

**Republic of South Africa**  
**Transforming Education Summit**  
**National Statement of Commitment**

**August 2022**

Republic of South Africa

## National Statement of Commitment

*Acknowledging* the progress being made to reform basic and higher education and training system in the country since 1994

*Recalling* that the right to education<sup>1</sup> safeguarded in the Constitution of South Africa for all and is critical in enabling the realisation of other rights essential for our aspirations as a nation;

*Recognising* that the National Development Plan: Vision 2030 sets the investment through quality early childhood development (early learning)<sup>2</sup>, basic education<sup>3</sup>, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training, and skills development as a priority in building national capabilities in the country<sup>4</sup>;

*Confirming* the country's commitment that all South Africans should have access to quality and inclusive education and training of the highest quality through an education, training and innovation system building an inclusive society, providing equal opportunities and helping all South Africans to realise their full potential;

*Drawing* on the Government of South Africa's existing policies, plans and commitments towards the early childhood development (early learning), basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training and skills development;

*Acknowledging* that education is an investment that requires adequate and sustainable funding to ensure appropriate qualified human resources, safe infrastructure and supporting resources that will facilitate teaching and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century;

*Acknowledging* the key determinant for quality education outcomes and the achievement of national, regional and global commitments is well qualified and competent education workforce;

*Understanding* that quality education in early childhood development (early learning), basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training and skills development is compact of partnership between children, young people, parents, education and support staff, civil society and government;

*Recognising* the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic and associated minimum health, safety and social distancing measures to address, prevent and combat the spread of COVID-19 had the people of the country and the national goals and commitments for education set out in the National Development Plan: Vision 2030, Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals as well as individuals' personal goals regarding their education and training.

We, the Government of South Africa represented by the Ministries of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training together with national stakeholders in the education, following the country's national consultations herewith commit at the Transformation Education Summit 2022:

1. Prioritise the recovery of learning losses in early learning (ECD), basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training and skills development by 2023 through the implementation of a national education recovery plan and the allocation of resources towards this commitment.
2. Develop a national plan of action based on the insights obtained through the national consultations with due consideration of existing national plans and policies to accelerate the achievement of the national and international

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<sup>1</sup> The term **education**, unless otherwise indicated, early childhood development (early learning), basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training and skills development.

<sup>2</sup> The term "**early childhood development (ECD)**", unless otherwise indicated, refers to early learning and development opportunities and early learning programmes for young children birth to six (6) years). This includes all types of early learning interventions, but excludes Grade R.

<sup>3</sup> The term "**basic education**" legally refers to programmes delivered from Grades R to 9. For the purposes of this statement and report, and ease of reference, it refers to Grades R to 12 provided in in public and independent primary and secondary schools.

<sup>4</sup> National Planning Commission. 2012. *National Development Plan 2030. Our future – making it work*. Pretoria: The Presidency.

goals and commitments set out in the National Development Plan: Vision 2030 (NDP), Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all South Africans. This shall include the education and training system as defined in the National Development Plan: Vision 2030 (NDP) and include early childhood development (early learning), basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training and skills development.

3. Children, young people and adults are supported and have access to quality and inclusive education. In this regard, quality education is defined against practical benchmarks that aims to transform education in the country to ensure that 2030 targets are met as well as educational approaches and pedagogies to facilitate knowledge and skills needed for a changing world and the associated world of work in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
4. Foundational literacy and numeracy skills are essential for learning, and important for lifelong learning that is imperative in enhancing the country's human capital; and should be embedded in early childhood development programmes and the foundation phase of basic education (Grades R to 3) through active play-based pedagogies.
5. Education outcomes for literacy, science, technology, engineering, the arts, mathematics and life skills requires an integrated approach starting in early childhood development and continuing seamless throughout basic education system into post-school education and training system supported by appropriately qualified education workforce, curricula and learning programmes.
6. Recognise that inclusive and quality education and training are influenced by factors and challenges beyond the pedagogical approaches and learning programme, inside and outside the early childhood development programmes /school/post-school education and training (PSET) institutions to be addressed in an appropriate, inter-sectoral and sensitive manner. Addressing these programmes need to be implemented and monitored against existing and/or adjusted policies to ensure safety, non-discrimination, prevention of violence (general and gender-based violence), prevention and managing of drug and alcohol abuse, impacting on children/young people and educators. Issues like health, nutrition, diversity, ability, care and support and life skills need to be integrated across the education and training system.
7. Comprehensive sexuality education, inclusive of sexual and reproductive health rights, needs to start early in early childhood development programmes and continue throughout basic education and post-school education and training (PSET) in an age-appropriate manner as to provide children and young people with the required knowledge to make informed decisions.
8. Ensuring the continuation of education and training in the case of a disaster/ emergency (including emergency preparedness, modalities of learning in early childhood development, basic education and post-school education and training, psychosocial support for children/ students, educators, lecturers, training facilitators, infra-structure, budgets, amongst others).
9. Children, young people and adults living with disabilities have the right to education and training and have equal access to early childhood development, basic education, technical and vocational education and training, higher education and skills development, and where such educational opportunities do not meet their specific needs, are supported and have access to special education and learning opportunities that will afford them their right to education and training. Provision for children, young people and adults with severe to profound intellectual disabilities need to be addressed at system level, inclusive of financial and human resources. For realisation of potential for learners with disabilities, we need to ensure digital infrastructure for all educational institutions to enable effective learning.
10. Fit-for-purpose education programmes through appropriate and accessible modalities to be provided for children in difficult circumstances and/or at risk to be excluded from education and training such as children/young people living and working on the streets, refugee children/ youth, undocumented persons, severely disabled children, young people in detention/ prison, amongst others, whom cannot be accommodated due to multiple contributing factors in mainstream schools or education programmes (such as ABET), as to ensure that their right to basic education is afforded.

