

Funders Report

BRiCE Project DRC and Niger: Baseline Report

**Gauthier Marchais, Sweta Gupta, Cyril Brandt,
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Samuel Matabishi, Patrick Mze Somora,
Pacifique Nyabagaza, Dieudonne Kanyerhera,
Issa Kiemtoré, Christian PolePole Bazuzi and
Jean-Benoît Falisse**

December 2020

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Summary

This Report presents the descriptive statistics and preliminary analysis carried out following the first phase of quantitative and qualitative data collection of the Building Resilience in Conflict through Education (BRiCE) research project in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and in Niger. Activities were led by the Institute of Development Studies, in partnership with Save the Children, with the Institut Supérieur Pédagogique de Bukavu in DRC and with the Save the Children MEAL team in Niger. The objective of the study is to further the understanding of education in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, focusing on four central research questions: RQ.1) Investigating whether, and how, exposure to and experience of violence influence teaching quality and well-being in fragile and conflict-affected contexts; RQ.2) Examining the impact of the Teacher Professional Development (TPD) and Improving Learning Environments Together (ILET) components of the BRiCE programme on teachers' quality and well-being in fragile contexts; RQ.3) Examining how teaching quality and well-being influence children's cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes in fragile and conflict-affected countries; RQ.4) Exploring how knowledge developed by teachers in conflict-affected contexts can be used effectively in policy and programming.

Keywords

Education; Education in conflict affected contexts; Governance; Niger; DRC.

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Executive Summary

This report presents the descriptive statistics and preliminary analysis carried out following the first phase of quantitative and qualitative data collection of the Building Resilience in Crises through Education (BRiCE) research project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Niger. Activities were led by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), in partnership with Save the Children, with the Institut Supérieur Pédagogique de Bukavu in DRC, and with the Save the Children Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) team in Niger. The objective of the study is to further the understanding of education in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, focusing on four central research questions (RQs): (RQ1) Investigating whether, and how, exposure to and experience of violence influence teaching quality and wellbeing in fragile and conflict-affected contexts; (RQ2) Examining the impact of the Teacher Professional Development (TPD) and Improving Learning Environments Together (ILET) components of the BRiCE project on teaching quality and teacher wellbeing in fragile contexts; (RQ3) Examining how teaching quality and wellbeing influence children's cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes in fragile and conflict-affected countries; and (RQ4) Exploring how knowledge developed by teachers in conflict-affected contexts can be used effectively in policy and programming.

Sections 1 and 2 of the report present the study objectives and the Baseline Report methodology. The quantitative research design employed a phased-in cluster randomisation. Schools were randomly assigned to receive the TPD and ILET set of interventions in a phased manner – pilot schools to receive in 2018, Group 1 schools to receive in 2019, and Group 2 schools to receive in 2020 (in the DRC, there were 6 pilot schools, 20 Group 1 schools and 29 Group 2 schools, and in Niger, 10 pilot schools, 35 Group 1 schools and 37 Group 2 schools). Since the baseline data were collected after the pilot schools had received the interventions, the quantitative study design will only be using Group 1 and Group 2 schools to address the research questions outlined above. Under the randomisation set up, the quantitative study will compare the Group 1 schools that received the intervention in 2019 to Group 2 schools that did not receive the intervention in 2019, in order to attribute any changes in teaching quality and students' outcomes to the TPD and ILET interventions.

The quantitative data were collected in the DRC in April and May 2019 in 55 schools, including the 6 pilot schools, and in Niger during November and December 2019 in 72 schools (excluding the pilot schools).¹ However, as noted, the findings in this Baseline Report only relate to the Group 1 and Group 2 schools (49 in the DRC and 72 in Niger). In the DRC, from Group 1 and Group 2 schools, 535 male teachers and 217 female teachers (752 in total) were surveyed using a proportional random sampling method, stratified by gender; 295 boys and 342 girls from primary school Grade 3 (and their primary caregivers) were also surveyed (637 in total). In Niger, 609 teachers (81 male and 528 female teachers) and 709 Grade 4 children (342 boys and 367 girls, and their primary caregivers) were surveyed.

1 IDS was unable to survey the pilot schools in Niger due to time constraints.

In the DRC, the qualitative data were collected through 59 semi-structured interviews conducted in nine primary schools in the territory of Uvira, South Kivu province, in October and November 2019.

Section 3 of the report provides the baseline characteristics of the BRICE schools in both countries. In the DRC, it shows that schools are exposed to significant levels of violence in the territories of Uvira and Fizi, both in South Kivu. Over half of the schools (59 per cent) reported having experienced a violent attack since 1990, with 20 per cent having experienced a violent attack in 2017–18. In Niger, only three schools reported having experienced an attack since 1990.

Section 4 of the report focuses on teaching quality, teachers' wellbeing, and exposure to violence, which are the focus of RQ1 and RQ2. The section provides background characteristics and key statistics on the teachers sampled in the survey. In the DRC, on average, teachers have 14.5 years of teaching experience, but only 46 per cent had received training in the 2018/19 academic year. There was no significant difference by gender in teaching experience and training of teachers. Almost a quarter (24 per cent) of the female teachers reported having missed school for at least one day in the week preceding the survey, compared to 18 per cent for male teachers. In Niger, on average, teachers in our sample have 10.83 years of teaching experience and nearly all teachers (92 per cent) have attended teaching-related trainings in 2018/19. For attendance, 62 per cent of teachers indicated that they missed school for at least one day during the past month, with no significant difference by gender.

In both countries a similar proportion (around a quarter) of the teachers reported that state wages were not paid on time. In the DRC, 15 per cent of teachers reported being satisfied with their salary, compared to 50 per cent in Niger. Other areas of dissatisfaction were the lack of textbooks and functioning school infrastructure; 25 per cent of teachers in the DRC expressed regret over becoming a teacher, compared to 8 per cent in Niger.

Teaching practices are key to understanding teaching quality. Overall, teaching and classroom practices relating to interaction with students, lesson delivery and feedback are prevalent in both countries. However, the survey points to serious limitations in terms of literacy-related teaching practices, and in particular comprehension, writing and vocabulary, as well as the teaching practices related to encouraging student autonomy.

Teachers in both countries reported being committed to creating a safe space in school. However, while over 80 per cent of teachers reported that they and their students feel safe at school in both countries, a significant proportion of teachers remain concerned about certain elements of girls' safety. In the DRC, almost half (45 per cent) of teachers agree that girls would not usually report incidents of violence, compared to 36 per cent in Niger. There was no evidence of gender bias in the form of differentiated treatment for boys and girls in the classroom by teachers. However, gender bias was prevalent when looking at teachers' views on women's role in society and the family. This was more pronounced in Niger than in the DRC.

Given the fragile settings in which teachers involved in the study operate, we administered a post-traumatic stress disorder checklist (PCL) to measure levels of trauma among teachers. We found

that 36 per cent of teachers in the DRC and 6 per cent in Niger show symptoms of PTSD. This is not surprising, as in the DRC, 67 per cent of teachers reported having experienced at least one violent attack in their lives, compared to 4 per cent in Niger. We explore the causes of violence against teachers in the DRC and their wider role in conflict-affected societies. We show that the perceived identities of teachers (ethnic, religious, insider/outsider) play an important role in their exposure to violence. We also show that, although teachers are exposed to considerable levels of violence, their role is more complex than solely that of 'victims'. For example, teachers can act as mediators between populations and armed factions.

Section 5 of the report focuses on student learning and wellbeing, which is the focus of RQ3. We provide descriptive statistics on the student key outcomes, which will enable analysis of the effects of the programme following the midline and endline data collections. In the DRC, the average age of Grade 3 children in our sample is 9.4 years and approximately 20 per cent of the children are 11 years or above. Just over half (54 per cent) of the children in the DRC reported missing at least one day of school in the month preceding the survey, while 45 per cent cited inability to pay fees as the most important reason for absence. In fact, 80 per cent of the children in the DRC sample reported that they were sent back home at least once in the 2018/19 academic year because of unpaid fees. In Niger, 17 per cent of children missed at least one day of school in the month preceding the survey. The average number of days of absence was higher than in the DRC (4 days in Niger versus 2.6 days in the DRC over the preceding month). In Niger, health was the main reason cited for absence (in more than 80 per cent of cases).

In terms of the school environment, most children reported frequent occurrences of positive teacher behaviour. However, in the DRC, 36 per cent of children said they never received help from the teacher when they felt sad. Almost a third (31 per cent) said they never received help from the teacher to complete tasks. This situation is quite the reverse in Niger, where more than 85 per cent of children reported receiving help from their teachers. In Niger, the use of physical punishment seems less common than in the DRC (30 per cent of children indicated that use of physical punishment is common, compared to 58 per cent in the DRC). The most common form of punishment in both countries was making the child stand or kneel for long periods. Girls were more likely to be punished in the form of having to do work at school or at the teacher's home. However, this form of punishment was rare.

In terms of security, most students reported that school is a safe environment. Teachers were identified by students as the main actor providing protection at school in both countries. There was some concern, however, over reporting violence experienced in schools. This concern resonated with teachers, of whom 45 per cent in the DRC and 36 per cent in Niger stated that girls do not report violent incidents. A fifth of the students in the DRC disagree that the school takes immediate action when students report violent incidents. Again, this is in line with teachers in the DRC, 18 per cent of whom also felt the same way.

The children were administered Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) in French and Early Grade Maths Assessment (EGMA). While in the DRC, we find a significant difference in the average scores on both by gender, with girls doing worse than boys, we do not find such a

learning gap in Niger. Overall, children in Niger performed better than those in the DRC. In the DRC, 9 per cent of children could not correctly identify any letter sound. This percentage increases fourfold to 45 per cent with word reading; fivefold with oral passage reading; and for comprehension, 82 per cent of the children gave incorrect answers to all questions. In Niger, 2 per cent of the children were unable to read a single letter and 62 per cent scored 0 in the reading comprehension exercise.

Children in both countries performed better on EGMA than on EGRA, with most children performing well on number identification and quantity discrimination sub-tasks. The worst performing sub-task on EGMA was subtraction, with 35 per cent of the children in the DRC and 18 per cent in Niger unable to correctly answer any of the subtraction tasks.

The survey also administered perseverance and empathy activities to all children. These were adapted from Save the Children's International Social and Emotional Learning Assessment. The children were asked to complete three drawing activities using their non-dominant hand for the perseverance activity. In the DRC, on average, only a quarter of the sample attempted all three drawings, with boys scoring slightly higher than girls. In Niger, nearly half of boys and girls attempted all three drawings. Under the empathy test, children were asked what they would do in five different situations. A higher score represents a greater presence of empathy. On average, the empathy score for the DRC sample was 3.8 (out of 5) with no significant gap by gender. In Niger, the empathy score (average) was 3.9, with girls performing better than boys.

We conclude the report by presenting some of the key avenues for future research identified by the research team in the DRC. First, there is a need for closer analysis of the question of ethnic homogenisation and segregation in schools. Incorporating this dimension would allow a closer understanding of the position of teachers in polarised social contexts, where polarisation occurs along identity lines. Second, we explore the possibility of incorporating an analysis of '*Gratuité*', the flagship policy of the DRC government with regards to education, implemented in the autumn of 2019. Despite concerns regarding the government's capacity to implement this policy, it has the potential to profoundly reconfigure the country's education sector, as well as the relationship between teachers and parents. Moreover, given that violence permeates the school environment and social relations in the conflict-affected territories of Uvira and Fizi, it is as yet unclear what consequences *Gratuité* might have on the dynamics of violence, which provides a motivation to incorporate it into the study.

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Acronyms

BRICE	Building Resilience in Crisis through Education
DEVCO	[European Union Directorate-General] International Cooperation and Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EGMA	Early Grade Maths Assessment
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
FARDC	Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo
IDP	Internally displaced persons
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
ILET	Improving Learning Environments Together
ISELA	International Social and Emotional Learning Assessment (Save the Children)
ISP Bukavu	Institut Supérieur Pédagogique de Bukavu
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PCL	Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist
PTSD	Post-traumatic stress disorder
RCT	Randomised control trial
SCI	Save the Children International
SECOPE	Service de Contrôle et de la Paie des Enseignants
TPD	Teacher Professional Development

1. Introduction

1.1 Study rationale

1.1.1 Project rationale

This report covers two countries that have been embroiled in violent conflicts: the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Republic of Niger.

Despite ongoing violence for the past 30 years, the DRC's education sector has continued to operate in conflict-affected provinces, but a range of factors prevent children from receiving quality education. Supply side factors (that affect children nationally) include chronic underfunding of the education sector (De Herdt and Titeca 2016), which is often exacerbated in conflict-affected provinces. They also include factors specific to these provinces, such as the destruction of school infrastructure and the deliberate targeting of school staff by armed factions (Brandt 2017, 2019). Demand side factors are equally numerous, as the economic, social and political factors hindering access to education are often exacerbated in conflict areas, and conflict-related factors such as short- and long-term displacement, insecurity, militarisation and the development of exploitative industries increase the barriers to children accessing education.

The Nigerien education system faces a range of challenges. First, two regional armed conflicts² have escalated between 2017 and 2019, causing an increase in the number of school closures (UNICEF 2019a: 3). Second, the drastic expansion of the education system to absorb an increase in educational demand by a very young population (half of Nigerians are under 18 years) has caused severe strain on the system. Exclusion from school remains significant, 'with 38% of primary school age children and 70% of lower secondary school age adolescent estimated to be out-of-school' (UNICEF 2019b: 5). Exclusion mainly affects girls, children in marginalised rural regions, and children from the poorest households (*ibid.*). Three in four girls in Niger are married before the age of 18, and one in three adolescent girls (15–19 years) are pregnant or have already given birth (UNICEF 2019b: 4). Third, the large majority of children who are in school do not properly learn reading and maths (*ibid.*: 5), one of the reasons being the insufficient quality and duration of teacher training. Fourth, various challenges pertaining to educational governance persist. Most schools in Niger are public and non-religious, with Franco-Arabic schools offering education to approximately 360,000 children (Lozneau and Humeau 2014: 8–9), while there are no reliable numbers on non-recognised Koranic schools and Arabo-Islamic madrasas. Most of the education budget is spent on teacher salaries. Since

² In the tri-border area between Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, as well as in the Lake Chad region.

1998, most teachers have been recruited as contract teachers, lowering the average salaries but not solving issues of quality and accountability (Cummings *et al.* 2016: 4; De Sardan, Bako and Harouna 2018; Bourdon, Frölich and Michaelowa 2007). Despite decentralisation, local actors (headteachers and parents) have little power in decision-making processes (Körling 2010; World Bank 2014: 5).

In this context, the Building Resilience in Crisis through Education (BRiCE) project, funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by Save the Children in Niger and the DRC, is seeking to sustainably deliver access to quality education in selected fragile and crisis-affected areas. Targeting primary and secondary schools, the project seeks to achieve its aims through the following mechanisms: (1) increase access to safe learning environments that enhance the socio-emotional and physical wellbeing of girls and boys; (2) improve the quality of teaching and learning outcomes; (3) strengthen the resilience of school communities and institutions; (4) ameliorate child protection mechanisms; (5) increase the conflict sensitivity of education in target areas and regional and national education structures; and (6) develop an evidence base to inform policy and action.

The project offers a range of conflict-sensitive participatory interventions to strengthen Teacher Professional Development (TPD) and assess and address community needs for quality learning environments – through the Improving Learning Environments Together (ILET) package.³ In order to strengthen evidence-based policies and practices, the BRiCE project comprises a research component, led by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), in partnership with the Institut Supérieur Pédagogique de Bukavu (ISP Bukavu) in the DRC.⁴ The research aims to gain a better understanding of education needs, access and quality in conflict-affected contexts, with a particular focus on teachers. Among the range of interventions that Save the Children is implementing in the DRC and Niger, this study focuses on ILET and TPD.

1.1.2 Study rationale

The study uses a mixed-methods approach to evaluate and analyse the impact of TPD and ILET, with a view to informing the design of the interventions, as well as programming and policy on education in fragile and conflict-affected contexts more broadly. The overarching aim of this study is to understand how the primary and secondary education sector operate in fragile and conflict-affected

³ The project also offers other interventions such as the Community Action Cycle and Conflict Sensitive Education. However, these were rolled out in all the schools at the same time. For our research design, we focus on TPD and ILET as these have been randomised in a phased manner. This gives us an appropriate control to compare with the treated schools, hence establishing the effect of these interventions in a robust way.

⁴ As of the submission date of this report, the Niger partner has not been contracted yet.

contexts, with a particular focus on the role of teachers. Research on ‘what works’ in education in emergencies continues to be scarce (Burde *et al.* 2015; Burde, Lahmann and Thompson 2019). This study’s design is tailored to address the complexity of education in conflict-affected contexts. The quantitative design allows us to deepen recent insights on student and teacher wellbeing (Wolf *et al.* 2015b; Wolf *et al.* 2015a; Torrente *et al.* 2015; Starkey 2016). The qualitative and historically informed methods enable a rich exploration of elements such as teachers’ exposure to violence and multi-faceted identities within violent conflicts (Lopes Cardozo and Shah 2016; Wilson 2001; Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) 2018).⁵ The specific research questions are:

- Research question 1 (RQ1): Investigate whether, and how, exposure to and experience of violence influence teaching quality and wellbeing in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.
- Research question 2 (RQ2): Examine the impact of TPD and ILET on teachers’ quality and wellbeing in fragile contexts.
- Research question 3 (RQ3): Examine how teaching quality and wellbeing influence children’s cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes in fragile and conflict-affected countries.
- Research question 4 (RQ4): Explore how knowledge developed by teachers in conflict-affected contexts can be used effectively in policy and programming.

In answering these questions, the project will make important academic and policy contributions. First, it will contribute to an understanding of how teaching quality and wellbeing are influenced by violence, conflict and insecure environments. Second, it will assess the impact of two interventions that aim to improve the learning environment in schools and provide professional training and support for teachers in fragile environments. Third, it will attempt to explore the links between teaching quality and students’ learning and non-cognitive outcomes. The objective is to underline the central role that teachers play in the education sector and to bring their employment conditions to the forefront of policy debate. Fourth, it will inform policy and programming on how teachers’ quality and wellbeing can be effectively improved in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, and how their knowledge of conflict situations can be better incorporated into programming.

⁵ Please see the research design for a more extensive literature review that connects the study to ongoing debates (Justino *et al.* 2019).

1.2 Objectives of the Baseline Report

The research questions described in the previous section provide us with the overall direction, and the Baseline Report presents a description of each dimension that will feed into these questions at later stages. The three dimensions that are central to exploring our research questions are conflict, teaching quality and wellbeing, and students' learning and wellbeing. Table 1.1 presents the indicators used to measure these three dimensions.

The Research Design Report (Justino *et al.* 2019) details the definitions and measurement of each of these dimensions, which we summarise here. We measure teaching quality in several ways. While teachers' experience, qualification and training are important predictors of teaching quality, we also measure classroom practices, with a focus on literacy practices, as these are key to the TPD intervention. We supplement this with questions on the 'intrinsic' value teachers attach to the teaching profession (reasons for becoming a teacher). Additionally, we measure teachers' beliefs, with a focus on gender roles and the provision of safe learning environments, as these are key indicators in fragile settings.

Teacher wellbeing is measured through teachers' satisfaction with their job and questions on the challenges they face. Since the project takes place in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, we focus on teachers' experience of violence and associated trauma (post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)).

Students' learning is measured through Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Maths Assessment (EGMA) tests administered in French. Student wellbeing is measured through self-motivation (perseverance and aspirations), and social awareness (empathy). These are supplemented with a study of 'enabling' factors, in particular a nurturing school environment – that is, the availability of support and information related to conflict-related risks, and the occurrence of positive and encouraging behaviour at school.

Gender is a key dimension of teachers' and students' experiences of education, and a central focus of the BRiCE project. Although gender is not a central focus of the research questions, it nevertheless constitutes a transversal theme of the study. In this report, we present the disaggregation of results by gender when these are statistically significant or relevant to particular sections. However, to avoid making the report excessively burdensome, we present gender disaggregation of results that are not statistically significant or directly relevant in Annex 5.

Table 1.1 Dimensions of research

Sub-questions engaged with in Baseline Report	Contribution to research question
Achieving education outcomes in conflict contexts	
What is the experience of schools as targets of violent events and armed groups?	(i), (ii), (iii), (iv)
Teaching quality and wellbeing at baseline	
What are the teachers' characteristics and experience?	(i), (ii), (iii)
What are the teachers' job satisfaction and challenges faced?	(i), (ii), (iii)
What are the teaching practices used in classrooms?	(i), (ii), (iii)
What are the teachers' knowledge and perceptions of creating a safe learning environment in school?	(i), (ii), (iii)
What is the personal experience of teachers as targets of violent events, and of trauma?	(i), (ii), (iii), (iv)
Students' learning and wellbeing at baseline	
What are the students' learning outcomes – literacy and numeracy?	(iii)
What are the students' non-cognitive outcomes – perseverance and empathy?	(iii)
What are the students' experience and perception of safe learning environment in school?	(iii)

The Baseline Report focuses on the results of the quantitative and qualitative fieldwork carried out in the DRC in 2019 in partnership with the Institut Supérieur Pédagogique de Bukavu (ISP Bukavu), and the quantitative fieldwork conducted in Niger in 2019 in partnership with Save the Children's Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) team. The project has experienced severe delays in Niger, where the contractual partner has pulled out. As a result, the qualitative component of the study has not yet taken place in Niger. IDS and Save the Children are still in the process of identifying and contracting a new partner, and plan to conduct the qualitative fieldwork in Niger in December 2020.

2. Baseline Study methodology

2.1 Quantitative component methodology

The quantitative data collection for the baseline took place in April and May 2019 in the DRC and in November and December 2019 in Niger. The survey instruments were developed and shared with Save the Children's BRICE team and the country partners: ISP Bukavu (DRC) and Save the Children MEAL team (Niger). For the full survey instruments, see Annex 1A (DRC) and Annex 1B (Niger).

2.1.1 Sampling strategy

In the DRC, we surveyed 55 schools selected by Save the Children for implementation of the TPD and ILET interventions in the territories of Uvira and Fizi, in South Kivu province. In Niger, 72 schools in the regions of Diffa and Zinder were selected by Save the Children. These schools were not randomly selected or selected to be nationally representative. The following criteria were used by Save the Children to select schools in the DRC:

- viable school
- school is in a secure area
- accessibility
- proximity of schools for teacher training
- equity between management regime in the area
- not a private school
- school does not receive the same intervention package that DEVCO aligns
- area is covered by mobile phone
- school grounds and buildings have infrastructure and access to water
- supportive community structures and dynamic school leaders (e.g. existence of parental committee and management committee)
- school located in an area where Save the Children International implements other interventions.

A phased-in cluster randomisation approach was chosen for research design. The schools were divided into geographical clusters based on proximity. These geographical clusters were then randomly allocated into three groups: pilot, Group 1 and Group 2. Therefore, the TPD and ILET interventions would take

place at different times in the selected schools based on their location (clusters are at the *groupement* level in the DRC and at the commune level in Niger). Under this approach, we compare schools in Group 1 that receive the interventions to schools in Group 2 that do not receive the interventions, thereby making it possible to attribute any change in teaching quality and wellbeing, and students' outcomes, to the interventions.

This design provides several advantages to suit the evaluation objective of the research project. Randomising schools into treatment (Group 1) and control (Group 2) implies that there is no selection bias. The treatment schools were not chosen based on any observable characteristics. This implies that after the intervention in treatment schools, any difference observed in our indicators between treatment and control schools is due to the interventions. Second, we opted for a phased-in approach on ethical grounds, implying that the control schools will also receive the intervention, but after the treatment schools. This ensures that no potential beneficiary is excluded from the intervention. A detailed discussion of the quantitative study design and the sampling strategy can be found in the BRiCE Research Design report (Justino *et al.* 2019).

The selected schools were divided into three groups or phases:

- In the first year of the interventions (September/October 2018 to May/June 2019), 6 schools in the DRC and 10 schools in Niger ('pilot schools').
- Another 20 schools in the DRC and 35 schools in Niger are targeted by the interventions in the second year (September/October 2019 to May/June 2020) ('Group 1 schools').
- In the final year (September/October 2020 to May/June 2021), the remaining 29 schools in the DRC and 37 schools in Niger will receive the interventions ('Group 2 schools').

Within each school, we targeted Grade 3 teachers and children in the DRC and Grade 4 teachers and children in Niger. Since we surveyed the DRC at the end of the academic year and Niger at the beginning of the academic year, the distinction in grades implied that the children belonged to the same cohort, allowing for cross-country comparability. Power calculations (accounting for a 25 per cent attrition rate in the DRC⁶) and budgetary constraints determined the total number of teachers to survey.⁷ In the DRC, we interviewed an average of 15 teachers per school. In Niger, the sample size was set with an average of 10 teachers per school. In each school, we surveyed a sample of teachers, stratified

⁶ Attrition rate could not be accounted for in Niger, as the average number of teachers required would be 13 per school and 93 per cent of the Niger schools had less than 13 teachers.

⁷ Please see the BRiCE Research Design Report for details on power calculations and the assumptions (Justino *et al.* 2019).

by gender. In schools where the number of teachers was below the average country sample mean (15 in the DRC and 10 in Niger), we surveyed every teacher. In the other schools where the number of teachers available was larger than the desired average, we first surveyed Grade 3 (DRC) and Grade 4 (Niger) teachers. If the targeted number of sampled male and female teachers was not reached, then Grade 1 and Grade 2 teachers (and Grade 3 teachers in Niger) were sampled, and finally Grade 5 and Grade 6 teachers (and Grade 4 in the DRC).⁸

In Uvira (the territory where the DRC baseline data collection had started), the number of available primary school teachers in some schools was lower than the number provided by Save the Children. Hence, while our target number for the teachers' sample was 825, in reality we reached 822. Annex 2 provides a detailed overview of the data collection and quality assurance processes followed.

In Niger, we did not collect data in the 10 pilot schools due to time constraints. The decision to implement the data collection was delayed from October to November 2019 because of a delay in the authorisation process. This left limited time to collect data on the 72 target schools before the December school break. The total sample in Niger was 609 teachers across the 72 Group 1 and Group 2 schools. Most schools were small and employed fewer than 10 teachers.

