



EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL

Report to CEART, July 2003

Education International (EI) has been invited to present a document to the triennial meeting of **CEART** (The Expert Committee on the Application of *the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Teachers* and *the Recommendation on the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel*). EI intends to focus on seven issues in its contribution to the CEART meeting:

- teacher shortage and the recruitment of unqualified teachers;
- teacher salaries;
- consultations with teacher organisations;
- academic freedom and tenure for teachers
- decentralisation
- privatisation and
- HIV/AIDS

1. Teacher Shortage and the Recruitment of Unqualified Teachers

Teacher shortage is a reality today in many countries. A large number of teachers need to be recruited in many countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America to make it possible for all children to get an education. There are also many countries in Europe and North America that are experiencing a shortage of teachers. The reasons for this situation may vary from country to country, but there seems to be certain similarities. The number of retiring teachers has grown in recent years and, according to statistical information, and will be even higher in the coming years. There is also a feeling that a growing number of teachers are leaving the profession and difficulties will arise to recruit qualified students for teacher education institutions.

The countries in Europe and North America have found several ways of 'solving' the teacher shortage problem in the short run. One of them is to increase class size, so that the qualified teachers available have to work with larger classes and groups. Another way is to offer more lessons to qualified teachers, so that they have not only the number of lessons required for a full-time position, but also over-time. In some education systems, teachers could also be asked to reduce their working hours allocated to prepare and follow-up lessons and instead use a larger part of the total working time to give lessons. A further method is to make changes in the education offered by a school where it is possible. For example; a school may not be able to offer lessons in a specific foreign language because a qualified teacher in this subject is not available. Instead, the students will be asked to follow courses in other foreign languages.

Some of these practices related to the problems to recruit teachers may have lasting effects on the quality of education provided to students. Increased class size and increased

number of lessons for teachers will certainly affect the quality of the education provided to students. Such measures can be seen as contradicting Article 10:7 in the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers:

... as an educational objective, no State should be satisfied with mere quantity, but should seek also to improve quality...

Many governments in Africa are now experimenting with different schemes to recruit teachers through new channels. In some countries, these recruits are referred to as "volunteer teachers" or "community teachers." Reports from Benin indicate that it is difficult to get students to institutions for teacher education and instead school principals recruit young persons with some education, give them a two-week training course and a temporary contract with a salary much lower than the normal teacher salary. An increasing number of teachers are recruited and paid by Parent-Teacher Associations and referred to as "community teachers". In Senegal an initiative with "volunteer teachers" was launched some years ago. During the first years it was possible to attract young persons with an academic background to the teaching profession, but it has become gradually more and more difficult. The latest information from Senegal shows that most of the "volunteer teachers" have only some years of secondary education and in several cases even less. While different models exist, all tend to hire teachers who are not required to have the same qualifications as the regular teaching force, and all are paid lower salaries.

The long-term risk is that these new ways of recruiting teachers will devalue the status of the teaching profession and that the quality of education will be seriously damaged for decades to come. The view that teachers do not need much education in general is a dangerous one to propagate.

The practice of recruiting "volunteer teachers", "community teachers", etc. certainly violates the principles laid down in Articles 11 to 14 of the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers:

11. Policy governing entry into preparation for teaching should rest on the need to provide society with an adequate supply of teachers who possess the necessary moral, intellectual and physical qualities and who have the required professional knowledge and skills.

12. To meet this need, educational authorities should provide adequate inducements to prepare for teaching and sufficient places in appropriate institutions.

13. Completion of an approved course in an appropriate teacher-preparation institution should be required of all persons entering the profession.

14. Admission to teacher preparation should be based on the completion of appropriate secondary education, and the evidence of the possession of personal qualities likely to help the persons concerned to become worthy members of the profession.

Teachers who have received only a few weeks or less of preparatory courses will not be able to get the training indicated Articles 19 to 21 of the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers:

19. The purpose of a teacher-preparation programme should be to develop in each student his or her general education and personal culture, his or her ability to teach and educate others, an awareness of the principles which underlie good human relations, within and across national boundaries, and a sense of responsibility to contribute both by teaching and by example to social, cultural, and economic progress.

