

Teacher training in Rwandan secondary schools: a cascade model

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Leaders in Teaching

The Mastercard Foundation's Leaders in Teaching initiative aims to mobilize and support teachers and leaders who are at the front lines of education, and prepare young people for meaningful employment. It is doing this through a number of teacher training programs delivered by five implementing partners in Rwanda.

Laterite and the Research for Equitable Access and Learning (REAL) Centre at the University of Cambridge are the learning partners on the five-year initiative, responsible for generating ongoing evidence of improved teaching and learning within the initiative. The learning partners aim to improve the knowledge base regarding teaching quality and STEM subjects in Rwandan secondary education and beyond.

This study

This study explores the continuous professional development (CPD) programmes offered by Government of Rwanda institutions and Leaders in Teaching implementing partners to school leaders in the 12 months prior to March 2020 (i.e. before schools closed due to COVID-19). The study focuses on which topics of training school leaders received, and whether they passed this training on to the teachers they lead.

Methodology

The study is based on surveys of 350 school leaders (Directors of Studies and head teachers) at 350 Rwandan secondary schools between January and March 2020, located in the 14 districts where Leaders in Teaching operates.



Key findings

Which school leaders received CPD?

In the 12 months to March 2020, 85% of school leaders surveyed reported receiving CPD on at least one topic. The most experienced school leaders, and those managing non-schools of excellence, were most likely to have received CPD. Fewer female than male school leaders received CPD - which is striking, as females are already under-represented as school leaders.

What were the training topics?

