



South Africa Yearbook 2015/16

Education

Basic education

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) deals with all schools from Grade R to Grade 12, including adult literacy programmes. The aim of the DBE is to develop, maintain and support a South African school education system for the 21st century.

Legislation and policies

Education in South Africa is governed by the following key policies and legislation:

- 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 (CEM), 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 of 1996, therefore, provided for the formulation of national policy in general, and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) 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 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 (SGBs), has been implemented in public schools countrywide. The school-funding norms, outlined in SASA of 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 ABET; 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 ABET.
- SASA of 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 NCS grades R to 12 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 pre-school 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 DBE'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.
- The Umalusi Council sets and monitors standards for general and TVET 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 South African Standard for Principals Policy was approved by the CEM in 2015. The policy was submitted to the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation unit in The Presidency to undergo a Socio-Economic Impact Assessment and Quality Assessment. The policy was gazetted on 18 March 2016.

Action Plan to 2019: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030

This Sector Plan is an update to the Action Plan to 2014. It is a reflection of how far the country has come in terms of planning service delivery, not just in basic education but in government as a whole. The sector plan encapsulates the department's response to the priorities, targets and programmes articulated in the National Development Plan (NDP), 2030; and provides a detailed five year plan and 15-year targets and programmes for the whole Basic Education sector.

The new Sector Plan replaces the 2014 Action Plan; which detailed programmes that the department had initiated in the previous cycle; and which were widely consulted in the Basic Education Sector. In the next few years, the DBE will build on its successes in attaining the Millennium Developmental Goals (MDGs) for access, participation, and gender equity. In the post-2015 period, the emphasis will be on quality of schooling outcomes, and on better preparation of young people for the life and work opportunities after they leave school. The department has, to this end, developed three streams of curricula (academic, vocational and technical), which address the diverse needs of young people for learning and development in all schools. The DBE is working with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) to better influence the quality and preparation of teachers and ultimately, learners, in critical subjects including mathematics, science and technology, and the African languages.

This plan has 27 goals. Goals 1 to 13 deal with outputs that the department wants to achieve in relation to learning and enrolments. Goals 14 to 27 deal with how the outputs are to be achieved. Five priority goals are indicated by three stars. In the interests of continuity, the 27 goals are the same as those appearing in the 2011 Action Plan (the one exception is Goal 9).

The department wants to ensure that every

As part of the Integrated National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy: A Whole School Approach and also as part of the Getting the Nation to Read Campaign, the DBE in partnership with SABC Education, UNISA, AVBOB Foundation, Spell It SA and Camp I am and Soul Buddies, hosted the national championships of the DBE Spelling Bee South Africa (Spelling Bee) at Sci-Bono Discovery Centre in Johannesburg on 10 October 2015.

The is aimed at improving learners' performance in languages, especially in English.

The 2015 national champions in the Spelling Bee were: Greenfield Primary in the Western Cape, Pioneer Primary in Gauteng and Dikolobe Primary in Limpopo.

learner has access to the minimum set of textbooks and workbooks required according to national policy.

Annual National Assessment (ANA)

ANA is used to monitor levels and quality of learning outcomes. 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.

This is an important exercise that helps identify learning challenges and assists in planning appropriate interventions to improve Literacy and Numeracy.

The tests are administered in all 11 official languages in the foundation phase, and in the two languages of teaching and learning in the Intermediate and Senior Phase.

Necessary adaptations are effected for learners who experience various kinds of learning disabilities, to ensure that every learner has the opportunity to demonstrate what they know in the assessment.

The department uses ANA as a measuring tool to annually record progress in learner achievement, towards achieving the 2014 target, of ensuring that at least 60% of learners achieve certain levels in Literacy and Numeracy.

ANA targets Literacy and Numeracy because these have been found universally to be the key foundational skills for successful learning in school and beyond.

The fifth ANA was scheduled to be administered from 15 to 18 September 2015 in Mathematics and Language to all Grades 1–9 in public schools. About nine million learners were expected to write the assessment, including Grades 7 and 8 for the first time.

However, during the week of 4–11 September 2015 teacher unions indicated their dissatisfaction with the ANA and threatened not to participate.

Teacher unions raised the following issues concerning the ANA:

- The tests were administered on an annual basis and hence the system was not given adequate time to remediate.
- There was a need for a more intensive programme of teacher development to address the shortcomings identified through ANA.
- The ANA could only be written after it was remodelled.

After unsuccessful interventions and deliberations with the unions, which had threatened to discourage their members from participating in the administration of the ANA in 2015 the

Department, in conjunction with the unions, agreed on 10 September 2015 to postpone the administration of the ANA to February 2016. At the CEM in October 2015, the ANA was rescheduled to 1–4 December 2015.

An agreement was reached with the teacher unions on the establishment of a task team to undertake the remodelling of the ANA and an Inter-Ministerial Committee to attend to the broader issues of dispute presented by the unions. A mediation process was set up to specifically address the writing of the ANA in December 2015.

Following the disruption of the ANA by teacher unions in September 2015 and subsequent engagements with the unions, the department proposed that the dispute be referred to mediation.

The mediation process, which took place over the course of 13 meetings, concluded with a draft agreement on 19 November 2015, to be considered by the principals of the parties involved for signature on 23 November 2015. The proposals in the settlement agreement were that:

- The ANA (for Grades 1–9) be administered and managed by each school at a time convenient and in a manner appropriate to the school. The school would mark the tests at a time convenient and in a manner appropriate to the school during the first school term. The results of the tests would be for the school's own internal diagnostic purpose.
- The Sampled ANA would be administered by an Independent Agent in 2 100 schools across the country. The agent would be responsible for the administration and collection of the tests, marking of the tests and the final compilation of results and reporting. Teachers would not be involved in this process. In the selected schools the writing of the ANA as described above would be optional for learners who were not part of the sample.
- The target date for completion of the remodelling of ANA would be 1 April 2016 and the instruments, administration and reporting of this national assessment would be informed by the agreed purpose as articulated by the parties concerned. This would include the support for teacher development through the Teacher Union Collaboration.

After the department and teacher unions failed to reach signed agreement, the Department communicated with schools to administer the ANA at a convenient time between 26 November and 4 December 2015. Provincial education departments (PEDs) were guided on the distri-

bution and collection of the ANA tests as well as timetabling issues. The distribution and collection of tests varied among the nine provinces.

The collection rate was high in Free State (75%), Northern Cape (73%) and North West (59%), with the lowest rate observed in the Eastern Cape at 25%. The national rate was almost 20% due to other provinces not submitting.

A notable number of schools requested writing the tests when they re-opened in January 2016. Schools that were unable to administer the tests in 2015 were advised to seek permission from the Provincial Education Head to write in 2016.

