



South Africa Yearbook 2018/19

# Education

## Education

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa declares basic education as an inalienable basic human right for all South Africans. In 2015, UNESCO adopted the global education agenda, Education 2030, which is part of the 17 United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that make up the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development. SDG 4 calls for an "inclusive, quality and equitable education and lifelong opportunities for all". The National Development Plan (NDP): Vision 2030 states that "by 2030, South Africans should have access to education and training of the highest quality, leading to significantly improved learning outcomes. The education system will play a greater role in building an inclusive society, providing equal opportunities and helping all South Africans to realise their full potential".

Education is governed by two national departments, namely the department of Basic Education (DBE), which is responsible for primary and secondary schools, and the department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), which is responsible for tertiary education and vocational training.

Accessibility to education has improved significantly over the years ensuring that South Africans are exposed to education in all levels to ensure that socio-economic challenges in the country are addressed.

The Inclusive Education system plays a major role in ensuring that there is access to quality basic education for learners with special needs. This inclusive education system contributes immensely towards the achievement of an inclusive economy and inclusive society.

The Early Childhood Development programme has ensured that early child development is expanded to all socio-economic levels of society. This programme ensures that school readiness is a priority among South Africans and equal basic education is achieved by the Government.

Evaluation and research has been a serious deficiency in the country and the education sector, but over the years with the introduction of Monitoring, Research and Evaluation in the sector, performance has also improved. There is substantial research conducted within the sector which assists in identifying gaps and also creates a platform to monitor the sector through evidence-based evaluations.

## Basic education

The DBE's Schooling 2025 action plan and vision is in line with the proposals for basic education set out in the NDP and outcome 1 (quality basic education) of government's 2014-2019 medium-term strategic framework. Over the medium term, the department will continue to focus on accelerating delivery and improving school infrastructure; enhancing teaching and learning by ensuring access to high quality learner and teacher support materials; improving Grade 12 completion rates; providing educational opportunities to learners with severe to profound intellectual disabilities; increasing the supply of quality teachers; monitoring performance; and providing nutritious meals to learners in schools through the national school nutrition programme.

## Legislation and policies

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

- The fundamental policy framework of the DBE is stated in the *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. The 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.
- The 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 National Curriculum Statement (NCS) grades R – 12 replaced the policy document, A Résumé of Industrial Programmes in Schools, Report 550 (89/03).
- The *Education White Paper on Early Childhood Development (ECD) (2000)* provided 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 Principalship 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.

### Enhancing teaching and learning

Ensuring access to high quality learning and teaching support materials, and ensuring they are used effectively, is critical to improving curriculum delivery. Over the medium term, the department will continue to focus on providing well designed print and digital content to teachers and learners; expanding access to and improving the use of ICT at schools; and providing teachers with essential tools and support.

The department expects to print 183 million workbooks over the MTEF period for grades R to 9 in life skills, languages and mathematics, which will be distributed to more than 23 000 public schools each year. This will be funded through the Curriculum and Quality Enhancement Programmes subprogramme in the Curriculum Policy, Support and Monitoring programme, at a projected cost of R3.5 billion over the medium term.

### Increasing the supply of quality teachers

The department aims to improve the supply of newly qualified teachers by providing 39 000 Funza Lushaka bursaries to prospective teachers in priority subject areas such as mathematics, science and technology.

R3.7 billion has been allocated for Funza Lushaka bursaries over the medium term. The decrease in the number of bursaries awarded in 2018/19 is due to the increase in university fees of up to 8% for the

2018 academic year, which is not in line with funding for the bursary increasing by 5.8% in 2018/19. If this trend continues, the number of students supported through the bursary is expected to decrease from 15 134 in 2017/18 to 12 500 in 2020/21. Funding for these bursaries is provided through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme, which is funded through the Education Human Resources Development subprogramme in the Teachers, Education Human Resources and Institutional Development programme.

### Monitoring performance

The department aims to ensure that the education sector assesses the quality of teaching and learning, and provides remedial action in identified areas to improve learning outcomes in numeracy and literacy. The annual national assessments, and the department's diagnostic of teaching and learning in the foundation and intermediate phases of schooling, have been discontinued and will be replaced by the national integrated assessment framework in 2018. The framework aims to address the shortcomings of previous assessments with three complementary tiers of assessment (systemic evaluation, diagnostic assessment and summative assessment). Over the medium term, the department will focus on systemic evaluation, which will be conducted with a sample of learners in grades 3, 6 and 9 for a three-year cycle, and will monitor learner performance and report on the quality of learning outcomes. The allocation to fund these activities is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 39.6%, from R81.2 million in 2017/18 to R220.7 million in 2020/21, in the Planning, Information and Assessment programme.

In 2019/20, the department plans to conduct the school monitoring survey, a national survey in public schools that monitors progress towards the achievement of key goals and indicators in Action Plan 2019. This plan details the direction the basic education sector will take to achieve the goals set

out in the NDP and outcome 1 (quality basic education) of government's 2014 – 2019 medium-term strategic framework. The survey, for which R23 million is allocated in 2019/20 in the Curriculum Policy, Support and Monitoring programme, will provide the sector with updated information on the indicators and delivery agreement of the plan.

## 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 DBE 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 PEDs 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 – comprising the ministers of Basic Education, Higher Education and Training as well as 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 comprises the Director-General (DG) of the DBE, the deputy DGs of the national 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 Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training

It sets and maintains standards in general and further education and training through the development and management of the general and further education and training qualifications sub-framework.

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

- Schools: NSC
- TVET colleges: the National Technical Certificate (Level N3) and the National Certificate Vocational
- 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, as well as assessment;
  - conducts research to ensure educational quality; and
  - verifies the authenticity of certificates.

The council's total budget for 2018/19 is R180.4 million.

### 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.

NEEDU completed its first five-year cycle of systemic evaluations by identifying, on a system-wide basis at school, district and provincial levels, the factors that inhibit or advance school improvement. The findings were in the following areas:

- Reading: Teachers in the 134 rural schools visited did not have a good method to teach foundational level learners how to read. Actions taken include a Reading Advisory Committee to advise on reading matters, prioritising reading support in the provinces, and piloting the Early Grade Reading Assessment.

