

# Republic of The Gambia: Situation Analysis of the national framework of professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders

October 2023

Steve Nwokeocha, Ebrima D. Kah, Njora Hungi, and Quentin Wodon



In partnership with

- Shanghai Municipal Government of the People's Republic of China
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Published in 2022 by UNESCO IICBA, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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## UNESCO IICBA STUDY 2023-3

### REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA: SITUATION ANALYSIS OF THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND COMPETENCIES FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS

Steve Nwokeocha, Ebrima D. Kah, Hungi Njora, and Quentin Wodon

October 2023

#### Abstract:

This study investigates the state of professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders in The Gambia. It was conducted against the backdrop of guidance from international best practice, including instruments developed by UNESCO, Education International, and the African Union Commission. Apart from an introduction on the need for professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders, the core of the study is structured into three chapters devoted respectively to: (1) the national framework of professional standards and competencies and its implementation; (2) teacher education, both pre-service and in-service; and (3) the working conditions of teachers and school leaders. An additional chapter puts findings for The Gambia in comparative perspective with findings for other West African countries. The analysis relies on a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach that includes results from two online surveys as well as key informant interviews and brainstorming sessions.

Keywords: Teachers, School leaders, Professional standards, Competencies, The Gambia.

Cover photo: Teachers and students of the Kairaba Basic and Senior Secondary School, Kanifing Institutional Layout, Banjul, The Gambia.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This report was funded by UNESCO IICBA as part of the Shanghai Funds-in-Trust [Shanghai-FIT] project for the professionalization of teaching in Africa and Asia-Pacific. The authors worked with many stakeholders to piece together the data for the study. They are especially grateful to Mr. Jeng Momodou, the Chair of the National Technical Working Group of the UNESCO Shanghai-FIT Project in The Gambia, for the mobilization of the Ministries of Education and agencies that contributed to the report. They are also grateful to his Secretary, Mr. Essa Sowe, who doubles as the Deputy Secretary General of The Gambia Teachers Union (GTU). The support of the Gambia National Commission for UNESCO through Mr. Lamin Jarjou is also recognized and commended, as is the active participation of the Conference of Principals and the Gambia College, among others. The authors are grateful to the supervisory Ministries for their support: the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education and the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology. The authors would also like to thank the team of the Teacher Section at UNESCO in Paris who provided unwavering support, especially Carlos Vargas and Valérie Djioze.

Disclaimer: The analysis in this study is that of the authors only and need not reflect the views of UNESCO, its Executive Directors, of the countries they represent, nor do they necessarily represent the views of the UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa or any of the governmental institutions of the Republic of The Gambia that contributed to the implementation of the study.

Suggested citation: Nwokeocha, S., E. D. Kah, H. Njora, and Q. Wodon, 2023. *Republic of The Gambia: Situation Analysis of the National Framework of Professional Standards and Competencies for Teachers and School Leaders*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa.

## ACRONYMS

AFTRA	Africa Federation of Teaching Regulatory Authorities
AUC	African Union Commission
BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education
COL	Commonwealth of Learning
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
EI	Education International
EU	European Union
GOTG	Government of The Gambia
GTCS	General Teaching Council for Scotland
GTU	The Gambia Teacher Union
HTCP	Higher Teachers' Certificate Primary
HTCS	Higher Teachers' Certificate Secondary
IFTRA	International Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities
IICBA	UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa
ITF	International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030
M.Ed.	Master of Education
MoBSE	Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education
MoHERST	Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PGDE	Post Graduate Diploma in Education
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PEO	Principal Education Officer
PSC	Professional Standards and Competencies
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TG	The Gambia
TC	Teachers' Certificate
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission
TSC	Teaching Service Commission
TRCN	Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UU	Untrained and unqualified (teachers)
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASSCE	West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination

## FOREWORD

*This situational analysis report provides critical insight and feedback on the current situation in The Gambia in terms of teacher professional standards and competencies and can serve as a good resource for the development of teacher policy to address quality of the teaching profession vis-à-vis teacher motivation, conditions of service, attitudes, and code of conduct.*

*The report will serve a basis for the development, alignment, and harmonization of professional standards and competencies frameworks for teachers, head teachers, and principals which will revitalize the teaching profession and help improve quality and relevance of education service delivery in The Gambia.*

*The National Technical Working Group Shanghai Funds-in-Trust [Shanghai-FIT] Republic of The Gambia is happy that this important study took place under its auspices. For this reason, it spared no efforts to see that the authors had a hitch-free exercise. It is satisfied with the work done and looking forward to the positive changes the findings may bring to the education system, particularly the teaching profession, in The Gambia.*

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Chairman  
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Republic of The Gambia*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*“Teacher professionalism is not negotiable. Just as we would never want unqualified surgeons operating on our children, we do not want our young people to be taught by unqualified teachers”* (UNESCO and Education International, 2019).

**This study investigates the state of professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders in The Gambia.** As is the case in many other sub-Saharan African countries, children in The Gambia suffer from high rates of learning poverty – many cannot read and understand a simple text by age 10. Improving teaching in the classroom and the quality of the school leadership – including through professional standards and competencies, is the key to improving learning. This study was conducted against the backdrop of guidance on professional standards and competencies from international best practice, including the *Global Framework of Professional Teaching Standards* developed by UNESCO and Education International (2019) and instruments from the African Union Commission (2019a, 2019b, 2019c): the *African Continental Framework of Standards and Competencies for the Teaching Profession*, *African Continental Teacher Qualification Framework*, and *African Continental Guidelines for the Teaching Profession*. These global and continental frameworks provide a framework to assess professional standards and competencies in The Gambia, with other approaches yielding additional insights.

**The study focuses on three areas: (1) The Gambia’s framework of professional standards and competencies; (2) teacher education; and (3) the working conditions of teachers.** Apart from an introduction on the need for professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders, the core of the study is structured into three chapters devoted respectively to: (1) the national framework of professional standards and competencies and its implementation; (2) teacher education, both pre-service and in-service; and (3) the working conditions of teachers and school leaders. An additional chapter puts findings for The Gambia in comparative perspective with findings for other West African countries. The analysis relies on a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach that includes results from two online surveys as well as key informant interviews and focus groups. Results were validated online and in-person. Dissemination took place at a national workshop held in August 2023 in Banjul. This executive summary outlines some of the most important findings and associated recommendations.

**On professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders, while The Gambia has policies in place, it has yet to adopt recommendations from international frameworks.** The country has made substantial efforts to develop and implement a national framework of professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders. However, much of these have not been published, the implementation is still in its infancy, and the framework is not aligned with the global frameworks provided by UNESCO and Education International and those developed by the African Union Commission. There is a low level of awareness about these global and continental frameworks among stakeholders. Other professional foundations have also not been laid for the teaching profession as expected by the continental frameworks. For instance, there is yet no law that has conferred on teaching a professional status, and there is also no National Teaching Council for the regulation of the profession. The Gambia has also not joined the Africa Federation of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA) and the International Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (IFTRA) to benefit from sharing of good practices. The Gambian Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016- 2030 endorses the development of professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders, but its recommendations must be implemented, including by creating a career path aligned to the African Union Commission framework. Mentoring, guidance,

monitoring, assessment, evaluation, rewards, and other professional support to teachers and school leaders should all be further developed to firmly establish teaching as a profession in the country.

**On teacher education, for both pre-service and in-service, multiple issues undermine its quality.** Teacher education is fundamental to improve teaching and learning, especially in a context where a large share of teachers do not have the minimum qualifications for teaching. The following issues have been identified and require responses: (i) The regulatory and quality assurance frameworks for pre-service teacher education is weak (e.g., lack of accreditation); (ii) two-year degrees are a dominant qualification in the school system, which is not enough, but some teachers do not even have that minimum— they require a path to acquire a degree and minimum qualifications; (iii) even if teachers and school leaders opine that they had adequate pre-service education, retraining is likely needed in many areas; and (iv) the academic staff and enrolment capacity of the three teacher education institutions is limited and insufficient to meet the demand for teachers. Similar issues affect teacher continuous professional development (CPD). There is a “Comprehensive Pre-Service and In-Service Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan” but it is not yet operationalized and could be better aligned with the international frameworks on standards and competencies. Government programs (and budgets) are insufficient to address CPD concerns, with only a minority of teachers being trained each year. CPD programs should have a positive impact on the professional capacities of teachers and leaders yet may not count so much towards promotion and advancement along the career path. CPD is being provided by the government, the teacher union, and individuals themselves, but coordination may be lacking. A positive development is a new one-year full-time training from MDI in school management and leadership provide to aspiring leaders. Teachers need more supply of teaching and learning resources, while leaders need more staffing and resources. As to digital competencies, most teachers and school leaders feel that they have good or excellent knowledge and skills for using computers, the internet, and online resources but there are few official provisions for access to a computer, laptop, tablet, or the internet. In terms of priority needs for CPD, teachers emphasize capacity building in teaching methodologies and the use of educational technologies. Many of these topics and issues have been discussed in the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016-2030.

**On working conditions for teachers and school leaders, improvements should also be considered.** Teachers in public basic and senior secondary education are government employees bound by the civil service rules and conditions of service. Policies and Orders issued by the Personnel Management Office define the rights and obligations of employees as well as government. The *Public Service Commission Regulations* empowers the Public Service Commission to handle all appointments, promotions, transfers, terminations, and related matters in the service. However, *The Gambia Civil Service: Scheme of Service Teachers Cadre* makes additional provisions that are specific to teachers. Many of the recommendations related to strengthening the career path for teachers are relevant for their working conditions. In addition, while many Governments and regional entities have introduced Best Teacher Awards to recognize outstanding teachers, this has not yet been done in The Gambia. In many countries teachers tend not to be highly satisfied with their job. This is also the case in The Gambia. Teachers were asked questions in the online survey on a range of factors that may affect working conditions as well as their overall job satisfaction and perception of their status. On a scale from 1 to 5, teachers rate their social status at an average value of 3.5 and their job satisfaction at an average value of 3.2. The relatively low levels of job satisfaction may be due in part to the level of salaries, but possibly also to issues with the timing of payment of those salaries. Half of the teachers that responded to the survey stated that their school did not have staff rooms, and when they are available, they may lack amenities. On the other hand, almost all teachers described the relationships with their supervisors as good or excellent, a positive sign.

**Finally, to complement the situational analysis conducted for The Gambia, comparative data were collected for other West African countries.** The analysis targeted 15 ECOWAS countries, of which eight responded at the time of writing (data collection is still on-going). All countries face challenges, but some are more advanced than others in confronting them. Most countries have legal or policy provisions that support the establishment of a national framework of teaching standards and competencies, but they are at various stages of this process and have not aligned their frameworks with international good practices, with Nigeria and Sierra Leone being exceptions. Except those two countries plus Ghana, Ministries of Education continue to regulate the teaching profession. Professional licensure examination, registration, and licensing of teachers and school leaders remain absent in many countries. Career paths and mandatory school leadership training for school leaders are yet to be implemented by most countries. The dominant teacher qualification remains the two-year Teachers' Certificates and that many countries have no or few requirements to admit candidates into pre-service teacher education programs. Some countries have substantial shares of unqualified teachers. On working conditions, respondents rated the social status and job satisfaction of teachers at low levels. Finally, except for Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Burkina Faso, countries do not participate actively in African and global federations for teaching agencies, which reduces their ability to benefit from exchanges of good practices and innovations.

## CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVE, AND DATA

### Introduction

**As many other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, The Gambia is facing a deep learning crisis.** Sub-Saharan Africa is faced with a deep learning crisis with some estimates suggesting that nine in ten children aged 10 may be learning poor, that is not able to read and understand a simple, age-appropriate text (World Bank et al., 2022; see also Bashir et al., 2018 on Africa). While some children are learning poor because they are out of school, in many African countries, most children who are enrolled in school are also not able to read and understand a simple text by age 10. Data on learning poverty are not available for The Gambia because the country has not participated in the international student assessments used for measurement, but it is likely to be an issue for the country's basic education system<sup>1</sup>. MoBSE and MoHERST recognize that learning outcomes as measured among others by National Assessment Tests, GABECE, and WASSCE are persistently low, especially in public schools<sup>2</sup>.

**Improving learning is key for increasing human capital and the country's future development prospects.**

A country's assets base is what enables its population to be productive. This assets base includes natural capital, produced capital, and human capital, itself defined as the present value of the future earnings of the labor force. In The Gambia, estimates from the World Bank (2021) suggest that two thirds (63 percent) of the country's wealth consists of human capital. This shows the importance of investing in people for the future development of the country. And yet the share of human capital wealth in total national wealth is lower in The Gambia than in several other African countries. To increase human capital wealth, and thereby create the conditions for gains in standards of living, improving educational opportunities and learning in school must be a priority. This requires a focus on professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders since while many factors may contribute to high levels of learning poverty, one the most important is the fact that the quality of teachers and school leaders remains too low<sup>3</sup>.

**Better teachers and school leaders are needed to improve learning, but The Gambia faces important challenges to professionalize its teaching force.**

School enrolment, which stood at 0.75 million students in 2022, is rapidly rising in part due to population growth, leading to a shortage of (qualified) teachers. Although only 10 percent of current teachers are considered 'untrained and unqualified' based on their education, many require training to improve pedagogy in the classroom. Pupil-teacher ratios are not very high in comparison to other West African countries, but the pupil-qualified teacher ratios are higher. There is also a persistent gender gap in the teaching force. While research suggests that female teachers

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<sup>1</sup> For perspective, estimates for West African countries suggest that the share of children in learning poverty is at 56 percent for Benin, 69 percent for Senegal, 74 percent for Burkina Faso, 82 percent for Togo, 83 percent for Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea, 90 percent for Mali and Niger, 94 percent for Chad, and 95 percent for Mauritania. Only Gabon has a substantially lower share (31 percent) of children in learning poverty. It could be that The Gambia has lower levels of learning poverty than some other West African countries, given higher rates of primary school completion in The Gambia than the average for sub-Saharan Africa according to data from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics. Still, it remains that many children are not at the level of proficiency in reading that they should be at.

<sup>2</sup> For example, MoBSE (2019b) notes that in 2019, average scores for English in NAT 3 and 8 were 49.15 and 53.04 respectively while average scores for Mathematics in NAT 3 and 8 were 45.09 and 32.42, respectively. In 2019, the GABECE pass rate for public school was only 19 percent, with credit rates at 8 percent. For WASSCE in 2019, the pass rate for public schools was 18 percent, with a credit rate of 5 percent. Private schools perform better.

<sup>3</sup> Another issue is that of teacher shortages in part because the teaching profession may not be sufficiently attractive (on shortages, see International Teacher Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, 2021, 2021).

and school leaders are associated with better learning outcomes, only 41 percent of teachers are women (this is better than the share of female teachers in many other countries, but still too low).

**The Gambia has yet to adopt international best practices in setting up professional standards and competencies for teachers and a teacher regulatory body.** The aim of this study is to assess the state of professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders in the country, relying in part on frameworks from the African Union as benchmarks. Specifically, the study considers (1) the national framework for teaching standards and competencies; (2) pre-service and in-service teacher education; and (3) working conditions for teachers. But first, it may be useful in this introductory chapter to briefly explain why professionalizing teaching and school leadership matters and how this can be done.

### Teachers and school leaders as professionals

**Professionalizing teachers and school leaders through a competencies-based standards is a must.** *“Teacher professionalism is not negotiable. Just as we would never want unqualified surgeons operating on our children, we do not want our young people to be taught by unqualified teachers”* (UNESCO and Education International, 2019). This statement in the Global Framework of Professional Teaching Standards points to the importance of professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders. In too many low-income countries, teaching remains seen as an activity open to “all-comers”, without candidates for the profession necessarily having the competencies required (African Union Commission, 2017; Nwokeocha, 2018; UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018). There is an urgent need to adopt standards and provide the training that teachers need to become more effective.

**The tenets of professionalism include standards and ethics, quality pre-service and ongoing professional development, and career paths** (Artur, 2018; Association of Accredited Public Policy Advocates to the European Union, 2022; Nwokeocha, 2017)<sup>4</sup>. The need to professionalize teaching is now well recognized. Some 57 years ago, Scotland, UK (1965) became the first jurisdiction to enact a law to legalize teaching as a profession, making it a crime for an individual to practice without registration and licensing. It also incorporated teacher professional ethics and standards in the law and created the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) as a professional regulatory body. A year later, UNESCO and ILO (1966) came up with *Recommendations concerning the status of teachers* which were followed later by *Recommendations concerning the status of higher education teaching personnel* (1997) as standards-setting instruments. The 1960s witnessed a renaissance in the professionalization of teaching.

**More countries have started to adopt professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders, including a few in Africa.** In Africa, the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) Decree (Nigeria, 1993) is one of the first laws to legalize teaching. TRCN was created to determine who should be a teacher, set standards for teaching, and raise those standards from time to time as circumstances permit (Section 1[1]a-c). The law mandated TRCN to register and license qualified teachers, accredit teacher education programs, regulate ongoing professional development, and prosecute any breach of professional standards. Other African countries have enacted similar laws and created a professional regulatory body for teaching with the mandate to develop and implement standards and competencies for teachers. Apart from TRCN in Nigeria, these regulatory bodies include the Council for Educators (South

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<sup>4</sup> As defined by the Australian Council of Professions (2003), a profession is *“a disciplined group of individuals who adhere to ethical standards and who hold themselves out as, and are accepted by the public as possessing special knowledge and skills in a widely recognized body of learning derived from research, education and training at a high level, and who are prepared to apply this knowledge and exercise these skills in the interest of others.”*

Africa, 2000), the Teaching Service Commission (Kenya, 2012), the National Teaching Council (Ghana, 2008), the Teaching Professionals Council (Botswana, 2019), and many others.

**The idea to professionalize teaching was at the core of the creation in 2017 of the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030** which commissioned research on “Teaching: A Profession,” a phrase used as the theme of the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Policy Dialogue Forum (International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 & International Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities, 2017; International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, 2017a). The research, conducted on behalf of the Task Force by the International Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (IFTRA), the world body of the national authorities that regulate teaching, investigated “the state of the professionalization of teaching across the regions of the world.” The Outcome Statement of the Policy Dialogue Forum (International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, 2017b) brought professional teaching standards to the fore. It declared that “*at its core, professional teaching standards should define the knowledge, skills, and competencies required for effective teaching.*” The standards and competencies are the set of knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and orientations that a teacher must have to be seen as qualified and fit to teach (Nwokeocha, 2017; Southern African Development Community, 2018). The Outcome Statement also emphasized the governance of the profession, stating that “*governments need to legislate for a dedicated professional body to have the legal power to regulate and exercise professional leadership for teachers, such as a teaching council*” (International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, 2017b).

**In Africa, existing national teaching standards and competencies published in a few countries are a foundation to build upon**<sup>5</sup>. At the level of the Economic Communities, the *Professional Standards for Basic Education Teachers in West and Central Africa* are noteworthy. They were developed by the UNESCO Regional Office for Dakar (2016) in partnership with UNESCO Abuja Office, UNESCO IICBA, International Task Force on Teachers for EFA, CONFEMEN and other partner agencies. Another reference is the *Regional Framework for Teacher Professional Standards and Competencies* by the UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa with the Southern African Development Community (SADC, 2018). A year later, UNESCO and Education International (2019) released a *Global Framework of Professional Teaching Standards* and UNESCO and the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 (2019) developed the *International Guidance Framework for Professional Teaching Standards*.

**A critical point is that teachers must be at the center of the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of professional standards.** Teacher unions must be given the latitude to work with the government and other education stakeholders in this process to ensure teacher well-being. As stated in the 2019 report by UNESCO and Education International, “*teaching practice must be evidence based and student focused. Teachers must have access to continuous professional learning and development throughout their careers... Improving teacher salaries and working conditions is absolutely essential, but the status of teachers is not just about pay and conditions. It is also about empowering and supporting teachers to stand at the center of what they do – the teaching and learning process*” (UNESCO and Education International, 2019). The report warns against ‘de-professionalization’ and calls for “*an end to the “precarious status of teachers,” and recommended that the teacher unions and government should use the framework of standards and competencies to “strengthen their national teaching standards and teaching and learning practices in order to ensure equitable, inclusive, free, quality education for all.*”

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<sup>5</sup> Some of the most prominent standards are those for Nigeria, Namibia, Ethiopia, and South Africa (Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria, 2010; Namibia Qualifications Authority, 2012; Ministry of Education, Ethiopia, 2013; and South African Council for Educators, 2017).

**As for school leadership, is critical and requires preparation, standards, and competencies.** It used to be that teachers assumed leadership roles without adequate preparation as there were no clearly stated standards for school leaders<sup>6</sup>. Yet school leadership also requires training. As noted in OECD (2008), while management may mean ‘doing things right,’ leadership implies ‘doing the right thing.’ Leadership is unique and refers to the capacity of individuals or groups to exert influence on others, thereby shaping their attitudes, motivations, and behaviors. School leadership is the art and capacity to positively influence others – including students, teachers, and other personnel and stakeholders, to accomplish exceptional goals for the school and education system. This art and capacity have hitherto been compromised when school leaders are appointed based merely on the length of years spent as a teacher, political, or other interests. As noted by the Wallace Foundation (2013) recalls that school leadership used to be “*noticeably absent from most major school reform agendas.*” According to the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, NSW Department of Education (2020), “*high-performing school systems proactively identify candidates and place them on a leadership development track*”. The Centre argues that principals make the second biggest impact on student outcomes, after the quality of teaching in the classroom.

### Teacher professional guidelines for Africa

**Building on this body of work, the African Union Commission (2019a) developed the *African Continental Framework of Standards and Competencies for the Teaching Profession*,** introducing additional features not in the global frameworks. This includes standards for school leadership, provisions for the career path for teachers and school leaders, and modalities for implementation and other critical matters. The Africa Union Commission supported the professional standards and competencies by developing two other continental frameworks that same year: the *African Continental Teacher Qualification Framework* and the *African Continental Guidelines for the Teaching Profession* (African Union Commission, 2019b, 2019c).

**The *African Continental Guidelines for the Teaching Profession* encourage the professionalization of teaching in Africa.** These include the requirements for legislation to make teaching a profession, the need for the creation of a professional regulatory agency, the development of national teaching standards in line with the continental standards, and the institutionalization of several other recommendations to give teaching a strong foundation as a profession (Box 1.1). The *African Continental Teacher Qualification Framework* dealt with issues around pre-service teacher education; teacher education curricular frameworks; teacher education accreditation; induction, internship, professional registration, and licensing of teachers; and continuous professional development, as well as progress across the career path for both teachers and school leaders (see again Box 1.1). The African Union Commission (2021) further issued a Note Verbale to member states requesting governments to implement the African frameworks, which it collectively called the *Teacher Professional Guidelines*. As an example of frameworks being used, key elements of the African Continental Teacher Qualification Framework are visualized in Figure 1.1.

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<sup>6</sup> See for example Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited (2015); Asia Society Partnership for Global Learning (2012); Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, NSW Department of Education (2020); Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2008, 2011); and Wallace Foundation (2013).

### **Box 1.1: The African Continental Guidelines and the Continental Teacher Qualification Framework**

The *African Continental Guidelines* define a profession as: “an exclusive vocation founded upon a long period of preparation in theory and practice at approved institutions and embodies its code of ethics and standards of practice protected through the certification and recruitment of only qualified individuals and regulated by a statutory professional authority to earn public trust and recognition” (African Union Commission, 2019c). Three principles are highlighted: (1) the Principle of Professionalism (clearly defined area of practice; appropriate and relatively long preparation of practitioners in theory and practice; professional ethics and professional standards; certification, registration, and licensing of professionals; public trust and recognition; highest standards of service; legalization of the profession; and prohibition of non-professionals from practice); (2) the Principle of Equity – Governments must treat teaching equitably in comparison with other professions (e.g., if member states have enacted laws that legalize other professions, they should enact a similar law to give teaching a legal foundation) and (3) the Principle of Prioritization of Teaching as “one of the most decisive factors in learning achievement and educational development.”

The *Guidelines* make a range of recommendations including: (i) Legalization of the Teaching Profession – apart from an appropriate law, member states should establish a professional regulatory authority and provide a synopsis of the functions and powers of such a body; (ii) Key Continental Frameworks – member states should develop or align existing national frameworks to the African Continental Frameworks on Teacher Standards and Competencies, Teacher Qualification, Teacher Professionalization, and Teacher Mobility; (iii) Africa Federation of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA) – Ministries of Education and National Teaching Regulatory Authorities should strengthen their membership in AFTRA for exchange of best practices and harmonization of professional standards and competencies, teacher qualification and mobility in Africa, and other professional issues; and (iv) Working and Living Conditions of Teachers – member states should address the issues of teacher motivation and living conditions as recommended among others by the *Study on Teacher Training, Working, and Living Conditions in Member States* (African Union Commission, 2017) and *Teacher Support and Motivation Framework for Africa* (UNESCO IICBA, 2017).