20. Fundamentally, a teacher-preparation programme should include:

- 1. general studies;*
- 2. study of the main elements of philosophy, psychology, sociology as applied to education, the theory and history of education, and of comparative education, experimental pedagogy, school administration and methods of teaching the various subjects;*
- 3. studies related to the student's intended field of teaching;*
- 4. practice in teaching and in conducting extra-curricular activities under the guidance of fully qualified teachers.*

21.

1. All teachers should be prepared in general, special and pedagogical subjects in universities, or in institutions on a level comparable to universities, or else in special institutions for the preparation of teachers.

2. The content of teacher-preparation programmes may reasonably vary according to the tasks the teachers are required to perform in different types of schools, such as establishments for handicapped children or technical and vocational schools. In the latter case, the programmes might include some practical experience to be acquired in industry, commerce or agriculture.

From the perspective of Education International, two obvious lines of action have to be followed to try and solve the problem of teacher shortage. These two lines are to improve the conditions of teachers, in order to make teaching more attractive as a career, and to maintain and improve the quality of teacher education.

Education International also realises that immediate action should be taken. It is doubtful whether governments in Africa, Asia and Latin America are able in the short run to meet the demand for more qualified teachers to achieve EFA. The ILO/UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Teachers is extremely helpful in this context. Based on the principles expressed in Articles 142 and 143 of the Recommendation, it is possible for teacher unions and governments to come to a transitional agreement on how to resolve a teacher shortage.

142. In developing countries, where supply considerations may necessitate short-term intensive emergency preparation programmes for teachers, a fully professional, extensive programme should be available in order to produce corps of professionally prepared teachers competent to guide and direct the educational enterprise.

143.

- 1. Students admitted to training in short term, emergency programmes should be selected in terms of the standards applying to admission to the normal professional programme, or even higher ones, to ensure that they will be capable of subsequently completing the requirements of the full programme.*
- 2. Arrangements and special facilities, including extra study leave on full pay, should enable such students to complete their qualifications in service;*

Article 38 of the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers may also be relevant in this context:

In collaboration with teachers' organisations, policy governing recruitment into employment should be clearly defined at the appropriate level and rules should be established laying down the teachers' obligations and rights.

Reports from several member organisations indicates that many countries do not follow the procedures suggested in the Recommendation concerning how to deal with teacher shortages.

Concerning Higher education, Education International considers that universities will need a very high number of teachers in the coming years. The main problem is not especially the hiring of less competent personnels but rather restrictions to hiring teachers with tenure and the competition for resources. There is a risk of an increase in the recruitment, on a precarious basis, of teachers who will not have access to regular positions. There is a further risk, particularly in North America and Western Europe, that more and more teachers will be recruited from other countries (brain drain). We should also recall that for many teachers the United States are very attractive, especially for leading sectors, and that American universities are attracting many professional resources. In this perspective it is important to note that in universities competence is more and more defined according to criteria concerning the capacity of teachers to obtain research funds and make "cost-effective" research. This change in the notion of competence is particularly worrying for the survival of quality university services based on the respect of fundamental missions, i.e. teaching, research and service to the communities.

2. Teacher salaries

Since education is by nature labour intensive, salaries and related costs make up a large part of education budgets and are frequently targeted when cuts are imposed. OECD figures shows that salaries for teachers in lower secondary education with 15 years of teaching experience have declined compared to the GDP per capita in all OECD countries, with only three exceptions (OECD, 2002a). Even if comparable statistics of the same type are missing from many other regions, Education International believes that the trend in OECD countries is not unique, but rather a part of a worldwide trend with very few exceptions.

In recent years the World Bank has argued that teacher salaries are too high in a number of African countries. The World Bank position is based on what is referred to as the indicative framework (World Bank, 2002a; World Bank, 2002b), which suggests that teacher salaries should be 3.5 times GDP per capita. This raises two questions. First, to which extent the World Bank has interfered in negotiations between governments and teacher unions on salaries, by using the 3.5 times GDP salary level as a condition for World Bank support and loans. Secondly, to which extent the method of comparing salaries between countries with very different economies and various institutional arrangements represents an acceptable way of guiding countries in their salary policies towards teachers.

