



**EDUCATION**

*Education*

South Africa's Bill of Rights stipulates that every citizen has the right to basic education, including adult basic education and further education. Consequently, government places education and skills development at the centre of its policies and has elevated education as one of its top priorities.

In 2012/13, education constituted more than 21% of government's allocated expenditure. The responsibility for education is shared by two ministries, namely the Department of Basic Education and the Department of Higher Education and Training, formed when the former National Department of Education was split into two separate departments.

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

## **Basic Education**

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

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

One way of achieving this is through the annual national assessment (ANA) tests that is standardised and internationally benchmarked. In September 2012, seven million learners in grades 1 to 6 and Grade 9 successfully completed ANA tests. The results of the 2012 ANAs showed that numeracy and literacy performance of South African learners in the lower grades had improved. In Grade 3, the national average performance in literacy stands at 53%, compared to the 35% in 2011.

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

## **Action Plan 2014: Towards the realisation of Schooling 2025**

The Department of Basic Education finalised a comprehensive turnaround plan for improving the quality of learning and teaching in schools called Action Plan 2014: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2025. The Action Plan sets out 13 goals to be achieved, related to learning and enrolment. In addition, it sets out 14 areas in education that need to be improved to reach these goals.

Action Plan 2014 is a long-term plan for the basic education sector which will allow for the monitoring of progress against a set of measurable indicators. These will cover all aspects of basic education including enrolments and retention of learners, teachers, infrastructure, school funding, learner well-being and school safety, mass literacy and educational quality.

## **Curriculum and Policy Statement (Caps)**

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

## **Role players**

### **Provincial departments of education**

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-

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personnel expenditure going to the poorest 40% of learners in public schools. The poorest 20% of learners receive 35% of non-personnel resources, while the richest 20% receive 5%

### **Council of Education Ministers**

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

### **Heads of Education Departments Committee (Hedcom)**

Hedcom consists of the Director-General of the Department of Basic Education, the deputy directors-general of the department and the heads of provincial departments of education.

### **Umalusi**

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

### **National Education Evaluation and Development Unit**

The unit was launched in March 2011 to ensure effective evaluation of all teachers based on the extent to which learner performance improves.

### **Education Labour Relations Council**

The main purpose of the council is to maintain labour peace within public education through processes of dispute prevention and resolution. These include constructive collective bargaining between the educator unions and the Department of Basic Education as the employer.

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

## Programmes and projects

### Learning and teaching support material

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

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

Regarding textbooks, a national catalogue for grades 1 to 3 and Grade 10 has been developed and distributed to provinces for procurement of core materials for schools. A national catalogue for grades 4 to 6 and 11 was finalised in June and July 2012. The development of a national catalogue for grades 7 to 9 and 12 was expected to be finalised during 2012/13. The Department of Basic Education distributed 4 424 500 Physical Science and Mathematics supplementary textbooks to all grades 10 to 12 learners in partnership with the Shuttleworth Foundation.

At the beginning of the 2012 academic year, through the

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

Department of Basic Education, government provided the following workbooks to schools:

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

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

### **Educational portal**

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

Thutong – meaning “a place of learning” in Setswana – features a searchable database of web-based curriculum resources for various education sectors, grades and subjects. The portal is a free service to registered users, who must go through a once-off, no-cost registration process.

### **Improving access to free and quality basic education**

By May 2012, more than 69,3% of learners were in more than 20 000 no-fee schools. The threshold target allocation for no-fee schools for operational expenditure has increased to R880 per learner. The national per learner target amount for Quintile 1 schools is R960. Expenditure for school allocation on no-fee schools at the national target level was projected to be in excess of R7,7 billion.

### **Education infrastructure**

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



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

of the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Committee.

The budget allocation for the Education Infrastructure Grant for 2012/13 was R5 822 398 billion. By May 2012, 50 inappropriate schools were under reconstruction for completion to be ready for occupation in 2013.