Citing UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2012) and European Commission (2018a), the *African Teacher Qualification Framework* defines qualification as “the formal outcome of an assessment and validation process obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards” (African Union Commission, 2019). A teacher qualification framework is “a complex network of teacher professional standards and competencies, initial teacher education, continuing professional development and professional regulatory requirements within specific socio-economic, political and cultural peculiarities of a country.” Provisions must be made regarding pre-service education; registration, certification and licensing; induction and mentoring; and continuous professional development. In particular, the Framework brings to the fore the importance of:

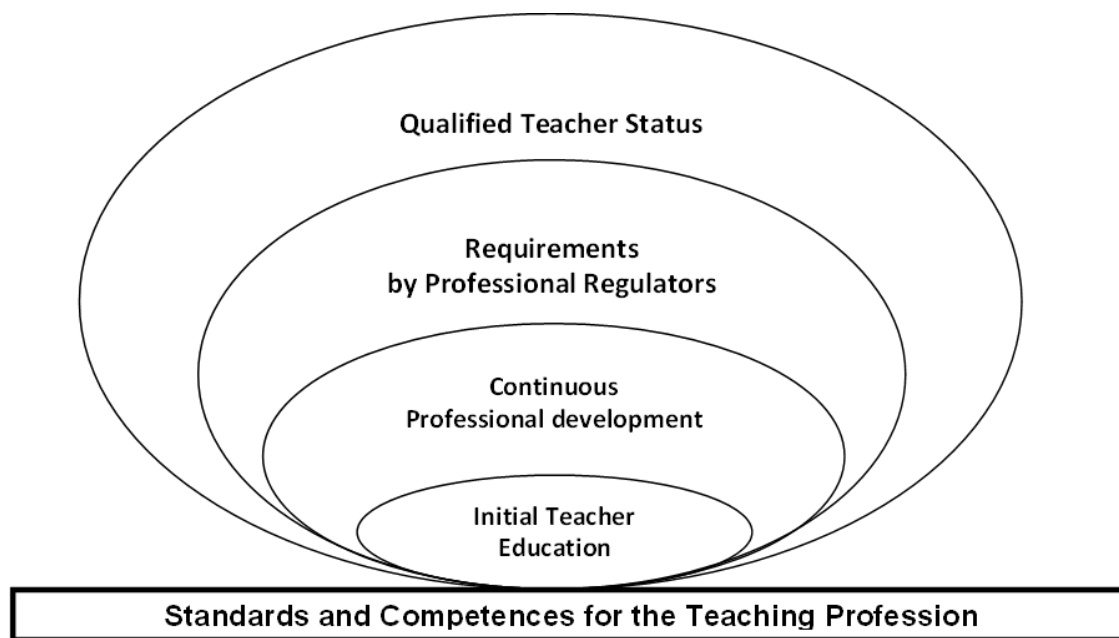
(i) Career paths defined as “the stages of proficiency: An increasing level of competencies expected of a professional as he or she moves from the point of entry to retirement” or the “benchmarks which recognize the professional growth of teachers throughout their careers, represented by increasing levels of knowledge, practice and professional engagement” (African Union Commission, 2019a, p. 9). The career path has four stages that teachers and school leaders need to pass through in their professional development (beginner, proficient, expert, and distinguished).

(ii) Standards and competencies for teachers in five key domains: (a) Professional knowledge and understanding; (b) Professional skills and practice; (c) Professional values, attributes, and commitment; (d) Professional partnerships; and (e) Professional leadership. These five domains mirror the recommendations in UNESCO (2019), UNESCO & Education International (2019), and International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 (2019). For every standard, specific competencies are expected at each of the four career stages.

(iii) Standards and competencies for school leadership in seven areas: (a) Developing self and others; (b) Leading professional knowledge, practice, and conduct; (c) Managing school resources; (d) Promoting school improvement, innovation, and change; (e) Generating resources internally and ensuring accountability; (f) Supporting learners’ enrolment and participation; and (g) Engaging and working with the community. Again, each standard should have competencies expected at the four career stages.



**Figure 1.1: Key Elements of the African Continental Teacher Qualification Framework**



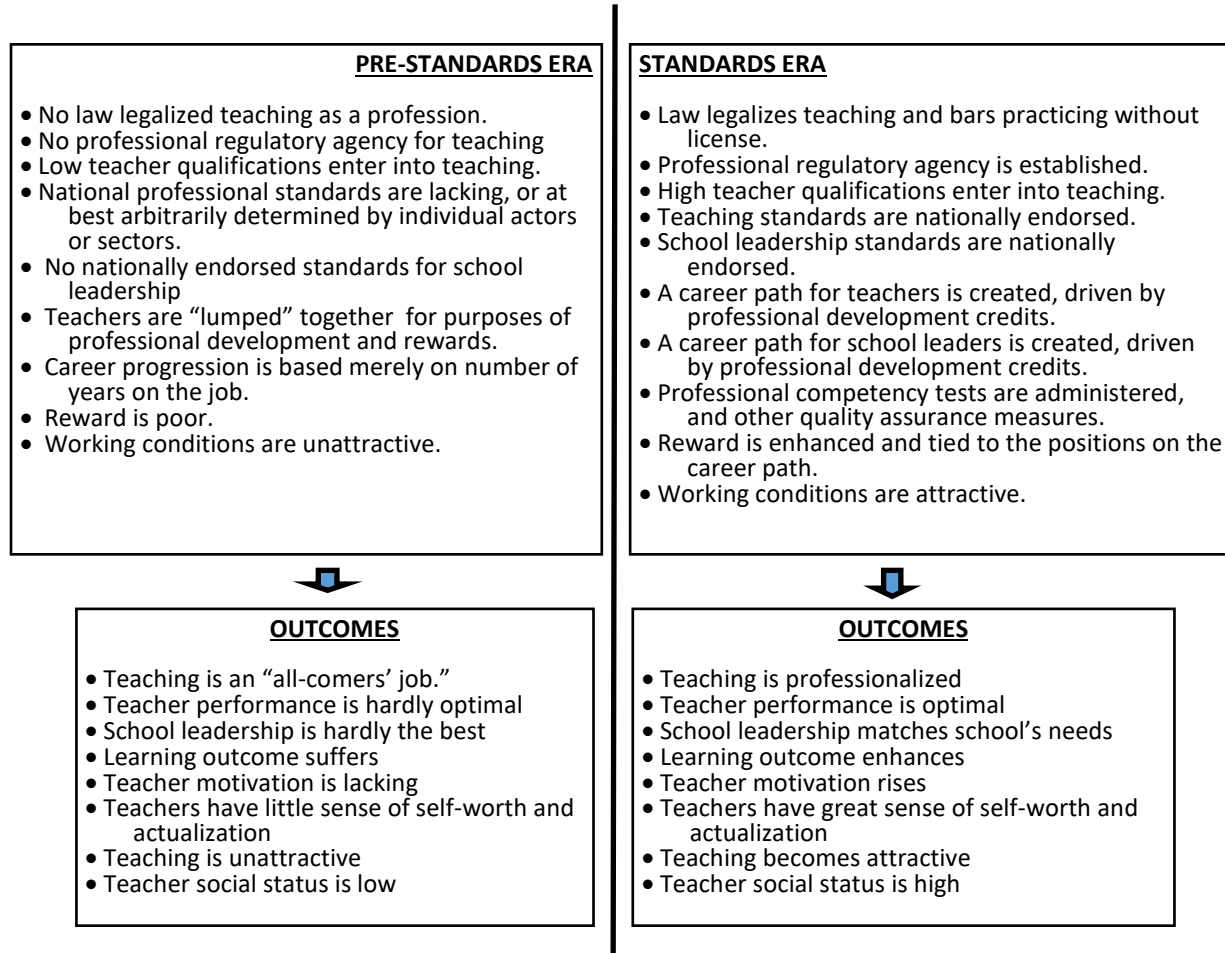
Source: African Union Commission (2019b).

**The guidelines explain in some details what is expected of teachers.** For example, they stipulate that a bachelor's degree or another degree with a Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) is a minimum qualification. They outline exit competencies of any initial (pre-service) teacher education. Other provisions include curricular frameworks and quality indicators for pre-service training and requirements and processes for the professional accreditation of teacher education programs. The Teacher Qualification Framework also prescribes induction and mentoring for newly qualified teachers; continuous professional development and credits required to move from one career stage to another; teacher competency assessments and other requirements for teachers. They introduce a Diploma in School Leadership and Management (DSLML) as a prerequisite for entering the leadership track. For the four stages of the career path of school leadership, they also provide a framework for induction and mentoring; continuous professional development and credits; competency assessment; and other aspects of the career.

### [Accountability and teacher well-being](#)

**Standards and competencies provide a framework for accountability, for teachers and school leaders but also for the education system.** A successful accumulation of professional development credits should result in rewards not only in terms of rising through the career path, but in terms of monetary and non-monetary incentives. When teachers know that their efforts will count and be rewarded, they are more likely to work harder to unleash their potential. This model is in contrast with a setting where standards and competencies are neither clearly stated nor endorsed. The pre-standard regime treated teachers as a homogenous group. What led to career progression was the mere number of years spent on the job. This is not the case anymore under a standards approach, as shown in Figure 1.2. Promoting professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders can transform an education system.

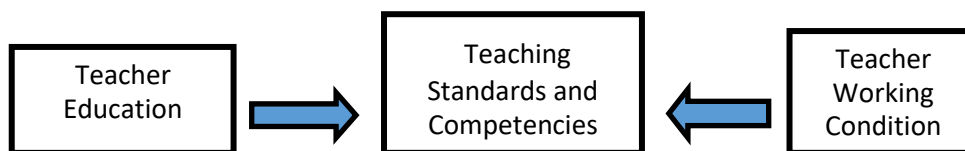
**Figure 1.2: Theory of Change Anchored in Professional Standards and Competencies**



Source: Authors.

**This simple theory of change makes it clear that professional standards and competencies relate closely not only to pre-service and in-service teacher education, but also to the working conditions of teachers.** Whether a country’s teachers and school leaders achieve expected standards and competencies depends in part on that attractiveness of the profession, and thereby on teachers’ working conditions. Said differently, like a coin, teaching standards and competencies have (at least) two sides, which are teacher education and working conditions. These are powerful forces shaping teaching standards and competencies (Figure 1.3). Teacher education comprises pre-service education and continuous professional development. An individual cannot give what s/he does not have, hence a teacher cannot achieve standards and competencies that have not been nurtured. Similarly, no matter the standards and competencies that a teacher comes with, working condition affect how much of those the teacher can impart upon learners and the school system. These working conditions affect teacher motivation, but they also matter for the health and safety of the teacher. When the safety of teachers is threatened by insecurity, natural disasters, conflicts, and other emergencies, they cannot offer their best.

**Figure 1.3: Selected Forces Shaping Teaching Standards and Competencies**



Source: Authors.

#### **Box 1.2: Other Existing Frameworks**

While this study relies on a particular framework, it should be noted that other frameworks with similar objectives exist. For example, the thinking that professional standards and competencies may have transformative potentials is implicitly at the core of the World Bank's (2013) Systems Approach for Better Education Results or SABER. The teacher domain of SABER outlines eight policy goals: (1) Setting clear expectations for teachers; (2) Attracting the best into teaching; (3) Preparing teachers with useful training and experience; (4) Matching teachers' skills with students' needs; (5) leading teachers with strong principals; (6) Monitoring teaching and learning; (7) Supporting teachers to improve instruction; and (8) Motivating teachers to perform. The goals are closely related to the ideals embedded in professional standards and competencies. As noted in the SABER 'What Matters' paper for the teacher domain, "education systems ... vary greatly in the content of the regulations they put in place to organize issues such as who is allowed to teach and what qualifications they are expected to have, under what conditions they will be teaching, how their work will be monitored, rewarded, and supported, among many others. Understanding the ways in which each education system regulates these issues is crucial to inform policy options" (World Bank, 2013).

#### Objective of the study

**This study assesses the current state of professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders in The Gambia, relying in part on the African frameworks as benchmarks.** As mentioned above, the study considers (1) the national framework for teaching standards and competencies; (2) pre-service and in-service teacher education; and (3) the working conditions of teachers. The study focuses on teachers and school leaders (i.e., head teachers and principals) in public basic education and senior secondary schools in The Gambia. It is part of a broader work program on those issues at UNESCO's International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA). The analysis is based on an on-going mapping for West Africa and detailed work on The Gambia. The study was funded by the Shanghai Trust-in-Fund project whose aim is to promote the professionalization of teaching in Africa and the Asia-Pacific, with The Gambia being one of the target countries. The study was undertaken within the context of Target 4.A under the Sustainable Development Goals (increase the supply of qualified teachers in developing countries) and the African Union's *Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2016-25)* and *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*.

**The first area of investigation is the national framework of professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders.** Questions considered include: Which laws and key policies support the standards and competencies?; What are the institutional frameworks for the regulation of the standards and competencies?; What are the content and structure of the standards and competencies?; What is the level of implementation of the standards and competencies?; How are the standards and competencies aligned to the UNESCO and Education International (2019) and African Union Commission (2019a, 2019b) frameworks of professional standards?; and How is the regulation of the teaching profession aligned with the African Union Commission (2019c) *Continental Guidelines on the Teaching Profession*?

**The second area of investigation focuses on teacher education.** Questions considered include: What are the critical pre-service teacher issues?; What is the type/profile of the teaching qualifications required?; What are entry requirements, duration, and curricular framework for teacher qualifications?; What is the system of accreditation of teacher education programs and other quality assurance best practices?; Is there a national framework for continuous professional development (CPD) and what is the quantity, quality, and regularity of in-service training being provided?; Does CPD counts for teacher advancement?; Are teachers being mentored, especially after the initial induction?; Is there a mandatory course for School Leadership and Management?; What are some of the teacher quality issues encountered in the school system; and How is teacher education aligned with the provisions of the African Union Commission (2019b) *Continental Teacher Qualification Framework* and other frameworks based on best practices?

**The third area of investigation focuses on the working conditions of the teachers and school leaders.** Questions considered include: What are some of the key issues as expressed by teachers and school leaders that affect their working conditions?; and How are policies and practices aligned with the *Recommendations on the Training, Working and Living Conditions of Teachers* (African Union Commission, 2017) and *Teacher Support and Motivation Framework” and other guides?* (UNESCO IICBA, 2017).

## Data collection

**The study relies on a blend of qualitative and quantitative approaches.** Apart from a brief literature review, the analysis is based on online surveys for teachers and school leaders, key informant interviews, and other data, as well as data for other countries. The key data sources are as follows:

1. **Key informants interviews.** Interviews were conducted with the heads and/or high-level representatives of stakeholder organizations (list in annex 1). These organizations included the National Technical Working Group for the Shanghai-FIT Project in The Gambia; Relevant Directorates of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education; the Gambia Teachers Union; the Institute for Technical Training, University of Applied Science, Engineering and Technology; the Management Development Institute; the Gambia National Commission for UNESCO; the Gambia College; the University of The Gambia School of Education; the Association of Lower Basic School Heads; the Conference of Principals of Upper Basic Schools; the Conference of Principals of Senior Secondary Schools; and the National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority.
2. **Online surveys of teachers and school leaders.** Questionnaires (see Annex 2) were designed for teachers and school leaders with over 40 questions on professional standards, teacher education (pre-service and in-service) and working conditions. The Gambia Teachers Union (GTU) used its offices across the country to share links randomly with 1,000 teachers and 1,000 school leaders. It also liaised with other stakeholders using the WhatsApp forums of the GTU, principals, and head teachers. A total of 183 teachers and 36 school leaders submitted responses to the survey, although for some questions data may be missing for some respondents. The response rate for teachers is adequate, but for school leaders it is too low, hence statistical analysis in the report is conducted mostly for teachers, but not for school leaders.
3. **Focus groups and validation.** Discussions and/or focus groups were conducted with the Secretary, Conference of Principals of Upper Basic Schools [CPUBS], Chairman, Association of Lower Basic School Heads [ALBAS]; Chairman, Conference of Principals of Senior Secondary Schools [COPSSS] and Member, National Technical Working Group of the UNESCO Shanghai-FIT Project in The

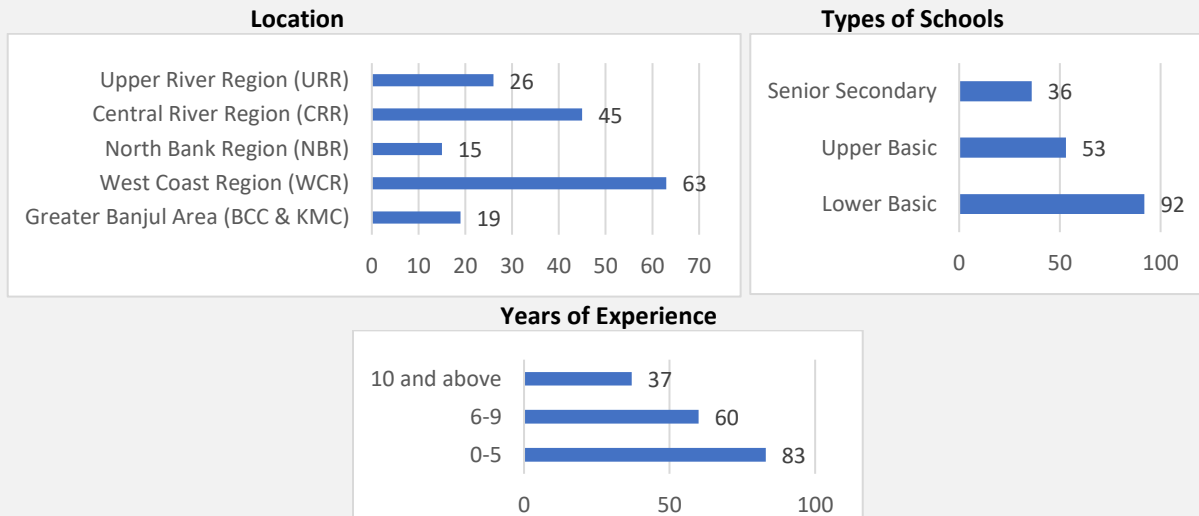
Gambia; Deputy Secretary General, GTU, and others. Regular meetings were also held to enable the research team to regularly review data collected and understand them properly.

4. **Data for West Africa.** Data have also been collected for other countries in West Africa using a separate online survey and key informant interviews. That separate regional study targets the 15 members<sup>7</sup> of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and is still on-going, but preliminary findings from the data collected so far are shared to assess in a comparative perspective how well The Gambia is doing on professional standards and competencies.

**Box 1.3: Selected Characteristics of Respondents to the Online Surveys**

For the online surveys sampling, the country was divided geographically into five regions, namely Greater Banjul Area, West Coast Region, North Bank Region, Central River Region, and Upper River Region. Figure 1.4 provides selected characteristics of respondents for the teachers survey, suggesting good coverage of various regions, levels of schooling, and teaching experience. Overall, the sample appears reasonably representative of the overall population of teachers in the country. The sample for school leaders is however too small to warrant analysis.

**Figure 1.4: Number of Survey Respondents by Location, Types of Schools, and Experience for Teachers**



Source: Authors' estimation from online survey.

**Outline of the study**

**The study consists of five core chapters and annexes.** Chapters 2 to 4 consider sequentially the three areas of focus for the study, namely (1) the national framework for teaching standards and competencies; (2) pre-service and in-service teacher education; and (3) the working conditions of teachers. Chapter 5 provides a preliminary analysis of how The Gambia compares to other West African countries in those areas (the analysis is preliminary because data collection for some countries is on-going). Annexes provide additional information, including a list of key findings from this study and associated recommendations.

<sup>7</sup> The 15 ECOWAS member countries are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

## CHAPTER 2: PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND COMPETENCIES

### Introduction

**The first objective of this study is to assess the framework for teaching standards and competencies in The Gambia, with the country lacking some of the internationally recommended policies and practices.**

The situation analysis tries to ascertain if there are prescriptions by law which set requirements for teachers (e.g., qualifications, registration, licencing) for practicing. Such a law does not exist yet. Efforts were made towards such a law during a previous Constitutional review, but the proposed Constitution was eventually not approved. Similarly, there is also no teaching regulatory authority with the mandate to regulate teaching as a profession. Overall, many of the concepts and instruments pertaining to the regulation of teaching are still missing, and the country is not a member of the Africa Federation of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA), the continental umbrella for the regulation of teaching, nor of the International Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (IFTRA), the global umbrella. Stakeholders are also typically not aware of the African Union (2019a, 2019b, 2019c) Continental Frameworks of Standards and Competencies, Teacher Qualification, and Guidelines on the Teaching Profession, nor do they know about the Global Framework of Professional Teaching Standards developed by UNESCO and Education International (2019). Generally, stakeholders opine that they are not yet familiar with those instruments and do not reflect them in their own efforts to set and monitor teacher standards and competencies.

**Nevertheless, the concepts of teaching standards and competencies are not new to The Gambia and various policy documents discuss those issues.** This includes the *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016-2030* and the public service policies issued by The Gambia Personnel Management Office (2013a, 2013b, 2013c) covering code of conduct, service level agreements, and *General Orders*. These documents give direction for standards, competencies, conducts, and attitudes expected of teachers. In addition, the Public Service Act of 1991 (Republic of The Gambia, 1991) provides a regulatory framework for the efficient and effective functioning of the entire public service. Basically, teachers as public servants are guided by all the rules of the public service in addition to the regulations made by the MoBSE. While the rules of the public service pertain not just to teachers but also other public servants, frameworks of standards and competencies are found in the policy documents of the MoBSE, not as one consolidated document but rather are contained in several documents. These are reviewed in the following section.

### The Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016 – 2030

**The Ministries of Basic and Secondary Education and Higher Education Research Science and Technology jointly developed the *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016 – 2030* on the theme “Accessible, Equitable and Inclusive Quality Education for Sustainable Development.”** One of the seven areas of intervention of the Strategic Plan is Quality and Relevance. Nine result areas are stated for Quality and Relevance, with the result areas 5 and 6 capturing the thrust of the Strategic Plan in terms of its provisions for teacher and school leadership competencies (MoBSE & MoHERST, 2017):

- *Result Area 5 – Highly qualified staff motivated and retained.* Key areas of focus are as follows: Train teachers in pre-vocational and technology subjects at the tertiary level; Train teachers on content knowledge in English and Mathematics through e-learning training mode; Continue to provide scholarships for the training of senior secondary school teachers at the UTG; Develop professional standards for teachers; Strengthen staff training to ascertain quality service in higher and tertiary institutions; Review and strengthen the HTC Programs to provide adequate and competent teachers especially technical teachers for TVET programs; Develop better recruitment,

training and retention packages to attract more PTC graduates to HTC Primary and for high quality and motivated STEM teaching staff especially in pure sciences, engineering and mathematics.

- *Result Area 6 – Effective and efficient school management.* Key areas of focus are as follows: Provide ongoing leadership training for Head teachers; Develop and implement development programs for school leaders (study tours, peer networking, experienced principals used as trainers & facilitators); Strengthen the capacities of schools to implement the minimum standards; Continue to implement the star system based on the attainment of the minimum standards; Develop remedial programs and strategies to enhance student mastery of numeracy and literacy skills at the lower basic level.

**The Strategic Plan calls for the development of professional standards for teachers, ongoing leadership training for Head teachers, and the strengthening of schools to implement the minimum standards.** These activities were verified during the study as having been implemented. MoBSE hired an international consultant (Tony Mahon) to develop *The Gambia Teacher Competency Framework* (The Gambia Education Sector Support Program, 2020), but the framework has not been published or implemented yet. However, MoBSE continues to work towards enhancing the teaching standards and competency. In this regard, in 2021 it developed a *Teacher Competency Test Policy* (MoBSE, 2021a), now waiting to be implemented.

**For school management, minimum standards exist for administration and leadership of the schools.** These include the *School Management Manual for Senior Secondary Schools, Version 1* (MoBSE, 2015); *School Management Manual for Lower Basic, Basic Cycle and Upper Basic Schools Revised Version 3* (MoBSE, 2020b); and *Minimum Standards for Basic Schools: Indicators Under the Control of the School and the Community* (MoBSE, 2021b). These documents are not specific to the competencies that a school leader should have, but they cover all aspects at the school level that must be met and guide monitoring and evaluation. The documents contain important school leadership standards and provide strong direction to school leaders regarding what is expected of them. Also, as required by the Education Sector Strategic Plan, Head Teachers of Basic Schools since 2021 undergo a one-year full time professional training in school leadership at The Gambian Management Development Institute (2022a, 2022b). Therefore, it can be asserted that MoBSE is seriously pursuing the requirements of the Strategic Plan with regards to the establishment of the professional standards for teachers, ongoing development of the Head Teachers, and the provisions of minimum standards for the management of the schools.

### [The Gambia Teacher Competency Framework](#)

**The Gambia Teacher Competency Framework has been developed but not yet published or implemented.** As already mentioned, the framework was developed by a consultant under the Gambia Education Sector Support Program. It proposes a career path in four stages termed Student Teacher, Teacher, Senior Teacher, and Head Teacher, as shown in Table 2.1. These stages are different from the Gambian Scheme of Service, wherein the cadre for teachers comprises Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster, Senior Master, Qualified Teacher, and Unqualified Teacher (The Republic of The Gambia Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education, 2004). As shown in Table 2.2, the first three stages (Levels 1-3) have a common set of competencies as follows: (i) Competency 1: Planning for learning and teaching; (ii) Competency 2: Teaching to facilitate learning; and (iii) Competency 3: Assessing and reporting learning outcomes and progress, with specific areas of expertise listed under each competency. As shown in Box 2.1, the level of mastery for competencies increases with the stages of the teacher career.

**Table 2.1: The Gambia Career Path with Four Stages/Levels**

Level	Career Stage	Competency Level	Purpose	Evaluation
4	Head Teacher	Leadership and management competency	CPD	Head Teacher Professional Portfolio
3	Senior Teacher	Proficient competency	CPD	Teacher Professional Portfolio
2	Teacher	Essential competency	CPD	Teacher Professional Portfolio
			Induction	Teacher Induction Portfolio
1	Student Teacher	Readiness to teach competency	Readiness to teach	Student Teacher Teaching Practice Portfolio

Source: The Gambia Education Sector Support Program (2020).

