

Policy, Planning and Management of Primary Teachers in Lesotho

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Background

In Lesotho, primary education consists of seven grades, aimed at children from 6 to 12 years old. Primary education is not compulsory, but has been expanding rapidly, especially since the introduction of Free Primary Education in 1999.

Of the 1,350 registered primary schools in 2003, most are owned by the churches, as follows:

- Roman Catholic Church (RCC) - 38%,
- Lesotho Evangelical Church (LEC) - 36%, and
- Anglican Church of Lesotho (ACL) - 12%.

Other churches own a small percentage. Since Free Primary Education (FPE) was introduced in 2000, the government has been building additional schools, mainly in rural areas. There are now 120 government schools, mostly newly built. There are also some community schools established by communities, but supported by the government, and are sometimes difficult to distinguish from government schools. Under the education laws of Lesotho, teachers on the government pay roll are employed under the auspices of the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) which has a strong representation of the three major Christian denominations.

In all schools, with the exception of a few private schools, teacher salaries are paid by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET). The government also pays for building cost in some church schools. Whereas under FPE fees are gradually being abolished as the state covers the majority of costs, schools sometimes charge voluntary contributions to pupils and there often is considerable pressure to pay. These funds may be used to pay for other school costs including private teachers. Nonetheless, since the introduction of FPE the number of private teachers has decreased considerably.

Teacher demand and supply

The population of Lesotho was just over 2 million in 2000, and is predicted to rise by 28% over the next thirty years. Based on these predictions, the population in the primary school age cohort will rise until 2010, and then decline slightly for the following years.

In 2003 the total primary enrolment of 429,720 translated to a Gross Enrolment Rate of 126% and Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) of 85% against a primary school-going age population of 490,000. If the GER remains constant, this figure will decline slightly as the size of the school cohort diminishes. The MOET, in its Strategic Plan, has a target of reducing the GER to 100% by 2015. If this ambitious target is attained, the primary school population will decline considerably by 2015.

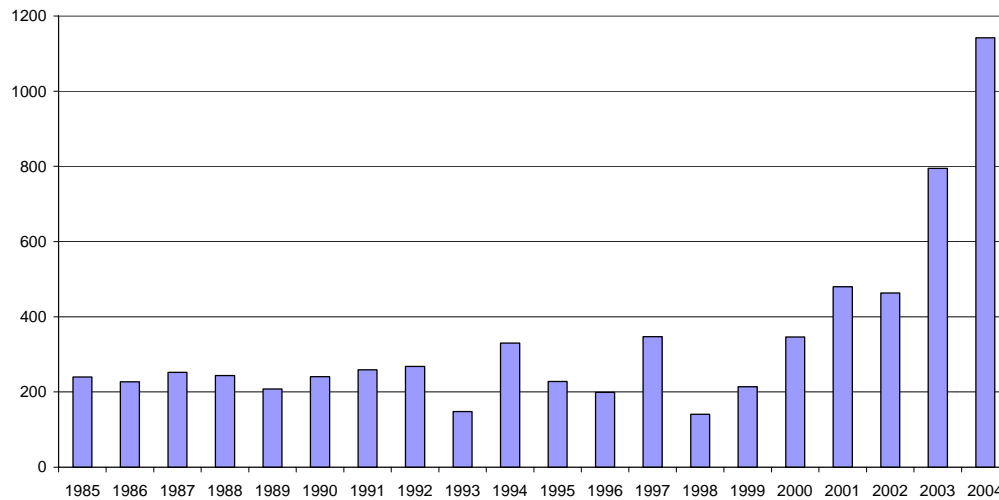
However, the Ministry has also set targets for reducing the Pupil Teacher Ratio. When FPE was introduced, the target ratio was 60:1. By 2004, the target ratio was 50:1, and the

current goal is 40:1. To achieve this ratio, the government is adding in average 350 new teaching positions each year, and even more in some years. If the PTR is to reach 40, additional teachers will be needed. Based on the current GER, the requirement will reach a peak of 11,500 by 2015, and afterwards decline slowly.