The number of surveyed Grade 3 children in the DRC and the number of surveyed Grade 4 children in Niger was fixed by power calculations (accounting for 30 per cent attrition) and budgetary constraints. The sample of children was randomly selected and stratified by gender in all schools. We were not able to get a sample that was proportional to the number of students in the relevant grade (Grade 3 in the DRC and Grade 4 in Niger) in all schools as this information was not available. Therefore, the targeted number of students per school was set at 13 (a total of 715 across 55 schools) in the DRC and 10 in Niger (a total of 709 across 70 schools).

While there are 72 Group 1 and Group 2 schools in Niger, for two schools (Mai Kazagui and Mal Entendants) the children were not surveyed. In the first school, Grade 4 did not exist; the second school only catered for children with hearing disabilities and the enumerators were not trained to survey these children.

When arriving at a target school, the survey researchers were first asked to create the list of children in these grades, with information on their gender and classroom. First, two Grade 3 classrooms in the DRC and two Grade 4

⁸ For example, at a school in Uvira, 9 male teachers and 6 female teachers were to be randomly selected. If there were 5 teachers of Grade 3 (4 men and 1 woman) and 1 headteacher (male), there remained 4 male teachers (9- (4 + 1 headteacher)) and 5 female teachers (6-1) from which to randomly select among the teachers of grades 1 and 2 (and then among teachers of grades 4, 5 and 6 if the number of teachers was not reached).

classrooms in Niger were randomly selected. Then, an equal number of boys and girls were randomly selected in these two selected classrooms.

2.1.2 Post-data collection sample distribution

This subsection presents the distribution of teachers and children in our research sample. The tables are presented according to three cohorts for the DRC: pilot (received TPD and ILET interventions⁹ in the 2018/19 academic year); Group 1 (will receive the intervention in the 2019/20 academic year); and Group 2 (will receive the intervention in the 2020/21 academic year). For Niger, however, data were collected only in the Group 1 and Group 2 schools. Pilot schools were not included for the reasons previously mentioned.

Table 2.1 presents the primary school teachers surveyed, as compared to the population of teachers in the schools visited. In the DRC, we surveyed 822 teachers out of 876 available primary school teachers – that is, 94 per cent of the teachers in BRICE schools. In Niger, 609 teachers were interviewed out of a total of 739, which equates to 82 per cent of teachers in these schools.

Table 2.1 Teachers sampled versus the population of teachers

		DRC			Niger		
		Uvira	Fizi	Total	Diffa	Zinder	Total
Pilot	Population	34	38	72			
	Sample	32 (94%)	38 (100%)	70 (97%)			
Group 1	Population	257	130	387	203	203	406
	Sample	251 (98%)	106 (82%)	357 (92%)	138 (68%)	159 (78%)	297 (73%)
Group 2	Population	159	258	417	77	257	334
	Sample	151 (94%)	244 (95%)	395 (95%)	55 (71%)	257 (100%)	312 (93%)
Total	Population	450	426	876	280	460	740
	Sample	434 (96%)	388 (91%)	822 (94%)	193 (69%)	416 (90%)	609 (82%)

Note: The percentages in the brackets denote the sample size as a percentage of the population.

Table 2.2 presents the distribution of surveyed teachers by gender. In our sampling methodology, we followed a proportional random method stratified by gender. First, we see that there are more male teachers in schools in the DRC than female teachers (71 per cent, or approximately 2.6 male teachers per

⁹ The intervention refers to ILET and TPD, as only these two arms of the programme were randomised in a phased manner.

female teacher). This distribution is similar for both Group 1 and Group 2 schools. Second, since we followed a proportional sampling methodology, we were able to replicate this distribution in our sample: 72 per cent of our surveyed teachers are male, similar to the proportion in the teacher population.

There are more female teachers in schools in Niger than male teachers. As for the DRC, the proportions in the sample match those in the population.

Table 2.2 Teachers sampled by gender versus the population of teachers

		DRC			Niger		
		Male	Female	Male:Female ratio	Male	Female	Male:Female ratio
Pilot	Population	58	16	3.63			
	Sample	56	14	4.00			
Group 1	Population	276	111	2.49	56	350	0.16
	Sample	252	105	2.40	35	262	0.13
Group 2	Population	293	124	2.36	53	281	0.19
	Sample	283	112	2.53	46	266	0.17
Total	Population	625	251	2.49	109	631	0.17
	Sample	591	231	2.56	81	528	0.15

In Table 2.3, we present the distribution of sampled teachers by the grades they teach. As mentioned earlier, our sampling methodology is not representative by grade. We purposely selected, in order of priority, teachers from Grade 3 in the DRC and Grade 4 in Niger, then lower grades, and finally higher grades. In the DRC, 17 per cent of surveyed teachers are in Grade 3, and in Niger, 19 per cent are Grade 4 teachers.

Table 2.3 Teachers sampled by grade

	DRC				Niger		
	Pilot	Group 1	Group 2	Total	Group 1	Group 2	Total
Grade 1	12	81	75	168	55	46	101
Grade 2	12	73	69	154	49	51	100
Grade 3	13	67	63	143	48	49	97
Grade 4	12	54	62	128	54	60	114
Grade 5	10	43	59	112	44	52	96
Grade 6	10	37	56	103	47	54	101
Directors*	1	2	11	14			

Note: * The 'Directors' category includes only directors of school who do not teach in any capacity. If a school director also teaches, he/she is included in the categories from grades 1–6. In Niger, we did not survey the directors, if he/she did not teach a grade.

Table 2.4 presents the Grade 3 children surveyed in the DRC as compared to the population of children in Grade 3 of schools visited (similarly for Grade 4 in Niger). We surveyed 715 Grade 3 children, or 10 per cent of the total population of Grade 3 children in BRiCE schools in the DRC, and 709 Grade 4 children, or 16 per cent of the total population of Grade 4 children in BRiCE schools in Niger.

Table 2.4 Grade 3 and Grade 4 children sampled versus the population of children

		DRC (Grade 3)			Niger (Grade 4)		
		Uvira	Fizi	Total	Diffa	Zinder	Total
Pilot	Population	369	342	711			
	Sample	39 (11%)	39 (11%)	78 (11%)			
Group 1	Population	1892	1501	3393	928	1216	2144
	Sample	182 (10%)	78 (5%)	260 (8%)	143 (15%)	200 (16%)	343 (16%)
Group 2	Population	1175	2012	3187	376	1919	2295
	Sample	117 (10%)	260 (13%)	377 (12%)	60 (16%)	306 (16%)	366 (16%)
Total	Population	3436	3855	7291	1304	3135	4439
	Sample	338 (10%)	377 (10%)	715 (10%)	203 (16%)	506 (16%)	709 (16%)

Note: The percentages in the brackets denote the sample size as a percentage of the population.

Table 2.5 presents the Grade 3 (DRC) and Grade 4 (Niger) children sampled for the study, disaggregated by gender. In both the DRC and Niger, there is a slightly higher proportion of girls in the sample (53 per cent and 52 per cent respectively).

Tables 2.6, 2.7, 2.8 and 2.9 present the descriptive statistics on functioning limitations among the sample students. The Washington Group Short Set of Questions was used to identify children with functioning limitations. The questions were asked to the child. Each question had four response categories – ‘no difficulty’, ‘some difficulty’, ‘a lot of difficulty’, and ‘cannot do it at all’. The Washington Group on Disability Statistics (2020) recommends using ‘a lot of difficulty’ as the cut-off to assess functioning limitations. However, even when using this cut-off point, one must remain cautious as these questions have been shown to generate both false negative and false positive biases, the latter being more common (Miller *et al.* 2011). False positives correspond to respondents incorrectly reporting that they have a functioning limitation. Miller *et al.* (2011) use a cross-national sample of 15 countries across Central and South America,

Asia and Africa, and find the bias to be strongest for statements relating to vision (difficulty seeing) and cognition (difficulty remembering or concentrating).

Table 2.5 Grade 3 and Grade 4 sampled children breakdown by gender

		Pilot	Group 1	Group 2	Total
Uvira	% female	54%	54%	55%	54%
	Total Grade 3 students	39	182	117	338
Fizi	% female	49%	53%	53%	53%
	Total Grade 3 students	39	78	260	377
Total DRC	% female	51%	53%	54%	53%
	Total Grade 3 students	78	260	377	715
Diffa	% female		50%	50%	50%
	Total Grade 4 students		143	60	203
Zinder	% female		52%	53%	52%
	Total Grade 4 students		200	306	506
Total Niger	% female		51%	52%	52%
	Total Grade 4 students		343	366	709

Note: Three schools in Zinder, Niger, were only for girls. This might explain the slightly higher percentage of female students in Zinder as compared to Diffa.

The choice of the cut-off point is key for assessing the prevalence of a certain type of functioning limitation. A study in Vietnam reported the prevalence of functioning limitations to be 31.6 per cent when using 'some difficulty' as the cut-off in all of the six functions, but 10.0 per cent when using 'a lot of difficulty' (Mont 2007). Moreover, interpretations of different difficulty grades ('some' versus 'a lot') differ across countries and socioeconomic groups within countries (Murray, Salomon and Mathers 2001; Mont 2007). These are important caveats to bear in mind when interpreting results.

We report the results of these measures here. As tables 2.6 and 2.7 show, a third of the children in our sample are reported to have some form of functioning limitation when using 'some difficulty' as the cut-off point. The most common functioning limitations that primary caregivers report for children are related to vision, mobility and cognition. While in the overall sample in the DRC, we do not find a significant gender difference, there is a significant gender difference in the Group 2 sample, with 42 per cent of boys and 33 per cent of girls reported to have some form of functional limitation. In Niger, we also notice a gender difference in the Group 2 sample – with 17 per cent of boys and 12 per cent of girls reported to have some form of functional limitation (although this difference is not statistically significant at $p < 0.1$).

Table 2.6 DRC children (Grade 3) with functional limitations using ‘some difficulty’ as cut-off

	Pilot		Group 1		Group 2		Total	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Any (of the below) functioning limitation	37.5%	39.5%	28.8%	29.7%	32.5%	41.9%	37.2%	31.7%
Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses?	2	1	19	12	14	15	35	28
Do you have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid?	4	0	9	5	11	14	24	19
Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?	10	9	15	10	40	46	65	65
Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?	2	3	11	12	19	19	32	34
Do you have difficulty with self-care such as washing all over or dressing?	1	4	1	3	5	3	7	10
Using your usual (customary) language, do you have difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood?	3	5	9	8	10	7	22	20
Sample size	40	38	139	121	203	174	382	333

Table 2.7 Niger children (Grade 4) with functional limitations using ‘some difficulty’ as cut-off

	Group 1		Group 2		Total	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Any (of the below) functioning limitation	9.71%	11.31%	12.50%	16.67%	14.04%	11.17%
Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses?	8	1	3	4	11	5
Do you have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid?	6	0	5	3	11	3
Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?	8	15	8	21	16	36
Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?	2	6	8	4	10	10
Do you have difficulty with self-care such as washing all over or dressing?	1	0	0	1	1	1
Using your usual (customary) language, do you have difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood?	0	3	3	4	3	7
Sample size	175	168	192	174	367	342

The number of children with functional limitations drops to 6 per cent in the DRC versus 1 per cent in Niger when using ‘a lot of difficulty’¹⁰ as the cut-off (see Table 2.8 and Table 2.9). In the DRC, 7.5 per cent of girls and 5.2 per cent of boys are reported to have some form of functional limitation, and the difference is not statistically significant. The more common limitations relate to vision and cognition. In Niger, less than 1 per cent of girls and boys are reported to have some form of functional limitation.

¹⁰ Also recommended by Miller *et al.* (2011), who recommend using ‘a lot of difficulty’ as a cut-off instead of ‘some difficulty’.

Table 2.8 DRC children (Grade 3) with functional limitations using ‘a lot of difficulty’ as cut-off

	Pilot		Group 1		Group 2		Total	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Any (of the below) functioning limitation	2.50%	2.63%	5.76%	8.26%	5.42%	8.05%	7.51%	5.24%
Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses?	0	0	3	4	5	5	8	9
Do you have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid?	0	0	2	1	0	3	2	4
Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?	0	0	2	2	6	3	8	5
Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?	0	0	1	1	1	3	2	4
Do you have difficulty with self-care such as washing all over or dressing?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Using your usual (customary) language, do you have difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood?	1	1	2	3	0	2	3	6
Sample size	40	38	139	121	203	174	382	333

Table 2.9 Niger children (Grade 4) with functional limitations using ‘a lot of difficulty’ as cut-off

	Group 1		Group 2		Total	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Any (of the below) functioning limitation	1.14%	0.60%	0.00%	1.15%	0.88%	0.54%
Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses?	1	0	0	0	1	0
Do you have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid?	1	0	0	1	1	1
Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?	1	1	0	1	1	2
Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?	0	0	0	0	0	0
Do you have difficulty with self-care such as washing all over or dressing?	0	0	0	0	0	0
Using your usual (customary) language, do you have difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood?	0	0	0	1	0	1
Sample size	175	168	192	174	367	342

Given that the baseline survey was undertaken after the implementation of ILET and TPD in pilot schools, the rest of the report will only present results for Group 1 and Group 2 schools, teachers and students combined. Unless explicitly stated, the quantitative results presented hereafter refer to the Group 1 and Group 2 samples (49 schools, 752 teachers and 637 students for the DRC; 72 schools, 609 teachers and 709 students for Niger).

2.2 Qualitative component methodology

As a result of the delays on the Niger component of the study, qualitative fieldwork in that country has not yet taken place. We are in the process of identifying and contracting a new partner. If there are no further delays, we aim to conduct the qualitative data collection in Niger in December 2020.

In the DRC, the qualitative fieldwork began with the drafting of the qualitative questionnaire in a collaborative workshop, which included IDS and ISP Bukavu project researchers. The two field researchers of ISP Bukavu began the fieldwork by conducting three pilot interviews, which they shared with the project team. After an initial analysis, questions and feedback from the project team were shared with the field researchers. Subsequently, some questions were

clarified and adapted. Interviews were based on seven respondent-specific questionnaires (educational administrators, headteachers, teachers, teacher trade unionists, parents, conflict specialists, students) (see Annex 4). In total, the field researchers conducted 59 semi-structured interviews (see Annex 3 for the detailed list) in 9 primary schools in Uvira, South Kivu, between 18 October 2019 and 16 November 2019, with the following persons:

- 10 (deputy) headteachers
- 27 teachers
- 8 parents
- 2 students
- 6 government educational administrators
- 2 faith-based educational administrators
- 1 chief
- 1 council of chief
- 1 colonel (Congolese National Army)
- 1 teacher trade unionist.

On average, the researchers spoke to five respondents per school, one headteacher, three teachers and one parent (see Table 2.10).

Table 2.10 Location of qualitative interviews in the DRC – Phase 1

School n°	Territory	Location	Respondents
1	Uvira	Luvungi	Headteacher, 3 teachers, parent, students (focus group)
2	Uvira	Luberizi	Headteacher, 3 teachers, parent
3	Uvira	Luvungi	Headteacher, 3 teachers, parent, students (focus group)
4	Uvira	Sange	Headteacher, 3 teachers, parent
5	Uvira	Sange	Headteacher, 3 teachers, parent
6	Uvira	Kiliba	Deputy headteacher, 3 teachers
7	Uvira	Cité d'Uvira	Headteacher, 3 teachers, parent
8	Uvira	Cité d'Uvira	Deputy headteacher, 3 teachers, parent
9	Uvira	Mutarule	Headteacher, 4 teachers, parent

The qualitative fieldwork was carried out in one non-BRiCE school (school 9) because respondents frequently highlighted this area and school as severely affected by armed conflict.

The interviews have been transcribed, coded and analysed using Qualitative Data Analysis coding software. We again provided questions and feedback to the field researchers to validate our interpretations and fine-tune the questionnaires for future rounds of data collection.

In addition to the interviews, the researchers collected letters written by members of militias to extort money from teachers – an omnipresent practice in the area under study. The letters are primary material that help to better understand some of the key dynamics of this study.

2.3 Ethics review

This research project has undergone a full review by the IDS Ethics Committee (which can be provided upon request). The IDS Research Ethics procedure combines the Economic and Social Research Council's (ESRC) Research Ethics Framework and the University of Sussex's Research Ethics Committee procedures. The project has also undergone a full review and has been authorised by the board of ISP Bukavu for the DRC. This authorisation is recognised as an Ethics Authorisation, as ISP Bukavu has authority to review and approve research projects carried out in the province of South Kivu. Moreover, the IDS and ISP Bukavu research team carried out a Child Safeguarding training session during the qualitative and quantitative research training undertaken in Bukavu in April 2019. The Save the Children Child Safeguarding guidelines were used for this training, as well as elements gathered via a Child Safeguarding training session carried out by Save the Children Child Safeguarding Focal Point in Goma for another project (Reussite et Epanouissement via l'Apprentissage et L'Insertion au Systeme Educatif (REALISE)). For the baseline data collection in Niger in November to December 2019, the research team and surveyors received training in Child Safeguarding during the survey training in November 2019.

3. BRiCE schools in the DRC (South Kivu province) and in Niger (Diffa and Zinder regions)

This section presents the characteristics of Group 1 and Group 2 schools and the context in which they operate (49 schools in DRC and 72 in Niger). As noted earlier (see Table 1.1), the education sectors of the DRC and Niger are deeply affected by conflict and state fragility, and understanding these contexts is essential before we can turn to our research objectives – exploring the effects on teachers' wellbeing and teaching quality; the functioning of TPD and ILET interventions; students' cognitive and non-cognitive development; and the implications for wider policy.

Table 3.1 presents the key characteristics of the schools in our sample. In both contexts, the schools have been operating for more than 30 years on average. In the DRC, the schools are fairly large, with an average of 389 girls and 400 boys per school enrolled across all primary school grades. The schools in Niger are just over half that size on average. The legacy of conflict is clearly visible, with an average of 16 per cent of internally displaced persons (IDPs) or refugees among the student sample in the DRC and 27 per cent in Niger. As highlighted earlier, there are more male teachers than female teachers in schools in the DRC (almost three times more), but almost six times more female than male teachers in Niger. Given the large number of children enrolled and the relatively small number of teachers employed, the student-teacher ratio is high, at 50 students per teacher in the DRC and 40 in Niger. Almost 97 per cent of the teachers employed by schools in the DRC are permanent state teachers (with the caveats explained in Section 4.3 that they may not be on the official payroll) while in Niger the figure is only 38 per cent.

In both countries, the school facilities are rather rudimentary. While almost all have some form of toilets (separated by gender in three-quarters of cases), and a vast majority have a playground and clean drinking water, only 8 per cent of the Congolese schools and 15 per cent of the Nigerien schools have electricity.

Table 3.1 Key baseline characteristics of schools

	DRC			Niger		
	Min	Max	Average	Min	Max	Average
Number of years since establishment	4	86	38.22	0	99	30.47
Number of years since accreditation	1	71	32.73	0	99	30.47
Number of girls enrolled at the start of school year 2018/19	155	1185	388.47	22	504	200.51
Number of boys enrolled at the start of school year 2018/19*	148	1194	399.63	49	516	203.30
Number of classrooms	6	31	13.82	3	18	9.19
Number of classrooms per grade	0.86	5.17	2.29	0.6	2.67	1.47
Number of IDPs/refugee children**	0	450	65.93	0	402	26.76
Number of female teachers***	1	10	4.54	0	20	9.01
Number of male teachers	5	25	11.61	0	6	1.51
Student-teacher ratio	26.25	106.5	50.39	10	68	39.18
Number of permanent teachers	4	31	15.96	0	11	4.14
% of permanent teachers	50	100	97.26	0	77.78	38.41
Class time hours (typical Grade 3 for DRC and Grade 4 for Niger)	5	9	6.12	6	7	6.42
School has no toilet (%)			2.04			0
School has flush toilet (%)			6.12			0
School has pit toilet (%)			91.84			95.83
School has separate toilets for girls and boys (%)			73.47			77.78
School has a play area (%)			71.43			84.72
School has clean drinking water (%)			73.47			91.66
School has electricity (%)			8.16			15.28

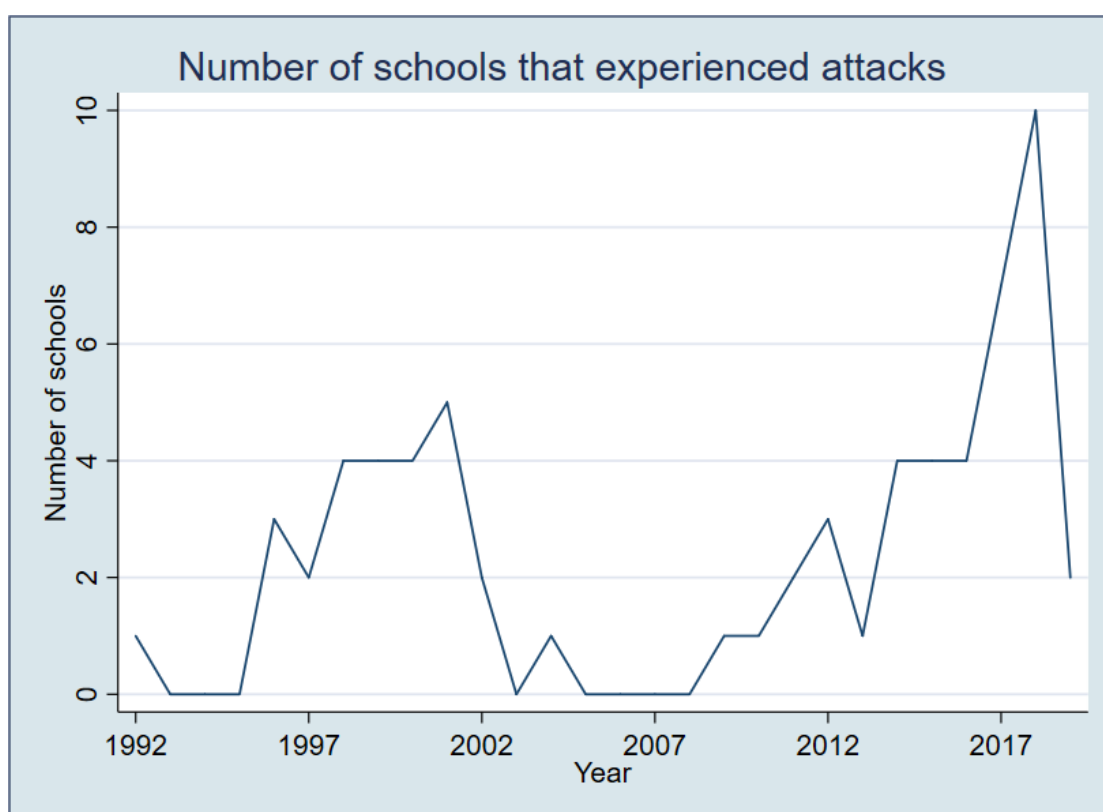
Note: *The sample size for average number of boys enrolled in Niger schools is 69 schools because 3 schools in Niger catered for girls only. **For 4 schools in the DRC, we considered the information provided to be unreliable as these were over 3 standard deviations above the mean of the sample. These criteria were used to identify outliers and thus excluded from the sample.

** For 1 school in the DRC, the information provided was inaccurate as the number of female teachers reported was greater than the total number of teachers. Again, we discarded this school while reporting this statistic.

Figure 3.1 reports the history of violent attacks experienced by the schools in our sample in the DRC as reported by the school director. On average, 59 per cent of the schools reported having experienced at least one violent attack since 1990. While there is temporal variation in the number of schools that experienced violent attacks, 2017/18 saw a rise in attacks, with 10 out of 49 schools in our sample (20 per cent) reporting having experienced violence during this period. This is likely due to a spill-over from the military operations of the

DRC National Military against rebel groups in the highlands of Uvira and Fizi, and an upsurge of violence in the Ruzizi plain. We will continue to investigate the causes of this increase in attacks against schools. In Niger, the number of schools that experienced attacks was much lower than in the DRC: only 3 reported an attack (out of the 72 schools in the sample), and all three were in Zinder. The schools in Diffa did not report attacks during this period despite the conflict with Boko Haram in neighbouring north-east Nigeria.

Figure 3.1 History of violent attacks on South Kivu schools (DRC) by year



In the DRC, 35 per cent of school directors reported that they felt the school environment to be unsafe or under threat from violent conflict or other forms of violence, even though 59 per cent of the schools have experienced instances of violent attacks since 1990. This disparity in high levels of historical experience of violence but relatively lower levels of reporting that schools were 'unsafe' points to a potential distinction between experience and perception of violence as well as its temporal dynamics. Almost a third (29 per cent) of schools reported that safety concerns had forced them to send students home on occasion; while 16 per cent reported that safety concerns had forced them to send teachers' home. In Niger, the picture is almost inverted: while the overwhelming majority of

schools do not have any experience of direct violent attacks, 37.5 per cent of school directors reported that they felt the school environment to be unsafe or under threat from violent conflict or other forms of violence.

When asked to identify which actors provide school protection when needed, 42 per cent of the students in the DRC cited schoolteachers, a figure that jumped to 74 per cent in Niger. Protection levels are low, with 28 per cent of students in the DRC and 9 per cent in Niger reporting that the community provides protection, and 16 per cent and 14 per cent respectively reporting that the police or national military provide protection. We do not find a significant difference in the response by gender (for a detailed breakdown by gender please refer to Annex 5, Table A5.1). Against this background, unpacking the dynamics of violence in the school environment is crucial, and this is what the study does, using the qualitative interviews (see Section 4.8).