Note: CPD = continuing professional development,

**Table 2.2: Competencies for the First Three Stages (Student Teacher, Teacher, and Senior Teacher)**

Competency 1	Competency 2	Competency 3
Planning for learning and teaching	Teaching to facilitate learning	Assessing and reporting learning outcomes and progress
1.1 Knowledge of the curriculum and education policies	2.1 Learning environment	3.1. Assessment for learning
1.2 Content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge	2.2 Teaching strategies and resources	3.2. Assessment to inform planning
1.3 Planning lessons	2.3 Behaviour for learning strategies	3.3. Recording and reporting pupils' progress strategies
1.4 Knowledge of factors that promote and hinder learning	2.4 Inclusive practice strategies	
	2.5 Communication strategies	
	2.6 Use of ICT	
	2.7 Connections across the curriculum and to daily life	
<b>Core professional values and dispositions: Integrity, respect love and care social justice</b>		

Source: The Gambia Education Sector Support Program (2020, p. 12).

**The fourth stage for Head Teachers has a different set of four competencies related to leadership, management, and communications.** Specifically, these are: Competency 1: Strategic leadership; Competency 2: Educational leadership; Competency 3: Management; and Competency 4: Communication and Relationships. Again, a list of sub-competencies is provided in each of the broad four categories.

**Table 2.3: Competencies for the Fourth Stage of Head Teacher**

Competency 1 Strategic leadership	Competency 2 Educational leadership	Competency 3 Management	Competency 4 Communication and Relationships
1.1 Strategic vision	2.1 Educational knowledge	3.1 Managing people	4.1 Communicating
	2.2 Monitoring and evaluation	3.2 Managing resources	4.2 Establishing relationships
	2.3 Continuing professional development	3.3 Managing change	

Source: Source: The Gambia Education Sector Support Program (2020).



**Box 2.1: Examples of Competencies from the Framework of Competencies for the First Three Stages**

Competencies required of teachers depend on their level. For the first three stages (Student Teacher, Teacher, Senior Teacher), Table 2.4 lists the competencies expected under planning for learning and teaching.

**Table 2.4: Competencies for Planning for Learning and Teaching by the Level of the Teacher**

<b>Competency 1: Planning for Learning and Teaching</b>			
<b>Sub-Competency</b>	<b>Level 1 (Student Teacher)</b>	<b>Level 2 (Teacher)</b>	<b>Level 3 (Senior Teacher)</b>
	<b>Indicators</b>		
<b>1.1 Knowledge of the curriculum and education policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Apply basic knowledge of The Gambian curriculum, syllabuses and textbooks to plan appropriate learning activities and lessons</li> <li>▪ Implement school policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draw upon knowledge of The Gambian curriculum, syllabuses and textbooks to plan schemes of work and interactive activities that support the learning of all pupils</li> <li>▪ Implement national education and school policies as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draw upon detailed knowledge of The Gambian curriculum, syllabuses, textbooks and education policies to plan lessons that have appropriately challenging learning outcomes, teaching objectives and content</li> <li>▪ Plan interactive learning activities and lessons that match pupils' needs and support their learning</li> <li>▪ • Contribute to development of school policies</li> </ul>
<b>1.2 Content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Apply foundations of subject content knowledge (CK) and basic pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) to planning lessons and learning activities</li> <li>▪ Draw upon basic knowledge of pupils' misconceptions to inform lesson planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Apply relevant and appropriate subject content knowledge (CK), including knowledge of pupils' misconceptions to planning for learning and teaching</li> <li>▪ Draw upon appropriate pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) in order to inform planning for learning and teaching and address pupils' misconceptions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Apply detailed subject content knowledge (CK), evaluation of pupils' common misconceptions and appropriate pedagogical content knowledge to plan for improved learning and teaching</li> <li>▪ Apply content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge to monitor teaching and Identify training needs of less experienced teachers</li> </ul>

Source: The Gambia Education Sector Support Program (2020, p. 23).

**Another key document for teacher professional standards and competencies referred to the Service Level Agreement which all teachers must enter in.** The Standards and Quality Assurance Directorate of MoBSE which oversees teacher and school leader competencies notes that the Agreement (MoBSE, 2022d) is at the core of teacher and school leader evaluations. As garnered from MoBSE (2022e, 2022f), the Service Level Agreement and Performance Evaluation (MoBSE, 2022e, 2022f) for teachers covers three areas: Planning; Curriculum delivery; and Assessment. Table 2.5 is a sample *Teacher Performance Form*. Planning entails extra-curricular activities, the development of scheme of work and lesson plans; curriculum delivery is about executing extra-curricular activities, delivery of lesson plans, and use of teaching aids; and assessment has to do with conducting tests, developing marking schemes, administering tests and providing feedback, and vetting tests. These constitute core competencies expected of teachers. Similarly, the Service Level Agreement and Performance Evaluation (MoBSE, 2022e, 2022f) for school leaders cover six key areas: Attendance (punctuality and regularity); Planning; Monitoring and administration; Assessment; Administrative compliance; and Personal development plan. Table 2.6 provides an overview of the six areas and indicators used in assessing performance.

**Table 2.5: Sample of the Form for Assessing Teacher Performance**

Planning			Curriculum Delivery				Assessment			
Extra-curricular Planned	Scheme of work developed	Lesson Plans Developed	Extra-curricular Done	Lesson Plans Delivered	Lessons with Teaching Aid	Tests Conducted	Marking Scheme developed	Test with feedback	Tests Vetted	
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	

Source: MoBSE.

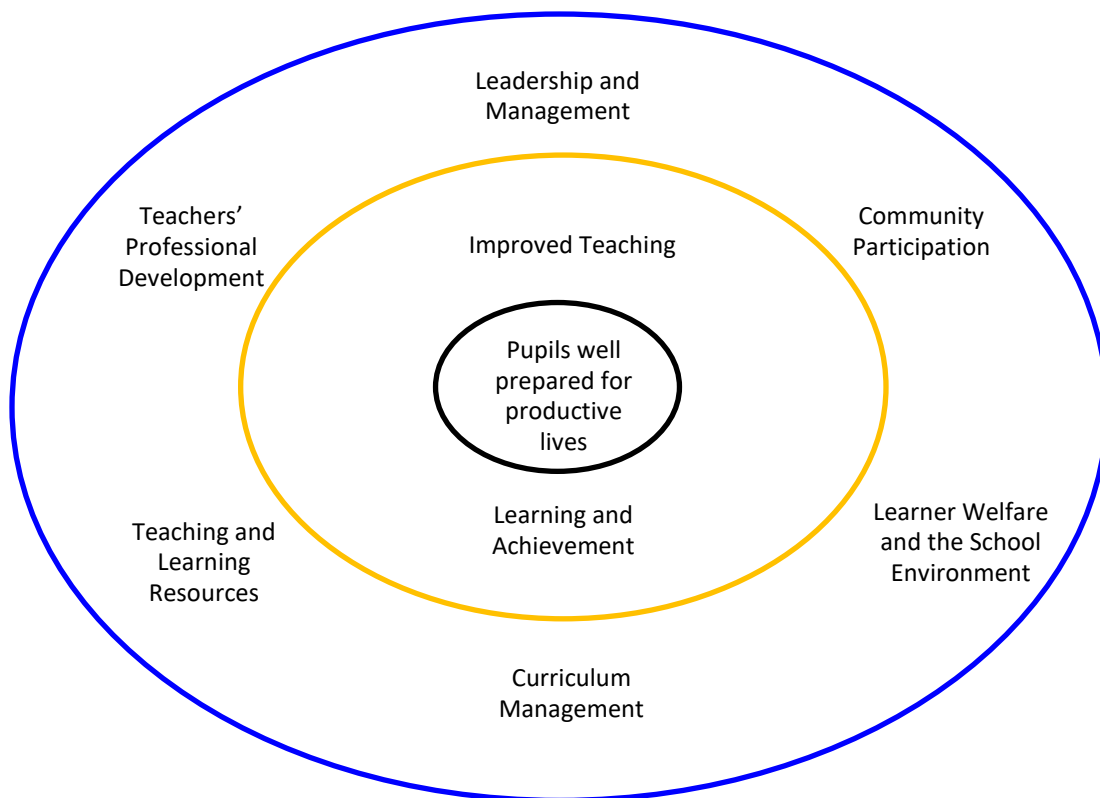
**Table 2.6: Key Areas of the Service Level Agreement/Performance Evaluation for School Leaders**

Key Areas	Indicators and Expected Level of Attainment
Attendance (Punctuality and Regularity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &gt;95% attendance and punctuality achieved (SM)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Regularity</li> <li>○ Punctuality</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 100% of teachers' attendance record entered on regular bases and recorded.</li> </ul>
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worked Plan developed for the academic year (showing term agreements)</li> <li>• 100% lesson monitoring schedules developed.</li> </ul>
Monitoring and administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &gt;80% of planned monitoring conducted</li> <li>• 100% Teacher attendance data analyzed and reported</li> <li>• &gt;95% of planned internal trainings done</li> </ul>
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &gt;90% scheduled tests coordinated</li> <li>• 100% of teachers performance reported and feedback provided</li> <li>• 100% of questions and marks verified</li> <li>• 100% of external Examination data analysis coordinated</li> <li>• Performance report and review conducted for the term (teacher)</li> </ul>
Administrative compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adhere to all relevant procedures Minimum Standard;</li> <li>• &gt;95% of terms and conditions in the Minimum Standard adhered.</li> </ul>
Personal development plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant competency in lesson delivery and management/Acquire relevant competencies in monitoring lessons</li> <li>• Graduate level school management/Minimum Certificate in School Management</li> </ul>

Source: MoBSE (2022e, 2022f)

**Still another instrument for enforcing and monitoring the performance of schools and communities is the Minimum Standards for Basic Schools** which relies on indicators under the control of the school and the community (MoBSE, 2015, 2021b). The Manual was first developed in 2015 and updated in 2020. During focus group discussions with the leadership of the association of headteachers and principals, participants spoke about the Minimum Standards as their most serious guide for the administration of schools. They stated that the Standards were originally developed for Basic Education but have now been adopted also for Senior Secondary Education. As illustrated in Figure 2.1 and Table 2.7, the Standards cover six subthemes: Leadership and management; Teachers’ professional development; Teaching and learning resources; Curriculum Management; Learner welfare and the school environment; and Community participation. Together the Service Level Agreement and Minimum Standards provide rich content and clear guidance, even if they are not yet aligned to the African continental frameworks.

**Figure 2.1: School Management Manual for Lower Basic, Upper Basic, and Senior Secondary Schools**



Source: MoBSE (2015, 2020b).

**Table 2.7: School Management Manual for Lower Basic, Upper Basic, and Senior Secondary Schools**

Domains	Major Issues Covered
Leadership and Management	School management, strategic direction, school data, school improvement, school policies, management of staff, financial management, status report, monitoring and quality assurance, school star award system,
Community Participation	Meaning of community participation, monitoring of school performance, role of the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and School Management Committee (SMC), communications and information, Open Days, wider participation.
Curriculum Management	Curriculum content, organization of the teaching time, making good use of the teaching time, ensuring, and improving the quality of lessons, assessment of pupil achievement, homework, creating a positive classroom environment, curriculum enrichment, extra-curricular activities.
Teachers' Professional Development	Promoting continuing professional development, supporting teacher trainees and others,
Teaching and Learning Resources	Textbooks, and teachers' guides, teaching and learning aids, libraries,
Learner Welfare and the School Environment	Enrolment, attendance, retention, and punctuality; pupil behaviour and discipline; student councils, school health, infrastructure.

Source: Adapted from MoBSE (2015, 202b).

### Perceptions of teachers and school leaders

**The online surveys implemented for this study suggest a limited level of awareness and knowledge of professional standards and competencies among teachers, but also a belief that they can be useful.**

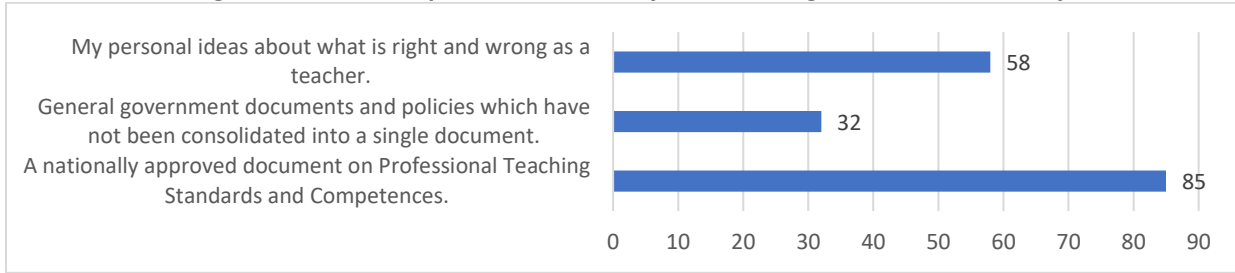
Table 2.8 provides teachers' responses to four questions which tried to establish the teachers' awareness of professional standards. Most teachers have not heard about standards, nor have they read any professional standards. However, nearly all of them indicate that professional standards should be spelt-out and that they can improve performance. Similarly, Figure 2.2 shows that only a small minority of teachers indicate that the country has well spelt-out standards. Clearly, professional standards have not yet attained the desired level of conceptualisation, development, and implementation in the country. Teachers were also asked about the most important source of teaching standards they are using currently. Half state that it is a nationally approved document, but a third indicate that their personal idea about standards is their source, the rest opining that the sources are the general government documents. In essence, there is no high-level of consensus about the current source of standards in the profession.

**Table 2.8: Awareness of Professional Standards**

Questions	Teachers		
	Yes	No	Total
Have you heard about Standards?	64	118	182
Have you read the Standards?	24	158	182
Do you believe Standards should be spelt out?	177	4	181
Do you think Standards can improve performance?	177	5	182

Source: Authors' estimation from online survey.

**Figure 2.2: Most Important Source of your Teaching Standards Currently**



Source: Authors' estimation from online survey.

**Perceptions regarding the existence of a regulatory authority for teaching are mixed, but many teachers are registered, see teaching as a profession, and benefited from an induction when they started.** Table 2.9 provides additional responses by teachers from the survey. Half of the teachers state that the country has no teaching regulatory authority, with the other half thinks it has one. Possibly the latter believe that MoBSE though its Directorates including its Standards and Quality Assurance Directorate constitute a teaching regulatory authority. However, going by the guidance from the African Union Commission (2019c) *Continental Guidelines on the Teaching Profession*, the country does not have such an authority yet. Most teachers believe that they are professionally registered, but only a minority believe they hold a license and have taken a professional qualifying examination. Three in four teachers benefitted from an induction when they started as teachers. Finally, nearly all teachers believe that teaching is a profession.

**Table 2.9: Perceptions Regarding Teaching, Professional Registration, and Licensing**

Questions	Teachers		
	Yes	No	Total
Do you have a teaching regulatory authority?	86	92	<b>178</b>
Currently, are you professionally registered as a teacher or leader by any authority?	149	31	<b>180</b>
Currently, do you hold a teaching or leadership license like other professionals you know?	71	106	<b>177</b>
Did you take any professional test or examination before being appointed a teacher/leader?	65	116	<b>181</b>
Before starting your job as a teacher or leader, did you receive a professional induction (an orientation exercise)?	135	47	<b>182</b>
Overall, do you think teaching or school leadership is a profession?	176	5	<b>181</b>

Source: Authors' estimation from online surveys.

### Summing up

**On professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders, while The Gambia has policies in place, it has yet to adopt recommendations from international frameworks.** The country has made substantial efforts to develop and implement a national framework of professional standards and competences for teachers and school leaders. However, much of these have not been published, the implementation is still in its infancy, and the framework is not aligned with the global frameworks provided by UNESCO and Education International and those developed by the African Union Commission. There is a low level of awareness about these global and continental frameworks among stakeholders. Other professional foundations have also not been laid for the teaching profession as expected by the continental frameworks. For instance, there is yet no law that has conferred on teaching a professional status, and there is also no National Teaching Council for the regulation of the profession. The Gambia has also not joined the Africa Federation of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA) and the International Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (IFTRA) to benefit from sharing of good practices. The Gambian

Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016- 2030 endorses the development of professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders, but its recommendations must be implemented, including by creating a career path aligned to the African Union Commission framework. Mentoring, guidance, monitoring, assessment, evaluation, rewards, and other professional support to teachers and school leaders should all be further developed to firmly establish teaching as a profession in the country.

## CHAPTER 3: TEACHER EDUCATION

### Introduction

**The second objective of this study is to assess teacher education in The Gambia.** Teacher education, both pre-service and in-service, is the foundation of teacher quality. Teacher education matters for teaching standards and competencies – they are like two sides of the same coin. One cannot exist without the other, and their relationship is direct and mutual. Accordingly, this chapter reports the situation of teacher education in the country, considering first pre-service education, then CPD. Perspectives from teachers on those issues as they emerge from the online survey are also discussed.

### Pre-service teacher education

**Pre-service education is the first course of preparation for teachers.** Factors affecting the quality of pre-service education are complex (e.g., Chalmers, 2008; Sanyal 2013; Nwokeocha, 2018). For example, Chalmers (2008) lists five dimensions – assessment, engagement and learning community, diversity of teachers and students, and institutional climate, and systems that may affect the quality of the training received. He also pays attention to the quality of relationships at various levels such as an institution, its faculty, departments and programs, and teachers or individuals. Training in higher education involves inputs, processes, outputs, and outcomes. Similarly, Sanyal (2013) notes similarly that the quality of training may be affected by a learner’s characteristics as well as by various inputs, contexts, and outcomes.

**Quality assurance is indispensable in pre-service teacher training.** A useful framework for quality assurance was designed by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council & Commonwealth of Learning (2017a, 2017b, 2017c). This framework provides five key dimensions, 25 aspects of quality, and 75 indicators to benchmark a teacher training program. The key dimensions are curriculum design and planning, curriculum transaction and evaluation, research development and extension, infrastructure and learning resources, and student support and progression. In a similar vein, African Union and European Commission (2018a) developed the *African Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM)* and *African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA)*. Also relevant is the Harmonization of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation (HAQAA) Initiative (African Union and European Commission, 2018b). The idea is to assess higher education programs against the standards and criteria of the AQRM and ASG-QA. The criteria of the AQRM are “Governance and Management; Infrastructure; Finances; Teaching and Learning; Research, Publication and Innovation; and Societal Engagement.” As to the ASG-QA, it provides criteria for internal and external quality assurance.

### **Box 3.1: ASG-QA Standards for External Quality Assurance**

The African Union & European Commissions (2018b) suggest seven standards for quality assurance:

*Standard 1. Objectives of External Quality Assurance and Consideration for Internal Quality Assurance:* External quality assurance shall ensure that the higher education institution has clearly articulated vision and mission statements, and it shall help the institution ensure the effectiveness of its internal QA mechanisms, providing an additional instrument for assessing institutional quality.

*Standard 2. Designing External Quality Assurance Mechanisms Fit for Purpose:* Standards, guidelines and processes for external quality assurance shall be designed to be fit for purpose, defined to achieve the intended aims and objectives of EQA, and to strengthen IQA systems at institutions.

*Standard 3. Implementation Processes of External Quality Assurance:* The standards, processes, and procedures for EQA shall be pre-defined, reliable, published, and consistently implemented for purposes of accountability.

*Standard 4. Independence of Evaluation:* EQA shall be carried out by panels of external experts drawn from a wide range of expertise and experience.

*Standard 5. Decision and Reporting of External Quality Assurance Outcomes:* Reports and decisions made as a result of external quality assurance shall be clear, based on published standards, processes and procedures, and made accessible, for purposes of accountability.

*Standard 6. Periodic Review of Institutions and Programs:* External quality assurance of institutions and programs shall be undertaken on a cyclical basis.

*Standard 7. Complaints and Appeals:* The procedure for lodging complaints and appeals shall be clearly defined and communicated to the institution concerned.

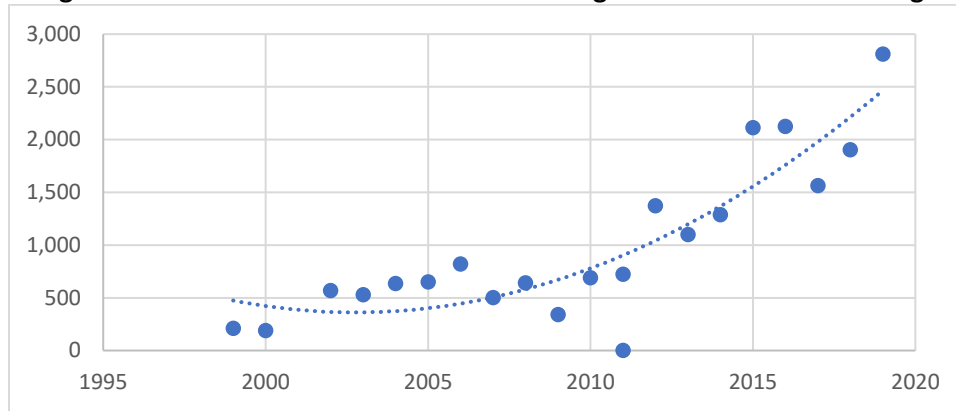
**The Gambia College is the main teacher education institution in the country.** Established in 1978, it results from the merger of institutions such as the Yundam Teachers College founded in 1952 and the Gambia School of Nursing and Midwifery, School of Agriculture and the School of Public Health (The Gambia College, 2022e). The College caters to other disciplines apart from teacher education for which it offers eight specialisations (The Gambia College, 2022a, 2022d)<sup>8</sup>. These specializations are two- or three-year degrees that constitute the bulk of teaching qualifications in The Gambian education system (MoBSE, 2020). Institutionally, the Gambia College recently became autonomous from MoBSE and is now under the authority of the Ministry of Higher Education Research Science and Technology (MoHERST), but MoBSE has developed policies (discussed below) to ensure that the College's graduates meet its needs. Table 3.1 presents the entry requirements into the programs. Generally, the two-year Diploma and three-year Advanced Diploma courses require 2 WASSCE credits and 4 WASSCE credits, respectively, including English and Mathematics. In terms of enrolment, Figure 3.1 provides trends over time. There has been an increase in enrolment in recent years, but it may not be sufficient to avoid teacher shortages.

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<sup>8</sup> These are: Diploma in Education Primary (2 years); Advanced Diploma in Education Primary (3 years); Diploma in Early Childhood Development (2 years); Advanced Diploma in Education Secondary Specialisation in ICT (3 year); Advanced Diploma in Education Secondary Specialisation in General Science (Chemistry, Physics & Biology) and Mathematics (3 years); Advanced Diploma in Education Secondary Specialisation in History, Geography and English Language (3 years); Advanced Diploma in Education Secondary Specialisation in Agricultural Science (3 years); and Advanced Diploma in Education Secondary Specialisation in Business Management and Accountancy (3 years).



**Figure 3.1: Trends in Enrolment in Teacher Degrees at The Gambia College**



Source: Data from the School of Education of The Gambia College.

**Table 3.1: Entry Requirements for Education Courses at The Gambia College**

Program	Official entry standard
Diploma in Education primary (2 year)	2 WASSCE credits including credits in Math and English and 2 passes.
Advanced Diploma Primary (2 year)	3 WASSCE credit including English Language; CGPA of 3.00; Two years teaching experience after initial qualification
Advanced Diploma Primary (for people without a Diploma)	4 WASSCE credits including English and two subject specialisations
Diploma in Education Primary Madrassa (3 year)	Grade 12 Madrassa Certificate with excellent mention
Diploma in ECD (2-year)	2 WASSCE credits including credits in Math and English and 2 passes. A 40% pass mark for the entrance examination
Diploma in ECD (3 year)	2 WASSCE credits including credits in Math and English and 2 passes. A 40% pass mark for the entrance examination
Advanced Diploma Secondary (3 year)	4 WASSCE credits in English including English and the two- subject specialisation
Diploma in Education Islamic (2 year)	Grade 12 Madrassa Certificate with Excellent

Source: The Gambia College (2022c)

**A second institution training teachers is the University of The Gambia which grants bachelor’s and higher degrees, but with a small number of education graduates each year.** The School of Education at the University of The Gambia (UTG) began in 2001 as a Faculty of Education, then changed to a Department of Education and now is the School of Education. Both the School of Education and its teacher education programs which started in 2007 are recent. The faculty of the school is small with seven lecturers, one of whom holds a Doctorate degree, three Adjunct/Sabbatical lecturers and two Graduate Assistants. This could suggest a lack of staff to play a larger role in training future teachers and school leaders. The school offers a four-year Bachelor of Education degree which prepares graduates to teach in senior secondary schools. Admission requirement into the program is a minimum of 5 credits at the General Certificate in Education (GCE) Ordinary Level or WASSCE including English Language or 4 credits at GCE Ordinary Level or WASSCE including a credit in English Language plus HTC with a GPA of 3.2 or above (University of The Gambia, 2022). A student must earn a minimum of 120 credit hours to be awarded the Bachelor of Education degree. The total number of graduates of the School of Education from 2017-18 to 2020-21 was at 367, i.e., the school graduates on average under 100 students per year. As shown in Table 3.2, most graduates are men (while research suggests better student performance with female teachers – the issue of few female teachers is observed across many West African countries).

**Table 3.2: Graduates of the School of Education, University of The Gambia, 2017-2021**

2017-18			2018-19			2019-20			2020-21		
Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F
90	75	15	108	84	24	53	43	10	116	88	28
Grand Total: 367 Graduates											

Source: Data supplied by the School of Education, UTG, 2022.

