



ALUING teachers



What makes teachers tick?

A policy research report on teachers'
motivation in developing countries



Sharing skills • Changing lives



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VSO

317 Putney Bridge Road
London SW15 2PN, UK.

www.vso.org.uk

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Text

Lucia Fry, VSO Senior Policy Advisor.

Field research

Saskia Verhagen, Lucy Tweedie, Marianne Tudor-Craig

Country case-study reports

Saskia Verhagen, Lucy Tweedie, Marianne Tudor-Craig

Editing

Sara Cottingham, Hilary Coulby, Silke Bernau, Lucy Tweedie

Design

VSO Publications

Cover photo

Dan Cashdan, VSO volunteer, Zambia

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Acronyms and abbreviations

AIEMS	Action on Improvement of English, Maths and Science
AusAid	Australian Agency of International Development
CDSS	Community Day Secondary School
CIE	Centre for International Education
DEO	District Education Officer
DFID	UK Government’s Department for International Development
EFA	Education For All
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MK	Malawi Kwacha
MOE	Ministry of Education
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Skills and Training
NGO	non-government organisation
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PNGTA	Papua New Guinea Teachers’ Association
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SSTEP	Secondary School Teachers Education Project
TOPSUPP	Teachers of Primary Schools Secondary Upgrading Project
TUM	Teachers’ Union of Malawi
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USD	United States Dollars
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas
ZK	Zambian Kwacha

Executive summary

Education in developing countries is at a critical juncture: a potential crisis in the teaching profession threatens the ability of national governments to reach internationally agreed targets to expand and improve education. In many developing countries, the teaching force is demoralised and fractured. Teachers, especially in rural areas, are frequently paid little and late, their educational and training needs are neglected, and they are mired in bureaucracies that support neither their effective performance nor their career progression in their jobs. Teachers, previously benefiting from considerable public respect and reasonable financial reward, feel that their status is in decline. As a result, the teaching profession in developing countries is characterised by high attrition rates, constant turnover, lack of confidence and varying levels of professional commitment. Teachers very often feel powerless either to create positive learning experiences and outcomes for their pupils or to improve their own situations.

Despite the pivotal nature of teachers' contribution to education, there is a tendency on the part of national and international policy-makers to bypass teachers in decision-making, and to neglect their needs when considering new policy directions. Teachers are rarely regarded as partners within education planning and reform, and are frequently treated as passive implementers of decisions, or even as technical inputs. Academic and policy debates focus on teachers' deficiencies, and seldom take into account the difficulties under which they live and work. The fundamental importance of teachers' role in ensuring effectiveness of education must be recognised, understood and taken into account if these international efforts to achieve development targets in education are to be successful. Further, the rights of teachers must be realised in order to secure and strengthen their own commitment to achieving quality 'Education For All' (EFA).

The rationale for this report, then, is that policy analysis and dialogue on education reform will benefit greatly from insights on teaching gained from teachers themselves. VSO sought to gain such insights through a research-based advocacy project, Valuing Teachers. The research explored, from national teachers' own perspectives, critical factors influencing their motivation and identified the changes required in national and international policy, practice and process in order to enhance teachers'

motivation. A variety of techniques, including focus-group work, questionnaires, interviews and workshops was used to elicit the views of national teachers, volunteer teachers and other education stakeholders in three developing countries: Zambia, Papua New Guinea and Malawi¹. The project took as its starting point the supposition that teachers' motivation had a significant impact on their performance and that teacher performance was one of the major factors influencing education quality, an assumption based on feedback from VSO volunteers and their colleagues, backed up by desk-based research.

This exploration provides an opportunity to develop a holistic understanding of the interplay between teachers' remuneration requirements, professional and pedagogic support needs, and their relationship to wider society. The findings express the first-hand views of teachers and education professionals and capture the opinions of those directly affected by education policy – an element that is so often missing from more academic research.

The main findings are:

- ▶▶ Teachers' motivation is fragile and declining.
- ▶▶ Teachers have low self-esteem in their professional role, and feel they are not respected by others.
- ▶▶ Teachers' performance in contributing to learning is strongly influenced by teacher motivation.
- ▶▶ Teachers wish to be enabled to perform well, which in turn influences their motivation.
- ▶▶ Teacher motivation is a critically ignored factor in education management and policy formulation at all levels: school, regional, national and international.
- ▶▶ There is a strong link between teachers' motivation and performance, and education quality, but improving teachers' motivation is not uniformly prioritised as a major concern of national and international policy-makers.
- ▶▶ Non-remuneration and administrative issues are almost as important as the actual level of remuneration teachers receive. Improving teachers' motivation may not, therefore, be as difficult or expensive as it appears.
- ▶▶ Policy-makers and other stakeholders are aware of the problem of poor teacher motivation, but are not taking appropriate action either to seek teachers' views or address their needs.

The recommendations of this report contribute to a better understanding of how policy and practice can be formulated to strengthen teachers' motivation and to support effective teacher performance. Without proper recognition of the value and relevance of teachers' contribution to education, international aspirations to achieve Education for All are in jeopardy.

Recommendations for national and international policy-makers

- ▶▶ Addressing the factors that reduce teachers' motivation should be a major concern of policy-makers. This will create conditions for the success of other education interventions.
- ▶▶ It is essential to improve practices around administration, management and equity of remuneration as they are key factors in teacher motivation.
- ▶▶ Ministries of Education should establish professional representative bodies for teachers, such as general teaching councils, as fora for debate and discussion of teachers' needs and contributions outside the domain of industrial relations and terms and conditions.
- ▶▶ Decentralisation should be accompanied by effective measures to ensure successful top-down and bottom-up communications with schools, supported by monitoring and evaluation systems. The appointment of an ombudsman to ensure open and operational communications between schools and headquarters could be an effective measure.
- ▶▶ Reform processes should incorporate mechanisms to ensure participation of teachers and other civil-society actors, such as NGOs working in education or related fields, in planning, implementation and evaluation of change in education.
- ▶▶ The extent to which teachers have participated in the formulation of national education plans should be a key criterion for donors and international financial institutions in judging their viability.
- ▶▶ International financing frameworks should not recommend a single formula for the calculation of teacher remuneration packages. Teachers' salaries are a matter for collective bargaining and negotiation at country level.
- ▶▶ Donors should be willing to support teachers' remuneration in the same way as other education interventions.

1: These countries were selected on the basis that VSO staff, volunteers and colleagues identified teacher motivation as a key issue in the current education policy context, and that advocacy work was feasible and had the possibility of being effective.

- ▶▶ Donor consortia and international working groups on education should ensure regular representation of teachers in their decision-making processes.
- ▶▶ International monitoring systems should include provision for seeking direct feedback from teachers on the efficacy of education reform.

Recommendations for non-government stakeholders and civil society

- ▶▶ International NGOs should support the inclusion of teacher voices in education decision-making as well as ensuring it in their own planning processes.
- ▶▶ Teacher unions, education councils of religious bodies, civil-society coalitions and teaching service commissions should work together to ensure that teachers are identified, trained and supported to participate in open decision-making processes.
- ▶▶ Teacher unions should develop well-informed positions on debates about quality and relevance of education as well as engaging in industrial relations negotiations on teachers' terms and conditions.
- ▶▶ All education stakeholders should demonstrate the value of teachers, and take steps to ensure that wider society develops a more positive and supportive attitude towards teachers.

Introduction

Education in developing countries is at a critical juncture, as international efforts are galvanised towards the attainment of internationally agreed targets to expand and improve education as part of the Education For All (EFA) movement. However, at the same time, a potential crisis in teaching threatens the ability of many developing-country governments to reach these targets. In such countries, the teaching force is demoralised and fractured. Teachers, especially in rural areas, are frequently paid little and late, their educational and training needs are neglected, and they are mired in bureaucracies that support neither their effective performance in their jobs nor their career progression. As a result, the teaching profession is characterised by high attrition rates, constant turnover, lack of confidence and varying levels of professional commitment. Teachers feel powerless either to create positive learning experiences and outcomes for their pupils or to improve their own situations.

Teachers are the central actors in education, facilitators of learning, bringers of knowledge, brokers of relationships between pupils and the societies in which they live. When policy-makers discuss dilemmas of pedagogy, education management and financing, materials and school infrastructures, what they are really asking themselves is: how can we help teachers to do their job effectively?

Yet despite the pivotal nature of their role, there is a tendency on the part of policy-makers to bypass teachers in decision-making, and to neglect their needs when considering new policy directions. Teachers are rarely regarded as partners within education planning and reform, and are frequently treated as passive implementers of decisions, or even as technical inputs. The fundamental importance of teachers' contribution to education effectiveness must be recognised, understood and taken into account if these efforts are to be successful. Further, the rights of teachers must be realised in order to secure and strengthen their commitment to achieving quality education for all.

VSO has 40 years' experience of placing volunteer teachers and other education professionals to work alongside local teachers in disadvantaged schools in the developing world. From this experience it is clear that teachers have been undermined by the public and policy disregard for their needs and voice. VSO

teachers and their local colleagues, already working in difficult situations and with limited resources, find that morale and motivation in schools is fragile and declining. The implications of this are serious. With the drive of the Education For All movement, it is now more essential than ever that teachers are supported and enabled to engage positively with the process of education reform, and to perform well in the classroom. If they are not supported in this way, education quality will undoubtedly suffer. Teachers, of all people, do not want this to happen.

The starting point for this report, then, is that policy analysis and dialogue on education reform will benefit greatly from insights on teaching gained from teachers themselves. VSO set out to gather such insights through a research-based advocacy project, *Valuing Teachers*. The research explored, from teachers' own perspectives, the following questions:

- » What is the relationship between teacher motivation and performance?
- » What is the current level of teacher motivation in developing countries?
- » What are the critical factors influencing teacher motivation?
- » What changes are required in national and international policy, practice and process in order to enhance teacher motivation?

Motivation was selected as the focus of the research because literature reviews and desk-based research revealed that this dimension of understanding teachers' ability to do their jobs effectively is persistently neglected. While there is general agreement that motivated teachers are crucial to quality education (for example, *The Oxfam Education Report* by Kevin Watkins, 2000, cites 'motivated teachers' as one of five key elements associated with quality education), very few reports attempt to explore the factors affecting teacher motivation in any depth². Too often, the discourse about teachers centres on their deficiencies in pedagogic approaches or subject knowledge, or is locked in industrial relations dialogue.

'The social context of the teachers, the teachers' attitudes, and their working conditions are intimately related in a very complex manner and we need to understand them better... What we do not have is a very clear picture of what motivates teachers, or indeed, what demotivates them.'

Garrett, R.M., 1999, *Teacher job satisfaction in developing countries*, DFID

'Teachers are often blamed for the problems of the school system and students' deficient learning achievements... Teachers, themselves products of a poor education system, are often seen as obstacles to educational change rather than key human resources.'

DESO/Sida, 2000, *Teacher education, teachers' conditions and motivation*, Sida

An exploration of teachers' motivation provides an opportunity to develop a holistic understanding of the interplay between teachers' remuneration needs, professional and pedagogic support needs and their relationship to wider society. It is hoped that this will lead ultimately to a better understanding of how policy and practice can be formulated to offer appropriate incentives and support to ensure effective teacher performance.

The report is based on qualitative research with teachers and does not purport to be an exhaustive study of teacher motivation and/or teacher performance. The findings express the first-hand views of teachers and education professionals in the three case-study countries and so capture the honest opinions of the people directly affected by education policy – an element that is so often missing from more academic research. Research techniques included: literature reviews, desk-based research, analysis of volunteer reports, focus-group work with national teachers and volunteers, semi-structured and in-depth interviews with national teachers, education officials and policy-makers, and other education stakeholders and round-table policy meetings³. The research process used participatory techniques and approaches wherever appropriate and aimed to respect and empower teachers as far as possible using available time and resources. The methods used were of a straightforward, simple nature and could be employed by a range of different people.

2: *The work of the Commonwealth Secretariat, in particular that authored by Coombe and White (1994), is a notable exception.*

3: *See Appendix 1 for details of methodology.*

Case-study countries were Zambia, Malawi and Papua New Guinea (PNG)⁴ and focus-group research was conducted in schools where VSO works – mainly rural, disadvantaged, secondary schools with teachers who had a range of education qualifications, and were in many cases primary-trained⁵. Stakeholders at regional and national level were also consulted through one-to-one interviews and workshops. Research took place between July 2001 and August 2002. For each case-study country, a policy report was prepared drawing conclusions and making context-specific recommendations⁶.

This report is a synthesis of findings from all three case-study countries, and is presented within the context of current policy developments and internationally agreed education goals. It is laid out as follows.

Section 1 describes the international policy context for the research and report, drawing out current issues for the teaching profession and establishing the timely nature of this research. **Section 2** then examines the importance of teachers in delivering quality education and describes VSO's experience of working with them. This is followed in **Section 3** with an overview of the status of, and discourse about, teachers and teaching. **Section 4** then explores the research findings in six key areas:

1. **Context of the research**, including location, school facilities, pupil profile, qualifications and training, community participation, HIV/AIDS and gender.
2. **Teachers' motivation and performance, and quality education** explores VSO and national teachers' views on the relationship between motivational support for teachers and their performance and education quality.
3. **Teachers as employees** explores factors affecting teachers' motivation deriving from their remuneration and human resource management.
4. **Teachers as educators** demonstrates the impact of training, pedagogic support, and pupil achievement and behaviour on teachers' motivation.
5. **Teachers as members of community and society** examines the effect of teachers' declining public status on their morale and motivation.
6. **Teachers' voice** looks at the issue of teachers' participation in decision-making from teachers' own perspective and that of other stakeholders.

The report concludes in **Section 5** by distilling the main trends in factors affecting teachers' motivation and draws out implications for national and international policy-making. It argues that it is time for national and international policy-makers to make teachers full partners in education reform. To do this, they must first secure the commitment of teachers to their profession by ensuring that policy frameworks and budget allocations are optimally structured to enable positive teachers' motivation and excellence in teachers' performance. Recognising that there can be no real policy formula or blueprint solution for supporting teachers' motivation in the South, this report does not seek to make specific recommendations on the best approach to doing this, but will identify themes that should be addressed by policy-makers. It will call for a new approach to policy-making at national and international level in which teachers are brought into the dialogue on strategy formulation. Teachers are perhaps better placed and better informed than any other stakeholders on what does and does not work in education policy. As such, their participation in design, implementation, adaptation and evaluation of policy and project initiatives is an essential ingredient of success. Without their participation, it is clear that reforms will falter and change will be slow in coming. Indeed, researchers at the University of Edinburgh concluded that lack of consultation led to the failure of India's 'Operation Blackboard', a government programme that aimed to ensure that all schools had at least two rooms and two teachers, and that all teachers had a package of essential teaching aids. The researchers found that, in Gujarat, the programme fell apart because, 'failure to consult teachers, or their representatives, at any planning stage contributed to demoralisation, alienation and passive resistance.'

The scale of reform and the challenges facing teachers in the 21st century is huge. Without teachers' active engagement in the change processes this implies, it is likely that the resultant increases in enrolment will be accompanied by a decline in education quality and the eventual loss of community confidence in education.

4. These countries were selected on the basis that VSO staff, volunteers and colleagues identified teacher motivation as a key issue in the current education policy context.

5: Many of the general lessons learned could equally well apply to primary schools, where teachers' status and reward is equally precarious. In Zambia and Malawi, researchers also visited at least one primary school to establish areas of common concern.

6: Full texts of these reports are available on request from the VSO Advocacy Department.

Section 1

International policy context

The World Conference on Education of 2000 in Dakar, Senegal, reconfirmed and refined international commitments to ensuring Education For All made in Jomtien, Thailand, ten years earlier.

►► Box 1 ◀◀

Education For All commitments – Dakar 2000

- expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality
- ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes
- achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults
- eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality
- improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

At the time of writing, it appears that at last political will has a chance of being marshalled behind the target of achieving universal basic education of good quality, following a huge effort on the part of global civil society. A new Education For All Action Plan has been approved by the Development Committee of the World Bank and IMF⁷, which sets out a framework for mobilising donor resources to allow 'feasible' Education For All plans to be operationalised. The Action Plan has also been backed by UNESCO, UNICEF and the G8 education taskforce.