It seems obvious that the World Bank has directly interfered in salary negotiations in a country at least on one occasion. In a background paper for the World Bank spring meeting 2003, the following information is given in a box entitled: Policy gains in Mozambique: *"The government has recently proposed a major increase in teacher's salaries (to 7.4 times per capita GDP), which analyses showed to be unsustainable. After discussion of the FTI proposal in relation to the EFA benchmark (3.5 times per capita) the increase is being renegotiated on the basis of finding a solution that is fair to teachers, while ensuring progress on the quality front."* (The World Bank 2003, p.11, Box 3). This intervention by the World Bank in the negotiations on teacher salaries in Mozambique should be considered in the light of the problems to recruit teachers as indicated by the Mozambique government in the country report they submitted to the EFA Assessment 2000:

"The Government recognises that the current salaries and conditions of work of public sector employees are not conducive to high morale or effective performance, and is therefore working with its international partners to develop a strategy to improve their wages, benefits, and working conditions. The Ministry of Education strongly supports this effort, which will benefit teachers as well as other public sector workers. At the same time, the Ministry will seek to provide teachers with access to alternative forms of compensation (e.g., opportunities for promotion, housing, community support) so as to restrain growth in the wage bill. /../

Improvements in teachers' conditions of service is essential in order to attract better-qualified teachers, increase their time for class preparation and teaching, and reduce their dependence on second jobs and "unofficial" sources of additional income. In addition, of course, improving teachers' conditions of services makes the teaching profession more attractive relative to alternative employment, and so may help to reduce the rate of attrition among current teachers. Improvements in the compensation of teachers will be closely linked

to improvements in their qualifications and performance as teachers are provided with increased opportunities for in-service training." (Mozambique Country Report, 2000).

When they drafted the report on EFA in 2000, the Mozambique government obviously had a first opinion, and changed to a second one after the intervention of the World Bank in 2003. From that perspective it seems clear that the indicative framework is not only a tool for comparisons, but a condition put on governments' education policy.

It is also doubtful whether teacher salaries as ratio of GDP per capita is a useful instrument for comparing teacher salaries. As has been pointed out in OECD reports "*there is a significant association between teachers' salaries and GDP per capita*" (p. 333, OECD, 2002b). Countries with a low GDP per capita usually have teacher salaries that correspond to a high ratio of GDP per capita. Many of the countries with teacher salaries above the 3.5 times GDP per capita prescribed by the World Bank are among the less developed countries in the world. Instead of making this comparison it would be much more relevant to compare teacher salaries "*with salaries paid in other occupations requiring similar or equivalent qualifications*" as suggested in article 15:2 of the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers. Unfortunately, there is not much information available enabling to make such comparisons. One of the few sources available is the study on salaries and prices in various cities made by the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS). The booklet entitled "*Prices and Earnings Around the Globe*" has been published every third year since the late 60s. In total ten surveys have been published, the latest one in 2000. Among other things, the survey compares salaries for various jobs in several big cities in all continents. One of the jobs is primary teaching. The conclusion which can be drawn from studying the figures in this survey is that teachers do not seem to be better paid than skilled workers and employees in other occupations. In several cases teachers are actually paid less than skilled workers and employees. ILO has come to a similar conclusion in earlier studies: "*The general impression which emerges from these comparisons is that, in the wage hierarchy, teachers do not occupy the place to which their qualifications and responsibilities should entitle them.*" (p. 96, ILO, 1991).