11. Build on the adaptations made in education when dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic such as virtual classrooms solution for teaching and learning, broadcasting (TV and Radio), online content and support resources, use of social media platforms and online platforms as a transformative impetus in the country's education and training system.
12. Give priority to ensure that the education workforce has the required knowledge, skills and qualifications to provide quality and inclusive early childhood development programmes, basic education, special needs education, technical and vocational education and training, higher education and skills development; and effectively utilises the transformative power of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Educators to be able and supported in the use of hybrid models of education including in-person and e-learning through digital platforms. This to be supported by a Human Resource Development Strategy and its Implementation Plan to ensure that education workforce meets the demands of quality and inclusive education as well as the skills and knowledge needed in transforming education in the country; as well as conditions of service of educators, including remuneration, needs to be market related and match their qualifications, experience, performance, position and specialised skills and knowledge.
13. Continue to give priority to the professional recognition and professionalisation of the education workforce in early childhood development, basic education, special needs education and post-school education and training based on minimum standards in terms of proficiency (qualifications, knowledge and skills) and professional conduct, and required to be registered with the South African Council for Educators (SACE) or other professional Councils as appropriate for educators in the post-school education and training (PSET) sector. Continued proficiency through continuing professional teacher development (CPTD) should be a requirement imbedded in professional recognition and registration.
14. All educators need to have a basic training on the inclusion of all children/students in learning environment (including disability, gender, diversity, sexual orientation, special educational needs, similar) as part of their pre-service training as well as post qualification continuing professional teacher development (CPTD). Educators working with children/young people with special education needs such as those with severe to profound intellectual disabilities need to have the appropriate knowledge and skills and be accredited through South African Council for Educators (SACE) that they are proficient in providing education to these children/young people.
15. Post-school education and training (PSET) focusses on the skills, research and innovation capacity that the country needs and responds to the world of work that includes gainful employment as well as enhanced entrepreneurship.
16. Integrate transversal skills such as critical thinking, creative thinking, communicating, and collaborating, information and technology literacy, flexibility, inter-personal and social skills that are important for adaptation, success and resilience as to be prepared for an uncertain future need to be embedded in the curricula for early childhood development, basic education, special needs education and post-school education and training.
17. Learning and skills for life and the world of work should be integral to education and training, while ensuring that adolescents and young people have opportunities by offering life skills through multiple pathways; the education and training of persons with disabilities, including skills training is supportive of their employment with support from the industry; and that inclusive and quality Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) follows inclusive and active pedagogical approaches, and is fully incorporated in the education and training system's transformation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
18. Sustainable development (linked to all 17 SDGs) is integrated in a practical manner in all education curricula facilitate knowledge and skills to address challenges such as environmental and climate change, poverty, inequality, war and others.
19. Close the digital divide in terms of access to data/ internet for educational purposes by ensuring that free, high-quality access is available to all through regulation and adequate resourcing.
20. Embed the use of technology, internet, digital skills in educational learning programmes through transformative and active pedagogical approaches that will prepare and enable children, young people and adults to engage with and respond to the opportunities and challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution.
21. Create an enabling environment for digital learning and transformation of education through a review of national policies and plans as to adapt and integrate digital learning and transformation of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and

e-Education is fully integrated into schools and post-school education and training (PSET) institutions by 2030 with high quality.

22. Public funding allocated to education should be sufficient to ensure that children, young people and adults' right to inclusive and quality education is realized and that all have opportunities and access to early childhood development, basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training and skills development.
23. Accountability for the allocation and expenditure of the education budgets against clear norms and benchmarks for funding in education and training should be implemented continuously and transparently with an emphasis on accountability to the nation and the world.

**Republic of South Africa**

**REPORT ON THE NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS IN PREPARATION FOR THE  
TRANSFORMING EDUCATION SUMMIT**

**August 2022**

**TOWARDS 2030: Building forward differently**

## DEFINITIONS

In this report, unless the context otherwise indicates –

“**education**”, unless otherwise indicated, refers to early childhood development (early learning), basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training and skills development. “*education system*” and “*education sector*” includes the aforementioned.

“**basic education**” legally refers to programmes delivered from Grades R to 9. For the purposes of this statement and report, and ease of reference, it refers to Grades R to 12 provided in in public and independent primary and secondary schools.

“**early childhood development (ECD)**”, unless otherwise indicated, refers to early learning and development opportunities and early learning programmes for young children birth to six (6) years). This includes all types of early learning interventions, but excludes Grade R.

“**educator**” refers to multiple professionals involved and responsible for the implementation of education and training, including teachers, teaching assistants, early childhood development practitioners, lecturers, facilitators, tutors or similar.

“**post-secondary education and training**” refers to education provided by education and training institutions that include universities, private higher education institutions, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges, private colleges, community education and training (CET) colleges and private skills development providers. These are established, declared or registered by any law assigned to the Minister of Higher Education and Training

## 1. TES NATIONAL CONSULTATION PROCESS

**Convener’s name** South African National Commission for UNESCO  
(Mr Carlton Mukwevho, Secretary-General)

**Number of consultations** 15

### Basic information of consultations convened.

Dates	Title	Types	Number of participants
27.06.2022	General basic education	Virtual	47
18.07.2022	ECD sector representative structures	Virtual	49
18.07.2022	Provincial Education Departments	Virtual	40
19.07.2022	Business and corporate sector representative structures	Virtual	8
19.07.2022	Youth sector representative structures	Virtual	34
20.07.2022	Disability sector representative structures	Virtual	27
20.07.2022	TVET colleges representative structures	Virtual	25

21.07.2022	Higher Education Institutions	Virtual	20
22.07.2022	Donors representative structures	Virtual	31
23.07.2022	Regulatory and statutory structures	Virtual	15
24.07.2022	Teacher unions	Virtual	19
25.07.2022	Parent representative structures	Virtual	30
25.07.2022	Social development and health sector representative structures	Virtual	24
8-12.07.2022	Girls and Boys Education Movement	In person	108
05.08.2022	National Concluding Consultation	Hybrid	55
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>532</b>

**Geographical focus** National

**Language used** English

**Total number of participants**

**0-17** 108

**18-29** 42

**30-59** 268

**60 +** 8

**Gender of participants**

**Male** 219

**Female** 313

**Prefer not to say** 0

**Number of participants from each sector**

**Basic Education** 147      **Nutrition** 7

**Higher Education and Training** 66      **Communication** 4

**Early learning (ECD)** 53      **Disability** 31

**Child protection** 19      **Information technology** 3

**Labour** 19      **Social protection** 9

**Environment** 3      **WASH** 4

**Finance** 2      **Regulatory bodies** 15

**Health** 12      **Other (specify):** 157

**Participants from each stakeholder group**

**Teachers, educators, facilitators, and professors** (*included in "school leaders"*) 0

**Youth and students (including children and adolescents)** 142

<b>School leaders</b>	147
<b>City and local government representatives</b>	2
<b>Parents and caregivers</b>	30
<b>Small/medium enterprises</b> ( <i>business and corporates</i> )	8
<b>Unions</b>	19
<b>Members of Parliament</b>	4
<b>Multi-national corporations</b>	0
<b>Local authorities</b> ( <i>included in “City and local government representatives”</i> )	0
<b>Government and national institutions</b>	15
<b>Public servants</b>	19
<b>Regional economic community</b>	0
<b>Local NGO’s</b>	53
<b>International and/or Regional financial institutions</b>	1
<b>International NGO’s</b>	8
<b>Indigenous people and community leaders</b>	0
<b>Scientific community, academic, universities and research institutes</b>	51
<b>Media</b>	2
<b>Other (specify):</b> <i>Donors, development partners, multi-lateral</i>	31

## 2.2 PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR THE NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS

2.2.1 The national consultations in preparation for the Transforming Education Summit were embedded in the principles of *government leadership and ownership* as well as the *active participation of the widest range of stakeholders feasible* including stakeholders from early childhood development (ECD), primary schools, secondary schools, special needs schools, TVET colleges, higher education institutions, training organisations, representative bodies and structures, educators, administrators, parents, learners, civil society organisations, organized labour, business/ corporate sector, donors, amongst others. A particular effort was made to ensure inclusion of specific target groups such as children with disabilities, children at risk of not being included in education programmes (children and young people on the move, children and young people living on the streets).

2.2.2 The national consultations were convened by the South African National Commission for UNESCO with the support of the *National Consultation Task Team* consisting of designated senior officials from the Department of Basic Education, Department of Higher Education and Training, Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), National

Youth Development Agency, and the United Nations in South Africa represented by UNICEF and UNESCO (to provide technical support and act as Secretariat).

