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| Basic Education Program

Effectiveness of the USAID School-College Linkage Program in Preservice and Inservice Teacher Development Programs in Ethiopia

Addis Ababa

August, 2007



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USAID/Basic Education Program

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Executive Summary

The USAID School and College Linkage Program was initiated in 2004/05. The program was a response to MOE's needs which required stronger matches and meaningful linkages between TEIs and schools. The primary objectives of USAID supported preservice and inservice linkage program were to strengthen the TEI training curricula and provide professional development services to participating primary schools within the overall context of school improvement programs. Since the school and college partnership program has been started, no study has been conducted to evaluate its effectiveness.

The purpose of this study was to fill this gap. It was directed to explore the effectiveness of the cluster Preservice and Inservice Linkage Program supported by USAID/Basic Education Program in Ethiopia. It was an attempt to investigate the extent to which the two way communication for mutually benefiting TEIs and cluster primary schools has taken place as desired by USAID/BEP project.

A multi-method case study approach was adopted as main research methodology. For this purpose, questionnaires were prepared and filled by TEI deans/assistant deans, instructors, cluster school teachers and school directors. Focus group discussions were conducted with staff development units/key teachers, coordinators and student teachers. Accordingly, 558 participants responded to the questionnaires and 148 participated in focus group discussions. In addition, 13 school directors and 7 college deans participated in the study.

Overall, findings of the study indicate that the new initiative to link schools and colleges was effective in meeting its objectives of strengthening TEI training curricula and providing teacher professional development support. In teacher professional development and school improvement, linkage programs were effective in creating school-TEI partnerships and they have a wide ranging acceptance wherever they have been introduced. The purposes for which linkage programs are created in regions were also found to be congruent with the goals for which they are intended at the national level. Linkage programs created the opportunity for TEIs to provide vital technical and professional development support to schools including highly regarded training

programs and accompanying materials. School teachers got access to college facilities as the result of their partnership with TEIs. Schools were provided highly regarded support in school management, participated in experience sharing visits and were provided with materials for their pedagogical centres. There was a very positive attitude created towards school-college partnerships as a result of the linkage programs.

With reference to the improvement of TEI curricula, it was found out that linkage programs have contributed to building the capacity of TEIs in human power, organization of training programs, and preparation of technical materials. Most instructor respondents indicated that they had the opportunity to get training due to the linkage program, and those training programs were accompanied with reference and other materials. The linkage program supported student teachers and TEI instructors to get a first hand experience of schools. Just like in schools, linkage programs helped TEI instructors to develop positive attitudes towards the partnership with schools.

However, some problems have exerted negative pressure on the effort made to maximize the effectiveness of linkage schools. These problems have to do with lack of policy at regional and woreda levels to guide linkage activities, lack of effective leadership and management at TEIs and schools, lack of integration of linkages into the formal structure of TEIs, overlapping of responsibilities of Staff Development Unit and with other committees in schools, lack of proper monitoring and evaluations of linkage programs. So far, no budget has been allotted to support the program at any level of government. Overall, linkage programs lack sense of ownership on the part of the beneficiaries.

From the findings it was concluded that school-college partnership was widely effective and accepted in the regions and their objectives were congruent with the prevailing needs of schools. Linkage programs were instrumental in providing professional development programs in terms of training both in TEIs and cluster schools. They were very useful in providing material support to schools and creating access to the resources of TEIs. They were very effective in bringing TEI instructors and students to school reality. School-TEI linkages were extremely useful in creating positive attitudes of teachers and TEI instructors towards partnership. They were rated very high in improving the overall competence of teachers and school management.

The implications of the findings for policy and practice led to the proposition that school and TEI linkage programs need to be sustained and expanded in Ethiopia. It was recommended that different modalities appropriate to the situation of the regions can be followed for sustainability, but the effectiveness of the programs compels that this direction is one of the most promising alternatives for the improvement of TEI training programs and the improvement of teachers' profession in the context of school reforms. Moreover, it was proposed that problems of implementation related to policy, leadership and management at TEIs and schools, monitoring and evaluation as well as budgeting needs to be resolved. The results also suggest that linkage programs need real ownership by all beneficiaries including regional education bureaus, woreda education offices, TEIs and schools.

Abbreviations

USAID/BEP	United States Agency for International Development/Basic Education Program
CCU	Cluster Coordinating Units (in TEIs)
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
MOE	Ministry of Education
PDS	Professional Development School
REB	Regional Education Bureau
RSEB	Regional State Education Bureau
TEIs	Teacher Education Institutions
TESO	Teacher Education System Overhaul
TTI	Teacher Training Institute
SDUs	Staff Development Units (Cluster Schools)
SUTEP	West Carolina Teacher Education Partnership
WEO	Woreda Education Office
WCU	Western Carolina University

Part I

Background

Within the strategic objective of USAID/BEP /Basic Education Program/ to enhance the quality and equity of primary education in Ethiopia, the significance of promoting the quality of educational personnel is paramount. The support of USAID/BEP includes both preservice and inservice components of teacher development. While the preservice support focused on TEIs, the inservice support focused on Cluster Schools. Apart from this, TEIs carry out professional development activities in selected primary schools in their vicinity.

The primary objectives of the USAID preservice and inservice linkage program are to strengthen the TEI training curriculum, provide professional development services for the participating primary schools and to contribute to the overall school improvement in primary education. Among the main reasons for initiating these programs are the perceived mismatches between teacher education and school (general) education and lack of meaningful linkage between TEIs and schools (MOE/TESO, 2003:10-11). Because the previous training programs did not provide adequate competence for teachers on active learning methodologies and utilization of the locally prepared materials, it was believed that this type of linkage would improve the level and quality of education in primary schools. Generally, there was recognition that the upgrading of teachers or any other type of short-term training is essential for professional development. Supported by the rising awareness of the value of inservice teacher education worldwide, the introduction of the linkage program in Ethiopia was believed to be appropriate because it was recognized that primary school teachers would have ample opportunities to exploit the rich human and material resources of TEIs.

At the same time, linkage programs provide colleges with inputs from primary schools. Future teachers are acquainted with the primary school curriculum, the existing school leadership, classroom organization and instruction, materials production, utilization, preservation, school environment and hygiene. Generally, linkage programs assist TEIs to train teachers who are capable of teaching in the local context.

The concept of linkage is not new in Ethiopia. Evidence indicates that linkages were practiced since the beginning of the 1950s in the form of TTI-model school relationships. However, these linkages were not sustained except for some TTIs. The current approach is different from the previous one since it is firmly grounded in the needs of the Ministry of Education. This linkage program is hoped to provide a blueprint or a model as to how teacher education needs to be conducted in the country. It is an example of how preservice and inservice teacher education would support each other. It also helps TEIs and schools to build good relationships among each other in the training of teachers in the years to come. It is hoped that a lot can be learned in how colleges could do professional development activities in schools with a limited capacity. TEIs are limited in their capacities, because they are already over crowded with their preservice training programs. At the same time, cluster resource centres run professional development activities, and there is an assumption that, by using the facilities and know-how of the TEIs, they would create the best alternative to conduct teacher professional development programs in the schools.

Since its introduction, the effectiveness of preservice-inservice linkage programs has not been investigated. In this sense, the concern is whether or not the assumed two-way link between TEIs and schools has taken place as desired. Since cluster schools are going to continue as centres for the continuous professional development of teachers, it is required to see how far the linkage programs support school based professional development. On the other hand, the attempt by TEIs to train teachers who are fit to teach in the local context is a consistent concern. Teacher trainers need to get the opportunity to interact with schools for which they prepare teachers. Future teachers from colleges also need to be familiar with the actual school organization for a longer period. Given these concerns, therefore, it becomes essential to assess the effectiveness of the school-TEI linkage program.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Two types of primary teacher education can be identified in Ethiopia. The first type of teacher education is the preservice program while the second is the inservice program. The preservice program is carried out in TEIs following the structure of the education system. As it is well known, the primary education system consists of eight years of

education having two cycles. Whereas the first cycle covers Grades 1-4, the second cycle covers Grades 5-8. Teachers are trained by TEIs at the certificate level to teach in the first cycle primary schools and at diploma level to teach in the second cycle primary schools.

The inservice training of primary school teachers is carried out in cluster resource centres. Traditionally, inservice programs were also run by TEIs, and the main purpose was to upgrade the qualification of teachers. These were off-site training programs, which were far from practice. The cluster approach is different from the TEIs' approach in that it is an on-site program. Teachers get training not for qualification, but for continuously improving their practice in the classroom. It is an approach where teachers get theoretical training to develop it by practice that follows it immediately.

The USAID Linkage Program has been effectively in practice since 2004/05, but the basic question is whether or not this program has benefited both the preservice and inservice programs. Obviously, for TEIs to operate the inservice program in clusters, they need to undertake training programs. What does the training program organized by TEIs look like in cluster centres? As the main expectation is to focus on the training of teachers on active learning, the question is how far has this effort helped teachers to acquire skills in active learning? Linkage programs are supported by a variety of materials and new techniques. Do colleges and institutions support the linkage program by materials and a variety of techniques? The appropriateness of training time in relation to the on-going nature of the instructional process is a very important dimension in the inservice teacher education programs which are based in clusters. What time is allocated to these training programs and are they convenient? What do school authorities do to facilitate this type of training programs and are they convenient? What was done by school authorities to facilitate this type of linkage programs and were they supportive? How do school teachers assess the program in relation to their improved practice in the classroom? Are there any particular problems teachers perceive in the professional development activities conducted by the colleges or TEIs?

Since colleges were supposed to benefit in familiarizing their students with the school situation before they become teachers, how did this practice help them in their endeavours? How do teachers and students assess this professional development activity in cluster schools? In what major ways did it contribute to their preparedness to work as future school teachers? How did teacher educators find actual schools for which they train teachers? What was the contribution of school leadership towards the fulfilment of this linkage program? What were the basic problems of TEIs in running the linkage program in cluster schools? There is a clear understanding that not all linkage programs between TEIs and schools are equally effective. Some obviously carry out activities better than others. Consequently, the experiences, impressions and hopes of the linkage program across regions may either be different from one another or similar to each other. In this regard, it is also interesting to investigate the differences and similarities in these experiences, impressions and hopes.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to explore the effectiveness of the school and TEIs' preservice and inservice linkage program supported by USAID/BEP project in Ethiopia. It is an attempt to explore whether or not the two-way communication for mutually benefiting TEIs and cluster centres in teacher development has taken place as desired by USAID/BEP project.

The specific objectives of the study are the following.

- Explore the types and administration of professional development activities that have been practiced in the linkage program.
- Analyze the technical, material and other forms of exchange and flow to support the linkage program.
- Find out the role of leadership in the facilitation of linkage program.
- Explore how teachers and TEI instructors assess the relevance, practicality and usefulness of linkage program for their professional development.
- Assess problems or contributing factors that may impede or enhance the implementation of linkage programs.
- Identify relevant experiences from the existing practices that may provide lessons to scale up and undertake successful linkage programs in the future.

1.3 Significance of the Study

At present the preservice and inservice linkage program is on the cross-roads. First, USAID/Basic Education Program is in the last phase of termination. This means there is a need for technical take over of the current program by the partners. Second, there is a demand from Regional State Educational Bureaus to scale up the linkage program. Regions have expressed interest for the involvement of teacher education institutions in the teacher development programs. Third, a modality is being sought and discussed cautiously in order to adopt linkage strategy as a viable innovation for the improvement of the quality of teacher development programs. In order to take actions in all these directions, it is essential that the effectiveness of the programs is clearly known from the ongoing experimental practices from USAID linkage programs. This study provides such information to policy makers, Regional Education Bureaus and other organs concerning the effectiveness of Preservice and Inservice Linkage Program.

Ethiopia is witnessing a clear shift towards quality of education as is the case elsewhere in the world. In this process, there is an increasing awareness that teachers' development plays an important role. In this respect, Linkage Programs have been identified as having a distinct positive part to play in teacher support, skills up-grading and school improvement. Studying the effectiveness of this program in Ethiopian context is significant, because it indicates what are required to implement the program and how it benefits the system as a whole. It provides clear knowledge and evidence about how the two-way exchange of activities can efficiently enhance the performance of schools as well as the Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs).

1.4 Limitations of the Study

Linkage among schools and TEIs for the purpose of the professional development of teachers may take different formats. Examples include summer schools, extension classes, distance education and so on. This study is limited only to the USAID/Basic Education linkage programs which are meant to strengthen TEI curricula and school improvement in cluster schools.

Dane (1990) argues that the goals of research are multiple: exploratory, descriptive, explanatory, predictive and action. This study is an exploratory research since its main concern is to find out for the first time about the effectiveness of the linkage program in Ethiopia. Other studies may work on the remaining objectives as situations permit.

Linkage programs involve a form of school experience by student teachers as well as TEI instructors. It may focus on different objectives including such activities as inservice training, professional development, enrichment of resource centres, supervision, etc. This study focused on the linkage program between Primary Teacher Education Colleges and USAID/Cluster Schools the aim of which is the improvement of TEI curricula and the condition of teaching-learning in schools.

1.5 Definition of Terms

Effectiveness: The concept of effectiveness has been defined in a variety of ways. Ostrower (2004) says that most of these definitions are explained in broad and general terms. Among the most commonly used definitions, according to him, are the notions of attaining goals and having an impact. Chen (1996) indicates that effectiveness can be referred to as an added value. In school education, for instance, effectiveness refers to the significant contribution a school made to student achievement, controlling students' background and community context. According to Temu (1995), effectiveness is normally defined as the ability to produce desired results. In this research, effectiveness generally refers to the ability of linkage programs to meet desired objectives and results, which are the improvement of the TEI curricula and general school improvement.

USAID/Preservice and inservice linkage program: These are programs supported by USAID/Basic Education Program since 2004/2005. They are programs aimed to create partnerships between TEIs and cluster schools in the vicinity of TEIs. The main objectives of this program are to strengthen the TEI curriculum and to improve the primary school learning and teaching conditions.

Primary Education in Ethiopia: The Ministry of Education (2004) classifies the levels or cycles of primary school in Ethiopia into two structures. These are First Cycle Primary Schools (Grades 1-4) and the Second Cycle Primary Schools (Grades 5-8). Thus, primary education in this context refers to the first eight grades of education in Ethiopia.

Preservice teacher education: The newly prepared blueprint of the Ethiopian Teacher Development Policy by the Ministry of Education (2007) indicates that this type of education involves diploma and degree programs conducted at TEIs and universities. Primary school teachers are supposed to have a diploma level qualification before they join the profession. Secondary school teachers are required to have a Bachelor Degree before joining the teaching profession as teachers. Overall, preservice teacher education refers to these programs in Ethiopia, but the focus of this study is primary teacher education.

Inservice teacher education: The new document on Ethiopian Teacher Development Policy by the Ministry of Education (2007) notes that teachers need to improve their competence in order to cope up with changing circumstances while they are in their profession. It identifies two mechanisms for what it calls Continuous Professional and Qualification Improvement Program: upgrading the educational qualification of teachers and improvement of professional competence programs. Strategies of Upgrading programs focus on summer courses, extension/evening classes and distance education programs. In professional competence improvement programs such strategies as induction, higher diploma and English Language Development Programs are charted. The linkage program can be categorized in to the latter as it does not involve upgrading educational qualifications.

Teacher development: The Ministry of Education defines teacher development as the recruitment of appropriate candidates and the provision of adequate knowledge, abilities, skills and professional qualities both at preservice and inservice levels so that they will be able to provide quality education for rearing competent citizens. In this study, the overall understanding of this concept is based on this definition of the Ministry of Education.

Part II

Review of Related Literature

Teacher education is one of the different aspects of any education system. While there are efforts to maintain access, quality and equity in education, it seems that teacher education is left as a side issue. There is no as such a contention on the strong influence of the quality of teacher education on school improvement and the quality of children's learning. However, there are arguments that in most cases, teacher education programs are divorced from school practices and fail to play appropriate roles to address the quality of education, and this has been and still is a problematic issue. It might be because of this that Korthagen (2001) designated teacher education as "a problematic enterprise."

Hence, different education systems are now embarking to link teacher education programs to school realities, in a form of partnership, to address the need for quality education through school improvement. This chapter attempts to provide theories, tenets, assumptions and practices pertaining to TEI-school linkage in enhancing teacher professional practices through preservice and inservice professional development programs.

2.1. Concept of College–School Linkage or Partnership

Despite the fact that there is historically generated alienation between 'scholars' and practitioners who work in very different cultures and respond to different demands, there are increasing number of successful partnerships at preservice and inservice levels, particularly those aimed at enhancing the knowledge creation capacities of individuals and professional communities (Day, 1999).