- Curriculum delivery: Gaps such as the development and implementation of Provincial Literacy and Numeracy were observed in curriculum delivery. Actions taken included asking for learners' books to monitor quality of writing and held school management teams and principals accountable for curriculum delivery.
  - Use of learning and teaching support materials: Most learners in primary schools did not have sufficient learning and teaching support materials as well as textbooks for Mathematics and languages due to an ineffective retrieval system from previous learners. Actions taken included developing policies that ensured that textbooks were retrieved from schools that did not have a good retrieval system.
  - Time management: Many schools experienced time management issues such as tardiness and absenteeism by learners and teachers; and teachers did not follow the time allocated to subjects on the timetable. Actions taken included monitoring of time management in schools by district and provincial officials. The DBE and the Minister engaged district and provincial officials in a discourse on time management.
  - Assessment: Teachers in most schools were not able to construct/set assessment items of good quality. Learners perform "well" in school-based assessments but poorly in common and international assessments. Teachers assess what they have taught, not what they ought to have taught. Few schools had school improvement plans that were informed by assessments. Actions taken by the DBE included aligning PED school improvement plans with DBE plans. Subject committees and school-based assessment workshops were conducted in provinces to train advisors in setting up quality tasks.
  - Special schools: The preliminary findings indicated that special schools did not have a systemic way of admitting learners and different curricula were used in each special school. Findings at the school level were presented to districts and PEDs to take necessary actions.
- During the second five-year cycle (2017 – 2021), the focus will shift to development to ensure the system-wide impact of the NEEDU's findings.

### 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 (CPTD)

System, which recognises professional development undertaken by educators on their own initiative.

### Educator unions

Educators are organised into six educator unions:

- National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa
- National Teachers' Union
- South African Teachers' Union
- Professional Educators' Union
- Cape Professional Teachers' Association
- South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU).

A labour-relations framework was agreed on by the then 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

### Incremental Introduction of African Languages Incremental Introduction of African Languages (IIAL)

The African language pilot is a DBE initiative that was introduced in 10 schools per district in 2014, 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 NCS 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 SGBS, 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.

IIAL was piloted in grades 1 and 2 in 264 public schools across all provinces in 2014 and 2015. The long-term target is to reach 3 558 public schools across all grades by 2029.

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.

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.

The programme aims to:

- strengthen the use of African languages at a home language level
- improve proficiency in and use of the previously marginalised African languages
- increase access to languages by all learners, beyond English and Afrikaans
- promote social cohesion
- expand opportunities for the development of African languages to help preserve heritage and cultures
- ensure that all learners offer at least one previously marginalised official African language as part of their curriculum requirement.

In April 2018, the DBE hosted a National Reading Workshop in Pretoria to develop a National Framework that will strengthen the teaching of reading in African Languages.

### Satellite broadcasting programme

The satellite broadcasting service broadcasts Mathematics for grades 8 and 9 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-Schools programme

The Eco-Schools programme is an international programme of the Foundation for Environmental Education that was developed to support environmental learning in the classroom.

The programme is active in 64 countries around the world. Locally, it was implemented by the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa in 2003.

The programme is aimed at creating awareness and action around environmental sustainability in schools and their surrounding communities as well as supporting 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 in the programme, reaching 400 000 learners and 16 000 teachers.

The programme accredits schools that make a commitment to continuously improve their school's environmental performance. The Eco-Schools programme is operational in both supported and unsupported schools.

### Student Sponsorship Programme (SSP)

The SSP assists academically distinguished learners 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 learners from low-income families a great education to improve their chances of a bright and prosperous future.

The learners have to be academically distinguished to be considered. Once selected, they are placed in the top high schools in Gauteng, the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape.

More than 850 scholars have directly benefitted from this programme since its inception in 2000, with over 550 alumni. The SSP partners with top high schools that obtain high matric pass rates and university passes in the four provinces.

The programme commits to funding the learners for five years of high school by matching each child with either an individual or a corporate sponsor. Many of the learners 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 learners 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 learners cope and adjust in their new schooling environment and guide them throughout high school.

They run leadership development programmes that offer learners 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.

Learners who wish to apply for the programme must be in Grade 6 and not more than 12 years old. The learners must have attained 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](http://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

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

Government aims to provide the subsidy to all children accessing ECD services in registered centres. Over the MTEF period, R1.1 billion is allocated to ensure an estimated 113 889 more children receive the subsidy.

Many ECD facilities find it difficult to meet the minimum infrastructure requirements to become fully registered in terms of the Children's Act of 2005.

Over the MTEF period, R230,6 million has been allocated for minor upgrades to facilities that are conditionally registered to allow them to comply with norms and standards, and improve the quality of their services. Approximately 1 993 facilities will be targeted for minor upgrades by 2019/20.

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

This is done through 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 DBE will continue to work with sister departments to formalise Grade R and will ensure that the provisioning of appropriately qualified and experienced ECD practitioners, as well as age-appropriate learning and teaching support materials, are prioritised.

Over the past few years, there has been an increase in the number of learners in Grade 1 who have attended Grade R. The medium-term goals for the sector will be to ensure that there are sufficient readers and other learning materials for Grade R, and that the qualifications of ECD practitioners are upgraded.

The Department of Social Development leads government departments regarding services to children under the age of four years. In terms of the Children's Act of 2005, it is the Department of Social Development'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.

According to the General Household Survey, 2018, more than six-tenths of the parents or care givers of the children aged 0 – 4 in KwaZulu-Natal (70.1%), North West (66.9%), Northern Cape (62.1%) and Eastern Cape (58.2%) kept the children at home with parents or other adult guardians. Nationally, 49.2% of children remained home with their parents or guardians, 38.4% attended formal ECD facilities, and 5.9% were looked after by other adults. Attendance of ECD facilities was most common in Gauteng (49.8%), Free State (48.3%), and Western Cape (43.7%).

Nearly half (46.8%) of children aged 0 – 4 years never read a book or drew (43.1%) with a parent or guardian. Naming different things (47.3%) was relatively common, while counting (40.0%) or talking about different things (38.8%) with the guardian or parent were much less common.