- 2.2.3 The approach followed for the country's national consultations included planning and coordination by the *National Consultation Task Team* to ensure a coordinated and inclusive process.
- 2.2.4 Based on the country's existing legal, political and sector wide commitments towards basic education and higher education and training, a *Consultation Draft: Issues towards a National Statement of Commitment (Annexure A)* was prepared, as well as a young people friendly version (*Annexure B*), as a synthesis from amongst others the following (non-exhaustive): current legislative and policy commitments; Constitutional obligations; APP's of Department of Basic Education and Department of Higher Education and Training; National Development Plan: Vision 2030; Action Plan to 2024: Towards the realisation of Schooling 2030; National Plan for Post-School Education and Training 2021–2030; Skills Strategy: Support for the South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan: 2022; agreements at Lekgotlas and similar, amongst others. This was used as a starting point for the consultations with the sole purpose of initiating dialogue and debate<sup>5</sup>.
- 2.2.5 A hybrid model with multiple modalities was used to facilitate the inclusion of as many stakeholders as practical. The invitations were sent to more than 2,300 stakeholders based on existing databases and additional databases obtained from the secondary sources. Notwithstanding short notices in some instances for consultations, the responses and attendance were encouraging and reflected commitment towards the intend of the national consultations. A total 532 persons attended representing 112 government departments and stakeholder organisations (see list of participating organisations at the end of report)
- 2.2.6 *Sectoral virtual national consultations*
- (a) Fourteen (14)<sup>6</sup> stakeholders from the following sectors: early childhood development (ECD); basic education; post school education and training (Higher Education Institution and TVET colleges); sectors that work with children and people with disabilities; donors and development partners; business and corporate; youth; regulatory and statutory structures; parent representative bodies, teacher unions, social development and health sector; to add their voices to the Statement of Commitment towards the transformation of education in the country.
- (b) These sectoral consultations were, as far as feasible, chaired by a representative from the sector (non-governmental), and where not possible, by a senior official from government. The consultations were guided by a standard agenda (*Annexure C*) that included a background to the Transforming Education Summit,

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<sup>5</sup> It was made very clear during all consultations that the Issues for consultation on the *National Statement of Commitment: Consultation Draft* is by no means the National Statement of Commitment; nor should it be assumed to be.

<sup>6</sup> This excludes the National Concluding Consultation held on 5 August 2022.

the purpose of the national consultations, and group work to enhance participation.

- (c) Participants received a *Participants Pack* prior to each sectoral consultations to enable them to prepare for the consultation (*Annexure D*).
- (d) A standard guideline (*Annexure E*) for the group work was used in all sectoral consultations to ensure that all salient issues were captured in a consistent manner.

#### 2.2.8 *Consultations as part of existing processes*

- (a) The Task Team encourage stakeholders to use existing processes such any meeting, workshop, training session, gathering, internal meeting, or similar already organised by themselves, which may provide an opportunity to include as part of the agenda or programme a slot for a consultation on the *Consultation Draft: Issues towards a National Statement of Commitment*.
- (b) These types of consultations were supported by a guideline (*Annexure F*) to facilitate a consistent approach in the absence of Task Team members.
- (c) It proved of particular value in reaching children (under 18's) already involved in existing workshops or meetings during the school holidays.

#### 2.2.9 *Online consultation*

- (a) An online virtual platform was created for persons to give inputs either on behalf of their organisations or as individuals.
- (b) This format supported organisations/persons not able to attend the virtual sectoral consultations.

#### 2.2.10 *National Concluding Consultation*

- (a) A *National Concluding Consultation* was held in hybrid format (in-person and virtual) on 5 August 2022 to consolidate and conclude the process of national consultations that took place from 27 June to 25 July 2022; to reflect with stakeholders' key topics that emerged from the national consultations that need more in-depth deliberations; and to facilitate proposals for key sectoral actions required from the country post the Transforming Education Summit by all stakeholders (*Agenda* attached as *Annexure G*)
- (b) The National Task Team reviewed and analysed the feedback received and identified the following nine (9) critical topics (*Annexure H*) that need further deliberation during the National Concluding Consultation. This was the focus of the group discussions supported by a guideline (*Annexure I*).

2.2.11 An important principle adopted and communicated throughout the consultations was that the feedback will be provided to stakeholders on the *National Statement of Commitment* and *Report on the National Consultations*. Furthermore, it was communicated that the stakeholders will continue to be involved through multiple modalities, including existing and potential processes, on the implementation of commitments post the Transforming Education Summit. The key message during the *National Concluding Consultation* was:

*Based on the National Statement of Commitment & National Report on National Consultations as well as the Outcome document of the Transforming Education Summit develop a national plan of action to enhance, enrich and embed transformation into existing plans. Not starting new, but building forward differently.*

### **3. CONSULTATION FOCUS AND OUTCOMES**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXTUAL OVERVIEW**

3.1.1 The education system in South Africa consists early childhood development (early learning), basic education, post school education and training and national research and innovation as subsector led by the Ministry of Basic Education and Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation developing and implementing legislation, policies, plans, strategies and programmes at a national level<sup>7</sup> to give effect to the right to education as safeguarded in section 29 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996*.

3.1.2 In 2021, the South African basic education system consists of approximately of 42,420 early learning and development programmes<sup>8</sup> providing early learning and development opportunities to 1,660,316 young children, employing 198,361 persons of which approximately 97,196 are early childhood development practitioners<sup>9</sup>; and there were 24,894 public (22,740) and independent schools (2,154) attended by 13,409,249 learners (63% in primary schools<sup>10</sup> and 37% in secondary schools<sup>11</sup>, and with a learner to school ratio in public schools of 559:1) and were served by 447,123 educators (with learner to educator ratio in public schools 31.4:1 and educator to school ratio in public schools of 17.8:1)<sup>12</sup>. The gender distribution of enrolled children is an almost perfect 50/50 split between male and female children in early learning and development programmes<sup>13</sup>, while the distribution of female and male learners in Grades R to 12 is 49% female and 51% male, while for Grades 10, 11 and 12 (non-compulsory education band) the distribution is 52% female and 48% male<sup>14</sup>.

In 2020 there were 489 special educational needs schools (435 public and 54 independent schools) with an enrolment of 133,236 learners with disabilities, while 129,680 learners with disabilities were enrolled in ordinary public schools and 3,423 children with severe to profound intellectual disability supported in special care centres<sup>15</sup>.

The majority of early learning and development programmes are privately operated through regulation in terms of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 and/or South African

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<sup>7</sup> National Planning Commission. 2012. *National Development Plan 2030. Our future – making it work*. Pretoria: The Presidency. (p.296)

<sup>8</sup> Providing early learning opportunities for children from birth to 6 years (excluding children in Grade R), which includes ECD centres, pre-schools, creches, play groups, child minders and similar.

<sup>9</sup> Department of Basic Education & the LEGO Foundation. 2022. ECD Census 2021: Summary of key results. Pretoria: DBE.

<sup>10</sup> Grades R to 7.

<sup>11</sup> Grades 8 to 12.

<sup>12</sup> Department of Basic Education. 2022. 2021 School Realities. Pretoria: DBE.