In most literature (e.g., Wallace, 1993, 1992; Eraut, 1994; Day, 1999), college-school relations is designated as partnerships. The term college here is used to encompass the range of teacher education and training institutions for different levels of schools. Partnerships in education are a form of professional collaboration designed to provide mutual benefits to educators and students at a public school and a college of education. According to Day (1999), partnership is "the relation which subsists

between persons carrying on a business in common with a view to profit” (p.52). In other words, partnerships are usually formed because each of the partners has something to offer to the joint enterprise, which is different from but complements that which is offered by the other partner. Hence, colleges and schools are different enterprises entering to a certain contract for achieving common goals. Partnership may be of different forms. Biott (1991) identifies *developmental* (responsive and evolutionary) and *implementational* (imposed, formal, mechanistic and with specific brief and limited time span for action) partnerships. Developmental partnerships often begin with the culture of contrived collegiality, typical of implementation partnerships, but they have a greater learning potential because the participants themselves control the ownership of the theme and process. Day (1999) wrote that these extended partnerships, often called *Networks* or *Consortia*, recognize the advantages of involving schools, universities, educational bureaus and other stakeholders in collaborative work.

2.2. Overview of Teacher Education

Before deliberating on the need and purpose of school-college partnership, it is relevant to provide an overview on the development of teacher education. This sparks the features of teacher education through time and paves the way to understand the conditions that necessitate school-college partnership.

During earlier times of modern education, before the 19th century, teachers used to teach without training and were admitted to the occupation based on their inclination to teach. Korthagen (2001) wrote that in the late 19th and early 20th century, as psychological and pedagogical knowledge developed, academics wished to offer this knowledge to teachers in order to change education and “adapt” it to scientific insights. This was how the idea of the professionalization of teachers began. According to Hoyle and John (1995), the most important criterion of professionalism is the availability of a recognized body of knowledge.

Korthagen (2001) further described that during the second half of the 20th century, those who wish to equip teachers with professional knowledge base were stimulated by growing desire, worldwide, to educate a broader group than the most gifted children.

The general trend was to teach teachers courses in relevant domains, for example, psychology of learning. Gradually, however, it became clear that teachers did not carry much of this knowledge base into practice and more was needed. The knowledge base should become visible in the skills that teachers used in the classroom. This led to the introduction of Competency Based Teacher Education/CBTE (Korthagen, 2001), the same with process-product model. The idea underlying this model of teacher education was the formulation of concrete and observable criteria for good teaching. Behind this line of thought is what Clandinin (1995, p.25) calls “*the sacred theory-practice story*” in which teacher education was conceived as the translation of theory into practice in good teaching. The desire to use as much of the available knowledge as possible has led to a conception of teacher education as a system in which experts, preferably working within colleges, teach this knowledge to prospective teachers. In the best case, they also try to stimulate the transfer of this knowledge to the classroom, by skill training (CBTE), or by assignments to be carried out during field experiences, theory-to-practice approach and philosophically identified as technical rationality (Schon, 1983).

A number of research show that the traditional technical-rationality paradigm, which stresses on theoretical imperatives in the training institutions, does not function well. Zechner and Tabachnick (1981), for example, showed that many notions and educational conceptions, developed during preservice teacher education were “washed out” during field experiences. The findings revealed that there were severe problems teachers experience once they have left preservice teacher education and that there was a dominant role of practice in shaping teacher development.

2.3. Needs and Purposes of Partnership

The traditional technical rationality model of teacher education falls short of mirroring school realities. Many student teachers, graduates, and teacher educators were dissatisfied with teacher education. Baronte et al. cited in Korthagen (2001) noted that parents and politicians too increasingly raise doubts about the functionality of teacher education. This puts heavy pressures on teacher education. Korthagen (2001) reported that in several countries (e.g., United Kingdom), the dissatisfaction of politicians has led to a development in which considerable part of teacher education

was moved to the schools. In reaction to the criticism on the relevance of theory as a preparation for practice, alternative certification programs have been created in which novice teachers sometimes receive very little theoretical background, and teacher education becomes more of a process of guided induction. In many places, this was also influenced by the need to solve the problem of teacher shortages. However, Korthagen (2001) stipulated that the balance seems to move completely from an emphasis on theory to reliance on practical experience and such an approach to teacher education does not guarantee success.

In fact, it has been shown that teaching experience can be a socializing factor rather than an opportunity for professional development. Often, the process of socialization into the school context creates a dislike for reflection and theoretical deepening (Cole, 1997). The basic question, namely how to integrate theory and practice has not been addressed (Korthagen, 2001).

As a reaction to weaknesses of the traditional approach to teacher education and the limitations of approaches based only on practical experience, new ways of preparing teachers for their professional development have emerged. For example, at many places in the United States, a trend has become visible to create professional development schools (PDS), also known as professional practice schools or clinical schools (Bullough & Kauchack as cited in Korthagen, 2001). The idea is to develop collaborative partnership between institution based teacher educators and school based teachers, sharing the responsibility for preparation of prospective teachers. In this context, there is much attention for the role of the school in the local community, a focus on developing new teaching methods, and an emphasis on an ongoing professional development through inquiry-oriented approach aimed at promoting reflective way of learning for all involved in such project.

As Korthagen (2001) reported in the United Kingdom, during the 1990s, teacher education has largely moved to schools, although the development was forced by political decisions in 1992 and 1993. Furlong et al. (1996) concluded that in the majority of cases, university tutors have less opportunity to influence the character of initial teacher education as compared to the past. However, they found that collaborative models had been developed in which teacher education faculty work

together with teachers in the schools on regular basis and this way has increased their influence on professional development of teachers.

In both professional development and the more general trends to move teacher education to the schools, there is a wish to ground teacher education within practical context and conceptualize it as an ongoing process, experiencing practical teaching and other educational learning situations, and reflecting on them under the guidance of a more experienced colleague. At the same time, it is directed towards developing one's own insights into teaching through the interaction between personal reflection and theoretical notions brought in by a teacher educator.

2.4. Types and Areas of Partnership

Teacher education institutions have a significant higher education role, with a central core of teacher education and substantial inservice responsibilities (James, 1975). This would be true whether the colleges are acting independently or within the context of a much more generalized further education provision normally of an advanced kind. There could be various areas of college-school partnership depending on the needs of the schools and education colleges. James (1975) identifies three general areas of partnership comprising the professional development, induction and inservice teacher education.

The main feature of professional development is its emphasis solely on inservice education and training. In most institutions, however, training qualified teachers is only a part of the purpose of the college. Indeed, any institution concerned solely with inservice training has to have a concentration of staff, resources and organization to serve the special and continuing needs of practising teachers. Such activities are performed by a professional development centre under the responsibility of a senior member of staff, with its own board representative of the various interests in the field of inservice education. It has the power to respond to requests, as well as to initiate major programmes. Normally it is given the responsibility for research and inquiry as it is a critical field of development in teacher education.

The induction period is the essential bridge between training and teaching, and much of the quality of the professional and the response to future inservice opportunities are dependent upon what is done in the first year of teaching. It is also a key stage in the professionalization of the teacher. According to James (1975), induction should offer a systematic programme for professional initiation, guided experience and further study. The whole direction of courses and guided experience should be to support and help the new teacher to become more skilled and adequate as a teacher works through the various stages of concentrated and decisive professional experience.

Inservice training as an arena of partnership implies the development of a professional centre at a college primarily as a resource centre. Such a centre needs to be a place with good facilities, an educational technology area, spaces to make things, to experiment with materials and see examples of work done by children and of publications and apparatus for use in schools. It needs to serve as a major social area with common rooms, a cafeteria and other facilities. In addition, all parts of the college should be open: library, studios where available, laboratories, access to computers, further social facilities such as sports and cafeteria.

Complementing these areas of partnership, Day (1999) located three areas as possible fields of partnerships.

- Supervisory/monitoring relationships between tutors and teachers in preservice programmes;
- Provider led relationship between teachers and universities in which the latter offer a range of modularized award-and non-award bearing inservice teacher development programmes.
- Research and development relationships between university tutors and the education community, which are subdivided as pure research, applied research and collaborative research. In pure research, university scholars alone are deemed to have the technical expertise necessary to generate knowledge about teachers, teaching, learning and school. In applied research, university scholars lead others in curriculum and staff development projects. In collaborative research, university researchers work alongside teachers on needs identified by the teacher participants themselves in order to generate 'grounded' knowledge.

With particular reference to school-college partnerships in the United States, Wallace (1993) provided a review of literature which identifies four areas or types of linkage. These include programs and services for students and teachers; research and resources; and the restructuring of the educational system. Programs and services for students focus on identifying “at risk” students at elementary and secondary schools and providing them college-level instruction. Programs and services for educators include initiatives of alliances of school teachers and college faculty in the same academic discipline; programs that combine teacher preparation with an exemplary school site to demonstrate the best knowledge about teaching and learning. Research and resource programs developed by some universities integrate research, teaching and service with a school and its community. Partnership which involves restructuring aims at the way whole systems operate and educational services are organized. Such partnerships focus on sharing of resources, faculty, equipment and facilities.

2.5. Roles and Responsibilities in Partnerships

The roles and responsibilities in teaching transcend the prescribed rules of politicians and authorities since it is abided by the moral character of teaching. This intrinsic trait drives the materialization of the prescribed roles and responsibilities in the partnership of stakeholders in improving conditions of teaching and eventually learning. Hence, the roles and responsibilities mentioned below emanate from this predisposition. Although in partnership, roles and responsibilities may be defined by the concession of the stakeholders, it is deemed that there are such understandings of roles that serve for starting. For the purpose of this study the role of teacher training institutions, schools and school districts, education offices are described.

2.5.1. Teacher Training Institutions

Teacher training institutions, which play the predominant role in preservice teacher education, continue to have important inservice responsibilities. According to Long and Rodney (2002), these responsibilities are the following.

- Continuing the effort, started in undergraduate school, of encouraging teachers to devote much of their time and energy in advancing their professional development and that of their colleagues as well;

- Updating teacher qualifications and skills through courses, seminars, workshops, and conferences;
- Utilizing outstanding public school teachers as instructors at their institutions;
- Preparing, in cooperation with public schools, outstanding teachers to specialize in such roles as coordinator of school research and coordinator of community resources;
- Orienting a significant amount of their research to problems relevant to public school teachers;
- Assisting school district in acquainting teachers with the results of research relevant to the classroom;
- Providing teachers with the knowledge and skill necessary to play, conduct, and evaluate classroom-oriented research;
- Conducting joint research with teachers;
- Providing interested teachers with advanced training in Masters and Doctorate degree programs with academic standards comparable to those in other university programs;
- Designing, conducting, and analyzing sociological studies of teachers and the teaching profession.

2.5.2. School Districts/Education Offices

As reported by Long and Rodney (2002), if schools are to improve significantly, school districts must give teachers the support and incentive essential for them to advance their professional development and that of their colleagues. School districts provide little financial support for professional development. School districts provide little financial incentive for teachers to engage in professional development that specifically enhance their teaching effectiveness. With few exceptions, teacher salaries throughout the nation are based not on teaching effectiveness but on experience and education credentials.

Establishing and assisting professional development schools and pedagogical gymnasiums is another intervention. One way that some school districts and teacher training institutions have collaborated is in the creation of professional development

schools (PDS). According to Long and Rodney (2002), professional development schools are similar in concept to teacher hospitals in medicine. They are designed to provide extended internships for prospective teachers (normally in a five-year program), and a year long induction experiences for novice teachers, and professional development activities for veteran teachers. Professors and teachers working in these schools also conduct research that will permit schools to be a viable means of enhancing both preservice and inservice teacher training. Only if both institutions are strongly committed to providing the essential human and financial resources, its successful implementation and continuation can be guaranteed.

Considering the significant growth of specialized public school in recent years, some of the larger urban school districts may want to consider establishing a school that has some of the characteristics of “pedagogical gymnasiums” located in such Russian cities as St. Petersburg and Moscow. Such gymnasiums have encouraged many talented students to enter teaching and have served as an excellent vehicle for involving professors and school teachers in collaborative teacher education activities.

To wrap up this section, it is pertinent to briefly mention a few other things that school districts/education offices might do to be more actively involved in teacher education. First, they should work carefully with people in their communities to help them have a better understanding of why students’ learning is dependent on professional development of teachers and why this development should be a top priority of their districts. This means allocation of substantial funds to professional development and restructuring how schools are organized and run so that teachers have the opportunity to grow continuously. Inservice education must receive careful attention by teachers, administrators, and school board members in order to make it a highly planned, systematic process that always focuses on the real, practical needs of classroom teachers.

Second, school districts should develop a mentoring program for first and second year teachers. We do not expect new doctors to have all the polished skills of experienced doctors. They are inducted in to full membership in their profession slowly through an internship and a residency program. Nor should we expect neophyte teachers to assume immediately full responsibilities of experienced teachers. Just as doctors,

young teachers need time and mentoring if they are to cope successfully with the many demands of successful teaching.

Third, school districts should be as actively involved in preservice teacher education as in inservice teacher education. This means that both preservice and inservice training of teachers should be a dual responsibility of school districts and schools of education. School districts should make being a supervising teacher of teacher trainees involved in field experience and student teaching an honour to be sought after by the best teachers in the school district. To be a good supervising teacher takes time, energy, considerable human relations skills, and commitment. Such requirements cannot be met if teachers do not have sufficient time during the school day to even prepare adequately for their own lessons. School districts can honour supervising teachers by paying them substantially more than regular teachers, by reducing their teaching load, and by providing them, in collaboration with teacher training institutions, specialized training appropriate for a supervising teacher.

Fourth, school districts should make it possible for meritorious teachers to acquire specialized skills that will permit them not only to remain in the classroom with a reduced teaching load but also to serve as their schools specialist in curriculum development, research design, student evolution, community liaison, and so on.

Fifth, school districts should pay teachers more for their teaching effectiveness than for their academic credentials and years of experience. Finally, school districts should start treating teachers as professionals by actively involving them in all school reform efforts and by providing them with principals who devote practically all their workday to being teacher educators.

2.5.3. The Changing Role of Schools

Furlong et al. (2000) presented the changing role of schools in partnership with colleges of teacher education in the UK. They argued that the majority of teacher education courses in England and Wales were based on the principle of what they termed 'integration' rather than partnership. The courses were aiming at training students with the world of the school. However, they reported that in most courses the

responsibility for achieving this integration lay largely with those in higher education. Tutors present sessions within college that were highly practical; they adopt pedagogies that were designed explicitly to model classroom teaching; they set and mark school based assignments for students to undertake while they were in school; they take overall responsibility for supervising students on teaching practice and they had primary responsibility for assessing students both in their written work and in their practical teaching competence. Although much of the courses were closely related to the world of school in part, the formal responsibilities of teachers in the planning and provision of training were minimal. Even their role in the assessment of teaching practice was often only an advisory one.

However, what also became apparent was that there were many ways of organizing partnerships; different models had significantly different implications for what the role of schools and teachers should be. They also had implications for the forms of professionalism they were designed to engender in students. Exploring different models of partnership therefore becomes an important dimension.

2.6. Models of College-School Partnership

Furlong et al. (2000) identified two 'ideal typical' models of partnership as a starting point at a continuum. At one end of the continuum is *collaborative partnership* and at the other end is *complementary partnership*.

Complementary partnership comprises the school and the university or college relationship having separate and complementary responsibility but no systematic integration or any attempt to bring these two dimensions into dialogue. In other words there is partnership but not necessarily integration in the course; integration is something that the student himself or herself has to achieve. It seems that such a model might emerge either from a principled commitment to allowing schools the legitimacy to have their own distinctive area of responsibility or as a pragmatic response to financial constraints. The implication of this for the professionalization of students is clear. Work in school is inferred to be undertaken separately from that in higher education. What students have to learn about the practical business of teaching is defined and assessed by those in school with little or no reference to more

‘theoretical’ forms of knowledge traditionally made available through higher education. Universities and colleges retain an important role but largely as the organizers of the scheme as a whole.

Collaborative partnership was the idealized model of partnership that was favoured by professional teacher educators in the early mid 1990s. The heart of this model is the commitment to develop a training program where students are exposed to different forms of educational knowledge some of which come from school and some from higher education or elsewhere. Teachers are seen as having an equally legitimate but perhaps different body of professional knowledge from those in higher education. Students are expected and encouraged to use what they learn in school to critique what they learn within the college or university and vice versa. It is through this dialectic that they are expected to build up professional knowledge. For the model to succeed and if they are to develop a programme that is integrated to higher education and the school, the collaboration of teachers and lecturers is essential. Below are some of the principles of this model of partnership.

- Integration – one curriculum
- Complementarities
- Access to different kinds of knowledge
- Emphasis on student teachers understanding of how they can learn
- Individualized progression
- Mentoring as a new role to be explored
- College tutor – also a new role to be explored

The key features of collaborative partnership include:

- Planning: That gives opportunities or teachers and tutors opportunities to work together in small groups
- College visits to school: That emphasizes collaborative discussion of professional issues together.
- Documentation: That codifies emerging collaborative practice
- Content: The school and college recognize legitimacy and difference of each others contribution to an ongoing dialogue.

