



# **Composition and Status of Primary School Teachers in the Context of EFA**

**The Case of Contract Teachers in  
Lesotho**

**Paramente Phamotse  
Ministry of Education and Training Lesotho**

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## Executive Summary

- 1) Up to 85 percent of primary schools in Lesotho are owned by churches, and while they operate as public schools, the churches have a statutory representation in the school management committees and teacher management structures.
- 2) One third of all serving primary school teachers in Lesotho have only a school leaving certificate called the Cambridge Overseas Schools Certificate (COSC). Further, one tenth of teachers have even lower qualifications.
- 3) The Lesotho College of Education (LCE) is basically the only institution that provides initial teacher development programmes for primary education. Its limited capacity has restrained it from meeting the demand for qualified teachers in the country.
- 4) Lesotho introduced Free Primary Education (FPE) from 2000; as a result the primary education enrolment increased from 364,951 (NER = 60.2%) in 1999 to 395,089 (NER ≈ 83.5%) in 2008. In the same period the number of primary school teachers increased by 33.2% to 10,956.
- 5) Up until 2006, the number of teachers produced from initial teacher development programmes was barely enough to make up for teacher attrition, more so in the advent of HIV and AIDS.
- 6) Unqualified teachers are either employed on specified short term contracts to fill temporarily vacant positions, or for an indefinite period, pending the availability of qualified teachers.
- 7) In Lesotho recruitment of teachers is done at local level by school management committees which then recommend to the Teaching Service Commission to appoint teachers.
- 8) Since teachers choose for themselves which schools they would like to teach in, remotely located and poor schools do not succeed to attract and to retain qualified teachers. As a result, there is a high prevalence of unqualified teachers in schools in the mountain districts of the country. The government plans to improve the incentive to attract qualified teachers into the most difficult schools.
- 9) The introduction of a Distance Teacher Education Programme (DTEP) at the LCE provides an opportunity for contract teachers to obtain training and teaching qualifications while they work. This way, DTEP yields an additional 420 qualified teachers per year. The current capacity of LCE through its DTEP programme is about 2,050 teachers.
- 10) Some unqualified teachers, including those who have served for many years, do not meet the minimum requirements to be admitted into the DTEP.
- 11) The proportion of unqualified primary school teachers increased from 22 percent in 1999 (i.e. before FPE) to 40 percent in 2008.
- 12) Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is provided to all primary school teachers, but none that specifically targets contract teachers, has been offered in more than seven years. The biggest challenge to CPD in Lesotho is the need for improved planning and coordination of CPD programmes.
- 13) Unqualified teachers earn a salary of about USD3,320 per annum which is about 4.7 times per capita GDP, and about half of that of qualified teachers.



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14) Whereas unqualified teachers are not pensionable under the current pension laws, they are entitled to earn gratuity if their services are terminated after ten years of continuous service.

## 1. Introduction

Lesotho committed itself to achieve Education for All (EFA) by endorsing the Jomtien declaration on Education for All in 1990. The recruitment of additional primary school teachers has been one of the key strategies to increase the supply of education since the early 1990s. The purpose of this study is to assess the situation of unqualified (or contract) teachers in Lesotho and to highlight the main features related to their recruitment, deployment and professional development opportunities and support.<sup>1</sup> The study is undertaken under the auspices of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) Working Group on the Teaching Profession and is part of a series of studies for presentation at the Bamako + 5 Conference on Contractual Teachers to be hosted by the Mali Ministry of Education, Literacy and National Languages in Bamako in October 2009.

The specific objectives of this study, in response to the terms of reference from the Commonwealth Secretariat are to:

- a) Understand the country model(s) for pre and in-service training of primary teachers and the continuous professional development;
- b) Understand the current practices on selection, recruitment, training, deployment, utilisation and retention of teachers, as well as guarantees of social protection, rights and obligations of contractual teachers;
- c) Assess the current composition of the teaching force and the weight of contractual teachers in the overall teaching force in Lesotho.

The method of data collection for this study was main literature review of policy documents, reports, analysis of official statistics held by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) under its Education Management Information System (EMIS) and other publicly available sources of relevant information. First, a brief background of the Lesotho education system is given.

## 2. Background on the Lesotho Education System

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<sup>1</sup> ADEA Working Group on the Teaching Profession Terms of Reference (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2009)



The Kingdom of Lesotho (Lesotho) is a sovereign constitutional monarchy of about 1.8 million people, located in Southern Africa. It is a landlocked, mountainous country divided into ten administrative districts. Lesotho is a Least Developed Country with a per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of around US700 (2004). Compared to other countries, Lesotho has a relatively high expenditure level on education at 11.8 percent per capita GDP in 2009/2010 fiscal year (Thahane, 2009).

Since attaining independence from the United Kingdom in 1966, education in Lesotho has remained a joint responsibility between the Government of Lesotho (GOL) and several Christian denominations (churches) that owned 85% of the 1,470 registered primary schools in 2008 (Ministry of Education and Training, 2008). With an exception of a few private schools, government supports public schools which include, government, community and church owned schools. The GOL supports such schools by providing, among others, salaries for teachers, teaching and learning materials and construction of additional facilities where necessary.

