



Concept Note

The Teaching Practice Project: A School Based Approach to Initial Teacher Education

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The Global Teachers Institute is registered in South Africa as a non-profit organisation (174-938 NPO)



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The Teaching Practice Project: A School Based Approach to Initial Teacher Education

1. Executive Summary

The Global Teachers Institute (GTI) is a South African non-profit organisation whose mission is to shift the way children are taught by transforming teacher education.

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the Department of Basic Education (DBE) have identified the need to improve the teaching practice and school experience component of initial teacher education (ITE) by developing the capacity of schools to facilitate the work-integrated learning and teaching practice experiences of student-teachers through the development of professional practice schools (PPS)¹.

The Teaching Practice Project is a school based teacher development programme that supports schools in becoming professional practice schools by facilitating teaching internships and supporting school leaders and in-service teachers to be more effective mentors, teachers and leaders. Student-teachers study via a distance institution and are placed at participating schools to gain professional experience and provide additional support to teachers and learners. The project aims to improve the teaching practice experience by facilitating substantial work-integrated learning, through increasing the capacity of school leaders and teachers, and utilising student-teachers to provide direct interventions to learners in numeracy and literacy.

The four major components of the project are:

1. School-Based Teacher Internships for Pre-Service Teachers

Through the Future Leaders Programme, pre-service teachers study through distance learning and are placed in schools full-time and paired with an experienced teacher as a mentor.

2. Leadership Development for SGBs and SMTs

School leaders are provided with training and support in human development, instructional leadership and general management skills.

3. Professional Development for In-Service Teachers

In-service teachers receive training and support to improve their instructional practices as well as their ability to mentor and coach pre-service teachers.

4. Learner Interventions Facilitated by Pre-Service Teachers

Interns work as assistant teachers in class and provide targeted and direct interventions to learners in literacy and numeracy.

The programme works to leverage the capacity already in schools to improve performance and the quality of student-teachers practical experiences. GTI works to develop reflective, empathetic, socially responsible master teachers, while employing a district based approach to work with departmental officials to identify areas of need, potential host schools and to build a replicable model at the provincial level.

¹ Department of Higher Education and Training & Department of Basic Education. (2011) *The Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa 2011 - 2025*



2. The Need

2.1. Teacher Shortages

Despite spending nearly 20% of its national budget on education, South Africa is in the midst of an educational crisis and continues to rank poorly on several international benchmarks. The National Development Plan emphasises the importance of highly trained and qualified teachers, although the current demand for teachers is unmet with 20,000-30,000 needed per annum with an extra 30,00 needed overall by 2025² in addition to those being replaced. While teachers are in over supply in some areas, there are acute shortages in Maths, Science, IT, Commerce and African languages and intensified in some geographical regions.

2.2. Lack of Teacher Quality

Teacher quality is the most important contributor to the effectiveness of an education system and improvement of learner outcomes³, however quality continues to plague the system with a large amount of teachers lacking pedagogical, conceptual and content knowledge especially in Maths, English, Science and Technology⁴. A review of 5 higher education institutions commissioned by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) report that these institutions are failing to address the low quality education provision by teachers in South Africa⁵.

2.3. Inadequate Initial Teacher Education

Retention in both training and the profession is low and therefore results in poor value for money in the higher education system. Whilst more students are enrolling in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes comparatively fewer are graduating over time⁶. The ITE graduation rate for Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) was 39.2% (on average over 4 years) and for PCGE was 46.3%. The nation's largest producer of teachers, UNISA, accounts for just fewer than 50% of graduates with a B.Ed graduation rate is 9.6%.

2.4. Low Learner Performance and Outcomes

South African learners continue to struggle in critical areas including basic numeracy, where by some estimates learners are two years behind their peers in other middle-income countries⁷. Another study has suggested that only 16% of grade 3 learners begin the year at grade level⁸. Similar results relate to literacy and reading and despite the diversity of languages, 'South African learners perform abysmally poorly regardless of whether reading is assessed in African home languages, English or Afrikaans'⁹

² Centre for Development and Enterprise. (2015). *Teachers in South Africa: Supply and demand 2013-2025*.

Johannesburg: Centre for Development and Enterprise.