The fact that the World Bank has taken the helm in the push to mobilise donor funds for realising the Education For All targets will lend impetus to education policy-making around the world. However,

7: compromising Finance and Development Ministers of shareholder governments from around the world.

'The World Bank is proactively harnessing opportunities presented by the increased international support for education and has adopted a dynamic strategy to scale up EFA efforts, going beyond these targets to ensure the long-term sustainability of quality education. The overall thrust is to use a systematic and integrated approach to education encompassing basic, secondary, tertiary and higher levels of education that would help countries accelerate progress from whatever point they are at along the education and development continuum.'

World Bank, 2002, *Action Plan to Accelerate Progress Towards Education For All*, World Bank

it remains to be seen how many donor countries will commit to the plan, and to what extent. What is clear is that the plan reflects and contributes to a significant shift in the debate about the role that the international community plays in supporting education in the South. Donors now increasingly countenance the possibility of disbursing aid in the form of direct budget support, moving away from the project-based interventions that have dominated the last 20 years' work in education in developing countries. After the 1980s and 1990s, when education was regarded principally as an arena for cost-reduction and efficiency savings, this can only be welcome. It seems likely that the availability of additional funds for education will mean a renewed dynamism on the part of national governments in drawing up effective education strategies. However, fresh impetus does not, and should not, come without due consideration of the implications. It is abundantly clear that donors, governments, communities and civil-society organisations will want to ensure that the education systems in which they are investing deliver high quality, cost-effective, inclusive and empowering learning for all.

One key theme that emerged from discussions at Dakar was that the issue of access to education has overshadowed *quality* in the drive to achieve the original Education For All targets. Thus, despite a modest growth in enrolment rates, there remained serious doubts about the effectiveness of the educational experience. Ultimately, it is feared, the efforts of poor countries to increase enrolments in education, particularly at primary level, will count for nothing if there is no concomitant improvement in the quality of education. One of two scenarios is possible: a generation of learners will leave education with the expectation of participating fully in society and economy but without the skills and

knowledge needed to do so; or community confidence will be damaged to the extent that the gains made in enrolments will gradually recede as parents withdraw their children from school early, or choose not to send them at all. The Dakar Education For All Framework for Action drew attention to the crucial nature of teachers' contribution to the achievement of improvements to quality.

'The pre-eminent role of teachers as well as other educational personnel in providing quality basic education needs to be recognized and developed to optimize their contribution. This must entail measures to respect teachers' union rights and professional freedoms, and to improve their working conditions and status, notably in respect of their recruitment, initial and in-service teacher training, remuneration and career development possibilities, as well as to allow teachers to fulfill their aspirations, social obligations and ethical responsibilities.'

Dakar Framework for Action, 2000, *Building partnerships and mobilising resources*, Working Paper from the World Education Forum

However, several issues pertaining to this new era of financing and planning for Education For All give cause for concern. **First**, the issue of teachers' salaries remains contentious, with the World Bank Action Plan including a recommended ceiling on teacher salaries as a percentage of per capita GDP and proportion of national education budgets. While it must be recognised that an appropriate balance needs to be achieved between expenditure on salaries and non-salary inputs, the Bank's recommendations suggest a worrying tendency to continue considering teachers' remuneration as a potential area of cost-reduction. Quite apart from the fact that this disregards principles of national sovereignty and international rights of collective bargaining, it implies a failure to understand the key role of teachers in delivering education strategies in the 21st century. VSO's findings suggest that policy-making on remuneration requires a nuanced, well-researched understanding of how to reward and incentivise teachers in order to ensure their participation in the national effort to improve access to and quality of education. The World Bank plan has the potential to undermine governments' ability to formulate rational, appropriate national policy in this vital sphere, and in extremis, could become a blunt instrument for influencing teachers' salaries by the donor community.

Second, doubts creep in about the capacity of education systems to absorb and make best use of additional aid. During the course of this research, it became clear that teachers' personal and professional lives act as a 'lens' through which the observer can understand critical issues in education, including decentralisation, bureaucracy, accountability and transparency, funding, balancing quality and access, curriculum design and availability of essential materials. All these issues seriously affect the lives and work of teachers and the degree to which innovations can be successfully managed is decisively influenced by teachers' ability and commitment. Teachers' reflections on the factors motivating them in their daily lives and work reveal that years of under-funding and churning reform have left education systems in a state of vulnerability and even disarray. Perhaps most importantly, management capacity at all levels of education systems is weak⁸. Teachers' accounts of the failure of administrative and bureaucratic systems to deliver, for example, teaching and learning materials or information about new syllabuses and curricula, point to a deep malaise in education management that must be addressed as a priority. Without this, it is doubtful whether the World Bank Action Plan can be put into effective action.

Third, the implications of the implications of expansion of education required to achieve Education For All are that the demand for teachers will increase massively over the coming decade. Education International⁹, for example, estimates that five million primary teachers will be needed to deliver the commitment on primary education in Africa alone. Issues of recruitment, training, retention and performance of teachers will become matters of urgent concern if this requirement is to be met.

Fourth, it is evident that despite the fine words of the Dakar Framework for Action, teachers' voices have gone unheard for too long, and it is unclear at this time that any new period of planning in national and international policy fora will support their inclusion. Certainly, the Global Campaign for Education is doubtful whether the rhetoric of civil-society consultation, seemingly so powerfully endorsed by all players at Dakar, has thus far been realised in the formulation of national education plans. Even where consultation, has taken place, the degree to which teachers' views have been sought is variable. As will be demonstrated below, this may have serious implications for the viability of the plans.

8: Commentators on teacher effectiveness have also noted this vital issue. Notably, the Commonwealth Secretariat (1994) has been concerned with this matter for some time: 'There is little doubt that teachers' morale and motivation, their commitment, and ultimately their performance would benefit considerably if education ministries, as employers, put into practice reliable principles of good management'.

9: Education International is a worldwide trade-union organisation of education personnel, with 24.5 million members.

This report concerns itself with the essential role that teachers will play and have long played in realising the aspirations of international society to provide Education For All. As will be demonstrated in **Section 2**, much has been expected of teachers over the last 50 years, and there is more change yet to come.

Section 2

The importance of teachers

2.1 Why do teachers matter... to education?

In all education systems, the performance of teachers is one of the handful of factors determining school effectiveness and learning outcomes. But teachers influence is even greater in the South – they are *the* major learning resource in most developing-country schools. In under-resourced education systems, teaching with limited resources and in difficult working and living conditions, they play a pivotal role in enabling societies to realise their educational aspirations. While this is true for all education systems around the world, it is particularly so for developing countries, where school-related factors are more important than non-school factors in determining differences in pupil achievement (Vulliamy, 1987; Heyneman, 1987). Indeed, as acknowledged by the World Bank, this is one of the most easily demonstrable causal relationships ever found in research on school systems (Farrell and Oliveira, 1993).

Teachers' interaction with learners is the axis on which educational quality turns, and as has been highlighted above, it is quality of education which will increasingly preoccupy policy-makers in the coming years. If school effectiveness can be regarded as being the 'value added' to an individual by their school experience, it must be acknowledged that this value is added mainly by their interaction with teachers.

'A key determinant of student achievement is the quality of teaching... Governments must design policies and programmes aimed specifically at improving the academic and pedagogical preparation of teachers and providing incentives to strengthen their motivation and professional commitment... Improving teacher motivation is perhaps the trickiest task that governments face in their effort to upgrade the teaching force.'

Lockheed, M.E. and Verspoor, A., 1991, *Improving Primary Education in Developing Countries*, World Bank/OUP

Teachers are also the major agents in delivering education reform. The late 20th and early 21st century have witnessed a huge number of shifts in thinking about how to improve and expand education. Teachers are both the recipients and deliverers of this change. A massive growth in enrolments, the shift towards child-centred methodologies, and decentralisation of education

management are just some examples of education policy trends which not only have major implications for teachers' jobs and lives, they also depend on teachers for their effective realisation. The UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID) acknowledges this:

'The big educational project of many developing countries, in the next decade or so, is involving wholesale change on a level quite unprecedented in those countries. The successful management of this change is therefore crucial. However this cannot be undertaken without a clear understanding of the reaction of the professionals to changes in their work and the heightened expectations being made of them.'

Garrett R M., 1999, *Teacher job satisfaction in developing countries*, DFID

More than this, policy-makers rightly believe that the work of teachers should incorporate an element of nurturing and socialisation, with teachers acting as role models and counsellors for their pupils. Often, contact with the teacher is one of the few experiences that pupils have with an educated person in formal employment. This means that teachers' work ethic, gender roles, professionalism and relationship with community and society at large, have an enormous impact on pupils. In situations where many pupils are boarders, or travel long distances to reach the schools, teachers need to play a pastoral role, ensuring that their pupils are emotionally and physically safe and secure.

In many countries, teachers are seen as a conduit of information between governments and remote rural areas, and are expected to engage in activities such as immunisation drives or census-taking. Internationally, there is an increasing trend to expect education to take on a humanising dimension and enable citizenship and participation in society. Once again, the work required to realise these worthy ambitions falls largely on teachers.

Teachers are also expected to respond to wider societal demands. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa, there is an increasing expectation that teachers can play an active role in HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness-raising, and to adapt their practice and organisation of education in response to the pandemic. Michael Kelly (2000), for example, posits the view that education must take on a new

role and content in light of HIV/AIDS. This aspiration adds a further dimension to the work of the already over-stretched teaching profession, and does not always take into account the needs of teachers themselves as affected by the pandemic.

►► Box 2 ◀◀

Qualities of a good teacher

- Showing respect
- Being genuine
- Enthusiasm and competence
- A professional attitude
- Empathy
- Encouraging learning
- Good work preparation
- Developing curiosity
- Fairness
- Selecting appropriate teaching styles
- Interest in the subject and the child
- Openness
- Recognising student effort
- Being consistent
- Establishing trust
- Updating skills and knowledge
- Keeping promises
- Sharing humour, warmth and honesty
- A good listener, as well as a good talker
- Using language the student understands
- Setting and maintaining standards of work
- Behaviour and attitudes in the class and out in the community
- Seeing the other view

(From a poster issued by the National Department of Education Papua New Guinea, and displayed in all schools)

There is of course one further reason why policy-makers should pay attention to teachers: in most developing countries, teachers' salaries make up a huge proportion of education budgets – up to 95 per cent in some cases (UNESCO World Education Report, 1998). Policy-makers need to ensure that this substantial investment pays dividends, and to do this, a rational policy framework must be in place to support teacher performance. This situation also provides an opportunity for donors and civil-society to monitor whether funds within the education budget reach their intended targets – teachers are eventually likely to broadcast the fact that their salaries are unpaid.

To conclude, it would seem that within the international policy arena there are some causes for optimism. Since the status of teachers depends to a very great extent on the status of education, teachers might be able to anticipate an improvement in their terms and living and working conditions if the drive towards realising EFA goals does gain momentum. Yet, concerns about the quality of planning by national governments and about the potential for conditions to be imposed on release of donor funds remain. An increasing prioritisation of education will not benefit teachers if the additional resources are mainly used for the expansion of the education system on the basis of existing conditions. This is the logical outcome of prevailing trends in economic and financial planning in the South from neo-liberal theories that seek to depress public-sector spending. The latest iteration of World Bank/IMF frameworks for lending is the new Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) approach. Despite the emphasis on national ownership, civil-society participation and poverty reduction, neo-liberal thinking is still predominant in the emerging PRSPs, with clear implications for education spending and, in particular, teachers' remuneration packages. From all perspectives then, there will be a renewed need to understand the relationship between remuneration and other factors affecting teacher morale, motivation and performance.

'If teachers cannot perform, how can we expect a high standard in education?'

World Bank Project Coordinator, Papua New Guinea

'We know that teachers are the key factor in contributing towards any enhanced quality of classroom experiences.'

Garrett, R.M., 1999, *Teacher job satisfaction in developing countries*
DFID

2.2 Why do teachers matter... to VSO?

VSO is an international development agency working through volunteers. Its work is based on a fundamental belief in international voluntarism, placing skilled and experienced individuals from another context and culture (whether that is in the North or South), to live and work with national colleagues in similar circumstances and with similar salaries, in order to share skills and together build the capabilities of individuals, organisations and institutions. VSO believes that education is a

fundamental human right and a key element in the development of individuals, communities and nations that enables them to realise their full potential. VSO works in education in a number of different ways: direct service delivery, non-formal education, pre-service and in-service teacher training, curriculum development and policy formulation. VSO's most recent strategic plan, *Focus For Change*, sets out its commitment to improving quality teaching.

'Highly-motivated, well-trained and professionally-supported teachers are crucial for an effective education system. VSO will help to improve the quality and effectiveness by working at all levels of the education system, from teacher-training to policy-making.'

VSO, *Focus For Change*, 2002

From its earliest days, VSO has supported secondary education in disadvantaged areas through provision of qualified and experienced secondary school teachers to work as classroom teachers. The aim is to enable education systems to expand and improve in the face of absolute shortages of educated and qualified teachers in countries, or embarking on the expansion of access to secondary schooling. VSO teachers are expected not only to deliver the curriculum alongside national colleagues, but to share skills formally and informally through cooperation with others and participation in small-scale teacher training initiatives. Typically, VSO volunteers work in remote, poor rural regions of developing countries, where national teachers are scarce or non-existent. The absence of teachers in such regions is due to a variety of reasons, with national shortages of teachers, lack of local recruitment and training policies, aftermath of conflict or political strife, inadequate incentives to attract teachers from other parts of the countries to these areas being just some of them.

However, VSO has become increasingly concerned about the failure of education policy frameworks and systems to attract, retain and motivate national teachers, especially in disadvantaged rural areas. VSO is committed to the principle that teaching placements have a multiplier effect because of the opportunities they present for VSO volunteers to engage in skill-sharing with national teachers. The emphasis of VSO's work in education is therefore about long-term capacity-building of individuals, schools and education systems at local and national

level. Through this work, VSO volunteers and staff have observed that a lack of appropriate support for teachers results in high turnover, shortages of teachers (particularly in undesirable postings) and a gradual erosion of teachers' professionalism, which could be characterised as 'virtual attrition'. These impacts will be examined in greater depth in **Section 4** but the following quotes from VSO educationalist reports demonstrate their concerns.

'Low motivation of teachers, poor attendance and the changing schedules of teachers [were constraining factors]. I think the major constraint on this placement in terms of sustainability, is the socio-economic situation that exists across the whole of Cambodia, particularly with regard to teachers' salaries. These are so low that teachers need to have a second, and often third, job just to make ends meet.'

VSO teacher trainer, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Cambodia

'Teachers' motivation is problematic but understandable given their working conditions. In a way it's easier for us, as VSOs, to maintain enthusiasm when we know we are only here for a short period of time and are paid enough to get by. For our Malawian colleagues, it's easy to see how demoralising their situation is.'

VSO teacher, secondary school, Malawi

Section 3

Declining status, deficit discourse: the place of the teacher in education policy debates

It is possible that no other profession has been subjected to so much scrutiny, debate and discussion as the teaching profession. In the UK, for example, where VSO's head office is based and from where it recruits most of its education volunteers, debates focus on the best way to recruit, reward and retain teachers in a time when there are desperate shortages in classrooms all over the country. In the developing world, a deficit model for understanding teachers' professionalism and status tends to prevail in academic and policy discourse on teachers. In other words, discussion and, to some extent, policy interventions focus on the attributes perceived to be lacking in teachers, principally: knowledge of a range of pedagogic methods and approaches, subject expertise, professional commitment and work ethic. At the same time, the public's regard for teachers has deteriorated. Both these trends have developed in the absence of recognition that teachers do not receive the conditions and support to enable teaching to take place, much less learning.

But it is worth noting that this was not always the case. In the 1940s, 50s and early 60s, the teaching profession enjoyed an elite status in the majority of countries – especially within secondary education, reflecting in part the fact that secondary schooling was only available to a tiny minority of the population. Teachers were seen as bringers of progress, modernity and development, and were rewarded and respected accordingly.

In 1966, a Special Intergovernmental Conference on the Status of Teachers adopted the *UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers*, largely as a response to the growth of the teaching profession in developing countries. This recommendation articulated a bold and optimistic vision of the future role and status of the profession in education and society at large.

