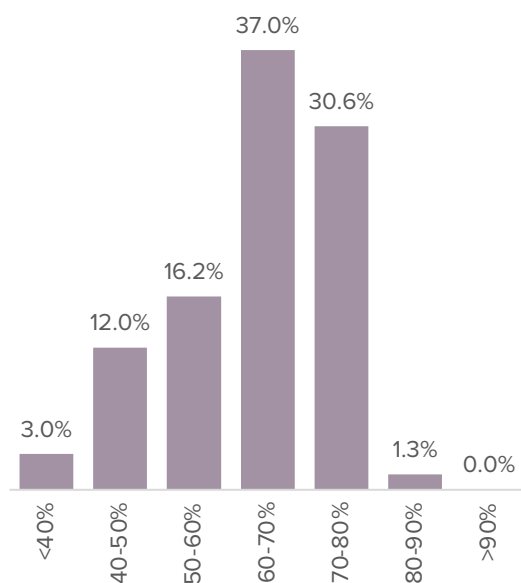**KEY INSIGHT: Baseline classroom observations found only 32% of classes scored >70% in teaching practice quality, highlighting opportunities for improvement**

Opportunity EduFinance analysed 468 baseline classroom observations taken at partner EduQuality schools between late 2020 and 2021. Observations evaluate student engagement and teaching approaches aligned with best practice techniques shared in EduQuality Teacher Mentor Professional Development sessions. Sample data will continue to be collected annually to understand whether teaching practices shift over time. This Key Insight shares observations collected through baseline data prior to the delivery of teacher training.

Classroom Observation Total Scores

Bar chart — Classroom Observation Total Scores:

Score range	Percentage
<40%	3.0%
40-50%	12.0%
50-60%	16.2%
60-70%	37.0%
70-80%	30.6%
80-90%	1.3%
>90%	0.0%

Key finding #1 – EduFinance's scoring methodology provides significant differentiation of quality – enabling EduFinance to identify improvements in coming years.

Most observed classes had a total score **between 60-70%.** 15% of classes scored <50% overall, with 32% of classes scoring >70%. Only 6 classes achieved between 80-90%, and no classes achieved above 90%.

The Education Quality program of Opportunity EduFinance partners with affordable schools in low- and middle-income countries to continue improving the quality of education for learners. This includes Teacher Mentor Professional Development sessions that provide hands-on, interactive training on best practice teaching techniques, with a pedagogical focus on literacy. Training also equips mentors to deliver professional development training and coaching to peer teachers. Topics include:

- Engaging all Learners
- Positive Behaviour Management
- Phonics
- Planning a Lesson
- Checking for Understanding
- Leading Teacher Professional Development
- Leading Coaching

OPPORTUNITY EduFinance

Teaching Practice. The Classroom Observation tool evaluates multiple aspects of teaching practices that are **cross-cutting best practices for instruction**. In **three areas**, observers document whether the practice was used (yes/no), while in **four areas**, observers score on a 4-level scale based on set criteria in the coding manual. For both **lecture** & **discussion**, observers track total minutes of each practice.

Clear & Precise Expectations: Give clear & precise instructions so learners know expectations of their behaviour and performance
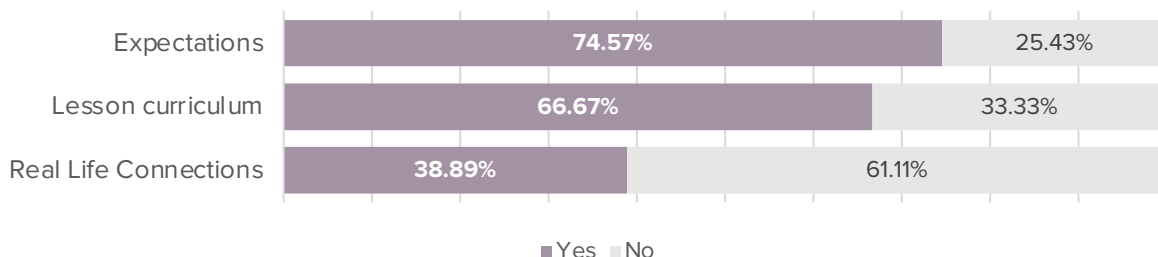
Lesson in Curriculum: Situate lesson in wider curriculum by referring to past or future lessons