**A third institution has played a role in pre-service teacher education for TVET – the Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI), set to become the University of Science, Engineering and Technology (USET).**

GTTI is regarded as the premier TVET institution in the country. It was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1980 to equip youth with relevant education and life skills (GTTI, 2022a, 2022b). Over the years, it has trained youth in the technical and vocational areas. However, the upcoming University (USET) will have four departments such as Civil Engineering, Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Geomatics Engineering and Mechanical Engineering (GTTI, 2022b). In essence, GTTI is not a typical teacher training institution, but it has filled a gap created by the shortage of qualified teachers in the technical and vocational subjects. A question is whether graduates acquire sufficient pedagogical training to operate in the school system, but GTTI has a Professional Development Department (PDD) that offers two-year Higher Teachers Certificate (HTC) and one-year Teachers Certificate (TC) programs run as part of its array of other professional development programs. The PDD has trained a total of 1,402 individuals from 2014 to 2022 and teachers are a small proportion of this number. Therefore, GTTI, is not a major producer of qualified teachers in The Gambia. Regarding the quality of training at the GTTI, a study that traced the 2015-2016 graduates of GTTI programs concluded that the graduates were within the “average to good rating” range. However, the study also emphasized that the quality of learning materials, the availability and technical quality of equipment, and work-based experience of teaching staff required strengthening (GTTI, 2018).

**A test for teachers who graduated from the Gambia College suggests major gaps in competencies.**

In 2021, MoBSE in collaboration with the Gambia College and the West African Examination Council (WAEC) conducted a competency test for graduates from the College. The test assessed professional knowledge and skills of teachers based on the Lower Basic School Curricula with a focus on Mathematics and Literacy. Other tasks included assessing graduates’ ability to (i) write and identify student writing mistakes; (ii) construct an effective lesson plan; (iii) add marks on class tests; and (iv) read and comment on tables and charts containing information on children’s learning achievements to monitor their progress (Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education & World Bank, 2021). To pass teachers had to master 60 to 80 percent of the curriculum content depending on the grade while also demonstrating the other competencies just mentioned. Out of the 806 candidates who completed the assessment, only three percent met the minimum requirement. About half (48 percent) did not pass but were close to meeting the requirements. Still, many performed so poorly that they would not be able to teach Grade 1-3 curriculum content.

**A related issue is a lack of accreditation for programs.**

None of the pre-service teaching institutions have their programs accredited by The Gambian National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority (NAQAA) or another external authority. MoBSE & MoHERST are aware of the need to ensure accreditation and improve the quality of the teachers being trained. Under the Quality and Relevance Program Area In the Education Sector Strategic Plan for 2016-2030, the Result Area 9 on an effective higher education quality assurance outlines the following measures: (i) Review and revise the regulatory framework for the operations of non-state providers of tertiary and higher education; (ii) Develop a framework with criteria and standards for assessing academic quality in tertiary and higher education within the country; (iii) Conduct regular external reviews of tertiary and higher education programs including TVET; (iv)

Develop a system of accreditation and recognition of evidence of prior learning to facilitate credit transfer within and across tertiary and higher education institutions. (MoBSE & MoHERST 2017).

**Other issues were identified in a 2019 situation analysis.** The analysis suggested that the split in qualifications for teaching at different levels and a lack of passthrough between levels may affect the deployment of teachers and their quality (The Gambia Education Sector Support Project, 2019). Selected findings are provided in Box 3.2. The report made recommendations, including: (1) Reform of pre-service teacher education through a new B.Ed. program jointly developed and delivered by Gambia College and the University of the Gambia in line with recognised good practice internationally and providing a pathway to a degree for teachers at each school level; (2) Develop a coherent framework and program for in-service teacher education; (3) Develop a Teacher Professional Development Index of Competencies to inform a coherent approach to design, develop, and evaluate pre-service and in-service teacher education; (4) Define career stages for the teaching profession; (5) Strengthen the competencies of mentor teachers and cluster monitors so that they can adopt an effective supportive role for student teachers and new teachers; (6) Strengthen expertise in diversity, inclusion, and special education needs in both the Gambia College and the wider education system; (7) Strengthen ICT facilities and expertise in technology enhanced learning teaching and assessment; and (9) Raise awareness, understanding and support from stakeholders and the wider public for the reform initiatives.

**Box 3.2: Selected Issues in Pre-Service Teacher Education as Identified in a 2019 Study**

The Gambia Education Sector Support Project PPA - P162890 (2019) supported a situation analysis of pre-service education at The Gambia College and University of The Gambia. Some of the findings include:

1. A degree is required to teach at the senior secondary level while at other levels a Diploma or Advanced Diploma is sufficient, leading to a perception that teaching in early childhood or at the primary level is inferior to teaching at secondary level. There is also no system to recognize and transfer credits for holders of a Diploma or Advanced Diploma or the previous Primary Teachers' Certificate (PTC) and Higher Teachers' Certificate (HTC) to continue to study for a B.Ed. at UTG. Teachers must leave their position to study the entire four-year program. It also means that there is no clear career pathway for teachers at early childhood or primary level to upgrade their qualification to a degree and continue teaching at the same school level.
2. Diploma and Advanced Diploma holders who go on to successfully complete the B.Ed. at UTG will re-enter the profession as secondary school teachers, due to the enhanced salary on offer. Thus, their expertise and new knowledge is lost to the primary education sector.
3. After entering the profession as teachers at Lower Basic Level, teachers who hold a Diploma or Advanced Diploma are often transferred to teach at the Upper Basic Level. This affects programs at the Gambia College as there is a perception that primary teachers need content knowledge suitable to teach across grade levels 1-9. This is challenging for many students, particularly in mathematics and sciences subjects, with students learning content that may not be needed for what they should teach. This also inflates the number of courses offered within the Diploma and Advanced Diploma programs and contributes to staffing issues.
4. The B.Ed. program at UTG contains eleven specializations, with material taught by departments in other Faculties. The School of Education only teaches General Education and General Pedagogy courses. Communication on how to incorporate subject specific pedagogical content knowledge into the program is lacking (students are not inducted into the pedagogical practices necessary for the subjects they will teach). The program requires students to spend the second semester of Year 3 in school on teaching practice, but this may not be enforced and holding a single teaching practice late in the program means that students do not have enough opportunity to connect theory with practical in a school setting in a progressive manner.
5. The School of Education at UTG has just six academic staff including the Dean. Therefore, there is no capacity to improve the existing program structure or develop additional degree level programs to address needs.

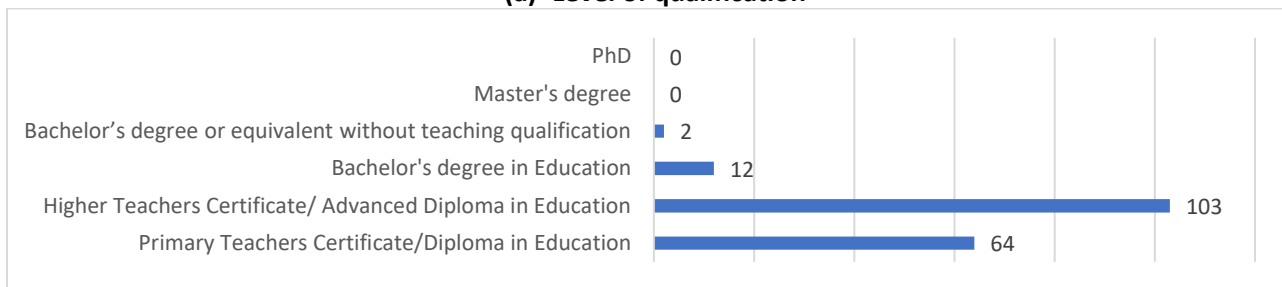
Source: The Gambia Education Sector Support Project (2019)

**Efforts are being undertaken by MoBSE to strengthen pre-service teacher education.** MoBSE (2020) has suggested to establish a Quality Assurance Framework for Graduating Students at The Gambia College. The Framework would help MoBSE set annual quota for teacher recruitment, determine the professional knowledge and skills expected of teachers, conduct pre-recruitment tests, and ensure that the Gambia College training policies and training content are aligned with the Ministry’s policy (MoBSE, 2020). In 2021, MoBSE introduced a *Teacher Competency Test Policy* to test Lower Basic School aspiring teachers before recruitment. The policy was piloted in 2020 and is anchored in the *General Orders for the Public Service of The Gambia* (2013) Clause 02105 which requires that applicants should provide evidence that they meet requirements for appointment to the post for which they are applying. The Scheme of Service Clause 14101 empowers the government to define the conditions and qualifications for appointment (MoBSE, 2021a). Hence if an applicant does not reach the minimum recruitment standards, s/he is not eligible for recruitment as public service teachers. However, the Scheme of Service allows MoBSE, when there is exigency, to recruit unqualified teachers hired at the unqualified teacher pay rate and not pensionable.

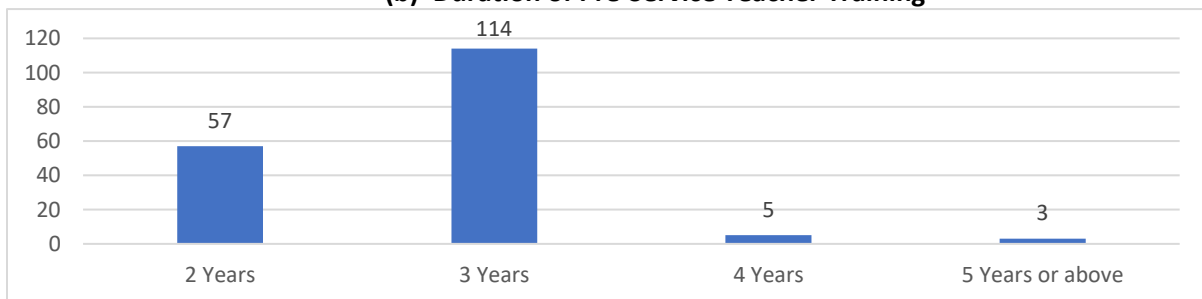
Perceptions of teachers on pre-service education

**Most teachers believe that their training was adequate, but this may reflect self-confidence rather than high quality in the training received.** Figure 3.2 provides data from the online survey of teachers. In terms of qualifications, more than half have Teachers Certificate/Advanced Diploma in Education, a third have Primary Teachers Certificate/Diploma in Education, and less than one in ten has a Bachelor’s. Regarding the duration of pre-service teacher education, most teachers benefited from two or three years of training, as expected given the degrees they have. Regarding the adequacy of the training received, most teachers opine that their training was adequate. This self-rating may indicate self-confidence rather than the reality given the deficiencies discussed earlier about which respondents may have no knowledge.

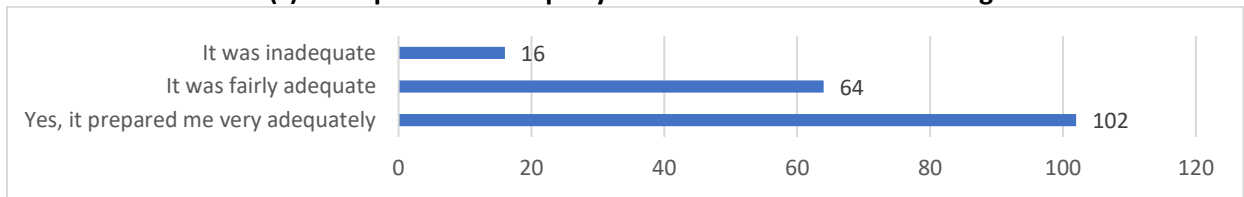
**Figure 3.2: Qualifications of Teachers, Duration of Training, and Perceptions on Training**  
**(a) Level of qualification**



**(b) Duration of Pre-Service Teacher Training**



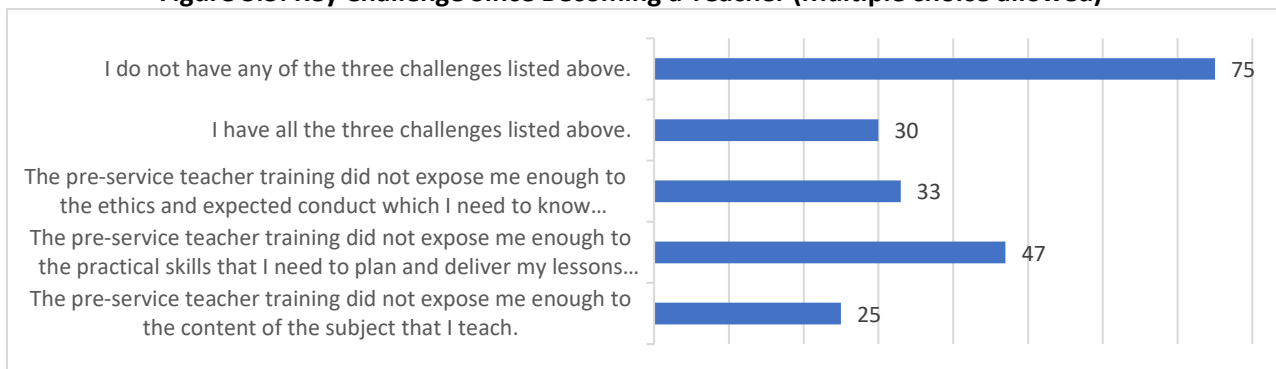
**(c) Perceptions of Adequacy of Pre-Service Teacher Training**



Source: Authors’ estimation from online survey.

**At the same time, many teachers and school leaders declare having faced challenges since becoming a teacher or school leader.** Three challenges were identified in the survey questionnaire: (1) The pre-service teacher training did not expose me enough to the content of the subject that I teach; (2) The pre-service teacher training did not expose me enough to the practical skills that I need to plan and deliver my lessons and other educational programs; (3) The pre-service teacher training did not expose me enough to the ethics and expected conduct which I need to know about as a teacher. Figure 3.3 presents perceptions regarding these and other potential challenges these challenges. A substantial share of teachers declare having no challenges are 75, but many do indicate some challenges, first for practical skills, next for their knowledge of professional ethics and codes of conduct, and lastly for subject content knowledge.

**Figure 3.3: Key Challenge Since Becoming a Teacher (Multiple choice allowed)**



Source: Authors’ estimation from online survey.

**Continuous professional development**

**CPD is the second major component of teacher education.** CPD consists of various forms of training, education, and development spanning the career of a teacher or school leader. Sometimes these are broken down into further studies to earn higher or professional certificates, diplomas, and degrees; induction and mentoring; capacity building workshops, seminars, and conferences; and self-development that comes through individualized efforts and search for knowledge. No matter how excellent the quality of pre-service education is, CPD is indispensable for the teacher and school leader to keep abreast of required teaching standards and competencies. Accordingly, this section reviews the landscape of CPD in The Gambia and the efforts and challenges faced by MoBSE to coordinate CPD.

**MoBSE understands the importance of CPD for teachers and school leaders, based on a comprehensive framework underpinned by key principles.** One of the early documents discussing CPD, *The Gambia Civil Service: Scheme of Service Teachers Cadre*, was published by The Republic of The Gambia Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education (2004). It emphasizes the need for appropriate training, knowledge, skills, and conduct for teachers. It also gives power to MoBSE to recruit only teachers that

meet its standards, and to ensure continuous professional development. More recently, the Gambia Education Sector Support Project helped develop a strategic framework for teacher education based on key priorities, namely the need to: (i) establish a continuum in teacher professional development from pre-service to CPD in line with recognized international good practice; (ii) connect pre-service education with teaching practice in schools and develop competencies needed to teach effectively the national curriculum; (iii) develop a suite of in-service teacher upgrading training modules in core curriculum subjects, integrating content and pedagogical Knowledge; (iv) create additional modules for pre- and in-service training in priority areas such as inclusive and special education, early childhood development, national languages, and technology enhanced learning teaching and assessment; (v) develop a Teacher Professional Development Index of Competencies (TPDIC) with graded competency levels for all stages of teachers' career (student teacher, Teacher, Senior Teacher and Head Teacher)<sup>9</sup>; (vi) provide capacity strengthening to further develop the knowledge, understanding and skills of teacher educators from The Gambia College and the University of The Gambia; and (vii) establish an effective team of INSET teacher trainers recruited from within the Ministry, teachers, and teacher educators and strengthen their capacity to design and lead effective INSET training courses under supervision by MoBSE.

**These priorities emphasize the importance of a framework of professional standards and competencies that can anchor both pre-service education and CPD.** The competencies required of teachers should be structured according to career stages, with acquisition of competencies leading to advancement in the career stage, rewards, appointment into positions of higher responsibility, and other professional duties and roles. The project developed a comprehensive framework for pre-service and CPD consisting of seven components: (1) Teacher Career Stages; (2) Teacher Professional Index of Competencies (TPDIC); (3) Reform of Pre-service Teacher Education; (4) Reform of In-Service Teacher Education; (5) Modes of Evaluation; (6) Professional development program for academic staff at GC and UTG; (7) Professional development program for INSET trainers. Table 3.3 presents an overview of this framework.

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<sup>9</sup> TPDIC can help provide a coherent approach to teacher education (Caena, 2011, Mahon, 2018, Pepper, 2011) among others with respect to: (i) the design and development of PRESET, Induction and INSET programs aligned to the competency framework; (ii) the evaluation of the competencies of both trainee and practicing teachers; (iii) the selection of mentor teachers and other teachers of excellence; (iv) the identification of teachers with the competencies to take positions of responsibility within schools and districts; (v) the licensing of teachers; (vi) the promotion of teachers to higher teaching positions; (vii) the development of a language for clear and coherent discussion of teaching and learning issues; and (viii) the enhanced professionalization of teaching. The development of TPDIC also provides an opportunity to elaborate expectations of teachers at each career stage and the potential to create a formalized career ladder or structure for the teaching profession aligned to the competency levels.

**Table 3.3: Continuum of Pre-Service and In-Service Teacher Education**

Teacher Career Stages	Teacher PD Index of Competencies	Reform of Pre-service Teacher Education	Reform of In-Service Teacher Education	Modes of Teacher Evaluation	PD program for academic staff at GC & UTG	PD program for INSET trainers
<b>IN-SERVICE</b>						
Head Teacher	Leadership and management competencies		Specialist Leadership & Management modules	Head Teacher Professional Portfolio		Establish core team of trainers; Work collaboratively with international technical assistance to develop train-the-trainer program and suite of INSET modules; International study visits to enhance capacity; Train district trainers to Implement INSET modules
Senior Teacher	Proficient competencies		Specialist training modules; Mentor Teacher & Cluster; Monitor training module	Senior Teacher Professional Portfolio		
Teacher	Core competencies		Core Subject; Continuing PD modules; In-school Induction	Teacher Professional Portfolio; Teacher Induction Portfolio		
<b>PRE-SERVICE</b>						
<b>Student Teacher</b>	Readiness to teach competencies	B.Ed. degree with specialist pathways (jointly developed and delivered by GC and UTG); Advanced Diploma		Student Teacher Practicum; Portfolio; Program Assessment Externally Administered Comprehensive Examination (EACE) in subject content knowledge	Teacher Education Competency Framework Accredited Diploma / Short course in Teacher Education Pedagogy Enhance academic staff capacity to develop specialist knowledge and skills in areas of national need Work collaboratively with international subject specialists to develop new B.Ed. program with specialist pathways International Study Visits to enhance capacity	

Source: The Gambia Education Sector Support Project PPA - P162890 (2019).

**MoBSE has made progress in implementing the framework, but additional steps are needed in some areas.** is faithfully implementing this framework, though not completely yet. For instance, it came up with the Competency Test Policy for Teacher Recruitment; it published the *School Management Manual for Lower Basic, Basic Cycle and Upper Basic Schools Revised Version 3* (MoBSE, 2020b); it published an *Induction Handbook and Guidelines for Mentor Teachers and Newly Qualified Teachers in The Gambia* (MoBSE 2022c); in 2021 it commenced the one-year full time training of Head Teachers of the Basic Education in School Management and Leadership; and many other programs and activities. The key provisions of the School Management Manual have been discussed earlier in this report under the Chapter on Professional Standards and Competencies. The induction policy includes placing newly qualified teachers beginning from the 2022-2023 session on one-year full time induction and mentoring which have the following components: Meetings between Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) and Mentor Teacher; Orientation Checklist; Career Entry Profile; Induction Portfolio; Personal Induction Plan; Lesson observations; Assessment meetings; Co-planning and co-teaching. The efforts in training the Head Teachers are also significant and discussed separately in the next sub-section. However, MoBSE is yet to develop a Framework of Professional Standards and Competencies for Teachers and School Leaders in line with international best practices which is something overarching to drive the entire reform of the pre-service and CPD. The Gambia is also yet to establish a teaching regulatory that should drive these professional reforms as happening currently across Africa and the world.

**The Gambia has created an innovative training of Head Teachers in school management and leadership.**

From 2021, MoBSE began training Head Teachers of basic schools in school management and leadership. The training is provided by The Gambian Management Development Institute (MDI) as a two-semester full time program during which Head Teachers are relieved of their duties. The MDI Handbook on School Management and Administration for Lower Basic, Basic Circle and Upper Basic School Managers (MDI, 2022a) lists 16 modules<sup>10</sup>. On the first cohort, MDI (2022b) documents that 83 Head Teachers, Deputy Heads, and Senior Teachers participated across the 6 regions from August 2021 to April 2022. On concern expressed by MDI is limited financial assistance from MoBSE to support personnel salaries and infrastructure (MDI is self-financed hence must raise resources through the programs it runs). MDI also does not have a sufficient fleet of vehicles to dedicate to school practicum. The MDI report recommended that: (1) laptops be given to participants to facilitate acquisition of IT skills; (2) the program be upgraded to B.Ed. and M.Ed. respectively when MDI is elevated to a degree awarding institute in the future; (3) MDI and MoBSE work together towards establishing a Faculty of Education with a focus on Management and Leadership; (4) the Post Retirement Management Scheme, already developed by MDI be introduced to all ministerial staff, particularly those within five years to retirement; (5) MoBSE to provide at least one vehicle to facilitate practicum (support visits) and impact assessment exercises. MDI's aim is to provide a state-of-art one-year Postgraduate Program in School Management and Leadership for school leaders.

**A recent review of in-service training suggests that CPD should be tailored, practical, focused, and ongoing.** The review discusses trainings over the last decade (Kalisz and Drammeh, 2021). As shown in

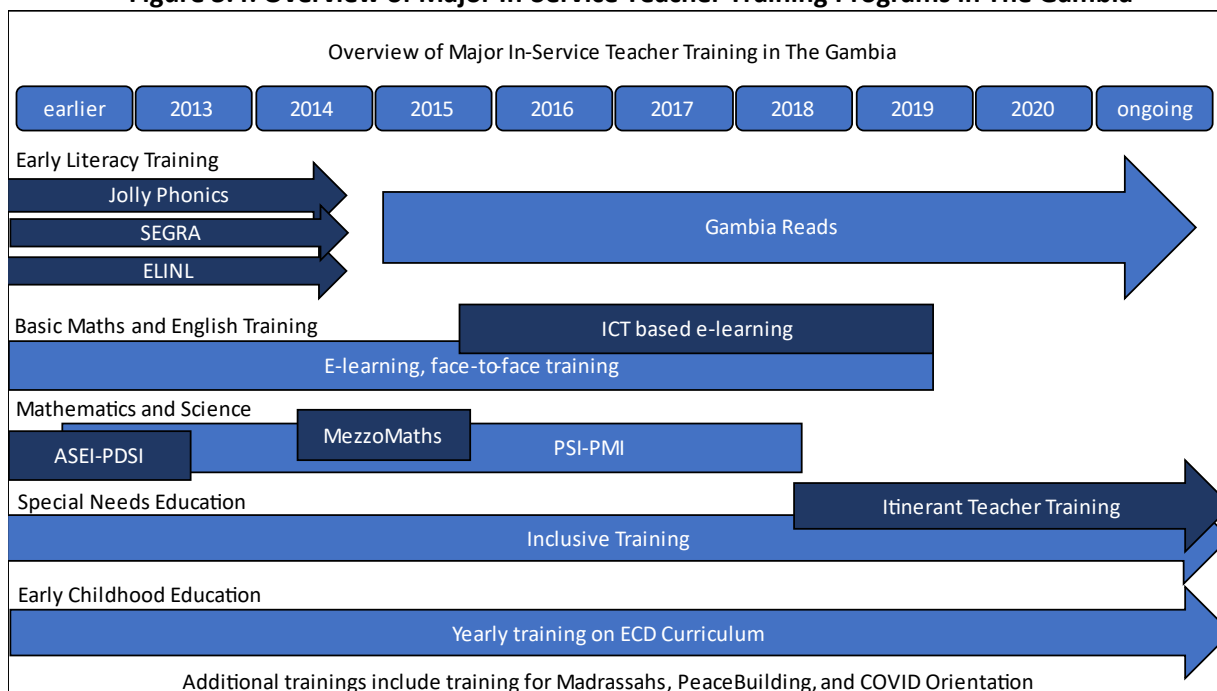
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<sup>10</sup> The modules are: Curriculum Management and Implementation; Human Resource Management; Educational Technology and ICT; Gender Issues in Education; Continuous Professional Development for School Managers; Leadership and Professional Ethics; Financial Management; Governance of Schools; Inclusive Education; Research Methods; Health and Safety in School Management; Guidance and Counselling; Communications Strategy in Education Planning; Principles and Practice of School Management; Records Management, Report Writing and Monitoring of School Effectiveness; Project Management.