»» **Box 3** ««

The guiding principles of the UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers

1. Education from the earliest school years should be directed to the all-round development of the human personality and to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and economic progress of the community, as well as to the inculcation of deep respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; within the framework of these values the utmost importance should be attached to the contribution to be made by education to peace and to understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and among racial or religious groups.
2. It should be recognised that advance in education depends largely on the qualifications and ability of the teaching staff in general and on the human pedagogical and technical qualities of the individual teachers.
3. The status of teachers should be commensurate with the needs of education as assessed in the light of educational aims and objectives; it should be recognised that the proper status of teachers and due public regard for the profession of teaching are of major importance for the full realisation of these aims and objectives.
4. Teaching should be regarded as a profession: it is a form of public service which requires of teachers expert knowledge and specialised skills, acquired and maintained through rigorous and continuing study; it calls also for a sense of personal and corporate responsibility for the education and welfare of the pupils in their charge.
5. All aspects of the preparation and employment of teachers should be free from any form of discrimination on grounds of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national or social origin, or economic condition.
6. Working conditions for teachers should be such as will best promote effective learning and enable teachers to concentrate on their professional tasks.
7. Teachers' organisations should be recognised as a force which can contribute greatly to educational advance and which therefore should be associated with the determination of educational policy.

A mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the Recommendation was drawn up two years later, when a joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers was established. This body initially based its work on a questionnaire sent out every three to four years to governments. However, due to a patchy and poor quality response, this practice was abandoned in 1991. It was replaced by a focused approach that uses a range of methodologies to gather information on specific topics deemed to be of major importance to the status of teachers. In 1994, the Committee moved a step further in calling upon UNESCO and the ILO to develop a set of reliable, internationally comparable statistical indicators that could facilitate monitoring the status of teachers. However, mechanisms were never put in place for the enforcement of the Recommendation, a situation it shares with other international agreements and declarations.

Ironically, the period during which the Recommendation has been in existence has seen a dramatic downturn in both the fortune and in perceptions of teachers in developing countries. The 1960s and 70s saw tremendous efforts in the majority of developing countries to increase enrolment amongst the school-age populations, particularly in primary education. This inevitably resulted in a massive surge in demand for primary teachers in particular (see, for example, UNESCO/IIEP, 1998). The demand was met to some extent by employing large numbers of unqualified, untrained teachers, often on temporary and poorly-remunerated contracts. In many cases, these teachers had only completed the level of education that they were tasked with teaching. Despite such measures, there were still too few teachers, resulting in large class sizes, multi-shift and multi-grade teaching and the need for those teachers in school to cover for vacant posts. At the same time as this massive expansion in primary enrolment, demand for secondary education increased, with no concomitant increase in funding. If anything, the status of secondary schools, and thus the teachers within them, actually declined. These problems ran deepest where disadvantage was greater – remote rural areas frequently suffered their impact most keenly.

While the qualifications and education of many teachers, then, was poor, and numbers inadequate, the demands on them, as highlighted in **Section 2**,

have grown in complexity and numbers. The last 50 years have seen a barrage of educational innovation aimed at improving quality and accountability of education in the developing world, affecting both primary and secondary teaching. Some of the important trends have been:

- ▶ decentralisation of education management
- ▶ introduction of pupil-centred approaches into curricula and methodology
- ▶ a greater emphasis on assessment and more time devoted to it
- ▶ shifts away from long pre-service teacher training towards shorter pre-service training with ongoing in-service opportunities
- ▶ cost-saving and cost-effectiveness measures, particularly multi-shift and multi-grade teaching.

The philosophies and ideas behind these innovations have very often been developed by Northern donors. This has led to a situation in some countries where donor lending and grants for education have almost exclusively taken the form of project funding, whereby aid for education is conditional on the government implementing a particular project or programme of work. The projects frequently depend on the 'expertise' of highly-paid development consultants, and can result in considerable influence of these expatriates on decisions about mainstream education delivery. Doubts about the efficacy and appropriateness of such projects were voiced during this research due to the preconceptions and approach of the those who usually deliver them. Further, they are often based on the aforementioned assumption that teacher performance is in deficit and must be upgraded through the adoption of a particular, usually Northern-devised practice, or the use of a new technology. The sustainability of such projects is questionable. One example that was cited during the research was the British Council AIEMS (Action on Improvement of English, Maths and Science) project in Zambia that had established teacher resource centres but had, according to some teachers, become a 'white elephant'.

And of course, it is not merely changing circumstances within education and shifts in educational theory that have had an impact on the lives of teachers. The prevailing trends in macro-economic theory, dominated by the re-structuring and adjustment policies of the 1980s, had major implications for the material status of teachers and for their working conditions (see, for example, ILO,

1996). Governments have been encouraged, or compelled, to see public expenditure on education as an arena for cost-saving and cutbacks. Teachers' salaries, comprising the largest proportion of any education budget, have come under particular pressure and in some cases have experienced such marked decline in value as barely to constitute a living income. Teachers' salaries have suffered directly as a result of fiscal parsimony, but teachers are also affected in other ways. School infrastructures, provision of teaching and learning materials, inspectorate and advisory services and professional development opportunities within education have also suffered as a result of this externally-driven financial constraint.

'The general picture is that few teachers manage on their salary to the end of the month... When all basic costs are paid, there is nothing left and in many cases the salary has already disappeared before these costs are paid. To manage, most employees in the education sector have to look for additional income and have little time left to concentrate on their job. One difference between teachers and other employees in the public sector is that the teachers have fewer opportunities to generate extra resources.'

Education International, 1999, *Structural adjustment, education reforms and trade union strategies: Ghana as a case study*, Education International

'In the case of Latin America, it is acknowledged that over the last decade and within the IMF/World Bank structural adjustment policies, the adjusting variable has been the teachers' salary, which has experienced a more profound reduction than that of other public servants.'

Torres, R.M., 1995, *Teacher Education: from rhetoric to action*, UNICEF

Teachers have responded in a variety of ways. All case-study countries in the VSO research had experienced teacher strikes within the last five years. It is also clear that the practice of taking second jobs has become commonplace, and that in some cases, teachers' commitment to educational norms and values has been undermined by the difficulties of their daily lives. Teachers, confused and ill-informed about frequent changes in education policy and practice, can be resistant to innovation in pedagogy.

It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that blame for the failure of education systems to deliver quality

education for the majority of the population is increasingly laid at the feet of teachers. Policy-makers, academics and even non-government organisations (NGOs) have tended to cast teachers as conservative, self-serving and reactionary, as part of the problem rather than part of the solution. A number of commentators have remarked on this tendency (see, for example, Farrell and Oliveira, 1993; DESO/Sida, 2000). While in rhetoric they are often idealistically portrayed as bringers of enlightenment to the poor, in reality, the combination of Northern-inspired education models and neo-liberal economics has reduced them to little more than factors of production.

In many ways, the lives of teachers, who form the biggest body of public servants in almost all countries, exemplify the impact of externally-driven economic trends, such as structural adjustment, on the developing world. They are also the deliverers and mediators of a number of education policy trends and innovations. However, despite the fine words of the *UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers*, little recognition has been given to their needs and perspectives. This neglect, as will be demonstrated below, has had a marked deleterious effect on levels of teacher motivation, especially in disadvantaged, marginalised schools. The report will now go on to examine the relationship between teachers' motivation and performance, and to detail the specific factors affecting teacher motivation.

Section 4

Research findings

As stated, VSO's starting point for this research was the supposition, based on feedback from VSO volunteers and returned volunteers, that levels of teacher motivation had a significant impact on their performance. It was also assumed that teacher performance was one of the major factors influencing education quality. In all countries, there are teachers for whom teaching is a vocation, who have intrinsic high levels of commitment to the teaching profession. There are also those who have never wanted to be teachers and have no commitment to the job. The majority, though, lies somewhere in between. They wish to remain in teaching and want to do a good job, but their motivation and thus their performance is critically influenced by the extent to which their situation supports and enables them. VSO set out to explore this belief and to develop understanding of factors affecting teacher motivation in three developing countries: Zambia, Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Malawi (see **Section 4.1**).

In each case-study country, an average of 60–70 teachers participated in focus-group discussions about their motivation and performance. Individual teachers and head teachers from every school also gave in-depth interviews about the issues. In all cases, approximately 30–40 stakeholders were consulted, from a wide variety of backgrounds including representatives of teacher unions and civil-society organisations, regional and national education officials, and donors¹¹.

It was abundantly clear that teachers' motivation is at best fragile and at worst severely deteriorating in the three countries. A combination of neglect of the secondary school sector, scarcity of resources within the system and an ever-expanding set of demands on teachers, accompanied by a deterioration in their social standing, has led to a climate of frustration, and in the case of Zambia at least, despondency. This has already begun to have an effect on teacher performance and education quality. Conversely, where teachers' motivation is good, there are positive impacts on teachers' performance and the quality of schooling. This will be demonstrated in **Section 4.2**, below.

In **Sections 4.3 – 4.5**, the factors affecting teacher motivation will be elucidated. It is worth noting that teachers in all cases ranked issues deriving from their sense of being enabled and supported to operate successfully as professionals at least as highly, if not

11: See Appendix 2 for education statistics from each country.

more highly, than issues of their remuneration package. In PNG, the most prevalent source of teacher demoralisation was poor school management. In Malawi, access to training opportunities and issues of complexity of workload dominated teacher responses to the researchers. Only in Zambia was salary consistently rated the most important factor affecting teacher motivation, but even here it was closely followed by school management.

Therefore, the findings on the factors affecting teachers' motivation divide into three main themes, according to the source of their motivation or demotivation:

Section 4.3 will focus on motivational factors that were associated with teachers' terms and conditions of service, including their relationship to management structures within and beyond school. In other words, it will seek to elucidate how teachers feel about their situation *as employees*.

Section 4.4 will look at motivational factors relating to teachers' performance and professionalism *as educators*. It will analyse the impact of access to training, teaching and learning materials, inspections and guidance support, workload and pupil performance and behaviour.

Section 4.5 will examine teachers' relationship to *the communities around them and to wider society*, and the impact of their declining status on their motivation.

Section 4.6, following on from the findings on factors affecting teacher motivation, will examine the issue of teachers' voice in how far teachers' concerns are known and addressed by policy-makers at national level. It will share teachers' own views on the extent to which their views, opinions and vital knowledge are welcomed and acted upon. It will also highlight the views of other stakeholders on the issue of teacher motivation. Notably, it will demonstrate that although there is some knowledge of the issue amongst influential players in education in the three countries, there is a lack of nuanced understanding and a resistance to taking responsibility for and action on it. This is because systems do not support the inclusion of teachers' views as central to decision-making in education, to the detriment of teachers and of education itself.

4.1 Context of the research

VSO teachers are typically placed in schools that bear the brunt of teacher shortages and high teacher turnover; these schools therefore provided the fora for the focus-group research. While clearly there are huge variations both within and between education systems, certain generalisations can be made about the characteristics of the schools where the research took place, and their contexts.

►► Box 4 ◀◀

Extract from a VSO placement outline, Zambia 2002

Kasempa is a very large, very rural district in the north-western province of Zambia. It is undoubtedly one of the country's least developed areas. The journey from Lusaka is just possible in a day with private transport, but takes two days with public transport. The roads are good from Lusaka to the Copperbelt, but badly pot-holed from there to Solwezi. Kasempa School is a disadvantaged school due its rural location and, like most other rural schools in Zambia, the school finds it difficult to recruit qualified Zambian teachers. Teachers prefer to work in urban areas which have better living conditions. At national level, the emphasis is on basic education (Grades 1–9), leaving secondary schools to fend for themselves. As a result, secondary schools are poorly funded, resulting in poorly resourced schools. Rural secondary schools are the worst hit. The conditions in which staff live and work are bad and can sometimes be evident in the classroom. Sadly, government is not in a position to revamp the schools.

4.1.1 Location

The vast majority of the schools studied were situated in undesirable, disadvantaged locations. In the main, this can be interpreted to mean poor, rural regions, although in Malawi and PNG some of the research took place in schools in peri-urban and urban contexts. That said, a generally predominant feature of the schools where the research took place was their physical remoteness (either because of distance or poor roads or transport) from services such as clinics, hospitals, banks, libraries, shopping and leisure facilities. Travel to other parts of the

country was costly, rare and unreliable. In PNG, this was particularly extreme; schools were accessible solely by plane, and the only facility within reach by foot was often a small shop selling kerosene, batteries and canned meat. Communication by telephone or post was at best erratic.

In all three countries, teachers were rarely from the communities in which they lived and worked, meaning that their year was punctuated by difficult lengthy journeys back to their home communities. The physical remoteness of the schools also meant that teachers far from regional and provincial education authorities were rarely visited and did not receive regular prompt communications from the region or the centre. Teachers had little opportunity for contact with their community of practice outside their schools. Teaching and learning materials were slow to reach the schools and usually did so in inadequate numbers, if they arrived at all.

4.1.2 School facilities

Most schools had basic infrastructure only, many were dilapidated and neglected. Typically, classrooms were old, dusty and equipped with at most a chalkboard and a limited number of desks and chairs. Often, they did not have glass in the windows, and were vulnerable to prevailing weather conditions: leaky in the rainy season, stifling during hot summer months, freezing in winter. Teachers' housing mirrored this pattern, with teachers frequently inhabiting dwellings that suffered from poor maintenance and infrastructure, and lacked electricity, running water, good sanitation and cooking facilities. This is not to say that all schools studied in the research followed this pattern, however, since the researchers did encounter schools that had benefited either from the input of extra resources or from effective maintenance programmes by good management.

4.1.3 Profile of pupils

Pupils typically achieved lower educational attainment than the average within their countries, and a class might well include a number of over-age pupils and pupils who were repeating years a number of times. In some cases, pressure from national administration or the need to collect school fees led to secondary schools admitting pupils who were barely literate or numerate. Class sizes were relatively large though not unmanageably so

(average 35–45 pupils). In all three countries, the medium of instruction for secondary school was English, meaning that pupils might be learning in a second, third or even fourth language. Pupils came from a diversity of language groups, which did not in all cases include the first language of the teacher. Very few pupils had the opportunity to travel far, even within the country, meaning that their experience of life was very limited, yet syllabuses were usually academic and based on the experience of urban life, including concepts such as trains, robots, washing machines and traffic lights.

4.1.4 Qualifications and training

The profile of the teachers was one of considerable heterogeneity, both within and between countries. A huge range of levels of education and qualification could be observed, with teachers having been trained and recruited through a variety of different schemes. In all three countries, trained secondary school teachers worked alongside colleagues who had been promoted from primary schools or recruited in from other professions in response to teacher shortages. By and large, of the teachers interviewed for this research, those in PNG had attained the highest levels of education and professional qualification, followed by Zambia, with Malawi bringing up the rear. This is in part due to the fact that the bulk of the research in Malawi took place in the recently created Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSSs). These schools were created to meet the increased demand for secondary schooling caused by the introduction of free primary education in 1994. Teachers in the CDSSs were usually trained to primary level at best. In all three countries, there was a great desire amongst teacher cohorts to upgrade their professional qualifications and many were either seeking release to follow courses at a university or teacher training institution or were pursuing distance education.

4.1.5 Community participation

Communities and parents were rarely involved in any positive way in the life of the school, even though both national and VSO teachers felt this was beneficial when it did occur. Usually, lack of involvement was due to indifference or alienation from education generally. In extreme cases, communities were actually hostile to the schools and their teachers, threatening and occasionally carrying out acts of violence against the staff. Teachers in

PNG, in particular, were reported to be vulnerable to community hostility, exacerbated by the fact that they were rarely living and working within their home communities.

