

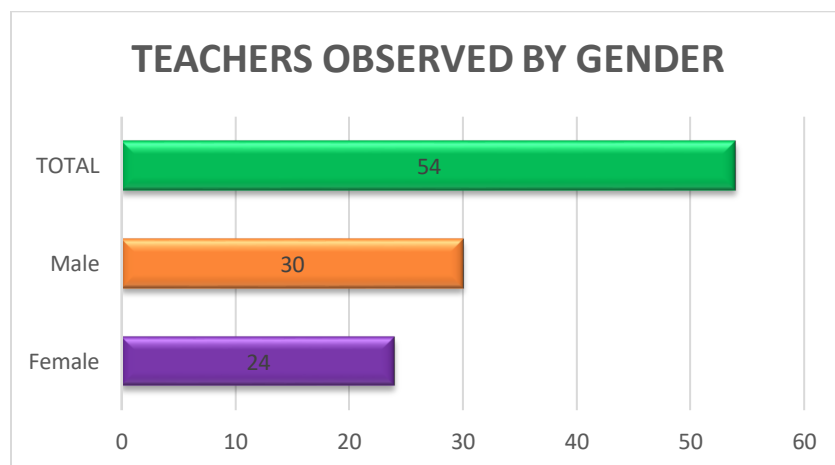
FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING CLASSROOM OBSERVATION REPORT- NOVEMBER 2025

Introduction

In November 2025, FICH and its partners Growth Care Uganda, Arua youth development initiative and Change Lead Agency for Social Support Conducted end of year classroom observation for foundational learning program across 32 schools in Oyam, Alebtong, Kole and Arua districts. The primary aim of these observations was to assess key aspects of teaching and learning, including classroom management, lesson delivery, and use of teaching resources, gender considerations and learners' engagement. The observations sought to provide a comprehensive understanding of how foundational learning practices are implemented in these schools highlighting both strengths and areas for improvement. The findings capture evidence on the effectiveness of teachers' knowledge, adherence to lesson plans, use of interactive and student-centered methodologies, time management, and gender-responsive practices within classroom environments. This report reflects the collective efforts of the implementing partners to support quality foundational learning and to inform strategies for enhancing teaching and learning outcomes across the observed schools as presented in findings below.

REPORT FINDINGS

Teachers observed by gender

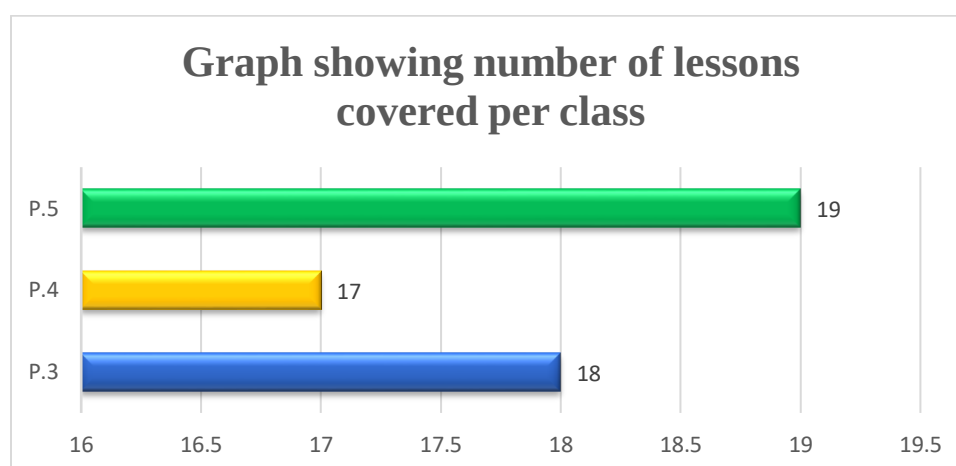


During the foundational learning classroom observation visits, a total of 54 teachers were observed delivering lessons and engaging learners in their classrooms. Of these, 30 were male and 24 were female showing a fairly balanced representation contributing to the teaching and learning process. The observations provided an opportunity to understand how teachers are applying foundational learning approaches in real classroom settings, with both male and female teachers demonstrating commitment to supporting learners and encouraging participation. Across the schools visited, teachers used different strategies to engage pupils and create supportive learning environments,

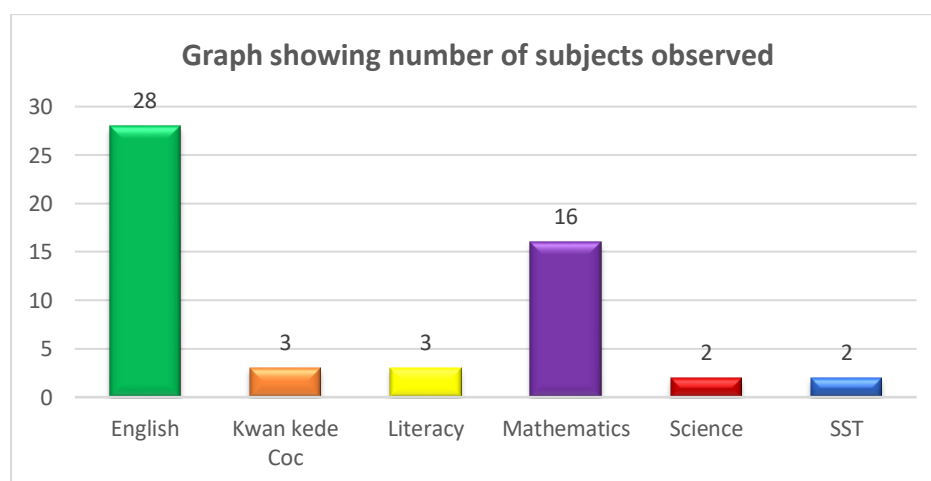
reflecting the diverse experiences and teaching styles present in the classrooms. Overall, the exercise highlighted the important role played by these 54 dedicated teachers in strengthening foundational literacy and numeracy and improving learning outcomes in their schools

Classes observed

During the classroom observation visits, a total of 54 lessons were observed across three key primary levels. Primary Three (P.3) had 18 lessons observed, Primary Four (P.4) had 17 lessons observed and Primary Five (P.5) had the highest number with 19 lessons observed. This distribution provided a balanced opportunity to assess teaching and learning practices across the middle primary section where foundational literacy and numeracy skills continue to be strengthened. Observing these classes allowed the team to gain insights into how teachers support learners' progression from early foundational skills in P.3 to more advanced comprehension and application in P.5. The spread of observations across the three grade levels also helped capture diverse classroom dynamics, teaching approaches and learner engagement as represented in graph below.