### Early Grade Reading Programme

The programme aims to improve learner's reading proficiency levels in the foundation phase. Interventions in the foundation phase have the most significant impact on learning outcomes in the long term.

The department will provide an early grade reading assessment tool to assist teachers in measuring, at different intervals, the reading progress made by learners in grades 1 to 3. It will also provide toolkits (teacher guides and learner assessment charts) and teacher training and support material, and monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the tool in a sample of schools nationally.

The early grade reading assessment is expected to be expanded incrementally over the medium term, from 1 000 schools in 2016/17 to 5 000 schools in 2018/19 and 8 000 schools in 2019/20, in all official languages. R39 million has been allocated over the MTEF period for the implementation of the early grade reading assessment tool in the Curriculum

Implementation and Monitoring subprogramme in the Curriculum Policy, Support and Monitoring programme.

### Education of learners with special needs

The DBE'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, the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) was passed 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.

The DBE implemented the first NSC examination on South African Sign Language at the end of 2018. The expected outcome of the programme is the standardisation of the quality of curriculum delivery for learners with severe intellectual disability.

In addition, the Minister has established an advisory committee made up of stakeholders in visual impairment communities who are advising the DBE on the acceleration of the production of braille material given the limited capacity in the country; 223 textbooks have been adapted to braille and provinces source the textbooks directly from producers.

The need to improve the provision of quality education and support to learners with profound disabilities who are not in schools, and ensure that these learners are incrementally included in schools, resulted in the introduction of the learners with profound intellectual disabilities grant in 2017/18. This grant is aimed at providing access to quality publicly-funded education and support to 8 000 learners with profound intellectual disabilities. The grant was allocated R190,5 million and R209 million for the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years respectively.

Over the medium term, the department will focus on providing access to quality, publicly funded education and support to learners of school-going age with severe to profound intellectual disabilities who are not enrolled in school and whose education is not publicly funded through the grant.

Over the MTEF period, the sector will make use of this grant to appoint an estimated 155 outreach teams and provincial coordinators, procure the necessary tools of trade for these appointees, develop a database and data management system, and audit 285 care centres. The provincial coordinators and outreach teams will strengthen the capacity of district-based support teams.

The learners with profound intellectual disabilities grant will fund the training of education officials, provincial coordinators, outreach team members and caregivers in an estimated 320 care centres, and teachers in 79 selected schools that have enrolled learners with severe to profound intellectual disabilities. The grant has an allocation of R649.1 million over the MTEF period in the Curriculum Policy, Support and Monitoring programme.

### Educator development

Absa and the DBE has partnered to improve the financial management skills of thousands of education officials and members of SGBs at public schools across the country. The School Governing Body Financial Management Programme functions to strengthen financial management and improve accountability of schools.

The School Governing Body Financial Management Programme aims to:

- be at the level where everyone, even an SGB member from the most rural of areas, could easily understand it
- support and highlight the current financial processes within schools – it was therefore not meant to change any policies or processes within schools
- highlight the importance of proper governance procedures and financial management in running a school to perform well.

The initiative has already been implemented in four provinces: Limpopo, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape.

### School infrastructure

In November 2013, Government published the Regulations Relating to Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure. This was the first time that Government had set itself targets of this nature in terms of school infrastructure.

These targets included the provision of water, sanitation and electricity to all schools as well as the eradication of inappropriate structures, such as mud schools, asbestos schools and the “plankie” schools (schools that are old and do not have even the most basic of infrastructure such as running water, sanitation and electricity).

In acknowledging the backlogs and in a bid to fast-track the provision of school infrastructure, a multitude of programmes specifically targeted at the provision of infrastructure have been undertaken by Government.

The sector provides infrastructure through two programmes – the provincial infrastructure programmes and the Accelerated School Infrastructure Delivery Initiative (ASIDI).

The Provincial Schools Build Programme is implemented by

provinces and it targets the provision of basic services, new schools, additions to existing schools, new and upgrading of services and maintenance. It is funded through the Education Infrastructure Grant and the provincial contribution through the equitable share.

Each PED is required to submit its infrastructure plan to the DBE on a set of scheduled dates. The PED identifies its targets in terms of the three-year MTEF and progress is monitored and reported on a quarterly basis.

ASIDI addresses schools infrastructure backlogs on all schools that do not meet the basic safety norms and standards. It is funded through the Schools Infrastructure backlogs grant.

The aim of the programme is to eradicate schools made entirely of inappropriate structures and to provide basic level of water, sanitation and electricity to schools that does not have these services.

The targets, as set out in the Regulations Relating to Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure, was to attain universal access to basic services provision.

Significant progress has been made in provision of the services in the sector. According to the norms and standards for the three-year target, all schools which did not have some form of sanitation facilities were prioritised.

By mid-2019, ASIDI had replaced inappropriate structures in 222 schools, provided water to 936, sanitation to 795 and electricity to 372 sites around the country with the majority being in the Eastern Cape.

The provision of water and electricity requires an infrastructure network that lies outside the provision of what the DBE can supply. In this regard, the department relies heavily and works closely with Eskom and the various municipalities.

Government employs a full team of experts who work to design and deliver these schools – which include science labs, computer labs, nutrition centres, rainwater harvesting tanks, decent sanitation, administration blocks with staff room and offices for educators as well as dedicated Grade R centres for the best foundation basis.

Over the medium term, R7.3 billion from the unallocated portion of the education infrastructure grant is reallocated to the school infrastructure backlogs grant to

complete remaining infrastructure projects to eliminate backlogs and replace unsafe school structures. This allocation is, however, reduced by R3.6 billion over the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period as part of Cabinet approved budget reductions.

The school infrastructure backlogs grant is thus allocated R3.8 billion over the MTEF period. The original project list for this grant was revised in 2016/17 due to learners moving between schools, and because 61 small schools were not closed or merged with other schools because of their remote locations.

The department plans to reconstruct these small schools at a cost of R485 million in 2017/18 and 2018/19 using modular structures, which are quicker to build and easy to dismantle and re-assemble elsewhere in the event of changes in enrolment.

To replace 50 inappropriate and unsafe schools with newly built schools, and provide water to 325 schools and sanitation to 286 schools, R1.5 billion is allocated in 2018/19.