Figure 3.2 Entity providing school with protection – DRC

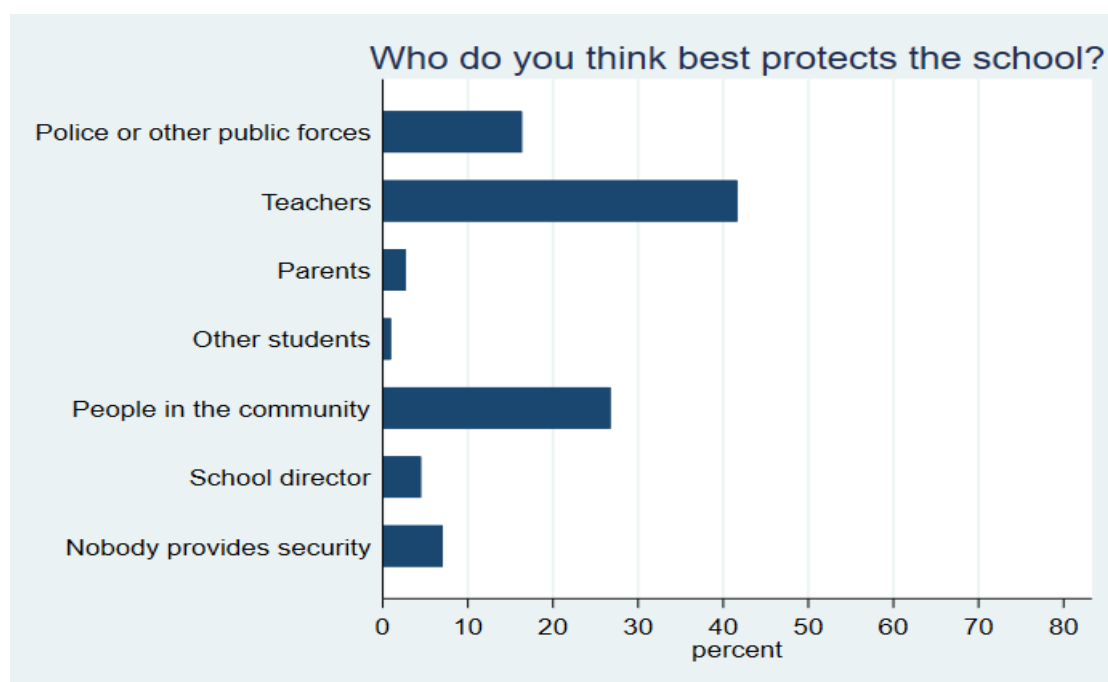
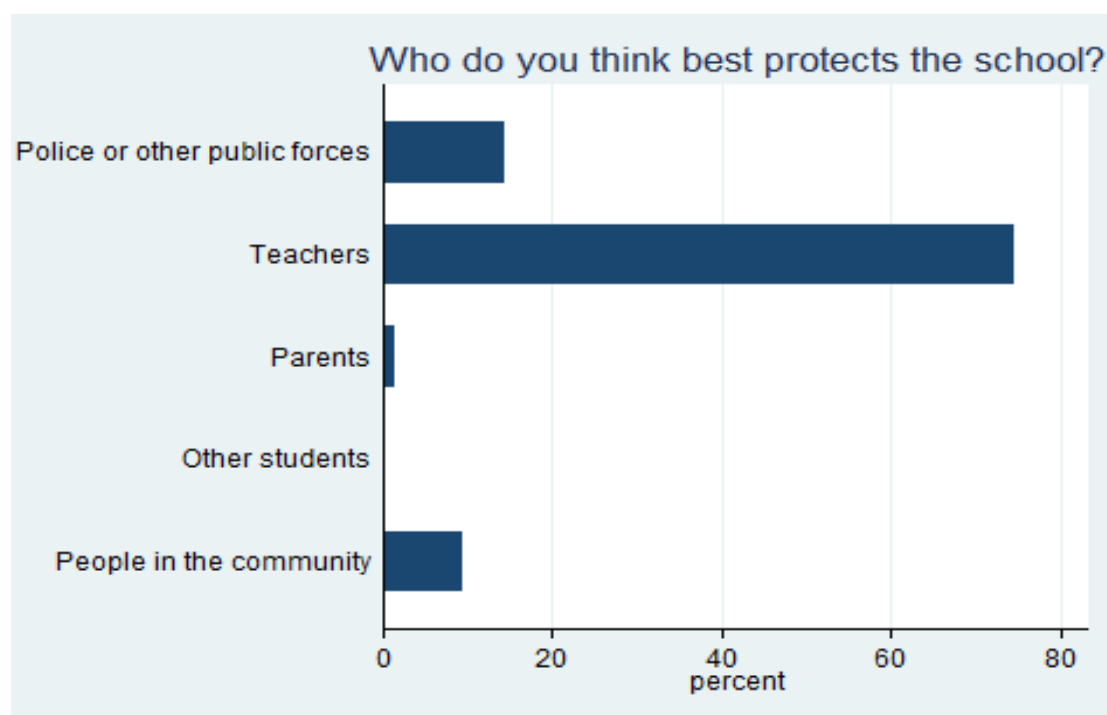


Figure 3.3 Entity providing school with protection – Niger



4. Teaching quality and teacher wellbeing

In this section of the report, we provide key statistics on teachers from the baseline survey, and preliminary analysis from the qualitative study. This section serves as a key input into all our research questions (see Table 1.1). While this report describes the status of teaching quality and wellbeing at baseline, the Midline Report will compare how these have evolved through TPD and ILET interventions in a conflict context (using the indicators described in Section 3). Furthermore, the Midline Report will also follow the evolution of children's cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes (to be described in Section 5) as a direct result of change in teaching quality and teacher wellbeing. The quantitative study sampled 752 teachers (in Group 1 and Group 2 schools) in the DRC, of which 71 per cent were male. The teachers in our sample in the DRC are, on average, 39 years of age. Whereas in Niger, the quantitative study sampled 609 teachers (Group 1 and Group 2 schools), of which 87 per cent were female. The teachers in our sample in Niger are, on average, 36 years of age.

4.1 Socioeconomic characteristics

Table 4.1 provides background information on teachers' socioeconomic characteristics. Across contexts, teachers live in rather modest conditions. In both the DRC and Niger, almost all teachers' households own basic durable assets such as a table, a chair, a bench/stool, a bed, and a mobile phone. More expensive assets such as water pumps, fridges and access to electricity are much less common in teachers' households. Regarding transportation assets, households rarely own a car/truck, an animal-drawn cart, or a moto/scooter but almost a third of teachers' households (28.32 per cent) in the DRC have a bicycle, and almost half in Niger. A majority of households own a radio and ownership of a television is widespread in Niger (88.51 per cent) but not so much in the DRC (only 27 per cent). This is likely related to the most striking and possibly the main difference between Niger and the DRC: access to electricity, which is 86 per cent in Niger, almost 7 times the percentage in the DRC. It is also worth noting that teachers are more likely to come from educated families in the DRC – 28 per cent of teachers in our sample in the DRC have fathers who never attended school, compared to 45 per cent for Niger.

Table 4.1 Teacher background

	DRC	Niger
	Percentage %	
Assets		
Owens radio	56.25	54.84
Owens television	26.73	88.51
Owens bicycle	28.32	47.95
Owens animal drawn cart	1.2	11.33
Owens car/truck	0.4	29.06
Owens moto/scooter	7.45	53.2
Owens table	91.76	82.92
Owens chair	90.82	91.13
Owens fridge	3.59	58.29
Owens bed	83.38	96.88
Has electricity	12.5	85.88
Owens water pump	5.85	69.46
Owens mobile phone	93.88	99.51
Quality of housing		
Households with low quality wall material (wood or mud)	29.65	29.72
Parental education		
Mother did not attend school	64.23	62.23
Father did not attend school	27.93	45.16

4.2 Qualifications and experience

While the Ministry of Education in both countries has clear regulations about the required qualifications to be a teacher, the reality in the field is that many teachers are appointed locally and do not necessarily have the required training. In the DRC, 76 per cent of the sampled teachers completed secondary school (up to and including sixth year of secondary), while 14 per cent completed only their fourth year of the secondary school cycle, which corresponds to the 'short cycle' for the training of primary school teachers.¹¹ This figure is even lower in Niger, where only 33 per cent of the teacher sample completed secondary school, but 50 per cent had completed the first cycle of secondary school. There is a significant difference by gender in the DRC, where female teachers are less likely to have completed secondary school Grade 6 and more likely to have completed secondary school Grade 4. This trend is similar in Niger.

¹¹ In the DRC, D4 teachers are teachers with four years of secondary schooling, which corresponds to the 'short cycle': 'Reportedly, the short cycle of the *humanités pédagogiques* still produces D4 teachers. The short cycle was established in June 1970 and produced D4 teachers; the so-called "D4 nouvelle structure" (Verhaghe 2006: 75).

The data for the DRC show that teachers start to teach early and, on average, teachers in our sample have 14.5 years of teaching experience (particularly in Mathematics and French). The average number of years of teaching experience in Mathematics and French is 15.1 for female teachers, and 14.3 for male teachers. However, this difference is not statistically significant in a t-test of means (p-value of 0.42).

In Niger, the average years of teaching experience is a little lower (10.83 years) but still substantial, again particularly in Mathematics and French. The average number of years of teaching experience across both subjects is 10.50 for female teachers, and 13.04 for male teachers. This difference is statistically significant in a t-test of means (p-value of 0.00).

Teacher training is a typical approach for compensating the lack of formal training of teachers. The TPD component of the BRiCE project builds on teacher training approaches to provide holistic teacher professional development, incorporating interventions on teacher socio-emotional wellbeing. Our survey shows that about half the teachers in the DRC (46 per cent) have attended teaching-related trainings in 2018/19, and nearly all teachers in Niger (92 per cent) have done so (Table 4.2). There is no difference in training attendance by gender in either country. As expected, very few teachers trained in pedagogy after secondary school (6 per cent in the DRC, 19 per cent in Niger).

Table 4.2 Training experience

Qualification (% of teachers)			
DRC	Total	Female	Male
Primary school	0.73	1.30	0.51
Secondary Grade 4	13.87	23.38	10.15
Secondary Grade 5	0.73	1.73	0.34
Secondary Grade 6	76.76	70.13	79.36
University education	7.91	3.46	9.64
Niger	Total	Female	Male
Primary school	8.37	7.50	13.58
Secondary school (first cycle)	50.24	51.71	40.74
Secondary school (second cycle)	33.00	33.00	41.98
University education	8.39	7.79	3.70
Training (% of teachers)			
DRC	Total	Female	Male
Received pedagogical specialty training after secondary education	5.59	5.07	5.79
Received training in 2018-2019	45.74	47.47	45.05
Niger	Total	Female	Male
Received pedagogical specialty training after secondary education	18.88	17.61	27.16
Received training in 2018-2019	91.95	92.05	91.36

Note: Secondary school (first cycle) refers to grades 6, 7, 8 and 9. Secondary school (second cycle) refers to grades 10, 11 and 12.

4.3 Job requirements and perceived satisfaction

Table 4.3 displays information on the level of work expected and performed by teachers. It is important to note that these measures are self-reported and not administrative or observed measures. There is a social desirability bias effect, as measures are likely to be biased towards what teachers believe to be the expected level of work required of them by the general public (and among funders and the Ministry of Education). We partly prevent this bias by asking teachers not only the number of hours they work but also the number of hours they think they are expected to work. In the DRC, on average, teachers reported that they were expected to work for 5.5 hours a day. However, when asked how many hours teachers actually work, the average was 4.9 hours a day. In Niger, the number of expected worked hours was 6.4 and the 'actual' number was 6.1 hours per day. It should not be assumed that teachers who do not work the expected amount of time do so because they have done all they had to do: in Niger, 23 per cent of teachers reported not having enough time to prepare the lessons. In both countries, teachers allocate a significant amount of time to preparing (2 hours a day on average) and correcting students' work (1 hour a day on average). A noticeable difference between the two contexts is in interaction with parents, which is more than 50 per cent higher (25 percentage points) in the DRC than in Niger, where only 43 per cent of teachers engage with parents weekly. Teachers in Niger spend less time travelling to their school on average than teachers in the DRC (0.22 hours and 0.48 hours respectively).

Teacher absenteeism is high in both countries: almost a fifth of teachers did not come to school in the week preceding the survey and a substantial proportion reported having missed school in the month preceding the survey, suggesting that this is somewhat of a broader problem. In the DRC, 18 per cent of male teachers and 24 per cent of female teachers in the sample reported missing school for at least one day in the week before the survey. This difference is statistically significant. (See Annex 5, Table A5.2 and Table A5.3, for a detailed breakdown of Table 4.3 by gender.)

Yet it seems, based on this self-reported data (which is likely an underestimation), that absenteeism remains relatively limited in duration: around 1–1.5 days per month on average.

Table 4.3 Engagement and attendance

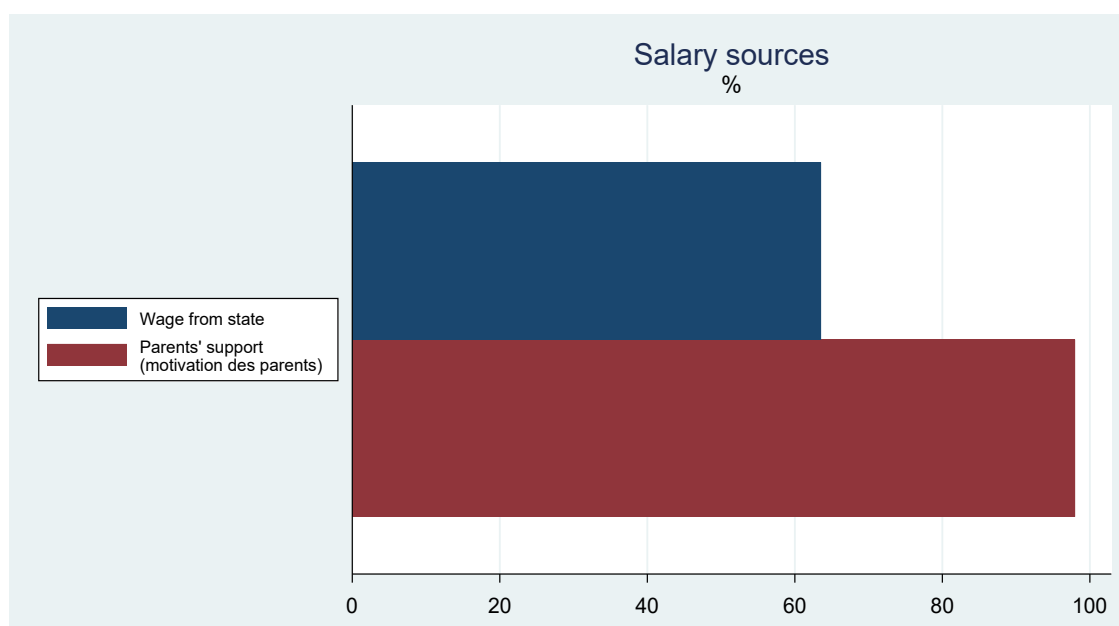
	DRC		Niger	
		N		N
Engagement				
Average number of hours per day teacher is expected to work*	5.52	747	6.37	605
Average number of hours per day teacher actually works*	4.91	747	6.11	605
% of teachers who report working more than expected to*	1.08	744	0	605
Average number of hours per day teacher spends preparing lessons*	2.08	743	1.98	605
Average number of hours per day teacher spends correcting students' work*	1.11	741	1.06	605
Average number of hours per day teacher travels to work (one way)	0.48	752	0.22	609
% of teachers who engage with parents in a typical week*	67.02	752	42.93	608
Attendance				
% of teachers who missed at least 1 day of school in the week preceding the survey	19.95	752	18.56	609
% of teachers who missed at least 1 day of school in the month preceding the survey	44.28	752	62.23	609
Average number of days missed in the past month	1.57	752	1.19	609

Note: * The sample size of teachers in these categories is less than 752 for the DRC and less than 609 in Niger because certain reports of number of hours were implausible and had to be excluded from reporting.

Figure 4.1 reports the sources of teachers' salary in the DRC, where most teachers reported multiple sources of payment. Just over 60 per cent are paid a salary by the state (97 per cent of the teachers employed in BRiCE schools report being permanent state teachers – Table 1.1), but almost all teachers also reported receiving part of their salary from parents. As explained earlier, this is not a surprise and is known to have been common practice in the DRC since the early 1990s. In late 2019, after our survey, a new law (referred to as '*Gratuité*', meaning free tuition) forbade parent contributions. We discuss this point further, and its implications for the project, in Section 6.2.

In Niger, unlike in the DRC, teachers do not rely on students' parents for their salary. Almost all teachers said they received their salary from the state. However, similar to the DRC is the proportion of (state-paid) teachers who experience delays in wage payments (28 per cent in Niger, 26 per cent in the DRC). There is no statistically significant difference in the percentage of teachers receiving salary from various sources by gender. (See Annex 5, Table A5.4, for a breakdown by gender).

Figure 4.1 Teachers' salary sources – DRC



Across these sources of payment, the average monthly teaching salary was 199,515 in Congolese francs (US\$120 or US\$199 purchasing power parity (PPP)) in the DRC and 100,655 Niger West African CFA francs (US\$60 or US\$163 PPP). Even when adjusting for PPP, Niger teachers appear less well-paid than their Congolese counterparts (US\$163 versus US\$199).¹² A small number of teachers (14 per cent) indicated that they have a second occupation outside of teaching in the DRC,¹³ but only 3.8 per cent of those reported being on a part-time teaching contract. The figure of moonlighting teachers is lower in Niger but all those with a second occupation outside teaching were on full-time contracts or permanent (civil servant) teachers. They were not part-time teachers.¹⁴

The survey also provides information on the reasons for becoming a teacher. Figures 4.2 (DRC) and 4.3 (Niger) show the percentage of teachers in the sample who reported one of eight possible motivations for choosing the profession. (See Annex 5, Table A5.5, for a breakdown by gender). The

¹² Using a rough conversion based on the differential between the 2019 World Bank nominal and purchasing power parity adjusted gross domestic product (GDP) per capita. The GDP per capita in 2018 was estimated at US\$561.8 for the DRC and 414 for Niger by World Bank national accounts data.

¹³ Teachers with a secondary occupation have a lower teaching salary than those without another occupation (165,839 in Congolese francs, US\$100, and 204,980 Congolese francs, US\$123, respectively). The difference in the average monthly teaching salary for those with a secondary occupation and those without a secondary occupation has a p-value of 0.24, indicating that the difference is not statistically significant.

¹⁴ The difference in the average monthly teaching salary for those with a secondary occupation and those without a secondary occupation has a p-value of 0.79, indicating that the difference is not statistically significant.

difference between the two countries is striking: in the DRC, the most prevalent reason was related to teachers' perceptions of their own abilities as a teacher (almost 30 per cent of teachers) – yet this answer is marginal in Niger (3 per cent). Conversely, in Niger, the vast majority of teachers reported that they entered the profession to help their country or community (63 per cent), whereas that answer was very rare in the DRC. The lack of other job opportunities was also an important reason for joining the teaching profession, especially so in the DRC (more than 20 per cent compared to just 12 per cent in Niger). Employment security (and status) was a more important factor in the DRC than in Niger ('Teaching is a permanent job/likely to be made permanent' and 'Teaching has some social status'). The only elements that are similar across both countries are the lack of importance of having a parent or a relative who was a teacher, and gender stereotypes ('Teaching is the most suitable profession for women').

Figure 4.2 Reasons for choosing teaching as a profession – DRC

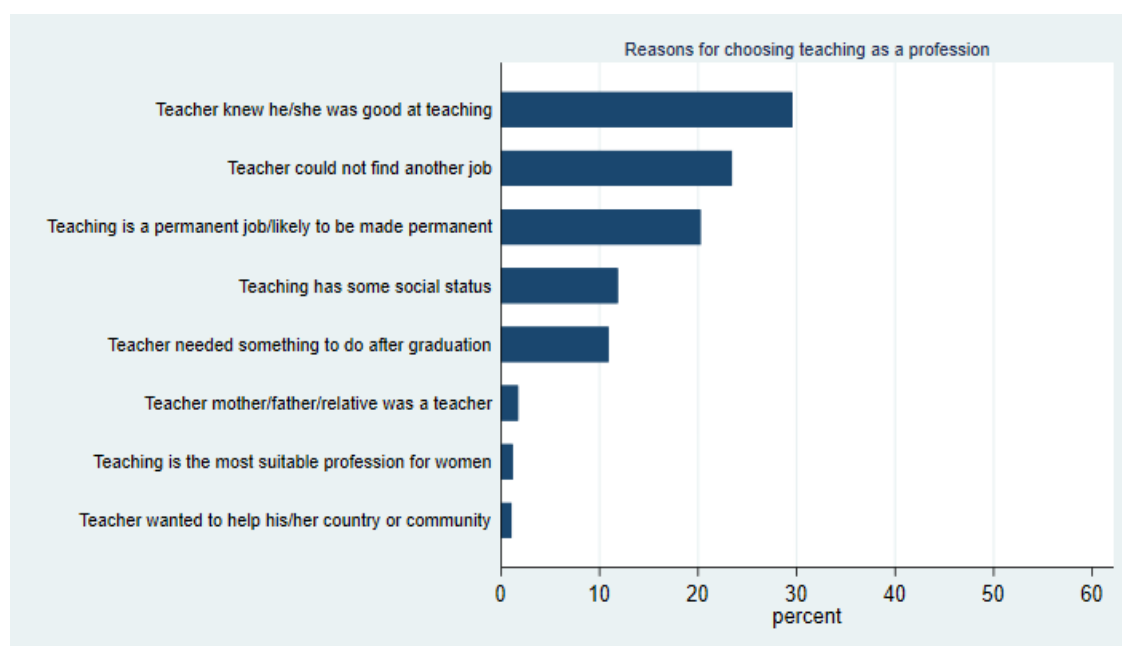


Figure 4.3 Reasons for choosing teaching as a profession – Niger

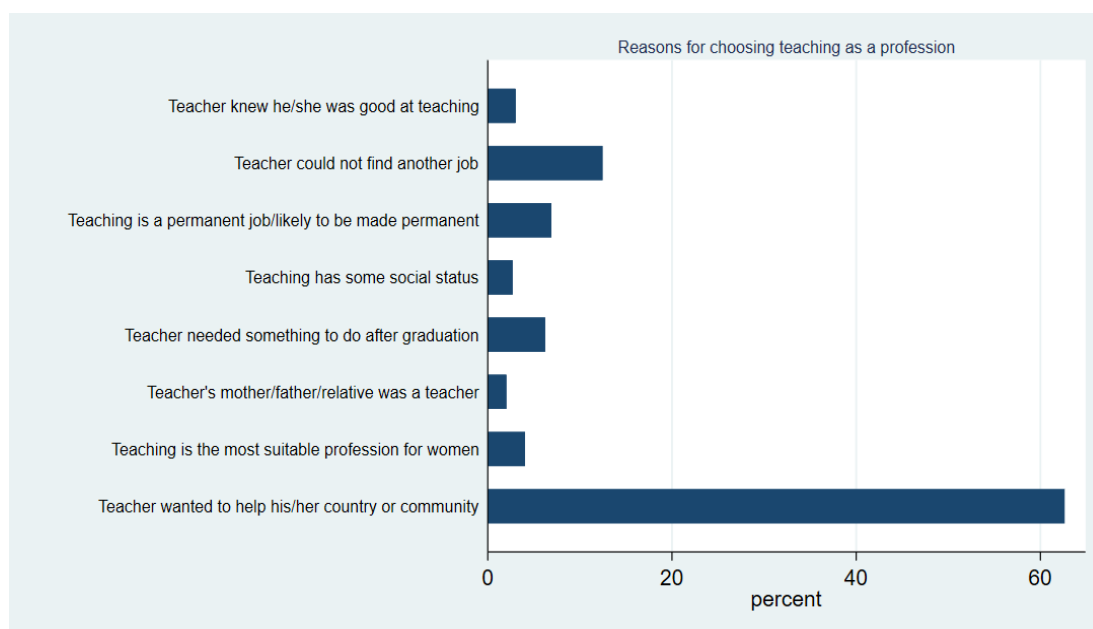


Table 4.4 sheds light on teachers' perceived and self-reported satisfaction at work. Again, the contrast between the DRC and Niger is stark: only 15 per cent of sampled teachers report being satisfied with the salary they receive in the DRC compared to almost half in Niger (incidentally, this may explain the difference in the proportion of teachers who are moonlighting). Across the board, the main reason for dissatisfaction stems from the lack of good resources (textbooks, equipment) but there are also other reasons, which are more salient in the DRC than in Niger, such as job security and school posting.

Additionally, 25 per cent of the teachers in the DRC sample expressed regret over becoming a teacher. This might also explain high teacher attrition rates documented in other research based in the DRC.¹⁵

In the DRC, 91 per cent of the teachers indicated that they were satisfied with the workload. In Niger, nearly all teachers were satisfied with workload. When further asked about how the workload has changed in recent years, a third of teachers (33 per cent) in the DRC and more than half in Niger considered that the workload had increased over the past three years. The main reasons for this seem similar in the two countries, but with slightly more divided opinions in Niger: half the teachers in the DRC but only 37 per cent in Niger cited an increase in

¹⁵ Education Development Center (2014) documents the attrition rate in the DRC as 41 per cent in the PAQUED study for teachers in grades 1–2.

the number of lessons, while 68 per cent in the DRC but less than half this figure in Niger cited the introduction of new curricular content by the government.

Annex 5 (Table A5.6) reports levels of job satisfaction by gender, and we do not find any significantly different results for male and female teachers in the DRC. However, in Niger, female teachers are more likely to be satisfied with their salary, working hours, job posting and job security.

Table 4.4 Perceived job satisfaction

	DRC	Niger
	% who agree or strongly agree	
I am satisfied with my current salary in this job.	14.63	49.92
I am satisfied with the number of working hours in each school day.	91.36	81.44
I am satisfied with the availability of textbooks in school for myself and for the children in my class.	21.81	29.39
I am satisfied with the condition of school infrastructure, such as classrooms.	39.49	46.47
I am satisfied with job security in this job.	66.62	70.94
I am satisfied with the level of cooperation from parents.	81.52	66.67
I am satisfied with my social status as a teacher in the community.	86.3	95.73
I am satisfied with the support from other teachers.	91.09	98.36
I am satisfied with the support from the headteacher.	92.69	98.36
I am satisfied with my school posting.	59.84	70.94
I regret that I decided to become a teacher.	24.87	8.21

4.4 Teaching practices

In this section, we analyse specific teaching practices, as reported by teachers themselves. The tables have been divided by teachers in various grades (first group is grades 1 and 2, second group is grades 3 and 4, and the third group is grades 5 and 6). It is important to keep a critical distance when reviewing these results, as the self-reported nature of the measures means that teachers might over-report 'positive' measures and under-report 'negative' ones with regards to their teaching practices.

