



Southern African Policy Dialogue Forum on Teachers for the Future

**Pretoria, Republic of South Africa
8 December 2005**

The Pretoria Declaration on Teachers

Preamble

1. Government, teacher union and private sector employer representatives from 13 Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries and Nigeria met in a Policy Dialogue Forum held in Pretoria, Republic of South Africa, 6-8 December 2005, under the auspices of an International Labour Organization (ILO) initiated programme on teacher shortages and Education for All (EFA).
2. The Forum considered extensive research and analytical work on the principal theme that had been directed by tripartite or bipartite national steering groups from four countries participating in the programme since 2004, Lesotho, Mauritius, Nigeria, South Africa, relevant experiences and policies of 10 other SADC countries, namely, Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, plus those of international and regional organizations – ILO, UNESCO, Education International, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Commonwealth Secretariat and SADC.
3. After careful consideration, the Forum unanimously adopted this day, 8 December, the ***Pretoria Declaration on Teachers***, and recommends its provisions for consideration by the SADC Ministers of Education, by the Minister of Education of Nigeria and by the Education Ministers of other African States convened in Addis Ababa, January 2006.

General observations

4. Teachers make the difference in quality education for all: sufficient numbers of well-qualified, adequately remunerated and highly motivated and professional teachers are the key to realizing quality Education for All (EFA) and MDG goals.
5. Teacher shortages are a threat to our education goals: quantitative and qualitative shortages, current and potential, represent one of the greatest challenges to our national objectives, and require urgent policy solutions to ensure access, equity, and quality in education.

6. The education systems, structures and cultures of each participating country are different, and the solutions to shortages of qualified teachers must take account of national conditions.

7. Adopting and applying solutions to challenges in this area requires a partnership of the major actors involved in this Forum, namely Governments, principally Ministries of Education and Teaching Service Commissions who are the main employer of teachers, teacher unions and private sector school employers, plus other stakeholders, to work out solutions on the basis of social dialogue enshrined in international labour standards and principles and the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers, 1966. Meaningful social dialogue is based on respect for and application of relevant ILO Conventions.

Governance and finance

8. SADC countries and Nigeria are advised to review and improve governance and management tools applicable to education systems.

9. Given the relative under-spending on education in many sub-Saharan African countries, consideration should be given to establishing a common benchmark on education expenditure, for example, at 5-6 percent of GDP. At the same time, education authorities should examine internal efficiency measures to ensure that education investments are effectively utilized.

10. A costing exercise should be undertaken to quantify the teacher resources needed to meet the EFA goals by 2015, including expansion at secondary and tertiary levels where appropriate. The Forum recommends the establishment of working groups within SADC and other regional forums to undertake more intensive research in this area.

11. In order to supplement public resources for education, effective and efficient public-private sector partnerships need to be developed within a clearly defined regulatory framework.

Teaching profession profiles and deployment

12. At present, teacher supply and demand differs by country: a shortage exists in some countries, resulting from demographic pressures and the impact of factors such as HIV and AIDS, whereas there is no shortage or even a surplus of teachers overall in others. However, all countries agree on the need for a comprehensive and easily usable Education Management Information System (EMIS), including gender-disaggregated data, to be developed and used by education employers as a planning tool for the future. Education Ministries, Teaching Service Commissions and teacher education institutions, in partnership with teacher unions and private sector employers, need to invest in the development of this tool as a matter of priority.

13. Recruitment and retention of qualified teachers in positions in rural, remote and geographically challenged areas, increasingly in difficult urban zones of many countries

and for chronic shortage subjects, e.g. maths, sciences, ICT, some languages, are one of our greatest challenges. Policy solutions advocated by Forum countries include:

- a) targeted, material incentive schemes, which are equitable and efficient; and
- b) greater provision of evaluation and continual professional development opportunities for teachers operating in these areas so as to cope with isolation, challenges of multi-grade schools and difficult work environments.

14. In the framework of increasing feminization of teaching in Forum countries according to available statistics, targeted human resource strategies and measures should be adopted to ensure more gender balance through:

- a) targeting recruitment of male teachers according to identified needs in under-represented levels or subjects, with particular attention to primary education;
- b) capacity building efforts and other measures, so as to realize greater equality of opportunity for qualified female teachers enabling them to acquire management responsibilities; and
- c) the application of concepts of equal pay for work of equal value and content.

15. To address the concerns of some Forum countries with an imbalance in age profiles, i.e. the departure of large numbers of older experienced teachers and the recruitment of many younger, inexperienced teachers, especially in rural areas, EMIS should be used to target and develop recruitment and incentive packages to achieve a balance in the age structure of the teaching profession.