The Teaching Service, and the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) that manages it, are both established under the Constitution of Lesotho. The 1995 Education Act provides the legislative framework for the Teaching Service on matters such as registration, employment, promotion and discipline of teachers.

Lesotho follows a 7-3-2 Education System with primary education taking seven years, followed by junior secondary education for three years, and then two years of senior secondary level. At the end of each level there are high-stakes, national examinations mainly used for selection of students into the next level of education (see figure 1). All national examinations - the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE), the Junior Certificate Examinations and the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate (COSC) are managed by a semi-autonomous Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECOL) which also awards certificates to successful candidates. Candidates who attempt COSC but do not meet the minimum requirements are awarded a General Certificate of Education (GCE) certificate if they pass at least one of the subjects whose examination they took.

Figure 1: Lesotho Education System



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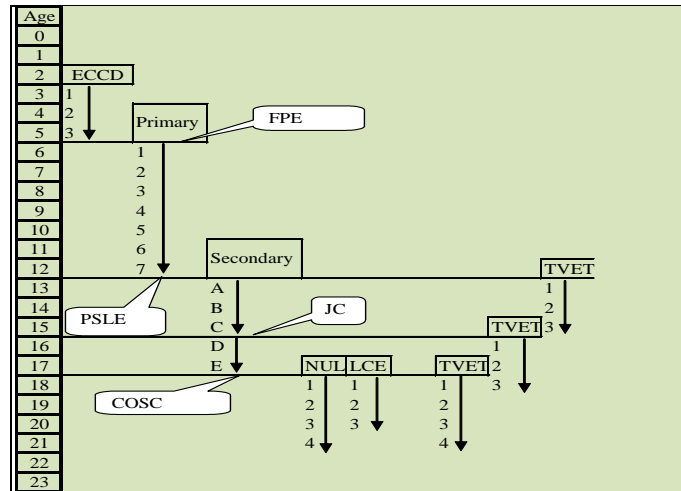
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Source: (World Bank, 2005)

Besides the Lesotho College of Education (LCE), which exclusively provides initial education for primary and secondary school teachers at diploma level, other tertiary institutions that provide teacher education are the National University of Lesotho (NUL) offering degree and postgraduate programmes and the Lesotho Agricultural College, affiliated to NUL. By-and-large, these institutions train teachers for post-primary schools and they all require at least a COSC for admission into their programmes.

In pursuit of the EFA goal of universal primary education, the GOL introduced Free Primary Education (FPE) from the 2000 school year. The phased introduction of FPE one grade a year starting with grade 1 in the year 2000, meant that only from 2006 were all the seven grades of the primary education cycle offered free of charge. Many of the 1,470 registered primary schools opted to be part of FPE with the exception of less than 20 mainly private schools. As part of FPE the GOL undertook to provide services to schools at no cost to parent including construction of additional school facilities where necessary; hire additional teachers as required; provide in-service training of teachers; and provide teaching and learning materials including textbooks and stationery (Ministry of Education, 2001)The services provided by the GOL under FPE were offered to all the schools that opted to offer FPE.

As a result of FPE, primary education in Lesotho grew rapidly in terms of enrolment, number of schools, teachers, and the national budgetary allocation to primary education. Enrolment in primary education increased from 364,951 in 1999 to a maximum of 427,000 in 2005 after which it started declining down to 395,089 in 2008 (see [Annex 1](#)). The overall number



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of primary school teachers also increased from 8,225 in 1999 to 10,956 in 2008. In the same period the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) in primary education increased from 60.2% in 1999 to 83.5% in 2007 (Ministry of Education and Training, 2008). While Lesotho has historically had a higher enrolment for females, since the introduction of FPE, the gender gap narrowed rapidly in favour of males with the Gender Parity Index (GPI)<sup>2</sup> declining from 1.13 in 1999 to 0.97 in 2008 (Ibid).

### 3. Recruitment of Teachers

In Lesotho, recruitment of teachers is done at a local level by school management committees instead of by a central authority. The demand for qualified teachers has always outstripped the supply, leading to recruitment of a considerable number of unqualified teachers. The gender profile of the teaching service in Lesotho has been in favour of females with only one in five of primary school teachers being male.

#### 3.1. Supply and Demand of Teachers

Since the establishment of the first teacher education institution by French missionaries in Lesotho in 1868 up to about 1972, the academic requirements for recruitment into teaching and teacher training programmes was as low as standard 6 (eight years of primary schooling) (Institute of Education, 1993). This was followed by two to three years of education and training in teaching. Following the establishment of the National Teacher Training College (NTTC) in 1975, and the abolition of church-owned training colleges, the entrance requirement for training of primary school teachers was raised to a Junior Certificate (JC). Teacher trainees were awarded a Primary Teachers' Certificate (PTC) after 3 years of training inclusive of practice teaching, until the programme was also discontinued by the NTTC in 2002/2003 in favour of a diploma programme.

Because of the insufficient numbers of primary teachers produced by the teacher training institutions over the years, school-leavers with the minimum entry qualifications were recruited directly into the teaching service without any formal training. Some of these unqualified teachers were later enrolled to upgrade their qualifications at different levels on part-time or full-time bases, and ultimately received formal qualifications. Some, however, remain in the teaching service without any formal training up to the present. In 2008 there were 43 teachers with primary education level qualifications, 740 with JC or a GCE

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<sup>2</sup> Gender Parity Index is computed as the proportion of females to males enrolled in any given school year.