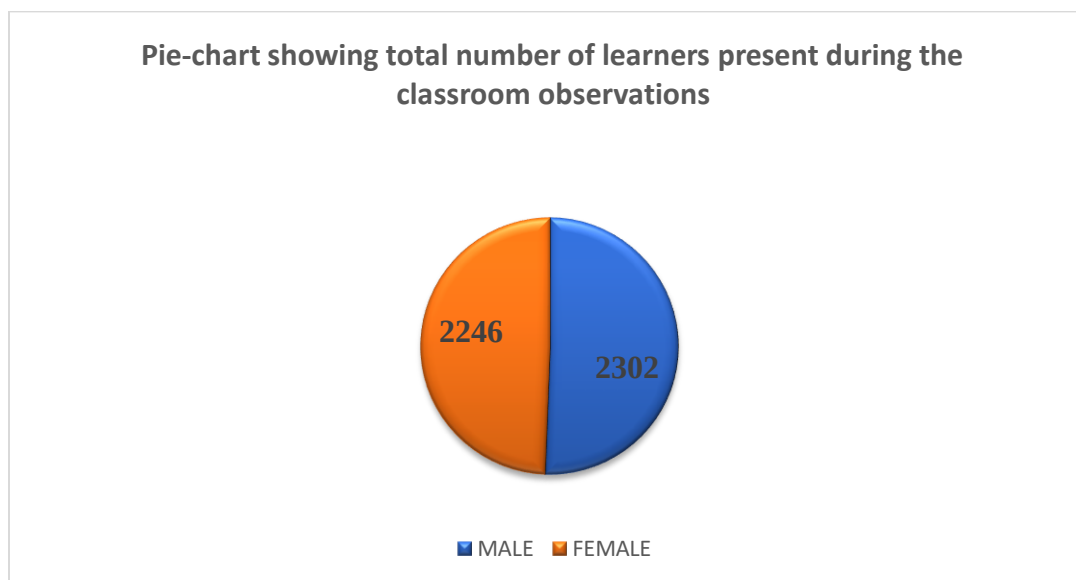


Subjects observed



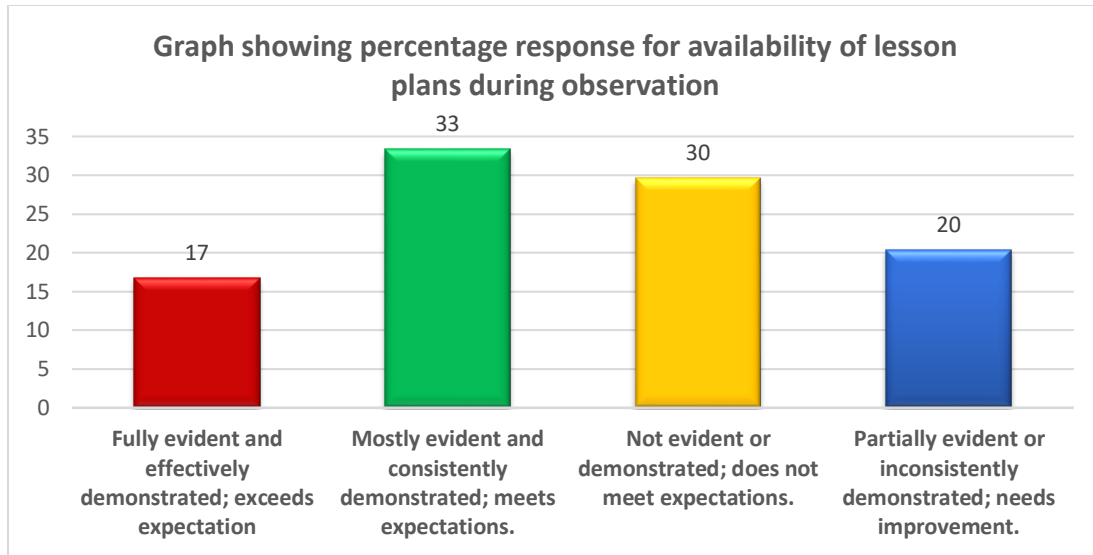
In the graph above, a variety of subjects were observed to understand how foundational learning is being delivered across the curriculum. English had the highest number of observations with 28 lessons, reflecting its central role in strengthening learners' reading, writing, and communication skills. Mathematics followed with 16 observed lessons, providing insights into how teachers support learners in developing numeracy and problem-solving abilities. A smaller number of observations were conducted in Kwan Kede Coc (3 lessons) and Literacy (3 lessons), which are important in reinforcing language development and early reading skills, particularly in lower and middle primary classes. Additionally, Science (2 lessons) and Social Studies – SST (2 lessons) were observed, offering a glimpse into how foundational skills are integrated into content-based subjects. Overall, the range of subjects observed helped provide a broader understanding of teaching practices and learner engagement across different areas of the curriculum, while highlighting the strong emphasis placed on English and Mathematics as key drivers of foundational learning.

Total learners present during day of observation



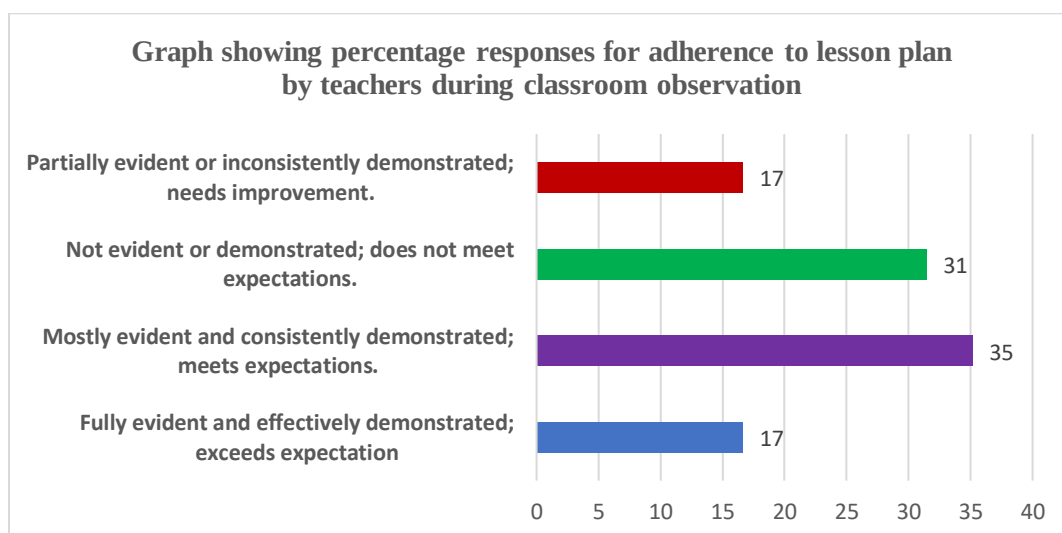
A total of 4,548 learners were present and actively participating in lessons across the schools visited. Of these, 2,302 were boys while 2,246 were girls, showing a nearly balanced participation of both male and female learners in the classroom activities. This strong attendance provided a meaningful opportunity for the observation team to witness real classroom interactions, learner engagement, and how teachers support diverse groups of pupils during lessons.

