

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ON THE REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL ON THE DEPLOYMENT OF TEACHERS IN BASIC SCHOOLS FOR THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE ELEVENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

Consisting of:

Dr C K Kalila, MP (Chairperson); Mr B Mutale, MP; Ms S Sayifwanda, MP; Mr S Mushanga, MP; Mr C Miyanda, MP; Mr E C Musonda, MP; Mr K K Hamudulu, MP; and Mr H Kunda, MP.

The Honourable Mr Speaker
National Assembly of Zambia
Parliament Buildings
P.O. Box 31299
LUSAKA

Sir,

Your Committee has the honour to present its Report on the Auditor General's Report on the Deployment of Teachers in Basic Schools.

Functions of the Committee

2. 0 In addition to any other duties conferred upon it by Mr Speaker or any Standing Order or any other Order of the Assembly, the duties of the Committee are to:
- (i) study, report and make appropriate recommendations to the Government through the House on the mandate, management and operations of the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education and of departments and/or agencies under its portfolio;
 - (ii) carry out detailed scrutiny of certain activities being undertaken by the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education and of departments and/or agencies under its portfolio and make appropriate recommendations to the House for ultimate consideration by the Government;
 - (iii) make, if considered necessary, recommendations to the Government on the need to review certain policies and/or certain existing legislation relating to the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education;
 - (iv) examine annual reports of the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education and departments and agencies under its portfolio in the context of the autonomy and efficiency of government ministries and departments and determine whether the affairs of the said bodies are being managed according to relevant Acts of Parliament, established regulations, rules and general orders; and
 - (v) consider any bills that may be referred to it by the House.

Meetings of the Committee

3.0 During the consideration of the Auditor General Report, your Committee held eight (8) meetings.

Procedure Adopted by the Committee

4.0 In order to fully appreciate the queries and recommendations raised in the Auditor General's Report, your Committee invited the following stakeholders who provided both written and oral submissions:

- i. Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education;
- ii. Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC);
- iii. Teaching Service Commission;
- iv. Public Service Management Division (PSMD); and
- v. Basic Education Teachers Union of Zambia (BETUZ).

Audit Scope and Methodology

Scope and Limitations of the Audit

5.0 The audit focused on the activities relating to the deployment of teachers in basic schools during the period 2008 to 2010. The audit object was the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education, involving a review of policies, plans, procedures, rules and regulations as well as reports on Deployment of Teachers in Basic Schools. Interviews were conducted with officials responsible for the formulation and implementation of policies and plans on deployment of teachers at headquarters, provincial and district levels.

Four (4) provinces were selected for the collection of audit evidence, namely; Southern, Copperbelt, Northern and Lusaka Provinces. Within the provinces, a sample of three (3) Provincial Education Officers (PEOs) and eight (8) District Education Board Secretaries (DEBS) offices were selected. These were all selected on the basis of the rural and urban dimension in order to get a balanced picture of the teacher deployment. In addition, a survey was conducted using questionnaires in which ninety three (93) basic schools participated. Of these schools, eighty eight (88), representing 95%, responded to the questionnaires.

The methods used for the collection of audit evidence are as set out below.

i. Interviews

Interviews were conducted with key staff in order to obtain an understanding of the audit area and also to gather audit evidence on teacher deployment in basic schools as well as to confirm the responses obtained through interviews.

ii. Document Review

Documents were reviewed with a purpose of understanding the operations of the Ministry with regard to the deployment of teachers to basic schools.

iii. **Questionnaires**

In the school survey, questionnaires were administered to the basic schools to collect quantitative and qualitative data on teacher deployment, pupil enrolments, teacher pay-points, transfers and training.

iv. **Field Observations**

The audit team also visited school premises to verify the availability of teachers, teacher accommodation and the condition of the basic schools.