4.1.6 HIV/AIDS

Teachers in all three countries were affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This is much more openly an issue in Malawi and Zambia than in PNG, although HIV/AIDS is an increasing problem there too. In Zambia and Malawi, HIV/AIDS was becoming a major obstacle to teachers performing to the best of their ability, with teachers and students infected and affected by the virus. The teacher workforce showed that increased sickness absence and mortality rates were beginning to increase. Teachers also had to absent themselves to care for sick relatives or to arrange and attend funerals. However, reports on whether teachers can be considered to be at greater risk than other groups vary. It has been assumed by HIV/AIDS professionals, and even within education establishments, that teachers are particularly vulnerable to infection, being typically migrant within their own countries and having a higher socio-economic status than average. However, recent evidence suggests otherwise, with a report by Nicola Swainson and Paul Bennell (2002), asserting that teachers are no more vulnerable than other professionals. What is clear, however, is that HIV/AIDS has further jeopardised what, in many cases, is already a fairly marginal existence. Teachers who are HIV-positive incur medical costs that they find hard to sustain. They are unlikely to be able to afford antiretroviral therapies or even money for basic drugs to treat HIV-related illnesses. They may also be subjected to stigma and discrimination. Teachers find that they are increasingly called upon to support family members infected and affected by HIV, carrying physical, financial and emotional burdens, this being especially true of female teachers. They will also be expected to take on additional duties as a result of colleagues' morbidity. In a situation where teachers' morale and motivation is already very fragile, the intensifying affect of living in a society deeply affected by HIV may prove to be devastating.

'More generally the AIDS crisis heightens the need to professionalise the teaching cadre as quickly as possible and improve teacher morale through improved remuneration and other conditions of service.'

Swainson, N. and Bennell, P., 2002, *The Impact of HIV/AIDS Epidemic on the Education Sector in Southern Africa*, CIE

4.1.7 Gender

Generally in rural areas there were fewer female teachers, and those present had frequently followed their husbands to the schools. This mirrors the pattern commonly found in rural primary schools, whereas in urban areas it is usual to find female teachers in both primary and secondary schools. Female teachers were subjected to gender discrimination at school and at home. They were generally less likely to be promoted to senior positions and were offered sub-standard or no teacher housing due to lack of recognition of their status as heads of households. In some cases, it appeared that female teachers were vulnerable to sexual harassment by colleagues and superiors at work. They were also likely to be primary carers for children and parents, and responsible for ensuring that a host of domestic duties such as cooking, water-carrying and cleaning were carried out. In some cases, notably in PNG, female teachers reported incidents of domestic violence. When invited to contribute any personal factors affecting their morale, female teachers were far more likely than male teachers to cite difficulties in their marriages or home lives as having a negative impact in this respect. Female teachers were more likely than male teachers to be taking on caring roles because of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

4.2 Teachers' motivation and performance, and quality education

As noted above, VSO's hypothesis was that there is a close relationship between teacher motivation and performance, based on the testimony of serving and returned VSO volunteers, and backed up by desk-based research. It also assumed that teachers' performance had an important impact on educational quality.

'If teaching and learning are the beginning and end of the educational planning process then all matters that bear on the welfare, professional development and effectiveness of the teacher must be of prime importance.'

Coombe, T., 1988, *Integral Planning for the Staffing Function in Education*. Paper presented at the workshop on the Future of Strategic Education Planning, IIEP

'Learning opportunities are reduced when teachers are poorly motivated, poorly trained and unable to foster a child-centred learning environment. High rates of teacher absenteeism reduce rates of attendance and undermine parental confidence in school systems. Teachers play a crucial role in determining the expectations of children and how they relate to the school environment.'

Watkins, K., 2000, *The Oxfam Education Report*, Oxfam Publications

'The improvement of quality in basic education depends on teachers' education, and on teachers' behaviour and attitudes.'

DESO/Sida, 2000, *Teacher education, teachers' conditions and motivation*, Sida

'We know that teachers are the key factor in contributing towards any enhanced quality of classroom experiences.'

Garrett, R.M., 1999, *Teacher job satisfaction in developing countries*, DFID

While VSO does not claim to have demonstrated a direct causal link between teacher motivation, performance and quality education, this research goes some way to validate the hypothesis.

A random sample of volunteers' final reports¹³ submitted over the last five years revealed a very high level of concern about the motivation of colleagues and its impact on their performance. Out of 70 reports from five countries, including the three selected for case-study research, around 50 per cent spontaneously cited teacher motivation as a key constraining or contributing factor affecting their placement. For the vast majority of these, poor teacher motivation was considered to be a constraining factor, although in a few cases the positive attitude and good motivation of colleagues was put forward as a key contributing factor. It should be noted that these reports are open in nature, with no prompts to volunteers that they should address particular themes or issues. It can thus be concluded that the concerns they reported

were entirely derived from their actual experience rather than any bias of VSO.

In a review of reports from VSO volunteers in Malawi, six out of ten of them mentioned teacher motivation and/or morale. Generally, there was a perception that progress achieved in placement and in any extra-curricular activities established by the volunteer, would not be maintained due to lack of good teacher motivation. A number of the volunteers also reported that teacher absenteeism was a problem within their schools. Despite the frustration this caused, volunteers showed some empathy with their colleagues' difficult situation.

'Unfortunately, a lot of the time I feel like I am on a personal crusade to help the students, whether I am in class or in extra-curricular activities while other local teachers skip their lessons especially when the headmaster is away. A lack of motivation among fellow teachers (mostly as a result of low salaries) is not something that a teacher from abroad is ever going to change.'

VSO teacher, secondary school, Malawi

In Papua New Guinea, five out of ten volunteer reports mentioned teacher motivation as affecting their placement. Generally, most referred to the fact that teachers in PNG frequently move schools due to the poor working conditions they encounter in rural areas, affecting continuity in the school and the ability of colleagues to work effectively.

'The high turnover badly impacts upon the sustainability of the volunteers' work. The counterpart who works with volunteers and is hoping to take over from volunteers does not necessarily stay on for continuity, as there is a tendency of teachers moving schools in PNG.'

VSO teacher, secondary school, PNG

'Many national staff at school X appear to be affected by motivational issues that are seen throughout the educational system in PNG. The staff are poorly paid and it is not unusual for wages to be severely delayed. This often results in a reluctance on behalf of national members of staff to attend any formal in-service sessions or carry out extra-curricular duties.'

VSO teacher, secondary school, PNG

13: All VSO volunteers are required to report on the objectives, activities and indicators in their placement outlines. Final reports give them the opportunity to highlight factors affecting the attainment of the objectives.

For Zambia, 15 volunteer reports were reviewed, of which eight mentioned teachers' motivation as constraining their effectiveness. The major effects of this were felt to be high turnover of teachers and teacher absenteeism. A number of VSO teachers specifically cited the failure of the education system to tackle problems of poor teacher motivation as a cause of frustration to them and their colleagues.

'High staff turnover makes it difficult to meet placement objectives. Teachers who were interested in and committed to changes in the department and future improvements were unfortunately transferred within the first year. These teachers were not replaced, leaving other teachers in the department overburdened and often teaching a subject they were not qualified to teach. This contributes to low morale, making it difficult to work alongside colleagues and introduce new ideas and practices in other classes.'

VSO teacher, secondary school, Zambia

'It is very difficult to work in an environment where morale, discipline and enthusiasm among staff is very low. The same problems are ever existent (people do not recognise the problems) but these are never tackled... Because the head of department does not have the authority to run the department, teachers organise private lessons during school time.'

VSO teacher, secondary school, Zambia

'Both teachers and students are demotivated resulting in students feeling abandoned by most teachers.'

VSO teacher, secondary school, Zambia

Before the field research, a focus group of returned VSO education professionals also convened to explore their attitudes to teachers' motivation in their placements. Returned volunteers from five countries (Malawi, Uganda, Guyana, China and Ethiopia) cited the following as the main effects of poor motivation on teachers' performance and the quality of schooling and education:

- » teachers take up other jobs alongside teaching
- » teachers move out of teaching where possible
- » teachers don't teach
- » teachers use inappropriate methodologies
- » teachers do not take account of learners' needs
- » the quality of teaching is poor.

Secondary effects noted were:

- » loss of community confidence in education, resulting in high drop-out rates and more out-of-school children
- » educational ability of country workforce is poor and economy suffers.

Volunteers' understanding of the impact of teacher motivation was explored in more depth during the actual case-study research process. In Zambia, for example, all volunteers working in the country were asked to complete a brief survey on the importance of teachers' motivation. All the respondents ranked teacher morale or motivation as important to the quality of education in their school, with 60 per cent stating it to be very important, and 40 per cent feeling it to be *the* most important factor affecting quality of schooling in their placements. In Malawi and Papua New Guinea, volunteers interviewed during the research process were invited to offer their insights on the topic and over 90 per cent supported the view that there was a causal relationship between teachers' motivation and performance. In PNG, a number of volunteers (and other stakeholders) challenged the assumption that teachers' performance was poor per se, but felt more that it was in jeopardy due to the lack of support for their motivation. This led the researcher to characterise education as being at a 'crossroads', where crucial policy choices could still be made to support teachers' motivation and performance and prevent decline in quality of education.

'Motivated teachers perform well. Demotivated teachers don't turn up and if they are at school, they just give the class notes.'

VSO teacher, CDSS, Malawi

Q: 'What are the four main hurdles to the quality of education and teaching in your placement?'

A: 'Teachers' motivation – they are not willing to put in extra hours for training, observation etc.'

VSO teacher, secondary school, PNG

'They are an amazingly dedicated, hardworking group of professionals in spite of their difficult conditions and workloads.'

VSO, secondary school, PNG

Further insights into the relationship between teachers' motivation and performance and the quality of education were gleaned through the focus-group discussions with national teachers. In Zambia and PNG, teachers were invited to describe the characteristics of a well-motivated teacher, with the following results:

Zambia	PNG
Hardworking	Hardworking
Punctual	Puts time into planning /preparation
Happy	Teacher performs well
Efficient (prepares his/her lessons on time)	Students perform well
Pupils do not fear the teacher, are happy	Teacher uses a variety of methods
Physical appearance is neat	Teacher sets and marks homework
Active in most school programmes	Students and teacher are happy
Found at the place of work	Good relationship with the community
Gives more work to pupils	Committed
Good relations with colleagues and supervisors	Punctual
Self-supervised	Disciplined
Good relations with staff	

These responses imply that there is indeed a strong relationship between teacher motivation and teacher performance.

In Malawi, teachers were explicitly asked about the relationship between their motivation and their performance. Perhaps unsurprisingly, 100 per cent of teachers confirmed the view that being well-motivated affected their performance. Moreover, the comments made around this statement reflect a deeper understanding:

'If you are unhappy then you cannot work. You will go to the classroom with loads of problems and your presentation will be poor. You need to have peace of mind.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

'If you are happy, you are going to deliver everything that is required in that particular job. For example, if you've got a good house and good books, then I think nothing is going to hinder you going into class very happily and liking the job. But sometimes we are disappointed, we are going to class unprepared, we haven't understood everything and we are doubting, 'could they [the pupils] do this?' ...but if you are provided with something that is needed, even the mood, even the pupils, if they see you in a light mood, they are happy to learn in that situation.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

'By the 21st of the month, a teacher has literally nothing at home, and has to come to school hungry and having eaten nothing. In this situation, you cannot be able to deliver anything good in class.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

Head teachers also corroborated the view that teachers' performance was influenced by the extent to which their motivation is supported, with eight out of eleven head teachers (or deputies) confirming this finding.

'If the teachers are not motivated, they can work only under supervision – if alone [unsupervised] they would not go to class, but if they are happy then they go.'

Deputy head teacher, primary school, Malawi

'If a person is given a good package for the job he's [sic.] doing, he makes sure he does the job without disappointing these people who are providing the package for him.'

Head teacher, CDSS, Malawi

'Sometimes you see heads chasing the teachers into the classrooms, but you can't force them to teach. If they are motivated, then they teach properly.'

Head teacher, secondary school, Malawi

In all three countries, reports from teachers and other stakeholders also confirmed the impact of fragile and declining teacher motivation. Impacts could be categorised into three main themes:

►► High turnover

All schools where research took place were negatively affected by high teacher turnover, as

teachers sought better opportunities elsewhere, either within or outside the teaching profession, and occasionally in other countries. The main effects of this were lack of continuity, loss of good teachers, and uncertainty about the school establishment at the start of the school term.

▶▶ Teacher shortages

As well as dealing with the problems of high turnover, most schools in the study had enormous difficulty attracting teachers and almost constantly operated without a full complement of staff, forcing them to depend on volunteer teachers or expatriate teachers from neighbouring countries. Teachers were also forced to cover vacant posts, adding a large additional burden to their own workload. In many cases, shortages were so extreme as to leave classes without teachers for long periods of time.

▶▶ 'Virtual' attrition

Although, as noted above, many teachers continue to do their jobs in difficult circumstances, it is clear that the hardships of their living and working lives have begun to take their toll on professional commitment. In countries where there is little alternative formal sector employment, it is perhaps inevitable that the education system will end up carrying some teachers who are not fully committed to their work. Thus, attrition out of the profession itself may not be a problem, but a gradual erosion of professional norms and values is unfortunately in progress, with concomitant effects. Absenteeism was a particular problem in Zambia and Malawi, where teachers frequently had to take second jobs to supplement their meagre incomes. Sadly, in Zambia it was reported that 'remote teaching' (the practice of writing notes on the board or using a class prefect to read out a textbook while the teacher occupied themselves elsewhere) is becoming commonplace. In Malawi, poorly motivated teachers depended on chalk and talk methods or reading from textbooks. The impacts were perhaps less severely felt in PNG, although national and VSO teachers felt that if their motivation was better supported, teachers'

'A motivated teacher will give 200 per cent more.'

Teacher, secondary school, PNG

performance would dramatically improve. The major function of the focus-group work was to draw out in more detail teachers' understanding of the different factors affecting their motivation. A clear picture emerged of teachers' self-perception as

public-sector employees, as educators, and as members of society at large, and in particular, of their sense of *worth* in these spheres. Having established teachers' understanding and perceptions surrounding motivation, the next section of this report will answer the crucial question of what it is that actually motivates teachers.

4.3 Teachers as employees

As noted above, teachers in most developing countries have experienced a marked decline in standards of living and purchasing power since the mid-1970s, when fiscal pressure caused by setbacks in economic growth began to take its toll on public purses. This was intensified by the adoption of structural adjustment policies in the 1980s and 1990s, when teacher salaries became an obvious target for cost-savings in education budgets, since in many cases they make up the bulk of recurrent expenditure on education. In many countries, teachers' salaries have been supplemented by a variety of additional payments for extra duties or taking up hardship postings. Various referred to as incentives, entitlements and allowances, these salary supplements have, over time, become a significant administrative burden on education systems that are already overstretched. Other elements of the remuneration package offered to teachers have also come under pressure. In particular, the housing stock available to teachers is inadequate in terms of both quality and quantity. In countries where there is an expectation that state employees will have low-cost accommodation of reasonable standard, the provision of teacher housing will remain an issue of concern to national governments.

Teachers have also borne the brunt of another common trend in education in developing countries: lack of investment in management at local, regional and national levels to enable the system to accommodate change and cope with crisis.

4.3.1 Remuneration packages

▶▶ Salaries

In all three case-study countries, VSO's research demonstrated that the poor absolute value of the teachers' salaries was a significant factor influencing their motivation. Teachers' concern about their salaries was particularly acute in Zambia and Malawi, where teachers' salaries do not constitute a living wage. For example, the average net monthly wages of teachers interviewed in VSO's Zambia case study varied from ZK 170,000 or USD 44 (basic school

teacher) to ZK 298,000 or USD 77 (headmaster of a secondary school). The monthly cost-of-living survey in June 2001 conducted by the Zambian Government estimated the cost of a basket of food for a family of six in Zambia to be ZK 328,570, or USD 85. In Malawi, a presidential edict had recently set a minimum for all teachers' pay packages of MK 5,000. A VSO teacher in Malawi is paid MK 14,000 – an amount that is determined by VSO to be the minimum required for basic living, not including travel or entertainment. It is thus clear that most Malawian teachers are not earning a living wage.

Not surprisingly, poor remuneration had a detrimental effect on teachers' classroom performance, as they reported being tired and distracted during their time in school, and in some cases took time out to attend to other business.

'I get ZK 198,000. I have six children, need to send two children to school and that takes up ZK 144,000 per term. The children of my sister now depend on me as well, so when I come to school, I know I have not solved the problems in my family and that bothers me.'