First, Table 4.5 shows the teaching and classroom practices. In both cases, teachers interact frequently, which is core to good teaching practices: in the DRC, the percentage of teachers frequently discussing, collaborating, sharing and working with other teachers is above 75 per cent in almost all grades, compared to less than 60 per cent in Niger.

The picture is also encouraging in relation to teaching practices, which are, in the large majority of cases, in line with expectations regarding pedagogical methods. As expected, more teachers frequently summarise what students should have learnt from the lesson as the grade increases (82 per cent to 84 per cent in the DRC and 64 per cent to 87 per cent in Niger). Conversely, the use of material, graphs, pictures and printed materials during class is less frequent in higher grades in the DRC, but not in Niger. The percentage of teachers who say they check students' understanding remains at 92–93 per cent in the DRC and 97–99 per cent in Niger, across grades.

Table 4.5 Teaching and classroom practices

	DRC			Niger		
	Grades 1 and 2	Grades 3 and 4	Grades 5 and 6	Grades 1 and 2	Grades 3 and 4	Grades 5 and 6
	% who perform the activity often or very often					
Interaction with other teachers						
Teacher discussed how to teach a particular topic	74.83	75.2	72.12	59.7	56.87	56.85
Teacher collaborates in planning and preparing instructional materials	75.84	72.76	75	70.65	72.51	72.08
Teacher shares teaching experiences	80.54	78.46	80.29	85.57	85.31	84.77
Teacher works together with others to try out new ideas	80.87	74.39	73.56	78.11	80.09	82.23
Lesson delivery						
Teacher summarises what students should have learnt from the lesson	81.88	82.52	83.65	63.68	83.89	87.31
Teacher relates the lesson to students' daily lives	78.19	81.3	76.44	71.14	83.41	85.79
Teacher brings interesting material to class	81.21	81.3	75.96	82.59	85.78	90.86
Teacher uses graphs, pictures, printed materials during class	74.83	70.73	66.83	79.6	74.41	79.19
Teacher asks questions to check for understanding	92.62	92.28	92.79	97.01	98.1	98.98
Feedback						
When a student responds incorrectly, teacher does not provide feedback and moves on to avoid delays	12.42	13.01	10.58	6.47	8.06	2.03
Teacher ignores students who show little interest in schoolwork	5.03	2.44	4.33	5.47	6.16	3.05
Teacher provides specific comments and suggestions	73.49	73.58	75.48	82.09	83.89	87.31

when a student performs well in a task						
Teacher rewards students for improving their school work	76.85	73.58	78.85	86.57	86.73	86.8
Teacher takes notes of the changes in a student's performance in school and discusses it with the student	63.42	60.98	60.58	68.66	82.46	81.73
Teacher observes the student's behaviours through art activities or games	71.48	71.95	69.71	66.67	70.14	63.45
Teacher keeps communication open with parents and others involved in the students' lives	70.13	74.8	75.48	64.18	65.88	69.54

In both countries, most teachers report that they provide feedback to the students (more than 75 per cent in the DRC and 80 per cent in Niger report often providing feedback to students at different grades). Very few teachers report that they ignore uninterested students. Relatively less common is for teachers to discuss changes in a student's performance (close to 60 per cent, compared to 70 per cent or higher for other feedback practices in the DRC). Teachers are more actively engaged with students' guardians the higher the grade (70 per cent prevalence in grades 1 and 2, up to 76 per cent in grades 5 and 6 in the DRC; 64 per cent in grades 1 and 2 in Niger, up to 69 per cent in grades 5 and 6).

Table 4.6 provides information on the extent to which literacy-specific teaching practices are performed in classrooms (reading, comprehension, writing and vocabulary). This is clearly an area where many teachers seem to underperform.

The reading practices are reported to be carried out by a majority of teachers in all primary school grades. Given the curriculum, reading practices related to reading the alphabet or recognising the first letter of the word describing an object is less commonly used in the higher grades. Most teachers report preferring to form mixed-ability reading groups (about 84 per cent in the DRC and 60–70 per cent in Niger) rather than same-ability groups. The percentage of teachers who report conducting most reading practices decreases significantly as the grade level increases in the DRC. This is due to higher grade teachers spending more time on comprehension. However, the prevalence of comprehension-related practices is low compared to reading practices.

Comprehension practices generally improve over grades, in both contexts. In the DRC, only 39 per cent of grade 1 and grade 2 teachers report that they 'ask students to read stories themselves' and, in the same grades, only 45 per cent ask students questions based on the story. Those figures jump to 61 per cent and 57 per cent in grades 5 and 6. In Niger, reading and comprehension practices are less common than in the DRC schools in grades 1 and 2 – below

20 per cent for the two practices just mentioned, remaining low (below 50 per cent) in grades 5 and 6.

Writing practices are an area which increase sharply over grades, in both contexts. For example, the percentage of teachers who often ask students to write sentences multiple times with different verbs or nouns increases from 30.54 per cent in grades 1 and 2 to 70.67 per cent in grades 5 and 6 in the DRC (7 per cent in grades 1 and 2 in Niger, up to 75 per cent in grades 5 and 6). In both countries, among writing practices, it is more common for teachers to use repetitive technique rather than allowing students to independently write texts expressing themselves.

Very few teachers frequently conduct the vocabulary practices (except stopping to explain a word, in all grades, and asking for synonyms/antonyms for a word in the higher grades).

Table 4.6 Literacy-specific teaching practices

	DRC			Niger		
	Grades 1 and 2	Grades 3 and 4	Grades 5 and 6	Grades 1 and 2	Grades 3 and 4	Grades 5 and 6
	% who perform the activity often or very often					
Reading						
Teacher asks students to read the alphabet	84.56	68.7	50.96	71.14	81.99	78.68
Teacher uses pictures of objects and asks students to name the first letter of the name of the object	73.15	66.26	52.88	61.69	70.14	64.47
Teacher uses short words written on the board and ask students to read the letters of the word	69.8	71.14	65.38	61.19	83.89	76.14
Teacher teaches reading as a whole-class activity	83.56	82.11	80.29	74.13	88.15	86.8
Teacher teaches reading based on same-ability groups	12.42	7.32	12.02	31.34	42.65	48.73
Teacher teaches reading based on mixed-ability groups	82.89	84.96	83.65	60.7	76.78	67.01
Students read at loud	91.95	89.43	83.65	88.56	93.36	94.42
Comprehension						
Teacher asks students to listen to a story	65.1	62.2	66.83	40.3	42.65	48.22
Teacher asks students to read a story	38.59	50.81	60.58	14.93	39.81	46.7
Teacher asks students to answer questions on key aspects of the story	44.97	53.66	56.73	18.41	37.44	44.67

Writing						
Teacher asks students to write sentences multiple times with different verbs or nouns	30.54	61.79	70.67	7.46	44.55	75.13
Teacher asks students to write texts to express ideas, feelings, etc	19.46	39.02	51.92	6.47	21.33	48.73
Teacher asks students to match words spoken out loud with written words	57.38	69.92	65.38	51.74	78.2	83.76
Vocabulary						
Teacher stops to explain a word	68.12	63.82	67.31	79.6	82.94	90.86
Teacher creates a word bank on specific themes	27.18	27.64	45.19	20.9	37.44	39.59
Teacher gives students newspapers and asks them to cut out words they do not know	15.44	33.74	42.79	5.47	19.91	19.29
Teacher asks students to think of synonyms, antonyms or words that rhyme	15.1	52.44	76.92	6.97	17.54	43.15

Table 4.7 highlights the frequency of practices to encourage autonomy of students in the classroom. It is clearly an area where there is scope for improvement. In both countries, the percentage of teachers who report conducting these four practices becomes slightly greater as the students reach higher grades. A minority of teachers report that they allow the students to decide independently how they would like to carry out a piece of work assigned in class (first two practices of Table 4.7). However, most teachers report that they often allow students to help with the class. Similarly, they report encouraging students to frequently participate at the board and explain the solutions.

Table 4.7 Teaching practices to encourage autonomy

	DRC			Niger		
	Grades 1 and 2	Grades 3 and 4	Grades 5 and 6	Grades 1 and 2	Grades 3 and 4	Grades 5 and 6
	% who perform the activity often or very often					
Socio-emotional skills – Autonomy in children						
In the organisation of the class, teacher provides students with choices. For example, where the child can sit or what materials to use during the class	28.86	28.05	29.33	13.93	19.43	17.77
When the students are completing some work in the classroom, teacher suggests different ways to do the task and students can choose accordingly	36.58	43.09	45.19	28.36	33.18	34.52
Teacher provides students with the opportunity to help in the organisation of the classroom	60.74	64.63	65.87	66.67	86.73	90.36
Teacher provides students with the opportunity to answer questions on the board and explain their reasoning	64.77	71.14	76.44	46.77	73.93	81.73

Overall, while teaching and classroom practices in terms of interaction with teachers, lesson delivery, and feedback appear generally decent with room for improvement, the survey points to severe issues in terms of literacy-specific teaching practices, and in particular comprehension, writing and vocabulary, and teaching practices that encourage autonomy.

4.5 Creating a safe learning environment for students: teachers' perceptions and practices

Table 4.8 highlights that corporal punishment is very widely disapproved of by teachers in the sample. More than 80 per cent of teachers in the DRC and 92 per cent in Niger consider that the use of force or the cane (Fr. *le baton*) is not appropriate to punish students for bad behaviour or bad performance in class. This high number further urges us to take these figures with caution, as it contrasts with figures on the use of violence in the classroom reported by students (see Figure 5.9 and Figure 5.10).

Annex 5 (Table A5.7) provides a breakdown of teachers' views on corporal punishment by gender. While female teachers are more likely than male

teachers to favour corporal punishment, the difference is small (less than 5 percentage points) and statistically insignificant.

Table 4.8 Teacher perceptions of discipline

	DRC	Niger
	% who strongly disagree or disagree	
Teacher should physically punish students for not doing their homework	79.79	88.83
Teacher should make the student sit in the corner for misbehaving	75.66	75.86
Teacher should use the cane more frequently	82.05	91.63

Figures 4.4. and 4.5 report teachers' perceptions on safety at school. We observe similar numbers in the DRC and in Niger. While it is clear that over 80 per cent of the teachers sampled report that they and the students feel safe at school in both countries, there is a significant proportion of teachers who remain concerned about certain elements of girls' safety. For example, 45 per cent of teachers in the DRC agree that girls would not usually report incidents of violence, and 36 per cent in Niger. Overall, though, the perception that schools are not doing enough to provide a safe environment is not widely shared by teachers: while 20 per cent agreed that girls did not feel safe travelling to school in both countries, less than 10 per cent agree that girls or boys may not feel safe in school, and in the DRC only 18 per cent say that the teachers or schools do not act enough on violence against students, while this figure goes down to just 4 per cent in Niger.

Annex 5 (Table A5.8) reports the breakdown of teachers' perceptions of safety at school by gender. We only find a significant difference by gender in Niger, where a higher proportion of male teachers agree that girls do not report incidents of physical violence; and a higher proportion of female teachers agree that girls do not come to school due to harassment experienced on the way to school.

Figure 4.4 Teacher perceptions of safety at school – DRC

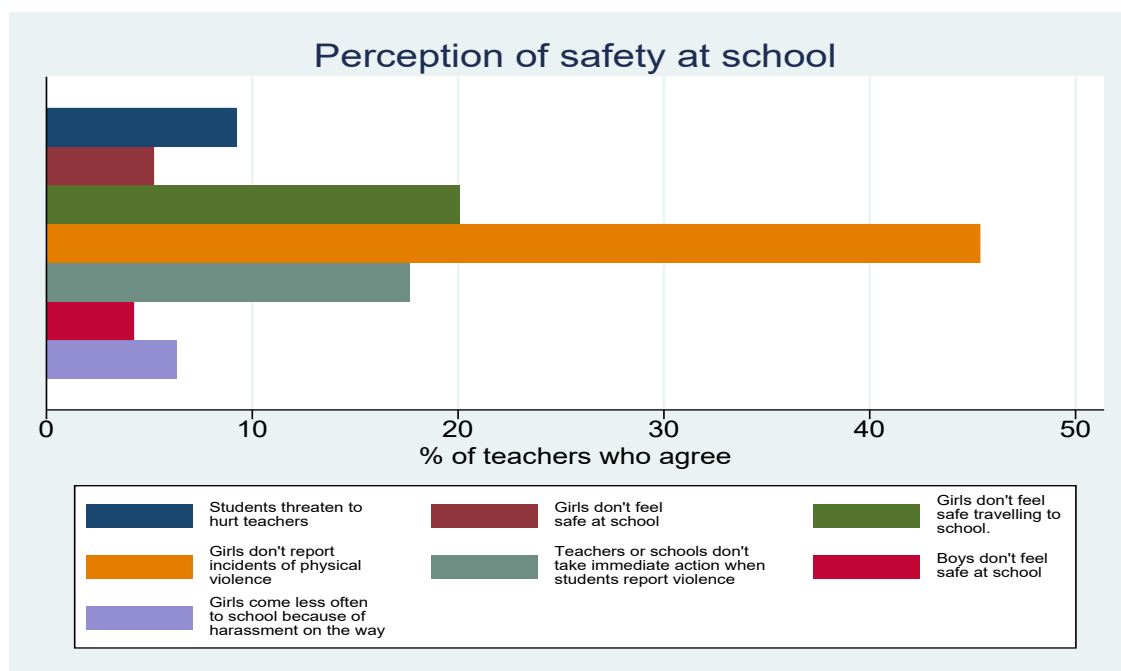
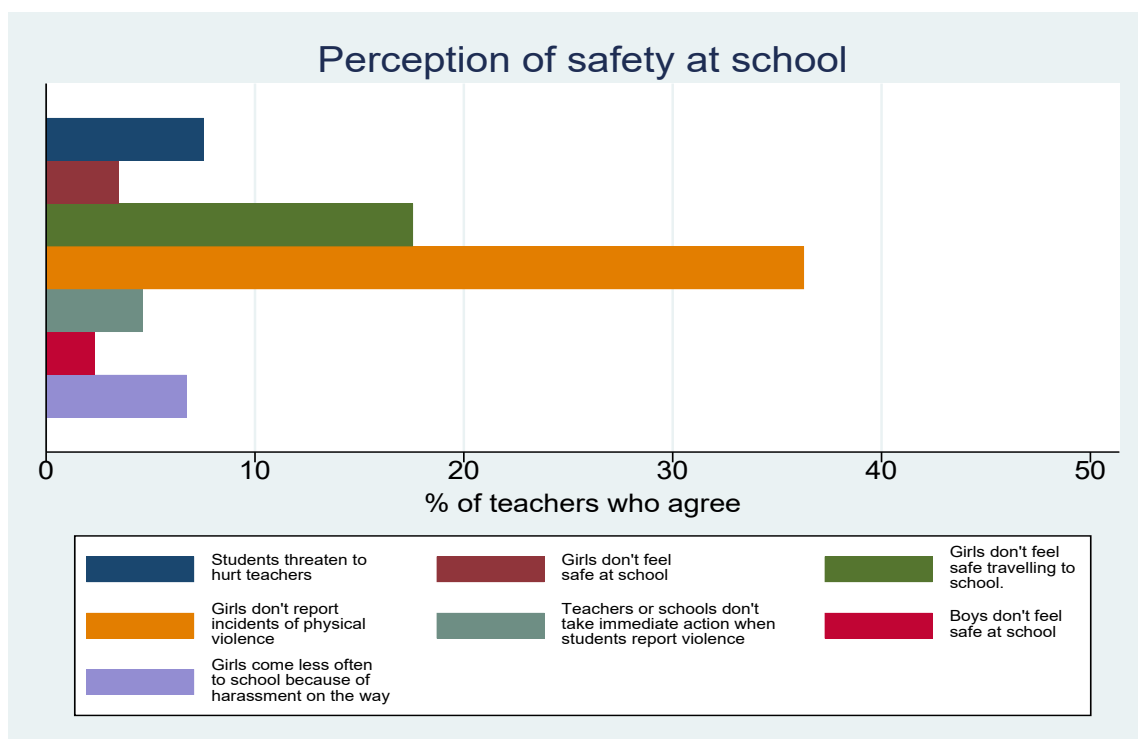


Figure 4.5 Teacher perceptions of safety at school – Niger



The study also seeks to understand gender bias among teachers, which may have a negative impact on the learning environment in schools.

We find gender bias to be prevalent when looking at women's role in society and in the family. The issues appear more pronounced in Niger than in the DRC (and it is also important to remember that 87 per cent of teachers in Niger are women). Figures 4.6 and 4.7 reveal that about 48 per cent of teachers sampled in the DRC agree that men should have the final say in household decisions, compared to 70 per cent in Niger. In both countries, around 35 per cent of the teachers sampled support the notion that women's most important role is to take care of the home, but for all other indicators the difference is marked, with Niger teachers more likely to hold conservative views of women's role in society and the family. Almost 80 per cent of the teachers sampled in Niger agree that women should not be elected as village heads. It is important to note that, when disaggregating the response between gender groups in the DRC, we do not find statistical differences between male and female teachers, with the exception of the statement 'Men should not share in cooking and cleaning activities'. Almost a third (30 per cent) of male teachers and 45 per cent of female teachers agreed with this statement. For Niger, we find a marked difference in the response to the statement 'Women are more suited to being a teacher' – 67 per cent of female teachers and 56 per cent of male teachers agreed (see Annex 5, Table A5.9).

Figure 4.6 Teacher perceptions of women's role in society – DRC

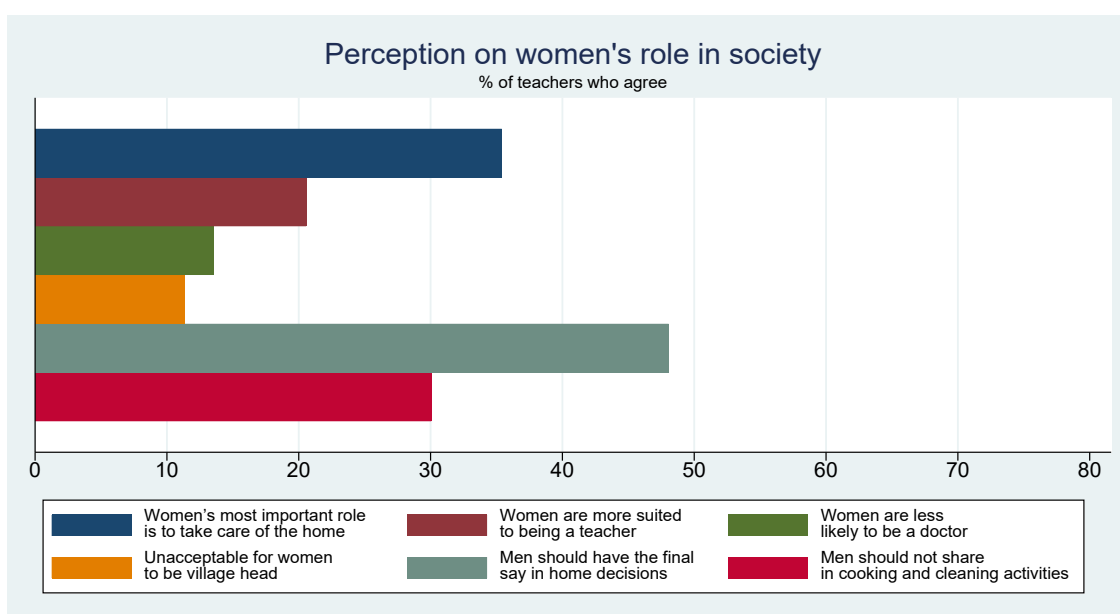
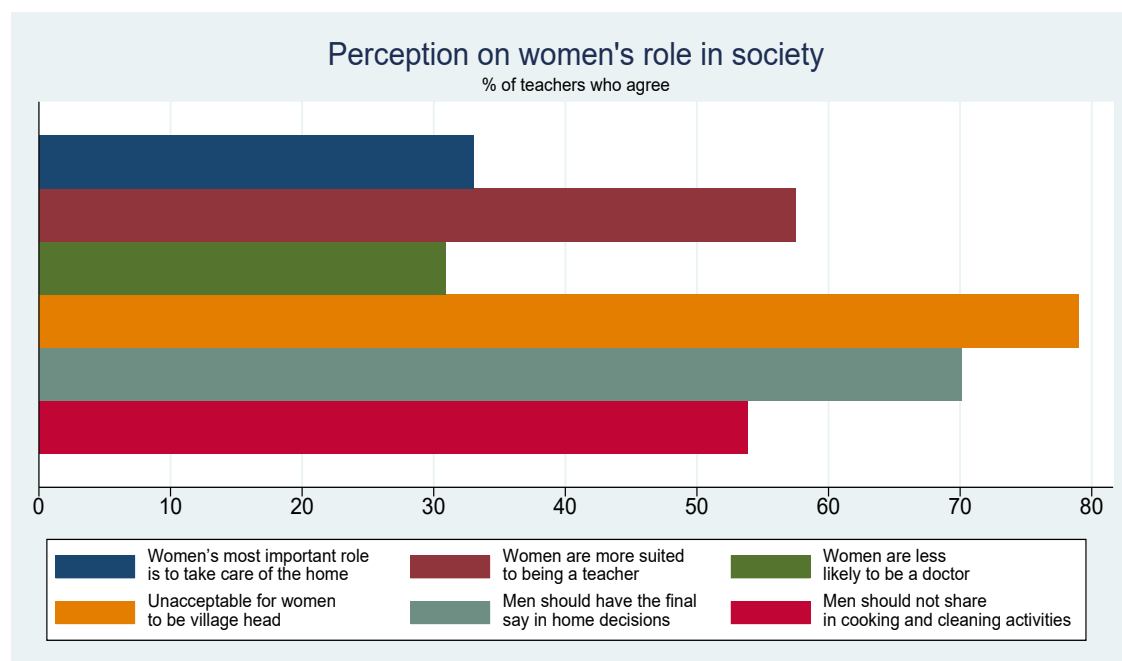


Figure 4.7 Teacher perceptions of women's role in society – Niger



In a similar way, statements on gender discrimination within the classroom were presented to the surveyed teachers (Figure 4.8 and Figure 4.9). Gender bias is less prevalent here than in Figure 4.6 and Figure 4.7 (teacher perceptions of women's role in society). Numbers are very similar in both countries. Interestingly, almost 70 per cent of teachers across both samples agree with the statement that 'books should not encourage women to stay at home'. For the other statements, approximately 90 per cent or more teachers agree with statements that are gender neutral (not privileging one gender over the other).

Annex 5 (Table A5.10) reports the statements on gender discrimination within the classroom, broken down by gender. Overall, we find no significant difference between the views of male and female teachers, with the exception of one statement in Niger, where a higher proportion of female teachers are more likely to agree with the statement that 'Teachers should not assign only boys as leaders in group activities'.

Figure 4.8 Teacher perceptions of gender discrimination within the classroom – DRC

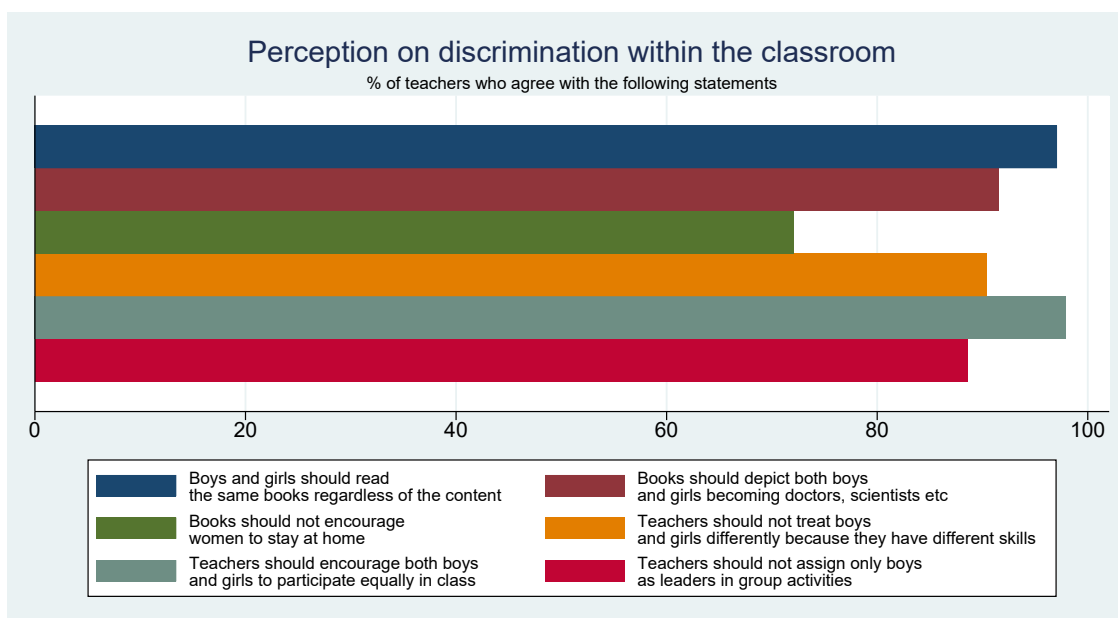


Figure 4.9 Teacher perceptions of gender discrimination within the classroom – Niger

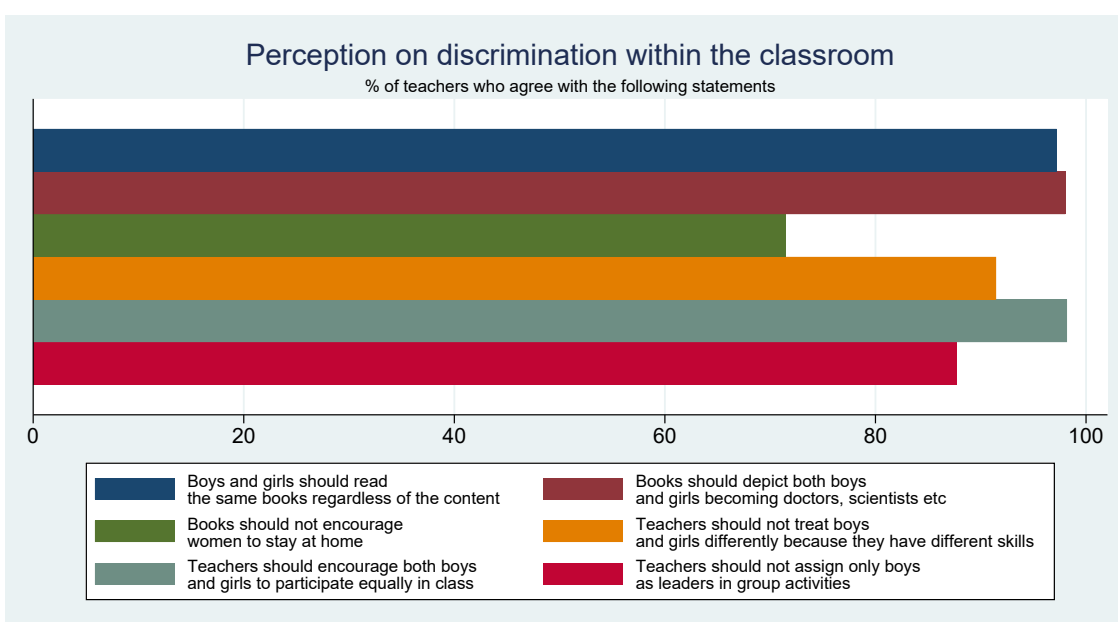


Table 4.9 shows teacher practices in the classroom that may deter discrimination. We find that teachers say they take an inclusive approach in class. In the DRC, more than 80 per cent of teachers in the sample report that they treat all students in the same way during teaching and learning activities. In Niger, practices seem generally slightly more inclusive.