PROJECTIONS OF TEACHER DEMAND¹

YEAR	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Population ('000)	2,142	2,224	2,309	2,395	2,497	2,609
Primary school age population (6 -12)	335,558	388,000	366,000	354,000	350,000	350,000
Current GER	126	126	126	126	126	126
Primary school population, based on current GER	422,800	488,880	461,160	446,040	441,000	441,000
GER target, as per Strategic Plan	126	115	100	100	100	100
Primary school population based on GER target	422,800	446,200	366,000	354,000	350,000	350,000
Pupil teacher ratio, assuming a target PTR of 40 by 2015.	45	40	40	40	40	40
No of teachers needed, based on current GER	9,395	10,864	11,529	11,151	11,025	11,025
No of teachers needed, based on target GER	9,395	9,916	9,150	8,850	8,750	8,750

NUMBER OF NEW TEACHERS RECRUITED EACH YEAR 1985-2004²



The increase in data recruitment since 2000 is part of a deliberate effort by the Government under FPE to provide for an increasing enrolment and to reduce the pupil teacher ratio. The most likely explanation for the sharp increase in numbers of teachers on the pay roll in 2003 and 2004 is a possible simultaneous filling of position created since 2000 and vacancies that arose in the same period.

¹ Population projections taken from World Bank/UNESCO Edstats, March 2005.

² Data taken from Computer Centre database. Graph based on primary teachers date of appointment.

PROFILE OF THE TEACHING FORCE

The current size of the teaching force is difficult to determine precisely, as different figures emerge from various sources. The Education Management Information System (EMIS) based on an annual school census, which provides teachers available in schools, in spite of their terms of employment, and excluding absentees, suggests that there were 9,836 teachers in 2004 (8,908 in 2003). The teaching force is predominantly female with almost 80% of teachers being women. In mountain, areas there are slightly more male teachers, but even there, women account for more than 70% of the teacher population.

TEACHERS AND PUPILS BY GENDER AND LOCATION – 2004

LOCATION	%FEMALE PUPILS	% FEMALE TEACHERS
Foothills	49	79
Lowlands	48	83
Mountain	53	71
Senqu River Valley	50	74
Total	50	79

Attrition from the teaching force seems relatively low. The staff in the Teaching Service Department (TSD) reports that there are relatively few alternative job opportunities. Traditionally, many male teachers have left to seek employment in the mines in South Africa. As the opportunities in that sector have diminished, this is less frequent. The perception in the TSD is that attrition is lower among primary teachers, as they are less educated and have fewer alternative sources of employment. In fact, many teachers remain in the service until retirement age. Retirement is compulsory at 65, and more teachers request extension of service beyond these age than those who seek early retirement. Estimates of attrition vary between 250 and 380 per annum, representing between 3 and 4 percent of the teaching force.

ATTRITION OF PRIMARY TEACHERS, 2004

CAUSE	TSD DATA	TREASURY PAY ROLL
Retirement	104	55
Death	117	80
Dismissal	10	1
Resignation	149	76
Other		46
Total	380	258³

The HIV infection rate is high, particularly among women in the 15-24 age group. This is reflected in a death rate of approximately 1% of teachers annually.

³ The difference between the Treasury teachers' salary data and the Teaching Service Department data is a result of a considerable time lag in reporting cases between these two government departments.

HIV INFECTION RATES⁴

HIV/AIDS prevalence rate among women 15-24 (2001)	51%
HIV/AIDS prevalence rate among men 15-24 (2001)	23%
Overall HIV prevalence rate (EDSTATS, 2003)	29%

Teacher supply

The supply of newly qualified teachers is very limited. The main source of qualified teachers is the Lesotho College of Education (LCE). LCE operates a full time, three year course for school leavers known as the Diploma in Education, Primary. This is intended to have 250 students per year, but because of limited capacity at LCE, it has not reached that number. Last year (2004), there were 183 graduants from the college. This means that the total number of newly qualified teachers each year does not meet the demands arising from teacher attrition, let alone the need to expand the teaching force. The impact of this has been that as the teaching force has expanded, the proportion of untrained teachers has increased. Between 1999 and 2003 the total number of primary teachers increased by 1,000, but the number of qualified teachers fell by 150, leaving nearly one third of teachers untrained. *In short, Lesotho is not producing enough newly qualified teachers to meet the demands of the primary education system.*