The marking of the tests were done by the teachers at school in the first quarter of 2016, providing an important diagnostic baseline for teachers on learning gaps.

The ANA verification process could not be implemented on 1–4 December 2015 because the affected service provider indicated that it would need a lead time of at least 15 days to re-mobilise its 2 500 fieldworkers across the country.

National Curriculum Statement

The NCS grades R to 12, implemented between 2012 and 2014, represents a policy statement for learning and teaching in South African schools. It is the curriculum that underpins the various programmes followed in each Grade from grades R to 12.

It enables a learner to obtain an NSC after completing the full programme of the NCS grades R to 12.

The NCS grades R to 12 consists of three documents, namely:

- curriculum and assessment policy statements for each approved school subject as listed in the National Policy Document pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the NCS grades R to 12
- national policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the NCS grades R to 12, which describes the number of subjects to be offered to learners in each grade and the promotion requirements
- National Protocol for Assessment of grades R to 12, which standardises the recording and reporting processes for grades R to 12 within the framework.

South Africa was ranked last on the quality of its Mathematics and Science education in the World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Competitiveness Report 2014 – 2015. The Global Competitiveness Report 2014 – 2015 assesses the competitiveness landscape of 144

economies, providing insight into the drivers of their productivity and prosperity.

Secondary School Improvement Programme

The importance of the Secondary School Improvement Programme (SSIP) will be pushed to the fore, as matrics wrote for the first time write the NSC exams based on the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS).

Through the programme, teachers will receive additional training to ensure they are confident to deliver the new curriculum. The DBE also ensured that learner study notes and extra classes were aligned to the CAPS curriculum.

Under SSIP, Grade 12 learners received extra classes on Saturdays and during school holidays. In its fifth year, SSIP has become an important element in improving the quality of education in Gauteng schools by giving support to educators and school managers to ensure better curriculum delivery.

SSIP has helped 435 priority schools to achieve the provincial benchmarks. SSIP has shown an average performance increase of 15% since 2009 and the gap in performance between fee-paying and no-fee schools has narrowed from 24% in 2009 to 9% in 2013. In 2013, the number of public schools achieving a pass rate of less than 60% has dropped from 188 in 2009 to 19 in 2013. Subjects targeted were: Maths; Maths Literacy; Physical Science; Life Sciences; Accounting; English First Additional Language; Economics, Business Studies; History and Geography.

Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

CAPS is a single, comprehensive and concise policy document, which replaces the Subject and Learning Area Statements, Learning Programme Guidelines and Subject Assessment Guidelines for all the subjects listed in the NCS grades R to 12.

It comprises the following:

- CAPS for all approved subjects
- National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the NCS grades R to 12
- National Protocol for Assessment grades R to 12.

The department's continued focus is on the phased-in implementation of the revised CAPS. .

The department completed the process with a roll-out to grades seven to nine and 12 in the 2014 academic year.

South Africa has continuously been ranked in the lower tiers of international assessments such

as Progress in International Reading Literacy Studies (PIRLS). On a scale of 0 to 1 000, pupils tested for English and Afrikaans in Grade 5 achieved a score of 421, described in the 2011 PIRLS report as "the lowest for benchmarking participants." According to the PIRLS report, 43% of Grade 5 pupils in South African schools have not developed the basic skills required for reading at an equivalent international Grade 4 level.

The department has approved the introduction of the revised Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) for Technology (Technical Subjects).

The CAPS for all Technology Subjects, including Technical Mathematics and Technical Sciences that were promulgated in July 2014, will be incrementally implemented in January 2016 from Grade 10, with Grade 11 and 12 implemented in 2017 and 2018 respectively. The revised curriculum offers learners elementary engineering and technological skills, which are suitable for the world of work, higher and or further education and self-employment.

The changes introduced in the revised curriculum necessitated the need for the orientation of subject advisors and re-training of teachers on theory and practical teaching methodologies. The orientation and teacher training will take place during June and September 2015 for subject advisors and teachers respectively.

A National Training Team, which comprises of provincial officials specialising in the nine core areas of the curriculum and those with skills in Technical Mathematics and Sciences was appointed to drive the training process. The training manual for Civil, Electrical and Mechanical Technology has already been developed to standardise the training to be delivered by different service providers.

The orientation and teacher training processes form part of the implementation of the Mathematics, Science and Technology (MST) Strategy. Based on the nature and scope of the curriculum, the department is of the view that teacher training for Technical subjects should be conducted in a technically oriented environment in order to expose teachers in the practical application and use of the subject related equipment, tools and machinery. It is therefore in this context that Skills Training Centres were recommended as the preferred training venues.

Budget and funding

The overall budget allocation for 2015/16 for the DBE was R21,5 11 billion. In the 2014/15 financial year, the budget allocation was R19, 699 billion.

This is an increase of R1,821 billion, which is equivalent to 9.24%.

A new Conditional Grant, namely the MST Grant, intended to promote the teaching and learning of mathematics, science and technology in schools. This grant, an amalgamation of the Technical Schools Recapitalisation Grant and the Dinaledi Schools Grant, has been allocated a total of R1,1 billion over the 2015/16 to 2017/18 MTEF period. The allocation for 2015/16 is R347,185 million; which will increase to R367,670 million and R385,145 million in 2016/17 and 2017/18 financial years, respectively. The MST Grant will strengthen the implementation of the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Action Plan to 2019 by increasing the number of learners taking Mathematics, Science and Technology subjects, improving the success rate in the subjects, and improving teachers' capabilities in teaching these three gateway subjects.

The Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign received a reduced allocation of R439.584 million in 2015/16. This campaign has impacted the lives of more than 3,5 million people. The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) – Kha Ri Gude was allocated R65.099 million. This allocation was meant to contribute significantly towards job-creation by recruiting and training Kha Ri Gude volunteers.

The importance of public-private partnerships is a prevalent theme of the NDP; and it is also consistent with the President's call to make education a societal issue. To this end, the National Education Collaboration Trust will receive an additional R200 million over the MTEF, bringing the total allocation over the MTEF to R326 million. This allocation is meant to leverage the partnership contributions from the private sector.

Infrastructure delivery – both funded through the Education Infrastructure Grant at R29,622 billion for the MTEF period; and the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative (ASIDI) funded to the effect of R7,042 billion over the MTEF period. The ASIDI programme is gaining momentum; and that the challenges of yesterday, are now overcome.

The programme has delivered more than 107 new state-of-the-art schools thus far. In mid-2016, the department was finalising a dedicated Infrastructure Delivery, Management and Oversight Unit to enhance school maintenance, development and provisioning in its system.

This unit will comprise built environment experts and specialists with the requisite skills;

so that, on a named school basis, the department can improve and monitor infrastructure, equipment and furniture provisioning in support of quality education. This unit must finally get to grips with the crippling and unacceptable sanitation situation that continues to plague too many schools.

