



chapter 8

Education

Education is not only pivotal to economic prosperity, but also plays a crucial role in enabling South Africans to improve the quality of their lives and contribute to a peaceful, productive and democratic nation.

According to the Bill of Rights contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996), everyone has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education and further education, which the State, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

Education is one of the most important long-term investments a country can make. There has been a significant increase in the education budget-allocation under the post-apartheid democratic Government, from R31,8 billion in 1994 to R69 063 billion in 2003. At almost 6% of Gross Domestic Product, South Africa has one of the highest rates of government investment in education in the world.

Formal education in South Africa is categorised according to three levels. The General Education and Training (GET) band consists of the Reception Year (Grade R) and learners up to Grade 9, as well as an equivalent Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) qualification. The Further Education and Training (FET) band consists

of all education and training from the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Levels 2 to 4 (equivalent to Grades 10 – 12 in schools) and the National Technical Certificate 1 to 3 in FET colleges. The Higher Education (HE) band consists of a range of degrees, diplomas and certificates up to and including postdoctoral degrees. These levels are integrated within the NQF provided by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act, 1995 (Act 58 of 1995).

By mid-2003, the South African public education system accommodated more than 11,7 million school learners, 448 868 university students, 216 499 technikon students, and over 356 000 FET college students. There were 27 458 primary, secondary, combined and intermediate schools with 354 201 educators.

Universities, technikons and technical colleges are undergoing rationalisation, which will reduce the overall number of institutions through mergers.

Education structures

South Africa has a single national education system, which is organised and managed by the national Department of Education and the nine provincial Departments.

Ministry of Education

The National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act 27 of 1996), gives the Minister of Education the power to determine national norms and

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standards for education-planning, provision, governance, monitoring and evaluation. The principle of democratic decision-making must be exercised within the context of overall policy goals. In determining policy, the Minister must take into account the competence of provincial legislatures and the relevant provisions of any provincial law relating to education.

National and provincial Departments of Education

The Constitution has vested substantial power in the provincial legislatures and governments to run educational affairs (other than universities and universities of technology – until recently, technikons), subject to a national policy framework. The national Department of Education is responsible for formulating policy, setting norms and standards, and monitoring and evaluating all levels of education. It also funds HE institutions through subsidies and by providing financial support to students through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS).

Provincial Departments of Education are responsible for all aspects of school education, as well as ABET, Early Childhood Development (ECD) and FET at colleges. The South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act 84 of 1996), further devolves responsibility to school level by delegating the governance of public schools to democratically elected school governing bodies consisting of parents, educators, non-educator staff, and (in secondary schools) learners.

Relations with provincial Departments of Education are guided by national policy, within which the provincial Departments have to set their own priorities and implementation programmes. The National Education Policy Act, 1996 formalised relations between national and provincial authorities, and established the Council of Education Ministers (CEM) and the Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM) as intergovernmental

forums to collaborate in developing the education system.

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

It is the responsibility of the Department to ensure that:

- all levels of the system adhere to these policies and laws
- mechanisms are in place to monitor and enhance quality in the system
- the system is on par with international developments.

The core activities of the Department are to:

- provide research and policy review
- provide planning and policy development
- provide support to the provinces and HE institutions in their implementation of national policy, norms and standards
- monitor the implementation of policy, norms and standards to assess their impact on the quality of the educational process, and identify policy gaps.

Statutory bodies

Council of Education Ministers

The CEM, consisting of the Minister of Education, the Deputy Minister of Education, and the nine provincial executive council members (MECs) 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 co-ordinate action on matters of mutual interest.

Heads of Education Departments Committee

The HEDCOM consists of the Director-General of the Department of Education, the Deputy Directors-General of the Department, and the heads of provincial Education Departments. The functions of the Committee include



facilitating the development of a national education system, sharing information and views on national education, co-ordinating administrative action on matters of mutual interest, and advising the Department on a range of specified matters related to the proper functioning of the national education system.

Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi)

On 11 April 2003, the Minister of Education, Prof. Kader Asmal, officially launched Umalusi, a statutory council that reports to the Ministry of Education. It replaced the South African Certification Council in June 2002.

The Council ensures that education- and training-providers have the capacity to deliver and also assesses qualifications and learning programmes to ensure that they conform to set standards.

The Council has a five-point programme:

- quality assurance of providers
- quality assurance of qualifications and learning programmes
- quality assurance of assessments
- issuing of certificates
- monitoring and reporting on quality in education and training.

South African Qualifications Authority

The SAQA, which is a statutory body established in 1995, is answerable to the Ministers of Labour and of Education.

The SAQA, via the NQF, ensures that South African qualifications are of the highest quality, and internationally comparable. The functions of the Authority are to oversee the:

- development of the NQF by formulating and publishing policies and criteria for the registration of bodies responsible for establishing education and training standards or qualifications, and for the accreditation of bodies responsible for monitoring and

auditing achievements in terms of such standards and qualifications

- implementation of the NQF by ensuring the registration, accreditation and assignment of functions to the referred bodies, as well as the registration of national standards and qualifications on the NQF.

The NQF is a set of principles and guidelines in which records of learner achievement are registered, to enable national recognition of acquired skills and knowledge, thereby ensuring an integrated system that encourages lifelong learning. The NQF also attempts to move the measurement of achievement in education and training away from input towards outcomes.

The SAQA's Centre for the Evaluation of Educational Qualifications determines the equivalence between foreign and South African qualifications in the South African context.

The integration of a seamless system, encompassing ECD, GET, ABET, FET and HE is achieved through the development of the NQF.

Thirty-one Education and Training Quality Assurance Bodies have been accredited, including the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and 25 Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). There are 6 945 qualifications registered with the NQF.

Council on Higher Education

The CHE was established by the Higher Education (HE) Act, 1997 (Act 101 of 1997), and is responsible for advising the Minister on all aspects of HE, in particular funding arrangements, language policy, and the appropriate shape and size of the system.

It is also responsible for designing and implementing a system for quality assurance in HE. It promotes student access to HE, publishes an annual report on the state thereof, and convenes an annual summit for stakeholders. The Council also holds executive responsibility for quality assurance through its permanent subcommittee, the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC).

The HEQC was awarded Education and Training Quality Assurer status by SAQA in 2001.

South African Council for Educators (SACE)

The SACE functions under the auspices of the SACE Act, 2000 (Act 31 of 2000), and is responsible for the registration, promotion and professional development of educators, and setting, maintaining and protecting their ethical and professional standards. It aims to enhance the status of the teaching profession. Almost 30 000 educators registered with the SACE in 2002, bringing the total number of registered educators to 430 000. The Council relies on initial registration fees and monthly levies from educators as its main source of revenue.

The Ministry of Education, together with the SACE and the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) embarked on the *Proud to be a Teacher* Campaign during 2003. The Campaign is aimed at uplifting the status of teachers and mobilising young South Africans to join the teaching profession.

The Code of Conduct of the SACE took effect on 1 January 2000. The Code determines the ethical rules of the profession which educators must adhere to.

