USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

TEACHER MOTIVATION AND INCENTIVES STUDY

PHASE III

IMPROVING READING, EQUITY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

This publication was produced at the request of the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared independently by School-to-School International.

TEACHER MOTIVATION AND INCENTIVES STUDY PHASE III

IMPROVING READING, EQUITY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

CONTRACT NUMBER: AID-660-C-15-00001

USAID/DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

JULY 2019

Submitted by School-to-School International
Under T&M Multiplier Subcontract-157
with Chemonics International, INC

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

School-to-School International would like to thank ACCELERE!1and the twenty enumerators who collected data across the three provinces for their continuous and irreplaceable support. We would also like to recognize Blaise Ayangasobe, the *Conseiller du Ministre en charge de la formation et des évaluations* for his support throughout this study. The following persons also played a major role in the third phase of the Teacher Motivation and Incentives Study:

CHEMONICS INTERNATIONAL, INC.

Sonia Arias, Technical Deputy Chief of Party
Kant Ibal, Provincial Team Leader Sud Ubangi
Joslin Kamadilu, Provincial Team Leader Kasai Central
Souleymane Kante, Chief of Party
Cherif Sango, Provincial Team Leader Haut Katanga

SCHOOL-TO-SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL

Fernanda Gándara, Measurement and Evaluation Specialist
Sylvain Limbisa, Research and Assessment Assistant
Mark Lynd, President and Co-founder
Wilfrid Mpwate, Senior Research Manager
Drew Schmenner, Senior Data and Technical Writing Manager
Stephanie Templeton, Junior Research and Evaluation Associate
Hali Thomas, Program Manager
Peter Cooper, Deputy Director of Evaluation and Research
Laura Zasoski, Senior Editor and Communications Manager

CONSULTANT

Michel Rousseau
Yelizaveta Yanovich

CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

A!1	Activity 1 of the Accelerating Equitable Access to School, Reading, Student Retention, and Accountability, known *as Accès, Lecture, Redevabilité et Rétention!*
CB	School-level Forums, known as *Cellule de Base*
DRC	The Democratic Republic of the Congo
IST	In-service Training
MEPSP	Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel
ML	Reading Mobilizers, known as *Mobilisateurs de Lecture*
REP	Cluster-level Forums, known as *Réseaux d'ecoles de Proximité*
TMIS	Teacher Motivation and Incentives Study
UP	Grade-level Forums, known as *Unités Pédagogiques*

LIST OF TABLES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of its operations research program, Activity 1 of the Accelerating Equitable Access to School, Reading, Student Retention, and Accountability (A!1) conducted a Teacher Motivation and Incentives Study (TMIS) to identify and pilot strategies that can motivate teachers to perform well in the classroom, leading to improved learning on the part of their students, especially in reading in the early grades. The third and last phase of TMIS sought to understand how teachers define motivation and to examine the relationship between components of the A!1 in-service training (IST) model with teacher motivation as well as changes in teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and practices.

Phase III of the study included two rounds of data collection. In August 2018, teachers of second and third grades and school directors participated in surveys during the annual A!1 face-to-face training. In May and June 2019, the same teachers and school directors were surveyed again to evaluate whether changes occurred between the beginning and end of the school year. The teachers also participated in focus group discussions, which provided a deeper understanding of how participants view motivation and how the A!1 IST model has affected them.

The study found a strong link between participation in the IST model and improvements in perspectives on six factors that affect teacher motivation: job satisfaction, school director leadership, student performance, confidence as a teacher, teacher attitude toward reading, and teacher practices. Among the various components of the model, teachers and school directors ranked the annual face-to-face training as the most useful, followed by the grade-level forums, known as *unités pédagogiques* (UPs). The study also found that teachers held favorable views of the A!1 materials and, in general, felt increased ability and confidence after participating in A!1 activities.

Based on these findings, eight recommendations are proposed: four to be considered for implementation in Year 5 of A!1 and four to be considered over the longer term by the *Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel* (MEPSP) and partners. Year 5 recommendations include strategies for reinforcing the A!1 IST model, dialoging with teachers about strategies to improve motivation, distributing materials in a timely fashion, and providing teachers with additional materials such as dictionaries and manuals. Longer term recommendations include improved engagement of school directors in school management decision-making processes, introducing a career ladder for teachers, providing learning opportunities for students over the long breaks, and strengthening community and parental support for reading and writing.

INTRODUCTION

Activity 1 of the Accelerating Equitable Access to School, Reading, Student Retention, and Accountability (A!1) is a five-year education project funded by United States Agency for International Development and the UK Aid Direct. The project aims to improve equitable access to quality primary education and learning outcomes—especially in reading—for boys and girls in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The project has three main objectives: increase equitable access to a quality education environment, improve education quality, and improve governance and accountability by stakeholders. Project support includes annual training for teachers, the creation of teacher learning circles, regular support visits to teachers by literacy monitors, and the provision of teachers' guides and reading materials for children. Of course, the success of this support depends, in part, on teacher motivation. If teachers are engaged and willing to apply these and other supports, the quality of literacy teaching and learning can improve markedly. However, if teachers are not motivated, even these supports will not make a substantial difference in student reading outcomes.

Because part of A!1's mandate is to assist the Ministry of Education, *Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel* (MEPSP), with the development of sustainable and scalable strategies for improving teaching and learning, and because resources for supporting teachers nationwide in the DRC are limited, the importance of knowing how to motivate teachers in feasible, low-cost, and scalable ways through the use of non-monetary incentives has become crucial. Moreover, knowing which types of incentives are more directly linked to improving teacher performance—especially the teaching of reading—could result in improved reading outcomes over time.[1]

To that end, A!1 conducted the Teacher Motivation and Incentives Study (TMIS) to identify non-monetary incentives that can lead to improved teacher motivation and classroom instruction practices, particularly those factors that can be affected by the A!1 interventions. Note that TMIS is one of several operational research studies conducted by A!1. The aim of each of these studies is to identify contextual factors that may help or hinder the achievement of project objectives and, by identifying them, contribute to ongoing project design revision or changes in project implementation strategies.

The was designed in three phases:

1. In **Phase I**—which occurred in August and September 2016—teachers, school directors, inspectors, and education advisors were surveyed about their perspectives on conditions of service and ideas about what incentives might increase teacher motivation. The incentives most commonly cited by respondents included continuous professional development, promotion to a higher post, decision-making responsibility, praise and recognition, instructional materials, safety traveling to and from school and at school, and improved student learning.

2. **Phase II**—which occurred in February 2017—examined the findings from Phase I in detail through focus group discussions with teachers, school directors, inspectors, and education advisors. The focus group discussions suggested that**—**among the non-monetary motivating factors identified in Phase I**—**the most promising were the provision of professional development opportunities, certificates for training, instructional materials such as dictionaries and maps, support materials such as umbrellas and plastic folders, and mechanisms for

[1] Other operations research studies conducted by A!1 included the Rapid Education Risk Assessment (RERA), the Study on Teacher Language Ability, Socio-linguistic School-based Mapping, the Community Engagement Study on Behavioral Change Communication (SBCC), and the study on Accountability / Community and Civil Society Oversight and Accountability at Local and Sub-provincial Levels.

recognizing strong performance.