Teacher, secondary school, Zambia

'I have a big family at home, my salary is finished in one week, so we borrow here and there. The other thing you would see is that I will not knock off at 13.00 hours exactly, as I have a tailoring project in town, so I have to deviate to that project... If I had enough money, I could use this time to prepare lessons. I'm aware this time is being misused by me in going absent, but teaching cannot be my main occupation.'

Teacher, secondary school, Zambia

In PNG, teachers found that their salaries were not enough to meet the high cost of living in remote rural areas, where transport costs are high.

It is not simply the absolute amount of teachers' salaries that provokes their dissatisfaction, but the unfavourable comparisons they make between their own remuneration packages and those of other professions. In Papua New Guinea, this concern was so profound as to have prompted the Papua New Guinea Teachers' Association (PNGTA) to commission research into the Hay method of job evaluation¹⁰, and heated debate continues about whether teacher salaries should have parity with other public servants. Teachers in all countries

reported feeling inferior to other professionals, leading to demoralisation and teacher attrition out of the profession.

'We say we teach to help students, but on the other hand, teaching is a profession where at the end, the one teaching needs to get something. Now there are other jobs we know quite well where they have very good packages, salaries which are very good and a person working in these organisational departments – he works happily.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

'Teachers, from my point of view, are the makers of the nation. The salaries we get are very small compared with other professions. The salaries being low makes me unhappy with the profession.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

It is clear, however, from discussions with stakeholders, that there is little or no prospect of teacher salaries being brought into line with those of other public servants. This is not a situation unique to developing countries; sheer numbers of teachers mean that in the developed world, policy-makers have also shied away from taking such a step.

► Allowances and entitlements

A common feature of all three countries' education systems was the attempt to boost teachers' salaries through extra allowances and incentives. Over time, the list of these salary supplements has become longer and longer. In Papua New Guinea, for example, a teacher in a rural area was able claim up to 13 different types of allowances or entitlements. Incentives were also paid in all three countries to attract teachers to undesirable regions and schools. However, these were seen as neither adequate nor appropriate. In all three countries, teachers reported dissatisfaction with both the amount and administration of these allowances, and in some cases, objected in principle to being paid in this way instead of through the salary system.

'The allowance has made us happy – now we have something to eat at the end of the month and don't go to school hungry. But an allowance is not a salary. I would like more to have an increase in basic [salary] to be sure for the future.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

10: The Hay method was devised in the US in the 1950s by E.N. Hay and Associates. It provides guidance for job grading relating to the skills required for effective job performance in three categories: know-how, problem-solving and accountability.

'The thing that would drive me out of the profession would be the problems with allowances and entitlements.'

Teacher, secondary school, PNG

This issue was particularly pertinent during the course of the Malawi research, which took place shortly after the release of a new housing allowance for teachers. Teachers were, without doubt, thankful for the additional spending power afforded them by the new allowance. Head teachers, in particular, felt the new allowance had had a positive impact on teachers' motivation. However, this satisfaction was tempered by a number of anxieties and complaints. Teachers' perception was that the allowance was insecure and could be taken away from them; they also noted the fact that the allowances were not pensionable. Furthermore, the initial conditions imposed on the allowances were seen as inequitable, as they varied according to region and grade and were of uneven benefit depending on the cost of housing to the individual teacher.

'It's not all teachers who are accommodated in schools, so you find that you received the same housing allowance, but some of us are paying rents that are higher than others. So although it's good, it's not wholly positive.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

▶▶ Administration of payments

In all countries, a major grievance voiced by teachers was the difficulties they experienced in getting their salaries and allowances paid on time. In this respect, teachers can be seen most clearly as the victims of system failure. In PNG, for example, the PNGTA spoke of three teachers who had paid from their own pockets to make the expensive and difficult journey to Port Moresby. These teachers spent more than a month in Port Moresby and the expense of the trip cost more than the allowances that were eventually paid to them. This type of experience was so commonplace that non-payment of allowances, such as the boarding duty allowance and the home leave allowance, had resulted in the refusal of teachers to fulfil their duties, or in absenting themselves from school in order to try to secure the supplements owed to them. Newly qualified teachers reported having to wait up to nine months for their first salary payment, and an informant from a major donor agency disclosed that the PNG Government itself

estimated that some 50 million kina (USD 1,257,700) was owed to teachers in back pay. In all three countries, delays, or in some cases apparent obstruction to the payment of allowances and salaries, results in teachers feeling frustrated and angry, and to a perception that poor financial accountability at district and provincial level is responsible. The resulting impact was twofold. Teachers spend inordinate amounts of time trying to ensure that payments they are entitled to do eventually reach them and they feel that the problems with accessing their payments reflect a general lack of regard for them and their welfare. This compounds their sense of being low in status and value and is further exacerbated by the rudeness and even contempt they experience at the hands of regional and provincial officials

'I did a full year of double shift teaching last year, up till now I have not had my allowances for that. I followed up on that; I walk to the DEO's [District Education Officer] office (15 km), take a form, walk back, have the head to sign it, bring it back to the DEO's office, and then...'

Teacher, basic school, Zambia

'The pay problems are what affect teachers. The teachers know they themselves are working hard so they get frustrated when they see the paymaster, office staff and senior administrators at national and provincial level not performing.'

Head teacher, PNG

▶▶ Collective bargaining

In all three countries, teachers were unionised and elected representatives were charged with collective bargaining on teachers' salaries and allowances. However, their effectiveness was patchy, as they themselves acknowledged in a couple of instances. In PNG, for example, the Teachers' Association acknowledged that a recent victory in securing a seven per cent pay increase was too little, too late. The PNGTA were explicit in stating that, in their view, the cause of their disempowerment was ultimately due to the adjustment policies imposed by the IMF and the World Bank. In Zambia, teachers' unions were perceived by teachers to be divided and there were unconfirmed reports of deals being struck whereby members of one union were granted bigger salary increases than those of another! In Malawi, however, more positive views emerged, perhaps because of the recent success of TUM (Teachers' Union of Malawi) in securing the new housing allowance.

'Without TUM there would have been no housing allowance. It is a way we can produce our problems; before there was no way. TUM can refer problems, it is a good channel of communication.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

►► Accommodation

A further issue of concern to most teachers was accommodation. During this research, teachers reported that their poor housing is a daily source of irritation and ill-feeling. Housing stocks were reported to be small and to have frequently fallen into disrepair, leaving teachers with the choice between paying high rents for private housing sometimes far from their place of work, or living in highly unsavoury conditions. Teachers reported living with leaking roofs, bad sanitation and broken windows. Frequently they had to manage without electricity and running water, which adds to an already heavy burden of daily duties. Efforts to engage communities in house building and maintenance had met with mixed success. This situation was particularly disappointing for teachers as housing had traditionally been free for teachers in all three countries and thus perceived as a perk of an otherwise difficult job.

Q: 'Why do teachers around you leave the profession?'

A: 'Poor accommodation. The toilets are not OK, they are made of grass and mud. In the rainy season they fall down.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

In one situation observed during the Zambia research, two teachers spent a whole year living in a narrow office between two classrooms. Zambian teachers who did have a house often complained about the state or the size of the house. This was especially true for unmarried female teachers who were often forced to share a house with a colleague and their family. For married female teachers, the main problem encountered was the official view held that they have no need of housing, as it was assumed that their husband would provide for them.

Teachers who had been posted to rural areas and who had no access to permanent, affordable and appropriate accommodation spent a considerable amount of time searching for other accommodation and in some cases in seeking transfers. This added to the insecurity and lack of continuity experienced in

'A male teacher has a house, without putting across any marriage certificate, he puts in a girlfriend... Meanwhile, we are four female teachers here and we all have our own kids... They say that actually our husbands are supposed to take care of a house for us. Where we do not have [a husband], like some of us, they make us share a house, with our children in a three-room block... Maybe we are not friends; we do not even speak the same language. We are two adults and eight children together, while that male teacher has the whole house to himself and his girlfriend.'

Female teacher, secondary school, Zambia

many rural schools. Once again, the feeling of being neglected or disregarded by both school management and the wider education establishment was equally important in generating frustration and resentment, as the practical problems posed to teachers.

'When it comes to applying for next year's posts, those who suffer might leave this place... and find where are the schools with housing etc...'

Teacher, secondary school, PNG

'The minister really does not care whether I live in a house or under a bridge.'

Teacher, high school, Zambia

►► Promotion prospects

Teachers, like other types of public servants, see themselves not as static employees but as professionals on a structured career path. The trends in teacher recruitment highlighted in **Section 3** have, however, meant that education systems often operated a barrage of schemes to bring more teachers into the profession, meaning that the teaching force has considerable variation of experience and qualification. At the time of writing, the Lehara scheme in PNG had been designed to attract people with vocational qualifications into the profession. As mentioned earlier, a massive cohort of primary teachers in Malawi had been upgraded to work in the CDSSs. In Zambia the TOPSUPP (Teachers of Primary schools Secondary Upgrading Project) scheme had fulfilled a similar function.

Common to all, though, was a real hunger for promotion. In PNG, teachers' resentment at the decline in service by inspectors highlighted earlier, was due in part to the stipulation that teachers had to be deemed eligible for promotion by an inspector before being able to apply for higher positions. Teachers in PNG were also disappointed by the lack of availability of college courses, seen as the best way of gaining promotion. In Malawi, the majority of teachers interviewed were working in the CDSSs and therefore hoped to improve their status through improving their qualifications and getting better terms and conditions as a result. However, in all three countries, teachers felt that their opportunities were constrained both by the bureaucratic systems managing promotions and by the exorbitant costs of improving their qualifications.

'I would love to go further but with the current trends it doesn't look possible as the fees are so high and I can't afford it.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

One problem shared by all the systems examined during the research was a perceived lack of opportunity for promotion while remaining in the teaching profession. Opportunities to become a head teacher were necessarily rare. Career progression was thus perceived to be a gradual acquisition of teaching skills and qualifications, before progressing into education administration. The effects of this are twofold: good teachers are quickly lost to the profession while those who remain in teaching feel that their status and recognition is limited.

4.3.2 Management of teachers

It is manifest that teachers' experience as employees within education systems is essentially shaped by their experience of the school in which they work. In fact, this truism applies to virtually every type of public servant. Yet, oddly, it seems to have escaped the notice of both donors and governments, who continue to bombard teachers with innovations and initiatives without considering whether management capacity is strong enough to nurture their commitment to working life.

'When management are OK, we are OK.'

Teacher, high school PNG

▶▶ In-school management

School management and the role of head teachers in particular was a crucial area of concern to teachers, particularly in PNG and Zambia. In both cases, there is a marked lack of congruence between the significance of the issue to teachers (and in some cases head teachers), and its importance in the eyes of the other stakeholders and in policy commitments. In Malawi, interestingly, dissatisfaction with school management was predominant amongst female teachers and much less mentioned amongst male teachers, who generally reported that they felt included in school decisions and that decisions about promotions were fair. VSO volunteers in Malawi, however, commented on management as a crucial factor in determining teacher motivation, both positive and negative.

Q: 'What is the role of the head teacher in motivation?'

A: 'He demotivates. He gives no guidance or encouragement...There is no respect for the head.'

VSO teacher, CDSS, Malawi

A: 'When he is there everybody works – they are aware of their responsibilities. When he is not there little things go amiss. When there are issues in the staff room he takes the lead and the others follow. There is a lot of communication between the administration and teachers and it is constructive communication.'

VSO teacher, CDSS, Malawi

In both PNG and Zambia, the relationship between head teachers and their staff was a particular concern to many teachers. Many examples of unsatisfactory interactions were cited including:

- ▶▶ not being listened to, not being heard – a feeling that the head does not take on board what the teachers say
- ▶▶ a lack of respect from the head teacher. Examples of this were being reprimanded in the presence of pupils and colleagues, or being asked to apologise after speaking out in a staff meeting.
- ▶▶ a feeling that the head does not stand up for teachers at regional education offices and does not defend their case for allowances or leave
- ▶▶ unfair promotions, with teachers who are new to the school being made heads of department before the older teachers
- ▶▶ female teachers not being given certain extra responsibilities (acting in the head teacher's absence, administrative duties)

- ▶ female teachers feeling that the head was more likely to believe male teachers in matters of dispute between teachers
- ▶ a lack of transparency about decision-making, particularly in financial matters.

Where relationships between the head teacher and staff were less than positive, this also tended to have a negative effect on relations between teachers themselves. This was especially true for female teachers, who felt that they were the object not only of generally poor management by head teachers, but were specifically overlooked for promotion on the basis of their gender, and, in some cases, suffered sexual harassment by male teachers.

'My fellow teacher proposes love to me, but I don't want it and I deny him. Then he goes to the headmaster and tells him I don't do my job and so and so... Of course the head listens to him, so what can I do?'

Female teacher, high school, Zambia

Head teachers did recognise the importance of their management role, and, in some cases, acknowledged their shortcomings in this respect. Their explanations for their poor managerial ability included the fact that their own appointment has been based on seniority in school, rather than genuine support for the development of management capabilities, and the fact that they are offered little in the way of training and support.

'...the incentive is from the headmaster – if there is a problem within the school it is the teacher and/or headmaster; so the headmaster is so important... Students and teachers must feel there is a headmaster and deputy headmaster who is willing to listen to them.'

Deputy head teacher, secondary school, PNG

'I didn't get training for this and it would make for more confidence, otherwise I don't feel I know whether what I am doing is right or the correct method... The way in which I do things is according to what I have observed from other deputy headmasters.'

Deputy head teacher, secondary school, PNG

It appeared from the remarks made by teachers in both PNG and Zambia that simple steps taken on the part of a head teacher could make a big difference to

the morale of staff in schools. This impression came from a researcher's observation of one exceptional school in PNG where, despite having the same salaries and allowance problems as their colleagues in other schools, teachers reported feeling supported and encouraged, which in turn made them willing to keep their discontent about teachers' terms and conditions out of the classroom. In particular, teachers in this school appreciated the sense that the school management would represent their concerns to higher authorities – something they struggled to do themselves due to a lack of effective channels of communication.

'It's administration that provide the support that counteract the other factors... any success rates from the school come back to the administration at the school level.'

Teacher, secondary school, PNG

'If you just get a word of appreciation, just a remark, it already does a lot to make you happy – whether it is the headmaster, or the District Education Office.'

Teacher, secondary school, Zambia

Effective management is crucial for one further reason. In some disadvantaged schools, the secondary school teaching profession has reached a stage where educational norms and values are clearly in decline. In some schools in Zambia, for example, it is considered acceptable to practise 'remote teaching' – the practice in which teachers write notes on the chalkboard, or set pupils a chapter of a book to read, and then leave the classroom. It is accepted that teachers have started to make money outside their teaching job, and an atmosphere of minimal effort has become normal. This situation is, in some cases, exacerbated by the practice of sending teachers to rural schools as a punishment for misconduct. In the Zambia research, two teachers who had respectively stolen and misbehaved with female students, were transferred to a rural area. For those remaining responsible teachers wishing to do their job properly, the climate of demoralisation and neglect cannot but affect them. Good management is crucial if such schools are to avoid spiralling into a vicious circle of neglect and despondency, and others are to be prevented from reaching this level.

» Decentralised management and administration

One of the fundamental reform measures common to all three countries is the decentralisation of many functions of education system management and administration. Teachers' experience of this trend could, at best, be described as mixed. On the whole, the regional structures responsible for supporting schools were characterised by teachers as inefficient, remote (both literally and figuratively) and, in some cases, lacking in transparency and accountability. In the rare cases that regional officials visited schools, they were seen as checking up on teachers, rather than supporting them. For many teachers, their experience of systemic breakdown or failure, for example, in the payment of their salaries and allowances, was encountered chiefly at their regional or provincial office.

'We were asked by the District Education Officer to fill in a list of teaching and learning materials needed. Five heads of department spent a huge amount of time finding out the exact needs of the school. Then they travelled to the District Education Officer's office and spent a whole day there to list and write everything out. This has been very detailed work. We have not heard anything since...'

VSO teacher, secondary school, Zambia

'I would really like my leave. If you save it up for three years than you have ZK 2.5 million. I could use that to build a house. But as for the Provincial Education Officer's office, you come and go, come and go, come and go. I think if you want it, you would have to give them part of it.'