The SACE is dedicated to ensuring adherence to the Code, which includes dealing with complaints. Serious offenders can lose the right to teach.

The Ethics Division of the SACE received 241 complaints during 2002. Some 36 investigations and 30 hearings were held, resulting in 16 educators being struck off the roll.

The SACE partners the Department of Education and the ELRC in facilitating the upgrading of teacher qualifications. By mid-2003, approximately 10 000 educators benefited from programmes leading up to the National Professional Diploma in Education.

National Board for Further Education and Training (NBFET)

The NBFET was launched in June 1999 in terms of the National Education Policy Act, 1996. It provides the Minister with independent and strategic advice on matters relating to the transformation of FET. The Board may, on its own initiative, advise the Minister on any aspect of FET as well as:

- national FET policy, goals and priorities
- norms and standards, including funding
- norms and the terms, purposes and conditions of earmarked grants
- reports on FET from provincial advisory bodies.

Education Labour Relations Council

The ELRC is a bargaining council for the education sector. The Council consists of equal representation of the employer (the national and provincial Departments of Education) and the employees (trade unions representing educators and other employees in the sector). The ELRC aims to create effective and constructive labour relations in the education sector, and to ensure the promotion and transformation of education at all levels within society.

National Student Financial Aid Scheme

The NSFAS is responsible for:

- allocating loans and bursaries to eligible students in public HE
- developing criteria and conditions for the granting of loans and bursaries to eligible students in consultation with the Minister
- raising funds, recovering loans, maintaining



In May 2003, South Africa's home-grown television programme, *Takalani Sesame Street*, won the International Grand Prix Award for Best Children's Programme, at the World Media Festival in Hamburg, Germany. The programme, designed to help children prepare for school, is a joint project of the Department of Education and SABC Education.



and analysing a database, and undertaking research for the better utilisation of financial resources

- advising the Minister on related matters.

In 2003/04, the Department utilised R850 million in loans and bursaries to support students from the poorest communities in receiving tertiary education. Of the R850 million, R210 million came from repaid loans, an amount which is expected to grow annually.

Financing education

In the 2003/04 financial year, R69 063 billion was allocated to education. This amount included R8 380 billion for universities and technikons, and R53 102 billion for college and school education.

Financial planning in the Department occurs within the Government's Medium Term Expenditure Framework, which, through its three-year budgeting horizon, facilitates sustainable and properly planned financing. An average amount of R243 million has been allocated per year over the medium term (2002/03 – 2005/06) for financial management and quality enhancement in school education.

Conditional grants to provinces

A Conditional Grant for improved financial management and education quality in provin-

cial education systems was established in 1999.

Provincial Education Departments formulated projects to be funded through this Conditional Grant, based on the framework of priorities established by the Minister of Education after consultation with provincial MECs. The priority areas for this Grant include:

- whole-school evaluation, school record-keeping, quarterly reports on school attendance and school supervision
- regular assessment of learner performance
- school safety
- improvement in the quality of Senior Certificate Examinations
- professional development of principals, with an emphasis on the induction of new appointees
- developing functional and effective school-governing bodies
- orientation and ongoing professional development of educators for Curriculum 2005
- provincial strategic planning and the availability of credible and reliable data for planning and budgeting
- working systems and processes, including financial systems, procurement procedures and personnel practices.

Equity in education expenditure

Equity between and within provinces is achieved through three mechanisms, namely the equitable division of national revenue between provinces, making use of the Equitable Shares Formula (ESF), the National Norms and Standards for School Funding, and the National Post Provisioning Norms.

The Government's ESF promotes financial equity between provinces, through the distribution of national revenue to provinces on the basis of relative need and backlogs. In the area of education, the size of the school-age population and the number of learners enrolled in public ordinary schools are taken into account, as well as capital-investment needs.



In March 2003, the South African National Defence Force donated part of its Klippan Military Base, outside Mafikeng in North West, to the provincial Department of Education.

The R30-million facility, excluding the radar section of the Base, is to be transformed into an educational facility for pupils from farm schools.

It will be used to integrate 25 farm schools around Mafikeng, Zeerust and parts of Lichtenburg, and will house 600 lodgers and 230 day pupils, aged between seven and 15 years (Grades 1 to 9).

The province has some 390 farm schools in total.

The North West Education Department has budgeted R9,7 million over the next three years to renovate and upgrade facilities at the Base.

The National Norms and Standards for School Funding, which became national policy in 1999, are aimed at achieving equality and poverty redress at schools in terms of non-personnel expenditure within a province. The Norms are clearly 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%.

Considering that about 90% of provincial education expenditure goes towards personnel costs, the distribution of personnel, in particular educators, is a key driver of equity within provinces. Equity in this regard is promoted by the National Post Provisioning Norms. These Norms have contributed to the narrowing of inequalities with regard to educator:learner ratios and the availability of more educator posts in historically disadvantaged areas.

Education policy

Legislative framework

Education policy is informed by the following legislation:

- The National Education Policy Act, 1996 is designed to identify the policy, legislative and monitoring responsibilities of the Minister of Education, and to formalise relations between national and provincial authorities. It established CEM and HEDCOM as intergovernmental forums to collaborate in developing the education system, and provides for the determination of national policies in general and further education and training, including curriculum assessment, language policy and quality assurance. The Act embodies the principle of co-operative governance.
- The South African Schools Act, 1996 promotes access, quality and democratic governance in the schooling system. It ensures that all learners have access to

quality education without discrimination, and makes schooling compulsory for children aged seven to 15, or learners reaching the ninth grade, whichever occurs first. It also provides for two types of schools – independent schools and public schools. The Act's provision for democratic school governance through school-governing bodies is in place in public schools country-wide. The school-funding norms outlined in the Act prioritise redress and target poverty in funding allocations to the public schooling system.

- The FET Act, 1998 and the *Education White Paper 4 on FET (1998)* provide the basis for developing a nationally co-ordinated system, comprising the senior-secondary component of schooling and technical colleges. It requires that FET institutions, created in terms of the new legislation, develop institutional plans, and provides for programme-based funding and a national curriculum for learning and teaching.
- The HE Act, 1997 makes provision for a unified and nationally planned system of HE, and creates the statutory CHE which advises the Minister and is responsible for quality assurance and promotion. The HE Act, 1997, *Education White Paper 3 on HE (1997)*, and the National Plan for HE form the basis for the transformation of the HE sector.
- The Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act 76 of 1998), regulates the professional, moral and ethical responsibilities and competencies of educators.
- ABET Act, 2000 (Act 52 of 2000), provides for the establishment of public and private adult-learning centres, funding for ABET provisioning, the governance of public centres, and quality-assurance mechanisms for the sector.
- The SAQA Act, 1995 provides for the creation of the NQF, which establishes the framework for a national learning system that integrates education and training at all levels.



- The SACE Act, 2000 provides for the establishment of a Council to undertake the registration of educators; promote the professional development of educators; and set, maintain and protect ethical and professional standards for educators.

The Education Laws Amendment Act, 2002 (Act 50 of 2002), and the HE Amendment Act, 2002 (Act 63 of 2002), came into effect during 2002.