THE TEACHING FORCE, SIZE AND QUALIFICATIONS

	Total	Qualified	% qualified
1999	8,225	6,416	78
2000	8,578	6,362	74
2001	8,762	6,558	75
2002	8,908	6,466	73
2003	9,294	6,259	67

The LCE offers two programmes aimed at providing training for unqualified teachers:

- Diploma in Primary Education, is a 2 year full time course for teachers with some experience, usually teachers with lower level qualifications. In 2004 there were 60 graduates from this course.
- The Distance Teachers Education Programme (DTEP), is a part time course for in-service teachers. It is offered by distance education, using a mix of residential sessions, meetings with tutors in locations around the country, and text materials. In its first year the programme took in 500 teachers. A further 100 teachers with COSC (upper secondary education) started at the beginning of year 2. This pattern has been continuing since, with unqualified teachers starting at year 1 and others joining at year 2. As the course is fairly new, the first graduates will not emerge until 2006. There has been some dropout, but at present there are 536 in year three, from the 600 taken in. Although the academic requirements for entry were

⁴ Report of the Gender Audit on the Education Sector, 2003, p30, From UNICEF 2002.

lower than for the conventional course, the curriculum is designed to parallel the full time course.

One of the unusual features of the Lesotho primary teachers' system is the presence of unpaid "volunteer" teachers in some schools. The 2004 school census captured a total of 354 such teachers. These volunteer teachers are typically young school leavers who cannot find a job, and who volunteer to teach in the local school in the hope of getting employed if a vacancy arises, and to gather the requisite experience to be admitted in the DTEP.

Rural teachers

There are particular problems in rural areas. Lesotho has some very mountainous areas where travel is difficult infrastructure is poor and the climate inhospitable. The MOET is trying to reach the children in these remote areas, using a sophisticated school mapping exercise. The aim is to provide a school within 3km of every child, on the assumption that 3km is the equivalent of about one hour's-walk. Given the dispersed population, schools in rural areas are generally smaller than those in urban areas. As a result, multi-grade teaching is a norm in many of these rural schools.

PRIMARY SCHOOL SIZE BY DISTRICT

District ⁵	No of schools	Average enrolment
Berea	126	430
Botha-Bothe	80	347
Leribe	183	376
Mafeteng	150	303
Maseru	236	374
Mohale's Hoek	164	247
Mokhotlong	104	205
Qacha's Nek	100	181
Quthing	123	237
Thaba-Tseka	136	227
Total	1,402	303

Accurate data on the rural-urban disparities is difficult to obtain, as this is not tracked and recorded in routine reports. However, the last four districts in the table above are mountain districts with almost all schools being rural.

The lack of facilities makes rural areas unattractive to many people, and the rural schools find it more difficult to attract qualified teachers. The perception in the TSD is that *"it is hard to attract people to rural areas, as the conditions are difficult... Young people, even those from rural areas, want to come down from the highlands as soon as they can. Even those who come on study leave, try hard to stay in Maseru"*. In some areas this may be

⁵ Calculated from Total Enrolment and school type, xls.

changing as the Highlands Water Project, has opened up areas to tarred roads and other modern infrastructure.

The school census does record school location in 4 general categories, although this is not normally used for analysis. This location data reveals that only 24% of teachers in lowland areas are unqualified, compared with 51% in mountain areas.

PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS WHO ARE UNQUALIFIED BY LOCATION

ECOLOGICAL ZONES	% UNQUALIFIED		
	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
Foothills	35	58	39
Lowlands	21	39	24
Mountain	47	60	51
Senqu River Valley	26	59	35

Even these figures may mask greater teacher shortages in the most isolated schools. One District Resource Teacher⁶ outlined the teacher supply in nine rural schools for which he has responsibility. As shown in the table below, less than one third of the teachers in these schools were qualified. These isolated schools had typically only one qualified teacher (the principal), and two of the schools had no qualified teacher at all.

