve classroom space, e.g. efforts to make classrooms more soundproof so that teachers and students can hear and engage in learning more effectively, provision of movable furniture so children can work in groups, etc.?
 - Do the teachers have teaching and learning materials to assist them with lesson planning and preparation? Issue a complete set of textbooks and teacher guides to each teacher, if not already provided.

3. Consider initiatives to encourage community support of teachers.

Head teachers and supervisors can be trained in promoting community support for schools, which may also benefit teachers. (See also the *Guidebook, Chapter 5.5, 'Community participation'*.)

- Can communities contribute to the payment of teachers?
- Can communities provide other forms of compensation such as food or housing?

- If cleaners, guards, or cooks are paid out of the education budget, can the community take responsibility for these tasks?
- Are there other forms of support that communities can provide, e.g. special events to recognize teachers' efforts, support to school gardening projects, physical labour to construct classrooms in order to improve the learning environment for teachers and students, etc.?

4. Review financial control systems related to teacher payment.

Government and other education providers should review their systems of financial control. (See also the [Guidebook, Chapter 5.8, 'Budget and financial management'](#).)

- By what mechanism do teachers actually receive their salary? Are they being paid regularly and on time? Who handles the money? Are teachers receiving the correct amount? If not, review the payment process to determine necessary controls to minimize corruption in the teacher payment process.
- Are teachers paid in cash? If so, are systems in place to move this amount of hard currency safely into the field? Is it possible to pay teachers through a local bank?
- Are teachers in remote rural areas required to travel periodically to a town, or to the capital city, to receive their payments? This disrupts their classroom duties. If so, make arrangements for local payment of salaries.
- Does the school administration deduct items such as union dues out of the wages? How has this been decided? Are the dues accounted for?

- Are there mechanisms to ensure that only active teachers and not ‘ghost teachers’ are on the payroll? Ghost teachers may include teachers in exile, teachers who have obtained other employment but are still receiving their teacher salaries, or deceased teachers.

5. In situations where teachers or educated people have fled persecution, ensure that payroll lists cannot be used as a means of identifying and targeting individuals.

- Consider who has access to the lists.
- Store the lists in a safe and secure location with limited access.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

1. INEE minimum standards for teachers’ compensation and working conditions

Standard 2: Work conditions

Teachers and other education personnel have clearly defined conditions of work, follow a code of conduct and are appropriately compensated.

Key indicators

- Compensation and conditions of work are specified in a job contract, and compensation is provided on a regular basis, related to the level of professionalism and efficiency of work.

- International actors coordinate with educational authorities, community education committees and NGOs to develop appropriate strategies, and agree to use fair, acceptable and sustainable remuneration scales for the various categories and levels of teachers and other education personnel.
- The code of conduct and defined conditions of work are developed in a participatory manner, involving both education personnel and community members, and there are clear implementation guidelines.
- The code of conduct is signed and followed by education personnel, and appropriate measures are documented and applied in cases of misconduct and/or violation of the code of conduct.

INEE minimum standards guidance notes

1. **Conditions of work** should specify job description, compensation, attendance, hours/days of work, length of contract, support and supervision mechanisms, and dispute resolution mechanisms (see also ‘Standard 1, guidance note 1’ above [in [INEE, 2004](#)]).
2. **Compensation** can be monetary or non-monetary, should be appropriate (as agreed upon), and paid regularly. The appropriate level of compensation should be determined through a participatory process ensuring coordination between the actors involved. It should aim to be at a level that ensures professionalism and continuity of service and sustainability. In particular, it should be sufficient to enable teachers to focus on their professional work rather than having to seek additional sources of income to meet their basic needs. Compensation should be contingent on adherence to the conditions of work and code of conduct.

Care should be taken to avoid a situation where teachers from different backgrounds (e.g. nationals and refugees) receive different levels of pay. Key actors should be involved in the development of long-term strategies for a sustainable compensation system. There should be coordination between United Nations agencies, NGOs, educational authorities and other organizations to determine common levels of compensation.

- 3. The code of conduct** should set clear standards of behaviour for education personnel and specify the mandatory consequences for persons who do not comply with these standards. The code should apply to the learning environment and to education programme events or activities. The code should ensure that teachers and education personnel promote a positive learning environment and the well-being of learners.

The code should state, among other things, that education personnel:

- Exhibit professional behaviour by maintaining a high standard of conduct, self-control and moral/ethical behaviour.
 - Participate in creating an environment in which all students are accepted.
 - Maintain a safe and healthy environment, free from harassment (including sexual harassment), intimidation, abuse and violence, and discrimination.
 - Maintain regular attendance and punctuality.
 - Demonstrate professionalism and efficiency in their work.
 - Exhibit other behaviours as deemed appropriate by the community and education stakeholders.
- 4. Code implementation guidelines:** there should be training on the code of conduct for all education and non-education

personnel who work in the learning environment. Training and support should be provided to members of community education committees and education supervisors and managers on their roles and responsibilities in monitoring the implementation of codes of conduct. They should also be helped to identify and incorporate key concerns around codes of conduct into school/non-formal education programme action plans. Supervisory mechanisms should establish transparent reporting and monitoring procedures, which protect the confidentiality of all parties involved.