Annex 5 (Table A5.11) reports on teacher practices that may deter discrimination within the classroom, broken down by gender. We do not find any significant difference by gender of teachers in either country.

While these are high proportions, it is important to regard these numbers with caution and critical distance, as they are self-reported. Teachers might report that they use inclusive approaches because of social desirability and possible awareness that the survey might constitute an evaluation of their teaching practices. In Section 4.9.3, we discuss conflict-sensitive education and issues around addressing conflict within the classroom using the qualitative data, which suggests a more nuanced picture around inclusive teaching than that shown by self-reported measures.

Table 4.9: Practices that may deter discrimination within the classroom

	DRC	Niger
	% who do this very often or often	
Teacher provides the same teaching methods to all students.	82.18	76.54
Teacher encourages all students to participate in learning activities, regardless of gender, ethnicity or cognitive and physical ability.	85.11	95.06
Teacher divides students with different abilities during learning activities.	21.81	50.62

4.6 Teaching challenges

Table 4.10 lists a series of teaching areas widely considered as challenging. Overall, the number of teachers who report experience of dealing with these challenges is lower (and sometimes substantially lower) in Niger (e.g. community safety: 124 in the DRC versus 30 in Niger; irregular attendance 565 in the DRC versus 312 in Niger), and the reported need for support is, logically, higher. In both countries, the most notable challenges were in the following areas: teaching students with special needs; students with other learning needs; students lacking prerequisite skills; large classes; disruptive students (especially in Niger);

uninterested students; students with irregular attendance; students who are unable to speak the language of instruction; and students who cannot afford school materials. For these challenges, most teachers stress that without additional support, they are negatively affecting the class activities. Students' involvement in the local conflict was identified as the least important challenge in the DRC (but still an issue for 21 per cent of teachers sampled) and was not reported to be an issue at all in Niger.

Table 4.10 Teaching challenges

	DRC		Niger	
	Number of teachers with experience	% of teachers who report needing more support	Number of teachers with experience	% of teachers who report needing more support
Teaching students with special needs	405	41.98	173	67.63
Teaching students with other learning needs, such as poor performance in tests and homework	596	50.17	419	66.35
Teaching students lacking prerequisite knowledge or skills	575	56.70	396	71.46
Large class size	234	50.43	225	76.44
Small class size	117	17.95	39	10.26
Teaching students from multiple grades in a class	297	46.46	92	71.74
Disruptive students	556	38.13	389	64.27
Uninterested students	399	46.62	233	65.24
Students with irregular attendance	565	53.10	312	65.71
The other teachers are often absent	222	34.23	86	54.65
Problems dealing with parents of students	153	39.87	25	60.00
Problems related to community environment	124	57.26	30	66.67

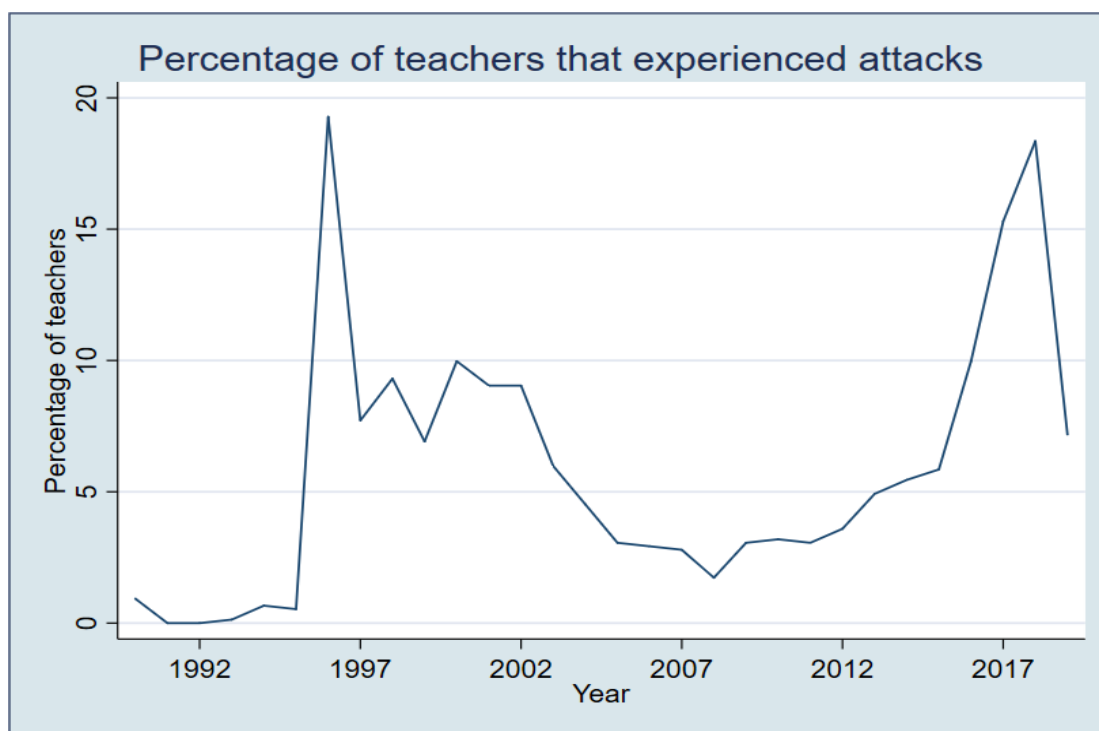
such as attacks, safety issues				
Problems related to parents unable to afford school materials	544	61.58	319	74.92
Teaching students who have difficulties understanding the language of instruction	646	48.45	519	66.28
Teaching students who are linked to armed groups or military	129	20.93	2	0.00

4.7 Teacher exposure to violence, and teacher wellbeing

The study gathers historical data on teachers' exposure to violent attacks and other forms of violence (as part of the empirical data gathered to address RQ1). A first series of measures were introduced in the baseline survey, using recall methods.¹⁶ The midline survey will include additional measures of exposure to violence during the period between baseline and midline data collection. As expected, given what we already know of the context, the DRC has a much higher exposure to violence, with 67 per cent of sampled teachers reporting having experienced at least one violent attack, compared to just 4 per cent in Niger. When broken down by gender, 65.9 per cent of female teachers and 66.7 per cent of male teachers in the DRC reported having experienced at least one violent attack, though this difference is not statistically significant. Figure 4.10 shows the percentage of teachers who were exposed to violence in each year from 1990 to 2019 in the DRC (we do not present a figure for Niger given the low level of incidents). There is a peak in attack exposure in 1996 and again in 2017–18.

¹⁶ These methods for collecting data on historical exposure to violence were developed in previous projects on violent conflict in the DRC. For a detailed discussion of these methods, see Marchais (2016) and Sanchez de la Sierra (2020).

Figure 4.10 Teachers' exposure to violence by year in South Kivu, DRC



Given that the study takes place in an area affected by ongoing armed conflict in the DRC, and that an overwhelming majority of our sampled teachers have experienced violence, we administered a PTSD checklist (PCL). The PCL assessment instrument was developed by Weathers *et al.* (1993). The United States Department of Veteran Affairs conducts this assessment to judge PTSD levels of military staff returning from combat zones. It is also frequently applied in developing countries affected by conflict and with workers and survivors of road accidents and natural disasters (Ibrahim *et al.* 2018). Fodor *et al.* (2015) found the average PCL score of 31.4 in their sample of 465 individuals who were exposed to genocide in Rwanda. In other conflict settings in Asia, Lim *et al.* (2013) reported an average PCL score of 36.2 for medics who had worked in eastern Myanmar's conflict zones.

The validity of the PTSD assessment has been confirmed by many studies. Blanchard *et al.* (1996) show that the PCL showed a very high internal consistency¹⁷ and scored above 0.9 for the test-retest reliability at 2–3 days and one week.¹⁸ This is the most widely used measure of PTSD. Other measures used in the context of developing countries include the Harvard Trauma

¹⁷ The Cronbach's alpha was 0.94 in Blanchard *et al.* (1996).

¹⁸ Test-retest reliability is a measure of reliability obtained by administering the same test twice over a period of time to a group of individuals.

Questionnaire and the Kessler-10 Questionnaire (Ibrahim *et al.* 2018). These two measures also aim to determine individuals' level of PTSD but ask different questions than the PCL. These measures are therefore not comparable.

The PCL comprises 17 questions that parallels diagnostic criteria B (re-experiencing symptoms), C (avoidance symptoms), and D (hyperarousal and reactivity symptoms) as delineated in the fourth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV). In these 17 questions, respondents answer using a rating scale from 1–5: 'Not at all', 'A little bit', 'Moderately', 'Quite a bit' and 'Extremely'.¹⁹ The sum of these scores across the 17 questions provides an indication of the individual's level of trauma as a result of violence and shock. The higher the score, the worse the individual's symptoms of trauma.

The cut-off number used to consider an individual suffering from PTSD varies across contexts. For a civilian context, the cut-off often used in the United States of America (USA) is 35 (Weathers *et al.* 1993). Another way to determine whether an individual meets DSM-IV symptom criteria to be diagnosed with PTSD is to show at least one B item (questions 1–5), three C items (questions 6–12), and at least two D items (questions 13–17) rated as 'Moderately' or above.

Figures 4.11 and 4.12 show the distribution of the total PCL score (across all 17 questions) in our sample. In the DRC, 36 per cent of teachers report a total score greater than 35 and may, therefore, fall into the category of people suffering from PTSD using the cut-off approach. Using the second approach of exhibiting high scores across the B, C and D items, 20 per cent of teachers may show symptoms of PTSD. Still in the DRC, the average score for teachers was 32 – a high score that reflects the high prevalence of symptoms of trauma in the population. In comparison, in Niger, where there has been much less exposure to conflict, 6 per cent of teachers had a PCL score higher than 35 and the average score was 24. It is important to see that exposure to conflict is, as expected, correlated with PCL score, but this correlation is not perfect: in Niger, for instance, there are more PTSD-affected teachers than teachers who directly experienced attacks (less than 1 per cent). Trauma is, in part, a personal experience and its sources can vary and be multiple, even in conflict-affected areas.

¹⁹ For full details, please see <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/assessment/adult-sr/ptsd-checklist.asp#obtain>

Figure 4.11 Distribution of PCL score for sampled teachers – DRC

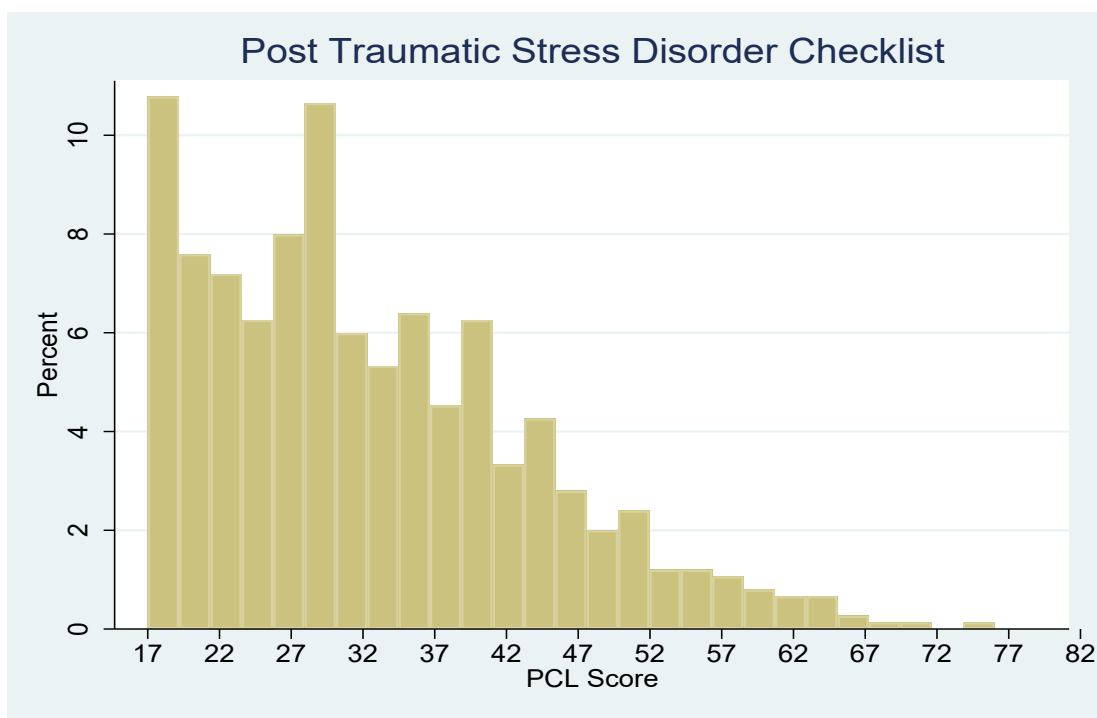
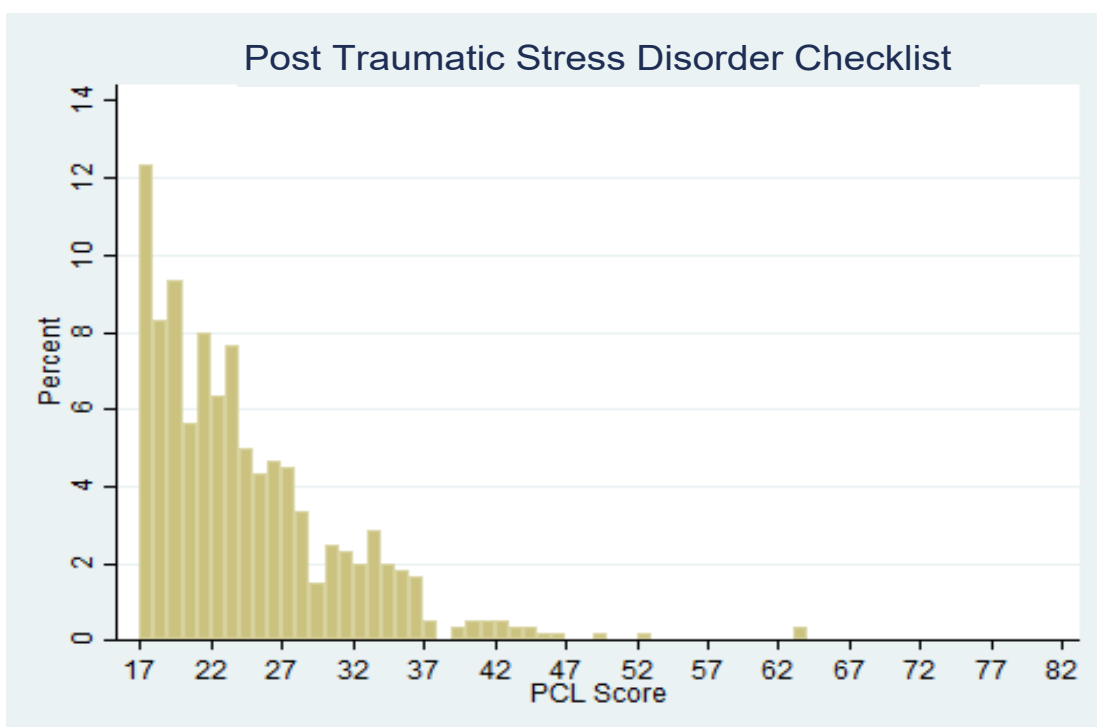


Figure 4.12 Distribution of PCL score for sampled teachers – Niger



4.8 Unpacking violence against teachers: insights from the qualitative study

As seen earlier, the quantitative study provides substantial evidence that teachers in the DRC are exposed to violence. Indeed, violence against teachers is one of the crucial ways in which violent conflict penetrates the school environment. However, the causes of violence against teachers are complex, and range from perceptions of them as state agents (Brandt 2019) to their relationship to the communities and armed groups in conflict areas. In our Research Design report, we describe the rationale behind the decision to partially focus the study on understanding the causes of violence against teachers (Justino *et al.* 2019: 20). In particular, we highlight the importance of understanding the relationship between teachers' social positioning, how they are perceived by local actors, and their exposure to violence. Moreover, understanding the social positioning of teachers is necessary to develop a more contextualised understanding of teacher wellbeing (Brandt and Lopes Cardozo, forthcoming).

In this section, we present the insights that have emerged from the first round of analysis of the qualitative fieldwork in the DRC (the qualitative fieldwork in Niger is still to take place). These insights contribute to addressing RQ1: 'How, and to what extent, does exposure to violence and conflict influence quality of teaching and teacher wellbeing, and what are the factors that may mitigate these impacts?', and RQ2: 'Examine the impact of TPD and ILET on quality of teaching and teacher wellbeing in fragile contexts'.

Overall, the qualitative interviews provide rich evidence for multiple forms of violence against teachers. However, as with most actors in conflict-affected contexts, they are not solely 'victims' of the violence, but play complex roles with regards to the dynamics of violence. Here, we also raise questions for future research.

4.8.1 Kidnappings and ransoms

As a result of years of ongoing violent conflict, the territories of Uvira and Fizi have experienced the emergence and entrenchment of a violent political economy, causing an advanced militarisation of society (Verweijen 2016). Armed groups – which range from large and organised rebel factions to small village-level self-defence groups – are deeply embedded in local societies, allowing them to generate revenue and resources through the strategic exercise of coercion and threats that are characteristic of 'threat' economies. Taxation and resource extraction usually take the form of roadblocks, imposing taxes on markets and other economic activities, and the blackmailing and kidnapping of individuals or groups (reported in various interviews).

The qualitative interviews provide substantial evidence that the education sector is also the target of rackets, kidnappings and threats, particularly by local militia known as the Mayi-Mayi. Headteachers are particularly targeted, as they are deemed to have more money given that they handle the school's overall financial resources. In some schools we found that teachers jointly collect money to liberate their headteacher (e.g. Int. 6). Teachers are also targeted, and sometimes entire schools, and feel particularly vulnerable on payment days, as these dates are often well-known to the population. The teachers in the study area are paid through mobile money, and risks due to journeys to collect salaries were only reported a few times (see also Brandt and De Herdt 2020 for more information on these reforms). Thus, we find evidence that schools and teachers function as 'taxation' points through which money is channelled to armed groups, therefore suggesting that the education sector might indirectly finance armed groups. Although this can sound alarming, it is important to remember that most state and non-state institutions in areas where armed groups operate are targeted for resource extraction, and the education sector is no exception.

One respondent stated that teachers can be exposed to violence through their role as informants. They inform, for example, the chieftaincy or the mayor about conflict dynamics, but they do so secretly 'because if armed groups are aware that this or that teacher provided information he will die' (Int. 44). They can also visit *groupement* chiefs to speak on behalf of a kidnapped person (Int. 8). Other interviewees, however, said that teachers do not inform (Int. 4, 23), or only inform when personally concerned (Int. 11). Usually the headteacher passes on the information to superiors (Int. 4, 41). Another teacher argued that teachers 'are exposed to death. Some people can enrol in armed groups just to rob or kill us. It is because we are envied' (Int. 46). Unfortunately we do not know the respondent's assumptions as to why teachers are envied. Possible explanations are social distinctiveness due to status as intellectuals, their regular salary or ability to speak French. Informing can be dangerous, one respondent wrote, as you are not always surrounded by the armed forces you informed (Int. 21).

In general, what happens within schools is said to easily be communicated to the military, government and Mayi-Mayi as they all have connections to students and school staff: 'We teach with their brothers and sisters' (Int. 1). Moreover, some schools are said to be 'protected', especially when being associated with one particular armed group (Int. 47; see also Section 6.1). In the Highlands (Haut Plateaux), it was reported that many people resorted to self-protection by arming themselves. One respondent had met a headteacher with a gun in his coat, 'to protect himself' as he said. He also added that: 'we know that students and teachers in the Hauts Plateaux are Mayi-Mayi soldiers' (Int. 35). The following situation, described in an interview, sheds light on the complex situation on the ground. One teacher had a good reputation in the eyes of parents because he never expelled children. However, his colleagues envied him because of his

competence and denounced him to the Mayi-Mayi. As the Mayi-Mayi had their own children in that school, they were hesitant to turn against him. A Mayi-Mayi met with him and his wife, and said: 'We will kill you because you are loved by parents and the headteacher. But as you don't expel our children, we are protecting. I advise you to leave this school.' He did leave and became an inspector (Int. 22).

In addition to these findings that uncover how teachers can become victims of armed conflict, the qualitative interviews provide evidence that teachers and administrators can play a role in mediating kidnappings and ransoms. Teachers, and administrators, are reported to play roles in exchanging hostages against ransom and in mediating between villages and Mayi-Mayi militia in such cases (Int. 5). One interview reports that teachers receive a share of the money (Int. 3), although this is likely because of their position as mediators, rather than their position as teachers.

Furthermore, teachers are not only victims, mediators or informants. They have agency and some make use of the militarised society for their own needs. Some teachers are said to be on the side of the Mayi-Mayi (Int. 44; see also Section 4.8.4), which is unsurprising given that Mayi-Mayi groups have a large social base in Uvira communities. In one case, a teacher had been intimidated through Service de Contrôle et de la Paix des Enseignants (SECOPE) staff. While we do not have data on the nature of these intimidations, a respondent stated that members of an armed group kidnapped the SECOPE personnel in return (Int. 42). In a different case, the Sous-Préfet (head of an educational sub-division) mentioned a teacher who was killed because he cooperated with criminals in the kidnapping of people. The teacher would look after money belonging to his brother, who was a criminal (Sous-Préfet, Int. 1).

Overall, the qualitative interviews provide a more complex and nuanced picture of the relationship between teachers and armed groups – sometimes as victims of taxation and resource extraction practices of the latter, but other times also as mediators. Teachers' position, however, is no different than that of other civil servants and business people, and this position does not seem specifically tied to education *per se*, but rather to the constant cashflows of teachers via the government and households. As the qualitative fieldwork has focused mostly on Uvira 'centre' and the Plaine de la Ruzizi, we have limited information on the severely conflict-affected Hauts Plateaux. Given that the conflict situation is substantially different there, it is likely that the role of teachers is also different, which provides an avenue for future research.

4.8.2 Identity and ethnicity

Internal and external markers of identity, such as ethnicity, language, religion or class, can play a crucial role in channelling violence against individuals in conflict-affected contexts, particularly when conflicts are aligned around identity. In Uvira, as in much of the eastern provinces of the DRC, the conflict is pitted along ethno-territorial lines, particularly between ethnic groups considered as 'autochthones' and groups considered as foreigners (Jackson 2006; Verweijen 2016). As a result, violence against teachers can result from their ascription to a particular ethno-territorial group, and we find evidence for this mechanism in the interviews. In one case, a teacher reported that he was considered an ally of the Banyamulenge, he himself being of another ethnicity, through the mere fact of greeting someone from the area in which Banyamulenge are the majority group (Int. 21). One headteacher told us how he has been threatened for a long time because of being considered as *non-originaire* in the village where his school was (Int. 21). Another teacher states that 'I wonder why I am being attacked and followed. I don't know the reasons. Yes, I am Burundian but I've been here for a long time' (Int. 2). Such forms of discrimination and targeting are not restricted to ethno-territorial identities, and often articulate with other forms of discrimination; one teacher felt marginalised within her school, and was not even receiving payments (i.e. no steps were undertaken to add her to payroll), because of not adhering to the school's religion (Int. 22).

These preliminary results confirm that exploring the relationship between the identity of teachers, their exposure to violence, and their wellbeing, is a fruitful avenue of research to understand teaching in contexts of violent conflict. Recent studies have emphasised that 'local' teachers might find particular motivation for their work: 'Being born in the community where a teacher currently resides is advantageous for teachers. These teachers tend to be more motivated, show a trend towards playing a strong role in the student's social and emotional learning, and tend to be absent fewer days'. (Torrente *et al.* 2012: 42). In conflict-affected contexts, however, this relationship might not be linear. In some contexts, being 'local' might reduce the risk of being exposed to violence related to being perceived as an outsider. In others, locals might be more exposed to violence – for example, if they serve as mediators for armed factions (as seen in the previous example) or due to vigilante justice. This provides further justification for studying different social positionings of teachers in different conflict configurations.