<sup>13</sup> Department of Basic Education & the LEGO Foundation. 2022. ECD Census 2021: Summary of key results. Pretoria: DBE.

<sup>14</sup> Department of Basic Education & the LEGO Foundation. 2022. ECD Census 2021: Summary of key results. Pretoria: DBE.

<sup>15</sup> Department of Basic Education. 2022. Department of Basic Education: Annual Performance Plan 2022/2023. Pretoria: DBE.

Schools Act 84 of 1996, while all primary and secondary schools as well as special needs education schools are regulated by the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996.

- 3.1.3 The post-secondary education and training (PSET) system has five key subsectors: namely, public and private universities, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges, community education and training (CET) colleges, private colleges, and Sectoral Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). South Africa has 343 Post-School Education and Training institutions comprising 132 private Higher Education Institutions, 26 public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), 126 registered private colleges, 50 Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges and 9 Community Education and Training (CET) Colleges<sup>16</sup>. The enrolment target for HEIs according to the National Development Plan (NDP) is 1.6 million students by 2030. In 2020, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) had over 1.3 million enrolments when combining both private and public HEI enrolments. This indicates that universities are likely to meet the NDP enrolment target. However, the same does not apply to TVET and CET colleges who would have to double and triple their enrolments respectively from 2018 to 2030 to achieve their NDP enrolment targets<sup>17</sup>.
- 3.1.4 The education system is directed by the South African National Quality Framework (NQF) established through the National Quality Framework Act 67 of 2008 under the auspices of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). Quality councils play an important role as primary bodies with a direct role in governing quality assurance and certification through their responsibility for setting standards, some are also responsible for curriculum development and assessment. These include the Council on Higher Education (CHE), Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) and Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi). Furthermore, Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA) established in terms of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 develop and implement sector skills plans and promote learning programmes, including workplace learning. Sector education authorities such as Umalusi (the council for quality assurance in general and further education and training); The South African Council for Educators (SACE); the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) (for social workers and child and youth care workers); the Health Professionals Council of South Africa (HPCSA) (for health professionals including medical doctors, psychologists, occupational therapist, etc.); and the South African Nursing Council, these statutory councils play an important role to ensure a high caliber of professionals through regulation.
- 3.1.5 The sections below are based on areas of general agreement or consensus that emerged during the national consultations and does not reflect the comprehensive details. The latter will be consolidated into a report for the country.

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<sup>16</sup> Department of Higher Education and Training. 2022. 2020 Statistics on Post-Schooling Education and Training in South Africa. Pretoria: Government Printers.

<sup>17</sup> National Planning Commission. 2012. *National Development Plan 2030. Our future – making it work*. Pretoria: The Presidency. (p.296); Department of Higher Education and Training. 2021. *Post-Schooling Education and Training Monitor: Macro Indicator Trends*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

## **3.2 THEMATIC AREAS**

### **3.2.1 INCLUSIVE, EQUITABLE, SAFE, AND HEALTHY LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

*The following is a synthesised summary of issues raised during the national consultations and does not necessarily reflect the commitment or obligations of the Government of South Africa, neither should it assume to. The commitments of the Government are contained in the National Statement of Commitment.*

The national consultations concluded that this theme does not only apply to schools, but to all learning environments, inclusive of early childhood development programmes and post school education and training institutions, amongst others. As such it was adjusted for the country as above.

Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy learning environments from early childhood development (early learning), basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training and skills development.

Quality of teaching and learning throughout the education system is at the core of this thematic area as quality in education are dependent on determinants such as qualified human resources, financial resources, learning and teaching support materials, infra-structure, inclusion, safety, health, nutrition and other areas.

Inclusive learning environments and inclusion in education needs to be define in its broadest sense to be all children and young people can learn and develop and have the right to education, but in particular those at risk to excluded or discriminated against to fully claim their right to education due to a disability, gender, diversity, sexual orientation, special educational needs, status (migrant children/young people, children/young people on the move, refugees, undocumented persons), children living and working on the street, severely disabled children), children/ young people living and working on the street, children/young people at risk of drop-out or who have dropped out. As such, inclusive learning requires infra-structure, appropriately qualified human resources, flexible modalities for learning, equal opportunities, differentiation, and where appropriate education focusing on learners/students with special educational needs in appropriately designed and resourced programmes.

*Recommendations* for the consultations:

- (a) Inclusion of all children/ young people in education should be a universal principle and benchmark throughout the education system in terms of access, infra-structure, pedagogy and resources. As a minimum, all educators should have acquired basic knowledge and skills on the inclusion of all children/students in learning environment (including disability, gender, diversity, sexual orientation, special educational needs, similar) as part of their pre-service training and be required to continue their development in this regard as part of Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) (and similar for those in post-school education and training).
- (b) The Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) Policy of the Department of Basic Education needs to be implemented by all working in early learning and development and basic education, and need to be covered as part of pre-service training.

- (c) Children with severe to profound intellectual disability need to have access to inclusive, equitable and quality education that provide them with appropriate and quality opportunities to learn and develop.
- (d) Specialised education programmes through appropriate and accessible modalities need to be supported and implemented for children in especially difficult circumstances and/or at risk to be excluded from education such as children/young people living and working on the streets, refugee children/ youth, undocumented persons, severely disabled children, young people in detention/ prison, amongst others, whom cannot be accommodated due to multiple contributing factors in mainstream schools or education programmes (such as adult basic education and training) as to ensure that their right to basic education is afforded.
- (e) Children, young people and adults living with disabilities are supported and have equal access to early learning (ECD), basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training and skills development, and where such educational opportunities do not meet their specific needs, they are supported and have access to special education and learning opportunities that will afford them their right to education.

Education outcomes for literacy, science, technology, engineering, the arts, mathematics and life skills throughout the education journey of a person are dependent on building on previous learning and developmental experiences and learning starting from birth supported by appropriately qualified education workforce, curricula and learning programmes. This requires a seamless and planned implementation of early learning programmes, basic education, post school education and training (and where appropriate special needs education) that is embedded in quality and clear standards, and build upon each other. This will give effect to the goals for education set out in the *National Development Plan*. Addressing challenges experienced in the early grades with reading and mathematics, needs to start earlier than Grade R or Grade 1, within quality early learning and development opportunities for young children from birth through early childhood development programmes as well as support to parents to provide such opportunities.

*Recommendations* for the consultations:

- (a) Quality early learning and development opportunities for children provided by early childhood development programmes from birth to six years that age- and developmentally stage-appropriate embedded in the basic education system need to be recognised, resourced and supported as the foundation of basic education and lifelong learning.
- (b) The definition of early childhood development as in *White Paper on Education and Training (1995)*<sup>18</sup> and *Education White Paper 5 on Early Childhood Education (2001)*<sup>19</sup> that early childhood development, based on evidence and

<sup>18</sup> Department of Education. 1995. *White Paper on Education and Training*. Cape Town: Government Printers. (p33)

<sup>19</sup> Department of Basic Education. 2001. *Education White Paper 5 on Early Childhood Education*. Pretoria: Government Printers (p. 5)

global standards<sup>20</sup>, is the period ranging from birth to nine years of age needs to be reflected in basic education legislation and policy post the function shift from the Department of Social Development to Department of Basic Education. This will ensure a coherent approach to early learning and development.