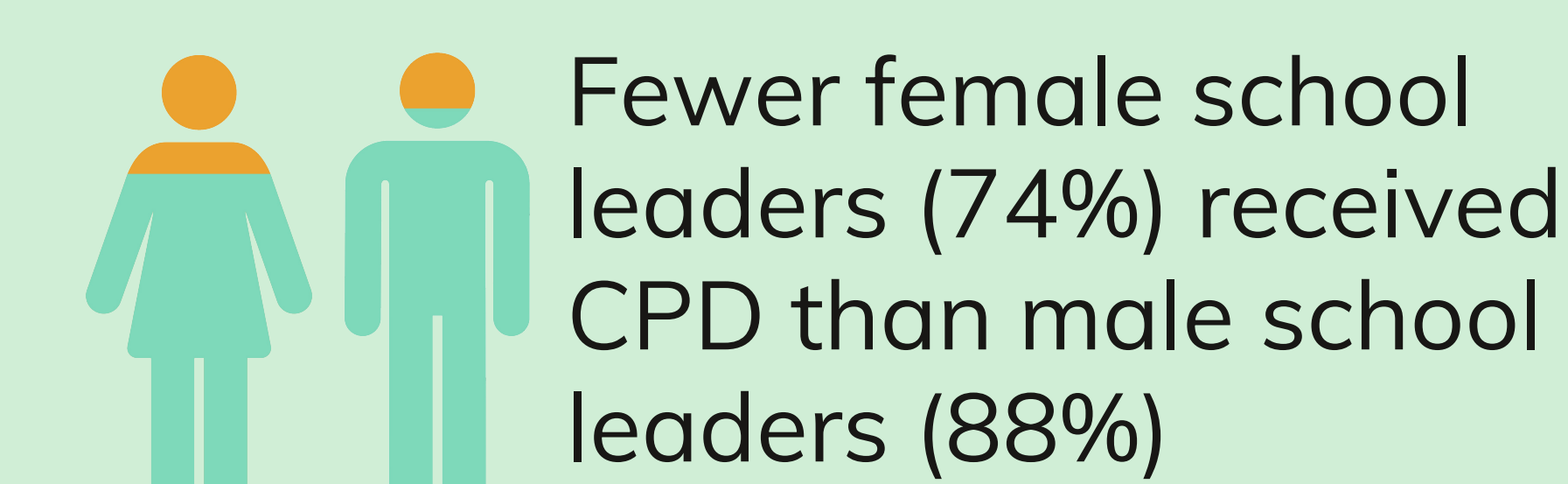
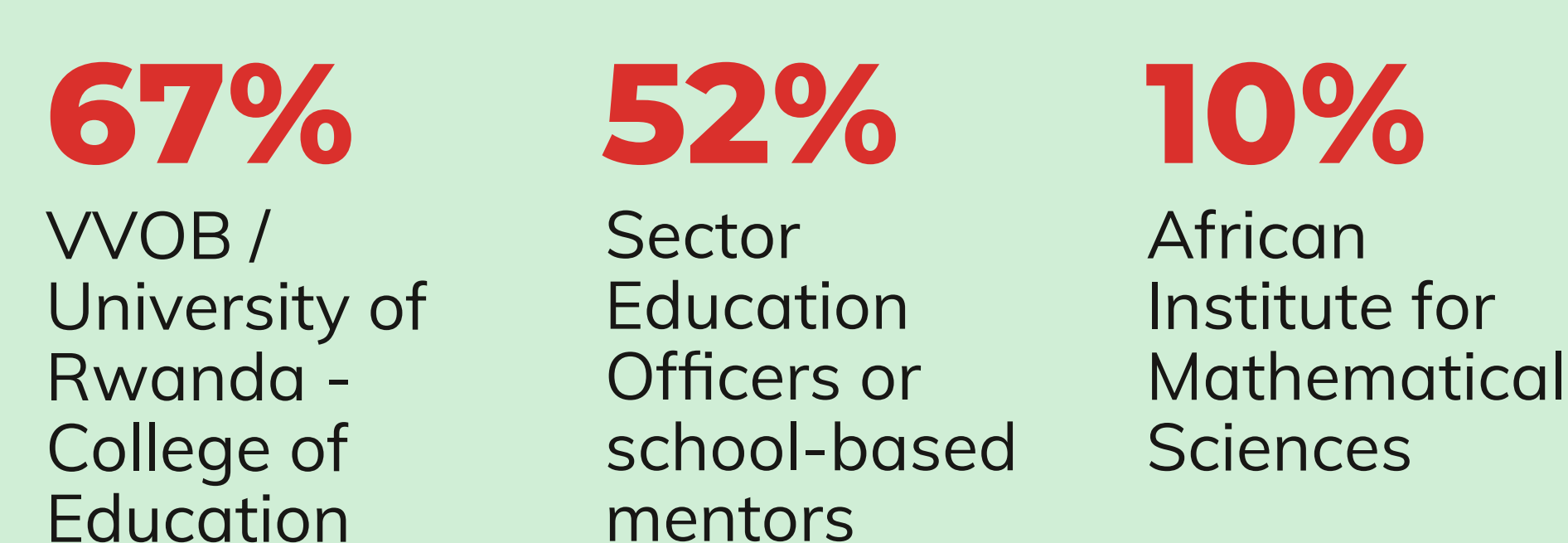
The main training topics were the competence-based curriculum (CBC) and inclusive teaching, in line with the Government of Rwanda's policy on building teachers' capacity in these areas. Only a quarter of school leaders were trained in gender-sensitive teaching practices.

Did school leaders pass on what they learned to the teachers they lead?