Figure 3.4, trainings have covered early literacy (Jolly phonics, SEGRA, and ELINL); basic mathematics and English language; mathematics and science; special needs education; and early childhood education, among others. There have also been trainings for Madrassahs, peace building, and Covid-19. Citing World Bank (2021), the report notes that trainings should be tailored, practical, focused, and ongoing, which may not yet be sufficiently the case. For example, the report notes that it is not clear how much of in-service training takes a practical rather than theoretical approach. In addition, participants and trainers in promising programs reviewed asked for greater frequency of training as well as training over a longer duration. Research suggests that programs of longer duration that support teachers in their classroom practice are most effective. Finally, the report emphasizes the need to align pre-service, CPD, and school curriculum with a strong collaboration between Gambia College, INSET, and other MoBSE directorates.

**Figure 3.4: Overview of Major In-Service Teacher Training Programs in The Gambia**

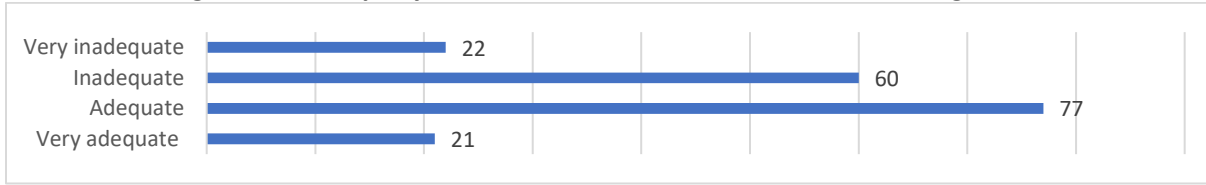


Source: Kalisz and Drammeh (2021).

### Perceptions of teachers and school leaders on CPD

**Teachers responded to questions on the adequacy of CPD in the online survey.** Perhaps surprisingly, as shown in Figure 3.5, more than half of teachers described it as adequate or very adequate (as for pre-service training, this does not however imply that CPD is indeed adequate). Table 3.4 shows the number of times teachers and school leaders attended a training, workshop, or conference in the last three years and who sponsored the event. Many teachers attended at least one training per sponsor, which is encouraging although not high number, with the government and the teachers themselves being the training sponsors slightly more than the union. Overall, while many teachers and leaders may feel that CPD is adequate, by international best practice it is likely not.

**Figure 3.5: Adequacy of Amount of CPD Received Since Becoming a Teacher**



Source: Authors' estimation from online survey.

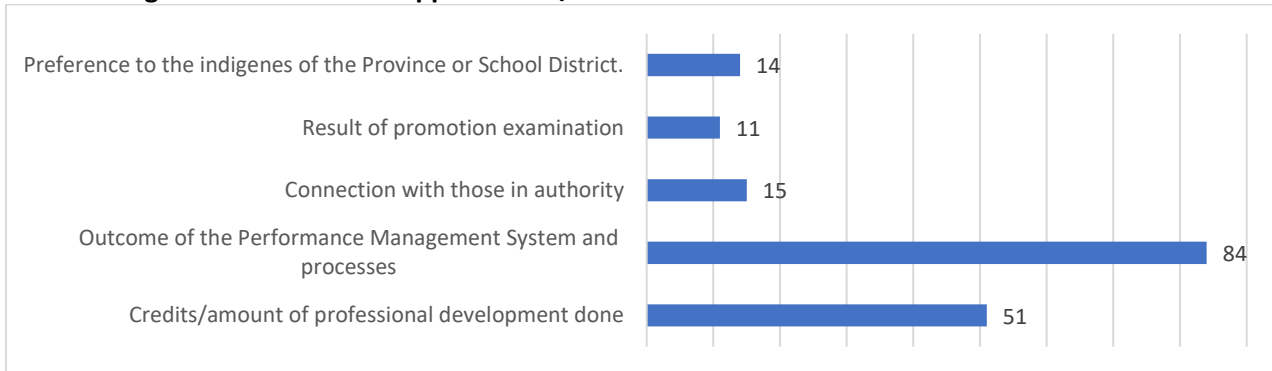
**Table 3.4: Number of Trainings Attended by Teachers in the Last Three Years by Sponsor**

Trainings	Government	Union	Self
One	100	83	100
2	28	35	24
3	19	13	7
4	7	7	3
5 or more	16	18	4
<b>All</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>134</b>

Source: Authors' estimation from online survey.

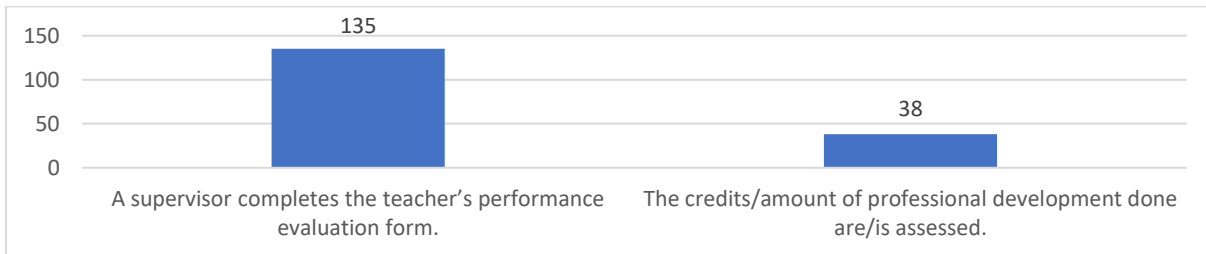
**While CPD should counts towards promotion, the perception of teachers is that the assessment of their work by their supervisor matters more.** On the criteria for appointment and promotion (Figures 3.6 and 3.7), many teachers opine that the amount of CPD is a criterium for promotion besides their years of experience. However, most teachers perceive that their supervisor's comments on their evaluation form counts more for promotion than the amount of CPD earned. It is worth noting that MoBSE has not yet developed a system of assignment of credit for the CPD accomplishment of the teachers.

**Figure 3.6: Criteria for Appointment/Promotion of Teachers Besides Year of Service**



Source: Authors' estimation from online survey.

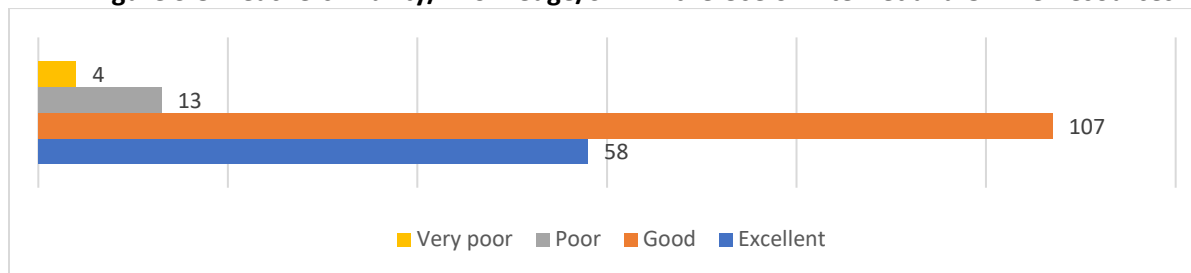
**Figure 3.7: What Counts Most in Performance Evaluation as Carried Out?**



Source: Authors' estimation from online survey.

**The ability to access and use the internet is important for some forms of CPD, with most teachers rating that ability as good or excellent, yet most do not own a computer.** As shown in Figure 3.8, most teachers rate their capacity to access and use the internet as good or excellent, with only a small minority rating that capacity as poor or very poor. Table 3.5 also shows that relatively few teachers have heard about professional development portfolios. While many own a smart phone, few own a laptop. They also do not typically have access to an official computer, laptop, or tablet. In practice, most teachers may not take full advantage of digital resources for teaching and learning even though they have significant knowledge and skills in the use of computers and the internet.

**Figure 3.8: Teachers’ Ability/Knowledge/Skill in the Use of Internet and Online Resources**



Source: Authors’ estimation from online survey.

**Table 3.5: Knowledge of CPD Portfolio, Ownership of Computer/Laptop/Handset, and Internet Access**

	Yes	No	Total
Have you ever heard the term “professional development portfolio”?	55	124	<b>179</b>
Do you have access to an official computer, laptop or tablet?	28	154	<b>182</b>
Do you have access to official internet connection/data?	25	157	<b>182</b>
Do you own a personal computer, laptop or tablet?	50	132	<b>182</b>
Do you own a smart phone?	179	2	<b>181</b>

Source: Authors’ estimation from online surveys.

**Lack of good internet connectivity in some areas may also affect the ability of teachers and school leaders to use digital resources.** Information from the online surveys is provided in Table 3.6 on connectivity (note that the data are provided by respondents who managed to go online to answer the survey, hence the situation for some teachers and school leaders may be worse). Access to mobile phone networks is typically good, but access to reliable internet connections is weaker (and some schools do not have electricity). This may be part of the explanation why teachers find personal computers, laptops, or tablets more useful than official ones that may need to be used only in schools.

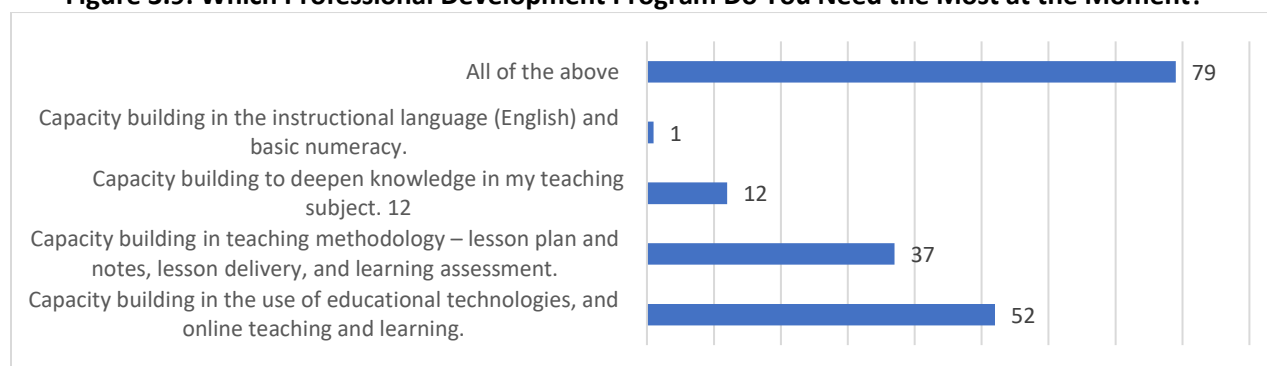
**In terms of priorities for CPD, training in the use of educational technologies and teaching and learning online, and training for lesson plans and notes, lesson delivery, and learning assessment come first.** Figure 3.9 presents the views of teachers regarding CPD opportunities they need most. Training in the use of educational technologies and teaching and learning online is mentioned most often, followed by training for lesson plans and notes, lesson delivery, and learning assessment. But many teachers state that they need training in all the areas mentioned in the survey, including capacity building to deepen knowledge in a teaching subject/area of specialization and capacity building in the instructional language (English) and in basic numeracy. Lastly, teachers were also asked about the supply of teaching resources in their school (Figure 3.10), which are clearly insufficient.

**Table 3.6: Online Connectivity for Teachers**

Questions & Responses	Teachers
<b>Quality of mobile phone network in your location</b>	
Good	120
Poor	61
Non-existent	1
Total	182
<b>Quality of internet connection in your location</b>	
Good	99
Poor	80
Non-Existent	3
Total	182
<b>Most beneficial to access online teaching content/preparing lessons</b>	
Official computer/laptop/tablet	13
Personal computer/laptop/tablet.	156
Total	169

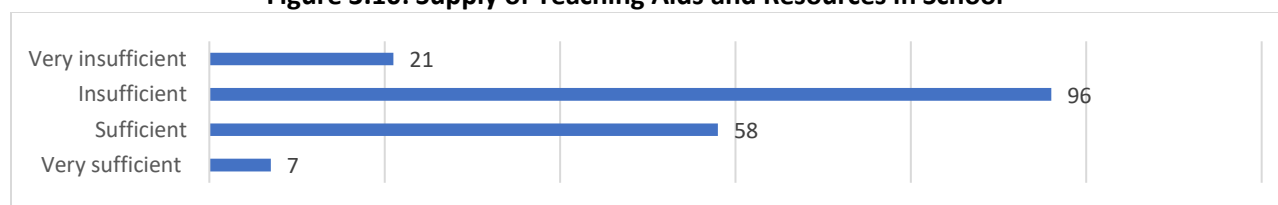
Source: Authors' estimation from online survey.

**Figure 3.9: Which Professional Development Program Do You Need the Most at the Moment?**



Source: Authors' estimation from online survey.

**Figure 3.10: Supply of Teaching Aids and Resources in School**



Source: Authors' estimation from online survey.

### Summing Up

**On teacher education, for both pre-service and in-service, multiple issues undermine its quality.** Teacher education is fundamental to improve teaching and learning, especially in a context where a large share of teachers do not have the minimum qualifications for teaching. The following issues have been identified and require responses: (i) The regulatory and quality assurance frameworks for pre-service teacher education is weak (e.g., lack of accreditation); (ii) two-year degrees are a dominant qualification in the school system, which is not enough, but some teachers do not even have that minimum– they require a

path to acquire a degree and minimum qualifications; (iii) even if teachers and school leaders opine that they had adequate pre-service education, retraining is likely needed in many areas; and (iv) the academic staff and enrolment capacity of the three teacher education institutions is limited and insufficient to meet the demand for teachers. Similar issues affect teacher continuous professional development (CPD). There is a “Comprehensive Pre-Service and In-Service Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan” but it is not yet operationalized and could be better aligned with the international frameworks on standards and competencies. Government programs (and budgets) are insufficient to address CPD concerns, with only a minority of teachers being trained each year. CPD programs should have a positive impact on the professional capacities of teachers and leaders yet may not count so much towards promotion and advancement along the career path. CPD is being provided by the government, the teacher union, and individuals themselves, but coordination may be lacking. A positive development is a new one-year full-time training from MDI in school management and leadership provide to aspiring leaders. Teachers need more supply of teaching and learning resources, while leaders need more staffing and resources. As to digital competencies, most teachers and school leaders feel that they have good or excellent knowledge and skills for using computers, the internet, and online resources but there are few official provisions for access to a computer, laptop, tablet, or the internet. In terms of priority needs for CPD, teachers emphasize capacity building in teaching methodologies and the use of educational technologies. Many of these topics and issues have been discussed in the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016-2030.

## CHAPTER 4: WORKING CONDITIONS

### Introduction

**Teacher motivation is key to teacher performance.** The literature suggests – not surprisingly, that teacher motivation matters for teacher effort, which in turn can lead to gains in learning for students. As noted in UNESCO IICBA (2017), there are multiple layers and approaches to understanding of what drives teacher motivation, but it clearly has an impact on teachers’ behaviors and their teaching practice. As teachers have varying degrees of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, quick generalizations are risky, but a variety of factors affect motivation. This includes teacher salaries, but also their broader working conditions, and whether they believe that they have a realistic and rewarding career path ahead of them. This chapter considers teachers’ conditions of employment, whether teacher awards exist, and the teachers’ perceptions on some of their working conditions in The Gambia.

### Public service conditions of employment

**Teachers in public basic and senior secondary education are government employees bound by the civil service rules and conditions of service.** Their terms and conditions of employment are regulated by the *Public Service Act* (Republic of The Gambia, 1991) and policies of the Republic of The Gambia Personnel Management Office such as the *Personnel Procedures Manual* (2009), *The Code of Conduct for the Civil Service of The Gambia* (2013a), *Public Service Commission Regulations* (2013b), *The General Orders for the Public Service of The Gambia* (2013c), and regulations put in place by MoBSE, for instance, *The Gambia Civil Service: Scheme of Service Teachers Cadre* (The Republic of The Gambia Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education, 2004). The role of these policies in regulating the teaching profession has earlier been discussed under Chapter 2 on professional standards and competencies.

**The *Public Service Act* give the President substantial authority on the public service, including for recruitment and conditions of service.** The power is then devolved to the Personnel Management Office and the relevant Ministries. The Policies and Orders issued by the Personnel Management Office defines the rights and obligations of the employees as well as government. For instance, the Personnel Management Procedures ensure “*the standardization of human resource policies and procedures*” in order to accomplish the following: (i) providing a uniform system of human resource administration throughout the civil service; (ii) assisting managers in the development of sound management practices and procedures, and making effective and consistent use of human resources policies throughout the civil service; (iii) promoting effective communication among managers, supervisors and employees; and (iv) ensuring, protecting, and clarifying the rights and responsibilities of both the employer and employees (Republic of The Gambia Personnel Management Office, 2009). Also relevant is the code of conduct<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> The Code of Conduct for the Civil Service of The Gambia is the resource book on disciplinary procedures as well as the “dos” and “don’ts” of the service. The Code also enunciated seven fundamental ethical values and standards for all public servants. These are: (i) To demonstrate loyalty to the Government of the day and to the country; (ii) To place the public interest before private interest and to ensure that private advantage does not conflict with public duty; (iii) To avoid the use of public position for personal advantage; (iv) To serve with efficiency and industry and to perform tasks honestly and conscientiously; (vi) To avoid bringing outside pressures or personal relationships in pursuit of personal claims; (vii) To refrain from accepting gifts, presents and other favors that will compromise one’s integrity and objectivity’ (viii) To avoid divulging confidential information available to one in the course of the execution of his/her official duties (Republic of The Gambia Personnel Management Office, 2013a).

**The Public Service Commission Regulations empowers the Public Service Commission to handle all appointments, promotions, transfers, terminations, and related matters in the service.** *The General Orders* provides details for appointments, promotions, resignations, and retirement; general conduct and discipline, leave and passages, transport and travelling entitlements, and scholarships and training. Other provisions deal with matters such as attachments and official visits, medical and dental treatment, and so forth. These rules pertain to all public servants. However, *The Gambia Civil Service: Scheme of Service Teachers Cadre* makes additional provisions that are specific to teachers<sup>12</sup>. The Scheme states that its objectives are the promotion of professionalism in teaching; the implementation of educational standards; the attraction of quality candidates to the teaching service; the promotion of uniform standards and quality of work across the teachers' cadre; and the prescription of realistic qualifications (academic, training and promotion criteria) to maintain professional standards. The Scheme categorizes schools (see Table 4.1) for determining the cadre and salary grade levels in the schools.

**Table 4.1: Three Categories of the Lower Basic/Basic Cycle Schools**

Category	No. of Streams	No. of Classes	Approximate Enrolment
Class A	1 or 2	6 to 12	240 to 480
Class B	3 or 4	18 or 24	720 to 960
Class C	5 and 6	30 to 40	1200 to 2500

Source: The Republic of The Gambia Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education (2004).

**The cadre remains roughly the same for all teachers but with slight differences in salary grade depending on the category or the school they are with.** By way of illustration, the cadre for the Lower Basic School teachers is depicted in Table 4.2 (the CPD framework has adopted this cadre as the teacher career path/stage). On career progression, the Scheme clearly states that promotion will depend on (1) the existence of a vacancy in the higher grade; and (2) the decision of the Public Service Commission regarding the suitability of an officer for promotion. While this provides a career path, it does not conform to the guidance provided by the African Union Commission (2019a) Framework on teacher careers.

**Table 4.2: The Teachers' Cadre in a Lower Basic School (Class A)**

Title	Grade
Headmaster	8
Deputy Headmaster	7 (upper half of scale)
Senior Master	7 (Lower half of scale)
Qualified Teacher	6
Unqualified Teacher	1

Source: The Republic of The Gambia Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education (2004).

<sup>12</sup> The following clarifies the scope: "The Scheme of Service applies to the Professional Qualified and Unqualified Teachers who work in the Government Lower Basic, Basic Cycle and Senior Secondary Schools. However, in cases where teachers working in Grant Aided schools decided to transfer their services to Government, the scheme would be used to decide on their placement. The three sub-cadres (Lower Basic, Basic Cycle and upper Basic Teachers) are differentiated below. However, the differentiation, though minimal, is based on the category of the schools. Because of the reduction in the number of grade levels in the Civil Service from 21 to 12 levels, Lower Basic, Basic cycle and Upper Basic teachers are re-classified for the purpose of this Scheme of Services" (The Republic of The Gambia Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education, 2004).

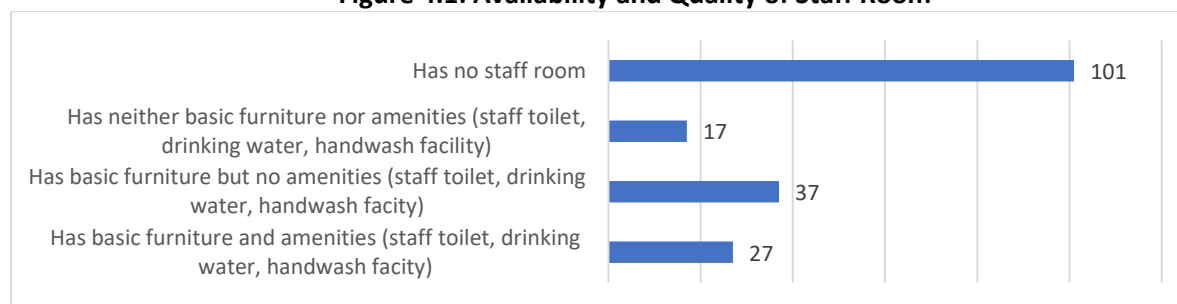
## Teacher awards

While many Governments and regional entities have introduced Best Teacher Awards to recognize outstanding teachers, this has not yet been done in The Gambia. Teacher awards can raise the appreciation of teachers in society while demonstrating that hard work pays. In 2019, the African Union Commission instituted the Continental Best Teacher Award. Three teachers won the award in 2019, six in 2020, and nine in 2021. The winners received cash gifts and were celebrated. For some of the winners, their countries promoted them and added to their gifts. In 2022, the Africa Federation of Teaching Regulatory Authorities also formally showcased them to the international audience during its annual Continental Conference. The impact of such recognition is hard to measure, but it may boost confidence in the value of the teaching profession and inspire teachers. In The Gambia however, no Best Teacher Awards have been implemented yet (by contrast, Best Teacher Awards have become Presidential Awards in neighboring Anglophone West African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, and Sierra Leone).

## Perceptions of teachers and school leaders

Teachers were asked questions in the online survey on a range of factors that may affect working conditions as well as their overall job satisfaction and perception of their status. Figure 4.1 provides data on whether the staff rooms used by teachers have basic amenities. Most teachers note that there are no staff rooms in their school, and when there is a staff room, it may not have basic amenities. This said, most teachers still rate their physical working environment are good or excellent (Table 4.3). In addition, working relationships in schools between teachers and their supervisors also appear to be good.

**Figure 4.1: Availability and Quality of Staff Room**



Source: Authors' estimation from online survey.

**Table 4.3: Physical Working Conditions and Relationships with Supervisors**

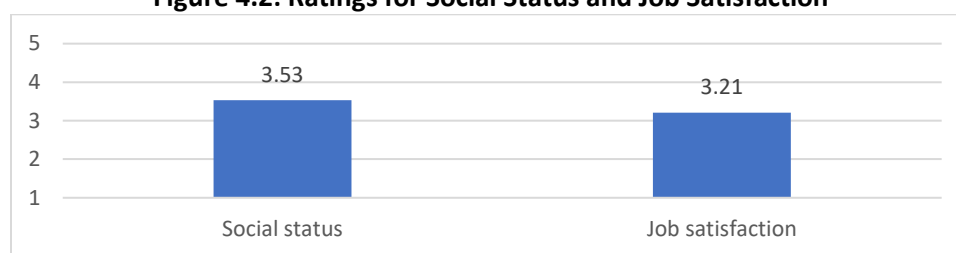
	Teachers
<b>Physical working conditions at school?</b>	
Excellent	34
Good	100
Poor	24
Very poor	23
Total	181
<b>Relationships with superiors/supervisor(s)?</b>	
Excellent (Cordial and inspiring)	80
Good (Cordial)	94
Poor (Not cordial)	6
Very poor (a lot of conflict)	1
Total	181

Source: Authors' estimation from online survey.



**This does not imply however that teachers have high levels of job satisfaction or perceive that their profession has a high social status.** In many countries tend not to be highly satisfied with their job. This is also the case in The Gambia. As shown in Figure 4.2, on a scale from 1 to 5, teachers rate their social status at an average value of 3.5 and their job satisfaction at an average value of 3.2. The relatively low levels of job satisfaction may be due in part to the level of salaries, but possibly also to issues with the timing of payment of those salaries. Table 4.4 suggests that while most teachers receive their salaries in time, there are a few exceptions. Similarly, most teachers indicate that they are paid their salary in full, this is not always the case. On whether there are teacher awards or recognition programs at the school level, only a third of teachers answer in the affirmative, and the same is true for potential awards at the national level (although as mentioned earlier, The Gambia does not have such awards as is the case for a few other West African anglophone countries). Asked how they accessed their monthly salary, teachers mentioned their Teachers’ Credit Union first, and commercial banks next.

**Figure 4.2: Ratings for Social Status and Job Satisfaction**



Source: Authors’ estimation from online survey.

**Table 4.4: Payment of Salary and Other Issues**

Questions	Teachers		
	Yes	No	Total
Are you paid your salary monthly when due?	174	8	182
Are you always paid your salary in full or sometimes is it in part?	157	25	182
Is there a teacher award or other programs to recognise teacher performance organised at your school’s level?	62	119	181
Is there a teacher award or other programs to recognise teacher performance at the national level? Is there an award or other ceremonies to recognise high-performing head teachers?	64	115	179

Source: Authors’ estimation from online survey.