The education infrastructure grant, which provides co-funding for the ongoing infrastructure programme in provinces, including the maintenance of existing infrastructure and the building of new infrastructure, is reduced by R10.9 billion (R7.3 billion shifted to the school infrastructure backlogs grant and R3.6 billion as part of Cabinet approved reductions) to R31.7 billion over the medium term. The department expects that these reductions will lead to delays in completing outstanding projects.

### ICT infrastructure at schools

ICT has been significant in simplifying learning. In particular, ICT in education forms part of Government's Operation Phakisa, which is designed to fast-track the implementation of solutions on critical service-delivery issues highlighted in the NDP.

Operation Phakisa ICT in Education aims to fast-track the development and distribution of education-related digital content, with a specific focus on 15 gateway subjects, including Mathematics, Science, and Accounting.

The monitoring of the programme is guided by the provinces; they are expected to finalise their provincial frameworks and provide monthly reports to the DBE by the 28th of every month.

Devices and connectivity progress is monitored against the Universal Services Access Obligation project, which compels

the country's main four network operators (Vodacom, MTN, Cell C and Neotel) to connect schools and provide them with end-user devices.

The connectivity solution includes, for each school, a mobile trolley with devices: 24 tablets for learners, three laptops for teachers, two printers, one projector, one server, a wireless access point and one e-Beam.

South African learners continue to perform poorly in international assessments, particularly in mathematics, science and technology. In response to this, over the medium term, the department aims to increase learner participation and success rates in these subjects by providing ICT equipment, laboratories and related apparatus, workshops and equipment, teacher development, and learner and teacher support materials to 1 000 schools.

These objectives will be funded through an allocation of R1.2 billion over the medium term to the maths, science and technology grant in the Curriculum and Quality Enhancement Programmes subprogramme in the Curriculum Policy, Support and Monitoring programme. This allocation has been reduced by R50.5 million over the MTEF period as part of Cabinet approved budget reductions, which is expected to result in fewer resources being provided to the targeted schools over the period. The sector will implement interventions and efficiency measures, such as training more teachers at a time to ensure that learner participation rates and performance continue to be enhanced despite these reductions.

The department collaborates with ICT businesses such as Vodacom and Microsoft, and international organisations such as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, to provide professional development for educators. To procure and provide offline e-library solutions to 100 schools and upgrade the Thutong education portal, which offers support for teachers and learners in various subjects, the department plans to spend R51.2 million over the MTEF period.

### Feeding learners

The department's National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) will continue to contribute to the NDP's priority of eliminating poverty and supporting food security.

Over the medium term, the department plans to provide meals to 19 800 schools, feeding about nine million learners each year in quintile one to three schools.

These objectives will be funded by a projected R21.7 billion allocated over the MTEF period through the national school nutrition programme grant to provinces in the Educational Enrichment Services programme.

The NSNP in South Africa caters for primary school and secondary school pupils, providing daily hot meals to over nine million children in more than 21 000 schools in all nine provinces.

About 64 000 volunteer food handlers continue to prepare meals for children; while 8 000 small, medium and micro-sized enterprises, locally-based community cooperatives, and other service providers continue to supply the prescribed NSNP foodstuff to schools.

More than three-quarters (77.1%) of learners who attended public schools benefitted from school feeding schemes in 2018, compared to 63.1% in 2009. Learners in Limpopo (91.2%), Eastern Cape (89.7%), Mpumalanga (87.8%) and Northern Cape (82.6%) were the most likely to benefit from this programme. By comparison, only 53.6% of learners in Western Cape and 55.3% of learners in Gauteng benefitted from this type of programme.

Between 2009 and 2018, the largest increases in the percentage of children that used the school nutrition programmes were noted in Free State (28.2 percentage points), North West (18.7 percentage points), Mpumalanga (18.3 percentage points) and Limpopo (18.0 percentage points). The percentage of children that used food schemes declined slightly in Northern Cape (-3.2 percentage points).

Each meal served contains protein, starch and a fresh vegetable.

The NSNP annually embarks on advocacy and nutrition education campaigns such as National Nutrition Week, World School Milk Day and also a number of workshops.

Every day, 370 million children around the world receive food at school provided by their governments. More than half the children are assisted worldwide by the World Food Programme (WFP) with school meals live in Africa.

School meals encourage attendance and reduce drop-outs,

keeping children well-nourished, focused and healthy, ensuring they become productive adults.

The WFP is working with the Government on a study commissioned by the African Union (AU) to document the impact of school feeding in AU member states. This study will be the entry point for discussing the next steps in scaling up and improving school feeding programmes in Africa.

The NSNP is a leading safety net programme in southern Africa. Both the WFP and the Government are committed to sharing technical knowledge and best practices from this programme with the wider region.

### 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 DBE'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 wellbeing of learners and educators, and by addressing key health and social barriers to learning 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 immunisation).

The National Department of Health and the DBE continues to implement the ISHP, which contributes to the health and wellbeing of learners by screening them for health barriers to learning.

### Alcohol and Drug Use Prevention and Management Programme

The DBE runs 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, as well as 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 organisations 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. 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 (along with Swaziland, Zambia, Madagascar, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Mozambique) participating in the programme.

To realise its goal, nine priority areas were identified in Phase 1 of the programme. These were: nutritional support, health promotion, infrastructure, water and sanitation; safety and protection, social welfare services, psychosocial support, material support, curriculum support, co-curricular activities.

Over the next five years, during Phase 2, the CSTL programme will build on the experiences, successes and lessons learnt from the previous phases of CSTL. In this next phase of the journey, a number of the foundation strategies of CSTL will continue, as CSTL programmes in member states are consolidated and expanded.

However, there are certain critical challenges affecting children and youths – in particular those who are vulnerable and marginalised – and since these compromise their right to education, they will, in future programming, be given prominence and special attention.

To remain responsive and relevant, the specific challenges that demand attention as CSTL enters a new phase are twofold:

- HIV and AIDS: As the region most affected by HIV and AIDS, education sectors in all member states, like other sectors,

must respond to the enormous prevention, care and support demands that exist. This is clearly articulated in the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan, in which HIV and AIDS is a priority area and the critical need for coordination and implementation across sectors is emphasised.