Real Life Connections: Connect academic content to learners' daily lives & 'real life'

Teaching Practices Observed

	Yes	No
Expectations	74.57%	25.43%
Lesson curriculum	66.67%	33.33%
Real Life Connections	38.89%	61.11%

Key finding #2 – Nearly 75% of teachers set expectations for the learners during the lesson, but most teachers do not connect the lesson to real life for learners to better understand. Only 39% of lessons referenced a real-life connection to the lesson topic.

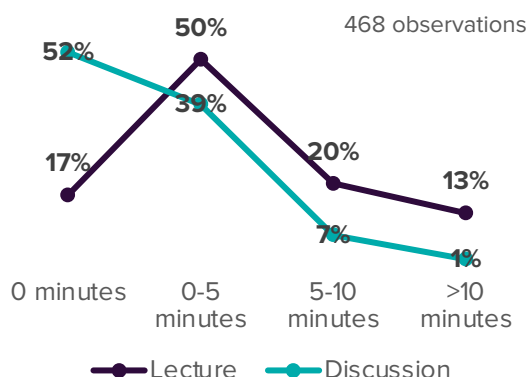**Lecture:** In this type of explanation of academic content the learner acts as a passive listener

Discussion: In this type of active learning, learners speak out loud to each other or the teacher.

Key finding #3 – Teachers do not actively use learner discussion in their teaching practice. 91% of classes had <5 minutes of **discussion** time with learners, with 52% reporting no discussion time. 33% of these classes included >5 minutes of **lecture** time, with 13% of classes including >10 minutes of lecture.

Discussion & Lecture Minutes
468 observations

	0 minutes	0-5 minutes	5-10 minutes	>10 minutes
Lecture	17%	50%	20%	13%
Discussion	52%	39%	7%	1%

OPPORTUNITY EduFinance

Teaching Practice. The Classroom Observation tool evaluates multiple aspects of teaching practices that are **cross-cutting best practices for instruction**. In **three areas**, observers document whether the practice was used (yes/no), while in **four areas**, observers score on a 4-level scale based on set criteria in the coding manual. For both **lecture** & **discussion**, observers track total minutes of each practice.

Active Learning:
Ask questions or give learners tasks to shift from passive listening to

Explanation:
When necessary, explain or demonstrate a concept to learners, ensuring the explanation is appropriate, clear, detailed and deep
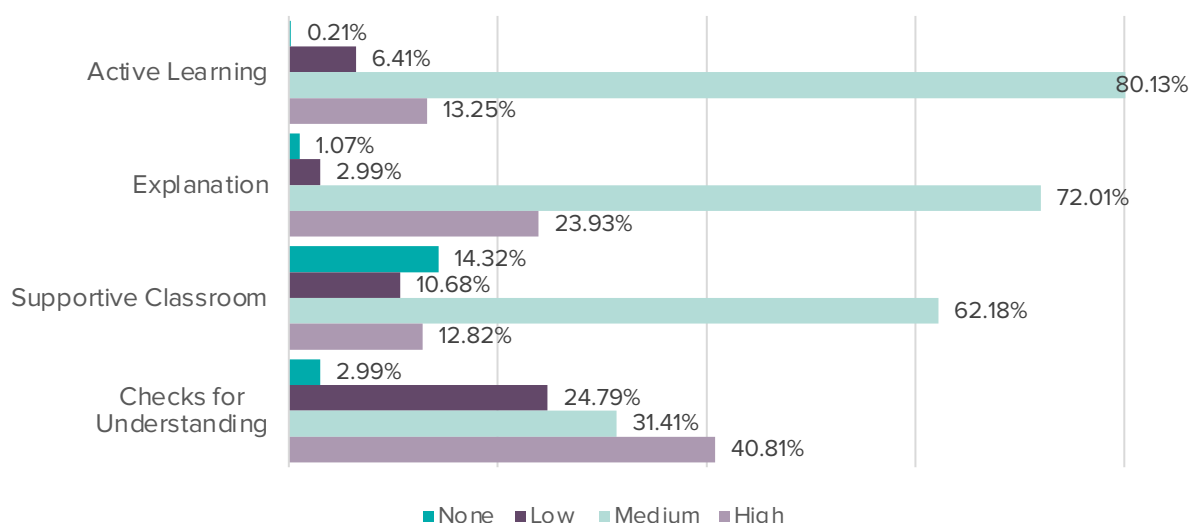
Supportive Classroom Culture:
Set, monitor and reinforce a positive, supporting classroom culture that encourages appropriate behavior and creates a respectful experience for learners and the teacher.