4.8.3 Violence, students' performance and school fees

The qualitative interviews provide evidence of other mechanisms through which violence penetrates the school environment. First, we found evidence that teachers could be targeted when students did not achieve desired exam results. One teacher was reported to have been kidnapped because a student had failed their final exam, another because the student had not come first in class, and a third child who failed the final exams threatened a teacher and implied that he would turn to the Mayi-Mayi for revenge (Int. 7, 22, 23).²⁰ Second, the interviews showed that violence could be used in relation to school fees. One interview reported that a Mayi-Mayi kidnapped a headteacher because he was accused of increasing the fees of the final primary school exam (*examen d'état*) from US\$45 to US\$50 (Int. 14). Moreover, a number of interviews pointed to harassment of teachers by the Mayi-Mayi because of the teacher motivation fee, and that some parents joined the Mayi-Mayi to raise money to pay school fees (Int. 14). As well as these cases relating to school results and fees, several teachers shared their fear of punishing or expelling children associated with the Mayi-Mayi, in contrast to those of the national army, FARDC (Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo) (Int. 16, 21, 27), although others reported that they had no problems doing so (Int. 3). Interestingly, one respondent claimed that having students whose parents belong to the Mayi-Mayi at one's school can protect teachers (Int. 55). There were even reports of indistinct personal threats, such as that of a parent who publicly claimed that he would begin by killing teachers in case conflict broke out, without giving any further reason (Int. 12).

The complexity of school environments is illustrated by the following:

There are multiple conflicts in villages. Some sowed by authorities who seek benefits by gaining the population's trust or by dividing the population... Consequently, parents no longer send their children to specific schools when they are associated with a certain politician. For example, since 2017 a secondary school has been victim of this kind of conflict because it is supported by a member of national parliament who is in disaccord with the groupement chief, who is at the same time a member of the provincial parliament. Parents who side with the latter no longer send their children to the former's school, with some of these children then growing closer to armed groups.
(Int. 54)

²⁰ 'In Luvungi during the proclamation, a girl who was always the first in her class came out second of her class for the first time. Her mother told the teacher to increase the grade of her daughter. That night, the teacher was attacked by the Mai-Mai. The education authorities and the elders of the area had to intervene for the mother to understand. This was in July 2016'. (Int. 23).

These different mechanisms illustrate the advanced militarisation of local societies in the DRC, where individuals or groups can resort to violence to settle multiple types of scores and grievances, including in relation to education. In the study areas, numerous families and local actors have relatives and friends in armed groups and can therefore rely on these connections to wield violence or threats, which is characteristic of militarised environments (Verweijen 2013). As a result, teachers can be targeted to settle personal scores, but also as a result of more structural conflicts, such as those around school fees. Throughout the DRC, school fees are a source of contention and grievances, and can take a violent turn in such militarised contexts.

4.8.4 Teacher governance

RQ1 is concerned with the impact of violence on quality of teaching and teacher wellbeing. As well as the direct indicators of violence discussed in the previous subsection, we found more indirect signs of reduced teaching quality and teacher wellbeing due to armed conflict. We approach this issue through a focus on teacher governance, which we define as the recruitment, deployment and management of teachers. First, reduced or fragile wellbeing can lead to high turnover, absences and transfers, all of which have a negative effect on aggregated teaching quality. Few qualified teachers are willing to accept deployment to conflict-affected areas in the first place (Int. 1). Many teachers desire and request transfers away from conflict-affected areas, especially headteachers, as they are reportedly the main targets of blackmailing and kidnapping for ransom (see Section 4.8.1).²¹ These headteachers, usually very experienced teachers, would then have to be replaced by other, possibly less experienced, teachers. Second, non-paid teachers have always formed an unstable part of the teaching workforce in the DRC. While waiting to be included on the government's payroll, they might leave the profession to pursue other economic opportunities. In conflict-affected contexts of South Kivu, unpaid teachers might turn to the Mayi-Mayi and other armed groups to seek revenge against their paid colleagues, or might join the Mayi-Mayi as a way to make some money (Int. 14). The recently implemented *Gratuité* policy has reinforced these dynamics by removing the financial livelihoods (household contributions) of unpaid teachers. Third, our interviews reveal that armed actors, particularly militias, can try to intervene in recruiting teachers. In these cases, members of the militias attempt to get one of their acquaintances on the payroll (Int. 14, 26). Conflicts around positions in schools (such as promotions to the headteacher role) can also be reinforced when teachers involve armed groups and kidnappings in a bid to reach their goals (Int. 1). Fourth, it is reportedly very challenging to manage teachers who have been members of armed groups or

²¹ Bennell (2004: v) reports the widespread practice of using bribes and social connections to influence their positioning and recruitment.

who have a relationship with armed groups (for instance, via family members) (Int. 5, 8, 11, 38). Headteachers report being very hesitant to call out or criticise these teachers. Improving teaching quality under these circumstances appears particularly challenging.

4.9 Contextualising the impact of TPD and ILET on teachers

In the first round of interviews, qualitative fieldwork was unable to address the direct impact of the TPD and ILET interventions, as these were still in the early days of implementation. Nonetheless, we were able to analyse key elements of the context in which TPD and ILET are implemented, in view of developing, throughout the study, a contextualised understanding of teacher-related interventions and policies. This section concerns only the DRC, as qualitative fieldwork in Niger is still to be carried out in December 2020.

4.9.1 Knowledge of the project

A first line of inquiry in the qualitative study concerned knowledge among teachers and headteachers of the BRiCE programme and its different components. Somewhat surprisingly, there seemed to be very little knowledge of the programme's name (BRiCE), as few of the teachers interviewed had heard of it. Some said they had read the name somewhere, but relatively few were able to explain what the programme was about. In contrast, DEVCO and especially *école zone de paix* were better known. This finding suggests the need to strengthen communication efforts among the implementation teams, so that beneficiary schools and teachers can not only understand the name, aims, and funding behind the project, but also its underlying Theory of Change, and the different components involved. Moreover, some interviewees claimed that non-selected school communities were disappointed, and some suspected that the attribution of schools to particular entities resulted from informal networks between non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and schools. While such rumours are common in similar projects, it is important to bear in mind that 'its effects in a volatile conflict setting might be different as resulting tensions might be manipulated in favour of one interest group or another' (Oldenburg 2016: 10). As discussed in the previous section, polarisation along ethnic lines is both a consequence and a driver of violent conflict in the DRC. If education programmes carried out by international NGOs are perceived to be attributed to particular groups on the basis of personal connections or ethnic affinities, this can reinforce the grievances that underpin the conflict. This underscores the importance of strengthening communication, and particularly making selection and attribution processes transparent to beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the project, to dispel such conceptions.

4.9.2 Teacher Professional Development

Analysing the implementation of the BRiCE TPD component requires taking a step back and reflecting on teacher training in Congolese schools more generally. First, almost all respondents agreed that the quality of teaching has continued to deteriorate and that new teachers have relatively low qualifications. As Wolf *et al.* (2015a) found, low qualifications can imply low motivation at the onset of a teaching career, but also a relatively higher increase of motivation through TPD. Hence, TPD can play an important role in raising the motivation of teachers, especially of young teachers. Second, internships were largely judged to be too short and ineffective, and it was reported that actual internships were often much shorter than what formal programmes had promised. Therefore, TPD interventions should not expect that all teachers they are engaging with have been trained according to the formal Congolese curriculum. Instead, each intervention could gain from better understanding the actual qualifications and experiences of the teachers to be trained. Third, almost all teachers cited higher salaries as their top concern, which is consistent with the results of the survey detailed in the previous section. Consistently, almost all teachers named the emergence of the teacher motivation fee in 1991/92 as the origin of the crisis of the Congolese education system. Thus, it is important to consider the BRiCE TPD intervention in this larger context: teachers are interested in professional development but remain preoccupied with securing their financial livelihoods. As Wolf *et al.* note: 'TPD programs that add to teachers' workloads without adding support or that fail to meet teachers' needs may result in teacher burnout and de-motivation' (Wolf *et al.* 2015a: 33). Fourth, our qualitative findings helped us identify a tension between equal access and sustainability regarding TPD. Unpaid teachers are a very unstable group of teachers. It can take up to several years to be included on the government's payroll, so throughout the DRC, unpaid teachers are likely to leave the teaching profession for economic reasons. Currently, due to the *Gratuité* policy, these teachers have not received money from parents for several months. Some went on strike while others simply did not show up at school anymore. Hence, training unpaid teachers might not be a sustainable investment. Yet, from an equal access perspective, it is inconceivable to side-line these teachers and exclude them from training. Finally, several teachers were transferred away from conflict-affected areas due to experiencing threats or violence. The project can thus have positive externalities for other regions while the targeted region might lose newly trained teachers.

4.9.3 Conflict-sensitive education

In order to understand conflict-sensitive education – a key component of TPD – it is important to analyse how teachers and students discuss conflict and violence within schools. Our preliminary research points to contradictory evidence on this front. While some people state that teachers do not and should not discuss

conflict-related aspects at school as they ‘are there for the curriculum’ (Int. 34), several teachers reported talking about conflicts in school. The term used to describe this was usually ‘sensitisation’ (Fr: *sensibilisation*) – for example, in the health and environment education class (Int. 11) or civic education class (Int. 31), both in grades 5 and 6 (see also Int. 1, 21, 28, 41). One headteacher made clear that they cannot discuss conflict-related aspects because no one has trained them to do so (Int. 23), while another headteacher stated that trainings received (for example, through Save the Children) helped to train teachers to handle conflicts and to teach traumatised students (Int. 31). Another aspect to be mentioned here is that a teacher reported that his school invites parents to discuss why children leave school to participate in armed groups (Int. 14). In general, many people reportedly seek advice from teachers in this regard (Int. 4).

Moreover, teachers were portrayed as ‘pacifiers because they teach children of different ethnic backgrounds’ (Int. 11). At the same time, many respondents said that ‘In school, tribes/ethnic groups (Fr: *tribu*) do not exist’ (Int. 14, 16, 38). In fact, there was a strong emphasis in many interviews on the argument that there is no discrimination whatsoever in schools (see also Int. 18). This issue is two-sided: on the one hand, being ‘ethnicity-blind’ within schools implies, for example, the sanctioning of discrimination based on ethnicity and refraining from discussing ethnicity-based conflict dynamics. This approach might appear to lead to a more pacified climate within schools. On the other hand, however, this approach side-lines a major driver of conflict – that is, polarised ethno-territorial identities (see Section 6, ‘Next Steps’), which are clearly present in schools; in one reported case, students insulted each other as ‘you *munyerwanda*’ or ‘you Mai’ (Int. 27). All teachers and students know, in more or less detail, that the armed conflict is closely bound up with ethnic identity, nationality, territorial autochthony, belonging, etc. Side-lining these issues makes it difficult to have a discussion around the actual conflict. Yet addressing these issues is highly sensitive and runs the risk of further polarising identities: one teacher who discussed ethnicity in school – we do not know in which way – was threatened and had to flee his home region, never to return (Int. 27). Thus far, our research has not revealed a great level of detail about the way that teachers address conflict, and ethnicity, in school. We are exploring the possibility of using supplementary research methods – such as classroom observation – to gain a better understanding of this issue.

5. Students' learning and wellbeing

In this section of the report, we provide key statistics on students from the baseline survey, in order to address RQ3. The quantitative study sampled 637 children in the DRC and 709 children in Niger.

5.1 Socioeconomic characteristics

Table 5.1 reports the living arrangements of our sampled children, and shows that 12 per cent of those in the DRC and 7.62 per cent in Niger are single orphans (loss of one parent), which are relatively high figures. On average, children in the DRC sample have 5.6 siblings and a household size of 8, while in Niger, households are marginally bigger, with 5.7 siblings on average and 9 people living in the household.

Table 5.1 Living arrangements of children sampled

	DRC	Niger
	Average	
Single orphans, either mother or father not alive (%)	12.4	7.62
Double orphans, mother and father are not alive (%)	0.16	0.71
Number of people living in the child's household	8.4	9.37
Number of siblings	5.59	5.72

Table 5.2 provides some additional information on children's households. The most common assets cited are furniture (such as a table, a chair, a bench/stool, and a bed) and a mobile phone, in both countries. Compared to the teachers' asset inventory, the students' families have, on average, fewer assets. As was the case for teachers, water pump and a fridge were less common (if not almost absent) in households of the children sampled in the DRC, and this is still related to access to electricity, as only 12.7 per cent of children lived in families that had access to electricity (but 43 per cent in Niger). A fifth of households (19.78 per cent in the DRC and 20.87 per cent in Niger) have a bicycle. Assets permitting access to information – beyond having a phone – were not very prevalent in these households. Owning a radio was more common (34 per cent in the DRC and 38 per cent in Niger) than owning a television (19 per cent and 36 per cent respectively).

The state of the children's dwellings reflects the difficult conditions in which many live. In the DRC, 36 per cent of the children live in dwellings with wood or mud as walls; 48 per cent live in dwellings with roof leaks; and almost everyone uses

low-quality cooking fuel, while 10 per cent live in houses with no toilets. In Niger, most households live in dwellings with wood or mud as walls (62 per cent), with roof leaks (54 per cent) and use low-quality fuel (89 per cent), while almost a quarter (24 per cent) do not have toilets.

Finally, it must be noted that the learning environment of children is further worsened by the low education levels of their parents: in Niger, 64 per cent of children had a mother who had never attended school (33 per cent in the DRC), and 53 per cent had a father who had never attended school (14 per cent in the DRC).

Table 5.2 Key characteristics of children's households

	DRC	Niger
	%	%
Assets owned		
Owns radio	33.59	38.22
Owns television	18.52	35.83
Owns bicycle	19.78	20.87
Owns animal drawn cart	3.3	25.11
Owns car/truck	1.41	8.32
Owns motorcycle/scooter	7.06	29.06
Owns table	66.88	47.95
Owns chair	75.2	59.38
Owns bench/stool	63.89	59.94
Owns fridge	4.08	15.94
Owns bed	64.21	86.32
Has electricity	12.72	42.74
Owns water pump	6.75	32.16
Owns mobile phone	63.27	90.83
Quality of housing		
Households with low quality wall material (wood or mud)	36.42	62.48
Households with roof leaks	47.57	53.74
Household with no toilets	10.05	24.4
Households with low quality toilets (pit, Turkish and water closets)	84.46	67.42
Households with low quality fuel (corn/ millet stalks or firewood)	99.84	88.58
Parental education		
Mother can read and write	57.93	28.85
Father can read and write	77.08	40.76
Mother has not attended school	33.39	64.28
Father has not attended school	13.93	53.33

5.2 Education participation

As already mentioned, the quantitative study surveyed children currently enrolled in Grade 3 in the DRC and Grade 4 in Niger. It shows that many of the children are older, and sometimes considerably older, than would be expected for their grade. This is likely caused by a high repeat rate and, especially in the DRC, important financial barriers to accessing education. In the DRC, only 55 per cent of the girls and 56 per cent of the boys enrolled in Grade 3 are aged 8–9 years (the expected cohort for Grade 3). Approximately 19 per cent of the girls and 22 per cent of the boys in Grade 3 were 11 or older, an age by which students are expected to have completed primary school. While there is no marked gender difference in the DRC, the gender difference in Niger is staggering – 67 per cent of boys but only 32 per cent of girls in Grade 4 are in the expected 9–10 years of age category.

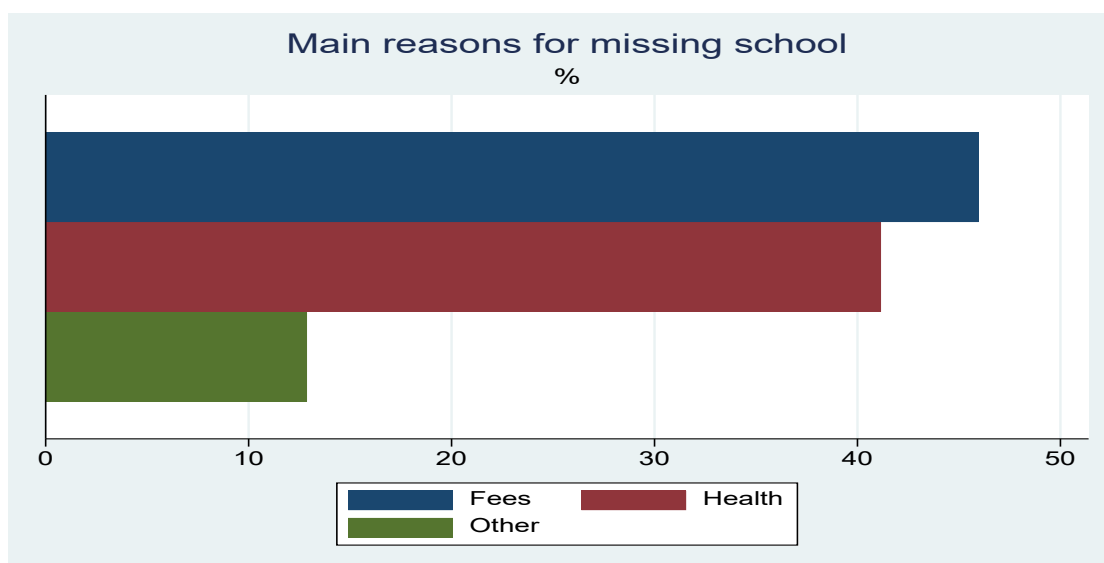
Table 5.3 Age and grade progression

	DRC		Niger	
Age in years	% in Grade 3		% in Grade 4	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
6	0	1.02		
7	5.26	6.78		
8	23.98	18.31	0.27	2.05
9	31.29	27.46	3.27	22.22
10	20.76	24.41	28.34	42.98
11	8.77	12.2	39.24	21.05
12	6.43	6.44	19.35	8.48
13	3.22	2.71	6.81	2.34
14	0.29	0.68	1.91	0.58
15			0.82	0.29
Total	342	295	367	342

Looking at school attendance, 54 per cent of children in the DRC sample but only 17 per cent in Niger missed at least one day of school in the month preceding the survey. However, when children missed school in Niger, they tended to do so for a longer period of time (four days over the preceding month versus 2.6 in the DRC). This is likely due to the underlying causes for missing school, which are clearly different across contexts, as illustrated in Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2. There is no statistical difference by gender in school attendance in either country. In the DRC, 45 per cent of those who missed school cited inability to pay school fees as the main reason, and almost 80 per cent of the children in our sample noted that they have been chased out of school due to unpaid fees at least once in the academic year. On average, a child is chased

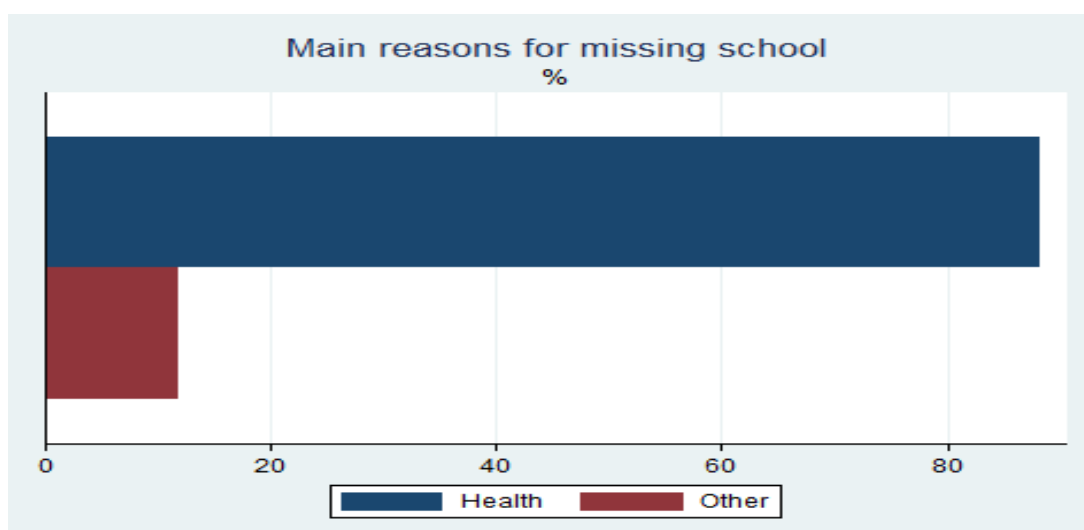
out of school on account of unpaid fees five times in an academic year. In Niger, inability to pay school fees was not mentioned as a reason for being absent from school; poor health was the main reason cited (accounting for more than 80 per cent of absences). There is no statistical difference by gender in the reasons given for missing school in either country.

Figure 5.1 Reasons for school absence – DRC



Note: The category 'Other' includes the following reasons: school material costs, violence/child feels unsafe outside of the school, violence/child feels unsafe inside of the school due to staff or to other students, absence of teacher, disability, concentration issues, work, household reasons, child is not willing to go or is late, and poor weather.

Figure 5.2 Reasons for school absence – Niger



Note: The category 'Other' includes the following reasons: absence of teacher, disability, work, and household reasons.

5.3 Learning assessment

The learning assessments in this study were the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Maths Assessment (EGMA). The detailed instrument can be found in Annex 1. The following sub-tasks were implemented:

Literacy

- EGRA Sub-task 1: Letter sound identification (50 letters timed).
- EGRA Sub-task 2: Familiar word reading (50 words timed).
- EGRA Sub-task 3: Invented word reading (50 words timed).
- EGRA Sub-task 4: Oral passage reading.
- EGRA Sub-task 5: Reading comprehension (5 questions).

Numeracy

- EGMA Sub-task 1: Number identification (25 numbers timed).
- EGMA Sub-task 2: Quantity discrimination (5 tasks timed).
- EGMA Sub-task 3: Missing number (5 tasks timed).
- EGMA Sub-task 4: Addition (levels 1 and 2 – 10 tasks timed).
- EGMA Sub-task 5: Subtraction (levels 1 and 2 – 10 tasks timed).

Table 5.4 gives an overview of the performance of children by the five EGRA sub-tasks implemented.

The overall EGRA performance was quite low in our sample, with children in the Niger sample performing better than those in the DRC on average, but still with enormous challenges.

In the DRC, girls performed worse than boys on every sub-task of EGRA. These differences are significant for each sub-task, except 'reading comprehension'. The average number of letters correctly identified per minute is 13.8 (out of 50 letters), with a gender gap of 2 letters per minute. On average, children correctly identified only 28 per cent of the letters. However, only 9 per cent of the children were unable to read a single letter. This percentage increases fivefold when looking at sub-tasks involving reading words (familiar, invented, and oral passage). Close to half the children score '0' on these tasks, with girls performing worse than boys. On average, children correctly read five words per minute. The 'reading comprehension' sub-task saw the worst performance, with 82 per cent of children unable to answer a single question (out of five) correctly. This might be related to literacy-specific class activities, where 51 per cent of the teachers reported reading a story in class, and 54 per cent reported asking children questions based on the story (see Table 4.6).

However, even when 65–85 per cent of grades 1–4 teachers report conducting activities relating to reading the alphabet and words, the proportion of children who can correctly identify letters and words remains low.

Table 5.4 EGRA performance by gender

		DRC			Niger		
		Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Average number of correct items	Letter sound	12.38	15.44	13.8	20.71	18.93	19.85
	Familiar word	4.61	6.05	5.28	9.75	9.62	9.69
	Invented word	3.88	5.61	4.69	7.16	7.53	7.34
	Oral passage reading	3.72	5.41	4.51	9.14	8.57	8.86
	Reading comprehension	0.35	0.43	0.38	1.11	0.99	1.06
Average percentage of correct items	Letter sound	25%	31%	28%	41%	38%	40%
	Familiar word	9%	12%	11%	20%	19%	19%
	Invented word	8%	11%	9%	14%	15%	15%
	Oral passage reading	6%	9%	7%	15%	14%	15%
	Reading comprehension	7%	9%	8%	22%	20%	21%
Percentage of children scoring '0'	Letter sound	12%	6%	9%	2%	1%	2%
	Familiar word	47%	43%	45%	18%	19%	18%
	Invented word	54%	46%	50%	28%	27%	28%
	Oral passage reading	54%	48%	51%	36%	35%	36%
	Reading comprehension	82%	81%	82%	62%	63%	62%

In Niger, girls performed as well as the boys in our sample. The average number of letters correctly identified per minute was 19.6 (out of 50 letters). On average, children correctly identified only 40 per cent of the letters. However, only 2 per cent were unable to read a single letter. This percentage increases at least ninefold when looking at sub-tasks involving reading words (familiar, invented, and oral passage). Close to a third of the children score '0' on these tasks. On average, children correctly read 10 words per minute. The 'reading comprehension' sub-task saw the worst performance, with 62 per cent of children unable to answer a single question (out of five) correctly. This might be related to literacy-specific class activities, where 47 per cent of the teachers reported reading a story in class, and 45 per cent reported asking children questions based on the story (see Table 4.6).

In Annex 5 (Figure A5.1 through to Figure A5.10), we provide the full distribution of percentage of correctly answered items for each EGRA sub-task by gender.

Table 5.5 gives an overview of the performance of children by the five EGMA sub-tasks implemented.

Table 5.5 EGMA performance by gender

		DRC			Niger		
		Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Average number of correct items per minute	Number identification	13.75	14.56	14.12	13.17	13.96	13.55
	Quantity discrimination	3.97	4.02	3.99	4.01	4.24	4.12
	Missing number	2.36	2.38	2.37	2.51	2.48	2.5
	Addition	4.95	5.95	5.42	6.05	6.32	6.18
	Subtraction	2.57	3.39	2.95	4.42	4.54	4.48
Average percentage of correct answers per minute	Number identification	55%	58%	57%	53%	56%	54%
	Quantity discrimination	79%	80%	80%	80%	85%	82%
	Missing number	47%	48%	47%	50%	50%	50%
	Addition	50%	60%	54%	61%	63%	62%
	Subtraction	26%	34%	30%	44%	45%	45%
Percentage of children scoring '0'	Number identification	1%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%
	Quantity discrimination	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
	Missing number	8%	8%	8%	7%	8%	7%
	Addition	8%	4%	6%	10%	8%	9%
	Subtraction	40%	29%	35%	19%	17%	18%

In both the DRC and Niger, overall, children in the sample performed better on the EGMA than on EGRA, with a lower proportion of children scoring '0' than for the EGRA. Niger is again slightly ahead of the DRC but less so than in the case of the EGRA. In both countries, girls performed worse than boys, but that difference was not significant for the sub-tasks 'quantity discrimination' and 'missing number' in the DRC, and not significant for any sub-tasks except for 'quantity discrimination' in Niger. On average, in both countries, children identified 14 (out of 20) numbers per minute, with almost no children scoring '0'. In both countries, the 'quantity discrimination' sub-task saw the best performances, with children being able to correctly answer 80 per cent (or 4 out of 5) of the items.