- Mentoring: Defined as giving students access to teacher professional knowledge, mentor training as professional development learning.
- Assessment: Collaborative based on triangulation.
- Contractual relationship: Negotiated, personal.
- Legitimizing: Commitment to value of collaboration in ITE

What model could be more appropriate depends on the government policy on teacher education and teaching professionalism. Moreover, it also depends on the peculiarities of stakeholders in partnership. On the basis of these; alternative models of partnership could also be developed.

2.7. International and Local Experiences in College-School Partnership

2.7.1. International Experiences in College-School Partnership

In the above sections, attempts have been made to pull some theoretical frameworks of college-school partnership in different programs of teacher education. Models are also revealed. As it is reiterated, the practice of these models is contextual. Accordingly, the practice is late in other countries, well developed in others and not yet practiced in some other countries. Following are two case studies from the United States.

School University Teacher Education Partnership (SUTEP) of West Carolina University

The College of Education of Western Carolina University (WCU) has a scheme of partnership known as college of education and allied professions. The college has established partnership with a number of schools in the region in different teacher education programs including preservice education, induction, and professional development.

In order to run the programs institutionally, the university has set a functioning structure that incorporated partners. A steering committee sets and monitors policy and direction for the partnership. It also sets, monitors, and evaluates annual and long-range goals. The Steering Committee is responsible for assuring adequate communication among partnership stakeholders. This committee constitutes the

recruitment, preservice, induction, and professional development and liaison subcommittees. The Recruitment Sub-Committee promotes education as a career and conducts programs to recruit teachers and other professional educators. The Preservice Sub-Committee supports the professional preparation of quality teachers. The Induction Sub-Committee provides support for new and initially licensed teachers. The Professional Development Committee assesses the needs of the partnership in collaboration with stakeholders to provide professional development opportunities and complement other professional development activities in the region. The Liaison Committee is comprised of a liaison (representative) from each partnership school. It is advisory to the Director of Field Experiences and the Coordinator of SUTEP.

As indicated by WCU (2004), *preservice education* focuses on all aspects of the teacher education program prior to graduation. During the sophomore year, students begin field experiences by being assigned a classroom for two hours a week for the semester. There are additional field experiences as part of the requirements in some courses. These different placements assure that students are placed in a variety of classroom settings and can participate in a number of culturally diverse experiences. There are a number of workshops, seminars, and programs designed for preservice students to learn how to work with culturally diverse populations. Interns may apply to attend the “Closing the Achievement Gap Conference” in Greensboro each spring. The year-long internship takes place in the senior year.

With teacher shortages continuing, SUTEP provides support to beginning teachers to help them succeed and remain in the profession in the form of *induction*. The Induction Committee assesses the needs of beginning teachers and works to meet these needs. The teacher-in-residence, a National Board Certified teacher, makes hundreds of contacts each month to support beginning teachers and their mentors. He/She supports the continuum of professional development for teachers from preservice to career status and provides training and program materials focused on INTASC’s (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium) standard, portfolio development, and coaching skills.

In June each year, with participation from other stakeholders, SUTEP offers a Summer Institute for beginning teachers and teacher leaders. Beginning teachers focus on issues for rising second-year teachers, including the performance-based licensure process, INTASC Standards, classroom climate, and mentoring by teacher leaders. After participating in the conference, beginning teachers receive support throughout the year. University faculty and mentors regularly send email messages to answer questions and offer support. The group meets for Saturday sessions several times during the fall.

Professional Development involves the preparation of high quality professional educators, teacher leaders and school administrators. Teacher leaders work closely as school-based teacher educators and expand their professional networks. SUTEP works with other partners to support teachers seeking National Board Certification. This partnership also provides opportunities for teachers to apply for action research and/or school improvement grants. These grants target at enhancing student achievement in P-12 schools. There are additional ways to involve university faculty to work in collaboration with public school teachers on mutually beneficial activities. Some teachers are employed to teach methods courses, curriculum courses, or internship seminars with university faculty. Some of these partnerships have led to joint presentations at state and national conferences and professional publications.

Professional Development Schools Partnership of Columbia University

The other experience is from the College of Education of the Columbia University. The partnership has developed a full document ranging from its philosophical stances, beliefs and values that govern the partnership from which the working structure and job description emanated. Since it is pertinent as an experience for others to adapt, it is reviewed below.

In the document of the partnership, the Professional Development School partnership (PDS) is defined by an orientation to the nature of the collaboration between schools and universities – valuing and acknowledging the unique talents, strengths, questions, and concerns that individuals and/or parties bring to the process. The purpose of the PDS's charter is to provide college's partnership with a framework that articulates the

college's vision, and delineates institutional and individual responsibility and accountability. The charter supports the work of current participants and lays the groundwork for future work.

Fundamental beliefs: Central to the work is a fundamental concern for students' learning, growth and development. The Partnership believes that all children can learn and that children- and the teaching of those children-are valuable and worthy of full commitment on the part of teachers, teacher educators, and administrators. It is committed to promoting urban schools and universities as inclusive communities of life-long learners. Its work is supported and defined by the following four cornerstones.

- Shared responsibility for the development of preservice and beginning teachers
- The continuing development of experienced teachers and teacher educators
- The creation of communities of sustained inquiry
- The research and development of the teaching profession and school reform

The conception and interpretation of roles within this Partnership is creative and flexible. The college sees the Partnership as a space where all people come to learn, but also as a space where all people come to teach. The value of the contributions is attached to the person and what he or she brings and not to the institutional position. The flow of collaboration is between schools and universities, and between and among schools.

The commitment is to build a common culture and shared respect between schools and universities. Clear advantages of such a synthesis include a common language across issues of teaching and learning, and value for the diverse kinds of understandings and perspectives different people bring to the partnership. The PDS is based upon the belief that it must work toward an intellectual and compassionate community that is sensitive to issues of equity in urban education. All of its work is sensitive to race, gender, and class, sexual orientation, disability, and religion.

Goals for PDS: The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in recognition of the relationship between the PDS of the college and the national PDS community outlined the following goals for the PDS.

Learning community: A belief that PDS should foster learning centred communities that support children and adults' learning. Opportunities to learn are equitably supported.

Collaboration and correspondence of responsibility: PDS is characterized by joint work between schools and among school and university faculty and administrators' directed at implementing fundamental beliefs. Responsibility for learning is shared; research is jointly defined and implemented; all participants share expertise in order to support children's and adults' learning.

Accountability: PDS is accountable to the students in all education settings. PDS should be responsible to the parents, the wider community, and the teaching and teacher education professions for upholding high standards for the teaching and learning of all students, the preparation of new teachers, and the creation of communities of sustained inquiry and growth.

Equity: PDS views equity in three ways. First, all children should have equal access to high quality education. Second, support norms and practices that maintain the diverse strengths, values, and experiences brought to the partnership by all involved. Finally, it believes in the creation of consistent and flexible structures to examine and push forward issues of equity in substantive as well as symbolic ways.

Institutional commitments: Teachers College, Teacher Education Programs and District value, promote, and encourage partnership at every opportunity. The PDS provides multiple opportunities for participants to develop their knowledge, skills and understandings related to working with diverse students in urban settings.

Structure

Partnership Wide: It is managed by two co-directors with faculty status at Teachers College and with significant school-based experience in the NYC Board of Education.

Responsibilities of the co-director(s) include:

- interfacing with the institutional constituencies at (1) TC: President, Dean, TEPC, professors, students, alumni, admissions, development employees; (2) Schools: community, directors, Principals, Superintendents, teachers, parents, development office; (3) National/international community: NCATE, Holmes
- budgetary planning and management
- coordination of PDS sites
- flow of information and communication
- overseeing documentation
- facilitating roles of participants

School Wide. At school level, each individual school Partnership is supported by (1) a Teacher Liaison and (2) a University Liaison. Each Liaison will receive “load credit” or compensation for this responsibility. The amount of time is flexible and depends upon the work generated by the site.

Partnership Committee (the Executive Board)

This committee constitutes the (co-) director(s), principals/administrators from each site, teacher/faculty liaison(s) from each site, representative of the Dean, and representative of the Superintendent.

Accountability and documentation practices: At every juncture, there is documentation and analysis of how to (1) broaden the base of participation, (2) impact the preservice programs, and (3) impact students’ learning. Each site will be responsible for preparing a brief document describing how they are being responsive to their own context as well as the overarching goals and cornerstones of PDS. This document will be based on the goals set by the site-based Partnership at the beginning of the year and reviewed at the end of the year. Although it will be the responsibility

of the teacher and university liaison to ensure the document is written and completed, it will be viewed as whole site-based partnership initiative. Thus, each document will be generated and agreed upon by the site at large. The document will also be submitted to the Partnership Committee. This work will be done in accordance with (1) the comprehensive education plan of the school and district and (2) school leadership teams.

The experiences above require a great deal of understanding, commitment and resources. Of course, its feasibility is dependent on the peculiarities of the government policy, schools and colleges concerning these variables. Despite this, it is of paramount importance for other situations to make use of these practices as they may apply to one's needs and situation.

2.7.2. Partnership Features in Ethiopia

Enhancing the quality of teachers through preservice and inservice training has been emphasised by the Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (TGE, 1994). In this regard, the policy states that teachers, starting from kindergarten to higher education, will be required to have the necessary teaching qualification and competency in the media of instruction, through preservice and inservice training. The policy also emphasizes the need for continuous professional development of teachers. Article 3.4.4 of the Education and Training Policy states that the criteria for the professional development of teachers will be continuous education and training, professional ethics and teaching performance. A more focused policy that created a background for linkage programs was issued by MOE (2003:10) in TESO document.

It is important that strong and mutually beneficial links between TEIs and schools should be developed both for the development of teacher educators' knowledge and understanding of the type of school for which the student teachers are being prepared and to provide teacher educators with the opportunity to undertake some school teaching to develop their expertise.

Evidence shows that Ethiopia is one of the African countries that practiced school-college linkage programs since the 1950s (USAID/BEP, 2007). The linkage consisted of five primary schools and one TTI with the purpose of providing access for the staff and the students of the TTI to engage in varieties of activities to strengthen the training

and the curriculum. Such linkage, however, was not sustained except in few cases, and since the 1970s, TTIs did not have model primary schools attached to them.

It was in 1996 that the school linkage program in its present form was reinstated by the USAID supported program of Basic Education Systems Overhaul (BESO I) in Awassa College of Teacher Education. The college started the linkage program with the neighbouring schools with a purpose of creating a joint working partnership that ensures mutual benefits for both parties (USAID/BEP, 2007). In 2004/05, the linkage program was further extended.

Overall, teacher training institutions and school partnership in Ethiopia seems not well developed. Experience shows that the internship programmes of the secondary school prospective teachers at universities and prospective primary school teachers at teacher education institutes (TEIs) were limited to teaching practices for one month at the end of the final year of the training. The one-week classroom observation followed by a three-week teaching practice was what was expected from the prospective teachers. Instructors from the institutions also evaluate the prospective teachers during the teaching practice while the school teachers have no apparent duty in this regard. It would be very difficult to designate these teaching practices as partnership, but cooperation. This is because there was no as such common share of duties, responsibilities and accountability and above all common benefits from such cooperation. This indicates that the curriculum and its management fall short of reflecting school realities. That might be why MOE (in TESO, 2003) said that teacher education in the country is an overly academic, often irrelevant and without well understood curriculum and weak management and leadership.

Hence, as teacher education in the country has undergone teacher education system overhaul (TESO), different guidelines were prepared. Among these, the guidelines for continuous professional development (MOE, 2003) suggest that teacher education institutions are going to have increasing links with schools. Apart from conducting preservice teacher education and undertaking research, the new practicum arrangements necessitate stronger and more frequent links with schools. In addition, the new higher diploma to be taken by Teacher Education Institution (TEI) instructors includes a period of time spent in schools. The new Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

strategy also benefits from the support of TEIs. The TEIs need to create links with relevant stakeholders to support the ongoing CPD programmes by working at the schools in their vicinity.

2.8. Conditions Influencing School-College Partnerships

Needless to mention, as it is apparent from the above partnership experience, resources such as financial, human and time are the most important conditions influencing school-college partnership.

In addition to this, Day (1999) identifies that the level and variation of understanding partnership, professional autonomy and vested interests and the existing roles and relationships between higher education and schools have significant role on the success of partnership. Day (1999) identified the differences between collaboration and cooperation. The former involves joint decision-making, requires time, careful negotiation, trust and effective communication – both parties are learners in the enterprise which focuses upon enhancing professional dialogue. If such understanding is not well perceived, gaps will be created eventually jeopardizing the purpose. In the latter, role boundaries and power relationships are unquestioned and maintained, and there is a little mutual learning in what is essentially the ‘expert’ provision of professional development which may be more in the interest of those who traditionally hold the knowledge than those who do it. “When power and prestige are unequal, ‘collaboration’ can easily result in ‘cooptation’, or even domination masked by a euphonious label”(Erickson and Chrisman in Day, 2006) .

Regarding autonomy, the assumption is that change can only be effective if the practitioner have certain level of professional autonomy. Stenhouse as cited in Day (1999) stated that:

I value highly the tradition of professional autonomy as the basis of educational quality, but it seems that this must now be negotiated at school level. Concessions must be made in individual autonomy in order to provide a basis for collaborative working, for the school staff can no longer be seen as a federal association of teachers and departments: it must be professional; community. And it is with that community their professional autonomy must lie (P. 187).

The other issue is wrongly perceived as role of higher education institutions and schools. This is why there remains in the minds of many authorities and their successors as well as teachers a perceived theory-practice, theoretician–practitioner, problem. Day (1999) described this as a division between those who work in schools and higher education, between those who practise and those who theorize. With the thought of discrepancy, common goal partnership can reach very short distance and transmits the legacy of imposition than mutuality.

Part III

Research Methodology

A multi-method case study approach which synthesizes both qualitative and quantitative research methods was used in the study. Brewer and Hunter (1989) say that a multi-method approach involves attacking a research problem with an arsenal of methods that have non-overlapping weakness in addition to their complementary strengths. The study uses quantitative methods for surveying different aspects of the linkage program by means of questionnaires from randomly selected samples of a considerable size. It also uses qualitative methods in the sense that data are generated from interviews, observations, and focus group discussions.

The case study feature of this study is related to its analysis of the linkage program as a single unit. According to Merriam (1998), case studies are differentiated from other types of qualitative research in that they are intensive descriptions and analyses of a single unit or a bounded system such as an individual, program, event, group, intervention or community. The strength of the case study design is also that it can accommodate multi-method approaches for it be quantitative or qualitative (Yin, 1994; Merriam, 1998). As much as this study tries to capture issues referring to the past events it is historical. The inclusion of current practices and experiences makes it also cross-sectional.

The study was planned to follow three basic procedures: preparation, administration of instruments and data collection, data analysis and report writing. In the preparatory phase the main activities included development of a research proposal, review of literature, development of instruments of data collection and recruitment and training of data collectors. The second phase was the administration of different instruments in different settings and the collection of data. There was also the communication of the intent of the study to regions, TEIs, schools and woredas. The third phase included a series of activities: data organization, entry, cleaning, analysis and interpretation, draft report writing, technical review of reports, improvements of draft reports, publication and dissemination.

3.1. Sample Selection

The total number of TEIs currently having linkages with clusters is 21 in the country. The number of schools linked with TEIs is 236. The TEIs and their linkage schools are presented in Table 1.

3.1.1. Selection of TEIs, Deans, Instructors, Cluster Coordinating Units (CCUS) and Student Teachers

The sampling procedure followed for selecting TEIs was judgemental or purposeful sampling. According to Patton (1987), the power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study. He shows that there are more than nine different strategies for purposefully selecting information-rich cases. For this study, a criterion based sampling strategy which involved the selection of TEIs meeting some criteria was adopted.

The first of these criteria for selection of TEI samples was the functionality of the linkage. Linkage programs that do not function were not included in the sample. The second criterion for selection of TEI samples were the provision of inputs by USAID/BEP. Since USAID/BEP provides support to those linkages that function and provide reports on their performance, this criterion was taken as significant. Another criterion for selection was region. Different regions have different numbers of TEIs and their size was considered. From larger regions including Oromia and Amhara, two linkage TEIs were selected. From intermediate regions, SNNPR and Tigray, one linkage TEI from each region was selected. From smaller and emerging regions, one TEI was believed to provide the required information.

The total number of TEIs selected was seven or 30% of the total population. Under these circumstances, since the main interest is not only to learn unique qualities, differences or what are especially enlightening, but also to capture or describe common strategies that worked across these linkages, the selection was done in a way to capture this feature. In this respect, the selection of TEIs within each region was conducted by the use of simple random sampling. From emerging regions only one region was considered and Jijiga was a special case because of its experience.