3. **Phase III**—which was conducted from August 2018 to June 2019—originally aimed to pilot test and assess the effectiveness of a select number of strategies identified from Phase I and II for later adoption and scaling by A!1 and the MEPSP. This phase sought to understand how teachers define motivation and examine the relationship between components of the A!1 training model and both teacher motivation and changes in teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and practices.

This report presents the results of Phase III of TMIS.

THE A!1 IN-SERVICE TRAINING MODEL

The A!1 in-service training (IST) model is a multi-tiered model designed to support teacher learning at the classroom, school, and cluster level. It also, simultaneously, sought to build the capacity of inspectors and school directors to integrate principles of professional development into their work with teachers. The IST model is implemented across eight provinces in the DRC.

The A!1 IST model has five components.

1. One component is **face-to-face training workshops**, known as *formation face à face*, with teachers and school directors that focus on the use of A!1 methods. It emphasizes building teachers' skills to implement the daily lesson plans using the teacher's guide and student books. These workshops usually last about eight days and occur in clusters of several schools.
2. A second component is **cluster-level forums**, known as *réseaux d'ecoles de proximité* (REP), with teachers and school directors from several schools coming together to share success stories and collaborate on special projects such as the development of materials. This level is also used for refresher training throughout the year.
3. A third component is **school-level forums**, known as *cellule de base* (CB), whereby teachers within a school meet monthly to have guided discussions around given themes related to reading and other subjects.
4. A fourth component is **grade-level forums**, known as *unités pédagogiques* (UP) through which teachers who teach the same level meet and discuss successes, challenges, and strategies. These forums are also guided by an elected facilitator who employs a *Forum d'echange* facilitator's guide with scripted sessions to follow.
5. A fifth component is **classroom observations and coaching** of teachers conducted by the school director.

METHODOLOGY

TMIS Phase III employed a mixed-method design, combining quantitative data collected from closed questions on surveys in Phase I (August-September 2016) and Phase II (February 2017)—and qualitative data collected from focus group discussions—Phase II only—to answer the research questions. For round one, data were collected in Kasai Central, Haut-Katanga, and Sud-Ubangi; for round two, data collection took place only in Kasai Central and Haut-Katanga. Due to security issues, Sud-Ubangi was not included in the second round.

CONSTRUCTS

Phase III was designed to explore how teachers define motivation and to examine the relationship

between components of the A!1 IST model with teacher motivation and with changes in teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and practices. To measure motivation, teachers and school directors were asked to state their level of agreement with a series of statements related to constructs for which prior research has established a close association with motivation. These constructs include

- Job satisfaction;
- Working conditions;
- Perceptions of school leadership, teacher management, and teacher performance;
- Perceptions of and expectations for student performance; and
- Confidence in current role as a teacher or school director.

To understand knowledge, attitudes, and practices, participants were asked to state their level of agreement with a series of statements related to

- Attitudes about reading;
- Reading instructional support practices; and
- Confidence in delivering or supporting reading instruction.

Finally, to understand the survey respondents' level of participation in the IST model and their notions of motivation, several questions were asked related to[2]

- Participation in the A!1 IST model, including the level of participation in training and reception of instructional materials; and
- Teachers' perspective on the concept of motivation.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

TMIS Phase III sought to answer two research questions:[3]

1. How do teachers define motivation? What factors, in general, do teachers find motivating? Which aspects of the A!1 IST model do teachers find motivating?
2. To what extent is the A!1 IST model associated with changes in teacher motivation, knowledge, attitudes, and practices?

SAMPLE

For TMIS III, teachers and school directors were interviewed from each of the three national language groups served by A!1 in order to reflect the perspectives of each of those groups. Sampling was purposive. First, convenience sampling was used to select one province for each language group: Haut-Katanga for Kiswahili-phone populations, Kasai Central for Ciluba and Sud-Ubangi for Lingala. Within each province, schools were to be selected based on several criteria, including their proximity to district centers for the purpose of convenience (more far-flung schools were to be excluded) and their relative degree of exposure to A!1 interventions, as verified by fidelity of implementation data (schools with greater levels of exposure to A!1 would be included to ensure the study included teachers who had participated in the IST model). However, due to time and resource limitations, the decision was taken to interview teachers and directors while they were attending the August 2018 face-to-face training program sponsored by A!1. In the end, 164 respondents were interviewed for round one of data collection—see Table 1.

[2] Data for the last two constructs were collected in the second round of TMIS Phase III.

[3] From round one to round two the research questions were amended – see Annex A.

Table 1: Summary of Respondents by Gender and Location, Round One

Method	Role	Kasai Central			Haut-Katanga			Sud-Ubangi			Grand Total
		F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	
Survey	School Directors	2	16	18	4	15	19	5	13	18	55
	Teachers	13	23	36	15	23	38	18	17	35	109
Total		15	39	54	19	38	57	23	30	53	164

For round two of data collection in May 2019, the same teachers and school directors were interviewed, this time in their schools, including one Grade 2 teacher, one Grade 3 teacher, and the school director. If a teacher who had participated in round one was not available in round two, she or he was replaced with a teacher who had participated in the A!1 IST.[4] Also, due to implementation challenges discussed in the *Limitations* section, Sud-Ubangi was eliminated from round two of this study. In addition to the surveys, focus group discussions were conducted with 14 teachers who were selected purposively—seven from Grade 2 and seven from Grade 3—for a total of 106 participants included in this analysis—see Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of Respondents by Gender and Location, Round Two

Method	Role	Kasai Central			Haut-Katanga			Grand Total
		F	M	Total	F	M	Total	
Survey	School Directors	4	15	19	2	14	16	35
	Teachers	9	20	29	11	17	28	57
Focus Group	Teachers	4	2	6	4	4	8	14
Total		17	37	54	17	35	52	106

TOOL DEVELOPMENT AND PILOTING

A!1 developed the teacher and school director surveys and related protocols for TMIS III based on prior research, including TMIS Phase I and II research as well as the goals of A!1. Constructs were developed around teacher motivation, as well as teacher knowledge, attitudes, and practices. For each construct, statements were developed based on prior TMIS findings and extant validated teacher motivation research tools. For some constructs, participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with provided statements—strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree. For other constructs, participants were asked to describe the frequency with which they perform certain tasks when teaching reading; and for two constructs, participants' opinions were solicited, asking them to choose three

[4] While all data were analyzed to identify patterns, only data from teachers and school directors who participated in both rounds were used in correlational analyses.

responses in order of priority. In all, 11 constructs were developed, each consisting of several statements. See Annex C for more details.

Pilot testing for the surveys took place in July 2018 with teachers and school directors at two schools in each of the three provinces selected for operational data collection. A!1 research staff led the pilot with assistance from reading mobilizers, known as *mobilisateurs de lecture* (MLs). During the pilot, participants were asked to respond to each survey question and, where relevant, explain how they understood the questions to inform tool revision. Survey forms and protocols were adapted and finalized for round one based on pilot results. Pilot testing was not conducted for round two.

Based on the results of the first round of data collection, a focus group discussion tool was developed to be conducted with teachers. Questions were generated around five constructs where the team felt more nuanced information could be obtained. See Annexes E, F, and G for copies of the tools.