³ Hanushek, E. A. (2010). *The economic value of higher quality teachers*. Cambridge: National Bureau of economic research

OECD. (2011). *Teachers matter: Attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers. Pointers for policy development*. OECD

⁴ Venkat, H., & Spaul, N. (2015). What do we know about primary teachers' mathematical content knowledge in South Africa? An analysis of SACMEQ 2007. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 121-130.

⁵ Taylor, N. (2014). *The initial teacher education research project: An examination of aspects of initial teacher education curricula at 5 higher education institutions*. Johannesburg: JET Education Services

⁶ Teacher Supply in South Africa: A Focus on Initial Teacher Education Graduate Production, Hendrik Van Broekhuizen, University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch Economic Working Papers: WP07/15

⁷ Centre for Development and Enterprise. (2013) *Mathematics Outcomes in South Africa: What are the facts? What can be done?* Centre for Development and Enterprise.

⁸ Spaul, N., & Kotze, J. (2015). Starting behind and staying behind in South Africa The case of insurmountable learning deficits in mathematics. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 13 – 24.

⁹ Pretorius, E.J. & Spaul, N. *Read Writ* (2016) 29: 1449. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-016-9645-9>



3. The Teaching Practice Project

The teaching practice project is a school based initial teacher education programme that supports schools into becoming professional practice sites capable of offering supportive work-integrated learning experiences for student teachers¹⁰. Schools receive training and support for school management teams and in-service teachers to be more effective in their school roles and as mentors to pre-service student teachers. Student-teachers are placed in schools via an internship model, are paired with a staff member as a mentor, and offer targeted interventions to learners in and out of the classroom in literacy and numeracy.

Schools are supported by a local learning centre or established professional practice school, that provides off-site support, demonstration lessons and training space. The project utilises a district based approach to replication by identifying and working with district officials experiencing or anticipating teacher shortages, and are eager to support school based professional development and to improve the quality of schools hosting student-teachers for teaching practice.

3.1. Project Aims

- To increase the quality of work-integrated learning for student teachers
- To provide training and support to school leaders and in-service teachers
- To increase the number professional practice schools
- To provide targeted interventions to learners in numeracy and literacy

3.2. Professional Practice Schools

According to research conducted for the Department of Higher Education Training, which define professional practice schools spaces where student-teachers engage in work-integrated learning, classroom teachers, receive mentorship in addition to being 'hubs for the development of professional learning communities'. Among several indicators PPS are categorised as well-managed with supportive mentor teachers and a culture of professional development.

3.3. District Based Development

In recent years education districts have received increased interest as an effective unit of change to improve learner outcomes, as evidenced by national policy statements, the National Education Consortium Trust's (NECT) District Development Programme and a variety of pilot programmes targeting district level leadership and professional development¹¹. While considerable progress has been made to close the gap in teacher production, considerable teacher shortages remain in certain phases, subject areas and particularly geographical regions. Particularly in provinces like the Eastern Cape, where the province has declared that shortages exist in every district¹².

Two potential education districts have been identified where strong relationships exist with district officials—East London, Eastern Cape and Sekhukhune, Limpopo, and 12 schools within each district as potential sites for the project.

¹⁰ Robinson, M. (2016). Professional Practice Schools as a Form of School-University Partnership in Teacher Education. *Education as Change*. Vol 20 pp 11 – 26.

¹¹ Department of Basic Education. (2016) Amended Policy on Organisation Role and Responsibilities of Education Districts

¹² News24. (2017) Eastern Cape education department on shortage of school teachers



4. Project Activities

The project provides schools with support, training and interventions in four key areas, *leadership development for SGBs and SMTs, professional development for in-service teachers, school-based teacher internships for pre-service teachers, and interventions for learners facilitated by pre-service teachers*. These interventions are supported by a physical learning centre to provide access to educational materials, online resources and internet, facilitation space and model lessons led by experienced teachers and trainers. A school based approach utilises the capacity already within schools to train and develop pre-service teachers school, while using the presence of student-teachers to provide direct interventions to learners.

In 2017 the project aims to identify a district to participate in the project and to recruit 10 host schools in 2017 in preparation for 2018 when 50 Future Leaders (student-teachers) will be recruited as interns. In 2019 the programme will add an additional 10 schools and 50 student-teachers and another 10 schools and 50 student-teachers the following year in 2020.