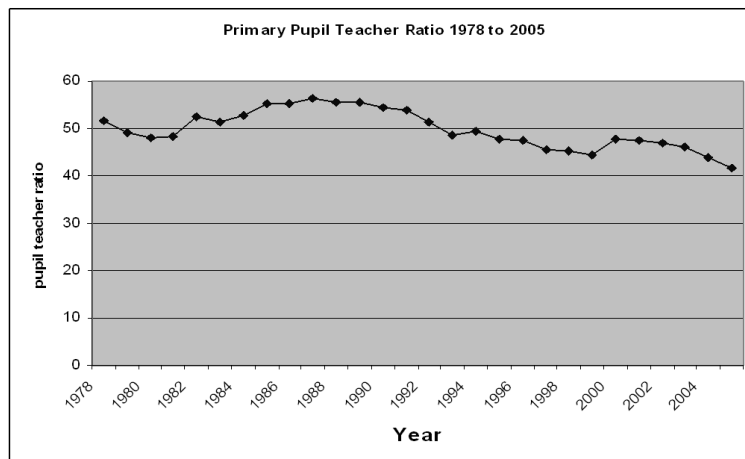
qualification, and 3,700 teachers with COSC. All these unqualified teachers accounted for 34 percent of all primary teachers (see Figure.3). The COSC, GCE, JC and Primary Education holders are the unqualified teacher who are referred to as paraprofessionals or contract teachers in the context of Lesotho.

Whereas the introduction of Free Primary Education from 2000 highlighted the shortage of qualified primary school teachers in Lesotho because of the sudden increase in enrolment that it brought about, the need to reduce the Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) in primary schools to below 50:1 had existed since the 1970s (see figure 2). In 2008 the average PTR at primary level was at about 36:1 (MOET EMIS, 2008), mainly because of a significant decrease in enrolment from 2004 to 2008, while the number of teachers was increasing.

While the proportion of those teachers with COSC has increased substantially from 21% in 2002 (Lewin, 2002) to 34% in 2008 (see figure 3), those with JC and Primary Education have decreased substantially from 11.5% in 2002 to 7.1% in 2008.



Figure 2: Evolution of Pupil Teacher Ratio in Primary Education in Lesotho 1978 – 2004



Source: Analysis of EMIS (Ministry of Education and Training, 2008)

The net deficit of qualified teachers coupled with the increased need of additional teachers in the advent of FPE has led to more COSC holders being recruited, while the number of those teachers with JC and primary education has been reducing as they reached mandatory retirement age. Overall the number of unqualified teachers has increased substantially from 1,809 (22%) in 1999 to 4,483 (40.9%) in 2008 (Ministry of Education and Training, 2008).

Figure 3: Primary School Teachers by Qualification – 2008



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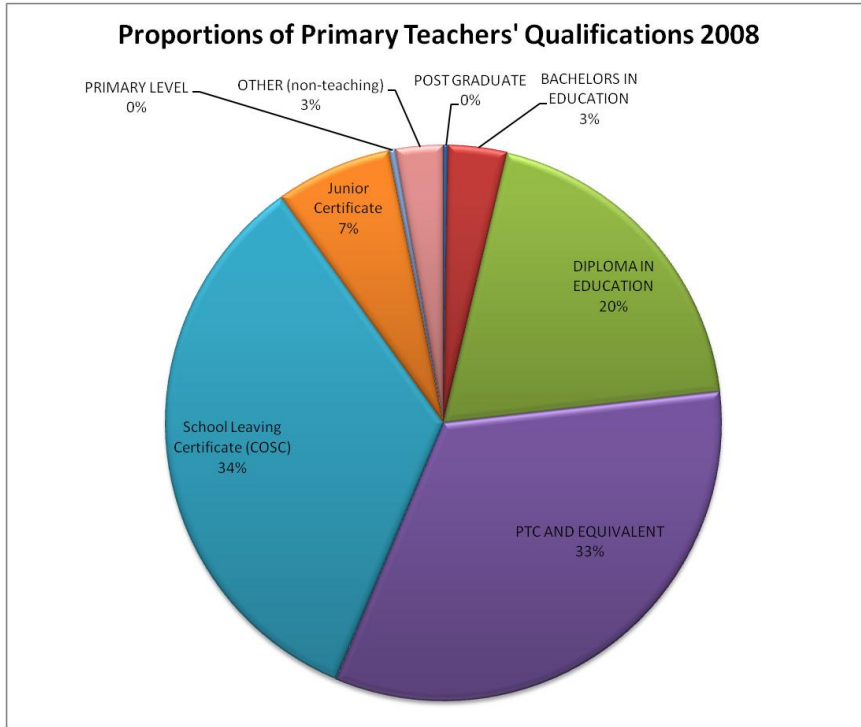
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Source: Analysis of EMIS Data (Ministry of Education and Training, 2008)



### 3.2. Teacher Recruitment Policies

As a prerequisite for being considered for a teaching job in Lesotho, the law requires that a person should first be registered as a teacher. Currently, the Teaching Service Department (TSD) under the Ministry of Education is responsible for the registration of teachers, and if they meet the minimum requirements, they are issued with a registration certificate. The Minister responsible for education determines the minimum requirements for registration of teachers. The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) may not employ a person who is not registered as a teacher. In April 2009 the Ministry of Education raised the minimum requirement for registration into the teaching service to a school leaving certificate (i.e. COSC).