Teacher, high school, Zambia

'The provincial government system hasn't worked – it has proved to be a drain on cash and is too politicised. It is now a hybrid system and a decision must be taken whether to re-centralise or to build capacity to make it work again.'

PNGTA representative

As well as citing specific practical examples of provincial and district offices' inefficiency in respect of schools' or teachers' needs, there was a general sense that decentralised offices blocked information and effective two-way communication about reform measures. Especially for teachers in remote rural areas, it appeared that crucial bulletins, circulars and gazettes were not reaching schools. At the same time, such limited opportunities that do exist for

consultation on reform plans were poorly advertised and therefore not taken up by teachers in rural areas. In Malawi, this was a particular source of frustration, as was the lack of any effective government communication about the rationale for, and the future of, primary teachers working in CDSSs, both to teachers themselves but also to the general public.

'The majority of the country are so confused about these changes and no one knows exactly what is going on or who is doing what in the plan.'

Teacher, secondary school, PNG

'I can now see the channels that could have been there during my time as teacher; more liaising, more close-up communication and regular, daily and consistent communication between the head offices, provincial, district and individual schools in order to communicate what is really happening.'

Curriculum development officer and former teacher, PNG

To conclude, the research demonstrated a surprising complexity of analysis by teachers about their standing as employees. While the researchers had expected teacher responses to be dominated by concerns about the absolute value of their salaries, teachers also cited issues of administration, transparency and equity as being of equal import in their feelings about remuneration. Furthermore, their motivation depended almost as much on the quality of their relationships with school-level and regional management, with clear implications for national policy.

4.4 Teachers as educators

A deficit model of teachers characterises teachers, at best, as passive implementers of inputs and innovations, as just another factor in the production of education 'outputs'. At worst, they are seen as the source of problems of education, as an obstruction to the effectiveness of government and donor intervention. During the research it became clear that policy-makers essentially regarded teachers as conservative and concerned principally with securing improved terms and conditions of service. However, VSO's examination of teachers' own views on what factors inhibit and support their motivation suggests that most teachers remain deeply concerned about the quality of their professional practice as educators, and that they harbour a real desire for practical and pedagogic support in this arena.

4.4.1 Training

Amongst the groups interviewed for this research, there was a very strong desire for opportunities for professional development. Naturally, teachers had aspirations to upgrade their qualifications, either through distance learning or attending a college course. This desire can in part be attributed to the fact that an improved qualification is a pre-requisite for progress up the career ladder. However, the teachers' responses gave a clear indication that their interest in professional development also resulted from a desire to do a better job in the classroom. In Malawi, training was cited more frequently than any other factor both as a positive 'motivator' when teachers had access to it, and as a source of demoralisation when it was unavailable. When asked to offer reasons for this, responses centred on the fact that teachers had not been given enough preparation or training to be able to deliver the new curriculum, rather than their wish for career advancement.

'Lack of training and subject knowledge demotivates them. The new syllabus is a problem – it has knocked their confidence. They are usually only one step ahead of the students in their knowledge. There are new syllabuses and new textbooks but there is no training... In-service training within the school does make a difference but more is needed not just from the volunteer.'

VSO teacher, CDSS, Malawi

'Motivation would come if the teachers were trained, but when the curriculum came in teachers were saying, 'we can't do this', and that led to demotivation.'

Head teacher, CDSS, Malawi

'I'm encouraged and motivated [by the SSTEP (Secondary School Teacher Education Programme) training programme] as I'm acquiring new skills and the supervisors are motivating and encouraging us – they tell us the weaknesses and strengths of our lessons so we improve gradually.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

In all three countries, professional development opportunities, from short in-service training courses to longer upgrading courses, are in short supply. Specific courses were available to teachers aimed at upgrading their qualifications (for example, from diploma to degree level) through colleges and distance learning. Yet, these can of course only be

made available to limited numbers of teachers due to the fact that they are expensive, may well entail teachers being released from school, and are not designed with the intention of achieving coverage of the whole teacher population.

In the research discussions, however, it appeared that teachers are equally eager to have the opportunity to share ideas and learn new skills in short courses or meetings, through on-the-job support, and to extend the range of techniques and methods in their professional practice. In all three case-study countries, such training opportunities were reported to have become extremely scarce when compared to the past.

'Previously teachers had two years at college, workshops and other facilities for teachers to learn. Now there is nothing. There has been no new training for the new syllabus.'

Head teacher, CDSS, Malawi

Where courses did exist, there was little follow-up or support from management or inspectorate services. This lack of opportunity to reflect on and improve their performance has led to a situation where teachers are reluctant to adjust their methodologies to incorporate more interactive approaches, and rely instead on the chalk and talk approach with which they feel more comfortable. Clearly, this is particularly problematic where curriculum changes require new methodologies to be deployed.

'The syllabus is good. It was syllabus D when I started in 1985, and it is still D, but maths does not change and the pupils are every time different and I know it very well by now. But I'm still using the methods and the schemes that I learnt in college 15 years ago.'

Teacher, secondary school, Zambia

'Still we have meetings every week. In these meetings we have a lot of nice ideas, plans for observing, but when you're out of the meeting, it does not happen!'

VSO teacher, secondary school, Zambia

Teachers felt that not only were they left lacking in confidence and ideas because of the limited access to training courses, they also perceived the loss of in-service opportunities as a disregard of their needs. Such training that was available was driven not by an

understanding of teachers' professional development but by policy-led requirements, for example to bring primary teachers up to required levels to teach in secondary schools. There was little evidence that attempts were being made in any of the three countries to assess serving teachers' training needs in any participatory or inclusive fashion, resulting in a set of priorities that did not satisfy the true demands of the situation. This could be seen as part of a broader failure to consult or accommodate teachers' views in policy development and implementation, as **Section 4.6** will examine.

4.4.2 Teaching and learning materials

Another common cause for complaint was the lack of teaching and learning materials available to teachers. Having no textbooks or supporting materials left teachers feeling that their possible approaches to teaching are limited and inadequate; as a result they struggle to manage in the classroom. This issue was intensified by the fact that in all three countries, teachers are frequently trying to accommodate curriculum and syllabus changes arising from reforms – reforms on which they felt they had not been consulted and were therefore sometimes inappropriate or badly planned. This was an issue in particular in Malawi, where the training needs of the primary teachers promoted to CDSSs had not been taken into account – they were therefore dependent on textbooks to compensate for shortfalls in subject knowledge and teaching approaches.

'Really I feel that sometimes the government does change the other things when it is not ready to do so...You find that the curriculum or maybe the syllabuses have changed and we start at school without having the instructional materials... We find that somewhere we have a lot of problems.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

Teachers in all three countries seemed to be aware of different teaching styles and techniques that they could apply, such as group work and other interactive methods. However, any newly learned methodologies and interesting lessons were often stymied by the lack of materials. Basic items such as textbooks are seen by teachers as essential to their performance in class.

'My colleague has very good ideas to teach, but he will need to go and buy manila paper, felt pens and scissors himself to make the materials he needs for those lessons, and he can't!'

VSO teacher, secondary school, Zambia

'We want to do literature in English and Chichewa, but we can't do them because we don't have the books or tape recorders, which is tough.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

In PNG, lack of teaching and learning materials was seen not merely as a cause of difficulty to teachers in getting the job done, but as contributing to a situation in which teachers were unable to meet students' needs and thus encountered behavioural problems in the classroom, leading to a further dip in morale.

'Lack of teaching materials leads to teachers not being prepared for class, which leads to disobedient students, which leads to lower teacher motivation.'

Teacher, secondary school, PNG

4.4.3 Inspections and guidance services

'Between 1991 and 1999, inspectors used to come to increase our knowledge and interest. Now there is no more inspection – we can do whatever we want knowing that nobody will come.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

Like all other departments of the education systems studied in this research, inspectorate services had come under pressure due to lack of funds. This was a source of irritation for teachers in Malawi and PNG especially. In PNG, for example, in the year 2001/2, the Inspections and Guidance Division was operating on just 13 per cent of the previous year's budget, resulting in part from a government decision to offer free education to all in an election year. In all three countries, teachers and head teachers reported a decline in the service they received from inspectorate services. Perhaps surprisingly, supervision from inspectorate services appeared to be regarded as essentially helpful and motivating – this decline consequently had a negative impact on motivation, as teachers felt that there was no way for them to

gain feedback and praise for good performance or to seek advice and tips on how to improve. Teachers' desire to undergo inspection at their schools may indicate a need for professional discourse and positive reinforcement for those who have few opportunities to connect with their community of practice due to the remoteness of their situations. It may also reflect a sense that inspectors and guidance visits were an effective way for teachers to receive information about decisions made at headquarters, and to express their concerns to someone who they felt had a voice in authority.

'There is also a lack of inspectors which is no reason for motivation. There are no checks on the teachers. There is no help, no encouragement, so the teachers run away.'

Head teacher, CDSS, Malawi

'It is good to be able to talk about these things... Normally it should be the inspectors who are our only messengers to pass on the problems but he [sic.] only comes once a year even though he is meant to come three times, and even when he does come, it is just for a couple of hours to cover all three areas of work – advisories and inspections for eligibility, which affects promotion.'

Teacher, secondary school, PNG

Teachers in Zambia, however, did not mention neglect from inspections and guidance services as a source of dissatisfaction. It is not clear whether this is because they are still receiving the attention of inspectors, or whether visits from inspectors are not welcomed, or whether it just did not register as a problem for teachers either way.

4.4.4 Workload

In Papua New Guinea and Malawi, concerns about workload were cited as very important influences on teacher motivation. In fact, in Malawi, this was the most important factor influencing motivation. In neither case, perhaps surprisingly, were teachers primarily affected by heavy teaching loads due to increased enrolments. Rather, the problems encountered stemmed from pedagogic initiatives or system breakdowns.

In PNG, teachers' resounding view was that a major factor in making them feel positive about teaching was being able to plan and deliver lessons well enough so that pupils were able to achieve learning objectives. However, they felt they were prevented from doing so by the heavy administrative burden

imposed by fulfilling assessment procedures and procuring teaching and learning materials. Both problems were perceived as originating from provincial and district authorities. Other demands on their time stemmed from their responsibilities as boarding school teachers, which were both complex and onerous.

This problem was compounded by teacher

'We are used as 'Jacks of All Trades' – as security, counsellors, policemen, work parade supervisors, mess management, dormitory managers and so on and so on...The focus is always being taken away from the teaching, with no extra money, and this affects our performance.'

Teacher, secondary school, PNG

shortages, particularly at the beginning of the school year, meaning that teachers were compelled to cover vacancies in subject areas other than their own. This issue also affected Malawian teachers working in rural areas, while teachers working in urban and semi-urban areas were clearly less affected, partly because they were able to attract single female teachers.

'Most of the schools in town have got reduced workloads as opposed to those which are in the rural areas, because you only get men there while here we are many women...'

Female teacher, CDSS, Malawi

'I am a caretaker teacher – all of us are like this. All have extra subjects so our working capacity is low because we are overloaded.'

Male teacher, CDSS, Malawi

Teachers in all regions of Malawi were united by a sense that recent innovations had increased the complexity of their workloads, with a negative impact on their motivation. The pressure created by accommodating these changes also goes some way to explain the grievances voiced about training and teaching and learning materials mentioned earlier. These factors together form a picture of teachers left in the dark about decisions, and given little assistance to implement them. Similar resentment about the expectations placed on teachers by reforms made without consulting them was expressed by PNG teachers. This is just one example of the way in which policy-makers would benefit

from a more nuanced, well-informed understanding of the potential impact of their initiatives.

'There is more work as there are more different subjects. The Division [Ministry of Education] is good at promising but they don't deliver on orientation.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

It is interesting to note that, by comparison, Zambian teachers voiced very little concern about workload, either in terms of amount or complexity. This may be due to the fact that sheer survival figured so largely in their consideration of their concerns, leaving little room for lower-order anxieties. Sadly, it may also be that their morale has dipped so low that they do not, in the main, concern themselves with the quality of their own performance. If this is the case, the impact of innovations or teacher shortages may appear quite peripheral when compared to the struggle of daily life.

'The Form 1 pupils are innocent and know nothing, but by the time they leave they are big and they know things, and that is satisfying.'

Teacher, secondary school, Malawi

4.4.5 Pupil achievement and behaviour

In common with teachers around the world, teachers in this study were fundamentally affected by the daily interactions with their pupils. When asked about their original motivation for becoming teachers, they reported a desire to communicate with young people as a primary motivation, with few citing salary or career ladder. Good performance of pupils was also frequently given as a source of positive teacher motivation in all three countries. Where teachers felt supported and enabled to assist pupil learning, their motivation was generally higher. Female teachers, in particular, appeared to put pupil achievement at the heart of their perception of their own worth.

'I am coming to like my job when I see that the pupils are learning. In 1998 I used to complain a lot... I had a group that did well in the examinations and that really motivated me.'

Female teacher, secondary school, Zambia

Zambian teachers were particularly concerned about the issue of poor pupil achievement due to pressure to promote pupils up to grades that were inappropriate to their abilities. Schools are not incentivised to remedy this situation because by refusing entry to pupils who do not achieve entry standards, they would make it impossible to collect sufficient school fees. Thus, teachers find themselves teaching pupils who have little or no chance of true success in school.

'Maths is known to be difficult, that is what other teachers tell the students. It is not obligatory, so pupils just tell me, "I don't care, I will not write [take the exams] in Grade 12.'"

Teacher, secondary school, Zambia

In Malawi, pupil behaviour was one of the most frequently given reasons for poor teacher motivation. Unfavourable comparisons were often made between pupils of today and of the past, and quite often teachers compared pupils' attitudes with their own when they were at school. Older teachers were particularly challenged by the fact that they perceived that their authority and respect was in decline.

It appeared from the responses that a decline in teacher confidence in their own skills and subject knowledge, partly prompted by innovations in syllabuses, curricula and methodology, has unfortunately coincided with a considerable culture shift in pupil behaviour and parental attitudes due to changing societal and political conditions. Teachers frequently mentioned 'too much' democracy or a misconception of democracy as being the source of the problem. Parents and pupils now feel entitled to expect that a class will be staffed by a qualified teacher who knows their subject, and are beginning to voice their discontent when their expectations are disappointed, as frequently happens due to the exigencies of employing primary teachers in CDSSs without training or additional pay. Whatever the rights and wrongs of this situation, teachers feel ill-equipped to deal with it from within their own menu of teaching approaches, and yet cannot depend on support from within the education system or from the community at large. They also feel that it has a negative impact on pupils' learning attainment.

The stark contrast between the past and present situation appears to have resulted in a policy lag that

will need to be compensated through changes to teacher training and school behaviour policies, if and when the relevant decision-makers come to realise the seriousness of the situation. The situation is so sensitive that it merits a concerted effort on the part of the Malawian Government to educate the population about the current realities of the situation in secondary schools.

'To me, as I was starting, I felt it was good but now, it seems the behaviour of the children it is not really motivating. They introduced democracy in Malawi and the behaviour and discipline of pupils has changed. This makes a person not to enjoy teaching now compared to the first days.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

This section has demonstrated that teachers, even in difficult circumstances, have a strong desire to perform well, to enhance their pupils' learning and to have opportunities to continue learning and improving their practice. It has also shown the consequences of failing to include teachers in decision-making processes about educational innovation. **Section 4.5** will now look more deeply at the relationship of the teaching profession with community and society.

4.5 Teachers as members of community and society

There is one further area from which teachers appear to derive a sense of worth and value. This is their status in, and contribution to, the communities around them and to wider society. As observed in **Section 3**, teachers, and in particular secondary school teachers, have experienced a sharp drop in monetary status over the last 20 years. The effects of the decreasing value of their remuneration packages have been noted above. This section will take a more holistic look at the impact on teachers of the concomitant decline in their reputation and standing in the eyes of the public

4.5.1 Teacher status in the community and with parents

Up until the 1970s, a secondary school teacher could expect to command considerable respect in the eyes of the community they served. Often the only educated people in the vicinity, they took pride in their roles and the rewards that their positions

brought. However, the setbacks to their financial reward have begun to take their toll on the public perception of teachers' role and contribution. Ironically, this comes at a time when teachers' dependency on the communities around them may have actually increased – teachers require credit in local stores and might even depend on local supplies of cheap agricultural goods for survival.