- Vulnerable groups of children and youths: While the groups that are assessed as vulnerable children and youths differ from country to country, every member state has, in common, the fact that large numbers of children and youths cannot realise their right to education for one or many reasons; at times simply as a result of belonging to an identifiable group. CSTL will adopt relevant, sustainable strategies – where necessary in partnership – to address these realities and to enable all children and youths to realise their rights to education, safety and protection, and care and support.

### 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.

### Learner Safety

The Safe Scholars programme aims to create a platform for further education around road safety for young learners between the ages of six and 13 who walk long distances to and from school. The aim is to reach children at a grass root level, which is imperative in developing responsible road safety behaviour that will last a lifetime.

The programme, sanctioned by the DBE, teaches the fundamentals of safe road practices and provides learners with reflective sashes which, thanks to the DBE, has been made a mandatory part of these children's school uniform.

The Safe Scholars programme is an extension of Imperial Road Safety's Scholar Patrol Improvement Project.

The Safe Scholars programme is supported by Imperial's road safety mascot, Bongie – Buckle Up Buddy, a fun loving bush baby character that help to bring the message of road safety across in a way to which the children can relate. The mascot creates an active and fun method of learning that makes

it easier for children to connect, engage with and remember road safety principles.

The Safe Scholars team ensure an engaging and interactive experience for the children through question and answer sessions, colouring in images and using stickers to reinforce road safety. Posters are put up around the school to serve as an ongoing awareness platform.

### Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme

The department aims to increase the supply of newly qualified teachers in mathematics, science and technology in different phases by providing 38 000 Funza Lushaka bursaries to prospective teachers over the medium term.

The number of bursary awards is set to decrease from 13 500 in 2018/19 to 13 000 in 2019/20 and 12 500 thereafter as the general increase in university costs exceeds this allocation's average annual growth of 5.5% over the MTEF period. While some Funza Lushaka bursary recipients qualify for fee-free funding at universities, the department expects the demand for Funza Lushaka bursaries to remain unchanged as students prefer this bursary because they are guaranteed a work placement offer after qualifying.

For the National Student Financial Aid Scheme to administer these bursaries, R3.9 billion over the MTEF period is allocated in the Education Human Resources Development subprogramme in the Teachers, Education Human Resources and Institutional Development programme.

### Secondary School Improvement Programme (SSIP)

Under SSIP, Grade 12 learners received extra classes on Saturdays and during school holidays.

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, which is the major strategic intervention for progressed and high-risk learners, is ongoing every Saturday and everyday over the school holidays.

### Improving matric completion rates

The Second Chance programme intends to increase the number of young people obtaining a matric qualification. In 2018/19, 25 000 learners are expected to enrol in the programme, which will offer support in 11 key subjects such as mathematics and science, as well as all home languages. Face-to-face classes will be extended to 80 venues across South Africa with 2 teachers per subject, per venue. The plan over the long term is to make the programme virtual through broadcast and video lessons developed by universities and the department.

Support will also be provided at 40 broadcast centres nationally, which will transmit lessons on the OpenView satellite platform to about 1 million households. All content will also be available to candidates on DVD. Online support will be provided on the department's website and Facebook page, and offline support at 82 sites nationally, at an estimated cost of R7 million over the medium term. Learners will be able to access support at community libraries, Vodacom centres and teacher centres across South Africa. Learner and teacher support materials will be printed and distributed to sites and learners on demand at an estimated cost of R30 million over the MTEF period.

The Second Chance programme is allocated R261.1 million in the Curriculum Policy,

Support and Monitoring programme over the MTEF period. The Cabinet approved budget reduction of R117 million for the Second Chance programme over the period is expected to result in slower expansion of the programme to include all priority subject areas and districts.

The programme was introduced in January 2016 as a direct response to the NDP's injunction that retention rates should be increased and drop-out rates reduced.

The Second Chance Programme provides support to matric candidates who could not meet the pass requirements of the National Senior Certificate Examinations.

Candidates are subjected to strict conditions before they are allowed to sit for the Second Chance Programme.

### National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT)

The NECT also aims to advance the goals of the NDP of 90% of learners mastering at least 50% of the curriculum by

2030, and creating a better balance between unionism and professionalism.

The initiative will improve teachers' subject knowledge as well as inculcate effective daily teaching routines critical for quality education.

The first union to finalise a collaboration partnership with NECT is SADTU.

SADTU is to identify the relevant lead teachers and principals to drive the initiative. The NECT would then step in to conduct the first level of training of lead teachers and principals and also provide the materials (hard and soft copies to each lead teacher/principal).

During the Phase 1 of this partnership, the NECT targeted 348 primary and secondary schools in Butterworth in the Eastern Cape and 437 primary and combined schools in Sekhukhune, Limpopo. The pilot phase involved 700 teachers – 390 from Limpopo and the balance from the Eastern Cape. This included 160 primary school principals.

The importance of public-private partnerships is a prevalent theme of the NDP.

### School attendance

According to the General Household Survey, 2018, there were approximately 14.2 million learners at school in 2018. The largest percentage of these learners attended schools in KwaZulu-Natal (22.2%) and Gauteng (19.6%).

Although only 6.0% of learners attended private schools, there were large variations between provinces. While 12.0% of learners in Gauteng and 5.6% of learners in Mpumalanga attended private schools, only 3.2% of learners in Northern Cape and 3.8% of learners in North West attended such institutions.

Large variations were also observed in terms of transport used to travel to school. More than two-thirds (67.7%) of learners walked to school while 8.0% used private vehicles. Another 5.0% travelled to school by taxi or minibus taxi. More than 80% of learners needed 30 minutes or less to get to school. In addition, it seemed that most learners (84.9%) preferred to attend the nearest institution of its kind to their place of residence.

## Higher education and training

The NDP and outcome 5 (a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path) of government's 2014-2019 medium-term strategic framework envisage that, by 2030, South Africans should have access to post-school education and training of the highest quality, leading to significant improvements in what learners know and can do on completion of their education or training. In line with this, the department will, over the medium term, focus on supporting the post-school education and training system by expanding access to universities and TVET colleges and improving their performance, improving the development of artisans, and strengthening the management and governance of community education and training colleges.