Checks for Understanding:
Use question or prompt techniques to determine learners' understanding of academic content

Quality of Teaching Practices

Active Learning
- 0.21%
- 6.41%
- 80.13%
- 13.25%

Explanation
- 1.07%
- 2.99%
- 72.01%
- 23.93%

Supportive Classroom
- 14.32%
- 10.68%
- 62.18%
- 12.82%

Checks for Understanding
- 2.99%
- 24.79%
- 31.41%
- 40.81%

■ None ■ Low ■ Medium ■ High

Key finding #4 – The majority of teacher were scored as medium in the practices of active learning, explanation and supportive classroom culture.
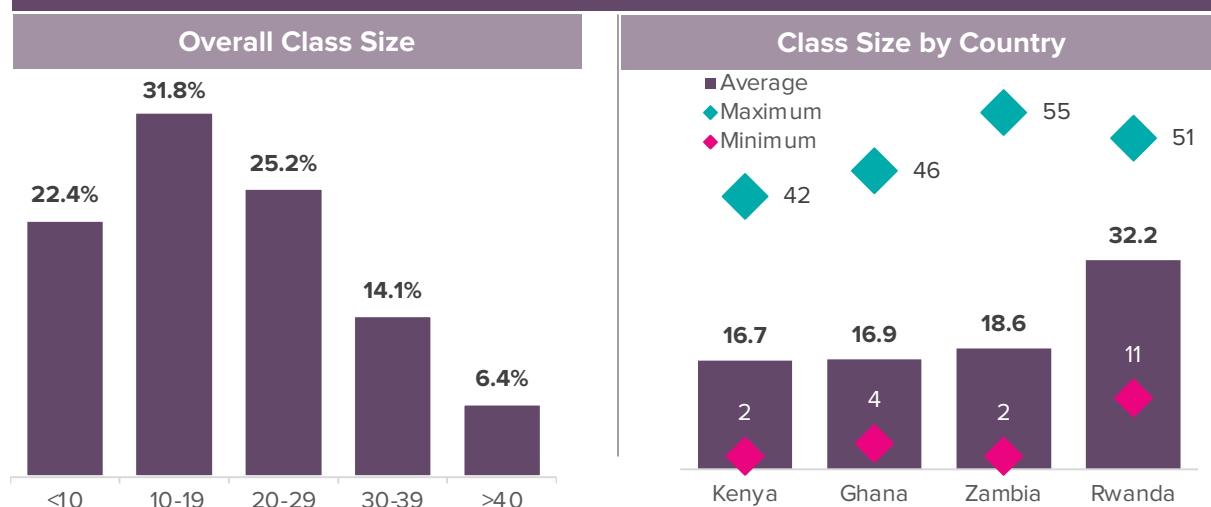- However**, less than 1** in **3** teachers used techniques to **check for learner understanding** throughout the lesson**.**
- Under Supportive Classroom Culture, **14%** of teachers scored '**none**' which indicates the teacher used physical punishment, insulting language and/or ignored learners' disruptive behavior. Additionally, **11%** scored '**low**' indicating use of negative language or inappropriate voice with learners.