The Education Laws Amendment Act, 2002 makes provision for amending the South African Schools Act, 1996, to give clarity and certainty regarding the admission age to Grades R and 1 at public and independent schools. As a result of the amendment, the minimum age of admission has been lowered by six months. The compulsory school-going age remains seven to 15 years, or completion of Grade 9. A new section was also inserted to prohibit initiation practices at schools.

The HE Amendment Act, 2002 clarifies and brings legal certainty to labour and student matters regarding the mergers of public HE institutions, and provides clarity on the authority to take the decision to merge and to give a name and physical location to a new institution.

The HE Amendment Bill, 2003 provides for the establishment of National Institutes for HE in Mpumalanga and Northern Cape. The Institutes will serve as the administrative and governance hubs for the provision of HE in response to regional needs. The Institutes are not intended to offer their own academic programmes, but will co-ordinate HE in these provinces, including the sharing of infrastructure and resources.

A new section was inserted into the Employment of Educators Act, 1998 to enable a provincial Department to appoint new recruits or applicants after a break in service, without requiring a recommendation from a governing body. It also enables the fair distribution of qualified educators by allowing provinces to

distribute such educators, especially to schools in rural areas.

A new section was inserted into both the FET Act, 1998 and the ABET Act, 2000, prohibiting corporal punishment in educational institutions and centres.

Tirisano

In January 2000, the *Tirisano* (meaning working together) plan was operationalised. Through it, the Department has achieved greater stability in the system, enhanced basic school functionality, improved the ability of provincial education systems to manage human and financial resources, and ensured a clear focus on delivery.

Since 2001, the Department has been able to shift its focus from creating an integrated education framework and providing basic systemic functionality, to institutional renewal and enhanced effectiveness, focusing on teaching; learning; curriculum and whole-school development; learner performance; increased participation in further and HE; mathematics, science and technology; building good citizenship through the promotion of values, and targeting those communities that are part of government-wide programmes for rural and urban development.

The nine priorities of *Tirisano* are to:

- deal urgently and purposefully with HIV/AIDS by utilising the education and training system
- ensure the successful running of provincial systems through successful co-operative governance
- reduce illiteracy among adults and youths over the next five years
- develop schools as centres of community life
- end conditions of physical degradation in South African schools
- develop the professional abilities of the teaching force
- ensure the success of active learning through outcomes-based education (OBE)
- create a vibrant FET system, which will equip youths and adults to achieve social goals

- build a rational and seamless HE system that will embrace the intellectual and professional challenges facing South Africans in the 21st century.

These priorities have been organised into the following six core programme areas that will guide the activities of the Department over the next five years:

- HIV/AIDS
- school effectiveness and teacher professionalism
- literacy
- FET and HE
- organisational effectiveness of the national and provincial Departments of Education
- values in education.

New salary and post structure

In March 2003, the Minister of Education unveiled a new pay and post structure for teachers. The new salary system comprises 16 notches.

Two key features of the new post and pay structure are:

- the creation of a senior teacher category in schools, which allows teachers to remain in the classroom without sacrificing career opportunities
- different career paths for teachers, which will allow them to choose between a teaching, learning or management option.



The Policy on Drug Abuse in Schools was gazetted in 2002. The policy makes a very clear statement about the unacceptability of drugs and other illegal substances in schools, and proposes firm action, including suspension and expulsion, where necessary.

The policy also recognises that substance abuse is a complex problem and that interventions must be relevant to the particular context. In all cases, a supportive response, aimed at correcting the problem, is encouraged. Random drug testing and searches are prohibited, and should only be conducted where reasonable suspicion exists. In all cases, parents must be involved as soon as possible.

Nicotine use by pupils, teachers and visitors is prohibited.

New policy developments

Improving access to free and quality basic education

School fees are charged for children to attend school. The amount is set at an annual public meeting of the school governing body where parents vote on the amount to be paid. Parents who cannot afford to pay, or who can only afford a lesser amount, are granted an exemption or reduction in the amount they must pay.

In response to government's concern about the relatively high costs of school education, the Department of Education undertook a Review of the Financing, Resourcing and Costs of Education in Public Schools.

The Review, which was released for public comment in March 2003, highlighted practices within the system and in society that drive increases in the cost of education, and gave recommendations on how to curtail practices that lead to the marginalisation of learners, especially those from poor families.

A Plan of Action to improve access to free and quality education for all was subsequently developed and approved by the Cabinet. The Plan was made public on 17 June 2003.

The Plan includes mechanisms to ensure:

- Greater interprovincial equity so that learners with similar levels of poverty receive the same minimum level of school funding.
- The abolition of compulsory school fees, where adequate levels of resourcing are reached, for 40% of learners in the poorest schools.
- A national norm based on a minimum basic package of R450 per school term in 2003, which will be allocated per learner for non-personnel recurrent items, starting with the poorest 20% of learners. Adequate-per-learner funding for the poorest 60% of learners in the poorest schools will be phased in over three years.
- The granting of automatic fee exemptions to learners who qualify for certain social service grants and payments.



Religion in education

After extensive public consultation, the National Policy on Religion and Education was launched on 9 September 2003. The Policy aims to strengthen the role and place of religion in schools, which is an important aspect of the campaign for moral regeneration.

In line with the principle of equal recognition of all religions, enshrined in the Constitution, the non-prescriptive Policy emphasises the prohibition of practices which are discriminatory and which lead to a loss of respect, or undermine the dignity of a person.

In terms of the Policy, a public school must cater in an equitable fashion for all religions, in order to bring about mutual respect and appreciation for the diverse cultures and religions of the country. The Policy restates the need for children to be educated about religion, in an impartial and fair way, so that they can be better informed. The Department of Education has developed age-appropriate outcomes for each of the Grades, which will form part of the compulsory and examinable Life Orientation Programme.

Religious groupings were invited to assist in the development of suitable teaching material and in the training of educators, to ensure support for the Programme.



The Department of Education launched the Girls' Education Movement (GEM) in Parliament in March 2003. As part of its objectives, GEM hopes to:

- provide opportunities for girls to develop and exercise their leadership and technical skills
- tap the potential of boys, women and men to work in partnership with girls to promote girls' education in Africa; and through education, create more equitable and just African societies.

GEM is an organisation representing children in Africa which was initiated in Kampala, Uganda in 2001.

It comprises children in schools and communities throughout Africa, who work in different ways to improve the lives of African girls.

It also aims to ensure that girls receive an adequate education, especially in science and technology.

As a core element of the National Curriculum Statement, no pupil may be exempt from this Programme and no educator may refuse to teach it.

Agreement on target shooting in schools

In April 2003, the CEM gave their support for the use of airguns instead of .22 rifles in the sport of target shooting at schools. This is in line with the view of the Ministers of Safety and Security and of Education that schools should be declared gun-free zones.

The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) loaned guns which are currently in the possession of schools, and the CEM gave their support for the collection of all existing .22 rifles in schools by the SANDF.