The Education Act confers the power to employ government paid teachers to the TSC and assigns the responsibility to recommend such employment to school management committees in the case of primary schools. The Act requires that churches, as proprietors of schools, establish Management Committees (MC), each responsible for up to eight primary schools. Each school under one MC normally has its own Advisory School Committee (ASC)<sup>3</sup>. The responsibility to *recruit*, i.e. to identify and offer a job to a potential teacher, therefore, lies with the MC.

A vacancy that arises in a specific school is advertised and potential teachers choose whether or not to apply for a job in such a school. The MC considers all the applicants and makes a recommendation to the TSC for appointment, using standard forms and procedures. When all the basic requirements are met, the Commission normally appoints the recommended person on such terms as their qualification and status of the vacancy require.

As a body with the responsibility for the employment of teachers on behalf of the government, by legal dictate, the membership of the TSC has representation of two of the Christian denominations that have the largest number of schools, namely the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) with 35 percent of schools and the Lesotho Evangelical Church (LEC) with 33 percent of primary schools.

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<sup>3</sup> In the case of post-primary schools each school has its own School Board that performs a similar function to the MC.



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The Government allocates teaching positions to schools based on (i) school enrolment, (ii) existing number of teaching positions, and (iii) the pupil teacher ratio (PTR) that the MOET sets as a norm from year to year. Newly created teaching positions, and others that may fall vacant, are publicly advertised specifying the required teaching qualifications. It is where there are no qualified candidates who apply, which is often the case in schools located in remote mountain areas, that MCs are compelled to offer the job to the best available candidate despite their qualification. In theory these teachers are employed on temporary terms until such time that qualified teachers become available to take up such positions. In reality, however, many of these temporary teachers end up employed for years on end.

It is common for unemployed, qualified teachers to take up jobs in some of the more difficult schools when they have no choice, only to apply for transfer to more preferable locations as soon as an opportunity arises, resulting in a high teacher turnover in the most difficult schools. Practices like these often lead to candidates from the school locality, even when they are not the best qualified candidates, being preferred by the local school committees. This local bias in recruitment, while it is proscribed by public policy, remains one of the challenges in attaining equitable distribution of the scarce qualified teachers in Lesotho.

#### **4. Initial Training and Continuing Professional Development of Teachers**

Teacher development for primary education in Lesotho had been restrained by the limited capacity of the one National Teacher Training College (NTTC), established in 1975 and ultimately awarded autonomy and renamed the Lesotho College of Education (LCE) from 2002. For almost 25 years up to 1999, the College had produced a total of 4,521 teachers, of whom only 2,518 were at Primary Teachers Certificate (PTC) level and 271 at Advanced Primary Teachers Certificate<sup>4</sup> level (Lewin, Ntoi, & Mapuru, 2000). In more or less the same period the total number of primary teachers had increased from 4,139 in 1974 to 8,908 in 2002 (Ministry of Education, 2005b). The output of trained teachers had been barely enough to cope with teacher attrition, let alone the increasing demand for additional teachers to reduce the average PTR and to accommodate the enrolment increase brought about by FPE from 2000. The employment of unqualified primary teachers seemed to have been accepted as a norm in Lesotho up to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

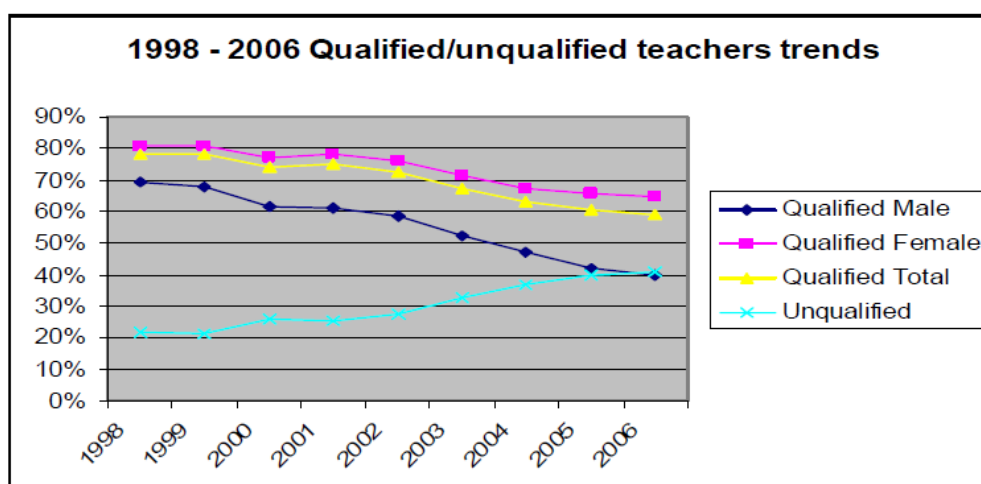
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<sup>4</sup> The Advanced Primary Teachers Certificate was offered after PTC and bearers qualified to become primary school principals and was later replaced by the Diploma in Primary Education from



