

Making Teachers Count

Voices and views from the classroom



VALUING teachers

Guyana
SOUTH AMERICA

A policy research report on Guyanese teachers' attitudes to their own profession



Sharing skills
Changing lives

Making Teachers Count:

Voices and views from the classroom



VSO Guyana
Valuing Teachers

A Teacher's Plight

*Faced with 40 faces each morning
I am aware of my lack of enthusiasm and intense yearning.
It is not by desire I experience these sentiment.
However, they overwhelm me because of the difficulty of imparting knowledge.
Concerned: with very few and inadequate instrument;
The frustration and anxieties of having the time consuming task
Of making them comfortable,
When furniture and ventilation should not have caused any preamble;
It is an obvious setback and great injustice
To stress only the theory and neglect the practice!
Failure to prepare, lack of interest are no reason
But powerlessness.
My plights are shared, not merely to vent or seek sympathy
But to appeal to humane emotion
In those having the responsibility.*

Minerva Munroe, teacher
24 September 2003

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Acronyms and abbreviations

BEAMS	Basic Education Access, Management Support programme
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CHS	Community High School
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPCE	Cyril Potter College of Education
CPD	Continued Professional Development
DES	District Education Supervisor
DFID	Department for International Development, UK
DHM	Deputy Headmaster/mistress
DoE	Regional Department of Education
EDP	Education Development Plan 1995–2000
EFA	Education for All
E-HIPC	Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative
ESP	Education Strategic Plan 2003–2007
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
GBETT	Guyana Basic Education Teacher Training
GEAP	Guyana Education Access Project
GSS	General Secondary School
GTU	Guyana Teachers' Union
HFLE	Health and Family Life Education
HM	Headmaster/mistress
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
LRC	Learning Resource Centre
MoE	Ministry of Education
NCERD	National Centre for Education and Resource Development
NDS	National Development Strategy
OAS	Organisation of American States
PEIP	Primary Education Improvement Project
PNC/R	People's National Congress/Reform alliance
PPP/C	Progressive People's Party/Civic alliance
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSC	Public Service Commission
PT	'Primary Top' – secondary sections of primary schools
PTA	Parent–Teacher Association
REdO	Regional Education Officer
RLRC	Regional Learning Resource Centre
SIAC	School Improvement Advisory Committee
SIP	School Improvement Planning programme
SSEE	Secondary School Entrance Examination
SSRP	Secondary School Reform Project
TSC	Teachers' Service Commission
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USE	Universal Secondary Education
WB	World Bank

1 Executive summary

VSO's 'Valuing Teachers' project is founded on the belief that teachers' needs and perspectives should be at the heart of decision-making if education reform processes are to succeed. This belief comes from research carried out in VSO country programmes and feeds into dialogue at international level. The research was carried out to extend the findings of 'Valuing Teachers', to provide insights into teacher motivation and morale to policy-makers in Guyana, and to inform the future education programme for VSO Guyana. All this is critical in the context of Education for All (EFA) goals for achieving quality, equity and accessibility of education by 2015.

The report shows that for Guyana, as with many other countries, the challenge of ensuring high morale levels in the teaching force is critical to the achievement of quality education. Listening to teachers' perspectives provides a valuable insight on the actions that need to be taken for morale to be raised – and remain high. Good leadership and management, through the empowering role it can play, provide a lever to ensure motivational factors are in place. If teachers feel valued for their role as educators and receive professional respect, they then feel able to carry out their role effectively with the provision of adequate resources.

Through a qualitative methodology, involving focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews and policy document analysis, it emerged that factors affecting the motivation levels of teachers can be grouped into four themes:

1. good **leadership** and management
2. being **valued** as important stakeholders in the education sector
3. being respected as **professionals** by parents, children and the education sector
4. being **enabled** to do the job.

Teachers explained how factors relating to each of these issues had an impact on their role as educators. Through the research process they made suggestions on how these factors in turn could be used effectively as a motivator and promote high performance from teachers. Findings indicate that teachers' motivation is generally low and that without intervention it will continue to deteriorate. This raises concerns for policy-makers trying to develop systems to ensure high-quality education.

In response to the findings of the research, the recommendations focus on actions to promote teacher motivation and morale, and suggest roles that various stakeholders can play.

Recommendations to improve teachers' motivation

Good leadership and management:

- Improve leadership and management at all levels of the education system.
- Establish mechanisms by which teachers are listened to and are involved in decisions at all levels.
- Develop an effective appraisal system.
- Ensure professional development opportunities exist to create competent leaders and management.

Being valued as important stakeholders in the education sector:

- Establish mechanisms by which civil society is listened to and is involved in decisions at all levels.
- Ensure positive representation of teachers and education through a variety of media and communication channels.

Being respected as professionals by parents, children and the education sector:

- Review the appointments system in the education sector: role and effectiveness of the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC).
- Review and revise the promotion/pay scale.
- Enhance and extend incentives available to teachers.

Being enabled to do the job:

- Ensure the channels of distribution of resources function effectively.
- Ensure curriculum development mirrors the needs arising as a result of education reforms.

- Establish effective systems for monitoring budget planning and administration at the regional and school level.

Findings, conclusions and recommendations of the report should not be taken as a criticism of individuals or of the actions or efforts of particular institutions. Rather the report is intended as a starting point for further dialogue between actors within education in Guyana to explore common solutions to the greater benefit of all stakeholders. VSO Guyana would be happy to play a part if desired by relevant actors in Guyana.

If anything, the report findings can testify that dialogue at all levels may be the absolute most important area for improvement to make teachers feel more valued in the future. The report also shows that although most focus and contention is placed on teachers' remuneration packages, many other factors may be equally important to address, and they would not necessarily incur additional costs to the national education budget.

Teachers will always represent a significant resource as part of national development in any country – whether fully utilised or not. Making the most out of this invaluable resource will continue to be the key challenge for policy-makers in the future in the continuous efforts to educate future generations as well as possible.

2 Introduction

VSO believes everyone should be able to exercise their fundamental human rights, and our work in education attempts to make this a reality. By linking closely with Millennium Development Goals 2 and 3¹, VSO aims to support the provision of high-quality, relevant education that is accessible to all. We aim to do this by working in partnership with education institutions and systems, either where volunteers are based or through collaborations formed by our programme offices.

Our experience gained through our volunteers and partner organisations indicates that under-resourced education systems, along with fragile and declining teacher motivation levels, affect the quality of education. VSO is keen to build on this experience and begin to influence the policy context in which its education programmes operate. We have, therefore, initiated a three-year advocacy research initiative, ‘Valuing Teachers’, which aims to find key motivational and demotivational aspects faced by teachers at country level in order to inform policy-making and implementation at both national and international levels. Also, the identification of critical interventions areas for VSO, both for volunteers and for country programmes, has helped address policy-level obstacles to teacher motivation, and increased the overall impact of VSO in the teaching profession.

The ‘Valuing Teachers’ initiative, which has been active for over a year, grew out of the findings of three country studies (Papua New Guinea, Zambia and Malawi). These fed into a wider policy position as expressed in the report *What Makes Teachers Tick?* (Fry, 2002). The research clearly indicated that teachers’ motivation has a significant impact on their performance, which, in turn, influences education quality. It would therefore seem sensible to explore what affects teacher motivation levels and to formulate policy and practice to strengthen teachers’ motivation. And according to Lucia Fry, VSO senior policy adviser and author of the aforementioned report:

‘...policy analysis and dialogue on education reform will benefit greatly from insights on teaching gained from teachers themselves.’ (Fry, 2002)

A major challenge facing teaching in Guyana, as well as other professions, is systematic migration, which for the past few years has severely reduced the number of qualified teachers. Teachers primarily move to the US, Canada, the Caribbean and Botswana. In fact, every year, US representatives send in a team of education assessors to Guyana’s capital, Georgetown, to identify the best available teachers. They are then offered employment opportunities in the US that are far more lucrative than anything Guyana’s public sector can offer. This continual, systematic brain drain has already started to undermine the provision of education for future generations in Guyana. This report presents the factors affecting motivation and possible solutions to raise morale, as expressed by teachers. These insights could reveal strategies that go some way to motivate and persuade teachers to stay in Guyana, even though the issue of economic migration is too complex to be fully explored here.

Guyana has experienced other political and institutional challenges that undermine the teaching profession. There appears to be little consultation between the different levels of the education sector, and collaboration between the donor-funded education projects and programmes is weak. In many cases, education reform processes have failed to engage teachers in the planning and implementation of initiatives. It would appear that teachers have been forgotten as a creative, essential and indispensable resource in the education sector.

The current VSO Guyana programme has been active since 1989. It has placed over 150 volunteers in the education sector. The education programme has evolved from placing upper secondary classroom teachers in primary and secondary teaching posts to a growing component of pre- and in-service teacher training and support. Over the past five years, VSO teacher trainers have also played a central role in the Department for International Development (DFID)-funded Guyana Education Access Project (GEAP)². VSO sees it as critical to understand and respond to the causes of disadvantage in the sectors and countries where it works. The ‘Valuing Teachers’ research is a core part of the process and the findings will play a key role in VSO’s own

¹ Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education; Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women.

² A partnership between the Guyanese Government and the UK Government’s Department for International Development to increase opportunities for poor and marginalised children to attend secondary school.

programme development and strategic planning in the future, as well as being the basis for constructive engagement with key education stakeholders on issues of mutual concern.

2.1 Research process and methodology

The purpose of undertaking this research in Guyana was to:

- identify factors or root causes affecting teacher motivation and thus highlight the effect of these on teacher performance to make recommendations to stakeholders in Guyanese policy and implementation
- recommend future action by VSO to address identified obstacles through advocacy work at policy levels
- assess how these findings may influence the demand for and profile of volunteers working in education in the future.

The research process³ involved a number of methods, including focus groups discussions (see Appendices 3 and 4), semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. It evaluated the subjective nature of qualitative research techniques to gain a true representation of the feelings of the research participants. Overall, the research covered six of the administrative regions of Guyana and involved:

- focus group discussions (mixed gender groups):
 - a total of 79 teachers (54 females, 25 males)
 - ten General Secondary Schools (GSS)/Community High Schools (CHS)
 - two primary schools
 - one group of nursery teachers.
- semi-structured interviews (see Appendices 1 and 2)
 - headteachers/deputy headteachers
 - officers of education institutions and Ministry of Education (MoE)
 - donor organisation representatives
 - Guyana Teachers' Union (GTU).
- questionnaires provided to teachers and VSO volunteers (see Appendices 5–6).
- desk-based research supporting an analysis of policy documents to allow cross-referencing against field-based research findings.

As part of the process of receiving feedback from stakeholders, a policy round table forum was held. During this meeting, there was further information gathering around possible solutions to address the fragile nature of teachers' motivation and a consensus-building exercise to encourage stakeholders to identify the roles they could play.

The report is not a representative analysis of the whole education sector, but a synopsis of findings of the field-based research. It illustrates how the teachers interviewed see themselves, how they perceive their profession and how other stakeholders view teachers' motivation. The findings can be grouped into four main themes:

1. good leadership and management
2. being valued as important stakeholders in the education sector
3. being respected as professionals by parents, children and the education sector
4. being enabled to do the job.

The recommendations therefore focus on what policies and implementation are required to improve teacher motivation levels and its impact on education quality.

³ The research to advocacy process used for the project is being documented as a VSO toolkit entitled *Simple Toolkit for Advocacy Research Techniques – START*.

3 Contextual analysis

Guyana, the only English-speaking country⁴ in South America, borders Venezuela to the west, Suriname to the east and Brazil to the south. The Atlantic Ocean lies to the north. Guyana has a land mass approximately the size of England, but a population of only 800,000. Of the total population, 90% lives along the coast, which represents about 10% of the land. The rest of the land is covered by rainforest and savannah. There is an obvious difference in circumstances between the Guyanese living on the highly populated coast and those living in the remote and inaccessible hinterland.

3.1 Socio-economic overview of Guyana

The multi-ethnic society of Guyana has been greatly influenced by earlier colonial powers, in particular the Dutch and the British. The population today comprises six main groups: the Amerindians (6.8%), East Indians (49.4%), Africans (35.6%), Chinese (0.3%), Europeans (0.6%) and mixed (7.0%)⁵. The Amerindians are the original inhabitants of the land and the Africans are descendants of victims of the slave trade. The East Indians, Chinese and Europeans arrived as indentured labourers to offset the increase in demand for labour when slavery was abolished in 1834.

Only a handful of the numerous political parties in Guyana have seats in Parliament. The majority are held by the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) alliance, followed by the People's National Congress/Reform PNC/R) alliance. The government and opposition have traditionally been unable to collaborate effectively since independence, mainly due to politics taking place in an ethnically charged environment.

In relation to education, a major impact of the political impasse is that service commissions have not been appointed. The TSC and Public Service Commission (PSC), both responsible for hiring and firing in the education sector, have not been convened for almost two years. This has affected the employment and promotion of educators throughout the education system.

Guyana is one of four countries in the Latin America and Caribbean region that is part of the Enhanced Highly Indebted Poor Countries (E-HIPC) debt relief initiative. A full Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) informs strategies for many of the sectors in the country, including the government's Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2003–2007. In fact, the government's central strategy for poverty reduction is investment in human capital, and so, a major investment in both formal and non-formal education throughout the country:

'There is considerable agreement in the society that the road to national development can be achieved only through learning and hard work. There is a profound level of consciousness in the leadership of the country that it is necessary to improve the human capital of Guyana by giving all citizens the opportunity to grow to their fullest potential, paving the way to greater productivity and economic development.' (MoE, 2002b, p1)

3.2 Education policy

'To ensure that all citizens of Guyana, regardless of age, race or creed, physical or mental disability, are given the best possible opportunity to achieve their full potential through equal access to quality education as defined by the standards and norms outlined by the Ministry of Education.' (MoE, 2002b, p18)

This is the MoE's mission statement and guiding principle of its ESP. The broad statement links into the global movements of EFA and the six goals outlined following the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000⁶. This forum, in essence a review of the declarations made ten years earlier at the World Conference on EFA in Jomtien, recognised that the education reform processes should focus on the quality of education as well as increasing access to schooling. 'Valuing Teachers' emphasises that policy analysis and dialogue on education

⁴ English is the official language.