Availability of lesson plan



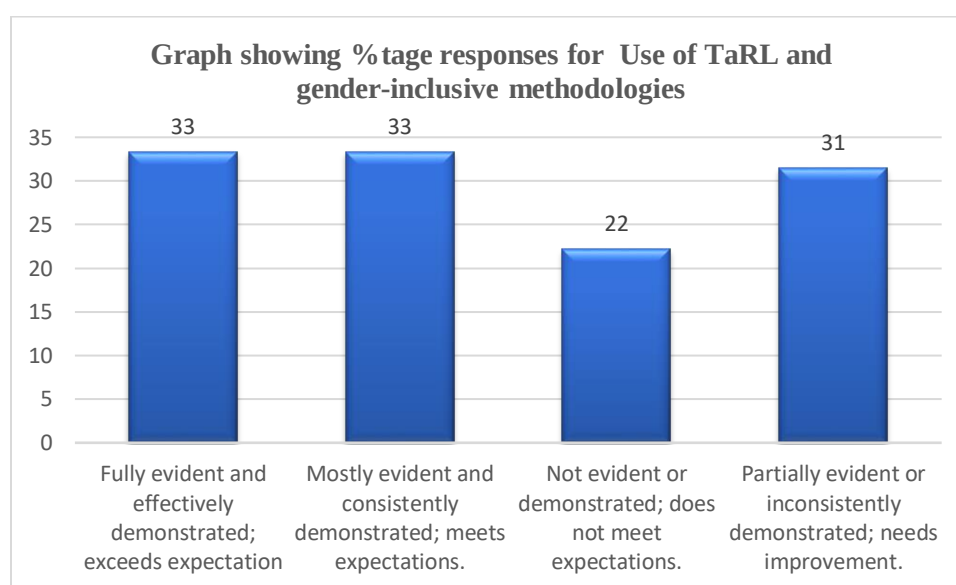
During the classroom observations, the availability and use of lesson plans among teachers showed varying levels of preparation and consistency. About 33% of the teachers had lesson plans that were mostly evident and consistently demonstrated, meeting the expected standards, while 17% went a step further with lesson plans that were fully evident and effectively demonstrated, exceeding expectations. However, the observations also revealed areas that require improvement, as 20% of the teachers had lesson plans that were only partially evident or inconsistently demonstrated, suggesting the need for additional support and follow-up. Additionally, 30% of the lessons observed did not have lesson plans evident or demonstrated indicating a significant gap in planning that may affect the structure and delivery of lessons. Overall, the findings highlight encouraging efforts by some teachers while also pointing to the need for continued guidance and reinforcement on the importance of consistent lesson planning to support effective teaching and learning in the classroom.

Adherence to lesson plan



About 35% of the teachers mostly adhered to their lesson plans in a consistent manner, meeting the expected standards, while 17% demonstrated a very strong level of adherence, where the lesson plans were fully evident and effectively followed, exceeding expectations. However, the observations also highlighted areas that require improvement, as 17% of the teachers only partially adhered to their lesson plans or did so inconsistently, suggesting a need for further guidance and support. In addition, 31% of the lessons observed showed little or no evidence of adherence to the lesson plan, which may affect lesson flow, time management, and achievement of learning objectives. Overall, while a number of teachers are making efforts to follow their planned lessons, the findings point to the need for continued mentorship and reinforcement on the importance of effectively using lesson plans to guide teaching and enhance learner engagement and outcomes.

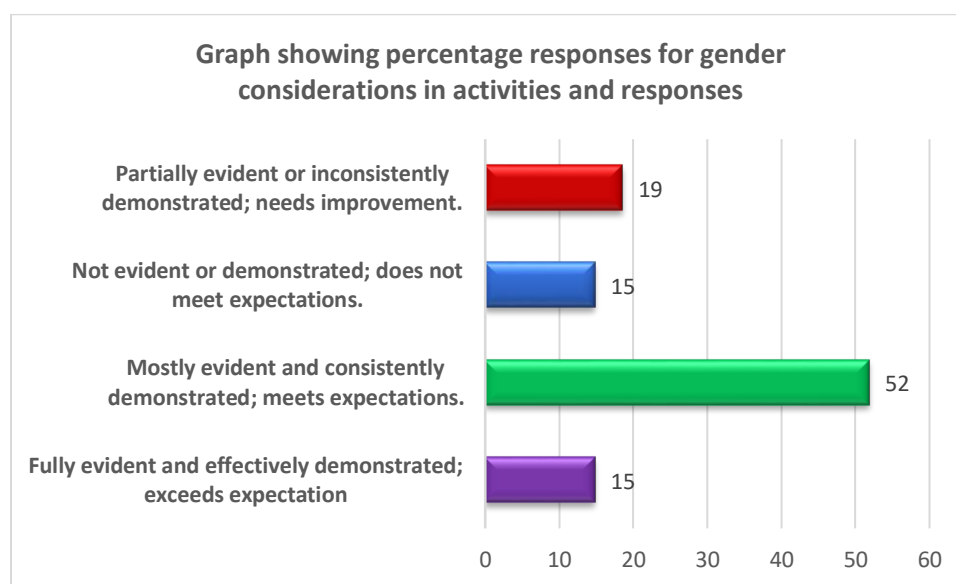
Use of TaRL and gender inclusive methodologies



The use of Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) and gender-inclusive methodologies showed encouraging progress though with clear areas that still require strengthening. About 33% of the teachers demonstrated these approaches very effectively with practices that were fully evident in the classroom and even exceeded expectations. Another 33% mostly applied TaRL and gender-inclusive strategies consistently meeting the expected standards and showing a good understanding of how to support learners at different ability levels while ensuring both boys and girls actively participate in the learning process. However, 31% of the teachers applied these methods only partially or inconsistently indicating that some still need additional support and practice to confidently integrate the approaches into their daily teaching. In addition, 22% of the observed lessons showed little or no evidence of TaRL and gender-inclusive methodologies highlighting the need for continued coaching, mentorship and reinforcement to ensure all teachers are able to effectively apply these strategies and create inclusive classrooms where every learner has the opportunity to succeed.