In the DRC, on average, children correctly answered 5 (out of 10) addition items and 3 (out of 10) subtraction items. Just over a third (35 per cent) were unable to

answer even a single subtraction item correctly (score of '0'). The gender gap for the 'subtraction' sub-task is also the starkest, with 40 per cent of girls scoring '0' compared to 29 per cent of boys.

In Niger, on average, children correctly answered 6 (out of 10) addition items and 4 (out of 10) subtraction items; 18 per cent were unable to answer even a single subtraction item correctly (score of '0').

In Annex 5 (Figure A5.11 through to Figure A5.20), we provide the full distribution of percentage of correctly answered items for each EGMA sub-task by gender.

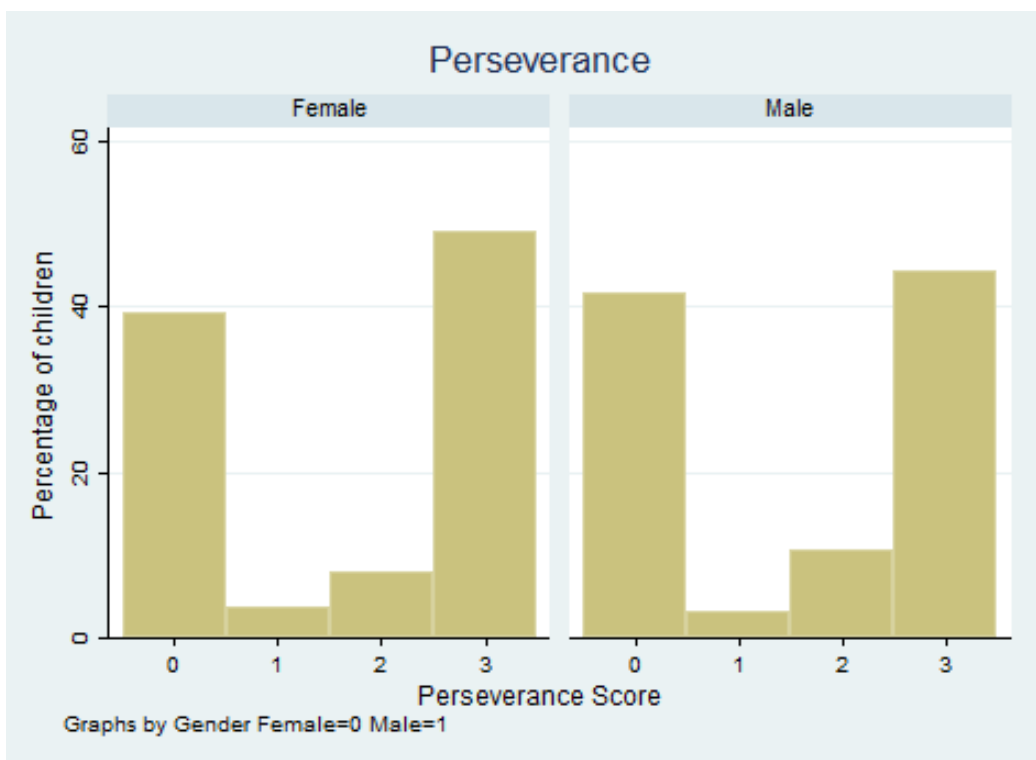
5.4 Non-cognitive skills

We administered perseverance and empathy activities to all children. These were adapted from Save the Children's International Social and Emotional Learning Assessment (ISELA) (Save the Children 2018). The ISELA was designed to examine the non-cognitive skills of primary school students and the changes over time in response to social and emotional interventions. Scores in each test are not comparable across contexts and they are not used as a diagnostic tool. They do, however, provide a profile of a child's social and emotional skills at specific points in time. These tools have been adapted to many different countries where Save the Children works. The detailed instrument can be found in Annex 1.

The perseverance test captures perseverance by asking children to complete an increasingly difficult drawing activity using the non-dominant hand. It shows children's ability to motivate themselves and finish the task. A higher score indicates a greater presence of the trait of perseverance.

Figures 5.3 and 5.4 show the distribution of perseverance score (min 0 and max 3) for girls and boys. The scores indicate the number of drawings that the child attempted to complete or completed in one minute. In the DRC, boys scored higher (average of 1.4) than girls (average of 1.0)²² whereas in Niger, scores were similar for both genders. In the DRC, more than half the girls could not complete even one drawing, while 38 per cent of the boys could not do so. On average, 25 per cent of the children (23 per cent of girls and 28 per cent of boys) attempted all three drawings. In Niger, nearly half of boys and girls attempted all three drawings.

22 The difference is statistically significant at 1 per cent.

Figure 5.3 Perseverance score by gender – DRC**Figure 5.4 Perseverance score by gender – Niger**

Figures 5.5 and 5.6 show the distribution of empathy score (min 0 and max 5) by gender. The empathy test reveals children's capacity to comprehend and react appropriately to emotions of others in the school. It is based on five situation questions where the children are asked to take the perspective of others into account and answer what they would do in this situation. A higher score represents a greater presence of the trait of empathy. Among both samples, empathy levels were generally high, especially in Niger (42 per cent of children scored the maximum) where girls scored significantly higher than boys. In the DRC, 36 per cent of the children scored the maximum, and the difference between boys and girls was not statistically significant.

Figure 5.5 Empathy score by gender – DRC

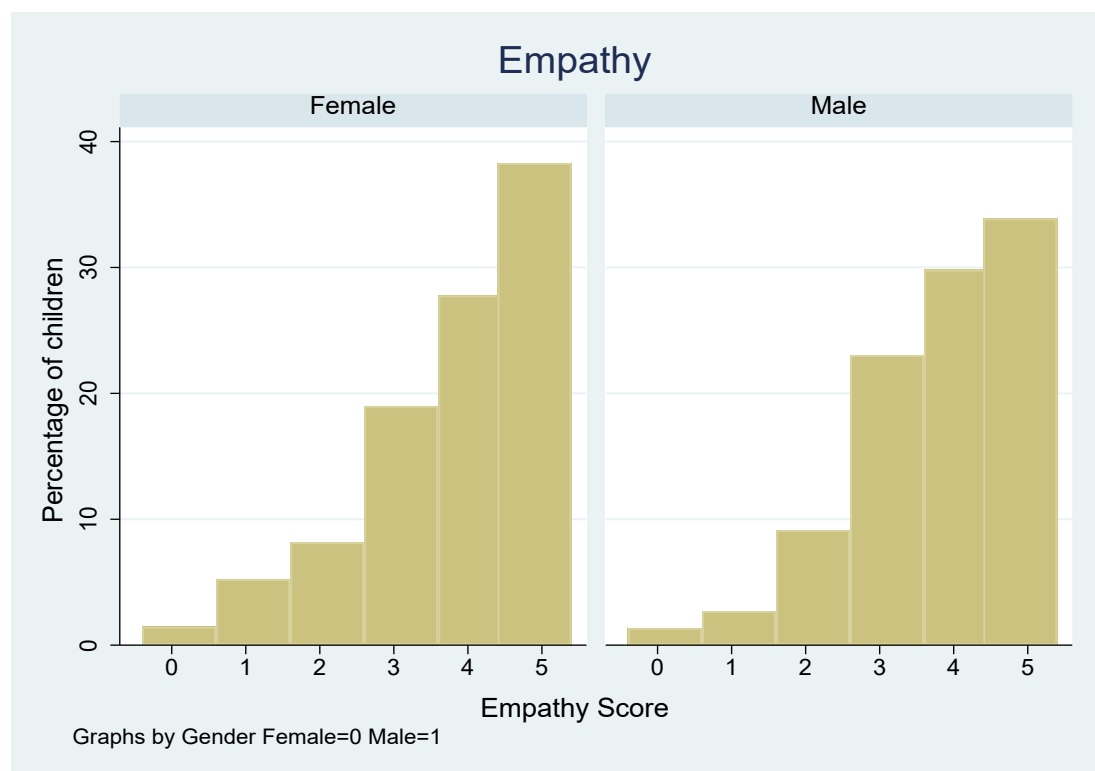
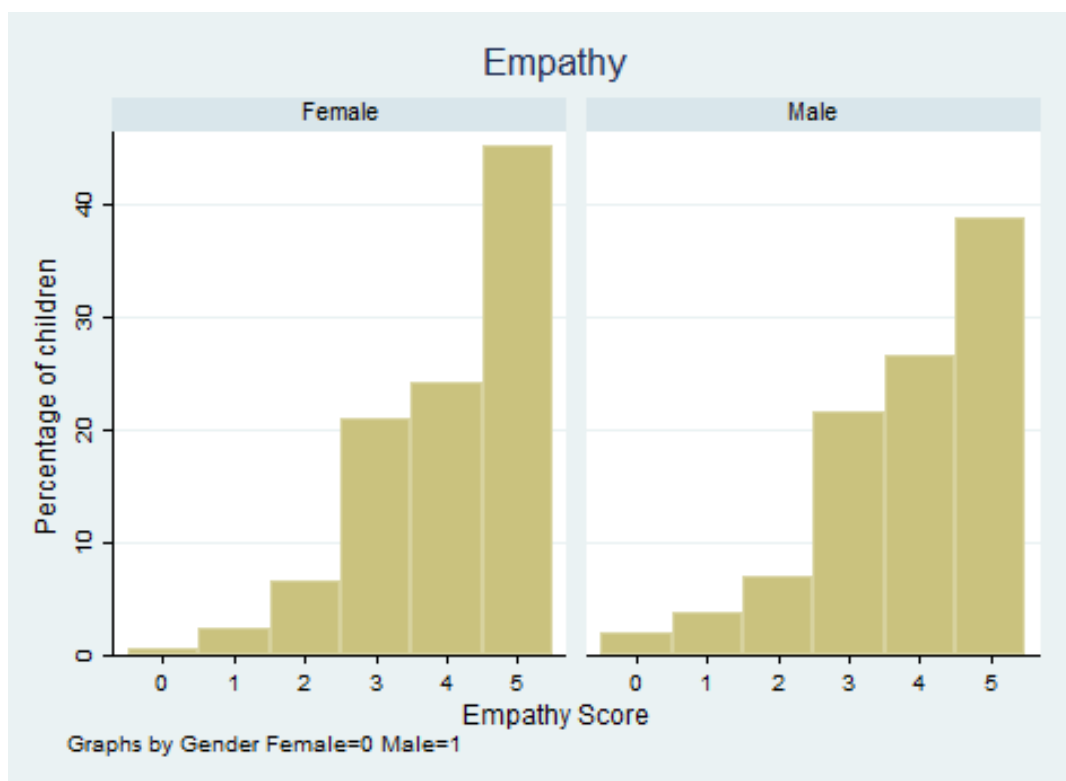


Figure 5.6 Empathy score by gender – Niger

5.5 Safe learning environment

The survey asked children to rate the occurrence ('never', 'sometimes', 'often' or 'very often') of certain teacher behaviours (Figures 5.7 and 5.8). Most children stated frequent occurrence of positive teacher behaviours such as 'Teacher treats the child fairly' and 'Teacher praises the child for good work'. In the DRC, 81 per cent of the children stated that teachers never threaten to hurt them and 83 per cent stated that teachers never humiliate them. However, 36 per cent said that they never received help from the teacher when they were feeling sad. Just under a third (31 per cent) said they never received help from the teacher to complete tasks. In Niger, these percentages were higher (84.6 per cent and 93.5 per cent respectively for teachers never threatening to hurt them and never humiliating them). Almost all children reported that teachers helped them to complete tasks, and 88 per cent indicated that the teachers helped them when they were feeling sad. In Annex 5 (Figure A5.21 through to Figure A5.24), we report students' perceptions of the learning environment by gender. In both the DRC and Niger, we do not find any significant difference by gender in the responses given in either country.

Figure 5.7 Students' perceptions of the learning environment – DRC

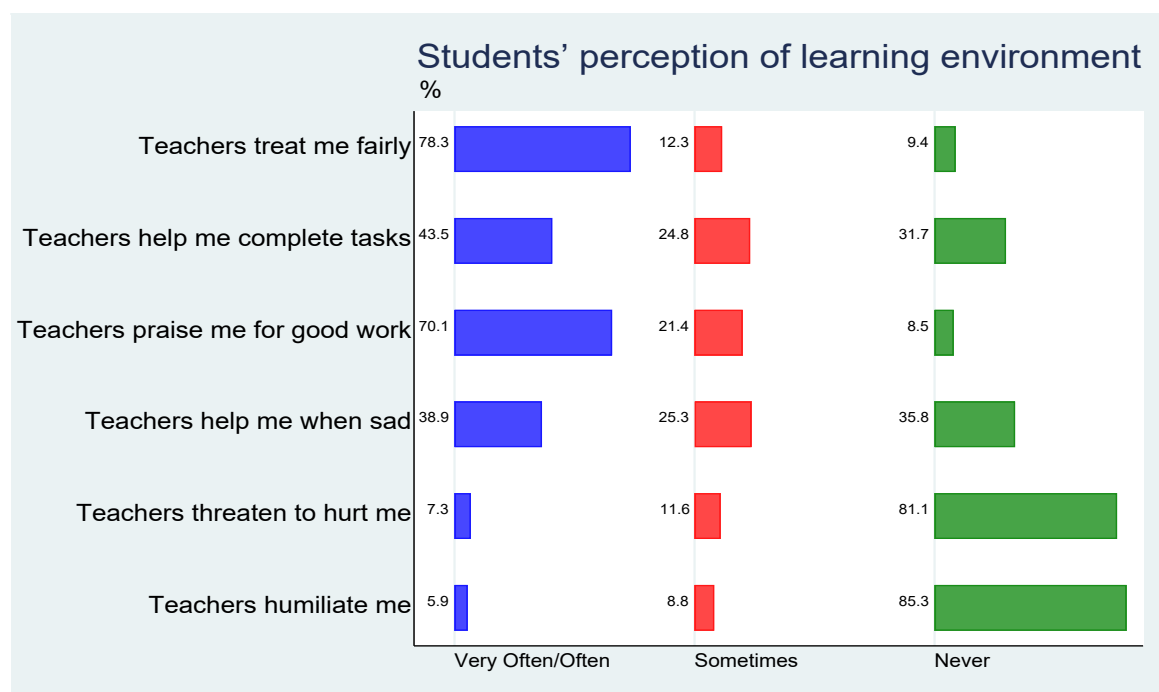
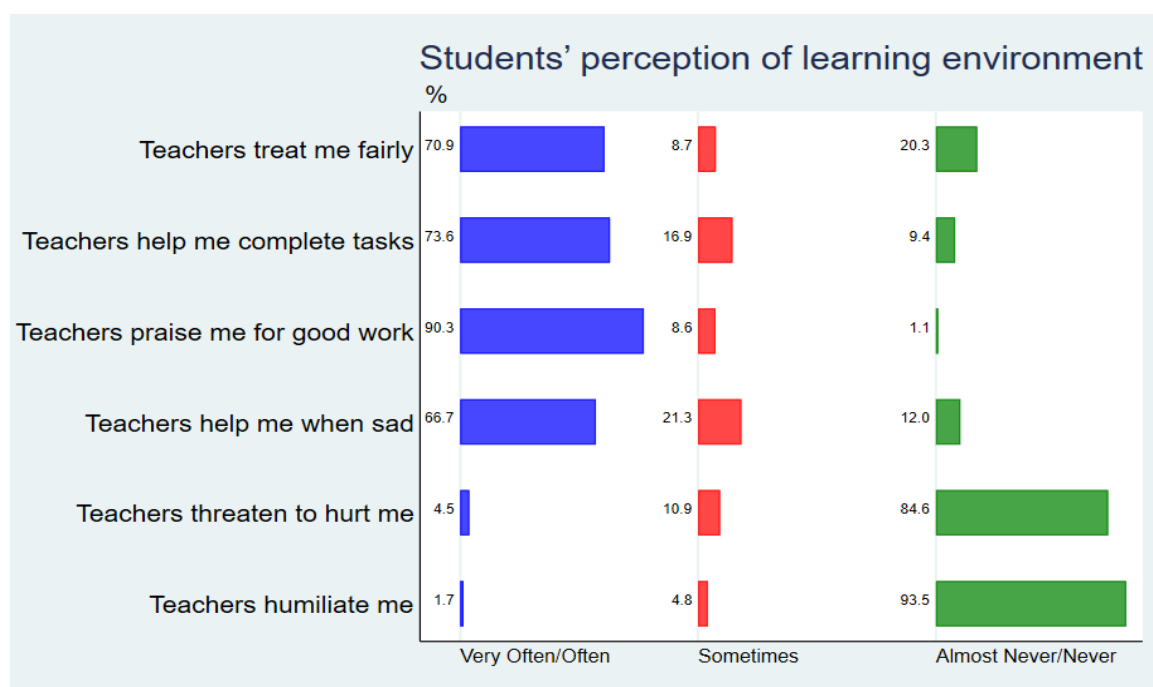


Figure 5.8 Students' perceptions of the learning environment – Niger



Figures 5.9 and 5.10 report children's perceptions of punishment at school. In Annex 5 (Figure A5.25 through to Figure A5.28), we report children's perceptions of punishment by gender. We do not find any significant difference by gender in the responses given in either country.

In the DRC, while 88 per cent of children disagree that they are punished unfairly, 58 per cent state that use of physical punishment (whip/stick) is common practice. This is in contrast with teachers' self-reported use of physical punishment (see Table 4.8, with 82 per cent of teachers disagreeing with use of cane/stick/whip as punishment). In Niger, based on children's responses, the use of physical punishment seems less common than in the DRC (30 per cent of children in the Niger sample indicated that use of physical punishment is common). For other measures, the situation in Niger is similar to that in the DRC.

Figure 5.9 Students' perceptions of punishment – DRC

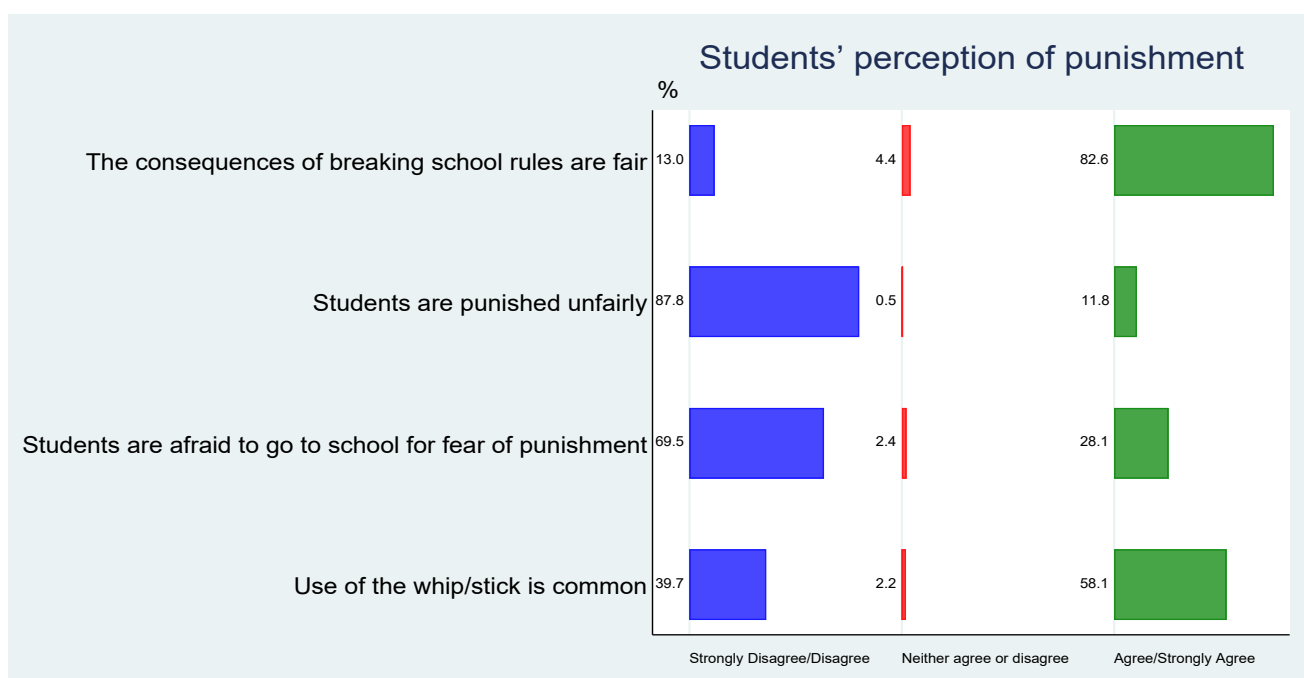


Figure 5.10 Students' perceptions of punishment – Niger

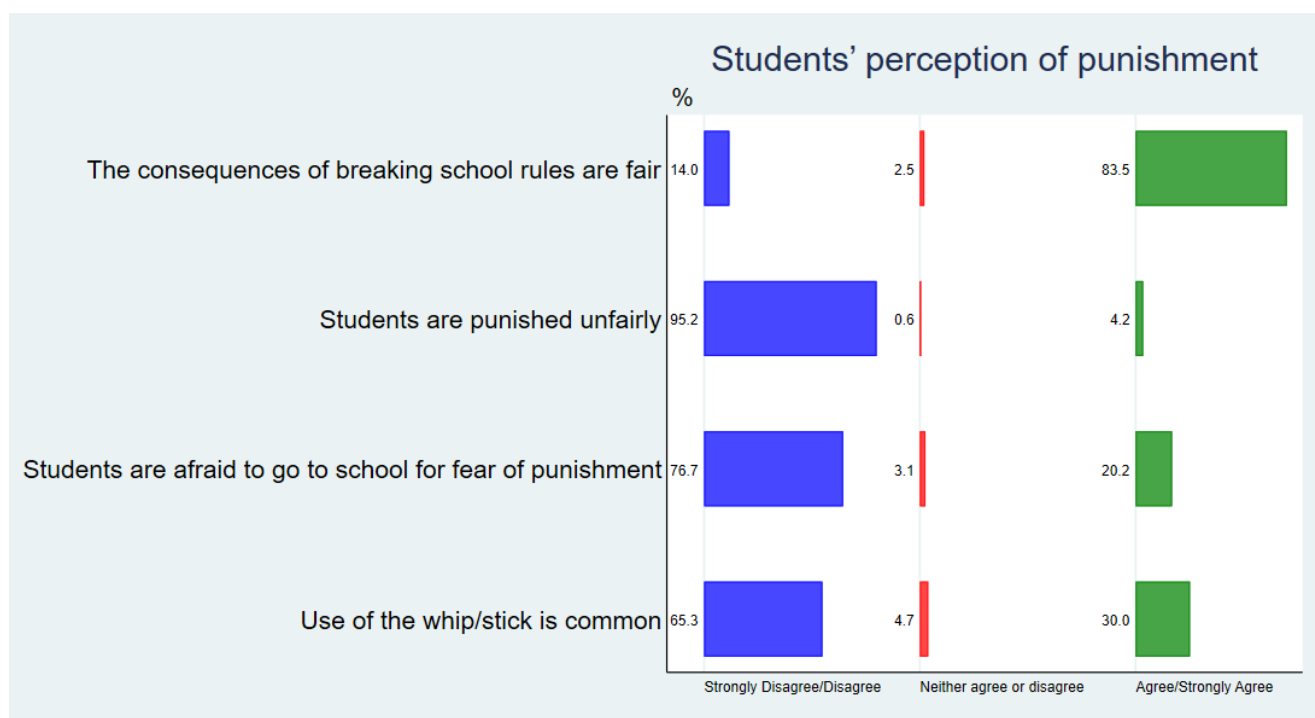


Table 5.6 reports the occurrence of certain forms of punishment. While in the DRC sample, 58 per cent of the children (Figure 5.9) stated the use of whip/stick to be common, only 17 per cent of children say that this occurs often. The most common form of punishment is to make the student stand or kneel (24 per cent in the DRC, and 13 per cent in Niger, stated that this occurred often). Girls were more likely to work at school or at the teacher's house after class hours as a form of punishment compared to boys, in both countries.

Table 5.6 Students' experiences of punishment

	DRC			Niger		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
	% of children who stated the occurrence to be often/ very often					
	(# of children who stated the occurrence to be never)					
Teacher shouted things at you in front of your classmates that humiliated you	6.1 (193)	4.09 (228)	5.02 (421)	2.05 (266)	2.72 (299)	2.4 (565)
Teacher hit you with a hand or closed fist on any part of your body	10.17 (137)	11.7 (166)	10.99 (303)	4.68 (231)	4.09 (247)	4.37 (478)
Teacher hit you with any type of object	17.97 (129)	16.08 (161)	16.95 (290)	4.68 (217)	5.45 (237)	5.08 (454)
Teacher pulled or twisted your ear	16.95 (119)	11.7 (185)	14.13 (304)	6.73 (221)	3 (286)	4.8 (507)
Teacher made you stand or kneel in a way that hurts or for a long period of time	25.42 (109)	22.22 (119)	23.7 (228)	13.45 (158)	11.99 (210)	12.69 (368)
Teacher made you work at the school or at the teacher's house as punishment	4.75 (212)	8.1 (227)	6.59 (439)	0 (295)	1.09 (320)	0.56 (615)

Figures 5.11 and 5.12 report children's views on safety and security at school. Overall, most agree that school is a safe environment. However, only 46 per cent agreed that girls report incidents of violence in the DRC; and only 54 per cent agreed that boys report incidents of violence. This concern resonated with the teachers surveyed in the DRC, 45 per cent of whom reported that girls do not report violent incidents (see Figure 4.4). One-fifth (20 per cent) of the children disagreed that the school takes immediate action when students report violent incidents. Again, this is in line with the teacher perceptions – 18 per cent of whom also felt the same way (see Figure 4.4). More than a third (38 per cent) of children did not know who to report such incidents to.