⁵ figures from the 1991 census

⁶ For more information see www.unesco.org/education/efa/wef_2000/index.shtml (April 2004)

reform will benefit greatly from insights into teaching provided by teachers themselves, and that teachers should be acknowledged for the contributions they can make in developing good quality education systems.

Education as a national priority is expressed in both the National Development Strategy (NDS) and the PRSP. The past decade has seen a great effort to improve education in Guyana and both the 1990 and 1995 MoE policy documents were committed to increasing access to education on an equitable basis. The most recent policy document guiding the activities of the MoE is the five-year ESP.

The ESP was developed over a period of about a year. The process is described (in the documentation) as having involved an analysis of the sector's present situation through an evaluation of the MoE's performance in relation to its Education Development Plan (EDP), 1995–2000, and extensive consultations with civil society. The ESP is described as a 'planning system' because it outlines the direction in which institutional actions will move over the next five-year period. Within this is the commitment to develop annual action plans that will find the steps necessary for effective implementation.

This first year of the ESP is described as the 'getting ready' phase. During this period, there needs to be improvements in performance at management levels to enable the education management level to cope with changes that will result from the reforms taking place over the rest of the ESP period. 2004 has an emphasis on improving the delivery of services, while in 2005 systems should be in place and running. 2006 and 2007 will involve 'striving for excellence' and 'producing a new future', respectively (see Appendix 9).

3.3 Structure of the education system

Guyana's education system covers a broad spectrum, from nursery schools through to tertiary establishments. Two years of nursery education is followed by six years at primary and up to seven years at secondary level. The mandatory age of entry into schooling is five years and nine months (ie start of primary school), and schooling is compulsory through to three years at secondary level (ie the age of 14.5 years).

Guyana's education system was once regarded as one of the best in the Caribbean, but is now considered one of the weakest. The system has suffered from serious economic decline over the past three decades and visions of free quality education across the country have failed to materialise. Quantitatively, the picture looks promising with net enrolment rates at primary level at 98% and an increase in access to secondary education. However, the quality of education is still debatable, despite the inputs made in recent years. Only now is the sector beginning to feel the effects of increases in social sector spending that have accompanied economic and structural reforms.

Access to primary education is now almost universal. However, this is not on an equitable basis across the whole country and there are serious issues regarding the quality of primary education in more remote areas. In addition, numeracy and literacy levels are worryingly low.

Secondary education is experiencing major reform as the country strives for universal secondary education (USE). In the current system, each child can follow one of three paths, depending on the score they achieve in the Secondary School Entrance Examination (SSEE). At the age of 11, children either enter a GSS, a CHS or a Primary Top (PT), which are secondary sections in primary schools. The inequality of this system is recognised and it clearly goes against the vision of the MoE's mission statement. Reforms are taking place that seek to redress this inequality.

Over recent years, more private schools have been established, mainly in response to the poor reputation of the public schooling system. The impact of these recent developments is yet to be seen. Stakeholders across the education sector are concerned that this will lead to further loss of trained and experienced teachers from the public sector, because of the attraction of better salaries and working conditions.

3.4 Teacher supply and demand

'...it is not simply a matter of producing more teachers – it is also a matter of attracting them into the classroom and, above all, of *keeping* them in the school system.' (Noonan, 2003, p65)

This quote highlights the real need for the ESP to realise its objective of reducing the loss of valuable personnel in the system. Guyana suffers from the migration of its most skilled and experienced professionals, a problem

that is exacerbated by visits from international recruitment agencies, particularly for teachers and nurses. The MoE has recognised that the loss of experienced personnel has serious implications for building a high-quality education system in the country and is committed to addressing the situation.

A recent study commissioned by the Basic Education Access, Management Support (BEAMS) programme as part of its project planning cycle addressed the problem of achieving a match between teacher supply and demand. Figures for 1998/1999 show that the primary sector experienced a net gain of trained teachers but the secondary sector suffered a net loss of trained teachers. Combined figures for primary and secondary sectors show an overall increase in numbers of teachers but a decrease in the proportion of trained teachers. Since the study was published, statistics for 1999/2000 have been made available in the *Digest of Education Statistics of Guyana 1999–2000* (MoE 2002a; see table below). The figures for this period are alarming, showing a net loss of trained teachers from the system for both the primary and secondary sectors:

	1997/1998			1998/1999		
	Intake	Loss	Net	Intake	Loss	Net
Primary						
Trained teachers	421	277	144	173	266	—93
Untrained teachers	402	370	32	271	230	41
Total teachers	823	647	176	444	496	—52
% of total who are trained	51	43	--	39	54	--
Secondary						
Trained teachers	209	304	-95	130	207	—77
Untrained teachers	435	103	332	231	224	7
Total teachers	644	407	237	361	431	—70
% of total who are trained	32	75	--	36	48	--
Total primary and secondary						
Trained teachers	630	581	49	303	473	—170
Untrained teachers	837	473	364	502	454	48
Total teachers	1467	1054	413	805	927	—122
% of total who are trained	43	55	--	38	51	--

To date, no official figures have been published for the period covering 2000/2003 and it is unclear whether the situation has improved or deteriorated.

The EFA–Fast Track Initiative (FTI) proposal document (MoE 2002c) describes a simulation model that was created to represent the dynamics of the number of teachers in the hinterland and in the coastlands. This revealed that under the proposed initiatives, 80% of the teaching force in the hinterlands would be trained by 2009, but attrition, driven mainly by migration, would reduce it again to 55% by 2015 if there were no additional inputs of trained teachers. Hence, EFA–FTI funds are to be channelled into the constant training efforts needed to keep supplying trained teachers. What the simulation did not address was the potential impact if factors causing teacher attrition were also addressed. If the root causes for teachers leaving the profession can be understood, it may be possible to prevent such a decrease in the number over time and would remove the need for a constant large supply of funds to keep training new teachers. Any money saved could then be channelled back into the education sector, possibly even to increases in salaries for existing teachers.

This demonstrates that it is important to deal with *true causes* of teacher attrition rather than the symptoms, especially when resources – financial or otherwise – are limited.

3.5 Education expenditure, international institutions and development agencies

The government’s commitment to prioritise education is evident in the increases in expenditure over the past decade. In 1990, the education budget represented 4.4% of the national budget. This grew to 14.5% in 2000 and despite the steady decline in the rate of exchange of the Guyanese dollar, this is a clear increase in real terms. This value, however, remains low in comparison with other countries in the region (Belize 21%, St Lucia 22% and Barbados 19%).

Alongside government expenditure, financial assistance provided by donor agencies has played, and will continue to play, a significant part in enhancing Guyana's education sector. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and World Bank (WB) are the major multilateral donors, while the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Organisation of American States (OAS), United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) also involved. Furthermore, bilateral grants are provided by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the UK's DFID.

VSO's position as a development partner has supported Guyana's education sector for the past 14 years. Our assistance through international volunteers has provided trained and experienced professionals at different levels of the education sector, according to the requests from the MoE and other stakeholders in education. Support within the education sector will remain a priority in VSO's next strategic plan. However, the future focus on education will be on enabling factors within education, rather than a classroom focus per se. Opportunities to support non-formal education initiatives will be pursued, as will a much more regional focus on hinterland education. Attempts will be made to support efforts to strengthen local regional bodies and councils, including Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and consultations on appropriate education. VSO will transform support to the national education institutions (the National Centre for Education and Resource Development (NCERD) and the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE)), which have received a substantial number of international teacher training and curriculum development volunteers over the years, to a more regional perspective – possibly through local chapters of CPCE. We will also seek partnerships with institutions whose collaborations are likely to create greater long-term impact.

Over the next few years, the main donors in the education sector will be the IDB with the BEAMS programme and CIDA, who will continue to work with the Guyana Basic Education Teacher Training (GBETT) programme. Through its two primary objectives⁷, BEAMS aims to 'provide a sustainable framework for enhanced educational sector performance and reform' (IDB, 2002). Its primary goal is to contribute to socio-economic development and poverty reduction in Guyana. A value of US\$50 million will be provided by the IDB towards the BEAMS programme, whose total cost is estimated to be US\$55 million (IDB, 2002).

Alongside this, Guyana is one of the first seven countries to be chosen to benefit from the EFA-FTI. This initiative, coordinated by the WB on behalf of several bi and multilateral agencies, provides assistance to countries to achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2015. It is estimated that Guyana will receive approximately US\$29.9 million over a period of 13 years (MoE, 2002c).

The guiding principle of EFA-FTI is that the proposal works in harmony with the Guyanese Government's education plans and hence enables the MoE to achieve its goals outlined in the ESP. This establishes clear lines of ownership of the proposal, ie Guyana rather than donor agencies. The five strategic objectives underlining the EFA-FTI proposal focus on quality and equity in provision of effective primary education and will come into operation through the expansion of existing programmes. However, these programmes are those that have been donor initiated, and in some cases donor led, and so lines of ownership will need to be clarified for implementation of the proposal activities.

The EFA-FTI proposal creates a novel situation in the relationship between donor agencies and the recipient country. Instead of the donors providing a set sum of money to execute a specific project or programme, it is envisaged that the EFA-FTI finances will be channelled through a trust fund in Guyana – the recipient country. Funds from the various donors are amalgamated so that the recipient country can execute activities outlined in their EFA-FTI proposal. The funds required are not identified by the donor, but by the recipient. One controversial issue is whether the required funds will actually be made available by the donors, if each has its own specific criteria for allocations of funds. Will the country's EFA-FTI plans be jeopardised if donors are reluctant in awarding funds? This is an ongoing issue not only in Guyana but for the EFA-FTI as a whole.

⁷ (1) Sustained, improved literacy and numeracy attainment through the primary cycle; (2) Expanded secondary access in underserved areas and poverty zones.

4 Research findings on factors affecting teacher motivation

‘Trained teachers leave the classroom more rapidly than they are replaced by the teacher training system... The major single reason for loss of trained teachers is resignation, they find something that offers them a better situation.’
(Noonan, 2003, p55)

Teachers are a key piece in the education jigsaw; losing this piece means leaving the puzzle incomplete. So why are teachers important? The nature of interaction between teachers and students at the ‘chalk face’ greatly determines the quality of education, and it is the pursuit of achieving access to high-quality education that has been at the centre of activities of education policy-makers since the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000. Education enables individuals to meet the challenges in society today. For developing countries with limited educational resources, teachers are the sole learning resource in schools, making their contribution, if possible, even more critical than in richer countries. With the position of school becoming more embedded in society, the role that teachers play is essential, and this is in addition to the many other roles they fulfil – as role models, counsellors, health workers, agents of change etc.

The loss of trained teachers from the system is a serious issue for policy-makers in Guyana; it is having a grave impact on the quality of education. One of the six strategic issues outlined in the ESP falls under the heading ‘Human Resources Issue’, within which is the clear need ‘to reduce the loss of valuable human resources in the system’. One action outlined to address this issue is a study ‘to quantify the loss of personnel in the system, especially teachers’. This would provide an understanding of the true situation. A second action is the formation of a task team to develop ‘a comprehensive approach to minimise losses from the system’⁸. Both these actions have a target date of 2003, but during the research process for this initiative, it has not been possible to identify progress on these actions. The BEAMS planning document and the Education Digest provide substantial information but more recent figures have not yet been published.

Experiences of past and current VSO volunteers also provide some insight on the existing situation:

‘Motivation levels of the teachers I have worked with vary enormously. Some simply enjoy educating others, whether it is in the classroom or sharing ideas with other teachers at workshops. Others motivate themselves and their students by trying new ideas and activities but are generally dissatisfied with their jobs.’ (Jane Lansdown, VSO PE specialist, NCERD)

This quote is typical of the comments made by VSO volunteers, whose experience indicates that teachers are intrinsically motivated and are dedicated to the work they do, in spite of their circumstances. However, job dissatisfaction, created by extrinsic factors, can also lead to alarming consequences.

‘The lack of recognition of the work of most teachers leads to their low levels of motivation, impacting seriously on their performance.’ (Rebecca Neal, VSO science teacher, GSS)

The same volunteer feels that if the work teachers did was appreciated and acknowledged, there would be more willingness on the part of teachers to enhance their performance. In the school where she works, many teachers do the bare minimum, leaving the school to function with about ten teachers (of a total of about 50). She explained that teachers want to feel that their particular skills are fully utilised and that they are not limited by external constraints.

For teachers to remain in teaching and perform well it is critical that their morale remains high. Conditions must be in place to create favourable working conditions, resources must be available to help deliver effective lessons and, most importantly, teachers need to be valued for the role they play in the development of individuals, communities and the country as a whole.

⁸ More details can be found in the *Education Strategic Plan 2003–2007* (MoE, 2002b, p41).

The hope is that the findings and recommendations through this qualitative research will provide information to support the MoE in its progress towards reducing the loss of human resources, in particular teachers, from the education sector.

It is important to know how teachers understand the factors that contribute to their motivation and morale levels. In this way, the root causes of the fragile situation can be addressed rather than the ‘sticking plaster’ approach that only deals with the symptoms. Teachers have a critical insight into the way that the education sector functions. This knowledge must be valued and the teachers’ voices must be heard along the path to achieving quality education.

This section presents the research findings analysed from focus group discussions and questionnaires given to teachers and semi-structured interviews with headteachers, Regional Education Officers (REdO), District Education Supervisors (DES) and MoE officials. The findings are presented in four main themes that emerged from cause/effect mapping of motivational factors cited by teachers (see Appendix 8):

1. good leadership and management
2. being valued as important stakeholders in the education sector
3. being respected as professionals by parents, children and the education sector
4. being enabled to do the job.

4.1 Good leadership and management

4.1.1 Teachers need support and their opinions should be valued

‘In staff meetings we can all voice our feelings, and say exactly how to we feel. It may end in a split decision – but we all have a say.’ (Female teacher, Head of Department, secondary school)

During the research, a clearly defining aspect of motivated teachers was the presence of a ‘good’ headteacher. Teachers described a good headteacher as someone who was a supportive leader, taking time to listen to and consult with the teachers, as well as being able to represent them fairly at the higher levels. A feeling of cooperation and respect was evident in schools with a good headteacher and this extended to the relationships in the whole school community – with teachers, students and parents.