Table 1: TEIs and Schools in the linkage program by region

Region	TEIs	Number of Schools Linked
Tigray	Aby Adi	29
	Adwa	27
	Mekelle	10
	Total	66
Amhara	Debre Berhan	8
	Debre Markos	8
	Dessie	20
	Gondar	5
	Total	41
Oromia	Adama	10
	Assela	5
	Jimma	19
	Mettu	20
	Nekemte	4
	Robe	20
	Total	78
Addis Ababa	Kotebe	6
SNNP	Awassa	8
	Bonga	4
	Arba Minch	11
	Hossana	10
	Total	33
Gambella	Gambella	6
Somali	Jijjiga	6
Total		236

In all 7 TEIs, all Deans were included in the sample since their number is manageable. The selection of instructors was carried out on the basis of information the CCUs or the Deans provided. Since all instructors may not be involved in each TEI, the deans or CCU coordinator were asked for a list of those instructors who are active in linkage programs, and all those who were in the list were included in the sample. All in all, 342 teachers were involved in the study.

Student teachers were selected on the basis of their knowledge and participation particularly of school experience during the course of their practicum. Considered as key informants, they were identified by members of CCUs. The total number of student teachers who participated in the present study was 50. All CCU members were targeted on the basis of availability sampling for their opinion provides an insider's view of the linkage efforts. The total number of CCU participants was 39 in this study.

3.1.2. Selection of Regional Education Bureau and Woreda Education Office Heads/Experts

Regional Bureau Heads or experts were purposefully selected for the interview. It was decided to include at least two participants from each bureau. The reason for targeting Regional Bureau Heads has to do with the desire to get first hand information from the highest authority. Experts were included because of their technical knowledge of the linkage programs. Similarly, Woreda Education Offices (WEOs) were selected from these regions. The respondents from these WEOs were heads or experts of the WEOs. Table 2 shows the distribution of the sampled regions and TEIs.

Table 2: Sample TEIs by region and linkage schools

Region	Bureau heads/ experts	Sample TEIs	Number of schools	WEO	WEO heads	WEO experts
Tigray	2	Adwa	2	1	1	1
Amhara	2	Debre Berhan	2	2	1	2
		Dessie	2			
Oromia	1	Assela	2	2	2	2
		Robe	2			
SNNP	2	Hossana	2	1	0	2
Somali	2	Jijjiga	2	1	0	2
Total	9	7	14	7	4	9

Table 2 shows that the total number of regions selected was five. In each region, regional heads or experts have participated as planned except for Oromia. The total number of TEIs was seven whereas the number of schools was 14. The total number of Woreda Education Offices included was seven and participants were four Woreda Education Office Heads and nine Education Experts.

3.1.3. Selection of Schools, Directors, Teachers and School Development Units

In the selection of schools under each linkage, distance or nearness is the most important criterion. In principle, linkages were established to serve schools in the vicinity of TEIs. The more proximate they are, the better is the interaction from both sides. The second criterion was the richness of information the schools could provide. Schools which participate in linkages without doubt have reasons to participate at the

level they do. A maximum of two schools in each linkage were selected based on the information provided by the linkage expert of the USAID/Basic Education Program. In order to represent the common variations of schools, one school was selected from rural area whereas the other was from urban area. This means a maximum of 14 schools were included in the current study.

Within schools, all directors were included on the basis of availability sampling. School teachers were surveyed on the basis of their involvement in linkage programs. All in all, the total number of participants is 342. All members of School Development Units (SDUs) in each school, totalling 59, were included as key informants. Table 3 below provides a summary of the respondents and participants of the study.

Table 3: Respondents and participants in the focus group discussion and interview by region

Region	Type of institution	Number	Instructors/ School teachers	Deans/assistant deans or directors	SDU/ student teachers	CCU	WEO heads/ experts	REB heads/ experts
Amhara	TEI	2	77	2	15	11	3	2
	School	4	102	4	23	-		
	WEO	2	-	-	-	-		
Oromia	TEI	2	48	2	14	11	4	1
	School	4	79	4	7	-		
	WEO	2	-	-	-	-		
SNNP	TEI	1	25	1	8	6	2	2
	School	2	59	2	7	-		
	WEO	1	-	-	-	-		
Somali	TEI	1	14	1	7	6	2	2
	School	2	53	1	11	-		
	WEO	1	-	-	-	-		
Tigary	TEI	1	32	1	6	5	2	2
	School	2	49	2	11	-		
	WEO	1						
Total	TEI	7	196	7	50	39	-	-
	School	14	342	13	59	-		
	WEO	7		-	-	-		

Table 3 shows that the participants of this study were regional education bureau and woreda education office personnel, TEI deans, TEI instructors and student teachers, cluster centre units in the TEIs and school teachers. According to the table, data were collected from a sample of schools and teacher education institutions (TEIs) that participate in school-TEI linkage programs. Overall, there were 728 participants in the study, of which 538 were TEI instructors and school teachers whereas the remaining 148 were other professionals.

3.2. Instruments of Data Collection and Sources of Data

3.2.1. Questionnaires

Different types of questionnaires were used to collect data from participants. These are TEI instructors' questionnaire, school teachers' questionnaire, deans/assistant deans' questionnaire and school directors' questionnaire. The total number of questionnaires filled in by respondents sums up to 538 out of the total 728 participants. The largest number of respondents who filled in the questionnaires are school teachers and the size is 342. The next is that of TEI instructors with 196 returned questionnaires. Directors' questionnaires were 13 while Deans' questionnaires were seven. The questionnaires for deans and schools were directed at factual data.

3.2.1. Focus Group Discussions and Interviews

Focus Group Discussions had 148 participants while 21 participants took part in interviews. The proportion of respondents to the questionnaires was 61.3% from primary school teachers 35.1% from TEIs. Among those who participated in the focus group discussions, 40.0% were from school development units (SDU) and key teachers from cluster schools, 34.0% were student teachers of the TEIs and 26.0% were cluster-coordinating units (CCU) and members of practicum unit committees. From five region education bureaus (REBs), nine region education bureaus heads or experts participated in the interview. Also, from seven woreda education offices (WEO) of these regions, 13 office heads or experts participated in the interview.

In TEIs, the sources of information were deans, teachers and students who participated in the linkage program. In cluster schools, teachers, and students were the sources of information. As already indicated, all Deans of the sample TEIs were included in the study. Teacher trainers who were involved in the linkage programs were included in filling questionnaires. Focus group discussions were conducted with a maximum of 5-6 teacher trainers who were involved in conducting training or other types of linkage activities. The student participants were selected among those who participated in practicum. In primary schools, all teachers of the sample schools who participated in the linkage program were included. Directors and assistant directors were included whenever relevant. Students from Grades 6, 7 and 8 were selected for focus group discussions.

3.3. Data Analysis

Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods were employed. Because the study was exploratory and descriptive, percentages were found to be sufficient to analyze the quantitative data. Whenever appropriate, however, means were also used. The qualitative data were included in the analysis to substantiate the results obtained through quantitative analysis. The data were also analyzed using a pattern-matching strategy whereby explanations were built on each unit of analysis first for each case and then comparisons were made across cases for theoretical generalizations.

Part IV

Presentation of Data and Findings of the Study

The data on school-college linkage were collected by the use of questionnaires and focus group discussion guides. Questionnaires were used to collect data from school directors, teachers, college deans and instructors while interviews were made with REB and WEO heads or experts. Focus group discussion guides were used to collect data from staff development units, student-teachers and cluster coordinating units.

This chapter comprises the analysis of data and presentation of the main findings of the study. Data are presented by major themes, and information from the respondents is triangulated and discussed under these themes. The sequence of presentation is such that the quantitative data is presented and then substantiated by the data obtained through focus group discussion. Themes which are not in the questionnaire, but dealt with in the focus group discussion were also treated during the cross analysis. The general profile of the respondents are presented first followed by the presentation of data on the linkage program across the themes.

4.1. Profile of Respondents to Questionnaires

In questionnaires for school teachers, directors, TEI deans and assistant deans, and TEI instructors, factual items which asked for sex, qualifications, work experience and weekly load were included. Responses were obtained from both males and females. The qualification of respondents ranged from certificate to master's degree. Similarly, the workload of teachers and their work experiences varied showing that respondents can provide the required information. The data obtained are shown in Tables 4 and 5 below.

Table 4: Profile of respondents to questionnaires

Profile		School Teachers		School Directors/ Assistant		Deans/ Assistant		Instructors		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Sex	Female	145	42.4	1	7.7	-	-	8	4.1	154	13.6
	Male	173	50.6	12	92.6	7	100.0	188	95.9	380	84.7
	Total	318	93.0	13	100.0	7	100.0	196	100.0	534	98.3
Qualification	MA/MSc	-	-	-	-	5	71.4	47	23.4	52	94.4
	BA/BSc	2	6.0	1	7.7	2	28.6	133	66.2	138	27.1
	Diploma	125	36.5	11	84.0	-	-	14	7.0	150	30.5
	Certificate	197	57.6	1	7.7	-	-	-	-	198	16.2
	Other	10	2.9	-	-	-	-	7	3.5	17	1.6
	Total	334	97.7	13	100.0	7	100.0	201	100.0	555	99.43

As indicated in Table 4, female and male respondents were 13.6 % and 84.7%, respectively. With respect to the qualification of the respondents, 57.6% of the teachers were certificate holders, 36.5% were diploma holders, and 6.0% were BA/BSc degree holders. Among the school directors, 7.7% were BA/BSc, 84.0% were diploma and 7.7% were certificate holders. The college deans were with qualifications of MA/MSc (71.4%) and BA/BSc (26.8%).

Table 5: Work experience and weekly load of teachers by region

Region	Work Experience in Years				Period per week	
	Total		In the current school year			
	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean
Amhara	97	26.2	101	11.2	101	25.9
Oromia	78	21.7	63	8.0	76	20.9
SNNP	58	22.3	57	8.7	55	21.5
Somalia	50	16.0	49	8.3	48	15.3
Tigray	48	25.1	47	4.0	48	23.6
Total	331	22.3	317	8.0	328	22.4

The service year has an implication for professional development since teaching experience by itself may lead to professional development. According to Table 5, the

average work experience of the respondents was 22.3 and the average work experience in the current school year was 8.0 years while the average teaching load per week was 22.4 periods (one period has a 40-minute duration). Teachers' workload has an impact on the linkage program as teachers were expected to assist practicum of student teachers and other activities. On average, teachers from Amhara region had the longest work experiences and those from Somali had the shortest work experiences. The following sections describe and analyze the data obtained from these respondents in line with the themes and emerging issues.

4.2. Prevalence, Purposes and Organizational Support System of the Linkage

School-college linkage as a new systematic approach in teacher development program in Ethiopia is not widely spread throughout regions. Hence, it is difficult to say that all regions and districts have similar experiences about it. In the regions where this practice is prevalent, it is expected to be supported systematically through organizational structure. This section explores the prevalence or establishment of the linkage program and the support system it has been rendered. The information is obtained from interviews of REB and DEO heads and experts.

Prevalence: Before examining the effectiveness of linkage programs it was essential to know whether or not linkage programs existed in the first place. To this effect, the REBs respondents were interviewed if there are linkage programs in TEIs and schools in their respective regions. Accordingly, all respondents reported that “there are TEI – school linkage programs in their respective regions.” In more specific terms, a respondent from Amhara REB said the following:

There is no teacher education institution-school linkage program other than the one sponsored by AED/BESO at the moment. The TEI-school linkage that had been in the region in the long past was restructured and strengthened since AED/BESO's intervention. Linkage is becoming an essential component of the TDP in our region.

Another example is a respondent from Oromia who also said that there is TEI – school linkage program in the Region and it has started in 2004/05. The establishment

of the linkage has the purposes of supporting the professional development of inservice teachers and the implementation of the practicum courses of preservice teacher education. Respondents from Tigray Education bureau said that there is TEI-School linkage program which supports the CPD program as well as schools clusters.

In addition, WEO heads/experts were asked about the existence and functioning of TEI-school linkage program. Responses indicate that there is School-Teacher Education College Linkage in their respective districts. An example is the response from Assella Woreda Education Office, Oromia region:

Assella was under Tiyo woreda and it has become an independent office only two years back. As a result, the WEO did not have an immediate communication with AED/BESO representative who was closely working with Tiyo. However, there are three cluster schools through which the linkage has been functioning.

A similar example is from Hosana Woreda Education Office, the SNNPR, which was expressed as follows:

In addition to the linkage program supported by USAID/BEP, there are linkage programs supported by two private colleges in the district. These two private TEIs are Hiwot and Wachamo Colleges. These colleges run the linkage program through direct contact with schools...The AED/BESO supported linkage program is supported by Hosanna College of Teacher Education. The linkage perfectly matches the intentions of the Woreda Education Office...

From the above descriptions, it can be concluded that there is school-TEI linkage program in all regions and districts involved in this study which are supported by USAID/BEP.

Purposes of Linkage Programs: The purpose of any innovation is subject to change during implementation. In this respect, REB experts were asked what purposes their linkage programs have in order to understand whether or not linkage programs are

implemented according to the purposes for which they were intended. Responses indicate that linkage programs are geared towards the objectives for which they were created. A respondent from Oromia Education Bureau said:

The establishment of the linkage had two purposes to serve. One purpose is to assist the professional development of inservice teachers...The other purpose is to help the implementation of the practicum. The inservice aspect helps teachers in many aspects. For example, it gives seminars and workshops on the notion of active learning methods, large class management, continuous assessment...in connection to preservice, all the colleges send their students to cluster primary schools... These schools show sufficient readiness and willingness to accept student teachers, let them observe the classes...

A respondent from Amhara Region Education bureau described the purposes of linkage programs in relation to educational quality:

The main purpose of the establishment of the linkage was to raise the quality of education through, for instance, raising the professional quality of teachers. Building the school capacity through strengthening Cluster Resource Centres is another essential component of the linkage program.

A similar description was given by a respondent from Tigray Education Bureau about the purposes of linkage programs as follows:

At the regional level...the reasons for establishing the linkage are mainly three. The first is to develop the capacity of schools materially and professionally while the second is to increase the relevance of the preservice training to the actual situation in schools. The other reason is to facilitate the practicum.

The above descriptions lead us to the conclusion that linkages are correctly perceived by regions to support both the preservice and inservice teacher education programs.

Organizational support: Organizational support is the recognition and inclusion of the linkage program in the organizational structure and job description of the REBs and their line staff. Responses indicate no encouraging directions. For instance a respondent from Oromia Education Bureau said the following:

There is no specific body at region level to coordinate linkage programs. However, at district and school level there are teachers who coordinate cluster schools in each district in the Region and who provide administrative support for the program.

Respondents from SNNPR education bureau revealed that there is no person who is permanently assigned to lead and guide the linkage program at the regional level. One of the respondents gave the following information about organizational support to the linkage program:

At the regional level the program is largely supported by USAID/BEP while limited support is also provided by UNICEF and TDP (Teachers Development Program). The linkage program functions through direct involvement of schools and TEIs. The education experts at the region level provide largely assistance in coordinating and taking part in training and discussion meetings.

According to the above response, no professional is assigned to coordinate the linkage program. However, it was revealed that there are two focal persons (one from teachers training department and the other from supervision department) who follow linkage related issues.

The respondents from Tigray Regional Education Bureau indicated that continuous professional development (CPD) program and cluster are supported by the TEIs in the region. However, there is no separate body responsible at region level to coordinate the School-TEI Linkage Program. The departments of public relations, training and civil service reform work collaboratively in coordinating the School-TEI Linkage Program.

The responses from Somali region indicate that the linkage program works in two ways:

The TEI gives training to the teachers in cluster schools and the schools provide an opportunity for prospective teachers to practice teaching. Organizationally, the linkage has different bodies. There is a focal person who is responsible for running the linkage program at regional level. There is a unit in TEI which is given the mandate to facilitate the linkage from the side of TEI. Similarly, the cluster schools have teachers' committee.

Woreda Education Office heads/experts also confirmed that there are no clearly set roles, responsibility or job description to run the program. According to Asella WEO (Oromia), for instance, a respondent said the following:

There is no coordinator (personnel) specifically assigned to work and to monitor the linkage. There is no clear direction or chain of command. Sometimes the cluster schools arrange their own programs and request the TEI to train their staffs. Conversely, the TEI also schedule its own training programs and invites the schools to participate in the training.

Supporting this, respondents from Kombolcha and Debreberhan WEOs, Amhara region, said the linkage does not have a systematized organization. A respondent from Kombolcha has to say this:

We don't have any formal structure and guidelines showing lines of relationships, responsibilities and accountability and how the program has to be organized and carried out....The woreda has four cluster centres. The tasks pertaining to linkage are handled by supervisors of the centres under the guidance of school directors where clusters are situated. The supervisors organize, coordinate, and facilitate the practicum program. ...they assess the training needs of teachers in the clusters and bring them to the attention of the TEI so that the latter could conduct training.