- (c) Foundational literacy and numeracy skills are not only essential for children and young people's ability to learn, but also for lifelong learning that are important in enhancing the country's human capital. This should be embedded in early childhood development programmes and the foundation phase of basic education (Grades R to 3) through active play-based pedagogies. Where required, the learning gap in terms of foundational literacy and numeracy skills need to be addressed as early as possible in the foundation phase.
- (d) Define quality education (early childhood development, basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training and skills development) and defined and practical benchmarks for quality education (including language of instruction in education as a determinant for education outcomes, budget requirements)
- (e) One of the central determinants of quality education and education outcomes is language of instruction. This is particularly important in the early learning programmes and first grades of schooling (Grades R to 3) as it is important for children to learn in languages they deeply understand. In addition, language of instruction can also become a barrier, and in some instances an exclusion, to education in school and post-school education and training that impact on education attainment and outcomes, unless foundations for second language instruction are appropriately addressed.

Quality education is, as mentioned earlier, dependent on determinants such as safety, care, support, health, nutrition, amongst others. Children/young people find it challenging to learn and educators find it challenging to teach/lecture in learning environments that are not physically, socially and emotionally safe; healthy and supportive, which in turn impacts on the quality of education and learning outcomes. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) *Care and Support for Teaching Learning* (CSTL) Programme provides a framework implemented by the Department of Basic Education for schools becoming inclusive centres of learning, care and support. It has the potential to be adjusted for the broader education sector from early learning programmes to post-secondary education and training to address key determinants for quality learning.

Safety in schools/ post-secondary education and training institutions safety is a priority, but it needs to be recognised that it is interdependent on safe communities, which requires involvement and action beyond school/post-secondary education and training institutions, such as community leaders, local municipalities, South African Police Services, health care providers, social services and alike. Similarly, is the prevention and managing of drug and alcohol abuse; management of violence, gender-based

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<sup>20</sup> UNESCO. 2018. *Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)*.

violence, abuse and similar challenges faced by schools/ post-secondary education and training institutions issues that requires systemic approaches with active involvement of role-players beyond the School/ PSET institution.

Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy learning environments requires a deliberate and active focus on sexual and reproductive health; comprehensive sexuality education in life orientation and life skills curriculum that prepare children and young people with sufficient information and skills to make informed choices.

*Recommendations* for the consultations:

- (a) The implementation of existing government policy on safety, health, nutrition, life skills, non-discrimination and similar needs to be implemented in schools and post-secondary education and training institutions, as appropriate, against clear benchmarks which are monitored and reported on.
- (b) Schools and post-secondary education and training institutions need to be supported and resourced to access support from social workers, health care practitioners, psychologists, qualified child and youth care workers, occupational therapists or related where needed and without delay to mitigate and address challenges experienced in these learning environments for children/young people and educators.
- (c) Consider adapting and customize the *Care and Support for Teaching Learning* (CSTL) Programme or the principles underpinning it for the whole education sector.
- (d) Comprehensive sexuality education, inclusive of sexual and reproductive health rights, needs to start already in the early learning programmes and continue throughout basic education and post-secondary education and training in an age-appropriate manner as to provide children and young people with the required knowledge. Special attention needs to be given in a developmentally appropriate manner to children/ young people with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities with regards to their sexuality education.
- (e) Teenage pregnancy needs to be dealt with in accordance with adopted policies in a non-discriminatory manner, while no child or young person being pregnant, shall be denied access to quality education or discriminated against in any manner while attending school or education institution.
- (f) The places where children and young people learn needs to support their learning and be accessible. Places of learning should be supportive to diversity and inclusion where the physical environment (infrastructure) and the educational programmes facilitate inspiration, non-discrimination, access, safety and respect of the rights for all.

### **3.2.2 TEACHERS, TEACHING AND THE TEACHING PROFESSION**

*The following is a synthesised summary of issues raised during the national consultations and does not necessarily reflect the commitment or obligations of the Government of South Africa, neither should it assume to. The commitments of the Government are contained in the National Statement of Commitment.*

For the purpose of this section the term educator (teacher) will be used which refers to multiple professionals involved and responsible for the education and training,

including teachers, teaching assistants, early childhood development educators and practitioners, lecturers, facilitators, tutors or similar. Similarly, the term teaching refers to actual practice of education and development from early learning to post-secondary education and training, and teaching profession refers to all categories in the definition of “educator.

Persons involved in teaching of children and young people need to appropriately qualified and recognised professionals as to implement quality and inclusive learning programmes. Pre-service training of educators needs to provide educators with the required proficiencies (knowledge and skills) needed, but also differentiate for teaching in different context and learning programmes, e.g., in early childhood development programmes, primary schools, secondary schools, colleges, universities, special needs education, vocational training amongst others. Special attention should be given to ensuring teaching practice of pre-service teachers provide them with the skills to deliver quality teaching when they graduate.

There is an urgent need for a comprehensive human resource plan for the education system that includes all aspects of qualifications, professional registration and regulation, continuing professional teacher development (CPTD), provision of teacher amongst others. It is estimated that 45% of teachers in South Africa will retire in the next 10 years, requiring advance planning for qualified educators entering the workforce.

Educators in general do not receive sufficient training on inclusion of children/young people with disabilities, and more particular educators working in schools for learners of special education needs often do not have the appropriate qualifications to implement the learning programmes. Currently, there are four (4) universities are funded to provide teacher training on teaching children/young people with disabilities, which means the output is not sufficient.

Early childhood development practitioners are generally not suitably qualified to implement early learning and development programmes. The NDP lifts “teacher training” out as one of the six central challenges in the provision of quality early learning and development programmes<sup>21</sup>. It is important that the professionalisation of the persons providing early learning and development programmes for child birth to six (6) years be prioritised coinciding with supported obtaining of qualifications at a degree and diploma level. It was acknowledged that the shift of early childhood development from the Department of Social Development to the Department of Basic Education not only requires for a better qualified early childhood development workforce, but also provides impetus to professionalisation and registration with South African Council for Educators (SACE). Appropriately qualified educators providing early learning and development in early childhood development programmes should be able to implement curricula and learning programmes embedded in active (play-based) pedagogies as to ensure the required child outcomes.

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<sup>21</sup> The Presidency, National Planning Commission. 2012. *National Development Plan 2030. Our future – making it work*. Pretoria: The Presidency. (p. 300)

Educators need to be deployed in accordance with their qualification, knowledge and skills and not fill “gaps” in staffing. The latter impacts on the quality of education as educators that are deployed in learning environments (classes) that they are not equipped for unintentionally contribute to compromising learning outcomes, and should be held accountable for that. Examples include educators deployed in Grades R to 3, that are not qualified to teach in these grades.

The pre-service training of educators should prepare the education workforce with knowledge and skills required for teaching and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution. This should be continued through compulsory accredited continuing professional teacher development (CPTD) as to ensure that all educators are trained and competent on the rollout of digital and ICT skills in classrooms. Similarly, pre-service and in-service training on environmental and climate change education are urgently required for educators to implement and integrate in early childhood development, basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training and skills development.

