**EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF THE DBE-BRITISH COUNCIL ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME: THE QUEST FOR STRENGTHENING THE QUALITY OF BASIC EDUCATION IN THE COUNTRY – 28 JANUARY 2015**

On the 28th January 2015 the Department Basic Education (DBE) and the British Council will be holding a one day workshop to evaluate the English First Additional Language Quality Improvement Programme. The main focus of the workshop will be on the national in-service teacher training courses initiated through the programme, the Certificates in Primary and Secondary English Language Teaching (CiPELT aimed for the GET Phase and CiSELT for the higher classes).

In 2012 the DBE and the British Council signed a co-operation agreement which led to the training of over 300 Subject Specialists/Advisors in the Foundation, Intermediate and Senior Phases, including FET. These two teacher training programmes are aimed at strengthening/supporting curriculum delivery in English First Additional Language (EFAL) and have the following goals:

* Strengthening the content and pedagogic competence of all teachers in our schooling system
* Provision of opportunities to teachers and Subject Advisors (trainers) of accessing high quality professional development programmes/courses
* Creation of a large number of highly skilled and self-directed teachers who engage on-going professional teacher development and are capable of influencing learner performance in a positive way.

To ensure that relevant, responsive and high quality continuing teacher development programmes continue to be offered to all teachers at all the levels, the DBE and British Council have decided to hold a meeting where the Quality English First Additional Language programme will be evaluated focusing on the following key aspects:

* Impact of the training on Subject Advisors and the extent to which provinces were able to roll-out the CiPELT and CiSELT teacher training programmes that are aimed at strengthening the delivery of English First Additional Language (EFAL);
* The impact on the competence of teachers who received the training, to deliver the English First Additional Language curriculum at classroom level; and
* Determine whether there are any areas in this programme that need to be strengthened.

Both the DBE and the British Council view this initiative with great excitement as the evaluation exercise will not only provide valuable feedback on the various efforts that continue to be made by both the DBE and the British Council in increasing the competence of the teachers in our schools in their various teaching fields/specialisations but equally importantly, the strengthening of teacher focus on the Departmental goals of improving the quality of basic education in this country. From the perspective of the Department of Basic Education and the British Council, it is undoubtedly clear we cannot compromise on quality in teaching and learning and the need for all our teachers to receive ongoing support in the delivery of the curriculum.

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*“The project is intended to provide quality support to our teachers who in turn will deliver quality teaching to our learners in the classroom, which will ultimately improve the quality of learners’ results.”* **Mr Mathanzima Mweli, Deputy Director General for Curriculum, South Africa Department of Basic Education.**

*“The British Council is delighted to partner with the Department of Basic Education in South Africa on this exciting project to promote quality English Language education for all learners and teachers in South Africa. The project aims to provide access to high quality teaching and learning training and materials for teachers and learners from the remotest parts of South Africa. By putting in place a rigorous monitoring and evaluation process we will be able to measure the tangible benefits for teachers and learners in a few years.* “**The British Council Country Director for South Africa, Colm McGivern**

“*Given that English is the main language for curriculum provision and assessment whilst not being the home language for the majority of South African learners, there is a strong drive to improve English language acquisition. This programme will assist in this quest by bringing together international and local best practice and specialists to support teachers in their work.”* **Mr Haroon Mahomed, the Department of Basic Education’s Director for Teacher Development**

*“From a methodological point of view the British Council has made an enormous contribution towards changing teaching and learning from a static, boring process into an exciting, lively, process filled with FUN where both teachers and learners can enjoy what they have to do in class!”* **Mrs. Elmarie van Heerden, Senior Education Specialist, Department of Education, North West Province, South Africa.**

*‘’The key to the success of this programme is the excellent partnership between the DBE and the British Council. From the outset, plans have been developed and implemented in a true spirit of sharing and the relationship between the partners continues to be one of mutual respect. Both the British Council and the DBE have contributed equally to the project which will ensure the long-term sustainability of the programme.’’* **Caroline Grant, Head of English for Education Systems West and Southern Africa, British Council**

*“We would like to thank our partners in the DBE and across South Africa for working so hard to implement this excellent programme of work.  We know that its impact is substantial”.* **Joanne Newton, English Adviser, British Council South Africa**

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. The **British Council** is the UK’s international organization for educational opportunities and cultural relations. We create international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries and build trust between them worldwide. We work in more than 100 countries and our 7000 staff – including 2000 teachers – work with thousands of professionals and policy makers and millions of young people every year teaching English, sharing the Arts and in education and society programmes.

We are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter. A publically-funded grant-in-aid provides less than a quarter of our turnover which last year was £781m. The rest we earn from English teaching, UK exams and services which customers around the world pay for, through education and development contracts and from partnerships with other institutions, brands and companies. All our work is in pursuit of our charitable purpose and creates prosperity and security for the UK and the countries we work in all around the world.

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