Education International believes that it is time to render the teaching profession more attractive, so that able and motivated people can be recruited, and good teachers remain. There is a strong case to increase teacher salaries in several countries. Article 115 of the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers states:

115. Teachers' salaries should:

- 1. reflect the importance to society of the teaching function and hence the importance of teachers as well as the responsibilities of all kinds which fall upon them from the time of their entry into the service;*
- 2. compare favourably with salaries paid in other occupations requiring similar or equivalent qualifications;*
- 3. provide teachers with the means to ensure a reasonable standard of living for themselves and their families as well as to invest in further education or in the pursuit of cultural activities, thus enhancing their professional qualification;*
- 4. take account of the fact that certain posts require higher qualifications and experience and carry greater responsibilities.*

It is traditional in most countries to use seniority and qualifications as the basis for determining salaries for teachers. During recent years there have been discussions in many countries about linking teacher salaries to job performance. Among teachers and their organisations there is widespread scepticism about performance-related salaries. A general belief among teachers is that the job performance of teachers is very difficult to assess in a fair way, especially if all relevant factors, such as the social environment of children and the economic resources available, are taken into consideration in an objective way. An obvious risk is also that collegiality will be affected. Examples of merit pay on a large scale are hard to find or very new. Available information to date indicates that merit pay schemes have been problematic and that it is more efficient to have clear and objective rather than subjective criteria as the basis for salary levels.

The Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers should carefully monitor developments in countries that have introduced systems with elements of merit pay. In this context we would also like to recall article 117 of the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers:

The salary structure should be planned so as not to give rise to injustices or anomalies tending to lead to friction between different groups of teachers.

and article 119:

Salary differentials should be based on objective criteria such as levels of qualifications, years of experience or degrees of responsibility but the relationship between the lowest and the highest salary should be of a reasonable order.

Governments and other employers of teachers should keep in mind Article 124 of the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers:

No merit rating system for purposes of salary determination should be introduced or applied without prior consultation with and acceptance by the teachers' organisations concerned.

As regards higher education, several surveys in Canada and Western Europe have proved that salaries of university teachers are not evolving at the same pace as those of other professional groups requesting similar academic training and experience. The adjustment of teacher salaries with those of other professional groups is at stake in negotiations within many trade unions. But there is a widely spread trend to increase salaries by offering market grants, special conditions to teachers who are performing according to various criteria, or even fiscal advantages to teachers coming from abroad. University administrations tend to adopt this strategy rather than improve salaries and working conditions for all.

In this context we would like to recall article 60 of the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel:

Higher-education teaching personnel should be paid on the basis of salary scales established in agreement with organizations representing higher-education teaching personnel, except where other equivalent procedures consistent with international standards are provided. During a probationary period or if employed on a temporary basis qualified higher-education teaching personnel should not be paid on a lower scale than that laid down for established higher-education teaching personnel at the same level.

and Education International recommends that employers keep in mind article 61, when introducing merit pay:

A fair and impartial merit-rating system could be a means of enhancing quality assurance and quality control. Where introduced and applied for purposes of salary determination it should involve prior consultation with organizations representing higher-education teaching personnel.

3. Consultations with Teacher Organisations

As a contribution to the 1995 EFA mid-term evaluation, Education International asked its member organisations in the nine most populated countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America¹ if they had been consulted on the reforms which came out of the EFA process. Most organisations had not been invited to any consultations, and those that had discussed reforms with government representatives did not have much influence (Education International, 1995). As a contribution to the EFA 2000 Assessment, Education International asked the same question to the same member organisations, and while the situation had improved to some extent, fundamental problems still existed. For example, most countries had no

¹ The so-called E9 countries, which refer to the nine most populated countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, are: Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, and Pakistan.

tradition or mechanism of regular consultations between teacher unions and governments/ministries of Education (Education International, 1999).

In order to know the extent to which teacher unions had been involved in the process of developing national EFA strategies after the World Education Forum in Dakar, Education International sent a questionnaire to its member organisations in Africa, Asia/Pacific and Latin America (Fredriksson, 2003). A majority of the organisations that responded to the questionnaire were not aware that the EFA forums existed. Among those that were familiar with the Forums, a majority had not participated in them. In some cases, the governments appeared to organise training seminars on EFA - not forums for discussion and consultation.