A national task team, comprising the Directors-General of the Department of Education and of Sport and Recreation South Africa, as well as the Commissioner of the South African Police Service, will liaise with the relevant sporting federations to discuss the possible development and promotion of target shooting as a sport in schools in an equitable and safe manner.

e-Education

On 27 August 2003, the Cabinet approved the *Draft White Paper on e-Education*. It sets out government's response to a new information and communications technology (ICT) environment in education. Government wants to ensure that every school has access to a wide choice of diverse and high-quality communications services.

The goal is to ensure that every learner is ICT-capable by 2010, and that all schools are connected to the Internet by that time. The need for teacher-training and ICT equipment was recognised, which would require additional resources from provincial budgets and other innovative sources.

By September 2003, agreements had been signed between the Department of Education and the private sector, including Microsoft,

Sentech, the Telkom Foundation, and the Digital Partnership Programme.

The services offered by the initiative will enhance lifelong learning and provide unlimited opportunities for personal growth and development. This includes the ICT development of teachers and managers, and the availability of high-quality content resources.

General Education and Training

General school education is structured according to three phases, namely the Foundation Phase, Intermediate Phase and Senior Phase, and constitutes the compulsory component of the education system. The progressive provision of a Grade R prior to Grade One started in 2002.

Currently, the Foundation Phase lasts three years. Basic learning activities during this Phase centre around three learning programmes, namely literacy, numeracy and life skills. One additional language is introduced in Grade 3.

During the three-year Intermediate Phase, learning activities centre on five learning programmes, namely language literacy and communication; mathematical literacy, mathematics and mathematical sciences; arts and culture; life orientation, human, social, environmental and management sciences; and natural sciences and technology.

The Senior Phase accounts for Grades 7 to 9. During these years, learners have to master the following learning programmes: language literacy and communication; mathematical literacy, mathematics and mathematical sciences; arts and culture; life orientation; human and social sciences; economic management sciences; natural sciences; and technology. Grade 9 signals the end of compulsory schooling and ends with a GET certificate, which is Level 1 on the NQF.

Curriculum 2005

Curriculum 2005 is the brand name of the National Curriculum Framework introduced

into schools in 1998 and based on the concept of OBE.

OBE regards learning as an interactive process between and among educators and learners. The focus is on what learners should know and be able to do (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values). It places strong emphasis on co-operative learning, especially group work involving common tasks. The goal is to produce active and lifelong learners with a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning.

The revised Curriculum will be phased in, starting with Grades R to 3 in 2004.

The revised Curriculum Statement is available in all 11 official languages as well as in Braille. This Statement is much simpler to work with and provides much more guidance to teachers about expectations and standards. In addition, a teacher's guide has been prepared, which assists the educator in developing appropriate learning programmes to achieve the specified outcomes.

A national core team provided training to officials from every province, including curriculum specialists, subject advisors and other key staff. They, in turn, have been training school principals, who are expected to provide instructional leadership in their schools and to educators.

The National Curriculum Statement, Grades 10 – 12, was approved by the CEM and by the Cabinet. It will be accompanied by a new Further Education and Training Certificate (FETC), which will replace the current Senior Certificate. While the new Curriculum will be introduced in Grade 10 in 2006, the new Certificate will be introduced in Grade 12 in 2008.

The FETC, which will require higher levels of performance in each subject, will greatly enhance the Department's ability to predict learners' future performances, by explicitly stating levels of learner performance. The FETC will not prejudge learners' potential by differentiating them into Higher and Standard Grades.



School admission policy

Pupils normally enrol for Grade 1 education at the beginning of the year in which they turn seven years of age, although earlier entry at the age of six is allowed if the child meets specified criteria indicating that he/she has reached a stage of school readiness.

When applying for admission, parents must present the school with an official birth certificate and proof that the child has been immunised against communicable diseases.

For non-South African citizens, a study permit, temporary or permanent residence permit, or evidence of application for permission to stay in South Africa, is also required.

Further Education and Training

FET consists of all learning and training from NQF Levels 2 to 4, or the equivalent of Grades 10 to 12 in the school system and National Technical Certificate 1 to 3 in FET colleges. Learners enter FET after the completion of the compulsory phase of education in Grade 9 or via the ABET route. The long-term vision of this sector includes the development of a co-ordinated FET system, providing high-quality, flexible and responsive programmes and opportunities for a learning society. The short-to-medium-term focus is on addressing the weaknesses and deficiencies of the current system, while simultaneously laying the foundations for the system to be built over the next 20 years.

Government declared 2003 the Year of FET, in recognition of the vital role FET plays in the development of the country's human resources.

Curriculum development in Further Education and Training

The FET Curriculum is shifting away from the traditional divides between academic and applied learning, theory and practice, and knowledge and skills. The new Curriculum moves towards a balanced learning experience that provides flexible access to lifelong learning, higher education and training, and

productive employment in a range of occupational contexts.

FET comprises three different pathways, namely academic, vocationally orientated and occupation-specific. The Curriculum consists of three components of learning: fundamental, core and elective. Curriculum development in FET regards the 12 learning fields of the NQF as its point of departure.

By May 2003, a Draft National Curriculum Framework, setting the parameters for the development of responsive programmes was in place.

Further Education and Training colleges

South African learners need a range of skills and knowledge to keep up with modern technology. Remote rural areas need to be reached, and adult learners need the opportunity to retrain for a second or third career. Small-business entrepreneurs also need courses catering for their needs, and industry and the community need to be provided with productive people who see learning as a lifelong occupation, within an economy that is being restructured to meet the demands of globalisation.

In this context, the creation of a dynamic, responsive and high-quality FET system to promote wider access and social inclusion, encourage lifelong learning, meet the human resource development needs of the country, contribute towards urban renewal and rural development, and develop an entirely new citizenry in the country, became imperative.

As a result, a major transformation of the FET sector took place during 2002, in which the existing 152 technical colleges were merged to form 50 multicampus FET colleges.

The colleges provide:

- high-level skills training
- a balanced training programme, emphasising both theoretical and practical skills linked to specific industry requirements
- vocational training, which continually exposes students to the demands of the work environment.

The new system operates under a single governing council appointed to oversee effective and accountable management across and within the various FET college campuses and sites.

The recorded increase in student intake, the development of new programmes and increased participation in learnerships bear testimony to the potential for growth in this sector.

Higher education

The role of HE in the South African education system is threefold:

- Human resource development: the mobilisation of human talent and potential through lifelong learning, to contribute to the social, economic, cultural and intellectual life of a rapidly changing society.
- High-level skills training: the training and provision of person power to strengthen the country's enterprises, services and infrastructure. This requires the development of professionals with globally equivalent skills, but who are socially responsible and conscious of their role in contributing to the national development effort and social transformation.
- Production, acquisition and application of new knowledge: national growth and competitiveness are dependent on continuous technological improvement and innovation, driven by a well-organised and vibrant

research and development system which integrates the research and training capacity of HE with the needs of industry and of social reconstruction.

Transformation and reconstruction of the Higher Education system

The *Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of HE* and the HE Act, 1997 provide the policy and legislative framework for the transformation of the HE system.