Gender consideration in activities and responses

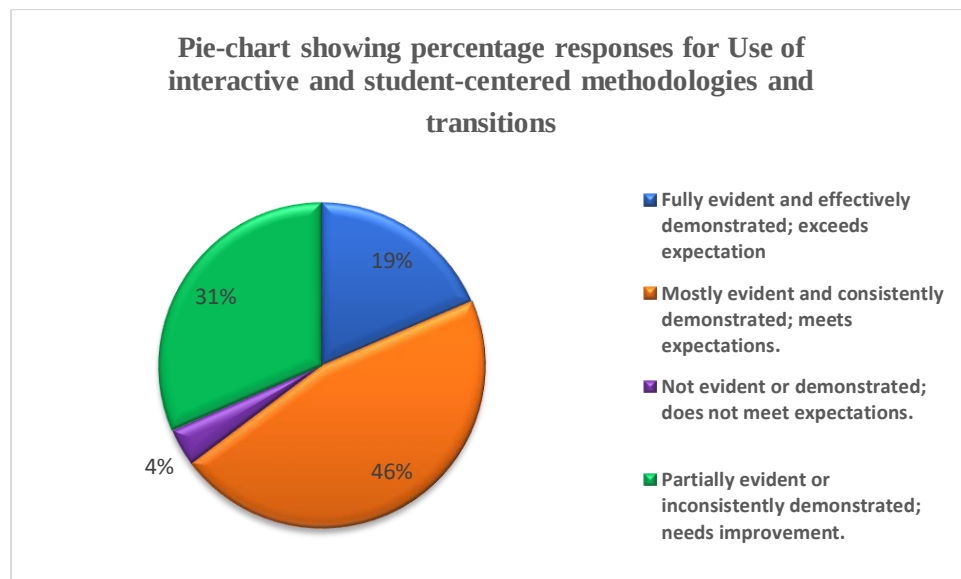
About 52% of the lessons observed demonstrated gender consideration that was mostly evident and consistently practiced meeting the expected standard while 15% of the teachers showed very strong and deliberate gender inclusion, exceeding expectations. In these classrooms, teachers intentionally engaged both girls and boys by randomly selecting them to answer questions, encouraging them to read aloud, participate in role plays, and demonstrate activities on the chalkboard. In several cases, observers noted that boys and girls participated equally in class activities, with teachers being mindful and intentional about ensuring balanced participation. However, 19% of the lessons showed only partial or inconsistent gender inclusion, where participation sometimes leaned more toward one group. Additionally, 15% of the observed lessons did not clearly demonstrate deliberate gender consideration, with some instances where boys were called upon more frequently than girls or where participation occurred mainly as a whole class without targeted encouragement. A few observations also highlighted the need for more gender-sensitive seating arrangements and deliberate strategies to encourage quieter learners, particularly girls, to participate actively. Overall, while many teachers are making positive efforts toward inclusive participation, continued support will help strengthen gender-responsive teaching practices in the classroom as represented below



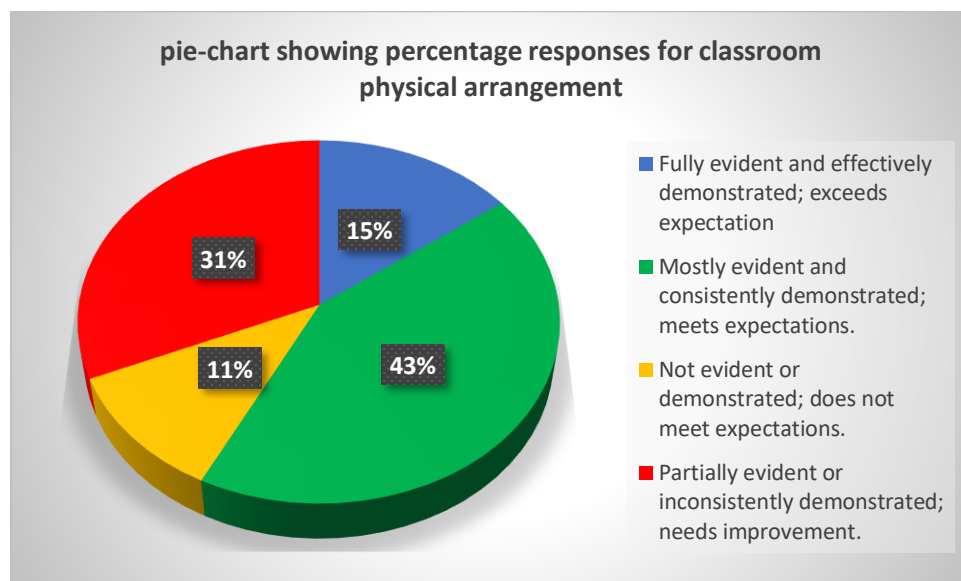
Use of interactive and student-centered methodologies and transitions

Classroom observations show that teachers are generally using interactive and student-centered approaches effectively. About 19% of lessons went above and beyond expectations with teachers fully engaging students through hands-on activities, group discussions and smooth transitions. The majority, 46% of lessons consistently met expectations showing that participatory methods are regularly applied even if minor improvements in transitions could be made. Some lessons, 31%, were inconsistent with engagement varying among students while a small number 4%, did not demonstrate these approaches relying more on traditional lecture-style methods. Overall, the

findings suggest that teachers are making strong efforts to keep learning dynamic and student-focused, though continued support and sharing of best practices could help ensure every lesson consistently captures all students' attention as shown in the pie-chart below