What is clear from the above response is that there is no formal organizational STLP structure in this woreda. Linkages operate on the basis of joint actions and efforts made by the college cluster coordinating unit and cluster school supervisors. The condition is not different in Debre Berhan. A respondent from the woreda education office said the following:

There is no structure put formally in place to show and direct how it works. It operates on the basis of joint actions and efforts made by the college cluster coordinating unit and cluster school supervisors. The supervisors and other school leadership make needs assessment on areas of training to be conducted for teachers by the TEI and facilitate the practicum...Concerning the linkage program, the woreda doesn't have a bigger role to play. Rather, it has a very limited involvement in the program.

However, the respondents from Adwa and Jijjiga WEOs said that there is organizational structure for the linkage program. In this organizational structure, in the TEI there is a unit to follow the activities of the linkage. Similarly, in schools there are staff development facilitators that represent schools. Responsible body from TEIs and WEOs support the linkage program. This include cluster schools unit from the TEI and programs division from WEO.

From the above analysis, one can observe that School-TEI Linkage Program is not clearly recognized both at region and district education levels. The program is not well supported by structurally recognized body at the regions and districts, except that side assignments are given to already existing units. This implies that the recognition for the linkage program is fuzzy. More concern seems to be reflected at TEIs where a unit of staff development is responsible to run the linkage program. The TEIs and Cluster schools make direct communication where the regions' and districts' role and support is vague.

4.3. Provision of Policy or Working Guidelines and Regulations

As far as systematic function of a program is concerned, the need to establish guidelines is not contestable. Policy and guidelines assist in showing the directions, role and expectations of those involved in the program. Therefore, as a program, the linkage program is expected to function with the support of policy and guidelines.

Respondents of all regions confirmed that there is no definite or clear policy and strategy prepared for guiding the linkage program. They pointed out that the manual for CPD, cluster and practicum are used to run the linkage program. For instance, a respondent from Tigray Education Bureau said the following:

There is linkage in the region. But there is no specific policy and strategy for the linkage. However, policies regarding CPD, cluster and practicum, are used to strengthen the linkage. There is no separate body responsible for the linkage either. In the Department of Public Relations, Training and Civil Service there are two divisions which are responsible for the linkage.

The interviewees from Amhara REB pointed out that there is a manual for cluster schools prepared at the region's Education Bureau. The presence of the manual, according to the respondents, has contributed a lot to narrow discrepancies between the performances of the TEIS, among others, on matters related to the linkage program in the Region. In Oromia region, interviewees indicated that issues related to linkage are carried out with mutual understanding. Sometimes, however, this understanding may be lacking and working in harmony gets disrupted.

The responses from WEO heads/experts support the position of the respondents from REBs. For instance, a respondent from Kombolcha Woreda Education Office of Amhara region has to say this:

There is a policy and strategy at the level of the Ministry of Education. However, there is no definite policy and strategy guiding the linkage at the level of the Woreda that I know. We do not have clear-cut guidelines.

Similarly, a respondent from Asella Woreda Education Office of the Oromia region said the following:

AED/BESO has its own policy and strategy which, I believe, has been presented to the Education Bureau of Oromia with whom it made an agreement to work in the woreda. Apart from that, there is no definite policy and strategy at the woreda level.

Similar interviews held with WEO heads/experts from Sinana woreda Oromia region and Hosana Woreda, SNNPR revealed that there is no strategy and policy other than that developed by the Ministry of Education. Sinana Woreda Education head further reported that his office did not know the policy and strategy of USAID/BEP TEI–School Linkage Program.

There are some few exceptions to the above findings. For instance, the Somali Regional Education Bureau respondent claims that his regional education bureau has a clearly defined policy and strategy. According to him,

Its organization permits two way interactions. The TEI has a unit that follows the activities of the linkage. The clusters schools have staff development committee that is responsible for the linkage.

In reality, what the respondent describes is not a written document of policy about linkage. The response refers to the conventional wisdom with which linkages are practiced in the region. Moreover, it was not made clear who and at which level this policy was developed.

Rather a firm response about the existence of policy came from Adwa Woreda office, Tigray region:

The cluster unit at the TEI developed a document that guides the activities of the linkage program. This was commented on by the WEO and the schools. Finally that document is used as a guideline for the linkage program.

Overall, the above data suggest that the linkage program is run without governing policy and guideline or with no clear knowledge of the existing policy and guidelines. Although the general linkage program guide is indicated in the CPD guidelines (MOE, 2003), it seems that some authorities have no knowledge about its existence.

4.4. Budget Allocation

It is clear that the linkage requires resources to function effectively. Among these resources, the most vital is the financial support of the program. One of the means to sustain the program is the allocation of budget by REBs. With respect to budget the views of REB and WEO heads/experts were solicited through interviews.

According to a respondent from the Tigray REB, there is no specific budget allocated for the linkage program in the region. Here are the statements:

There is budget for the practicum and for TEIs as a whole but no specific budget is allocated for the linkage. ...the TEIs are provided with a budget for the clustering activities. And the region yearly allocates money to provide equipment such as duplicating machines...

Similarly, respondents from SNNP and Somali affirmed that there is no government budget allocated for school-college linkage program. The financial resource for the linkage program is available only from the USAID/BEP through TEIs and region USAID/BEP branch offices.

According to the respondents from Oromia and Amhara REBs, a token amount is allocated from the TDP. The following is, for example, the explanation given from Oromia Education Bureau:

TDP has no significant amount of specific budget put aside for implementation of the inservice program. However, whatever the amount- big or small- is covered from the TDP budget. The budget allocated from the TDP budget this academic year is slightly over one million Ethiopian

birr. ... The responsibility of the management of the budget is in the hands of the colleges.

All WEO respondents said that no budget is allocated for the linkage program. They further reported that the TEIs cover the expenses of the linkage program. The WEO respondents also said that they do not have information about USAID/BEP allocated budget to run the linkage program.

One can understand from this description that there is no government budget allocated for the linkage program apart from the budget allocated for regular programs such as practicum. The TDP fund is the source of budget for the linkage in some regions. Since TDP is a project that may phase-out any time, there is an urgent need to allocate a regular budget for the linkage program. Otherwise, its sustainability is in question.

4.5. Responsibility and Follow up

Responsibility emerges from the accountability indicated in an organizational structure. It is embedded in the job description of the roles of organs in the organizational structure. The regional education bureaus and woredas provided information during the interview made with them on the responsibility and follow up of the linkage program.

It has been already reported in the previous section that personnel have not been assigned to lead linkage programs in regional education bureaus. Coordination and leadership in this respect rests in other personnel who do the job as extra (or additional) responsibility. Other responsibilities including monitoring, supervision and reporting must be carried out by others as well.

Interviews with REB respondents indicated that the supervision, monitoring and reporting of the linkage activities at the region level is done along with the overall educational activities in the region. For example, when supervisors visit zones, woredas and schools, they deal with the linkage program as one part among many activities they supervise. Similarly, reports on the linkage program appear as a

subheading or a paragraph within the overall educational activity reports compiled in the regions.

WEO experts asserted that there is no assigned person to guide and follow up the linkage program at the woreda level. They said that there is a Cluster coordinating Unit at TEIs and cluster centres and key teacher at cluster level.

According to the authorities of Adwa WEO (Tigray region), at woreda level, the programs division (specifically primary school supervisors) is responsible for the linkage activities. Thus, the supervisor with the head teachers follows up the linkage program. The TEI also evaluates and ranks schools according to their performances and discusses it with the schools in a conference. For instance, the respondents from Hosanna WEO, SNNPR said that “there is no specifically assigned person (staff) at woreda level to coordinate the linkage program.” The linkage program is taken as an additional task to the several educational activities going on in the woreda.

Respondents from Kombolcha WEO (Amhara region) said that they do not have the plan for supervising and follow up the linkage program since they do not consider it as their formal responsibility. As a whole, the respondents said that they do not consider supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the linkage program as their task. Since they do not plan for the linkage programs, they do not report about their achievements. Of course, they said that they receive reports from cluster supervisors which include some points about how the programs are handled and comment on them when they come together for periodic meetings.

Responsibility and follow up are the reflections of recognition of the linkage program in the organizational structure. It is possible to understand from the above description that there is no body responsible for the follow up of the School-TEI Linkage Programs at region and woreda levels. WEOs did not recognize the linkage program as their concern. Some WEOs put aside the responsibility of following up the School-TEI Linkage Program to supervisors and teachers.

4.6. Collaborations of TEIs and Schools

Collaboration of TEIs and schools is a means through which the linkage activities are performed. The respondents were inquired to point out ways through which the partners collaborate. According to Asella and Sinana WEO respondents, the collaboration between schools and TEIs is irregular. Sometimes both parties collaborate with each other directly and at other times through the mediation of the WEOs. They reported that schools get professional, material and to some extent financial support from the TEIs. The TEIs, on the other hand, send students for practicum to the schools and the schools render mentoring services for the TEI.

According to the respondents from Hosanna WEO, the collaboration of the TEI School Linkage Program in this woreda is through direct contact and communication between the TEI and the cluster schools. The Woreda Education Office is not directly involved. The respondents from Kombolcha, Debre Berhan and Adwa reported that the interaction is in terms of the activities embedded in the program. They said that the TEIs interact with the schools by way of assigning their students for practicum in the schools and collaborating with them in this regard, providing materials and by giving training on areas identified as important by the schools. The schools interact with the TEI through assigning mentors for students who are on practicum, identifying needs for training and material and financial assistance and submitting them to the TEI which expedite or channel to other donors the assistance required by the schools. They further explained that, the supervisors and other school leadership make needs assessment on areas of training to be conducted for teachers by the college and facilitate the practicum. The colleges arrange and monitor both the practicum and the inservice training. Concerning the linkage program, the WEO does not have much role to play. Rather, it has a very limited involvement in the program.

According to respondents from Jijjiga WEO, the organization of the linkage has two parts; the TEI gives training to the teachers in cluster schools and the schools provide platform for practical experience to the student teachers to help them exercise in practice what they have learned theoretically and there are a unit in the TEI and committees in the schools that run the linkage.

It is possible to infer from these descriptions that the TEIs and schools collaborate by assigning responsible person or a committee and cluster school unit in the TEIs, and mentors for practicing students. The collaboration is facilitated more through the provision of material support and inservice training from the TEIs to the cluster centres. Usually the communication is through a letter. The involvement of WEOs is negligible in this regard.

4.7. Management of Linkage Programs by Cluster Coordinating Units in TEIs

Cluster coordinating Units in TEIs are the main micro-implementation bodies. They are supposed to plan, coordinate and monitor linkage programs with cluster schools. In order for these bodies to function well, however, it is necessary that they are properly organized and supported by the TEI management. In order to understand how Cluster Coordinating Units are functioning, the following questions were posed in Focus Group Discussion with members of the Cluster Coordinating Units: What does the formation of the CCU look like in your TEI? Are there full time staff members assigned to it? Is it integrated into the formal structure of the TEI? The data obtained from the focus group discussions are summarized below.

4.7.1. Formation and Staffing of the Cluster Coordinating Units

Cluster Coordinating Units were formed at different times (2001-2005/06) and some TEIs have spent valuable time without implementing the program. For instance, in Debre Berhan it was formed in 1993 E.C. or 2001 G.C. In Assella it was formed in 1998 E.C or 2005/06. In Hosanna the formation of the CCU dates back to 1997 E.C or 2004/05 G.C whereas in Gijjiga and Adwa the establishment of CCUs goes back to 2004 and 2005/06 respectively. The significance of time in the implementation of innovations should be very well recognized. Those who had established CCUs as early (quickly) as possible had sufficient time for implementation and shaping the new relationships with schools. In this respect, Assella TEI, for instance, came to the practice only recently.

The staffing of the Cluster Coordinating Units also shows a fairly similar pattern whereby there is no permanent TEI staffs assigned to lead the linkage program. In Debre Berhan TEI, for instance, the linkage was run by a committee until 2001. Since

this period, however, two key teachers from primary school were recruited and assigned to run the unit on full time basis. In Assella, there is no CCU, only a three-man committee provides overall guidance to the CCU since the beginning of 1998 E.C.(2005/06). In Hosanna, it was reported that there is neither full time staff nor office and hence no allowance is allocated. In Jijjiga, focus group discussants indicated that the TEI has no full time staff or office for the linkage program and this unit shares the office of SDU. The trend is not different in Adwa TEI whereby a report indicated that there is no permanent staff or office for the linkage program.

4.7.2. Integration of the CCU into Formal Structures of TEIs

The Cluster Coordinating Units are not included as integral parts of the formal structures of the TEIs. For instance, focus group discussants in Debre Berhan TEI reported that the CCU does not make up the formal structure of the college, but it is well organized by the leadership of the college. In Assella, it was reported that the CCU operates under Staff Development Unit by a committee consisting of three staff members. The committee serves as a bridge between the college and schools. It was pointed out that the CCU is not yet transformed into a full-fledged unit, and its duties and responsibilities are not clearly identified. According to the reports, this has created confusion between CCU and SDU, and there is no guideline as to how to go about the activity. In Hosanna this unit is in a state of unclear situation. It was established by a legislation which brought about the establishment of the college, but it has been already reported that the CCU has no full time staff or office. In Jijjiga, the unit functions under the academic vice dean, but there is no structure in practice as there is no full time staff or office for the unit. In Adwa, discussants said that the unit is under the Research and Publications Unit of the TEI.

The integration of the CCU's plans into the TEI plans was another issue of concern raised in the focus group discussions. In Debre Berhan it was reported that the CCU's plan is integrated with the college's plan and gets support from the college. Currently two Ethiopians and two foreigners run the program voluntarily. It has its own office. The structural problem did not allow the unit to elaborate clear directions for the linkage program. In Hosanna, there was a clear report from the respondents that the CCU plan has no integration with the college plans. In Jijjiga, respondents said that the

plan of the CCU corresponds with that of the college. Overall, the above data suggest that the plans of the CCU and the college are at varying levels of integration.

4.8. Management of Linkage Programs by Staff Development Units in TEIs

Out of the 14 sample schools, in-depth focus group discussions were held in 12 schools. Data were not collected as expected in two schools. In all 12 schools, the collected information indicates that Staff Development Units were established between 2000/01 and 2005/06. Therefore, the formation of Staff Development Units has been accomplished. Two forms of organization have been reported in the formation of the staff development units. One is the leadership of Staff Development Units by a committee made up of key teachers. Typically this establishment has overlapping responsibilities with the practicum committee. Another form of organization is the normal staff development unit. A variety of roles of the staff development units were reported. These are

- Facilitate the professional and career development of teachers, mentor them, observe sessions, evaluate the preparation and utilization of teaching aids
- Help student teachers in socialization in the school situation
- Facilitate the delivery of teaching aids
- Encourage teachers to use the college's resource centre
- Create conducive condition for professional development activities
- Organize training sessions
- Assist practicum activities, evaluate linkage program
- Mediate between the college and the school
- Identify needs through discussions
- Receive materials from the college and make accessible to teachers and satellite schools
- Facilitate experience exchange/sharing and supports model classroom teachers

On the other hand, in few of the schools where there are no clear structures the roles played by staff development units were expressed as follows in one of the schools of the Oromia Regional State:

There is no as such SDU, but a sort of committee since 1998. Training was conducted three times, but the training lacks actual audience because the contents were merely “dry science,” not backed by written handouts. The role is expressed in principles, may be not in practical sense. Some staff members lack interest and there is also lack of support from heads of the school.

The above reports clearly indicate that where there are clear structures and roles for staff development units in schools, the linkage program has been effective in following the objectives set for accomplishment. Conversely, lack of clear leadership structures has been counter-productive in implementing linkage programs. Of the 12 schools that provided data, only four schools reported that there is lack of clear leadership by the staff development unit. This implies that the majority of the schools have staff development units for the linkage program to follow the desired routes.

4.9. Professional Development of Cluster Primary School Teachers by the Linkage Program

One of the purposes of the linkage as a part of school development programs is to assist teachers to improve their professional competencies. As a result, cluster school teachers were expected to participate in varieties of skill training programs including active learning. Accordingly, they were requested to provide information whether or not they have participated in such type of training and in which areas they received training. Their responses are shown in the following sections.

4. 9.1. Participation in Training Programs

Training is one of the means through which teachers develop their professional activities. TEIs are expected to assist teachers of their partner schools in this respect. Teachers were requested to provide information whether they have participated in such training and the topics addressed. The number of teachers who took part in this training is shown below.

Table 6: Participation of cluster schools teachers in linkage training programs

Region	Teacher Responses				Total	
	Yes		No		N	%
	N	%	N	%		
Amhara	95	30.0	0	0	95	30
Oromia	65	20.6	7	2.2	72	14.2
SNNP	48	15.2	4	1.3	52	10.4
Somalia	40	12.7	10	3.6	50	10
Tigray	40	12.7	7	2.2	47	9.4
Total	288	91.1	28	11.13	316	74.8
Mean	57.6	18.2	5.6	2.2	63	14.8

Table 6 shows that 91.1% of the respondents participated in linkage training programs organized on active learning and other issues while the remaining 8.9% did not. The proportion of teachers from Somali (12.7%) and Tigray (12.7%) who got training was the least whereas the proportion of teachers from Amhara was the highest (30.0%).