Recognition of the importance of teachers in improving the education in Lesotho was best expressed by the current Prime Minister of Lesotho soon after his appointment as the Minister of Education in 1993 when he noted that “...the quality of the teacher is an important factor in the quality of education that any school system can offer” (Institute of Education, 1993). In the *Education Sector Strategic Plan 2005 – 2015*, the MOET reiterated its commitment to improve the quality of education through the upgrading of teachers’ qualifications to at least diploma level by 2015 (Ministry of Education and Training, 2005). While the overall enrolment of trainee teachers at LCE increased from 949 in 1999 to 1,739 in 2002 (ibid), the number of qualified primary school teachers was declining in absolute terms from 6,362 in 1998 to 6,133 in 2006 (see figure 4). The number of newly qualified teachers entering the system from training programmes continued to be outstripped by the teacher attrition rate (Mulkeen & Chen, 2008).

Figure 4: The Trends in Teacher Qualification in Lesotho 1998 – 2006



Source: (Institute of Education, 2008)

A direct intervention to expand the system’s capacity to train more teachers came under the Second Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP II), funded by the International Development Agency (IDA); the Ministry of Education (MOE)<sup>5</sup> undertook to support, among other things, the introduction of a Distance Teacher Education Programme (DTEP) from 2001 (World Bank, 1999). The DTEP is described in detail in the next section.

<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that the Government of Lesotho department responsible for education was known as the Ministry of Education (MOE) until July 2002 when it was changed to the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET).



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#### **4.1. The Distance Teacher Education Programme (DTEP)**

The DTEP was particularly aimed at increasing the annual intake of trainee teachers from 200 to 500 and to improve their qualifications without them leaving the classroom (MOET, 2005a). While the requirements for school leavers to enrol in the fulltime diploma in education programme at the LCE is a COSC pass with four credits<sup>6</sup> and at least one pass including English Language, the requirements for DTEP are slightly lower. Along with a minimum teaching experience of 2 years, a teacher requires at least five COSC passes, including English Language, to be admitted in the DTEP training. Teachers with a Primary Teachers Certificate (PTC) are also admitted into the programme and they join in the second of four years of training (Ministry of Education and Training, 2007).

The requirements for admission into the fulltime programme for primary teachers have so far not succeeded to attract a sufficient number of qualifying candidates. This may have to do with the lower esteem that school leavers have for primary school teaching since the same is not true for the diploma in education for secondary teachers (ibid). The DTEP on the other hand seems to be oversubscribed with some of the unqualified and under-qualified teachers not being admitted. On the other hand, there are about 9 percent of the total primary teachers who have qualifications below COSC and would not qualify for admission in the DTEP. Some of these teachers continue to take supplementary COSC examinations, hoping to improve their symbols to meet the minimum requirements. From 2009, the LCE, assisted by the MOET from an African Development Bank funded project, is offering a bridging programme for those teachers who do not meet the minimum requirements for entry into the pre-service programmes.

In 2004 the LCE had 620 teachers enrolled in the fulltime pre-service primary education diploma programmes, and 1,157 in the DTEP, giving a total of 1,777 student teachers for primary education (Lesotho College of Education, 2004). From 2002 to 2008, the College increased its DTEP enrolment from 500 to 2,054. The year 2006 was significant not only because of the last grade of primary education being included under FPE, but also because the first cohort of 439 unqualified and under-qualified teachers graduated at LCE under the DTEP. In the same year, the regular pre-service residential programme produced only 194 primary teachers. Two other cohorts have since graduated from the DTEP in 2007 and 2008 with an average of 420 graduates per year.

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<sup>6</sup> A credit is a minimum of C symbol, while a pass is a D symbol in the COSC examinations.



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## 4.2. Continuing Professional Development for Primary Teachers

Different departments of the MOET including the teacher training institution have been offering Continuing Professional Development (CPD)<sup>7</sup> courses for teachers from school management, curriculum and assessment, pedagogic skills and awareness on emerging issues including HIV, environmental awareness and life skills. The challenge has always been poor coordination of these efforts to maximise their effectiveness and efficiency (World Bank, 1999). Very few of the CPD courses, other than those aimed at awarding formal qualifications have been particularly aimed at the contract teachers.

Following the introduction of FPE, in 2001 the MOE and LCE, with financial support from Irish Aid, provided orientation training to 1,180 paraprofessional primary teachers who were serving without teaching qualifications. The remaining group of 720 teachers was provided with the same training by the Institute of Development Studies (IDM), which is a parastatal under the MOE, offering training programmes for public servants. Each of the teachers was provided with 30 hours of orientation training covering the following areas:

- Curriculum interpretation, Preparation of schemes of work and lesson plans;
- Classroom management;
- Child Development;
- Testing and Evaluation;
- Teaching Professional Ethics;
- The use of teaching and learning materials; and
- HIV/AIDS and hygiene in schools.

The training was aimed at providing unqualified teachers with basic skills of the teaching career, after which they were only given certificates of participation. The initiative to provide contract teachers with basic orientation course was not continued beyond 2002 after the funding of the activity from Irish Aid discontinued<sup>8</sup>. Unqualified teachers have, however, been included along with other teachers in CPD activities that have been offered by the MOE since then.

