

## **SADTU POLICY PAPER ON EDUCATION**

*Restore the character of SADTU as a Union of Revolutionary Professionals, Agents of Change & Champions of People's Education for People's Power in Pursuit of Socialism*

### **Introduction**

- SADTU is a union organizing education workers - irrespective of race, creed, or gender - nationally throughout South Africa. The union believes that teaching more than any other profession influences who we are and also influences the societies we live in. The union believes that taking up the aims to balance the professional and trades union aspects of members lives is in the long term interests of members and society at large. It ranks amongst the largest unions affiliated to the Congress of South African Trades Unions (COSATU); and is also a member of Education International, an international trade union coordinating body organizing workers in the educational sector with over 23 million members.

- SADTU was launched in Johannesburg on 6 October 1990. This was an historic occasion as it brought together a range of racially divided teacher organizations into a unitary structure with a progressive vision. In doing so SADTU challenged the legitimacy of ethnic education departments and made an important contribution to the struggle for non-racialism in South Africa. Today the union is the largest teacher's union in the country and boasts a membership of 240,000 members spread across the 9 provinces in South Africa.

- The Union has decided, 24 years of policy making through its National General Councils, Congresses and Conferences to develop a comprehensive policy on education. The Education Policy draws all existing SADTU resolutions into a

coherent document into a coherent policy. This Policy document combines the founding principles, values and vision of SADTU.

- This policy challenges explicitly the narrow, instrumentalist view of education as solely teaching students to become skilled employees. Instead, it argues for a perspective on education that serves both the values of the society at local and global levels, as well as cultural, democratic, social, economic and environmental needs. It recognizes that education is a human right and a public good in its own right, enabling people at all stages in their lives to achieve their maximum potential and to better understand themselves and their role and relationships. Education is also a key means for the transmission, analysis and application of knowledge and experience, and plays a central role in the creation of new knowledge through research and innovation. Its role is broader than the mechanistic and instrumental role that many proponents of market forces and “customer-provider” models acknowledge.
- This policy statement is underpinned by concepts which are central to SADTU's philosophy and which represent the core values and demands of education. These include quality education as a human right, education provided by the State and available freely to all, inclusive education and equality in education and society, and high professional status for teachers. The policy also refers to challenges that serve as a call to action to be addressed by concrete initiatives and strategies.

## **I: Promoting Education as a Human Right and a Public Good**

1. Quality education nurtures human talent and creativity, thereby contributing to the personal and professional development of the individual person, as well as to social, cultural, economic, political and environmental development of society at large. It promotes peace, democracy, creativity, solidarity, inclusion, a commitment to a sustainable environment, and international and intercultural understanding. It provides people with the critical knowledge, abilities and skills that are needed to conceptualise, question and solve problems that occur both locally and globally.

2. The government must be the guarantors and primary providers of education systems and as such it has the key responsibility for ensuring that free, universally accessible education is well-resourced and constantly updated and developed. By raising funds through progressive taxation, it can and must invest a substantial proportion of the state budget in education. Such investment should ensure the balanced development of all education sectors from early childhood education through to higher education and life-long learning. The State in cooperation with teachers Unions, should oversee and regulate the education sector and aim to constantly improve its quality, establishing and implementing a legislative framework that ensures a high quality service, professional standards, access for all and a representative governance system. In short the State is responsible for the financing, provision and regulation of all education institutions.

3. The social values of education require the State to protect the education sector from the neo-liberal agenda of privatization and commercialisation. This negative agenda includes marketisation and trade in education and intellectual

property, the casualisation of employment in the education sector, the application of private-sector management models on education institutions, the privatisation of provision, the usage of Non Governmental Organizations to develop and implement educational policies and the intrusion of for-profit motives or business interest in the governance of education institutions.

4. The emergence of a global “market” in education which began in higher education but which is now encroaching on most educational sectors, poses a number of potential risks for the teaching and research mission of educational institutions. The privatisation of education has been facilitated by trade and investment agreements like the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) as well as a growing number of bilateral and regional treaties. These agreements have the effect of locking-in and intensifying the pressures of commercialisation and privatisation. SADTU through Education International believes that services provided in the public interest like education must not be subject to the commercial rules of trade treaties. Transnational education is to be governed by educational principles, not commercial imperatives. The State must ensure adequate recurrent and capital funding and agreed and adequate standards for teaching and research.