Class Size & Lesson Planning. Pupil-to-teacher ratio is a common indicator of learning environment quality & the extent to which a learners can benefit from individualized teacher attention. **Lesson plan**s can indicate the quality of instruction if structured with a learner-centred learning objective, learner activity, and planned assessment.
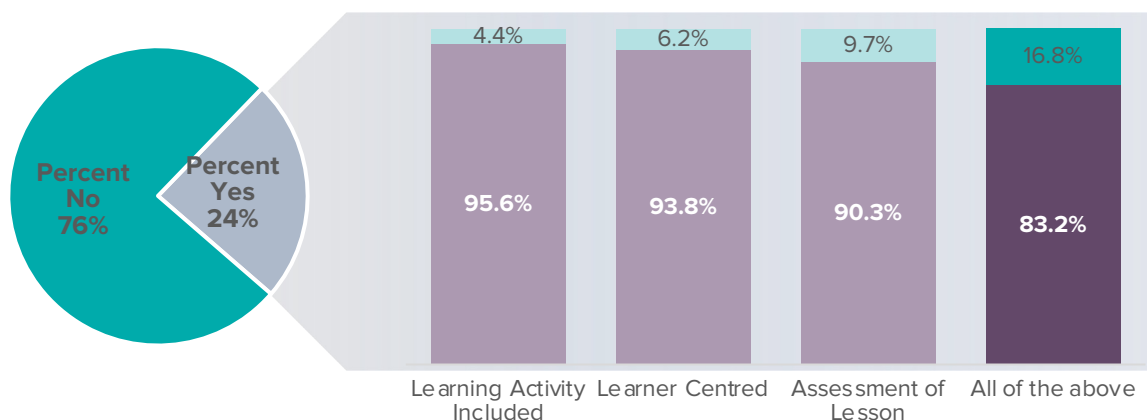
Key finding #5 – The majority of classes had ≤19 learners present, with an average class size between 16-19 learners, excluding Rwanda**.** In Rwanda, the average class size was 32 learners, nearly double the average class sizes in Kenya, Ghana and Zambia.

Number of Learners Present

Overall Class Size

Class Size	Percent
<10	22.4%
10-19	31.8%
20-29	25.2%
30-39	14.1%
>40	6.4%

Class Size by Country

■ Average
◆ Maximum
◆ Minimum

Country	Average	Maximum	Minimum
Kenya	16.7	42	2
Ghana	16.9	46	4
Zambia	18.6	55	2
Rwanda	32.2	51	11

Key finding #6 – Less than 1 in 4 teachers observed had a lesson plan for the class, but plans shared were of high quality. Of the 468 classes observed, 134 (24%) of teachers were able to show the M&E Specialist a lesson plan. Of the lesson plans shared, 96% included a **learning activity**, 94% were **learner centered**, and 90% had an **assessment** of the lesson. Of these three key features, only 83% of plans contained all three.

Presence and Quality of Lesson Plans

Percent No 76%

Percent Yes 24%

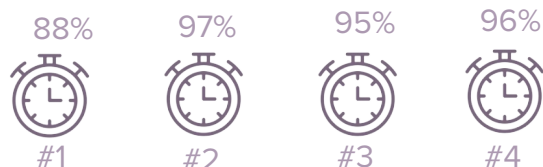|	Learning Activity Included	Learner Centred	Assessment of Lesson	All of the above
(top)	4.4%	6.2%	9.7%	16.8%
(main)	95.6%	93.8%	90.3%	83.2%

Snapshots. A snapshot uses a time interval approach to do a **10-second visual scan** of the classroom at **five-minute intervals.** Scans are conducted **four times** during the lesson to record whether a learning activity is taking place, and if so, how many learners are off-task during the learning activity.

Key finding #7 – The vast majority of class time was spent on learning activities, observed in **94.3%** of total snapshots. Learning activities were lowest in Snapshot #1 – taken 5 minutes into the lesson – but were more consistent during each of the other snapshots.

