2.1 The challenge

It has been increasingly acknowledged that the acute shortage of qualified teachers is one of the greatest barriers to achieving the Education For All (EFA) goals by 2015 (UNESCO, 2004b). In 2006, it was estimated that to reach universal primary education in time, sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries would need to create 1.6 million new posts, representing a 68% increase of the teaching force, and hire 4 million additional teachers (UIS, 2006). The teaching force at this time needed to double, triple or even quadruple in size (as in Congo and Chad), and the need was seen as even greater once other levels of education are taken into account.

However, there remained severe logistical limitations to recruiting sufficient numbers of teachers: the traditional college-based model of teacher training alone is not able to cope with the increasing demand posed by demographic trends and increasing school enrolments, and is too costly to be sustained. Lack of qualified teachers is also not just an issue of training but one of poor working conditions and inadequate salaries that teachers face. Even with the inadequate number of teachers that this article highlights, teacher salaries still represented up to 90% of education budgets in many countries. This leaves little money for school infrastructure or resources and presents less-than-ideal teaching and learning conditions for teachers and children. Poor conditions and inadequate salaries bring low status to the profession and threaten the quality of education.

This low status is further exacerbated by countries lowering entry requirements in order to encourage more teacher trainee applicants into the colleges. This leads to teacher training programmes placing greater emphasis on academic upgrading, rather than on the professional dimensions. Newly qualified teachers are thus often ill-equipped to deal with
the realities of the classroom. If the teacher preparation is inadequate the importance of ongoing professional support to teachers is even more key, yet for many teachers it will either not be available, or its provision will be ad hoc and fragmented. Professional support staff, such as Advisers and Inspectors, are likely to have responsibility for many schools and face logistical problems, such as lack of transport, which may prevent them from actually visiting the schools and providing the kind of support that is needed. With the challenges highlighted above it is no surprise therefore that there is frequent teacher absenteeism (Mulkeen, 2007), especially in the rural schools (ibid.), and that teacher attrition is highest within the first years of joining the profession.

In addition to the challenges of trying to address teacher shortage through increasing the intake of teachers into traditional preparation and training models, there is also the financial burden of increasing teacher numbers. Any plan to increase the number of teachers has to take into account the implications for the teacher wage bill, which, as noted earlier, already consumes a large percentage of the education budget. An increase in teacher numbers may therefore reduce teacher salaries or worsen their working conditions, with school systems adopting budget-saving strategies such as double-shift schooling, larger class sizes or heavier workloads. These ‘coping’ strategies likely further reduce the attractiveness of teaching as a career and thus make it even more difficult to recruit and retain teachers in the long term (OECD, 2005).

In SSA countries with often limited resources and low educational outcomes (for example, average student achievement in SSA has been found to be lower than in developed countries with data indicating that in mathematics and language Southern and Eastern Africa lags behind by around 3 grades), issues of teacher quality and quantity therefore need to be considered together to ensure that any policy response impacts positively on both. For example, various options, such as modifying existing teacher salaries, creating varied strata of teachers (as reflected in salaries and terms and conditions of work), increasing current class sizes or changing teachers’ overall workload might increase children’s access to a teacher but can also affect the quality of teaching in the long term. Similarly, potential strategies to address problems of shortage may themselves bring new challenges if they are not properly conceived and their longer term implications not considered. Policy development and implementation take time and in the interim students need teachers. When countries respond, as many have done, by contracting untrained teachers, they need to be able to determine how to address the professional development needs of these teachers.

Confronted with the challenge both to achieve an adequate number of teachers and ensure that they have the requisite skills and qualities to fulfil the expectations placed upon them, the countries of sub-Saharan Africa requested—as Member States of UNESCO—that UNESCO design and implement a teacher-focused Initiative. The Teacher Training Initiative for sub-Saharan Africa (TTISSA) was conceived and launched in January 2006 as a ten-year UNESCO initiative aiming to increase the quantity and improve the quality of
the teaching force in SSA. The initial mandate of TTISSA was to work with Member States in 17 ‘first phase’ countries, gradually extending to all SSA countries by 2015.1

2.2 Responding to needs

In light of the interdependence of the challenges facing the teaching profession, the emphasis on ‘Teacher Training’ in TTISSA seemed somewhat limiting. This was all the more so given that research indicates that teacher policies which attempt to grapple with determining the type of initial training but do not comprehensively address the dimensions of professional development, administrative and professional management, working conditions and teacher status are not effective. If issues of status, working conditions and management are not managed they may lead to increased absenteeism and a further decline in teachers’ motivation.

As such, teacher training alone is unlikely to suffice if teachers are not supported professionally and administratively once in service and if they find their daily existence to be constrained by poor working conditions and low status, which impact on their motivation and increase attrition rates (Michaelowa, 2002). The complexity and interrelationships of macro-level financial and policy environments and of teacher personal capabilities, identities and experiences need to be better understood in order to address the challenges the profession faces.

