

SOUTH AFRICA YEARBOOK 2012/13



Education

Education

South Africa's Bill of Rights stipulates that every citizen has the right to basic education, including adult basic education and further education.

There is also increasing recognition that education and skills development has a key role to play in South Africa's future prosperity. Government, therefore, places education and skills development at the centre of its policies and has consciously elevated education as one of its top priorities. In the 2012/13 financial year, education constituted more than 21% of government's total allocated expenditure.

The responsibility for education is shared by two ministries, namely the Department of Basic Education and the Department of Higher Education and Training, formed when the former National Department of Education was split into two separate departments.

The Department of Basic Education deals with all schools from Grade R to Grade 12, and adult literacy programmes, while the Department of Higher Education and Training deals with universities, and other post-school education and training, as well as coordinating the Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa (HRDSSA).

The future of basic education is informed by the Action Plan to 2014: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2025.

Medium- to long-term interventions focus on:

- improving the quality of teaching and learning with an emphasis on strengthening numeracy and literacy
- undertaking regular assessments to track progress
- improving early childhood development (ECD)
- ensuring a credible outcomes-focused planning and accountability system.

As part of government's Infrastructure Plan, 90 new schools were built during 2012 to replace inappropriate structures. Government is addressing the insufficient number of engineers, which could threaten the speedy implementation of some of the projects, by exploring several strategies including entering into deals with universities and Further Education and Training colleges to ensure an increased supply of engineers.

Open Educational Resources is a system that uses digital materials for teaching, learning and research, and makes them freely available on the internet. In August 2012, Cape Town video marketing company Blink Tower saw off competition from more than 60 global entrants and walked away with top honours at the Why Open Education Matters video competition, an international competition for documenting the importance of the system for teachers and pupils.

Despite some challenges in 2012, there were also many highlights:

- The national pass rate for the matric class of 2012 was 73,9%. This was an increase of 3,7% from 2011 (70,2%) and an increase of 13,3% from 2009 (60,6%).
- In 2012, the *National Curriculum Framework* for children from birth to four years of age, as well as the *Guidelines for Developing Learning Programmes*, were finalised. There are now 19 261 registered ECD centres with about 845 000 children receiving ECD and partial care services.
- 767 865 learners were enrolled in Grade R and 900 000 Grade R workbooks were provided by the Department of Basic Education.
- The Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign for adults reached 2 243 766 adults between 2008 and 2011, with 665 246 adults in enrolled in classes in 2012.
- More than 11 million learners and 24 000 schools benefitted from workbooks and textbooks provided at the beginning of the 2012 academic year. The Department of Basic Education has been monitoring the delivery of educational material to schools since September 2012 to ensure a smoother 2013 school year.
- The Integrated School Health Programme (ISHP) made comprehensive in-school health services available to 290 602 learners by September 2012, exceeding its target of 250 000 learners for the year.
- Regarding higher education, Census 2011 results indicate that there was an encouraging increase in the percentage of students

who completed higher education; from 7,1% in 1996 to 11,8% in 2011.

- Funding support for Further Education and Training (FET) received a boost through bursaries. R200 million was provided to enable the NSFAS to grant loans to students who completed their studies but did not receive their certificates or graduated owing to outstanding debt.
- A further R50 million was provided for post-graduate students who required financial assistance to complete their honours, master's and doctoral degrees.
- In 2011, 10 370 newly qualified teachers graduated from public universities. This represents an increase of 74,5% since 2008. By 2014, over 14 000 new teachers are expected to be trained and qualified.

Basic education

The Department of Basic Education has a crucial leadership, policy-making and monitoring responsibility in improving the quality of learning and ensuring quality sustained education across the education sector.

The department strives to develop, maintain and support a South African school education system which is in line with the educational demands of the 21st century. It is also mandated with providing leadership regarding provinces, districts and schools in the establishment of an effective South African education system.

Among the closely monitored performance areas are learners' Mathematics and Physical Science pass rates and the number of Grade 12 learners qualifying for university entry. Government aims to increase the number of Grade 12 learners who qualify to enrol for a Bachelor's Degree to 175 000 by 2014.

One way of achieving this is through the annual national assessment (ANA) tests that is standardised and internationally benchmarked. Analysis of the results of such assessments will inform the department's plans to improve the quality of learning and teaching.

The tests are aimed at measuring learners' improvement in specific grades and subjects.

Through ANA, all public schools, as well as independent schools subsidised by government, conduct the same grade-specific language and mathematics tests.

Language tests cover learners' home language and their first additional language, and teachers mark the ANA tests using the departmental guidelines. The tests are moderated by officials of the various provincial education departments to ensure that similar standards are upheld across all schools.

In September 2012, seven million learners in grades 1 to 6 and 9 successfully completed ANA tests. The results of the 2012 ANAs showed that numeracy and literacy performance of South African learners in the lower grades had improved.

The results showed that in Grade 3, the national average performance in literacy stands at 53%, compared to the 35% in 2011 – an improvement of 17% from 2011.

An allocation of R75 million to strengthen the existing programme and expand assessments to include Grade 9 were secured for 2013/14.

The programme was to be integrated and aligned with the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (Caps).

Legislation and policies

Since 1994, a number of policies have been implemented and legislation promulgated to create a framework for transformation in education and training. Some key policies and legislation are:

- The fundamental policy framework of the Ministry of Basic Education is stated in the Ministry's first *White Paper on Education and Training in a Democratic South Africa: First Steps to Develop a New System*, published in February 1995.
- The National Education Policy Act (Nepa), 1996 (Act 27 of 1996), brought into law the policies, and legislative and monitoring responsibilities of the Minister of Education, as well as the formal relations between national and provincial authorities. It laid the foundation for the establishment of the Council of Education Ministers, as well as

the Heads of Education Departments Committee (Hedcom), as intergovernmental forums that would collaborate in the development of a new education system. Nepa, 1996 therefore provided for the formulation of national policy in general, and FET policies for curriculum, assessment, language and quality assurance.

- The South African Schools Act (Sasa), 1996 (Act 84 of 1996), is aimed at ensuring that all learners have right of access to quality education without discrimination, and makes schooling compulsory for children aged seven to 15. It provides for two types of schools, namely independent and public schools. The provision in the Act for democratic school governance, through school governing bodies, has been effected in public schools countrywide. The school-funding norms, outlined in Sasa, 1996, prioritise redress and target poverty regarding the allocation of funds for the public schooling system.
- The Adult Basic Education and Training (Abet) Act, 2000 (Act 52 of 2000) regulates adult basic education and training; provides for the establishment, governance and funding of public adult learning centres; provides for the registration of private adult learning centres; and provides for quality assurance and quality promotion in adult basic education and training.

In July 2012, a South African publishing company launched a new digital manual that is transforming the classroom, inspiring a love for learning and improving academic performance by making education fun and interactive. Maramedia Publishing's interactive educational tools are a first for South Africa and are changing the way children experience education.

The manuals, which comply with the Department of Basic Education's curriculum policy statement, are a combination of textbooks, study guides and workbooks to supplement learning in the classroom. In keeping with modern technological trends, the manuals are colourful, fully interactive digital manuals for tablet devices.

READ Educational Trust's 2012 Readathon, from August to October 2012, was launched with a supporting statement of "The more you read, the more you know". The annual Readathon is a literacy awareness campaign that focuses on various activities to encourage an appreciation of reading. Central to the 2012 campaign was a handbook for teachers providing literacy activities and a selection of stories, quotations, slogans, competitions and posters. Some 4 000 handbooks were distributed to schools nationally; these can also be downloaded from the READ website in three booklet formats.