Audit Criteria

6.0 The audit criteria that were employed are as detailed below.

Pupil Teacher Ratios

The Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) is the average number of pupils per teacher at a specific level of education in a given school year. The PTR is used to assess quality of education. It is generally assumed that a lower PTR signifies smaller classes, which allows teachers to concentrate more on individual pupils, resulting in better performance of pupils.

a. Standard Establishment in Basic Schools

According to the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education School Establishment Report of 2010, the Standards Directorate developed the standards of staffing required for the Ministry to provide quality education, specifying the number of teachers required for basic schools. The factors stated to determine the establishment of basic schools include population of school-age children, infrastructure development, subjects taught, subject options, enrolment, school grading and teacher retention.

b. Recruitment and Deployment of Teachers

According to the Education Policy, the Ministry is responsible for recruitment and deployment of teachers. The recruitment and deployment is done through the Human Resource and Administration (HRA) Directorate. The Standards Directorate advises the Ministry on the staffing levels in schools measures the overall quality in the education system and also coordinates its activities with those of HRA and other departments.

According to the Ministry's Deployment Policy Regulations of 2010, the factors set out below are supposed to be considered during recruitment, deployment and transfer of teachers.

i. Choice of Station

The possible candidates should be sent to areas of their preference. However, where one province has more applicants under consideration and other provinces have exhausted the applicants, the province with excess applicants can export to the provinces with deficits.

ii. Distribution of Married Teachers

Teachers should be employed in specific schools where vacancies exist. Where a married teacher accepts a position in a school far from their matrimonial home, they are expected to serve in such a school for at least two years before they can be considered for transfer.

iii. Candidates with Medical Conditions

It is a general principle for all employers to employ people who are certified medically fit. It is for this reason that all those employed should prove that they are certified fit before being posted to a station. Those who are not certified fit should not be employed and as such once a teacher is posted, it is not expected for such a person to come back with an excuse of a medical condition requiring them to be near a big hospital.

iv. Type of Teacher Transfers

For a transfer to be effected, it is a condition that a payroll vacancy should be available at the school where a teacher is transferring to.

There are three (3) types of transfers, namely:

- a) transfers within the district which are managed by the District Board Secretary (DEBS);
- b) transfers within the province which are managed by the Provincial Education Office (PEO); and
- c) transfers from one region to another managed by the Permanent Secretary.

c. Entitlements of Teachers

Apart from their basic salary, teachers are entitled to the benefits set out below.

i. Rural Hardship Allowance

Rural schools are classified in four categories; according to the district's remoteness and a particular school's distance from the nearest district centre. These categories are:

- A – 30 to 70 km from the nearest district centre;
- B – 25 to 70 km from the nearest district centre;
- C – 20 to 70 km from the nearest district centre; and
- D – 0 to 15 km from the nearest district centre.

The rural hardship allowance is paid at 20% of the monthly basic salary.

ii. Remote Allowance

A school is described as remote if the distance from the nearest district centre is over 70km for category A, B and C and over 15 km for category D. Teachers at such schools are entitled to remote allowance which is 25% of the monthly basic salary. The teacher qualifying to receive the remote allowance is not eligible to receive the rural hardship allowance or vice versa.

iii. Accommodation for Teachers provided by Schools

Teachers are supposed to be accommodated in houses provided by a school. In the absence of such accommodation, they are paid a housing allowance according to their salary scale. The provision of housing allowance or residential accommodation to basic school teachers serves as a motivation to retain teachers especially those in the rural areas.

7.0 Audit Findings and Recommendations; Stakeholders' Views and Observations; Government Responses and Committee's Observations and Recommendations

a. Weaknesses in the Deployment of Teachers

There were weaknesses in teacher deployment. The results showed that some schools had higher PTRs than others. It had further been observed that some schools within the same district had more teachers than other schools, especially those in the urban areas. Further, establishments of teachers were not consistent with the demands of schools as those establishments had not been filled fully.

Auditor General's Recommendation

The Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education should ensure that the establishments for schools are revised appropriately. The Ministry should also align teachers' pay points to their respective schools to avoid distortions as this affects the data for deployment of teachers. The Ministry should also ensure that schools are gazetted and put on the establishment on time.

Stakeholders' Views

Somme stakeholders observed that the weakness in the deployment of teachers was as a result of failure by the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education to timely upgrade schools from their previous status to the one they were currently operating on. Schools had been developing in terms of infrastructure and enrolment but the Ministry had not upgraded them, making it difficult for such schools to officially accommodate more teachers. In certain cases, establishments were not commensurate with the size of schools.