National Plan for Higher Education

The National Plan for HE was released in March 2001. The Plan establishes indicative targets for the size and shape of the HE system, including overall growth and participation rates, institutional and programme mixes, and equity and efficiency goals.

It provides a framework and outlines the process for the restructuring of the system. It also provides signposts for the development of institutional plans.

The key proposals of the Plan are that:

- the participation rate in HE will be increased from 15% to 20% in the long term, i.e. 10 to 15 years
- there will be a shift in the balance of enrolments over the next five to 10 years between the humanities; business and commerce; and science, engineering and technology from the current ratio of 49:26:25 to 40:30:30 respectively
- institutions will establish student-equity targets with the emphasis on programmes in which black and female students are underrepresented, and develop strategies to ensure equity of outcomes
- institutions will develop employment-equity plans with clear targets for rectifying race and gender inequities
- institutional diversity will be achieved through the approval of a distinct mission and academic-programme profile for each institution
- the academic programme mix at each institution will be determined on the basis of



In February 2003, the Minister of Education, Prof. Kader Asmal, announced the completion of the building of classrooms and schools in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, two of the four provinces earmarked for infrastructure development in the country.

Together with Limpopo and Mpumalanga, the provinces are part of a comprehensive programme of assistance to South Africa by the Japanese Government. The assistance includes a school-building programme to the value of about R200 million.

The four provinces account for the largest portion of school-infrastructure backlogs in the country.



its current programme profile, as well as its demonstrated capacity to add new programmes

- redress for historically black institutions will be linked to agreed missions and programme profiles, including developmental strategies to build capacity
- a single dedicated distance-education institution will be established through the merger of the University of South Africa (UNISA) and Technikon South Africa, and the incorporation of the distance education campus of Vista University into the merged institution
- research will be funded through a separate formula based on research output, including, at a minimum, master's and doctoral graduates and research publications
- earmarked funds will be allocated to build research capacity, including scholarships to promote postgraduate enrolments
- the institutional landscape will be restructured through collaboration at the regional level in programme development, and delivery and rationalisation, particularly of small and costly programmes.

As part of the process of implementing the National Plan, the Minister of Education appointed a National Working Group to advise him on the restructuring of the institutional landscape of the HE system. The Working Group investigated the feasibility of consolidating HE provision by reducing the number of institutions, but not the number of regional delivery sites.

In May 2002, the Cabinet approved the ground-breaking proposals for the transformation and reconstruction of HE.

As part of the transformation process, a National HE Information and Applications Service was established in 2003 to provide Grade 12 learners with easily accessible information on study opportunities in HE.

Institutional restructuring

The proposed institutional landscape establishes a new institutional and organisational form,

namely comprehensive institutions formed by merging universities and technikons. This will strengthen the provision of technikon programmes by ensuring that they are available throughout the country, particularly in rural areas which are currently inadequately serviced in terms of technikon provision.

In October 2003, the Minister of Education announced the new names of the merged institutions of higher learning.

- The merged Universities of Potchefstroom, North West and Vista (Sebokeng campus) will be called the North West University.
- The University of Pretoria will retain its name after incorporating the Mamelodi Campus of Vista University.
- UNISA will retain its name after merging with the Vista University Distance Education Campus.
- Technikon Pretoria, North West and Northern Gauteng will be called the Tshwane University of Technology.
- Technikon Witwatersrand and the Soweto and East Rand Campuses of Vista University will merge with the Rand Afrikaans University in 2005 and be called the University of Johannesburg.
- The Medical University of South Africa (Medunsa) and the University of the North will merge to become the University of Limpopo.
- The University of Port Elizabeth, Port Elizabeth Technikon and Port Elizabeth Campus of Vista will be called the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University from 2005.
- The University of Transkei, Border Technikon and the Eastern Cape Technikon will be called the Eastern Cape University of Technology.
- The East London Campus of Rhodes University will be incorporated into the University of Fort Hare.
- The Universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand will remain unchanged.
- Cape Technikon and Peninsula Technikon will be called the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Adult Basic Education and Training

The ABET Act, 2000 and the regulations for a National ABET Board provide a legislative framework for the establishment, governance and funding of ABET centres. Through the Adult Education and Training Multi-Year Implementation Plan (MYIP), the quality of ABET provision and delivery is improving.

The National ABET Board, an advisory body to the Minister which receives reports from all sectors on the progress of the MYIP, replaced the interim ABET advisory body in 2002.

The most recent Household Survey placed illiteracy at a level of 93% – up from 86% in 1994. Between 1999 and 2002, over one million learners attended and successfully completed literacy and ABET programmes.

The South African National Literacy Initiative (SANLI) was established in 2000 with the purpose of engaging with all organisations involved in the development and delivery of literacy, to mobilise resources for these organisations, and to improve and assure the quality of their programmes. SANLI pledged to ensure that one million of the estimated 3,3 million illiterate people in South Africa can read and write by 2004. It noted that this could only be achieved through extensive partnerships.

The Department established the South African Literacy Agency to significantly reduce adult illiteracy through:

- mobilising voluntary services in support of a nationwide literacy initiative
- developing training programmes for volunteer educators
- designing, developing and procuring reading and resource material
- setting up local literacy units
- establishing and maintaining a database of learners and providers
- servicing the needs of learners and educators.

As part of the Literacy Strategy, the Department is also ensuring the development of frameworks for the provision of ABET in line with the NQF.

As part of the advocacy campaign to mobilise learners, National Adult Learners' Week was launched as an annual event on 1 September 2000, and award ceremonies are held on International Literacy Day (8 September) to honour and applaud the courage and achievements of adult learners and their educators.

SANLI managed to mobilise sufficient resources, largely from the United Kingdom's (UK) Department for International Development (DFID) and the European Union (EU), to enable it to present literacy classes to more than 200 000 newly enrolled adult learners in 2003. The majority of these learners were from the Eastern Cape and Limpopo, where the effects of illiteracy compound the difficulties experienced by the rural poor.

Masifunde Sonke is another project set up by the Ministry of Education to address the challenges of illiteracy, and to promote a love of reading. The project is tasked to profile reading, and to encourage stakeholders to promote reading. The project is being used to 'spread the word', and numerous reading promotion messages are seen on television channels and heard on radio, owing to the strong working relationship with the SABC.

The Democracy in the Classroom Project was launched in August 2003. It is the result of a partnership between the DFID, the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, and the ABET Institute of UNISA, in collaboration with SANLI.

Education of learners with special education needs

The Ministry appointed the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee on Education Support Services (NCESS) in October 1996, to investigate and make recommendations on all aspects of special needs and support services in education and training in South Africa. A joint report of the findings of these two bodies was presented to the



Minister in November 1997, and the final report was published in February 1998.

The NCSNET and NCESS recommended that the education and training system develop inclusive and supportive centres of learning that would enable all learners to participate actively in the education process. They could then develop and extend their potential and participate as equal members of society.