- Sasa, 1996 was amended by the Education Laws Amendment Act, 2005 (Act 24 of 2005), which authorises the declaration of schools in poverty-stricken areas as "no-fee schools", and by the Education Laws Amendment Act, 2007 (Act 31 of 2007), which provides for the functions and responsibilities of school principals.
- The Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act 76 of 1998), regulates the professional, moral and ethical responsibilities of educators, as well as teachers' competency requirements. The Act and the South African Council for Educators (SACE), regulate the teaching corps.
- The design of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) was refined with the publication of the Higher Education Qualifications Framework in the *Government Gazette* in October 2007 to provide 10 NQF levels.
- The National Curriculum Statement grades R to 12, a policy statement for learning and teaching in schools, replaced the policy document, *A Résumé of Industrial Programmes in Schools, Report 550 (89/03)*.
- The *Education White Paper on ECD (2000)* provides for the expansion and full participation of five-year-olds in preschool Grade R education by 2010, and an improvement in the quality of programmes, curricula and teacher development for birth to four-year-olds and six- to nine-year-olds.
- The *Education White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education (2001)* describes the Department

of Education's intention to implement inclusive education at all levels in the system by 2020. The system will facilitate the inclusion of vulnerable learners and reduce the barriers to learning through targeted support structures and mechanisms that will improve the retention of learners in the education system, particularly learners who are prone to dropping out.

- The Education Laws Amendment Act, 2002 (Act 50 of 2002), set the age of admission to Grade 1 as the year in which the child turns seven. However, the school-going age of Grade 1 was changed to age five if children turned six on or before 30 June in their Grade 1 year.

Action Plan 2014: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2025

The Department of Basic Education finalised a comprehensive turnaround plan for improving the quality of learning and teaching in schools called Action Plan 2014: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2025.

The purpose of the action plan is to improve all aspects of education such as teacher recruitment, learner enrolment, school funding, mass literacy and numeracy and overall quality of education through specific measurable targets.

The adoption in 2010 of an outcomes-based approach in implementing government's priorities ensures that the work of government is measured according to outcomes. The performance outcomes are politically determined positions of government to achieve greater and more focused development. The outcomes approach enables the Department of Basic Education to set measurable targets and deliverables for monitoring progress in addressing challenges in education.

The action plan sets out 13 goals to be achieved, related to learning and enrolment. In addition, it sets out 14 areas in education that need to be improved to reach these goals.

Making sure that every young South African receives quality schooling is an urgent need. Schooling 2025 provides a clear vision of how

to achieve this towards 2025. It is a long-term plan for the basic education sector that will allow for the monitoring of progress against a set of measurable indicators covering all aspects of basic education including, among others, enrolments and retention of learners, teachers, infrastructure, school funding, learner well-being and school safety, mass literacy and educational quality.

Curriculum and Policy Statement (Caps)

The curriculum focus in 2012 was on the implementation of Caps for grades 1 to 3 and 10. Caps is a single, comprehensive and concise policy document that replaced subject and learning area statements, learning programme guidelines and subject assessment guidelines for all subjects listed in the National Curriculum Statement Grades R to 12.

Caps was to be implemented in a phased approach over a three-year period. Following the 2012 implementation in grades 1 to 3 and 10, it was implemented in grades 4 to 6 and 11 in 2013. Implementation will be completed in 2014, with grades 7 to 9 and 12.

With the introduction of Caps, every subject in each grade will have a single, comprehensive and concise policy document that will provide details on what teachers need to teach and assess on a grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject basis.

This curriculum review is aimed at reducing the administrative load on teachers and ensuring that there is clear guidance and consistency for teaching.

The department trained hundreds of teachers and provincial and district subject advisers from all nine provinces on how to implement Caps in schools.

The *Sunday Times*, through its Storybook Campaign, has published and printed more than two million books for children, written and illustrated by South Africans. These are distributed freely to schools nationwide as part of the campaign to promote literacy. The books contain five stories and is available in all 11 official languages.

More than 1 000 Intermediate Phase subject advisers were orientated and provided with training manuals and resource packs to be used for training teachers. Training is ongoing for the 2013 and 2014 implementations.

Budget and funding

The overall budget for 2012/13 for the Department of Basic Education increased from R13,868 billion in 2011/12 to R16,344 billion – an increase of R2,475 billion.

Umalusi was allocated R22 million for 2012/13, which will reach R83 million in 2014/15 to cover its expanded mandate.

On earmarked amounts, allocations for 2012/13 included R520,9 million for the Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign.

More than R51 million was allocated to the Extended Public Works Programme's (EPWP) Kha Ri Gude programmes in 2012/13, to contribute to job-creation, by recruiting and training volunteers.

The threshold target allocation for no-fee schools for operational expenditure increased to R880 per learner. The national per learner target amount for Quintile 1 schools was R960.

Total expenditure for school allocation on no-fee schools at the national target level was projected to be in excess of R7,7 billion. Informed by government's Anti-Poverty Strategy, the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) Conditional Grant increased by R327,7 million in 2012/13, to R4,907 billion.

The Dinaledi Schools Programme received a conditional grant of R99,7 million for 2012/13 towards implementing a new national strategy for Mathematics, Science and Technology education.

For expanding distribution of workbooks to Grade 9 learners in 2012/13, R811 million was allocated.

The budget allocation for the Education Infrastructure Grant in 2012/13 was R5 822 398 billion. This budget was R93,215 million more than the adjusted budget of 2011/12 and R324,098 million more than the original budget.

Other allocations in 2012/13 included R37 million for the Integrated Quality Manage-

In May 2012, South Africa and the European Commission signed the Joint Declaration on Education and Training Sectoral Policy Dialogue Forum on the sidelines of the African Higher Education Harmonisation: Tuning and Shaping Responsive and Quality Postgraduate Education Conference at the University of the Western Cape.

ment System and R21,7 million for Systemic Evaluation. For 2012/13, the Funza Lushaka Scheme was allocated R671,9 million.

Role players/statutory bodies

Provincial departments of education

The role of the national Department of Education is to translate government's education and training policies and the provisions of the Constitution into a national education policy and legislative framework.

However, the national department has to work closely with the departments of education of each province to ensure that provincial budgets and strategies are in line with and support national policies.

The national department shares a concurrent role with the provincial departments for basic schooling and ECD, but it is the responsibility of each provincial department to finance and manage its schools directly.

District offices are the provincial departments' main interface with schools. Not only are they central to the process of gathering information and diagnosing problems in schools, they perform a vital support and intervention function.

This includes organising training for personnel, dealing with funding and resourcing bottlenecks and solving labour-relations disputes. They are key to ensuring that school principals remain accountable to the provincial department and that accountability lines within the school to the principal and to the school governing body are maintained.

Equity in education expenditure between and within provinces is achieved through the equitable division of national revenue between

provinces, making use of the Equitable Shares Formula, the National Norms and Standards for School Funding, and the national post-provisioning norms.

The norms are progressive, with 60% of a province's non-personnel expenditure going to the poorest 40% of learners in public schools. The poorest 20% of learners receive 35% of non-personnel resources, while the richest 20% receive 5%.

Council of Education Ministers

The council, consisting of the Minister of Basic Education, the Minister of Higher Education and Training and the nine provincial members of the executive councils for education, meets regularly to discuss the promotion of national education policy, share information and views on all aspects of education in South Africa, and coordinate action on matters of mutual interest.

Heads of Education Departments Committee

Hedcom consists of the Director-General (DG) of the Department of Basic Education, the deputy DGs of the department and the heads of provincial departments of education.

The purpose of the committee is to facilitate the development of a national education system, share information and views on national education, coordinate administrative action on matters of mutual interest and advise the department on a range of specified matters related to the proper functioning of the national education system.

Umalusi

Umalusi is responsible for the standards of general and further education and training, hence its name, which means "herder" or "shepherd". In Nguni culture, this is the person who is the guardian of the family's wealth.

