MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE NATIONAL STEERING GROUP UNDER THE ILO INITIATIVE

DATE: 13 OCTOBER 2004
VENUE: WATERBRON BUILDING
TIME: 09H30

ATTENDANCE

1. Ms M V Dlomo (Department of Education : Chairperson)
2. Ms S Geyer (Department of Education)
3. Mr. C Maake (Department of Education)
4. V Abhilak (Department of Education)
5. Mr. D Balt (NAPTOSA)
6. Mr. M Cele (SADTU)
7. Mr. R Brijraj (SACE)

APOLOGIES

Ms S Mannah (SADTU)
Ms S Carthy (BUSA)
Ms M Licata (ILO)

1. INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME

The chairperson extended a warm welcome to all delegates and requested the members to introduce themselves. It was indicated that some members including the secretariat from the ILO were unable to attend due to prior commitments.

All parties accepted the agenda.

The CEO of SACE expressed his appreciation to the chairperson for having been granted a seat on the National Steering Group (NSG).

2. RATIFICATION OF THE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 01 OCTOBER 2004

The chairperson provided a brief background of some of the crucial decisions taken at the last meeting for the benefit of the new members. It was pointed out that:

- The International Labour Office has invited South Africa to join an international programme, “Teachers for the future”: Meeting teacher shortages to achieve Education for All, for the period 2004-2006;
- Teaching shortages exist in most countries and these shortages represent a serious barrier to realizing universal basic education of high quality;
• The programme emphasizes a careful identification of all factors affecting qualitative and quantitative shortages in the teaching profession in South Africa, whether actual or potential;

• Based on investigation findings, policy options and other measures may be identified to help improve an adequate supply of high quality, competent and motivated teachers.

• The information will also be shared with other countries participating in the programme within the SADC region through a policy dialogue forum for southern and eastern Africa.

• The programme depends on tripartite participation and dialogue, involving key government departments, Education and Labour, teacher unions, business and other educational stakeholders.

• A National Steering Group (NSG) was formed on 01 October 2004 to establish priorities based on the current situation of teaching in South Africa and to guide work through an action plan over the next year.

• NATU and SACE have been invited to join the NSG.

• A conceptual framework for gathering and analyzing evidence on problems, trends and innovative practices to underpin conclusions and recommendations for action, which was proposed by the ILO, has been examined, modified and agreed to by the NSG to investigate the current situation.

• The NSG concluded that the comprehensive framework needs substantial funding to succeed.

• It is estimated that one million rand is necessary to fully fund and carry out the proposed programme over the next nine months.

• A funding proposal to the ETDPSETA was made with the hope of securing funds

• The ILO has offered logistical and technical support.

3. RESPONSE FROM THE ETDP SETA

3.1 The executive committee of the ETDPSETA discussed the funding proposal and concluded that it was not possible to fund the programme in this financial year.
3.2 It was indicated that R1,5 million was allocated to the Ministerial Committee on Teacher Education (MCTE) and the proposal was to utilize these funds. Unfortunately R700 000 of these funds have already been used. Eight hundred thousand (R800 000) is available and it was stated the funds could be used for both the IQMS and this programme.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 The chairperson indicated that in view of the unfavourable response from the ETDPSETA it was necessary to meet today (13/10/2004) to apprise members.

4.2 It was stressed that R800 000 would not be sufficient to fund both projects. Since the IQMS would not be implemented this year it was suggested that the R800 000 be used solely for the ILO programme and a fresh application to fund the IQMS be made which would come from the new financial budget.

4.3 At the previous meeting parties averred that they would consult with their principals before committing themselves to particular tasks. Parties were requested to provide some feedback. All parties present expressed firm commitment for the project.

4.4 The chairperson pointed out that some of the programme initiatives may already have been investigated or is under investigation by certain bodies. She also referred to the joint project of the ELRC and the HSRC which is due to be finalized shortly.

4.5 It was stated that the study should be completed by March 2005 so that it could be shared with other countries in the SADC region in October/November 2005 when the FORUM meets.

4.6 The chairperson also appealed to parties to approach the ETDPSETA individually for funds which could be used towards the programme.

4.7 NAPTOSA stressed that Education For All (EFA) is the prime objective of all Teacher Unions.

4.8 It was also suggested that the ELRC be used to carry out this study as all the relevant stakeholders are already represented there. Furthermore it was emphasized that research currently undertaken at ELRC level can feed into this project. In addition the ELRC has discretionary funds which may be used towards this programme. The chairperson was not averse to the proposal.

4.9 It was proposed that a small part (10%) of the available funds be set aside to fulfil the EFA objectives.
4.10 NAPTOSA indicated that SETA has allocated to it funds for specific issues and it was therefore impossible for NAPTOSA to commit any funds towards this programme. He stated that in the next financial year it may be possible to direct some funds towards the programme.

4.11 SADTU was not in a position to discussing the funding issue.

4.12 It was proposed that the ILO programme would be put on the agenda of the ELRC meetings after the Task Team has compiled its report and identified the gaps.

5. WAY FORWARD

5.1 It was agreed that a small team be constituted to analyse and synthesize existing information, fill in the gaps and prepare a report for the NSG for consideration and eventual actions based on consensus among the partners on the way forward.

5.2 The Task Team consists of the following individuals:
   - Department of Education : Vishnu Abhilak
   - NAPTOSA: Ms Sue Muller
   - SADTU: Ms Sharmain Mannah
   - SACE Ms Ella Mokgalane

5.3 Based on the findings and recommendations of the Task Team, service providers may be appointed to accomplish the task. If some of the work can be undertaken by the Task Team based on work already completed it would most certainly reduce costs. The Task Team would also investigate the possibility of using the ELRC to undertake this study.

5.4 It was also suggested that as the Task Team continues with their work the Chairperson through the SETA secures the services of a service provider.

5.5 Unions were also requested to send letters to the SETA informing them of the unions strong support for this project and appealing to the SETA to fund this programme.

5.6 Two dates (18 or 20 October) were suggested for the first meeting of the Task Team. Parties undertook to inform the relevant delegates of the Task Team.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The NSG would meet on 02 November at 09h00 at Waterbron.
7. CLOSURE

The chairperson thanked all delegates for their attendance and inputs.

CHIEFPERSON : M V DLOMO

DATE