*Recommendations* for the consultations:

- (a) Educators are at the centre of quality and inclusive education and instrumental in the shift from reforming education to transforming education as to achieve the national, continental and global goals. This required that all educators need to have the appropriate pre-service qualifications and be required to participate in continuing professional teacher development (CPTD) to ensure their proficiency in their subject matter.
- (b) Educators need to be recognised as professionals and adhere to the standards associated with the teaching professions, inclusive in relation to aspects such a professional registration with South African Council for Educators (SACE), ethics and professional conduct, continuing professional teacher development (CPTD). The professionalisation of those not already adhering to standards for professional recognition should be prioritised. It is important South African Council for Educators (SACE) plays a leading role in this regard. The latter includes in particular those currently working in early learning and development programmes to obtain the required appropriate qualifications and being registered in the correct professional category (educator or practitioner).
- (c) The conditions of service of educators, including remuneration, needs to be market related and match their qualifications, experience, performance, position and specialised skills and knowledge.
- (d) Educators have the responsibility to ensure that they continuously remain up to date with the latest development in their field through self-study, advance qualifications and/or continuing professional teacher development (CPTD). Employers of educators need provide the necessary support towards educators in this regard, while the national and provincial government departments need to have agreed, planned and accredited in-service training and development programmes.

- (e) All educators need to have a basic training on the inclusion of all children/students in learning environment (including disability, gender, diversity, sexual orientation, special educational needs, similar) as part of their pre-service training as well as post qualification continuing professional teacher development (CPTD). Educators working with children/young people with special education needs such as those with severe to profound intellectual disabilities need to have the appropriate knowledge and skills and be accredited through South African Council for Educators (SACE) that they are proficient in providing education to these children/young people.
- (f) A National Education Sector Human Resource Strategy and Plan need to be developed as a priority as to ensure that education workforce meets the demands of quality and inclusive education against national and international goals and commitments by 2030. This strategy and plan must include the adequate supply of educators for the demand as well as the key benchmarks related to the skills and knowledge needed in transforming education in the country.
- (g) The upskilling and retention of educators with scarce skills and knowledge should be incentivized.
- (h) Educators need to be abled and supported in the used of hybrid models of education including in-person and e-learning through digital platforms.
- (i) In-service training, including continuing professional teacher development (CPTD), on inclusion and disability must be provided training providers/ persons accredited with South African Council for Educators (SACE), or other professional Council, and the training programme must meet nationally agreed minimum standards.
- (j) Educators need to be provided with Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSM) that will allow them to teach in professional manner.
- (k) Monitor and quality assure colleges and universities as to ensure that students graduating fully qualified and adequately able to enter the profession.
- (l) Immediate implementation of a curriculum with skills and competencies for a changing world, with the emphasis being on the Three Stream Model, entrepreneurship education, focus schools, coding and robotics, and the implications of the Fourth Industrial Revolution

### **3.2.3 LEARNING AND SKILLS FOR LIFE, WORK, AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

*The following is a synthesised summary of issues raised during the national consultations and does not necessarily reflect the commitment or obligations of the Government of South Africa, neither should it assume to. The commitments of the Government are contained in the National Statement of Commitment.*

Learning and skills for life and work take place within a specific national context with due consideration of the continental and global contexts. Learning embraces knowledge, skills and the development of values and attitudes towards an individual's and collective purpose. Learning is not for children and young people only, but also for adults who have missed educational opportunities, in particular towards functional

literacy, but also the creation of a culture of life-long learning that are essential for life, the world of work and sustainable development.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century there is need to have a learning balance between the academic knowledge and skills like literacy and numeracy; knowledge and skills related to opportunities and challenges in life and work in an ever and rapid changing world; and transversal skills such as critical thinking, creative thinking, communicating, and collaborating, information and technology literacy, flexibility, inter-personal and social skills that are important for adaptation, success and resilience as to be prepared for an uncertain future. The latter are not only essential “life skills” that needs to be integrated and taught across curricula in the education system, but also skills need for the world of work. With younger children, skills taught earlier will ensure that these skills are improved and perfected through their adolescence and youth. By the time these children enter the working space, they have the required skills to thrive in the new world, not only in South Africa but the world. There is currently a mismatch between skills being taught and skills required to enter, succeed or thrive in the workspace.

Pedagogies and approaches in facilitating learning need urgent and rapid transformation especially as most of the archaic approaches to teaching and learning haven't changed for more than a century. This requires a concerted effort through pre-service and in-service training, as well as leadership, policy changes and resourcing for transformative approaches. This requires a national effort within the whole education system to embrace and use inclusive and active pedagogical approaches where the children/learners/students play an active role in learning. Inclusive and active pedagogical approaches are known within the early learning and foundation phase education through play-based learning, while not implemented as required, but should a pedagogical approach within all school grades, special needs education and post school education and training (PSET). This will require a review of curricula as well as the capacity development of the education workforce.

The achievement of the 17 sustainable development goals is dependent on the quality and inclusive learning from early learning to post-secondary education and training, and the kindling of lifelong learning for all. It needs to be filtered in from the start in education curricula in an integrated and practical manner to facilitate the country and world's development goals and challenges such as poverty, inequality, climate change, war and others.

An essential component in learning and skills for life, work, and sustainable development is inclusive and quality Adult basic education and training (ABET) as to ensure that those who did not have education opportunities have access to such opportunities. Adult basic education and training (ABET) approaches need to follow inclusive and active pedagogical approaches, and be fully incorporated in the education system's transformation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Research and innovation need to be driven by the transforming education agenda and the fundamental shifts that are needed. It does not only play an important role to explore new and innovative approaches and methodologies in education for the 21<sup>st</sup>

century, but also play an important role generating continued evidence on what is working and what needs to adjust in reforming education.

Education needs to address the world of work in its broadest sense inclusive of informal and formal sectors, that includes gainful employment, skills for employment and enhancement entrepreneurship.

*Recommendations* for the consultations:

- (a) Young people and adults are supported and have access to quality and inclusive technical and vocational education and training, further and higher education and skills development, including the implementation of quality apprenticeships through Technical and Vocational training college in conjunction with industry.
- (b) Deliberate and plan actions to support children/young people with transition for school to work/ school to post-school education/ post-school education to work.
- (c) Embed transversal skills such as critical thinking, creative thinking, communicating, and collaborating, information and technology literacy, flexibility, inter-personal and social skills in an integrated manner in the curricula for early learning, basic education, special needs education and PSET. It should not left to be “taught” as part of life-skills or life-orientation, but integrated across all subjects.
- (d) Employment opportunities for persons with disabilities should be actively encouraged supported through appropriate education (including skills training facilities) and partnership with the industry. For persons with Intellectual disabilities the model of supported employment has proven to be a good model of employment.
- (e) Sustainable development is included from start in education curricula in an integrated and practical manner to facilitate the country and world’s development goals and challenges such as poverty, inequality, climate change, war and others
- (f) Improve our curriculum to ensure a pathway to the job market as the current curriculum is not providing the necessary skills needed to enter the job market.
- (g) Support to the 3 Streams Education Model to allocate specific skills to implement the model and sufficient resources to fund the model.
- (h) ABET approaches need to follow inclusive and active pedagogical approaches, and be fully incorporated in the education system’s transformation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **3.2.4 DIGITAL LEARNING AND TRANSFORMATION**

*The following is a synthesised summary of issues raised during the national consultations and does not necessarily reflect the commitment or obligations of the Government of South Africa, neither should it assume to. The commitments of the Government are contained in the National Statement of Commitment.*

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the introduction of new ways of learning to continue the education of children, young people and adults through virtual classrooms solution for teaching and learning, broadcasting (TV and Radio), online content and support resources, use of social media platforms and online platforms as a transformative impetus in the country’s education. This can be seen as an unintended “transformative” impetus, but it also brought to the fore the digital divide (inequity),

where those with access to internet and devices reaped the benefit, while those without continued to face challenges that compromised their education.

