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NOTES ON DISCUSSIONS HELD BETWEEN PDC, M J MNTANGI, AND SAEU

COORDINATOR (SA) , MRS M MTHEMBU, IN J OHANNESBURG 9-10 NOVEMBER

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1. V INTRODUCTION

1.1 The SAEU Programmes Development Coordinator (DPC), M J Mntangi, held discussions with the coordinator of SAEU programmes in South Africa (CSAEU-SA), Mrs M Mthembu in the SAEU office in Johannesburg on Tuesday and Wednesday, 9-10 November 1993. PDC had spent the first day (Monday, 8 November 1993) looking at the records kept by CSAEU-SA while she was away doing her post graduate examinations.

. 1.2 Discussions were based on the monthly report written by the coordinator on the progress of the centre since assuming her new position, and an outline submitted by PDC summarising objectives of his visit. The motive of the discussions was to assess progress of the centre, get an indication of the problems faced and find ways of improving the delivery of the programme.

2. I TUESDAY, 9 NOVEMBER 1993

2.1 The monthly report and the outline of the objectives of the visit were elaborated by the coordinator and PDC respectively.

2.2 The following points were agreed:

i) CSAEU-SA must submit monthly progress reports to the SAEU Head-Office without fail. The reports should be sufficiently informative and substantive enough to allow the SAEU Management and its structures to make an objective assessment of the progress of her centre and identify problems facing it. Monthly reports should also assist the management to prepare Quarterly or Interim reports, demanded by donors.

ii) The number of students quoted in the coordinators reports should be substantiated with a list showing names of students even where registration numbers have not been allocated to them. The exercise of opening records files for individual students should be speeded up because information about learners' enrolment is crucial to the programme.

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Registration forms currently in use by learners in south Africa omits some important information about students, (such as sex and marital status). Furthermore, information demanded about names and educational background has resulted in diverse responses. PDC and Coordinator should revise the form and demand the missing information from the students.

The timetable for face-to-face tutorials should ensure that no more than two week-end schools are held per month, to correspond with the budgetary projections. The coordinator confirmed that she could allocate only one hour per O/A level subject during each week-end school in her revised timetable. the majority of the tutors have been allocated a maximum of two hours per week-end school, divided equally between the O and A level groups.

Arrangements to recruit a Physics tutor should be finalised before the next week-end school. A-level Chemistry students qualify to get face-to-face tutorials because their number has reached five.

As a result of the review of the timetable, the week-end school set for 13 November 1993 should be cancelled, and affected students and tutors be informed. Letters/telegrams be dispatched to students on 9 November 1993 and tutors be informed by phone on the same day. Particulars shown in the list of tutors is not adequate. The list should show their qualifications, working experience, and working stations. Tutors should be demanded to submit their curriculum vitae (CV). Furthermore, a more rigorous recruitment procedure should be devised.

Students whose return bus fares exceed R20 be refunded only 50 - 60 % of their fares. Decision to cancel lunch allowance to SAEU learners to maintain conformity with SACHEDE students should be upheld also as a measure for cost-cutting on the SAEU programme. PDC should analyse the current level of expenditures against the budget to find out conformity between the two and advice appropriate measures.

Request for opening satellite centres to serve students coming from Pretoria and the Orange Free State regions should wait until the trend in the enrolment reveals more significant rises in the two regions. It was important for the coordinator to keep accurate records of non-returnees admitted into the SAEU programme. Currently the number was indicated as 5-6 only.

- xii) The cost of marking assignments pegged at SACHEDis level of R10 per script is likely to have serious implications on the SAEU budget for tutorials, bearing in mind the large number of students earmarked for enrolment. The coordinators intention to negotiate with tutors to scale it down should be put into action.
- xiii) Arrangements to contact donors funding the SAEU returnees programme and Batlagae Trust should be followed up the next day.
- xiv) PDC should sort out how administrative and financial records kept by the coordinator should be classified for easy reference.
- xv) Four activities to be carried out the next day were drawn up.

3. WEDNESDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 1993

3.1 Four main activities were carried out:

- i) Authorities in Kagiso Trust, Batlagae Trust and Independent Development Trust (IDT) in Johannesburg were contacted; 1
 - ii) Telegrams/letters to inform learners of the postponement of week-end school were written;
 - iii) Matters for discussion with SACHED Assistant Director were drawn UP;
 - iv) Coordinator was introduced to SAEU,s guidelines for classifying administrative and financial documents.
- 3.2 Attempts were made to fix appointments for a courtesy call to be made by . PDC and CSAEU-SA to Batlagae trust and Kagiso Trust, and to inform IDT about PDCis visit.
- 3.2.1 The Executive Director of Batlagae Trust, Mr Tickly, fixed an appointment to meet with PDC and CSAEU-SA a week later, on Thursday 18 November 1993 at 09h00.
- 3.2.2 iAt Kagiso Trust, Ms Nonceba referred the SAEU staff to Mr Yogesh, who nevertheless regretted that he could not fix an appointment with them.

Asked for guidance on SAELVS 1994 Request Proposal, Mr Yogesh advised that although the Kagiso Trust accepts proposals for consideration throughout the year, the earlier the SAEU submitted its request for 1994 the better the chances for getting more immediate consideration. On the question of magnitude of support likely to be

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extended to SAEU, Mr Yogesh noted that there were no fixed limits and that proposals were considered on individual merit. He advised that the SAEU should build its next proposal along the current one, but in the long run the aim should be to make the project self-supporting.

3.3.2.3 Although the IDT Johannesburg office had first indicated that an officer overseeing the SAEU project would fix an appointment to see the SAEU team, it was later regretted that only Ms Cuba in Cape Town could give any substantive advice about the SAEU project. It was, however, evident that the IDT Johannesburg office had a project officer, Mr Kiss Mokwape, promoting opportunities for self-employment among rural-based communities and that returnees among SAEU learners living in rural areas should be advised to contact him for guidance on how to apply for such support.

An arrangement to send telegrams to learners whose original timetables had a week-end school fixed on Saturday, 13 November 1993 was abandoned after it was discovered that the cost would be quite high. Instead, letters were prepared for submission to the learners by post, where they could not be contacted by telephone.

The rest of the afternoon was spent introducing the coordinator to SAEU Head Office's systems of classifying correspondences and recording financial and stores transactions. Subsequently the gross budget for the South Africa study centre was analysed in terms of the on going activities and expenditures incurred since the programme was launched. It was hoped that on the basis of the trend of expenditures, strategies could be drawn up to eliminate over expenditure.

3.4.1 On the documents from SAEU Head Office it was agreed that the coordinator should take time to study them and that as soon as she returns from the Workshop on Thursday, 18 November, she should work with PDC in practical terms.

3.4.2 On the Returnees budget, PDC's analysis revealed the following points: (Also refer to ANNEXURE 1)

i) the amount estimated for each session of the learners, workshops, assuming 4 workshops are run in each centre within a year, has already been overspent.

ii) the amount estimated for the tutors' workshops, assuming 4 workshops as for (i) above, has a large balance unspent.

Therefore, if some of the learners, workshops will be run concurrently with the tutors' workshops, funds for the latter could offset some of the problems of the learners' workshops.

iii) If the current levels of expenditure for tutorial, are maintained, when the student population reached 200 per centre and monthly assignments are regarded compulsory, the budget will not allow refunds for bus fares to be made to students.

iv) If ten study rooms are hired during each week-end school in each study centre, then the charge per room should not exceed about R11 per day for the budget to meet the cost for one year in two study centres.

v) Assuming that the amount shown in the budget for GCE examination was earmarked for 100 candidates, the number of candidates registered to do examinations in May/June 1994 should not exceed 50 out of whom only about ten can be registered for A-levels. None of the candidates should be allowed to do more than two subjects per sitting.

vi) Computations for office administration will depend on the scale that SACHED intends to charge SAEU.

3.5 Draft agenda for the next days meeting with SACHEDls Assistant Director was drawn up. (ANNEXURE 2)

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