ENUMERATOR TRAINING AND DATA COLLECTION

MLs served as enumerators for each round of the study. They were trained by A!1 facilitators prior to data collection for each round: August 13–14, 2018, for round one, and May 27–28, 2019, for round two. The content of each training included an orientation to TMIS Phase III as well as techniques for surveying respondents and facilitating focus group discussions, taking notes, and asking probing questions. During each training, discussions focused on how to administer the tools, the meaning of constructs and questions, and wording and language issues. During each training, enumerators also conducted mock interviews and, during round two, focus group discussions. A!1 facilitators observed and provided feedback.

For round one, data were collected from August 15–31, 2018, during the A!1 IST model's face-to-face workshops with Grade 2 and Grade 3 teachers and school directors. Data were collected using tablets to record information in SurveyCTO. A total of 23 MLs were split into three teams, and one team was assigned to collect survey data from training workshop sites in each of the three provinces selected for the study. Respondents were informed of the rationale behind the study and were assured that their identity would remain anonymous. Consent was obtained before proceeding, and respondents had the option to refuse to participate.

For round two, data were collected from May 28–June 8, 2019, in each of the 35 schools. Again, 20 MLs used tablets to record information in SurveyCTO for the survey. Focus group discussions were held on June 4, 2019, in Kipushi, a subdivision of Haut-Katanga, and Kananga, subdivision of Kasai Central. The discussions were led by A!1 facilitators with the assistance of three MLs who acted as animators and note-takers. Audio recordings were also made of each session for reference during data analysis. The teachers participating in the focus group discussions were recommended by the MLs based on several criteria, including participation in A!1 and dispositions toward sharing information in a focus group format. All participants were vetted by A!1 facilitators. As in round one, respondents were again informed of the rationale behind the study and were assured that their responses would remain confidential. Consent was obtained before proceeding, and respondents had the option to refuse to participate.

DATA ANALYSIS

For each round, data were uploaded to a secure server, then merged, and cleaned. Quantitative data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel and Stata software, while qualitative data were analyzed using Microsoft Word and Excel.

Quantitative data analysis consisted of the following steps:

- Descriptive tables were generated to summarize the characteristics of the respondent populations.
- Frequency tables were generated to summarize responses by function, gender, age, and province.
- For round one, tests were run to identify statistically significant differences in responses between subgroups.
- For round two, in addition to descriptive and frequencies, correlations were run between the amount of change from 2018 to 2019 in teachers' responses on the survey concerning motivation, knowledge, attitudes, practices, and levels of participation in the A!1 IST model. Within each, constructs were identified, and statements such as "confidence in teaching" were combined into composites for which results were generated on a scale of zero to ten, first for each statement, then for the entire construct (see Annex B).

Qualitative data analysis consisted of the following steps:

- Data notes from two note-takers in each group were compiled and entered into Word. Notes were then cleaned and entered into Excel using a template with each individual's response recorded per line. Audio recordings of the sessions were also analyzed and compared to the notes. Participants' responses were sorted into five categories based on the research questions and the focus group discussion topics:
    - Large-scale annual training and IST by A!1;
    - Professional satisfaction;
    - Leadership and teacher management;
    - Attitudes towards student performance; and
    - Teaching reading, attitudes, and practices.
- Major overall themes and emerging concepts were identified and categorized in Excel and drafted in Word. Similarities among and differences between themes, as well as outliers, were identified and noted. Relationships and variation between individuals and groups were recorded. Individual and group dynamics, as well as changes in the groups or between participants, were noted.
- Finally, summaries of findings were synthesized relating to purpose and research questions.

DATA COLLECTION CHALLENGES

Data collection for both rounds was conducted without any major problems. Respondents seemed eager to participate both in the survey interviews and the focus group discussions. However, some minor challenges occurred. For example, while all eight teachers in Haut-Katanga were able to attend the focus group, two of the eight teachers in Kasai Central were unable to attend. Similarly, while the team in Haut-Katanga did not face challenges reaching schools or sending data to the SurveyCTO server, the teams for Kasai Central and Sud-Ubangi experienced difficulties in round one uploading data to the server due to patchy internet coverage. For round two, the biggest challenge for teams in Haut-Katanga and Kasai Central was making and keeping appointments, as surveys were conducted during school hours and participants often had to reschedule the interview in order to deal with a situation at school. In the end, all intended sample participants were surveyed.

In the second round, the teams also faced challenges with the length of both the survey and the focus group discussion tool; data collection took longer than expected, in some cases, lasting more than an hour. To address this difficulty, enumerators took the necessary time to explain and rephrase difficult

questions to help respondents answer faster and finish the survey.

LIMITATIONS

The following are the factors that need to be considered when interpreting TMIS Phase III results:

- **Correlation, not causality.** The design of this study does not make it possible to establish causality. That would only be possible with an *experimental design*, which would require randomly assigning teachers to treatment and control groups, then implementing the A!1 IST model with the treatment group only and studying the differences between the two groups. Because an experimental design was not possible at this stage of A!1, TMIS was designed instead to identify correlations between participation in the A!1 IST model and changes in teacher motivation, the results of which might suggest a relationship between participation in the model and increased motivation.
- **Self-reporting**: Analyses in this study include correlations between levels of participation in the A!1 IST model and changes in responses from 2018 to 2019. Because all survey questions and statements are self-reported data from participants, the assumption that changes in teachers' motivation, knowledge, attitudes, and practices can be measured by their responses to these statements should be treated with caution.
- **Sample size**: While round one of this study included teachers and school directors from three provinces, round two only included participation from two of those provinces. The third province—Sud-Ubangi—had to be excluded due to challenges with project implementation. As a result, statistical analyses lost some significance, especially with school directors, for whom only one correlation was found between participation in the A!1 IST model and motivation levels.
- **Question interpretation**: Understandings of terms, such as "motivation," varied across respondents and thus may have led to some ambiguity in the meaning of their responses. For example, the teacher survey includes the statement "The director of my school rewards me when my students perform well." When responding to this statement, some participants indicated that "to reward" meant to provide financial incentives; hence, some of these participants responded "strongly disagree" or "disagree" unless the enumerator explained that the statement did not refer to financial rewards exclusively.

FINDINGS

For the purposes of this study and acknowledging that its primary interest is in the motivation of **teachers**, subsequent sections of the report will focus mainly on the findings for teachers, not school directors, when discussing the participants of the study. Where the opinions of the school directors diverged significantly from those of the teachers or provided information valuable to the study, their responses will also be discussed. This decision was also made because 100 percent of the surveyed school directors had worked as teachers prior to becoming directors.[5]

RESEARCH QUESTION 1

HOW DO TEACHERS VIEW AND DEFINE MOTIVATION? WHAT FACTORS IN GENERAL DO TEACHERS FIND MOST MOTIVATING? WHICH ASPECTS OF THE A!1 IST MODEL DO TEACHERS

[5] The survey did not ask whether the school director is also currently teaching in addition to carrying out the director role; however, as a general practice, school directors in the DRC also teach at least one class.

FIND THE MOST MOTIVATING?