Headteachers recognised that a large part of their role is to provide the support that teachers require, particularly the less qualified teachers. Headteachers explained they tried to ensure regular meetings took place to disseminate information and to enable teachers to share their ideas and good practice. In addition, they encouraged in-class support between teachers, but added that time constraints always impinged on the frequency of this taking place, with paperwork taking precedence.

Teachers gave many examples of simple actions (such as ‘thanks’ for a task completed) that could add to their happiness and most teachers placed a lot of value on being commended for a job well done:

‘The headteacher makes sure she greets each teacher in the morning as she takes a walk around. A smile creates a good feeling in you.’ (Female teacher, primary school)

In a number of schools, however, there was a strong feeling of neglect on the teachers’ part. They felt that more could be done by school management to provide professional support, for example by creating opportunities for all staff to meet together to share information and promote discussions. This would also enable teachers to support each other on a regular basis, creating a cohesive and mutually accountable working team.

Relationships between schools and regional Departments of Education (DoE) varied from region to region and were dependent on the headteacher’s perception of the style of leadership expected by the DoE level. Similar concerns were also voiced by headteachers regarding regional officers. Headteachers talked of ‘being stuck in the middle’ with little control over their school, and feelings of inadequacy were expressed in attempts to marry the demands of the regional DoE with those of the teachers. The implication here is that the demands from

managers further up in the hierarchy of the education system do not match those demands from below. Also the pressure to be accountable to senior managers does not always provide headteachers with the authority to make decisions that will be of benefit for their schools, and their teachers.

The professionalism of individuals was questioned at all levels. The perception of nepotism, based on personal and political affiliations, was discussed openly, particularly in criticisms of the leadership styles of many managers. This gave a feeling that unless you knew the 'right' person, you did not have an equal chance, for example in getting a particular job. It also had an impact on how individuals were treated by certain managers where there was a personality clash. This has serious implications on the levels of teacher motivation, and hence performance:

'If in a department the Head does not appreciate a particular teacher, the teacher will be the one getting the letters in their file about not performing duties, even if others are doing the same. Favouritism comes right from the top.' (Female secondary school teacher)

One potential cause of poor leadership was inadequacy of training for management roles, which was highlighted in the school-based research. Both teachers and headteachers mentioned this issue, with the belief that good managers are created through adequate training and development opportunities. The current system provides training once a person has been appointed to a position, and is supposed to take place once a year. However, some headteachers remarked they had never had any training to enable them to carry out their duties and ended up 'learning on the job, by watching others'. For some this was enough, but most talked of a feeling of inadequacy when unable to deal affectively with a certain situation. All respondents agreed that continuous training and professional development should be part of a programme for aspiring education managers to put them on their path to become headteachers or education officers. This links to the discussion about the promotion system that is investigated further in the 'Being respected as professional' theme.

The need for supportive leaders and managers in the system has been acknowledged by policy-makers. Strategies proposed in the ESP identify not only school-level and regional-level leadership, but also central-level leadership as targets for training programmes to improve the current situation. Over the next few years, the education sector expects to see many positive changes through the outcomes of these strategies. This includes clear guidelines on the roles and responsibilities at each managerial level. This will be an essential step as the process of decentralisation is brought on stream. If decentralisation is to work, there must be true devolution of power 'downwards' with appropriate authority being given to leaders to execute their tasks effectively.

4.1.2 Teachers need to be included in decision-making processes

'The consultation process which was part of the planning process was extensive. Trips were completed to each of the regions, and experts from different sectors and members of civil society were invited to participate in various meetings and task teams. The process in itself must be considered a great achievement.' (MoE, 2002b, p1)

The development process of the ESP was probably the first occasion that consultation of a wide group of stakeholders has taken place. The ESP explains who was involved to ensure the consultation process was successful, and in what way. Teachers and headteachers, however, expressed a lack of knowledge of the policy agenda for the education sector in coming years and an ignorance of the changes planned. In fact, none of the school-level participants was able to provide any information on the ESP and its contents. Conversely, officers of the regional DoE and the MoE all agree that consultations did take place and that it was a very enlightening process, enabling a wide range of viewpoints to be considered in the attempt to decide on the education reform process.

The following is indicative of the reply given by a number of policy-level stakeholders:

'Spread of consultations dependent on timeframes available. And as you can't ask everybody there will always been feeling from some that they have not been consulted. In addition, institutional memory of individuals varies and many

people do not remember the fact that they were consulted.' (Consultant for a donor agency)

The teachers' opinion was that the limiting factor was not a lack of consultation, but that the follow-up and feedback, once the final document was produced, was less extensive. Teachers still feel their input into decision- and policy-making is weak. They also felt it was difficult for them to access information to find out more. When some of the strategies outlined in the ESP were shared with the teachers, the reaction was positive. Teachers felt 'if it all works out' then there were good things ahead. This point highlights the fact that ensuring more extensive dissemination of information could be a simple mechanism by which motivation and morale is raised. If changes are in the pipeline, then individuals may remain motivated and focused on future improvements, and feel included in the change process. This is a mechanism by which policy-makers can encourage stakeholders to 'buy into' reform agendas.

Teachers explain that a lot of information from the MoE does not filter down to them and that it is difficult to have a say in the decisions that are made 'higher up'. Both top-down and bottom-up communication channels are weak and contribute to the low levels of morale that exist in many schools. Part of the 'planning process' that is the ESP is the development of annual action plans that will define the specific actions to be taken in each year and outline the steps necessary for implementation. This process could incorporate an ongoing mechanism for teachers' views to be fed into decision-making, and ensure suitable actions are incorporated, as well as implemented, effectively. Furthermore, the institution of a system that ensures the involvement of teachers will provide information to teachers so they feel they are informed, which in turn may change the general perception that they are not consulted.

The GTU is the only representative body for teachers in Guyana. Its involvement in decisions involving education reform is unclear and the current impasse created by the salary dispute is said to be affecting the contributions that the union could make as well as the contribution that would be accepted. Over the past year, GTU's activities have been focused on the salary dispute. Stemming from the feeling that the MoE enforced the limited salary increases of last year without agreement, the union continues to make a stand for the benefit of the teachers.

GTU representatives explained that poor communications from the MoE, for example in relation to meeting schedules etc, was seriously affecting the likelihood that the current stalemate would be resolved. In addition, the union believes that lack of collaboration between the MoE and itself is keeping the union out of the education sector's decision-making loop. Expressions from within MoE were very much to the contrary, explaining that GTU and MoE meet on a regular basis to discuss issues affecting teachers and that GTU are usually invited to relevant workshops and discussion forums.

Some teachers expressed mixed reactions to the role that GTU plays as a representative voice. There was approximately an even split between those who recognised the worth of being a union member and those who felt that union dues were 'money badly spent'. Many teachers felt that the activities of the union reflected the racially segregated political agenda that manifests itself in society, and were reluctant to be involved in staking their full rights. With no other representative bodies, teachers are left with limited opportunities to express a voice.

4.2 Being valued as important stakeholders in the education system

4.2.1 *Teachers need positive communications and links with communities*

'One thing that motivates me is when parents show interest in the welfare of their children and the teachers in the school.' (Female primary school teacher)

Teachers and headteachers explained that a good relationship with parents and the community is an important factor in their levels of motivation and morale. Parents who are involved in the activities of the school are said to have a better understanding of the importance of education and so influence their children in a way to make it easier for teachers to teach. This was raised particularly in relation to the discipline of students in school. Better disciplined students were described as those having parents who took the time to find out about school activities and encouraged them in their school work.

However, many teachers complained that parents did not have the time, or make the time, to understand what the school was doing. This meant that little value was placed on education and, therefore, the educators. A number of teachers described how they had been the victims of verbal abuse from parents. In a few cases, teachers felt insecure and fearful of potential violent consequences when they left the school building.

Headteachers recognise that forging strong links between the school and the community is critical and enhances the quality of education in the school. All schools have PTAs through which many links could be developed. Headteachers complain that very few parents attend these meetings and that repeatedly asking the same group to support school activities actually puts a strain on relationships. They realise alternative strategies need to be used but feel a little unsure about what they may be. One headteacher described a Parents' Day activity, which involved parents attending their child's lesson to get a feel for what is being taught and how it is being taught. Another headteacher was inviting parents into the school to talk about their professional experiences as part of careers guidance. These ideas for encouraging community participation could be usefully shared with other headteachers and schools, but headteachers find few opportunities to do so on a regular basis. The monthly headteachers' meeting, which currently tends to be more about information dissemination, could provide the chance to discuss innovations for school improvement.

The school improvement planning (SIP) programme being established⁹ in schools across Guyana is a mechanism by which the MoE aims to 'build strong partnership, between teachers, parents, local community, Regional/Georgetown Education Departments and Central Ministry, in which there is a shared understanding and commitment to school improvement and a shared responsibility for the school's success in achieving such improvement'¹⁰. In essence, it is about developing greater stakeholder participation throughout the education sector to enhance the quality of education delivered. In the words of Guyana's Minister of Education, this process has already contributed to improvements in the system:

'Greater stakeholder participation in the school system, particularly greater parental involvement, improved school management and a sense of greater commitment by teachers despite the difficult circumstances under which they function, have all contributed to the improved performances over the past decade.' (Minister of Education, Dr Henry Jeffrey)¹¹

This shows there is recognition of the commitment that teachers have and it implies teachers possess the intrinsic motivation that inspires them in their work. This provides the MoE with a force to enhance the quality of education, providing responsibility is taken for continued nurturing of the 'greater commitment of teachers'.

For the teachers and headteachers, the initial feelings about SIP are negative because it creates more work. How it fits into existing systems is unclear, which highlights the fact that much more needs to be done before SIP can become an effective tool for school improvement. The MoE identifies training for School Improvement Advisory Committees (SIACs) in its ESP as an area that needs to be established for SIP to be effective. The current situation indicates that it would be of value to the MoE to remember the training would be more worthwhile as a precursor to the establishment of SIACs rather than reactionary to problems that arise. This will be important if initiative III of the EFA-FTI¹² is to be realised. For sub-initiative III.A, FTI funds are to be fed into school 'after approval of their (SIP) plan by the Ministry of Education' (MoE, 2002c, p33) and for sub-initiative III.B, monies will be allocated once an operational plan for a proposed feeding programme has been prepared. Both activities are the task of SIACs. To ensure schools are able to produce plans that will be approved, SIACs will need to be trained to enable them to carry out the necessary tasks appropriately. This will firmly put the horse in front of the cart, rather than the other way round.

⁹ School improvement planning is a process that is becoming more widespread globally in achieving quality education in schools. SSRP was the first programme to introduce School improvement planning in (secondary) schools in Guyana. GEAP adopted this model in its two pilot regions and now the policy direction is to extend the process to all schools in the country.

¹⁰ See the MoE website: www.sdn.org.gy/minedu/teacher/sip1.htm#a (April 2004)

¹¹ *Guyana Chronicle*, Friday 5 September 2003, p11

¹² Initiative III is 'Strengthening school community partnerships'; sub-initiative III.A is 'Accelerating the implementations of SIP'; sub-initiative III.B is 'Upgrading the school feeding programme in the hinterland'.

Part of the long-term vision linked to the full decentralisation of the education system entails the active involvement of many stakeholders for a viable school board system to develop, based on the President's College Act 1990. School boards, once established, are to be given administrative and governing responsibility of the school. As explained by the Schools' Boards Secretariat, at present this system is underway in only a handful of schools and very much in the trial phase. The learning from these trials will feed into the development of an approach suitable for other schools. Most school-level respondents during the research had little knowledge of school boards, which is understandable, as they may not necessarily be involved in current trials.

Many policies and strategies are outlined in the main policy documents. Stakeholders at many levels of the education sector recognise that the relationship between schools and the wider community is fragile. Encouraging more involvement by communities and giving schools opportunities to communicate with communities positively will go some way towards forging strong links and promoting positive relationships in the task of developing high-quality education.

4.2.2 Teachers need positive representations through the media

'There is no one out there saying good things about us, the teachers. All you hear is that teachers are no good; that they do not prepare for their lessons; that they do not attend school regularly and then charge students for lessons. Some teachers are like that, but not all.' (Female secondary school teacher)

As well as effective mechanisms for relationships to develop between schools and communities, teachers expressed a need for more positive public representations of education. Their own roles in education are jeopardised when negative, and not always well-founded headline statements¹³ are made about the teaching profession. This has been particularly acute over the past year during salary discussions. Teachers feel that those in more powerful positions can be explicit in the comments they make to the general public and the media, but that the teachers themselves are not in a good position to respond to the accusations with little or no interest from the press. For example, if they were to make statements critical of regional DoE or the MoE then they, the teachers, feel certain they would be victimised¹⁴. The teachers welcome the opportunity to take part in debates affecting their profession and to respond publicly without discrimination. The media is in a position to pose questions for genuine debate and can play an important role in raising the status of education.

Regional officers believe the media does present a correct picture of the situation but also confirm the view of the teachers that it is only part of a bigger picture. They have grave concerns about the impact comments made in the national papers have on how communities react to teachers. The GTU made the comment that it 'learns from the media and not the MoE', implying communications between the two were inadequate. Articles appearing in national papers¹⁵ over the course of this research are indicative of the debate between the MoE and the GTU. Respondents from all levels, from teachers through to the MoE, expressed concern about its effect on society's perception of the education sector.

Increasing stakeholders' levels of participation and commitment is a key strategy, outlined in the ESP, in addressing the social issues surrounding the education sector. However, there is little direct mention of the specific way of publicising education reforms and the policy plans to these stakeholders. The wide dissemination of information has a crucial role to play in increasing stakeholder participation and the print media, which is accessed by a large proportion of the population, could be a useful means of achieving this. However, the

¹³ such as 'Teacher absenteeism affecting student attendance' (*Sunday Chronicle*, 20 July 2003). Although the article does talk specifically about teachers attending the University of Guyana, the headline statement seems to imply a much broader context.