Teachers in all three case-study countries reported feeling that the community did not value them as they had done in the past. It was especially difficult for them if, as was often the case, they came from a different region and language group from that of where they now work. This was perhaps most acute in Papua New Guinea where the isolation of teachers was greatest. In Malawi, the issue of access to democratic rights again presented a challenge for teachers in managing their relationships with the community, particularly parents. Teachers believed this lack of respect compounded the poor morale they felt as a result of their poor remuneration.

'It [the relationship with the community] is not good due to this new freedom and parents have the wrong attitude. There is no respect and they see the teacher as an intruder.'

Teacher, secondary school, Malawi

'The community abuse us and underrate our job. The lack of respect makes us unhappy when our salaries are so low we can't even have chairs in our house.'

Teacher, secondary school, Malawi

Good relations with the community were also seen as a positive motivator for teachers. In the exceptional school in PNG mentioned in **Section 4.3.2** as having benefited from good management, one of the results of this was that the school and community had an excellent relationship, which brought advantages to both.

'All teachers are local – they are teaching their own community and feel obligation to their communities. If teachers are from the local community the teachers get praise from their own community. Also the community support the teachers with praise and food.'

Head teacher, secondary school, PNG

4.5.2 Teachers' status in wider society

Continued dissatisfaction with remuneration and the sense of their needs being ignored by their employers gave rise to a general feeling of being undervalued by government and society as a whole. Teachers reported feeling that they were the lowest of the low, the neglected and forgotten profession. They were particularly aggrieved by the sense that their status had fallen below other public servants when their contribution to national development was just as great. This may have been intensified for the teachers in this research by the remoteness of their situation and the lack of communication and consultation channels open to them.

'A teacher is nothing and is passed from one office to another. The same mentality that a teacher is nothing is there. It takes months to correct salaries if they are wrong after you have been promoted.'

Teacher, secondary school, Malawi

'There is a certain picture painted about teachers. The importance is not shown in practice, despite leaders saying we are. Compared to anything else we are valueless.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

'There is no regard for teachers in society any more. Once we were important people in the town, but now...'

Teacher, secondary school, Zambia

In PNG, a sense of declining status had led to the development of a complex discourse on teachers' relative 'work value'. In 1999, the PNGTA had commissioned a year-long research project on teachers' terms and conditions – *Last In Line: Teacher Work Value Study* – from the National Research Institute in order to influence government to bring teachers' terms and conditions into line with other public servants. In Zambia, teachers attributed the difficulties they encountered with their terms and conditions of service as resulting directly from their poor status in the eyes of their employers.

Sadly, in Malawi, teachers' feelings of low self-worth were intensified by living in an HIV-prevalent society.

'It upsets me when they are saying that we all have the virus.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

'If a teacher dies, sometimes officials are not present at the funeral and they also have to hire a vehicle. This is an embarrassment to the relatives, as it looks as if the person had a bad job.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

It appears, then, that recognition for teachers' key role is diminishing both inside and outside the education system. Teachers' views are not sought, their needs are not prioritised and they are regarded as little more than technical inputs that can be moulded to suit the exigencies of public policy.

4.6 Teachers' voice

The research findings reveal many aspects of the disempowered situation of teachers, and this section focuses on how teachers' motivation is affected by the nature of the power relationships with national and local education authorities, and their lack of voice in education decision-making processes. Mirroring their sentiments are those of education officials – sentiments that tend to show a lack of dialogue between the two groups.

The researchers found that teachers were eager to communicate their perspectives on their own situation, and their views on wider education policy and practice. It also revealed that they rarely, if ever, felt that these views were actively sought or welcomed. This, teachers felt, had contributed to the precariousness of their situation and their wavering morale. Teachers were aware that much is expected of them, particularly in light of the fact that they are responsible for delivering educational reform. Yet, they reported that they have not been consulted for their experienced viewpoints on what is needed for the reforms to succeed.

In all three case-study countries, teachers' focus-group discussions on the demotivating factors deriving from national level centred on the fact that the educational authorities disregarded teachers' views and voices. For example, in Zambia 'lack of understanding of teachers' problems', 'no attention to teachers' problems', and 'not aware of teachers' problems', were among the responses to the focus-group prompt on factors affecting their motivation from regional and national level.

'Teacher issues are not addressed by the government... As a sector we are unimportant, neglected.'

Teacher, secondary school, Zambia

Teachers in Papua New Guinea reported that a lack of consultation led to them feeling undervalued even though their involvement was fundamental; as if they were just viewed as the vehicles – not as key stakeholders or informers – in a system in which they had no say in designing. This is particularly acute given the physical remoteness of the schools, and is exacerbated by the fact that teachers do not even feel well-informed about what is expected of them, much less that their input is actively welcomed.

'There are no bottom-up communications. As a teacher I have not been consulted on anything in nine years about what teachers feel. They just do it in the top offices and then send it down.'

Teacher, high school, PNG

'The majority of the country are so confused about these changes and no one knows exactly what is going on or who is doing what in the plan... No one knows where we are.'

Curriculum development officer, PNG

This was echoed during the Malawi research, where teachers and most head teachers felt that they did not have a voice in decision-making at regional or national level. Head teachers were sometimes involved in planning for regional sporting activities and the National Day of Education activities for example, but consultation on matters of curriculum, training needs and the expansion of the Community Day Secondary Schools was notably unsatisfactory. Teachers and head teachers both commented on this.

'For the most part it is just a matter of them saying, 'do this'.'

Teacher, secondary school, Malawi

'When it comes to decisions by the provincial and national levels, there is no say. To change the curriculum some research around schools should have been carried out, but it wasn't...'

Head teacher, secondary school, Malawi

'The heads do assemble but they just say 'yes, Sir'...'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

While teachers felt that they were not included in decisions, in all three countries they reported that they were held responsible for the failings of the education system, compounding their sense of alienation and resentment.

'When the results are poor the MoEST say the CDSS teachers are under-qualified. We are, but we don't want it to be like this... They only see the bad – they don't see when we have done well.'

Teacher, CDSS, Malawi

'Teachers are not consulted on anything, but criticised about everything!'

VSO teacher, secondary school, PNG

The extent to which teacher unions were perceived as being an effective channel for teachers' views varied from country to country and within countries. For example, the PNGTA was generally believed to be doing what they could to secure improved terms and conditions for teachers at national level, but to have limited effectiveness in dealing with problems associated with regional administration. In Malawi, about 60 per cent of teachers who participated in the research were members of TUM, and of those, about 50 per cent found the organisation effective. It was said by some to be, 'a voice for our problems', 'a channel for communication', and 'a negotiator between teachers and government'. However, others were critical of the organisation. It was described as 'just taking my money', 'politicised' and a 'non-starter'. In Zambia, teacher unions seemed to have been weakened by recent splits, meaning that negotiations with each other took priority over fighting for teachers' terms and conditions of service. A number of other stakeholders cited incidents when the teachers' unions had failed to take up opportunities to give input into decisions.

In all three countries, some limited efforts were made to consult teachers in decision-making processes, but these were far from systematic. For example, in Papua New Guinea, a recent review of the secondary curriculum had included four regional workshops to which teachers were invited to discuss

the curriculum. However, in the event, only two completed consultation forms were returned by teachers to feed into the process, suggesting that very few teachers actually attended the workshops and bringing to the fore questions about why they had not felt enabled to do so. Similarly, in Malawi, there has never been a formal, established approach to elicit teachers' views, and therefore teachers reported feeling confused and sidelined by decisions about a new curriculum and in-service training. In Zambia, one donor informant reported that teacher representatives had been invited to sit on the Secondary Schools Committee of the Education Strategy Board, but again, no teachers seemed to be aware of this opportunity. In all countries, it is clear that mechanisms for informing teachers about consultations and ensuring that they are enabled and supported to attend them are inadequate.

Consultations with education officials and donors confirmed the fact that teachers' concerns and views were insufficiently prioritised in planning and policy formulation. In many cases, there was general awareness of the problem of poor teacher morale and even the factors causing it, but little impetus or inclination to act on it. A major problem seemed to be an inability to prioritise appropriate action, and a desire to shift responsibility to other stakeholders.

Regional managers and other officials were inclined to blame teachers for the climate of demoralisation in schools, citing incidents of teacher absenteeism and lack of commitment to work, without attempting to interpret the reasons for this. They were also unwilling to take responsibility for their own role in supporting teachers' motivation.

'Teachers sneak out and don't come back to school for one or two months... Why should we pay teachers if they are not standing in front of a class?'

Provincial education adviser, PNG

'I am the desk officer. I cannot do anything to help. It is beyond my capacity.'

District education manager, Malawi

'We are squeezed between the national plans and the actual delivery of education in schools. There is not much that we can do for teachers.'

Provincial education officer, Zambia

One group of education officials who were more sympathetic to teachers' concerns were those responsible for pedagogic support, such as inspectors and curriculum development officers. In general, their accounts of the issues closely reflected what the teachers expressed. They also, however, felt disempowered in addressing such issues.

'Teachers do so much and they are not being recognised and we are losing a lot of teachers in this country because of this.'

Curriculum development officer, PNG

'As for curriculum changes, it does not necessarily motivate the teachers – actually it demotivates the teachers because the changes are forced on them without training or guiding them.'

Education and methods adviser, Malawi

National officials recognised the problem of poor teacher motivation and, to some extent, were able to cite the causes of it. In particular, officials who had been teachers themselves were aware of the issues and tended to be sympathetic. However, in round-table discussions and one-to-one interviews, there was a marked tendency to shift responsibility to other departments within the Ministry of Education or even to other ministries, rather than taking a systematic and coordinated approach. There was also a feeling of helplessness that funds were insufficient to allow for effective steps to be taken, and occasionally that politicians were impeding rational decision-making. It should be noted, though, that the stakeholder meeting held to conclude the research process in Malawi did result in a group endorsement of the findings of the research and commitment to act upon them.

'The Teaching Service Commission needs to review policies and structures like form-filling. Quite a few problems stem from salaries.'

Staff development officer, PNG

'The Ministry is fully aware but there is no means in terms of money.'

Teacher trainer, Malawi

National officials also reported that donors and international institutions had a large and sometimes inappropriate influence on education priorities, without taking account of teachers' own needs and

responses to their innovations. This was backed up by other stakeholders, such as teachers' associations and religious institutions supporting education.

'Donors sometimes have policies that are not flexible to the normal daily operation of our business and this does not give room to the MoEST to motivate teachers. For example, you cannot implement certain programmes because you are supposed to follow the programme as arranged by donor consent.'

Divisional statistician, Malawi

'University centres are funded by AusAid but teachers struggle to find cash to attend expensive courses and there are no scholarships available. AusAid also tend to fund costly infrastructure projects such as the provision of computers to selected schools.'

PNGTA representative, PNG

'The MOE are being pushed towards the provision of basic education. Secondary schools have been left out in the bush.'

Education academic, Zambia

'Management capacity should be improved by getting IT systems for training on management and by bringing lecturers from the University of Queensland to train.'

AusAid representative, PNG

'I think the idea that teachers are demotivated is overplayed – it's something of a fashion and not borne out in reality.'

DFID representative, Zambia

In conclusion, stakeholder consultations largely confirmed the teachers' sense that decision-makers were not addressing their problems. Despite some knowledge of teachers' difficult circumstances and a generalised awareness of the problem of poor morale in schools, donors and ministry officials did not display a nuanced understanding of the impact of poor teacher motivation, and were unable to prioritise appropriate action. Leadership and ownership over the problem and a willingness to address it were notably lacking.

Civil-society organisations, including teachers' associations, were generally highly aware of the issues and sympathetic to teachers' concerns, and recognised the limitations of Ministries of Education in addressing them.

'The pot is simmering; it's about to boil.'

PNGTA representative, PNG

'Nobody recognises teachers' efforts. The MoEST is not doing anything, so morale is low.'

Representative of the Synod of Livingstonia, Malawi

Donors were mainly, though not exclusively, sympathetic to the issue of poor teacher motivation, but tended to approach it from the perspective of how well teachers were implementing donor projects and to propose technical solutions to the problems. Other stakeholders felt this to be a weakness in donor programmes, although individual projects were well-received.

Positive motivation and morale in practice: an example of a rural high school in Papua New Guinea

'Tall Trees' High School (not its real name) is certainly cut off in a remote rural area – it takes a flight from the provincial town and a car ride to get to the school. It experiences many problems typical of remote schools in developing countries, yet it is also praised by education officials for obtaining very impressive results. The school was described by one key stakeholder as a 'small but very good little school' and by others as having the best performance in the province.

So, what makes the difference? The critical factor identified by the teachers was the leadership of a well-trained head teacher and other administration staff in crucial areas, such as supportive management, budgeting and planning. This not only made for the smooth running of the school, but for a positive relationship with the local community.

In focus-group discussions, teachers told the researcher that the secret to the more positive motivation of teachers and better performance of this school was related to the good management of the working environment. Examples of benefits were good maintenance of teachers' houses and ready availability of teaching aids and other resources. But equally as important is that good management enables teachers to understand their responsibilities and they therefore do their bit to make sure that the school runs well.

The first point that struck the researcher on arrival at the school was how well maintained the school buildings and teachers' housing were. This, the teachers say, is because the school management undertakes regular maintenance and in turn, the teachers feel responsible for the good upkeep of the school; the good houses are also a motivating background factor to their lives as teachers at the school.

The teachers say they feel responsible because they are treated and respected well by their seniors. Respect for the teachers extends to all areas of school life, from the head teacher being completely transparent about school budgets and expenditure (teachers can see these whenever they want, so they do not feel excluded from the running of their school) to the headmaster being well organised for the orientation week of each term – setting objectives, timetables and programmes for the year. Problem-solving is open and consultative – teachers feel able to be open about things to their seniors and management are open to criticism and suggestions from teachers.

The teachers are given regular in-service training within the school throughout the year, by more senior or experienced staff members, both formal and informal. In addition, teachers receive continual observations, as well as feedback and positive suggestions for improvement. Teachers say they feel supported and motivated when this is done positively. When it comes to sorting out teachers' problems, such as unpaid allowances, the school administration try as far as is possible to follow these up for teachers by writing to the relevant offices and supporting them where they can, so that teachers do not have to go to the provincial offices themselves. The teachers say that the lack of allowances does not affect them as badly as in other schools, as not only do they feel supported by their own superiors at school level but they also have enough other positive factors in place: *'People are responding to my needs, I am cared for, I am looked after by the authorities'*.

The working relationship and atmosphere between the teachers and the community is positive. All teachers are from the local community except for one who is married to a local person, and some were themselves pupils at the school; maybe this goes some way to explaining the successful relationship between the school and the local community. Perhaps this is further helped by the fact that the school supports the local community where it can and vice versa, for example, by buying the local produce and growing coco within the school grounds – the community is involved so there are no problems with crops being stolen, as happens in other schools. The constant liaising by the headmaster maintains this good relationship. This has also turned into an excellent project in which students can learn about growing rice and coco palms and offsets the high cost of living by providing the school with cheap local goods and injects cash into the local economy. A constructive reciprocal relationship exists.

Teachers are still under pressure from heavy workloads and what would normally be expensive living costs, but due to the combination of these reasons listed, they do not feel demoralised or demotivated.

'Tall Trees' is one of the most successful schools in Papua New Guinea: 20 out of 36 students went through to Grades 11 and 12 at secondary school and 100 per cent of these then went on to tertiary education.

Section 5:

Conclusions and recommendations

VSO's Valuing Teachers project set out to explore the relationship between teachers' motivation and performance and education quality, and to identify and analyse the factors affecting teacher motivation in order to make recommendations for national and international policy-makers. **Section 5.1** will look at the broad conclusions that can be made from the research. **Sections 5.2 and 5.3** will summarise the factors affecting motivation as identified by teachers in the case-study countries in this research. Focusing more particularly on the issue of teachers' apparent exclusion from the decision-making that affects them, the report will go on to suggest, in **Section 5.4**, measures that must be implemented to ensure that teachers' voices are heard in policy fora, including, but not limited to, adequate representation for teachers' associations. Finally, recommendations on the role of donors and international institutions in supporting a new compact between teachers and policy-makers will be made in **Section 5.5**.