Regular maintenance is at the heart of many of the department's infrastructure problems, in addition to the emerging needs as a result of demographic shifts and pressures, and variable unit costs in the country. Small and unviable schools, will be merged or closed where the quality of learning and teaching is compromised.

Teacher placement, deployment and development – any quality education system, is reliant on the quality of its teachers. The education system is no different. To support teacher training, R3.094 billion will be awarded in Funza Lushaka bursaries over the 2015/16 and 2017/18 MTEF period.

During the 2015/16 financial year, 10 216 young and qualified teachers entered the system. This was 1 616 above the annual target of 8 600. In 2015, 4 723 graduates who had been Funza Lushaka bursary recipients were eligible for placement. By end of financial year 2015/16, 4 424 graduates were placed.

Role players/statutory bodies Provincial departments of education

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

Therefore, the department works closely with the PEDs to ensure that provincial budgets and strategies are in line with and support national policies.

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

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

This includes organising training for personnel; dealing with funding; resourcing bottlenecks; and solving labour-relations disputes. District offices are key to ensuring that school principals remain accountable to the PEDs and that accountability lines within the school to the principal and to the SGB 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 CEM – consisting of the Ministers of Basic Education, 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 comprise the Director-General (DG) of the DBE, 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 development and management of a sub-framework of qualifications for general and TVET and for the attendant quality assurance. Umalusi means “herder” or “shepherd” which in Nguni culture, is the person who is the guardian of the family's wealth.

The council is tasked with the certification of the following qualifications:

- In schools: NSC.
- In TVET colleges: the National Technical Certificate (Level N3) and the National Certificate Vocational.
- 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.

National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU)

NEEDU ensures effective evaluation of all educators 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 inform and complement external evaluation.
- monitoring the different levels of school support and the extent action is considered on proposed interventions, whether in the form of developmental support or disciplined action
- reviewing and assessing existing monitoring, evaluation and support structures and instruments regularly, to ensure clarity and coherence in the way 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 (ELRC)

The ELRC 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 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 collective bargaining between the educator unions and the DBE as the employer. The ELRC also conducts various workshops to increase the level of awareness and understanding of sound labour-relations procedures.

South African Council for Educators

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. It was established in terms of the SACE Act, 2000 (Act 31 of 2000).

The SACE's functions are to:

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

Before their employment, educators are required to register with the SACE, which has a register of about 500 000 educators.

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
- ensuring that educators adhere to the SACE Code of Professional Ethics
- the Continuing Professional Teacher-Development System, which recognises professional development undertaken by educators on their own initiative.

Educator unions

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 (OSD) for educators in public education. The OSD 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 for 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

The department increased learner access to workbooks and coverage to improve literacy, numeracy and reading.

It provided workbooks to all learners in grades one to nine. Through savings from developing content in-house, the scope was expanded to cover Braille workbooks as well.

The *Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality 2011 Survey* put South Africa at 78% for literacy and 83% for Mathematics.

Prudence in the deployment of resources is key to the national endeavour for equality and inclusive development and growth. Addressing inequalities in education forms part of the rationale for centralising the procurement of books.

Learn English Audio Project (LEAP)

The DBE launched the LEAP in partnership with the British council.

LEAP is a British Council project, which seeks to help teachers from remote and under-resourced schools in nine African countries. It is aimed at improving listening and speaking skills in learners and, ensure access to quality English learning materials on micro-SD cards delivered via solar powered MP3 players popularly known as 'Lifeplayers'. The Lifeplayer technology has been developed in South Africa thus ensuring its relevance and long-term sustainability.

The training pack comprises a solar powered MP3 player pre-loaded with over 40 hours of teaching material, teacher guides and lesson plans for grades R to 4, a book with primary songs and stories, and a set of colourful cartoon story posters. Relevant teaching and learning audio material linked to the South African national curriculum and in particular the DBE Rainbow Workbooks have been developed by the British Council and the DBE.

This material has been uploaded onto the solar powered MP3 players for distribution to selected multi-grade schools in three provinces: the Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal. To complement the training package, teachers received a training video, lesson plans and posters, and an extra SD card containing the all the materials so that they could access the materials on their cell phones, thus facilitating lesson planning at any time and location.

The LEAP is a valuable addition to the efforts of the DBE to support teachers in the poorest schools. It provides an innovative approach to providing materials to teachers to improve their subject knowledge in English, and other languages, as well as for learners to access materials.

Incremental Introduction of African Languages (IIAL)

The DBE's African language pilot policy was implemented in 2014.

The purpose of the pilot is to identify challenges in the implementation of IIAL to inform full scale implementation in 2015.

In 2012, the department announced that full implementation would be preceded by a pilot in Grade 1 classes in selected schools in each province in 2014.

The IIAL policy will be implemented incrementally, commencing in Grade 1 in 2015 and continuing until 2026 when it will be implemented in Grade 12.

The pilot project is targeting the introduction of the previously marginalised African languages in schools where an African language is presently not offered.

In the near future children who attend government schools will be able to learn at least one African language.

Preparations are underway for the implementation of the Incremental Introduction of African Languages (IIAL) programme in more than 3 558 schools across all provinces that don't offer an African language.

The IIAL programme is a DBE initiative that was introduced in 10 schools per district, and is

currently being implemented incrementally from Grade 1, continuing until 2026 with implementation in Grade 12. The department believes that promoting African languages could address some aspects of social cohesion.

The IIAL policy aims to promote and develop previously marginalised languages and increase access to languages beyond English and Afrikaans. Currently, the National Curriculum Statement requires that two languages be offered, one as a language of learning and teaching and the other as an additional language. One of the two languages should be offered at Home Language level, and the other at either Home Language or First Additional Language (FAL) level.

Schools, together with their school governing bodies, decide on the two languages to be offered at FAL level, one of which must be an African language. The choice of the three languages is largely going to be determined by the demographics of the school population.

The roll-out of the programme began with the IIAL programme being piloted at Grade 1 level in 231 schools across eight provinces last year. The pilot targeted the introduction of previously marginalised African languages in schools where an African language is not offered.

To ensure the IIAL programme roll-out runs smoothly, the department has identified three key deliverables: the provision of teachers, learner/teacher support materials and the finalisation of policy.

The IIAL's success depends on teacher availability. An audit by the department revealed that provinces are at different levels of teacher provision.

The Free State, Limpopo, Northern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal provided African language teachers in all former Model C schools. Mpumalanga and Gauteng had teachers in some schools, while the Eastern Cape and North West were putting plans in place to provide teachers for African languages. In the Western Cape schools share an African language teacher. Learners could choose indigenous languages in 2016.

To date the foreign languages most extensively offered in South African schools are German followed by French and other languages such as Portuguese, Urdu, Tamil and Arabic.