As the responses from school directors reveal, all (100%) agreed that their respective schools and teachers have benefited from the linkage program. The directors reported that both the schools and teachers have benefited in getting training on topics such as active learning, continuous assessment, gender sensitivity, production and use of teaching aids and school administration.

4.9.2. Topics of Training Programs and Other Professional Development Benefits

Different issues pertinent to the training programs are expected to be addressed as topics of the linkage training programs. In this respect, teachers who participated in such training programs were asked to provide information regarding the topics covered during the training sessions. In addition to this, they were asked the number of times they took part in the training programs over the last three years. The following table shows the results.

Table 7: Topics and frequency of trainings cluster school teachers received over the last three years

Topic	Participants and number of training					
	Once		Twice		More than two	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Professional ethics	106	50.0	51	24.3	53	25.2
HIV/AIDS	77	57.9	29	21.8	27	20.3
Civics and Ethical education	46	13.5	20	22.5	23	25.8
Environmental education	32	41.6	22	28.6	23	29.9
community school relationship	33	34.0	31	32.4	33	34.0
Instructional planning	68	50.0	37	27.2	31	22.8
Curriculum integration	79	62.2	29	22.8	19	15.0
student centred methods	110	46.8	41	17.4	84	35.7
continuous assessment	116	50.9	44	19.3	68	29.8
Subject methodology	73	41.2	46	26.0	58	32.8
Self contained classroom management	83	45.6	40	22.0	59	32.4
Mean	75	48.0	34	24.0	43	28.0

As could be seen from Table 7, the first three topics which were most frequently taken more than two times were student centred methods (35.7%), community-school relationship (34.0%) and subject area methodology (32.3%). The topics, which were mostly taken once included, curriculum integration (62.2%), HIV/AIDS (57.9%) and continuous assessment (50.9%). On the other hand, Civics and ethical education (13.5%) was the least widely covered topic as it was provided to the smallest number of teachers. In general, the largest proportion of teachers (52%) took training twice or more.

In focus group discussions, members of cluster coordinating units, staff development units and student teachers were asked about the benefits school teachers got in terms of professional development from this program. A variety of responses were obtained and these are summarized in the table below.

Table 8. Perceived professional development benefits of teachers from linkage programs

Region	CCU members	SDU members	Student teachers
Amhara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved teaching skills Shared experience Learned school realities Skills of classroom management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquired new methods of teaching Acquaintance with college staff Improved teaching skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience student –centred approach Did action research
Oromia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motivations towards teaching Experience in active learning Experience sharing and visits of Pedagogical centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional training was given on different topics Exposure to ICT & computers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New teaching techniques
SNNP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learned active learning and its application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on different topics Active learning methods Improved techniques of student assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New experience of teaching Integration of theory & practice
Somali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free professional training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on different topics Increased professional awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exposure to modern teaching methods
Tigray	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gained new experiences of teaching Participated in professional training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved classroom management skills Awareness of different professional matters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Got motivation to teaching Gained new techniques of teaching

The responses in Table 8 above show that linkage programs not only provided training on a variety of areas but training programs have also different concrete benefits for teachers. This was acknowledged by Cluster Coordinating Units of TEIs, Staff Development Units of Schools as well as by student teachers. It can be inferred from this that linkage programs have met their objectives of teacher development within the broader context of school development.

4.9.3. Trainers of Teachers in Linkage Programs

In relation to the topics of training, the question of who offers the training is equally important. The next section examines this issue. Related to this, school teachers were asked to state the trainers. Table 9 shows their responses.

Table 9: Trainers of the School teachers in the linkage programs

Trainers	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
TEI instructors	219	76.6	67	23.4
Key teacher	40	14.0	246	86.0
Staff development unit	50	17.5	235	82.5
Others	43	15.0	243	85.0

As shown in Table 9, the majority of the respondents (76.6%) said that the training was provided by TEI instructors. This indicates that there is linkage between the TEIs and the schools at least at the training level. The advantage of this approach is that colleges will be able to share their latest experiences to practicing teachers. However, this provision also shows that it is possible to devolve these activities, as there is an indication that the training can be provided by key teachers or staff development units (31.5%) at the school level.

4.9.4. Organizers of Training Programs for School Teachers

The role of organizers has implications to the linkage programs because it indicates the initiation and the ownership of the program. In order to explore this, teachers were requested to provide information on who organized the training programs. Table 10 presents the summary.

Table 10: Organizers of Training Programs

Organizer	Responses of School teachers			
	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
TEIs/ instructors	154	55.0	126	45.0
Cluster resource centres	104	37.1	176	62.0
Schools	45	16.1	235	83.9
Other	24	8.6	255	91.4

As indicated in Table 10, most of the respondents (55.0%) said that TEIs organized the training program, while 37.1% and 16.1% disclosed that cluster resource centres and schools organized the training program respectively for school teachers. These responses may comply with the capacity (resource) that these institutions have. This argument assumes that TEIs have better capacity than schools and cluster resource

centres. However, the finding also indicates that schools can manage professional development activities if they have the required resources and capacities.

The place of the training has also an impact on the practicality and convenience of the training. According to the responses of the instructors, the training was conducted in TEIs (87.2%), at a national workshop (27.4%) and at regional workshop (6.7%). The indication is that the instructors have received the training repeatedly at these places in different times.

4.9.5. Relevance, Usefulness and Appropriateness of the Training Programs

This section presents teachers' perception of the relevance of the training provided by linkage programs to their professional development as well as school improvement. In order to explore the conduciveness of the training events, teachers were asked to provide information about the time of the training.

With reference to the first question, the majority rated the practicality and usefulness of the training as average (46.4%) or high (29.5%). The practicality and usefulness of the training was perceived as high in Amhara and Oromia regions than in other regions. It seems that the training addressed the needs of teachers and schools. Table 11 shows the summary of the results. This was substantiated by another related question that inquired teachers about the relevance of the training. A similar finding was obtained as shown in Table 13. Teachers rated the relevance of the training as average (47%), low (7.2%), or very low (6.6%).

Table 11: Teachers' Perception of the practicality and usefulness of the training

Responses		Regions					Total
		Amhara	Oromia	SNNP	Somali	Tigray	
Very high	N	7	8	4	11	2	32
	%	2.2	2.5	1.3	3.4	0.6	10.0
High	N	25	21	15	12	21	94
	%	7.8	6.6	4.7	3.8	2.6	29.5
Average	N	63	31	18	21	15	148
	%	19.7	9.7	5.6	6.6	4.7	46.4
Low	N	4	5	11	1	4	25
	%	1.3	1.6	3.4	0.3	1.3	7.8
Very low	N	1	6	9	2	2	20
	%	0.3	1.9	2.8	0.6	0.6	6.3
Total	N	100	71	57	47	44	319
	%	31.3	22.3	17.9	14.7	13.8	100

With reference to the second question, teachers said that the trainings were mostly given while the teaching learning was in process (28.8%), during vacation (26.9%) or weekends (26.9%). The time of the training especially on weekends and vacations seems to be not conducive as it shares the teachers' leisure time.

Another question forwarded to teachers in connection to this was the appropriateness of the training programs to their level of understanding. They were asked to rate the item from very high to very low. Table 14 below presents the summary of teachers' perception in this regard.

Table 12: Teachers' perception of the appropriateness of the training to their understanding level

Responses	Responses	
	N	%
Very High	37	11.7
High	96	30.4
Medium	157	49.7
Low	12	3.8
Very low	14	4.4
Total	316	100

Table 12 shows that 91.8% of the respondents believed that the training was appropriate to their understanding at medium (49.7%), high (30.4%), or very high (11.7%) levels. On the other hand, 8.2% of the respondents said that the training was appropriate at low or very low level. All in all, the perception of the majority of the respondents was that the training was reasonably appropriate to their level of understanding.

4.10. Provision of Materials and Resources

Equally important as the provision of training is the provision of materials, facilities and resources. In this respect, the significance of providing training materials pertinent to the training programs is paramount. Training materials assist the training as well as encourage further reading and training. To this end, teachers were asked whether or not training materials were provided during their training. The responses from the teachers are presented in Table 13 below.

Table 13: Proportion of teachers who received training materials by region

Region	Responses					
	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Amhara	65	19.5	36	10.8	101	30.3
Oromia	50	15	28	8.4	78	23.4
SNNP	45	13.5	14	4.2	59	17.7
Somali	33	9.9	16	4.8	49	14.7
Tigray	34	10.2	12	3.6	46	13.8
Total	227	68.2	106	31.8	333	100

As shown in Table 13, 68.2% of the teachers received materials during the training whereas 31.8% did not. The proportion of those who did not get the training materials was almost one third of the respondents and seems a significant figure. The proportion of those who did not get the material is greater in Amhara (10.8%) and Oromia (8.4%) than other regions. The overall results indicate that the trainings were supported by training materials. This provision would enable the trainees to transfer the knowledge and skills to their colleagues by being supported by the materials. In connection to this, among those instructors who participated in the training, 80.7% have received materials that would assist them to provide training on active learning methods. The types of materials received are indicated in Table 14 below.

Table 14: Types of materials school teachers' received during training

Type of material	Teacher Responses			
	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Manuals	80	35.9	143	38.4
Handouts	88	39.5	135	77.5
Instructional kits	36	16.5	187	7.9
Others	59	17.3	164	-
mean	66	27.0	157	26.0

According to the data in Table 14, the training of teachers was supported by manuals (35.9%), handouts (39.5%), instructional kits (16.5%) and other materials (17.3%). Although handouts play an important role in providing more explanations than manuals, the latter has more guiding roles and enables the participants to use it.

Teachers who received the materials were asked to clarify the extent to which they use these materials to improve their professional competence. Responses indicate that teachers (10.7%) never or rarely use them. Almost 25.0% of the teachers use the

materials unsatisfactorily. At the same time, 14.7% said that they use the materials always or most of the time. Almost 43.0% use the materials satisfactorily. The data suggest that a reasonable number of teachers use the materials to improve their professional competence.

During focus group discussions, members of Cluster Coordinating Units and Staff Development Units in schools have also mentioned some of the resources obtained by schools. These discussions indicate that schools have been provided with such resources as stationery materials, science kits, teaching aids, dictionaries, books, chairs and tables. In Hussien Giery Cluster School, Somali region, it was reported that

There was provision of training on 8 topics eight times... materials such as teaching aids, stationery, hand tools, duplicators, typewriter, tape-recorder, kits and furniture were made available...

A similar story of the provision of materials and resources was reported from Soloda Cluster Primary school in Tigray region:

Training of teachers on 7 different topics has been conducted. Training was provided every month on one topic...Material support worth 6000 Ethiopian birr was also provided to our school.

From the above descriptions, it is possible to infer that linkage programs provided training materials of different kinds for supporting teachers' professional development. It is also clear that schools have benefited from the provision of different resources from the linkage program.

4.11. Access of School Teachers to TEI Facilities

Resource sharing and getting access to the facilities of partners is among the different forms of benefits of the linkage program. School teachers were asked whether they had access to TEIs facilities or not.

Table 15: Teachers' access to TEIs' facilities by region

Region	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Amhara	55	17.4	37	11.7	97	29.1
Oromia	33	10.4	42	13.3	75	23.7
SNNP	32	10.1	25	7.9	57	18.0
Somali	22	7.0	24	7.6	46	14.6
Tigray	30	9.5	16	5.1	46	14.6
Total	172	54.4	144	45.6	316	100.0

Table 15 shows that 54.4% of the respondent teachers had access to TEI facilities while 45.6% did not. The data show that teachers from Amhara and Oromia got fewer facilities as compared to the other regions. This might be due to different reasons such as personal interest or legitimacy to use it. Teachers may not use these resources perhaps because they lack interest. The other reason could be that some TEIs may not let the teachers use their facilities. Those who got the opportunity to use TEI facilities indicated the facilities that they used and this is presented in Table 16.

Table 16: Type of TEI facilities used by school teachers

Facilities	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Library	61	35.7	110	64.3
Computer lab	6	3.6	162	96.4
Laboratory	5	2.9	165	97.1
Pedagogical centre	101	59.4	69	40.4
Others	11	6.5	159	93.5

Table 16 shows that 59.4% and 35.7% of the respondents reported that they used pedagogical centres and libraries, respectively. Very few respondents used the other facilities. Of course, a significant number of teachers were using library and school pedagogical centres of TEIs. On the other hand, few respondents reported that they were using laboratory (2.9%) and computer labs (3.6%).

4.12. Usefulness of the Provision of Inputs to the Cluster Schools

The inputs of TEIs to enhance the working conditions of schools are significant given the higher capacity of colleges in terms of resources and competencies. In this respect, teachers were asked to rate the extent to which the different forms of provisions or inputs were beneficial to their respective schools. The responses are shown in Table 17 below.

Table 17: Types of inputs and their benefits to schools

Inputs/provisions	Not useful		Little useful		Somewhat useful		Useful		very useful	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Financial support for SDU	52	18.1	34	11.8	41	14.3	83	28.9	77	26.8
Training for SPC	37	12.6	33	11.2	54	18.4	93	31.6	77	26.2
Materials for SPC	30	9.8	44	14.4	51	16.7	94	30.7	87	28.4
Training for staff development	28	9.5	40	13.5	75	25.3	84	28.4	69	23.3
Improvement of school library	45	15.5	35	12	57	19.6	79	27.1	75	25.8
Experience sharing visits	46	15.7	39	13.3	50	17.1	71	24.2	87	29.7
Support for the school management	32	10.9	26	8.9	57	19.5	88	30	90	30.7

The data from Table 17 show that the first three most useful provisions are supports given for the school management (30.7%), experience sharing visits (29.7%) and material provisions for school pedagogical canter (28.4%). On the other hand, financial supports for staff development unit and experience exchange visits were rated as not useful by 18.1% and 15.7% of the teachers, respectively.

Teachers were asked to assess the helpfulness of the school-college linkage program as well as the efforts of TEIs to strengthen teachers' professional development. Accordingly, 49.8% and 29.5% of the respondents rated the School-TEI Linkage Program as helpful and very helpful, respectively. The school teachers rated TEI efforts as very high (16.3%) and high (34.8%). These responses from teachers are indicative of the helpfulness of the linkage program for the professional development of teachers.

The responses of directors substantiate the above results. According to the directors, the inputs from the linkage program were training of SPC and SDU, material provision for the school library and SPC, experience sharing and support for school management. The majority of the directors (66.1% to 77%) rated the extent of the provision of these inputs as high or very high. All deans and assistant deans believe that the cluster resource centre benefited from the linkage program in improving teaching skills, planning of schoolwork, improved student support mechanism, in production and use of teaching materials. They also said that cluster schools benefited

from the linkage program in getting access to TEIs facilities, improved material status of schools, improved involvement in extra curricular activities, and gender sensitivity.

4.13. Strengthening TEI Curricula through Linkage

The improvement of TEI curricula through linkage is expected to occur in the form of experience sharing, school experience for TEI instructors and students, action research, training of TEI instructors, etc. In this respect, the collected data show the following results.

4.13.1. Training of TEI Instructors

In TEI instructors' questionnaire, teacher trainers were asked whether or not they have got training as the result of the linkage program between their respective TEIs and cluster schools. The following table summarizes the results.

Table 18: Training of TEI instructors by linkage program

Region	Instructor Responses			
	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Amhara	68	35.4	6	3.1
Oromia	41	21.4	6	3.1
SNNPR	24	12.5	1	0.5
Somali	13	6.8	1	0.5
Tigray	17	8.9	15	7.8
Total	163	85.0	29	15
Mean	33	17	5.8	3

Table 18 above shows the number of TEI instructors who received training as the results of linkage programs. Accordingly, 163 (84.9%) of the instructors have reported that they have taken training while 29 (15.1%) did not. Since carrying out professional development in schools is contingent on the competence of each TEI instructor, it is encouraging to see that the absolute majority of trainers are trained by themselves.

It is expected that different issues relevant to the professional development programs to be provided to primary schools are covered during these training programs for TEI instructors. In order to verify the relevance of TEI instructors' training to the professional development activities of primary school teachers, TEI instructors were provided with a list of items to check the types of topics they covered during their training. Moreover, they were asked the number of times they participated in each type of training.