TEACHER SUPPLY IN 9 SCHOOLS SUPPORTED BY A DRT IN A RURAL AREA

School	Pupils	Qualified teachers (including principal)	Unqualified teachers	Volunteer teachers (unpaid)	PTR	Pupils per qualified teacher
A	70	1	0	3	70	70
B	278	1	4	0	56	278
C	292	1	3	0	73	292
D	365	4	4	0	46	91
E	123	1	4	0	25	123
F	382	1	5	0	64	382
G	100	0	4	0	25	INF
H	68	0	2	0	34	INF
I	250	2	1	0	83	125
Total	1,928	11	27	3	51	175

Although the overall PTR in the rural schools is not very different from the national average, the DRT suggests that classes are often very small in the higher grades, reflecting greater dropout.

⁶ Source : Mr. Mofota Phatela, District Resource Teacher, Qacha's Nek.

Teacher absenteeism is reported to be a problem in rural areas. These schools are very remote, and it can take a days travel to reach a town. At the moment most teachers leave the school to collect their salary cheques at the end of each month. This can involve an absence of up to three days, where the school is deserted, with one teacher left behind to keep control. The government is planning to make it possible for teachers for the first time for teachers' salaries to be paid through their banks. Teachers will still want to travel to withdraw money and buy commodities, but they may be able to spread this out to reduce the impact on the school. Other factors also cause absenteeism – a visit to a doctor can take three or four days. Most of the teachers are from rural areas, but their home place is often a long distance away from where they are working. Travel home at weekends is difficult, and teacher absenteeism is higher on Monday and Friday.

Monitoring of absenteeism may be more difficult in rural areas, for a number of reasons. First, in the church schools that make up the majority of primary schools management responsibility is given to a management committee which is responsible for a number of schools. As these can be widely dispersed, the management committee may have little direct experience of individual schools. Second, in rural areas the school principal is often better educated and wealthier than many of the community and may have considerable status and influence in the community. As a result, he/she may have a considerable influence on the composition and actions of the management committee, making it much less likely that the committee will report difficulties in the school. Teachers who misbehave should be reported by the principal, the management committee, and the inspectorate. In reality, the delays in taking action against teachers weaken the disciplinary system. While this may be true in all areas, the problem may be greater in rural areas where communication is more difficult. Schools difficult to access by road are less likely to be visited by government inspectors of schools.

Teacher absenteeism is compounded by pupil absenteeism, as pupils are withdrawn by their families for domestic tasks and minding livestock.

The combination of poorly qualified teachers, teacher absence and uneven pupil attendance is reflected in lower attainment in rural areas. The overall repetition rate is higher in mountain areas than in lowlands, and the results on the SACMEQ⁷ tests indicate poorer learning outcomes in rural areas.

PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS WHO ARE REPEATERS

Ecological Zone	Female	Male	Total
Foothills	16	22	19
Lowlands	14	20	17
Mountain	18	23	20
Senqu River Valley	14	18	16
Total	16	21	18

⁷ Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) survey carried out in 2001.

SACMEQ II SCORES FOR LESOTHO (2001)

	Overall	City	Rural
Reading	451.2	482.1	441.3
Mathematics	447.2	482.2	436.8

Getting teachers in rural areas does not appear to be as much of a problem as it is getting fully qualified teachers. The PTR in rural areas is similar to that in urban areas, and few schools reported difficulty in filling posts. As the presence of volunteer teachers attests, there are school leavers anxious to take up positions in schools. Teacher attrition in rural areas is believed to be lower than in urban areas, although a quantitative analysis was not available. As the data above shows, the majority of teachers in remote schools may be untrained, causing serious concern about the quality of education.