5. The responsibility also includes the ratification, implementation and regular monitoring of international conventions and regulations relating to education. These include the following: the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, 1948; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966; the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women, 1979; and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989; the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers, 1966; the UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel, 1997.

6. This responsibility also extends to respecting the professional rights of education employees as envisaged in the ILO Convention 87 on the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948; the ILO Convention 98 on the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining, 1949; The ILO Convention 111 on Discrimination (Employment and Occupation), 1958; Employees the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, 1998; and the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation, 2008.

7. Consistent with these international obligations, the State must support the autonomy of higher education institutions in relation to academic policies, curriculum, staff appointments and internal management. Institutional autonomy, in these spheres, is a pre-condition for the existence of academic freedom which guarantees that independent research, teaching and scholarship can flourish, but it must not be confused with academic freedom. Institutions must not use the right to institutional autonomy and academic freedom to undermine national development goals and the transformation agenda of the higher education sector. Institutions have an absolute obligation to ensure their autonomy facilitates the protection of academic freedom from a hostile external environment, and must not abuse their autonomy to undermine or suppress academic freedom internally. Further, it must be acknowledged that institutions operate in the public sphere and bear a general obligation to public accountability and the public good. A key element of academic freedom is the right of academic staff and researchers to be directly represented on all key decision-making bodies within universities and colleges that should be founded on the principle of collegiality. This principle includes guarantees of individual staff rights such as the freedom to determine teaching style, research priorities and the right to intellectual property.

## **II: Improving the Quality of Education**

8. Every citizen has the right to a quality education. Providing quality education that caters to students' aptitudes and needs will be a primary challenge for lifelong learning, from early childhood education through to further and higher education. SADTU defines quality education in terms of context and culture. Quality is neither one-dimensional nor straightforward. Quality education is defined by its inputs (including students' background, teachers' qualifications, working conditions, class-size and investment in education); by the education process (including teaching, parenting and related processes of learning) and by projected outcomes (including individual, social, cultural, economic and environmental needs). A contextual approach to quality is never deterministic, as it is contingent upon creativity and constant development.

10. The importance of quality teaching for quality education cannot be underestimated. To this end, teachers at all levels of education must be appropriately trained and qualified. Teachers should continue their professional development upon recruitment through a period of induction into the profession with the support by a mentor and should have access throughout their careers to high quality continuous professional development and learning. These opportunities should be provided by the State at no cost to individual teachers.

11. The teaching and learning environment should be designed in such a way that it supports teachers and education employees in their missions. The State should provide the necessary infrastructure and resources to cater for this environment.

12. Quality education must be underpinned by credible educational research. The findings of such research should inform the theories and practice of teaching. Research should also draw on the actual professional experience of teachers and involve teachers in the process. This should culminate in an inseparable link between education and research which would help to generate new understandings and knowledge and improve pedagogical skills.

13. SADTU believes that teachers should maintain high professional standards and should be accountable to society. Professional standards should be established with the full involvement of the teaching profession. Teachers should feel confident that both their professional standards and their professional development are relevant to their teaching.

14. The State should ensure that schools have a broad and balanced framework curriculum which sets out common rights and responsibilities for all students. The framework should be sufficiently flexible to allow schools to adapt it to the needs of all of their students. Schools themselves should be responsible for adapting the curricular framework to the needs of the relevant societal context.

15. The purpose of evaluation should be clear to all those involved in education. The evaluation of education systems, of school, of teachers, and of students have different purposes and should be separate. When one form of evaluation designed for a particular purpose is used to serve a different purpose, the consequences can be unforeseen and damaging. Another damaging form of evaluation is imposed, high stakes evaluation. Imposed high stakes testing systems and punitive school inspection models, for example, lead to schools focusing mainly on what is tested and inspected, to the curbing of the capacity to innovate, to curricula being narrowed and to teachers' self confidence being undermined. This also poses the risk of increased demotivation and disaffection

of students, who are less likely to progress and achieve. All forms of evaluation involving students, teachers, schools and higher education institutions, and education systems should be understood and be agreed with teachers and education unions. Indeed, the key principle which should be applied to all forms of evaluation, including teacher evaluation, is self-evaluation. Teacher review and appraisal should be based on trust and the active involvement of those being reviewed. Its outcomes should lead to teachers' professional development needs being identified and provided for. Such an approach means that teachers are more likely to be enthusiastic and committed to such a process including to any professional standards involved in evaluation and to professional development outcomes.