Studies undertaken in the framework of TTISSA indicated that although many SSA countries faced similar challenges with regard to the teaching profession, the emphasis within a country could vary. One of the key sources of information was an analytical synthesis of school level descriptive data from studies conducted by the Programme d’analyse des systèmes éducatifs de la CONFEMEN (PASEC) and the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) for Francophone and Anglophone African countries, respectively (Bonnet, 2007.) This synthesis, undertaken to support the design of TTISSA, covers a range of teacher characteristics including employment status, gender, age, experience, academic qualifications, pre- and in-service training, subject matter knowledge, curriculum and command of local languages, as well as issues related to management and motivation (Bonnet, 2007). The findings underlined both common challenges and specific country characteristics. For example, the issue of contract teachers remains of particular significance in Francophone Africa where teachers are contracted under different terms and working conditions from their civil servant colleagues. The study emphasised how civil servant teachers had become a minority in four out of the six PASEC countries between 2001 and 2004. In the PASEC sample, less than 50% of teachers were civil servants in Chad, Guinea, Niger and Togo, while these percentages were 67% in

1 The 17 first-phase countries were: Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Madagascar, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Zambia.
Mali, in 2001, and 94% in Mauritania. Differing status and salaries are often accompanied by new modes and duration of training, all of which have implications for teaching quality and the perceptions of teaching as a profession.

The design of TTISSA thus needed to respond to the similarities across the region, while acknowledging the differences. A key step in moving the Initiative forward was therefore the development of a comprehensive results-oriented logical framework (Logframe) which would facilitate country level contextualisation. Four key areas of focus were identified:

- status and working conditions of teachers;
- teacher management and administration structures;
- teacher policies;
- quality and coherence of teacher professional development.

(A detailed Logframe has been developed and is available at [http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001539/153940e.pdf](http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001539/153940e.pdf))

Activities to be implemented under each ‘output’, and time-bound ‘indicators’ to measure their progress, were also developed. The Logframe was refined and eventually adopted by all of the UNESCO Field Offices responsible for managing first-phase TTISSA countries. It served as a useful overall planning tool for the large-scale initiative whereby implementation was to take place at different levels and engage a diversity of stakeholders. At country level the Logframe was used by the respective UNESCO Field Office and the Ministry of Education in order to determine their own priorities. Similarly, when additional funding was sourced for TTISSA from a development partner, the Logframe could help in capturing the specific country needs, but in alignment with the overall orientation of the Logical Framework.

Each of these four areas of the TTISSA Logframe, and their interrelationship, were thus central to the design, implementation and ongoing direction of the programme.

### 2.3 Aligning with existing systems or activities

It was important to ensure that the design and implementation of TTISSA reflected not only the overall mandate of UNESCO, but also drew on its comparative advantages. As the sole UN agency with a global mandate for all levels of education, including higher education, UNESCO works to support its 195 Member States towards the creation of learning societies with educational opportunities for all people. The ability it has to provide expertise and foster partnerships, to support lesson sharing across and within regions and to set international norms and standards can help to catalyse international cooperation in
UNESCO’s Teacher Training Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa

education and build capacity. Alongside the need to draw upon UNESCO’s comparative advantage was the importance of reflecting the emphasis the Agency places on country ownership, harmonisation, partnership, results-based management and accountability—all echoed in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of 2005. In this context it was key that the design and implementation of TTISSA reflected the work of external stakeholders engaged in teacher issues in many of the SSA countries; these included other UN agencies, multilateral and bilateral development partners, NGOs, private sector companies, foundations, universities and individuals. The programme furthermore provided an opportunity to strengthen relationships with key organisations working at global, regional, sub-regional and national levels. These included, among others, the ILO, Education International, World Bank, African Development Bank, African Union, NEPAD, ADEA, Commonwealth Secretariat, Commonwealth of Learning, Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, the UK Open University UK’s TESSA programme and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies.

At the regional level the African Union Second Decade for Education was a key reference point. Sub-regionally, the education strategies of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), such as Southern African Development Corporation (SADC), provided other important frameworks. At national level the Paris Declaration had emphasised the need for increased harmonisation, with development partners and governments working hand in hand. For UNESCO Field Offices in SSA this often meant operating within the context of an Education Sector Wide Approach (Riddell, 2002). Here teachers may be specifically targeted, and the TTISSA initiative had to dovetail with current practices and not duplicate or undermine them. At that time, the overall implication for designing and implementing TTISSA was the need to ensure better understanding of how the initiative could add value within a complexity of different levels of frameworks, roles and responsibilities.

Adding to this complexity was that of UNESCO itself, where TTISSA was perceived as a centralised initiative in an increasingly decentralised context, the challenge was to situate TTISSA between the Headquarters in Paris and Regional, Cluster and National Offices in sub-Saharan Africa. The strategic design and direction of the Initiative was to be provided by the Teacher Education Section of the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. Coordination of the TTISSA programme was the responsibility of the regional office for education, based in Senegal (BREDA), and implementation of activities and technical support was the responsibility of the Cluster and Field Offices. Although roles and responsibilities at each level were clearly articulated, in practice there was still uncertainty and even wariness at Field level. To try to allay any concerns the HQ team worked from the onset with the Field Office colleagues in conceiving TTISSA and deliberating on implementation modalities.

Practically this collaboration was also enhanced through the way in which funds were mobilised, with Headquarters playing a key role in the mobilisation of extra-budgetary support from countries, such as that provided by France, Spain, Italy, Israel, Japan and the Nordic-funded EFA Capacity Building Programme. In designing TTISSA proposals to
access these funds, the Headquarters thus ensured active engagement with the UNESCO Field Offices so that proposals were developed collaboratively and addressed UNESCO country-level priorities but also those of the overall TTISSA framework.