a Learning Activity was taking place during 94% of all snapshots

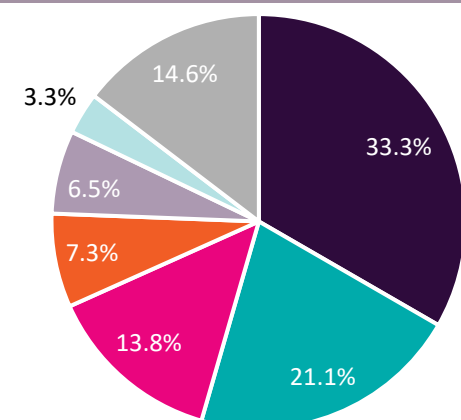| 88%	97%	95%	96%
#1	#2	#3	#4

94% Learners on Task

5.7% Learners not on Task

Key finding #8 – Most learners are engaged during learning activities, with 94% of learners observed on-task across all snapshots.
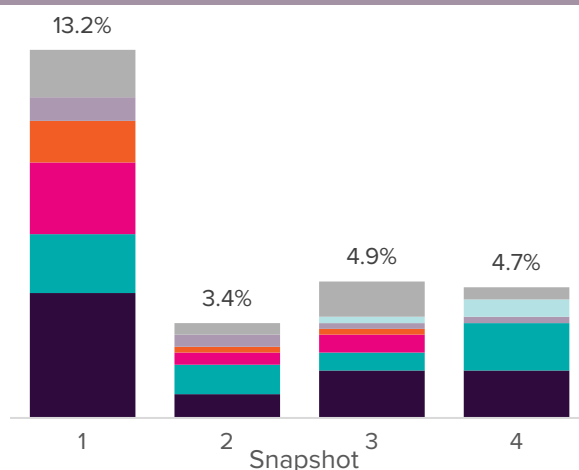
Key finding #9 – Material preparation was the most common reason a learning activity was not taking place, most often observed early in the class. Preparing or Passing Materials was observed most often (33%), followed by 'Preparing to Write or Waiting' (21%) and 'Disciplining' (14%).

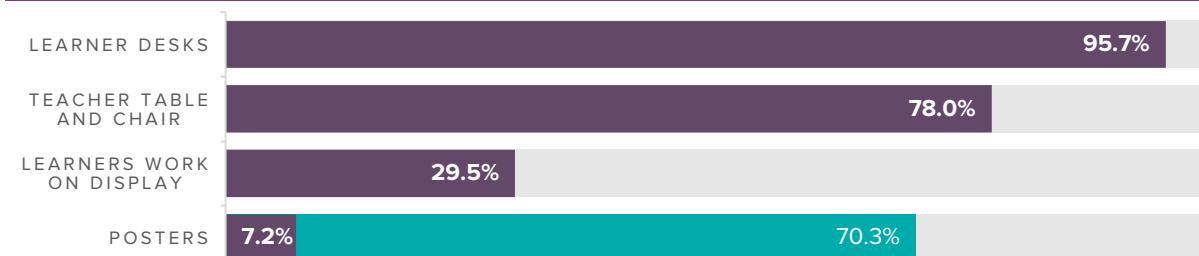**Reason Learners not engaged in a Learning Activity during Snapshots**

Overall Reasons

Pie chart values: 33.3%, 21.1%, 13.8%, 7.3%, 6.5%, 3.3%, 14.6%

Reasons By Snapshots #1 - 4

Snapshot values: 13.2%, 3.4%, 4.9%, 4.7%

Legend:
- Preparing or Passing Materials
- Preparing to Write
- Disciplining
- Organising Attendance
- Teacher Absent
- Cancelled or Ended
- Other

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS
BASELINE FINDINGS

■ Used ■ Present

Class Furniture & Visual Displays

LEARNER DESKS	95.7%
TEACHER TABLE AND CHAIR	78.0%
LEARNERS WORK ON DISPLAY	29.5%
POSTERS	7.2% 70.3%

Key finding #10 — Nearly all learners had desks, and posters on classroom walls were common but rarely referenced during the lesson. 70.3% of classrooms had at least one poster, but the poster was only referenced in 7.2% of lessons. Learner work was displayed in less than 1/3 of classrooms (29.5%).