Growth Plan	2017*	2018	2019	2020
Schools	10	10	20	30
Future Leaders (Student-Teachers)	0	50	100	150
Mentors	50	50	100	150

4.1. School-Based Teacher Internships for Pre-Service Teachers

School-based internships are offered through the Future Leaders Programme (FLP) that utilizes the teaching capacity already existing in schools to develop new teachers. It utilises in-service teachers as mentors of student-teachers who provide them with direct, experiential training in the classroom. The mentor-student teacher relationship also provides mentor teachers with a classroom teaching assistant who offers additional support to learners. The model also gives mentors the opportunity to better understand their own practice and develop the necessary skills to become effective instructional leaders.

Each intern enrolled in the programme is supported with the following development activities:

- 20 hours of individual mentoring per year/per intern (30 minutes a week X 40 weeks)
- 8 formal observations per year by an experienced teacher for each intern
- 8 formal observations of a lesson by an experienced teacher conducted by each intern each year
- 400 hours of team teaching per year (2.5 hours per day/ 4 days a week for 40 weeks)]
- 20 hours of professional development workshops
- 20 hours of peer reflection in a community of practice per year
- 112 hours of direct instructional time with SETA accredited GTI staff, including workshops on literacy and numeracy
- Academic support for 10 UNISA modules per year

Two of the programme's early graduate have been selected as the top 200 young South Africa's by the Mail and Guardian in 2016 and 2017.

4.2. Leadership Development for SGBs and SMTs

Developing schools to be effective host sites for pre-service professional practice requires school leaders to possess a range of competencies and abilities that span operational, instructional and relational leadership. Managerial skills must be accompanied with leadership capacity that facilitates human



development and a commitment to professional development within the school culture. The project develops the capacity of SGBs, SMTs and HoDs to become effective instructional and operational leaders and to facilitate the development of their staff's teaching practice as well as their ability to mentor and coach aspiring teachers during their teaching practice.

4.3. Professional Development for In-Service Teachers

In-service teachers are supported directly through professional and personal development workshops to improve their instructional practices and ability to mentor pre-service teachers during their teaching practice. As mentors are a key lever to the success of effective teaching practice for initial teacher education, the development of these teachers is critical to the success of the project and are supported by training staff to identify growth areas and how improvements can be achieved.

4.4. Learner Interventions Facilitated by Student-Teachers

Placing pre-service teachers in schools for the duration of their studies also benefits schools and in-service teachers as the additional capacity can be leveraged to offer additional support to learners. Interns work as assistant teachers in class allowing for teachers to provide more directed and individualised attention to learners. In addition, interns provide targeted interventions in and out of class and after-school and on weekends without relying on existing staff members.

In 2016, GTI introduced a pilot in 6 government schools in Jane Furse, Limpopo utilising PaperVideo to assist learners in maths and science. Before the intervention, only 4% of students in those 6 schools had a bachelors pass in maths and science, with a district-wide rate only slightly higher. Bachelor passes are crucial for acceptance into university, which means that only 4% of students from these schools could enter university immediately. After the PaperVideo intervention in 2016, 19% of students earned bachelor passes with mathematics and science, enabling them to enter university, all delivered utilising the additional capacity of student-teachers in schools.

5. Supplemental Activities

5.1. Learning Centres

To support host schools as they develop into professional practice schools, learning centres will be established or leveraged from existing centres to provide spaces where teachers can gain access to demo lessons, master classes, online resources and additional training. These centres serve as sites of excellence that assist in the on-going improvement and development for all stakeholders by demonstrating best practices in relevant local contexts.

5.2. Monitoring & Evaluation

GTI has developed an advanced set of monitoring and evaluation procedures to support the efficient and effective growth of the project. The cloud-based software development platform, FLIP (Future Leader Information Portal) allows interns and school staff to record the various programme activities and serve as a hub for all programme data and information. The first version of FLIP was completed in April of 2017 and is currently in its first phase of testing. The key processes including attendance, weekly professional development, mentor meetings and reflective circles. Additional processes including, academic results management, quarterly and yearly performance reviews, text book tracking and a recruitment and application function will be added in 2018.



6. Training and Support Framework

The recruitment, training and support for schools and teachers will be provided by the Global Teachers Institute (GTI), a non-profit organisation based in South Africa whose mission is to shift the way children are taught by transforming teacher education.

