

Facts and figures on schools, teachers and pupils in Sierra Leone

The following information is taken from the School Census 2019. The census report was still in draft at time of writing (March 2020) therefore the figures may be subject to change. However, they provide a good overall picture of the entire sector (private and public), with more than 11,000 schools, 83,000 teachers, and 2.6 million school children.

The Teaching Service Commission is responsible for teachers in approved (government or government assisted schools) who are on the government payroll. In 2019, there were 46,436 teachers registered by the TSC.

Teachers in unapproved schools may be registered with TSC if they hold relevant teacher qualifications. All teachers and schools in both the private and public sector must adhere to general rules.

Total Schools in Sierra Leone

	Community	Government	Mission	Other	Private	Total
Pre-primary	256	151	721	5	625	1,758
Primary	881	1,163	4,412	7	691	7,154
J. Secondary	347	166	784	3	333	1,633
S. Secondary	95	61	305	1	161	623
Total	1,579	1,541	6,222	16	1,810	11,168

The Government owns little more than 16% of schools in Sierra Leone. The majority of schools are mission schools, and there are large numbers of community and private schools. Approximately 60% of schools are approved, meaning they are government or government assisted schools – either financially or in other ways. Not all teachers in approved schools are on the government

payroll.

For a school to be approved, it must meet certain criteria in terms of the number of qualified teachers, facilities, etc. While the approval of schools is a ministerial responsibility, the teaching service must ensure the majority of teachers are qualified to deliver teaching of a high professional standard through its recruitment and deployment practices, school leadership and through provision of professional development.

Total Approved and Unapproved Schools

	Approved	Unapproved
Pre-primary	728	1,030
Primary	4,707	2,447
J. Secondary	1,125	508
S. Secondary	440	183
Total	7,000	4,168

Total Female and Male Teachers in Sierra Leone

	Female	Male	Total
Pre-primary	4,878	688	5,566
Primary	14,284	33,454	47,738
J. Secondary	3,155	16,733	19,888
S. Secondary	817	9,024	9,841
Total	23,134	59,899	83,033

NB: the figures above refer to teachers across all schools, including government, community, Mission and private.

There are disproportionate numbers of female and male teachers, with far more male teachers at all levels except pre-primary. The discrepancy increases at each higher level in the school system and peaks in senior secondary schools with approximately 11 times more male than female teachers. It is an important task of HR to redress the imbalance.

Teachers by Qualification

	Bachelor in Ed	Masters, PhD + ED	HTC (Secondary)	HTC (Primary)	TC	Un- qualified	Total
Pre- primary	51	9	123	485	2,206	2,692	5,566
Primary	454	39	1,350	5,666	22,875	17,354	47,738
J. Secondary	2,615	239	8,679	954	1,841	5,560	19,888
S. Secondary	3,666	304	3,029	166	223	2,453	9,841
Total	6,786	591	13,181	7,271	27,145	28,059	83,033

NB: the figures above refer to teachers across all schools, including government, community, Mission and private.

Nearly a third of all teachers are un-qualified and should either be replaced or become qualified over the next couple of years. Teachers in secondary schools are generally well qualified with many degree holders but there are still considerable numbers of unqualified teachers at this level.

In primary schools nearly 2 out of every 3 teachers are unqualified.

NB: Some teachers who are considered to be unqualified may be partially educated in teaching, have valuable teaching experience, or have an education that does not directly qualify them for teaching, but is useful.

Girls and Boys School Enrolment

	Girls	Boys	Total	Total pupils in approved schools
Pre-primary	66,752	60,416	127,168	59,534
Primary	896,191	874,177	1,770,368	1,372,356
J. Secondary	226,159	225,526	451,685	386,027
S. Secondary	147,696	157,389	305,085	273,164
Total	1,336,798	1,317,508	2,654,306	2,091,081

NB: the figures above refer to pupils across all schools, including government, community, Mission and private.

School children make up a considerable proportion of Sierra Leone's population and is expected to increase in the foreseeable future. The Government's policy of free, compulsory education has created a growing demand for qualified teachers. Forecasting future demand of teachers is an important role of HR and impacts on the planning, capacity and resources of Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs).

The gender balance among pupils is improving, with more girls than boys attending primary school, and almost equal numbers in junior secondary school. The discrepancy in senior secondary school is small, with around 10,000 more boys than girls. This trend is likely to affect tertiary education in the near future, including the output of qualified teacher candidates from TTCs. It is important to promote the teaching profession to women.

This manual focusses on Government and Government-assisted schools, and teachers who are approved, registered in the teacher records database and on the government payroll.

Revision #6

Created Thu, Mar 12, 2020 4:51 PM by [Admin](#)

Updated Wed, Apr 8, 2020 11:06 AM by [Admin](#)