The Umalusi Council sets and monitors standards for general and further education and training in South Africa in accordance with the NQF Act, 2008 (Act 67 of 2008), and the General and FET Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act 58 of 2001).

The council is tasked with the development and management of a sub-framework of qualifications for general and further education and training and for the attendant quality assurance.

Umalusi is currently responsible for the certification of the following qualifications:

- In schools: the Senior Certificate, to be phased out by 2014; and the National Senior Certificate (NSC), which replaced the Senior Certificate in 2008.
- In FET colleges: the National Technical Certificate (Level N3); the NSC (Vocational), which is being phased out; and the National Certificate Vocational (NCV), which commenced in 2007.
- In adult learning centres: the General Education Training Certificate: Adults.

To issue learners with certificates that are credible, Umalusi:

- develops and evaluates qualifications and curricula to ensure that they are of the expected standard
- moderates assessment to ensure that it is fair, valid and reliable
- accredits providers of education and training, and assessment
- conducts research to ensure educational quality
- verifies the authenticity of certificates.

The Ikateleng Programme for Supplementary Instruction, which was started at the North West University's Vanderbijlpark Campus in 1988, has made a huge difference in learner performance in the area. More than 20 000 learners have benefitted from the programme, through which learners receive supplementary education in subjects like Mathematics, Science, Physical Science, Accounting, Business Science and English. They receive textbooks and supplementary hand-outs, and learn life skills, social skills, study methods and career orientation. Ikateleng's pass rate for the past 23 years have been more than 80%. In 2011, 350 Grade 12 learners collectively achieved a 93% pass rate and 177 distinctions. Several former Ikateleng students have already made their mark in the corporate world.

Gauteng's first school built entirely from alternative construction technologies was opened in November 2012. The state-of-the-art Orefile Primary School in Olievenhoutbosch was built in a record of 10 months using the Razorbil alternative construction method, instead of bricks and mortar. The new school dramatically improved learning conditions, especially for learners who had been housed in prefabricated structures. The school boasts 24 classrooms, an administration block, computer and multimedia rooms, store-rooms, laboratories, sports fields, and recreational and ablution facilities.

National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (Needu)

Needu was launched in March 2011 to ensure effective evaluation of all teachers based on the extent to which learner performance improves. Its core responsibilities include:

- providing the Minister with an independent account of the state of schools, including the quality of teaching and learning in all schools
- providing an independent account on the development needs of the school education system
- accounting for the attainment of the standards by all schools through a monitoring and evaluation system
- identifying on a systemwide basis the critical factors that inhibit or advance school improvement and making focused recommendations for redressing problem areas that undermine school improvement
- proposing appropriate sanctions to ensure that schools offer effective education for all learners
- strengthening internal evaluation capacity within schools in ways that reliably inform and complement external evaluation
- monitoring the different levels of school support and the extent to which there is considered actions on proposed interventions, whether in the form of developmental support or in the form of disciplined action
- reviewing and assessing existing monitoring, evaluation and support structures and instruments on a regular basis to ensure

clarity and coherence in the ways schools and teachers are assessed and supported

- providing schools with evidence-based advice on how to pursue school improvement in their particular context
- promoting school improvement through the dissemination of good practice.

Education Labour Relations Council

The Education Labour Relations Council serves the public education sector nationally. It is a statutory council, initially established by the Education Labour Relations Act, 1993 (Act 146 of 1993), but now draws authority from the Education Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act 66 of 1995). The main purpose of the council is to maintain labour peace within public education through processes of dispute prevention and resolution.

These include constructive collective bargaining between the educator unions and the Department of Basic Education as the employer. The Education Labour Relations Council also conducts various workshops to increase the level of awareness and understanding of sound labour-relations procedures.

While the bargaining council is guided by its own constitution in resolving disputes, the framework for this is governed by South Africa's labour legislation.

South African Council for Educators (SACE)

The SACE is a professional council aimed at enhancing the status of the teaching profession and promoting the development of educators and their professional conduct. The SACE was established in terms of the SACE Act, 2000 (Act 31 of 2000).

The council's functions are to:

- register educators
- promote the professional development of educators
- set, maintain and protect ethical and professional standards.

Educators are required to register with SACE before they are employed. The SACE has a register of about 500 000 educators.

In June 2012, movie theatre company Ster-Kinekor, in partnership with the US-based Cinema Park Network, introduced an innovative way to educate young people through entertainment, by bringing the educational programmes of Cinema Park to South Africa. Cinema Park's programming, which encourages interactive viewing, uses multi-sensory technologies, combined with 3D film-projection technology, audio effects and audience interactive tools to heighten viewers' immersion in the learning process. The initiative aims to inspire young South Africans to change their attitudes and behaviour towards various social and moral issues they face on a daily basis.

The council has strengthened entry requirements by checking applicants' professional standing.

The SACE has a number of programmes that promote the development of educators and enhance the status and image of the teaching profession. These include:

- the Professional Development Portfolio Project, which aims to encourage educators to reflect on their practice and take responsibility for their own professional development
- teacher education and development research activities
- setting up the Continuing Professional Teacher Development System
- celebrating World Teachers' Day to acknowledge the work of educators.

The ethics function ensures that educators adhere to the SACE Code of Professional Ethics. The Continuing Professional Teacher-Development System recognises professional development undertaken by teachers on their own initiative.

Educator unions

The majority of educators are organised into six educator unions, namely the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa, the National Teachers' Union, the South African Teachers' Union, the Professional Educators' Union, Cape Professional Teachers' Association and the South African Democratic Teachers' Union.

A labour-relations framework was agreed on by the former Ministry of Education and the unions. This encompasses both traditional areas of negotiation, and issues of professional concern, including pedagogy and quality-improvement strategies.

An agreement was reached on the framework for the establishment of an occupation-specific dispensation for educators in public education. The occupation-specific dispensation provides for dual career paths where educators and specialists in classrooms can progress to levels where they earn salaries that are equal to or higher than those of managers without moving into management/supervisory posts.

It also provides for a new category of posts of teaching and learning specialists and senior learning and teaching specialists, as well as the creation of a cadre of education managers at school and office level.

Programmes and projects

Learning and teaching support material

In 2012/13, the Department of Basic Education extended the National Workbook Programme to cover grades 7 to 9. The allocation for 2012/13 amounts to R811 million for expanding distribution of workbooks to Grade 9 learners.

In 2012, the department provided 54 million books to learners, at no cost to the parent or learner. In line with its commitment to inclusive education, workbooks for grades 1 to 9 were adapted and printed in Braille.

Regarding textbooks, a national catalogue for grades 1 to 3 and 10 has been developed and distributed to provinces for procurement of core materials for schools.

In January 2013, the National Youth Development Agency gave R450 000 towards the My Future, My Career Project, which provides secondary school learners with career education screenings in cinema complexes. The initiative is run through a partnership between the Department of Basic Education, Primestars Marketing and Nedbank as the main sponsor.

A national catalogue for grades 4 to 6 and 11 was finalised in June and July 2012. The development of a national catalogue for grades 7 to 9 and 12 was expected to be finalised during 2012/13.

The Department of Basic Education distributed 4 424 500 Physical Science and Mathematics supplementary textbooks to all grades 10 to 12 learners in partnership with the Shuttleworth Foundation.

At the beginning of the 2012 academic year, through the Department of Basic Education, government provided the following workbooks to schools:

- 900 000 Grade R workbooks
- 6 754 525 home language workbooks
- 919 220 grades 1 to 9 Mathematics workbooks
- 411 675 grades 1 to 6 English first additional language workbooks
- 1 277 550 grades 10 to 12 Mathematics textbooks
- 934 700 Physical Science textbooks.