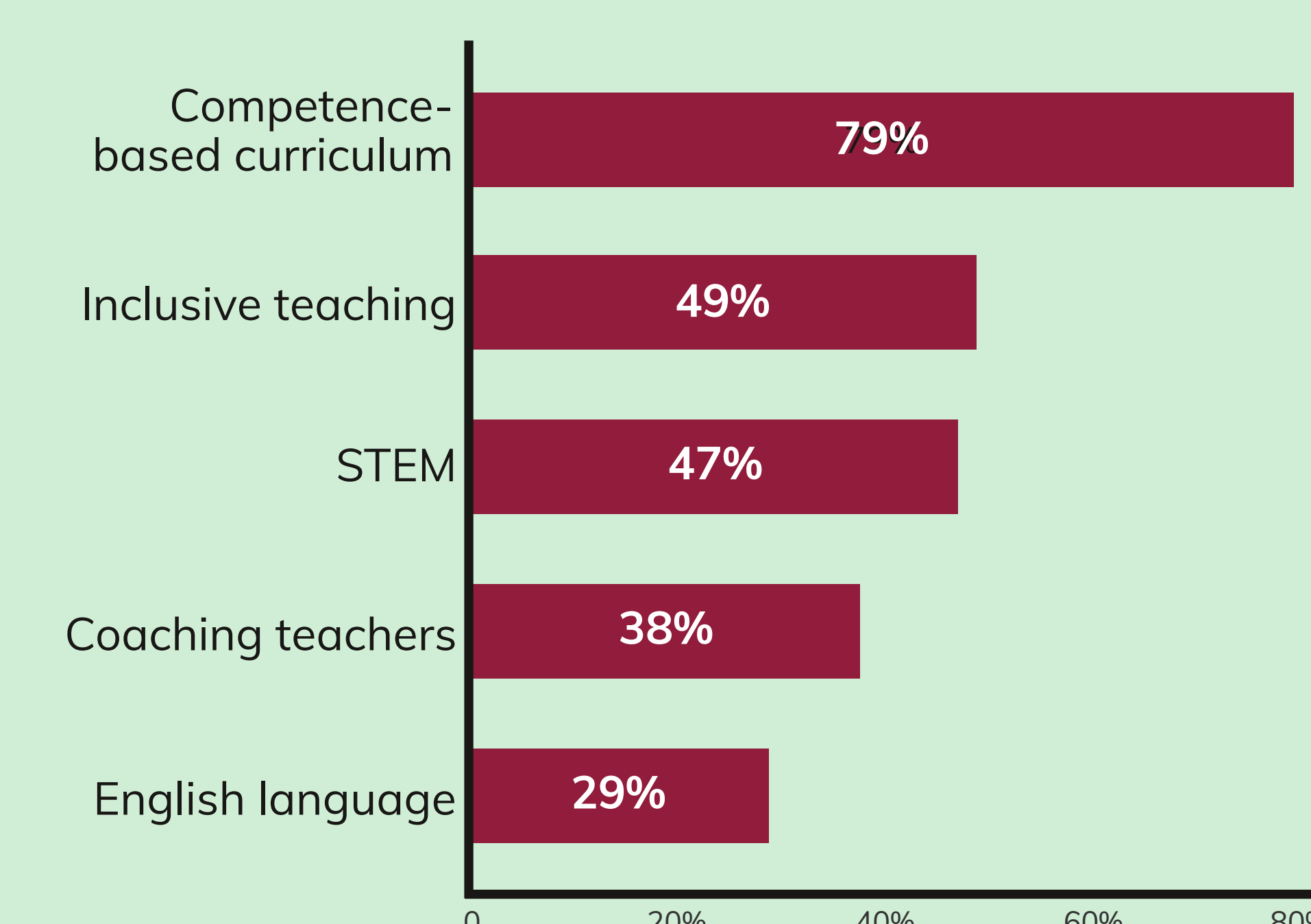
83% of school leaders reported providing CPD to their staff, with more experienced school leaders and those in schools of excellence the most likely to report doing this.

Topics differed based on school type: teachers in schools of excellence were more likely to receive CPD on student behaviour and classroom management; while teachers in urban schools were more likely to receive training on teaching in English.

School leaders reported receiving training from the following providers:



Topics of training received by school leaders in the 12 months to March 2020



Implications

A capacity and training needs assessment could improve the targeting of CPD across different groups and schools, especially among less-resourced schools. In addition:

- Training female school leaders is an important area of focus, as they are under-represented both as school leaders and CPD recipients.
- Increasing efforts to train school leaders in gender-sensitive teaching practices is important, and could help to close the student performance gender gap.
- Training less experienced school leaders, who are less likely to have received training, would be a good avenue to explore.