One very initial strategy, undertaken prior to the development of the Logframe and the establishment of the HQ team was the appointment of National Coordinators in each of the 17 first-phase countries. The role of TTISSA Coordinators, who were all senior-level officials familiar with teacher issues in their countries, was to design action plans for TTISSA activities in their countries, based on existing education sector plans and national teacher policy. However, the success of the model varied from country to country, which reflected in part the fact that UNESCO Field Offices had not always been involved in either the nomination of the Coordinators of the countries under their purview or in determining the appropriateness of this approach in their context. As such, the TTISSA action plans produced were not in line with existing national frameworks and structures, as in some cases the Coordinators were not privy to the mainstream systems and structures. This led to proposals for what would have been the establishment of parallel systems, which would have likely not functioned and would have been perceived as undermining of the existing work of the development partners and the Ministry of Education. In a few countries, the idea of a National Coordinator was considered appropriate, but the actual person selected was less so. It was therefore a priority for the new HQ team to discuss how best to move forward with regard to the National Coordinator model with the UNESCO Field Offices. Field Offices who in turn felt that the decision as to whether or not to maintain a National Coordinator should rest with them in discussion with their Ministry counterparts. The experience with the National Coordinator model highlighted the importance of dialogue and shared decision making between HQ and the Field Offices and of working within mainstream systems and structures.

2.4 Status and working conditions of teachers

Teacher status and working conditions are inextricably linked with their recruitment, training, salaries and management and themselves an outcome of evolving contexts and broader financial issues. Many countries, in attempting to quickly respond to teacher shortages in constrained financial environments, have turned to employing teachers on a contract basis. This is likely, however, to mean less job security and often far lower salaries for these teachers than their civil service counterparts. In the long term this can adversely affect pupil learning, although research on the impact that teacher salaries and contractual status have on pupil learning outcomes often seems contradictory. For example, in a number of Francophone countries such as Madagascar or Mali, community or contract teachers, who were paid up to 6.4 times less than civil servant teachers, were found to have, all other parameters being equal, more positive impact on pupils’ academic progress than their civil servant counterparts (Bernard, Tiyad and Vianou, 2004 and PASEC/CONFEMEN, 2004). The same phenomenon can be seen in Kenya (Duflo, Dupas
and Kremer, 2008) and in the fifth grade in Cameroon (ibid). However, in other contexts (like in Niger or in the second grade in Cameroon), civil servant teachers have a more positive effect on pupils’ progress, everything else being equal, than do their contractual colleagues. Although these findings are interesting as a snapshot, the data does not allow for consideration of whether this positive impact is sufficient or sustainable, nor does it relate to the retention level of teachers. Even teachers with civil servant status, and the greater security of tenure and better wages that this brings, are still unlikely to be satisfied with their salary and teaching and learning working conditions. Here TTISSA’s analytical synthesis showed that:

- 68% of Togolese civil servant teachers who were surveyed said that salaries were late (this percentage rises to 95% for contract teachers);
- in Lesotho and Malawi more than half of all students go to schools which either need complete rebuilding or major repair;
- less than a quarter of teachers surveyed have a dictionary in Zanzibar, Chad, Guinea, Mauritania and Niger; and
- in Guinea only 16% of schools in the sample have toilets (Bonnet, 2007)

Job satisfaction is a complex issue, and the question of status and working conditions may go beyond issues of tenure, wages, school conditions or classroom equipment. Societal respect for teachers and the perceived ability of teachers to have a say in what affects them at the national level may be equally important. In this respect “qualitative research [has] identified the sense of undervaluing, disempowerment and alienation that the average classroom teacher feels in many developing countries. Teachers, including head teachers, do not feel that they have a voice in education decision-making beyond their immediate teaching or school environment. There is a strong sense of distance from regional- and national-level decisions that are eventually communicated to teachers as immutable decisions, often divorced from their daily situation” (UNESCO, 176/32, 2007d). It is interesting to note that membership in a teacher union seems to have a positive impact on teachers’ job satisfaction. This may be interpreted as a sign that unionised teachers are better supported and feel they have more voice and political strength and are part of a professional body (Michaelowa, 2002).

Teacher motivation is also seemingly highly dependent on societal and individual expectations. Better qualified teachers may be dissatisfied with a job they perceive as having lower status than they expected (which expresses itself in terms of a decrease in job satisfaction among teachers with higher academic or pedagogical degrees), offsetting any positive impact of increased competency on motivation. The same effect is seen with interim head teachers in Francophone countries who are although this position has a higher status than that of teachers the incumbents and markedly less satisfied than these teachers. [ibid]. Similarly, in relation to teachers’ working conditions increasing class size or increasing teachers’ workload is likely to have a negative impact on teachers’ overall
motivation, although research suggests that class size, within a certain threshold, does not have a negative impact on pupils’ learning, at least within the environment and teaching culture of the countries of the study (Michaelowa, 2003).

These findings pose challenges, as while they suggest that options such as contract teachers and limited changes in class size can be an acceptable option for governments and employers, they are almost certainly difficult for teacher themselves and possibly detrimental to the overall status of the profession. Research which considers the reality of contractual status and class size in the context of countries’ economic and social situations and their impact on the micro-level is thus needed. This implies an analysis of pupils’ social and personal needs, teachers’ own perception of their situation and working conditions and their expectations for the future, community perceptions and the overall effect of these factors.

TTISSA set out to help unravel these issues in order to see how best the status of the profession as a whole can be enhanced. Through the Initiative, issues and challenges were highlighted and research in these key areas was emphasised. An example of how the Initiative worked in this way was in Burundi, a country plagued by 12 years of civil war, where a TTISSA study was undertaken on teachers’ motivation, attrition and career development.