A majority of the teacher unions which responded to the questionnaire had not heard of any National EFA Plans either. Moreover, many unions had tried to meet with governments to discuss the EFA process without success. Some governments had not even responded to their letters. Most unions that knew of the EFA Plans had been involved in some kind of consultation on them, but this was not always the case. Among those that were included in EFA consultations, several thought that they had been insufficient.

In discussions on how to implement the changes needed to make EFA a reality, it is crucial to note that no educational reform can be effective without the agreement and active partnership of the personnel who will ultimately be responsible for its implementation. Teachers have far-reaching knowledge and experience of the situational and even daily needs of an educational institution. Governments should take advantage of this knowledge and experience.

Of course, consultations or negotiations cannot take place with every single teacher, but they can be organised in a structured way. The easiest way for governments to acquire a counterpoint in their discussions on education reforms is to acknowledge the existing teacher unions. Organised teacher participation involves a process whereby the profession, through representative education unions, is able to express its views on a range of issues. These views are generally obtained through a democratic process of policy determination, which is then conveyed by elected representatives.

Various structures are used to distribute information and organise consultations and negotiations between governments and teacher unions. That being said, certain provisions should always exist, including information, formal consultations on policy, and negotiations on service conditions. Open attitudes and transparency are also needed. Governments have to recognise that it is in their interest to keep unions well informed. The development of the education system should not be kept a secret.

The lack of consultations with teacher organisations in many countries is clearly a violation of Article 9 in the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Teachers:

Teachers' organisations should be recognised as a force which can contribute greatly to educational advance and which therefore should be associated with the determination of educational policy.

4. Academic Freedom and Tenure for Teachers

Professional and academic freedom for teachers is of crucial importance to achieve a teaching that is independent of any political, economic, ideological or religious influence, in order to preserve young peoples' democratic exercise and right to critical creativity. There has to be a general trust in the creativity of the teacher. How the teaching is done in the classroom should never be prescribed by persons outside the classroom reality. This does not imply that authorities should not suggest new teaching methods through in-service training, professional development and other means. It is important and necessary for teachers to be given different approaches and models for their teaching, but it must never turn into a process of dictating which methods to use.

At the same time, as decisions concerning budget responsibilities in many countries are decentralised, in some cases the formulation of curriculum objectives has been stricter and more precise. Some governments have even tried to prescribe to teachers which initial reading instructions method should be used in the classroom. This can result in fewer opportunities for teachers to make their own decisions on how to transform curriculum objectives into practical classroom teaching.

A risk occurs in situations where some decisions regarding curriculum and syllabus are referred to different kinds of local authorities and school boards, as part of decentralisation processes. Local administrators and politicians might not be aware of the need to respect teachers' professional freedom. In their eagerness to use the new rights to take decisions, they might reach conclusions about courses, teaching aids, textbooks etc. without the necessary consultations with teachers and their organisations.

Education International believes that it is important to protect the professional freedom of teachers. We would like to recall Article 61 of the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers:

The teaching profession should enjoy academic freedom in the discharge of professional duties. Since teachers are particularly qualified to judge the teaching aids and methods most suitable for their pupils, they should be given the essential role in the choice and the adaptation of teaching material, the selection of textbooks and the application of teaching methods, within the framework of approved programmes, and with the assistance of the educational authorities.

In Higher education, issues of academic freedom and tenure are of major importance.

The general feeling, it seems, is that academic freedom might be lost. However, threats or pressure against academic freedom are various. They are often subtle, setting up contexts resulting in self-censorship on the part of teachers. Concrete and evident cases of constraint upon academic freedom do exist.

How does self-censorship appear? The time necessary to innovate, create, develop and update material is ever reduced in a heavy timetable. In spite of various claims, bureaucracy is increasing; demands with regard to performance request heavy reporting, the preparation

of files, especially concerning requests for research funds, is more and more time-consuming, etc.

Furthermore the democratisation of education requests adequate conditions to favour the success of a greater number of students. If we claim to have a society of knowledge, an economy of knowledge and, above all, to want to make it benefit the whole society, it is important to maintain essential provisional conditions, including the autonomy of teachers to manage their own time. Threats to their application are sometimes subtle, most often linked with funding (sub-funding), with pressures related to the commercialisation of different teaching and research activities.

