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## Public-Union Sector Politics and the Crisis of Education in South Africa

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### Author(s)

Moeketsi Letseka, Bongani Bantwini, Ethel King-McKenzie

### ABSTRACT

This paper reflects on public-sector unions in South Africa with a view to highlighting teacher unionization's contribution to South Africa's education crisis. South Africa's teaching profession is highly unionized. The largest teacher union, the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) is affiliated to the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). The latter is a partner in the ruling tripartite alliance that includes the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP). Worldwide most public-sector unions are known to prop up left-wing political organizations. SADTU is no exception. But this paper shows that SADTU organizes teachers at the expense of teaching and learning in a country whose education system has been described as "a crisis" and "a national disaster" whose schools are "dysfunctional". The paper contemplates on the possibility of borrowing from business models to "redesign" or "reengineer" the country's ailing education system into an efficient system.

### KEYWORDS

SADTU; Global Union Politics; Reengineering; South Africa; Teachers' Strikes; Education Crisis

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