Some stakeholders, therefore, recommended that the Ministry of Education should come up with an effective information management system which would help in giving accurate information on the deployment and transfer of teachers as opposed to total reliance on the PMEC system. Further, The Ministry must come up with an effective and co-ordinated training system anchored on decentralized training, recruitment and deployment of teachers.

Government's Response

Currently, the Ministry in conjunction with the Management Development Division (MDD) is undertaking an Institutional Assessment of the Ministry with a view to streamlining and harmonising the schools establishment, ensuring that teachers' salaries are harmonised and the pay points for teachers reflect the actual schools at which the teachers are stationed. This process is at an advanced stage. The Ministry has progressively been creating positions for approved structures in newly constructed schools. The annual teacher net recruitment has been based on replacements and the establishment of 25,000 positions mainly in newly gazetted and constructed schools. The recruitment has been undertaken in a phased approach.

Further, the gazetting of schools has always been done by the Ministry. However, in view of the policy shift of transforming basic schools to primary schools, the legislation is being revised to ensure that these changes are effected and included in the Education Act. Once this has been completed, the new schools will be gazetted accordingly.

Committee's Observations and Recommendations

Your Committee expresses disappointment at the pace at which the Institutional Assessment of the Ministry is being undertaken as it is meant to streamline and harmonise the schools establishment and considering that the Auditor's General's Report was done in 2010.

Your Committee further observes that the current deployment of teachers by the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (MESVTEE), which is done centrally by the Standards Directorate, will continue to pose major challenges and therefore recommends that serious efforts must be made to decentralise the teacher recruitment, deployment and transfer functions to the district level. The role of the Directorates at Headquarters and the Provincial Education Offices should be to monitor the processes of

recruitment and deployment. This is in line with the decentralisation policy and will also help in implementing the newly launched curriculum and the use of local languages as a medium of instruction at lower primary school level. Decentralisation will also reduce incidences of some schools having too many teachers, while others have very few teachers within the same district.

b. Unreliable Vacancy Data for Determining Teacher Vacancies

The Ministry is responsible for assigning teachers to schools. In determining vacancies for teachers, staff assignment reports are obtained from the Public Service Management Division with details relating to vacant teaching positions available and at which school. However, the data used in identifying vacancies had distortions as teachers appeared on payrolls which did not belong to their work stations; and newly constructed schools which were in operation were not gazetted on time. Coordination among directorates within the Ministry was lacking when it came to staffing of schools.

Stakeholders' Views

Stakeholders contended that the database determining teacher vacancies was unreliable because the Ministry of Education, Science Vocational Training and Early Education had no database of their own, generated through the established education structures. They, therefore, recommended that the Ministry of Education should through its structures come up with its own information management system to generate accurate data on staffing.

Government's Response

Although the Auditor General's Report did not provide a recommendation on this matter, the Ministry in its interaction with your Committee submitted that they had embarked on a project to develop a database. The Permanent Secretary submitted that human intervention had proved slow and unreliable and so there was need to computerise the system.

Committee's Observations and Recommendations

Your Committee recommends that the Ministry of Education should introduce a separate Information Management System to manage information on recruitment, deployment and transfer of teachers which also complement Payroll Management and Establishment Control (PMEC) system.

c. Non-Adherence to Transfer Guidelines

The Auditor General had observed that according to existing guidelines, teachers were supposed to work at a school for a minimum of two (2) years before they could become eligible for transfer to another school and in any case, a transfer would depend on the availability of a vacancy under the Payroll Management and Establishment Control (PMEC) system maintained by the Public Service Management Division. Notwithstanding these guidelines, it had been established that teachers sent to rural areas were transferred even before the lapse of the minimum two (2) years and those

that were transferred still maintained pay points of the schools they were coming from or another school which, in most cases, was different from the original school. Most of the transfers were based on marital status or medical grounds.

Auditor General's Recommendation

The Ministry should ensure that the guidelines on recruitment and transfers are adhered to strictly. Failure to adhere to the guidelines has an adverse effect on teacher deployment especially in rural areas.