To answer this question, the survey and focus group discussion responses were analyzed. The following section presents a summary of the findings from this analysis in three parts.

HOW DO TEACHERS VIEW AND DEFINE MOTIVATION?

Survey respondents were asked "What is motivation?" and given several response options. As their first choice, both teachers and school directors selected the following three definitions: (i) the satisfaction they find in their daily job duties, (ii) the desire to do their job better, and (iii) the feeling of well-being in their profession.

During focus group discussions held in the Kasai Central and Haut-Katanga provinces, teachers also expanded on these definitions by adding that they view motivation as (i) the intrinsic force that pushes them to go above and beyond their own expectations of themselves, (ii) the desire to continue learning new skills and improving their performance, (iii) the ability to teach their students to read and to raise their morale, and (iv) the means to do their job well, including remuneration and other monetary incentives, such as bonuses and rewards.

WHAT FACTORS IN GENERAL DO TEACHERS FIND MOST MOTIVATING?

In the survey, respondents were asked several questions in an effort to understand what general factors teachers find most motivating. As such, teachers and school directors were asked "What factors either currently have or could in the future have a positive impact on your motivation?" **IST**, **teaching materials**, and **student learning** were at the top of the list of factors that currently motivate teachers to do their job.[6] When asked to identify factors that could motivate them in the future, teachers chose **salary increase**, **promotion**, and **safety traveling to and from school and at school** as the most important. Interestingly, in addition to salary increases and safety, school directors also mentioned **participating in decision making** as one of the potential factors that could motivate them in the future. School directors also cited **unmotivated teachers** as one of the aspects that make their work more difficult.

IST is the top motivating factor for teachers. Of the three factors previously listed, the greatest proportion of teachers (roughly 53 percent) selected IST as the most motivating factor in their job. In focus group discussions, teachers described what they found useful in the A!1 IST model. Teachers were also asked to name topics covered during the various training activities that they found the most useful and motivating. What stood out for many participants were strategies for pair and group work, teaching cursive, differentiating between letters and sounds, methods for achieving fluency in reading, motivating all students to participate, ensuring gender equality in the classroom, and disciplining unruly students. Teachers' enthusiasm for the A!1 program was evident when they expressed regret that it may be leaving their schools. One teacher even said: "*Why is A!1 leaving us?! I wish that A!1 could stand behind us [teachers] until children graduate from secondary school!*"

Teachers are motivated by student performance and parent recognition. As part of the focus group discussions, teachers were asked questions such as "What aspects of your job do you enjoy?" and "What are the advantages of your profession?" A common theme that resonated with all teachers in the focus group discussions was watching children progress from tabula rasa to reading fluency over time with the teacher's help. Teachers said that this is in part due to the new curriculum and teaching strategies developed by A!1 and instilled in the teachers. One example that came up several times was

[6] Other possible responses to this question included "work conditions" and "the quality of school management."

that of students progressing from reading on a blackboard in class, to reading in their books, to reading signs on stores and streets. One teacher even told the following anecdote:

> "My student's disgruntled mother came to me complaining that her daughter was a nuisance to her because she always stopped to read all of the signs on the street. The mother became so frustrated that she punished the child by hitting her and not allowing her to go to church. I had to explain to the mother that this type of desire to read everything everywhere is positive behavior and that it should be encouraged rather than punished. It made me very happy that one of my students was so excited about reading!"

The children's ability to transfer acquired reading skills from the classroom into real-life situations proves to be a strong motivating factor for teachers.

When children perform well, teachers feel appreciated by parents and the community. Focus group discussion participants stated that receiving praise from parents and feeling respected by community members makes them appreciate their own value as teachers and the impact their profession has on children's lives. One teacher recounted an anecdote of being sick for several months and the parents of several children visiting her repeatedly at her house to find out when she would be coming back to school.

Teachers are proud of their work and feel that the teaching profession is a calling. During the focus group discussions teachers were asked questions such as "When responding to the survey, most teachers said that given an opportunity to start one's career from scratch, they would still choose to become teachers. If you agree with this opinion, can you explain why teachers would choose to stay in the profession?" Nearly all of the teachers who participated in the focus group discussions were adamant about the fact that, for them, the teaching profession was a conscious choice; they expressed feeling proud of being able to impact the minds of children in a positive way. Most teachers reported being happiest in the classroom among students; they said that they feel that they are doing a service to their country and consider the teaching profession a noble one. They look down upon other teachers who come to the profession for the wrong reasons and who do not belong because they "do not have a love for the children." A common thread during the discussions was the sentiment that "he who teaches, learns;" many teachers mentioned that teaching allows them to stay young and challenges them never to stop learning.

Teachers feel discouraged by negligible salaries and a lack of opportunity to grow in their profession. The notion of motivation is inherently tied to remuneration for many respondents. Insufficient salaries were a recurring theme both in the surveys and focus group discussions. In addition, many teachers stated that they would never consider leaving the teaching profession if they were sufficiently paid. A couple of younger teachers mentioned that they would change careers if they were able to find something that pays better.

Other teachers expressed feeling discouraged by the fact that there is no clear or official path for progressing in the teaching career. Many teachers would like to become school directors or school inspectors, but, in their opinion, this happens infrequently and is difficult to achieve. One teacher voiced the concern that this may stem from the fact that school directors are the individuals who select the teachers to attend the various training and participate in career building activities. Some teachers said they were discouraged when the same teachers are chosen repeatedly while others never had the chance to participate.

Teachers suggest ways to improve IST support and increase motivation. During the focus group discussions, teachers were asked what IST programs could do to strengthen support and improve

motivation. Ideas included introducing extracurricular activities for students and supplementing teaching materials. Several teachers suggested that introducing activities for students at least two times per week for the duration of the long school break—that is to say, a form of summer school—would keep students motivated to continue learning, prevent them from forgetting what they learned the previous year, and help teachers keep students on track when they return from break. Another suggestion to engage students and improve learning outcomes was to introduce and maintain extracurricular activities, such as reading or spelling competitions and reading clubs. In terms of improving teaching materials, teachers mentioned that having recorded videos of successful model lessons that they could watch on their own or during UPs or CBs would be an effective way to have continued support outside of A!1's annual face-to-face training.

WHICH ASPECTS OF THE A!1 IST MODEL DO TEACHERS FIND THE MOST MOTIVATING?

In the surveys and during the focus group discussions, teachers were asked a series of questions to gauge their participation in the A!1 IST activities and to identify which training activities respondents found most useful.

Participation rates in A!1 IST activities was high. As Table 3 shows, reported participation rates in A!1 IST activities by teachers and students was high, with most of the five types of activities attended by over 90% of respondents during the prior school year, and in most cases, more than half of respondents participating with the frequency recommended by the model: at least three sessions for the REP, UP and CBs and at least four observations by the school director.