## 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
- The 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.
- The 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
- The 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.

- The 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 (2011 – 2020) is improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the skills development system. It promotes the linking of skills development to career paths, career development and promoting sustainable employment and in-work progression. The emphasis is particularly on people 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) and private training providers 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 youths and adult language and numeracy skills to enable additional training
- encouraging better use of workplace-based skills development
- encouraging and supporting cooperatives, 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.

## Budget and funding

Cabinet has approved budget reductions amounting to R384.4 million over the MTEF period, to be effected on transfers and subsidies in the University Education, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training, and the Skills Development programmes. The following reductions are mainly in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training programme: R50 million in 2019/20 for pension payouts that were concluded in 2018/19 and R200 million in 2019/20 and R100 million in 2020/21 for the operationalisation of new TVET campuses as fewer will be operationalised in these years than projected. Over the same period, Cabinet has approved a freeze on salary increases for senior management staff in public entities earning more than R1.5 million per year and a 2.8% increase for senior managers in public entities earning between R1 million and R1.49 million per year; and reductions to spending on goods and services.

These reductions are effected on transfers to the following public entities: the Council on Higher Education (R1 million), the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (R22.3 million), the

Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (R9.3 million), and the South African Qualifications Authority (R1.8 million).

## Transforming universities and increasing student financial aid

Over the medium term, the department will continue to focus on creating a transformed higher education sector that is of high quality, is demographically representative, and provides students and staff with opportunities through the implementation of the university capacity development programme. Accordingly, the department plans to continue funding 26 universities through transfers in the University Education programme.

These transfers constitute the department's largest spending area, and increase at an average annual rate of 7.1%, from R38.7 billion in 2018/19 to R47.5 billion in 2021/22. These funds will support enrolments and ensure financial sustainability, an improved quality of higher education and affordable university fees. Included in these transfers to universities is an additional allocation of R120 million in 2019/20, made through the budget facility for infrastructure, for the student housing infrastructure programmes at Nelson Mandela University, Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University and Vaal University of Technology.

Transfers to the National Student Financial Aid Scheme are expected to increase at an average annual rate of 22.4%, from R20.3 billion in 2018/19 to R37.3 billion in 2021/22. This increase is due to an additional allocation of R43.4 billion in the 2018 budget for the phasing in of the new departmental bursary scheme for students from poor and working class families.

## Improving the performance of TVET colleges

The department is mandated to provide quality skills programmes that address the need in the labour market for intermediate skills accompanied by practical training. In this regard, over the MTEF period, the department will focus on monitoring students' performance and TVET colleges' adherence to governance standards, and implementing teaching and learning support plans in TVET colleges. To enhance the quality of these improvements in the TVET sector, part of the R1.9 billion allocated over the medium term in the National Examination

and Assessment subprogramme in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training programme will be used to ensure that national examinations and assessments are appropriately conducted to eradicate certification backlogs; and to implement an IT examination services system.

As such, transfers to TVET colleges through the programme are expected to increase at an average annual rate of 18.9%, from R4.3 billion in 2018/19 to R7.2 billion in 2021/22. These transfers include: R967.2 million over the medium term for the operationalisation of 3 new TVET college campuses (Waterberg TVET College in Thabazimbi, Umfolozi TVET College in Nkandla, and Umfolozi TVET College in Bhambanana); and R4.9 billion over the same period for infrastructure-related spending at TVET colleges. As 70% (more than 16 000) of the department's personnel are paid through the Technical and Vocational Education and Training programme, spending on compensation of employees accounts for the bulk of the programme's budget, and increases at an average annual rate of 7.2%, from R6.3 billion in 2018/19 to R7.7 billion in 2021/22.

## Educational attainment of persons aged 20 years and older

According to the General Household Survey, 2018 individuals aged 20 years and older who have attained at least Grade 12 has been increasing consistently since 2002, expanding from 30.7% in 2002 to 45.7% in 2018. Over this period, the percentage of individuals with some post-school education increased from 9.2% to 14.3%. The percentage of individuals without any schooling decreased from 11.4% in 2002 to 4.5% in 2018.

Individuals without any formal education were most common in Limpopo (8.7%), Mpumalanga (7.6%) and Northern Cape (7.5%) and least common in Western Cape (1.5%) and Gauteng (2.2%). The figure shows that 24.4% of people aged 20 years or older have attained some academic qualifications that are equivalent to or less than Grade 9. Grade 9 is the final year of the senior phase and learners are allowed to leave school on its completion or when they turn 15 years old, whichever comes first. Individuals with lower secondary qualifications or

less were most common in Eastern and Northern Cape (both 35.0%) and North West (32.4%).

Nationally, three-tenths (30.9%) of persons aged 20 years and older have attained Grade 12 while 14.3% have attained some post-school qualifications.

Post-school qualifications were most common in Gauteng (21.0%) and Western Cape (17.7%) and least common in Northern Cape (8.8%) and North West (9.1%).

Individuals over the age of 60 years have consistently remained most likely to be functionally illiterate, followed by individuals in the age groups 40 – 59 and 20 – 39. Improved access to schooling has led to a significant decline in the percentage of functionally illiterate individuals in the 20 – 39 age group.

Between 2002 and 2018, the prevalence of functional illiteracy in the age group 20 – 39 years declined noticeably for both men (17.1% to 5.3%) and women (15.8% to 3.5%). With the exception of women in the age group 20 – 39, women remain more likely to be functionally illiterate across all age groups. The difference between men and women has, however, declined significantly over time. Although a higher percentage of women than men over the age of 60 years were functionally illiterate in 2018 (43.3% compared to 35.4%), the difference has declined in each successive age group, to the point that, in 2018, a smaller percentage of women in the age group 20 – 39 were functionally illiterate than their male peers (3.5% compared to 5.3%).

## 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 (UCT)
- 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.

### Developing artisans

Over the MTEF period, the department will focus on providing extended access to programmes in which artisanal skills are developed. These programmes are funded through income generated from the skills development levy, which contributes significantly to the key performance areas of the public skills development system, including artisan development. Income from the levy is transferred directly to sector education and training authorities, and the National Skills Fund, which, in turn, make transfers to relevant trade and quality assurance institutions for occupational qualifications, as these institutions play a pivotal role in ensuring the requisite standards for qualified artisans and the creation of work-based learning opportunities.