The combination of the effects of civil war within the country and easy access to its neighbour Rwanda, where teacher salaries are higher, led to an exodus of many of the most qualified teachers. The TTISSA project in Burundi was therefore designed to respond to this situation through an assessment of the status of teachers to identify the factors which attract, motivate and retain qualified professionals. The research explored the situation in the various provinces of the country and drew on existing documentation. Interviews were undertaken with representatives from the Ministry of Education and teachers’ unions. Approximately 800 teachers from over a hundred primary and secondary schools in the 18 education provinces were interviewed. In addition, a questionnaire was sent to both education personnel and students to complement the picture. The findings indicated a devaluation of the profession and identified the desire for constructive social dialogue between the teachers and the Ministry of Education in order to address this. Based on the findings, the Ministry worked on developing a teacher education policy which will set out a career path for teachers; it also undertook training programmes for both teachers and inspectors which seek to address the issues highlighted in the study. The support that was provided to Burundi through TTISSA provides a good example of the way in which the Initiative could be a vehicle for evidenced-based policy making.

The TTISSA programme was similarly a means to strengthen general advocacy for teachers, as well as for those managing the profession. Key to this advocacy was raising awareness of the two teacher-related UNESCO and International Labour Organization (ILO) global normative instruments: The 1966 joint ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teaching Personnel and the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the
Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel. These instruments outline the rights and responsibilities of teachers and address the key areas of initial teacher education and training, recruitment, deployment, in-service training, retention, remuneration, social security, working conditions, social dialogue and academic freedom. Their implementation is supported by the Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teachers (CEART), and within this committee, the Working Group on Allegations. This Working Group receives allegations of non-adherence to the Recommendations from teacher organisations and fully examines them. The CEART then reports back to the Governing Bodies of both UNESCO and ILO on the allegations received, and also more broadly on global trends, issues and challenges facing the teaching profession. Although the Recommendations are not legally binding, they do serve as an important reminder to all Member States, in a high-level arena, of the need to ensure that teachers’ rights and responsibilities are fully recognised.

The issues impacting teachers in Sub Saharan Africa are not dissimilar to those impacting on teachers around the world. In this regard, the UNESCO-led annual celebration of World Teachers’ Day every 5 October is a key opportunity for advocacy for all teachers with regard to the central role they play in the achievement of the Education For All goals. Celebrations are held around the world, and a Joint Message is prepared initially by UNESCO and endorsed by the ILO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and Education International. The World Teachers’ Day message and the activities organised on this day provide the opportunity to not only acknowledge the importance of teachers, but also to highlight issues and challenges impacting on the profession. In the 2007 message, for example, emphasis was placed on the need for teacher-related data, both quantitative and qualitative, to support the development of appropriate policies. Limited data is a particular issue in many SSA countries, but also in other regions of the world. In the 2008 message the need for coherent teacher policies was further endorsed, and their significance with regard to teacher recruitment, training, management and career development emphasised. (See Box 1.)

Similarly UNESCO in its capacity as a global agency can itself advocate for teachers and raise awareness of the important role they play, through the awarding of prizes for excellence. One such prize was launched in 2008 namely the UNESCO-Hamdan Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum Prize for Outstanding Practice and Performance in Enhancing Effectiveness of Teachers. The focus of this Prize is on outstanding teacher-related activities which serve to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Priority is given to developing country contexts and to marginalised and disadvantaged communities. The promotion of the prize, the award process and the dissemination thereafter of the ‘outstanding’ practices, can further raise the profile of the teaching profession.

UNESCO has the capacity to support its advocacy with data and research, through its Institute for Statistics (UIS), International Institute for Educational Planning (IIIEP) and the EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR). Informed advocacy can initiate and sustain dia-
Box 1  World Teachers’ Day 2008 at UNESCO

World Teachers’ Day was inaugurated in 1994 to commemorate the signing of the UNESCO/ILO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers on 5 October 1966. The celebration of this day in 2008 was an opportunity to give a voice to teachers from different regions. Teachers from Togo, France, Haiti, Morocco and Malaysia spoke of their experiences of classes of 130 pupils and of teachers having to work as motorcycle taxi drivers or as night guards in order to supplement their teaching salaries.

Mr Kokou Mawunyo Ayedze, National Coordinator of UNESCO Associated Schools in Togo, described some of the huge difficulties that teachers face in his country, where limited number of regular teacher contracts has led to low or unequal scales of pay, poor training and scant school inspection. He described a situation in which there are “secondary schools with 130 pupils per class, where the teacher cannot walk down the aisle and can barely control just the first row. Checking attendance can take 45 minutes. How can anyone be taught in this situation?” he asked.

But there were success stories too. Ms Asha B. Dass, a teacher with over 20 years of experience and working in a secondary school in Penang, Malaysia, described how the Malaysian government has implemented a policy change which has had major impact on the status of teachers. Ms Dass talked of how mothers used to warn children that if they didn't study enough they would “end up as a teacher”, in her words. But she explained that change began in 1994, when the new post of Master Teacher was created whereby candidates are identified by their Head Teachers to undergo a rigorous process towards the achievement of Master Teacher status, along with improved salary and conditions.

As the 2008 World Teachers’ Day message asserted, the role of teachers in achieving quality Education For All must be “clearly articulated and reflected in policies which will foster a motivated, valued and effective teaching force”.

Dialogue and debate on the issues of status, salaries and working conditions of teachers in sub-Saharan Africa. It can highlight the need for both governments and development partners to confront these issues.