Workbooks and textbooks were sent to 24 355 schools across the country, benefitting 11 015 446 learners.

Educational portal

The educational portal www.thutong.org.za offers a range of curriculum and learner-support material, professional development programmes for educators, and administration and management resources for schools.

Thutong – meaning “a place of learning” in Setswana – features a searchable database of web-based curriculum resources for various education sectors, grades and subjects.

The portal is a free service to registered users, who must go through a once-off, no-cost registration process. The portal is a partnership venture between the Department of Basic Education and various role players in the field.

The department also revitalised and revised the content of the portal. It has over 31 000 registered users and more than 22 000 curriculum resources.

In June 2012, the eThekweni Municipality, in partnership with the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, hosted a Mathematics, Science and Technology Indaba in an effort to attract learners to careers in these fields.

The indaba included a competition among participating schools to showcase their knowledge of the sciences. Various institutions, further education and training colleges and municipal technical departments exhibited material on educational programmes and career opportunities.

Improving access to free and quality basic education

School fees are set at annual public meetings of school governing bodies, where parents vote on the amount to be paid. Parents who cannot afford to pay, or who can only afford a smaller amount, are granted an exemption or reduction in fees.

The Education Laws Amendment Act, 2005 provided the legal foundation for introducing no-fee schools in 2007.

By May 2012, more than 69,3% of learners were in more than 20 000 no-fee schools. The threshold target allocation for no-fee schools for operational expenditure has increased to R880 per learner. The national per learner target amount for Quintile 1 schools is R960.

Total expenditure for school allocation on no-fee schools at the national target level is projected to be in excess of R7,7 billion.

National Strategy for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education

In 2005, the then Department of Education introduced the National Strategy for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education to increase the number of learners passing high-level Mathematics.

The primary objective of the Dinaledi Schools Project is to ensure that selected schools are supported to significantly increase the participation and performance of learners in Mathematics and Physical Science.

Since the project's inception in 2002 with 102 schools, it has been expanded to 500 schools in all nine provinces. This number includes

18 schools that were adopted by the Department of Science and Technology as part of the Adopt-A-School initiative.

The Dinaledi Schools Project is one of many initiatives to improve learning outcomes in schools. The 500 Dinaledi schools continue to demonstrate that learners can perform well above the national average with the necessary focus and support.

In 2012, the department implemented a new National Strategy for Mathematics, Science and Technology education. It reinforces the Dinaledi Schools Project, which has received a conditional grant of R99,7 million for 2012/13.

In June 2012, the department convened a Mathematics and Science Indaba, with key education stakeholders involved in the teaching of Mathematics and Science.

Early Childhood Development (ECD)

Over the next three years, R1,4 billion will be spent to support ECD programmes and to implement the community-based Child Care and Protection Programme. This will increase access to ECD from the current 500 000 to 580 000 children, with a focus on rural areas. It is expected that more than 10 000 youths will be employed as a result of the programme.

Government is committed to ensuring that ECD is linked to other development-based programmes, particularly within the context of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme, and integrates other services that flow from different departments and relevant stakeholders.

This is done through a massive education campaign focused on women in rural areas, and selective peri-urban and urban areas like informal settlements, which are generally regarded as focal points for government's poverty and malnutrition eradication programmes. The department is also ensuring that ECD centres have access to relevant study materials.

ECD centres play an integral part in providing children with tools to cope socially, especially where there is a lack of parental supervision

at home. More than 20 000 ECD practitioners have therefore been equipped with the necessary skills to nurture, instil discipline and care for children in ECD centres.

The Department of Social Development coordinates the activities of the three partner departments, namely social development, health and basic education.

The integrated plan includes the development of national early learning standards, the training of ECD practitioners – which is part of government's employment creating EPWP – and the development of national norms and standards for funding.

The Department of Social Development leads government departments for services to children under the age of four years. In terms of the Children's Act, 2005 (Act 38 of 2005), it is the department's responsibility to manage the registration of ECD sites, monitor their functionality and impact, and provide a subsidy for those children where a need exists.

Education of learners with special needs

In July 2001, the then Department of Education gazetted *White Paper 6, Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System*. This White Paper provided strategies for developing an inclusive system and increasing access to quality education for children experiencing barriers to learning.

The department's approach to inclusive

Census 2011 results indicate that the past 15 years saw a general increase in the percentage of learners between the ages of five and 15 attending educational institutions. The five- to seven-year age group showed the most significant progress in enrolments rates between 1996 and 2011.

Enrolment for the five-year-old age group was at 22,5% in 1996, 45,6% in 2001 and leapt to 81,2% in 2011. For the six-year-old age group, these figures were 49,1% in 1996, 70,3% in 2001 and 92,7% in 2011, while for the seven-year-old group it was at 73,1% in 1996, 88,4% in 2001 and 96,1% in 2011.

The Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities adopted Techno Girls as a key government programme in terms of the department's mandate to drive government's equity, equality and empowerment agenda. Through this programme, 3 952 girls were exposed to possible career choices, especially those that are technology related, in the private sector.

education is geared to promote the democratic values enshrined in the Constitution. Provincial departments of education provide a wide range of education services to learners who, owing to a range of factors, experience barriers to learning and participation.

These factors include:

- autism
- behavioural problems
- visual and hearing impairments
- tuberculosis
- conflict with the law
- physical disabilities
- neurological and specific learning disabilities
- intellectual disabilities
- communication disorders
- epilepsy
- being over-aged learners.

Educator development

Teachers are at the heart of curriculum delivery. Continuous teacher professional development and good teaching is the key to unlocking excellence in learner performance.

However, there is still a shortage of qualified teachers. The overall vacancy rate by January 2012 averaged 8,7%, 10,2% and 8,7% for principals, heads of departments and teachers, respectively.

The department oversees the implementation of the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development that was launched in April 2011. For 2012/13, provinces have set aside over R3 billion for teacher development.

An audit process was conducted to support functionality of the 144 teacher resource centres, including the development of new centres.

School safety awareness campaigns, which aim to raise awareness of various issues affecting learners, was launched in various schools in Gauteng in September 2012. The campaigns, which are part of the road shows for Grade 8 to Grade 11 learners, will raise awareness on drug and substance abuse, gangsterism, bullying and teenage pregnancy. Inspirational speakers, faith-based organisations, psychologists and social workers were available at each event to assist and make arrangements with learners who required support.

In 2011/12, 5 962 principals and deputies completed the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership and Management.

The Department of Basic Education entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with teacher unions to strengthen capacity in teacher development and teacher supply and use. In addition, the university sector has been supported financially to enrol greater numbers of teacher education students through dedicated funding for teacher education.

From a baseline of 5 942 new teacher graduates in 2008, in 2011 there were 10 370 new teachers who graduated from public universities. This represents an increase of 74,5% in four years. Substantial growth is expected over the next few years, and by 2014 over 14 000 new teachers should be produced.

Research output has increased at most universities, including at traditionally low-research-intensive universities. From 2010 to 2011, research publications increased from 9 747 units to 11 191 units and these were in published accredited journals, books and conference proceedings.

Education infrastructure

Through the Accelerated School Infrastructure Delivery Initiative (Asidi), the department continues to do more to fast-track provision and improvement of school infrastructure. This programme has been given a further boost by being included in the work of the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Committee.

The total budget allocation for the Educa-

tion Infrastructure Grant for 2012/13 was R5 822 398 billion. This was R93,215 million more than the adjusted budget of 2011/12.

The Department of Basic Education has the following targets to meet through Asidi:

- eradicating 496 inappropriate structures
- providing basic water to 1 257 schools
- providing basic sanitation to 868 schools
- electrifying 878 schools.

By May 2012, 50 inappropriate schools were under reconstruction for completion to be ready for occupation in 2013.