A total of 91 500 artisans are expected to be trained and 73 500 are expected to qualify over the medium term.

Transfers from the skills development levy are expected to increase at an average annual rate of 8.8%, from R17.3 billion in 2018/19 to R22.3 billion in 2021/22.

### Improving the community education and training sector

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, targeting youths and adults who did not complete school or never attended school.

The department recognises that improving the community education and training sector is crucial for development, as the sector has the potential to provide necessary skills opportunities. As such, the department plans to re-establish the sector for it to contribute more meaningfully to the post-school education and training sector. This entails strengthening the sector's governance by developing steering mechanisms pertaining to the Continuing Education and Training Act of 2006, and developing and approving monitoring and evaluation reports by March 2022 to ensure effective oversight of the sector. Spending in the Community Education and Training programme increases at an average annual rate of 7%, from R2.4 billion in 2018/19 to R2.9 billion in 2021/22, mainly on compensation of employees.

The number of personnel in this programme account for approximately 35% (9 425) of the department's total headcount, the majority of whom are educators in the 3 276 community education and training colleges across South Africa.

## Programmes and projects

### National Skills Fund

The National Skills Fund was established in 1999 in terms of section 27 of the Skills Development Act of 1998. The fund focuses on national priority projects identified in the national skills development strategy, projects related to the achievement of the purposes of the act as determined by the Director-General of the Department of Higher Education and Training, and activities prioritised by the Minister of Higher Education and Training to achieve a national standard of good practice in skills development.

Over the medium term, the National Skills Fund will focus on: investing in initiatives focused on developing priority skills to reduce the skills gap and create opportunities for out-of-school youth, expanding and enhancing the post-school education and training system, and implementing a new ICT system.

The fund anticipates that 92.3% (R12.1 billion) of its total budget over the MTEF period will be spent on skills development initiatives, including: transfers to various skills development projects relating to education and training, capacity building in the post-school education and training system, and providing infrastructure for skills development and skills development research. Among these initiatives are the development of foundational learning programmes for the TVET sector, the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants chief financial officer and human resource management projects, and TVET curriculum development.

Accordingly, over the period ahead, 3 000 small, medium and micro enterprises and cooperatives; 9 000 learners and 600 workers are expected to benefit from the fund's developmental initiatives.

Spending on skills development initiatives and administration is projected to decrease at an average annual rate of 6.2%, from R4.3 billion in 2018/19 to R3.5 billion in 2021/22. This is mainly due to contractual agreements of the majority of funded projects, such as infrastructure development at TVET colleges, coming to an end in 2020/21.

With the implementation of a new ICT system over the medium term, the fund expects to improve its performance reporting mechanisms and processes. The system will allow the fund to measure the throughput of learners on an ongoing basis and make proactive improvements, while strategically focusing funding on priority occupations. The system is currently undergoing its final round of user acceptance testing and data migration. Training on the system is expected to have taken place in January 2019, with the system expected to go live in February 2019. R23.8 million over the medium term is allocated for operating and maintaining the system.

The fund's primary source of revenue is the skills development levy, which is collected by the South African Revenue Service and transferred to the fund as a direct charge against the National Revenue Fund. Transfers from the skills development levy are projected to increase at an average annual rate of 8.8%, from R3.5 billion in 2018/19 to R4.5 billion in 2021/22.

### National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS)

The scheme was established in terms of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme Act of 1999. The scheme is responsible for: providing loans and bursaries; developing criteria and conditions for the granting of loans and bursaries to eligible students in consultation with the Minister of Higher Education and Training; raising funds; recovering past loans; maintaining and analysing a database of funded students; undertaking research for the better utilisation of financial resources; advising the minister on matters relating to student financial aid and undertaking other functions assigned to it by the act or the minister.

Over the medium term, the NSFAS plans to continue providing financial aid to students from poor and working class families to promote access to, and success in, higher education and training; and improve its administrative and management processes. The scheme expects to receive 90.2% (R103.3 billion) of its revenue over the MTEF period from transfers from the department. The bulk of the remainder is derived from transfers from the Department of Basic Education (R3.6 billion), the National Skills Fund (R1.3 billion), sector education and training authorities (R800 million), and interest (R5.3 billion).

Transfers from the department for student bursaries are expected to increase at an average annual rate of 22.6%, from R20.1 billion in 2018/19 to R36.9 billion in 2021/22. These increases will fund the new departmental bursary scheme for undergraduate university and TVET college students from households with a combined annual income of up to R350 000 per year. Bursaries from the scheme will cover costs related to tuition fees, prescribed study materials, meals, accommodation and/or transport. An estimated 1 348 965 undergraduate university and 1 567 105 TVET college students will be assisted through the bursary scheme over the medium term.

In response to a number of unresolved issues on the timely disbursement of funds to students, in 2018/19, the Minister of Higher Education and Training appointed an administrator to oversee and review the scheme's administrative and management processes. Senior managers have been deployed across the country to reduce administrative backlogs and enable efficient disbursements. This model of releasing funds

will inform the scheme's organisational design going forward.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 16.4%, from R25.5 billion in 2018/19 to R40.2 billion in 2021/22. This is mainly driven by the increase in transfers, the bulk of which are disbursed to students as part of the new departmental bursary scheme. The scheme's second largest cost driver is compensation of employees, spending on which increases at an average annual rate of 4.8%, from R204.3 million in 2018/19 to R235.4 million in 2021/22. This is due to an increase in the scheme's number of personnel, from 558 in 2018/19 to 580 in 2021/22, mainly to improve the scheme's ICT capacity and for additional call centre contractors after the introduction of a toll-free helpline for students in 2018/19. The relatively low average annual increase in spending on compensation of employees despite the increase in personnel is partly due to a freeze on salary increases approved by Cabinet for senior management staff earning more than R1.5 million per year and a 2.8% increase for senior managers earning between R1 million and R1.49 million per year.