Stakeholders' Views

Some stakeholders noted that although all public service workers, including teachers, were bonded for a period of two years on first appointment to work in rural areas and thereafter they can request for a transfer for any justifiable reason, District Education Board Secretaries were under pressure from powers that be to transfer relatives and children of such influential people to schools of their preference. This made it very difficult for them to strictly follow the laid down guidelines.

Government's Response

The Ministry in its net recruitment and replacement process always placed adverts in the public media and provided guidelines on the recruitment procedures. It is these guidelines that determined where teachers were posted as the adverts usually indicated the areas where vacancies were available as opposed to where one teacher would like to be posted. The Ministry was inclined towards recruiting more teachers for the rural areas than the urban areas.

Committee's Observations and Recommendations

Your Committee observes that sometimes the flouting of these regulations was as a result of pressure from senior Government officials who instructed PEOs and DEBSs to transfer their relatives and children to their preferred areas. Further, the incentives, namely; rural and remote hardship allowances, had been rendered ineffective in retaining teachers in rural schools due to the absence of social facilities such, medical, transport, communication and banking.

Your Committee, therefore, recommends that Government should create an enabling economic environment through Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) to provide the necessary social and economic amenities that will make rural areas attractive to teachers and other civil servants. Further, rural and remote hardship allowances should be adjusted upwards from the current 25% to 40% of the basic pay.

d. Reluctance by Teachers to Work in Rural Areas

In an effort to make the rural basic schools attractive, the Ministry introduced incentives such as fast-track promotions and upgrading opportunities, that is, in

addition to the current hardship allowances paid to teachers. Provision of housing for teachers especially in the rural areas was also meant to be a tool to attract teachers.

However, in spite of this initiative, most teachers have continued to prefer urban basic schools to rural ones claiming that rural schools have offered fewer opportunities for personal advancement. Most teachers in rural schools feel that the rural hardship allowances are inadequate and therefore do not inspire them enough. The inadequacy of suitable accommodation has also posed serious challenges in most schools visited.

The problem of teacher deployment in the country was identified as contributing significantly to the lowering of the educational standards. The deployment of teachers to basic schools had its own challenges such as attrition and transfers. The impact of these challenges has a direct bearing on Government's efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goal No.2 on Education.

Auditor General's Recommendation

The Ministry should ensure that the provision of teachers' accommodation, particularly in rural areas, is made on a sustainable basis. The Ministry's training programme of teachers should not only be equitable but it should be seen to be equitable.

The Ministry should coordinate effectively with other key Ministries such as Local Government and Housing, Health, Energy, Lands, and Environmental Protection to ensure that projects of construction of schools and teacher's houses meet the minimum required standards.

Stakeholders' Views

Stakeholders told your Committee that the incentives attached to teaching in rural areas were not attractive enough as compared to the risks associated with working in a rural area. They contended that the rural hardship allowance of 20% of one's basic salary and the remote hardship allowance of 25%, which when computed to the actual cash, amounted to between K700 for rural and K900 for remote hardship allowance was not appealing enough to the majority teachers. Further, teachers' accommodation in rural areas was substandard.

Government's Response

Since 2008, the Ministry embarked on a massive school infrastructure development throughout the country which saw the Ministry constructing classroom blocks, teachers houses, VIP latrines for the schools, as well as teacher's houses. This expansion has continued to date and the focus has been on the rural areas. The reason has been to attract teachers to these areas so that they can provide services there. The Ministry has concentrated in those areas where the number of teachers is low as opposed to the areas where the teachers' numbers are high.

With regard to equity, the Ministry has an establishment responsible for carrying out human resources development activities. In order to ensure transparency and equity in the provision of training and development opportunities, the Unit responsible develops a training needs assessment based on the submission from each unit, section, directorate, district and province where members of staff identify the capacity building that they need and wish to undergo in the subsequent years. In addition, there is a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme, where teachers already in the system are availed a chance to upgrade their pedagogical skills on a rotational basis at the various provincial and district levels.