In Canada, the government recognises within the framework of the 2001 report that new challenges have arisen:

"But new challenges arise. There was a very public case at the University of Toronto recently in which the question was raised as to whether private companies that contract to do research in the university can forbid the publication of the results, particularly when those results are negative. More generally, can the university continue to be a place of independent research in an age of commercialization? Who will fund independent scientific or public policy research? Does peer evaluation collapse in the commercial age? If so, how is quality maintained?"

Questions have arisen about censorship and privacy on the Internet (see above). Questions also arise when a politician attacks a university because of a controversial department or faculty member. Is that joining in the academic debate, or is it intimidation and an attempt to limit that debate? Is academic freedom violated when the courts demand the research notes of a faculty member who has promised confidentiality to his or her research subjects in an area of community controversy?

Old questions also re-emerge. How will the increase in private sector funding of university research affect academic freedom, free speech and independent research? Are speech codes and attempts to regulate the behaviour of faculty members a violation of academic freedom or a necessary step in combatting harassment and disruption on campus? The answers to these questions will determine whether the idea of academic freedom continues to evolve in Canada as one that maximizes freedom as it has for the past hundred years".

EI believes that articles 26 to 30 of the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel have to be underlined for a better application by the states and the institutions, more especially **article 27**.

..... the principle of academic freedom should be scrupulously observed. Higher-education teaching personnel are entitled to the maintaining of academic freedom, that is to say, the right, without constriction by prescribed doctrine, to freedom of teaching and discussion, freedom in carrying out research and disseminating and publishing the results thereof, freedom to express freely their opinion about the institution or system in which they work, freedom from institutional censorship and freedom to participate in professional or

representative academic bodies. All higher-education teaching personnel should have the right to fulfil their functions without discrimination of any kind and without fear of repression by the state or any other source. Higher-education teaching personnel can effectively do justice to this principle if the environment in which they operate is conducive, which requires a democratic atmosphere; hence the challenge for all of developing a democratic society.

Concerning tenure, Education International would like to stress the importance of *better job security for academic staff*. Tenure or its functional equivalent is one of the crucial safeguards of academic freedom and against arbitrary decisions. *But tenure is undermined!* The result of the great volume of research projects externally financed, in some countries, has been that both general rules about short-term employment and special university regulations limiting employment periods have been invoked to limit the terms for researchers and for senior and junior lecturers. According to a study performed at Lund University (Sweden), 37 percent of all positions as teachers and researchers were limited in time. The study showed that it took a newly graduated doctor an average of seven years to attain a tenured post. Our member organisation in that country has asserted that the practice that has developed at institutions must be seen as an abuse of the regulations. Besides being an unacceptable and insecure situation for young people at the age when they are starting families, limited-term posts entail huge amounts of administrative work at institutions.

The new University law in Norway (from 2002) allows for more temporary positions for academic staff. It is a bit too early to say how the institutions will use this opportunity, but in combination with budget cuts and the dependence on external finances for projects, the EI affiliate is afraid that tenure will be less common and temporary positions used more frequently.

The Supreme Court of Canada in *McKinney v. University of Guelph* thought otherwise and declared that faculty "must have a great measure of security of employment if they are to have the freedom necessary to the maintenance of academic excellence which is or should be the hallmark of a university. Tenure provides the necessary academic freedom to allow free and fearless search for knowledge and the propagation of ideas."

Education international believes that it is very important to ensure and protect academic freedom and tenure for higher education teaching personnel and would like to recall articles 45 and 46 of the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation on higher education teaching personnel:

Tenure or its functional equivalent, where applicable, constitutes one of the major procedural safeguards of academic freedom and against arbitrary decisions. It also encourages individual responsibility and the retention of talented higher-education teaching personnel.

