

**Pre-requisites for attracting and retaining
teachers in the profession: experiences from
the Teacher Task Force and VSO**

Unite for Quality Education Conference
29 May 2014, Montreal

Purna Kumar Shrestha

Global Research and Advocacy Adviser, Education
VSO International

Member, Steering Committee
**International Task Force on
Teachers for Education for All**



Context



57.2 million children worldwide are still not in primary school



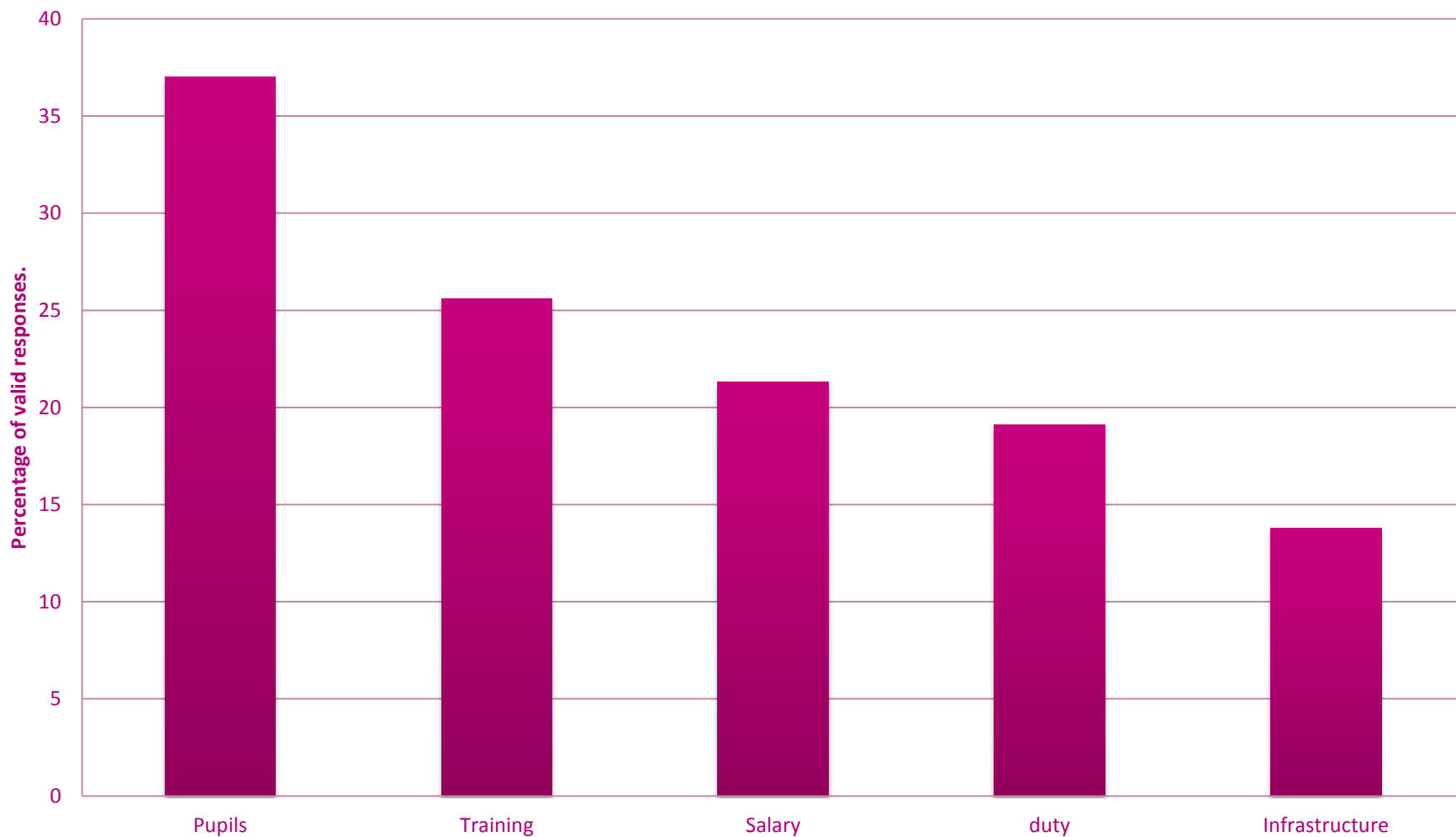
6.8 million all of whom need to be recruited by 2015