The cost of internet access in the country is high and free access is limited, not only in terms of available, but also capacity (ability to support high usage). This not only impacted on children/ young people ability to access online learning, but also educators and educational institutions to provide online learning programmes. Digital learning does not only require access to data, but also access to electricity, mobile devices, networks connections for phones, computers/ tablets/ laptops and similar. The costs of access to internet directly impacted on children and young people's Constitutional right to education during the pandemic and continue to do so post pandemic, notwithstanding multiple and innovative interventions by government, civil society and business, while placing an additional burden on already struggling households to feed the bill for digital learning.

The digital learning depends on the closing of the digital divide and access to free internet for all, otherwise the majority of children and young people will not be able to participate in digital learning, while educators and education institutions will not be able to provide digital learning opportunities.

The adaptations to allow digital learning allowed for the start of pedagogical innovation and change for education and other training, but still requires a significant amount of work and innovation. In most instances, in-person face-to-face learning was replaced with on-screen face-to-face learning, rather than digital learning and transformation in pedagogical approaches in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Notwithstanding, it create an environment where physical presence in itself was not necessarily a pre-requisite for learning, in particular in post school education and training (PSET).

Digital learning should be differentiated in terms of appropriateness within the education sector as some parts such as post-school education and training (PSET) are abler to embrace digital learning, while other parts such as early childhood development programme and primary schools required a different approach that may limit digital learning. However, digital learning should not be seen as an end in itself and one-size-fits-all, but as a means of learning that we need to prepare society embrace. Thus, requiring that in educational learning programmes from early learning to post-school education and training (PSET), as well as adult basic education and training (ABET), the transformative element is to progressively and age-appropriately educate children, young people and adults about the digital work and how to embrace digital learning, not only for their formal education, but as part of lifelong learning and skills to adapt to a changing world.

Digital learning should not be construed as a distance learning, but also how technologies are used and applied in the curricula in an active manner from early childhood development to post school education and training (PSET). It includes the gaining of knowledge and development of skills on how to embrace and use technology to adapt to a world of never-ending change.

*Recommendations* for the consultations:

- (a) Close the digital divide (inequity) in terms of access to internet (data) as to ensure that all children/young people and adults have access to digital learning opportunities at no cost. This will require regulatory mechanisms to ensure that the basic right to education is not compromised due to lack of resources to pay for access to digital/online learning opportunities.
- (b) Support through resourcing, research and capacity development pedagogical innovation and change for education towards digital learning and transforming educational approaches.
- (c) Teachers and parents are actively supported through dedicated and well-resourced programmes to participate, implement and support digital learning.
- (d) Embed the used of technology, internet, digital skills in educational learning programmes from early childhood development to post school education and training (PSET), as well as adult basic education and training (ABET), to age-appropriately educate children, young people and adults on digital learning and technologies for their education and lifelong learning and skills to adapt to a changing world.
- (e) Resource educational institutions are endowed with resources that support transformation and digital learning.
- (f) Set clear standards and benchmarks for digital learning as to ensure appropriateness and quality of digital learning and curricula on digital learning.
- (g) Review national policies and plans as to adapt and integrate digital learning and transformation of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **3.2.5 FINANCING OF EDUCATION**

*The following is a synthesised summary of issues raised during the national consultations and does not necessarily reflect the commitment or obligations of the Government of South Africa, neither should it assume to. The commitments of the Government are contained in the National Statement of Commitment.*

Financing of education should be approach in principle as an investment of the human capital of the country and be safeguarded from budget cuts by government. Furthermore, it is important that there is consistent and transparent monitoring of the allocation, utilisation and efficacy of the education budget in line with legislation and policy.

Financial allocation in education enables children, young people and adults to claim their right to education as safeguarded in section 29 of the Constitution, and inadequate budget allocations, under expenditure or wasteful expenditure is a violation of this right. Financing of education does not only relate to the implementation of education, but also financial resources needed to participate in education such as clothing/ school uniform, transport, nutritional support and similar.

Financial allocation to education needs to take into account and prioritise those who are vulnerable and at risk to be deprived of their right to education such as children with disabilities, migrant children/young people, children/young people on the move, refugees, undocumented persons, children living and working on the street, severely disabled children), children/young people at risk of drop-out or who have dropped out.

Transforming education to build forward differently requires a review and reprioritization of national and provincial education budgets as to support the transformation. Agreeing to a new social contract embedded in social justice, human rights and a future orientated education will not be possible without a radical review of the education budgets.

It is important that the compact be reached with business, private sector and corporates, to compliment education budgets, but not in to step in for government funding. Government has an obligation to fund inclusive and quality education in support of national goals and commitment and the transforming education agenda.

Funding needs to be made available to upskill the education workforce as envisaged as part of the transforming education agenda and the country's commitments thereto. This should include dedicated resources to support a well-qualified education workforce in early childhood development as well as special needs education. The private sector, donors, development partners and the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) need to work coherently with government to provide financial support to persons in accessing PSET.

*Recommendations* for the consultations:

- (a) Review the efficacy of National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) as to address the challenges experienced by beneficiaries without delay.
- (b) Allocation of budget to education should be an investment priority and not to be compromised. Safeguarding and expanding the education budget is imperative to development of the nation and ensuring that the country meets its Constitutional and legal obligations in terms of education.
- (c) Allocate funding to provide stimulus to the commitments towards transforming education, with particular emphasis on educator development and training, innovation and resources for inclusive and active pedagogical approaches.
- (d) Dedicated financial resources are required for the upskilling of the education workforce, and more in particular ensure a well-qualified education workforce in early childhood development as well as special needs education.
- (e) Financial resources in education should not only support public education, but also where education is provided by non-profit organisations such education provided should be fully funded as far as it pertains to the right to education and resources for such education.
- (f) Financing of education programmes for children and young people with disabilities should be sufficient to fully realise their right to education.
- (g) Funding and resourcing for children with special educational needs to be adequate and appropriate.
- (h) There should be clear norms and benchmarks for funding in education based on justice and equity and to ensure accountability.
- (i) Oversight bodies like Parliament, Provincial Legislatures and Chapter 9 institutions should monitor education budget allocation and expenditure continuously and transparently with an emphasis on accountability to the nation and the world.

### **3.3 KEY COMPONENTS**

#### **3.3.1 Ensuring full recovery from COVID-19 educational disruption.**

The national consultations confirmed that the recovery of learning losses early childhood development, basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training and skills development must be prioritised through the implementation of a national education recovery plan by 2023 and the allocation of resources towards the recovery. The implementation of the recovery plan requires a collaborative effort amongst all stakeholders as a matter of national interest and priority, which should involve continued dialogue, review and monitoring.