Table 3: !1 IST activities attended the prior year, as reported by teachers and school directors

IST activities	Teachers	School directors
Face-to-face training: 2016	25%	54%
Face-to-face training: 2017	81%	94%
Face-to-face training: 2018	93%	94%
At least one REP	85%	100%
Attended more than three REP meetings	44%	49%
At least one UP on reading and writing	96%	100%
Attended more than three UP meetings	80%	86%
At least one CB session on reading and writing	90%	100%
Attended more than three CB sessions	70%	71%
Teachers observed by school director	96%	100%
Teachers observed more than four times	71%	80%
Teachers received feedback	85%	94%

Of the five components of the A!1 IST model, teachers and school directors feel that the annual face-to-face workshops are the most useful. Respondents were asked to list in order of priority the IST components they found most effective.[7] Most teachers ranked the annual face-to-face workshops as their first choice, followed by UPs and CBs. Directors also cited the annual face-to-face workshops as their first choice, followed by REPs and CBs. Moreover, during the focus group discussions, teachers explained that the face-to-face workshops are most useful because of the number of topics and teaching strategies covered during the week-long training. Praise for the face-to-face workshops came with a caveat—teachers felt that too much material is packed into a short time, which makes it difficult to treat the material sufficiently in-depth or to absorb everything presented.

[7] The options were annual face-to-face workshops, REPs, UPs, CBs, and observation and feedback by the school director.

UPs play an important role in helping teachers solve problems and learn different teaching approaches. During the focus group discussions, teachers explained that since the UPs take place once a week, teachers feel that they offer a good opportunity to remedy issues encountered during the week before they turn into larger problems. During these meetings, teachers have the opportunity to discuss the difficulties they faced in the classroom and receive advice from other colleagues who may have found a solution. During this time, the group also deconstructs lesson plans, and participants often deliver mock lessons. Taking part in the UPs exposes teachers to new teaching approaches, such as moving away from repetition drills to engaging students in a more interactive way.

In addition to discussing teaching strategies and problems teachers encounter, the issue of getting children to do homework is regularly raised during the UPs, as well as the approaches to checking students' homework for completion and correctness. Some teachers even get the parents involved in doing homework with their children, which creates a wholesome learning environment for the child, as attested by a teacher in Kasai Central:

> "In the past, too much weight was put on the shoulders of the teachers, but nowadays the system is recognizing the importance of distributing the weight more evenly between the teachers and the parents. Now, when I assign homework, some parents also do their part to help their children, and the result is good. Today, we work together with the family, which is something we were taught recently."

Despite a generally positive outlook on UPs, some teachers noted that school directors need to be more involved in the exchanges. In Haut-Katanga, teachers mentioned that directors rarely attend the UPs and never deliver model lessons. Teachers reported feeling frustrated because they believe that if a school director is not present at these exchange forums, then it is unreasonable to expect the director to fairly evaluate the teacher's performance in class.

Teachers find the teaching and learning materials provided by A!1 to be useful and motivating. In the survey, respondents were asked to list in order of priority three types of learning materials distributed by A!1 they found the most effective.[8] The results showed that teachers found the following materials to be the most useful: the teacher's guide, the letter banner, and the student manuals. School directors found most useful: the teacher's guide, the posters, and the student manuals.

During the focus group discussions, teachers said that the teacher's guide makes teaching much easier because it provides step-by-step instructions to planning and delivering lessons and assigning homework. They also noted the teachers' guide makes them feel more confident in developing lesson plans and applying new strategies. Additionally, they shared that the letter banner is effective because it acts as a useful visual tool for teaching the alphabet, and they feel motivated when they are given quality ready-to-use materials that they otherwise may not have made themselves. In the focus group discussions, teachers generally reported feeling satisfied with the materials and training to use the materials provided by A!1 and described feeling more motivated as a result. One participant in Haut-Katanga said:

> "We are very happy with the materials. We have everything we need now from the guide to the letter banner, etc. This makes it much easier to work. The only thing that is outdated is the dictionary the teachers have at their disposal. The program materials also do not include explanations of grammatical concepts; so if we need to teach grammar, we have to turn to a different book."

[8] For this question respondents could choose from the following: the teacher's guide, student manual, student workbook, posters, or the letter banner.

As a result of A!I support, teachers feel more confident in developing lesson plans and applying new teaching strategies. However**,** when discussing the various factors that play a role in motivating them, participants did not explicitly state that feeling confident about developing lesson plans or applying new strategies has an impact on their motivation.

Teachers do not feel motivated as a result of classroom observations and feedback received from school directors, which are often limited to short or infrequent visits. Most teachers reported that the director regularly observes teachers in the classroom and provides feedback; however, there was no consensus on how often such observations or feedback take place, or what is included in the feedback.

In the Haut-Katanga province, some teachers described a very informal, somewhat random process, whereby a director may enter a classroom for a few minutes, observe the teacher, and then provide a comment before leaving. In Kasai Central, one teacher described a more structured, if limited, process:

> "The director gathers all the teachers every morning before class in the courtyard and gives us pointers in an effort to motivate us. But the director rarely visits us in the classroom, which is what we really need, and most of his feedback and morning pep talks have to do with disciplinary measures for disobedient children, rather than our teaching abilities."

Yet another teacher described her experience with the director positively, explaining that when a teacher is struggling, the director asks a stronger teacher to deliver a mock lesson, from which the weaker teacher can learn. In general, all teachers agreed that it is the director's job to guide teachers and point out if they are doing something incorrectly. Without this guidance, a teacher may think she or he is teaching correctly and runs the risk of using incorrect strategies or approaches.

Focus group discussions revealed that most teachers do not feel comfortable approaching the director for help. Teachers were asked whether or not they feel comfortable asking the director to come observe them in class when they need help. Nearly all participants said that they are scared to do so and feel that this would go against an established hierarchical structure, may reveal their weaknesses, and could potentially undermine their chances for advancement. They believe that it is the responsibility of the director to set up a time to observe them in class. This attests to the hierarchical structure of the school system and the respect for and fear of authority. One disgruntled teacher said: "How could I have the courage to approach the director and ask for help when he himself has never had the courage to visit the classroom to observe me teaching?!"

The A!I IST model has enhanced teacher knowledge, attitudes, and practices, and thus improved motivation. During the focus group discussions, teachers provided different examples of ways in which the A!I IST model has had an impact on their motivation level by enhancing their knowledge, attitudes, and practices. Teachers described how the support they receive makes them stronger pedagogues because the A!I IST model (i) provides new strategies for teaching reading and writing, including pair work and the use of songs to teach language elements such as the difference between a letter and a sound; (ii) addresses issues that were not previously addressed, such as gender equality between boys and girls or violence in the classroom and in the home; (iii) helps teachers find unique approaches for difficult or struggling students; (iv) sets the foundation for professional development exchanges where teachers can share grievances, seek advice, brainstorm ideas, and learn from one another; and (v) emphasizes the importance of positive reinforcement as opposed to negative feedback.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

TO WHAT EXTENT IS PARTICIPATION IN THE A!1 IST MODEL ASSOCIATED WITH CHANGES IN TEACHER MOTIVATION, KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND PRACTICES?

To answer the second question, correlations were run between levels of participation in the A!1 IST model and changes in teacher motivation from 2018 to 2019. Specifically, teachers' reported levels of participation in A!1 IST training and reception of materials were given a score.[9] Then, levels of motivation were calculated by tallying teachers' responses to a series of statements grouped into composites, then calculating an overall score for each composite. Finally, the participation in A!1 IST scores was correlated with the motivation scores. Higher numbers indicate stronger correlations. Table 2 presents the results of this analysis; statistically significant correlations are marked with an asterisk. See Annex C for a complete list of statements and groupings.