Materials for Learners

NOTEBOOKS	83.1% 94.4%
TEXTBOOKS	19.9% 35.0%
LEARNING MATERIALS	4.7%
ICT (CLASS)	1.7% 2.8%
ICT (INDIV.)	1.1% 1.7%

Key finding #11 — The most commonly available and used material for learners was a notebook. 94.4% of learners had a notebook, which was used in 83.1% of lessons. In comparison, only 1 in 3 learners (35%) had a textbook and only 19.9% of lessons used the textbook. Less than 3% of classes had any ICT present in the classroom.

Materials for Teachers

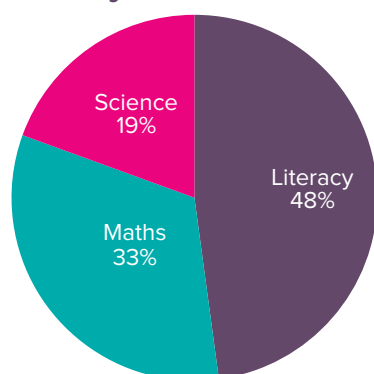|	
CHALKBOARD	99.1% 99.6%
TEXTBOOK	22.2% 84.0%
LEARNING MATERIALS	7.1%
ICT	3.8% 4.9%

Key finding #12 — Chalkboards were used in nearly all lessons, while hands-on learning materials were infrequently utilized during lesson. Teachers used hands-on learning materials during only 7.1% of observed lessons.
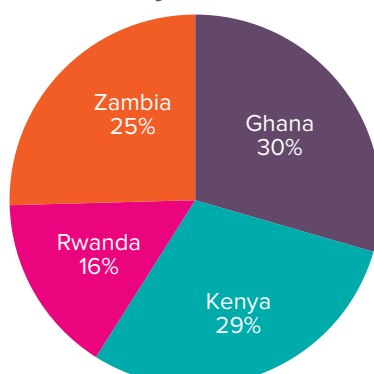
METHODOLOGY & NOTES

The Classroom Observation Tool (COB) is part of EduFinance's Monitoring & Evaluation toolkit. This bespoke tool that aims to gather valid and reliable data on the in-class teaching practices, student engagement and classroom environment at Opportunity EduFinance partner schools. COB baselines were collected across 4 countries from April 2021 - January 2022, observing a total of 468 classes. The COB tool captures background information including subject and grade, as well as learner engagement snapshots, materials & learning environment, planning & record keeping, and quality of teaching practice.
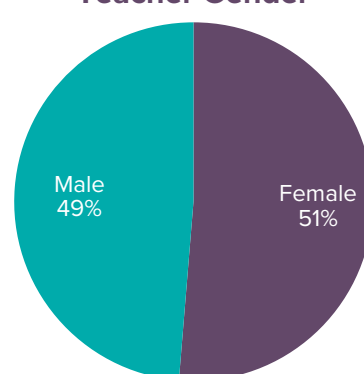
Subject of Classes

Science 19%
Literacy 48%
Maths 33%

Country breakdown

Zambia 25%
Ghana 30%
Rwanda 16%
Kenya 29%

Teacher Gender

Male 49%
Female 51%

Calculating overall score. An overall (or Total) score was calculated for **each class based on the point scale below.** Unless otherwise noted, 0 points were awarded if the expectation of the indicator was not met.

- If learning was taking place during a **snapshot –** 4 points
- If there were **clear & precise expectations set** for learners **–** 10 points
- If the teacher spent <30% of class time **lecturing -** 10 points
- If class started **on time** - 10 points, with a point deducted for every minute of lateness up to 10
- The ratio of discussion vs. lecture is measured, with 10 points awarded for no lecture time.
- The following teaching approaches were scored by observer ranking: Checks for learner understanding, Supportive classroom culture and Active learning were all ranked either none (0), low (5), medium (10) or high (15).

All components other than the snapshots are direct measures of teaching practice, which are internationally recognized and EduQuality programme-aligned indicators of learner-centred teaching.

Weight	16%	10%	10%	15%	15%	15%	10%	10%

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

- ■ Snapshots- Learning is taking place
- ■ Clear and Precise Expectations
- ■ Proportion of lecture minutes during class
- ■ Checks for understanding
- ■ Supportive Classroom Culture
- ■ Active Learning
- ■ Prompt
- ■ Discussion Time