Satellite broadcasting programme

The satellite broadcasting service broadcasts Mathematics for grades eight and nine directly to priority high schools during lesson time so that teachers can integrate the broadcasts with their

teaching time. Broadcasts are automatically recorded for revision or afternoon lessons.

Eco-school programme

The Eco-school programme is an international programme of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) that was developed to support environmental learning in the classroom. The programme is active in 58 countries around the world and has been implemented in South Africa since 2003 by WESSA.

The programme is aimed at creating awareness and action around environmental sustainability in schools and their surrounding communities as well as supporting ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) in the national curriculum. With over 50% of the content in some CAPS subjects being environmental in nature Eco-Schools makes a positive contribution towards improving education in South Africa.

Since 2003 more than 10 229 schools across all nine provinces have participated on the WESSA Eco-Schools programme, of which over 6 000 have sustained their environmental projects for three to 12 years, involving more than 500 000 learners and 40 000 teachers. WESSA Eco-school accredits schools that make a commitment to continuously improve their school's environmental performance.

The programme is operational in both supported and unsupported schools.

Student Sponsorship Programme (SSP)

The SSP assists academically distinguished pupils to realise their potential during their high school years with scholarships and bursaries. To find the country's brightest kids, SSP searches schools in the major townships.

The focus is on giving pupils from low-income families a great education to improve their chances of a bright and prosperous future.

The pupils have to be academically distinguished to be considered and once they are selected, they are placed in the top high schools in Gauteng, the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape.

The non-profit organisation has awarded more than 640 scholarships since 2000. The SSP partners with top high schools that obtain high matric pass rates and university passes in the three provinces.

The programme commits to funding the pupils for five years of high school by matching each child with either an individual or a corporate sponsor. Many of the pupils who have been part of the programme have passed matric and are

now studying at tertiary institutions.

The organisation's vision is to produce leaders who are committed to creating a society that is non-racist, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous. In addition to the quality education and enrichment provided by the partner schools, SSP supports its pupils by assigning a student programme officer to them and finding a corporate mentor for each pupil.

The SSP also runs a parallel programme that focuses on leadership development, study skills, life skills, career guidance and assistance with applications to tertiary institutions and bursaries for further studies. The mentors also help the pupils cope and adjust in their new schooling environment and guide them throughout high school.

They run leadership development programmes that offer pupils regular compulsory leadership workshops. This approach has produced an incomparable track record for SSP, with 94% of their scholars completing the programme (matric pass) and 91% going on to pursue a tertiary qualification.

Pupils who wish to apply for the programme must be in Grade 6 and not older than 12. The pupils must attain an overall average of 70% or more in Grade 5.

They must achieve a 70% minimum grade for mathematics, English and science. Their families must earn less than R200 000 in combined annual incomes. In addition, the applicants must show leadership potential and be community-service orientated.

Successful applicants will be placed in a year-long bridging programme that seeks to improve their abilities in English, mathematics, science and technology. The scholar development programme consists of Saturday classes, academic camps and personal development workshops.

Educational portal

The educational portal www.thutong.doe.gov.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 DBE 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.

Improving access to free and quality basic education

School fees are set at annual public meetings of SGBs, 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 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.

Early Childhood Development (ECD)

In respect of ECD, the NDP underlined the need for access for all children to at least two years of pre-school education.

The NCF for children under four years were rolled out in registered ECD centres from January 2015. All preparations such as practitioner training and supply of resources have already started.

Over the next two years, R1.4 billion will be spent to support ECD programmes and 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 (CRDP), and integrates other services that flow from different departments and relevant stakeholders.

This is done through an education campaign focused on women in rural areas, and selected peri-urban and urban areas such as informal settlements, which are generally regarded as focal points for government's poverty and malnutrition eradication programmes.

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 (DSD) 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 DSD leads government departments regarding services to children under the age of four years. In terms of the Children's Act, 2005 (Act 38 of 2005), it is the DSD'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 education is geared toward promoting the democratic values enshrined in the Constitution. PEDs 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
- over-aged learners.

In November 2015, Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) was passed in to ensure that no child will be refused admission to a school and that children who are exempted from school attendance are captured on a list so as to ascertain that they also have access to other government services.

By mid-2016, there were 453 special schools

in the country and 18 of them were still under construction. Only two of the 82 education districts did not have special schools.

Educator development

The department developed a National Education Human Resource Planning Framework to effectively manage the demand, supply and utilisation of educators.

With support from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the department commissioned a project to develop an instrument for evaluating the implementation of the post-provisioning norms. The department has a responsibility to monitor compliance regarding teacher attendance, punctuality and proper use of school resources.

The implementation of the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development is making progress.

The CAPS has seen over 200 000 educators being familiarised with the new curriculum imperatives.

The DBE distributed 400 000 copies of educator guides to the workbooks and ensured the training of 200 Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase advisors and specialist trainers.

In addition, the DBE concluded strategic partnerships with Vodacom, CISCO, Mindset, University of South Africa (Unisa), MTN and other partners to strengthen the capacity of teacher centres by improving Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and content for teacher development.

School infrastructure

One-school-a-week

Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Development Initiative

The programme aims to deliver an adequate standard of schools to all children in provinces

and to ensure that the facilities are conducive for effective teaching and learning.

ASIDI is an ongoing programme aimed at implementing the basic safety norms and standards in school infrastructure.

The R8,2 billion public-private programme aimed to eradicate the 496 mud schools in the country, provide water and sanitation to 1 257 schools and electricity to 878 schools by March 2016.

By the end of 2015/16, a total of 510 ASIDI projects had been identified; 299 were allocated to Implementing Agents (IAs), 163 were completed, of which 51 were completed in the 2015/16 financial year, and 136 others were at various stages of planning, procurement of contractors and construction. In the Eastern Cape, 211 schools with low learner enrolment were subject to rationalisation by the Eastern Cape Department of Education and were consequently not awarded to IAs.

Eradicating mud schools restores dignity to education and is transforming people's lives for the better.

Learners and educators have better access to improved environments for learning, teaching and growth. It usually takes 10 to 15 months for a state-of-the art school to be built, if no delays are encountered.

Learning is not interrupted as the learners are housed in temporary mobile classrooms during construction. They move into the school as soon as it is ready. Standard facilities for newly built schools include classrooms, administration blocks multi-purpose centres, science and computer labs, nutrition centres, libraries, decent sanitation, electricity, rainwater harvesting tanks and a fully resourced Grade R centre, complete with jungle gym and sand pit.

ASIDI also provides basic services of water, electricity and sanitation to schools that previously had none. Schools are assessed to establish infrastructure needs. The department appoints implementing agents that manage projects on its behalf. The implementing agents in turn procure and appoint professional service providers and contractors, who carry out the work.