Source: [INEE \(2004: 67-68\)](#).

2. INEE minimum standards – teacher’s code of conduct

At all times, the teacher:

- Acts in a manner that maintains the honour and dignity of the profession.
- Protects the confidentiality of anything said by a student in confidence.
- Protects students from conditions that interfere with learning or are harmful to the students’ health and safety.
- Does not take advantage of his or her position to profit in any way.
- Does not sexually harass any student or have any manner of sexual relationship with a student.
- Is a good, honest role model.

In the classroom, the teacher:

- Promotes a positive and safe learning environment.
- Teaches in a manner that respects the dignity and rights of all students.

- Promotes students' self-esteem, confidence and self-worth.
- Promotes high expectations of students and helps each student to reach his/her potential.
- Encourages students to develop as active, responsible and effective learners.
- Creates an atmosphere of trust.

In his/her professional life, the teacher:

- Displays a basic competence in educational methodology and his/her subject.
- Displays an understanding (in his/her teaching) of how children learn.
- Is always on time for class and prepared to teach.
- Does not engage in activities that adversely affect the quality of his/her teaching.
- Takes advantage of all professional development opportunities and uses modern, accepted teaching methods.
- Teaches principles of good citizenship, peace and social responsibility.
- Honestly represents each student's performance and examination results.

With respect to the community, the teacher:

- Encourages parents to support and participate in their children's learning.
- Recognizes the importance of family and community involvement in school.
- Supports and promotes a positive image of the school.

In addition to the items mentioned here, the teacher is expected to abide by all other rules and policies of the wider environment (camp, school, etc.).

Source: [INEE \(2004: 70\)](#).

3. NGO support to education in emergencies

Governments in disaster and post-conflict situations often do not have the funds to pay teachers an appropriate wage. The matrix below (adapted from [INEE, 2003](#)) presents some ideas for how NGOs can support government schools, and some potential positive and negative impacts of each strategy.

	POSITIVE IMPACTS	NEGATIVE IMPACTS
STRATEGIES TO ASSIST THE GOVERNMENT		
NGO pays teachers and school administrators a full or partial salary while government systems are established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education system starts and maximum number of children attends school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undermines government authority • Unsustainable and raises the question of when the government will be able – or willing – to pay salaries • May create disincentives for teachers to continue teaching after NGO programme ends
NGO pays incentives – all teachers receive the same amount regardless of experience and qualifications – for a limited period, e.g. the duration of a programme. The expectation is that the government will resume payment of teacher salaries as soon as possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure on government to receive and take responsibility for the teachers as well as for children and for new classrooms as part of the total programme • Trained teachers will continue teaching; children who complete NGO programmes can enter public school system afterwards • New teachers prove their skills and government has some time to consider and plan for additional salaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers will be unhappy with the incentive system and the lack of a pay scale • Despite an agreed commitment to pay salaries, the government may be unable or unwilling to pay the salaries regularly. This will result in severe motivation problems for teachers who have become used to regular payments from the NGO

	POSITIVE IMPACTS	NEGATIVE IMPACTS
NGO advocacy with local government to compensate teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional pressure on the government to pay teachers • Identification of whether the problem is lack of money or administrative (e.g. no computers to compile payroll or transportation to deliver salaries to schools) • Identification of alternative means to support teachers. In some countries, teachers and civil servants are given an allocation of farmable land instead of monetary compensation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible loss of political capital and leverage on a very complicated and political issue
NGO advocacy with donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure on the local government separate from NGOs • Possible attention and assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible loss of political leverage

		POSITIVE IMPACTS	NEGATIVE IMPACTS
STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT SCHOOLS THROUGH COMMUNITIES			
Help in establishing school fees (and exemptions for the poor)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable • Typically part of the pre-conflict culture • Some children might be able to attend school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some children might not be able to attend school • Fees might not provide adequate income to teachers
NGO support for school agriculture or income generation projects (cash crops, animal husbandry, bees)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable (but often ineffectual since school administration, parents and teachers may not be good managers of income generation projects) • Typically part of the pre-conflict culture • Educational opportunity in regard to teaching agriculture, business, and animal husbandry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students, often of one gender, are frequently used for labour in the school fields, taking away from the time they could be studying • Takes school administrators' time away from education
Teacher housing incentives (NGO to build houses for returning teachers)	On school compound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can enhance school's permanent capital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May hinder permanent settlement of families since they are living on school property • Creates a precedent for returning teachers and other professionals
	Off school compound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhances community and family return 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disadvantages teachers who stayed during the crisis
Paying school teachers for additional work on NGO sponsored supplementary education projects, such as adult literacy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides services for other portions of the population • Lays the groundwork for these services being included in the national agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially overworks teachers and school administrators • Potentially unsustainable by the community and by the government
NGO support for creation of a mentoring system for teachers in which mentors receive an incentive		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases the quality of education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsustainable • Assists few teachers financially

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