The research established that the *UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers* quoted in **Section 3** are still very far from being realised. The findings amply demonstrate that there is an urgent need for policy-makers to recognise the fact that educational quality is very largely dependent on the willingness and ability of teachers to accommodate and implement change. Thus, support for their livelihoods, professional development and morale is not an optional extra but a central component of effective policy-making. Teachers are not bureaucrats or technicians but rounded professionals with complex and varied needs. As noted in the **Introduction**, it is impossible to make standardised recommendations on the policy measures that must be taken for all countries, so this will not be attempted here. However, the implication of the research is that a new approach to policy-making on education is required – one that puts teachers' roles, needs and views at the heart of policy formulation, implementation and evaluation.

5.1 Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from the research:

- ▶▶ Teachers' motivation is fragile and declining.
- ▶▶ Teachers have low self-esteem in their professional role, and feel they are not respected by others.
- ▶▶ Teachers' performance is strongly influenced by teacher motivation.

- ▶▶ Teachers wish to be enabled to perform well, which in turn influences their motivation.
- ▶▶ Teacher motivation is a critically ignored factor in education policy-making.
- ▶▶ There is a strong link between teachers' motivation and performance, and education quality, but improving teachers' motivation is not uniformly prioritised as a major concern of national and international policy-makers.
- ▶▶ Non-remuneration and administrative issues are almost as important as the actual level of remuneration teachers receive. Improving teachers' motivation may not, therefore, be as difficult or expensive as it appears.
- ▶▶ Policy-makers and other stakeholders are aware of the problem of poor teacher motivation, but are not taking appropriate action either to seek teachers' views or address their needs.

Recommendation: Addressing the factors that reduce teachers' motivation should be a major concern of policy-makers. This will create conditions for the success of other education interventions.

5.2 Non-remuneration factors

It is often assumed that teachers' job satisfaction is largely, if not exclusively, related to their remuneration levels. This research has demonstrated that teachers' motivation stems from a complex interplay of factors that link to their sense of their own worth and value as educators and employees. While remuneration is certainly one factor in influencing their motivation (and will be examined in more depth later), teachers expressly identified the following issues as equally, if not more, significant:

- ▶▶ Leadership is crucial in establishing school-level support systems and supervisory practices that can secure professional commitment from teachers, even in difficult and disadvantaged circumstances.
- ▶▶ Teachers must be given opportunities to reflect on their professional practice through short in-service training and supportive inspectors' visits.
- ▶▶ Teachers require more and improved mechanisms for the management of pupil behaviour and ability.
- ▶▶ Workloads must be rationalised to enable teachers to concentrate on the core business of teaching.
- ▶▶ Raising the public's regard for teachers is essential. This should be a shared responsibility of government, civil-society and teachers' associations.
- ▶▶ Teachers need to feel confident of the subjects they are expected to teach, and are assisted in doing so by the provision of teaching and learning materials for themselves as well as for their students, especially where teachers are teaching unfamiliar subjects or higher grades.

The factors that were largely or wholly omitted from teachers' discussions on what affects their motivation are interesting in their absence. Since these omitted factors are sometimes those prioritised for intervention by policy-makers, they are offered here by way of comparison:

- ▶▶ well-constructed classrooms
- ▶▶ furniture
- ▶▶ teacher resource centres
- ▶▶ school libraries
- ▶▶ sports equipment
- ▶▶ school uniform
- ▶▶ class size
- ▶▶ greater autonomy in determining teaching methods
- ▶▶ preferences about working in day versus boarding schools.

Recommendation: All education stakeholders should demonstrate the value of teachers, and take steps to ensure that wider society develops a more positive and supportive attitude towards teachers.

5.3 Remuneration factors

Teaching is a profession, and teachers' remuneration packages must reflect their proper status and valuable contribution to society. Policy-makers need to recognise that there is a threshold below which teachers cannot be reasonably expected to perform their duties effectively. Over time, inadequate remuneration packages (including accommodation and allowances) will erode teachers' commitment to their vocation and education norms and values will start to decline in schools. Therefore, national governments should not seek to reduce the salary budgets for teachers. Attention is required, however, to ensure that teachers' remuneration packages are structured appropriately and that their administration does not become a factor in teacher demotivation.

The application of complex systems of allowances and incentives, rather than ameliorating teachers' situation, has actually had a negative effect because of the difficulties in administering them. They are also considered to be insecure and an inadequate form of recognition for teachers' efforts in working in difficult circumstances.

According to teachers' views on the subject of their remuneration, the following themes can be identified:

- ▶▶ Pay schemes should, wherever possible, minimise the number of allowances and invest in salaries, except where necessary to attract teachers to disadvantaged regions.
- ▶▶ Teachers going to work in rural areas should be offered non-pay incentives such as security of tenure and accelerated access to professional development opportunities.
- ▶▶ Low-interest loan schemes to allow teachers to buy and maintain their own homes are teachers' preferred option to access housing of good quality in the event that free housing is not a condition of service.

Recommendation: It is essential to improve remuneration practices around administration, management and equity as they are key factors in teacher motivation.

5.4 Teachers' voice

The factors identified above may or may not immediately suggest certain rational policy decisions that can be taken. However, the proper people to express teachers' concerns to policy-makers are teachers themselves. If there is one overriding message that must come from this research, it is that policy-makers, education managers and donors need to do more to listen to teachers. Teacher unions may strive to negotiate on behalf of teachers with varying success but the discourse they have engaged in has been principally that of industrial relations negotiations. Education International recognises that teachers and teacher associations have much to offer in developing understanding of the delivery of quality education. This research strongly endorses their position. However, while this section calls for better representation of teachers' voices, it does not refer only to the inclusion of representatives from teachers' associations. While teachers' associations do have a vital role to play, the research also revealed

the need for all stakeholders, including national government and civil-society coalitions, to find imaginative and inclusive ways of eliciting teachers' views and addressing their concerns.

Teachers are the mediators between education systems and their target beneficiaries, and are the best-placed stakeholders to give a nuanced, well-informed view on the efficacy of those systems, policies and projects. While it must be acknowledged that teachers' interests are not the same as those of children, parents or managers, they have been left out of the debates for so long that there is a need to redress the imbalances of the past. Far too often, only token efforts are made to invite and support teachers to participate in decisions and change the processes that affect them and their ability to do their work, leaving them feeling that they are merely passive implementers of reform. Apart from the fact that this way of working fails to make the best use of teachers' understanding of education, it also demoralises teachers and undermines their sense of agency and commitment to the profession that is so vital to the maintenance of education norms and values in schools. The tendency towards the 'projectisation' of donor support to education, where donor funding is dependent on the adoption of a particular project, such as curriculum reform or textbook redesign, has in some cases exacerbated this problem. Often dependent on Northern concepts and accepted educational canon, such projects have varying levels of relevance to Southern contexts.

Finally, it must also be acknowledged that teachers and teachers' organisations have a part to play in claiming their space in education discourse. Teachers' sense of neglect and declining status has led to a creeping alienation from the process of education reform, and reports were heard of teachers failing to participate when consultation processes were in fact set up. Teachers must be enabled to take the opportunities offered to them in order to claim their rightful place at the decision-makers' table. Clearly, this entails policy-makers making new provision to allow teachers time and to reward them appropriately for their participation. It also requires other actors in education, such as NGOs, parent-teacher associations and school governing bodies, to actively support teachers' involvement.

Based on VSO's research, the following aspects of education systems would benefit greatly from the inclusion of teacher voice in planning, implementation and evaluation:

- ▶▶ development of new syllabuses or curricula
- ▶▶ design of pre-service and in-service teacher training (content and delivery mechanisms)
- ▶▶ design of donor projects
- ▶▶ structure of decentralisation
- ▶▶ national education planning
- ▶▶ design of management training and determination of competencies and duties of teachers and head teachers
- ▶▶ methods of payment of teacher salaries and allowances, including the balance between the two
- ▶▶ management of promotions
- ▶▶ incentives for taking up rural or hardship postings
- ▶▶ innovation in schools in respect of HIV/AIDS education.

Recommendations:

- ▶▶ **Ministries of Education should establish professional representative bodies for teachers, such as general teaching councils, as fora for debate and discussion of teachers' needs and contributions outside the domain of industrial relations and terms and conditions.**
- ▶▶ **Decentralisation must be accompanied by effective measures to ensure successful top-down and bottom-up communications with schools, supported by monitoring and evaluation systems. The appointment of an ombudsman to ensure open and operational communications between schools and headquarters could be an effective measure.**
- ▶▶ **Reform processes must incorporate mechanisms to ensure participation of teachers and other civil-society actors, such as NGOs working in education or related fields, in planning, implementation and evaluation of change in education.**
- ▶▶ **Teacher unions, education councils of religious bodies, civil-society coalitions and teaching service commissions should work together to ensure that teachers are identified, trained and supported to participate in open decision-making processes.**
- ▶▶ **Teacher unions should develop well-informed positions on debates about quality and relevance of**

education as well as engaging in industrial relations negotiations on teachers' terms and conditions.

5.5 International institutions and international NGOs

Donors and international institutions will continue to play a key role in influencing the conditions under which teachers live and work. Dakar and its aftermath have ushered in a new era where it is generally agreed that education strategies must be nationally designed and owned by governments, with the broad participation of civil society in their design. Mobilisation of donor funds should follow from the agreement of viable national plans to achieve the Education For All goals. Criteria must be determined against which the plans are judged, with major implications for the recruitment, remuneration and retention of teachers. This research suggests a need to understand the implications of any proposed financing frameworks for teacher morale and motivation.

Recommendations:

- ▶▶ **International financing frameworks should not recommend a single formula for the calculation of teacher remuneration packages. Teachers' salaries are a matter for collective bargaining and negotiation at country level.**
- ▶▶ **Donors should be willing to support teachers' remuneration in the same way as other education interventions.**
- ▶▶ **The extent to which teachers have participated in the formulation of national education plans should be a key criterion for donors and international financial institutions in judging their viability.**
- ▶▶ **Donor consortia and international working groups on education should ensure regular representation of teachers in their decision-making processes.**
- ▶▶ **International monitoring systems should include provision for seeking direct feedback from teachers on the efficacy of education reform.**
- ▶▶ **International NGOs must support the inclusion of teacher voices in education decision-making as well as ensuring it in their own planning processes.**

This report has, VSO believes, demonstrated that it is time to recognise teachers as partners in education discourse rather than as deliverers of education. VSO therefore calls on national governments to prioritise measures to support teachers' motivation above other possible interventions, and to welcome teachers' voices in policy-making. Furthermore, VSO calls on donors and international institutions to recognise the vital role that teachers play in realising education reform and to ensure that financing agreements create favourable conditions for teachers' reward, incentivisation and support needs. Teachers' contribution to quality education is paramount and it is time that this is recognised and valued by those with power over their lives. It is incumbent on all – national governments, donors, international institutions and teachers' own representative bodies – to support teacher motivation in order to facilitate their performance and to bring teachers into the dialogue on policy formulation, implementation and evaluation.

'A teacher who is a happy teacher will teach well, and a happy school is a good school.'

School inspector, PNG

Appendix 1

Methodology

The research was conducted using simple techniques with the aim of enabling participation where possible and at the same time generating a replicable model for low-cost advocacy research.

VSO volunteer reports were analysed to identify factors affecting VSO teaching and education placements. A focus-group discussion was held with a group of returned VSO volunteers in order to develop deeper understanding of attitudes towards their teacher colleagues.

Desk-based research was conducted on topics of school and teacher effectiveness, teacher morale, motivation and job satisfaction, and pertinent issues such as teacher training and school management.

Three case-study countries were identified for further in-depth research and analysis with volunteers, national teacher colleagues, other education employees, education managers and stakeholders. The case-study countries were Zambia, Malawi and Papua New Guinea, which were chosen according to the following criteria:

- ▶▶ Teacher motivation was considered by programme staff and volunteers to be a significant constraint on education quality and volunteer placements.
- ▶▶ VSO had significant experience of education delivery in the country.
- ▶▶ VSO programme staff were prepared to engage in policy dialogue at national level on teacher issues.

Research took place in these countries between July 2001 and August 2002. In all three countries, focus-group discussions and in-depth interviews were conducted with teachers, volunteers and school managers in schools where VSO had volunteer placements – mainly disadvantaged secondary schools. Education stakeholders, such as national officials, teacher unions, church missions, and education NGOs and coalitions, were consulted through semi-structured interviews and workshops.

In all three case-study countries, the research process concluded with a round-table policy discussion that aimed to share preliminary findings with key stakeholders and senior education staff and seek their views on possible country solutions. Because the research was conducted in conjunction with the VSO staff in-country and under fairly challenging conditions, it was occasionally necessary to incorporate some slight differences in the methodology used. For example, in Zambia and PNG, teachers and volunteers were invited to fill in questionnaires offering further insights and ranking their levels of teacher motivation and performance. For each case-study country, a policy report has been prepared, drawing conclusions and making context-specific recommendations. To obtain a copy of these reports, please contact the Advocacy Department, VSO, 317 Putney Bridge Road, London SW15 2PN. Tel: +44 (0)208 780 7200

Appendix 2

Education statistics for each case-study country

Public Expenditure on Education

Country	As percentage of GNP		As percentage of government expenditure		Average annual growth rate (%)	Current expenditure as percentage of total	
	1990	1996	1990	1996		1990	1996
Malawi	3.4	5.4	11.1	...	-3.9	75.3	82.3
Zambia	2.6	2.2	8.7	7.1	-3.4	87.0	92.6
PNG*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

* PNG stands for Papua New Guinea
UNESCO World Education Report 2000

Public Current Expenditure on Education

Country	Percentage distribution of current expenditure by level						Current expenditure per pupil as percentage of GNP per capita					
	1990			1996			1990			1996		
	Pre prim +prim.	Sec.	Tert.	Pre prim +prim.	Sec.	Tert.	Pre prim +prim.	Sec.	Tert.	Pre prim +prim.	Sec.	Tert.
Malawi	44.7	13.1	20.2	58.8	8.9	20.5	8	52	999	9	27	1,580
Zambia	42.9	20.2	18.4	41.5	18.4	23.2	6	20	235	5	11	192
PNG	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

UNESCO World Education Report 2000

Teaching staff in pre-primary, primary and secondary education

Country	Pupil-teacher ratio						Percentage of female teachers					
	Pre-primary		Primary		Secondary general		Pre-primary		Primary		Secondary general	
	1990	1996	1990	1996	1990	1996	1990	1996	1990	1996	1990	1996
Malawi	61	59	29	22	...	...	31	39	25	...
Zambia	...	44	39	43
PNG	...	32	32	37	25	24	...	66	32	27	31	...

UNESCO World Education Report 2000

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- Selected papers from the World Education Forum discussion groups

How can a crisis in the teaching profession in developing countries be averted?

VSO is an international development charity working through volunteers with over 40 years' experience of working in educational institutions in developing countries. VSO volunteers have the opportunity to gain unique insights into the challenges their national colleagues face in providing education to disadvantaged children in difficult circumstances. This research was initiated as a result of VSO's experience that teachers' motivation in developing countries is fragile and declining, with serious implications for the viability of education reform and the attainment of international development targets in education.

This report is based on focus-group, interview and questionnaire data gathered from national teachers and other education stakeholders in three case-study countries: Zambia, Papua New Guinea and Malawi. Focusing largely on teachers' attitudes to their own profession, the research sought to develop a holistic understanding of the complex interplay between teachers' remuneration requirements, professional support needs, and their relationship to wider society. It took as its starting point the assumption that teachers' motivation had a significant impact on their performance and that teacher performance was one of the major factors influencing education quality.

The findings of the research suggest that national and international policy-makers need to develop a deeper understanding of teachers' attitudes to their own profession and the factors affecting their motivation. Not only are teachers the major learning resource in developing-country schools, they also have a wealth of experience about what does and does not work for education in disadvantaged contexts. Yet these teachers' views and insights are seldom considered adequately in planning and implementing education reform. A new approach to education reform is called for: one that puts teachers' needs, and perspectives, at the heart of decision-making.