Financing teachers

Teachers are employed on incremental salary scales, with automatic progression through a series of steps. The entry level and upper limit are determined by the teacher qualifications and promotional grade. Some sample salaries (2005 salary scales) are shown below.

SAMPLE ANNUAL SALARIES FOR A PRIMARY TEACHER⁸, 2005.

	Starting point		Highest increment		No of steps
	Maloti	USD	M	USD	
Unqualified (STD 7)	10,056	1,734	10,680	1,841	3 steps
Unqualified, COSC	11,952	2,061	15,204	2,621	9 steps
Trained (certificate)	15,744	2,714	22,932	3,954	6 steps depending on Qualification
Trained (diploma +)	23,604	4,070	34,272	5,910	6 steps depending on qualification
Deputy Principal	35,315	6,089	41,940	7,231	6 steps
Principal	42,768	7,374	49,344	8,507	6 steps

Overall, primary education accounts for half of the national education budget. Within the primary education budget, the salaries of teachers in FPE schools account for 54% of the total. As there are approximately 9,500 teachers on the payroll, this equates to an average cost of 24,000 Maloti (4,100 USD) per teacher per annum.

⁸ There are different salary scales for primary and secondary teachers with the latter generally higher.

NATIONAL EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION, 2004

	Maloti	USD
National Education Budget	834,500,014	143,879,313
Primary Education (50% of education budget)	421,435,000	72,661,207
Primary teacher pay (54% of primary education budget)	228,000,000	39,310,345
Number of teachers	9,500	9,500
Average annual pay per teacher	24,000	4,138
Average monthly pay per teacher	2,000	345

Teacher Deployment

Teacher deployment is based on local hiring of teachers. The Ministry “grants” teachers to schools in response to school population and budget considerations. Once the school is granted a post, the school management committee can select the teacher. Once the teacher is identified, the papers are sent to the Teacher Service Commission (TSC) for ratification, and ultimate payment of salaries by the government.

This local hire system has a number of implications. First, teachers are not sent to schools. Instead they apply to schools where they would be willing to work. There is therefore no pattern of teachers refusing postings – individuals unwilling to work in rural areas do not apply for posts in those areas. Second, the ability to select teachers locally makes it more likely that local people will be appointed, and encourages the volunteer teachers, who may be more likely to get a post if they are known in the school.

On the other hand the local hire system is open to local influence. The Ministry perception is that, although posts are advertised, many schools have a person in mind before they begin the selection process. In some cases this results in a local person being appointed in preference to an outsider. There have even been cases of qualified teachers being rejected by communities wishing to hire a local unqualified teacher. In schools where there are volunteer teachers, these may have expectations of getting a paid position when one becomes available. In some cases where these expectations have not been satisfied, there have been tensions within the community. In addition, the local system makes the rational distribution of teachers difficult, as the MOET does not control teacher deployment. Strong local control may also cause uneven deployment within schools. Teachers in powerful positions may gain deployment to the smallest classes, leaving the largest classes to the least experienced and least qualified teachers.

Whereas Sesotho is the first language for the majority of the population, there are small numbers of speakers of minority languages, and finding competent teachers for them also presents challenges.

To encourage teachers to locate in rural areas, there is a hardship allowance paid as a flat fee of M275 per month. This is generally acknowledged to be too small to encourage the more highly qualified teachers to locate in remote areas. As one DRT explained, even

the cost of travel to town to collect the monthly cheque could easily be M70 return, and the cost of commodities, especially fuel, are higher in rural areas. There are two other noteworthy features of the hardship allowance:

- As it is a flat fee, it is proportionally more significant for the lowest paid teachers.
- The hardship allowance is determined by very general classifications of schools. Teacher in remote rural schools in the lowlands do not receive the allowance, while teachers in town in mountain districts do.

Teacher deployment between schools is quite uneven in some areas. While in theory the grants to schools ensure equitable distribution of teachers, a number of factors contribute to distorting the distribution. First, the process of appointing a teacher is fairly long, and involves different departments of government, church authorities and local management committees. Inefficiency, poor communication and bureaucratic delays mean that some schools do not take up the posts granted to them, or that there may be long delays before a teacher is in place.

