

WEEKLY UPDATE:

16 April 2020

COURAGE, FORWARD THINKING AND GROUNDED ACTIONS

CORPORATE FUNDERS, FOUNDATIONS AND NGOS WORK TOGETHER TO SUPPORT THE EDUCATIONAL RESPONSES TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

THE CONTINUITY OF LEARNING REMAINS A TOP PRIORITY DURING THE LOCKDOWN

We hope that those of our partners who observe Good Friday had a restful and fulfilling Easter holiday. Regards from all of us at the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT). In the third week of the 21-lockdown starts, the NECT, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and partners are encouraged that the nationwide collaborative efforts to maintain the continuity of learning have gained momentum. Apart from the extensive partnerships with private sector companies, foundations, NGOs and several stakeholders in the information and communications technology space, the broadcasting of lessons has been elevated with the announcement by the public broadcaster, SABC, of a comprehensive offering.

MEDIA BROADCAST SERVICES ARE UP AND RUNNING

Last week, the SABC and the DBE launched a multi-media learner support initiative under the banner: COVID-19 Learner Support. For example, from Thursday, April 09, SABC 1, SABC 2 and SABC 3 have been broadcasting content to help learners. The following radio stations, with extensive national coverage, which comes free of charge, and are accessible to most South African households, have started broadcasting lessons and other learning support initiatives:

SABC Radio Stations	Community Radio Stations
1. Ukhozi Fm	1. Pulpit FM.
2. Umhlobo Wenene Fm	2. Radio Laeveld, Radio Kragbon.
3. Lesedi Fm	3. Rise FM.
4. Motswedding Fm	4. Makhado FM.
5. Munghana Lonene Fm	5. Mala FM.
6. Phalaphala Fm	6. UniVen FM and Musina FM.
7. Thobela Fm	7. Tru Fm
8. Radio Sonder Grense	8. X-K Fm
9. Ikwewezi FM	
10. Ligwalagwala FM	
11. SA FM	
12. Radio 2000	

Online support

A series of online broadcasts have commenced. These provide curriculum support lessons to learners in Grades 10, 11 & 12 and Early Childhood Development (ECD). They include:

- Privately run platforms with emphasis on subjects such as Mathematics, Physical Sciences, English FAL, Life Sciences and Accounting, with different African languages being catered for under ECD.
- A partnership with Bhelela and 2Enable to give access to CAPS-aligned textbooks and teacher guides;
- Arrangements with telecommunication companies that have waived subscription fees and data costs to ensure free access to their educational content, e.g. Vodacom Digital Classroom, Telkom e-Education, MTN and Siyavula, African Storybook, WCED e-Portal, Khan Academy's YouTube channel, Mindset Learn, Nal'ibali, etc.

This adds to the bouquet of other initiatives announced previously available in different newspapers, on community radio stations, on the OpenView HD platform, DStv and many online solutions, among others.

Apart from the many partnerships announced in previous communication, the following have been added:

- Online platforms such as major updates to the DBE website (www.education.gov.za) to include more links to study materials, multimedia and reading materials.
- The Western Cape Education Department and Stellenbosch University have also made their Telematics lesson content available.

More details are available, and will be added as they come onstream, on the DBE website, www.education.gov.za.

The initial observations from the Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) programme attached to the Education Response Package has so far been in contact with 121 subject advisors and teachers. It has established are that:

1. More South African households, particularly the rural and the less affluent, largely use the radio and TV broadcasts which have very low access barriers.
2. Most South African houses are grappling to understand this new notion of e-learning, necessitating ongoing support, and how to support learners to take advantage of the content supplied.
3. There is high supply of content via online, TV and radio channels which have the potential to confuse the households and to send unfitting content, including content which is not properly sequenced and geared towards the national curriculum.
4. Even though teachers are willing to support learners from home via social media, data accessibility appears to be a challenge.

We suggested South Africans must turn their efforts and energies towards addressing the demand-side issues and to ensure that households are optimally utilising the abundant resources available.

- Simple ways to structure the day of learner(s) in each household to ensure that they spend minimum time on effective learning and teaching activities, balanced with some active life is recommended.
- The DBE and the NECT are working with the provinces in collaboration with partners such as the Independent Schools' Association of South Africa (ISASA) to develop simple guidelines to be followed by households, teachers and learners in this respect

HEALTH AND HYGIENE ELEMENTS

The NECT has established from the DBE that discussions are ensuing between the department (national and provincial) and the Department of Health on how to safeguard the health of teachers and learners when they do come back to school.

The DBE has committed to sharing the emerging Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), which are being developed. We would like to reiterate our gratitude for the research that is being undertaken by organisations such as the National Association of Social Change Entities in Education (NASCEE), which is aimed at strengthening our national strategies for responding to the disaster in education. The NECT partnered with NASCEE on this research agenda and in addition reviewed literature on how other education systems have responded and recovered from disasters caused by disease, wars and natural phenomena.

FEEDING INTERVENTIONS FOR UNDERPRIVILEGED LEARNERS

The NECT, in collaboration the DBE, are continuing to engage with partners on how to address the nutritional needs of the learners. DBE, in particular, is working with the Department of Social Development (DSD) on this aspect.