Security of employment in the profession, including tenure or its functional equivalent, where applicable, should be safeguarded as it is essential to the interests of higher education as well as those of higher-education teaching personnel. It ensures that higher-education teaching personnel who secure continuing employment following rigorous evaluation can only

be dismissed on professional grounds and in accordance with due process. They may also be released for bona fide financial reasons, provided that all the financial accounts are open to public inspection, that the institution has taken all reasonable alternative steps to prevent termination of employment, and that there are legal safeguards against bias in any termination of employment procedure. Tenure or its functional equivalent, where applicable, should be safeguarded as far as possible even when changes in the organization of or within a higher education institution or system are made, and should be granted, after a reasonable period of probation, to those who meet stated objective criteria in teaching, and/or scholarship, and/or research to the satisfaction of an academic body, and/or extension work to the satisfaction of the institution of higher education.

5. Decentralisation

There has been a broad trend towards decentralisation, for the most part finance-driven. Where the provision of resources for schooling is shifted to the local level, inequalities between regions translate into inequalities in educational provision. In the context of a general slashing of public sector expenditures in most countries, there has been a diminution of grants for municipalities, and decentralisation has come to be associated in most communities with cuts in resources for education.

Arguments in favour of decentralisation often include pressure for more say from parents in the case of younger children, or students themselves in the case of vocational and higher education. Uniform restructuring or centrally controlled systems of education can bring schools closer to their communities. The purpose of increasing school autonomy should be to improve the quality of education, enhance the participation of teachers and parents in decision-making and enable a flexible response to local community requirements.

However, there are also negative aspects to decentralisation. For example, when local school boards and/or school principals are given absolute authority to set curricula and to hire and dismiss teachers and other staff, serious problems may arise. Procedures for negotiation and consultation at national level may be ignored or considered redundant. In some countries more power over schooling has been given to the municipal councils. Yet, in many instances these councils have used their influence to silence and/or transfer teachers who sympathised with a party other than the party of the majority in the council. Moreover, many members of municipal councils have not been given the training and information they needed to complete their tasks.

One of the objectives behind decentralisation has been to save resources, and staff at national level has been reduced accordingly. At the same time, it has not been easy to find competent personnel at regional and local level. Another problem with decentralisation is that in many cases it has not resulted in more influence at municipal level. Centralism has only moved from national to regional level, and the local influence remains unchanged.

Some of the changes proposed and introduced as part of decentralisation programmes were met with mistrust and scepticism by teacher unions. It is feared that decentralisation

without sufficient financial means will increase inequalities in society and between schools, communities and regions.

Education International believes that decentralisation will work best if central government provides the regulatory framework, retains overall responsibility for ensuring the adequacy of funding levels and its equitable distribution, if there is careful preparation, widespread consultation with all partners, in-service training for teachers and school administrators and considerable opportunities for the exchange of information and feedback.

We would like to recall Article 10:1 and 10:2 of the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers:

10. Appropriate measures should be taken in each country to the extent necessary to formulate comprehensive educational policies consistent with the Guiding Principles, drawing on all available resources, human and otherwise. In so doing, the competent authorities should take account of the consequences for teachers of the following principles and objectives:

- 1. it is the fundamental right of every child to be provided with the fullest possible educational opportunities; due attention should be paid to children requiring special educational treatment;*
- 2. all facilities should be made available equally to enable every person to enjoy his or her right to education without discrimination on grounds of sex, race, colour, religion, political opinion, national or social origin, or economic condition;*

Article 38 of the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers may also be relevant in this context:

In collaboration with teachers' organisations, policy governing recruitment into employment should be clearly defined at the appropriate level and rules should be established laying down the teachers' obligations and rights.

6. Privatisation

Some theoreticians argue in favour of the extension of privatisation policies into education and training, by setting up competing structures and market mechanisms. The introduction of vouchers, education cheques, etc. would also move in the direction of privatisation. Many of these measures would support private schools at the expense of public schools.