Such global events, awards and data/research as discussed above served to strengthen the advocacy for TTISSA, through highlighting the common challenges confronting the teaching profession across the globe, as well as in SSA, as well as the focus they gave to the particular problems facing education and teachers in SSA.
2.5 Teacher management and administrative structures

Studies indicate that the impact on pupil learning of teacher ‘characteristics’, such as the duration of training, broad contractual categories or academic degree, may be as low as 3%, even though ‘teacher effect’ is high (Bernard, Tiyab and Vianou, 2004).

TTISSA analyses suggest that teacher management may be part of the ‘black box’ which is the difference between teacher characteristics and teacher effect. For example, the analyses show that on average every student loses two to three months of schooling in an academic year of 9 to 10 months. Of this up to one month is due to the school term beginning late (related to management and deployment issues), with one further month being due to teacher absenteeism (in itself linked to overall teacher management) and a third month due to student absenteeism (Bonnet, 2007). These findings are reiterated in World Bank studies in a number of Anglophone African countries which found a 25% absenteeism rate and a further 25% of teachers present on the premises of the school, but not actually teaching in the class (Mulkeen, 2007). Furthermore, absenteeism levels may often be underestimated, as exemplified by further TTISSA studies. These analyses show that teachers’ self-reporting and head teachers’ reporting are not always reliable (Bonnet, 2008). It also appears that an element of the differences in efficiency between individual teachers correlates with levels of teacher absenteeism and effective learning time.

This highlights the importance of overall teacher management and of strong leadership and adequate monitoring abilities at school level. TTISSA supported school management training through the UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA), located in Addis Ababa. IICBA carries out regional training workshops on school management and educational leadership. While further research is needed as to what works best and in which contexts, support was given through TTISSA to teacher management issues in the design of national programmes and policies. For example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, TTISSA provided country-level support to teacher management through the training of 1,500 Inspectors in order to enhance the professional support they provide to teachers. The TTISSA-supported programme also assisted the Ministry to establish a teacher management system with well-defined recruitment policies and career plans for teachers.

Another key aspect of teacher management, particularly in the context of teacher shortage, is the efficient deployment of teachers. A late start to the school term may be attributable to difficulties in managing teacher posting and deployment to all areas of the country. The ‘percentage of alea’, which reflects how much of the distribution of teachers across schools in the country can be attributed to chance, ranged from 10% or less in Sao Tome and Principe and Guinea to more than 50% in Togo around the year 2000 (Pôle de Dakar, 2005). Timely and efficient deployment therefore needs consideration, and appropriate policies need to be designed, implemented and monitored. With regard to placing
teachers in less attractive areas, monetary and non-monetary incentives may be adopted alongside appropriate monitoring (Mulkeen, 2007).

Up-to-date, efficient and transparent systems for administrative management of teachers must be in place. This will ensure that teachers receive their salaries and other benefits on time and that promotion or deployment is dealt with effectively.

2.6 Teacher policies

Achieving visionary national goals towards the realisation of quality EFA requires strategising, costing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating, and a sound policy framework is crucial to support this process. Policies must specifically address the issues relating to teachers, from entry requirements to the profession, training modalities, teacher management issues, incentives at the school level, deployment and management capacities, professional development and issues of working and living conditions.

A sound basis for the policies is data and analysis of the economic efficiency of various investment options, i.e. teacher salaries, management, training and professional development. Such analysis is necessary in order to help ground teacher policies in realities and to help determine the choices to be made at the national level.

It is important, however, that economic efficiency is considered against the findings of both qualitative and quantitative research on factors contributing to teacher effectiveness. In the absence of an explicit teacher policy, trade-offs and options cannot be clearly analysed. Many of the SSA teacher policies reviewed through the TTISSA initiative were descriptive and aspirational, rather than evidence-based. Similarly implementation of the policies may not be strategically planned, and without strong evidence that the interventions are crucial and have the required impact, Ministries of Finances remain unconvinced of the need for additional funds for teachers (ADEA/ADB/World Bank meeting, Tunis, 2009).

In order to support countries in the review and development of teacher policies, TTISSA focused on a number of complementary areas. Firstly, a comparative study—discussed earlier—was undertaken to support the initial analysis of issues impacting on teachers (Bonnet, 2007). Secondly, in regard to the paucity of internationally comparable indicators on teachers and teaching-related issues, expert workshops were held, in conjunction with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). These sought to explore current issues impacting on the quantity and quality of teachers and the implications in relation to quantitative and qualitative information needs. Here existing global data, which drew upon studies such as those of SACMEQ, PASEC and the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), were reviewed. This work fed into UIS’s future work on teacher indicators, including an Expert Group Meeting on Indicators for Teachers and
Teaching held in October 2012, which recommended, among other things, the collection of policy level data, sub-national disaggregation of indicators and the broadening of teacher indicators to all levels and types of education.

Thirdly, through TTISSA, national-level analysis of teacher-related policies from SSA countries and a number of other countries (Argentina, Brazil and Pakistan) was undertaken. The majority of the policies were found to address issues of country context, provide an overview of the education system and discuss the main components of teacher training, with some covering teacher training at all levels, while others focused only on the basic education level. However, commonly cited challenges were insufficient budgets, disconnects between teacher training and classroom practice and the fragmented provision of in-service training. This analysis of national teacher education policies formed the basis of the first Teacher Education Policy Forum for sub-Saharan Africa, held at UNESCO Headquarters in November 2007. The Forum brought together Directors and Deputy Directors of Teacher Education from the first-phase TTISSA countries along with UNESCO Field Office Education Specialists from the respective SSA countries, as well as internal and external partners (IIEP, Pôle de Dakar, ILO, University of London and World Bank). This diversity facilitated presentation and discussion on different dimensions of teacher policy development—research, costing and financing, teacher management, status and working conditions and emerging issues such as HIV and AIDS and ICTs—and enabled consideration of country level policy review and implementation processes.