The MOET commissioned the LCE to conduct training needs assessment study on primary school teachers in mathematics, English Language and Sesotho (LCE, 2006). Generally the

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<sup>7</sup> CPD in this context refers to the in-service education and training received by teachers to improve their knowledge and skills without necessarily conferring formal qualifications to them.

<sup>8</sup> The source of information in this section is unpublished official reports of the MOE on the specific activity from the 2001/2002 financial year



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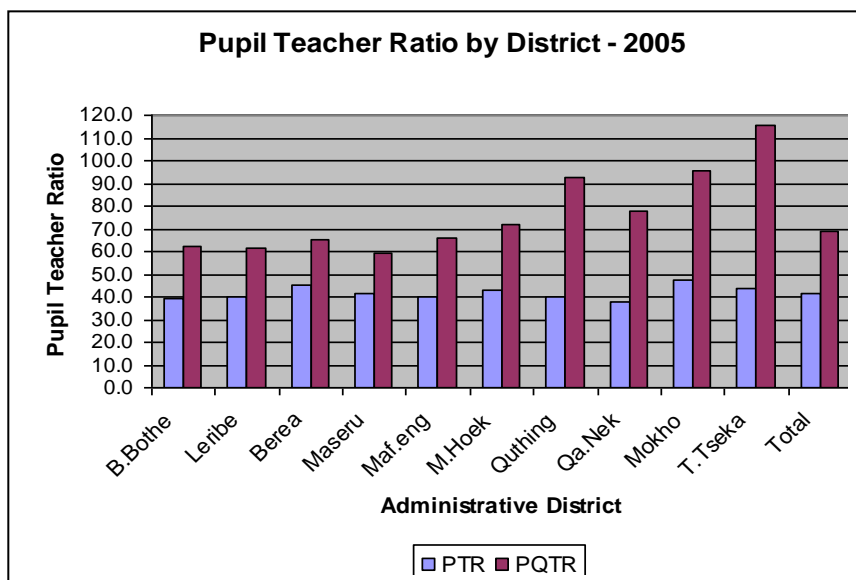
study found that unqualified teachers were doing worse than their trained counterparts in areas of classroom management, Pedagogic Content Knowledge and content mastery. These were besides the areas where there were common needs for all teachers despite their qualification status. The Inspectorate Department of the Ministry has since conducted short courses for all teachers in some of the identified areas. The biggest challenge in the provision of CPD for primary teachers remains the weak planning and coordination of programmes.

## 5. Teachers Deployment and Utilisation

As noted earlier, in Lesotho teachers have a choice of schools where they wish to work and they do so by applying for jobs when vacancies arise. There is no practice of mass deployment of teachers. The TSC, which is mandated by law to transfer teachers, only approves transfers when there is mutual agreement between the teacher and the MC of the school from where a teacher wishes to be transferred.

Schools located in the more remote mountain areas of Lesotho, which also tend to be serving children from poorer families, and generally have worse off infrastructure, also struggle to attract and retain qualified teachers. Figure 2 below shows that the Pupil to Qualified Teacher Ratio (PQTR) is a lot worse in the mountain districts such as Qacha's Nek, Mokhotlong and Thaba-Tseka. Despite a fixed hardship allowance of M275.00 per month paid to all public servants including teachers working in the mountain areas of Lesotho, unqualified teachers are still more likely to serve in the most difficult schools. The GOL has undertaken to address this disparity by further offering special incentive for qualified teachers to take up jobs in specially identified difficult schools from 2010.

Figure 5: Pupil to Qualified Teacher Ratio by Lesotho Districts – 2005





Source: Ministry of Education and Training EMIS Data 2005

Government policy that the MOET has implemented since the mid 1990s is that whenever possible qualified teachers should be allocated to teach the first three grades of primary education. However, due to shortages of qualified teachers within schools and the high stakes that schools and parents have on the PSLE, it is still commonplace to find unqualified teachers taking all school grades in some schools and qualified teachers being preferred for higher grades. Once employed and deployed, unqualified teachers are expected to take as much of the teaching load as the staffing situation at the specific school dictates.

## **6. Terms of Employment for unqualified Teachers**

The Teaching Service Regulations (Government of Lesotho, 2002) provide that unqualified teachers can only be appointed on temporary terms. The duration of their appointment, however, depends on the nature of the vacancy that they are appointed to fill. In an event where a teaching position is substantively vacant and the only person available to fill it is an unqualified teacher, such a teacher is offered the post on temporary terms. This means that the school may decide to advertise the position again and if a qualified teacher becomes available, the temporary teacher's contract may be terminated by the TSC after a one month's notice. However, due to the acute shortage of qualified teachers, these temporary appointments have often lasted up to 20 years.

In order to ensure that pupils in schools are always attended to by an adult person, the Teaching Service Regulations permit temporary replacement of teachers who may be away from duty on sick leave, maternity leave, study leave or such other leave-of-absence that can be predicted to last longer than one month. Teachers are engaged on contract to fill these types of temporary vacancies and are paid accordingly. Given the short notice available to recruit replacement teachers, the requirement to advertise positions is waived, and a person who is registered as a teacher if available, can be engaged. People engaged under these terms are usually given a short contract with lasting from one month



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up to 4 years, at the end of which they are expected to vacate the position when the incumbent teacher returns.