The Ministry of Basic Education handed over the Dorrington Matsepe Primary School in Kroonstad in April 2015.

The handover marked a milestone in the ASIDI, as the Free State school was the 100th school to have been completed since ASIDI was initiated in 2011/12.

The school, which was established in 1992 and currently has an enrolment of 1 100 learners,

The Department of Basic Education has received a donation of R117 million – to be made over a period of 10 years – from the Motsepe Foundation towards sporting and cultural competitions.

In the first five years, R55 million will be allocated to the Kay Motsepe Schools Football Cup, the ABC Motsepe Schools Choral and Traditional Eisteddfod and the Kay Motsepe Schools Netball Cup.

In the subsequent five years, from 2021 to 2025, the Motsepe Foundation will contribute another R62.5 million.

The department and the foundation are currently in discussions to identify prizes for the winners of the various categories of the ABC Motsepe Schools Choral and Traditional Eisteddfod, as well as the Kay Motsepe Schools Netball Cup.

also makes use of gas and biogas for cooking in the nutrition centre while hot water is produced through the use of solar-powered geysers.

ASIDI is a massive public-private partnership programme and one of Government's Strategic Infrastructure Projects (SIPs), as part of the broader Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission.

All ASIDI schools come standard with specialist classrooms such as science and computer labs, nutrition and Grade R centres, libraries and administration blocks complete with a dedicated staff room, principal's offices, sick bay and reception area.

The singular mission of this ground-breaking infrastructure build programme is to eradicate schools built, in their entirety, from inappropriate materials such as those built of asbestos, wood and mud.

The programme seeks to restore the pride and dignity of our communities that were previously neglected by the apartheid regime.

National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP)

For the 2015/16 financial year, the programme provided daily nutritious meals to 21 177 Q1–3 primary, secondary and identified special schools nationally, reaching an average of 9 630 590 learners.

The target of providing nutritious meals to 19 800 schools nationally was exceeded by 1 377 schools. The number of learners reached was 340 545 more than the previous financial year.

Two hundred schools were targeted for visits in the 2015/16 financial year. NSNP officials visited a total of 299 schools in all the provinces. The purpose of these visits was to monitor progress and support schools on the implementation of the programme, as well as supporting the deworming programme.

Monitoring reports revealed that feeding was taking place in the majority of schools visited and that the schools fed all their learners. Further observations were that the programme was generally effectively implemented.

Good practices observed were the general hygiene practices such as learners washing their hands before their meals; food preparation areas being kept clean; as well as the cleanliness and protective clothing of Volunteer Food Handlers.

Storerooms were also well kept and in cases where there were no shelves, foodstuff were placed on pallets and not on the floor as was the practice in the past. The NSNP promotes gardens in schools to develop skills and knowledge and augment nutrition. The majority

of schools observed during monitoring visits had vegetable gardens in good condition.

School enrichment programmes

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

Some of the arts, culture and music flagship programmes the DBE 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 boost the South African Schools Choral Eisteddfod, the DBE trained 359 adjudicators, 509 conductors, 82 data capturers and 15 programme directors, most of whom were educators.

Learner health

Integrated School Health Programme (ISHP)

Key among the department's successes is the ISHP that will offer, over time, a comprehensive and integrated package of health services to all learners.

Health Promotion aims to create a healthy school environment by promoting the general health and well-being of learners and educators, and by addressing key health and social barriers to learning in order to promote effective teaching and learning.

Its strategic objectives are to:

- increase knowledge and awareness of health promoting behaviours;
- develop systems for the mainstreaming of care and support for teaching and learning;
- increase sexual and reproductive health knowledge, skills and decision-making among learners, educators and school support staff;
- facilitate early identification and treatment of health barriers to learning;
- increase knowledge and awareness of health promoting behaviours.

The departments of Basic Education and Health are jointly implementing the ISHP that will extend, over time, the coverage of school health services to all learners in primary and secondary schools.

The programme offers a comprehensive and integrated package of services, including sexual and reproductive health services for older

learners.

The Health Services Package for the ISHP includes a large component of health education for each of the four school phases (such as how to lead a healthy lifestyle and drug and substance abuse awareness), health screening (such as screening for vision, hearing, oral health and tuberculosis) and onsite services (such as deworming and immunization).

The ISHP implemented in partnership with the Department of Health was able to reach a total of 882 151 learners between April 2015 and March 2016. A total of 229 554 Grade 4 girls received the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination during August 2015. Grade 4 girls received the HPV vaccination and health education from 16 February to 11 March 2016.

A total of 1 111 705 learners received health services. On 4 June 2015, the World Health Organisation (WHO) approved the donation of seven million Mebendazole tablets for the deworming programme. The National School Deworming Programme launch was held on 16 February 2016 at Zimasa Primary School, Langa in the Western Cape.

Alcohol and Drug Use Prevention and Management Programme

The department currently implements an alcohol and drug use prevention and management programme. The programme is integrated into the school curriculum via the Life Orientation/Life Skills subject area.

This is supported by co-curricular activities implemented through Peer Education programmes. The programme adopts a public health approach and involves interventions to creating an enabling environment for policy implementation, prevention interventions, early detection and treatment, care and support.

The thrust of interventions by the department are on the prevention of alcohol and drug use. However, partnerships are set up with other government departments and non-governmental organizations to facilitate access to treatment, care and support where required.

Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) Programme

The CSTL Programme is a Southern African Development Community (SADC) initiative that was adopted by Education Ministers in 2008.

The goal of the CSTL Programme is to realise the educational rights of all children, including those who are most vulnerable, through schools becoming inclusive centres of learning, care and support.

The CSTL Programme intends to prevent and mitigate factors that have a negative impact on the enrolment, retention, performance and progression of vulnerable learners in schools by addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

South Africa is one of six countries (others are Swaziland, Zambia, Madagascar, Democratic Republic of Congo and Mozambique) implementing Phase 1 of the Programme between 2008 - 2015.

In order to realise its goal, nine priority areas have been identified to address barriers to teaching and learning. These priority areas have been identified based on the policy and legislative mandate that the department has to fulfil on care and support, as well as the most pressing needs in school communities.

The priority areas are as follows: nutritional support health promotion infrastructure water and sanitation safety and protection social welfare services psychosocial support material support curriculum support co-curricular support.

HIV and AIDS Life Skills Education Programme. The HIV and AIDS Life Skills Education Programme finds its policy mandate from the National Policy on HIV and AIDS for Learners and Educators in Schools (1999).

The programme was initiated in 2000 and is implemented in all public institutions with a focus on learners in Grades 1-12. The main objectives of the life skills programme are to integrate HIV and AIDS and relevant life skills into the school curriculum as a strategy to prevent and mitigate the spread of HIV infection, and to provide care and support for learners that are infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.