In May 2012, the Teacher Laptop Initiative was back on track with more teachers having access to computers.

The departments of basic education and communications developed a connectivity plan providing a comprehensive framework for achieving cost-effective and efficient information and communications technology (ICT) connectivity for all schools. The Telkom Masters Services Agreement was signed in March 2012 for Phase One Implementation of the Connectivity Plan for schools. The first phase will provide connectivity to 1 650 schools.

## Learner health

To reduce health and social barriers to learning, the department is working with the Department of Health to expand and strengthen school health services. The Integrated School Health Programme, which will ensure that learners have access to primary health care services, was launched in October 2012, under the theme *Taking responsibility for our learners' health and wellbeing*. The programme will offer among other services immunisation and deworming; counselling; and eyesight, hearing and oral hygiene assessments.

## Higher education and training

The Department of Higher Education and Training was formed to bring together all post-school education and training institutions, all higher education institutions, colleges and

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adult education institutions, formerly with the Department of Education; and the skills levy institutions, formerly under the Department of Labour.

Entry into institutions of higher learning is through a Grade 12 pass or a Grade 12 pass with exemption

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

- University of the Witwatersrand
- University of Cape Town
- Rhodes University
- University of Stellenbosch
- University of the Western Cape
- University of Zululand
- University of Venda
- University of the Free State
- North West University
- University of Pretoria
- University of KwaZulu-Natal
- University of South Africa (Unisa)
- Tshwane University of Technology
- Durban Institute of Technology
- Central University of Technology, Free State
- Mangosuthu University of Technology
- University of Johannesburg
- University of Limpopo
- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
- Walter Sisulu University
- University of Fort Hare
- Cape Peninsula University of Technology
- National Institute for Higher Education, Northern Cape

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

- National Institute for Higher Education, Mpumalanga
- Vaal University of Technology.

## National Skills Development Strategy

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

As part of an initiative to reduce the vacancy rate of about 45 000 jobs in the maritime industry, 12 Further Education and Training (FET) colleges across the country started offering courses in 2013 aimed at equipping young people for careers in the industry. FET colleges are expected to meet at least 80% of the industry's skills demands, producing artisans such as riggers, welders and boiler makers.

## Further Education and Training

In March 2012, Parliament passed legislation reverting functions of the FET colleges to the Department of Higher Education and Training. In 2012/13, R1,24 billion was allocated to the FET colleges' bursary scheme and 122 911 students were being supported by bursaries and loans.

## Role players

### South African Qualifications Authority (Saqqa)

Saqqa is a statutory body originally set up in terms of the Saqqa Act, 1995. The organisation, which is well-recognised nationally and internationally, focuses on upholding the principles of the National Qualifications Framework, including ensuring access, quality, redress and development for all learners through an integrated national framework of learning achievements.

### Quality Council for Trades and Occupations

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

### **Higher Education South Africa (Hesa)**

Hesa is the voice of South Africa's university leadership as it represents vice-chancellors of public universities.

### **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.

In September 2012, the eighth HRDCSA meeting, chaired by Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe, focused on the introduction of the integrated National Human Resource Development Plan, which is supported by the Human Resource Development Strategy 2010 – 2030.

### **Sector education and training authorities (Setas)**

Setas were re-established by the Ministry of Labour in March 2005 to help implement the National Skills Development Strategy 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

### **National Skills Authority (NSA)**

The NSA is an advisory body to give guidance to the Minister of Higher Education and Training on among other things:

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

### **National Skills Fund (NSF)**

The NSF is funded by 20% of the skills-development levies collected by the South African Revenue Service (Sars) (of which 2% is paid to Sars as collection fees and 2% is allo-

cated for administrative costs).

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

## **Library and information services (LIS)**

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

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

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

## **Libraries in the higher education sector**

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

Pressure on higher education libraries includes redistribution of educational resources and rising prices. These libraries have responded by forming consortia, looking at access and exploring digital resources.