¹⁴ This was certainly the experience of the researcher: when individuals were asked for permission for interviews to be recorded they hesitated because they were worried they might be named.

¹⁵ Examples include:

'Jeffrey threatens to withhold union dues' (*Stabroek News*, 20 March 2003)

'Ministry will not negotiate under duress' (*Chronicle*, 10 May^h 2003)

'GTU accuses Education Ministry of agreement breach' (*Chronicle*, 23 May 2003)

'GTU peeved over Ministry statement' (*Chronicle*, 19 July 2003).

findings indicate that the nature of the publicity needs to be controlled so that the outcomes are constructive rather than destructive.

4.3 Being respected as professionals

4.3.1 *Teachers need an adequate basic salary*

Teachers explained the difficulties they had in making ends meet each month and the sacrifices they had to make, especially with regard to food purchases. A number of teachers felt they were unable to provide a balanced diet for their families on a regular basis. Others talked of supplementary activities (such as fishing, growing vegetable gardens, rearing chickens) they would undertake to make up for the shortfall in their salary. In some cases, this was expanded into income-generating activities. Teachers admitted these activities affected their performance in school as they took away time that would otherwise be spent on school-focused tasks, such as lesson preparation, as well as leaving them tired. Not surprisingly, teachers are dissatisfied with their income level and expressed poor salary as a demotivator.

Research carried out by the GTU confirms that teachers have financial difficulties because of low salary levels. In its salary proposal document, which is the centre of its negotiations with the MoE, it is argued that a trained teacher's salary is insufficient to provide a food basket for a family of four in most regions. GTU's actions in the salary debate focus on salary levels that will enable teachers to earn enough to cover all basic needs and therefore not have to take time to supplement their livelihood through additional income-generating activities. When teachers were asked what increase in salary would be sufficient, many replied that it needs to be doubled: '100% increase'. While teachers do recognise that the economic situation of the country makes this a highly unlikely expectation, with so much talk of the economic impact of quality education, they believe a bigger investment in education (and hence their salaries) is favourable for the country as a whole. The need to be paid a salary reflecting their worth is the request that many teachers make.

Of all the issues raised by teachers, insufficient salary was one that had a significant gender bias. Male teachers were quick to place pay at the top of their lists of demotivators. The societal image of the male being the main breadwinner in a household weighs down on male teachers. A number of the male participants explained how they had already spent some time away from teaching to be able to earn enough to support their families. Mostly this included employment in more lucrative fields, such as mining, and so tended to have a greater effect on those living in regions where this was a possibility. The male teachers felt they are forced to make career choices based on financial opportunities rather than through desire to do a particular job:

'I didn't want to leave teaching, but I had to think about my family. As a man you are the main breadwinner and teaching does not allow for that.' (Male secondary school teacher)

Policy-makers doubt that increases in salaries will have a favourable impact. They see the issue of salaries as a 'no-win' situation and are reluctant to make any increases. The following comment in the ESP indicates why the government feel nothing will be gained through salary increases:

'Despite a virtual trebling of salaries since 1995, teachers continue to exit the system for greener pastures because of the unattractive terms and conditions of service, and the aggressive method of recruitment of overseas based agencies.' (MoE, 2002c, p22)

A number of policy-level respondents commented that in a country with high levels of unemployment, being a teacher ensures a regular salary – a luxury that a large proportion of the population does not have. Such comments do not give much support to the commitments made by the government to improve education in Guyana and the significant role that teachers play. It does, however, highlight the fact that whether teachers perform or not, salaries are paid. What this suggests is a failure of appraisal or promotion systems rather than the feeling that teachers' salary levels are adequate.¹⁶

¹⁶ The EFA-FTI guidelines give a benchmark of 3.5% per capita GDP for teachers' annual salaries. During the course of the research it was not possible to find out whether debates about salary increases were affected by having a benchmark.

On closer investigation and discussions with teachers, the crux of the demotivation was found to lie not in the specific salary levels but in the lack of incremental increases. On a year-on-year basis, there are no increases in salary for teachers, except in line with inflation. The GTU expresses this in its 'Salary Proposal 2002–2004':

'Every single teacher is at the minimum of his/her respective salary scale. This has meant, in the case of Trained Teachers, for example, that the most newly-trained teachers receive exactly the same salary as the trained teachers who did not seek promotion and spent up to six (6) years in the trained teacher grade.'
(GTU, 2002)

An incremental salary scale is not a new concept in Guyana. Such a system did exist and the view from respondents in management positions is that it could be a possible solution to the salary issue, should policy-makers be willing to embark upon it. The GTU has also broached this suggestion with the MoE but economic difficulties were cited as the reason for this not being a viable suggestion.

'Salary is an incentive, but it doesn't change after a teacher is trained. Afterwards there is precious little incentive. There used to be an incremental system but this has got lost along the way.' (MoE officer)

Teachers have little sense of increasing livelihood and improving financial circumstances as the years progress. So it is not surprising that they look for better opportunities, either outside teaching in Guyana or in teaching overseas. The recommendation made in the BEAMS project preparation document on teacher supply and demand (Noonan, 2003) is that middle and upper levels of the teachers' salary scales should be increased for trained, experienced teachers to remain in teaching. This is a pertinent suggestion, as it is the failure to retain *trained* teachers that is the core of the struggle facing the education sector at present.

4.3.2 Teachers need incentives to remain in teaching

'There needs to be improvements in working conditions and salary to motivate teachers. If we can't get improved salary then give us some benefits... The promises just get shifted further and further away. If the opportunity comes for you to go to the States then you go ahead and take it.' (District Education Supervisor)

Many teachers talked of incentives that have been suggested, such as the provision of house lots and duty-free concessions. These ideas have been made public and much of society believes these incentives have been put in place. Teachers, however, have experienced a different reality. There has also been a misconception in thinking that these house lots are being provided free of charge, when in fact it is just the process of applying for house lots that is being 'short-cut' for teachers. A representative of the GTU outlined how 3,000 application forms for house lots allocated for teachers were distributed and completed based on the needs assessment of individuals. However, these forms 'seem to have been lost' in the system and nothing has come of the initiative to date. The union believes that non-pecuniary benefits play an influential role in motivating teachers. When asked why the recent focus has remained on salaries, it was made clear that all incentives are bound into the negotiations of salaries and non-pecuniary incentives are also addressed in discussions. It is a means of using salaries as a tangible focus for the whole incentives issues.

One concrete suggestion put forward by teachers was to be provided with a uniform allowance to cover the costs of the clothing considered acceptable for school wear. Teachers felt a constant pressure to ensure appropriate clothing was worn at work and for some this extended to out-of-school hours. Being able to find the money to afford this was difficult and comparisons were made with other occupations, such as nurses and the police force, that are given a clothing allowance or a uniform. For policy-makers, this is just another suggestion that involves finding more money in an already tight budget. However, should such an incentive be effective in preventing teachers from leaving, than the long-term costs for education may in fact be lower.

A challenge continually faced by policy-makers is attracting teachers in the remote regions of Guyana, where higher living costs prevail. For teachers to be able to cover the increased cost of living and travel experienced in

hinterland regions, they are eligible for a 'hardlying allowance'. The current monetary value of this allowance does little to motivate teachers:

'The money from the hardlying allowance does not really do much. The price of things, flour, rice, is so much more here than, say, if you are in town. And then to travel anywhere always costs.' (Female teacher, hinterland school)

The recognition that teachers need an allowance to be encouraged to work under certain circumstances is a positive one, but for it to be an effective motivator, the allowance needs to be at such a level that makes teachers see it as worthwhile.

In addition, there is frustration expressed by teachers based at schools that are not eligible for the hardlying allowance, but are remote in the sense that access to the area is limited. This applies to many of the riverain schools of region five, six and ten. Teachers are not fully aware of the eligibility criteria for the hardlying allowance, but feel the system should be reviewed to consider all the factors that create 'remoteness', ie it should not be based on distance alone, but also the ease with which the area can be accessed. An additional suggestion included a hardlying allowance 'scale' to acknowledge the range of 'remoteness' that exists in the country. These are germane suggestions, with particular reference to the EFA-FTI initiative 1.D¹⁷, part of which includes the payment of an increased hardlying allowance. The current value of G\$5,500/month is to be increased to G\$12,000/month for 727 teachers in a move by the MoE to attract and retain teachers in hinterland regions. It may be worth taking on board teachers' suggestions to enhance the anticipated impact of the increase in the hardlying allowance. If the outcomes of the initiative are more favourable, it may bode well in the eyes of the donor community from which the EFA-FTI is funded, especially as this type of monetary financing of education initiatives is rarely permitted.

4.3.3 Teachers need to be given the authority to match their professional status and be able to access a suitable promotion system

'If they treat us like professionals then we would behave like professionals...'
(Secondary school teacher)

Many teachers are irritated by the use of the term 'professional' in descriptions of themselves. Not in the sense that they are not professionals but that their treatment, by those in authority, does not represent the treatment of professionals. Being a professional involves a certain level of empowerment and the authority to make decisions based on experience and ability. Teachers feel unable to use their own judgements and are often criticised for taking action without the necessary approval, sometimes despite a favourable outcome. This whole subject was very closely linked to the discussion regarding good leadership and management styles, and criticisms of the professionalism of seniors and line managers. The comments fell into two areas: one was the lack of wanting to act professionally, but the stronger feeling was the lack of knowledge and ability to act 'professionally'. This second point is expanded on in the 'Good leadership and management' theme in this report. The first regards the manner in which promotion takes places.

A TSC document outlining the eligibility criteria for promotion shows that the present promotion system relies primarily on 'number of years' service' as an indicator of an individual's ability to be an educational manager. The eligibility criteria used to make appointments to senior posts in schools makes no reference to performance as an indicator for promotion. A trained teacher or an untrained university graduate is eligible for a head of department post after five years, but as a trained graduate, only three years' experience is required. Those eligible for a deputy head of a grade B secondary school are 'Senior masters/mistresses and heads of department in secondary and community high schools all with at least three (3) years of experience or combination of experience as such', and so the list continues. What this creates is a system where individuals are promoted on the basis of 'doing the time', irrespective of performance. In the words of one DoE officer: 'you move up no matter if you are good or bad'. The point is that there is no incentive to improve performance because it does not necessarily lead you up a better path.

¹⁷ improving the conditions for hinterland teachers

One headteacher explained how she worked within the limitations of the eligibility criteria, but at the same time acknowledged the performance of good teachers, to ensure stable, balanced relationships remained among the staff.

'I would end up choosing the teacher who is senior (according to years) even though Ms X may be more enthusiastic and committed to her work. This is because of all the rules and regulations connected to that, but I would tell the senior chosen that Ms X has many ideas and hopefully you will be able to work with her. You have to be careful with these situations.'

Teachers who have been placed in positions of authority without the necessary abilities explain that it can induce a feeling of incompetence, which in turn leads to frustration and demoralisation. A few heads of departments explained how they had been promoted as 'there was no one else to do it'. They felt that other aspects should also be considered. For example, a head of business believed she was not necessarily equipped to be in the position as the department consisted of a number of disciplines, including accounts – an area she knew very little about.

Eligibility criteria are needed to ensure the promotion process is transparent, provides an equal opportunity for all and favours quality education. At present, the criteria may not be providing the most effective means of achieving this, possibly smothering those with inspiration and pressurising others needlessly. Teachers feel that good performance should be rewarded appropriately and suggested that the eligibility criteria should include a performance criteria that takes into account ability to perform (gained from training and experience) and wanting to perform (teachers' intrinsic motivation levels).

For those in management positions, performance-related promotion was cited as a possible mechanism to ensure the best people are chosen for the job. Hand in hand with this was the comment that poor performers should be disciplined. This resonated closely with many teachers' frustration that a few individuals behaving inappropriately has an impact on the whole teaching force, hence portraying a negative image to society (a point linked to the theme of 'Being valued as stakeholders in the education sector' in this report).

When questioned about the disciplinary procedure, respondents working at all levels of the education sector made the point that the system does little to discipline such individuals, but there were differing perspectives. Many teachers felt they are easily victimised based on personal rather than professional circumstances and were not able to follow through with grievances about their own line managers. This was largely because of the hierarchical nature of the disciplinary procedure, running from teacher to headteacher, regional officer, central ministry and finally the TSC. The concern with this is that it is almost impossible to voice a concern about a line manager as, officially, it has to pass through the line manager to be acted on. Headteachers felt they had little power to impose any sanctions on the teachers, and regional officers explained they always conducted a thorough enquiry and dealt with each on an individual basis. For the past two years, the TSC has not been in a position to review any disciplinary cases and so a backlog exists until the service is commissioned.

An interesting observation was made by a number of untrained teachers on the change in behaviour of some teachers after training. They felt that on becoming a trained teacher, some individuals began to lose the commitment they had previously had. They found it difficult to determine the true cause of this phenomenon, but thought it may be related to the fact that these individuals were now 'permanent' and had the security of a salary each month despite their performance. This throws up a number of questions around the appraisal/promotion/disciplinary procedures and the function they play in ensuring teachers are motivated to perform effectively after they have qualified.

Besides this is the impact of the contractual agreements trained teachers are expected to sign as soon as they graduate from the CPCE (and sometimes the University of Guyana). The MoE believes contractual agreements are one method by which the loss of personnel from the system can be reduced, and the signing of such contracts is outlined as a specific action in the ESP. However, teachers, disillusioned by their chosen profession, talked of 'getting out' of the contract as soon as possible, questioning the worth of such contracts in keeping teachers in teaching and negatively affecting motivation.

Trained teachers responded that as soon as they graduate they are expected to carry on with little further support and many new tasks are piled on them. They feel they 'are thrown in at the deep end' and the additional pressure

affects motivation levels. Again, this point was relevant to the discussion of what constitutes a good leader, ie someone who is supportive and encouraging.