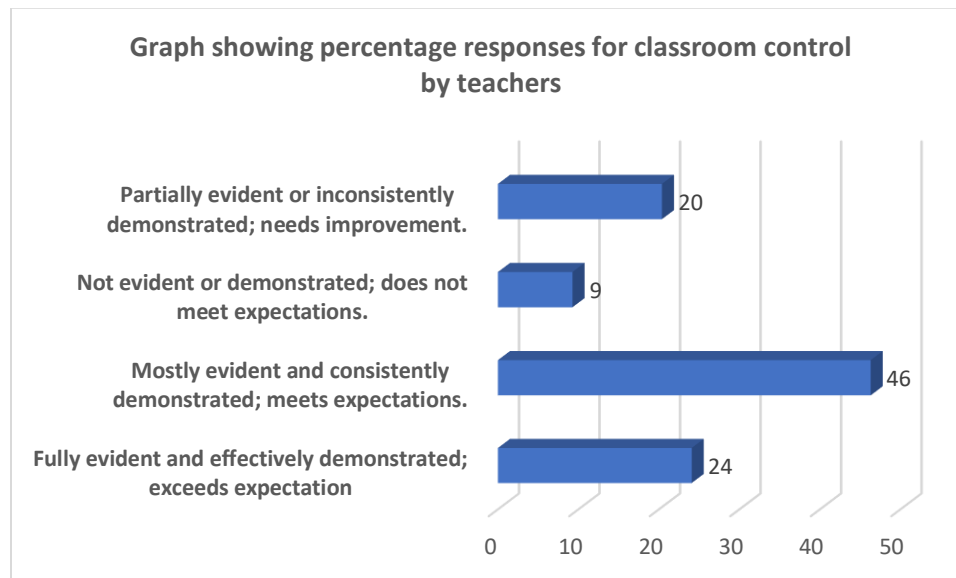
Classroom physical arrangement



As represented above, about 15% of classrooms were excellently organized, exceeding expectations, with furniture and learning materials arranged to promote interaction, movement, and accessibility. 43% were mostly evident and consistently demonstrated, meeting expectations, showing that most teachers maintained functional and orderly spaces, though some adjustments could improve student engagement or comfort. 31% of classrooms showed partial or inconsistent

arrangements, where space or material placement sometimes hindered activities, while 11% did not meet expectations, with cluttered or restrictive layouts limiting learning interactions. Overall, while many classrooms are thoughtfully arranged to support learning, targeted guidance could help more teachers optimize their space consistently.

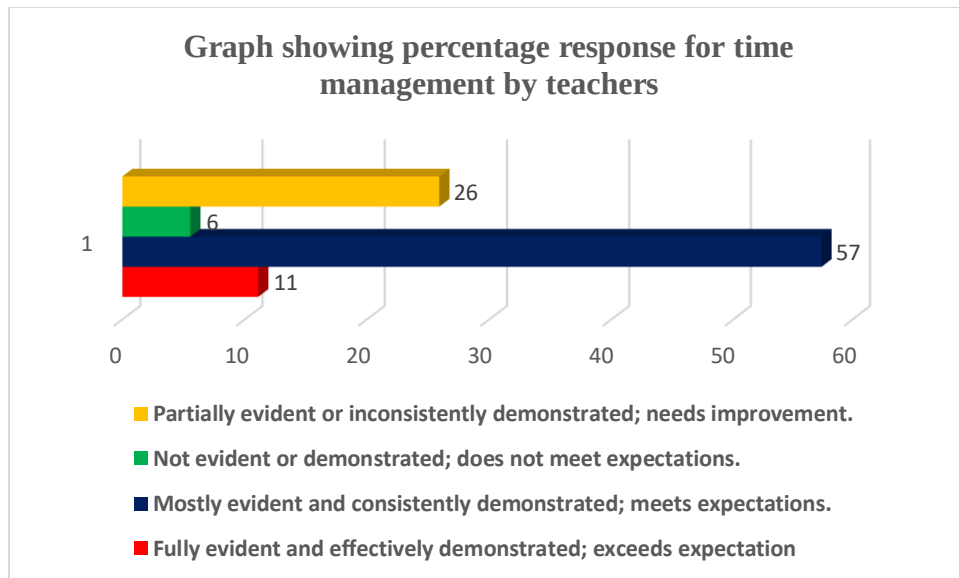
Classroom control



Observations of classroom control above show that many teachers are effectively managing their learning environments. About 24% of lessons were exemplary, exceeding expectations, with teachers maintaining authority while fostering a positive, focused, and respectful classroom atmosphere. 46% of lessons consistently met expectations, reflecting that most teachers managed student behavior and engagement well, though occasional minor disruptions occurred. 20% of lessons showed partial or inconsistent control, where discipline or order was uneven, and 9% did not meet expectations, with classrooms experiencing noticeable disruptions that affected learning. Overall, the findings suggest that while classroom control is generally strong, ongoing support and sharing of best practices could help all teachers sustain consistent, effective management.

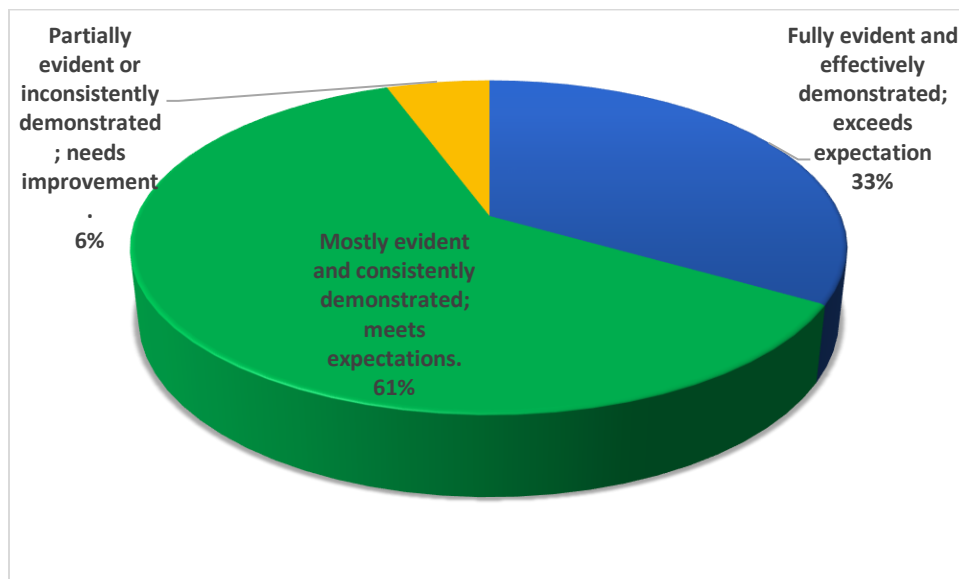
Time management

Observations of time management in classrooms indicate that teachers are generally pacing their lessons effectively. About 11% of lessons were exemplary, exceeding expectations, with teachers using time efficiently to cover all planned activities while allowing meaningful student engagement. 57% of lessons consistently met expectations, showing that most teachers managed time well, though small adjustments could improve transitions or activity pacing. 26% of lessons were partially evident or inconsistent, where some activities ran over or under time, and 6% did not meet expectations, with significant time mismanagement affecting lesson flow. Overall, while time management is largely effective, focused support could help more teachers optimize lesson timing consistently as demonstrated below.