### Summing up

**On working conditions for teachers and school leaders, improvements should also be considered.**

Teachers in public basic and senior secondary education are government employees bound by the civil service rules and conditions of service. Policies and Orders issued by the Personnel Management Office define the rights and obligations of employees as well as government. The *Public Service Commission Regulations* empowers the Public Service Commission to handle all appointments, promotions, transfers, terminations, and related matters in the service. However, *The Gambia Civil Service: Scheme of Service Teachers Cadre* makes additional provisions that are specific to teachers. Many of the recommendations related to strengthening the career path for teachers are relevant for their working conditions. In addition, while many Governments and regional entities have introduced Best Teacher Awards to recognize outstanding teachers, this has not yet been done in The Gambia. In many countries teachers tend not to be highly satisfied with their job. This is also the case in The Gambia. Teachers were asked questions in

the online survey on a range of factors that may affect working conditions as well as their overall job satisfaction and perception of their status. On a scale from 1 to 5, teachers rate their social status at an average value of 3.5 and their job satisfaction at an average value of 3.2. The relatively low levels of job satisfaction may be due in part to the level of salaries, but possibly also to issues with the timing of payment of those salaries. Half of the teachers that responded to the survey stated that their school did not have staff rooms, and when they are available, they may lack amenities. On the other hand, almost all teachers described the relationships with their supervisors as good or excellent, a positive sign.

## CHAPTER 5: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE FOR WEST AFRICA

### Introduction

**Progress made by The Gambia towards establishing professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders can be compared to the situation in other West African countries.** A comparative analysis is being conducted across ECOWAS countries to assess their progress towards (1) adopting a National Framework of Teaching Standards and Competencies; (2) improving teacher education; and (3) ensuring good working conditions for teachers. As noted in Box 5.1, ECOWAS has not produced guidance on professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders, hence the framework used for analysis remains that of the African Union. The objective of the regional analysis is to (i) investigate the familiarity of countries with the UNESCO and Education International (2019) and African Union Commission (2019) frameworks on teaching standards and competencies; (ii) assess the stage of development and implementation of national frameworks of teaching standards and competencies; (iii) appraise the contents (domains, sub-domains, career path, etc.) of national frameworks; (iv) explore issues for teacher education; and (v) consider teachers' working conditions.

#### **Box 5.1: Frameworks and Data Collection at ECOWAS**

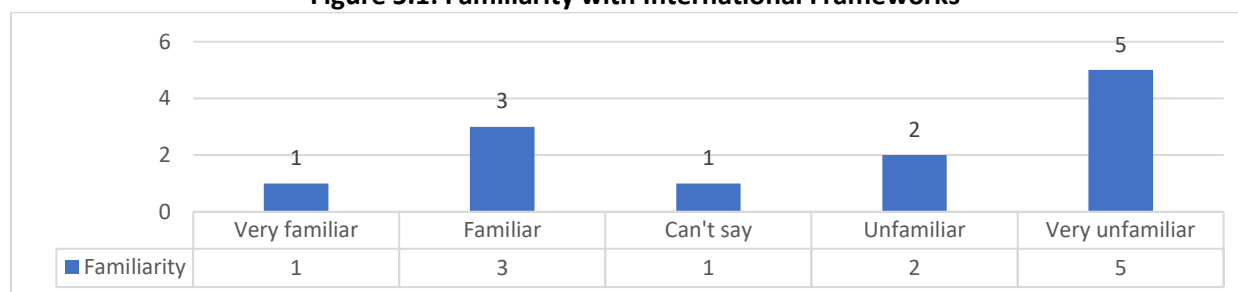
An interview was held with the Head of the Education Division of the Department of Education, Science and Culture of the ECOWAS Commission, Abuja. The Division does not have data on the frameworks for teaching standards and their implementation in member states and ECOWAS has not issued any framework on that topic. ECOWAS does however to harmonize frameworks and practices in several areas. Key documents include ECOWAS (2003), *Protocol on Education and Training, A/P3/1/03*; ECOWAS (2010), *Report of a Feasibility Study on the Equivalence of Certificates*; ECOWAS (2010), *Benchmarks for the Recognition and Equivalence of Certificates in the ECOWAS Region*; ECOWAS (2017), *A Framework for the Harmonization of Basic Education in the ECOWAS*; and ECOWAS (2017), *Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Strategy for Skills Improvement and Employability (ETSSIE -2017-2026)*. At the heart of these frameworks is a desire to see that West African countries harmonize their education systems as also called for by UNESCO and Education International (2019) and African Union Commission (2019) in the areas of the regulation of teaching standards and the professionalization of teaching.

**Results presented in this chapter should be considered as illustrative only and preliminary.** The regional analysis is based on key informant interviews and an online survey to be filled by senior officials of Ministries of Education and Teacher Service Commissions (when they exist). The questionnaire used for the regional analysis is provided in Annex 5. At the time of writing, officials from eight of 15 ECOWAS countries had responded to the online questionnaire. In four countries including Sierra Leone, responses were obtained from both the Ministry of Education and the Teacher Service Commission or its equivalent, yielding 12 observations (eight countries with two observations for four countries). The analysis is typically conducted for all 12 observations in this chapter, even though this gives a higher weight to countries with two observations. For some Tables, the analysis is however conducted at the country level. While illustrative, results shared in this chapter should be considered as preliminary. They may change as the West Africa study is being finalized and senior officials from more countries respond to the online survey.

## Professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders

**Officials in The Gambia are less familiar with the UNESCO/Education International and African Union frameworks on professional standards and competencies than other countries.** Officials were asked about their level of familiarity with the UNESCO/Education International and African Union Commission (AUC) frameworks. As shown in Figure 5.1, most officials were not familiar with these frameworks, but Sierra Leone and Nigeria were exceptions as officials from the Ministries and the Teacher Service Commissions stated that they were either familiar or very familiar with the frameworks<sup>13</sup>. Officials were also asked whether they had read key documents listed in Table 5.1. Again, while most officials had not read those documents, officials from Sierra Leone and Nigeria had read quite a few of them.

**Figure 5.1: Familiarity with International Frameworks**



Source: Authors' estimation with West Africa online survey (survey still on going – preliminary results).

**Table 5.1: Number of Respondents According to Whether They Read the Documents Listed**

Framework	Yes	No
UNESCO & EI (2019) - Framework of Professional Standards and Competencies	4	8
AUC (2019) - Framework of Professional Standards and Competencies	3	9
AUC (2019) - Continental Teacher Qualification Framework	5	7
AUC (2019) - Continental Guidelines on the Teaching Profession	2	10
AUC (2017) - Study on Teacher Training, Working, and Living Conditions in Member States	3	9
UNESCO IICBA (2017) - Teacher Support and Motivation Framework for Africa: Emerging Patterns	3	9

Source: Authors' estimation with West Africa online survey (survey still on going – preliminary results).

**Countries are at different stages of the development of standards for teachers and school leaders.** When asked if they believed that teaching is a profession, all officials responded in the affirmative. Similarly, when asked if their country had laws and policies to empower the professionalization of teaching, all but one official again responded in the affirmative. At the same time, countries are at different stages of the development of standards for teachers and school leaders. This is shown in Table 5.2. For teachers, five countries have completed their standards, while for school leaders, three countries have, but The Gambia is at a lower stage of these processes. In terms of dissemination of the standards, countries that have completed their standards typically have posted them on the web, but they have not distributed the

<sup>13</sup> Outside of Nigeria and Sierra Leone, knowledge of the international frameworks and related documents was limited. For instance, the interviewee from Burkina Faso responded that “*due to the poor dissemination of the provisions at the national level, the international frameworks are unknown in the country.*” The interviewee from Benin stated: “*I don’t know the mentioned documents, here in Benin we just have some rules created by the government in order to regulate the sector.*” The interviewee from Côte d’Ivoire stated that he “*only had contact and/or knowledge of the existence of the international frameworks in the course of the invitation to participate in the interview.*” Similar views were expressed by the interviewee from Liberia.

standards to schools, or to individual teachers and school leaders. Nigeria is the exception as officials have distributed copies to schools and teachers/school leaders<sup>14</sup>. That country is a bit of an outlier in that the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) issued in 2022 its globally renowned ISO Certification to the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria<sup>15</sup>.

**Table 5.2: Stage of Development of Professional Standards by Country**

Stage of development	Not started	Preliminary (first draft)	Advanced (final draft)	Completed (published)
Professional standards for teachers	-	The Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire	Benin	Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Liberia
Professional standards for school leaders	Benin, Senegal	Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire	-	Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Liberia

Source: Authors' estimation with West Africa online survey (survey still on going – preliminary results).

Note: No response for teaching standards was provided by Senegal.

**While standards have been (or are being) developed for teachers and school leaders, they do not always align with recommendations from international frameworks.** The African Union Commission framework of standards and competencies has five domains for teachers, and seven domains for school leaders. As shown in Figure 5.2, most respondents (9 out of 12) note that their country has included the domains “Professional knowledge and understanding” and “Professional skills and practices” in their standards for teachers. But only half of the respondents indicate alignment with respect to “Professional values” and “Professional leadership”, and few (2 out of 12) have included “Partnerships” (many respondents also indicate that their standards include domains not listed in the African Union framework). On school leadership, there is good alignment for two domains – “Leading professional knowledge, practice and conduct” and “Managing resources of the school,” and less alignment in other areas. For both teachers and school leaders, Nigeria and Sierra Leone are the two countries in alignment with the African Union<sup>16</sup>.

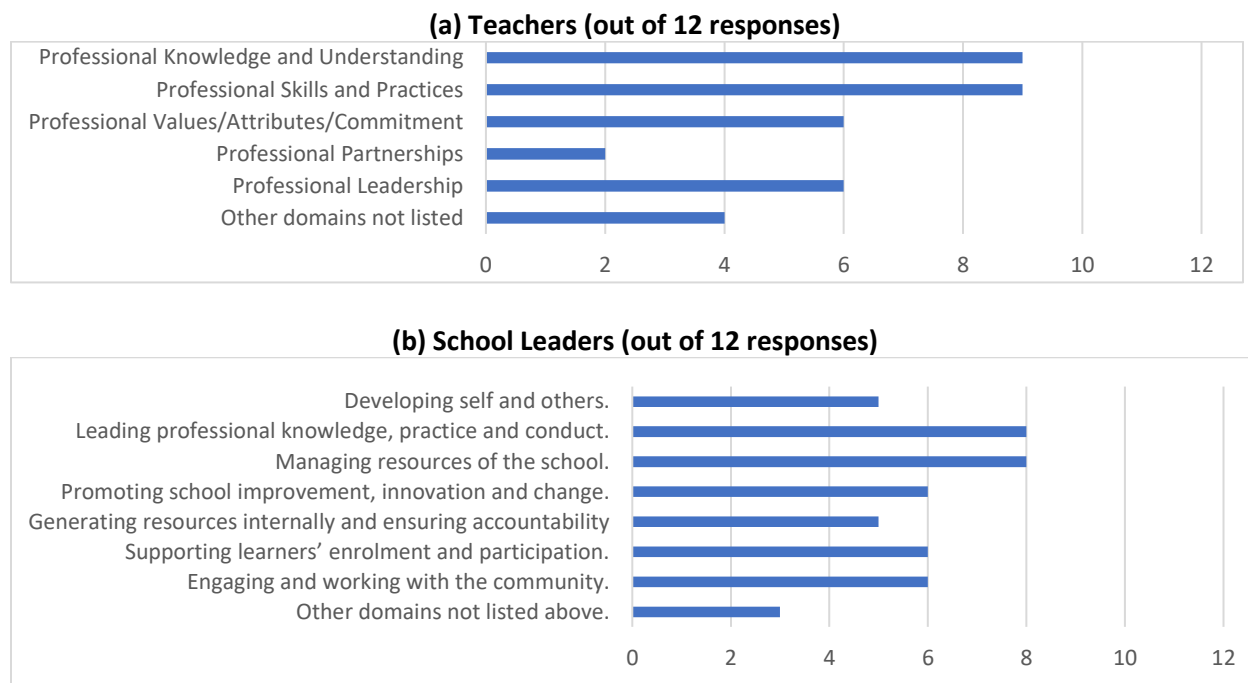
<sup>14</sup> Nigeria is an exception for the use and dissemination of frameworks aligned with the African Union Frameworks. In other countries, locally drawn professional standards are used to regulate the teaching profession. The interviewee from Côte d'Ivoire asserted that “*the National professional standards are also used for qualification, for employment of new staff, as well as for the appointment of school leaders...*”. The interviewee from Burkina Faso stated that “*in Burkina Faso, there are norms, which candidates for teaching in a primary and secondary levels must respect in order to be employed by the Ministry.*” The representative of Benin indicated that the country has “*some rules approved and adopted by the Ministry to recruit teachers into public sector as a teacher*”. Liberia has adopted a National Teacher Training Management Policy and National Teacher Professional Performance Standards.

<sup>15</sup> The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria stands out as the first teaching regulatory authority in Africa to be certified by the ISO with reference to the regulation of teaching. This explains also why Nigerian teachers licensed by the Council are receiving prompt registration and licensing abroad to teach overseas.

<sup>16</sup> On the domains for standards and competencies, interviewees from Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire stated that “*there is no clarified content*”, there are “*only the basic requirements to become a teacher, such as vocational and professional training - initial and in some cases continuing training*”. The recruitment to teach simply depends on the performance at teacher training institutions. The interviewee from Benin stated that standards and competencies are governed by National Council norms and policies of Ministry of education to regulate the teaching profession. The interviewee from Liberia pointed to again to the “*National Teacher Training Management Policy*” published in 2022 and the “*National Teacher Professional Performance Standards for Liberia*” being developed.

Of note, except for Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Burkina Faso, the other countries including The Gambia do not participate actively in African and global federations of teaching agencies, reducing their exposure to good practices shared by these agencies.

**Figure 5.2: Alignment of Domains for Standards with the African Union Framework**



Source: Authors' estimation with West Africa online survey (survey still on going – preliminary results).

**There are also differences between country approaches to career stages versus the recommendations of the African Union.** The African Union frameworks have four career stages for both teachers and school leaders. Tables 5.3 indicates the number of career stages at the county level. In many countries, the small number of career stages may be indicative of a lack of career path, acknowledging however that career stages do not refer to the public salary structures in the civil service. Rather, they are professional levels of proficiency to be attained by teachers and school leaders based on their professional growth and development. The qualities associated with different stages must be demonstrated by teachers and school leaders, and examined and certified by the competent authority, whether this is a teaching regulatory authority or the Ministry of education for countries without teaching regulatory authorities. Nigeria and Sierra Leone are again the two countries aligned with the African Union framework, but not The Gambia.

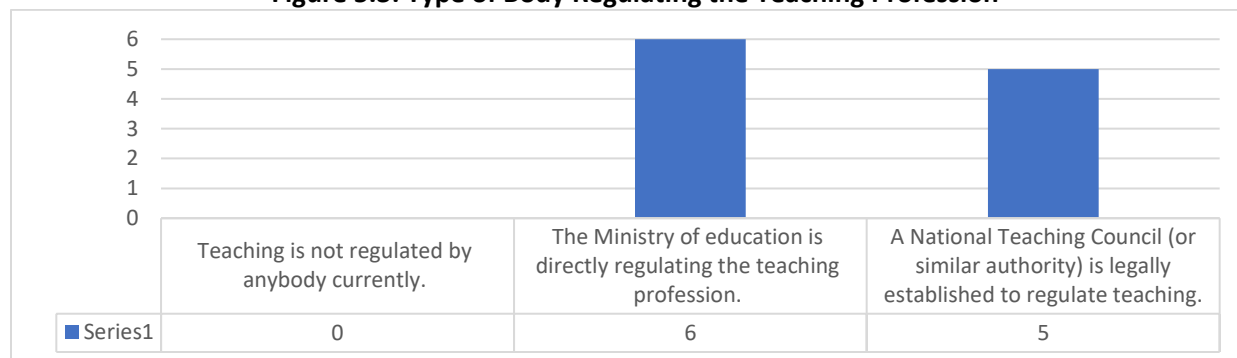
**Table 5.3: Number of Career Stages for Teachers and School Leaders in the Various Countries**

Career stages	Teachers	School Leaders
0	Senegal, The Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire	Senegal, The Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire, Benin
1	-	-
2	Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
3	Liberia, Benin	Liberia
4	Nigeria, Sierra Leone	Nigeria, Sierra Leone

Source: Authors' estimation with West Africa online survey (survey still on going – preliminary results).

Another question in the survey pertains to regulatory frameworks for teachers, with Ministries of Education performing this function in half of the countries, and Commissions in the other half. Figure 5.3 shows that in half of the countries including The Gambia, Ministries of Education serve as regulator, while in the other half specialized commissions do so (for Senegal no answer was provided). However, only Nigeria and Sierra Leone have a teaching regulatory authority clearly established by law and functioning as an independent professional regulatory authority. Respondents were also asked if they have registration, licensing, and licensing examinations for teachers and school leaders. In about half of the responses, teachers were said to be registered and licensed, but licensing examinations are observed for only one in four respondents<sup>17</sup>.

**Figure 5.3: Type of Body Regulating the Teaching Profession**



Source: Authors' estimation with West Africa online survey (survey still on going – preliminary results).

**Figure 5.4: Teacher Registration, Licensing, and Competency Examination**



Source: Authors' estimation with West Africa online survey (survey still on going – preliminary results).

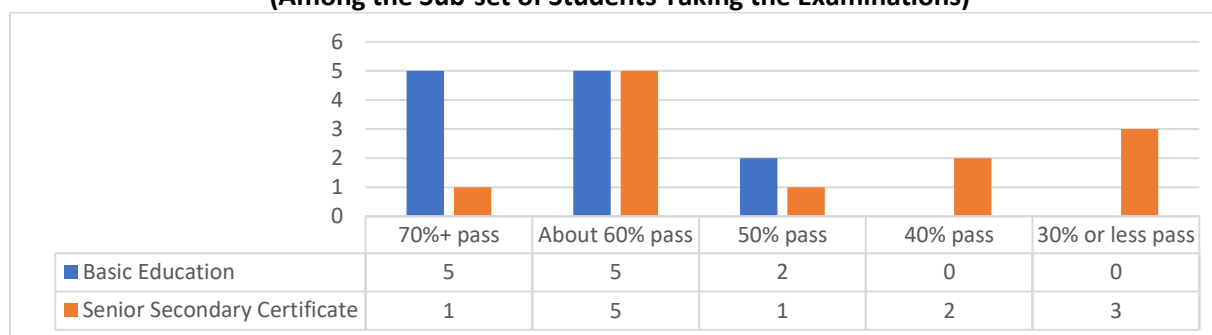
## Teacher education

**As mentioned earlier, most countries in sub-Saharan Africa face a deep learning crisis.** Learning poverty is measured as the share of children aged 10 not able to read and understand a simple age-appropriate

<sup>17</sup> Only Nigeria has a National Teaching Council (the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria). Liberia intends to establish a Bureau of Teacher Education that will exercise the powers of a National Teaching Council. The representatives of Burkina Faso and Benin made references to their “national teachers’ councils” responsible for overseeing the teaching profession under the direction of the Ministry of Education, but these Councils are not established by law to function independently as regulatory agencies for the teaching profession. The representative of Côte d’Ivoire was clear in stating that there is no National Teaching Council in the country, although there is Pedagogical Council in charge of reporting to the Ministry issues affecting the teaching profession in the country. He further stated that school heads/leaders oversee reporting of issues or difficulties faced in their area.

text (World Bank et al., 2022). In West African countries, that share is estimated at 56 percent for Benin, 69 percent for Senegal, 74 percent for Burkina Faso, 82 percent for Togo, 83 percent for Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea, 90 percent for Mali and Niger, 94 percent for Chad, and 95 percent for Mauritania. Only Gabon has a substantially lower share of children in learning poverty at 31 percent (data are not available for The Gambia). Questions were asked in the online survey for officials from Ministries and Teacher Service Commission about pass rates for students taking the Basic Education Certification Examination (BECE) and the Senior Secondary Certification Examination (SSCE). The estimates are provided in Figure 5.5. Many countries have low pass rates, especially for secondary school certification examinations. Given that many children drop out of school before taking these examinations, the data confirm that educational achievement and as a result attainment remain in the sub-region among the lowest in the world.

**Figure 5.5: Pass Rates in Basic Education and Senior Secondary Certification Examinations (Among the Sub-set of Students Taking the Examinations)**



Source: Authors' estimation with West Africa online survey (survey still on going – preliminary results).

**Teacher training is key to improve learning, but most countries face challenges in achieving quality pre-service education, including in terms of the minimum requirements for teaching.** As shown in Table 5.4, norms suggest that one or two years of training are sufficient in most countries, with three years required in Nigeria (one respondent mentioned four years as minimum qualification but this could not be validated). In practice too, teachers often have only one or two years of pre-service training. As to the number of credits at ordinary level (completion of senior secondary school) required for admission into teacher education programs, four countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Benin, and Burkina Faso) admit candidates without such credits. Sierra Leone requires three credits, The Gambia four, and Nigeria five. This suggest that teacher quality is likely low across countries. Respondents were also asked to rate the quality of candidates with Teachers' Certificates or Higher Teachers' Certificates or equivalent, which are mostly one, two, or three-year programs. On a scale of 1 to 5, respondents rated the quality as 3.3 on average, which is low. Similarly, respondents rated the quality of graduate teachers (with B.Ed. or bachelor's with Post Graduate Diploma in Education) at 3.3 on average, confirming challenges with teacher quality.

**Table 5.4: Norms and Practice for Teaching Qualifications by Country**

Teacher Education Programme	Norms	Practice
One-year teacher education	Senegal, Liberia	Senegal
Two-year teacher education	Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Benin	Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Benin
Three-year teacher education	Nigeria	Nigeria, Liberia
Four-year teacher education	-	-

Source: Authors' estimation with West Africa online survey (survey still on going – preliminary results).



Note: the categories are: One-year teacher education program; Two-year teacher education program (Teachers' Certificate/Diploma); Three-year teacher education program (Higher Teachers' Certificate/Higher National Diploma/Certificate in Education); and Four-year teacher education program (degree or equivalent).

**While countries have quality assurance mechanisms in higher education for pre-service teacher education, many have a large share of unqualified teachers.** Asked about the existence of a quality assurance agency for higher education, all respondents answered in the affirmative. Asked whether teacher education in the country is accredited by the Higher Education Authority, again all but one respondent responded in the affirmative (however, this situation analysis for The Gambia suggests that teacher education has not been accredited by a Higher Education Authority, and the same is true in some other countries). As to gaps in qualified teachers, Table 5.5 provides data for a few indicators, including the share of teachers on the government payroll, the share of unqualified teachers and the pupil-teacher ratio as well as the pupil-qualified teacher ratio. Several countries – this does not include The Gambia according to responses from officials in the survey, have a relatively high share of unqualified teachers, and in part as a result a relatively high pupil-qualified teacher ratio.

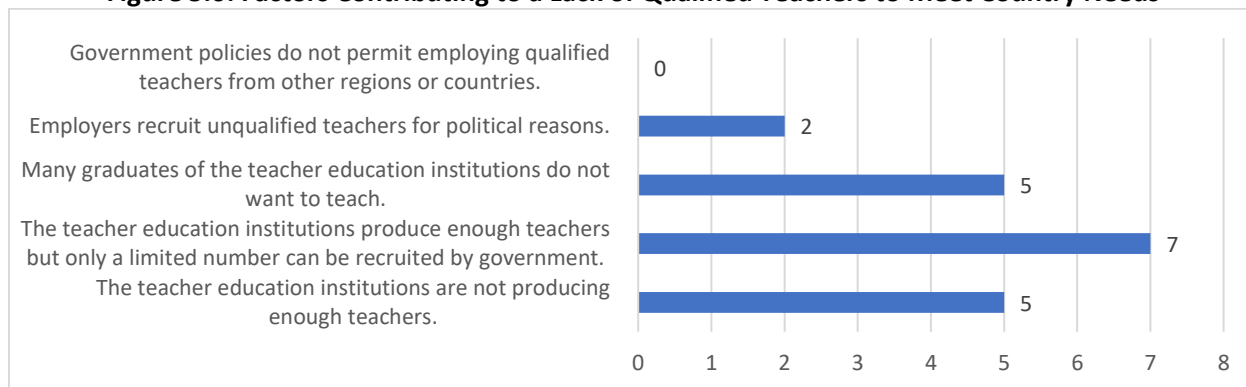
**Table 5.5: Teachers on Government Payroll, Unqualified Teachers, and Pupil-Teacher Ratios**

Public payroll	1-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81%+
% teachers on public payroll			Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire	Benin	Senegal, Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Liberia
Unqualified	1-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41%+
% unqualified teachers in basic education	Burkina Faso, The Gambia	Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia	Nigeria, Benin	Sierra Leone	-
% unqualified teachers in senior secondary	Burkina Faso, The Gambia	Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia	Senegal, Nigeria	Benin	-
PTR and PTQR	1-20	21-40	41-60	61-80	81+
Pupil-teacher ratio	Liberia	Nigeria, The Gambia	Senegal, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Benin		
Pupil-qualified teacher ratio	Liberia	The Gambia	Senegal, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone	Côte d'Ivoire, Benin	

Source: Authors' estimation with West Africa online survey (survey still on going – preliminary results).