GTI has developed a unique teacher development methodology built on four major domains *reflection, empathy, social responsibility* and *instructional mastery* that fosters teachers that are capable of facilitating learning environments for learners that are emotionally supportive, culturally relevant and academically challenging. This framework forms the foundation and structure of all of GTI's offerings and trainings and all of our programs are designed with the intention to replicate throughout the country and in collaboration with the national, provincial and local departments of education. Our core pieces of work are the annual GTI Axis Summit, the Champion Teachers Programme and the Future Leaders Programme.

GTI directly provides training and professional development opportunities to student teachers, mentors, and site managers to enable their ongoing personal and professional progress. By activating teacher capacity at all these levels, the project develops a school's long-term potential to improve its instructional delivery and leadership skills.

- *Teacher Development Manager*: Responsible for managing all aspects of the programme
- *Regional Schools Co-ordinators (RSC)*: For each district RSCs conduct site visits, lead trainings and provide day-to-day telephonic and online support to school sites. GTI works on a ratio of no more than 12 school sites by an RSC.
- *Facilitators and Trainers*: Additional facilitators and trainers provide support based on the needs of the school

7. Funding Requirements

We seek an amount of R 6 921 532 over the period from 2017 to 2020 to accomplish the following:

- Establish the Future Leader programme in 30 schools in a chosen district to reach an enrolment of 150 Future Leaders by 2020. The period September to November 2017 will be used to select schools and train mentors. In 2018, we will take on 10 schools and 50 Future Leaders and grow 10 schools and 50 Future Leaders per annum until 2020.
- Train 150 in-service teachers to improve their instructional practices who will mentor pre-service teachers during their teaching practice.
- Support the cost of all Future Leaders attending the annual GTI Education Summit Winter School as well as 2 mentor teachers per school.

Appendix A: Detailed Budget and Draw Down

Teache Practice Project Budget	Calculation Method	2017 (from Sep)		2018		2019		2020		TOTAL Amount
		Unit cost	Amount	Unit cost	Amount	Unit cost	Amount	Unit cost	Amount	
Permanent staff										
FLP Programme Manager (25%)	per month	R 8 750	R 26 250	R 9 275	R 111 300	R 9 832	R 117 978	R 10 421	R 125 057	R 363 085
Regional Schools Coordinator (East London)	per month	R 25 000	R 75 000	R 26 500	R 318 000	R 28 090	R 337 080	R 29 775	R 357 305	R 1 037 385
Regional Schools Coordinator (Sekhukhune)	per month	R 25 000	R 75 000	R 26 500	R 318 000	R 28 090	R 337 080	R 29 775	R 357 305	R 1 037 385
Consultants										
Curriculum Design	20 days in 2018	R 4 500	R 90 000							R 4 500
External Programme Evaluation at end of Pilot	10 days in 2020							R 5 000	R 50 000	R 50 000
Training & Staff Development										
External Coursework and Training	per annum per RSC	R 15 000	R 30 000	R 15 900	R 31 800	R 16 854	R 33 708	R 17 865	R 35 730	R 116 238
Travel										
Staff travel for school oversight visits / recruitment	per annum per RSC									
Staff travel for training	2 staff trainings per annum	R 4 000	R 16 000	R 4 210	R 16 960	R 4 494	R 17 978	R 4 764	R 19 056	R 57 994
GTI Winter School at Summit (Mentors)	2 Mentors per school per annum	R 5 200	R 10 400	R 5 512	R 110 240	R 5 843	R 233 709	R 6 193	R 371 597	R 720 746
GTI Winter School at Summit (Future Leaders)	per Future Leader per annum	R 5 200	R 10 400	R 5 512	R 110 240	R 5 843	R 233 709	R 6 193	R 371 597	R 720 746
Course Materials and IT Support										
Course Materials	per Future Leader per annum	R 1 000	R 53 000	R 1 060	R 53 000	R 1 124	R 112 360	R 1 191	R 178 652	R 345 012
Online Portal licence and related ICT costs	per Future Leader per annum	R 1 000	R 53 000	R 1 060	R 53 000	R 1 124	R 112 360	R 1 191	R 178 652	R 345 012
School Support Team Stipends										
Site Managers	per School per month	R 800	R 9 600	R 848	R 101 760	R 899	R 215 731	R 953	R 343 013	R 661 304
Mentors	per Mentor per month	R 500	R 6 000	R 530	R 26 500	R 562	R 56 180	R 596	R 89 326	R 172 506
Total			R 312 250		R 1 416 160		R 2 158 436		R 3 034 686	R 6 921 532