In 2011/12, 55 schools were provided with water, 115 with sanitation and 48 with electrification.

The department is in the process of putting together framework agreements that are intended to provide the sector with more implementing agents, built environment professionals and contractors.

In partnership with the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory and other partners in education, the department launched the 94+ Schools Infrastructure Project as part of International Mandela Day in April 2012.

In May 2012 the Teacher Laptop Initiative was back on track, with more teachers having access to computers. The departments of basic education and communications developed a connectivity plan providing a comprehensive framework for achieving cost-effective and efficient information and communications technology (ICT) connectivity for all schools. The Telkom Masters Services Agreement was signed in March 2012 for Phase One Implementation of the Connectivity Plan for Schools. The first phase will provide connectivity to 1 650 schools.

In 2011, 2 334 schools were connected to the internet for the purpose of teaching and learning, while 7 008 schools were using the internet for administration purposes. The establishment of nine ICT resource centres, one per province, and sponsored by the Vodacom Foundation, is expected to accelerate training of teachers in the use of ICT to support teaching and learning.

National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP)

The NSNP is one of the most important components of government's plans to improve learning and the quality of education. It was specifically assigned the responsibility of addressing children's ability to learn by providing them with nutritious meals. Informed by government's anti-poverty strategy, the NSNP feeds over eight million children in more than 20 000 schools, thereby contributing towards increasing their performance in class.

School enrichment programmes

At the end of June 2011, Sport and Recreation South Africa launched the School Sport Programme to ensure active participation in various sporting codes in all schools in the country. With this renewed focus on school sports, the Magnificent Wednesdays initiative was launched in March 2012 in Mamelodi in Pretoria, to encourage learners to participate in sport.

By April 2012, at least 2 500 KwaZulu-Natal schools had responded enthusiastically to the school sports programme, exceeding the target by 1 000 schools.

Of the 27 000 schools in South Africa, about 10 000 from seven provinces have already enrolled in the programme. The department invested R33 million in the programme to ensure that sports were played in schools.

Sport is set to become an integral part of the school curriculum and different sporting codes will be offered at every school in South Africa. This will culminate in the National Olympics Championship every year; with stakeholders such as trade unions, universities and the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee supporting the programme.

According to the *Ranking of World Universities Report*, issued in August 2012, three of South Africa's universities, namely those of Cape Town, the Witwatersrand and KwaZulu-Natal, were among the world's top 500 academic institutions. No other African country has a university in this group.

Census 2011 results indicated that the proportion of people aged 20 with no schooling halved from 19,1% in 1996 to 8,6% in 2011. In addition, the percentage of individuals aged 20 years and older who received no formal education has decreased steadily between 1996 and 2011. In 1996, 17% of men in this age group had no formal education. This decreased to 15,5% in 2001 and further to 7,2% in 2011. Among women, the percentage with no formal education declined from 20,9% in 1996, to 20% in 2001 and 9,9% in 2011.

Some of the arts, culture and music flagship programmes the department coordinates in collaboration with the Department of Arts and Culture include the South African Schools Choral Eisteddfod, the National Indigenous Games, the Music and Movement Festival and the National Language Festival and Concert.

To infuse more life into the South African Schools Choral Eisteddfod, the department trained 359 adjudicators, 509 conductors, 82 data capturers and 15 programme directors, the majority of whom were educators. About 230 school choirs participated in the 2012 National Choral Eisteddfod in July.

School safety

Since 2007, measures have been intensified and implemented to ensure that all schools are safe and secure for both learners and teachers.

An Inter-Ministerial Committee was established by Cabinet to address violence that affect school children. So far, more than 9 000 schools have been linked to police stations. This year, the department aims to link an additional 9 000.

Business Against Crime and the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention focus on eliminating crime and violence in schools. The centre was appointed by the department and the United Nations (UN) Children's Fund to conduct a baseline audit to collect information to guide the design and implementation of operational plans to support provinces in curbing crime and violence.

The Eskom Academy of Learning Welding School was launched at the end of March 2012 in Midrand, Gauteng. The school, a partnership between the South African Institute of Welding and Eskom, is expected to train more than 700 young people as welders over the next seven years. Eskom currently has 6 386 learners, with a focus on training artisans, engineers and technologists for the future. Eskom invests over R1 billion a year, representing over 6% of the wage bill, in training and development of workers.

The department identified 585 schools (65 schools per province) with high levels of crime and violence, and from these one school per province was identified to become part of a ministerial pilot project to create safe, caring and child-friendly schools.

Interventions were designed and implemented to meet the specific safety needs of the identified schools. Although the initial focus is on the nine ministerial schools, it is envisaged that the provinces will roll out this programme to more schools.

Learner health

To reduce health and social barriers to learning, the department is working with the Department of Health to expand and strengthen school health services. The ISHP, which will ensure that learners have access to primary health care services, was launched in October 2012, under the theme *Taking responsibility for our learners' health and wellbeing*.

The strengthening of existing school health services through the ISHP is a key component of the primary healthcare restructuring process in the Department of Health, and the Care and Support for Teaching and Learning Programme within the Department of Basic Education.

The Department of Social Development is responsible for assisting learners to access services, particularly where financial barriers impede access. This includes providing transport to health facilities where necessary.

The ISHP also offers:

- eyesight, hearing and oral hygiene

- immunisation (for foundation and intermediate phases)
- deworming (for foundation and intermediate phases)
- treatment of minor conditions, especially skin conditions (all phases)
- counselling on sexual and reproductive health issues and offering services via mobile health units (all senior and FET learners, and intermediate learners where required)
- prevention of drug and alcohol use and abuse.

The ISHP will also individually assess every learner once during each of the four educational phases. Additional individual assessments will be offered to all learners who are repeating grades, at the request of an educator or parent or of the learner.

Services will be made available to all learners incrementally over a five-year period from 2012 to 2016. By September 2012, 290 602 learners had been assessed.

Adult Basic Education and Training (Abet)

Although the concept of adult basic education had been around for some time, the concept of Abet is uniquely South African, as it is here that the "T" was added to include training.

Abet is defined as the general conceptual foundation towards lifelong learning and development, comprising knowledge, skills and attitudes required for social, economic and political participation and transformation applicable to a range of contexts.

Abet is flexible, developmental and targeted at the specific needs of particular audiences and, ideally, provides access to nationally recognised certificates.

One of the most successful Abet initiatives in South Africa is the Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign. It was launched in 2008 with the intention of enabling 4,7 million South Africans to become literate and numerate in one of the 11 official languages by 2015.

Achieving this goal will enable South Africa to reach its UN Education For All commitment made at Dakar in 2000, namely halving the country's illiteracy rate by 2015.

In its first year, 357 195 learners were enrolled, with 613 643 in 2009 and a further 610 000 in 2010. In 2011, 658 000 learners enrolled.

Kha Ri Gude, which means “let us learn” in Tshivenda, is managed by the Department of Basic Education and is available in all nine provinces. The learning material teaches reading, writing and numeracy and integrates themes and life skills such as health, gender, the environment and civic education.

The campaign makes specific efforts to target vulnerable groups. Recent statistics indicate that about 80% of the learners are women, 8% are disabled, 25% are youth, and 20% are older than 60.

Kha Ri Gude provides visually impaired learners with a range of assistive devices, including braillette boards and Perkins Brailers for use in class. Learner packs for the blind include a full set of materials in Braille and a talking calculator.

In addition to adult learning, Kha Ri Gude also offers short-term work opportunities to 40 000 volunteers who are paid a stipend as part of the EPWP.

In August 2012, the Kha Ri Gude Campaign was one of the winners of the Department of Public Works’ Kamoso Awards. The department awarded the campaign an incentive grant of R51,5 million for 2012/13 to contribute to job creation by recruiting and training volunteers.