16. All forms of evaluation should be formative, rather than punitive. In this respect, SADTU rejects instrumental approaches to the evaluation of education. SADTU believes that a widespread abuse of the notion of quality to justify standardised forms of testing is harmful to the education system as a whole, as it attempts to reduce the teaching and learning process to quantifiable indicators. It is the standardization and one-dimensional approach to testing and evaluation of the teaching and learning processes to which SADTU objects strongly. Moreover, if the stakes are too high in any given evaluation system then teaching will be directed to meeting the standardised external requirements - a phenomenon commonly referred to as 'teaching to the test'. This stifles innovation and creativity, narrows the curriculum and undermines professional autonomy. In other words, punitive, high-stakes evaluation undermines the effectiveness and confidence of education institutions.

17. One-dimensional tools focused on outcomes alone, such as standardised testing, league tables or rankings, are increasingly used as policy-making instruments. State should guard against the potential misuse of the Programme



for International Student Assessment (PISA) and TIMS in the administration and planning of education systems. They should also avoid using the pilot study on the Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO) in the construction of potentially misleading comparisons between national higher education systems.

18. SADTU recognises the key role which professional leadership plays in contributing to quality education. The professional leader is important for the enhancement of teachers' professional autonomy and professional development. Pedagogical leadership requires high-level qualifications, including teacher education qualifications. Those in leadership positions in schools and other educational institutions must receive the support and specific training which their demanding role requires. Those responsible for the leadership of other teachers should be engaged regularly in those activities that promote effective teaching and learning in the classroom. They should also be provided with the appropriate support and resources which are required to carry out their duties effectively. Leadership should be founded on the principles of collegiality, teamwork, democratic decision-making processes and recognise the importance of dialogue and cooperation.

19. Higher education and research plays a key role in sustaining the education sector as a whole, particularly through teacher education and education research. In recent years the higher education and research sector has witnessed a series of attacks which have undermined the principles of academic freedom and collegiality, and the intrinsic value of knowledge acquisition, transmission and analysis. The global trends towards commercialisation and competition in the higher education sector threaten to compromise quality and equity. These trends must be reversed. The higher education and research sector has the potential of finding solutions to the most pressing scientific, environmental,

economic, social and ethical challenges we face today. Higher education and research contributes to the development and well-being of individuals both through the personal development of students and through the development of society as a whole.

### **III: Promoting Equality through Inclusive Education**

20. It is the responsibility of the State to ensure that all citizens have access to high quality education appropriate to their needs. Supported by the Universal Declaration on Human Right and a series of international, multi-lateral instruments, National policies, SADTU maintains that all barriers to education must be removed in order to make it accessible for all persons, regardless of their gender, background or personal characteristics. SADTU therefore promotes the concept of equal opportunity and access to all levels of education. No-one should be disadvantaged because of perceived differences, including those based upon gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, faith, cultural or economic background, or personal characteristics. People with disabilities should be assisted to achieve their maximum potential.

21. Inclusive education means that all students should be educated together, to the same high standards, in so far as possible in the same education institution, irrespective of their gender, faith, ethnic, cultural or economic background or physical or intellectual capacities. However, SADTU recognises that in order to ensure the best opportunities for some students to develop to their maximum level, separate facilities and services may need to be provided. It is particularly important that a strong relationship exists between specialist and mainstream facilities which enables the sharing of pedagogic knowledge and skills and promotes institutional collaboration. The educational experience of students should instill in them concepts of equality, tolerance and respect for diversity.

22. Inclusive education is as crucial for developing countries. Complex processes of exclusion exacerbate inequalities in education worldwide. These inequalities are replicated in other areas of society. In an inclusive education setting, students are directly confronted by the challenges of diversity and learn how to be more caring and responsible citizens at an early age. Real inclusive education is challenging and demands a pro-active stance on the part of public authorities, teachers and education employees, students, parents, teacher Unions and civil society to include students from different backgrounds and with different learning and physical abilities in the same educational facility.

23. SADTU believes that issues relating to gender are a central aspect of inclusive education, as these affect all participants in education. From the earliest stage possible, all forms of gender stereotyping should be challenged and eliminated from education. The State should promote the full participation of girls and women, boys and men in education at all levels. They should also be sensitive to gender issues in relation to achievement, employment, recruitment and governance in education. Education institutions and unions should promote comprehensive gender-mainstreaming strategies.

