



## Individual Submission Summary

# A Review of Teacher Retention in Post-Conflict ESAR: Issues and Consequences for SDG 4

In Event: *Active teaching, teacher retention, professional development and teachers' perception*



**Thu, March 26, 10:00 to 11:30am EDT (10:00 to 11:30am EDT), Hyatt Regency Miami, Floor: Terrace (Level 0), Orchid D Proposal**

### Introduction

With eleven years left to actualize the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we examine how the state of teacher retention in post-conflict South Sudan and Mozambique shapes the actualization of the Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all in these two Eastern and Southern Africa Region (ESAR) countries (United Nations, 2015). We argue that to achieve, among other equitable education-promoting efforts, it is imperative to pay significantly commensurate attention to the subject of teacher retention and motivation.

Quality teaching is inextricably linked to quality education (Boeren, 2019). While we recognize that increase in quality of teachers may not necessarily bring about an increased (student) access to quality education, we, however, posit that increase in quality education is not mutually exclusive to increase in quality teaching. Following this logic, students cannot get the best out of a teaching and learning experience when teachers do not get the best out of an education system. Teachers are the implementers of curriculum because they “put education policies into practice” (Boeren, 2019, p. 290), so any attempt to improve education without improving the quality and quantity of qualified teachers may not yield the most effective and enduring results.

### Significance of the Study

Putting the CIES 2020 conference theme in perspective, our study explores how the interfacing of human and non-human elements shape teacher retention in post-conflict settings of South Sudan and Mozambique. In examining this interconnection, our review was guided by the following questions: (a) What, if any, are the psychological effects of teaching in a post-conflict setting on teachers? (b) How does the reminiscence of war affect teachers' pedagogical practices? (c) How does navigating the spatial context of a post-conflict setting shape teachers' pedagogical practices? (d) How much of a teacher's (professional) self is lost to conflict-related trauma? Teachers in post-conflict settings take on the role of a second parent/parents, guardian, and counsellor. They are not only teaching their students but humanity (Adebayo, 2019). In keeping with the value of symposium, we make a call to keep the human in mind even as we strive for a



## Research Questions

Our review for this paper was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the extant state of teacher retention in ESAR post-conflict countries?
2. What are the implications of improving teacher retention on the achievement of SDG4 in post-conflict ESAR settings?

## Methodology

We employed a thematic analysis of literature to explore this topic, foregrounding our analysis in the broad research questions warranting the study. We chose thematic analysis because of its affordances in “identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 6). Consequently, to determine inclusion of articles, a team of five reviewers independently extracted data, following the study’s objectives and guiding questions. In other words, we utilized several databases, including EBSCO, ProQuest Dissertation and Theses, ERIC-EBSCO, and ERIC-ProQuest, and Education Full-Text to identify pertinent literature on the subject of teacher retention in Mozambique and South Sudan, based on strategic key words.

## Theoretical Framework

We utilized a Functionalist theory as the theoretical framework for this review. “According to functionalism, society is a system of interconnected parts that work together in harmony to maintain a state of balance and social equilibrium for the whole” (Mooney et al., 2007, p. 1). Inclusive and quality education is captured as the ‘complex whole’ in our review, while retention of quality teachers is a subset of this whole. As such, we posit that any significant changes to the element of teacher retention might have a ripple effect on the availability of inclusive and quality education.

## Preliminary Findings

In 2016, UNESCO Institute for Statistics reported that countries need approximately 69 million teachers by 2030 to achieve part of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which was universal primary and secondary education (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016). The primary cause identified for needing teachers is due to low rates of teacher retention. Nearly 50 out of 69 million teachers needed are due to replacing teachers who have left. The greatest amounts of teacher shortages are located in sub-Saharan Africa, with a total of 17 million teachers needed to achieve SDG 4 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016). Significantly low rates of teacher retention have been partially attributed to low levels of teacher motivation (Oxfam Novib, 2015), teacher training and qualifications (Nerenhausen, 2014), medium of instruction (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018), and teacher absenteeism (World Bank, 2012).

## Conclusion

The low rates of teacher retention in these countries are a result of many challenges bedeviling the education system, including conflict, insecurity, poor and inconsistent remuneration, lack of teacher motivation, poor (academic and professional) qualifications, and teacher absenteeism. Although there are interventions which address the needs of teachers in post-conflict settings such as South Sudan Teacher Education



the achievement of SDG4 in post-conflict ESAR settings.

## References

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## Authors

*Ademola Alabi Akinrinola*, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



*Seun Adebayo*, National University of Ireland Galway



*Mame Diara Ndiaye*, Cornell University



*Bodunrin Ifeoluwa Akinrinmade*, Florida State University