In the interest of fairness and equity, the Ministry has rolled out a CPD fast track programme in collaboration with DMI- St. Eugene University to train 2,000 teachers in mathematics and science. The two thousand comprises equitably selected teachers from all the ten provinces of Zambia.

The Ministry has always liaised with other line ministries on matters of infrastructure development, provision of health facilities, water and sanitation, power and environmental issues when construction projects are being undertaken. The reason is to ensure that the projects are well serviced once they are completed and also that the minimum standards are maintained. In addition, the Ministry has a fully-fledged infrastructure development unit which is headed by an engineer with impeccable knowledge and experience to supervise all projects.

Committee's Observations and Recommendations

Your Committee observes that in the absence of other services, such as health, electricity, communication, transport, banking and recreation, the provision of suitable accommodation may not be a panacea to the reluctance by teachers to work in rural areas.

Your Committee, therefore, recommends that Government should, by involving relevant institutions such as the Rural Electrification Authority (REA), Zambia Information and Communication Technologies Authority (ZICTA) and Rural Road Unit (RRU), embark on a coordinated rural development programme that will take social services to rural areas, thereby attracting teachers as well as other civil servants to work there.

Conclusion

8.0 In conclusion, your Committee wishes to express its gratitude to you Mr Speaker and to the Clerk of the National Assembly for the guidance and support rendered to it during its deliberations. Your Committee also wishes to express its indebtedness to all witnesses for appearing before it and for providing the necessary information.

Your committee is hopeful that the observations and recommendations contained herein will help improve the delivery of education in this land.

Dr C K Kalila, MP
CHAIRPERSON

November, 2014
LUSAKA

APPENDIX I

Committee Members

Dr C K Kalila, MP (Chairperson);

(Member)

Mr B Mutale, MP;

(Member)

Ms S Sayifwanda, MP;

(Member)

Mr S Mushanga, MP;

(Member)

Mr C Miyanda, MP;

(Member)

Mr E C Musonda, MP;

(Member)

Mr K K Hamudulu, MP; and

(Member)

Mr H Kunda, MP.

(Member)

APPENDIX II

Witnesses

Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education

Dr P Nkanza, Permanent Secretary
Mr J Nthele, Head Infrastructure Development
Ms R N Mwelwa, Acting Director, Directorate of Distance and Open Education
Mr J M Nyangu, Assistant Director, Human Resource and Management Department
Mr A L Sililo, Principal internal Auditor
Ms N H Miyoba, Acting Chief Standards Officer
Ms I Kumwenda Acting Chief Accountant
M R K Bwato, Chief Librarian
Mr B Mutale, Administrative Officer, Parliamentary Affairs

Teaching Service Commission

Ms J M Chiwela, Chairperson
Mr A K Sikazwe, Vice Chairperson
Ms J M Kayama, Commissioner
Mr D S Wina, Acting Commission Secretary

Public Service Management Division (PSMD)

Dr V Mtonga, Permanent Secretary
Ms M N B Kapihya, Director, PEMEC
Mr A Sakala, Director, PSSD
Mr W Daka, Administrative Officer
Mr E Tembo, Head of Administration
Mr L Sakwiba, Director, Human Resource and Information Planning

Basic Teachers' Union of Zambia (BETUZ)

Mr K M Kakunta, Director, Workers Education
Ms A Chisanga, National Coordinator, Women's Desk
Mr E Hachamba, Director, Special Education
Mr M Sinkala, Director Organisation

Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC)

Mr G Hamusunga, Programme Manager
Mr M Kakunta, Board Secretary
Rev M Siwale, Member

Auditor General's Office

Mr A Mweemba, Senior Auditor, Performance Audits
Ms M N Nyambe, Auditor, Performance Audit

APPENDIX III

LIST OF OFFICIALS

National Assembly of Zambia

Mr S C Kawimbe, Acting Principal Clerk of Committees

Mr F Nabulyato, Committee Clerk (FC)

Mr M F Kateshi, Acting Committee Clerk (SC)

Mr C Chishimba, Assistant Committee Clerk

Ms K M Nkandu, Personal Secretary II

Mr C Bulaya, Committee Assistant