**Half of the countries struggle in generating enough teachers to meet their needs, although for various reasons.** Respondents were equally divided when asked if the teacher education institutions of their country were producing enough teachers to meet their needs. As shown in Figure 5.6, when asked about factors leading to shortages of qualified teachers, seven respondents mentioned that teacher education institutions produce enough teachers but only a limited number can be recruited by government, probably because of budget constraints. Two other reasons were chosen by five respondents each: (i) many graduates of the teacher education institutions do not want to teach; and (ii) the teacher education institutions are not producing enough teachers. The option that limitations from government policies on hiring across regions or from other countries was a factor was not chosen by any respondents, but two respondents mentioned the issue of the recruitment of unqualified teachers for political reasons.

**Figure 5.6: Factors Contributing to a Lack of Qualified Teachers to Meet Country Needs**



Source: Authors' estimation with West Africa online survey (survey still on going – preliminary results).

**CPD is as critical as pre-service education to improve learning, but few teachers benefit from CPD and many countries either do not have a CPD framework or do not use it for promotions.** As shown in Table 5.6, half of the respondents attest that their country has a national framework on teacher CPD, but fewer attest that credit units are attached to specific teacher CPD and that these credits must be earned to be promoted. In other words, in some countries there may be a national framework, but it may not be used to guide promotions, which in turn may discourage teachers and school leaders to invest time in CPD. In most countries, Ministries of Education coordinate CPD, although in Nigeria and Sierra Leone this is done by teaching regulatory authorities. Across countries however, as shown in Figure 5.7, the share of teachers that benefitted from CPD over the last three years is low since half of the respondents indicated that less than 20 percent of teachers were such beneficiaries. Respondents were also asked to rate the adequacy of CPD to address teacher quality. The average rating on a scale from 1 to 5 was 3.0, which is low. Finally, only seven respondents indicated the existence of (or planning for) a national training program for school leaders, suggesting a lack of such programs in many countries.

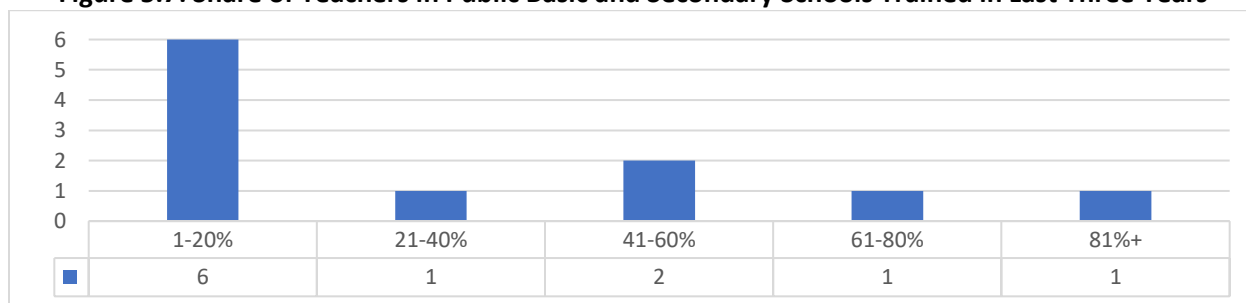
**Table 5.6: Existence of a CPD Framework and Utilization of CPD**

Question	Yes	No	NR
Is there a national framework on teacher CPD?	7	5	-
Are there credit units attached to specific teacher CPD?	3	8	1
Are there specified credit units a teacher must earn to be promoted?	4	7	1

Source: Authors' estimation with West Africa online survey (survey still on going – preliminary results).

NR: No response

**Figure 5.7: Share of Teachers in Public Basic and Secondary Schools Trained in Last Three Years**



Source: Authors' estimation with West Africa online survey (survey still on going – preliminary results).

## Working conditions

**The West Africa survey did not have many questions on the working conditions of teachers, but data were gathered on the existence of Teacher Awards and the social status and satisfaction of teachers.** Two thirds of respondents mentioned such awards (as noted earlier, the African Union Commission provides for teacher awards since 2017). As to the social status of teachers, on a scale from 1 to 5, the average rating from respondents on their perceptions of the status of teachers was very low at 2.6. Similarly, when asked to rate job satisfaction among teachers on the same scale, the average rating was only 2.7. These ratings suggest that teacher social status and job satisfaction are insufficient, hindering the full realization of professionalization of standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders.

**Feedback from key informant interviews confirm that working conditions are often sub-optimal, but with countries trying various approaches to improve those conditions.** The representative from Benin made references to the cost of living and how salaries are not sufficient to meet teachers' basic needs. The representative from Burkina Faso pointed to the public salary scale which has many cadres but limitations for teachers to attaining the highest cadre (for the teaching profession, National Inspector is the highest cadre but it is difficult to attain because of the requirements). The emergence of terrorism was also mentioned as a challenge faced by teachers and school leaders: *"we share a border with Chad, and in these regions Jihadist attacks do not cease. Sometimes teachers want to do their work, but ... attacks in the regions where they are assigned make them unwilling to perform their duties, even though the government allocates risk and longevity allowances, they fear for their lives."* The representative from Côte d'Ivoire pointed to poor training as an issue affecting the quality of teachers. He stated: *"Here in Côte d'Ivoire, we don't have many trained specialists in the area of training teachers, so I think this makes the quality of our education lower and lower."* The Liberia representative stated that remuneration has been regular though may not be adequate to meet the needs of the teachers, especially in the context of the recession and inflation arising from the devastation of the war, Ebola, and most recently Covid-19. He admitted that teachers are less professionalized, but the country is developing frameworks to get them more professionalized, including through registration and licensing. The representative for Nigeria mentioned packages approved for teachers by the Presidency including an increase in retirement age from 60 to 65 years and additional payment of 27.5 percent of basic salary as professional allowance to registered teachers. However, the key issues currently are related to the implementation of the career path, related policies, and other requirements arising from the adoption of international frameworks.

## Summing up

**To complement the situational analysis conducted for The Gambia in this study, comparative data were collected for other West African counties.** This chapter examined the same three key issues covered by the situation analysis, namely: the National Framework of Teaching standards and Competencies, Teacher education, and Teacher Working Conditions. The analysis targeted 15 ECOWAS countries, of which eight had responded at the time of writing (data collection is still on-going). Apart from an online survey, key informant interviews were held with officials of five countries. While results should be considered as illustrative and preliminary, they are nevertheless instructive to provide a comparative perspective.

**All countries face challenges, but some are more advanced than others in confronting them.** Most countries have legal or policy provisions that support the establishment of a national framework of teaching standards and competencies, but they are at various stages of this process and have not aligned their frameworks with recommendations from the African Union Commission and UNESCO and Education International, with Nigeria and Sierra Leone being exceptions. Except in those two countries and Ghana,

Ministries of Education continue to regulate the teaching profession. Practices such as professional licensure examination, registration, and licensing of teachers and school leaders tend to be absent in most countries. Career paths and mandatory school leadership training for school leaders are yet to be implemented in most countries. The dominant teacher qualification remains the two-year Teachers' Certificates with many countries having no or few requirements to admit candidates into pre-service teacher education. Some countries have large shares of unqualified teachers. On working conditions, respondents rate the social status and job satisfaction of teachers at low levels. Finally, except for Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Burkina Faso, countries do not participate actively in African and global federations of teaching agencies, which reduces their ability to benefit from exchanges of good practices.

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## ANNEXES

### Annex 1: Key findings and associated recommendations

<u>Key Finding 1:</u> The Gambia has not adopted international framework of professional standards and competencies.	The Gambia has not adopted international framework of professional standards and competencies such as the UNESCO and Education International (2019) <i>Global Framework of Professional Teaching Standards</i> , and the African Union Commission (2019a) <i>African Continental Framework of Standards and Competencies for the Teaching Profession (ACF-SCTP)</i> .
Recommendations	The Gambia should develop a national framework of standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders aligned with international frameworks.
<u>Key Finding 2:</u> The Gambia has not adopted the Africa Union Commission Continental Guidelines on the Teaching Profession.	The Gambia has not adopted the Africa Union Commission (2019c) <i>African Continental Guidelines on the Teaching Profession (ACGTP)</i> which requests Member States to pass a law making teaching a profession and establishing a teaching regulatory authority to regulate the profession.
Recommendations	The Gambia should work towards passing a law to legalise teaching as a profession and establishing a National Teaching Council (NTC) to regulate the profession in line with the African Union Commission recommendation.
<u>Key Finding 3:</u> The Gambia is yet to join the continental and global federations of teaching regulators.	The Gambia has not joined the Africa Federation of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA) and the International Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (IFTRA). Lack of membership implies that the country is unable to benefit from the exchange of best practices, synergy and mutual support.
Recommendations	The Gambia should join AFTRA and IFTRA to enjoy benefits that can accelerate the development of the teaching profession in the country. Membership is open to MoBSE and MoHERST as full members and the Gambia Teachers Union, Gambia College, and University of The Gambia as associate members.
<u>Key Finding 4:</u> The Gambian Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016- 2030 endorses the development of professional standards and competencies.	The Gambian Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016- 2030 endorses the development of professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders. One of seven areas of intervention is “Quality and Relevance” with nine “Result Areas” of which Result Areas 5 and 6 capture the thrust of the Strategic Plan in terms of the professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders.
Recommendations	Professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders endorsed by the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016-2030 should be developed and implemented, following international frameworks.
<u>Key Finding 5:</u> The Gambia Teacher Competency Framework has merit but could be better aligned with the African Union Commission framework.	The Gambian framework created a career path for teachers and school leaders that reflects the existing salary grade of teachers (Head Teacher, Senior Teacher, Teacher, and Student Teacher). For the Senior Teacher, Teacher, and Student Teacher, the framework created three competencies. For the Head Teachers, there are four competencies. The framework has merit but could be better aligned to the African Union Commission framework.
Recommendations	MoBSE in collaboration with stakeholders should further develop its national framework of standards and competencies to align with the UNESCO/EI and African Union Commission frameworks which have further depth.
<u>Key Finding 6:</u> The Gambia Teacher Competency Framework developed in 2020 has not been published or operationalised.	The Gambia Teacher Competency Framework developed in 2020 has not been published or operationalised. Rather, teacher and school leader performances are still based on the <i>Service Level Agreements</i> and related documents. These are not sufficient for the professional evaluation of teachers, and the same goes for the professional evaluation of school leaders who are assessed based



	on their delivery of the <i>Minimum Standards for Basic Schools: Indicators Under the Control of the School and the Community</i> (MoBSE, 2021b).
Recommendations	Mentoring, guidance, monitoring, assessment, evaluation, rewards, and other professional support to teachers and school leaders could best be derived from a fully developed national framework of professional standards and competencies fully aligned with international frameworks.
<u>Key Finding 7:</u> Teachers' support a national framework of professional standards and competencies.	Teachers' responses to an online questionnaire support the development and implementation of a national framework of professional standards and competencies, but many have not heard or read any professional standards.
Recommendations	MoBSE and MoHERTS, GTU, and other stakeholders should step up the development and implementation of a national framework of professional standards and competencies and prioritise advocacy, enlightenment, and capacity building for teachers and school leaders on standards.
<u>Key Finding 8:</u> The Gambia is yet to adopt the African Union Commission Continental Teacher Qualification Framework.	The Gambia is yet to adopt the African Union Commission (2019b) <i>African Continental Teacher Qualification Framework</i> (ACTQF) which sets minimum requirements for entry into the teaching profession in Africa, and provides for curricular framework, accreditation of teacher education programs, and other critical quality issues in pre-service teacher education and CPD.
Recommendations	The Gambia should consider a reform of its pre-service teacher education and CPD based on the provisions of the AUC (2019b) ACTQF.
<u>Key Finding 9:</u> The teacher education institutions are unable to produce enough teachers to meet needs.	There are only three teacher education institutions in The Gambia, namely the Gambia College (largest number of graduates); School of Education of the University of The Gambia; and the Gambia Technical Training Institute. Together they do not produce enough teachers to meet the needs of schools.
Recommendations	MoBSE, MoHERST, GC, UTG, GTTI and other stakeholders should hold a summit to develop strategies towards meeting the teacher gap in the country.
<u>Key Finding 10:</u> Unqualified teachers constitute 10% of all teachers and the Pupil-Qualified Teacher Ratio (PQTR) is at around 30:1.	Unqualified teachers constitute 10% of the total teachers in the school system, but more teachers are needed to bring down the Pupil-Qualified Teacher Ratio (PQTR) at around 30:1. and meets the goals of the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2016-2030 and SDG4.
Recommendations	MoBSE, MoHERST and the teacher education institutions should come up with a program to enable unqualified teachers to earn minimum teaching qualification, possibly through part-time and online study. The government, supported by development partners could offer scholarships to unqualified teachers to pursue the program. The profession should also be made more attractive in order to get more qualified teachers into the school system.
<u>Key Finding 11:</u> There are concerns about the quality of graduates of teacher education institutions.	There are concerns about the quality of the graduates of the teacher education institutions. MoBSE established a "Quality Assurance Framework" for graduating students at The Gambia College and introduced a <i>Teacher Competency Test Policy</i> that few teachers passed.
Recommendations	There is need to strengthen the quality assurance mechanisms for teacher education institutions in The Gambia.
<u>Key Finding 12:</u> None of the teacher education programs has external accreditation.	None of the teacher education programs in the teacher education institutions has external accreditation and other best practices seem lacking. The National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority (NAQAA) confirms these facts.
Recommendations	NAQQA should conduct accreditation visits to assess the quality of programs. When a National Teaching Council is established, it should also have a statutory mandate to carry out professional accreditation of teacher education programs. Peer review mechanisms are important. One challenge is

	the small number of teacher education institutions that may call for external examination and peer review mechanisms that may be more costly.
<b>Key Finding 13:</b> The Gambia Education Sector Support Project recommended the reform of teacher education programs in The Gambia.	A study funded by The Gambia Education Sector Support Project (2019) recommended a reform of teacher education programs in The Gambia. It also recommended a harmonisation of GC and UTG teacher education programs to encourage graduates from the GC to pursue degrees in education rather than being stuck for too long with Diplomas and feeling inferior to degree holders.
<b>Recommendations</b>	The recommendations of the report should be implemented. Being autonomous institutions, the two institutions of them should lead this harmonisation, supported by MoBSE and MoHERST and other stakeholders.
<b>Key Finding 14:</b> Teacher training institutions have few academic staff which affects their capacity to ramp up enrolments and programs.	The teacher training institutions (GC and School of Education, UTG) have a small number of academic staff which is a challenge for ramping up enrolments and programs. Some of the academic staff at the UTG are from outside the country, and this applies to the GC to some extent. It is challenging to run institutions relying on foreign staff strength.
<b>Recommendations</b>	Improving the academic staff in the teacher training institutions requires high-level government attention and action.
<b>Key Finding 15:</b> Most teachers hold two-year Diploma or three-year Advanced Diploma.	The bulk of the teachers in the school system are two-year Diploma and three-year Advanced Diploma holders. Graduate teachers (with degrees in Education) are few, and there are hardly any teachers with a master's or above. This may affect teaching and learning negatively.
<b>Recommendations</b>	As per the AUC ACTQF, two-year Diplomas and Teachers' Certificates are no longer envisaged as appropriate teaching qualifications. The minimum should be three-year Advanced Diplomas/Higher Teachers' Certificates.
<b>Key Finding 16:</b> Teachers believe they were trained well but still state requiring further training.	Teachers' responses suggest they believe they were adequately prepared during their education, but many opined that they need further training, including for professional knowledge, practical skills, ethics, and codes of conduct.
<b>Recommendations</b>	In-service training should strive to fill the training gaps identified by teachers. This pertains to professional knowledge, skills, ethics, and code of conduct.
<b>Key Finding 17:</b> Pre-service training and CPD need to be aligned with international frameworks.	There is a "Comprehensive Pre-Service and In-Service Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan" but it is not yet operationalized and could be better aligned with the international frameworks on standards and competencies.
<b>Recommendations</b>	The "Comprehensive Pre-Service and In-Service Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan" requires alignment with the AUC continental frameworks. It should also be finalized and operationalised.
<b>Key Finding 18:</b> The School Management Manual is a rich resource material for school leaders.	The <i>School Management Manual for Lower Basic, Basic Cycle and Upper Basic Schools Revised Version 3</i> (MoBSE, 2020b) has rich resource material for school leaders. It has relevant concepts, materials, guidance, and tools for monitoring and evaluation which is helpful in school administration.
<b>Recommendations</b>	The use of the School Management Manual for Schools should be strengthened as it is a rich source material on school leadership and has proven helpful in transforming the administration of the schools.
<b>Key Finding 19:</b> MoBSE has supported one-year training for aspiring school leaders.	MoBSE has supported training of Head Teachers in school management and leadership through full-time study at the Management Development Institute (MDI). This is one of the most commendable initiatives of MoBSE.
<b>Recommendations</b>	This training is an important innovation. It should be sustained and expanded to include principals of senior secondary schools. The course content should reflect the <i>School Leadership Standards</i> contained in the AUC frameworks.
<b>Key Finding 20:</b> The teacher career stage has not yet been	The teacher career stage has not yet been well developed, just as the CPD credits that will drive the progression along the career stages are still

well developed, just as the CPD credits that will drive the progression along the career stages are still undefined.	undefined. There should be a career path or progression policy built around the national framework of standards and competencies. The policy should fully explain the career stages for teachers and school Leaders, CPD credits and other requirements for promotion, and other career path policies.
Recommendations	Career path for teachers and school leaders should be developed following the professional tenets and not salary grades; the career path policy should define requirements and modalities for moving from one stage to another.
<u>Key Finding 21:</u> There is limited awareness about standards and competencies.	Generally, there is a low level of awareness about professional standards and competencies among stakeholders.
Recommendations	The National Technical Working Group of the UNESCO Shanghai-FIT Project in The Gambia in collaboration with MoBSE, MoHERST, GTU, GC, UTG, and other stakeholders should organise a capacity building workshop on standards.
<u>Key Finding 22:</u> Most teachers benefit only from limited trainings.	Teachers' responses to the online questionnaire concerning CPD indicate that many benefit from few and sometimes no training at all. They also pointed out their preferred areas for training.
Recommendations	There is need to expand CPD with a diversified offering by government, the GTU, and teachers and school leaders themselves. Teachers may invest more in training if the CPDs have credits that count for career advancement.
<u>Key Finding 23:</u> Teachers have knowledge and skills for use of internet resources, but do not always have access.	In their responses to the online questionnaire, the teachers opined that they have knowledge and skills for use of internet resources, but most have no personal or official computer or in some cases internet access.
Recommendations	The government, assisted by development partners should prioritize not only capacity building of teachers in educational technology, but also the provision of tablets if this is deemed affordable and training for best use is provided.
<u>Key Finding 24:</u> Teachers have insufficient supply of teaching resources.	Most teachers state they have insufficient teaching resources in their school.
Recommendations	The availability of teaching resources in schools must be improved.
<u>Key Finding 25:</u> Teachers are public servants with conditions of work guided by public service regulations.	The teachers are public servants and their conditions of work are guided by the public service regulations (e.g., Public Service Act and policies of the Personnel Management Office) plus regulations put in place by MoBSE. Yet teaching is not yet recognized by law as a profession.
Recommendations	A law is needed to legalise teaching and a National Teaching Council should be established to protect the interest, standards, and status of the profession.
<u>Key Finding 26:</u> The Gambia has yet to commence Best Teacher Awards at the national or regional level.	Despite the responses of some teachers in the survey, there is no national or regional Best Teacher Awards as is observed in some of the other anglophone West African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone.
Recommendations	MoBSE and GTU should collaborate with stakeholders to initiate a Presidential Best Teacher Award for The Gambia, in addition to devising other ways of recognising excellence among teachers and school leaders.
<u>Key Finding 27:</u> Staff rooms are lacking in many schools.	Half of the teachers that responded to the survey stated that their school did not have staff rooms, and when they are available, they may lack amenities.
Recommendations	There is need to provide schools with a staff room with amenities such as furniture, a separate toilet, drinking water, and handwash facilities.
<u>Key Finding 28:</u> Teachers suggest good relationships with their superiors.	Almost all teachers described the relationships with their supervisors as good or excellent.
Recommendations	Good relationships between teachers and supervisors should be nurtured.

<u>Key Finding 29:</u> Teachers may not always be paid in full.	On the payment of salary, while most teachers state that their salary is paid when due, some suggest that occasionally it may not be paid in full.
Recommendations	The issue of some teachers stating not receiving their salary in full should be investigated to be resolved.
<u>Key Finding 30:</u> Teachers rate their social status and job satisfaction as average.	Teachers were asked to rate their social status and job satisfaction on a 1-5 scale. Average ratings are 3.53 for social status and 3.21 for job satisfaction.
Recommendations	These ratings are not great, indicating that teachers' perception of their social status and job satisfaction is only average. Exploring what could lead to better perceptions for both social status and satisfaction should be a priority.

## Annex 2: List of officials for key informant interviews

Organization	Key Officials Interacted with
Curriculum Research Evaluation Development Directorate [CREDD] Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Momodou Jeng, Director &amp; Chair, National Technical Working Group of the UNESCO Shanghai-FIT Project in The Gambia</li> <li>▪ Fatou Dally Bittaye, Principal Education Officer [PEO]</li> <li>▪ Khadijatou Jobarteh [PEO]</li> </ul>
Directorate of In-service Training and Lifelong Learning [DITALL], MoBSE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tida Jatta Willan, Director</li> <li>▪ Mariama Chow, [PEO]</li> </ul>
Gambia Teachers Union [GTU]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Essa Sowe, Deputy Secretary General of GTU &amp; Member, National Technical Working Group of the UNESCO Shanghai-FIT Project in The Gambia</li> </ul>
Performance Management and Evaluation [PMEU], MoBSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mr. Andrew Gomez, Director</li> <li>▪ Lally Baldeh [PEO]</li> </ul>
Standards and Quality Assurance Directorate [SQAD], MoBSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Director: Mr. Sang Gomez.</li> </ul>
Institute for Technical Training [ITTI], University of Applied Science, Engineering and Technology [ USET]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alieu Badara Saine, Registrar</li> </ul>
Management Development Institute [DMI]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alieu K. Jarju, Director General</li> <li>▪ Lamin B.T. Sanyang, Trainer</li> </ul>
Regional Education Directorate [RED] 2, MoBSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lamin Fatajo, Director</li> </ul>
Gambia National commission for UNESCO [NATCOM]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lamin Jarju, Senior Programs Officer</li> <li>▪ Modou M. Touray, Program Officer</li> </ul>
Gambia College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Issatou Ndow, Vice Principal &amp; Member, National Technical Working Group of the UNESCO Shanghai-FIT Project in The Gambia</li> </ul>
University of The Gambia [UTG] School of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Prof Ajani Kassim, Acting Dean</li> </ul>
Conference of Principals of Upper Basic Schools [CPUBS]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alphasainey Baldeh, Secretary</li> </ul>
Association of Lower Basic School Heads [ALBAS]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Saja Sanyang, Chairperson</li> </ul>
Conference of Principals of Senior Secondary Schools [COPSSS]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lamin A.K. Sanyang, Chairperson &amp; Member, National Technical Working Group of the UNESCO Shanghai-FIT Project in The Gambia</li> </ul>
National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority [NAQAA]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dr Gibril Jaw, Director General/CEO</li> </ul>

Source: Compiled by the authors.

### Annex 3: Online questionnaire for teachers

This survey serves to collect the views of public basic and senior secondary school teachers on professional standards and competencies for teachers in The Gambia. It is an opinion poll which will have serious implications for the development and implementation of the professional standards and competencies for teachers in The Gambia. Therefore, please ensure that you are a public basic or senior secondary school teacher in the country before completing the questionnaire and respond honestly and to the best of your ability. Your personal detail will not be disclosed to a third party or included in the analysis. Also, ensure that you are participating in the survey voluntarily and not compelled in anyway by another individual or authority.

**Definition:** Professional Standards and Competencies for Teachers are statements of the knowledge, skills, behavior, ethics, values, and attitudes expected of a teacher.

1. Is The Gambia your country?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
2. Where is your location in The Gambia?
  - a. Greater Banjul Area (BCC & KMC)
  - b. West Coast Region (WCR)
  - c. North Bank Region (NBR)
  - d. Central River Region (CRR)
  - e. Upper River Region (URR)
3. Type of school where you teach:
  - a. Lower Basic
  - b. Upper Basic
  - c. Senior Secondary
4. Your email:
5. Years of teaching experience
  - a. 0-5 years
  - b. 6-9 years
  - c. 10 years and above
6. Have you ever heard about the Professional Teaching Standards and Competencies?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
7. Have you ever read a copy of the Professional Teaching Standards and Competencies of any country?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
8. Do you believe there should be clearly spelt out standards and competencies for teachers?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
9. Do you think the Professional Standards and Competence for Teachers can improve the performance of teachers?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
10. Has your country well spelt-out standards and competencies for teachers?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I don't know/I have no idea
11. Currently, which document is the MOST important source of your professional teaching standards and competencies?
  - a. A nationally approved document on Professional Teaching Standards and Competencies.
  - b. General government documents and policies which have not been consolidated into a single document.