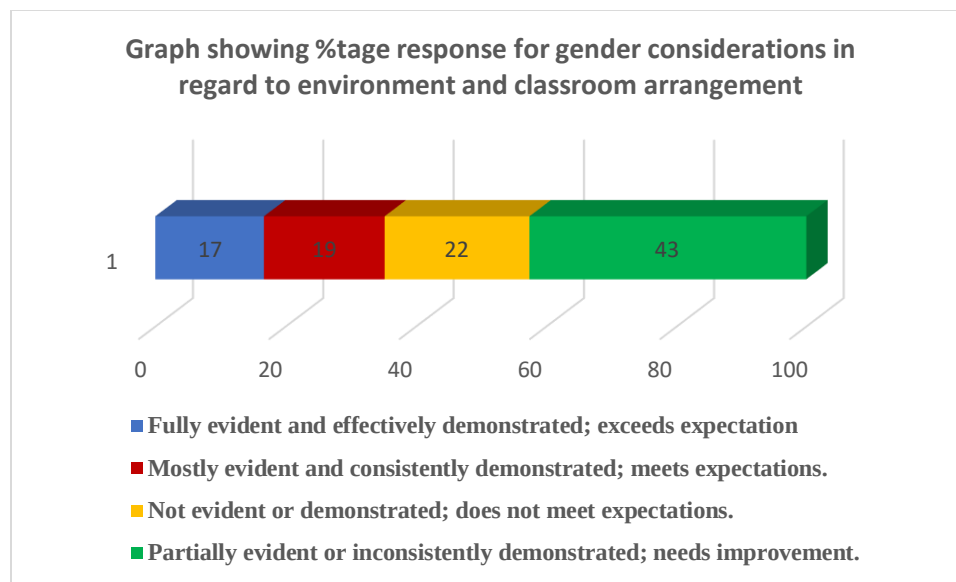
Lesson content (Knowledge of teacher)

Pie-chart showing responses for knowledge of the teacher



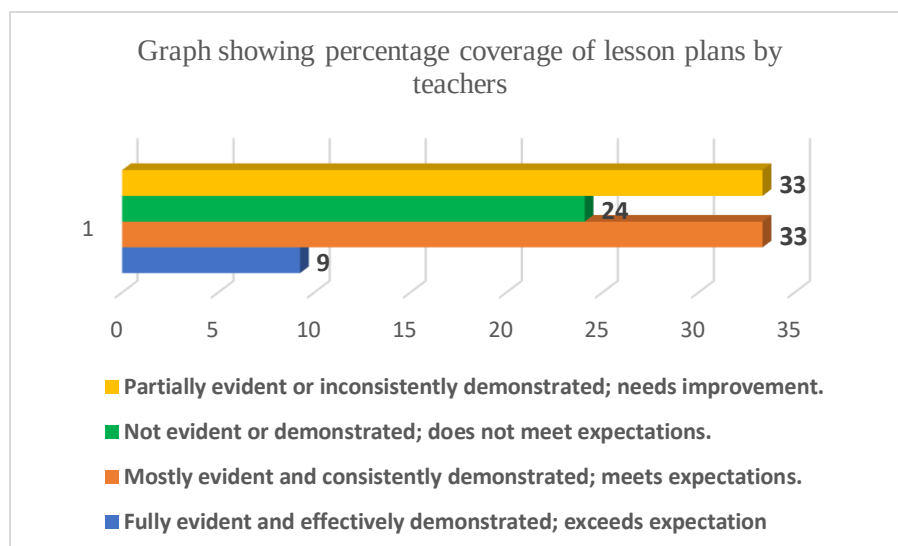
Pie-chart above for observations of lesson content indicate that teachers demonstrate strong knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. About 33% of lessons were exemplary, exceeding expectations, with teachers presenting content confidently, accurately, and in ways that deeply engaged students. The majority, 61% of lessons, consistently met expectations, showing that most teachers effectively delivered content, though some could enhance depth or clarity in certain areas. A small portion, 6% of lessons, were partially evident or inconsistent, indicating occasional gaps in content delivery. Overall, the findings suggest that teachers possess solid subject knowledge, providing a strong foundation for student learning.

Gender considerations in regard to environment and classroom arrangement



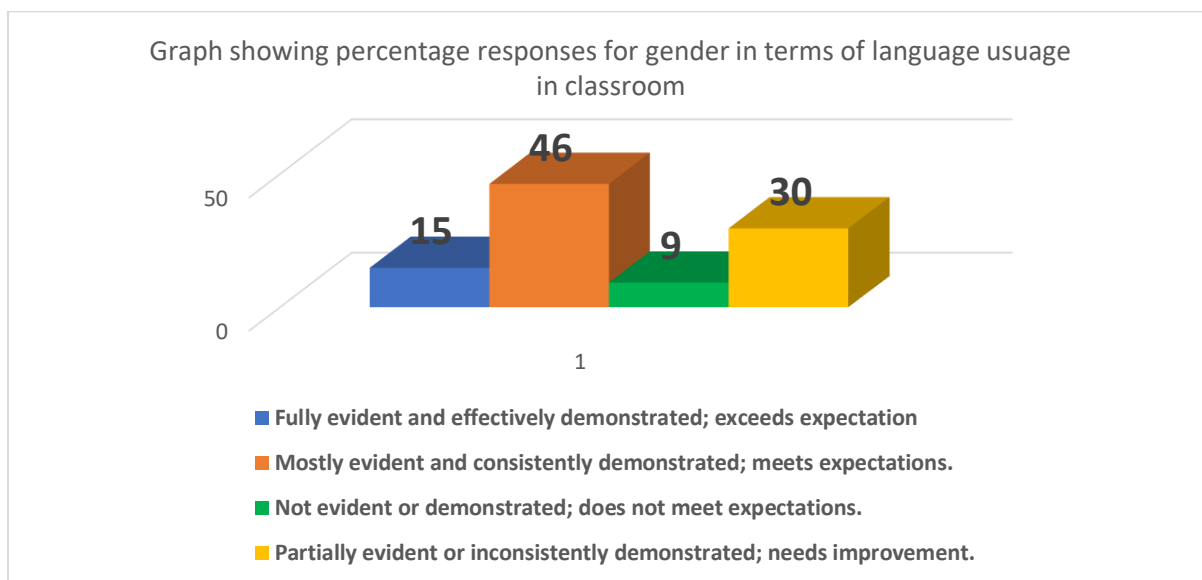
The graph above shows observations of gender considerations in classroom environment and arrangement reveal mixed implementation. About 17% of classrooms were exemplary exceeding expectations where seating, materials and learning spaces actively promoted equal participation for both girls and boys. 19% of classrooms consistently met expectations, demonstrating conscious efforts to support gender inclusion though not always fully optimized. However, a significant portion, 43% of classrooms showed partial or inconsistent consideration and 22% did not meet expectations with arrangements or practices that unintentionally limited equal access or participation. Overall, while some teachers effectively integrate gender-sensitive practices, focused guidance and support are needed to ensure all classrooms foster inclusive learning for every student.