In October 2012, the Clearing House – the first phase of the Central Applications System, which will manage all post-school education and training institution applications – was launched. Its main purpose is to help those who want to study in 2013, but did not apply in time, and those who have applied and have not been accepted.

Implementation of the Clearing House will be supported by the already working and established Career Advice call centre managed by the South African Qualifications Authority. The call centre operates on a website portal, a toll-free line (0860 111 673) and an SMS line (072 204 5056), which also accept “please call me” requests from learners.

In May 2012, the University of Venda unveiled much-needed new facilities at its main campus, including the life sciences building; student administration building; new lecture theatre complex; extension to the school of environmental sciences and the refurbishment of the library.

The awards recognise the work of public bodies and non-state organisations for excellence in the implementation of the EPWP.

Higher education and training

The Department of Higher Education and Training was formed to bring together all post-school education and training institutions, all higher education institutions, colleges and adult education institutions, formerly with the Department of Education; and the skills levy institutions, formerly under the Department of Labour.

The department is tasked with developing capable, well-educated and skilled citizens who are able to compete in a sustainable, diversified and knowledge-intensive international economy, which meets South Africa’s developmental goals.

Higher education and training, also referred to as tertiary education, provides the highest level of education. Entry into institutions of higher learning is through a Grade 12 pass or a Grade 12 pass with exemption.

South Africa’s higher education landscape comprises the following institutions:

- University of the Witwatersrand
- University of Cape Town
- Rhodes University
- University of Stellenbosch
- University of the Western Cape
- University of Zululand
- University of Venda
- University of the Free State
- North West University
- University of Pretoria
- University of KwaZulu-Natal
- University of South Africa (Unisa)
- Tshwane University of Technology
- Durban Institute of Technology

- Central University of Technology, Free State
- Mangosuthu University of Technology
- University of Johannesburg
- University of Limpopo
- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
- Walter Sisulu University
- University of Fort Hare
- Cape Peninsula University of Technology
- National Institute for Higher Education, Northern Cape
- National Institute for Higher Education, Mpumalanga
- Vaal University of Technology.

A ministerial committee was established to review the funding framework of universities and make recommendations, taking into account the needs of universities over the next 15 years. It will also consider ways of improving the funding framework to strengthen rural institutions and ensure that historically disadvantaged students are supported within the system.

The Ministerial Committee for the Review of the Provision of Student Housing submitted its a final report at the end of June 2011.

Legislation and policies

Some key policies and legislation relating to higher education and training in South include:

- The Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act 101 of 1997), in accordance with which private institutions offering higher education must register with the Department of Higher Education and Training.
- The Council on Higher Education was established in terms of the Higher Education Act, 1997. The Higher Education Amendment Act, 2008 (Act 39 of 2008), and the NQF Act, 2008 implied a significant change for the council, which was previously an advisory institution, monitoring and evaluating the achievement of South African higher education policy goals and objectives. The council now also functions as a quality council for higher education.
- The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) Act, 1999 (Act 56 of 1999) is responsible for administering and allocat-

ing loans and bursaries to eligible students; developing criteria and conditions for granting loans and bursaries in consultation with the Minister; raising funds; recovering loans; maintaining and analysing a database; and undertaking research for the better use of financial resources. The scheme also advises the Minister on student financial aid in general, and performs other functions assigned to it by the Minister.

- The FET Colleges Act, 2006 (Act 16 of 2006) regulates FET to provide for the establishment, governance and funding of public FET institutions; to provide for the registration of private FET institutions; to provide for quality assurance and quality promotion in FET; to provide for transitional arrangements and the repeal of laws; and to provide for matters connected therewith.
- The General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act 58 of 2001) provides for the establishment, composition and functioning of the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Council. It also provides for quality assurance in general and further education and training. This includes providing for control over norms and standards of curriculum and assessment, the issue of certificates at the exit points, the conduct of assessment and to repeal the South African Certification Council Act, 1986.
- The South African Qualifications Authority (Saq) Act, 1995 (Act 58 of 1995), provides for the establishment of the NQF, which forms the foundation for a national learning system that integrates education and training at all levels

As part of an initiative to reduce the vacancy rate of about 45 000 jobs in the maritime industry, 12 further education and training (FET) colleges throughout the country started offering courses in 2013 aimed at equipping young people for careers in the industry. The FET colleges will meet at least 80% of the industry's skills demands, producing artisans such as riggers, welders and boilermakers.

National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS)

The Department of Higher Education and Training is responsible for ensuring the development of a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path.

The NSDS 3 was launched in January 2011. It draws on lessons learned from NSDS 1 and NSDS 2.

The key driving force of this strategy is improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the skills development system. It represents an explicit commitment to encouraging the linking of skills development to career paths, career development and promoting sustainable employment and in-work progression. The emphasis is particularly on those who do not have relevant technical skills or adequate reading, writing and numeracy skills to enable them to find employment.

The development strategy promotes partnerships between employers, public education institutions (FET colleges, universities of technology and universities), private training providers and sector education and training authorities (Setas), to ensure that cross-sectoral and intersectoral needs are addressed.

The NSDS 3 will be guided by, and measured against, several key developmental and transformation imperatives, such as race, class, gender, geographic considerations, age differences, disability and HIV and AIDS.

NSDS3 addresses the scope and mandate of the Setas. The Setas are expected to facilitate the delivery of sector-specific skills interventions that help achieve the goals of NSDS 3, address employer demand and deliver results. They must be recognised experts in relation to skills demand in their sectors.

NSDS 3 provides a stronger base for the Setas and the Department of Higher Education and Training, through service-level agreements, to set targets that align with sector skills needs and ensure an improved focus on the core Setas' mandate.

The strategy emphasises the relevance, quality and sustainability of skills training programmes focusing on eight goals, namely:

Census 2011 results indicated a decrease in the proportion of the population with no formal education – the proportion of people 20 years and older with no schooling has halved between 1996 and 2011. The proportion of the population that completed matric has increased from 16% in 1996 to 29% in 2011. Although the proportion of people completing a higher education remained low, results showed upward trends over the same period.

- establishing a credible institutional mechanism for skills planning, and ensuring that the national need in relation to skills development is researched, documented and communicated to enable effective planning across all economic sectors
- increasing access to occupation-specific programmes targeting intermediate and higher-level professional qualifications
- promoting the growth of a public FET college system that is responsive to sector, local, regional and national skills needs and priorities
- addressing the low level of youth and adult language and numeracy skills to enable additional training
- encouraging better use of workplace-based skills development
- encouraging and supporting co-operatives, small enterprises, worker-initiated, non-governmental organisations and community-training initiatives
- increasing public-sector capacity for improved service delivery and supporting the building of a developmental state
- building career and vocational guidance.

The department has been increasing access to higher education programmes by expanding spaces and options available at FET colleges and universities.

The move is part of the department's plan to shift learner focus from traditional institutions such as universities and universities of technology to FET colleges, where training is vocationally based.

In honour of Nelson Mandela's 94th birthday on 18 July, the 94+ Schools Infrastructure Project was launched in July 2012. Aimed at upgrading 94 schools that have fallen into serious disrepair, the project formed part of Mandela Day, which is marked worldwide annually on 18 July to inspire people to change the world for the better and build a global movement for good.

Some 30 117 unemployed learners entered into learnerships against a target of 17 531 for 2011. Similarly, the target for workers entering learnerships was exceeded, with 19 192 workers entering learnerships against the target of 13 243.

More than 11 000 learners entered the artisan training system, with 8 102 passing their trade tests and obtaining their trade certificates. The trade test pass rate increased from 41% in 2010 to 57% in 2011.

The introduction of the NCV system in 2011 also marked a significant milestone in developing alternative avenues for skills development in all of the country's social sectors.