In this regard, a cross-curricular approach has been adopted. The Life Skills and HIV and AIDS Education is primarily located in the Life Orientation learning area/subject with some aspects of the programme integrated into other learning area/subjects.

The HIV and AIDS Life Skills Education Programme focuses on mainly curricular activities as per the following focal areas: Educators are trained to implement Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and TB programmes for learners through the curriculum Procurement

Team South Africa has won the 2016 International Schools Moot Court competition, held in The Hague in Holland. The city is home to the United Nation's International Court of Justice, headquartered in the Peace Palace, and the International Criminal Court.

The competition, held from 18 to 22 January, focused on the issue of crimes against humanity during a time of war. South Africa triumphed over Team USA in the final.

and distribution of NCS and CAPS compliant LTSM on HIV and TB Co-curricular activities on SRH and TB Advocacy activities with learners, educators and schools communities on SRH and TB Care and support activities for learners and educators.

Peer Education Programme

Peer education is used as a strategy to role model health promoting behaviour and to shift peer norms on HIV and AIDS and other health and social issues as a support to curriculum implementation.

Physical education at schools

The DBE and the Physical Education Institute of South Africa (PEISA) have joined hands to promote and improve physical education among South Africa's young people.

The changes to the curriculum has resulted in physical education being removed as a stand-alone subject and incorporated into the Life Orientation curriculum. This has led to a drop in physical education participation at schools due to lack of trained practitioners and content understanding of physical education.

To counter this, the DBE joined forces with PEISA to address best physical education practice and develop a game plan to ensure that physical education was functional and present in all schools.

A study has found that at least half of South African children are not active enough, doing less than an hour of physical activity each day, highlighting the need for an increased focus on physical education. The Discovery Healthy Active Kids South African Report Card 2014 also found that, on average, South African children spend almost three hours each day watching TV and are not actively involved.

The symposium was also an opportunity for stakeholders to share best practice and indicate how they, in their own sectors, could advance physical education in schools. Improving physical activity in communities was also identified as a critical factor that can improve and motivate learners to remain active throughout their lives.

International cooperation

The DHET has signed a joint agreement with Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) Education Ministers to develop a solid framework for future cooperation in education.

The agreement was signed in Moscow, Russia, in November 2015 and includes areas such as general education, educational policy strategy, Technical, Vocational Education and

Training (TVET) colleges and higher education.

It also commits the BRICS partners to support joint research projects, encourage more collaborative programmes at postgraduate, doctorate and postdoctorate levels and co-publishing of scientific results by BRICS universities.

By mid-2016, a process was underway to nominate 12 South African universities to participate in the BRICS Network of Universities, which will be anchor universities for collaboration.

Significantly, the agreement stresses the role of TVET colleges in attracting young people to the labour market.

The agreement follows a meeting in Brazil earlier in 2016, where member states agreed to promote the strengthening of internationalization of higher education and academic mobility, vocational and technical education, as well as to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Higher education and training

The DHET was established in 2009 when the former Department of Education was divided into two sections: Basic Education and Higher Education and Training.

The NDP and government's 2014-2019 Medium Term Strategic Framework envisage that by 2030, South Africans should have access to education and training of the highest quality, leading to significantly improved learning outcomes.

Over the medium term, the DHET will focus on expanding access to universities and technical and vocational education and training colleges, through infrastructure projects, teaching and learning support plans, management and accountability improvements, and bursaries.

Transfers from the department's University Subsidies subprogramme in the University Education programme are projected to reach R29 billion in 2017/18, which is an increase over the medium term of 6,3%. The transfers include spending on infrastructure at the newly established University of Mpumalanga and the Sol Plaatje University in the Northern Cape.

These infrastructure projects have specifically been allocated R1,2 billion for operational costs and capital expenditure in 2015/16. Lecture rooms and laboratories will be built, as well as new student accommodation. These new universities will, in time, increase the number of places available at the university level of education.

In addition to university access, the NDP also recognises the need for expanding access to occupationally directed programmes to increase

the availability of intermediate level skills in the economy, in particular, artisan skills.

Over the medium term, expanding skills training, work opportunities and work placements for artisans will be supported by the sector education and training authorities and the National Skills Fund.

By 31 March 2020, seven teaching and learning support plans for TVET colleges will have been developed and implemented to upskill lecturers and provide a technical and

The TVET functions and the adult education and training functions will shift from the provincial to the national sphere of government. The function shifts will, among other things, streamline colleges' reporting, ensure equal funding based on programme enrolments, and improve the planning and financial management of the colleges.

The Minister of Higher Education and Training will also be responsible for establishing and appointing college councils, which makes college principals accountable directly to the department. From 1 April 2015, the department became responsible for paying the salaries of officials in the TVET sector and the adult education and training sector.

Legislation and policies

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

- Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act 101 of 1997), in accordance with which private institutions offering higher education must register with the DHET
- Council on Higher Education, which was established in terms of the Higher Education Act of 1997.
- The Higher Education Amendment Act, 2008 (Act 39 of 2008), and the NQF Act of 2008, implied a significant change for the council
- National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) Act, 1999 (Act 56 of 1999) which is responsible for administering and allocating 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.
- FET Colleges Act, 2006 (Act 16 of 2006), regulates TVET to provide for the:
 - establishment, governance and funding of public TVET institutions
 - registration of private TVET institutions

- quality assurance and quality promotion in TVET.
- transitional arrangements and the repeal of laws.
- General and TVET Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (Act 58 of 2001), which provides for the establishment, composition and functioning of the General and TVET Quality Assurance Council. It also provides for quality assurance in general and TVET, providing for control over norms and standards of curriculum and assessment; the issue of certificates at the exit points; and the conduct of assessment and repealing the South African Certification Council Act of 1986
- SAQA Act, 1995 (Act 58 of 1995), which provides for the establishment of the NQF forms the foundation for a national learning system integrating education and training at all levels.

National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS)

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

The key driving force of the NSDS 3 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 (TVET 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 is 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.

NSDS 3 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.

The strategy emphasises the relevance, quality

and sustainability of skills training programmes focusing on eight goals, namely:

- 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 TVET 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 NGOs 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 DHET has been increasing access to higher education programmes by expanding spaces and options available at TVET 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 TVET colleges, where training is vocationally based.

Resources Universities

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

- Cape Peninsula University of Technology
- Central University of Technology, Free State
- Durban Institute of Technology
- Mangosuthu University of Technology
- National Institute for Higher Education, Northern Cape
- National Institute for Higher Education, Mpumalanga
- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
- North-West University
- Rhodes University
- Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University
- Sol Plaatje University (SPU), Northern Cape
- Tshwane University of Technology
- University of Cape Town
- University of Fort Hare

- University of the Free State
- University of Johannesburg
- University of KwaZulu-Natal
- University of Limpopo (UL)
- University of Mpumalanga (UMP)
- University of Pretoria
- Unisa
- University of Stellenbosch
- University of Venda
- University of the Western Cape
- University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)
- University of Zululand
- Vaal University of Technology
- Walter Sisulu University, Eastern Cape.