24. Pre-service and in-service teacher education and training is also central to equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills to provide appropriate services for students from different backgrounds, with different capabilities and orientations. Such teacher education and training and professional development should be fully funded by the State and targeted to help teachers embrace diversity and use it to enhance the learning experience, including through the use of new information and communication technologies in the classroom. Well-

designed induction programmes are important for the retention of new entrants in the profession and to enable them to perform effectively.

25. Adequate numbers of qualified support staff are also necessary within learning environments, to cater effectively for students with special needs. Partnership and teamwork is necessary between the different education and support employees in education institutions in order to ensure that teachers, support staff and students have the best advice and guidance available to them when dealing with conflict situations which arise in relation to inclusiveness.

26. In order to promote the concept of inclusive educational settings, both in terms of students and teachers, leadership and governance of education institutions should be more inclusive and should also involve an active role for teachers, in cooperation with parents and students.

27. Access to higher education should be available to all those who show potential to succeed with their studies and should not be limited by the financial means or social origins of potential students. This means higher education should be free of fees and charges. Given the legacy of apartheid policy admission to higher education university tends to privilege students from rich or affluent communities while neglecting talented and potentially good students from marginalized groups, particularly those from under-resourced township and rural schools (whose admission depends largely on financial aid). SADTU posits that the concept of merit needs to be reconceptualised to embrace equity and social justice concerns, which necessitates a policy of affirmative action to ensure that good students from poor backgrounds have equal opportunity.

#### **IV: Promoting Teaching as a Profession**

28. Teaching is a profession that lies at the heart of both the learning of children and young people and their social, cultural and economic development. It is crucial to transmitting and implanting social values, such as democracy, equality, tolerance, cultural understanding and respect for each person's fundamental freedoms. The profession should have a set of professional standards, ethics, conditions and rights. These should be similar to professional and ethical standards for other professional groups which require comparable qualifications. The professional standards in the teaching profession should be applied to teachers at all level, in both the public and the private sector. The basis for such professional standards should be inculcated during teacher education programmes.

29. The attractiveness of the teaching profession needs to be urgently improved. The current generation of teachers is ageing and alarming numbers of new teachers are leaving the profession within the first years of employment. It is the responsibility of the State and leaders of education institutions to ensure that the teaching, academic and research professions remain attractive to both current and potential staff by ensuring that working conditions, social security arrangements, pension schemes and salaries are attractive and are comparable to those applicable to other professions requiring a similar level of qualifications. The professional commitment of teachers and academics to the education and welfare of their students should be recognized and respected. Enhancing the professional autonomy and self-confidence of teachers in their professional and pedagogic judgements and through the assertion of their right to academic freedom and to undertake research should be given the highest priority by the State and employers as this is essential to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. In this context, job security is of enormous importance

and casualisation of the teaching and research profession must be rejected as it is fundamentally harmful to the profession.

30. The status of young teachers, academic staff, researchers and education employees deserves particular attention. The young are often the first to face employment on short-term, casual contracts, without any clear future career paths. Career structures at all educational and research levels must have the clear potential for progression based on professional standards, qualifications and the acceptance of additional professional responsibilities. There should be no possibility of discrimination on any grounds in promotion processes.

31. Teachers are moderately supported by a combination of professional, administrative, technical and general staff. This is a crucial development for quality education as well as for inclusion. SADTU affirms that support staff should have the same status, right and conditions as other education employees with comparable academic and technical qualifications and experience.

32. Entry into the teaching profession and related roles must be inclusive without discrimination based on gender, race, age, sexual orientation, disabilities, political or religious beliefs, and economic or social conditions. The State should support and monitor employment practices to ensure that discrimination does not occur.

33. Teacher education should be offered in higher education institutions, teacher training colleges up to a high qualification level, including opportunities for post-graduate level study and should be fully funded by the State. Qualifications obtained upon completing a teacher education programme do not signify the end of a teacher's professional development, however. Structured induction programmes should be provided for newly qualified teachers on recruitment

into the profession. Fully funded continuous professional development should be an entitlement for all teachers. If professional development is to be effective then teachers should be involved in identifying their professional development needs and owning the professional development which is provided. The State should seek to agree with teacher unions strategies for the development of the teaching profession. SADTU recognizes that many teacher unions provide good forms of professional development for their members and teachers in general and it urges the State and employers, therefore, to enhance and fund learning opportunities provided by unions. With such support teachers will be able to maintain high standards in their profession.