The South African policy development process, presented in the workshop, provided a unique example of how a government moved from a segregated education system of varying quality to the development of a full-fledged National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development (NPFTD) in 2007. The NPFTD was of particular interest to the participants of the Forum, because of its objective to raise the qualified teacher status to degree level and provide access to qualification through a range of routes—part-time, full-time, school-based, distance learning and combinations of these elements. It was also valuable for countries to learn about the way in which the NPFTD had set out the way forward to establishing a system of accredited continuous professional development—mainstreamed under the management of the South African Council for Educators (SACE). Information was also shared on the introduction of other incentives in South Africa, such as the national teacher education bursary scheme (‘Funza Lushaka’) to encourage more young people to pursue a Bachelors of Education. Discussions of this initial workshop are captured in the Teacher Education Policy Forum for sub-Saharan Africa Report (UNESCO, 2008b) which serves as a useful reference document to the dimensions of policy development.

Following on from this workshop the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA—more specifically its Working Group on the Teaching Profession), the African Development Bank (ADB) and the Commonwealth Secretariat committed to work together on teacher policies. Towards this, a joint forum, ‘Processes of Teacher Policy
Development— with case studies from Angola, Congo, Guinea, Nigeria, South Africa and Tanzania— was held in Tunis in November 2008. In the Forum the diversity and commonalities of country experiences in the development of teacher policies was acknowledged. Commitment was made to the development of a Teacher Policy Development Toolkit to assist Member States in implementing holistic teacher policies. While it was originally envisioned that the Toolkit would comprise three main sections (a methodological guide for the analysis of teacher issues, a section on policy development processes including Policy Briefs in various areas and a section with reference documents), it was subsequently decided to focus on the methodological guide. The Methodological Guide for the Analysis of Teacher Issues, published in 2010 after a rigorous development, piloting (in Benin and Uganda), consultation, re-writing and validation process, addresses the general context of teacher needs, teacher education, teacher management (recruitment, deployment, absenteeism and attrition, teacher management), remuneration, status and careers and professional and social context. The guide, which has since become the central facet of TTISSA, aims to support Member States in undertaking an overall analysis of the situation of teachers in their countries towards developing appropriate teacher policies or revising existing ones.

Since the guide’s publication, the ongoing work on teacher policies has become central to the TTISSA support to SSA. To date, three SSA countries (Benin, Burundi and Lesotho) have completed a complete diagnostic of the teacher issue in their countries using the guide, while two others (Uganda and Guinea) have almost finished doing so and one country (Mozambique) is in the middle of the process. In all cases, the analysis undertaken is expected to inform the development or revision of teacher policy.

### 2.7 Teacher professional development

Teacher preparation and ongoing professional development are often considered the sole determinant in teacher quality. Research in developed countries does indeed highlight the importance of teacher training and ongoing professional development (Fullan, Shleicher, et al., 2007). However as the discussion in this chapter highlights, a range of issues have to be considered with regard to increasing the quantity and improving the quality of teachers. Teacher training has been shown in some instances to have a variable and not necessarily positive impact on student learning. Some studies suggest a positive correlation in some countries between teacher training and academic achievement of students, while others show a negative or non-significant correlation (Bernard, Tiyab, and Vianou, 2004). The weak, and sometimes negative, impact of teacher training has in the past been viewed as a justification to shorten or eliminate teacher training (Lockheed and Verspoor, 1991). It may however be of more significance to consider this finding alongside other factors, not the least of which is the quality of the training provided. Quantitative studies such as the PASEC and the SACMEQ, which provide information on the length of training—as well as on its main components, e.g. the proportion of practical experience,
need to be complemented by other studies, some of which would deploy a more qualitative perspective. In this way, our understanding of the reality of teacher training will be enhanced, particularly with regard to factors such as the curriculum and programme structure, the experience and expertise of teacher trainers, the teaching methodology used and the balance between practical and theoretical elements of the programme. In SSA the students’ overall experience in the Teacher Training Colleges, or the ‘hidden curriculum’, i.e. the way in which the trainees are treated by the tutors and the Principal, is likely to have an impact on their development as teachers. Experience and research show that teacher trainees in SSA teacher training colleges are treated not as developing young professionals, but are rather subject to teaching that is often didactic, with lectures on child-centred learning, as opposed to opportunities to experience themselves the strategies being advocated.

TTISSA worked also with academic institutions and other partners to better understand which elements of the teacher training experience may contribute to positively shaping teachers’ behaviour and enhancing student learning. A critical analysis of teacher training is all the more warranted with the demands for alternative training models—including accelerated training and school-based and distance learning – in light of their potential to produce a larger supply of teachers. In many Francophone African countries for example, longer college-based training has been replaced by shorter courses. More than half of the teaching force surveyed had short (less than one year) pre-service education in Chad, Mauritania and Togo (where 84% of all teachers had training sessions lasting for three months or less). Academic entry level is also sometimes low, the most extreme case being Lesotho with 51% of sixth grade teachers having only completed primary school themselves. Professional and academic proficiency issues cannot be tackled separately; analysis of studies suggests that professional training does not have an impact unless there is a minimum of subject matter proficiency (Duthilleul and Allen, 2005). However, academic degrees only explain a small part of the differences in teachers’ subject matter mastery in 14 different SSA countries (Bonnet, 2008). Beyond a certain threshold, professional behaviour, that is the teaching methodology, marking of work and feedback to students, seems to be the main determinant of teacher efficiency. This emphasises the need for a balanced approach in the academic and professional dimensions of a teacher training curriculum.