Table 19: Topics and frequency of training received by TEI instructors

Topics	Once		Twice		More than two	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Professional ethics	42	60.9	16	23.2	11	15.9
HIV/AIDS	36	53.7	20	29.9	11	16.4
Environmental education	18	58.1	6	19.4	7	22.6
Ethics education	30	69.8	8	18.6	5	11.6
Community-school relationship	35	63.6	15	27.3	5	9.1
Instructional planning	36	47.4	24	31.6	16	21.1
Curriculum integration	32	40.0	28	35.0	20	25.0
Student centred teaching	45	31.3	32	22.2	67	46.5
Continuous assessment	49	31.6	43	27.7	63	40.6
Subject area methodology	31	39.2	17	21.5	31	39.2
Self contained classroom management	34	44.2	26	33.8	17	22.1
Mean	35	44.3	21	26.8	23	28.9

Table 19 shows that 44.3% of the instructors received the training once whereas 55.7% received two times or more. The first three training topics frequently received by instructors were student centred teaching (46.5%), continuous assessment (40.6%) and subject methodology (39.2%). Ethics education (69%), community school relationship (63.6%) and professional ethics (60.9%) were the first three widely given topics. The proportion of teachers who attended training almost matches that of the instructors. The frequently offered topic is student centred teaching in both cases. This indicates the level of attention given to this topic across education levels.

4.13.2. Provision of Training Materials to TEI Instructors

The need for the provision of materials during the training programs is very significant. TEI instructors need to transfer knowledge and skills using those materials and to have a permanent reference for themselves. The following table shows the type of materials distributed and the proportion of instructors who got the materials.

Table 20. Provision of training materials for TEI instructors

Type of material	TEI Instructors			
	Yes		No	
	No	%	No	%
Manuals	58	38.4	93	61.6
Handouts	117	77.5	34	22.5
Instructional kits	12	7.9	139	92.1
Resource papers	9	6	142	94
ELIP	2	1.3	149	98.7
Others	-	-	-	-
mean	40	26.0	111	74.0

Table 20 above shows that the training of 38.4% of TEI instructors was supported by manuals. Similarly, 77.5% said that they had handouts whereas 7.9% said kits and 6% said resource papers. Obviously, the above table shows that handouts and manuals are the two most commonly used training materials for TEI teachers.

4.13.3. School Experience of TEIs Instructors from Linkage Programs

A list of benefits that TEI instructors may get from their experience of cluster primary schools was included in TEI instructors' questionnaire for rating along a five-point scale. The highest rating to be given was very high while the least was very low. Table 21 gives a summary of the findings.

The table shows that the majority of the instructors rated their benefits as medium (22%), high (35.8%) or very high (29.3%). Thus, the ratings of 87% of the respondents ranged from medium to very high. Apart from this general satisfaction of the instructors, the table shows that instructors have benefited in understanding the class size, teachers' problem in teaching - learning and the implementation of active learning in the classroom of primary schools.

Table 21: Benefits of TEI instructors from cluster schools

Benefits	V. low		Low		Medium		High		V. high	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Knowledge of teaching in classroom	11	6.9	6	3.8	36	22.5	65	40.6	42	26.3
Understanding of student's discipline	11	6.9	8	5	42	26.4	59	37.1	39	24.5
Understanding of primary school curriculum	12	7.4	9	5.6	33	20.4	53	32.7	55	34
Understanding of classroom management	14	8.7	12	7.5	34	21.1	55	34.2	46	28.6
Understanding of reception capacity of students	15	9.7	9	5.8	50	32.5	64	41.6	16	10.4
Understanding of teachers' problem in teaching-learning	12	7.5	4	2.5	22	13.7	55	34.2	68	42.2
Understanding of teachers' attitudes towards schooling	12	7.4	6	3.7	39	24.1	65	40.1	40	22.7
Understanding of school – community relationships	15	9.3	14	8.6	53	32.7	50	30.9	30	18.5
Understanding of learning resources in schools	12	7.4	9	5.5	35	21.5	63	38.7	44	27
Understanding of class size	10	6.2	5	3.1	3	14.2	54	33.3	70	43.2
Understanding of teachers' load	11	6.8	8	5	29	18.0	60	37.3	53	32.9
Understanding of the implementation of active learning in classroom	10	6.2	6	3.7	29	18.0	47	29.2	69	42.2
Mean	11	7.5	8	4.9	35.4	22.0	58	35.8	48	29.3

Supporting this, Woreda Education Office respondents also reported that the TEIs benefited from the schools. The schools on their part help the TEIs in implementing the practicum courses where TEI students conduct practicum in the schools. Furthermore, sharing experiences with TEI students and giving feedback to the TEIs on the strength and weaknesses of their students were reported as the benefits obtained by TEIs.

According to Woreda Education Officers, the major impacts of this linkage program include the following:

- Creation of smooth relationship between schools and TEIs on practicum program.
- Assisting TEI teachers to revise their courses in line with school practical situations.
- Improvement of the pedagogical skills and knowledge of school teachers through workshops.

- Alleviation of the shortage of school resources to some extent.

All the deans and assistant deans said that their colleges have benefited from the linkage program. They also said that student teachers and instructors benefited from the linkage by getting acquaintances with real classroom situation, gaining experiences on the actual curriculum, teachers' working conditions, school administration, school rules and regulation, assessment practices, common school problems, and parent school relationships. Most of the deans/assistant deans rated the provision of materials support for staff development activities, improvement of school library and experience sharing visits as good or very good.

4.13.4. Attitude of TEI Instructors towards Linkage Programs

Just to get the reflection of the usefulness, practicality and relevance of the linkage program from TEIs themselves, instructors were asked to rate these aspects of the linkage program in the instructors' questionnaire. The data are presented in Table 22.

Table 22: Usefulness, practicality and relevance of the linkage program to TEIs

Usefulness, Practicality and Relevance	Very much		High		Average		Very Low	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Usefulness to the college	80	45.2	71	40.1	24	13.6	2	1.1
Practicality in addressing the needs of cluster school teachers	39	22.5	88	50.9	39	22.5	7	4.0
Relevance in addressing the needs of instructors/educators	50	28.6	81	46.3	33	18.9	11	6.3
Mean	56.3	32.1	80	45.7	42	18.4	6.3	3.8

As shown in Table 22, the usefulness, practicality and relevance of the linkage program was rated on the average as high (45.7%), very much (32.1%) or average (18.4%). A very small proportion of the respondents rated the usefulness, practicality and relevance of the program as very low (3.8%). This shows that the usefulness, practicality, and relevance of the program on the average were high.

4.13.5. School Experience of Student Teachers

One of the perceived weaknesses of the teacher education system, as stated in TESO document, has to do with the lack of school experience of student teachers before they join the teaching profession. During focus group discussions, student teachers were asked if and how they participated in school experience programs as well as the benefits they got out of their participation in the school experience program.

Their responses indicate, across all TEIs included in the study, that they have participated in different forms of school experience including teaching, observations of teaching-learning activities and classroom situations, visiting of school pedagogical centres, and discussions with students. When asked about the preparation of their respective colleges to send them to cluster schools, most mentioned that colleges usually write letters to schools beforehand. They also assign teacher educators for follow-up and assessment purposes. In addition, colleges prepare different formats, assign each candidate to schools in the vicinity and notify the schedule for school experience.

Student teachers assess that their school experience programs have been beneficial in many ways. Some of these are the following:

- To relate theory with practice and learn school realities.
- To develop the culture of learning from each other.
- To strengthen their relationship based on mutual respect with school teachers.
- To learn how to manage and wisely use school resources.
- To learn good work discipline from cluster school teachers.
- To get exposure to school community, problems, structure, students and teachers' behaviour.
- To identify deficiencies and strengths of teaching, explore curriculum materials
- To get acquainted with working conditions and to adjust before actual work.
- To improve teaching methods and learning resources.

Members of Cluster Coordinating Units also expressed similar opinions about the exposure of student teachers to school experiences. They said that school experience programs enable student teachers to develop knowledge about how schools function and positive relations with schools. They also noted that school experience programs of students are useful for colleges to get feedback on the effectiveness of their training programs and to create opportunities for TEI instructors to see school realities. TEI instructors were also asked to assess the organization of the student-teacher school experience programs both in TEIs and cluster schools on a five-point scale ranging from very low to very high as shown in TEI instructors' questionnaire. The summary of their ratings is given in Table 23 below.

Table 23: TEI instructors' assessment of the organization of the student teachers school experience program

Area of Assessment	Very poor		poor		Average		Good		Very good	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Program management	7	3.7	12	6.3	56	29.3	72	37.7	44	23
orientation of students	6	3.2	10	5.3	46	24.2	85	44.7	43	22.6
Provision of information to schools	2	1.1	16	8.4	54	28.4	83	43.7	35	18.4
Provision of information to students	47	24.9	26	13.8	40	21.2	40	21.2	36	19
Observation program/ Feedback	4	2.1	17	8.9	48	25.3	83	43.7	38	20
Evaluation of students	5	2.6	15	7.9	62	32.5	75	39.3	34	17.8
Arrangement of school timetable	4	2.2	19	10.5	52	28.7	83	45.9	23	12.7
Support of classroom Teachers	2	1.1	20	10.9	65	35.5	76	41.5	20	10.9
Support of classroom management	1	0.6	12	6.7	79	43.9	69	38.3	19	10.6
Readiness of trainees for the active learning process	4	2.2	9	4.9	55	30.1	85	46.4	30	16.4
Readiness of the school teachers to give feedback to trainees	5	2.7	24	13.2	67	36.8	66	36.3	20	11
Availability of textbooks & other teaching aids to Trainees	14	7.8	31	17.2	72	40	56	31.1	7	3.9
Mean	8	4.5	17	9.5	58	28.8	73	39.1	29	15.5

Table 23 shows that on the average 39.1% of the respondents assessed the program as good, 28.8% as average and 15.5% as very good. On the other hand, 14.0% of the respondents rated the organization of the linkage program as poor or very poor.

Overall, about 55% of the respondents rated the organization of the school experience program above average, which indicates that the school experience program is organized and conducted with higher efficiency and effectiveness. Some student teachers, however, complained that the preparation of the colleges for school experience is far from perfect. They particularly mentioned that transport services are inadequate. They also said that some schools are not willing to support their school experience programs.

4.13.6. Actual Evaluation of UASID Linkage Programs

As any other systematic program, School-TEI Linkage Program has to be evaluated systematically. Education personnel from REBs and WEOs were requested to provide information if they were undertaking the evaluation of the USAID linkage program and if so the results of their evaluation.

According to the response from Tigray Regional Education Bureau, the linkage program was evaluated as part of the whole activities. This was during annual conferences and reports. The regional education bureau has conducted no specific evaluation of the USAID/BEP supported linkage program. The respondents from SNNP Regional Education Bureau similarly said that the evaluation was conducted as part of the different educational activities, and not as USAID/BEP supported linkage program in particular. According to the responses, the evaluation showed that the linkage has contributed significantly towards the improvement of the quality of education in the region in that it has:

- introduced school teachers to new knowledge and skills such as active learning methods, continuous assessment and production of teaching aids
- enabled TEIs teachers to have school experiences
- created conducive situation for the overall coordination of the school practicum course
- equipped schools with facilities and model classrooms

According to the informants from Oromia Regional Education Bureau, the bureau gets reports from colleges. Information gained from such reports is used to make informed decisions about issues related to the linkage program in the region.

Similarly, the responses from Somali Regional Education Bureau experts reveal that no evaluation has been conducted (formal one), but they follow up the activities of STLP. The above descriptions indicate that in SNNP the linkage evaluation was conducted and the findings showed that the linkage has contributed to the introduction of improved methods of teaching and developed the capacity of schools. In all other regions, there is no formal evaluation except through reports and annual conferences. In all cases, the reflections indicate that the linkage program has contributed to the TEIs' and school improvement.

Woreda Education Office personnel on their part provided information on the evaluation of the linkage program. The respondents from Adwa Woreda Education Office said the linkage was evaluated in 1999 E.C. The conclusion was that the students in the model classrooms were better in achievement and conversation abilities in English. The model classrooms were selected in collaboration with the TEI (i.e., one model classroom from each of the grades 1 through 4). The model classrooms were supported by materials, arrangement of the materials in the classrooms, creating learning corners, and student centred methodology. Other Woreda Education Office respondents confirmed that there is no evaluation undertaken for the linkage apart from regular supervision of the whole education system, because it is not fully recognized as their responsibility.

For instance, the respondents from Asella and Sinana Woreda Education offices said that no evaluation of the linkage program has been made so far, because the linkage is not in the yearly plan of their respective office. It is done only by the TEIs and the schools.

They reflected their personal observation on the impact of the linkage program that school libraries have improved, teaching strategies have become student centred and teachers have started to produce and use local resources in classrooms.

In general, it is possible to conclude that there was no attempt to systematically and uniformly evaluate the linkage programs as a particular program in the education

system. However, personal observations revealed that the linkage program has contributed to classroom practices in schools.

4.14. Attitudes towards the Sustainability of the Linkage Programs

Since the School-TEI Linkage Program is the government's initiative, it is expected that the program will be part of the regular education activities. Hence, WEO personnel were requested if mechanisms are thought and designed to make the program sustainable. Respondents from Hosanna said that the woreda has thought on the sustainability of the STLP. Particularly, in case the USAID/BEP support is terminating, the woreda office has discussed with school directors and college officials and had an intention to continue with the program. According to them, since the linkage was so relevant and practical, it has to continue through the self support (budget) from colleges, schools, education bureau and the community.

Similarly, the respondents from Adwa WEO said that they are trying to ensure sustainability of the STLP. According to them, these days cluster schools have started to establish linkage programs with the TEI, but in the future, they said, the office is expected to design a mechanism to sustain the program. The respondent from Jijjiga said the woreda has a plan to continue this linkage in the future. Respondents from other WEOs (Asella, Sinana, Kombolcha, Debre Berhan) said that no mechanism has been considered to sustain the program so far, though they believe it is important.

It is possible to conclude from these descriptions that the offices are at the stage of thinking the sustainability of the STLP. But there is no concrete mechanism set to make the program sustainable.

4.15. Perceived Problems of the Linkage Program

Attempt was made to explore problems of the School-TEI Linkage Programs as perceived by respondents and participants of the study. This section deals with the data obtained from questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaires included items that the study participants rated on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high) with the highest rating indicating the severity of the problem.

4.15.1. Problems Related to Leadership

Five main anticipated areas of problems in leadership were presented to respondents for judgement. These included program coordination, support of the management for linkage programs, supervision, communication of objectives of linkage programs, and establishment of staff development units. Table 24 below presents the data pertaining to leadership.

With respect to specific leadership problems, the table shows that the proportion of respondents who rated the problem of coordination of linkage programs at high and very high levels (35.6%) is more than the proportion of respondents who rated it at low or very low levels (27.1%). The majority (37.4%) of the respondents indicated that the problem exists at an average level. Similarly, the proportion of those who saw high or very high level of problems in management support of linkage programs (43.9%) is higher than the proportion of those who saw the same problem at low or very low level (22.6%). Lack of supervision was rated at high or very high levels by 34% of the respondents whereas 31.1% rated this problem at low or very low levels.

Table 24: Perceived leadership problems of the linkage program

Problems	Very low		Low		Average		High		Very high	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Coordination of the program	33	10.3	54	16.8	120	37.4	74	23.1	40	12.5
Support of the management	22	7.0	49	15.6	105	33.4	93	29.6	45	14.3
Supervision	25	8.1	71	23.0	105	34	60	19.4	48	15.5
Communication of the objective of the linkage program	26	8.4	56	18.2	113	36.7	76	24.7	37	12.0
Establishment of staff development units	30	10.2	53	18.1	81	27.6	80	27.3	49	16.7
Mean	27	8.7	56	18.1	105	34.0	77	24.9	44	14.2

Problems related the communication of objectives of linkage programs were rated at high or very high levels by 36.7% of the respondents whereas 26.6% rated the same problems at low or very low levels. The problem pertaining to the establishment of staff development units was perceived at very high or high level by 44% of the

respondents whereas 28.3% perceived it at low or very low level. Overall, the proportion of those who see leadership problems at high or very high levels was 39.1% whereas those who rated this problem at low or very low levels comprise 26.8%. This is an indication of the seriousness of the problem of leadership in relation to linkage programs. This finding is also in line with the previous findings that were presented under organizational support at the beginning of this chapter. In that section, it was concluded that the TEI-School Linkage Programs lack clear recognition at regional and woreda education offices. Thus, the current result corroborates the results obtained from interviews.

4.15.2. Problems Related to Policy and Guidance

Problems related to leadership may draw their background from different sources, but policy/guidance can be a fundamental one. To explore the sources of the problem, teachers were asked to identify problems related to policy along few dimensions. Table 25 describes the results.

Table 25: Policy/ guidance problems of the linkage program

Problem	Level of the problem									
	Very low		Low		Average		High		Very high	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Clarity of goals of linkage	31	10.1	55	17.9	95	30.8	99	32.1	28	9.1
Division of roles and responsibilities	25	8.3	43	14.2	99	32.7	81	26.7	55	18.2
Program planning	31	10.1	60	19.5	77	25.0	77	25	63	20.5
Reporting	44	15.4	49	17.1	70	24.5	58	20.3	65	22.7
Average	32	10.9	52	17.6	85	28.2	79	26	53.	7.5

The policy and guidance problems of the linkage program were rated as below average, average and above average by 28.5%, 28.2% and 33.5% of the respondents, respectively. Specifically, the reporting system was rated as very high (22.7%), problem in program planning (20.5%) and lack of division of roles and responsibilities (18.2 %). To see the overall problem of policy, one may add the ratings at average and above average (28.2%, 26%, and 7.5%) levels which add up to

61.7%. In general, this indicates that the problem of policy and/or guidance is a serious one.