It resulted in the creation of opportunities for 164 713 additional learners at FET colleges. This was accompanied by various activities to improve the quality of service provided by FET colleges, including a review of curricula, distribution of learner and teaching support materials and training of lecturers.

Through internship programmes, students are benefitting from workplace placements, artisan training and learnerships. These include:

- 8 898 FET and universities of technology graduates who were placed in workplaces and a further 4 191 students that were placed in workplaces while studying during 2011/12
- 30 117 unemployed pupils and 19 192 workers who have entered learnerships, while 11 335 learners entered the artisan training systems, with 8 102 learners already passing and obtaining trade certificates
- 57 212 students in N1 to N3 for artisan development
- 120 053 students in NCV programmes

- 164 701 in N4 to N6 as post-matric study courses
- 85 519 learners in skills and occupational programmes.

Further Education and Training (FET)

In March 2012, Parliament passed legislation reverting all functions of the FET colleges to the Department of Higher Education and Training.

Government has invested resources in public FET colleges to ensure that they deliver quality higher education and become institutions of choice for learners, parents and employers.

FET colleges are well positioned to contribute towards the skills gap in the country. They have a wider geographic reach, especially for poor students from rural areas.

In keeping with the strategic priorities of the NSDS 3, which includes the expansion and strengthening of FET colleges, some FET colleges will be refurbished, while some new campuses will be built over the 2012 – 2014 MTEF period.

In April 2012, a Presidential Skills Development Summit was held with FET college principals in Pretoria. It served as a platform for principals to engage and deliberate on the central role FET colleges occupy within the country's skills development strategy, and in particular government's new infrastructure development priority programme.

The meeting was also attended by ministers who are members of the management committee of the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission as part of a process to identify sectors where skills are most needed.

These include:

- infrastructure development
- mining and beneficiation
- agriculture and the processing of farm products
- manufacturing
- green economy
- tourism and high-level services
- knowledge-based sectors of the economy.

Government's bursary support to FET college students has increased fourfold within the last

three years; with respectively R318 million in 2010, R1,235 billion in 2011 and R1,7 billion in 2012 allocated to all FET college students who meet the eligibility criteria of financial need and academic performance.

In 2012/13, R1,24 billion was allocated to the FET colleges bursary scheme and 122 911 students were being supported by bursaries and loans.

Budget and funding

Education constitutes more than 21% of government's allocated expenditure for 2012/13. Of this, the Department of Higher Education and Training received R41,1 billion, of which R9,6 billion comprised skills levies that went to the Setas and the National Skills Fund (NSF).

The department's budget (excluding levies) increased from R28,2 billion in 2011/12 to R31,5 billion for 2012/13. This is an increase of R3,3 billion (11,7%) on the 2011/12 allocation.

Universities received R20,9 billion while R4,8 billion was allocated to the FET Conditional Grant. NSFAS received R5 billion during 2012/13 for loans and bursaries in the university and FET sectors.

The amount available in funding to students had almost doubled – with the allocation to the NSFAS having increased from R3,3 billion in 2011/12 to R5,5 billion for 2012/13.

As at 30 September 2011, R753 million had been claimed under the department's financial support programme, covering 23 453 students.

Students who graduate had their student loans converted into bursaries.

In 2012, R200 million was provided to enable NSFAS to grant loans to students who have completed their studies but have not received their certificates or graduated, due to outstanding debt. This will enable an estimated 25 000 students to receive their certificates and enter the job market. A further R50 million was provided for postgraduate students who require financial assistance to complete their honours, master's and doctoral degrees.

Role players

South African Qualifications Authority (Saq)

Saqa which is well-recognised nationally and internationally, focuses on upholding the principles of the NQF, including ensuring access, quality, redress and development for all learners through an integrated national framework of learning achievements.

The authority's main responsibilities include:

- registering qualifications and part-qualifications on the NQF
- maintaining and developing the National Learners' Records Database as the key national source of information for human resource and skills development in policy, infrastructure and planning
- maintaining and developing the authority's role as the national source of advice on foreign and domestic learning and qualifications
- conducting research
- monitoring and undertaking evaluation studies that contribute to the development of the NQF and a culture of lifelong learning
- registering professional bodies and professional designations on the NQF.

In terms of the NQF Act, 2008, the executive functions for setting standards and quality assurance will move to the three quality councils.

In February 2012, PetroSA announced funding of R4,5 million over a three-year period for an eco-schools programme. Aimed at encouraging environmental responsibility among the youth, the programme exposes them to the importance of responsible environmental custodianship.

Launched in 2003, it is offered by the Wildlife and Environmental Society of South Africa and the World Wildlife Fund and accredits schools that make a commitment to continuously improve their environmental performance.

The number of schools that have registered with the programme has grown from 100 in the first year to over 1 100 in 2011. Worldwide, 51 countries are part of the programme.

Several initiatives to use offender labour to revamp and furnish schools in South Africa was launched in 2012.

The Mangaung Correctional Centre outside Bloemfontein donated 32 refurbished desks to Gonyane Primary School. Inmates revamped 1 528 school desks for primary schools in the greater Motheo district.

In July 2012, offenders from the Boksburg Correctional Centre gave the 46-year-old Tsakane Primary School in Tsakane Township near Brakpan in Gauteng a makeover. Inmates repaired desks, installed library shelves and burglar bars, cleaned the schoolyard, fixed broken classroom windows, repaired the fence, painted the school and developed a vegetable garden.

In July 2012, the Ezakheni Combined School received a donation of 2 178 kg of five types of fresh vegetables, planted and cultivated by inmates from Piet Retief Correctional Centre; 900 grey trousers manufactured by offenders from Witbank Correctional Centre; 900 white shirts made by inmates from Mogwase Correctional Centre; several pairs of school shoes; and 834 dozen eggs from Losperfontein Correctional Centre.

Quality Council for Trades and Occupations

The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations addresses the quality of training in and for the workplace, and ensures that such training and knowledge is accredited and certified, including proper recognition of prior learning.

The National Artisan Moderation Body was established in November 2010 under the council's umbrella. It is responsible for coordinating artisan development in South Africa. Plans are in place to establish offices in engineering campuses of public FET colleges.

Higher Education South Africa (Hesa)

Hesa is the voice of South Africa's university leadership as it represents vice-chancellors of public universities. Since 2005, Hesa has provided strong and effective representation for its members. Its mandate is to facilitate the development of public policy on higher education and encourage cooperation among univer-

sities, government, industry and other sectors in South Africa.

Hesa provides services to member universities in five main areas, namely:

- strategic research
- policy advocacy and stakeholder engagement
- sector support, including providing university leaders and their institutions with a supportive network and opportunities for collective action
- special programmes to strengthen institutions' capacity
- value-adding services, including scholarships and international programmes.

To obtain admission to university study for bachelors, with the old Senior Certificate, a candidate had to pass four subjects at 40% and two at 33,3%.

In the case of the NSC, admission to bachelor studies requires a pass in four subjects at 50% and the remaining subjects at 30%, provided that the home language is passed at 40% and the language of learning and teaching at 30%. The NSC requires a candidate to offer seven subjects, while the old Senior Certificate requires only six subjects.

The department benchmarks its question papers as a credible mechanism for ensuring that national question papers are internationally comparable and are of the highest standard and quality.

In 2007, question papers for 10 major subjects were evaluated by three international assessment bodies, namely Cambridge International Examinations, the Scottish Qualification Authority and the Board of Studies New

In 2012, 70 graduates have been accepted into the Forensic Toxicology Programme, a study programme aimed at reducing the turnaround time for toxicology results and increasing the number of forensic toxicologists. The programme, a joint initiative between the Department of Health and the University of Pretoria, will address skills shortage and unemployment in South Africa. Graduates undergo seven months of training followed by five months in laboratories.