Attracting and recruiting quality teachers: teacher education and professional development

16. The large number of unqualified and under-qualified teachers in many countries, and persistent shortages in others, require the development of a national teacher education and professional development strategy. Such a strategy may include the following elements:

- a) emphasis on fixed targets and timelines for qualifying all current and prospective teachers to nationally defined standards;
- b) the expansion of teacher education institutions;
- c) the reform of teacher training to meet changing teaching and learning needs and roles of teachers;
- d) targeted recruitment of young teachers in critical subjects, e.g. maths, sciences and ICT, including through bursaries; and
- e) development of teacher resource centres for professional development..

Some countries have lowered teacher training standards so as to meet universal basic education goals. Such measures should be considered provisional and phased out in the shortest possible time.

17. As part of national teacher training strategies, more investments and a comprehensive continual professional development (in-service) programme for all teachers should be established as a priority in all countries. An investment/funding target of 1% minimum of the teacher payroll per annum is recommended as a benchmark.

18. Countries are advised to create a teachers' council or equivalent institution, which includes practising teachers, both public and private, and their representatives. These institutions are designed to set, apply and monitor professional standards through the licensing of all teachers. Codes of conduct or ethics governing professional responsibilities of teachers should be developed where they do not exist, and effectively applied.

19. Teacher training and curricular development in appropriate languages should assume a higher priority, to ensure basic literacy and numeracy of all learners, especially in rural areas beginning in the early years of primary education.

20. To improve the visibility and intrinsic value attached to the teaching profession, countries should undertake sustained media and other publicity campaigns, establish and promote teacher awards and organize activities around World Teachers' Day, which is 5 October. This should ideally become a work-free day for teachers.

Employment, careers, teaching and learning conditions

21. Teacher remuneration and social security benefits are among the most important factors in the recruitment and retention of quality teachers. Remuneration systems should balance the constraints of government financial capacity, as well as personnel and non-personnel budget allocations, the signals that salary levels send to individuals who are considering teaching with regard to the value that the country attaches to the teaching profession, and the need to compare favourably with remuneration in other occupations with similar qualifications and job profiles.

22. Payroll management needs to be strengthened to ensure timely and direct payment of teacher salaries to avoid absenteeism and low morale.

23. Countries should review and adapt their teacher career structures so as to provide meaningful and diversified career opportunities for teachers, including advanced-skills teacher positions. As part of redesigning teacher recruitment procedures, Forum countries are advised to implement a mentoring programme for all new teachers.

24. New career development or performance management systems may be employed to encourage greater rewards for innovation, quality teaching and learning outcomes and continual professional development, provided that they follow basic principles of international standards: a) they are the subject of consultations or negotiations with teacher unions representing the collective voices of teachers; b) are transparent and applied using the best available objective criteria; and c) are subject to change upon application.

25. Class sizes should be set at levels that allow for the maximum individual instruction between teachers and learners. A useful benchmark for countries with excessive average class sizes would be 40 learners in a classroom. For those countries with more capacity and need to develop higher levels of learning, a benchmark of 30 or less learners per teacher in a classroom should be considered an ideal target, especially in early years' education.

26. Despite budgetary constraints in many countries, more investment in the infrastructure and new pedagogical approaches, including the use of ICT by teachers in their work, is urgently needed.

27. To address the severe impact of HIV and AIDS on the teaching profession in most countries of the Forum, education systems should put into place a national and institutional workplace strategy for education. The joint ILO/UNESCO programme on improving responses to HIV and AIDS in education sector workplaces could assist.

Social dialogue and participatory decision-making

28. Teachers need to be closely associated with the adoption and implementation of educational policies to ensure their ownership and therefore effective application. To this end, SADC countries and Nigeria which do not already have an institutionalized structure for social dialogue between education employers and teachers by means of regular information sharing, consultation on policy issues and negotiation of employment and working conditions should develop such structures as a matter of priority, to also include dispute resolution mechanisms. The mechanisms and experiences of South Africa's Education Labour Relations Council are recommended as a model. The technical assistance of the ILO may also be sought to help elaborate appropriate institutions and application of their mechanisms.

29. Effective partnerships which provide links between schools, teachers and parents in primary education, between students and parents in secondary education, and between community actors, need to be further developed in ways that do not undercut the professional responsibilities of teachers. Adoption of a national policy is recommended.

Regional and national mobility and migration: Qualifications frameworks

30. SADC countries and Nigeria should advance current efforts to design and implement a mutually beneficial teacher mobility framework for qualification recognition, licensing and recruitment of teachers across national borders. The migration of teachers could be managed through providing opportunities for teacher exchanges or allowing teachers to take unpaid leave or other work arrangements to teach in other countries. Education authorities need to assess more carefully the scope and impact of teacher mobility on education and adopt policy solutions to maximize benefits and minimize negative impacts. The Forum case study recommendations may be considered in this regard.

31. Forum countries are urged to quickly put into place national qualifications frameworks as a foundation for a regional one. Such frameworks should respect the needs and interests of all countries and individual teachers, using the Commonwealth Teacher Recruitment Protocol as a development model.