It is important to note that correlations do not indicate the direction of the relationship. For example, job satisfaction and training were correlated, yet the correlation does not indicate whether more training led to higher job satisfaction or if higher job satisfaction led to more training. Moreover, correlations do not account for other unknown variables. For example, praise from parents may have led to increased job satisfaction, but that was not a variable included in this study. As a result, each correlation should be interpreted with caution. Additional correlation tables can be found in Annex D.

Table 4: Correlation Between Teachers' Levels of Participation in A!1 IST and Change in Responses

Motivation composites	Participation in A!1 IST	
	Training	Materials
Job satisfaction	0.29*	0.22
School director leadership	0.16	0.40**
Student performance	0.18	0.38**
Confidence as a teacher	0.29*	0.27*
Teacher's attitude toward reading	0.32*	0.28*
Teacher practices	0.43**	0.06
Work conditions	0.12	0.16
Confidence teaching reading	0.21	0.07

Note: One asterisk (*) indicates statistical significance at $p < 0.05$, two asterisks (**) at $p < 0.01$

As Table 2 shows, statistically significant correlations were found for six of the eight composites analyzed. Almost all were moderate in strength—0.30 or above. Some correlations were found only for the training component, others only for the materials component, and two with both. The following section describes the statistically significant correlations.

Participation in A!1 IST is associated with an improved view of job satisfaction. For the **job satisfaction** composite, teachers responded to statements such as "I am satisfied with my job as a

[9] As noted in the *Methodology* section, training included annual face-to-face workshops, REPs, UPs, CBs, and classroom observation and feedback, while materials included teachers' guides, student books, posters, school kits, and letter banners.

teacher" and, to gauge the opposite motivation, "I want to be transferred to another school." The correlation (0.29) indicates that teachers who participated more frequently in IST reported greater increases from 2018 to 2019 in job satisfaction scores than did teachers who participated less frequently in IST.

Access to more materials is associated with an improved view of the school director's leadership. For the **school director leadership** composite, teachers responded to statements such as "The director supports teachers to teach well" and "The director of my school treats teachers fairly." The correlation (0.40) indicates that teachers who reported receiving more instructional materials from A!1 saw a greater increase in favorable views toward their school director's leadership from 2018 to 2019 than did teachers who reported receiving fewer materials.

Access to more materials is associated with an improved view of student performance. For the **student performance** composite, teachers responded to statements such as "I feel happy when my students are interested in learning" and "Most of my students perform up to my expectations." The correlation (0.38) indicates that teachers who reported receiving more instructional materials from A!1 saw a greater increase in favorable views about student performance than did teachers who reported receiving fewer materials.

Participation in A!1 IST—both training and materials—is associated with increased confidence. For the **confidence as a teacher** composite, teachers responded to statements such as "I feel confident in my ability to do my job effectively" and "I am constantly learning and improving my skills." The correlation with training (0.29) **and** materials (0.27) indicates that teachers who participated more frequently in IST and received more materials saw a greater increase in confidence scores than did teachers who reported lower levels of participation in training or reception of materials.

Participation in A!1 IST—both training and materials—is associated with improved attitudes towards teaching reading. For the **teacher attitudes toward teaching reading** composite, teachers responded to statements such as "All students can become fluent readers" and "If a child is having difficulty reading, it is my responsibility as a teacher to help him or her." The correlation with training (0.32) **and** materials (0.28) indicates that teachers who participated more frequently in IST **and** teachers who received more materials saw a greater increase in favorable attitudes toward teaching reading than did teachers who reported lower levels of participation in training or reception of materials.

Participation in A!1 IST training is associated with improved teaching practices. For the composite **improved reading practices**, teachers reported the frequency with which they used materials—such as the teachers' guide—or taught targeted reading skills.[10] The correlation (0.43) indicates that teachers who reported participating in IST more frequently reported greater increases in the frequency of use of materials and teaching skills than did teachers who participated less frequently in IST.

Non-correlations. Perhaps as informative as the correlations are two composites for which no correlations were found: **working conditions** and **teacher confidence in teaching reading**. For **working conditions**, teachers responded to statements such as "Teachers at my school have adequate teaching materials" and "I have a satisfactory salary." For the **teacher confidence in teaching reading** composite, teachers were asked to respond to statements such as "I am confident in my ability

[10] Aspects of a reading lesson include oral language, phonemic awareness, decoding, spelling, fluency, vocabulary, reading comprehension, writing, and assessment of reading level.

to teach decoding, spelling, vocabulary, etc. in French or the national language (Lingala, Swahili, Ciluba, or Other)." The analysis found no statistically significant correlations between either of these composites and participation in the IST model.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to learn which factors motivate teachers most and, in particular, whether participation in the A!1 IST model was associated with improved motivation. The third phase of a three-part series, the TMIS surveyed 57 teachers and 35 school directors from 35 schools in two provinces where A!1 is implementing its intervention: Haut-Katanga and Kasai Central. Of the 57 teachers surveyed, 14 participated in focus group discussions.

This study found statistically significant correlations between participation in the A!1 IST model and improvements in perspectives on six motivational factors: job satisfaction, school director leadership, student performance, confidence as a teacher, teacher attitude toward reading, and teacher practices. Teachers and school directors ranked the annual A!1 face-to-face training as the most useful of the five IST components; similarly, both teachers and school directors ranked the UPs in their top three choices of the five components. The study also found that teachers held favorable views of the A!1 materials and, in general, felt increased ability and confidence after participating in A!1 activities.

Statistically significant correlations in six of eight areas suggest a relationship between A!1's interventions and teacher motivation.

This study found that increased participation in the A!1 IST model was associated with six of the eight composites analyzed. If few or no correlations had been found, it would not be possible to conclude that a relationship existed. However, the fact that six of the eight composites were significantly correlated with participation in the model suggests that teacher participation in the A!1 IST model is somehow connected to teachers' overall sense of motivation. While not conclusive, this finding provides encouraging clues concerning which aspects of the A!1 IST model may prove to be most motivating to teachers, particularly ones that were supported by teachers' observations in the focus group discussions—for example, the extent to which training and materials contributed to their confidence in teaching and led to improved views of student learning. However, one correlation—school director leadership—was not consistent with teachers' views in the focus groups.

The unclear relationship between school leadership and motivation.

Results from the focus group discussions diverge from the correlations in some important areas. For example, while a statistically significant correlation was found between the amount of materials received and improved views of school director leadership, teachers participating in focus group discussions reported that school directors did not participate fully in the UPs, nor were school directors' classroom observations or feedback viewed to be effective by some teachers. Evaluations conducted by A!1 during teacher training events corroborated this finding: because school directors often have other administrative responsibilities, they often do not have enough time to carry out additional instructional leadership tasks such as observing teachers. Moreover, the number of times teachers are visited can influence their perception about the usefulness of the observations. Studies elsewhere have shown that on average, teachers benefit most from classroom visits if they are conducted at least once per month. The perceived limits of school directors' effectiveness in observing and providing feedback may be related to these factors.

Possible reasons for non-correlations.

The absence of a correlation between participation in the A!1 IST model and two composites—**work**

conditions and **teacher confidence in teaching reading**—raises several questions. First, it would seem that higher levels of participation in the A!1 IST model would be viewed by teachers as an improvement in working conditions, especially in terms of training and materials. As Table 3 shows, the difference in proportions of "agree" and "strongly agree" responses from 2018 to 2019 were the greatest on this composite of three statements. One of the included statements described conditions that A!1 could have influenced— "Teachers at my school have adequate teaching materials"—showed nearly an increase of 11 percent. Another could have been influenced by A!1—"The behavior of students in class is not a problem for teachers at this school"—had an increase of 19 percent that was possibly due to increased amounts of materials available during instruction or strategies acquired by teachers during A!1 IST components, including UPs. Mitigating the overall average for this composite, however, was the statement "I have a satisfactory salary," which declined by nearly 20 percentage points for unknown reasons.

Table 5: Changes in Teacher Responses to "Working Conditions" Statements, 2018 to 2019

Statement	2018					2019					Diff
	SD	D	A	SA	NR	SD	D	A	SA	NR	
I have a satisfactory salary.	16 (28%)	27 (47%)	13 (23%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	28 (49%)	26 (46%)	3 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	-20%
The working environment at my school is adequate.	12 (21%)	13 (23%)	28 (49%)	4 (7%)	0 (0%)	19 (33%)	4 (7%)	26 (46%)	8 (14%)	0 (0%)	4%
Teachers at my school have adequate teaching materials.	12 (21%)	10 (18%)	32 (56%)	3 (5%)	0 (0%)	10 (18%)	6 (11%)	34 (60%)	7 (12%)	0 (0%)	11%
Teachers at my schoolwork well together.	3 (5%)	2 (4%)	46 (81%)	6 (11%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%)	2 (4%)	40 (70%)	13 (23%)	0 (0%)	1%
The behavior of students in class is not a problem for teachers at this school.	7 (12%)	44 (77%)	4 (7%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	18 (32%)	22 (39%)	13 (23%)	3 (5%)	1 (2%)	19%
Teachers and administrators in my school are respected by parents and the community.	2 (4%)	2 (4%)	45 (79%)	8 (14%)	0 (0%)	6 (11%)	1 (2%)	43 (75%)	7 (12%)	0 (0%)	-6%
Parents and the community around my school are involved in school activities.	7 (12%)	6 (11%)	39 (68%)	5 (9%)	0 (0%)	12 (21%)	5 (9%)	33 (58%)	7 (12%)	0 (0%)	-7%
I take on many extra responsibilities at my school.	7 (12%)	15 (26%)	32 (56%)	3 (5%)	0 (0%)	8 (14%)	9 (16%)	36 (63%)	4 (7%)	0 (0%)	9%

Statement	2018					2019					Diff
	SD	D	A	SA	NR	SD	D	A	SA	NR	
My school acknowledges and praises teachers who teach well.	4 (7%)	7 (12%)	40 (70%)	5 (9%)	1 (2%)	7 (12%)	3 (5%)	37 (65%)	10 (18%)	0 (0%)	4%
Overall, the working conditions at my school impact my motivation to teach.	3 (5%)	5 (9%)	43 (75%)	5 (9%)	1 (2%)	5 (9%)	3 (5%)	39 (68%)	10 (18%)	0 (0%)	2%

Note: "SD" stands for strongly disagree, "D" stands for disagree, "A" stands for agree, "SA" stands for strongly agree, "NR" stands for no response/refuses to answer and "Diff" stands for difference between the 2019 and 2018 of those answering strongly agree or agree. N=57. Due to rounding, some columns may not sum to 100 percent

Similarly, no correlation was found between participation in the A!1 IST model and increased confidence in teaching reading. One possible reason is time—one year may not be enough to improve specific pedagogical skills, especially considering A!1 mid-year pivot away from the public schools studied due to the Trafficking in Persons Sanctions preventing support of government schools. A second possible reason is the intervention design—previously mentioned questions of the efficacy of certain parts of the IST model. For example, the manner in which school directors carried out their observation and feedback activities or their roles in facilitating meetings may mean that those activities lacked A!1's intended impact. Similarly, teachers' comments in the focus groups suggest that while UPs may have been effective for helping with problem-solving and strengthening general teaching skills, they did not reinforce specific reading instructional strategies. It should be noted that A!1 did provide a "handbook" to school directors and teachers to support their UP and CB meetings, which included scripted sessions for each "level" of the CPD model—UP, CB, and REP. This study did not examine the extent to which these handbooks had been distributed or were in use in these meetings where teachers were interviewed. Such a review might reveal more about why teachers' perspectives about these meetings focused on more general problems and skills.

The teaching profession is a calling, but salaries are lamentable.

Despite difficult living conditions and low salaries, nearly all surveyed teachers generally hold their profession in high regard and consider it a calling. When discussing motivation, teachers described feeling particularly happy in the classroom with their students, and most said that they would choose the teaching profession again if they had the opportunity to change careers. Nevertheless, teachers mentioned at every opportunity that their salaries were not enough to make ends meet, and many teachers openly said that despite loving their job, they would change careers if they could be better paid elsewhere. This may suggest an underlying view that teachers choose to remain in their profession not necessarily out of intrinsic love but due to a lack of other opportunities.

To be sure, the teaching profession is highly regarded in Congolese culture. A general sentiment, which resonated with teachers visited during the course of the study, is that parents and the community around the school view teachers as ambassadors of knowledge, second only to religious leaders. Yet teachers' deplorable salaries and the lack of a career ladder belie this fact.

Teachers' view of REPs and school director participation in other A!1 IST components suggests revisions for future models.

As mentioned in the *Findings* section, after annual face-to-face workshops, teachers placed the UPs in second place of importance, followed by the CBs. Based on survey data and the results of the focus group discussions, teachers did not seem to find the REPs very useful. In addition, fidelity of

implementation data for A!1 suggest that REP facilitators—usually school directors—almost never receive guidance from the project on how to conduct the meetings effectively. This suggests that even if the turnout at the REPs is reportedly high, as suggested by the survey data, teachers do not find them to be particularly useful. This raises questions of the efficacy of the REP model and how it can be improved.

Moreover, despite naming several benefits of the UPs and CBs, focus group discussion participants were vocal about the fact that the role of the school director in these forums needs to be strengthened. Participants reported that some directors are often absent from the forums or are unwilling to participate in a meaningful way by conducting lesson demonstrations or providing useful feedback.

Annual face-to-face workshops may not be focused enough.

While teachers cited the annual face-to-face workshops as one of the most useful aspects of the IST model due to the breadth of material presented, the same teachers often lamented that too much information is packed into a very short period of time. This does not allow for the material to be properly processed and absorbed. During the focus group discussions, teachers were asked to recall what material from the face-to-face trainings they remembered best. Very few participants mentioned general instructional strategies such as group work, working in pairs, or helping struggling students. Instead, they described the importance of learning for themselves and specific reading strategies such as teaching students the difference between the name of letters and the sounds letters make and how to write in block letters and in cursive. Many teachers admitted not knowing how to present these concepts in class prior to having gone through the IST model. Although anecdotal, this evidence attests to the idea that teachers tend to retain more specific, focused topics better than more ambiguous or theoretical items. It is also an indication that the IST model would benefit from reducing the number of topics covered but increasing the depth with which they are treated. In turn, this might allow more time and guided hands-on practice for teachers to absorb new information.

