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

National Steering Group (NSG), South Africa
First Session, ILO Office for Southern Africa, Pretoria,
1 October 2004

Summary Notes and Decisions

Opening
1. Welcoming remarks were made by the Director of the ILO Office for Southern Africa. Introductions of participants were made (list attached).
2. The ILO education sector specialist presented the action programme background, including expected activities and outputs in South Africa, southern Africa and internationally.

Priority issues relating to teacher shortages and EFA in South Africa
3. The Department of Education (DOE) considered that there were no current quantitative shortages (there were even some unemployed teachers), but such shortages could be looming in the future given large numbers of departures from teaching and continually small intakes to teacher training programmes. Other participants considered that there were considerable mismatches in terms of skill, subject and teacher competency levels compared to learning needs.
4. Participants identified the following key issues which needed to be addressed within the action programme:
   - low levels of entrants to initial teacher education programmes, plus relevancy of university-based training;
   - improvements in the teacher profile data available through the Education Management Information System (EMIS) in terms of quality, ready availability and synergies with other variables and sources (i.e., university data);
   - better deployment in relation to the Post Provisioning norms and subject requirements, especially disequilibria between urban (surplus) and rural (shortage) patterns;
   - recruitment trends and improvements in the system(s) of recruitment matched against teacher skill/competency requirements at provincial level;
   - a strengthened and universally accessible continual professional development (CPD) system for teachers in line with increased re-skilling and qualifications/competency requirements (among others, those relating to language and racial issues);
   - improved teaching/learning conditions (conditions of service) including workload, in line with new roles of teachers;
   - the impact of HIV/AIDS;
low teacher morale occasioned by heavy curricula and other reforms, and DOE and teacher union means of providing more support;
- status linked to the increased feminisation of teaching;
- quality and relevancy of education and training to employment and human resource needs of businesses and the economy as a whole.

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 South Africa’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 South Africa, subject to the following modifications:

- Chapters II and IV: add a point in each chapter to capture the dimension of regional and international teacher mobility, impact on South Africa as a sending and receiving country and policies, actual or future, that would affect teacher supply and demand in South Africa and the SADC region.

These additional points have been added in a revised version of the framework.

Plan of action and timeline for activities

6. Work under the action programme would need to take account of extensive previous and on-going work on many of the variables or indicators covered by the conceptual framework. The information base included: the EMIS; a major study underway by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) on retention, mobility, incentives/disincentives, conditions of work, HIV/AIDS, etc; and demand and supply and professional development research/information of teacher unions. Members of the NSG agreed to undertake an inventory of the information base in their respective departments or organisations within a matter of days, as the basis for assessing further work at the next meeting of the NSG.

7. The DOE has already committed to compiling the data for the teacher profiles, Chapter II. Composition of the teaching profession. Other members indicated likely parts of chapters on which their organisation had undertaken or would be able to undertake work, subject to confirmation after the necessary consultations.

8. It was agreed that a research coordinator or coordinating team would need to be engaged by the NSG to fill in gaps and coordinate production of the overall report under the supervision of the NSG. To that end, a funding proposal would be made to the ExCo meeting of the ETDPSETA on 7 October. The ILO produced a draft proposal with input from other NSG members and the members agreed to support it through consultations within their organisations and directly with members of the ETDPSETA ExCo. If agreed at the 7 October meeting, the proposal should be further considered and hopefully approved by the full Board of ETDPSETA on 26-27 October.

9. It was agreed that the NSG would next meet at 9h30 on 13 October (venue to be confirmed by the DOE) to assess the outcome of the ETDPSETA ExCo, examine commitments of members towards completing the conceptual framework and plan next steps accordingly. As necessary, a third meeting will be held on 2 November to assess results of the ETDPSETA Board and identify a coordinator(s) for a national report, including terms of reference. In the event that the ETDPSETA Board does not approve the request, the meeting will examine alternative means of carrying out the work.

10. The ILO will provide technical and logistical support to the work of the NSG in producing the country assessment (comments on the draft), logistical and other support within its capacity (for NSG meetings, alternative funding if needed), and help with organisation of the sub-regional dialogue forum.
Regional policy dialogue form

11. The DOE confirmed South Africa’s willingness to host a planned sub-regional policy dialogue forum to share information, good practices and policy options among participating countries of southern and eastern Africa. In addition to South Africa, Lesotho, Mauritius and Namibia are participating countries in the programme and would be invited to the forum, while Botswana and Zambia may join and participate in the sub-regional meeting. The ILO offered to assist with logistics and financial support for the forum, subject to its financial capacity within the overall action programme.

12. Tentative dates for the forum are the second half of October-early November. The nature (technical workshop/seminar or policy conference at ministerial level) remains to be decided.

NSG Chair and composition

13. The DOE has accepted to convene and chair future meetings until further notice or decision by the NSG. The ILO will examine possibilities for support to this task, but beyond offering a venue on sufficient advance notice, cannot commit to other tasks in view of the current staffing situation in the Pretoria office. Moreover, it is the understanding of the ILO that the NSG will be self-sustaining.

14. Members agreed by consensus that the South African Council of Educators (SACE) would be invited to join the NSG as a core partner. Further, three other education stakeholders should be briefed on the action programme, invited to respond as necessary to information requests and to participate in NSG meetings on request: the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC); the National Alliance of Independent School Associations (NAISA); and the National Association of School Governing Bodies. The ILO will send the letters on behalf of the NSG.

Notes prepared and submitted by the ILO as initial convenor

Pretoria, October 2004
List of Participants

Government

Ms. Maud Dlomo, Chief Director, Education Resources Planning, Department of Education
Mr. Paddy Padayachee, Representative, Department of Education
Mr. Vishnu Abhilak, Representative, Department of Education

Ms. C. Stepischnek, Manager, International Relations, Department of Labour (provisionally)

Teachers’ Organisations

South African Democratic Teachers’ Union (SADTU)

Ms. Shermain Mannah, National Education Officer

National Professional Teachers’ Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA)

Ms. Sue Müller, Director
Mr. J.K. Dikobo, Vice-President
Prof. G.N. Hall, Representative

Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie (SAOU)

Ms. M. Myburgh, Representative
Ms. M. le Roux, Representative

Employers’ Organisations

Ms. Stella Carthy, Representative, Business Unity of South Africa (BUSA)

International Labour Office (ex-officio)

Mr. Kenneth Andoh, Director, ILO Office for Southern Africa, Pretoria
Mr. Bill Ratteree, Education Sector Specialist, ILO Geneva
Ms. Margherita Licata, Programme Officer, ILO Pretoria