The report suggested that the key strategies required to achieve this, included:

- Transforming all aspects of the education system.
- Developing an integrated system of education.
- Infusing special needs and support services throughout the system.
- Pursuing the holistic development centres of learning to ensure a barrier-free physical environment and a supportive and inclusive psychosocial learning environment, and developing a flexible curriculum, which can be accessed by all learners.
- Promoting the rights and responsibilities of parents, teachers and learners.
- Providing effective development programmes for educators, support personnel and other relevant human resources.
- Fostering holistic and integrated support (intersectoral collaboration) by developing a community-based support system. This includes a preventative and developmental approach to support.
- Developing funding strategies that will ensure redress, sustainability and, ultimately, access to education for all learners.

The Ministry released a Consultative Paper based on these recommendations in 1999. The submissions and feedback of social partners, role-players and the wider public were collated, and informed the writing of the *Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System*, released in July 2001. The White Paper outlines a 20-year plan for an inclusive education and training system across all bands of education.

The Directorate: Inclusive Education implements inclusive education in classrooms and education institutions across the country. Their main tasks include removing barriers to learning experienced by learners with disabilities, and integrating learners with special needs into mainstream schools.

Early Childhood Development

In July 2000, the final report on the National ECD Pilot Project was released. The Project tested the interim ECD policy, particularly as it was related to Grade R. The report presented some evidence that the existing norms and standards were appropriate for the practitioners, but recommended that they be refined to eliminate vagueness.

An audit of over 23 000 ECD sites was conducted in 2001, which revealed that the ECD field is dominated by the non-governmental sector. Where departmental provision exists, it usually caters for children from the age of three years to school-going age. It is estimated that about 90% of children under the age of nine in South Africa do not have access to ECD prior to attending school.

ECD centres must be registered with municipalities and their activities are controlled by the provincial Education Departments. These regulations are applicable to public as well as private pre-primary schools.

The SACE Act, 2000 provides for the registration of ECD practitioners. In terms of the Act, all educators must be registered before they can be responsible for the care and education of children. When ECD practitioners are registered, they undergo professional development sponsored by the Council and are subject to the Code of Ethics.

The *White Paper 5 on ECD*, which establishes a national system of provision of Grade R for children aged five, was launched in May 2001. The medium-term goal is for all children entering Grade 1 to have participated in an accredited Grade R programme by 2010.

The White Paper also focuses on expanding ECD provision, correcting imbalances, ensuring equitable access and improving the quality and delivery of ECD programmes. These interventions aim to break the cycle of poverty by increasing access to ECD programmes, particularly of poor children.

The ECD policy focuses on the phasing-in of a nationally accredited Grade R Programme for five-year-olds, collaboration with other government departments in making provision for children from birth to five years old, as well as special programmes for five-year-olds.

The School Register of Needs

The School Register of Needs provides an important benchmark for addressing historical inequities.

Considerable progress has been made since 1994 in correcting these inequities. The School Register of Needs 2000 Survey recorded significant improvements in school infrastructure and access to basic services countrywide.

The Register reported less overcrowding in institutions overall, with a decline in the average number of learners in a classroom from 43 (in 1996) to 35 (in 2000). Except in Mpumalanga, learner:classroom ratios also decreased. Classroom shortages decreased from 49% (1996) to 40% (2000). In 1996, 40% of all schools nationwide had no access to water. By 2000, this was reduced to 34%. There was a 68% improvement in the provision of sanitation, although 16,6% of learners remained without toilet facilities. Fifty-nine per cent of schools had no telephones in 1996. This percentage was reduced to 34% in 2000.

On the other hand, the biggest decline was in the number of schools in excellent and good condition, indicating that investment in infrastructure had not been adequately maintained. The number of buildings in good condition declined from 9 000 to 4 000, with at

least 12 000 school buildings in need of repair.

Recent years have seen an improvement in infrastructure spending, especially on school education. The provincial education capital budget, which was R2,01 billion in the 2002/03 financial year, increased to R2,5 billion in 2003/04, with a projected increase to R3,02 billion in 2004/05. In particular, emphasis on classroom provision has reduced classroom backlogs drastically. Some 3 750 classrooms were built in 2002/03, while 4 330 were expected to be built by the end of the 2003/04 financial year.

Human Resource Development Strategy

In April 2001, the Ministries of Education and of Labour jointly launched the Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa, entitled *A Nation at Work for a Better Life for All*. The Strategy is underpinned by a set of institutional arrangements, including SETAs, and the general reshaping of further and higher education to meet the human resource development needs of the country.

The Strategy will ensure integrated human resource development planning and implementation, monitored on a national, regional and sectoral level. Progress will be measured against approved indicators.

The key mission of the Strategy is to maximise the potential of people in South Africa, through the acquisition of knowledge and skills, to set in place an operational plan and the necessary arrangements to ensure that everyone achieves productivity and works competitively to improve the quality of life.

The goals of the Strategy include improving the social infrastructure of the country, reducing disparities in wealth and poverty, developing a more inclusive society, and improving South Africa's position on the International Competitiveness Table.

The benefits to the country of the successful implementation of this Strategy over the



next five to 10 years will be significant. Primarily, the integration of different government policies will help to increase economic growth and employment, improve the standard of living for all, broaden participation in the labour market, and produce a more educated and trained citizenry.

HIV/AIDS

The Ministry of Education works alongside the Ministry of Health to ensure that the national education system plays its part in stemming HIV/AIDS, and ensuring that the rights of all those infected with the disease are fully protected.

This priority has been operationalised into three objectives of the *Tiriso* implementation plan. Each is linked to anticipated outcomes and performance indicators. The three programmes are:

- awareness, information and advocacy
- HIV/AIDS within the curriculum
- planning for HIV/AIDS and the education system.

The Ministry's policy on HIV/AIDS for learners and educators has been converted into an accessible booklet aimed at educators, school-governing bodies and district officials. One million copies were distributed nationwide, coinciding with a media communication campaign.

On 9 June 2003, the CEM announced a three-year strategic plan, which is consistent with the national five-year plan. The new plan focuses on:

- limiting the spread of HIV and AIDS through life-skills education – a component which had been exceptionally effective by mid-2003, with the training of 130 000 educators, and over 60% of schools offering the programme
- providing social support to educators and learners who are affected
- managing the impact of HIV and AIDS on the education system.

Partnerships, international relations and funding

Central to the education policy framework is the contention that a high-quality education sector cannot be built by government alone. It depends on creative and dynamic partnerships between the public sector, civil society and international partners. Several working partnerships have been, and are being, consolidated as the capacities of various sectors to contribute to educational development are better understood.

The Department of Education, the three teacher unions, the SACE, the ELRC and the Education, Training and Development Practices SETA signed a historic declaration at the National Education Convention in November 2002, in which they committed themselves to work together to achieve education transformation goals.