Coverage of lesson plan



Under coverage of lesson plans, the graph indicate that teachers show varied consistency in following their planned lessons. About 9% of lessons were exemplary exceeding expectations with teachers fully covering their objectives while engaging students effectively. 33% of lessons consistently met expectations demonstrating that most teachers generally adhered to their plans, though some pacing or detail adjustments could improve coverage. However, 33% of lessons were partially evident or inconsistently demonstrated and 24% did not meet expectations where key content or activities were missed affecting learning outcomes. Overall, the findings suggest a need for additional support to help teachers consistently deliver complete and well-paced lesson plans.

Gender in terms of language usage in class



As in the above graph, observations of language usage in classrooms indicate that teachers are generally mindful of gender in their interactions. About 15% of lessons were exemplary exceeding expectations where teachers consistently used inclusive language that encouraged participation from all students. 46% of lessons consistently met expectations, showing that most teachers generally maintained gender-sensitive communication, though occasional unconscious biases appeared. 30% of lessons were partially evident or inconsistent, and 9% did not meet expectations, where language used may have unintentionally favored one gender or limited engagement. Overall, while many teachers apply gender-responsive language effectively, continued awareness and guidance could help ensure consistent inclusion for every student.

FEEDBACK FROM TEACHERS

Successes

Improved learner engagement and participation. Learners are more attentive and actively participating in lessons. TaRL activities were particularly effective in making lessons interactive, with teachers quoted saying “*Learners enjoyed Tarl activities and they love it*” and “*Learners*

interact freely without any fear. The methodology has created healthy communication through play.”

Enhanced literacy and numeracy skills. Reading, sentence construction, and problem-solving skills among learners have improved. Teachers reported, *“Most of the learners are able to read sentences, analyze and interpret”* and *“Development of material has made teaching math easier.”*

Teacher knowledge and pedagogical growth. Teachers’ confidence and ability to deliver lessons effectively have increased. One teacher noted, *“My knowledge has increased compared to previous years.”*

Positive classroom dynamics and parental support. Learners are able to collaborate and participate actively, while parents provide support in learning materials. Teachers shared, *“Including them in problem solving, they are able to judge the correct answers”* and *“Parents improved on providing writing materials.”*

CHALLENGES

High learner numbers and overcrowding. Large classes make it difficult for teachers to give individual attention.

Absenteeism and irregular attendance. Frequent learner absences disrupt lesson flow as one teacher noted, *“High absenteeism rate of learners”*

Limited teaching and learning resources. Shortages of textbooks, teaching aids and materials hinder effective lesson planning and delivery. Teachers shared, *“No teaching aids used”* and *“Resources are not provided to support them in planning for the lesson.”*

Integration challenges with TaRL and gender-responsive pedagogy. Some activities are difficult to implement fully and gender considerations sometimes limit participation. One teacher stated, *“Integrating TaRL and gender responsive pedagogy is still a challenge.”*

Environmental and structural constraints. Inadequate seating, unsafe classrooms, and destroyed displays affect learning. Teachers observed, *“The class time display materials are always destroyed since the rooms are not locked”* and *“Unconducive classroom affected classroom display.”*

Teacher motivation and preparedness. Lack of communication, coordination and financial incentives affects readiness. Teachers highlighted, *“The lesson was challenging in that I didn’t adequately prepare myself due to no communication made about the visit”* and *“FICH should again organize in-school coaching for material development and lesson planning.”*

FEEDBACK FROM LEARNERS

Learner Experiences

Learners generally found lessons interesting, enjoyable, and easy to understand. They appreciated interactive teaching, active participation, and the supportive classroom environment. One learner noted, *“The teacher is interesting and makes us understand well.”* Improvements in attendance and engagement were also observed, as learners reported enjoying lessons more than before.

Areas for Improvement

Learners identified several challenges that affect their learning. Hunger was a major concern, often reducing concentration during lessons. Other issues included insufficient desks, difficulty recalling lessons in some subjects, occasional absence of teachers, fear of sitting with other genders and limited teaching materials. Learners also suggested more inclusive participation strategies, for example, ensuring that students who don't raise their hands also get a chance to contribute. Addressing these areas would further enhance learners' classroom experience and engagement.

FEEDBACK FROM OBSERVERS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

Observers noted that teachers generally engaged learners well, created interactive lessons and maintained enthusiasm in the classroom. Lessons were often interesting and enjoyable, with students actively participating and showing curiosity, especially in mathematics and language concepts. Teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and flexibility in handling learners. Observers also appreciated the use of teaching aids where available and highlighted positive classroom management practices. One observer noted, *“The lesson was interesting, the availability of textbooks eased learning. The TaRL activities tried were able to guide the learners to think and relate to the subject matter.”*

However, several areas were identified for improvement. Many observers recommended greater integration of TaRL methodologies, suggesting activities such as mind maps, multiplication with the box method and using local language to support understanding. Observers also noted the need to attend to learners at the back of the classroom, ensure inclusive participation, and mix genders in seating arrangements to improve motivation and collaboration. Other challenges included insufficient lesson planning, missing life skills and values components, inadequate teaching and learning aids, and large class sizes that affected individual attention.

Key recommendations included:

- Refresher training for teachers on TaRL methodologies, gender-sensitive pedagogy, and classroom management.
- Improved lesson planning with complete schemes of work and integration of life skills, values, and interactive activities.