- c. My personal ideas about what is right and wrong as a teacher.
12. Do you have a teacher licensing authority or body in your country?
    - a. Yes
    - b. No
  13. Currently, are you professionally registered as a teacher by any authority in your country?
    - a. Yes
    - b. No
  14. Currently, do you hold a teaching license like other professionals you know?
    - a. Yes
    - b. No
  15. After your teacher training, did you take any other teacher professional test or examination before starting your job as a teacher?
    - a. Yes
    - b. No
  16. Before starting your job as a teacher, did you receive a professional induction (an orientation exercise)?
    - a. Yes
    - b. No
  17. How many years did your pre-service teacher training last?
    - a. 2 years
    - b. 3 years
    - c. 4 years
    - d. 5 years or above
  18. Did your pre-service teacher training prepare you adequately for the challenges you met on ground when you started teaching?
    - a. Yes, it prepared me very adequately
    - b. It was fairly adequate
    - c. It was inadequate
  19. Which of the following is/are your challenge(s) since becoming a teacher? – Multiple choice
    - a. The pre-service teacher training did not expose me enough to the content of the subject that I teach.
    - b. The pre-service teacher training did not expose me enough to the practical skills that I need to plan and deliver my lessons and other educational programs.
    - c. The pre-service teacher training did not expose me enough to the ethics and expected conduct which I need to know about as a teacher.
    - d. I have all the three challenges listed above.
    - e. I do not have any of the three challenges listed above.
  20. Have you undergone any in-service training program?
    - a. Yes
    - b. No
  21. How would you describe the amount of continuous professional development you had received since becoming a teacher?
    - a. Very adequate
    - b. Adequate
    - c. Inadequate
    - d. Very inadequate.
  22. In the last three years, how many times have you attended a workshop, conference, seminar or any other form of training relevant to your work and sponsored by government?
    - a. Once
    - b. 2 times
    - c. 3 times
    - d. 4 times
    - e. 5 times or more

23. In the last three years, how many times have you attended a workshop, conference, seminar or any other form of training sponsored or organized by the teacher union?
  - a. Once
  - b. 2 times
  - c. 3 times
  - d. 4 times
  - e. 5 times or more
24. In the last three years, how many times have you attended a workshop, conference, seminar or any other form of training sponsored by yourself?
  - a. Once
  - b. 2 times
  - c. 3 times
  - d. 4 times
  - e. 5 times or more
25. Besides the number of years spent on the job, which is the next MOST important factor considered to promote a teacher from one level to another?
  - a. Credits/amount of professional development done
  - b. Outcome of the Performance Management System and processes
  - c. Result of promotion examination
  - d. Preference to the indigenes of the Province or School District
26. Which of the following is true of teacher performance evaluation in your school?
  - a. A supervisor completes the teacher's performance evaluation form.
  - b. The credits/amount of professional development done are/is assessed.
27. Have you ever heard of the term, "professional development portfolio"?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
28. How would you rate your ability/knowledge/skill to use the internet and online resources to improve your teaching?
  - a. Excellent
  - b. Good
  - c. Poor
  - d. Very poor
29. Do you have access to an official computer, laptop or tablet?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
30. Do you have access to official internet connection/data?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
31. Do you own a personal computer, laptop or tablet?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
32. Do you own a smart phone?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
33. How is the mobile phone network in your location?
  - a. Good
  - b. Poor
  - c. Non-existent
34. How is the internet connection in your location?
  - a. Good
  - b. Poor
  - c. Non-existent



35. Which has been more beneficial to you in accessing online teaching content and preparing your lessons?
  - a. Official computer/laptop/tablet
  - b. Personal computer/laptop/tablet.
36. Which of the following professional development programs do you need most at the moment?
  - a. Capacity building in the use of educational technologies, and online teaching and learning.
  - b. Capacity building in teaching methodology – lesson plan and notes, lesson delivery, and learning assessment.
  - c. Capacity building to deepen knowledge in my teaching subject.
  - d. Capacity building in the instructional language (English) and basic numeracy.
37. How sufficient is the supply of teaching aids and resources to teachers by your school?
  - a. Very sufficient
  - b. Sufficient
  - c. Insufficient
  - d. Very insufficient
38. How would you describe the staff room in your school?
  - a. Has basic furniture and amenities (staff toilet, drinking water, handwash facility)
  - b. Has basic furniture but no amenities (staff toilet, drinking water, handwash facility)
  - c. Has neither basic furniture nor amenities (staff toilet, drinking water, handwash facility)
  - d. Has no staff room
39. How would you rate your overall physical working conditions at school?
  - a. Excellent
  - b. Good
  - c. Poor
  - d. Very poor
40. How would you rate your overall relations with your head teacher or principal at school
  - a. Excellent (Cordial and inspiring)
  - b. Good (Cordial)
  - c. Poor (Not cordial)
  - d. Very poor (a lot of conflict)
41. How do you access your salary or monthly emoluments?
  - a. Through Commercial Banks
  - b. Through Teachers' Credit Union
  - c. Over the Counter at school level
42. Are you paid your salary monthly, as and when due?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
43. Are you always paid your salary in full or sometime it is a part-payment?
  - a. Always in full
  - b. Sometimes, it is part-payment
44. Is there a teacher award or other programs to recognize teacher performance organized at your school level?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
45. Is there a teacher award or other programs to recognize teacher performance organized at the national level?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
46. Rate your social status as a teacher on a 1-5 scale.  
Low social status <1, 2, 3, 4, 5 > High social status
47. Rate your job satisfaction as a teacher on a 1-5 scale.  
Low job satisfaction <1, 2, 3, 4, 5 > High job satisfaction
48. Overall, do you think teaching is a profession?
  - a. Teaching is a profession
  - b. Teaching is not a profession.

49. Do you have a teaching qualification?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
50. What is your highest educational qualification?
- a. Primary Teachers Certificate/Diploma in Education
  - b. Higher Teachers Certificate/ Advanced Diploma in Education
  - c. Bachelor's degree in Education
  - d. Bachelor's degree or equivalent without teaching qualification
  - e. Master's degree
  - f. PhD
51. Employment status
- a. I am employed and paid by government
  - b. I am employed and paid by the community/school
  - c. I am a volunteer teacher

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END/THANK YOU.

## Annex 4: Online questionnaire for school leaders

This survey serves to collect the views of head teachers and principals of public basic and senior secondary schools on professional standards and competencies for school leadership in The Gambia. It is an opinion poll which will have serious implications for the development and implementation of professional standards and competencies for school leadership in the country. Therefore, please ensure that you are a head teacher or principal in the public school before completing the questionnaire and respond honestly and to the best of your ability. Your personal detail will not be disclosed to a third party or included in the analysis. Also, ensure that you are participating in the survey voluntarily and not compelled in anyway by another individual or authority.

**Definition:** Professional Standards and Competencies for School Leadership are statements of the knowledge, skills, behavior, ethics, values, and attitudes expected of a school leader. The later refers to a head teacher or principal of a Basic or Senior Secondary School.

52. Is Gambia your country?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
53. Where is your location in the country?
  - a. Greater Banjul Area (BCC & KMC)
  - b. West Coast Region (WCR)
  - c. North Bank Region (NBR)
  - d. Central River Region (CRR)
  - e. Upper River Region (URR)
54. Type of school:
  - a. Lower Basic
  - b. Upper Basic
  - c. Senior Secondary
55. Your email address:
56. How many years did you spend as a teacher before your appointment as a head teacher or principal?
  - a. 0-5 years
  - b. 6-19 years
  - c. 10 years and above
57. How many years have you been a head teacher or principal?
  - a. 0-5 years
  - b. 6-10 years
  - c. 11-15 years
  - d. 16-20 years
  - e. Above 20 years
58. Have you ever heard about the Professional Standards and Competencies for School Leadership?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
59. Have you ever read a copy of the Professional Standards and Competencies for School Leadership of any country?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
60. Do you believe there should be clearly spelt out standards and competencies for head teachers and principals?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
61. Do you think the Professional Standards and Competence for School Leadership can improve the performance of head teachers and principals?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

62. Has your country well-spelt out standards and competencies for head teachers and principals?
- Yes
  - No
  - I don't know/I have no idea
63. Currently, which document is the MOST important source of your professional standards and competencies as a head teacher or principal?
- A nationally approved document on Professional Standards and Competencies for School Leaders.
  - General government documents and policies which have not been consolidated into a single document.
  - My personal ideas about what is right and wrong as a head teacher or principal.
64. Do you have a teacher licensing authority or body in your country?
- Yes
  - No
65. Currently, are you professionally registered as a head teacher or principal by any authority in your country?
- Yes
  - No
66. Currently, do you hold a license to practice as a head teacher or principal, as with leaders in other professions?
- Yes
  - No
67. Before your appointment as a head teacher or principal, did you receive training (workshop of at least one week, certificate course, or diploma) in school leadership?
- Yes
  - No
68. Did you take a professional test or examination for head teachers or principals before being appointed as one?
- Yes
  - No
69. Before starting your job as a head teacher or principal, did you receive a professional induction (an orientation exercise or workshop of at least one full day)?
- Yes
  - No
70. How many years did your pre-service teacher training last?
- 2 years
  - 3 years
  - 4 years
  - 5 years or above
71. Did your pre-service teacher training prepare you adequately for the challenges you met on ground as a head teacher or principal?
- Yes, it prepared me adequately
  - It was fairly adequate
  - It was inadequate
72. Which of the following is/are your major challenge(s) since becoming a head teacher or principal? – Multiple choice
- The pre-service teacher training did not expose me enough to the professional knowledge (theories, principles, leadership styles, technology, financial management, change and innovation, etc.) for school leadership.
  - The pre-service teacher training did not expose me enough to the professional skills (planning and implementation of school programs, etc.) for school leadership.
  - The pre-service teacher training did not expose me enough to the ethics and conduct which I need to know about as a head teacher or principal.
  - I have all the three challenges above.
  - I do not have any of the three challenges listed above
73. Have you undergone any in-service training program?
- Yes

- b. No
74. How would you describe the amount of continuous professional development you had received since becoming a head teacher or principal?
- a. Very adequate
  - b. Adequate
  - c. Inadequate
  - d. Very inadequate.
75. Since becoming a head teacher or principal, how many times have you attended a workshop, conference, seminar or any other form of training relevant to your work and sponsored by government?
- a. Once
  - b. 2 times
  - c. 3 times
  - d. 4 times
  - e. 5 times or more
76. Since becoming a head teacher or principal, how many times have you attended a workshop, conference, seminar or any other form of training sponsored or organized by the teacher union?
- a. Once
  - b. 2 times
  - c. 3 times
  - d. 4 times
  - e. 5 times or more
77. Since becoming a head teacher or principal, how many times have you attended a workshop, conference, seminar or any other form of training sponsored by yourself?
- a. Once
  - b. 2 times
  - c. 3 times
  - d. 4 times
  - e. 5 times or more
78. Besides the number of years spent as a teacher, which is the next MOST important factor considered to appoint you a head teacher or principal?
- a. Credits/amount of professional development done
  - b. Outcome of the Performance Management System and processes
  - c. Result of examination for head teachers or principals
  - d. Preference to the indigenes of the Province or School District
79. Which of the following is true of performance evaluation of head teachers or principals?
- a. A supervisor completes the head teacher/principal's performance evaluation form.
  - b. The credits/amount of professional development done are/is assessed.
80. Have you ever heard of the term, "professional development portfolio"?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
81. How would you rate your ability/knowledge/skill to use the internet and online resources to improve your leadership and research?
- a. Excellent
  - b. Good
  - c. Poor
  - d. Very poor
82. Do you have an official computer, laptop or tablet?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
83. Do you have access to official internet connection/data?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

84. Do you own a personal computer, laptop or tablet?
- Yes
  - No
85. Do you own a smart phone?
- Yes
  - No
86. How is the mobile phone network in your location?
- Good
  - Poor
  - Non-existent
87. How is the internet connection in your location?
- Good
  - Poor
  - Non-existent
88. Does your school have electricity supply (public power supply or generator)?
- Yes
  - No
89. Which has been more beneficial to you in accessing online resources to improve your research and leadership?
- Official computer/laptop/tablet
  - Personal computer/laptop/tablet.
90. Which of the following professional development programs do you need most at the moment?
- Capacity building in the use of educational technologies, and teaching and learning online.
  - Capacity building in teaching methodology – lesson plan and notes, lesson delivery, and learning assessment.
  - Capacity building to deepen knowledge in my teaching subject/area of specialization.
  - Capacity building in the instructional language (English) and basic numeracy.
91. Which of the following areas of capacity building do you need most?
- Leadership of professional knowledge, practice and conduct in the school
  - Theories, principles and practices of management.
  - Promotion of school improvement, innovation and change
  - Generation of financial resources for the school
  - Supporting learners' enrolment and participation in school
  - Engaging and working with the community of the school
92. How sufficient are the human resources (teachers and other staff) you need to run your school?
- Very sufficient
  - Sufficient
  - Insufficient
  - Very insufficient
93. How would you describe your office at school?
- Has basic furniture and amenities (staff toilet, drinking water, handwash facility)
  - Has basic furniture but no amenities (staff toilet, drinking water, handwash facility)
  - Has neither basic furniture nor amenities (staff toilet, drinking water, handwash facility)
  - There is no office
94. How would you rate your overall physical working conditions as a head teacher or principal?
- Excellent
  - Good
  - Poor
  - Very poor
95. How would you rate your overall relations with your immediate supervisors in the Education District or Ministry?
- Excellent (Cordial and inspiring)
  - Good (Cordial)
  - Poor (Not cordial)
  - Very poor (a lot of conflict)

96. How do you access your salary or monthly emoluments?
- Through Commercial Banks
  - Through Teachers' Credit Union
  - Over the Counter at school level
97. Are you paid your salary monthly, as and when due?
- Yes
  - No
98. Are you always paid your salary in full or sometime it is a part-payment?
- Always in full
  - Sometimes, it is part-payment
99. Is there award or other ceremonies to recognize high-performing head teachers or principals in your country?
- Yes
  - No
100. Rate your social status as a school leader on a 1-5 scale.  
Low social status <1, 2, 3, 4, 5 > High social status
101. Rate your job satisfaction as a school leader on a 1-5 scale.  
Low job satisfaction <1, 2, 3, 4, 5> High job satisfaction
102. Overall, do you think a head teacher or principal is a professional?
- A head teacher or principal is a professional.
  - A head teacher or principal is not a professional.
103. Do you have a teaching qualification?
- Yes
  - No
104. What is your highest educational qualification?
- Primary Teachers Certificate/Diploma in Education
  - Higher Teachers Certificate/ Advanced Diploma in Education
  - Bachelor's degree in Education
  - Bachelor's degree or equivalent without teaching qualification
  - Master's degree
  - PhD
105. Employment status
- I am employed and paid by government
  - I am employed and paid by the community/school
  - I am a volunteer teacher

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END/THANK YOU.

## Annex 5: Regional questionnaire for the west Africa analysis

### PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND COMPETENCIES FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS IN BASIC AND SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN WEST AFRICA

This survey serves to collect the views of one key official of the ministry of education, and one key official of the national teaching council (or a similar institution in the absence of a National Teaching Council). The key official to complete this questionnaire should be a director or head responsible for teacher standards, development, and professionalism in the country. Multiple responses from the same country are not allowed to ensure consistency in country information. The key official completing this questionnaire is free to consult with other critical authorities in the country so that information provided will be representative of the country. The survey seeks to ascertain the level of development and implementation of the professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders (headteachers and principals) at the Basic and Senior Secondary Education level. This questionnaire is about national and not regional or institutional professional standards and competencies. Specifically, the survey seeks to establish the following: (i) whether there are national professional standards and competencies for teachers and school leaders; (ii) the key contents (domains, sub-domains, etc.) of the national professional standards and competencies (if any); (iii) the extent of alignment of the national standards and competencies with the African Union Commission (2019) or UNESCO & Education International (2019) *Framework of Standards and Competencies*; (iv) Key issues affecting the quality of teacher education (pre-service and continuous professional development); (v) Key issues in the conditions of service affecting the motivation of teachers and school leaders. Please answer only questions that are relevant in the context of your country. No question is compulsory. Please be assured that your response will be highly appreciated, treated anonymously, and used purely to inform the development of a UNESCO Technical Guidance on Professional Standards and Competencies for Teachers and School Leaders in West Africa. Therefore, please offer you very honest answers to the questions.

**Definition:** The professional standards and competencies are statements of the knowledge, skills, behavior, ethics, values, and attitudes expected of teachers and school leaders. School leader refers to head teacher and principal.

1. Country
2. Name of Ministry or National Teaching Council
3. Your department or station
4. Name
5. Post
6. E-mail
7. WhatsApp number
8. Before this time, have you read a copy of the UNESCO & Education International (2019) *Framework of Professional Standards and Competencies*?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
9. Before this time, have you read a copy of the African Union Commission (2019) *Framework of Professional Standards and Competencies*?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
10. Before this time, have you read a copy of the African Union Commission (2019) *Continental Teacher Qualification Framework*?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
11. Before this time, have you read a copy of the African Union Commission (2019) *Continental Guidelines on the Teaching Profession*?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No



12. Before this time, have you read a copy of the African Union Commission (2017). *Study on Teacher Training, Working, and Living Conditions in Member States*?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
13. Before this time, have you read a copy of the UNESCO IICBA (2017) *Teacher Support and Motivation Framework for Africa: Emerging Patterns*?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
14. How familiar are top officials of the Ministry/National Teaching Council with the UNESCO & Education International (2019) and African Union Commission (2019) Frameworks on the teaching profession?
  - a. Very familiar
  - b. Familiar
  - c. Can't say
  - d. Unfamiliar
  - e. Very unfamiliar
15. Are there legal and policy documents (Constitution, teacher policy, Education Sector Strategic Plan) that emphasize teaching standards and competencies in your country?
  - a. Yes
  - b. Can't say
  - c. No
16. Does your country have a NATIONAL professional standards and competencies for teachers?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
17. Does your country have a NATIONAL professional standards and competencies for school leaders?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
18. Indicate the level of development of the NATIONAL professional standards and competencies for teachers.
  - a. Not started at all
  - b. Preliminary stage (first draft developed)
  - c. Advanced (final draft developed)
  - d. Completed (document is published and available to the public)
19. Indicate the level of development of the NATIONAL professional standards and competencies for school leaders.
  - a. Not started at all
  - b. Preliminary stage (first draft developed)
  - c. Advanced (final draft developed)
  - d. Completed (document is published and available to the public)
20. If there are national professional standards for teachers, which of the following are the domains (major themes)? (Multiple choice is possible)
  - a. Professional Knowledge and Understanding.
  - b. Professional Skills and Practices.
  - c. Professional Values/Attributes/Commitment.
  - d. Professional Partnerships.
  - e. Professional Leadership.
  - f. Other domains not listed above.
21. If there are national professional standards for school leaders, which of the following are the domains (major themes)? (Multiple choice is possible).
  - a. Developing self and others.
  - b. Leading professional knowledge, practice, and conduct.
  - c. Promoting school improvement, innovation, and change.
  - d. Generating resources internally and ensuring accountability.
  - e. Supporting learners' enrolment and participation.

- f. Engaging and working with the community.
  - g. Other domains not listed above.
22. If there are professional standards for teachers, how many career stages are provided? (Note: the career stage is not a salary scale or civil service cadre).
- a. None
  - b. One
  - c. Two
  - d. Three
  - e. Four
  - f. Five
  - g. Six
  - h. Seven
  - i. Eight or more
23. If there are national professional standards for teachers and career stages are provided, which of the following are among the stages?
- a. Beginner
  - b. Proficient
  - c. Expert
  - d. Distinguished
  - e. Other terms not listed above
24. If there are national professional standards for school leaders, how many career stages are provided? (Note: the career stage is not a salary scale or civil service cadre).
- a. None
  - b. One
  - c. Two
  - d. Three
  - e. Four
  - f. Five
  - g. Six
  - h. Seven
  - i. Eight or more
25. If there are national professional standards for school leaders and career stages are provided, which of the following are among the stages? (Multiple choice is possible).
- a. Beginner
  - b. Proficient
  - c. Expert
  - d. Distinguished
  - e. Other terms not listed above
26. If there are national professional standards for teachers, to what extent have they been distributed? (Multiple choice is possible).
- a. Still planning to distribute
  - b. Have distributed to the schools
  - c. Have distributed to individual teachers and school leaders
  - d. Have made copies available on the website
27. If there are national professional standards for school leaders, which of the following actions have been taken to make them familiar with the standards? (Multiple choice is possible).
- a. Still planning to distribute
  - b. Have distributed to the schools
  - c. Have distributed to individual teachers and school leaders
  - d. Have made copies available on the website
28. Which of the following is correct about the regulation of teaching in your country?
- a. A National Teaching Council (or similar authority) is legally established to regulate teaching
  - b. The Ministry of education is directly regulating the teaching profession

- c. Teaching is not regulated by anybody currently
29. Does your country have any law that established teaching as a profession which can be practised by only individuals who are qualified and registered?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
30. Which of the following apply to teachers in your country?
- a. They are professionally registered.
  - b. They are professionally licensed.
  - c. They write licensing examinations.
31. Which of the following apply to school leaders in your country?
- a. They are professionally registered.
  - b. They are professionally licensed.
  - c. They write licensing examinations.
32. Which of the following is the minimum teaching qualification in your country?
- a. One-year teacher education programme
  - b. Two-year teacher education programme (Teachers' Certificate/Diploma)
  - c. Three-year teacher education programme (Higher Teachers' Certificate/Higher National Diploma/Certificate in Education)
  - d. Four-year teacher education programme (degree or equivalent)
33. What number of credits at ordinary Level are required for admission into the minimum teaching qualification programme?
- a. None
  - b. One
  - c. Two
  - d. Three
  - e. Four
  - f. Five
34. What is the highest proportion of teacher qualification at the Basic Education level?
- a. One-year teacher education programme
  - b. Two-year teacher education programme (Teachers' Certificate/Diploma)
  - c. Three-year teacher education programme (Higher Teachers' Certificate/Higher National Diploma/Certificate in Education)
  - d. Four-year teacher education programme (degree or equivalent)
35. Does the country have a Higher Education Authority responsible for accrediting higher education programmes?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
36. Are the teacher education programmes accredited by the Higher Education Authority?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
37. How many teacher education institutions (colleges, polytechnics and universities) are there in your country?
- a. 1-10
  - b. 11-20
  - c. 21-30
  - d. 31-40
  - e. 41-50
  - f. 51 +
38. Are the teacher education institutions in your country producing sufficient number of teachers to fill the teacher gap in the schools?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

39. What could be the major reason(s) for qualified teacher gap (if any) in the school? (Multiple choice is possible).
- The teacher education institutions are not producing enough teachers
  - The teacher education institutions produce enough teachers but only a limited number can be recruited by government
  - Many graduates of the teacher education institutions do not want to teach
  - Employers recruit unqualified teachers for political reasons
  - Government policies do not permit employing qualified teachers from other regions or countries
40. How would you rate the quality of candidates with Teachers' Certificate/Higher Teachers' Certificate or equivalent?
- Excellent
  - Good
  - Fair
  - Poor
  - Very poor
41. How would you rate the quality of graduate teachers (those with B.Ed. or Bachelors with Post Graduate Diploma in Education)?
- Excellent
  - Good
  - Fair
  - Poor
  - Very poor
42. What per cent of teachers at the Basic Education level are unqualified teachers?
- 0-10%
  - 11-20%
  - 21-30%
  - 31-40%
  - 41% +
43. What per cent of teachers at the Senior Secondary Education level are unqualified teachers?
- 0-10%
  - 11-20%
  - 21-30%
  - 31-40%
  - 41% +
44. What is the percentage of the teachers in the Basic and Senior Secondary Education on Government payroll?
- 1-20%
  - 21-40%
  - 41-60%
  - 61-80%
  - 81%+
45. What is the average Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR) at the Basic Education level?
- 1-20
  - 21-40
  - 41-60
  - 61-80
  - 81+
46. What is the average Pupil-Qualified Teacher Ratio (PQTR) at the Basic Education level?
- 1-20
  - 21-40
  - 41-60
  - 61-80
  - 81+

47. What is the students' pass rate in the Basic Education Certificate Examination?
- Excellent (About 70% of students pass the examination)
  - Good (About 60% of students pass the examination)
  - Fair (About 50% of the students pass the examination)
  - Poor (About 40% of the students pass the examination)
  - Very poor (About 30% or less pass the examination)
48. What is the students' pass rate in the final Senior Secondary Certificate Examination?
- Excellent (About 70% of students pass the examination)
  - Good (About 60% of students pass the examination)
  - Fair (About 50% of the students pass the examination)
  - Poor (About 40% of the students pass the examination)
  - Very poor (About 30% or less pass the examination)
49. Is there a national framework on teacher continuous professional development?
- Yes
  - No
50. Are there credit units attached to specific teacher continuous professional development?
- Yes
  - No
51. Currently, are there specified credit units which a teacher must earn to be promoted to the next career stage?
- Yes
  - No
52. Which authority coordinates the teacher continuous professional development at the national level?
- Ministry of Education
  - National Teaching Council or similar authority
  - Different authorities (Ministries, National Teaching Council, development partners, Non-Governmental Organisations) decide what they do
53. What percentage of teachers in the public Basic and Secondary Schools participate in training or workshops in three years?
- 1-20%
  - 21-40%
  - 41-60%
  - 61-80%
  - 81%+
54. How adequate are the teacher training programmes and workshops in meeting the gaps in teacher quality?
- Very adequate
  - Adequate
  - Fair
  - Inadequate
  - Very inadequate
55. Is there existing or planned National School Leadership Programme for school leaders?
- Yes
  - No
56. Does your country organise national/Presidential Annual Best Teacher Awards?
- Yes
  - No
57. On a national level, rate the social status of teachers on a 1-5 scale.  
Rating from 1 (low) to 5 (high)
58. On a national level, rate the job satisfaction of teachers on a 1-5 scale.  
Rating from 1 (low) to 5 (high)
59. Overall, do you think teaching is a profession?
- Yes
  - No

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END/THANK YOU



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