As could be recalled from the previous discussion, all Regional Education Bureau and Woreda Education Office personnel asserted that there is no policy or guideline for the linkage program. However, CPD guideline issued by MOE (2003) could have been adapted. But it seems that this document is not made known to stakeholders, particularly for those at leadership level.

A policy shows direction of successive and specific activities of a program. It determines accountability and responsibility in the program. It would be difficult for TEIs and schools to develop their own without central policy support. Hence, lack of policy means lack of direction, standard and accountability.

4.15.3. Problems Related to Micro-Management of Linkage Programs

According to the responses from school directors, the major problems of the linkage program at cluster schools were:

- lack of frequent training on linkage program
- lack of human power to implement linkage program
- shortage of materials
- shortage of budget
- lack of assigned body to follow up the linkage program
- school programs do not encompass linkage program
- absence of incentive schemes to reward best performers
- lack of commitment from government.

Deans and assistant deans of TEIs were also asked to indicate their problems in questionnaires. Table 26 below presents the type of problems they indicated.

Table 26: Problems of the linkage program as perceived by deans and assistant deans

Problems	Responses			
	Yes	%	No	%
TEIs coordination is not good	3	6.1	4	8.2
Workload of the instructors hinders follow up	3	6.1	4	8.2
Lack of transportation to the clusters	5	10.2	2	4.1
Lack of communication of the objectives about the program	3	6.1	4	8.2
Shortage of budget	4	8.16	3	6.1
No per diem for cluster teachers during training	7	14.3	0	0.0
Lack of supervision of primary schools	7	14.3	0	0.0
Total	32	65.3	17	34.7

According to the data in Table 26, the serious problems of the linkage programs were lack of supervision of primary schools, absence of per diem for cluster teachers during training, lack of transportation to cluster schools and shortage of budget to run the program. The deans and assistant deans suggested the following in order to minimize these problems: reducing teachers load, informing WEOs about the linkage program, locating sufficient budget, providing vehicles for the program, and assessing the need of the schools.

4.15.4. Problems Related to Training Programs

The why, what, for whom, how, who and where questions of the program activities remain fuzzy and unaddressed if policies are not well articulated. The training component of the linkage program is one, which may be influenced by these questions. Hence, teachers were asked to provide information on the training and their responses are shown in Table 27.

Table 27: Problems related to the training component of the linkage programs as rated by teachers

Problems	V. low/low	Average	High/V. High
Time of training	125 (41.1%)	113 (37.2%)	66 (21.7%)
Methods of training used	82 (27.4%)	93 (31.1%)	124(41.4%)
Place of training	92(30.9%)	82(27.6%)	123(41.4%)
Materials used during the training	101(33.5%)	97(32.1%)	104(34.4%)

Table 27 shows teachers' ratings of problems of the training component of the linkage program. Accordingly, the majority (41.1%) of the respondents rated the problems related to time of training as below average implying that the time for training

programs are appropriate. However, the majority (41.4%) of the respondents rated the problems related to methods of training at high or very high levels. Teachers might need training programs that could be conducted by key teachers, but previous findings indicated that the current training is very much dominated by the TEI approach. Again, the majority of respondents comprising 41.4% rated the place of training programs as having problems. Materials seem to be alright with teachers as most rated them having average or less than average problems.

Part V

Summary, Conclusions and Implications of the Findings for Policy and Practice

5.1. Summary

The need to have quality education requires several issues to be considered. Among these are teacher development programs. As studies and experiences reveal, developing teachers professionally in a linear approach could serve very little. Today, different approaches such as practice based training and continuous professional development programs that can augment initial and inservice programs are deemed relevant. Such approaches require partnership among stakeholders. Teacher education institutions and respective school partnership is a determining factor in this regard. It was with this understanding that the linkage program between the schools and colleges were initiated.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of the USAID linkage program between TEIs and schools. For this purpose, questionnaires were prepared and filled in by TEI deans/assistant deans, instructors, cluster school teachers and directors. Focus group discussions were conducted with staff development units/key teachers, coordinators and student teachers. Accordingly, 558 participants responded to the questionnaires and 148 participated in focus group discussions. From those who filled in the questionnaires, 61.3% were teachers and 35.1% were TEI instructors. In addition, 13 school directors and seven college deans participated in this study.

Among those who participated in the focus group discussion, 40% were staff development unit and key teachers of cluster schools, 34% were student teachers of the TEIs and 26% were cluster coordinating units and members of practicum units/committee. Furthermore, nine Regional Education Bureau and 13 District Education Office personnel participated in the interview prepared for the study. This section summarizes the main findings of the study.

1. *Linkage programs were effective in creating school-TEI partnerships and they have a wide ranging acceptance wherever they have been introduced.* Linkage programs exist and function in regions and woredas included in the study. This means that the linkage program was effective in introducing college-school partnership in teachers' development.

2. *The purposes for which linkage programs are created in regions are congruent with the goals for which they are intended.* The establishment of the linkage has been for supporting both the preservice and inservice programs.

3. *Lack of clear policy guidelines and regulations for linkage programs at regional and woreda levels affect the effectiveness of linkages.* It is evident that linkage programs are not structurally recognized in Regional Education Bureaus and Woreda Education Offices. Moreover, findings clearly indicate that all regions have no definite policy on school-TEI linkage program, although there is clear directive from the MOE concerning this procedure of teacher development.

4. *Lack of guidelines for division of responsibilities in the management of the linkage programs in TEIs affects the performance of linkages.* Linkage programs are coordinated through cluster coordinating units in TEIs. Some TEIs have established such units although they are recognized as staff development committee. The overwhelming situation shows that there is no integration of Linkage Coordinating Units to the formal structures of TEIs, and there is confusion and overlap in the functions of staff development units and staff development committee. This indicates that there is no guideline that clearly describes the accountability, role and responsibility of the staff development units and staff development committees.

5. *Government budget was not allocated as a support to linkage programs.* Linkages are not allocated government budget apart from the budget allocated for regular programs. Clearly, this is an experimental program by AED, but the demand for linkage is a national issue.

6. *Lack of responsibility for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on linkage programs influences the proper functioning of linkages.* Responsibility and follow-up are the

reflection of the recognition of the linkage programs. Because linkages were not considered as prime responsibilities of WEOs and REBs, there was no one responsible for monitoring, evaluation and reporting of linkage programs.

7. The majority of schools has been responsive in creating staff development units responsible for effectiveness of linkages. The creation of staff development units with clear responsibilities to coordinate linkage programs has proved effective in implementing linkage programs. In schools where this structure was not clearly formed, the performance of schools has been negatively affected.

8. TEIs have provided vital technical and professional development support to schools through linkage programs. TEIs have provided highly regarded training programs in cluster primary schools. With respect to the linkage program, the support TEIs provide for cluster schools were similar. Before training is organized, all the TEIs conduct needs assessment (with the exception of Hosana TEI). After this, all the TEIs provide training for schools that were supposed to improve the quality of teaching at primary schools. During the training relevant materials in the form of manuals, handouts and modules on various current educational issues were provided.

9. Overlapping of responsibilities between Staff Development Units and Staff development committees of Cluster Schools (SDU). In some schools, the staff development units of cluster schools were found to be similar with staff development committees. The major functions of the committees include facilitating the professional development of teachers by encouraging them to use college resources, advance in career development, and produce and use teaching aids. They also facilitate professional training, coordination of practicum activities and evaluation of linkage programs. As already indicated, this overlap had a negative effect on performance.

10. The type of professional development provided by TEIs to cluster school were relevant, practical and useful. TEIs provided training to the absolute majority of teachers in their linkage domains. The first three training topics most frequently given to teachers were student-centred teaching methods, community-school relationship and subject area methodology. The majority of the respondents said the training was provided by TEI instructors, and rated the usefulness and practicality of the training as

average or above average. Moreover, the majority of teachers rated the relevance and appropriateness of the training as average or above average.

11. School teachers got access to college facilities as the result of their partnership with TEIs. Cluster schools teachers have confirmed that they had access to the pedagogical centres and libraries of teacher Education Institutions. The most popular facility used by teachers was college pedagogical centres.

12. School management support, experience sharing visits and provision of materials to pedagogical centres were rated as the most useful inputs to schools by linkage programs: Teachers judged that the highest benefits to schools were support given for the school management experience, sharing visits, and materials provisions for school pedagogical center. On the other hand, financial support for staff development units and experience exchange visits were perceived as minimal.

13. Linkage programs were instrumental in strengthening TEI curricula: Linkage programs have contributed to building the capacity of TEIs in human power, organization of training programs, and preparation of technical materials. Most instructor respondents indicated that they had the opportunity to get training due to the linkage program. The training programs involved a variety of topics, but student-centred teaching, continuous assessment and subject methodology were the most frequently covered topics. Most training programs were organized by TEIs. This shows that these institutions have developed more capacities than cluster resource centres in the organization of inservice training programs. Material provision is an important part of capacity building in the inservice training. In this respect, the majority of those who participated in the inservice training programs said that they have received materials during training in the form of handouts, manuals and instructional kits in that order of magnitude.

14. The effectiveness of TEI-Cluster school partnerships were highly rated for providing instructors with concrete school experiences. The absolute majority of instructors said that the linkage program has given them the opportunity to experience schools in a variety of ways. They reported that they benefited from the linkage programs in large class size management, understanding teachers' problems in teaching

learning and the implementation of active learning in the classroom of primary schools. This was also confirmed by Woreda Education Officers.

15. Linkages were also effective in providing overall competence to teachers. School directors disclosed that their respective schools and teachers benefited from the linkage programs. These benefits included training on active learning, on continuous assessment, gender sensitivity, production and use of teaching aids and school administration. Likewise, all deans and assistant deans reported that cluster schools benefited from the linkage program in teaching skills, planning of school work, improved student support mechanism, production and use of teaching materials, getting access to TEIs facilities, improved material status of schools, improved involvement in extra curricular activities, and gender sensitivity.

16. Linkage programs helped to develop positive instructors' attitudes towards partnership with schools. Instructors also have positive attitude towards linkage programs as the absolute majority of them rated the usefulness, practicality and relevance of the programs at high or very high levels. As already indicated, such positive attitude has been created among school teachers.

17. Linkage program supported student teachers to get a first hand experience of schools. Student teachers also reported that the linkage program benefited them in integrating instruction with school realities, get feedback from schools to improve their instructional skills during the practicum. Directors said that the linkage program benefited student teachers in familiarizing them with teachers' working conditions, school laws and regulations, common school problems, school-parent relations, student assessment methods, student promotion policy and practices. Deans/assistant deans underlined that student teachers benefited from the linkage in getting acquainted with real classroom situations, experiences on the actual curriculum, experience on school administration, teachers' working conditions, school laws and regulations.

18. Some implementation programs need to be improved to maximize the effectiveness of linkage program. Many problems were identified as having negative influences on the proper functioning of linkage programs. Specifically, problems related to the establishment of staff development units, school supervision/follow up, lack of support

from the top management were rated as very high. Lack of communication of the objectives of the linkage and lack of coordination were also rated as serious problems of the linkage program. For school directors, the most common problems are lack of incentive schemes, shortage of materials and lack of assigned body to follow up the linkage program. Similarly, Deans of TEIs identified lack of supervision of primary schools, absence of allowances for cluster teachers during training, lack of transportation to cluster schools and shortage of budget to run the program as serious problems of the linkage program.

5.2. Conclusions

The main objective of this study was to find out the extent to which school-TEI linkage programs were effective in meeting their objectives for which they were established. In the above sections, data obtained from REB and WEO experts, school teachers, directors, instructors, deans and student teachers as well as staff development units and cluster coordinating units were presented. Efforts were made to synthesize the data from these respondents. It is to be recalled that the overall objectives of linkage programs comprise two broad areas.

(1) *Strengthening the TEI Curriculum* which involves school experiences of TEI instructors and student teachers, development of teaching and learning materials, action research, experience sharing, etc.

(2) *Improving the primary school learning and teaching conditions*. This involves the concept of “whole school development”. Contained in this concept are the organization of learning and learning environments and networking of pupils, teachers and parents for improved quality of learning. School improvement in Ethiopia includes (a) academic achievement, (b) professional development of primary teachers, (c) improvement of school facilities and teaching resources, and (d) improving school organization, management and leadership, and linking the school with the community. School improvement means the improvement of the overall school performance by organizing programs around the interests of teachers, pupils and parents.

Given the above framework against which effectiveness can be measured, it is possible to conclude from the data presented above that the TEI-School linkage program has been effective for strengthening TEI curricula and improving the primary school learning and teaching conditions.

As one can infer from the main findings provided in the above section, the school-college partnership was widely accepted in the regions and their objectives were congruent with the prevailing needs of schools. Linkage programs were instrumental in providing professional development programs in terms of training both in TEIs and cluster schools. They were very useful in providing material support to schools and creating access to the resources of TEIs. They were very effective in bringing TEI instructors and students to school reality. School – TEI linkages were extremely useful in creating positive attitudes among teachers and TEI instructors towards partnership. They were rated very high in improving the overall competence of teachers and school management.

However, the linkage programs have faced serious problems in maximizing their effectiveness as a viable strategy for educational development. Most of these problems are related to lack of policy guidelines, effective coordination, leadership and management both at macro and micro-levels. In a nutshell, there is a lack of ownership on the part of Regional Education Bureaus, Woredas and to some extent TEIs and Schools. One main reason might be related to the experimental nature of the programs whereby USAID/basic Education program is considered as the prime initiator of the program. Obviously, USAID/ Basic Education Program is a partner in development of the educational sphere, but the ownership of the program belongs to the government. Therefore, REBs and other relevant government institutions need to be ready to take over this program. Given the effectiveness of this approach under the above constraints and its wide acceptance among the beneficiaries, it is obvious that the school-college partnership is a new area to be explored in view of the new policy for school improvement.

5.3. Implications of the Findings for Policy and Practice

The increasing partnership between teacher education institutions and schools is a world wide trend. There are varieties of partnerships, but centrally such programs are introduced to improve teaching learning, to carry out collaborative research, to perform cooperative supervision of prospective teachers, etc. From these perspectives, the move in Ethiopia of creating partnerships between TEIs and schools is a step in the right direction. As the findings indicated, this linkage or partnership program has been accepted and effective in bringing innovation to the system in all regions. Clearly, those who have been involved also indicated that linkage programs were useful, relevant, and practical. Moreover, TEIs have benefited in improving their curricula and schools have reported some benefits in the form of teacher skills, teaching learning materials and facilities. This shows that TEI linkage programs have to be sustained, expanded or formed in all regions. Here, what has been reported is about USAID linkage programs and the modality of its operations. There is no question that following this approach provides one of the best alternatives for success in linkage programs. However, other modalities can be adopted as far as they are effective. Since linkage programs also vary around the world, modalities to be used can also vary within Ethiopia.

On the other hand, for any initiative or program to be successful, the need for guidance, policy, effective leadership and management is not doubtful. As an important strategy for curricular and staff development, the current school-college linkage program has faced problems of strong ownership. It is evident that the program lacks clear guidance or might have clear guidance that was not well communicated. This has created bewilderment as to the roles and responsibilities of the TEIs, schools and student teachers. Thus, it would be appropriate to provide functional guidance that determines the role and responsibilities of stakeholders.

In most of the regions, the regional education bureaus and woreda education offices did not play significant role in setting policy, in coordinating, in providing facilities and in facilitating the program. Particularly Woreda education offices are expected as immediate facilitators of the program. Hence, there is a need to strengthen the collaborative work between Woreda education offices, TEIs and cluster schools to smoothly run the linkage program and create a system of periodic review.

Since the linkage program requires resources, specifically financial and human, the REBs, Woreda education offices and TEIs have to consider the allocation of sufficient budget to the program. Currently, the program is financed by USAID, but when the project terminates, there must be preparedness to sustain the program.

The problem of follow up and supervision might be due to lack of policy as well as the overload of coordinators and instructors with teaching and other duties. Hence, there should be a guiding policy which provides clear roles and responsibilities for supervisors who are involved in the program. At the same time, a reasonable reduction in the workloads of coordinators and instructors so that they can follow up and supervise the linkage program is mandatory.

The above findings also indicated specific issues to be improved in the modality of linkage programs supported by USAID for more achievement. These views were received from participants using open-ended questions. The most frequent suggestions of the respondents included providing training to improve school pedagogical centre (SPC), arranging experience sharing visits, providing financial support for staff development (SDU) activities, follow-up/supervision, establishing central offices for managing and coordinating linkage programs, and making available manuals/guides on how to implement the linkage program.

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