TEACHER ENGAGEMENT AND WELFARE

There is a growing number of activities that are being implemented to keep the teachers intellectually engaged during the lockdown and entertain their psychosocial concern. These include the following:

- E-mail and WhatsApp feeds being sent to teachers who are responsible for teaching reading, and school management.
- A twenty-episode programme on Radio 2000, which was launched on Monday, April 13. The Programme runs every weekday at 14:30. The series is meant to engage, inform and enable teachers to share insights and ideas about:
 - A. Reducing the COVID-19 infections during the lockdown period and once the schools are reopened;
 - B. Supporting the learners during the lockdown period and beyond;
 - C. Managing psycho-social impacts of the disaster on the learners and the teachers themselves;
 - D. Educational issues that impact on teachers. In particular, the teachers will participate in discussing the recently released report that on the teaching career in South Africa – their allocation to subjects, teacher associations, teaching environments, professional development and the career of teaching as a whole.

Listeners will be able to participate in discussions with education experts, partners, unions, sponsors, government leaders and hear how they can help our children learn during the lockdown.

Our partners are invited to volunteer on the show to contribute on the thematic areas listed above. We invite partners to tune in and to encourage others to do the same. For more information on this slot, please contact the NECT using the contacts provided below.

ONGOING CONSULTATION AMONG KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The NECT specifically supports consultations and by fosters multiple-stakeholder collaboration to optimise synergies. As the lead facilitator of the Education Response Package during the COVID-19 disaster period, it has sustained this effective approach to the management of stakeholder relations, and would like to highlight other developments in this regard:

- DBE has been in constant consultation with the teacher unions and the National Curriculum Assessment Task Team (NCATT) on crafting a Comprehensive and Coherent Recovery Plan for all Grades and all subjects and to discuss the reopening of schools and the associated, human resources issues.
- The South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) has set up a dedicated WhatsApp messenger communicator service so that its members can "receive from the union, clear and accurate updates on COVID19". The National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) for its part is also working with teachers' unions to plan with the DBE. Updates will be sent to ensure that members are kept abreast of all discussions and negotiations with the government.

The DBE is working with the NECT will have an information and consultation session with civil society organisations operating in the education sector. The NECT is working with the National Associations of Social Change Entities in Education (NASCEE) organise the session scheduled to take place on the web on Wednesday, 22 April 2020.

- The Interim Steering Committee (ISC) supporting the response plan – which is comprised of the DBE, the NECT and representatives of the Old Mutual Foundation, UNICEF, Momentum Metropolitan Holdings, ETDPSeta and FirstRand continues to meet weekly to support the implementation of the Education Response Plan. The ISC represents the interests of all involved, ensures swift joint decisions, gathers strategic inputs, communicates to the broader stakeholder group and liaises with the Solidarity Fund on the implementation of the education response plan.

The NECT wishes to thank the following organisations that have so far provided financial and other forms of resources to drive the Education Response Plan: Old Mutual Foundation, Momentum Metropolitan Holdings (MMI), Woolworths, UNICEF and ISASA. The NECT welcomes the commitment expressed by the organisations that have reached out to establish how they can assist and further commends the many organisations and individuals that are supporting various activities geared towards improving learning and the health and welfare of teachers.

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Masilelas@nect.org.za

ADDITIONAL USEFUL INFORMATION

Organisation	Contact Details
NICD	www.nicd.ac.za
COVID-19 Learners Support	www.education.gov.za
COVID-19 information	www.sacoronavirus.co.za
Coronavirus 24-hour Hotline	0800 029 999
Coronavirus WhatsApp	060 012 3456
Official Government Regulations and Guidelines on COVID-19	www.gov.za/coronavirus/guidelines
Business for South Africa	www.businessforsa.org
Solidarity Fund	<p>www.solidarityfund.co.za or any general information on the Solidarity Fund – info@solidarityfund.co.za</p> <p>For individual donation queries – individual@solidarityfund.co.za</p> <p>For corporate donation queries – corporate@solidarityfund.co.za</p> <p>For foundation donation queries – foundation@solidarityfund.co.za</p> <p>0860 001 001</p>
Interim Steering Committee (ISC) COVID-19 Learners Support Old Mutual Foundation United Nations' Children's Fund (UNICEF) Momentum Momentum Metropolitan Holdings FirstRand National Association of Social Change Entities in Education (NASCEE) Heartlines DG Murray Trust PILO	<p>DBE and NECT covidresponse@nect.org.za</p> <p>www.education.gov.za</p> <p>www.oldmutual.co.za / www.oldmutual.co.za/covid-19</p> <p>www.unicef.org</p> <p>www.momentum.co.za</p> <p>www.momentummetropolitan.co.za</p> <p>www.firstrand.co.za</p> <p>https://nascee.org.za/ info@nascee.org.za</p> <p>https://heartlines.org.za</p> <p>www.dgmt.co.za/</p> <p>www.pilo.co.za</p>



Organisation	Contact Details
CovidComms SA	covidcomms.org.za
Zenex Foundation	www.zenexfoundation.org.za
SABC	www.sabc.co.za
DSTV	www.dstv.co.za
Vodacom	www.vodacom.com
MTN	www.mtn.co.za
Telkom	www.telkom.co.za
Cell-C	www.cellc.co.za
JET Education Services	www.jet.org.za