Second, the ministry finds it difficult to transfer teachers from schools where numbers are falling. The construction of new schools in rural areas is causing a fall in numbers in some of the older schools. In addition, in some cases schools were built quite close to each other (often schools of different religious denominations) and now that these accept students of any denomination they compete for students. Where a school is perceived to be of poor quality, parents may move their children to nearby schools, or withdraw them altogether, causing falling enrolment in some schools. School authorities are reluctant to allow a teacher to be transferred out of a school. In particular church authorities may be sensitive about erosion of their schools and resist teacher transfer.

Teacher Utilisation

All primary teachers have the same official working hours. Schools work from 8am at 2.30pm, with some local variations. All teachers are largely trained to teach the entire curriculum without subject specialization. Within some schools there may be subject specialization arrangements, at the discretion of the management. Teachers are employed as public servants, but the unqualified teachers are not entitled to a pension (but do receive a gratuity payment on retirement). There are a number of types of teachers who are outside the public service, namely:

- a) Substitute teachers: these are teachers employed on a short term basis, usually to cover sick leave or study leave. These are employed on a contract, which is renewed annually and are paid by the government..
- b) Volunteer teachers, who are unpaid.
- c) Private teachers, paid from school funds may exist in some schools, particularly in church schools where funds are raised through voluntary contribution.

Multi-shift teaching is not practiced, although mentioned in the original plan for Free Primary Education. A shift system was proposed, but dropped due to budgetary limitations. It used to happen in earlier years, and may be introduced in future.

Multigrade teaching is widely practiced, especially in rural schools where the numbers in the higher grades are low. Multigrade is normally done by having one teacher teach two grades at the same time. Teaching more than two grades is perceived by many as impractical and occurring as a temporary inconvenience, while it has existed . Many small schools officially teach grades 1-6, because of small numbers in the higher grades. This is unpopular with parents, who see this as an incomplete school. As a result, some schools offer an “illegal” grade 7. This is almost always done using a multigrade approach. Despite the widespread use of multigrade teaching, it is not normally included in the programme for initial teacher education. The curriculum documents also tend to assume monograde classes.

The Ministry guidelines suggest that the qualified teachers be assigned to the lowest grades. This is the practice in some schools, but in others the experienced teachers arrange to teach older children.

In most schools the principal also teaches a class. The Ministry guidelines are that the principal should teach unless the school has more than 800 pupils.

Teacher Management

The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) has ultimate legislative powers over all matters pertaining to teacher appointment, promotion, transfer and discipline. The teacher management structures vary by type of school. In each school there is a principal. In government, community and smaller denominational schools, there is a Management Committee (MC) for each school. This MC has responsibility for recommending teacher appointments, promotions and transfers to the TSC. This gives the MC a good deal of power. Technically the TSC could over-rule these committees, but this seldom happens in practice. The MC liaises with the TSC on matters of teacher recruitment, but may also work with the Supervisor of government controlled schools, District Education Officers and the inspectors on matters of teacher discipline.

In church schools the structures are more complex. Each school has an Advisory School Committee (ASC), which has little executive power, and a group of up to eight schools is managed by a Management Committee. The school management committees normally works through the church Educational Secretariats in dealing with the Ministry.

Composition of MC	Composition of ASC
Committee of 8 people as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 representatives of the proprietor • 3 representatives of parents • 1 teacher representative • The principal • A representative of the traditional leader/chief. 	Committee of 9, made up of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 representatives of the proprietor • 4 representatives of parents • 1 teacher representative • The principal • A representative of the traditional leader/chief.

In the case of teacher absenteeism or other misbehaviour, a complaint from a principal of a church school would be passed to the management committee, the church authorities, the Ministry and the Inspectorate, before any action would be taken by the Commission. Where the misbehaving teacher is popular or well connected locally (as may easily happen given the local hiring system), the management committee may be reluctant to take action, causing even greater delays before the difficulty comes to the attention of the Ministry.