Teacher unions

The majority of educators are organised into three teacher unions, namely the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa, the South African Teachers' Union and the South African Democratic Teachers' Union. A labour-relations framework has been jointly agreed to by the Ministry of Education and the unions. This encompasses both traditional areas of negotiation and issues of professional concern, including pedagogy and quality-improvement strategies.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

NGOs are emerging as important partners in educational transformation and are often a source of creativity and innovation. The Department of Education is working with NGOs and the private sector to expand relationships, particularly in the areas of educator training, school improvement, ABET, ECD and FET, as well as evaluation, research and

monitoring. The private sector in particular is increasingly engaging in the provision of basic education by funding FET initiatives, building schools in needy communities, and supporting the provision of teaching and learning equipment.

Public-private partnerships

The success of key national initiatives (including SANLI) relies largely on partnerships with the private and NGO sectors.

Several partnerships have been consolidated, providing working models of educational transformation through public-private partnerships. The Business Trust, a partnership between business and government, works in education through three NGOs, namely the READ Educational Trust, Joint Education Trust, and the National Business Initiative Colleges Collaboration.

The international community

The international community's contribution to education transformation is important. The Department co-operates with United Nations (UN) agencies and with numerous donors to improve access to basic, further and higher education. Development co-operation partners such as the Australian Agency for International Development, Flanders, France, Germany, Italy, Japan International Co-operation Agency, the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation, the Danish Agency for Development Assistance, the United States Agency for International Development, the Swedish International Development Agency, the Canadian International Development Agency, DFID (UK), the Netherlands, the Irish Agency for International Development, the Finnish Government and the EU have been instrumental in the provision of technical and financial assistance to the national and provincial Departments of Education.

In February 2003, South Africa and France signed a R6,6-million agreement for the

improvement of education in Gauteng.

Two groups of 14 learners received training by attending two month-long internships in France on a 'train-the-trainer' basis. The project, expected to be expanded to Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, aims at setting up nine Education Action Zones in the province, and will also build capacity in the areas of administration and management, especially for school principals.

The Governments of the UK and Northern Ireland are making available R226 million to the Limpopo Department of Education. The assistance, which will be spread over six years (2003 – 2009), is known as the *Khanyisa* Education Support Programme.

The Programme aims to improve learning achievement, support, and service delivery across the whole education system.

The Ministry has also played a leading role in the development of the Southern African Development Community Protocol on Education and Training, which aims to achieve equivalence, harmonisation and standardisation of education in the region.

International partnerships and South-South exchanges are fostered particularly within the African continent.

The Department has a strong collaborative relationship with the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. A key initiative of the collaboration is the development of national Education For All (EFA) action plans. As part of regional consultations on the implementation, the Department participates in assessing progress in the elaboration of the EFA plans of countries in sub-Saharan Africa, and exchanges information and best practice on the development of these plans. South Africa has reaffirmed its commitment to the Ministers of Education of African member states to make the experience, expertise and existing infrastructure of South African HE available to the rest of Africa.



Highlights in education since 1994

The first years of democratic government witnessed significant reform in education, which included dismantling apartheid structures to create a unified education system consisting of one national and nine provincial Departments of Education. Thus, a more equitable system of financing education, and a policy framework to reflect the values and mandate of the new Government were created, putting in place democratic governance structures and democratising relations within the education system. A basis for lifelong learning, and transforming learning at school level by offering a new learner-centred, outcomes-based school curriculum to reflect the values and ethos of a new democratic order, were established.



The African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS), a new state-of-the-art educational centre, was formally launched on 18 September 2003 in Muizenberg, Cape Town.

The Department of Science and Technology has spent over R1 million on the AIMS programme which linked to centres and networks of excellence in science and technology. The centres and networks of excellence focus strongly on human resource development and are aimed at popularising science in South Africa and across the African continent.

AIMS is an international initiative combining the three universities in the Western Cape, Cambridge and Oxford in the United Kingdom, and the University of Paris-Sud in France. Its goal is to strengthen scientific and technological capacity across the African continent. Initially, it will focus on a unique residential nine-month postgraduate course, developing strong foundations in mathematical research skills as well as providing an overview of many of the most exciting cutting-edge fields in science.

Through advertising on the web, AIMS has recruited 30 of Africa's top graduate students, from Algeria to Zimbabwe, who on completion, will boost the African networks of excellence. In time, the student body will grow to 60. Students and lecturers are accommodated at the AIMS educational centre, allowing for maximal interaction. The centre has outstanding computer, library and lecture-hall facilities.

Major achievements in education over the past decade have included:

- Improving access to primary and secondary schooling, with near universal enrolment in primary schooling and 86% enrolment in secondary schooling achieved by 1998. The participation rate among girls is also among the highest in the world.
- Access to school education was further improved by exempting poor learners from paying school fees, and outlawing discrimination against, and exclusion of, learners who cannot afford school fees. A plan of action to progressively increase access to free education for all was made public in June 2003.
- Enhancing access to HE institutions through the establishment of the NSFAS in 1996. The Scheme disbursed over R2,6 billion to almost half a million students in HE institutions between 1996 and 2001.
- Improving the performance of learners throughout the schooling system and especially in the Grade 12 Senior Certificate examination, where the pass rate has improved from 53% in 1999 to 68% in 2002. The examinations were also subjected to a quality assurance exercise by the Scottish Qualifications Authority, which certified the examinations as being of a high standard. The National Systemic Evaluation System has also been established to monitor and evaluate the performance of learners and for quality assurance.
- Improving the qualifications of educators, with the proportion of underqualified educators being reduced from 36% in 1994 to 26% in 1998.
- Establishing more equitable learner:educator ratios, from an average of 43:1 in 1996 to 35:1 in 2000, through redeployment and post-provisioning strategies in favour of areas of greatest need.
- Increasing per-capita expenditure on learners, from R2 222 in 1994 to R3 253 in 2000, and achieving interprovincial equity.

- Restructuring the FET and HE systems to make their programmes more relevant to the needs of students and the economy, and to reconfigure their institutional landscapes from an apartheid structure to a rationalised one that eliminates unnecessary duplication and promotes growth, rejuvenation and co-operation.
- Nurturing the growth of democracy, and the promotion of values and moral regeneration through the establishment of the South African History Project and the Values in Education Initiative. The Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy, produced in 2001, laid the basis for a comprehensive and ongoing advocacy campaign, and provided a practical framework for instilling and reinforcing the values of the new South Africa in learners and promoting the concepts of democracy, national pride and identity in the classroom.
- Establishing a National Strategy for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education in 2001. The Strategy identifies 102 schools with a specific mandate to promote, especially among girls, study in these fields.
- Reducing illiteracy and aliteracy among the population through the establishment of SANLI, the reading advocacy project *Masifunde Sonke*, and ABET programmes.

Library and information services sector

South African libraries have developed over a period of more than 150 years. The world's first free public library service was established by Lord Charles Somerset in 1820, by levying a tax on the sale of wine. When he returned to England, tax reforms by the new governor spelt the end of the free library; but it formed the basis of what is today the National Library of South Africa in Cape Town.

By 1900, subscription libraries were operating in most towns and cities, financed

by annual membership fees and, in most cases, grants from local authorities. An investigation in the 1930s by the Carnegie Corporation of New York found most of these libraries inadequate and poorly funded. The necessity for government support to ensure free public libraries was recognised.