34. Codes of ethics and professional values assist and underpin teachers' professional judgments and teachers should be collectively responsible for developing such codes and for putting these codes into effect. Such codes help support the commitment of teachers to their profession, to students, colleagues, parents and to their school communities. They are crucial in maintaining high professional standards in any educational institution, and serve to raise professional job-satisfaction and instill a sense of self-worth among teachers. It is important that where any professional councils for teachers are established they are supported by the teaching profession and their unions.

35. As educational institutions aim to serve an increasing number of complex aims, the values of deliberation and partnership must be sustained and safeguarded despite trends to enhance effectiveness and efficiency above all else. An inclusive education environment, in and of itself, requires the different participants to work together but, especially, teachers, other education employees, students and parents, in a spirit of shared understanding of the educational process and a shared acceptance and openness to each others'

views. Collegial and democratic leadership in education institutions should therefore be strengthened.

## **V: Strengthening Education Trade Unions as Essential Partners in Civil Society**

36. The strength of a strategic, structured collaboration is evident among teaching professionals themselves. Organised, independent, democratic and representative trade unions are effective contributors to the development of educational policy at national, regional and international levels. In turn, they are also the key to ensuring that professional standards and ethics are respected. The freedom to associate and form representative democratic independent unions should apply to teachers and education employees in all territories, at all levels and in all education institutions, whether public or private. These trade union rights, including the right to strike should be respected by the State.

37. Education unions play an important role in the process of dialogue in society between the department of basic education (DBE) the department of higher education and training (DHET), the State and employees which aims to discuss constructively all work-related issues which arise in an educational setting. Social dialogue should be based upon respect for all partners, and should aim to improve the quality and status of education, professional standards and conditions. Unions must be equal partners in this social dialogue process. They also bargain collectively on behalf of teachers and other education employees. Education unions must be allowed to take traditional trade union actions if their members are being treated unjustly or their concerns are not being taken seriously. Salaries, working conditions and career structures of education



employees must be negotiated with unions through a collective bargaining process.

38. During the last 24 years SADTU through EI, has built up an important partnership with civil society organizations the Global Campaign for Education. It has become clear that quality education benefits from strong links between unions and civil society. Moreover, cooperation with civil society strengthens the social values of education, by contributing to peace, democracy, the environment and intercultural understanding.

## **VI: Promoting Solidarity in Education at the International Level**

39. International exchanges and contacts are an important contributor to education development in today's world. At whatever level these contacts and exchanges occur they should be encouraged and facilitated. The extent to which they improve international understanding and cooperation and mutual respect cannot be underestimated. In this context exchanges between schools and education institutions of students, teachers, academic staff and higher education researchers should be encouraged and facilitated, as well as exchanges between the governing authorities and other institutional bodies.

40. SADTU is an affiliate of Education International (EI) a world federation of education workers, an international union movement that values partnership and solidarity and its principles remain unaffected by adversity or crisis. Experience shows that global links are strengthened over time as similar concerns among education employees throughout the world inspire joint strategies to deal with similar challenges. The strength of the international

education union movement is also reinforced by expressions of solidarity through financial support or mutually supportive actions in times of crisis.

41. EI stresses that special attention must be paid to the needs of the African region. Such support is essential for the long-term development of the continent. This requires, among other things, significantly greater development assistance from the rest of the world to supporting the development of education in the region. There remains a need to build capacity in all sectors of education and to strengthen links between civil society organizations, including education unions, and public authorities within Africa, and to assist in establishing employment conditions and professional rights for teachers and other education employees which allow education and research to flourish.

42. Education is the key to uniting nations, bringing human beings closely together and guiding them towards humanity. In many parts of the world, civil society suffers because of situations of violent conflicts, repression and war. It is important to recognise the crucial role of education in contributing to building a culture of peace and condemning instances in which education is undermined in order to attack democracy and tolerance. EI stresses the importance of rebuilding education systems in post-conflict situations.

43. EI disagrees with the views of economic and financial inter-governmental organisations which view education purely as a commercial enterprise which is to be traded for private economic gain. EI works diligently within international organisations that operate in the field of education. These include UNESCO, the International Labour Organization, the Global Unions, and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, among others. EI supports the educational mission of these organisations, which envisage the development of education as a fundamental pillar in society.