The privatisation of public education, which implies competition between school establishments, would present the danger of placing young people in separate schools organised along religious, cultural, social and linguistic lines. The partial or full privatisation

of education would not lead to lower costs than the public service, if all the associated services indispensable to the proper functioning of school establishments, such as in-service training for teachers, support services for students with difficulties, and upkeep of school buildings, were to be taken into consideration. Recent research on school performance in several countries does not give any proof that private schools perform better than public schools given the same conditions.

Education International believes that the privatisation of public education services presents the danger of placing young people in separate schools which are organised along single-sex, religious, cultural, social or linguistic lines, of exacerbating differences instead of reducing them, and thus of creating societies where the risks of non-understanding, intolerance and conflict will be significant.

The rules concerning trade in education in GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services) should be seen in the light of an increased interest in the privatisation / commercialisation of education in some countries. Education International fears that that governments will use GATS as an excuse for deregulation and privatisation within the education sector. Education International also notes that the protection said to be provided in GATS for services provided under government authority is ambiguous at best, and open to interpretation by Trade Dispute Panels. The risk is obvious that education will become part of a general negotiation game whereby governments may have to open up the education market in their own countries in order to get access to other markets. In the long run there is a danger that education policies will increasingly be decided by trade ministers instead of education ministers.

We would like to recall Article 10:3 of the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers:

Since education is a service of fundamental importance in the general public interest, it should be recognised as a responsibility of the State, which should provide an adequate network of schools, free education in these schools and material assistance to needy pupils; this should not be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to choose for their children schools other than those established by the State, or so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions which conform to such minimum educational standards as may be laid down or approved by the State.

HIV/AIDS and EDUCATION

EI and its partners wish to develop their cooperation programmes for health education in general and HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmissible Infections (STI) prevention in particular because they consider that school is an irreplaceable place for action in the promotion of children, adolescents and education personnel health and in HIV/AIDS prevention and related discrimination.

Today, school health education and HIV/AIDS/STI prevention programmes taking into account the recommendations and resolutions made at the different seminars and meetings are implemented in the following countries: Botswana, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Haiti, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Africa is to date the continent hit most severely by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The teaching community EI is still very concerned about the extent of the epidemic and particularly the disastrous impact of HIV/AIDS on the education sector. EI is determined to strengthen its action and increase its activities, thus enabling teachers to protect and educate themselves, so that they can effectively train young people to access interactive teaching methods that will help them articulate their concerns and protect themselves.

included. One out of five teachers is expected to die of AIDS in the period 2000 - 2008 in the Southern Africa region. The impact of their death on the education system, the teachers unions and the future of the countries is enormous. In all countries involved, the teacher union is considered to be the institution that is best organised to reach out to the teachers and the students. The ownership of the project by the union increases the understanding amongst teachers of the importance of this programme as the objective is to train the maximum number of teachers at national, regional and district/local levels.

Up to now, thousands of teachers have been trained on interactive learning experiences in the 13 countries listed above. Results are very encouraging as shown by the Guinean case.

For more information

<http://www.ei-ie.org/educ/aids/eeintro.htm>

HIV prevention efforts in Guinea

In Guinea, the Fédération Syndicale Professionnelle de l'Education (FSPE) and the Syndicat Libre des Enseignants et Chercheurs de Guinée (SLECG), gathered in the *Intersyndicale de l'éducation* (inter-unions for education), started a project on school health and HIV/AIDS/STI prevention in January 2002. During the first year of the project, a strong team of 66 national trainers was trained. The role of the trainers is to train their colleagues in the regions. The teacher unions also produced a training manual for the trainers containing interactive learning experiences for teachers, adults and young people as well as sensitisation posters and leaflets. Since the beginning of the second year of the project in January 2003, a total of 1159 teacher trainers and teachers in 15 of the 33 Prefectures of Guinea and the capital Conakry have been trained. After the training, trainees sign a contract with the *Intersyndicale* in which they commit to train other teachers at the sub-Prefecture and school levels to use the information and training materials. The Project is being implemented by the *Intersyndicale* in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the three Ministries of Education. Teachers in the field are very enthusiastic and willing to demultiply the project. Every trained teacher has organised himself at school level to transfer his/her knowledge to his/her colleagues.

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