Spending on agency and outsourced services is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 6.3%, from R39.9 million in 2018/19 to R47.9 million in 2021/22. The main contributors in this regard are costs relating to the debt collection commission, which have been increasing as a result of increased collection targets.

Transfers to the scheme from the department for the administration grant amount to R788 million over the period ahead, increasing from R262.1 million in 2018/19 to R274.4 million by 2021/22. Administration fees amounting to R163.1 million over the MTEF period from other funders will be used to supplement the administration grant.

### 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 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.

SAQA offers leadership in the implementation of the national qualifications framework. The authority's focus over the medium term will continue to be on monitoring and evaluating the qualifications system. This is in line with outcome 5 (a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path) of government's 2014 – 2019 medium-term strategic framework. Over the medium term, the authority intends making the national qualifications framework more visible to and understood by the general public. It will do this by disseminating information on social media platforms and through structured communications to all government institutions through the Government Communication and Information System.

To maintain the comprehensiveness of the framework, the authority will continue to classify, register and publish qualifications and part qualifications. The authority aims to continue prioritising the recognition of professional bodies and their designations, and the verification of local and foreign qualifications.

The authority is set to receive 51,6% (R211,5 million) of its revenue over the medium term through transfers from the department, increasing at an average annual rate of 4,6%. Other revenue is generated through fees for the evaluation and verification of qualifications, amounting to a projected R183 million over the period, and from collaborations with international institutions, estimated at R8,2 million.

The authority's total revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 6.6% from R118.7 million in 2017/18 to R143.6 million in 2020/21.

### 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 Subframework.

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
- elementary occupations.

Its vision is to qualify a skilled and capable workforce; its mission is to effectively and efficiently manage the occupational qualifications subframework to set standards, develop and quality assure national occupational qualifications for all who want a trade or occupation and, where appropriate, professions.

The QCTO will continue focusing on its core functions of certifying occupational qualifications; providing quality assurance; and evaluating, assessing and verifying the qualifications provided by registered providers of skills and training programmes. This is in line with outcome 5 (a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path) of government's 2014 – 2019 medium-term strategic framework, which highlights the need for an integrated approach to skills development.

Over the medium term, the council expects to evaluate and approve more than 150 occupational qualifications per year; develop and assure the quality of leading trades, occupations and professions; and accredit skills development providers. The council will also monitor its quality assurance partners against compliance standards.

For these activities, spending in the occupational qualifications management programme is set to increase at an average annual rate of 25.8%, from R19.5 million in 2017/18 to R38.7 million in 2019/20.

The council is set to generate 78.6% (R318.5 million) of its revenue over the MTEF period through programme quality assurance assessments undertaken by sector education and training authorities. Transfers from the department constitute 21.4% of total projected revenue, increasing at an average annual rate of 4.3% from R26.9 million in 2017/18 to R30.5 million in 2020/21.

The council's total revenue is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 18.2%, from R95.3 million to R157.5 million, over the same period, driven largely by income from sector education and training authorities, which are mandated to transfer 0.5% of their income from the skills development levy to the council.

### Council on Higher Education

The Council on Higher Education is responsible for quality assurance and the promotion of higher education. In line with the NDP's vision of a South African higher education system that meets the knowledge and high-level human resource needs for 2030 and beyond, and outcome 5 (a skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path) of

government's 2014 – 2019 medium-term strategic framework, the council works to ensure that all institutions provide high quality education and training.

Over the medium term, the council will continue researching higher education sector issues such as the state of the academic profession, governance and management challenges, and the role played by private higher education institutions in Africa. The council will also monitor the state of higher education in South Africa by reporting on indicators such as student enrolment and completion rates, completion rates by qualification type and field of study, and the staff composition and financial performance of public universities.

The council plans to provide two proactive advice reports to the Minister each year over the medium term, and develop four qualification standards to ensure the relevance, comparability and currency of qualifications offered by public and private higher education institutions.

The council is set to receive 90.3% of its revenue over the MTEF period from the department, increasing at an average annual rate of 3.7% from R50.7 million in 2017/18 to R56.5 million in 2020/21. The remaining revenue is derived mostly from costs recovered from the accreditation services that the council provides to public and private universities, amounting to an estimated R13.5 million over the same period.

### 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 Higher Education South Africa (as USAf was formerly known), which 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 such as transformation, differentiation, internationalisation, etc.

USAf commissions and disseminates 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
- 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.

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 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.

SETAs 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 respective sectors.

The SETAs 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. In addition, SETAs provide information on quality education and training offered by employers within their sectors.

### **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 systems
- 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 realise national priorities.

### **Institute for the National Development of Learnerships, Employment Skills and Labour Assessments (INDLELA)**

This institute develops and implements an integrated learner registration management information system that is linked to provinces and regional structures.

To achieve its objectives, the INDLELA has the responsibility to:

- develop and maintain a database of learning programmes, including apprenticeships, learnerships and skills development programmes and training providers
- implement the national artisan development programme

- develop and implement a strategy to support the SETAs in the achievement of NSDS targets in relation to learning programmes
- ensure geographic access to and coordinate artisan trade testing nationally
- implement an efficient and effective policy and process for the Organising Framework for Occupations
- develop and implement accreditation and quality assurance systems for artisan skills development providers.

### **Work Integrated Learning**

Linking the education and training institutions and the labour market is a priority. 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 enterprises have increasingly been creating Work Integrated Learning programmes to ensure practical skills development in sync with theoretical knowledge by increasing their intake of young people for apprenticeships, learnerships and internships.

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

South Africa prides itself in having 26 higher education libraries (academic libraries), delivering services to approximately 1 020 000 students and 38 118 academic staff. The location of these higher education institutions and the population they serve is spread over nine provinces.

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

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 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 Open Access initiatives including its mandates, institutional repositories, observing Open Access Week and facilitating their institutions becoming signatories to the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities.

## International cooperation

The DHET has signed a joint agreement with education ministers from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) 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, 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.

The BRICS Network University (BRICS-NU) is a network initiative that presupposes real participation of 54 universities with all the resources (lecturers, materials, campus facilities). Within the frames of the BRICS-NU activities, it is planned to develop and launch completely new graduate programmes in six priority areas.