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## **VII: Using Technology for Quality Education**

44. New information and communication technologies (ICT) provide exciting possibilities to enhance the quality of education. Interactive education software, open access digital libraries and new forms of interaction between students, teachers, education employees and the community are just a few ways in which education can be enriched by integrating such technologies into traditional classroom activities. These tools provide a rich and powerful resource for teachers to assist them with the teaching and learning processes. Teachers, academic staff, higher education researchers and other education employees play an increasingly important role in integrating technology into education as coaches or authorities in the technological and information-rich environment in which many students now live.

45. These new technologies are best used as supplements to, and not replacements for, in-class-instruction. The use of ICT in education therefore requires more reflection on and improvement of teacher training and development programs, curricula, teachers' workload and education institutions' infrastructure. It also demands that the issue of equity of access to such technologies across the globe is resolved. Unless it is harnessed effectively and made available widely it will contribute to the growing gap between the wealthier and poorer societies throughout the world. Moreover, technology should be harnessed as a tool for improving personal and professional development through the evolution of the relations between students themselves and between students and teachers and other education employees.

46. New social media present ways of communicating across different cultures. Teachers realize that these media are an important tool to build a world based

on equality, democracy and solidarity. In the classroom, social media can help humanity move forward by connecting students and teachers at different geographical locations. These tools should be used to teach students the value of different cultures, by stimulating language learning and intercultural exchange.

47. SADTU embraces these as powerful means to connect with their members. Social media can strengthen democracy within unions, providing new forms of discussion and consultation. They can be important tools to strengthen involvement, as members can be more engaged directly in the development of the union's strategies, activities and services. Furthermore, they facilitate new forums of cooperation between unions and the wider civil society.

### **VIII: Promoting Adult Education and Training**

48. As the challenges facing citizens in societies worldwide grow ever-more wide-ranging and complex, one's educational experience cannot stop at the final year of compulsory education. Education systems must have a lifelong learning approach and provide opportunities for students of all ages. This is of crucial importance for adult men and women in South Africa who have been denied access to education during apartheid. Adult learning deserves special attention in vocational and higher education as these sectors provide not only the skills for new occupations, but for continuing personal development and for equipping citizens to deal with new global challenges.

49. Education systems must adapt to social, cultural, economic, political and environmental challenges. In this respect, a well-resourced system of vocational education and training must form an essential part of any modern education system. Teachers and other education employees in this sector will require

increased continuous professional development to enable them to keep up with the rapidly changing social and economic environment for which they prepare their students.

50. Education systems should also become more aware of the contribution they make to students' health. They should promote health awareness and life skills that enable students to be more responsible for their own health as well as the health of others around them. Catering facilities in education institutions should provide a healthy diet and curricula should include programs for improving personal hygiene and advising about sexual and reproductive behaviour.

51. Education systems have a responsibility to assist students in becoming aware of and confronting the challenges facing the modern world. This is particularly true with regard to the future of the planet and the need for sustainable development. Sustainable development education must now be an integral part of the curriculum in all educational institutions. As the citizens and consumers of tomorrow, students should be made aware of the impact which human beings have had on the environment and, in particular, of the implications of the continuation of a consumerist culture in society, for the future of the planet. Sustainable development should be included in the core of any prescribed curricular framework.

### **Promotion of African Languages as Medium of Instruction**

51. SADTU stresses that "as a consequence of political history of colonialism and apartheid in South Africa, English and Afrikaans have been well established as languages of learning to the exclusion of indigenous African languages" (2010:18) . Our children are forced to learn in a second language which they hardly comprehend. This affected and contributed to poor education of the black

child. But in the new democratic government, at which the education department seeks to provide equal educational access to all learners across racial lines, it is crucial for learners to be taught in the first language in order to grasp content knowledge. Setati argues that “learners’ main languages are a resource in the teaching and learning of mathematics” (2008:2).

The Education for All Global Monitoring Report (2010) posits that educating children in their mother tongues can be a powerful way to prevent them from becoming marginalized. The Report further argues that “It is increasingly recognised that there is a strong educational, political and cultural rationale for home-language instruction, especially in the early years of schooling. Children must to be taught in the language that they know from home, in the first year of their schooling”. Wright (2010) believes that children need to build confidence and expertise in their home language literacy before being transferred to another language. A successful additive multilingual policy should promote African languages, “both as a means to the desired proficiency in English and in order to recover their intellectual and cultural resources for the nation” (Lockett 1993:55).