4.4 Being enabled to do the job

4.4.1 *Teachers need a conducive learning environment in which to function effectively*

'It is important that teachers have a conducive working environment and are able to deliver quality education. Much discussion in education at the moment focuses on the responsibility of the teachers and very little on the rights of the teachers; the right regarding the conditions in which they are expected to work.' (Vice President, GTU)

Of the 12 schools targeted in this research, eight were in the process of, or had recently experienced, major infrastructural works. Each of the major donor-funded projects of the past five to ten years has had a large proportion of its budget allocated to improvements in infrastructure. Numerous physical improvements are visible with new teaching blocks, specialist rooms and supportive facilities such as toilet blocks. Nonetheless, much dissatisfaction was voiced by the teachers. Two main reasons emerge: first, the inadequate consultation of teachers, in particular during the design and construction stages, and secondly, a lack of maintenance culture.

For example, one school was having a number of extensions constructed, one of which was to become a computer lab. When asked by the researcher if the excitement of having the new lab built increased their motivation levels, the response was:

'How can we be excited if we don't know what is coming? The changes are probably beneficial ones and could be used as a motivator but they never tell us. It is a wasted opportunity by them.' (Female secondary school teacher)

In another school that set up a computer lab set up (a school initiative), the lab had to be relocated so the space could be converted into industrial arts facilities by a donor-funded programme. Both of these circumstances indicate a lack of information sharing with the teachers and schools by those in leadership and management roles. This is itself a contributory factor to low levels of motivation and morale that develop because of poor change management.

For schools in which construction work had been completed for some time, the concern voiced by teachers was how quickly the structures deteriorated. They felt the monitoring of construction work as it progressed was lax and so led to 'shoddy workmanship', which then posed problems for the teachers who had to work in those conditions on a daily basis. Washroom facilities, in particular, quickly fall into disrepair – a point cited by teachers in discussions in over half the schools. Latrines built in inappropriate places, such that when the rains come, unhygienic conditions are created, as well as a lack of water for flushing toilet blocks were just two aspects that kept arising. The experience of the researcher lends weight to this, as on a number of school visits it was almost impossible to find usable facilities, and she had to rely on the kindness of teachers who lived in the vicinity of the school.

The lack of hygienic sanitary facilities may contribute to additional issues, such as absence of teachers for health reasons. Suffering from an upset stomach and finding no facilities to hand may determine whether a teacher arrives for school one morning or not. Absenteeism in such cases is not the fault of the teacher, yet they are blamed for being away from the classroom. This suggests that looking deeper into the underlying reasons for absence may generate a different picture, instead of simply resorting to disciplining teachers for absence, contributing further to low motivation levels.

As the quote at the start of this section highlights, the GTU feels that the rights of teachers in this regard are being neglected. It believes greater effort must be made to make teachers aware of the codes and regulations concerning their rights, as cited in law, and aims to inform teachers of such details as part of its future activities. Currently, the GTU are in the process of extracting the relevant data from the documents that affect the day-to-day experiences of the teachers and are distributing them to their members

The cases described highlight that the delivery and receipt of quality education in any system is dependent on ensuring that teachers' basic needs to do an effective job are met during the time they spend on site. The MoE acknowledges this state of affairs and the ESP states the objective of improving infrastructure and equipment

through the development and implementation of local and regional preventative maintenance plans. To support this, recurrent expenditure on maintenance will be included in the budget.

The planned EFA—FTI sub-initiative IIC, with an estimated cost of US\$9.2 million by 2010, is responsible for upgrading school utilities¹⁸ nationwide. The work plan outlined for this sub-initiative includes the commitment to put the utilities in place, but the experiences voiced by the teachers show the problems often arise *after* the infrastructural improvements are made. This is due to lack of maintenance and lack of budget for maintenance costs, which includes the employment of cleaning staff. To avoid repeating past situations, preventative maintenance plans would benefit from incorporating maintenance activities that may have been missing from previous budgetary plans. In addition, teachers, if included in a venture from its inception, would be happy to play a role in ensuring the success of the venture. This is on the condition that teachers have time to plan ahead: an issue to be considered in planning and management by school and regional officers.

4.4.2 Teachers need sufficient resources to deliver good quality lessons

‘If they gave us the basics we ask for, not the fancy printed charts or anything like that, just some cardboards and good markers, we would try our best and make resources. Sometimes it is so frustrating, but I don’t have the money to be able to buy things.’ (Secondary school teacher)

In almost every focus group discussion, inadequate or inappropriate teaching and learning materials were mentioned as a demotivator. Interactive student-centred learning was being expected of teachers without the provision of basic resources – cardboards, marker pens, photocopying facilities. In addition, headteachers felt at a loss, as they were unable to provide what their teachers required. The present system does not provide schools directly with any funds; instead the headteacher has to obtain all resources from the regional DoE. In most cases, what is provided, if anything, does not match what is requested:

‘It seems that the purchaser at the Department does not know what we need in school and also what they sent us last time. There is no check kept. When they have stuff, they (the Department) do send it to us but many of the times it is not what we need.’ (Primary school headteacher)

This mismatch in demand and supply leads to a perception at school level that, at times, inadequate resources are provided, but at regional level that many resources are provided. This situation links again to issues of planning and management of resources and systems at school and regional levels.

The headteacher quoted above had experienced a very different situation in another region where she had been given the freedom to make purchases within a certain budgetary allocation, provided the receipts were submitted within a defined timeframe. It appears, therefore, that the issue lies to a certain degree with the administrative approach of the regional offices. This particularly affects the schools located in the more remote parts of certain regions. As another headteacher explains:

‘It is difficult for this school at times. When supplies are shared, other schools are given preference if there is not an adequate number for all the schools, and perhaps because we are far away, they feel that we may not need those things and sometimes we go without. For example, the microscope, other schools were given one and there was some sports gears that our school did not receive. We could not have traced where the one designated for us went. We are always at the losing end in distribution – even when it comes down to the things like getting our exam papers. If we do not make the effort to get them we may never get them.’ (Headteacher, riverain school)

The headteacher could not see any reason for this state of affairs except that ‘Perhaps those in the office are too lazy to seriously get these things down to us’. He felt there was no excuse for the regional education office’s neglect.

¹⁸ Utilities include drinking water, proper sanitation and electricity supplies.

Bringing in a perspective from the regional level, one Regional Education Officer explained the challenges he faces in his role as implementer of national education policy:

‘The first is the inadequate staffing. Not enough persons to carry out their duties and those that we have, some of them are not pulling their weight. If every clerk and officer was to stick to their job description, lots of jobs would be left not done, because every worker in the department is doing more than their share.’ (REdO)

The DoE’s inability to perform its duties adequately has a serious knock-on effect for the support that can be given at school level. It is vital that the national education officers ensure the regional officers are able to function effectively and support schools in the provision of good quality education.

One constraint voiced by teachers on this issue was that access to resources was restricted. Placing resources under lock and key means that the key holder must be located before access is possible. This leads to frustration, particularly when lessons planned are dependent on resources. The situation is indicative of the style of leadership that exists and its impact on those that are managed. Teachers express feelings of disempowerment that in turn contribute to low levels of motivation and morale. Closely related to this is the perception that the teachers are not valued for their professional abilities, a point raised earlier in the report.

As the last in line, teachers feel the full effect of implementation inadequacies in the hierarchical education system. The issues lie in the prioritisation of tasks. It appears that the requirements of the senior staff or rank are prioritised rather than those of their beneficiary: regional offices prioritise and react to tasks required of them by the central MoE, as opposed to direct requests from schools; and schools prioritise activities that satisfy the demands of regional education offices as opposed to the students etc. One way to overcome this impasse may be, for example, to give teachers open access to resources, enabling them to give their lessons at any given time.

Teachers in schools that had benefited from the Primary Education Improvement Project (PEIP), Secondary School Reform Project (SSRP) and GEAP felt the resources provided them with information and ideas needed to plan effective lessons. In addition, having an adequate number of textbooks made the delivery of the lesson more successful. These schools were also grateful for the benefits gained by science equipment and, in some instances, the construction of information technology labs.

Both the BEAMS programme and EFA–FTI funds will provide additional textbooks across the regions. A survey commissioned by the MoE estimated that the cost of providing each primary and secondary level student with a book for each of the four core subjects would be about US\$26.5 million, with a further US\$5.3 million per year for upkeep (ie replacement of damaged and lost books). Through donor collaboration, the MoE is trying to enhance the provision of resources to support further and enable schools in their task of delivering good quality education.

NCERD holds the responsibility for curriculum and resource development in the country. Based in Georgetown, teachers feel it creates an extremely centralised structure and contributes to concerns about the appropriateness of the National Curriculum. To attempt to address these concerns, subject specialists at NCERD (including a number of VSO volunteers) are making an effort to involve teachers from outlying areas in their work. Unfortunately, budgetary constraints frequently affect the extent of this involvement and, on many occasions, it is the more costly training sessions that are cancelled:

‘There have been many times when I have planned to go out to the regions and work with the teachers in their own circumstances, but then I am told that there is no money left in the budget for it and it is cancelled. There is not a lot you can do about that, it is just so frustrating.’ (VSO subject specialist, NCERD)

Limited budgets will continue to challenge the implementers of educational activities, although appropriate planning should allow for a more equitable distribution of funds. The present circumstances suggest that if educational institutions are to support the government’s vision of equity in education provision, longer-term planning and foresight are needed.

Regional Learning Resource Centres (RLRCs), an arm of the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) based at NCERD in Georgetown, exist in each region. In addition to being providers of resources, their mandate includes providing mentoring and professional development activities for local teachers, in particular those that are unqualified and inexperienced. EFA–FTI proposes to extend this network of RLRC in the hinterland areas by establishing Satellite Learning Resource Centres for teachers in remote clusters of schools.

Teachers felt the supportive role of the RLRC was inadequate, mainly due to its limited capacity. One REdO felt the remit of the RLRC was unclear and until it was clarified, the RLRCs would continue to be ineffectual:

‘It is not a gazetted institution, so the PSC do not appoint people there. We have a retiree working at one and a seconded teacher. It also poses a problem because the RLRC may be closed when teachers need to get to it. Anyway the resources we have there are limited.’ (REdO)

Personnel at NCERD recognise the constraints of the existing LRC system and acknowledge that the centres rarely function as they should. This throws into question the possible success of further initiatives that aim to expand the already existing, albeit ineffective, system. According to regulations, regional DoEs have the task of developing a viable, purposeful LRC and for this to occur, as pointed out by one NCERD officer, there needs to be an understanding of what schools and communities require, as well as the vision and capacity to develop a LRC. This may require further training and resourcing of regional officers, but the process would probably benefit from more consultation and involvement of teachers.

4.4.3 Teachers need schools to have sufficient numbers of teachers

There are insufficient numbers of teachers in the teaching force to cover the needs of universal access to free education, for nursery through to secondary education, for all children. Teachers are very aware of this, and the extra pressure it puts on them in their daily workload.

Teachers explain that the records that indicate the numbers of teachers in a school, and hence allow student–teacher ratios to be calculated, do not represent a true picture. Teachers may be assigned to a school, but may not actually be in the school. In a number of the regions, teachers were working at the DoE offices. One REdO expressed how grateful he was to be able to utilise the skills of one of his teachers, because the office was understaffed. This is an encouraging use of abilities, but the result is a classroom of students with no teacher. It is difficult to determine the best possible spread of human resources in a system with limited capacity, but it is important to assess the possible impact from all sides to be able to make the most appropriate decision.

For secondary schools, the difficulty is that there may not be the required number of subject specialist teachers available. Figures may indicate a sound student–teacher ratio, but in fact some departments suffer from insufficient numbers of teachers – a load that has to be carried by the rest of the department:

‘They do not look to see what subjects each of the teachers are trained to teach. We need more science teachers but the teacher who comes is a social studies teacher. We do not need that. But for the records we have a full set of teachers.’
(Teacher, secondary school)

The CPCE and its regional centres provide the initial teacher training programme for trainee teachers across Guyana. Prospective trainee teachers must meet the English and maths requirements to be accepted on the certification programme. In addition to this, the subject specialism is determined by high performance in subjects the individual has undertaken for external secondary level examination (through the Caribbean Examinations Council). Social studies is one of the subjects in which secondary students attain high examination grades and so is the course at CPCE that has the largest number of applicants.

Since the demand for training positions never exceeds the supply of places available at the college, the college is not in a position to specify the number of trainee teachers that can be accepted for each subject specialism. This is a limiting factor in ensuring suitably trained subject specialists for secondary schools. Possibly, this challenge can be met by encouraging secondary students and enhancing their perception of teaching as a career opportunity; this must involve all levels of the education sector, beginning with the teachers and extending to media campaigns promoted by the MoE.

5 Summary and conclusion

This research, as part of VSO's 'Valuing Teachers' initiative, set out to explore issues affecting teachers' motivation and morale levels in Guyana. The objectives were to identify the factors influencing teacher motivation and to assess the corresponding effect on performance to inform policy and practice at national and international levels. The report is a representation of teachers' own views on these issues. These were analysed along with the views of other education stakeholders on this topic. It aims to inform policy-makers of the nature of teachers' motivation and make recommendations to ensure motivation is raised and remains high.

The findings raise grave concerns about the status of teacher motivation levels in Guyana. Many teachers are dispirited by their experiences and feel undervalued for the crucial role they play in the education system. The government has placed education as a national priority and teachers believe this should be reflected in the conditions in which they are asked to make good quality education a reality. Teachers believe educational managers have a strong role to play in this and any limited capabilities need to be tackled to ensure improvements take place. The added benefits of this would be an overall increase in perception, by society, of the true professionalism of educators and the value of education.

The majority of teachers consulted during the research believe their professional experiences as teachers mean they are in a strong position to make valid contributions to the debates on how to achieve a good quality education system. They further believe they have valuable insights into the education system in which they work 'at the end of the line'. Creating the forum for this to take place on a regular basis is crucial if the teachers' voices are to be heard. This would lead to empowerment of teachers and allow them to become agents of change rather than victims of change:

'...Restoring teachers' abilities as agents of change would encourage more creativity, innovation and diversity in education in the future.' (Johnson and Hallgarten, 2002)

Good quality education will only become a reality when all education stakeholders work collaboratively. This is important not only in finding solutions but also in raising the status of education in Guyana. To this end, teachers believe more can be done to promote and publicise the activities undertaken at school level in a positive way. This requires strong administrative and political leadership and could quicken the path to increased community participation in schools (a strategy to increase the quality of education outlined in policy documents).

The call to be enabled to carry out their duties remains a strong one for all teachers. Simply having the appropriate resources, materials, time or other colleagues, is cited as critical to making the development and delivery of good quality education possible. Teachers are aware of budgetary limitations affecting the provision of resources, but contend that improved budget planning and management could go some way to creating better conditions.

The findings discussed in this report draw attention to the issues affecting teacher motivation levels in Guyana. If not dealt with, they will probably exacerbate the loss of teachers the education system experiences at present. This has serious implications on the success of any education reform initiative, especially those that will require the presence of an expanded and experienced teaching force. In addition, any poor perceptions of teaching as a career will affect the numbers of new recruits taken into the system. This should be a strong message to a government that has publicly committed itself to raising the status and quality of education provision in the country.

The main problem facing the teaching profession in Guyana is the loss of teachers to 'greener pastures' in countries that can offer teachers a better financial package. As suggested in the findings of this research, creating a 'greener pasture' in Guyana does not necessarily involve expensive financial packages. By taking on board the findings and recommendations of this report, stakeholders throughout the education sector could take action to address the needs voiced by the teachers, and avoid the possible failure of future reform initiatives. Of particular importance is the ongoing implementation of the initiatives outlined in the EFA-FTI plans (see Appendix 10). As Guyana is one of the first seven countries to be accepted for funding through this initiative, many eyes are on the country to see how effectively the initiative is executed.

VSO believes the voice of the teacher is key to enhancing the quality of education provision and achieving the goal of equal access to quality education (as mentioned in MoE's mission statement and international declarations of EFA). It will make use of the findings of this research to work through its country programme to support the realisation of the recommendations. Through its international activities, the findings will feed into dialogue with donor agencies and educational institutions to ensure teachers' voices remain at the forefront of the mind of policy-makers¹⁹. As highlighted in the 'Valuing Teachers' Papua New Guinea research: 'If teachers are the problem, then they are also the solution.'

The teachers' 'needs' as outlined in the recommendations section are those perceived by the teachers themselves, along with the voices of other stakeholders in the system. These needs are an indication of the changes required to bridge the gap between their present situation and the circumstances that will enable them to work effectively. It is recognised that policies outlined in official policy documents show awareness of many of the factors impinging on the tasks of teachers. There is also a general understanding of the factors affecting teacher motivation (see Appendix 11 for a comparison of research findings and current policies). Implementation is the next step and it is VSO's view that listening to the voices of teachers will go a long way to providing the answers to how to achieve a good quality education system with highly motivated teachers.

¹⁹ As part of the 15th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers held during the preparation of this report, VSO presented on the theme of 'Leadership in education' and took part in a number of symposium working sessions on teachers' issues. As part of the ongoing advocacy process of the 'Valuing Teachers' project, VSO will take action to ensure Ministerial commitments are maintained.

6 Recommendations

The process of development of the PRSP and the ESP has ensured much activity at the policy level in the education sector. The planning process of the BEAMS programme and proposal submission for the EFA–FTI has also added to this. The documentation linked to each of these contains comments in recognition of the need to address teacher motivation and there is an understanding of some of the causes of teachers’ dissatisfaction. With regard to ‘unmet expectations in education’ the PRSP states:

‘Poor conditions of service were cited frequently and were attributed to low wages, lack of accommodation for teachers... and absence of non-pecuniary incentives to retain trained teachers. In addition, teachers perform menial jobs such as cleaning of sanitary facilities and classrooms.’ (PRSP, 2001, p20)

Many of the findings of this research draw parallels to and strongly support the policy direction that exists. The additional dimension provided is the perspective of the teacher, whose voice of experience as the implementer of many policies can be used, and is crucial to ensure the success of any changes that are brought about.

If there is recognition that high levels of motivation and morale must exist for improved performance of teachers, and hence the delivery of quality education, it is important to ensure teachers’ needs are met. The recommendations in this section will use the ‘needs’ highlighted by teachers as the starting point for direction. The possible consequence is a good morale level in the education sector and a lessening of the loss of trained, experienced personnel from the system.

6.1 Good leadership and management

6.1.1 *Teachers need:*

- managers who are able to perform their roles in a professional and supportive manner
- transparent and accountable management systems
- regular appraisal and feedback on their performance
- training in effective management as they are promoted.

Teachers expressed a need for effective management to provide the ongoing support required to allow them to function effectively in providing good quality education. Particularly important are positive relationships between staff created by openness in discussions and decision-making processes involving school issues. People should be placed in management positions according to their ability to perform as good leaders and should be supported in undertaking such positions. Good leadership was outlined as a necessity to address many of the other issues that affected teachers’ motivation.

6.1.2 *Recommendations*

- Establish mechanisms through which teachers’ views are taken into account and that involve teachers in decisions at all levels.
- Develop an effective appraisal system that will provide equal opportunities at all levels and incorporate a ‘bottom-up’ appraisal mechanism.
- Develop positions that bring ‘master teachers/trainers’ into the pay scale; possibly seek funding from donors to assist in the initial stages of meeting the increased costs.
- Include more promotional levels and positions in capacity-building.
- Develop a system of continued professional development (CPD) that works alongside the promotion levels to provide training to develop future educational leaders and managers.
- Ensure disciplinary procedures are in place and remove ineffective personnel from all levels of the system.

6.2 Being valued as important stakeholders in the education system

6.2.1 *Teachers need:*

- to feel appreciated by their colleagues, managers and the community in which they work

- systems in which they are able to represent themselves publicly
- those who represent them to do so in a positive light
- managers who are able to make positive representations of their performance
- to establish supportive links with the wider community of the school
- parents to be supportive and encouraging.

The value of education is constantly questioned by society at large and teachers, being at the forefront of providing appropriate learning, bear the brunt of many criticisms that arise. Teachers request constructive action to encourage the development of a positive interface with the beneficiaries of education (students and parents).

6.2.2 Recommendations

- MoE, regional education committees and GTU need to ensure positive stories are presented in the media.
- MoE, regional education committees and GTU need to work in collaboration to create a positive climate for teachers.
- Develop an effective information-sharing mechanism/communications channel throughout the education sector, ensuring teachers are able to participate fully in policy dialogue.
- Donor agencies need to ensure teachers are involved during consultations and decision-making processes.
- Establish mechanisms by which communities can play a central role in improving the quality of education.
- Sensitise communities about reform taking place and expected benefits, in addition to highlighting the role they play.
- Donor agencies need to highlight the strengths of the education system.

6.3 Being respected as professionals by parents, children and the education sector

6.3.1 Teachers need:

- to be given a professional status
- to be paid an adequate salary and experience an improvement in their livelihood over time
- equity in the provision of incentives.

Teaching, as with any profession, requires a proficient knowledge and skill level in order to be accomplished successfully. Teachers ask that this be recognised and that they be rewarded appropriately through both pay and non-pecuniary incentives. In addition, appreciation of good performance, either through incentives or promotion, contributes to high motivation and morale.

6.3.2 Recommendations

- Create stronger competition for jobs in the system.
- MoE needs to review the promotion system, with the involvement of teachers and other stakeholders.
- Promotion systems need to include experience, performance, qualification and training needs.
- Increase salaries to introduce incremental increases into the pay scale. Yearly increments should also be introduced.
- The hardship allowance scale needs to be reviewed in light of recognising the true and variable levels of 'remoteness'.
- Review the role and effectiveness of the TSC.
- Review and address the issues created by the dual appointments system in the education sector (PSC/TSC).
- Review the application/appointment criteria and include more performance-related criteria.

6.4 Being enabled to do the job

6.4.1 Teachers need:

- to be able to access materials easily and simply without taking away from their planning and teaching time
- to be provided with appropriate resources for their teaching
- to have the flexibility to deliver a curriculum appropriate and of value to their community
- to have manageable class sizes to teach and a suitable number of contact hours in which to teach, leaving adequate time to prepare and plan.

Teachers want to do a good job but find it difficult, sometimes impossible, to do so under the circumstances that exist at present. They need to have the resources and infrastructure suitable to create an environment conducive to learning for their students.

6.4.2 Recommendations

- Review channels of distribution of resources to schools and ensure existing channels function efficiently. If not, make relevant changes.
- Budgets need to be given to the school level to enable more autonomy to support the effective management of the school on a daily basis. This will need to include management capacity-building at the school level.
- Establish effective systems and provide relevant training for monitoring budget planning and administration at the regional level to ensure budgets are adhered to.
- Ensure curriculum development mirrors the needs arising as a result of education reforms, eg universal secondary education.
- TSC needs to review the guidelines used for the allocation of teachers. Ensure there is regional representation in this by expanding the TSC network outwards from its centrally based position in Georgetown.
- Secondments taking teachers away from the classroom must be avoided if it results in insufficient numbers of teachers in a school.

‘We need to be incorporated into discussions or in formulating programmes. If you have a say you become part owner of it and so you want it to succeed and you would go the extra mile to see it work. We have responsibilities, now give us the power.’ (Male teacher, Head of Department, secondary school)

7 Recommendations and responsibilities

Recommendation	Stakeholders who could be take a lead role
Improve leadership and management at all levels of the education system.	MoE, GTU, in conjunction with development partners
Establish mechanisms by which teachers' views are taken into account and are involved in decisions at all levels.	MoE, GTU, donor agencies and development partners ²⁰ in conjunction with civil society organisations
Develop an effective appraisal system.	MoE, in conjunction with the GTU, ensuring representation of those at the school level (teachers and headteachers)
Ensure professional development opportunities exist to create competent leaders and management.	Training institutions, ie NCERD in conjunction with development partners
Establish mechanisms by which civil society is listened to and is involved in decisions at all levels.	MoE, GTU, donor agencies and development partners, civil society organisations
Ensure positive representation of teachers and education through a variety of media and communication channels.	MoE, GTU, donor agencies and development partners, civil society organisations
Review the appointments system in the education sector: role and effectiveness of the TSC.	MoE, in conjunction with the GTU and the TSC
Review and revise the promotion/pay scale.	MoE, in conjunction with the GTU and the TSC. If there is a need for a neutral party, development partners (such as VSO) could be involved.
Enhance and extend incentives available to teachers	MoE, GTU, with involvement from donor agencies to provide financial assistance to establish systems
Ensure the channels of distribution of resources function effectively.	MoE, GTU,
Ensure curriculum development mirrors the needs arising as a result of education reforms.	MoE, GTU, development partners, civil society organisations
Establish effective systems for monitoring budget planning and administration at the regional and school level.	MoE, in conjunction with the GTU and the TSC. If there is a need for a neutral party, development partners (such as VSO) could be involved.

²⁰ The distinction made here relates to agencies that provide direct financial assistance (donor agencies) and those, such as VSO, that provide alternative modes of assistance for development (development partners).

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TSC criteria for making appointments to senior posts in schools – The eligibility criteria

9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1: Regional and school level participants

Region	Participating schools	Female teachers	Male teachers	Headteacher interviewed	Regional Officer Interviewed
1	North West Secondary School	3	4	Mr Malcolm Marcus	Mr Oswald Valenzuela (REdO) Ms Baharally (DES)
	Santa Rosa Primary	4	2	Ms Modesa Gomes	
2	Cotton Field Secondary School	7	2	Ms Bhanwattie Gookul Acting HM	Mr Amsterdam (REdO)
	Charity Secondary School	4	0	--	
	Nursery School Teachers (Various)	6	0	--	
6	Skeldon Line Path Secondary School	3	3	--	Mr Nashrullah Khan (REdO)
	Orealla Primary School	2	3	Mr Clement Edwards	
7	Bartica Secondary School	2	2	Ms Debra Gomes Acting DHM	Ms Urline Crandon (Acting REdO)
	Saint John the Baptist Primary School	4	2	Ms Francine Watts	
9	Saint Ignatius Secondary School	2	4	Ms Shaharazade Atkinson Acting HM	Mr Gary Foo (Acting REdO)
10	New Silvercity Secondary School	6	0	Ms Miriam Gillis	Ms Gloria Britton (DES – Secondary)
	Kwakwani Secondary School	5	1	Angela Alert Mohamed Teacher in Charge	
	Regma Primary School	6	0	Ms Nancy Butcher	

9.2 Appendix 2: Key stakeholder interviews

Name	Position
Mr Ed Caesar	Chief Education Officer
Ms Evelyn Hamilton	Chief Planning Officer
Mr Romeo McAdam	Assistant Chief Education Officer (Admin)
Mr Edward Jarvis	Hinterland Coordinator
Ms Savitri Balbahardur	Project Director GBETT
Ms Foster	Principle CPCE
Mr Philip Roberts	GTU First Vice-President
Dr Henry Jeffrey	Minister of Education
Mr Trevor Thomas	General Secretary TSC
Mr RB Persaud	Project Coordinator BEAMS
Ms Deweaver	Assistant Coordinator for School Boards
Mark Sinclair	Education Consultant DFID
Rene Van Dongen	UNICEF
Michelle Rodrigues	UNICEF

9.3 Appendix 3: Focus groups discussion methodology

Introduction

Explain the purpose of the research and why VSO is doing it. Use the the following guidelines:

Presently, VSO Guyana is reviewing the impact of past and serving volunteers with a view to improving future volunteer placement relevance to Guyana. Linked to this is research into the factors that influence teacher motivation and performance. Teachers are pivotal to implementation of education reform yet there is scant research into what teachers themselves feel about their profession; what affects their morale; and what will help them perform well

Title: Perspectives of teacher motivation and morale in Guyana

Aim: To explore the issues affecting teachers' motivation and morale to increase performance in schools to the benefit of the students. The research aims to evaluate the level of teacher motivation and identify the critical factors influencing it.

Key questions for the research:

- What effect does teacher motivation have on performance?
- What are the critical factors influencing teacher motivation in Guyana?
- What changes are required to enhance teacher motivation?

Give personal background, and that of any additional facilitators.
Ask participants to introduce themselves.

Questions to be answered during focus group discussions:

- What makes you feel good/happy/motivated?
- What makes you feel bad/sad/demotivated?
- What are the characteristics of a motivated teacher?
- What motivates teachers?
- What are the causes of teacher demotivation?
- What are the solutions for addressing teacher demotivation?
- How do motivation levels change over time?

Activities

Activity 1: (20 minutes)

- What makes you feel good/happy/motivated?
- Ask participants to work in pairs and think about things that make them feel good during their working day, eg when a pupil suddenly understands a new concept.
- List them on notepaper.
- What motivates teachers?
- Extend personal experience to teachers in general, eg good working environment.
- What are the characteristics of a motivated teacher?
- Ask participants what characteristics a happy teacher has. How do you know when a teacher is happy/motivated? eg punctual, good tempered.
- Note comments on flipchart. If participants have difficulties, ask them to think of adjectives/adverbs to describe motivated teachers.

Activity 2: What is your level of motivation at present? (5 minutes)

Give each participant a slip of paper and ask them to write in their own level of motivation using the following scale:

Highly motivated – Fairly motivated – Slightly demotivated – Very demotivated

Activity 3: (45 minutes)

- What are the causes of teacher demotivation?
- What are the solutions for addressing teacher demotivation?

Give each participant a number of post-it notes on which to write down the causes of teacher demotivation (one per post-it note).

What makes you sad/demotivates/demoralises you in your work?

Group the issues into specific levels to identify the 'source' of the demotivation, eg personal/classroom/school/regional education office/national.

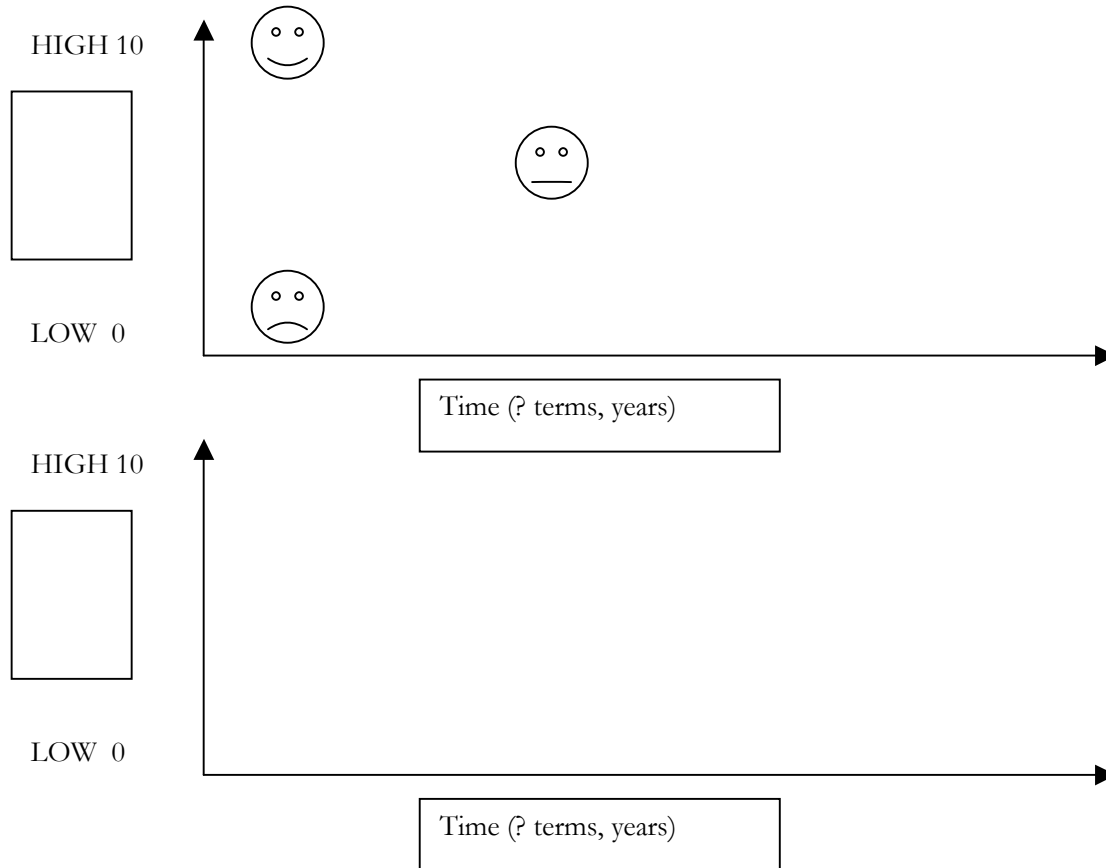
Within each of these categories, ask the participants to rank the issues in order of importance.

Extend this to draw out solutions to each of the main issues mentioned.

Activity 4: Motivation and performance timeline (15 minutes)

- How do motivation levels change over time?
- How do motivation levels link to performance level?

Ask teachers to think back over their teaching career and think about their motivation levels. Ask them to map them on a timeline to show changes in motivation (maybe using faces).



Ask participants to note in any time out or training years etc on the timeline. Repeat for performance level over time.

Activity 5: Profile sheet (5 minutes)

Ask participants to complete the profile sheet.

Closing:

Summarise the main points that have come out of the discussions and ask teachers whether it is the correct perception.

Thank the participants.

9.4 Appendix 4: Example of a focus group discussion summary

Date	24 June 2003	
Name of school	North-West Secondary School, Mabaruma	
Nature of group	Male 4	Female 3

What makes you happy at school? What motivates teachers?		
Group 1 (Female group)	Group2 (Male group)	Group 3 (Male group)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents visiting teachers/school to find out about their child's interest • Good and comfortable living conditions for teachers • Sufficient salary • Students interests – doing homework, passing exams • Students showing respect for teachers and fellow students • Students obeying teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary • Conditions in which they are working • Self-discipline of students • Being a well-qualified teacher • Cooperation from both students and other teachers • Good results from students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application on the students' part • Sufficient texts • Appropriate resources • Challenge of teaching, eg how to take a difficult subject and present it so the students understand • The headteacher – decision-making and relationships • Rewards and praise • Good living conditions • Introducing a new perspective • Support from the department of education • Students who want to learn and excel
What are the characteristics of a motivated teacher? How do you know when a teacher is happy?		
Group 1 (Female group)	Group2 (Male group)	Group 3 (Male group)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps records in order • Mode of dress • Facial expressions • Love for children • How the teacher responds to the students • Interested in students' learning, welfare, eg reasons for not learning, not being on time, poor behaviour • Assists children at all times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They work harder • Give extra classes for free • Try to help students that are below average • Friendly • Try to make sure the concepts are transferred clearly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Punctuality • Dedication • Enthusiasm • Involved (busy) – active in curriculum and co-curricular in the community • Presentation of dress (appearance) • Creative in teaching approaches • Good motivator • Has a good relationship with staff, students and the community

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good role model (practice what they preach) • Enjoy what they do everyday • Pride in their job
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Levels of motivation:			
Highly motivated	Fairly motivated	Slightly demotivated	Very demotivated
1 male (Peace Corps Volunteer)	1 male 3 female	1 male	1 male

What demotivates teachers? What makes you unhappy in your work?				
Personal	Classroom	School	Regional	Central MoE
Male: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient equipment • Disregard of incentives • Lack of motivation from students • Poor role models for students in the community • Having to wait a long time before being given the chance to enhance qualifications • Teachers living conditions • Gossip about the ideal teacher 	Male: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-application of students, due to parents not recognising the importance of education • Very poor results after very hard work from teachers • Lack of discipline in students (type of discipline) • Students not being engaged throughout the day 	Male: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having to head a class with very weak students • Parental approach to child • Lack of teamwork among staff • Lack of resources in the school • Lack of involvement from students' families 	Male: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An autocratic superior officer • Closed-mindedness to other's ideas • Incompetent office staff • Lack of support from education department • Informality of superiors • Poor use of resources that are here • Lack of organisation and accountability in the system 	Male: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient salaries (2) • MoE making decisions without involving teachers from the classroom • Poor communication • Upgrading of teachers • Trickle-down control within the education system
Female: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of interest of their own children • Parents' reaction to teachers 	Female: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students not doing their homework • Not enough respect for teachers from students 	Female: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers fighting down other teachers • Not enough texts to work with • Parents fighting teachers • Parents quarrelling with teachers in public 	Female: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late information passing from education department to school • Poor living conditions provided by the MoE 	Female: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient salaries (2)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers should recognise professionalism and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers to receive sufficient training to deal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers need to be trained to do their jobs 	

	<p>behave appropriately with students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school needs to conduct professional development sessions to support the above • The school should make stronger, positive links with the community, eg through graduation ceremonies, concerts etc, for sharing information with the community on the benefits of education 	<p>with students' issues (school level)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sessions on conflict management (how to deal with parents) 	<p>effectively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers should pay more visits to schools, to understand a true picture of conditions in which teachers work • Visits to schools by officers need to include staff development and classroom observations, and must be more positive. All visits need follow-up activities 	
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Other notes/comments/observations:

- In the area there is no way to access any other courses except the DoE teacher training one and an evening class to obtain the Caribbean Examination Council's.
- It is a small community and teachers felt that the respect they should get from students in school was poor. This was related to how the teachers are perceived outside of the school building in the community. There are inconsistencies in how teachers respond to students in and out of schools. Many teachers do not encourage a difference in behaviour/responses in and outside of school.
- There was a very negative feeling towards parents. Parents do not motivate students to go to school, but expect the teachers to take complete responsibility for the child's education. Parents do not attend PTA meetings and criticise teachers for everything.
- Need to tap into parents' interests in ceremonies by combining it with education messages.
- Lack of parental skills – no communication with their children.
- The teachers felt that the regional office was too admin focused and not education focused. It does not provide encouragement.

9.5 Appendix 5: Profile sheet completed by focus group discussion participants

Profile of focus group discussion participants

Date											
What education region do you teach in?	1	2	3	G T	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Gender	Male			Female							
Age	Years		Months								
What is your current teaching status?											
Please circle those that apply to you	Trained	Qualified		Permanent			Graduate				
	Untrained	Unqualified		Temporary			Non-graduate				
How many years have you been teaching for?	Years		Months								
How many schools have you taught in?											
What level do you teach at?	Nursery		Primary		Secondary			Other (please state)			
What were your reasons for becoming a teacher?											
Would you make the same choice again?											
What three things would help you be a better teacher?											
Rank them 1, 2, 3 with 1 being the most important											
Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?											
Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?											

9.6 Appendix 6: Questionnaire completed by VSO volunteer

1. Name:
2. What is your role? Teacher in a school Teacher Trainer Lecturer (eg UG) Other (eg CPCE, GEAP)
3. How long have you been in-country (number of months)?
4. Would you consider the teachers that you work with to be motivated? Please explain.
5. How do you think they consider themselves?
6. What do you think demotivates them? Please list in order of priority if possible.
7. What things do you think would help in the motivation of teachers? Please list in order of priority if possible.
8. What do you think are the reasons for teacher absenteeism? Please list in order of priority if possible.

9. What do you think are the reasons for teachers leaving the profession? Please list in order of priority if possible.
10. Do you as a volunteer have any impact on the motivation of teachers? Please explain.
11. Is there any way VSO Guyana could have an influence on the motivation of teachers? If so, how? Please list in order of priority if possible.
12. Can you identify individuals or groups of colleagues who would be willing/useful to participate in this research? Please list names and designation for further reference.

Any other comments?

Thank you.



'Valuing Teachers' Guyana

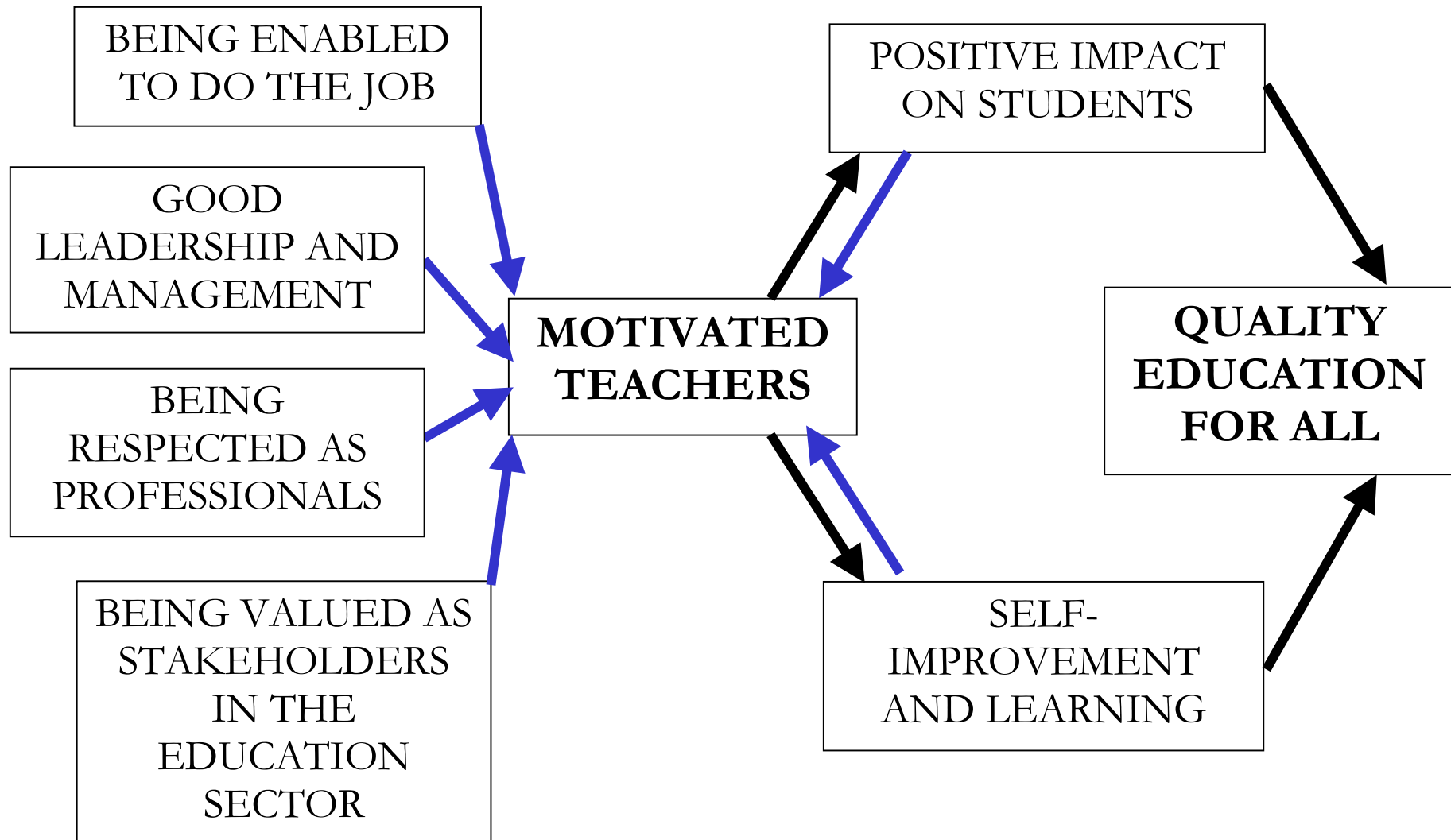
24 September 2003

Cara Inn

9.00am	Welcome
9.15am	'Valuing Teachers': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as an international initiative • 'What Makes Teachers Tick?' <p>Teachers' voice</p>
9.30am	'Valuing Teachers' Guyana: Presentation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • research methodology • research findings • question time <p>Teachers' voice</p>
10.00am	Break
10.15am	'Valuing Teachers' Guyana: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recommendations • question time
10.45am	Discussion forum - The Way Forward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any surprises in the findings? • What value does the education system place on teachers at the policy level? • What value does the education system place on teachers at the implementation/practice level? • What opportunities and challenges exist in meeting the needs of the teachers? • Who plays a role in taking the issues forward? • What actions need to be taken to ensure teachers' views are included in the decision-making processes that determine education policy in Guyana?
11.15am	Feedback from discussion groups Question time
11.45am	Possible role for VSO Guyana in supporting the education sector
12.15pm	Lunch



9.8 Appendix 8: Motivational themes: input/outputs



9.9 Appendix 9: Annual emphasis of the education strategic plan

Year	Area of emphasis
2003	<p>Getting ready Actions during the first year should concentrate mainly on preparing the MoE and the system as a whole to be able to undertake the changes necessary to produce the educational services the country needs.</p> <p>The MoE should become more efficient, faster in its responses and more effective in its overall performance. The regional offices must be improved to a level where they can perform the tasks they are supposed to perform in the system. The various reforms should be studied and planned. The actions to be taken in the different lines of priority should be clearly established and everything should be prepared to leap toward the next level.</p>
2004	<p>Improvement in the delivery of services Once management is prepared, the stage is set to deliver on the learning process. During the second year of the plan, efforts should concentrate on producing the improvements planned in the preceding year. Regional offices should work to supervise and guide the schools and provide capable leadership to the process. Schools should be able to produce their SIPs, and the Ministry should produce the curriculum reform and training support for the different levels. With a better level of management in the system, teaching is expected to improve and the final goal, which is better learning, can be achieved.</p>
2005	<p>All systems in place and running During the third year, the major and most dramatic changes should be completed or at least initiated. It is time to correct undesirable situations and to improve and/or finish whatever processes were started the year before. By this time, the system should have reached the structural and operational form desired.</p>
2006	<p>Striving for excellence The fourth year is the time to start insisting on reaching a level of excellence throughout the system. Emphasis should be placed on monitoring and evaluation, training, and developing the kind of responsible attitude that will take any action to success.</p>
2007	<p>Producing a new future This is the last year of the period covered by the plan, and it is necessary to start the strategic planning process for the years 2007–2011. It should be year of evaluation and decisions concerning the future. It is to be expected that with the experience accumulated during the previous years, the MoE will be able to face up to this new challenge.</p>

9.10 Appendix 10: EFA–FTI plans

Initiative I: Improving the quality of the teaching force in the hinterland (US\$4.74 million):

- training of qualified teachers using the GBETT distance education approach
- continuous professional development for all trained teachers
- establishing satellite learning centres for teachers in a school cluster
- improving the conditions of service for teachers.

Initiative II: Enhancing the teaching/learning environment in primary schools (US\$3.62 million):

- accelerating the establishment of the *Escuela Nueva* learning model
- establishing child-friendly classrooms in the coastal schools
- improving the status of utilities across all schools
- provision of textbooks.

Initiative III: Strengthening school community partnerships (US\$21.46 million):

- accelerating the implementation of school improvement plans in all schools
- upgrading the present school feeding programme in the hinterland.

9.11 Appendix 11: Table of comparison of research findings and policy directions

Teachers' needs/ findings of research	Recommendations and strategies in existing policy	Possible constraints New/additional recommendations
Continued professional development	BEAMS Teacher Supply and Demand Study – continued professional development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Trained teachers without further education should devote any spare time and energies they have to their professional development through further education, generally through the bachelor’s level or even through the master’s level.’ 	Perceived value of CPD needs to be enhanced. Teachers are expected to participate but there is no incentive to do so as it is not recognised in the current promotional system. Only academic education is given any value. Suitable CPD can increase the motivation levels of teachers.
Continued professional development	BEAMS Teacher Supply and Demand Study – career path for education managers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘It is recommended that a bifurcated professional educator career path development programme be established, with one stream involving a teaching career and the other stream involving a career in education management.’ 	The split in appointment of personnel in the education sector between the TSC and PSC complicates the promotion system and appointments, particularly into those institutions that provide support to the teachers, ie NCERD, Regional Learning Resource centres. This situation must be reviewed and, if necessary, changed through the correct procedures. It is only in this way that such bottlenecks in the system will be removed.
Initial teacher training	PRSP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘There will be a conscious effort to reverse the percentage of untrained teachers... measures will include...the expansion of distance education training centres to cover the 10 administrative regions.’ 	Ensure there are sufficient human and capital resources present before the expansion of the training centres. Too often teachers have to make do as systems are put in place. It is important not to create a ‘cart before the horse’ situation.
Strengthening school/ community partnerships	BEAMS Teacher Supply and Demand Study – ownership and participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘The central authorities do not and cannot have the capacity to make what should be essentially operational decisions that affect the schools. It is therefore recommended that the governance of the school system, from preschool level through general secondary level, be devolved to the regional level.’ PRSP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving enrolment and attendance and encouraging increased parental involvement through a school social welfare system; social workers attached to schools to provide counselling and support. 	Regional education boards require training in order to implement this effectively in the regions.

Teachers' needs/ findings of research	Recommendations and strategies in existing policy	Possible constraints New/additional recommendations
Strengthening school/ community partnerships	EFA–FTI initiative IIIA – Community involvement SIP nationwide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction of the SIP, to secondary schools by the WB/Guyanese Government funded SSRP has been so successful in forging links with the community that it is now being adapted at the primary level. Fifty-five schools per year will be identified for SIP implementation. 	How will the schools be identified? Schools will need to have produced a SIP. Will weaker schools be given the support to do so? Or will the better schools continue to get more support?
Strengthening school/ community partnerships	EFA–FTI initiative IIIB – School feeding programme hinterland	SIACs must be in place for this to happen, as it is through the SIP that these monies will be granted.
Salary	BEAMS Teacher Supply and Demand Study – salary scales and other remuneration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘The teachers’ salary scale should not be raised uniformly across the board... If the objective is to retain trained and experienced teachers, then the middle and upper end of the scale should be raised more than the lower end.’ ‘In order to finance the raising of the middle and upper ends of the salary scale, the lower ends of the scale, covering untrained teachers... should be allowed to stagnate.’ ESP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘In spite of substantial increases in recent years, teacher salaries continue to be a disincentive to encouraging people to enter and/or remain in the profession. The Guyana Government cannot compete with the salaries offered by some countries, but in addition to possible monetary increases, it is considering non-salary incentives such as land and loans for housing. The issue of teacher compensation however remains a challenge, as the level of teacher salaries cannot be totally divorced from the level of salaries in the rest of the public sector.’ 	Incremental pay increases are required to maintain a higher level of motivation among teachers.

Teachers' needs/ findings of research	Recommendations and strategies in existing policy	Possible constraints New/additional recommendations
Incentives – housing for teachers	<p>BEAMS Teacher Supply and Demand Study – teachers' housing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'It should be managed and controlled from the level of the regional education board, not MOE centrally.' <p>PRSP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • '...Government will work with the GTU to seek ways of improving the conditions of service of teachers, including the provision of non-pecuniary incentives' <p>EFA–FTI initiative IDii:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide at least three teachers houses per year in the hinterland, so that by 2015, each school should have at least one house made available to accommodate a headteacher and his family and two to four other single teachers, or two families in total. 	<p>The regional education departments need to be capacitated to able to accomplish this effectively. At the present capacity this is unlikely to be achieved.</p> <p>The number of houses constructed needs to take into account the size of the schools.</p> <p>The guidelines outlined in the MoE non-academic norms for teachers' housing must be followed to ensure housing is of adequate standard.</p> <p>The MoE should look to the donor community for additional funding to increase this in the larger schools.</p>
Incentives – duty free concessions	<p>BEAMS Teacher Supply and Demand Study – duty-free concessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Another suggestion sometimes voiced is that teachers should be allowed duty-free automobiles. This involves identifying special groups of individuals to receive tax exemptions. It flies in the face of good fiscal practice and is open to corruption. Such a policy should be avoided.' 	<p>Do not make public statements that are not truly feasible to follow through.</p> <p>If suggestions fall through offer an explanation/apology.</p> <p>Ensure policies regarding incentives are consistent across the PSC and TSC</p>
Incentives – hardlying allowance	<p>EFA–FTI initiative IDi:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the conditions of service for hinterland teachers – hardlying allowance. • Increase the allowance to \$12,000/month for teachers in the hinterland and region 10. 	<p>This figure is likely to need increasing over the years. Projections for further increases over time need to be included in the policy, and hence incorporated into budget forecasts.</p> <p>More riverain areas need to be eligible for the hardlying allowance. Devise a system by which differing degrees of 'remoteness' are distinguished by differing amounts of hardlying allowance.</p>

Teachers' needs/ findings of research	Recommendations and strategies in existing policy	Possible constraints New/additional recommendations
Incentives and promotion	BEAMS Teacher Supply and Demand Study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Equivalent years of service categorisation of schools. As an incentive mechanism to promote a more equitable distribution of trained and educated teachers, all schools should be assigned to one of three categories on the basis of ability to attract trained teachers...' • 'In applying for promotion or transfer, service time should be calculated not on the basis of the actual chronological years of service but on the basis of equivalent years of service...' 	Ensure transparency in the categorisation criteria and inform stakeholders, especially teachers, of how schools are assigned to relevant categories. A similar categorisation could be used in identifying eligibility for the hardship allowance.
TSC role	BEAMS Teacher Supply and Demand Study – role of the TSC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'It is recommended that the responsibilities of the TSC should be changed from operational to policy-making, certification and appeal.' • 'Upon completion of teacher certification, teacher training graduates should be offered a one- or two-year probationary period...' • 'Upon successful completion of the probationary period, and the absence of specific, authorised recommendations to the contrary, the appointment should be automatically transformed from probationary to permanent. This transformation should not require the involvement of the TSC or other central body.' • 'It is recommended that the regional education board have full authority and responsibility for hiring, dismissing, placing, promoting and disciplining professional educators' • 'It is recommended that the regional education boards establish, maintain and regularly publish current lists of all vacant teaching positions together with the requisite contact information.' 	Ensure that teachers do receive their trained teacher's certificate after the recommended two years. Link in to an appraisal/training plan for the two years of 'probation' since the provisional teaching certificate was given There must be clear designation of who will be responsible for the distribution of permanent certificates. This needs to be monitored regularly. Review the criteria against which promotion take place. Increase competition in the system. Improve the appraisal system.
In-service support services for teachers	EFA–FTI initiative IC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing extra teachers support services in the hinterland. • The creation of 22 satellite learning resource centres established in the hinterland regions. 	Already existing RLRC need to be fully functioning before any expansion takes place. Ensure the changes to the status of the NCERD corporation take this into account and include how RLRC status might be affected by the changes taking place at that level. This will require the creation of more positions, especially if 'master teachers' are to be involved in the functioning of RLRCs and the satellite centres.

Teachers' needs/ findings of research	Recommendations and strategies in existing policy	Possible constraints New/additional recommendations
Curriculum reforms	<p>PRSP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Curricula reforms will include (i) a pilot phase on the use of computers and the Internet in school instruction; (ii) greater emphasis on science and technology in primary and secondary school; (iii) introduction of national aptitude tests in Mathematics and language arts; (iv) maintaining balance between academics and the development of technical/vocational skills in secondary schools; and (v) expanding skills training in partnership with the private sector. Health and Family Life Education (HFLE), with its emphasis on respect for diversity, pluralism, tolerance and respect for democratic values and human rights, is also being introduced.' • 'Introduce curricula reforms to make education more relevant to Guyana's development and requirements at the work place.' <p>EFA–FTI initiative IIB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child-friendly school concept coast. 	<p>Ensure budgetary implications of consulting with teachers are accounted for to enable curriculum reform to be appropriate to the needs of the students in different regions.</p>
Improved working conditions	<p>PRSP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Janitorial services will also be contracted.' • '...Government will allocate increased resources to maintenance. A school maintenance policy and strategy will be developed to establish guidelines for resource allocation, and preserve an improved learning environment for students over a longer term.' <p>EFA–FTI initiative IIC:</p> <p>Upgrading school utilities nationwide, by 2006 rehabilitation/construction of utilities completed in 54% of primary schools.</p>	<p>Consultations with schools and communities from the start will engender stronger school/community links.</p> <p>More everyday maintenance tasks will take place.</p>
Adequate and suitable resources	<p>EFA–FTI initiative IID – provision of textbooks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the support of BEAMS, each primary pupil of the first three grades will be provided with a full set of readers and workbooks. <p>PRSP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide required textbooks. 	<p>Ensure the choice of materials link to the other initiatives taking place, eg child-friendly schools, literacy and numeracy drives etc.</p> <p>Involve teachers at the earliest stages, especially during the evaluation of current materials present in schools. This will avoid teachers being given resources that are not relevant to their students' circumstances.</p>