With regard to the modalities of teacher training, there has been increasing emphasis by Ministries and governments of SSA on the use of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and ICTs for teacher training and education. IICBA and UNESCO’s Regional Bureau for Education in Africa (BREDA) based in Dakar, for example, have both worked to build regional and national capacities in this area. Open and Distance Learning has often been seen as a panacea to address the problem of training large number of teachers while keeping them in the classroom. There are many examples of successful use of ODL; for example the national programme in Kenya, the School-based Teacher Development Programme (SbTD–1999 to date) has provided in-service training to over 100,000 teachers, and evalu-
tation indicates that the course has had a positive impact on the practice of the teachers in the classroom (Hardman, Abd-Kadir, et al., 2009). However the course is for trained teachers and comprises comprehensive, well-written material, appropriate assessment, and emphasises mainstreamed—at all levels—professional and administrative support structures (Pontefract, Kanja, et al., 2000). Studies of distance learning programmes for teachers, endorse this need for thorough planning and high quality materials (Robinson and Latcham, 2002). The use of ODL is not a short cut to training a large number of teachers quickly, but if well-designed and implemented, can support the professional development of teachers in a way which face-to-face training may not. It does enable teachers to start from where they are, and to reflect on their current practices and to try out new practices in their classroom. This approach, if well designed, can similarly emphasise the professional collaboration of teachers within the school and between schools (Pontefract conference 2011). However, the field would benefit from further studies which consider the impact of distance learning courses and compare and contrast this with that of traditional face-to-face courses.

Another approach of successful deployment of ODL is through the Open University UK Teacher Education for sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) programme (www.tessafrica.net). Through this programme, online and printable teacher classroom materials have been developed. TESSA is working with teacher training institutions to help them to integrate the material into teacher training courses. Collaboration and information sharing between the TTISSA and TESSA programmes have been ongoing. TESSA funded the short-term secondment of an experienced teacher trainer from an African Ministry of Education to UNESCO HQ to develop a strategy for further strengthening the links between the two programmes.

One key challenge which TTISSA and those responsible for its implementation faced from the onset were the unrealistic expectations, particularly of Member States, as to the role TTISSA could play in training teachers in the region. The name of TTISSA obviously contributed to these high expectations, with its articulation of teacher training rather than a more holistic approach to teacher issues. The TTISSA programme was not able and was never intended to provide training, whether pre-service, in-service or a combination of both, to address all the needs identified. But even if it were, teacher training in and of itself would not have addressed the challenges faced by teachers in SSA. These challenges were articulated in the four main areas of the TTISSA Logical Framework (status and working conditions of teachers, teacher management and administration structures, teacher policies and quality and coherence of teacher professional development). However with regard to teacher training at the country level, TTISSA support can be and is given to teacher training in identified priority areas, such as literacy, mathematics and science but while ensuring that this support aligned with the overall strategic and holistic TTISSA outputs. Similarly TTISSA can support training of key cadres, such as Non-Formal Education (NFE) teachers; in collaboration with the UNESCO Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) 14 studies on NFE teacher-related policies and practices in LIFE countries were
undertaken and the findings discussed in a LIFE-organised Capacity Building of Literacy Facilitators workshop.

At a more strategic level, TTISSA worked to create awareness and build capacity for the overall Quality Assurance (QA) in teacher education for both initial training and ongoing professional development. The need for harmonisation, standardisation and regionalisation is being given increased emphasis by Member States. Although there is a lot of activity with regard to QA in higher education, there has been little emphasis on QA in Teacher education. TTISSA has therefore supported the development of mechanisms and frameworks for QA in teacher education at global, regional and country levels. Again the importance of building on what exists and working with partners has been emphasised: with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), the COL–UBEC (Universal Basic Education Commission)–UNESCO Joint Forum on Quality Assurance in Teacher Education in West Africa focused on the experiences in the West African region and drew on the experience of India’s National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC).

Following on from this a number of reviews were commissioned to assess current QA practices in teacher education and to determine the issues and challenges. One such challenge is the use of terminology, which is not always consistent and therefore can cause confusion, for example between the terms ‘quality assurance’, ‘accreditation’, ‘standardisation’ and ‘national qualifications frameworks’.

A springboard for discussion on issues of Quality Assurance and teacher education was the Third Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications and the Second International Conference on Quality Assurance in Africa, held in Dakar, Senegal, on 15–16 September 2008. Here, through sessions organised by TTISSA, teacher educators and policymakers in SSA benefitted from the experience of other regions such as the Arab States, the Caribbean and Europe. One key conclusion of the Forum was for African countries to develop QA frameworks and structures which are meaningful within their own contexts.