School principals

School head teachers or principals are selected by the school management committees. The process of selection is not always transparent. Principals are required to have a qualification in school leadership and a certain minimum experience in teaching, but in rural school many of the principals do not meet these requirements. Whereas the position of principal is a promotion post to which ascendance is to be on merit, in an event that a person appointed to this position does not meet the standard minimum requirements, on a responsibility allowance is paid.

School support and inspection

There is a school inspectorate at the Ministry, with responsibility for inspection of primary schools. However, a recent report pointed to a series of weaknesses in the inspectorate, including:

- School inspection is most unlikely to be contributing in any way to the quality of education provided in Lesotho's schools.
- Primary school inspections are done by EOs without expertise in primary education.
- Most school inspections do not include evaluation of the quality of education provided.
- There is no follow-up of inspection recommendations.
- The Ministry of Education has almost no reliable information about the quality of education provided in the Kingdom's schools.
- There is almost no valid information on which it could base advice to the Minister or formulate new policy.
- The capacity of the Field Inspectorate is limited by lack of adequate transport.⁹

In view of these weaknesses, and in particular the transport difficulty, it seems likely that remote rural schools are unlikely to receive inspection visits with any regularity.

District Resource Teachers

District Resource Teachers were first appointed in the mid 1980's under the Primary Inservice Education Project (PIEP), but have since been mainstreamed into Ministry programmes. A DRT is a support person, usually a former principal of a primary school, appointed to look after a small number of isolated rural schools. Not all schools have a DRT assigned, as there are a limited number, and the aim is to support the most remote schools. The key duty of DRTs is to provide school-based support and training to rural

⁹ Schools Inspectorate Final Report, 2002, Conclusions.

(often unqualified) teachers in the areas of pedagogy, curriculum and school management.

In some cases the schools are so remote that the journey takes a full day travel from the “base school”. The aim is to visit each school twice every six months, but this is difficult to achieve. The logbook records from 1997 to 2001 show most schools had been visited by the DRT between one and four times a year but with few schools receiving more than two visits. Almost three quarters of the visits made to schools by DRTs were one-day visits. The other visits varied from two days to five days in length.¹⁰

These visits are intended to be supportive, with particular focus on supporting teachers with multigrade classes. They have the advantage of DRTs being experienced primary teachers, and can visit schools with some regularity. The evaluation of the DRT initiative reports an increase in learning performance in the schools, at least initially. However, this improvement was less obvious as the DRTs have stayed working with the same schools over a prolonged period.¹¹

Conclusions

As the primary education system is expanding, the number of teachers needed is growing. Lesotho is not producing enough newly qualified teachers to meet the demands of the primary education system. The impact of this has been that as the teaching force has expanded, the proportion of untrained teachers has increased.

Rural areas are at a particular disadvantage. Getting teachers does not appear to be a problem in rural areas. The PTR in rural areas is similar to that in urban areas, and few schools reported difficulty in filling posts. As the presence of volunteer teachers attests, there are school leavers anxious to take up positions in schools. Teacher attrition in rural areas is believed to be lower than in urban areas, although a quantitative analysis was not available. However, the difficulty is in getting qualified teacher in rural areas. As the data above shows, the majority of teachers in remote schools may be untrained, causing serious concern about the quality of education. Rural-urban comparisons are not a routine part of reporting on the education system.

Teacher deployment is done using a local hire system. This gives schools considerable autonomy in selecting teachers, and may contribute to high retention in rural areas. However, the system makes rational distribution of teachers difficult.

Although the Teaching Service Department is responsible for teacher recruitment, it tends to focus on the operational aspects of the task, rather than examining the strategic issues of supply and demand. The Lesotho College of Education is semi autonomous, and its intake is not determined directly by the ministry, creating the potential for mismatch between supply and demand.

¹⁰ Multiserve, Evaluation of the Primary Inservice Education programme, March 2002, p18.

¹¹ Multiserve, Evaluation of the Primary Inservice Education programme, March 2002, p21.