Further education and training

The DHET's top priority is to expand and improve the quality of TVET colleges.

TVET college enrolments have more than doubled over the past five years and will continue to increase, targeting 725 000 headcount enrolments this year, an increase of just over 39 000 on 2014.

The pace of growth will now be reduced to focus on quality improvements, including:

- reviewing the policy for the National Certificate (Vocational) and other programmes;
- lecturer development, and improving student academic success
- college improvement plans
- capacity building initiatives for student representative councils.

By mid-2016, construction work at three of the 12 planned new TVET college campuses was underway.

Adult education and training

The FET Colleges Amendment Act, 2013 (Act 1 of 2013) provides for the creation of a new institutional type, to be known as the Community Education and Training (CET) college. With time, the Public Adult Learning centres will be absorbed into the CET colleges, additional facilities and staff will be provided and the offerings will be extended to provide vocational or community-oriented programmes.

In April 2016, nine CET colleges were established, which will enable the merger of existing public adult learning centres into community colleges. The community colleges will cater for a population that is not integrated into the post-schooling environment.

The Minister of Higher Education and Training officially welcomed the staff from Adult Education and Training (AET) centres, TVET colleges and AET and TVET units in PEDs as they transfer to the DHET.

Approximately 38 000 employees joined the department on 1 April. The employees form part of the bedrock of TVET colleges and soon to be launched CET systems. The process of identifying nine community colleges for piloting in 2015 has been completed. The community colleges will be located in all provinces, with each province having one.

The department said the necessary legislative framework, compliance with labour relations legislation and compliance with the budget transfer processes have been fulfilled to enable the transfer of the AET and TVET functions.

The department has also established task teams to respond to any eventualities related to the transfer of the AET and TVET function going forward.

Budget and funding

For the 2015 Medium Term Expenditure Framework, the budget of the DHET projects increases over three years at an annual average rate of 5,9%, from R39 billion in 2014/15 to R46,3 billion in 2017/18. The amount of R41,8 billion for 2015/16 is an increase of R2,8 billion (or 7,3%) on the 2014/15 allocation, excluding direct charges.

A Ministerial Committee was developed in 2015 to develop a Strategic Disability Policy Framework that will strengthen the implementation and monitoring of disability policies across the PSET system. The DHET has allocated R1 981 200 million towards improving the infrastructure, student housing and maintenance, among other things, at 24 state-owned universities.

The allocations include R700 million for backlog maintenance, refurbishment/remodelling and capacity upgrades and R763 410 million for priority/committed projects which require urgent funding in the 2015/16 financial year.

An amount of R517 790 million had been allocated for student housing.

Programmes and projects

Thusanani Foundation

Thusanani Foundation is a non-profit organisation aimed at bridging the ever widening educational and technological information gap between rural youth and their urban counterparts in order to create an equal opportunity for all to access and succeed in institutions of higher learning (both universities and TVET colleges). Thusanani Foundation does this through an integrated and holistic approach tailor-made to address the socio-economic, educational, infrastructural and technological needs of rural

and township high schools.

Since 2011 Thusanani Foundation has evolved from a two men initiative into a registered organisation with over 1 000 volunteers in six institutions of higher learning across South Africa, reaching out to over 35 000 high school learners in rural KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Eastern Cape, Free State and some Gauteng Townships.

The foundation has managed to enroll over 450 students into various institutions of higher learning. In partnership with universities, TVET colleges, non-governmental organisations, government and the private sector, the foundation aims to reach out and empower over 100 000 rural and township youth by 2017.

Due to lack of access to accurate information, technology, and educational resources, many talented young South Africans living in rural and township areas either do not consider, or are unable to access institutions of higher education and many other post-schooling opportunities. There is a very big educational information gap that exists between rural high school learners and their urban counterparts.

This lack of information and motivation creates a spirit of hopelessness and discouragement among rural youth, which in turn impacts negatively on their academic performance and results.

In order to achieve its core objective, Thusanani Foundation offers the following services to rural and township Youth:

- Career guidance and motivational mentorship programmes
- Promotion and improvement of performance in Mathematics, Science, Engineering and Technology
- Winter and spring school revision programmes
- Facilitation of admission into institutions of higher learning and TVET colleges
- Higher education funding opportunities awareness
- Promotion of vocational and artisan skills
- Continuous on-campus social and academic support programmes
- Industry-based mentorship and professional development
- Entrepreneurship and leadership development

Role players

South African Qualifications Authority

SAQA, which is 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 resources 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 of 2008, the executive functions for setting standards and quality assurance will move to the three quality councils.

SAQA must advise the Minister of Higher Education and Training on NQF matters in terms of the NQF Act, 2008 (Act 67 of 2008). SAQA must also perform its functions subject to the Act and oversee the implementation of the NQF and the achievement of its objectives.

Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO)

The QCTO is a quality council established in 2010 in terms of the Skills Development Act, 2008 (Act 37 of 2008). Its role is to oversee the design, implementation, assessment and certification of occupational qualifications on the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework.

The QCTO is one of three quality councils responsible for a part of the NQF. Collectively, the councils and SAQA all work for the good of both the learners and employers. Another important role of the QCTO is to offer guidance to service providers who must be accredited by the QCTO to offer occupational qualifications.

Following the format of the organising framework for occupations, occupational qualifications are categorised into the eight major employment groups.

- Managers;
- Professionals;
- Technicians and associate professionals;
- Clerical support workers;
- Service and sales workers;
- Skilled agriculture, forestry, fisheries, craft and related trades
- Plant and machine operators and assemblers; and
- Elementary occupations.

Its vision is to qualify a skilled and capable

workforce; its mission is to effectively and efficiently manage the occupational qualifications sub-framework in order to set standards, develop and quality assure national occupational qualifications for all who want a trade or occupation and, where appropriate, professions.

Universities South Africa (USAf)

USAf is the voice of South Africa's university leadership as it represents the vice-chancellors of public universities. The body was also refocused and rebranded in keeping with international conventions for similar organisations. To that end, this association will strengthen and enhance the work started by HESA, established in 2005, with the merger of the South African Universities Vice-Chancellors Association and the Committee of Technikon Principals.

Its mandate is to influence and contribute to policy positions regarding higher education, advocate and campaign for an adequately funded university sector, facilitate effective dialogue among universities, government, business, parliament and other stakeholders on issues affecting universities and coordinate sector-wide engagement on major issues (e.g. transformation, differentiation, internationalisation, etc.