Challenges

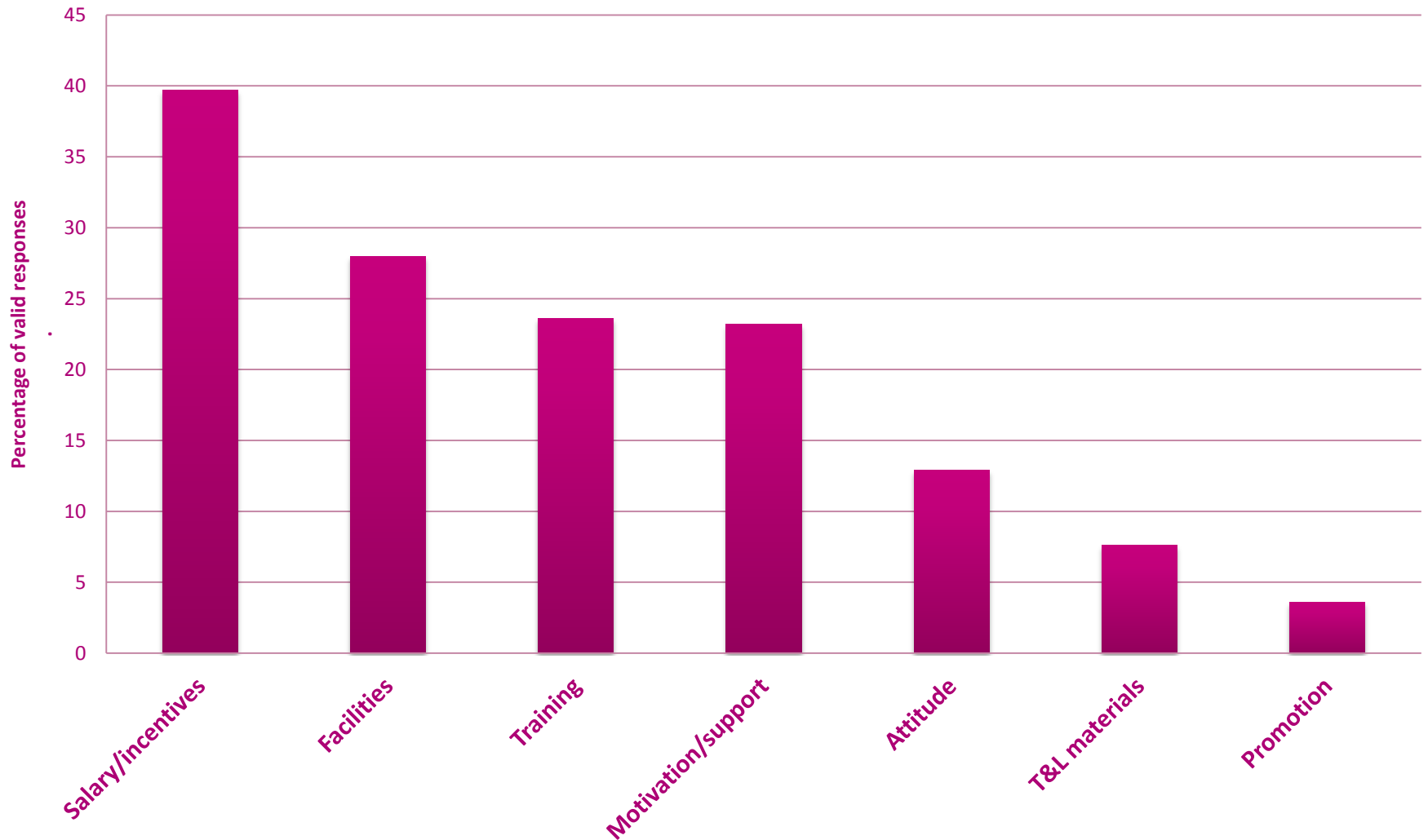
- **Poor working conditions and low salaries**
- **Poor career prospects**
- **Poor administrative support to teachers**
- **High pupil-teacher ratios leading to large class sizes**
- **Poor living conditions**
- **Low morale and poor status**
- **Teacher deployment imbalances**
- **Society's perception of teaching as a profession**

Pre-requisites for attracting and retaining teachers in the profession

What motivates you to be a good teacher? (top 5 answers)



How can we encourage good teachers to teach in the most challenging schools and deprived areas?



Teachers' Commitments if Salary Increases

Description	# of Response	Percentage
I would be more motivated	344	89%
I would spend more time preparing lessons	301	78%
I would be a better teacher	276	72%
I would only work as a teacher (not do other job)	214	55%
I would not be absent as much	166	43%
I would not take money from other sources in schools	73	19%
No change to me – I would still need to earn more money	6	2%

Salary and incentives



“The salary is not enough. For example, on my side when I return on Saturday or Sunday I spend the day in the field farming. My pocket is empty and I need more money to support my children and my family.” **male secondary teacher, the Gambia**

“Imagine a salary of 40,000 Rwandan francs while one bunch of onions costs 800 Rwandan francs here in the countryside and it costs 1,000 francs in town – the teacher’s salary is equivalent to 40 bunches of onions!” **-male teacher, rural 9YBE school, Rwanda**

“Teachers in primary schools don’t take their lunch because they don’t have enough money to use in restaurants and this really affects them and in the afternoon they are most of the time weak and don’t teach well” **-female teacher, rural secondary school, Rwanda .**

Non-salary incentives

- **Subsidised loans**
- **Hardship allowance**
- **Housing allowance**
- **Social and health security (Pension and health insurance)**

Recommendations

- **Improve the resource and financial base for teachers**
- **Create a social dialogue between teachers and other key stakeholders**
- **Build partnership between stakeholders and addressing how a range of factors could contribute to stronger delimitation of career paths for those entering the teaching profession**
- **Improve management tools and coordination between ministries to address payroll problems**
- **Ensure initial pre-service training for all new recruits to teaching that covers subject knowledge, pedagogy and training in diagnosis of students' learning needs, with sufficient time to develop these skills**
- **Support the establishment of Teaching Councils to develop and enforce professional standards and ethics and codes of conduct for teaching professionals**

Recommendations

- Ensure , even where promotion opportunities are few, that the processes are transparent and open and that teachers in remote schools do not miss out
- Reorient the role of ‘district education offices’ towards a ‘supporting’ rather than ‘administering’ function
- Strengthen procedures to regulate deployment and to ensure teachers have the tools (textbooks for example) to do the job
- Set up of incentives for continuing professional development
- Invest in the capacity building of Teacher Training Institutions
- Devise strategies for protecting teachers, particularly female teachers in remote areas
- Reinforce the roles of school leaderships

Practices that clearly worked

- The use of surveys and research to monitor the quality of teacher-government relations
- The raising of the teacher retirement age to help meet the teacher supply demand
- The use of donor resources to target specific teacher professional development needs
- Inter-related reforms (methods of paying teachers, housing provision and so forth) to qualitatively improve teachers working lives, particularly in terms of the functions of local education offices

Country case #1: Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

The government of DRC has made a number of statutory interventions to improve the conditions of service of teachers, including salary improvements, but the challenge of recruiting and retaining good teachers remains a significant issue, especially **female teachers**. This issue continues to be a major concern as only 12% of teachers are female. In answer to this under-representation, the Président de la République announced in October 2013 a major plan to improve the participation of Congolese women in all sectors of national life.

Country case #2: Republic of Guinea

A major issue in this country is associated with the role of teacher. In addition to the factors mentioned above other problems were elaborated. These included the sometimes conflictual relationships that existed between local education authorities and teachers, the lack of medical insurance and the perceived unfairness of promotion systems. The Republic of Guinea had sought to improve these problems through strengthening the dialogue with teachers (evidence was presented that showed an improving satisfaction rate for teacher-government relations.)

Stay in touch



International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All

7, Place de Fontenoy Paris75352 Paris France

teacherstaskforce@unesco.org

+33 (0) 1 45 68 05 43

<http://www.teachersforefa.unesco.org>



Purna.shrestha@vsoint.org

[@purnashrestha](https://www.instagram.com/purnashrestha)

[100 London Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 6QJ, UK](http://www.vsointernational.org/valuingteachers)

<http://www.vsointernational.org/valuingteachers>