Teachers for the future:
Meeting teacher shortages to achieve Education for All

National Steering Group (NSG), Nigeria
First Session, National Commission for Colleges of Education, Abuja,
10 February 2005

Summary Notes and Decisions

Opening
1. The Executive Secretary of the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) welcomed participants, noting the history and purpose of the NCCE to coordinate teacher education for Universal Basic Education (UBE), notably standards, accreditation and harmonization of curricula. Recent work had focused on information technology, family life skills, gender and HIV/AIDS. NCCE also helped to channel technical cooperation on behalf of Nigerian colleges of education, and maintained an active programme of research, statistics and publications on teacher education and the position of teachers in Nigeria.

2. Additional welcoming remarks were made by the President of the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT), who emphasized the importance of resolving the question of many qualified teachers without jobs, while avoiding lowered standards to meet alleged shortages. The Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity welcomed this critical programme’s potential for cooperation between two federal ministries, the NCCE and NUT, urged a selective focus on the most important priorities, including social dialogue, and confirmed her Ministry’s support to the work. The ILO Abuja Programme Officer then responsible for this programme introduced participants (list attached).

3. The ILO education sector specialist from Geneva presented the action programme background, including expected activities and outputs in Nigeria, in other African countries participating in the programme and internationally. In answer to questions, the following clarifications were given: a) ILO regular budget funding was limited and would be used to support the meetings of the National Steering Group (NSG) in Abuja; b) efforts would be made in partnership with the NSG to mobilize additional resources to carry out the work once decided, and preliminary steps had already been taken to contact development partners/donors in Nigeria and elsewhere (for example UNESCO which was interested to work with the NSG on teacher education); c) ILO technical assistance would take several forms, including organization of information and technical exchanges through the programme Website, regional forums, direct exchanges depending on resource implications (for example with South Africa), comments on drafts and the final report produced by the NSG, assistance on social dialogue, including at school level and support into 2006 and beyond if requested.

Priority issues relating to teacher shortages and EFA in Nigeria
4. Participants identified the following key issues which needed to be addressed within the action programme:
   - standards in teacher education programmes, plus professional development and support;
- the professional image and status of teachers;
- state and local government teacher recruitment policies;
- gender imbalances – men and women - in teacher recruitment and maintenance by state or major region;
- teacher salary levels, especially compared to competing professionals;
- incentives in the recruitment of NCE graduates;
- improved social dialogue frameworks, particularly at school level, and potentially between teachers and other professionals;

5. After some discussion on the viability of using the ILO’s proposed conceptual framework in a timely manner that would also be sufficiently complete for Nigeria’s needs, it was agreed that the framework for assessing issues and policy options encompassed most if not all of the priorities raised by participants, and should be the basis for work within Nigeria, subject to possible modifications to be discussed at the next meeting of the steering group.

Plan of action and timeline for activities

6. It was agreed that work would need to take account of relevant work by various NSG members, other education parastatals or specialized agencies and international organisations working on education in the country so as to avoid duplication.

7. Decisions on the appropriate methodology based on the agreed conceptual framework, including which organisations would be responsible for which parts and the funding needs to complete the work, would be decided at the next meeting, when hopefully the budget situation of the NCCE and others would be clearer. A decision would also need to be made on whether to focus work on a select number of states (more likely given the funding uncertainty and the short time frames to complete the initial assessment) or to undertake a national assessment in all states.

8. It was agreed that the NSG would next meet at **10 A.M. on 15 March in the NCCE Board Room** to decide on modifications in the conceptual framework, the distribution of work among different organisations, a timetable to hopefully complete a draft national report by August 2005, scope of the work (nation wide, or a few representative states), funding requirements and to plan next steps accordingly.

9. The ILO will provide technical and logistical support to the work of the NSG in producing the country assessment through the programme team based in Geneva and the ILO Sub-regional office in Abuja.

National or regional policy dialogue form

10. After a brief discussion on the desirability of organizing a national forum or focusing on information sharing through the southern African sub-regional forum, it was agreed to take a decision at a later meeting of the NSG. The ILO would also help with organisation of a national policy dialogue forum or assistance in participating in the sub-regional forum planned for South Africa, whichever was considered most appropriate.
NSG Chair and composition

11. The NCCE (Dr. Isyaku) was designated as Chair and convener of future NSG meetings. The Federal Ministry of Labour & Productivity will be the Vice-Chair, the official to be designated by the next meeting. NCCE will ensure the secretariat as meetings were likely to take place at the NCCE.

12. The ILO will make available meeting space at UN House if requested.

13. Members agreed by consensus that the Universal Basic Education (UBE – Executive Secretary), the Teachers’ Registration Council (TRC – Registrar and Chief Executive) and UNESCO (Director or head of the education work in Abuja) would be invited to join the NSG as core partners. The ILO will send the letters of invitation on behalf of the NSG.

Closing

14. The Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity, along with NCCE, closed the meeting with thanks to the ILO for the initiative and help in organizing the first meeting, and to NCCE for hosting and providing facilities. The participants looked forward to working together with each other and the ILO office in Abuja to make the programme a success.

Notes prepared and submitted by the ILO as initial convenor
Abuja and Geneva, February 2005
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List of Participants

Government

Federal Ministry of Labour & Productivity

Dr. Timiebi A. Koripamo-Agary, Permanent Secretary
Ms. Omorere Aiimiwu, Chief Labour Officer, International
Mr. Johnny O. Okoronkwo, Chief Labour Officer
Mr. Ishaya A. Babuwa, Assistant Director, Administration

National Commission for Colleges of Education

Dr. Kabiru Isyaku, Executive Secretary
Dr. Charles M. Anikweze, Director, Department for Planning, Research & Statistics
Dr. Samuel W. Aluwong, Deputy Director, Department for Planning, Research & Statistics
Dr. Moses Ojo, Deputy Director, Department for Planning, Research & Statistics

Federal Ministry of Education

Mrs. Enotse O. Oga, Deputy Director, Teacher Education
Mr. Mahan N. Dang, Chief Education Officer, EFA Unit

Teachers’ Organisations

Mr. Abdulwahed I. Omar, President, Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT)
Mr. Moses M. Attah, Chairman, Federal Capital Territory, NUT

International Labour Office (ex-officio)

Mr. Bill Ratteree, Education Sector Specialist, ILO Geneva
Mr. Ahmadu Sanda, Programme Officer, ILO Abuja