The A!1 IST teacher observation and feedback model may not be optimally effective.

In focus group discussions, teachers expressed ambivalence toward their relationships with their school directors. While the minority of teachers reported feeling dissatisfied or even frustrated with their director or the way their school is managed, most participants simply did not feel that the school leadership has a strong impact on their motivation. Some even expressed concerns about the school director's role in supporting them. Teachers cited examples of rarely being properly observed while teaching or that little or only negative feedback was provided after the observation. Quantitative data revealed that approximately 96 percent of teachers stated that their school director observes them teaching on a regular basis; however, this response rate may be due to a different reading of the question on the teachers' part than intended by the survey—the focus group discussions revealed that teachers considered even a five-minute visit to be an "observation." This suggests that there is little consistency across the A!1 model in the way directors are observing teachers and providing feedback.

One of the aims of A!1 is to strengthen the skills of the school directors so that they may be able to continue providing support for teachers outside the scope of the official IST model. Part of this process should also include helping the school directors become more open so that teachers may see them as a helping guide rather than simply an unapproachable authority figure. Taking the teachers' opinions into account, the question begs how well the observation and feedback model—central to IST—and the general training model of school directors is working as intended by A!1.

Parental involvement plays a role in teacher motivation.

In focus group discussions, teachers cited student learning—the ultimate goal of the A!1 program—as an important motivational factor. Teachers also revealed that when parents and the community become more involved in the schooling process, it creates a more wholesome learning environment and

improves teacher motivation. This demonstrates the multidimensional relationship that sometimes exists between the various components of the IST model. By strengthening the role of parents and the community, the A!1 team could achieve two interrelated goals—improve student learning **and** motivate teachers.

Teaching materials are linked with student performance and teacher motivation.

The fact that there were correlations between four composites of TMIS—school director leadership, student performance, confidence as a teacher, and teacher attitude towards teaching reading—and the materials' component of the IST model indicates that having these materials is related to increased levels of motivation. However, because this correlation could be due to outside or unknown factors, the role these materials might be playing in motivating teachers is unclear. Nevertheless, these correlations suggest a pattern—a logical one insofar as access to teaching and learning materials is associated with being motivated by student performance and was a factor teachers reported as motivating.

It should be noted that while most teachers spoke highly of the effectiveness of the teaching materials provided by A!1, they also expressed frustration with A!1's failure to deliver some of the student materials before the beginning of the school year. Such delays could mitigate the potential influence of teaching materials and their possible role in motivating teachers in future A!1 activities.

Engaging in dialogue with teachers on how to improve IST support could reveal interesting ideas and motivate teachers.

Innovative ideas on how to improve the IST model brought forth by teachers suggest that the teaching force may itself be a good resource for the A!1 team—as well as other projects—to find ways to improve support. Focus group discussions revealed that teachers' sense of worth is increased when they are asked for their opinion regarding teaching and other school-related matters. Simply by engaging with teachers and asking for their input, the A!1 program could further enhance motivation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are presented in two parts: ones that can be considered for inclusion in the A!1 intervention design in Year 5, and ones that are proposed for consideration by the ministry and education partners over the longer term.

FOR A!1, YEAR 5

1. **Continue supporting teachers through the A!1 IST model while strengthening aspects identified in this study.** Given the high number of correlations between changes in teachers' motivation and participation in the A!1 model, there is strong reason to believe that the model may be a contributing factor to their motivation, especially the face-to-face trainings and UPs. Nevertheless, findings from this study point to improvements that can be made in the model. They are described below:
    a. Ensure that the annual face-to-face workshops focus on specific strategies teachers can use to teach reading skills. Ensure that teachers have ample opportunity to view model lessons using these strategies. To the extent possible, ensure teachers have time during training to practice using these strategies.
    b. Continue promoting teacher participation in the UPs and CBs. Examine how the handbook produced by A!1 to support teachers and school directors in these meetings is used and identify strategies to improve its ability to ensure specific skills for the

teaching of reading are reinforced.

c. Explore opportunities for supplementing existing support materials with tools such as case studies or video recordings of model lessons that teachers could learn from on their own (the latter where electricity and equipment exists). Use these strategies to reinforce the UP and CB meetings.
d. Identify ways to encourage school directors to take on a more active role in REPs, UPs, and CBs and provide them with the necessary tools to lead the meetings, facilitate discussions on reading strategies, and demonstrate lessons.
e. Strengthen school directors' capacity to observe teachers in the classroom and to provide constructive feedback, with an emphasis on structuring observations to target specific reading skills and providing feedback concerning how to strengthen these skills. If school directors require the assistance of other personnel, consider processes for identifying other teachers in the school that can assist with these observations.
f. Introduce more hands-on activities to the IST model—such as mock lessons—to be conducted by participants on a more regular basis. Note that this recommendation was also made from the A!1 year 4 data review week in which data from multiple MEL sources (EGRA, operations research, FOI, QA) were reviewed by project and ministry personnel to take stock of accomplishments and identify strategies to improve project implementation.

In addition to strengthening the IST model, three other recommendations are proposed for consideration for Year 5:

2. Engage in regular dialogue with teachers on how to improve teaching and learning outcomes in order to increase teacher motivation – e.g., through quarterly roundtable discussions with teachers about instructional approaches, materials, and observation and feedback strategies that they find useful for changing their practice.
3. Distribute teaching and learning materials in a timely fashion to ensure that teachers are fully equipped to teach when the school year begins.
4. Given the gaps identified by teachers in the focus group discussions for this study, ensure teachers are provided access to dictionaries and manuals, either individually or by school, to teach grammar concepts relevant to reading and writing.

FOR THE MEPSP AND EDUCATION PARTNERS OVER THE LONGER TERM

Based on the findings from this study, four additional types of initiatives hold promise for increasing teachers' and school directors' motivation:

5. Explore ways to increase opportunities for school directors to be more involved in the decision-making processes related to school management.
6. Explore steps needed to prepare for a professional development system that includes a career ladder for teachers and school directors with a clearly defined path—including benchmarks for advancing from one level to the next—linked to participating in continuous professional development. Ensure that the process of participating in professional development and advancement, including the selection of teachers to attend training, is transparent. If feasible, link advancement to teachers' and school directors' salaries.
7. Consider introducing learning activities for students during long school breaks and expanding extracurricular activities such as reading or spelling competitions and reading clubs.
8. Seek ways to strengthen the involvement of parents and the community in the teaching and learning process, especially as it pertains to reading and writing. Consider introducing strategies

for the community to show appreciation for teachers and to enhance a sense of community around the school.

ANNEXES

[Annexes intentionally removed for online posting].

U.S. Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20523

and

School-to-School International
1005 Terra Nova Boulevard, Suite 1
Pacifica, CA 94044