Stakeholders in general agreed that the COVID-19 exacerbated drop-out of children and young people from early childhood development, basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training and skills development, with a particular impact on those most at risk and/or vulnerable. Addressing this, in addition to children and young people who were already outside of the education system prior to the pandemic, requires a concerted effort by all counter physical dropout. Without this, inequality and other associated issues will be exacerbated.

The impact of the pandemic on those educators responsible to facilitate learning in early learning programmes, schools and post school education and training programmes was profound and continues to impact on their psychosocial well-being and physical health which in turn impact on their teaching and support to those the children and young people that they teach. The recovery plan post the pandemic needs to be cognizant of this as a determinant in catching up with the learning losses.

*Recommendations* for the consultations:

- (a) Have a baseline on the learning losses as to ensure that the actions to fastrack recovery can be targeted.
- (b) Full recovery from COVID-19 educational disruption cannot be done by Government alone, but requires public-private partnerships, active involvement and contribution by corporate and business sector, civil society, parents, children and young people, educators, and others through multi-sectoral and multi-actions
- (c) The impact of pandemic on children and young people's education needs to be understood and responded to in the context of their learning and psychosocial needs.
- (d) Sufficient funding needs to be allocated for the recovery from COVID-19 educational disruption supported by clear indicators and benchmarks to be achieved by 2023 as to ensure timely and quality implementation of the recovery plan. Funding should not only be from the State, but also contribute through corporates, business, donor and development partners and the public as part of a national collaborative effort.

- (e) There need to be public accountability on the implementation of the plan to recover from the COVID-19 educational disruption, which include, but is not limited to roles of Parliament, Provincial Legislatures, Chapter 9 Institutions and similar, as to ensure public trust, commitment and participation in the recovery.
- (f) The recovery plan from the COVID-19 educational disruption needs to provide opportunity and impetus towards the transformation of education in the country at all levels, including in terms of legislation, policies, plans, strategies and programmes at a national level and sub-national levels “to build forward differently”.
- (g) A deliberate effort as part of the recovery plan must be to ensure that children and young people at risk of being excluded from education are included such as children and young people living disabilities; children and youth living and working on the streets; migrants, amongst others.

### **3.3.2 Identifying the main strategic transformations and levers for reimagining education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and accelerating progress towards shared education goals.**

Educators to be at the centre of the transforming and reimagining education for the 21st century, support by enabling government policy, training programmes and budget allocation. Pedagogies and approaches in facilitating learning need urgent and rapid transformation through a concerted effort through pre-service and in-service training, as well as leadership, policy changes and resourcing for transformative approaches within the whole education system to embrace and use inclusive and active pedagogical approaches where the children/learners/students play an active role in learning.

Specific recommendations and commitments were covered under paragraph 3.2 of the report.

### **3.3.3 Ensuring strengthened and more sustainable public financing of education**

See paragraph 3.2.5 of report as the above is covered in full there.

### **3.3.4 Raising the ambition of national education targets and benchmarks**

Education as a fundamental right is at the heart of national targets and ambitions. This has been confirmed through the national consultations.

Furthermore, the series of national consultations re-energized stakeholders in education towards a collaborative and coordinated approach to achieve national targets through their inputs. This is supported by a commitment from government, based on the National Statement of Commitment and National Report on National consultations as well as the Outcome document of the Transforming Education Summit develop a national plan of action to enhance, enrich and embed transformation into existing plans. Not starting new, but building forward differently.

## **LIST OF PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS IN THE NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS <sup>22</sup>**

South African National Commission for UNESCO  
Department of Higher Education and Training  
Department of Basic Education  
Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO)  
Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities  
National Youth Development Agency (NYDA)  
UNESCO  
UNICEF  
United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office  
Eastern Cape Department of Education  
Free State Department of Education  
Gauteng Department of Education  
Gauteng Provincial Legislature  
KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education  
Limpopo Department of Education  
Limpopo Department of Transport  
Mpumalanga Department of Education  
Northern Cape Education Department  
Western Cape Education Department

National Department of Health  
Department of Mineral Resources and Energy  
Department of Public Enterprises  
Department of Science and Innovation  
Department of Human Settlements  
Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation  
Department of Public Works  
Department of Communications and Digital Technologies  
Department of Employment and Labour  
Auditor General South Africa  
National Planning Commission  
Statistics South Africa

South African Council for Educators (SACE)  
South African Association for Social Workers in Private Practice (SAASWIPP)  
South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP)  
Council on Higher Education (CHE)  
Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO)  
South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)

Agape Family Ministries

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<sup>22</sup> This is the list of organizations, not individuals.

Association for the Education and Care of Young Children (AECYC)  
Association of Private Providers of Education, Training and Development (APPETD)  
Autism South Africa  
Black Business Council  
Black Management Forum  
Book Dash  
Bosch South Africa  
Centre for Social Development in Africa (CSDA)  
Centre for the Study of Resilience, University of Pretoria  
Cipla Foundation  
CSIR, Next Generation Enterprises and Institutions Cluster  
Development and Training  
Development Institute for the Deaf and Blind  
Discovery Limited  
Down Syndrome South Africa  
Early Learning Resource Unit (ELRU)  
Educate Lead & Achieve (Youth in Business South Africa)  
Environment and Language Education Trust  
Equal Education  
EU Delegation to South Africa  
Federation of Associations of Governing Bodies of South African Schools (FEDSAS)  
First National Bank (FNB)  
Fundisa for Change/ South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)  
Girls and Boys Education Movement (GEM/BEM)  
Governing Body Foundation  
Governors Alliance  
Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator  
Hope World Wide  
Impande South Africa  
Inceba Trust  
Independent Girls Business Enterprise Pty Ltd  
Institute of Training and Education for Capacity-building  
Jakes Gerwel Fellowship  
Kagiso Trust  
Knysna Education Trust  
KST (collaboration between Kagiso Trust and the Cyril Ramaphosa Foundation)  
Michael & Susan Dell Foundation  
Midlands Community College  
National Association of School Governing Bodies – KwaZulu Natal  
National Early Childhood Development Alliance (NECDA)  
National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT)  
New Leaders Foundation  
Occupational Therapy Association of South Africa (OTASA)  
Old Mutual

Parents for Children with Special Educational Needs  
PIFF  
Professional Educators' Union  
Safe and Sound Learning Association  
Sasol Foundation  
Sasol Foundation  
SchoolNet South Africa  
Sesame Workshop International  
Signs Connect  
Sikhula Sonke Early Childhood Development  
SmartStart  
South African BRICS Youth Association (SABYA)  
South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU)  
South African National Deaf Association  
South African Student Congress Organization (SASCO)  
Telkom SA  
The Balule Outreach Trust  
The LEGO Foundation  
The Media in Education Trust (MIET) Africa  
The University of the Witwatersrand, The Centre for Deaf Studies  
Training and Resources in Early Education (TREE)  
Tshikululu Social Investments  
United Front for School Governing Bodies  
Universities South Africa  
University of Pretoria  
Volkswagen  
VVOB Education for Development  
Western Cape Forum for Intellectual Disability  
Western Cape Foundation for Community Work (FCW)  
Youth Employment Service