In September 2012, a state-of-the-art school library was unveiled at the MC Weiller Primary School in Alexandra, Gauteng. The library, which is expected to help learners improve their reading and literacy skills, was donated by ad agency Net#work BBDO and its non-profit creative arm, the Make A Living Foundation. Out of 2 100 schools in the province, only 1 200 have libraries.

South Wales. There was consensus among these institutions and Hesa that by international standards, the question papers were well designed and assessed what they purported to assess.

Human Resource Development Council of South Africa (HRDCSA)

The HRDCSA is a national, multi-tiered and multi-stakeholder advisory body under the leadership and stewardship of The Office of the Deputy President of South Africa.

Established in March 2010, the HRDCSA is managed by the Department of Higher Education and Training. Membership is based on a five-year tenure and it is represented by a number of Cabinet ministers, as well as senior business leaders, organised labour and representatives from academia and civil society.

One of its key responsibilities is to build the human resource development base required to ensure a prosperous and inclusive South African society and economy. In essence, it must ensure that all relevant policies, programmes, projects, interventions and strategies are streamlined and optimised to support overall government objectives rather than merely sectoral imperatives.

The HRDCSA is supported by a technical working group, which is co-chaired by business and labour. It follows the council structure, but is supported by a team of experts comprising technical task teams that are appointed on an issues basis to provide expert input in respect of all matters pertaining to human resources.

In September 2012, the eighth HRDCSA meeting, chaired by Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe, focused on the introduction of the

Integrated National Human Resource Development Plan, which is supported by the HRDSA 2010 – 2030. This included equipping young people with skills to participate in national infrastructure projects.

Sector education and training authorities (Setas)

Setas were re-established by the Ministry of Labour in March 2005 to help implement the NSDS and to increase the skills of people in particular sectors. Setas replaced and extend the work of the old industry training boards and are accredited by Saqa.

They are responsible for the disbursement of training levies payable by all employers in the country. Setas cover all work sectors in South Africa, including government sectors. The members of Setas include trade unions, government and bargaining councils from appropriate industries.

Within its own sector, a Seta must develop and implement a skills development plan, be responsible for quality control and pay out development grants. They are responsible for about R2,5 billion each year.

Part of the objective of the Setas is to ensure that the skills requirements of the various sectors are identified, and that the adequate and appropriate skills are readily available. They are required to ensure that training is of the appropriate quality, meets agreed standards as laid out by the national framework, and caters for the training needs of new entrants to the labour market as well as the currently employed workforce.

As part of its efforts to address the critical skills shortage, government has introduced the TDM-Powered Skills Development Programme in conjunction with the Intsimbi National Tooling Initiative as a partnership between the Toolmaking Association of South Africa and the Department of Trade and Industry. Once qualified, students can pursue careers in cross-cutting sectors such as the aerospace, automotive, chemical, electronics, leisure, marine, medical, mining and packaging industries.

School attendance of children with disabilities aged between seven and 15 years improved by 21% between 2002 (73%) and 2010 (94%). Children with disabilities in the schooling system increased from 1% in 2002 to 6% in 2010. The challenge remains to provide access to the estimated half a million children with disabilities of compulsory school-going age (ages seven to 18) who remain outside the formal education system, by aggressively transforming mainstream schools into accessible, barrier-free and welcoming learning environments for all children.

The Setas are also responsible for a learnership programme and the implementation of strategic sector skills plans. They have discretionary funds, drawn from their levy income, that can be used for projects designed to assist in the achievement of sector priorities, including the design and implementation of learnerships.

National Skills Authority (NSA)

The NSA is an advisory body, established in terms of the Skills Development Act, 1998, to advise the Minister of Higher Education and Training on the following, among other things:

- policy, strategy, implementation and NSF allocations
- liaising with Setas about policy, strategy and sector skills plans
- implementing the NSDS
- reviewing the accounts and balance sheet of NSF annually
- receiving and using information from the Skills Development Planning Unit.

National Skills Fund (NSF)

The NSF is funded by 20% of the skills-development levies collected by the South African Revenue Service (Sars) (of which 2% is paid to Sars as collection fees and 2% is allocated for administrative costs). One of the NSF's key tasks is to advise the Minister on the Seta landscape and the NSDS. The Minister of Higher Education and Training, on advice from the NSA, allocates subsidies

from the NSF. The DG of Higher Education and Training is the accounting officer of the fund. The fund is to be used to target gaps and complement resource shortages for national priorities. Funds were set aside for competitive grants/bids from community-initiated skills development projects and other initiatives in line with the objectives and goals of NSDS 3.

In 2011, the Department of Higher Education and Training allocated R200 million to the NSF to enable students with historic debt to obtain their certificates.

Library and information services (LIS) sector

South Africa's growing LIS sector includes a national library, public/community libraries, school libraries, special libraries, government libraries and higher education libraries.

The Department of Basic Education recognises the necessity for school library resource provision and addressed this holistically during 2010, through the development of the *National Guidelines for School Library and Information Services*. The guidelines are part of the broader strategy, which is expected to contribute to ensuring that each school has a functional school library and information service.

The nine provincial library authorities provide, in partnership with local governments, extensive public-library services. Public libraries, among other things, increasingly render community and general information services, and provide study material and facilities for school and tertiary students.

In August 2012, the former Irish Head of State and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, opened the new library of the Vuyani Primary School in Gugulethu, Cape Town, which was donated by the Nelson Mandela Day Library Project.

Libraries in the higher education sector

The higher education libraries hold the bulk of South Africa's scientific and scholarly information resources and fulfil more than half of all

interlibrary loan requests. Pressure on higher education libraries includes redistribution of educational resources and rising prices.

These libraries have responded by forming consortia, looking at access and exploring digital resources.

Conclusion

Despite challenges, there has been steady progress in education, with government systematically addressing the shortcomings that have hampered progress in the past.

For example, in less than three years to go before the 2015 target, the Department of Basic Education is set to fulfil the millennium development goals for expanding access to education.

Recent statistics indicate that there are now about 12 million learners in more than 24 000 public schools, with 365 447 educators. Grade R enrolment has more than doubled, from 300 000 in 2003 to 705 000, which is well on track to meet government's target of having 100% coverage for Grade R by 2014.

It is also encouraging that more learners are completing grades 9 and 12, and that the percentage of Grade 12 learners who qualify for Bachelor Degree studies has increased.

The national pass rate for the matric class of 2012 was 73,9%. This was an increase of 3,7% from 2011 (70,2%) and an increase of 13,3% since 2009 (60,6%).

The Department of Basic Education monitored the delivery of educational material to schools for the 2013 school year. Challenges have been identified and are addressed to

ensure even better service delivery in 2014.

Much progress has also been made in improving higher education access and outcomes. About R850 million has been set aside towards improving infrastructure of tertiary institutions, including student accommodation.

To reduce finance as a barrier to accessing post-school training, allocations for loans and bursaries increased from R100 million in 2007 to R1,7 billion in 2012.

The long-term goal is to have a post-school system that provides a range of accessible alternatives for young people by 2030. The department strives to raise university enrolments to 1,5 million (a projected participation rate of 23%) as opposed to 899 120 (a 16% participation rate) in 2011. In addition, it aims for four million enrolments (about a 60% participation rate) in colleges or other post-school institutions such as proposed community education and training centres.

The goal is also to develop a post-school system that is able to service both young and older learners, address the needs of people from different economic backgrounds in terms of historical education and training disparities, speak to those who have a schooling background and those with none, as well as those who aspire to be either academics or medical doctors and those who aspire to be artisans or engineers.

Within this context, a differentiated college system is envisaged to include FET colleges, as well as community colleges.

Acknowledgements

Beeld

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