Basic salaries for Teachers in Lesotho have been dependant on the qualifications that a teacher has, and generally qualified teachers are paid more than unqualified teachers. Until April 2009, primary school teachers were generally paid less than their secondary school counterparts in spite of their qualifications and level of promotion.

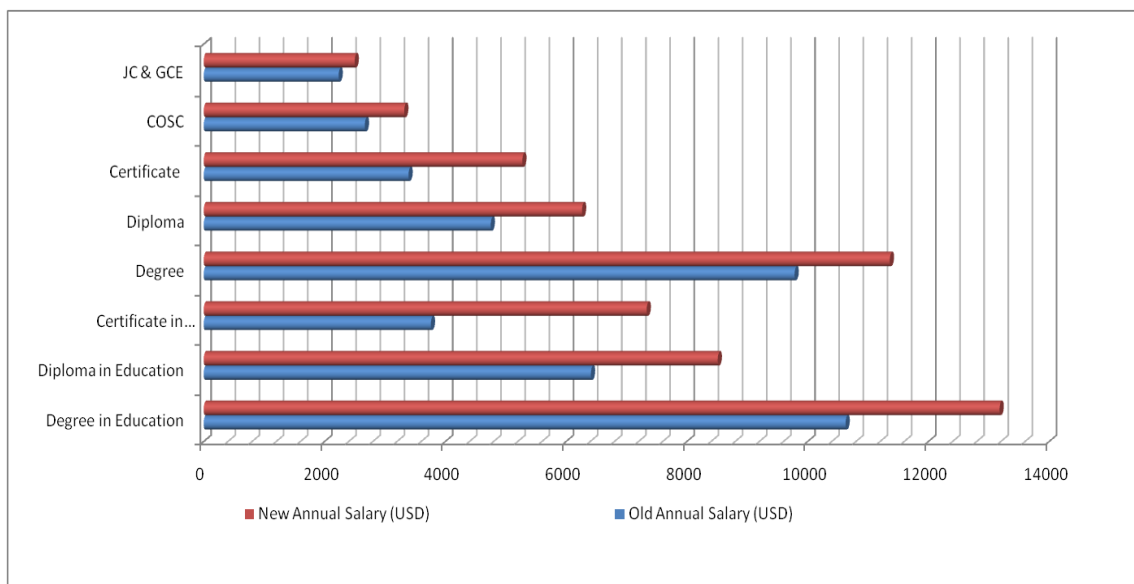
The recently introduced teachers' salary structure has brought about parity of salary among teachers of the same qualification regardless of the level of education at which they teach. Under this new structure, teachers can be promoted on a seven-point career ladder with qualification only used to determine the starting level (see figure 6). An unqualified teacher with a school leaving certificate earns about USD 3,320 per annum, which is about 4.7 times GDP per capita. For a minimally qualified teacher the gross annual salary is USD7,336 (see [Annex 3](#)).

Unqualified teachers, nonetheless can only be promoted after acquiring formal teaching qualifications. This includes those teachers with degree level qualifications who have not been trained as teachers, even though they are paid higher than qualified teachers with certificate level qualifications (see figure 6). Unqualified teachers are eligible for allowances such as acting allowances and hardship allowances where they apply if they are deployed in positions that attract such allowances.

The Teachers' Pension Act of 1994 (Government of Lesotho, 2004) and the Teachers' Pensions Regulations of 1998 (Government of Lesotho, 1998) exclude unqualified teachers from a government pension whatever their length of service. However, they are entitled to receive gratuity if they have served in the Teaching Service for a minimum of ten years continuously, or if they die on duty. The Government of Lesotho introduced for the first time a Public Officers Defined Contributory Pension Scheme from 2008, and teachers are included. The Ministry of Education and Training has undertaken to review the Teachers' Pension Act and its Regulations to ensure that all teachers are sufficiently covered by the new pension scheme.



Figure 6: Old and New Salary Levels for Teachers in Lesotho as of April 2009 (in US Dollars)<sup>9</sup>



Source: (Ministry of Education and Training, 2008)

In every other respect unqualified teachers in Lesotho have entitlements and obligations similar to the rest of the teaching force. They are members of teacher associations and unions and they are subject to the same code of discipline. They can also represent teachers in statutory bodies such as Advisory School Committees and Management Committees.

## 7. Conclusion

Efforts to reduce the number of unqualified teachers in primary schools in Lesotho seem to be yielding results but not rapidly enough to achieve the target set to have all teachers fully trained by 2015. While opportunities for these teachers to improve their qualifications are being expanded and the general working conditions being improved, the opportunity to attract more school-leavers to opt for primary school teaching as a career need to be further exploited. For those unqualified teachers with less than school leaving certificate qualifications and who are already within 10 years of compulsory retirement, it may be more cost effective to retire them from service at the earliest possible opportunity. While there is room to step up the efforts to train more teachers, contract teachers in Lesotho primary schools are likely to remain a feature for at least another decade.