By the 1950s, all four provinces of the Union of South Africa had ordinances that set out the functions of local and provincial government, and public library development gathered momentum.

In 1985, librarians commissioned UNISA to investigate the role that libraries can and should play in developing South Africa. The result was that greater emphasis was placed on providing material that would support formal and informal education. Outreach programmes to schools and pre-schools received priority. Many libraries started presenting literacy classes for adults.

South Africa's growing library and information services (LIS) sector includes a national library, public/community libraries, special libraries, government libraries and HE libraries. By mid-2003, South Africa had more than 11 373 libraries, with 77 HE libraries, 9 416 school libraries, 79 government departmental libraries, one national library with two branches and 1 800 public libraries provided by provincial and local government (library services and metro libraries). Less than 10% of secondary schools have school libraries.

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

The approximately 1 800 public libraries in the country have to provide services to a total population of about 44,8 million. According to Census 2001 figures, this trans-



lates to one library service point for every 25 000 people.

The HE libraries hold the bulk of South Africa's scientific and scholarly information resources and fulfil more than half of all the interlibrary loan requests. Pressures on HE libraries include redistribution of educational resources, rising prices and declining student numbers. These libraries have responded by forming consortia, looking at access, and exploring digital resources.

Special libraries refer to libraries which consist of subject-specialised collections, including private organisations' libraries and government departmental libraries.

Policy Framework for School Libraries

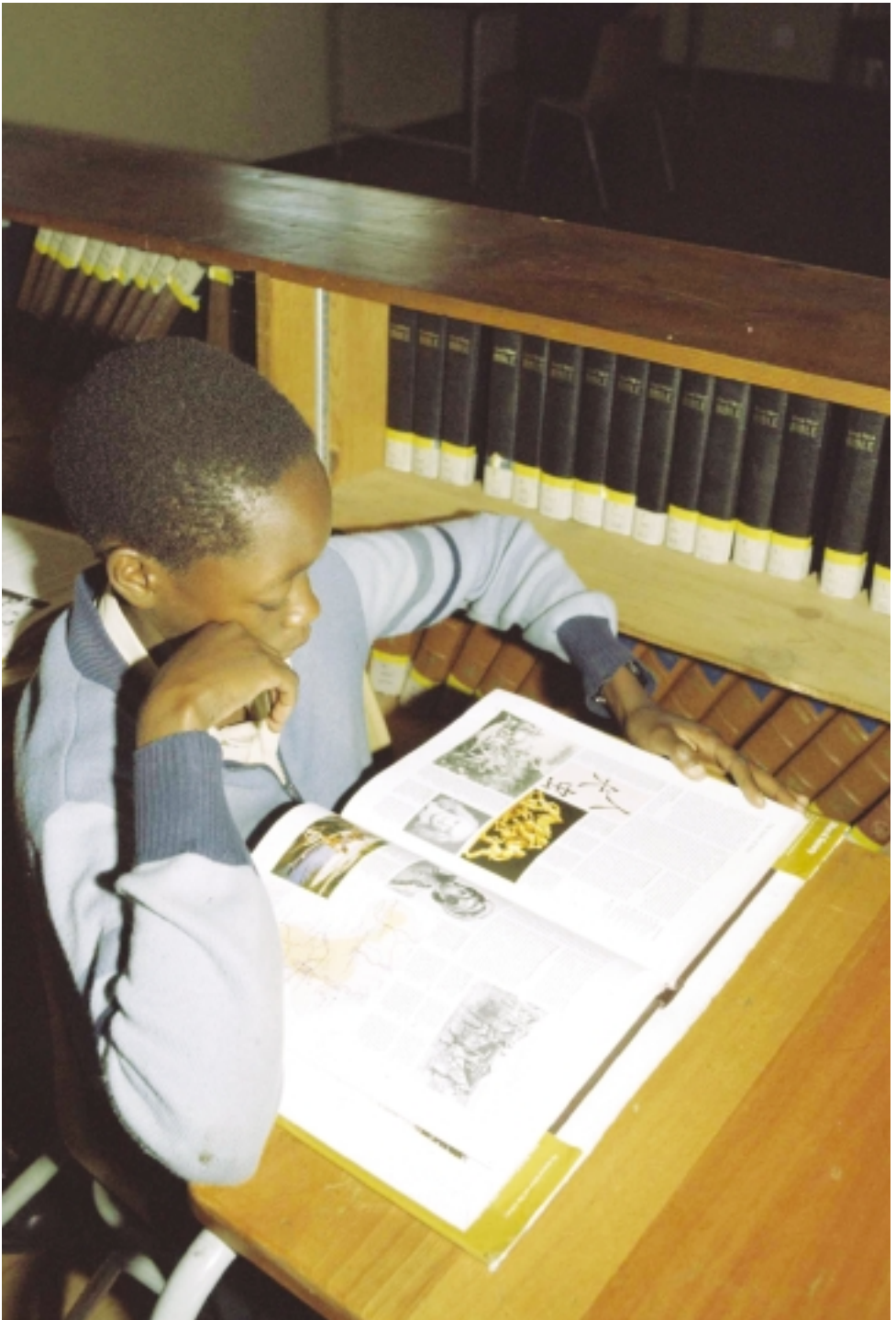
The Department of Education is working on the Policy Framework for School Libraries. This draft document locates itself within the context of socio-political and educational transformation that is driven by the new legislative framework and the educational paradigm shift to OBE.

The draft policy argues that teachers and learners will only be able to access an OBE curriculum if they have access to learning resources. This has implications for the way school libraries conceptualise, manage and provide resources. The draft policy recommends different models of school libraries to provide access to resources for learners, and draws attention to the relationship between the school library, the curriculum and learning resources. It also supports the view that the school library is a facility ideally suited to providing learners with a wide range of curriculum-orientated resources in diverse media forms, as required by an OBE system.

Library Association of South Africa (LIASA)

Librarians recognise the value that association membership and participation offers them. The LIS sector professionals have established the LIASA to unite all the institutions and persons engaged in the LIS sector in South Africa. LIASA's mission advocates and supports the provision of an efficient, user-orientated and excellent LIS that aspires to enhance equitable access to information for all communities in South Africa. However, unlike lawyers, doctors and dentists who may be required to be members of a legally constituted association in order to practise, librarians are under no legal obligation to belong to State, national or professional groups. LIASA's role in the profession is therefore to:

- provide a direct channel of communication between every member and the Association through a number of publications, in print and electronic format
- provide opportunities for continuous training and development
- provide access to professional expertise
- act as a powerful advocate for the LIS sector
- provide authoritative policy advice to government and other agencies
- provide an active and consultative process of governance in which the membership is encouraged to be involved
- facilitate development and networking of members through the structures of the organisation in branches, interest groups, etc.
- organise and support international and regional events such as the Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern African Library and Information Associations, and International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.





Acknowledgements

BuaNews
 Department of Arts and Culture
 Department of Education
 National Library of South Africa
 South African Qualifications Authority
www.gov.za

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