A TTISSA study on ‘Quality Assurance in Teacher Education in sub-Saharan Africa: Assessment and perspectives’ (Ottenwaelter, 2008) reiterated this. This study analyses QA practices in teacher education in SSA to encourage dialogue around the issues and foster the development of an appropriate strategy for QA in teacher education in Africa. The study considers the main international drivers in QA in higher education, underlining its historical development, the diverse and contextualised systems that exist and common principles, agreements and networks at both international and regional levels. An overview of QA in higher education in SSA is also provided and discusses the diversity of systems, regional and sub-regional cooperation agreements and the nature of support being provided. Within this context the main characteristics of QA in teacher education at the international level are highlighted and a comparative analysis of different systems under-
taken. The study concludes with some ideas for developing QA mechanisms for teacher education in Africa and suggestions as to the role of TTISSA in supporting this process.

This key study provided the basis for a TTISSA workshop (within the forum in Senegal on quality assurance in higher education in Africa in 2008) where the issues were discussed by a range of African policymakers and educators. A key achievement to date was awareness raising and strengthening of understanding of what quality assurance in teacher education in SSA means with a view of assisting policymakers and teacher trainers to develop an appropriate and workable model of QA.

2.8 Reflections and future implications

In the first few years of the TTISSA initiative, the holistic and strategic direction of the programme was established, based on research, analysis of data and dialogue with a range of stakeholders. TTISSA, from its onset, was successful in enhancing knowledge and understanding as to the issues confronting the teaching profession in SSA and in raising the profile of the profession. It contributed to a greater consensus among stakeholders that teacher issues are not only those of teacher training, but are also in relation to teacher status, working conditions, management, policy and their interrelationship. TTISSA further was key in raising awareness of the global UNESCO/ILO Recommendations and highlighting the rights and responsibilities of governments, teacher organisations and the teachers themselves. The Initiative facilitated high-level advocacy, research studies, collaboration with a diversity of partners, dissemination of key findings and their implications and lesson sharing.

Research has shown that although the teaching profession across SSA faces many similar challenges, there can be no ‘one size fits all’ solution. As such, that the work of TTISSA was key in helping countries to better understand their own contexts, to collect the most useful data and to analyse them within the framework of national, regional and global studies and frameworks.

Expectations as to the role of TTISSA in training the teachers of SSA were difficult to manage. As highlighted earlier, TTISSA could not, nor should it have been, responsible for large scale training of teachers; this remains the responsibility of UNESCO’s Member States. The Initiative was however able to have greater overall impact by contributing to the development of countries’ capacities to effectively manage their teaching forces. This was through understanding of the interrelationship of the issues which impact on the profession—issues of teacher status, management, policy and quality assurance and with regard to the modalities for training—such as Open and Distance Learning. Implementation of TTISSA benefitted from the comparative advantages of UNESCO as a UN agency with global responsibility for coordinating EFA and from the process of ensuring alignment with the key frameworks of the UN, EFA and the Paris Declaration. In this way
TTISSA played a strategic role in emphasising the importance of teachers to achieving quality education for all and served as a catalyst for innovation through sharing of lessons learned.

TTISSA however faced the challenge of limited human and financial resources and UNESCO’s institutional complexity. It was important that the Initiative played to the potential strengths of decentralisation and harnessed the expertise of all arms of the organisation. A coordinated model of decentralisation was therefore vital to ensure that the Headquarters and Field Offices worked together to complement and strengthen the inputs. Working closely with other partners was also crucial, and the management of effective engagement with a range of stakeholders in a continuum of collaboration, from information sharing to joint efforts and partnerships, is not always easy but is indeed paramount. The experiences with collaboration and communication are not unique to TTISSA alone, but further highlight the need for constant and consistent dialogue, both internally and externally, so as to determine how to best adhere to agreed mandates and achieve consensus on anticipating and tackling potential barriers. This is particularly important with the tension between addressing the complexity of issues and the demand to get things moving quickly. TTISSA faced the challenges of keeping on track and operating strategically, meaning ensuring that funds deployed were in line with the overall strategic focus of the Initiative, while addressing the immediate priorities of target countries. In light of this more attention was paid to the TTISSA communications strategy, and various strands were developed, including a newsletter, brochure, concept note and new website.

In collaboration with other partners within and outside UNESCO, the argument for coherence and partnership with regard to teachers has been extended well beyond SSA. A short paper was presented to an International Advisory Panel in April 2008 in Tokyo; this reflected our experience of TTISSA and advocated for a global level TTISSA-like response to the challenges confronting the issues of quantity and quality of teachers. The paper highlighted the need for coherence and emphasised the interrelationship of the factors impacting on the teaching profession. From these initial discussions and through the strong leadership of Norway (which played host to the Eighth Meeting of the High Level Group for EFA in Oslo in December 2008) and UNESCO, there was agreement to establish a global alliance on teachers which would be charged with executing a global action plan. A Teacher Task Force for EFA has been established, with a dedicated Secretariat based at UNESCO. To date, the International Task Force on ‘Teachers for Education For All’ has grown to a constituency comprising more than 50 members that range from national governments representing different parts of the world to international NGOs, UN agencies and local civil society organisations.

The Task Force has capitalised on its broad membership to ensure extensive advocacy for the issue of Teachers for EFA, has organised Policy Dialogue Forums at the global and regional levels, has produced major studies, and is working on providing ad-hoc, country-level support to countries furthest away from the EFA goals and with the biggest teacher
gaps. That TTISSA set the stage for this major global initiative is a testament to the impact of the Initiative, in both sub-Saharan Africa and beyond—most specifically with regards to highlighting the importance of addressing teacher issues more holistically and strategically.