<sup>9</sup> See also Annexure 3



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### Annex 1: Enrolment Figures and Number of Teachers in Registered Primary Schools in Lesotho 2004 – 2008

| Year | Enrolment in Registered Primary Schools |         |         | Number of Teachers |        |        |
|------|---|---------|---------|--------------------|--------|--------|
|      | Male                                    | Female  | Total   | Male               | Female | Total  |
| 2004 | 214,762                                 | 212,247 | 427,009 | 2 155              | 7 838  | 9 993  |
| 2005 | 212,683                                 | 209,595 | 422,278 | 2 205              | 7 949  | 10 154 |
| 2006 | 214,123                                 | 210,732 | 424,855 | 2 335              | 8 083  | 10 418 |
| 2007 | 202,708                                 | 198,226 | 400,034 | 2 356              | 7 997  | 10 353 |
| 2008 | 199,990                                 | 195,099 | 395,089 |                    |        | 10 956 |

Source: Ministry of Education and Training EMIS: 2004 - 2008

### Annex 2: Number of Unqualified Primary School Teachers out of Total Number of Teachers 1999 – 2007

| Year | UNQUALIFIED TEACHERS |        |       | ALL TEACHERS |        |        | PERCENTAGE UNQUALIFIED |        |       |
|------|----------------------|--------|-------|--------------|--------|--------|------------------------|--------|-------|
|      | Male                 | Female | Total | Male         | Female | Total  | Male                   | Female | Total |
| 1999 | 523                  | 1 286  | 1 809 | 1 630        | 6 595  | 8 225  | 32.1                   | 19.5   | 22.0  |
| 2000 | 653                  | 1 563  | 2 216 | 1 700        | 6 878  | 8 578  | 38.4                   | 22.7   | 25.8  |
| 2001 | 683                  | 1 521  | 2 204 | 1 746        | 7 016  | 8 762  | 39.1                   | 21.7   | 25.2  |
| 2002 | 746                  | 1 696  | 2 442 | 1 803        | 7 105  | 8 908  | 41.4                   | 23.9   | 27.4  |
| 2003 | 924                  | 2 111  | 3 035 | 1 936        | 7 358  | 9 294  | 47.7                   | 28.7   | 32.7  |
| 2004 | 1 140                | 2 553  | 3 693 | 2 155        | 7 838  | 9 993  | 52.9                   | 32.6   | 37.0  |
| 2005 | 1 281                | 2 740  | 4 021 | 2 205        | 7 949  | 10 154 | 58.1                   | 34.5   | 39.6  |
| 2006 | 1 405                | 2 872  | 4 277 | 2 335        | 8 083  | 10 418 | 60.2                   | 35.5   | 41.1  |
| 2007 | 1 380                | 2 834  | 4 214 | 2 356        | 7 997  | 10 353 | 58.6                   | 35.4   | 40.7  |
|      |                      |        |       |              |        |        |                        |        |       |

Source: Ministry of Education and Training EMIS: 1999 - 2007

**Annex 3: Revised Salary Structure for Teachers in Lesotho from April 2009  
in US Dollars**

| Rank | Career Level                                       | Minimum Qualifications             | Old Salary Points | Old Annual Salary Before 2009 (US Dollar <sup>10</sup> ) | New Salary Points | Starting Annual Salary (US Dollar) |
|------|--|------------------------------------|-------------------|--|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| 7    | Senior Specialist Teacher<br>Principal             | Only by Promotion                  | 75 - 79           | 16 831   | 85 – 95           | 21 105                             |
| 6    | Specialist Teacher<br>Deputy Principal             | Only by Promotion                  | 74 – 76           | 15 630   | 77 - 84           | 17 384                             |
| 5    | Assistant Specialist Teacher<br>Head of Department | Post-graduate degree in Education  | 65 – 69           | 11 623   | 71 - 75           | 14 918                             |
| 4    | Senior Teacher                                     | Bachelors Degree in Education      | 60 – 64           | 10 639   | 66 - 70           | 13 180                             |
| 3    | Teacher  | Diploma in Education               | 31 – 48           | 6 413  | 51 – 60           | 8 513                              |
| 2    | Associate Teacher                                  | Certificate in Education           | 26 – 36           | 3 762  | 46 – 50           | 7 336                              |
| 1f   | Teacher Assistants                                 | Masters Degree without Education   | 55 – 58           | 9 502  | 67 – 70           | 13 511                             |
| 1e   |  | Bachelors Degree without Education | 55 – 57           | 9 785  | 61 – 65           | 11 362                             |
| 1d   |  | Diploma without Education          | 36 – 40           | 4 754  | 41 – 45           | 6 266                              |
| 1c   |  | Certificate without Education      | 19 – 28           | 3 392  | 36 – 40           | 5 277                              |
| 1b   |  | COSC                               | 10 – 18           | 2 669  | 21 – 25           | 3 321                              |
| 1a   |  | JC & GCE                           | 4 – 8             | 2 234  | 12 – 18           | 2 500                              |

Source: Ministry of Education and Training, Teacher Career and Salary Structure, April, 2009

<sup>10</sup> Exchange rate for US Dollar to Maloti used is 1USD = M7.32 (Central Bank of Lesotho, 2004)