In Niger, children reported similar answers to those in the DRC. However, a higher percentage agreed with the statement that girls report cases of violence (and similarly for boys) than in the DRC and that the response of school officials is faster.

In Annex 5 (Figure A5.29 through to Figure A5.32), we report children's views on safety and security at school by gender. We do not find any significant difference by gender in the responses given; in most cases, the proportion who agree or disagree with a statement varies by less than 6 percentage points.

Figure 5.11 Students' perceptions of security at school – DRC

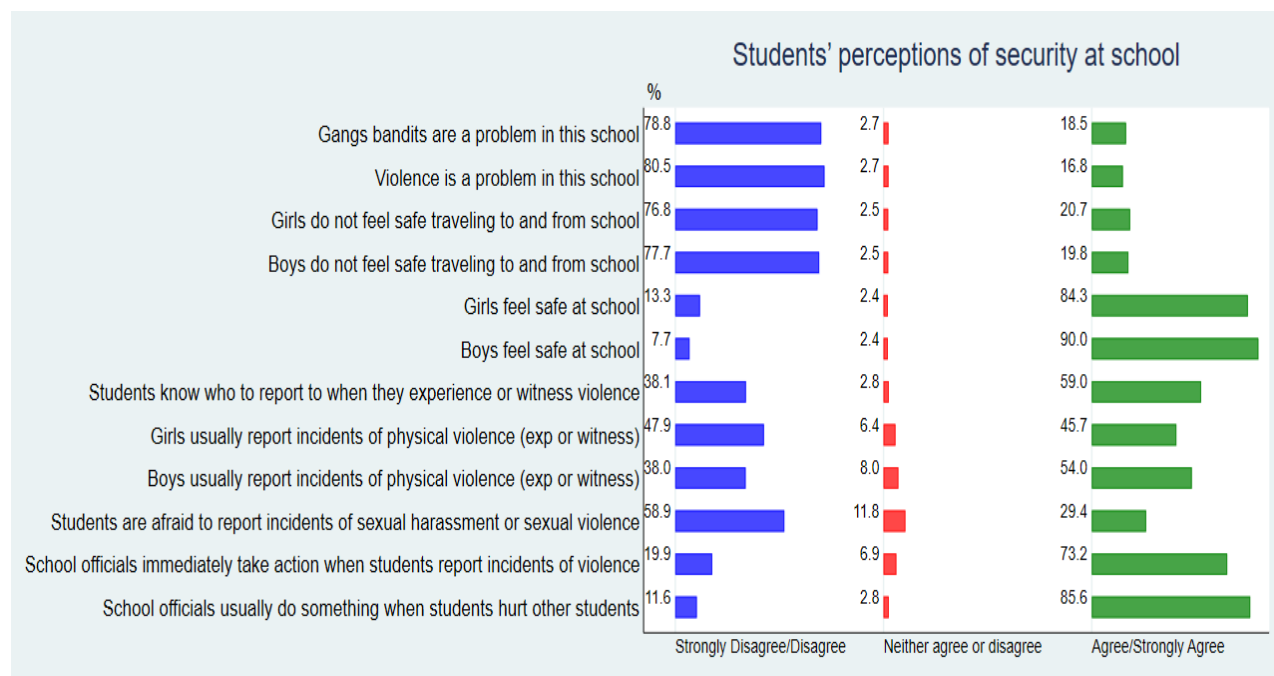
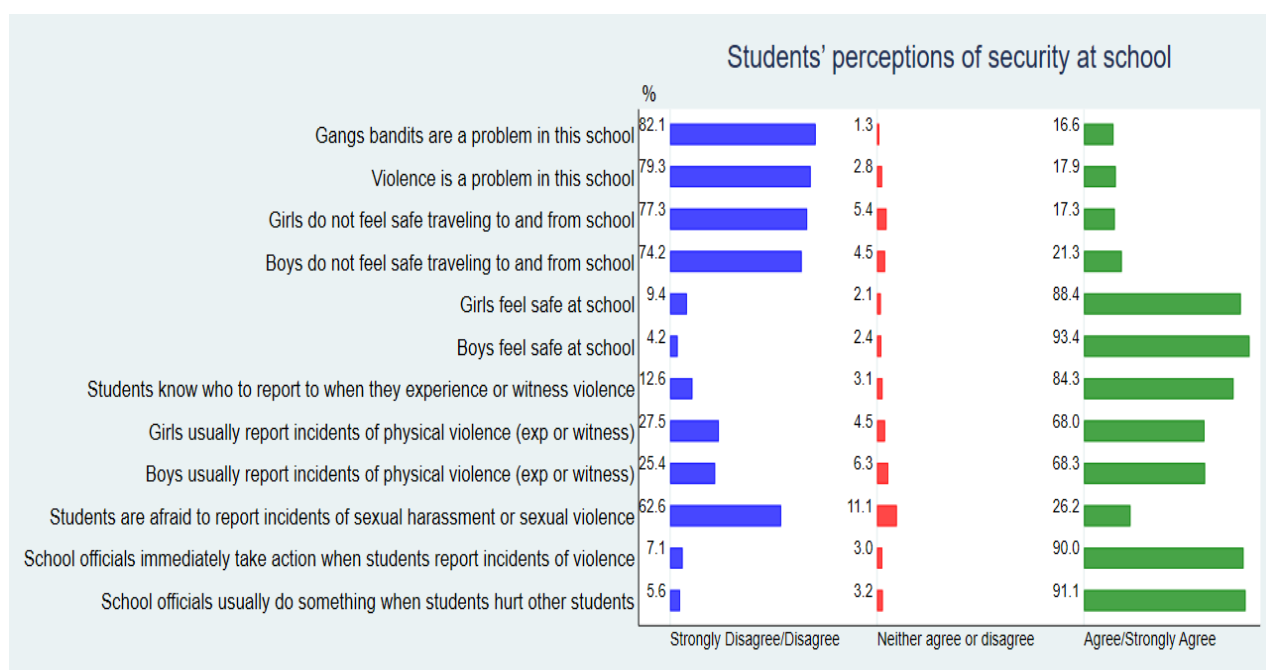


Figure 5.12 Students' perceptions of security at school – Niger



Figures 5.13 and 5.14 report on whether children are given access to resources on how to deal with certain security issues. Overall, a majority (just over half) were aware of how to deal with external security issues, such as armed conflict (except in Niger, where this figure is lower, at 44 per cent), attacks and emergencies. However, they are more likely to agree that they are aware of how to treat each other and care for each other's feelings.

In Annex 5 (Figure A5.33 through to Figure A5.36), we report children's knowledge of dealing with conflict, disaggregated by gender. We do not find any significant difference by gender in the responses given; in most cases, the proportion who agree or disagree with a statement varies by less than 5 percentage points.

Figure 5.13 Students' knowledge of dealing with conflict at school – DRC

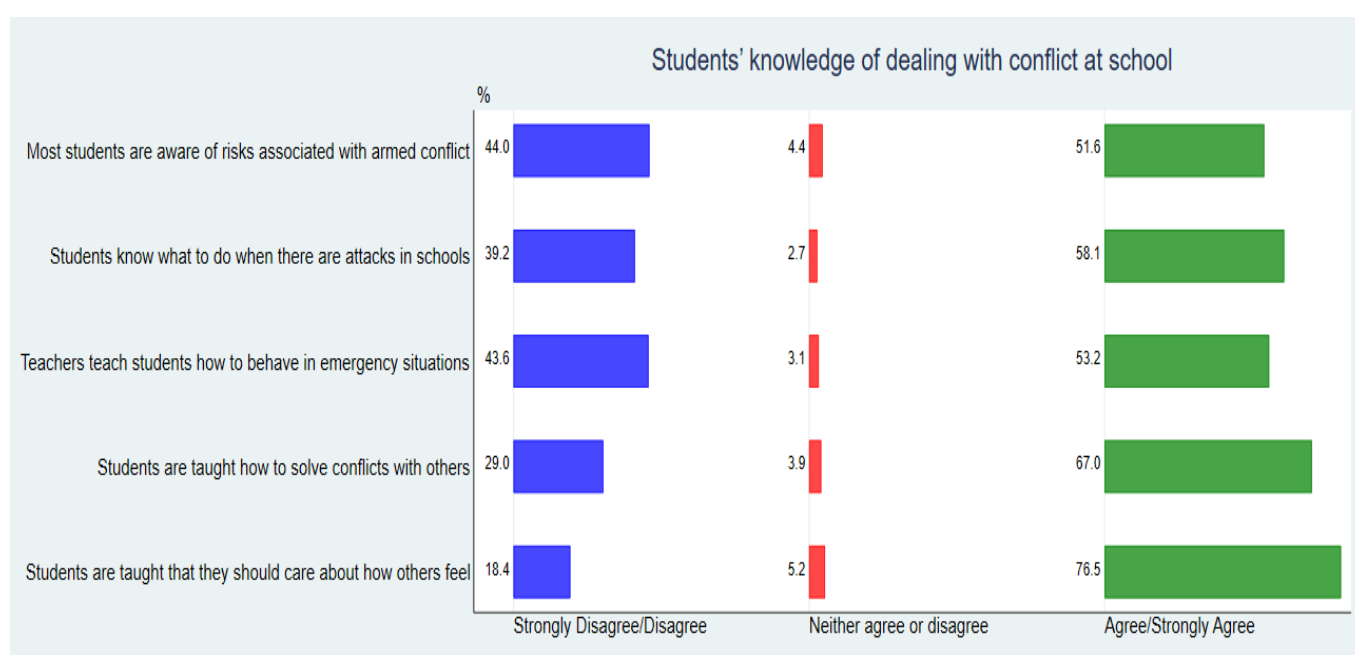
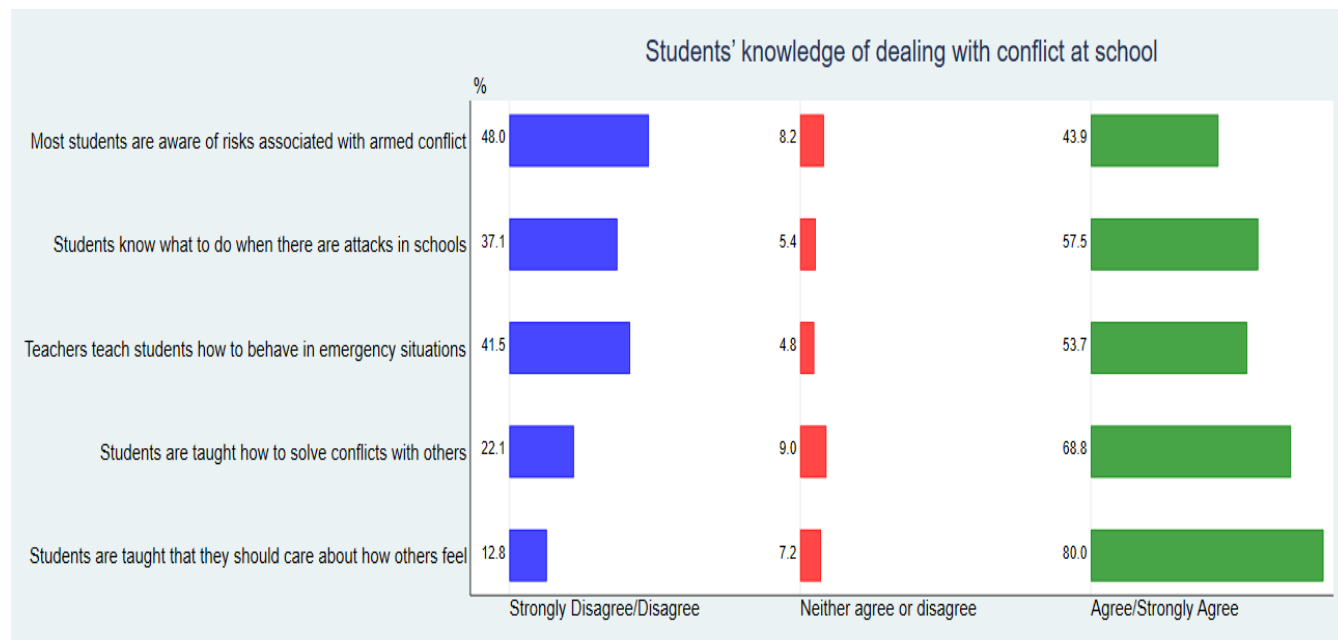


Figure 5.14 Students' knowledge of dealing with conflict at school – Niger



Figures 5.15 and 5.16 present teachers' self-reported practices relating to providing information on security issues. Almost 70 per cent of teachers in the DRC sample and more than 70 per cent in Niger claimed that they often informed students of the security measures in school. However, as Figure 5.13 and Figure 5.14 show, a much lower proportion of students are aware of such measures (in both countries). It is less common for teachers to engage effectively with students affected by violence – less than 45 per cent of teachers in the DRC, and a similar proportion in Niger, provide students with resources to help them or encourage them to think about other events if the student frequently mentions violent events.

Figure 5.15 Teacher-reported student knowledge of dealing with conflict at school – DRC

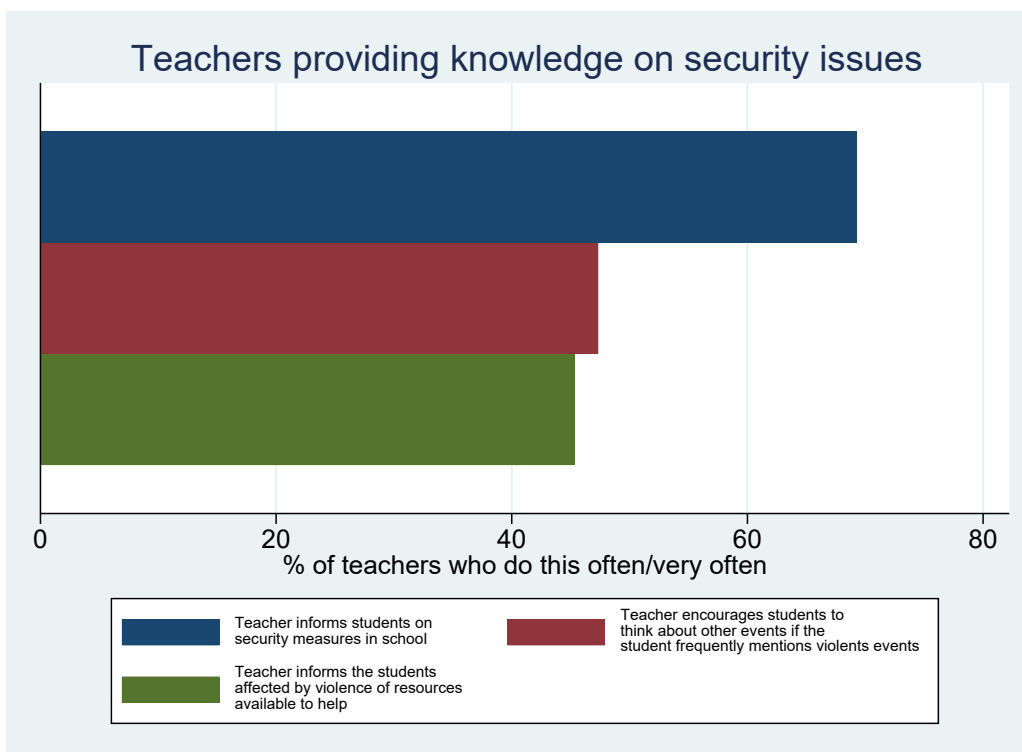
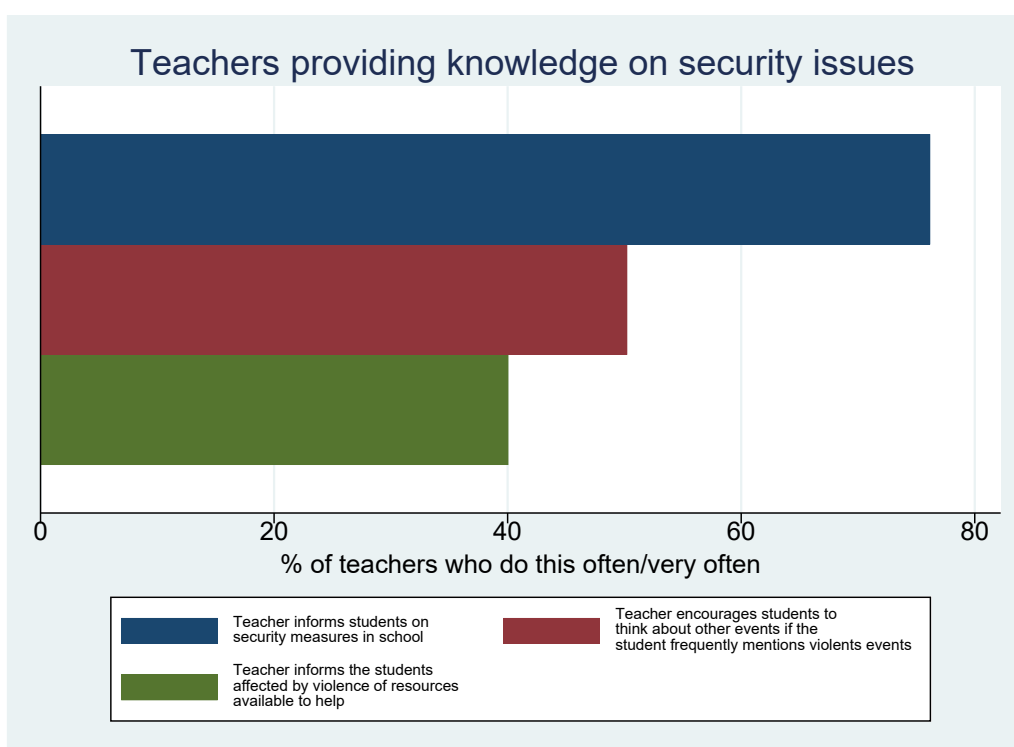


Figure 5.16 Teacher-reported student knowledge of dealing with conflict at school – Niger



6. Next steps: potential directions for future research in the DRC

This Baseline Report provides the results of the first round of (mostly descriptive) analysis, in view of answering the study's four main research questions. Two subsequent reports (Midline Report and Endline Report) will contain the data from the midline and endline surveys, thus allowing us to measure the effects of the TPD and ILET interventions. This first phase of analysis has allowed us to develop a deeper understanding of the context, and main dynamics of violent conflict and education sector dynamics in South Kivu province of the DRC. This has allowed us to formulate new questions, which are specific to the DRC component of the study. We present these here, not necessarily to pursue them as research objectives but to create a dialogue about the further orientation of the study. For Niger, as previously mentioned, we do not yet have a country partner. Once this issue has been resolved, we will provide an update on the adaptation of the research questions to the Niger context, and the potential directions of the study.

Generally, the first phase of field research in the DRC has encouraged us to develop a more critical and nuanced understanding of the relationship between education and violent conflict. For good reasons, programming and policy in the field of education in emergencies promote schools as safe and healing learning spaces.²³ However, this normative perspective tends to cloud the more complex and multi-faceted roles that the education sector plays in contexts of conflict, to which our empirical research points. Armed conflict permeates schools, and school actors take up roles in armed conflicts. While our study focuses centrally on teachers, it is necessary to situate the analysis of the role of teachers in a wider discussion and critical analysis of the position of the education sector. The following aspects are particularly important in this regard.

6.1 Ethnic homogenisation of schools

A significant transformation that our empirical analysis points to is the ethnic segregation and homogenisation of schools, and the emergence of what can be called 'mono-ethnic schools' (e.g. Int. 1, 4, 18, 36). There seems to be a constant and a temporary component to this ethnic homogenisation: some respondents mentioned clear-cut ethnically separated schools (Int. 4), while others pointed

²³ For example: the International Rescue Committee's (IRC) Learning in a Healing Classroom; Save the Children's ILET; the Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF) of the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience in the Education Sector and the Worldwide Initiative for Safe Schools; and the Safe School Declaration. For example, Berents (2014) argues that schools can be 'a space to discuss the conflict and strengthen resilience and capacity to cope with violence'.

out that during or shortly after violent confrontations, students can no longer go to a school that is not entirely attended by students from their ethnic group (Int. 18). Another interpretation is that school leadership and management could play a major role, as indicated by Int. 18, for example, who stated that ‘parents take their children to schools led by members of their own ethnic group’. The scope of our research did not allow the field researchers to visit these schools as they are located in the Hauts Plateaux, a region severely struck by armed conflict and difficult to access due to widespread insecurity. In that region, mono-ethnic schools exist, especially since a massacre in 2014. Banyamulenge have reportedly begun to slowly send their children back to schools dominated by other ethnicities (Int. 1). However, we did find indicators to suggest that the teaching workforce within schools we visited also tends to be homogeneous. We do not, however, know the reasons for this as yet. In general, the fact that some ethnic groups are disproportionately represented does not necessarily mean that this is due to biased recruitment or politicised ethnicities (Int. 1, 19). It may simply reflect the demographics in a certain region.

These findings reinforce those of a parallel study led by IDS and Save the Children in Tanganyika and Ituri (Marchais *et al.* 2020). Similar situations exist in other contexts: in Northern Ireland, for instance, entire neighbourhoods are inhabited either dominantly by Protestants or Catholic. The school system mirrors this segregation, with 95 per cent of children going to either a Catholic or Protestant school (Connolly, Kelly and Smith 2009). In Bosnia, since the early 2000s, schools have been ethnically segregated in the ‘Two Schools Under One Roof’ approach (Tolomelli 2015). Alongside the research for REALISE, to our knowledge, our research is the first that explicitly addresses this highly sensitive and relevant issue in the DRC.

This phenomenon has direct implications for educational programming. Conflict-sensitive programming would require an understanding of the ethnic composition of schools, so as not to favour one group over another. Otherwise, programmes might inadvertently reinforce the relative marginalisation from education of minority groups and, by doing so, fuel the underlying dynamics of violent conflict. However, our study confirms that ethnicity is a highly sensitive issue, also in schools. While some headteachers willingly and immediately listed the number of staff and students per ethnic group (Int. 8), others refused to do so, pointing out that this could create problems (‘it could cost my life’, Int. 18). Programmes should therefore find means of understanding ethnic composition without publicly discussing this matter or publicly using this information as it may endanger people who share it. Moreover, given that part of our study will focus on understanding the wider social position of teachers, this requires understanding the ethnic composition of schools and school communities, as well as the lines of social polarisation induced by a given violent conflict.

6.2 Gratuité

One of the most momentous recent events in the education sector of the DRC has been the government's announcement of the '*Gratuité*' policy – free access to education.²⁴ *Gratuité* is anchored in the Constitution, and the educational framework law from 2014 stipulates *Gratuité* for the *enseignement de base*, which comprises primary schooling and the first two years of secondary schooling (*secondaire general*). However, since the crisis of the education sector in the late 1980s, and the 'accord' of 1993 between teachers and parents' associations, parents have funded the lion's share of the education sector. It remains unclear whether the DRC government has the budgetary capacity to finance *Gratuité*,²⁵ and whether it will be effectively implemented across the country. The government has already reportedly backpedalled by withdrawing the *secondaire général* from *Gratuité*, which violates the educational framework law.

Despite these uncertainties, *Gratuité* and its implementation across the country has already caused profound and wide-ranging changes in the education sector. Schools have reported a drastic increase in the number of students in classes, pushing an already crumbling education infrastructure to its limits. In Uvira, teachers have engaged in prolonged industrial action against the pay squeeze, resulting from the suppression of household contributions, combined with a lack of additional funding to cover teachers' salaries. *Gratuité* fundamentally reconfigures the relationship between teachers and parents. Teachers not on the government's payroll immediately lose their revenue, so they no longer show up to take classes, or only for one hour to avoid termination of their contract. The entire architecture of economic transactions and social relations that had been built around the '*frais de motivation*' has been altered, leading to a fundamental

²⁴ *Gratuité* for the school year 2019/20 was announced on Twitter on 20 August 2019. In July, during budgetary preparations, the government outlined five priorities for primary and secondary education: gradual rollout of *Gratuité*; continuous teacher training; health insurance also for teachers in provinces; large distribution of textbooks and pedagogical manuals for primary schools; and pensions for teachers (ODEP 2019). On 27 August 2019, the Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel (Ministry of Primary, Secondary and Vocational Education, MEPSP) secretary general prohibited all forms of school fees, including teacher motivation fees (reiterated in *the Circulaire du 11 octobre 2019 précisant les mesures d'accompagnement de la gratuité* stipulates) and promised to put 15,000 teachers on the payroll (from a total of 132,613 who are registered but unpaid) (ibid.).

²⁵ According to a ministerial document, the expected costs of *Gratuité* are US\$2.9bn over three years (2020–22). However, only 15 per cent of this sum is factored into the education budget. In fact, 49 per cent of the DRC's entire budget would be needed to pay for *Gratuité* (Bauma 2019). Moreover, it needs to be noted that the approximately 94 per cent of the required sum would be spent on teachers; however, the MEPSP calculates there are 542,834 teachers, which excludes the non-registered (*Nouvelles Unités*) teachers, who will put further strain on future budgets. The government also promised to raise minimum salaries from US\$74 to US\$100, increase pay for schools' operational costs from US\$26.9 to US\$50, notwithstanding the number of students, and to pay transport and accommodation fees for selected teachers. Thereby, it reintroduces salary zones that were abolished in 2010 as follows: (1) Kinshasa and Lubumbashi (US\$83); (2) provincial capitals (US\$42); (3) other areas (nothing). This means that 70 per cent of all teachers receive no bonuses (ibid.).

re-negotiation of the teacher–parent relationship. As we have seen in this report, in conflict-affected contexts, violence permeates the relationships and interactions in and around schools. In the qualitative interviews, we have found evidence to suggest that *Gratuité* could potentially increase the likelihood of laid-off teachers joining armed groups. However, little is known about the effects of *Gratuité* on the position of teachers within the education sector and their role within local societies, and how *Gratuité* intersects with dynamics of violence. In sum, *Gratuité* can be directly relevant to research questions 1 and 3. Given that our research runs over this period of implementation of *Gratuité*, we believe it could contribute to a deeper understanding of the impact of the policy and its consequences, and would thus propose to incorporate it among the research objectives.

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