- Enhanced classroom management through strategies to monitor learners at the back and manage indiscipline effectively.
- Provision and display of teaching learning aids to support understanding.
- Encouragement of team teaching in large classes to balance learner attention and participation.
- Support from school management to ensure teacher attendance and adherence to planning.

Overall, observers concluded that lessons were successful and learners were engaged, but systematic support through training, resources and classroom strategies would strengthen implementation of TaRL and gender-responsive practices.

WHAT STOOD OUT FOR OBSERVERS

Observers were particularly impressed by the teacher's ability to actively engage learners and create a lively, interactive classroom environment. Several highlighted the sweet and calm language used during instruction, the friendliness of the teacher and the way learners were motivated to participate. Observers appreciated strategies such as picking every child to answer, asking learners to justify their responses and moving around the classroom to check on weaker learners, which allowed even silent learners to contribute and enabled the teacher to identify learning difficulties. One observer noted, *"The idea of picking every child to say an answer whether wrong or right was impressive. It gives the opportunity to silent learners to be understood."*

Other notable strengths included the integration of TaRL activities, use of learning aids and classroom displays and thoughtful classroom arrangements that supported movement and engagement. Observers also valued the use of energizers, role plays and a mix of English and local language to keep learners attentive. The high level of learner participation, good content knowledge, and ability to maintain some classroom control stood out across lessons, with learners demonstrating strong reading skills and enthusiasm for learning.

At the same time, observers noted areas that required attention, such as learners at the back being less engaged, indiscipline, and some students not paying attention, which sometimes limited the effectiveness of instruction for all. Despite these concerns, the overall impression was that teachers were committed, well-prepared, and successfully creating dynamic learning environments.

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENTS THAT OBSERVERS DISCUSSED WITH TEACHERS

Observers provided constructive feedback to help teachers enhance lesson delivery and learner engagement. A primary focus was on the use of simple and practical TaRL activities to involve all learners and make lessons more interactive. Observers recommended methods such as *letter jump*, *basket games*, *mind maps of syllables*, *role plays* and *energizers*, noting that these activities help learners connect new concepts to familiar experiences. Teachers were encouraged to move around

the classroom and pay special attention to learners at the back, who are often less engaged or disruptive.

Lesson planning and preparation were highlighted as critical. Observers emphasized that teachers should always prepare in advance, update schemes of work, develop teaching and learning aids, and incorporate TaRL methodologies into every lesson. One recommendation stated, *“Should always be prepared with scheme of work and lesson plan before executing a lesson,”* reflecting the importance of structured preparation for effective teaching.

Gender-sensitive classroom management was another area of focus. Observers advised teachers to mix boys and girls in seating arrangements, consider gender when organizing activities, and ensure equal participation. They also suggested better classroom control to manage indiscipline, unnecessary movement, and absenteeism, while fostering an interactive and learner-centered environment.

Additional recommendations included:

- Using the local language alongside English to enhance understanding.
- Displaying learning aids and teaching materials for learners to review.
- Providing learners with enough time to read and practice, and correcting mistakes immediately to reinforce learning.
- Revisiting the TaRL and gender-responsive manuals to identify more activities and strategies to engage all learners.
- Addressing attendance and hunger issues, ensuring learners are ready to participate.

Overall, the feedback emphasized that with improved preparation, integration of TaRL activities, classroom management, gender considerations, and use of teaching aids, lessons could become even more engaging, inclusive, and effective for all learners.

OBSERVATION OF STUDENTS’ PROGRESS IN FOUNDATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY SKILLS

Observers noted varying levels of progress among learners in literacy and numeracy skills. Many active learners demonstrated a clear understanding of lesson content, reading new words accurately, constructing sentences and forming nationalities from country names. Some learners showed improvement in arithmetic, with the ability to solve addition and multiplication problems correctly, while others displayed confidence in reading and identifying spelling or sentence errors. One observer reported, *“Learners seemed to understand what was taught since a number of them got correct answers during the individual trial.”*

Progress, however was inconsistent across classes. While some groups of learners read fluently and demonstrated strong writing skills, others struggled with unfamiliar words, had difficulty

recalling lessons in smaller groups, or showed only minimal improvement in numeracy. Observers described the overall progress as ranging from moderate and promising to minimal or very limited in certain classrooms. Despite these disparities, several learners displayed increased confidence, active participation and growing fluency in reading and writing, indicating that targeted support and continued practice could further enhance foundational skills.

TEACHER INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENTS REQUIRING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Teachers employ a variety of strategies to support learners who struggle with literacy or numeracy, though the extent of these interventions varies across classrooms. Common approaches include providing extra attention during lessons, moving around the classroom to check on learners individually, and assigning tasks or exercises to identify gaps in understanding. Teachers often place slower learners at the front, mix them with stronger peers in small groups, or use peers to provide additional support.

Several teachers also provide outside-classroom support, such as remedial lessons in the morning or evening, one-on-one coaching, and encouraging learners to practice with textbooks or exercises at home. Some educators emphasize repetition, continuous practice, and correction of errors immediately after tasks, ensuring learners consolidate understanding. Additionally, teaching aids, practical examples, and desk-by-desk reading are used to reinforce concepts for struggling learners.

Despite these efforts, a few observers noted that interventions were not always evident or consistently implemented highlighting the need for systematic support structures to ensure all learners receive the help they need. Overall, teachers show commitment to supporting weaker learners through individualized attention, peer support, remedial lessons and practical learning activities.

TEACHER KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS ON GENDER

Observers noted that several teachers have developed a good understanding of gender issues and consciously integrate this awareness into their daily classroom activities. Many teachers ensure mixed seating arrangements, pick both boys and girls to respond, and encourage equal participation during lessons, helping to balance opportunities for all learners. Some teachers also use real-life examples, competitions, and assignments to reinforce gender awareness and sensitivity in learning. One observer highlighted, *“Yes, the teacher is knowledgeable on gender issues. Learners’ sitting arrangement is mixed boys and girls, he uses appropriate language and encourages both genders to participate.”* However, progress in gender-sensitive teaching is uneven across classrooms. While some teachers demonstrate strong practices, others show minimal integration or require additional support and training to consistently apply gender-responsive approaches. A few classrooms showed limited evidence of gender consideration, indicating that more systematic mentoring, refresher training, and structured guidance could help all teachers develop inclusive practices that fully engage both boys and girls.