USAf commissions and disseminate research on key issues with implications for universities; provides value-adding services to member institutions; speaks on behalf of universities on major issues with implications for their well-being, strengthens the creation of a Higher Education Governance System based on the principles of cooperative governance, institutional autonomy and academic freedom.

USAf seeks to ensure that:

- Quality teaching takes place in all institutions;
- Adequate resources are allocated to universities;
- Deserving students gain access to universities regardless of their social, cultural and economic background;
- Universities contribute significantly to the socio-economic and cultural development of South Africa;
- Higher Education policy is evidence-based, informed by research of the highest quality;
- University sector is sufficiently internationalised to benefit from a mobile global student and academic talent pool; and
- South Africa understands the value of universities in the economy.

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. It is managed by the Ministry of Higher Education and Training.

The multi-sectoral advisory HRDCSA was established in March 2010. Membership is based on a five-year tenure and it is represented by a number of government Ministers and senior business leaders, organised labour and representatives from academia and civil society who serve on the council.

One of the council's key responsibilities is to build the human resource development base required to ensure a prosperous and inclusive South African society and economy, focusing on the development of strategy and the creation of a platform where social partners can engage to find ways to address bottlenecks in the development of human resources and skills in South Africa.

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 emulates council's structure, but is supported by a team of experts consisting of technical task teams that are appointed on an issues basis to provide expert input in respect of all matters pertaining to human resources.

Nine technical task teams have been established and form the pillars of the HRDCSA plans, to drive forward the work of the five-point plan.

The HRDCSA Secretariat provides strategic, technical, administrative and logistic support, and assumes responsibility for, among other aspects, management of the multi-sectoral response to human resource development matters and of the allocated funds designated to fulfil HRDCSA's functions in terms of the multi-sectoral HRD implementation plan.

The Provincial Coordination Forum was established with the mandate of creating a link between the HRDCSA and activities at provincial level. It encourages provinces to form their own councils in the Premiers' offices in view of the fact that all provinces have their own unique human resource issues.

Sector education and training authorities

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 encourage skills development in specific economic sectors such as agriculture, banking and finance, arts and culture, construction, the chemical industry, education and training, energy and water, the food and beverage industry, health and welfare, local government, manufacturing and engineering, media and advertising, mining, safety and security, wholesale and retail, public services, and others. Currently, there are 21 Setas that focus on promoting skills development in their sectors.

They focus on providing skills development and training to people employed or seeking employment in their sectors. They are tasked with developing skills development plans in response to the skills needs in their sectors.

They then ensure that training in their sectors is of appropriate quality and at the skills levels needed. If you know the sector in which the work you are interested in falls, you could visit the website of the Seta or contact its office to find out more about training options in the sector.

The Setas provide information on quality education and training offered by employers within their sectors.

Work Integrated Learning Partnerships and Innovation

Linking the education and training institutions and the labour market is a priority. This is because workplace training is generally more effective if on-the-job training is combined with theoretical study and also because practical experience gained during training or immediately afterwards increases a student's chances of finding employment.

Government departments and agencies at national, provincial and local level as well as state-Owned Companies started to increase their intake of young people for apprenticeships, learnerships and internships.

National Skills Authority (NSA)

The role of the NSA is to:

- strengthen the capacity of the NSA and the Secretariat;
- provide advice on the National Skills Development policies to the Minister and make inputs /participate in other DHET related

- policy development processes;
- review skills development legislative framework to support integration of education and training and the national priorities of government;
- develop capacity of skills development stakeholders and system;
- commission and initiate research, development and innovation to promote beneficiation and business enterprise development opportunities;
- monitor and evaluate the work of the Setas and the implementation of the NSDS III;
- promote skills development and profile the work of the NSA through communication and marketing;
- support post-school education and training to realize national priorities.

National Skills Fund

National Student Financial Aid Scheme

NSFAS is the department's primary tool for ensuring students who do not afford to pay for their own fees have access to post-school education. Since 1991, NSFAS has assisted more than 1,4 million students, and many NSFAS alumni play important roles in the country's economy and society.

Government has made money available to clear the historic debt of students who qualify for NSFAS.

The historic debt of all students who qualify for NSFAS has been resolved. The funding will be made available to qualifying students, who were studying between 2013 and 2015, in the form of a loan.

These students would either have been unfunded or underfunded, although they qualified for NSFAS funding.

The NSFAS budget will increase from R9,5 billion in 2015 to R10 billion in 2016/17.

Of this amount, over R700 million has been allocated for full bursaries in scarce and critical skills for the current year. This funding is made available through the financial aid offices at universities.

In total, the budget to be administered by NSFAS in 2016 was R14,582 billion. Following the no-fees protests in mid-2016, government recommended that universities should determine fee adjustments for the 2017 academic year and that they should not be above 8%.

Libraries in the higher education sector

South Africa prides itself in having 23 higher education libraries (academic libraries), delivering services to approximately 625 000

students and 60 000 academic staff. Two more universities are in the advanced stages of being established. The location of these higher education institutions and the population they serve is spread over the nine.

Higher education institutions, though largely autonomous, fall under the auspices of the National Ministry of Higher Education.

The DHET subsidises 23 universities and 50 TVET institutions. The main mandate of higher education libraries is to facilitate access to information that meets the teaching, learning and research information needs of institutions' communities.

In their endeavour to live up to this mandate, several considerations are made to ensure that the bigger picture is encapsulated in shaping relevant Library and Information Services (LIS).

These include the NDP, individual higher education institutions' niche areas, and national and international LIS trends.

Academic and research libraries are increasingly playing a pivotal role in the support of teaching, learning and research. Technology, library space and design, dynamic user services and staff development have emerged as strong drivers for change in academic libraries. The national research imperatives and the demand for more quality graduates have also influenced how academic and research libraries respond and align themselves to these institutional strategic imperatives.

Academic libraries in South Africa have emerged as intensely technologically enabled and driven environments. An assessment of the sector indicates that the predominant focus is aimed at strategic alignment of services and the broader information services environment.

Digital literacy has been introduced to support students with media literacy, information and communication technologies literacy, digital scholarship and communications and collaboration in an academic context.

This will enable students to participate in digital networks for learning and research; use of digital devices; study and learn in e-environments; and participate in emerging academic and research practices in a digital environment.

Web tools such as Twitter, Facebook and other social media tools and applications greatly impact on the academic library environment.

These are considered as value-added services, or potentially value-adding applications for raising the visibility of institutional research output and communication with students as well as marketing.

South African academic and research libraries

have recognised the importance of the global Open Access (OA) Movement for the dissemination of knowledge and cultural heritage, and increasing the visibility of its research output with the rest of the African continent and the world.

Many academic libraries have taken the lead in facilitating OA initiatives including its mandates, institutional repositories, observing OA Week and facilitating their institutions becoming signatories to the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities.