

ANNUAL REPORT

2020



2013 - 2019

- Scale up
- Social Capital
- Social Networks
- Significance



2020

- Triumph
- Courage
- Agility
- Focus
- Empathy



POST COVID

- Optimism
- Supporting Education Recovery
- Agility



2030 NDP GOALS

- Social Cohesion
- Growth
- Quality Education
- Skilled workforce

CREATIVE AND AGILE RESPONSE TO DISRUPTIONS.

Seven years of social capital to pursue the NDP vision.



ACHIEVE
DISTINCTIVE,
SUBSTANTIAL, AND
SUSTAINABLE
IMPROVEMENTS

MISSION

Our mission is to mobilise national capacity to assist government to achieve distinctive, substantial and sustainable improvements in education.

We want South African children to possess the skills, knowledge and attitudes that enable them to live economically gainful and fulfilled lives.





“The NECT will be critical for the route towards the recovery of education as many of the gains of the past 25 years have been eroded

SIZWE NXASANA Chairman

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

The year 2020 marked a post-Apartheid development crescendo. The gains in our democracy, the education reform agenda and the steady, - but definite, - progress towards the 2030 NDP goals were abruptly disrupted by the COVID pandemic. The education improvement needs changed drastically during 2020 and will require different forms of engagement going forward.

Fortunately, the NECT was conceived with the kind of agility that enables it to refocus its work in line with the support requirements of government and partners in the education sector. The agile capabilities of the NECT were effectively used to minimize possible regress in the education sector. During the year, the NECT assumed new roles including undertaking an independent, strategic assessment of the readiness of the education system to reopen safely and to coordinate critical partner support initiatives such as the Woza Matrics programme that provided 369 learning episodes which were broadcast for the national senior certificate students. The nimble and extensive strategic responses of the NECT were possible due to the social capital that has been built over its expansive seven years of networking stakeholders and expertise. The fungible social capital that brought about impact to 86% of schools nationally by 2019 was swiftly used to address the new challenges brought about by the 2020 health pandemic.

South Africans can be commended for the great spirit of collaboration portrayed during the disaster. As a result of this collaboration, the number of joint and special projects between the NECT and other players increased during the disaster period. The frequency of dialogues increased; stakeholder groups such as the private sector corporations and teacher unions took up new support roles. Notable among the dialogues, are the Ministerial civil society update meetings which took place almost monthly and the senior leadership engagements that were held about the reopening of the schools. In this regard, we would like to thank Minister Motshekga, the patrons of the NECT – Ms Phumzile-Mlambo Ngcuka, Mr Bobby Godsell and Mr James Motlatsi; as well as the teacher unions (led by the President of SADTU Mr Maphela and the Director of Naptosa – Mr Basil Manuel) who worked with the trustees of the NECT to facilitate agreements towards a smooth reopening of the schools.

On the other hand, the operations of the NECT were impacted like in many other organisations. In this regard, the Board of trustees advised Management to revisit the operations model and plans, to gear up the organization to respond to the new challenges in education and to avoid sustainability risks. The reorganization of

the NECT was primarily two-fold. Firstly, the programmes were frequently revisited to ensure that the organization responded to the most strategic needs in the education sector; and secondly, an additional collaboration platform was established to network additional partners in response to the new challenges. The new networking platform included five investment portfolios aimed at establishing national initiatives to address remote and digital learning; psychosocial support for learners and teachers; improving reading among learners; mobilizing communities to support learners' return to schools; and to re-imagine learning. Three of the investment portfolios (Remote and Digital Learning, Psychosocial Support, and Reading) have taken root. Combined, they have secured partner investments of over R140 million. The Board is particularly impressed by the fact that the NECT has maintained a good balance of focus between urgent risk-aversion needs and the continuation of long-term improvement initiatives. For instance, the organization remains focused on improving the quality of teachers to teach reading, mathematics and science; it is supporting the eradication of the pit latrines where we have provided facilities in over 60 schools and are working towards providing the same in over 600 schools.

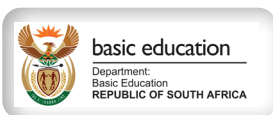
The sustainability of the NECT is certain as the organization continues to receive support from its partners. We have noticed that our special project funding has outstripped the core funding, nevertheless our core funding remains stable. We are thankful to the core funders of the NECT, whose details are included in Section 7, who continue to support this noble course. The NECT will be critical for the route towards the recovery of education as many of the gains of the past 25 years have been wiped out. We count on the commitments of all our partners to stay the course towards the NDP goals.

Lastly, I wish to express our anticipation of the evaluation of the NECT which is spearheaded by the FirstRand Foundation and led by three evaluators: Professors Mvuyo Tom, Elaine Unterhalter and Molefe Ralenala. The evaluators are supported by the Human Science Research Council and Citofield. We hope that the evaluation will bring out critical insights about the impacts of a national initiative such as the NECT in supporting our macro-development plan.

FUNDING PARTNERS

The NECT conveys its gratitude for the generosity and the support received from our partners which has enabled us to continue driving the positive agenda for education reform in our country. Through your support, we have achieved much for the South African Children.

Core Funders:



Special Projects:





“The big concern across the globe is on how to plan and undertake effective and sustainable education recovery

GODWIN KHOSA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

CEO'S REFLECTION

The focus of the NECT work in 2020 had many shifts. The annual strategy that was approved by the Board and endorsed by the DBE senior management in February 2020 guided our programming for only one month. Following the suspension of schooling in March due to the lockdown, we reviewed the strategic attention of the organization, the deployment of its resources and the thinking about its future. The changes consequentially impacted on the nature and the impact of the outcomes of the organization.

Three phases made up the strategy of the NECT following the suspension of the normal operations. The first phase was made up of an assumption of the role of the disaster organization that helped to minimize the impact of the pandemic on the sector. In this regard, the NECT swiftly moved to engaging the DBE and its partners about how to support its response programmes. A response programme comprising the following four parts was adopted: 1) communication and dialogue about the pandemic and continuation of learning; 2) the continuation of learning via remote and digital learning; 3) the coordination of the partner activities; 4) and the collection of strategic monitoring and evaluation about the readiness of schools to reopen, and the amount of learning that was achieved on the basis of the trimmed curriculum. The assessment of the readiness of the basic education system to reopen was a complex, first time process that provided independent critical insights to the DBE, the National Corona Virus Command Council, teacher unions and the public about how to reopen schools without risking the lives of the learners and the teachers. Some of the key findings of the evaluation were on how the provincial departments battled to set up and operationalize disaster management systems for the first time. The continuation of schooling for the matric learners and the partial reopening of schools for the other grades in July should be counted as a great success. *See Section 1 for the summary of the rapid interventions that the NECT took to contribute to the mitigation of the effects of the pandemic.*

Even with the foresight to partially reopen the schools in the second half of the year, the discontinuations of learning and teaching and the rotational timetabling had a serious impact on

learning. Data collected by the NECT from 100 schools, at the end of the 2020 academic year, shows that learners lost about 70% of schooling days; that only half of the schools completed the trimmed curriculum; and that the learners had very little written work in their exercise books and the DBE workbooks. A comparison of the oral reading fluency of learners shows that the gains in reading that were registered by the Primary Schools Reading Programme before 2020 regressed. For instance, the rate of non-readers was found to have increased by 4,2 percentage points.

While attending to the short-term effects of the pandemic was central to the work of the NECT, long term programming remained a significant part of the work done in 2020. The following are some of the programmes that remained the focus of the NECT despite limited rollout opportunities due to the competing short-term initiatives: Professional development of teachers in mathematics and languages remained where the Northwest Department continued to scale the learning programmes; research on the learning competencies which is an area where the NECT is working with the DBE to infuse the new thinking into the curriculum; the modernization of the school management system, the migration of ECD to the Department of Basic Education; and the rollout of the schools sanitation project.

As in any organisation, people are key to operations and organisational sustainability. In this regard, the NECT resolved to save the jobs among its over 100 direct and indirect employees by redirecting their focus to the emergency work of supporting the DBE through strategic data collection and implementing much needed psycho-social support. The engagement days of some of the human resources, especially the returned education retirees were reduced.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

INCOME		2020	2019	2018
TOTAL INCOME IN RANDS		298,082,220	261,501,131	262,298,343
INCOME SOURCES	GOVERNMENT SOURCES %	62%	65%	60%
	NON-GOVERNMENT SOURCES %	38%	35%	40%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE IN RANDS		245,650,491	245,513,305	269,923,151
EXPENDITURE		2020	2019	2018
EXPENDITURE SPLITS	Education Programme %	47%	59%	81%
	Special Projects %	46%	35%	12%
	Administration Cost %	7%	6%	7%
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR IN RANDS		52,432,729	15,536,664	(7,624,809)

The big concern across the globe is on how to plan and undertake effective and sustainable education recovery. It is envisaged that the rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations will allow learners and teachers to get back to the classrooms fully. Meanwhile, the limited teaching contact time resulting from the pandemic has demonstrated the role that remote and digital learning can play in education. This potential from technological advancements and the domination of artificial intelligence creates an opportunity for reimagining education. Therefore, the recovery of education will be preoccupied by the need to close the learning losses that manifested since the beginning of 2020 and a search for new ways of delivering education including how to be more prepared for other potential disasters. These three concerns define the education improvement strategy and sounds out the increased need for collaboration among education stakeholders.

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Financial Review





SECTION

01

NECT's Response to
the Covid-19 Pandemic



TWELVE 12 AGILE AND STRATEGIC WAYS IN WHICH THE NECT SUPPORTED THE RESPONSE TO COVID-19 DISRUPTIONS

01 SCHOOL READINESS ASSESSMENTS	02 COORDINATION OF PARTNERS	03 PATRONS DIALOGUE
<p>A consortium of expert organizations to provide critical advice to government, teacher unions and the public on the readiness of the schools to reopen. All provincial departments and over 13 000 teachers, parents and learners were surveyed or visited to advise how schools can open safely.</p>	<p>The NECT worked with the DBE, UNICEF, Old Mutual, MMI, FirstRand and ETPSETA to coordinate donor responses to COVID-19. Over R30 million was raised through this initiative. The funds supported the broadcasting of lessons, strategic communications, the provision of critical teaching and learning materials as well as the bolstering of sanitation provisions.</p>	<p>The NECT patrons, Phumzile Mlambo-Gcuka, Bobby Godsell and James Motlatsi joined the Chairman and the CEO of the NECT to facilitate discussions and broker agreements between government and teacher unions on the reopening of the schools after the first COVID-19 wave.</p>
04 DEVELOPMENT OF READERS	05 SANITATION PROVISIONS	06 WARD PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT
<p>The NECT diverted its underutilized field capacity comprising of experienced retirees to write 20 story books for the primary schools in five African languages. The project was ably coordinated by Ms Claudine Rambau, one of the field staff, who sadly succumbed to the second wave of COVID-19.</p>	<p>UNICEF and Assupol worked with the NECT rollout handwashing stations and ablution facilities in schools. Ablution facilities for a further 20 schools and 117 washing stations were sponsored by the two partners.</p>	<p>A model to extend psychosocial support beyond schools was designed, tested and rolled out in 25 electoral ward committees. This initiative was inspired by Mr Themba Kojana, the former Head of Department of the Eastern Cape Department, who challenged the NECT to take the fight against COVID-19 to community level. Mr Kojana also died from COVID-19 complications.</p>
07 ESTABLISHMENT OF INVESTMENT PORTFOLIOS	08 SWITCH TO VIRTUAL PLATFORMS	09 CRITICAL COMMUNICATION OF DEVELOPMENTS
<p>To counter the expected decline of funding to the education sector despite an anticipated increase in the education recovery needs, the NECT proposed to establish 'Education Recovery Investment portfolios' – platforms meant to expand partner networks and safety network for NGOs. Over R100m commitments were achieved.</p>	<p>In the context where no contact sessions were possible, the NECT capitalized on virtual platforms to continue its professional development endeavors. A total 268 subject advisors and 8549 teachers were reached. Many had to be inducted to the new training platforms.</p>	<p>The NECT introduced a special newsletter through which it disseminated current information about the response initiatives from government and non-governmental players. This communications initiative was replaced by the Minister's consultative meetings.</p>
10 MINISTER'S CONSULTATIVE MEETING	11 TEACHER DIALOGUE	12 THE VIRTUAL READING CLUB
<p>During the period of shock and disarray in the sector, the NECT used its Education DialogueSA to enable the education ministry and the department to regularly brief stakeholders to gather their views on how to sustain learning and teaching and avoid infections. The participation of the Ministry and its availability to engage with the public on the platform was welcomed nationally and appreciated internationally.</p>	<p>The NECT, its partners and the DBE delivered a 20-session national dialogue programme on Radio 2000 on elements of teachers' responses to COVID-19 and their daily engagements. The programme provided focus and motivation for teachers but was also used to disseminate a research report conducted by the DBE and Centre for International Education on the life and professional engagements of teachers.</p>	<p>A virtual reading club was introduced under the banner of the National Reading Coalition. The Virtual Reading Club networks individuals and other reading clubs to pursue President Ramaphosa's challenge to have South African read one book a month.</p>

DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, WE MANAGED TO ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING:

- Timeous development of policy guidelines (Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs); Parent and Responders' Guides; and Psychosocial Support (PSS) Model
- Radio and social media messaging
- Training district officials on the use of MS Teams for online meetings
- Introduction of online learning and teaching support
- Swift mobilization and training of community leaders to serve as PSS responders
- Revision of teacher resources and training
- Swift shift from face-to-face training to using online platforms

SECTION

02

Keeping learning going,
in the midst of a pandemic



This section of the report shares the roles that the NECT played to support the continuation of teaching and learning at school, at home, and in relation to the competencies of the future.

2.1. OVER 1 000 000 LEARNERS BENEFITED FROM THE EDUCATION BROADCASTING PROGRAMME LAUNCHED DURING THE LOCKDOWN.

EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTING

As the education sector grappled with finding a balance between saving the 2020 academic year and avoiding the loss of life, harnessing the collective wisdom, capabilities and contributions of government, labour and civil society was essential to achieving this balance. In the end, the pandemic forced the education sector to invest more in digital and online teaching and learning then and going into the future. The NECT and DBE in collaboration with various partners conceptualized and strengthened the use of radio and television broadcast to deliver curriculum content through the following programmes.

- Woza Matrics 2020 Catch Up Campaign aimed at broadcasting lessons for learners writing the National Senior Certificate (NSC)

- The Tswelopele programme aimed at broadcasting lessons for Grades 1-11 learners to ensure that these grades are not left behind.

The National Income Dynamics Study - Corona virus Rapid Mobile Study report suggests that learners lost over 60% of learning time. To support learners during this time, and in preparation for exams, the 2 important programmes, referenced above, were conceptualized and introduced.



Between 01 April and 30 September 2020, the NECT and its partners made use of radio and television to broadcast curriculum content. Provincial education departments, including the Western Cape and Gauteng Education Departments availed their educational broadcasting content to be broadcast on various platforms.

EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTING PARTNERS:



ONLINE LEARNING SUPPORT

In the context of constrained access to the classroom, remote and digital means of teaching and learning became necessary. Online learning support targeted over 2 000 000 learners, and provided guidance to teachers and parents on how to support learners from home. This support included zero-rating educational websites, and the introduction of educational broadcasting on radio and television. Furthermore, the programming provided support for dealing with psychosocial challenges experienced due to the pandemic.





200 Websites

Were granted zero-rated status



1 400 lessons

Were broadcast on radio.

ONLINE LEARNING SUPPORT ACHIEVEMENTS



Zero-rated Websites

Over 200 websites were granted zero-rated status, allowing learners, teachers, and parents to access the website or platform free of charge. This included:

- All national and provincial department of education websites
- NECT
- Siyavula
- 2Enable



Radio Broadcasting

Radio broadcasting was rolled out from April-December 2020.

- SABC Radio availed 12 regional and national radio stations to broadcast lessons for 30 minutes daily.
- Between April 2020 and December 2020, over 1 400 lessons were broadcast on radio.
- Mpumalanga Education Department managed the broadcasting of over 760 learning episodes across 20 community radio stations.



Television Broadcasting

Television broadcasting was rolled out from 1 April-30 September 2020.

- SABC 2 and SABC 3 television channels broadcast lessons for 2.5 hours, 5 days a week.
- DSTV Channel 317 and OpenView HD (OVHD) Channel 122, with lessons being broadcast for 24 hours a day on OVHD.

The Woza Matrics 2020 Catch Up Campaign began on 1 September 2020 and was aimed at providing a primarily free-to-air, supplementary broadcast support programme. By December 2020, the programme had reached an estimated 1 000 000 learners. The Tswelopele Campaign began in October 2020 to support learners in Grades R-11 with curriculum and psychosocial support.



ENSURING WIDE REACH AND KEY SUBJECT SUPPORT



Woza Matrics 2020 Catch Up
Campaign was launched
1 September 2020

- A primarily free-to-air, supplementary broadcast support programme to assist matriculants on curriculum catch up, exam revision and preparation
- 369 learning episodes were broadcast on SABC 3, OVHD and DSTV Catch-up for 4 hours a day.

SUPPORTED SUBJECTS

- Accounting
- Business Studies
- Economics
- English First Additional Language
- Geography
- History
- Life Sciences
- Mathematics
- Mathematical Literacy

In October, interactive exam guide shows were introduced for Woza Matrics. Learners could submit questions via WhatsApp or Facebook and teachers and subject advisors would respond to the questions during the show. To allow for greater inclusivity, the interactive shows incorporated sign language interpretation to support learners with hearing impairments. Overall viewership for the episodes ranged between 10 019 and 20 134 per episode, with viewership being higher for the afternoon broadcasts.

Similar to the Woza Matrics Campaign, the Tswelopele Campaign provided supplementary curriculum support and psychosocial support to learners in Grades R-11. The programme was broadcast for 9 weeks on SABC 1, 2, 3 and OVHD Channel 122, and supported the following grades and subjects.



Tswelopele 2020 Campaign was
launched on 01 October 2020

- Provided curriculum and psychosocial support to learners in non-Matric grades
- Over 630 hours of broadcasted educational content over 9 weeks across SABC and OVHD.

SUPPORTED SUBJECTS

- Mathematics
- English Home Language & FAL
- Life Sciences
- Physical Sciences
- Natural Sciences
- Social Sciences
- Geography
- Technology

FEEDBACK FROM SOME OF THE MATRIC CLASS OF 2020 ON HOW THEY BENEFITED FROM WOZA MATRICS PROGRAMME

“ Last year I wrote matric at Thebalentsha High School in Ladysmith. And I passed! Woza Matrics helped me a lot. I used to watch History on SABC TV. I watched every morning. I live with my family and we are eight people in the house. But they didn't mind me watching so I could pass my matric. “
Luyanda Mthlane



“ I attended Hlelimfondo Secondary School in Mpumalanga where I wrote my matric last year. It was difficult with the pandemic. We were forced to study on our own and stay at home. But I am happy that I passed. I used to watch Woza Matrics on SABC. I don't have data so I couldn't use the website. I especially liked Business Studies. I thought it was difficult but the show made me realise it is not so hard. “
Sabelo Hlatshwayo



“ Last year I wrote matric and passed. Woza Matrics helped me a lot. I don't have data so I couldn't study online. But I watched all the Accounting programmes on SABC. They really showed me how to tackle exams, like what to expect in different sections. This year I am at the University of Pretoria studying to be a teacher. I like being around children and helping them. Last year I helped my classmates and I realised that teaching is a vocation for me. “
Lungelo Sakude



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES HAD SUBSTANTIVE REACH – EVIDENCE FROM 2400 LEARNERS, TEACHERS, AND PARENTS

Key to providing an educational broadcasting programme that would give the necessary learning support to as many learners as possible, is to ensure that programming is evidence based. To this end, a monitoring and evaluation framework was developed and implemented over a nine (9) week period. Over 2 400 learners, teachers and parents were targeted and surveyed on a weekly basis on the awareness of and usage of the two educational programmes. The insights gathered through the surveys informed how the programmes were modified over time and have been taken into account for the 2021 programmes.

FINDING FROM WOZA MATRICS SURVEYING

For Woza Matrics, the Monitoring and Quality Assurance (MQA) team targeted a random sample of over 2 000 Grade 12 learners across nine (9) provinces to participate in a weekly survey either by WhatsApp or via a phone call. The surveying determined the extent to which learners were aware of and watching Woza Matrics.

- There is a preference for hard copy study guides and learning materials.
- Learners preferred attending extra classes than watching television for studying.



2039 Learners

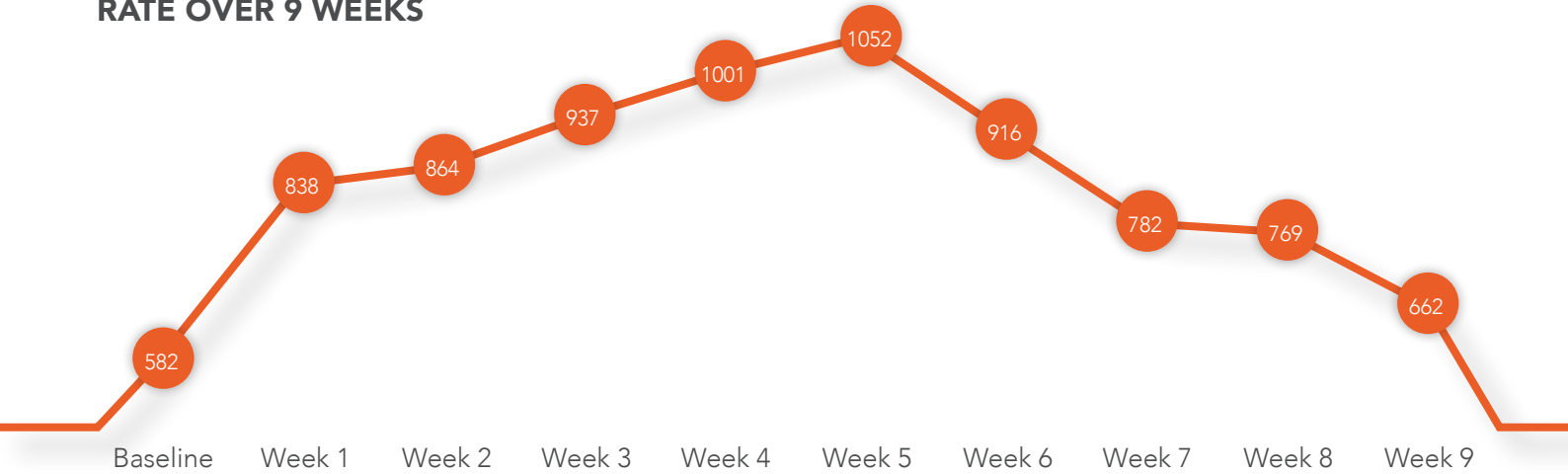
Highest number targeted in a week



840 Learners

Average number of learner responses

WOZA MATRICS RESPONSE RATE OVER 9 WEEKS



- The average learner response rate was 41%.
- An interesting finding is that 22% of interviewed learners had no access to television.

WOZA MATRICS 2020



656 Learners

With access to TV

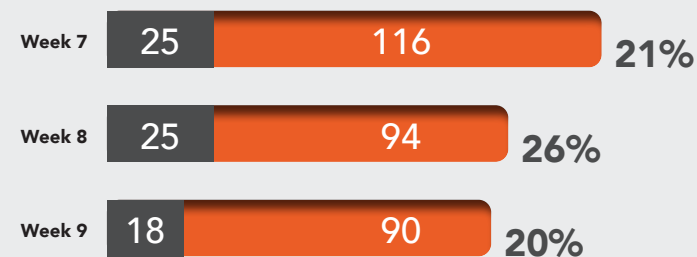


184 Learners

Without access to TV

INTERACTIVE SESSIONS

Graphs below show the number of learners who watched the interactive lessons and asked questions. Between 20-27% of learners who watched interactive sessions asked questions.



- Watched interactive session
- Asked questions

- Interactive lessons were introduced in the Week 7 and provided an opportunity for learners to submit questions and have them answered during the lesson. The graphs below show the number of learners who reported watching the interactive lessons and asking questions. Of those who watched, between 20-27% asked questions.
- According to the learners, the main reason for not watching the lessons was because learners were either at school, attending extra classes or had no access to television.

The weekly surveys also provided an opportunity for learners to give feedback and recommendations on how the Woza Matrics programme can be improved, especially for the 2021 programme. The following feedback was noted:

What the learners enjoyed about the Woza Matrics Programme

1. Learning something new and understanding the content.
2. They give tips on how to revise for an exam.
3. Gave me clear meaning of subjects I did not understand.

What the learners did not enjoy about the Woza Matrics Programme

1. The programmes lasted for less than two hours; we needed more time.
2. I did not understand some of the questions or how they got their answers.
3. Programmes are being aired when I am at school.

Feedback on how the programme can be improved in the future

1. Should be online so that everyone has access to the programmes.
2. Allocate time for all subjects equally.
3. Every school should have been informed about the programme.

OVER 380 PARENTS AND PRINCIPALS SURVEYED ON THE TSWELOPELE PROGRAMME

While monitoring and evaluation was conducted for the Tswelopele programme, the findings are limited because a small sample of parents (278) and principals (105) was surveyed, and the survey was conducted over a shorter period of time.

Principals



Parents



Findings from the survey show that advocacy for the Tswelopele programme was not as far reaching as that of the Woza Matrics programme. As such, very few schools and parents were aware of the programme and its intended curriculum support. As the NECT rolls out the 2021 Tswelopele programme, a greater focus will be placed on ensuring targeted communication and advocacy for the programme.



2.2. FIFTY PERCENT OF LEARNING TIME LOST IN 2020

LEARNING LOSSES DUE TO ROTATIONAL TIMETABLING

From a snap survey of 101 randomly selected schools across 6 provinces, this data illustrates the extent which schools were or were not coping with education recovery.

05

FINDINGS:

Grades that are following a weekly or daily rotation teaching approach are losing around 50% of face-to-face instructional time.

- The majority of teachers said they would not be able to complete the trimmed curriculum by 7th December 2020
- Learners are transitioning into the next grade with big learning gaps

02

SAMPLE / TARGET

NECT team successfully conducted surveys in 101 schools:

- 78 primary schools and
- 23 secondary schools

Based on the trimmed curriculum guidelines, primary schools were expected to complete the curriculum by 7 December 2020

04

TIME TABLING

- Exit grades (Grade 3 & 7) and pre-NSC grade (Grade 11).
- NECT SLP Subjects: EFAL and Mathematics

01

PURPOSE

- Survey on teaching guidelines as outlined in the Trimmed curriculum, Core Fundamentals and Timetabling Guidelines
- To inform the “Build back Better” prioritised with regards to the Curriculum Recovery 2021

03

FOCUS

- Exit grades (Grade 3 & 7) and pre-NSC grade (Grade 11).
- NECT SLP Subjects: EFAL and Mathematics



As it became clearer that teachers and learners would not be able to complete the curriculum in 2020, the DBE and provinces put in place trimmed curricula for grades R-11. The curriculum for grade 12 remained unchanged due to exam requirements. In this context, some research had already indicated that learning losses would be a major consequence of the pandemic. Learners had returned to school but all except grade 12 were attending classes on a rotational timetable – either daily or weekly. Learners were simply not receiving the same amount of face-to-face instructional time as normal. Towards the end of 2020, NECT set out to understand what was being taught, what was not being taught and what needed to be prioritised by the education recovery efforts being mobilised at national and provincial levels.

MATHEMATICS CURRICULUM COVERAGE

GRADE 3

54% had not covered the trimmed curriculum



20% of schools have partial curriculum coverage



26% trimmed curriculum coverage



The Trimmed Curriculum reduced time allocation for topics, merged and removed some topics for efficiency and coherence such as Measurement (M) and Space & Shapes (SS)

GRADE 7

47% had not covered the trimmed curriculum



19% of schools have partial curriculum coverage



35% trimmed curriculum coverage



The Trimmed Curriculum reduced time allocation for topics and moved some topics for efficiency and coherence such as Measurement and Space & Shapes

GRADE 11

36% had not covered the trimmed curriculum



8% of schools have partial curriculum coverage



56% trimmed curriculum coverage



Financial Maths and statistics was removed from Gr 11 Trimmed Curriculum

EFAL CURRICULUM COVERAGE

GRADE 3

55% of the schools had not covered the trimmed curriculum for EFAL in Grade 3.



3% had covered the curriculum partially.



42% of the learner books reviewed were on track with the trimmed curriculum.



GRADE 7

49% had not covered the trimmed curriculum



5% of schools have partial curriculum coverage



46% of the schools had covered the Gr 7 trimmed curriculum.



GRADE 11

68% had not covered the trimmed curriculum



4% of schools have partial curriculum coverage



28% trimmed curriculum coverage



Curriculum coverage was rated using the following key :

0 – 49% NO

50 - 79% PARTIALLY

+80% - YES

2.3. PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

NECT responds with speed to psychosocial distress in schools and communities

Psychosocial support addresses psychological and social issues that affect individuals and the community at large. The disruption to teaching and learning due to the pandemic caused instability in communities and schools,

which necessitated a quick response in addressing psychosocial issues. The NECT drew lessons from a literature review on how education systems coped during crises to pave a way forward in ensuring learning continuity in the midst of the distress caused by the pandemic. The following lessons from the research informed a multilevel response by the DBE and NECT.

In 2021, the Ward PSS programme will be implemented in the Eastern Cape, North West, Limpopo and Mpumalanga. In addition, the programme will roll out the District Based Support Teams' (DBST) PSS programme in Eastern Cape, North West, Limpopo and Mpumalanga.

1. FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW OF EDUCATION DURING CRISES

There was an acute need for psychosocial support (PSS) services for learners, parents, teachers and department officials

RAPID MULTILEVEL RESPONSE DEVELOPED BY DBE AND NECT A two-pronged approach was developed with DBE to assist community leaders and district officials to respond to distress and fear using two guides:

The Basic Psychosocial Skills guide is used at community and ward level to equip community leaders with basic skills to respond to psychosocial needs in the community as lay counsellors.

The Psychosocial Support Model for South African Schools equips district officials with skills to effectively support schools by reviving and activating the functionality of Districts and Schools-based support teams.

These guides strengthen the PSS programme for community leaders at ward level and District officials at schools' level.

2. FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW OF EDUCATION DURING CRISES

A need arose for supplementary PSS campaigns.

RAPID MULTILEVEL RESPONSE DEVELOPED BY DBE AND NECT

Radio campaign

8 radio interviews on PSS and reading done in four provinces on 8 community radio stations.

Telephone campaign

1 184 phone calls made to parents, learners, principals and teachers to assess PSS needs.

Social media campaign

22 811 overall impressions to PSS messages posted on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and WhatsApp.

Through the radio and social media campaigns, community members are empowered with knowledge about PSS issues. They are also equipped with skills to respond to PSS issues in their communities through on-air messages and social media posts.

To improve the design of the community PSS programmes, a telephone campaign has assessed the needs of parents, learners, teachers and principals.

3. FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW OF EDUCATION DURING CRISES

The role of parents in supporting and guiding learning at home becomes more critical.

RAPID MULTILEVEL RESPONSE DEVELOPED BY DBE AND NECT

The DBE and NECT compiled an easy-to-read guide for parents on how to support their children and encourage continued learning at home. This guide was versioned in all eleven official languages for use by people across language divides.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW OF EDUCATION DURING CRISES

Schools require guidance on health and safety measures when reopening.

RAPID MULTILEVEL RESPONSE DEVELOPED BY DBE AND NECT

The DBE and NECT compiled a guide for educators and non-educators on how to manage health and safety in schools during the COVID pandemic.

This guide highlights the standard operating procedures for increased health and safety in schools.

2.4. PILOTING CLASSROOM INTERVENTIONS

TRIALLING INTERVENTIONS NECESSARY FOR BUILDING COMPETENCIES OF THE FUTURE.



INNOVATION FOR THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION

The EdHub is the innovation unit of the NECT. Through research, development, dialogue and partnerships, we seek to explore the question: How should South African basic education evolve to meet the demands of a fast-changing world?



2020: AMBITIOUS PLANS AND A PANDEMIC



The EdHub and the Sandbox Schools Project were launched to help the basic education system prepare for the demands of a complex and unpredictable world. In 2020, this reality was foregrounded through the COVID-19 pandemic and its disruptive effects on social, political and economic systems around the world. After more than two years of planning, research and design, the Sandbox Project team was ready to implement and research a set of six school-based interventions over the next three years but, these plans were disrupted by the pandemic and lockdown measures. While this presented many challenges to programme activities, it also presented opportunities to reflect, innovate, and catalyse more long-term systemic transformation.

SCHOOL-BASED INTERVENTIONS TOOK THE FORM OF:

- Designing, launching and conducting initial research on an experimental, competency-infused structured learning programme
- Engaging in online participatory research with school principals to explore “leading a culture of learning in and for a changing world”
- Designing, launching and researching two exploratory COVID-response interventions:
 - Mindful Schools – promoting daily mindfulness practice in schools
 - Sandbox@Home – supporting learning in the home environment
- Hosting three webinars focused on Education for a Changing World
- Working with five PhD students, two Masters students, and five local academics/professors to explore the future of education in South Africa
- Publishing two book chapters and a collection of short research articles on the work of the Sandbox
- Partnering with the DBE to explore the infusion of 21st century competencies more systematically into the South African curriculum

2020 HIGHLIGHTS



Experimented with structured learning programmes that are embedded with all teachers' need to foster C21st competencies in their students, with special focus on changes in content, pedagogy and teaching mindset.



Explored how Initial Teacher Education needs to shift to prepare teachers who are relevant in a fast changing world



Worked with 5 PhD students, 2 Masters students, 5 local academics/professors



Published two book chapters that contribute to a growing understanding of education for a changing world in South Africa



Worked closely with principals to understand what school culture in a fast-changing world looks like, and how all schools can consider rethinking how teaching & learning happens at their school

SHIFTS IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

The research, development and advocacy work of the EdHub has begun to initiate shifts in the sector, in relation to the future of education. Over recent years, the DBE has acknowledged that changes in curriculum, pedagogy and assessment are necessary if basic education is to deliver relevant, quality teaching and learning in a fast-changing world. In 2020, the EdHub partnered with the DBE to establish a Competency-infused Curriculum Task Team (CICTT) mandated to assist the DBE in planning for curriculum 2024 and beyond: a medium-term strengthening of the curriculum with an emphasis on key competencies within the delivery of CAPS.

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS IN 2020

The innovation work of the EdHub happens through:



Research and Development (R&D):

Develop and research relevant innovative education practices



Advocacy:

Build momentum and buy-in via quality dialogue and sharing of learnings education broadcasting



THE VEHICLE FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (R&D) IS THE SANDBOX SCHOOLS PROJECT – A MULTI-YEAR RESEARCH PROJECT THAT INVOLVES TRIALLING APPROACHES TO COMPETENCY-INFUSED EDUCATION IN A SMALL SAMPLE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted work in both these streams, a number of exciting interventions were researched through the Sandbox Schools Project, and initial insights were distilled for sharing with the broader education sector. These insights relate to:

- The systematic infusion of 21st century competencies into the South African curriculum
- The creation of environments conducive to learning in a fast-changing world
- The introduction of regular mindfulness practice in public schools
- Supporting learning at home in resource-constrained environments
- Initial teacher preparation for the changing world

The EdHub's advocacy work gained momentum in 2020 through the Competency-infused Curriculum Task Team (CICTT), as well as through webinars and the sharing of initial research insights via the Sandbox blog and compendium. These initiatives all contribute to the growing momentum and understanding about how to better prepare learners and teachers for the demands of the 21st Century and beyond.

2020 ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (R&D):

Develop and research innovative education practices relevant to education for a changing world



COMPETENCY-BASED LEARNING PROGRAMME (CLP)

Launched and researched competency-infused structured learning programme in Gr 1 Home Language



Key initial insight:

More clarity, emphasis and support are needed relating to teachers' understanding and implementation of C21st competencies



SCHOOL CULTURE

Launched participatory research process with school leaders to understand how to create a school culture for the changing world



Key initial insight:

"Maslow before Bloom": School leaders need to view learners holistically and address multiple needs



MINDFUL SCHOOLS

Launched and researched a COVID-response programme of daily mindfulness exercises for teachers and learners



Key initial insight:

There is appetite and potential for mindfulness practice to become embedded in public schools



SANDBOX@HOME

Launched and researched a COVID-response programme for learning at home



Key initial insight:

Supporting learning at home is highly complex and challenging in resource-constrained environments, despite caregivers' willingness to participate



INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION

UJ students designed and researched interventions to prepare teachers for the changing world:



- Lesson design for a fast-changing world
- Pedagogy of Play
- Creative Coding
- Teaching with Robotics

2021
to
2024

Competency-infused Curriculum Task Team

The task team held a series of alignment and learning sessions, and compiled an initial report for discussion within the DBE. Work is set to continue in 2021-2024, with the intention of outlining a framework and roadmap for the strengthening of the curriculum.

ADVOCACY:

Build momentum and buy-in around relevant practices and policies via quality dialogue and sharing of learnings.

Dialogues:

The EdHub hosted three online dialogues in 2020, covering the following topics:

- Curriculum in a fast-changing world
- Emerging insights on remote learning
- Creative learning, at home or at school

The dialogues were well-attended and have led to further engagement and collaboration within the sector, related to education for the changing world

Sharing of learnings:

The EdHub shared initial insights from the Sandbox Schools Project through:

- A compendium of short articles
- Chapters published in two books: An Education Calamity: Learning and teaching during the covid-19 pandemic (Ed. Fernando Reimers) and Embedding Social Justice in Teacher Education and Development in Africa (Ed. Carmel McNaught and Sarah Gravett).
- Regular articles on the Sandbox Blog



SECTION

03

Strengthening the
education system



This section shares developments relating to how the NECT supported the endeavour to strengthen the system’s ability to deliver better quality education. It covers work in the modernisation of the schools data system; the technical office established to accelerate the planning of Early Childhood Development migration/function shift, support the pilot of the Three Stream Curriculum model; talent management; and the eradication of pit latrines in schools.

3.1. MODERNISING THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

2020 HIGHLIGHTS



Acquired the UNESCO OpenEMIS solution

which will form the base for the modernized SA-SAMS



Confirmed funding from National Treasury

to support the training and support provided by UNESCO

The role of Data under Covid-19 Conditions

According to United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), as of April 2020, many countries had to explore alternative ways to provide continuous education using technologies (UNICEF, September 2020). Through these technologies, authorities are using data and data analytics to gain a better understanding of the changing school education environment and learner needs. More and more governments are realising that data and predictive models in education are now key to progressing learning and teaching whilst preserving life. Data has never played a more important role than in the current crisis.

Turning to South Africa, regrettably, the data which is collected and used by the South African basic education sector via South African School Administration and Management System (SA-SAMS), including that from the independent school systems, is unreliable for decision-making. Reasons include poor data quality of individual data elements, as well as duplicate and inconsistent data collected in the school system. The sad outcome of this is the unending disputes on the veracity of learner, educator and learner data by key stakeholders in the sector.

With the advent of SA-SAMS modernised system implementation, the schools and the support administrative management officials would be able to use high quality, verified granular data in real-time to make the right decisions about the school management.

Loss of Funding

December 2019 and February 2020 saw the ELMA foundation and the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation not extending their funding agreement. The reason for this was because of missing the target dates due to the extended two vendor recruitment processes which were both unsuccessful. In the first recruitment, post the due diligence process, the bid was cancelled due to the presented vendor reputational issues which posed a risk to DBE. The second vendor recruitment process was also cancelled due to affordability issues for the available budget.

This resulted in a revision of the approach, with DBE and NECT finding more direct ways to source the solution.

The modernised processes

Based on the SA-SAMS Modernisation model (core business, core functional and core system products), a total of thirty (30) Business Requirements Specifications are being defined, of which twenty-seven (27) have been completed. Some of the achievements include:

- The intuitive system flows have been defined. This ensures that the system provides a user experience that guides the user in performing system functions efficiently and effectively.
- The User Interface and User Experience (UX/UI) design has been completed. This identifies the user roles of the modernised solution, ensuring that the needs and user experience approach to the various user roles are well understood.

A system for modernisation

Following the two unsuccessful vendor recruitment processes, the NECT Board initiated a process to source a solution that will still meet the requirements of the modernised solution. Following a thorough desktop exercise in collaboration with the DBE and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the OpenEMIS solution was identified as the potential Open-Source solution. This was subsequently accepted and recommended by DBE and the nine (9) Provincial Education Departments EMIS units, as a base to develop the modernised solution.

Supporting the DBE, the Minister of Basic Education formally requested UNESCO to provide the OpenEMIS solution to South Africa. In parallel, National Treasury also approved the payment of the professional services for the training, technical oversight, and support for the project that UNESCO will provide.

A Change in the Role of the NECT

Following the request by the Minister to UNESCO, NECT was retained in its role as the project management and delivery partner for the project. The new approach necessitated that the Project Team needed to be capacitated with strong technical skills to ensure the development of the OpenEMIS solution. The recruitment

processes were initiated with UNESCO guiding the project on the skills and resources required for a successful delivery team. Despite efforts in recruitment, the project was challenged in recruiting and retaining highly skilled and quality resources for the project due to affordability and desired longer term contracting.

Building the blocks for the accelerated delivery

The request for the cloud services from SITA was initiated to ensure the OpenEMIS solution is implemented in a secure cloud that holds critical learner and educator information in a cost-effective environment. The DBE and SITA advised that this provisioning process is estimated to be concluded in a six-month period ending in December 2021. The project has since sought an alternative service provider that also met the government security standards.

Strengthening the PED and DBE participation on the project

In addition to the two (2) on-going progress reporting to the DBE Governance Committees on e-Education, the Project Management Office (PMO) has established weekly meetings with the DBE, the pilot provinces, North-West (NW), and Free State (FS) as well as Eastern Cape (EC) as an additional province to ensure that the project provides timely and on-going reporting to these critical primary stakeholders.

2021 MILESTONES

THE FOCUS IN 2021 WILL BE ON THE FOLLOWING KEY MILESTONES:

Deployment of the OpenEMIS "out of the box" solution	Quarter 1
Enhanced development of OpenEMIS modules to meet the modernised SA-SAMS minimal viable product	Quarter 2
Development of the remaining SA-SAMS modernised functionality on OpenEMIS	Quarter 3
Pilot technical implementation for all PED users to access the system	Quarter 4

Whilst there have been setbacks to the successful implementation of the modernisation of SA-SAMS, the PMO has garnered valuable lessons from past hindrances and is moving speedily to make up for the lost time. The commitments have been made to the DBE and NECT authorities to have the full OpenEMIS-SA-SAMS equivalent by July 2023. With the finalisation of the contractual obligations with UNESCO, the PMO has overhauled the plans to ensure that the first phase – vanilla installation of the system – is implemented by the end of second quarter of 2021, with parallel phasing of the rest of the project by 2023.

3.2. DOING AWAY WITH PIT LATRINES IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

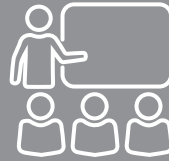
SUPPORTING THE PRESIDENTIAL CALL TO ERADICATE PIT LATRINES THROUGH THE SANITATION APPROPRIATE FOR EDUCATION (SAFE) PROGRAMME

2020 HIGHLIGHTS



In partnership with Assupol, **20 ABLUTION FACILITIES** were constructed in schools in KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and Limpopo.

Since the launch of the programme in 2018, **60 ABLUTION FACILITIES** have been constructed.



A total of **117 schools** in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga have received handwashing stations in partnership with Unicef.



With over **R500 000 000 INVESTED** by the DBE, **800 SCHOOLS** in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo will receive newly constructed ablation facilities.



The SAFE programme continues to make headways in the eradication of pit latrines in the three provinces. The NECT has demonstrated efficient and effective ways of delivering appropriate sanitation to schools and it is for this reason that the DBE has committed to have the NECT managing the project to construct over 650 toilets in the next three years.

A

A REWARDING PARTNERSHIP WITH ASSUPOL.

The following projects, which were funded by Assupol to the value of R10 000 000, were completed by the NECT PMO in the 2020/21 financial year:

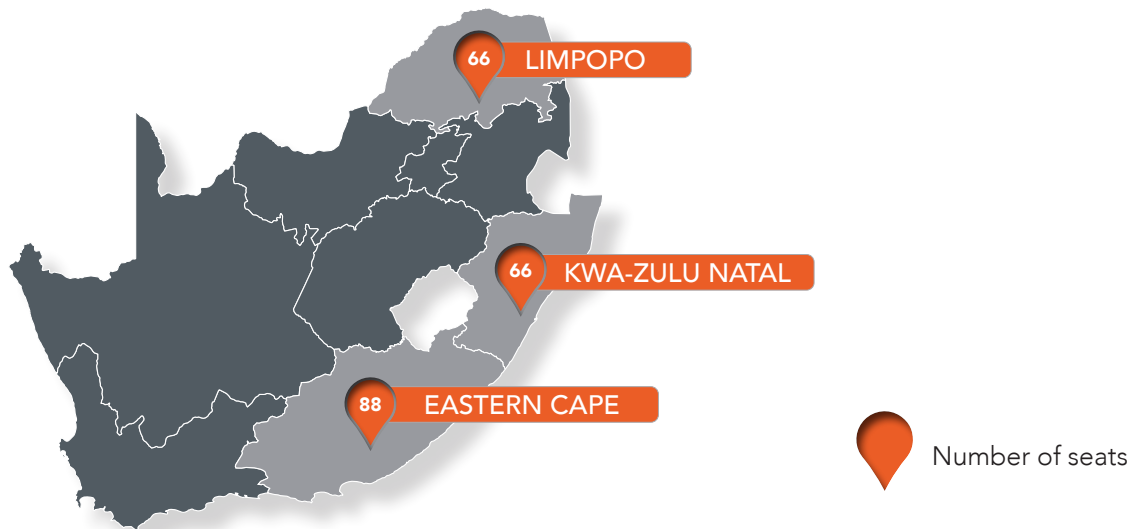





Table 3: Ablution facilities funded by Assupol

PROVINCE	NAME OF SCHOOL	NUMBER OF LEARNERS	NUMBER OF SEATS
 KWA-ZULU NATAL	Hlazakazi Primary School	245	11
	Mfihlelwane Primary School	123	11
	Qedusizi Primary School	152	11
	Izule Junior Primary School	101	11
	Kwampofu Primary School	125	11
	Phandaphansi Primary School	95	11
 EASTERN CAPE	Notinara Primary School	111	11
	Maqwatini Junior Primary School	80	11
	Hackney primary School	97	11
	Khulusomelele Primary School	112	11
	Maduma Primary School	62	11
	Cikicwayo Senior Primary School	92	11
	Cwecweni Primary School	123	11
	Mbokotwana Senior Primary School	98	11
 LIMPOPO	Dlamini Primary School	122	11
	Mmakubu Primary School	95	11
	Domboni Primary School	92	11
	Mkununde Primary School	107	11
	Nwanedi Primary School	98	11
	Kgalaka Primary Schools	150	11


B

COLLABORATION WITH UNICEF.

ROLLING OUT WASH STATIONS IN 117 SCHOOLS

The NECT signed an MoU with UNICEF for the construction of Hand Washing Stations (HWS) in 117 schools in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, Kwazulu-Natal and Mpumalanga provinces. The value of the project is R6 900 000. The project is currently 97% complete with the final completion date expected to be the 31 May 2021. The project will go a long way in improving health and hygiene, and contribute to minimizing COVID-19 risks in schools. The following is the allocation of projects per province:

Table 4: Handwashing Stations sponsored by UNICEF

FUNDING SOURCE	PROVINCE	DESCRIPTION	NO. OF SCHOOLS
	Eastern Cape	HWS	30
	Limpopo	HWS	34
	Kwazulu-Natal	HWS	30
	Mpumalanga	HWS	23



SCHOOLS SANITATION PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE PUBLIC SECTOR

The NECT is also implementing sanitation projects on behalf of the DBE as follows:

Table 5: Ablution facilities planned for 2021-2022

FUNDING SOURCE	PROVINCE	DESCRIPTION	NO. OF SCHOOLS
DBE	Eastern Cape Limpopo	SAFE Batch 1 & 2	222
	Eastern Cape Limpopo Kwazulu-Natal	SAFE Batch 3	360
	Eastern Cape	SAFE Batch 4	45
	Eastern Cape	HWS	52
TOTAL			679

In 2020 the NECT completed the feasibility studies for SAFE Batch 1,2 and 3. The NECT has also established two data bases for the Professional Service Providers (PSPs) and contractors. The contractors will be appointed in 2021 for the implementation of sanitation projects. The NECT has implemented all the sanitation facilities in the most cost-effective and efficient manner. For example, in 2020 the cost per seat has been kept at R37 000 and most of the projects were concluded on average in three weeks. A total of 121 workers from local communities benefitted from the projects.



576 TOILETS FACILITIES FUNDED BY DBE, **30 TOILETS** FACILITIES FUNDED BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR & **117 HANDWASHING STATIONS** FUNDED BY UNICEF.

The main challenges encountered in 2020 was the delay in procurement processes. The NECT is putting all measures in place to ensure that the procurement processes comply with National Treasury regulations, this unfortunately takes time. The focus in 2021 will be to complete construction of 576 toilets facilities funded by DBE, 30 toilets facilities funded by the private sector and 117 handwashing stations funded by UNICEF.

3.3. EDUCATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OFFICE (ETAO)

FLEXIBLE SUPPLY OF REQUISITE TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

In its pursuit to transform the education sector, the DBE has identified three critical initiatives:



The establishment of a **National Institute for Curriculum and Professional Development (NICPD)** for attaining more coherence and effectiveness in teacher development and curriculum implementation;



The Migration of **Early Childhood Development (ECD)** function from the Department of Social Development (DSD) to the DBE;



The roll-out of the **Three Stream Model** in order to diversify learning pathways for learners.

In partnership with the NECT, the DBE established the Education Technical Assistance Office (ETAO) as a unit configured to provide technical assistance to support the DBE in conceptualizing, planning and implementation of the three critical initiatives.

2020 HIGHLIGHTS

E.C.D



Developed the ECD Migration Concept Note, ECD Service Delivery Model and the ECD Migration Management Plan.

+R150M



Strengthened the Three Stream Model Concept Note with Articulation Framework, Strengthened the E4E Business Plan that will secure +R150 000 000 of EU funding over three years as part of the Three Stream Model implementation.

NICPD



Developed NICPD Concept Note with Integrated Teacher Development System and Costed Action Plan for NICP inception that were endorsed by the NICPD multi-stakeholder Reference Group and ETAO Steering Committee, and approved by DBE.

3.3.1. TOWARDS ACCESSIBLE EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD) SERVICES & QUALITY LEARNING

Following President Cyril Ramaphosa's announcement in 2019 about the function shift of ECD from Department of Social Development to DBE, in 2020, two key documents were drafted and tabled for approval. The ECD Migration Concept Note was developed as a blueprint for DBE consultations with stakeholders. Furthermore, the note proposes an Integrated Service Delivery Model which sets out to improve access to and quality of early learning, with the aim of building a good foundation for improved learning outcomes at different levels of the education system.

The second document was the ECD Migration Management Plan which sets out the steps to be undertaken from October 2020 with the aim of finalizing the migration to DBE by April 2022. Part of roll-out the plan entails stakeholder engagements, with one such engagement held in a form of a dialogue which attracted more than 230 representatives from civil society organisations, provincial and national government officials, ECD practitioners, and other stakeholders.

INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

NATIONAL CONTEXT, DEPARTMENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Grants

Inter ministerial and
departmental committees for
ECD

COOPERATIVE AFFAIRS

Infrastructure

PROVINCIAL MANDATES AND ACTORS

HEALTH

Home visits
Nutrition
Health and safety

BASIC EDUCATION

Expansion and access
Quality
School readiness

EDUCATION DISTRICTS AND CIRCUITS

Home visits for children 0-2 years
by community health workers and
mobile units for remote areas

HOW?

- District alignment and monitoring
- Curriculum guidance
- Practitioner development
- Support, monitor and respond

Centre-based full-time play
groups

Part time

- Home care
- Mobile units
- Toy libraries

Access for vulnerable children
Improved quality of ECD
Children's development tracked and managed
All children from 0-5 have opportunities for early learning
All children arrive at school ready to learn

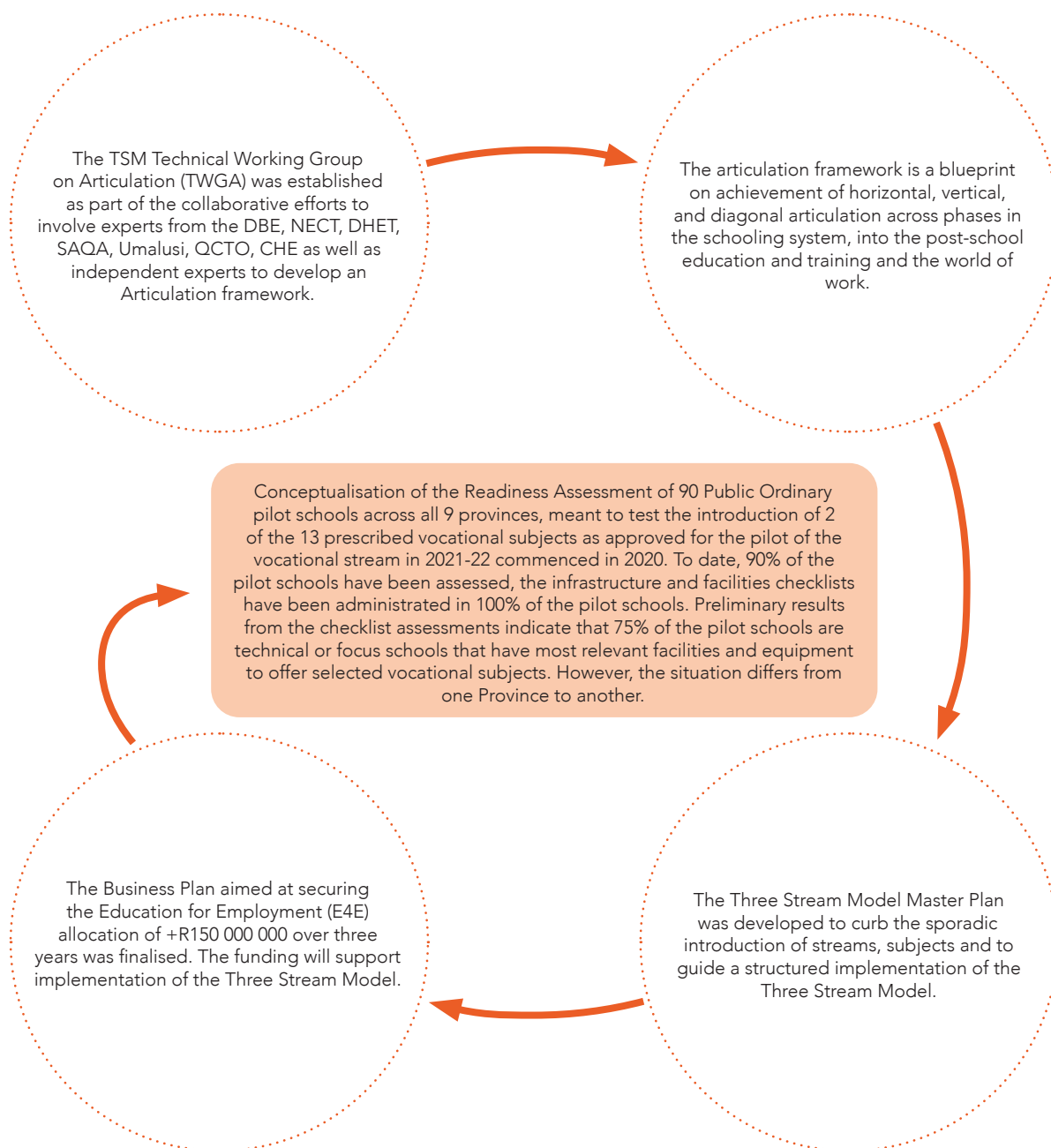
3.3.2. STRENGTHENING THE MULTIPLE LEARNING PATHWAYS FOR SCHOOLING

The implementation of the Three Stream Curriculum Model in public schools and introduction of the Vocational Stream in the FET Phase (Grades 10 -12) in 2016 and the Occupational Stream in Schools of Skills or Specialisation Schools in the GET Phase (Grades 8 -9) in 2017, ushered in a new era in the schooling system. The Three Stream Curriculum Model provides multiple learning pathways leading to the acquisition of the General Education Certificate (GEC) and the National Senior Certificate (NSC) with vocational and occupational subjects, in addition to academic subjects.

The objectives of the three Stream Model are to;

- Promote the acquisition of knowledge, skills, competencies and dispositions for a changing world;
- Implement learning pathways which meet the diverse learning needs of the youth; and
- Contribute to the societal and economic objectives, as outlined in the National Development Plan.

During 2020, the DBE, through NECT technical support office, ETAO, embarked on processes to strengthen conceptualisation and planning for implementation of the Three Stream Model (TSM). This section provides a synopsis of the achievements in the Three Stream Model sphere:





3.3.3. TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED NATIONAL SYSTEM FOR TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Part of the NECT support for DBE policy reform initiatives in 2020, was to assist with the conceptualization of a comprehensive integrated teacher development system for implementation through a National Institute for Curriculum and Professional Development (NICPD) and mobilization of resources for inception of the NICPD. The conceptualization process involved the development of a draft Concept Note to foreground the teacher development system and processes, consultations with various multi-stakeholder forums and structures, including teacher Unions, to solicit inputs, buy-in and support and the development of a costed action plan for inception of the NICPD.

In 2020, ETAO and DBE developed a concept note and costed action plan which articulate the framework for a comprehensive integrated teacher development system, and the activities and financial resources required to implement the framework. The concept note was approved by the NICPD Reference Group and ETAO Steering Committee, and a draft business plan was developed to kick-start the resource mobilization process. Lastly, a model for a Teacher Professional Development System was developed. This system aims to strengthen collaborative links and strategic roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in teacher development.

Going forward, an aggressive advocacy and communication strategy will be applied across all initiatives with the aim of keeping stakeholders abreast of developments in the respective initiatives. This will include creating platforms for engagement to share progress and encourage collaboration. While 2020 was a year of conceptualisation and planning, 2021 will be focused on testing, implementing, monitoring, and providing support.

3.4. LAYING A PLANK FOR SUSTAINABLE IMPROVEMENT

BUILDING TECHNICAL AND LEADERSHIP CAPACITY FOR EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT

3.4.1. POSTGRADUATE SUPPORT PROGRAMME

The purpose of the programme is to build the research capacity of masters and PhD students in education by developing a cadre of academics and scholars in the field of education, and in bringing to bear more research and intellectual capacity in contributing to the educational development agenda in South Africa.

// The NDP advocates for developing the capacity of the state through the development of academics and scholars who will advance the objectives of a developmental state. //

To this end, the NECT partnered with 3 universities, namely Nelson Mandela University, University of Limpopo and University of Venda. The university partners have successfully recruited students for the programme and their research topics are aligned to the DBE research agenda. The table below demonstrates the commitment of partner universities in the good number of Masters and PhD students who have enrolled in their respective Universities and would be part of this support programme.



THE NECT PARTNERED WITH 3 UNIVERSITIES, NAMELY
**NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY, UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO
AND UNIVERSITY OF VENDA**

Table 6: Number of students participating in the Postgraduate Support Programme

UNIVERSITY	PHD STUDENTS	MASTERS STUDENTS	TOTAL
University of Limpopo	10	10	20
University of Venda	14	19	33
Nelson Mandela University	11	14	25
TOTAL	35	43	78



In December 2020, an inception workshop was convened, with 98% of all recruited students and 100% of the relevant university faculty members (i.e., Deans of education) in attendance. The workshop was an opportunity to engage participants on how the postgraduate support programme sought to create cohorts of researchers and academics engaged in educational development issues.

Such initiatives are not free from challenges – most students who have enrolled for the programme have a similar socio-economic background, having limited proficiency in English, weak academic writing skills, and limited access to tools of trade, such as laptops and mobile data. Although the mandate of the NECT is to provide non-financial support, these challenges cannot be ignored, and it is on this basis that the NECT continues to secure strategic partnerships with private sector organisations to provide the necessary support.

3.4.2. Talent Management

The purpose of Talent Management programme is to support the education system with conceptual and practical approaches to managing existing and future talent. The programme has two sub-programmes: System support through competency specification and development, executive's capacity building seminars and an executive development programme for senior managers in the DBE. The focus for 2020 was on system support through

competency specification and development. This sub programme seeks to identify education sector specific competencies for senior managers through research and development and delivery of programmes to build and nurture education specific competencies. Pursuant to this, the NECT conducted research on existing senior manager job descriptions and guidelines for strengthening education management. Preliminary findings suggest that education management competencies need to be revisited to ensure greater alignment with job profiles.

In 2021, the NECT will bring upstream the second sub-programme which aims to build the understanding, skills and capacity of managers to address specific aspects of their managerial responsibility. The programme is also intended to build the capacity of managers to address technical and organizational issues which may impede the implementation of programmes. This will also include the development of a senior executive programme in the education management.

3.4.3. Trainee programme

Attracting and retaining young professionals in the education sector is important in ensuring that the National Development Plan (NDP) goals are achieved. The education sector has always been viewed as a sector that only needs individuals with teaching degrees and has little room to engage with other sectors. However, to improve the quality of education in a sustainable way the sector needs



to attract non-conventional skill sets. The NECT Trainee Programme was established in 2014 to groom education and planning professionals, with the view that they will be retained in the education sector to support planning, programme implementation, policy analysis and monitoring and evaluation.

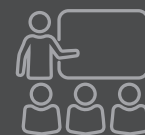
The programme is built on two fundamentals: immersion and mentorship. The work the trainees do, allow them to gain a deeper understanding of the education sector by researching, developing concept documents for programmes, writing reports and programme implementation as well as management. Each trainee is paired with a senior manager who will mentor, provide feedback and guidance.

The programme is built on two fundamentals: immersion and mentorship. The work the trainees do, allows them to gain a deeper understanding of the education sector by researching, developing concept documents for programmes, writing reports, and programme implementation as well as management. Each trainee is then paired with a mentor who is a senior manager so that they can receive feedback, guidance and encouragement.

During the first three years of implementation (2014-2017), the programme struggled to retain trainees, with 50% of them resigning within the first six months. With

the organisation having been in existence for a few years, programmes were constantly evolving, resulting in a fast paced environment which did not allow senior managers the ability to provide adequate support to the trainees, and leaving training frustrated.

Having noted these challenges, the programme was restructured to ensure that trainees are satisfied with their working environment, the amount of mentorship and responsibility given. Furthermore, the programme is evaluated bi-annually with the trainees to gauge job satisfaction, and senior managers have been encouraged to have quarterly check-in sessions with their trainees to allow for a deeper conversation about work-load, experiences with the organisational culture, relationships with co-workers and future plans.



Since 2014, **33 trainees** have participated in the programme, with **9 occupying full time positions** in the organization.



// Since joining the NECT as a trainee in 2018, my experience has been one of learning, growth, and discovery. Over the years, I have gained a deeper and broader understanding of the South African basic education sector, an appreciation for the complexities of systemic

improvement, and greater clarity and confidence about my own role in the sector.

I started out as a trainee in the Innovation programme and have never left as I have loved the work and the people in the EdHub 'tribe'. While my initial experience

was sometimes confusing and uncertain, I felt supported to navigate the uncertainty and find my niche within the broader programme. I have especially appreciated the opportunity to interact with, and learn from, local and international experts I had never dreamed of meeting. This, to me, has been one of the single most valuable experiences in my career. The culture of the programme is also one of open engagement and dialogue – I have always felt that my voice matters and that I have a role to play in shaping the evolution of the programme.

Through my work in the EdHub, I have also come to appreciate the role of research and policy in systemic education improvement, and I am therefore planning to study further in Education Policy and Analysis to strengthen these skills. I have really appreciated my years at the NECT, and I feel equipped with a broad set of skills and values to build on as I continue my journey in the public education sector. //

Cathryn Moodley - Edhub Coordinator

3.5. PREPARING THE SECTOR FOR RE-OPENING SCHOOLS

In the context of the declaration of a national state of disaster in 2020, schools had to be prepared to receive teachers and learners after the initial lockdown. Significant resources were mobilised to prepare schools in terms of the new COVID 19 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) concerning the supply of PPE, health screening, social distancing norms, water and sanitation and incident management. Provinces and schools had to report on a regular basis about their state of readiness for each intake, and reports from teacher unions, provinces, and an independent assessment led by the NECT were considered by the Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM) and the Council of Education Ministers (CEM).

Working closely with a group of partners including Plus 94 Research, Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and New Leaders Foundation (NLF), data was collected and analysed on the level of preparedness in schools and communities in terms of the SOPs, based on a set of key indicators. Importantly, the data included both self-reported and data collected on site at hundreds of schools across the country. An interlinked audit process led by Entsika Consulting provided data on procurement processes, and supply and distribution of PPE down to school level. This exercise was a significant success in the utilisation of real-time data in managing the COVID 19

crisis and reconfiguring conventional processes of data collection and reporting in education.

To prepare for the reopening of schools following the national lockdown, the NECT supported the DBE to carry out an evaluation to determine the following;

1. **Health and Safety** – the extent to which schools met the requirements necessary to ensure the health and safety of teachers, learners, and other school staff members.
2. **Incident Management** – the extent to which schools were ready to adequately respond to and manage incidents of infection.
3. **Reorganisation** – the extent to which schools were ready to reorganise structures and functions and adapt to a new set of requirements for curriculum delivery.
4. **Tensions and Anxiety** – The extent to which schools are ready to respond to the tensions and anxieties caused by the pandemic.

Structures such as CEM and HEDCOM, the Minister of Basic Education and the public benefited from the work of the NECT school readiness assignment. These structures received the reports in May and June, and the reports provided an evidence base for which the DBE used to re-open schools.



01 BACKGROUND

Schools were closed from the 18th of March to the beginning of June. This impacted on teaching and learning especially for learners who were unable to access on-line resources. The DBE decided to reopen schools in a phased approach.

02 PURPOSE

The National Coronavirus Command Council (NCCC) wanted the DBE to conduct a monitoring exercise with respect to the readiness of schools following the COVID 19 lockdown. The DBE engaged the NECT and other partners to collect this data. The data is a combination of school survey data and school verification data.

03 CONCERNS RAISED

- 76% Lack of PPE, water & sanitation.
- 38% Lack of teachers to cover classes.
- 57% Need for teacher support in managing teaching approaches and psychosocial support.
- 63% Teacher morale was positive.

SECTION

04

Optimising Social Capital
through Partnerships and
Collaboration



To overcome the challenges brought on by the pandemic, the NECT capitalized on seven (7) years of collaboration and building social capital by mobilizing various partners and stakeholders towards supporting the education sector. This section highlights how strengthened collaboration has led to the establishment of new projects and programmes within the organisation, including Investment Portfolios; Covid-19 Steering Team; and Civil Society Consultative Forums.

4.1. INVESTMENT PORTFOLIOS

A PLATFORM TO EXTEND THE PARTNER NETWORK IN RESPONSE TO THE EFFECTS OF THE PANDEMIC

2020 HIGHLIGHTS

+6



Introduced 6 Investment Portfolios, with the Remote & Digital Learning, and Care and Support for Teaching & Learning portfolios being well established by the end of 2020.

1 MILLION



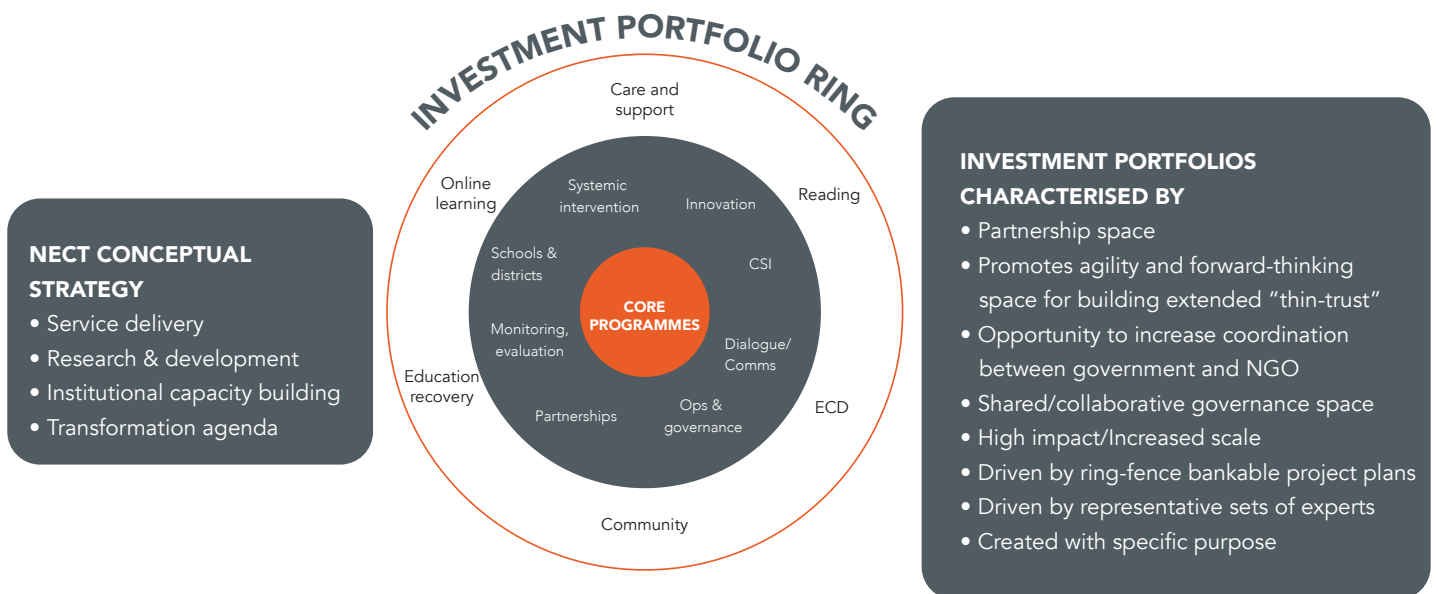
Over 1 000 000 learners supported through two educational broadcasting programmes launched between 01 September – 08 December

4



Launched the Community Psychosocial Support programme in 4 pilot provinces.

Figure 2 below shows the NECT strategy before and after Covid-19. Pre-Covid, the focus was on core programmes (inner white circle). During and post-Covid, there has been a need to introduce new strategies that will respond to the disruptions caused by the pandemic. The Investment Portfolios (IPs) were established with the intention of strengthening service delivery by mobilizing financial and non-financial resources towards priority areas critical for education improvement beyond the pandemic period.



Although six IPs were established, this initiative is resource intensive but also require diligence in building evidence that is necessary to attract investments from social partners. As such, only two of the six IPs are well established namely Remote & Digital Learning (RDL) and Care and Support for Teaching & Learning (CSTL).

4.1.1. REMOTE AND DIGITAL LEARNING (RDL)

The RDL investment portfolio was established to address systemic learning loss and digital inequality with the vision of creating a digitally enabled and equitable education system. Since its inception, the investment portfolio has registered achievements in educational broadcasting and has been involved in developing digital learning models for the South African education context. Key achievements of the portfolio include:

- The launch of the Woza Matrics 2020 Catch Up Programme in partnership with the DBE, SABC, DSTV, and eTV. The programme was launched on 01 September and, by 08 December 2020, 369 episodes had been broadcast for ten priority Matric subjects, including 8 psychosocial support videos.

More information about the achievements in educational broadcasting can be found in Section 2.

In collaboration with IBM, the NECT conducted research on remote and digital learning models in South African schools. The study was based on three no-fee paying schools in Diepsloot (Gauteng), Berlin and Libode (Eastern Cape). Qualitative and quantitative data was collected on the digital learning experience of learners in these schools. Key findings from the research showed the following:



Diepsloot Leap School is a no-fee independent high school: Had more dedicated HR and technological resources compared to the other schools. Most learners surveyed had access to their own digital device, with limited access to mobile data.



Zanokhanye Primary, Libode is a Q1 public school: The school had Wi-Fi access, however, it had a poor signal. All teachers had departmental laptops, but not all had the necessary digital skills to use them for teaching.



Silimela Senior Secondary, Berlin is a Q1 public school: The school has an outdated computed lab, and has poor network connection. Most learners did not have their own cell phones. However, Matric learners had access to tablets. Teachers had laptops, but these were under-utilised due to a lack of digital skills.

The results from the three schools indicates that successful digital learning models should be contextually-relevant, taking into account the school context, learners' home environments and the overall community.

4.1.2. CARE AND SUPPORT FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING (CSTL)

Education is acknowledged as essential for the social, economic, and political development of a country. However, for millions of children and youth in South Africa, their right to education is severely compromised by a range of factors such as poverty, HIV&AIDS and other diseases, food insecurity, disability, negative social practices, early-and unintended pregnancy, and violence; CSTL is a DBE response to these challenges. The purpose of the CSTL Investment Portfolio is to assist the DBE to deliver on its care and support mandate by mobilising the capacity and resources outside of government around a common vision and identified CSTL priorities. The following achievements were recorded in 2020:



COVID-19 SUPPORT:

The existing CSTL handbook was revised to include COVID-19 management protocols (with technical and financial support from UNICEF and MIET Africa).

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were developed for managing Covid-19, the "return-to-school", and ensuring that the delivery of services is Covid-19 compliant.



PROVISION OF PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (PSS)

The PSS model and guide for South African schools was developed. Furthermore, the community-based PSS model was tested in 20 districts across 4 pilot provinces.

The Common Elements Treatment Approach (CETA) was adopted as a model by the DBE and planning for the roll-out is currently underway.



NUTRITION

The DBE reintroduced the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) during the lockdown. Furthermore, NGO partners redirected resources towards supporting community feeding programmes.



HYGIENE AND SANITATION

UNICEF committed R7 000 000 towards the construction of handwash stations in 117 schools across Kwazulu Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and Eastern Cape Provinces.



SAFETY AND PROTECTION

A webinar series on Violence Prevention and Child Protection was hosted.

4.1.3. EDUCATION RECOVERY

The Education Recovery investment portfolio was established to assist the education sector in adapting to new requirements imposed by the pandemic. To date, a concept document has been written and shared with educational experts while research has also been conducted on international best practices for education recovery and what the priorities of education recovery should be. The NECT has also collaborated with the IBM Technical Support Team to develop international best practices in critical areas of educational recovery for South Africa.

4.1.4. SUPPORTING READING RECOVERY DURING AND BEYOND COVID-19

In 2020, UNICEF identified the NECT as the implementing partner for the European Union (EU) funded programme: Reading and Leadership Strengthening in South African Schools for Learning During Covid-19 and Beyond (REALS-SA). The purpose of the programme is to support the national Department of Education, three provincial departments (Kwazulu-Natal, Limpopo, and Eastern Cape) and 650 schools to respond to and manage the impact of Covid-19 on education. The programme prioritises the following outputs:

Output 1: Support the Department of Basic Education (DBE) efforts to continue learning through traditional and innovative approaches.

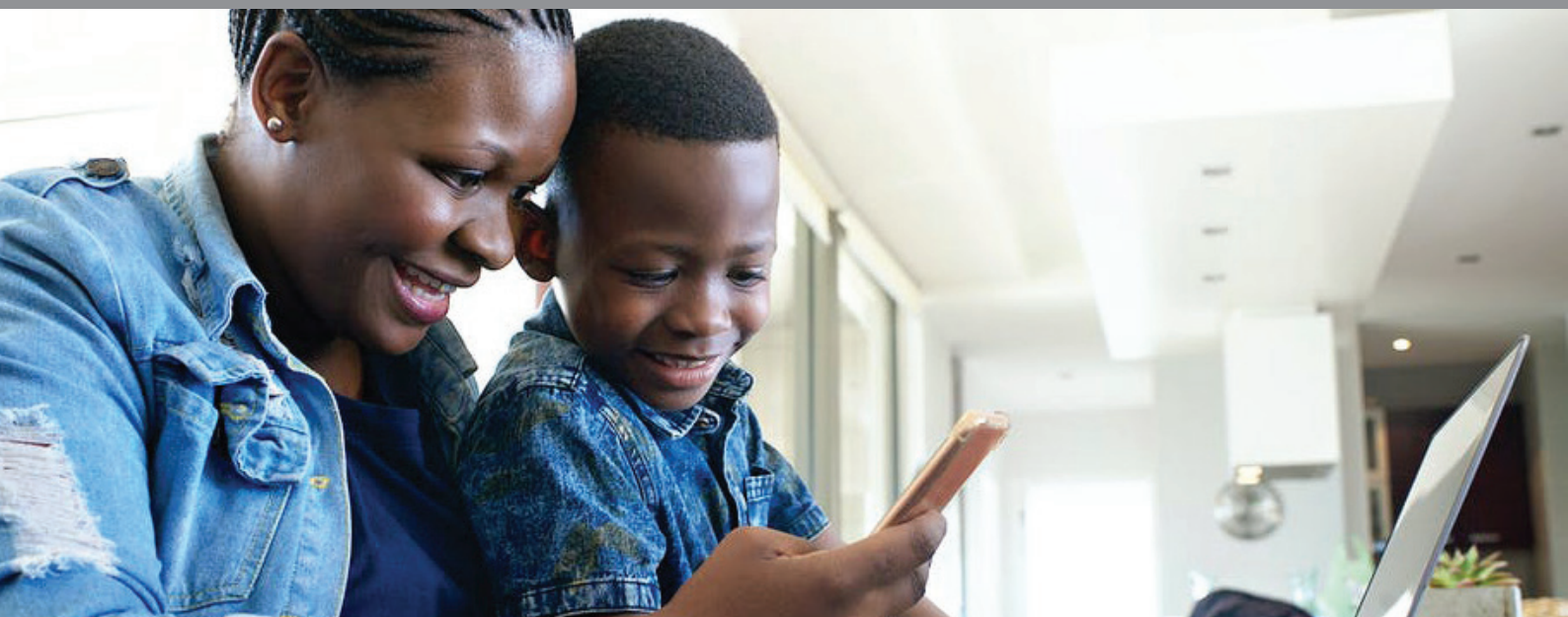
Sub-output 1.1: Support the implementation of the reading recovery programme for better learning outcomes. This will be achieved through creating a storybook package for learners in the identified schools, and by supporting the broadcasting of reading programmes.

Sub-output 1.2: Support curriculum trimming as part of the overall curriculum recovery programme. This will be done by providing training to teachers and SMTs on the trimmed curriculum and assessment for learning approaches.

Output 2: Strengthen the capacity of key stakeholders and enhance access to learning materials.

This will focus on enhancing parental engagement, and the capacity building of district officials and School Management Teams (SMTs). Teachers and SMTs will be trained on their roles in supporting learners with reading and homework. Furthermore, parents will be actively involved in school projects targeted at improving learner support.

The programme will be launched in 2021 and implemented over a two-year period from February 2021 – February 2023. The overall budget for the programme is R17 000 000 which will be utilised for the roll-out of the programme in the identified provinces.



4.2. OVER 230 000 CITIZENS REACHED THROUGH DIALOGUES

2020 HIGHLIGHTS



Hosted “Lunch with Teachers”, a 20-series dialogue on Radio2000 to discuss the teaching profession during the pandemic. The programme reached over **230 000 listeners**.



Hosted **seven (7) Civil Society meetings** between Minister Angie Motshekga and education constituents on issues such as re-opening schools amid pandemic, psycho-social support and remote learning.



Established **seven (7) Civil Society task teams** focusing on research and make recommendations to assist the system “build back better” after a pandemic.

2020 was a pivotal year for the Dialogue programme, which was premised on bringing people together to discuss matters such as psycho-social support and the professionalisation of teaching. Lockdowns and social distancing prevented that, and the programme could have been suspended. However, the impact on schooling meant that many issues needed dialogues more than ever, as emergency interventions were designed and put in place by the Department to counter the effects of the pandemic.

The DialogueSA programme was therefore able to mobilise new technologies (and our ability to use these) to facilitate wide ranging discussions on various issues, but all grouped around the central imperative of minimising

learning losses and planning for recovery. In doing so, we have realised the benefits of participation that arise from such events, with few (if any) barriers to participation. International guests have joined and presented, bringing new perspectives, and local participants have included ordinary practitioners, delivery agents, community-based organisations and others whose voices are not often heard.

There are limitations for this form of engagement in terms of robust debates, particularly if there are large numbers of participants. However as a form of information sharing they are invaluable, and they also provide a record of discussions, which can be utilised for further engagement.

2020 ACHIEVEMENTS

The planned programme for 2020 had to be reviewed in the light of the lockdown and the different imperatives brought about by this.

The Civil Society Consultative Forum

The major activity involved the hosting of the Civil Society Forum, which was initiated by Minister Motshekga early on during the lockdown. The aim was to inform civil society about the matter, and how the Department intended to deal with it. The Minister also called on civil society to use its capacities to assist in any way possible to ensure that learners were cared for and supported during this time.

Six further meetings of the Civil Society Consultative Forum were held through the year, at the request of the Minister. Each of these provided an update on the pandemic and schooling, and allowed for questions, comments and suggestions from civil society. It is true to say that through the Forum the number and depth of consultations that have been held with the Minister in 2020 is unprecedented, as well as the reach that has been achieved. This has been much appreciated by the NECT Constituencies (business and labour), as well as by ordinary members of civil society (NGOs, parents, academics and practitioners). It is to be hoped that such engagements can be institutionalised in future, as part of a blended model for Dialogues.

The first online Forum accepted the request of the Minister for a smaller Civil Society Task Team to take the lead, comprising people with expertise in identified areas who could contribute to the planning and implementation of urgent tasks signalled by the Department. The Task Team was convened by the NECT, and agreed on seven different workstreams, focused on those areas identified as worst affected by the pandemic. These were:

- Early Childhood Development
- Care and Support
- Curriculum
- Reading
- School and community
- Remote and online learning and
- Schooling Beyond Covid-19.



The Workstreams drew in people from all sectors of civil society, including academia, NGOs and community-based organisations, who drew on their own experiences and those of their organisations to work with the Department in identifying problems and proposing solutions. They met regularly to assess the situation and develop responses, and co-ordination was provided through the Task Team. The mobilisation of additional capacity was significant, with over 100 professionals involved in research, policy development, or other forms of assistance in managing the effects of the pandemic. A national Conference was held in December 2020 to conclude the process, which considered reports from all of the workstreams, and identified outstanding issues. The Minister and the Department expressed their appreciation to civil society for their contribution, and to the NECT for facilitating their participation.

Other Dialogues

Besides the Civil Society Forum and its associated activities, Dialogue SA convened various other focused Dialogues, including:

- A discussion on Ethics and Education, led by Business Leadership South Africa, and
- A research-based seminar on Covid 19 and Education, with a view to *“Supporting Teaching and Learning during the lockdown and beyond.”*



RADIO BROADCAST DIALOGUES

In April 2020, a 20-part dialogue series aimed at teachers was broadcast nationally on Radio2000, with a focus on discussing matters related to teacher professionalisation and development. Participation was vibrant, with the dialogues being well received by teacher constituencies.



PARTNERSHIPS

The NECT played an instrumental role in convening a research group into Covid responses, which analysed international and local education responses to the pandemic. The work: Learning and ‘Building Back Better’ - An Early Research Response to the Impact of COVID-19 on South Africa’s Education System, has been published in partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat.

The report is available at the following links:

<https://thecommonwealth.org/media/news/south-africa-report-covid-19%E2%80%99s-impact-education-offers-key-lessons>

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/jet-education-services_new-publication-south-africa-report-on-covid-activity-6790532109388910592-MjiG



4.3. SUPPORT THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL CONFERENCE

The Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) is a strategic vehicle for coordinating the efforts of various governmental, non-governmental organisations, and people to increase the pace of developing skills that are relevant for our country's economy. Every two years, the HRDC hosts a summit that is convened to foster collaboration amongst stakeholders within and across sectors, as well as to ensure accountability and sustainability through the signing of social compacts, which outline commitments that can be tracked and measured against targets set for skills development aligned to economic priorities.

In 2020, the NECT supported the HRDC in formulating an agenda for the summit which was scheduled to take place in May 2020. In preparation, various stakeholders were commissioned to coordinate research papers aligned to the three thematic areas adopted as follows:

- Building the foundation for a transformed economy and society (Linked to HRDC Outcome 1)
- Building skills for a transformed economy and society (linked to HRDC Outcomes 2, 3, and 4)
- Building a capable developmental state (Linked to HRDC Outcome 5)

The NECT was tasked to coordinate research under the thematic area 'Building the foundation for a Transformed Economy and Society. In undertaking this task, the NECT commissioned reflective papers (think pieces) on the HRDC conference programmatic areas that are deemed key to building the foundation for the skills development path. These are, i) Early Childhood Development ii) Reading improvement iii) STEM iv) Learning Pathways and v) Competencies for a changing world. The five (5) reflective papers were developed with the idea of identifying gaps in policy and practice, and make recommendations for strategic steps that should be undertaken.

In 2021, the NECT will organize a consultative forum for discussion of the composite proposals document and the development and mediation of a social compact that will be presented at the 2021 HRDC Summit and manage post-summit reflections and implementations.

4.4. SUPPORTING THE EDUCATION COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN

To minimize the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on education, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) developed the Education Covid-19 Response Plan which was aimed at providing teacher and learner support. The plan comprised of five components:

1. Online Learning Support
2. Nutrition Support
3. Health and Sanitation Support
4. Strategic Operations Support
5. Teacher Support

In supporting the DBE to implement this plan, the NECT led the Covid-19 Interim Steering Committee (ISC) which was tasked with providing oversight and mobilizing financial resources towards the implementation of the Response Plan. The ISC was represented by one to two members of various education sector stakeholders from government, private sector and civil society.

Table 8: ISC Representatives

GOVERNMENT	CIVIL SOCIETY	PRIVATE SECTOR
Department of Basic Education	National Education Collaboration Trust	Old Mutual Foundation
ETDP-SETA	United Nations Children's Education Fund (UNICEF)	Momentum Metropolitan Holdings
		FirstRand



Through the ISC, over R40 000 000 was committed towards the implementation of the Response Plan, the contributions were in cash as depicted in the below figure and in kind by organisations who paid for the broadcasting of lessons.

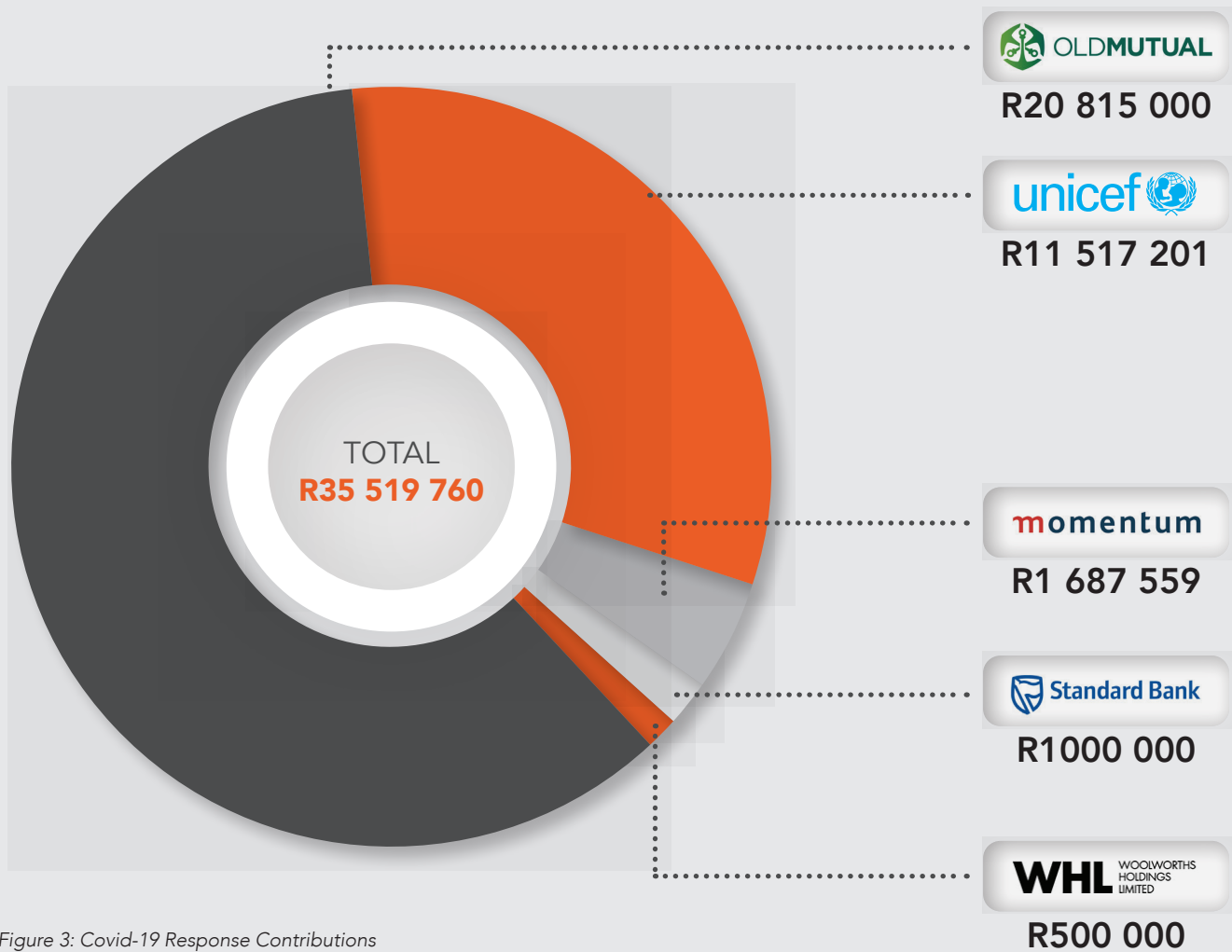


Figure 3: Covid-19 Response Contributions

ONLINE LEARNING SUPPORT

The national lockdown, and subsequent phased re-opening of schools, necessitated a shift towards remote and digital means of teaching and learning. The online learning support component of the Response Plan was aimed at providing guidance to learners, teachers, and parents on available online curriculum resources and learning programmes. A number of achievements can be noted, including zero-rating educational websites, and the introduction of educational broadcasting on radio and television. *More details on online support and education broadcasting can be gleaned in section 2.*





Health and Sanitation Support

In ensuring that schools are a healthy environment conducive for teaching and learning, and limiting the spread of Covid-19, UNICEF committed R7 000 000 towards the construction of handwash stations in schools. 117 schools were identified across Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape, and Kwazulu Natal. The NECT has managed this project which is envisioned to benefit almost 60 000 learners across the 117 schools.

Strategic Operations Support

Strategic operations support was comprised of project management, mass communication, and monitoring and evaluation activities; all of which were essential to supporting the other components of the plan.

Mass communication was a crucial element of the Response Plan and, as such, the NECT developed and implemented a communications and advocacy strategy to ensure the dissemination of accurate information on the pandemic; health and safety protocols for school re-opening; and available support materials for teachers, learners, and parents. Through engagement on social media, over 1 000 000 people were reached via NECT, Woza Matrics, and Tswelopele social media accounts.

The “Lunch with Teachers” dialogue series on Radio2000 was another significant communication and advocacy platform. This was a 4-week series of 20 dialogues which aimed to interact with and have meaningful conversations with teachers during the lockdown and to take advantage of the time to reflect on the teaching profession. Some of the guests on the show included NECT CEO, Godwin Khosa; NECT Chairman, Sizwe Nxasana; members of senior DBE management; teachers and education experts.

Teacher Support

Since April 2020, in excess of 28 000 teachers, subject advisors, and SMT members in 75 districts across the country have received themed monthly curriculum support WhatsApp messages. The aim of this messaging was to:

- Prepare beneficiaries for the post-lockdown period
- Drive professional development for subject advisors and teachers amidst the lockdown.
- Ensure the continuation of education by guiding teachers on how to support learners and parents at home
- Guide school managers on how to combat the spread of Covid-19 through the circulation of accurate Covid-19 information.



4.5. TEACHER UNION COLLABORATION

WORKING TOGETHER FOR TEACHER PROFESSIONALISATION AND EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT

The NECT continued to play a critical role in social mobilisation and coordinating the utilisation of social capital for education improvement. The NECT through the Union collaboration programmes seeks to (a) strengthen teacher union capacity to implement their professional development programmes to (b) benefit the education system. The following highlights are worth noting with regards to the work done through the unions:

- The NECT supported the DBE with training of Lead Teachers in three provinces (Kwazulu-Natal, Limpopo and Eastern Cape) under the Teacher Union Collaboration Programme to scale up the PSRIP. Through this programme teachers take responsibility to drive reading improvement at classroom level. This collaboration has upskilled 218 Subject Advisers, Lead teachers and Union representatives as well as 5 190 teachers.
- The three-way partnership (DBE-NATU-NECT) established end of 2019, successfully took off in 2020 using remote and digital means in the presence of the Covid -19 restrictions. The intervention targeted training of school management teams in Amajuba District in Kwa Zulu Natal on school leadership modules. This brings the number of unions the NECT is collaborating with in driving education matters in the system to four.
- The NECT will continue reaching out to the remaining teacher unions to establish areas of collaboration within the education space.

Table 9 shows the overall reach of union programmes over the past four years.

Table 9: Union Programme Reach over the past four years

UNION	2017	2018	2019	2020	*Reach
TUC	-	-	-	5 190	5 190
SADTU	785	1 330	1 225	-	1 330
NAPTOSA	59	114	190	320	320
NATU	-	-	-	132	132
Total	844	1 444	1 415	5 642	6 972
Variance		71.1%	2%	298.7%	

To date, through the Union programmes, the NECT has reached 6 972 teachers and school managers in four provinces (LP, EC, NW and KZN), resulting in a 298.7% growth in reach from 1 415 in 2019 to 5642 in 2020..

During 2020:

- 5 190 (110.9%) teachers were trained on the PSRIP programme by the Teacher Union Collaboration (TUC) in 3 provinces (KZN, EC and LP)
- 130 (100%) teachers and 4 SAs were trained on Assessment for Learning (AfL) in partnership with NAPTOSA in DR RSM district in NW Province, totaling 320 beneficiaries from 320 schools since 2017. This accounts for a 68.4% year on year increase in the number of schools participating in assessment for learning from 2019.
- 132 (44%) Principals, Deputy Principles, and teachers were trained on Curriculum Management through NATU in KZN.

Lessons:

- Capacity building of Union leadership needs to take note of their experience, knowledge and skills in order to make optimal use of existing talent in materials development and training.
- The involvement of Circuit Managers and Subject Advisors in joint planning and task execution is crucial. Together with unions at district level this builds teamwork, partnerships and meaningful integration of teacher professionalisation interventions.
- There is much value rendered to the system when teacher unions find a common ground on how to share and collaborate at district, circuit and school levels.

Going forward, the NECT will continue working closely with:

NAPTOSA in rolling out Assessment for Learning (AfL) programme in North West province. The programme aims to expose teachers to NAPTOSA's 'Demystifying Assessment' modules with the aim of enhancing curriculum coverage and assessment practices among teachers. This will be done through Subject Advisor and teacher training and support, materials development (lesson plans, content booklets, trackers, and assessment modules), and monitoring and quality assurance.

NATU in rolling out school leadership and management programme (Positive School Culture Module) in KwaZulu-Natal province. The programme aims expose teachers to the 'Positive School Culture Module' with the aim of enhancing school management and leadership. The partners will work closely with District officials, Subject Advisors, and teachers in the iLembe and Ulundi districts and will provide training and materials (Positive School Culture Module).

SADTU in rolling out psychosocial support programmes across the nine provinces. This meaningful collaboration between the DBE, NECT and SADTU is aimed at developing and implementing an agenda for creating a PSS Responder's Guide and PSS for Schools Module. The partners will work closely with District officials, Subject Advisors, and teachers through training, materials distribution (PSS Responder's Guide and PSS for Schools Module), and Monitoring and Quality Assurance (MQA).

The National Reading Coalition (NRC) is comprised of strategic activities aimed at shifting South Africa towards a national culture of reading. These strategies, and their percentage weightings, are represented in the diagram below.

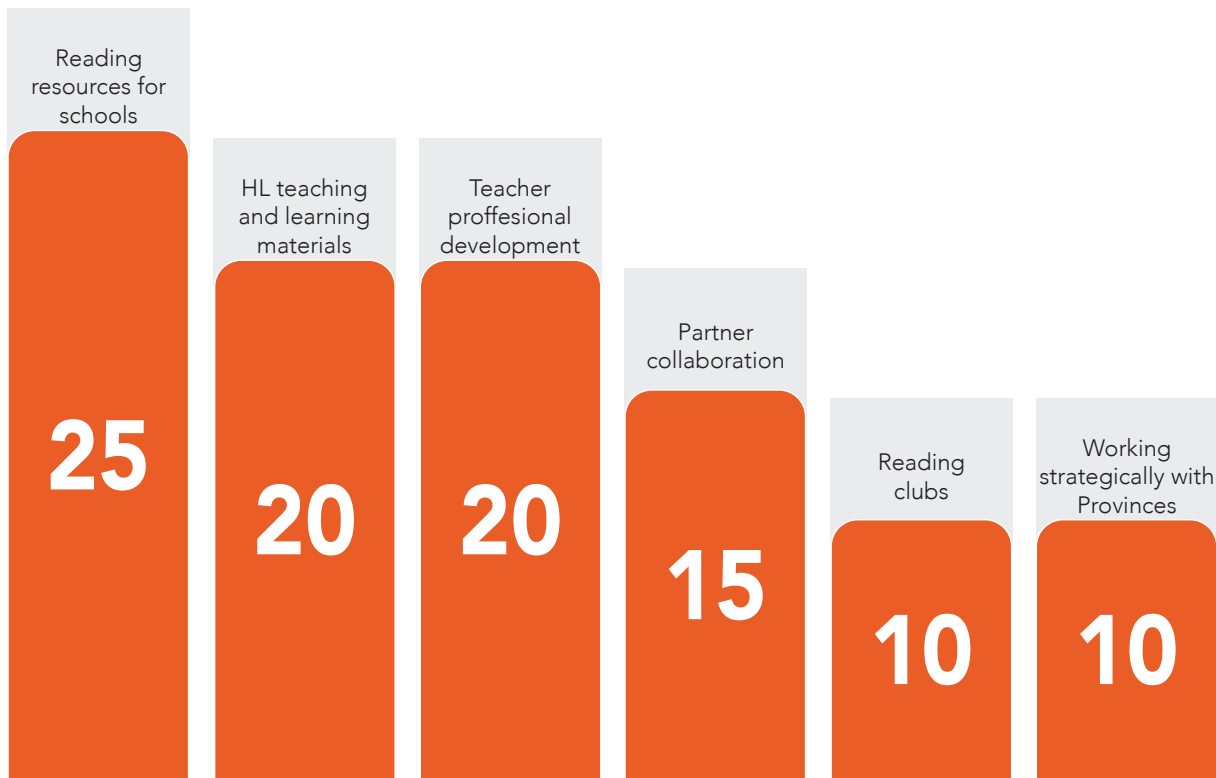


Figure 4: NRC Strategies

STRATEGIC ACHIEVEMENTS

The following strategic achievements were realised in 2020.

01 PROVISION OF READING RESOURCES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The NRC implemented three strategic interventions in its aim to provide reading resources for primary schools. Firstly, the NRC instituted a storybook project where Foundation Phase Stories were written by suitably skilled NECT District Change Agents, edited by subject advisors, and then professionally illustrated and produced. The aim was to increase the capacity of writers to develop suitable reading materials available for Foundation Phase learners, teachers, and parents. A total of 21 stories were successfully developed in 2020 in the following language and levels.

Table 10: Foundation Phase Books developed, by language

LANGUAGE	GRADE 1 LEVEL	GRADE 2 LEVEL	GRADE 3 LEVEL	TOTALS
Siswati	2	2	2	6
Tshivenda	1	1	1	3
Xitsonga	1	2	1	4
isiXhosa	2	1	1	4
Sepedi	1	2	1	4
TOTALS	7	8	6	21



Secondly, a process was implemented to place book collection boxes in key provincial locations. The purpose of this strategy was to encourage the South African population to donate books, using the boxes as collection points. By the end of 2020, 16 book collection boxes had been placed across the country.

Thirdly, Room to Read, one of the NRC partners, donated 20,000 books for dissemination to primary schools. An event was held at Dudu Primary School, Tzaneen (Nkowankowa Circuit) on 5 December 2020 to celebrate this generous donation and to launch the NRC Foundation Phase stories detailed above. In keeping with social distancing norms, this event was also publicly available on YouTube

02 HOME LANGUAGE (HL) TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

The NRC supported the development of Foundation Phase home language structured learning programmes (SLPs) and made the following language programmes available to the system: isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, isiNdebele, Siswati, English and Afrikaans.

This development is aligned to the LTSM strand in the Integrated Sector Reading Plan and the programmes form part of the minimum reading package for primary schools.

03 TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The NRC supports the expansion of the Primary School Reading Improvement Programme (PSRIP) into circuits actively involved with the NRC. This programme enhances teachers' skills in the teaching of reading through capacitating the state and providing reading resources. Subject Advisor training was planned for 2020 in a face-to-face training model. However, this had to be changed to virtual training on the MS Teams platform. The training was targeted at Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase subject advisors who support teachers in 375 schools across 22 circuits.

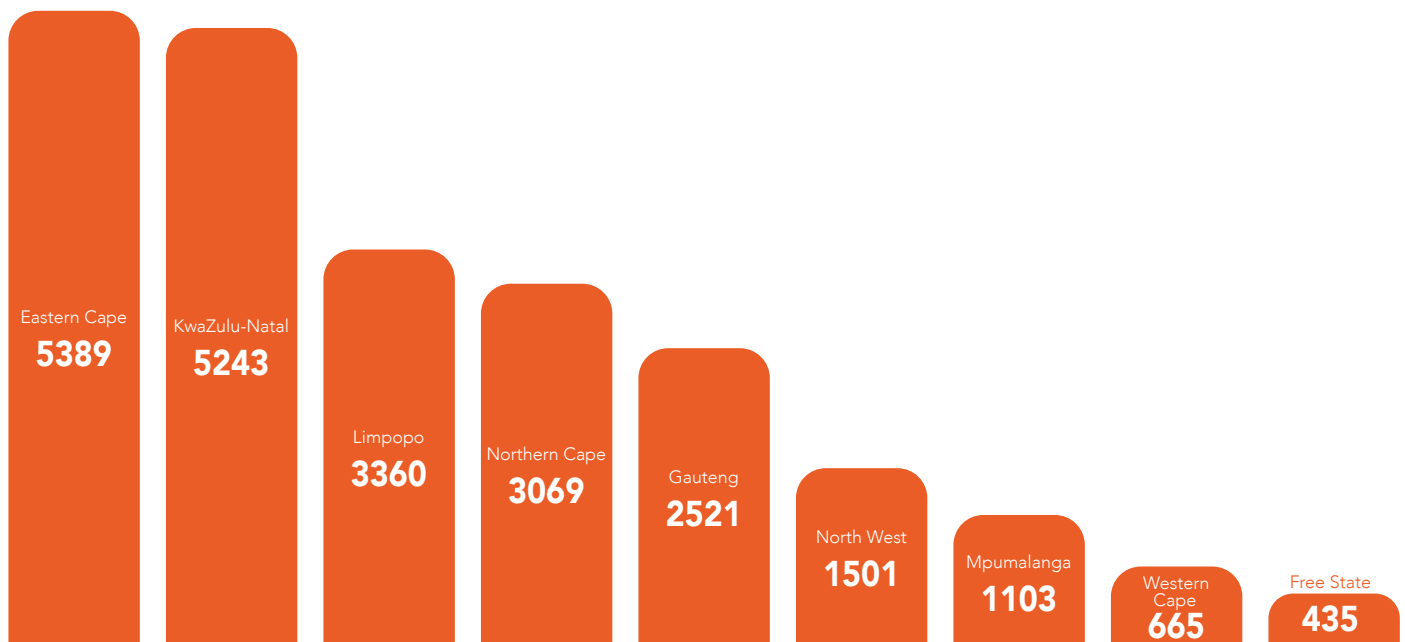
04 PARTNER COLLABORATION

The NRC has always supported collaboration with other literacy and reading organisations and began 2020 with memoranda of agreement with several partners, namely Nal'ibali, Room to Read, Activate Leadership, A Better Africa Foundation, Fundza and Bridge. These central partners were invited to a virtual meeting with the NRC in August 2020 to do the following:

- To make necessary adjustments for the 'new normal'
- To conceptualise 'bursts' of engagement to shift trajectory
- To meaningfully engage with NRC partners
- To scale up NRC activities to 25% of education circuits (222)

One of the first collaborative initiatives entered into with partners was support to the DBE for the national Reading Champions Programme. This programme began late in 2020 and continued throughout the first quarter of 2021. The aim of the programme was to source 50,000 champions who would be trained and deployed to schools to support reading.

The graph below reflects the number of reading champions trained per province by the end of 2020.



05 WORKING STRATEGICALLY WITH PROVINCES

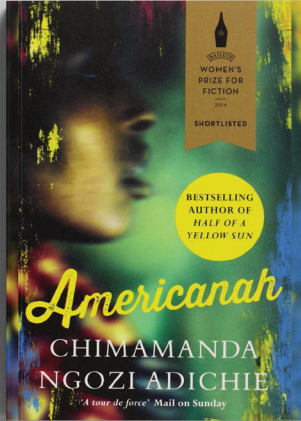
The NRC began working with provincial counterparts as they integrated the national reading framework into plans aligned to address local imperatives. By the end of 2020, the NRC had worked with both the Limpopo and Eastern Cape Departments of Education on this strategy.

The NRC also supported provinces and circuits to mark national and international reading days in 2020 as is demonstrated below.

Table 11: NRC activities

READING DAY	DATE	ACTIVITIES
World Read Aloud Day	5 February 2020	Collaborate with Nalibali to get more than 60 000 learners of 6 provinces to do reading activities. For example, learners read stories and responded to comprehension questions
World Mother Tongue Day	21 February 2020	Coordinated reading activities in 4 provinces. Example of activities included 1. Inviting guests to do reading at assemble. 2. Learners read stories to their peers.
World Book Day	23 April 2020	Shared reading messages. Shared book titles and download links. Conducted radio interviews.
Youth Day	16 June 2020	Shared video clips Shared reading messages through WhatsApp to principals, circuit managers and subject advisors
Mandela Day	17 July 2020	Shared Mandela quotes through WhatsApp groups
Women's Day	August 2020	Shared video clips Shared reading messages
Africa Day	May 2020	Shared posters via WhatsApp Shared audio Clips
Literacy month	September 2020	Shared reading posters Conducted radio Interviews
Teachers' Day	05 October 2020	Shared reading posters

Traditionally the NRC supported the implementation of face-to-face reading clubs at circuit level. These were operational in 22 circuits at the start of 2020. However, the implementation nature of these reading clubs had to change because of social distancing regulations in 2020.



The concept of a virtual reading club – hosted on the Zoom platform – was trialed on 14 December 2020. The NRC facilitated a panel discussion of the book 'Americanah' by Chimamanda Adichie. The discussion panel was made up of three people, namely, the Minister of Education, the Honourable Angie Motshekga, the NECT CEO, Mr Godwin Khosa, and the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Johannesburg, Professor Tshilidzi Marwala. 140 people participated in this first virtual reading club.

LESSONS LEARNT

The NRC learnt the following strategic lessons because of its work in 2020.

Lesson 1: The NRC continually needs to be defined by flexibility and agility

There has always been the need for the NRC to be flexible and agile due to the nature of its work, but these characteristics were severely put to the test during 2020. No one could have anticipated the impact the global COVID-19 pandemic would have on our work. The NRC tried to adapt its strategy to the 'new normal', and to a large extent was successful in shifting from face-to-face interactions to virtual interactions. As the NRC moves in 2021, more focus needs to be dedicated to ensuring that flexibility and agility is built into all NRC activities.

Lesson 2: State collaboration for capacity building

The NRC is committed to growing and developing the skills and competencies required by officials to instil a culture of reading across the country, and the DBE has a pivotal role to play in collaborating with the NRC on this. A central element in this partnership involves enhancing the reading development skills of education officials who work directly with the NRC.

In 2020, the NRC worked on the professional development of subject advisors in two ways:

1. Subject advisors were involved in editing the Foundation Phase stories written by the NRC. They were exposed to the supply chain required to write, edit, illustrate, layout and publish reading books. Much learning was acquired by all involved.
2. Subject advisors were trained as master trainers on reading methodologies in the PSRIP expansion project. They became more proficient workshop facilitators and more knowledgeable about the teaching of reading.

Lesson 3: Home Language Structured Learning Programmes are complex and require implementation testing

Lessons from the EFAL PSRIP demonstrated that, to gain a better understanding of the language and resourcing complexities of implementing a multi-language national home language programme, a carefully structured pilot is needed. While some schools will have on Foundation Phase Home Language, a great number of schools offer a combination of 4-5 home languages, and such complexities will affect how subject advisors and teachers are trained.

Lesson 4: NRC partner relationships need to be nurtured

The NRC was very successful in 2020 in engaging meaningfully with reading and literacy partners. However, these relationships require ongoing attention for them to be meaningful and relevant for all parties.

Next Steps

The table below details how the NRC will move forward on the strategic activities in 2021.

Table 12: NRC future plans

STRATEGIC ACTIVITY	ACTIVITIES
1. Reach	Expand the NRC activities into 222 national circuits.
2. Provision of reading resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Version the existing Foundation Phase storybooks into additional languages. Draw on subject advisor language competencies. 2. Conduct advocacy visits to shopping malls to make the purpose of the book boxes more explicit. Extend into churches as additional collection points. Develop and implement strategic plans for the collection and dissemination processes. 3. Continue to source book donations from partners and other stakeholders.
3. HL learning and teaching	Conduct a national pilot study to implement the HL structured learning programmes into a sample of schools. This is to test the complexity of running a multi-language programme and to provide the DBE with a clear set of lessons learnt and next steps.
4. Teacher professional development	Expand the PSRIP into an additional 2220 schools across 222 national circuits.
5. Partner collaboration	Continue to nurture current partner relationships and expand the reach to additional partners.
6. Strategic provincial interactions	Work with four additional provinces to align their reading plans to national and local imperatives. Focus on North West, Mpumalanga, Free State and Northern Cape.
7. Reading clubs	Continue to host monthly Virtual Reading Club (VRC) sessions.
	Continue involving circuits and schools in the celebration of reading and literacy days.
	Continue providing key stakeholders with books profiled in the VRC to encourage participation.

SECTION

05

Sustaining the education
reform agenda towards
the 2030 NDP vision



This section is about the partnership with ETDPS SETA and DBE on a national training programme to capacitate the system in the teaching of reading.

As the education sector recovers from the disruptions, there is an even greater need to continue driving education reform towards the goals stated in the NDP. In response to this need, the NECT has supported the DBE in advancing education reform through the Comprehension Across the Curriculum programme; Teaching Maths for Understanding programme; and teacher support messaging. Reading and reading for comprehension are major challenges that impact learning across all grades and subjects. The NECT works with the DBE to address these challenges by supporting the implementation of a number of programmes that address reading improvement.

5.1. PRIMARY SCHOOL READING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

2020 HIGHLIGHTS

+11 000



Subject advisors, teachers, and school management teams reached

+28 000



Beneficiaries reached through curriculum messaging

21








Schools across three provinces in which the Teaching Maths for Understanding programme was piloted

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

During 2020, the Primary School Reading Improvement Programme, a partnership between the NECT and the DBE – and funded by the ETDPS SETA – upskilled a new cohort of Subject Advisers, SMTs and teachers to support the teaching of EFAL in Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase classrooms across the country. The programme aims to develop the capacity of Subject Advisers and HODs to better support teachers in the teaching of reading, as well as to build the capacity of teachers to teach reading and comprehension more confidently. The programme has been endorsed by SACE for 15 CPTD points.

EXTENT OF THE PROGRAMME

The 2020 reach adds to the programmes impressive extent since inception in 2017, with a considerable impact on the national system:

	BENEFICIARY GROUPING	REACH FROM 2017-2019	REACH IN 2020	TOTAL REACH TO DATE	% SYSTEM REACH
	FP Subject Advisers	263	122	376*	100%
	IP Subject Advisers	144	144	278*	100%
	FP Teachers	16 037	3 966	20 003	18%
	IP EFAL Teachers	4 805	4 583	9 388	15%
	SMTs	2 676	2 578	5 254	12%
	Districts	51	56	59	77%
	Primary Schools	4 348	2 578	6 926	45%

* Some Subject Advisers have attended refresher training

** Some districts included in more than one iteration of the programme

To date 29 391 EFAL teachers from 6 926 schools have been upskilled in PSRIP methodology.

Programme Resources

All Subject Advisers who support EFAL from Grades 1 – 6 across the country, and at least one SMT member from each participating school has have been resourced and upskilled in programme methodology and approach.

Each programme beneficiary is resourced with a full curriculum pack that includes:

- Policy compliant Structured Learning Programmes
- Planners and trackers
- Reading books and reading texts
- Worksheets
- Posters

Programme resources are what drive the delivery of the EFAL curriculum and in 2020, 170 980 units of programme materials were delivered to 8 549 teachers.



//
PSRIP CURRICULUM RESOURCES ARE VERY USEFUL AS THEY MAKE TEACHING VERY EASY. THEY HELP ME A LOT TO UNDERSTAND WHICH CONCEPTS I MUST TEACH WHEN AND HOW.
//

Shernee Maasdorp
Grade 2 teacher – Abedare Primary School, WC

REVISED TRAINING APPROACH IN RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

Despite the challenges and disruptions brought about by Covid-19, swift and agile programme adjustments saw the programme being successfully implemented to completion. The most significant changes were to the mechanisms of training and support.

Subject Adviser and SMT Training

In June 2020, at the height of the first lockdown, Subject Adviser and SMT master training was moved to an online platform. A new approach to training ensured meaningful engagement as well as interparticipant interaction in the virtual space. In addition to instilling PSRIP programme methodology and approach, the training also prepared Subject Advisers and SMT Officials to support teachers with:

- Chunking and trimming the curriculum;
- Providing psychosocial support to colleagues and learners; and
- Ensuring appropriate health and safety practices in classrooms



//
DURING THIS OUTBREAK [COVID-19] THE TRAINING TAUGHT ME TO UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING THAT WOULD BE USEFUL TO ENSURE THAT TEACHERS RECEIVE ALL OF THE NECESSARY SKILLS TO ASSIST THEM WITH THEIR TEACHING.
//

Kgare Raxina
Intermediate Phase EFAL Subject Adviser
Capricorn District, LP

SUBJECT ADVISOR PROGRESS

In view of the important role of the Subject Advisor in the PSRIP it is extremely encouraging to see improvements in pre and post tests results, the progress of these beneficiaries will benefit the reaching of reading tremendously. As far as the applications and practice of the PSRIP, Subject Advisers requires a deep understanding in order to guide and train teachers.

Foundation Phase

Subject Advisers demonstrated a 7,8% improvement in their understanding of policy and programme methodology between pre and post-testing.

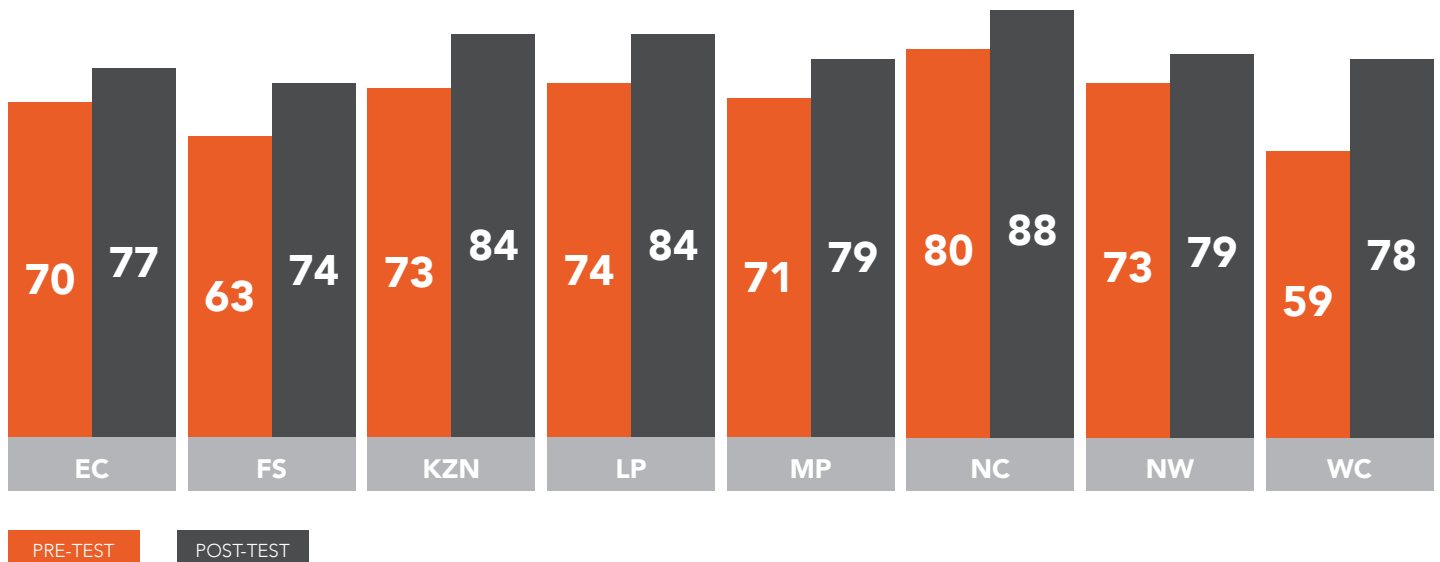


Figure 6: Comparison per province of FP SA pre-test and post-test results



Intermediate Phase

Subject Advisers demonstrated a 17,7% improvement in their understanding of policy and programme methodology between pre and post-testing.

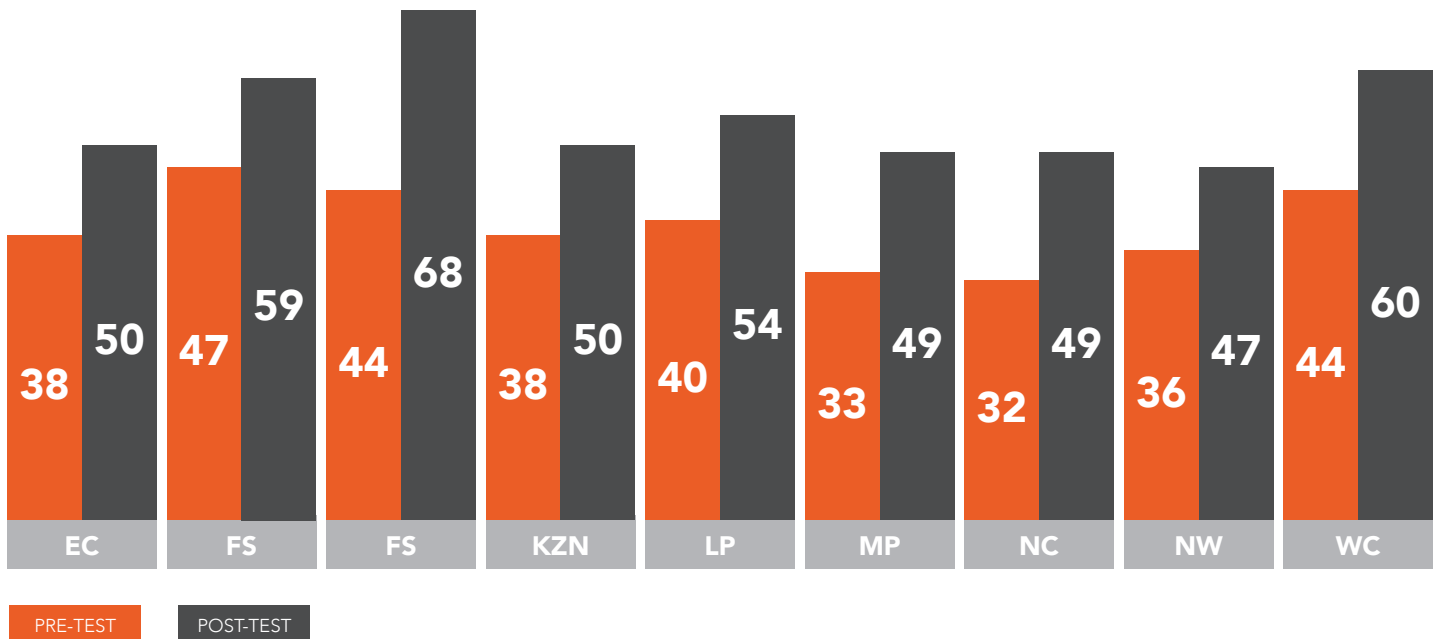


Figure 7: Comparison per province of IP SA pre-test and post-test results

Teacher Progress

Following on from the Subject Adviser Training, teacher training was conducted across provinces during Term 3 at the height of the pandemic. Each province opted for a different approach to teacher training – these included face-to-face training, online training or a blend of both of these. The programme was adjusted to support health and safety considerations: for example group guided reading was suspended, and replaced with individual reading to limit close contact between learners. In addition to the standard training, the PSRIP set up provincial WhatsApp groups with Teachers and shared biweekly guidance communications to assist them with navigating curriculum delivery and assessment during the pandemic.

A total of 27 EFAL communications were sent to 29 391 teachers between April and December 2020 to support them during the pandemic.



“ I FOUND THE TRIMMING OF ATPS AND THE INCORPORATION OF PSRIP TO BE REFRESHING DURING THE UNCERTAIN TIME OF COVID 19. THE PSRIP & TRIMMED ATPS WORK WELL TOGETHER AND ARE WELL COORDINATED. ”

Patty Ntlatleng

Grade 5 EFAL Teacher, Motoaneng Primary School, MP

Despite the circumstances, **teachers also demonstrated improvements in between their pre and post tests.** A 15% sample of the total number of teachers was marked and **analyzed to assess improvements** in programme and policy understanding.

Foundation Phase

The 572 teachers included in the sample demonstrated an improvement of 11% between pre and post-test.

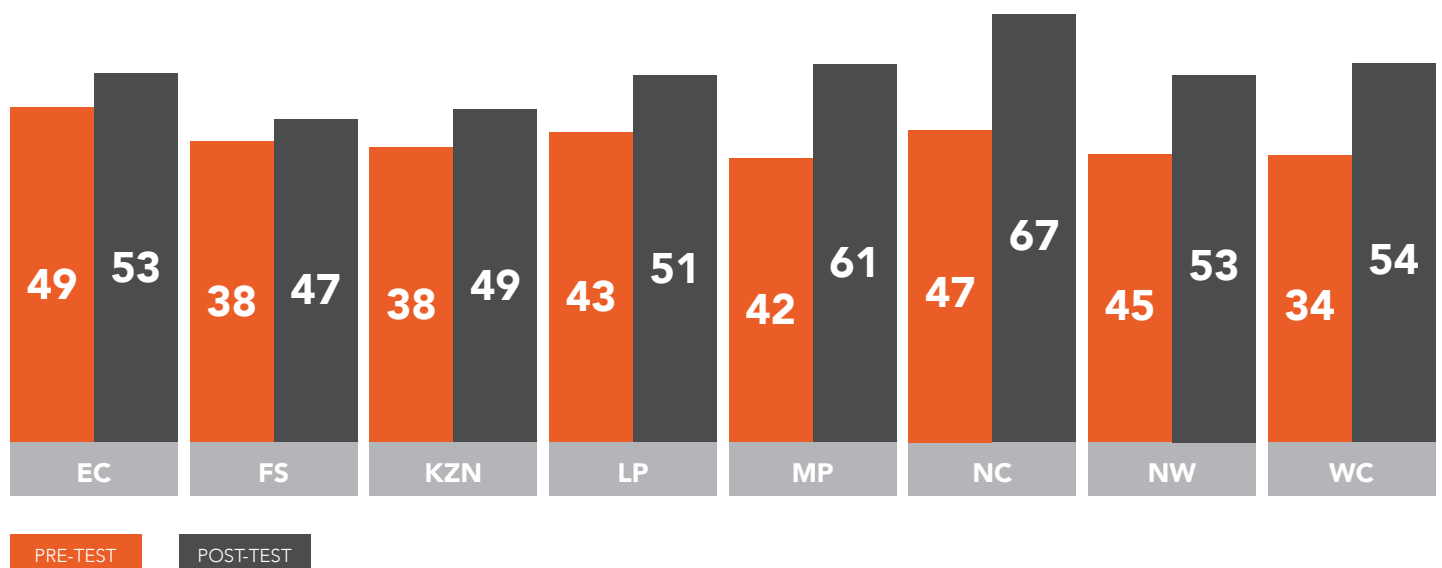


Figure 8: Changes in FP teacher performance per province

Intermediate Phase

The 723 teachers included in the sample demonstrated an improvement of 8,4% between pre and post-test.

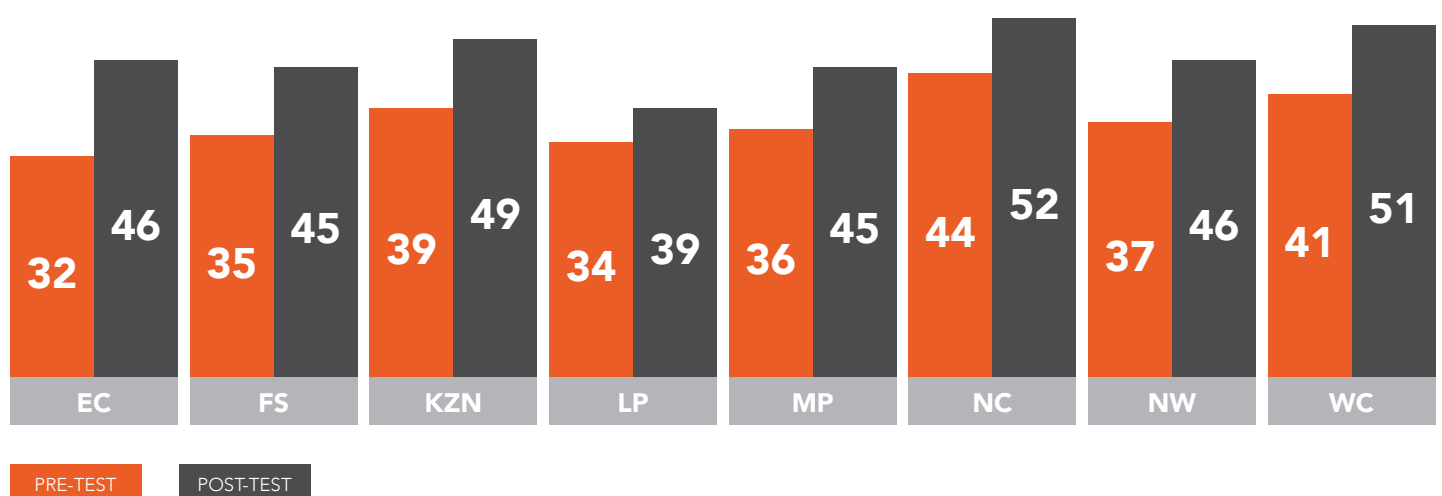


Figure 9: Changes in IP teachers total performance per province

SUPPORT TO PARENTS

Recognising the pressure that the lockdown put on parents, the PSRIP moved swiftly to provide inspiration and support to parents who suddenly found themselves fulfilling the role of a teacher at home. To this end, a series of lockdown videos were produced that provided guidance on establishing routines at home, supporting home learning and providing psychosocial support to children. In addition to this, a number of PSRIP storybooks were digitized and compressed in PDF format and they were disseminated via social media so as to be easily accessible to parents on their phones.

PROGRESS AND PLANS 2021

Due to the demonstrated successes in the Foundation Phase in Phase 1, and the Foundation and Intermediate Phases in Phase 2 and 3, the PSRIP is in its fourth iteration of the PSRIP, PSRIP phase 4 will upskill and develop a minimum of 240 Subject Advisors, 10 000 teachers, 18 provincial SMT teams and at least 1400 school level SMTs. The training aspect will include the provision of teaching and support resources which will be supported through rigorous M&E and MQA processes.

LESSONS FOR PSRIP

- Face-to-face contact is vital to maintain the momentum associated with a national scale movement
- Support to parents is vital for the development of reading outside of school.

5.1.2. NRC/ PSRIP READING BASELINE STUDY

The baseline study was conducted in Term 1 2020, using EGRA pegged at Grade 2 level from DBE and Room to Read (Sepedi). The purpose of the baseline study was to collect data on the teaching and learning of reading with comprehension in a sample of schools in 22 circuits. The Covid-19 pandemic prevented the completion of baseline data collection, after visiting 14 circuits.

Table 14: NRC/PSRIP Baseline Study

PROVINCES	CIRCUITS	GRADE 3 EFAL	GRADE 3 HL (ISIZULU)	GRADE 3 HL (SEPEDI)
EC	2	202	0	0
FS	2	25	0	0
GP	1	121	0	0
KZN	2	148	148	0
LP	3	127	0	57
MP	3	91	0	0
NW	1	30	0	0
WC	0	0	0	0
NC	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	14	744	148	57

EGRA was conducted using the Tangerine Application on tablets, to facilitate accuracy, standardisation and to reduce the turnaround time for reporting. Enumerators were trained thoroughly on the use of the Tangerine application, and pilot studies were conducted in Gauteng schools before data collection.

Summary of findings

English First Additional Language (EFAL)



Figure 10: NRC baseline EFAL assessment results

Descriptions of EFAL sub-tasks

SUB-TASK	DESCRIPTION
Active vocabulary	Learners name objects from pictures.
Letter sound	Learners say the sound made by a letter.
Decodable word recognition	Learners read words that can be sounded out phonetically.
Sight word recognition	Learners read words that are phonetically irregular which they must identify by sight.
Oral reading fluency (ORF)	Learners read a text as fast and as accurately as they can.
ORF comprehension	Learners answer comprehension questions on the passage read.

Observations for EFAL

Learners struggled with letter sounds. Mother tongue interference was observed in sounding out letters in English. Phonics form part of the technical reading skills for reading. This is likely to impact their reading fluency, and comprehension.

Teaching of shared reading and group guided reading can improve learners’ word recognition of decodable and sight words.

Average oral reading fluency of 23 words per minute in EFAL can hamper comprehension. A large number of slow readers observed in oral reading fluency, reading below 5 words per minute. Low scores in oral reading fluency may reflect lack of practice of independent reading by learners.

The higher the quintile, the better the school’s performance in vocabulary, phonics, oral reading fluency and comprehension. Performance between circuits varied, possibly due to differing contexts and resources, both material and human.

HOME LANGUAGE (HL)

Descriptions of HL sub-tasks

SUB-TASK	DESCRIPTION
Letter sound speed	Learners identify the sounds made by a list of letters in lower case.
Oral reading fluency (ORF)	Learners read a text as fast and as accurately as they can.
ORF comprehension	Learners answer comprehension questions on the passage read.
Object Naming	Learners name objects arranged in random order as fast as they can.
Letter sound recognition	Learners identify the sounds made by letters in upper or lower case, and a combination of letters as digraphs and trigraphs.
Non-words	Learners decode and read words containing phonics that they should be familiar with. The words may not mean anything in the language.



ISIZULU

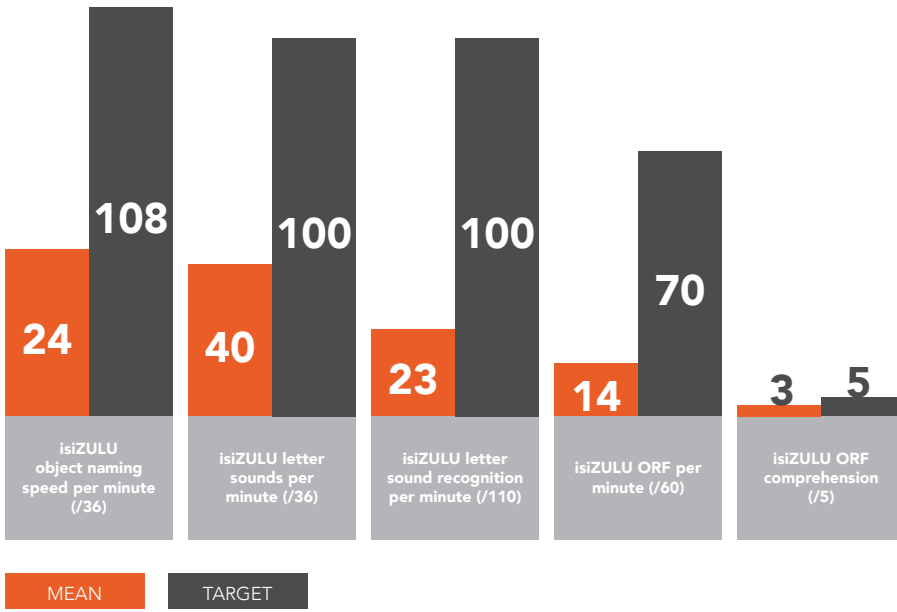


Figure 11: NRC baseline isiZulu assessment results

Observations for HL

A sizeable number of non-readers were observed in letter sound recognition and ORF (oral reading fluency). This has an impact on reading comprehension. Learners who struggle with phonics in HL are likely to struggle in EFAL as additive bilingualism will not apply.

Some learners struggled to understand what they read, achieving at between 0 and 1 out of 5. Low scores in oral reading fluency may reflect lack of practice of independent reading by learners.

SEPEDI

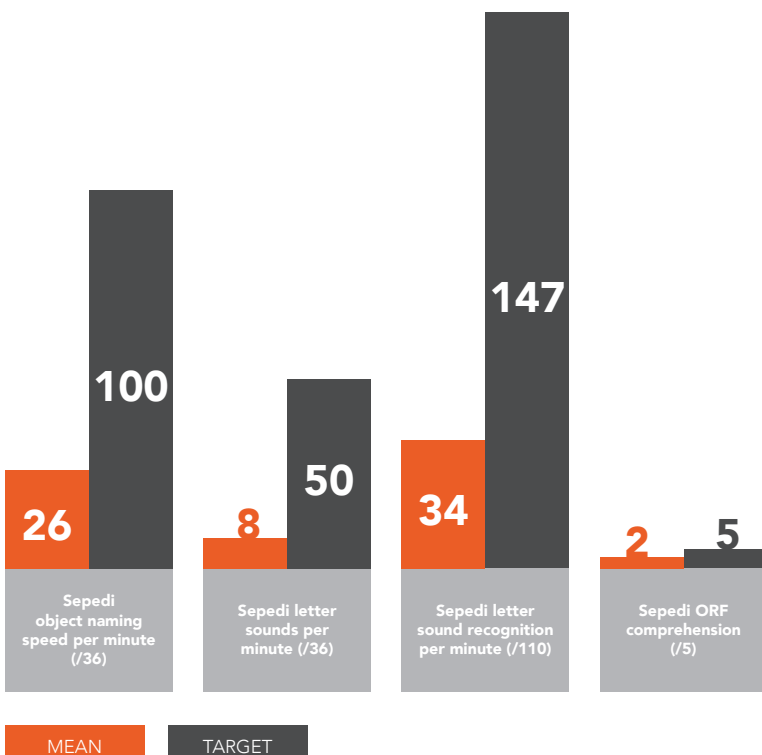


Figure 12: NRC baseline Sepedi assessment results

5.2. A NEW ONLINE LEARNING OPPORTUNITY FOR TEACHERS

The unprecedented times of the Covid-19 pandemic provided the NECT with the opportunity to consider alternative ways of training teachers. By swiftly bringing together relevant stakeholders, including the DBE, SACE and the ETDPSETA, the Comprehension Across the Curriculum (CATC) programme was born.

Programme aims

The programme was designed in 2020 and it aims to upskill teachers to better teach reading comprehension skills across the curriculum, while at the same time creating awareness about the importance of teaching comprehension and critical thinking in all subjects, across all phases. It reminds all teachers – no matter what their subject – that they are also language teachers.

Programme Summary

The DBE's TeacherConnect platform is used for teachers to access the learning opportunity, which is:

- Initially targeted at 10 000 teachers of all grades and subjects
- The first online SACE endorsed learning opportunity for teachers in South Africa, earning 5 CPTD points
- Conducted online through a bespoke designed Learner Management System (LMS)
- Self-paced and takes an estimated 6 hours to complete

The timing of the programme also lends itself to provide Covid-19 related support – which includes a focus on:

- Curriculum catch-up;
- Psychosocial support; and
- Health and safety guidance.

Progress and Plans for 2021

By the end of 2020 the conceptual design and programme content was completed, with four phase specific variations of the programme being designed: FP, IP, SP and FET. The content for each phase includes a series of resources, that comprise: videos (in classroom and graphic), stories, reading texts, activities and quizzes. A 1-hour TV documentary on the topic was also produced.

In 2021, the Learner Management System, that will host the learning opportunity, will be developed and the programme will be launched and made available to teachers. The TV programme will be aired nationally.

5.3. CURRICULUM MESSAGES

Following the national lockdown, this unprecedented event necessitated South African organisations to shift their ways of working so that they would remain functional in this 'new normal'. The NECT made interesting and courageous shifts that kept it relevant during these difficult times. This section details one such shift.

It has always been important for the NECT to keep in meaningful contact with its beneficiaries. And pre-2020, the District Improvement Programme (DIP) did this through the direct face-to-face training and support of subject advisors, school managers, departmental heads, teachers, learners, and parents. But the NECT was unable to continue with this strategy in 2020 given the new health guidelines involving lock down levels, social distancing and mask wearing. To adapt to this situation, the DIP began implementing a virtual messaging process with three main aims. Firstly, to keep in contact with beneficiaries when communities were increasingly isolated from each other; secondly, to support beneficiaries with important information; and thirdly, to draw beneficiaries to the NECT website as an important and supportive information hub.

The programme demonstrated its agility by curating and disseminating its first curriculum message as early as 27 March 2020, one day after the start of the national lockdown.

STRATEGIC ACHIEVEMENTS

The following strategic achievements were realised in 2020.

Messages disseminated.

From March to December 2020 twenty-two curriculum messages and seven psychosocial care and support messages were disseminated. Messages were sent to subject advisors, teachers, and departmental heads. Subject advisors and departmental heads, in turn, disseminated messages to parents.

The curriculum messages were structured around Maths, languages, and Science. They focused on:

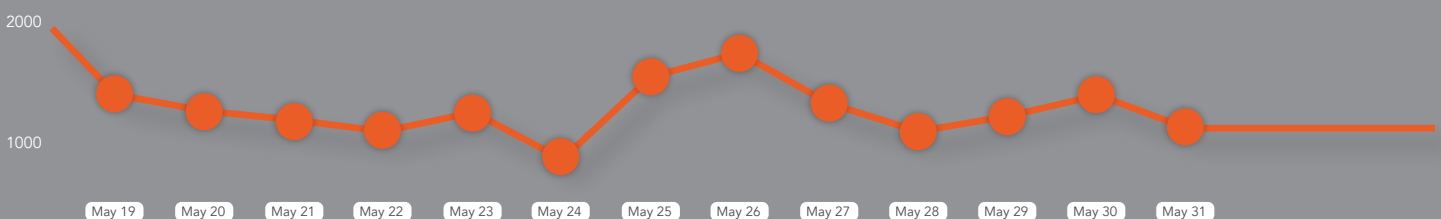
1. Tips for teachers on how to teach concepts learners missed due to school closures
2. Enhancing teachers' knowledge of key teaching and learning concepts
3. Involving parents in at home learning

The psychosocial care and support messages focused on:

1. General ways to support teachers during periods of lock down and quarantine.
2. How to analyse COVID-19 misinformation on social media
3. Definitions of well-being and resilience

Monitoring the NECT website

One of the aims of the messaging process was to draw beneficiaries to the NECT website where they could find important curriculum and COVID-19 information. The success of this aim was monitored through data analytics which provided Programme 1 with important information about the reach of the messaging programme. The figure below reflects the spikes on website usage when messages were disseminated during the month of May 2020. Please note that May was used as an exemplar month as it was then when learners began returning to school.



Spikes in the above figure reflect people's responses to the dissemination of messages.

● Pageviews

Most messages provided links to documents and / or video content hosted on the NECT website. The aim was to draw people into accessing important and relevant information. The table below reflects the website analytics produced for May 2020 and demonstrates high activity because of the messages sent.

HOME LANGUAGE (HL)

Descriptions of HL sub-tasks

# USERS	# NEW USERS	# SESSIONS	AVE SESSION/USER	AVE SESSION DURATION
16 704	14 998	24 250	1.45	5 mins 06 secs

In 2020 the following beneficiaries were reached by the messages in each province.



Table 15: Curriculum Message Reach

PROVINCE	REACH
Eastern Cape	3 266
Western Cape	9 589
Northern Cape	892
Gauteng	1 007
Mpumalanga	1 215
North West	3 174
Limpopo	4 338
KwaZulu-Natal	3 949
Free State	948
TOTAL	28 378

LESSONS LEARNT

The NRC learnt the following strategic lessons from the messaging process in 2020.

Lesson 1: In times of great need it is crucial to keep in contact with people

The global COVID-19 pandemic has caused disruptions in all aspects of social, emotional and professional life across the world. In such difficult times, it is very important that we remain connected with each other in as many ways as possible. The content of the messages becomes almost secondary to the act of messaging itself.

Lesson 2: Messaging is a two-way process; they need to be sent, but they also need to have a response

Data analytics demonstrated that the messages were received by beneficiaries and that they resonated with them in various ways. We can clearly see how the messages drew the beneficiaries to interesting documents on the NECT website.

Next Steps

From the data analytical statistics provided the messaging process was very successful in 2020; thus, the decision was taken to continue with it into 2021. Two separate teams will be established, with each team curating content twice a month. One team will cover curriculum issues related to Maths, languages, and Science, while the other team will provide messaging on reading as well as psychosocial care and support.

5.4. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY GRADE MATHEMATICS

In response to the slow growth in mathematics results both in the national and international assessments, the Minister called a Mathematics Indaba in December 2016, which recommended the appointment of a Ministerial Mathematics Task Team to develop a National Framework on the approach to the teaching and learning of Mathematics. The Minister subsequently approved the Mathematics Teaching and Learning Framework for South Africa: Teaching Mathematics for Understanding (TMU) on 19 March 2018. The NECT working collaboratively with the DBE started the TMU field testing in 2019 in 41 primary schools from three provinces (EC, KZN and LP).

RESPONSES FROM GRADE 4-9 NATURAL SCIENCE-TECHNOLOGY TEACHER.

What new knowledge or skills did you learn from the workshop?

“I have learned new knowledge and skills from the training such as, curriculum design, how to use the technical gadgets and how to plan activities for home learning”.

“The workshop was a success, and the facilitator was excellent, we now understand the explanation of terms, core skills vs content coverage and have learnt to reorganise content especially during the Covid-19 period”.





// THE SUPPORT PROVIDED FOR TEACHERS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME IS EXCELLENT AS TEACHERS CAN WHATSAPP AND GET INSTANT SUPPORT WHEN THEY STRUGGLE WITH PLANNING, IT IS A BRILLIANT WAY OF SUPPORT.



Beryl Khumalo
EFAL SMT Official, Northern Cape.

PLANS

- The NECT will continue with the embedding of Structured Learning Programmes (SLPs) through onboarding and capacity building of departmental official to ensure sustainability.
- There are also plans to expand the SLPs packages to include Home Languages in Foundation Phase and Second Additional Language.



SECTION

06

Financial Review



OVERVIEW OF 2020 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW



the **NECT 2020** revenue had an increase of 14% from R259 334 330 in 2019 to **R295 138 664**



surplus of **R52 431 729**



17% decrease in 2020
Core expenditure

Despite the difficult year brought by COVID-19 containment measures, the NECT 2020 revenue increased from R259 million in 2019 to R295 million representing an increase of 14%. The increase in 2020 is attributed to successful implementation of ring-fenced COVID-19 interventions related projects, SAFE and PSRIP. The 2020 total expenditure remained constant to 2019 expenditure resulting in a surplus of R52 million. The increase of 237% in the surplus for the year was due to the 17% decrease in 2020 Core expenditure as a result of COVID-19 containment measures such as school closures.

ABRIDGED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

The abridged statements below are extracts from the annual financial statements as audited by Ernst & Young Inc. The full audited annual financial statements, which received an unqualified audit opinion, are available on the NECT's website (www.nect.org.za).

Tables 1 and 2 below presents abridged statement of comprehensive income and statement of financial position as at 31 December 2020.



TABLE 1: **ABRIDGED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME**

	2020	2019	Change
	R	R	%
Income	295 138 067	259 334 550	14%
Expenditure	(245 334 220)	(245 513 305)	0%
Operating(deficit)/surplus	49 803 847	13 821 245	260%
Net finance charges	2 627 882	1 715 419	23%
Surplus	52 431 729	15 536 664	237%
Other comprehensive income	-	-	0%
Total comprehensive surplus/(deficit)	52 431 729	15 536 664	237%

TABLE 2: ABRIDGED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS	2020	2019	Change
	R	R	%
Non - Current Assets	4 236 149	6 597 582	-36%
Current Assets	266 139 185	87 172 620	205%
Total Assets	270 375 334	93 770 200	188%
FUNDS & LIABILITIES			
Accumulated funds	77 506 369	25 074 639	209%
Non Current Liabilities	400 657	2 136 704	-81%
Current Liabilities	192 468 308	66 558 859	189%
Total Funds and Liabilities	270 375 33	93 770 202	188%

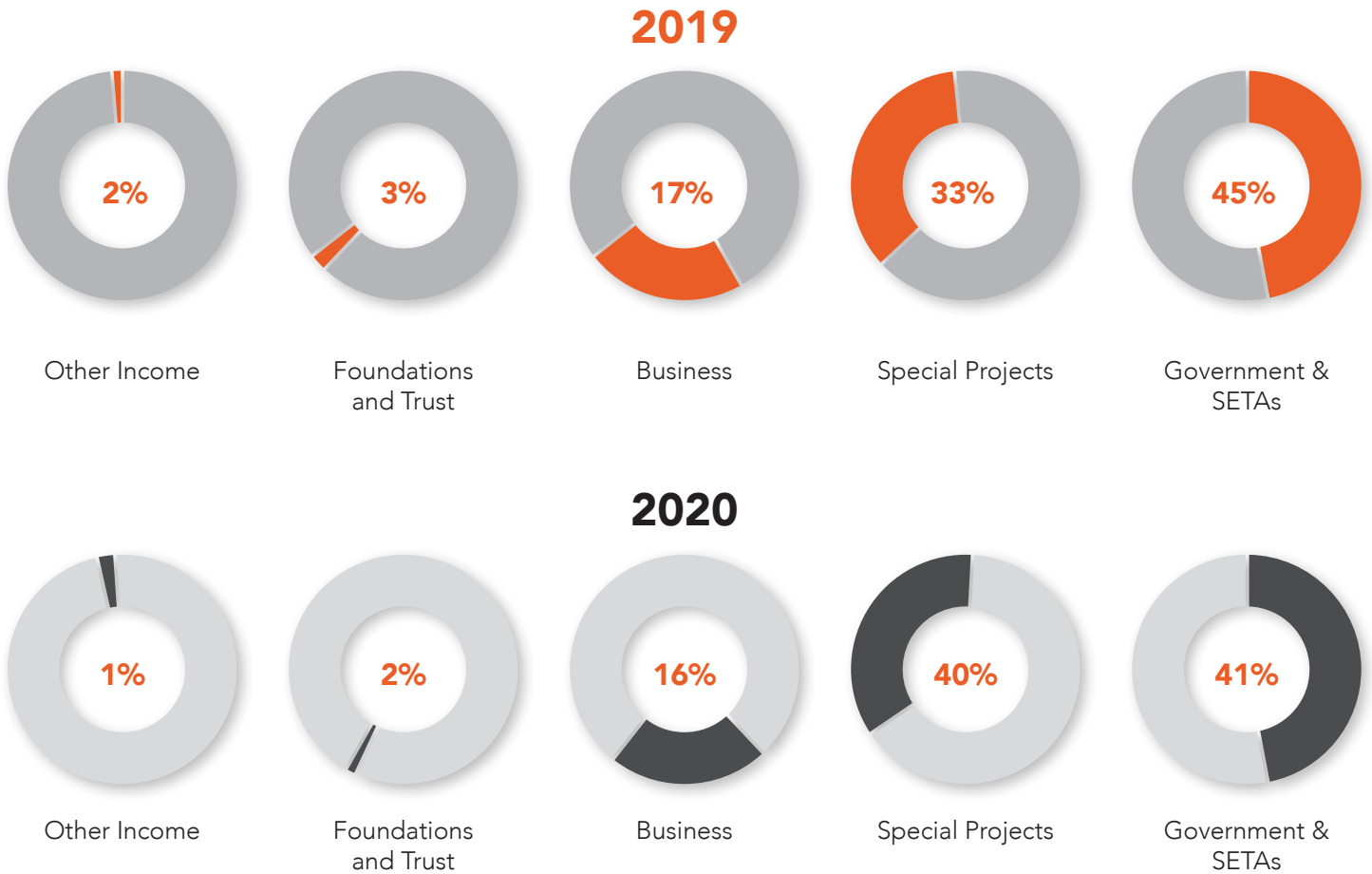
ANALYSIS OF INCOME

The income from special projects increased to 40% in 2020 compared to 33% in 2019 due to reasons already provided above. It is worth noting that the revenue from special projects has been increasing over the years and management is expecting the revenue from Special Project to surpass Core revenue in 2021. Government & SETAs contributed 62% of the NECT revenue, whilst 38% was contributed by non-governmental sources.

The figure below presents 2020 revenue figures compared to 2019 and distribution between the different funders for the two years:



FIGURE 1: SOURCES OF REVENUE



ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE

In 2020, the NECT invested 93% of all expenditure directly into education-related programmes, whilst 7% was spent on administration costs.

The following figure compares expenditure spread between education-specific programmes and administration expenditure in 2020 and 2019.

The **NECT** invested

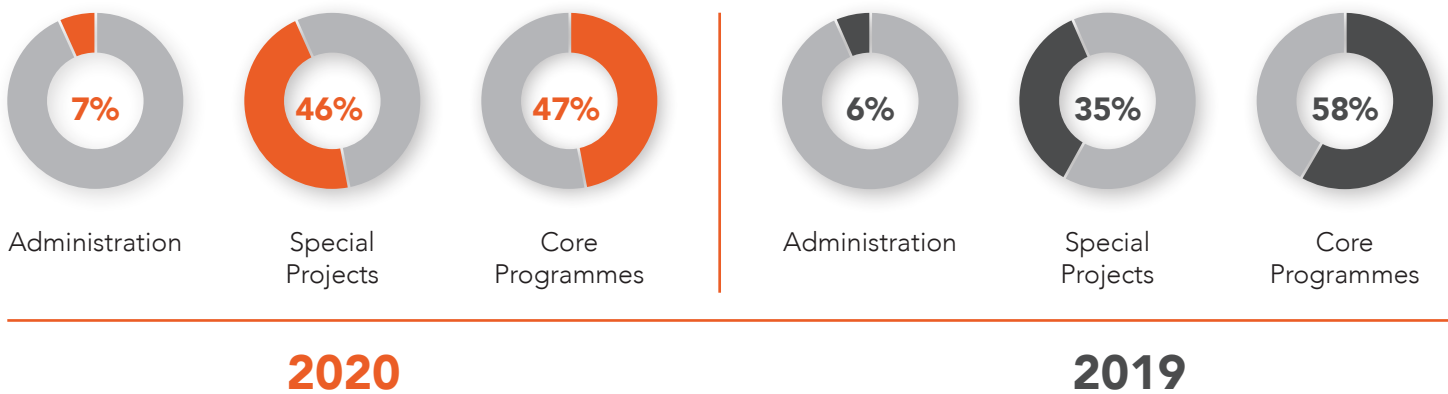
93% in 2020

of all expenditure directly into education-related programmes

7% Was spent
on administration costs.

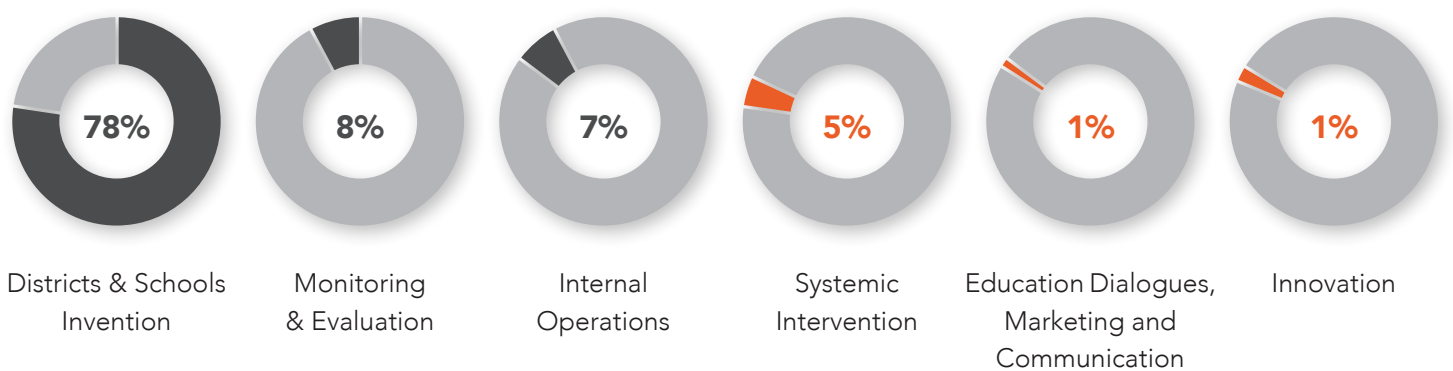
FIGURE 2: EXPENSE DISTRIBUTION

Expenses by Category 2020 vs 2019



Expenditure in 2020 was spread across six programmes as presented in the figure below.

FIGURE 3: PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE DISTRIBUTION 2020



Programme 1, which has been the NECT's flagship programme since 2014, which involve education improvement in the districts, took 78% of the NECT's total expenditure in 2020.

TABLE 3: LIST OF FUNDERS AND CONTRIBUTIONS: 2014 TO 2020

Government & SETA	2020	2019	2014-2018	Total Contributions
	R	R	R	2014-2020
Department of Basic Education	115 900 000	106 711 000	484 280 753	706 891 753
KwaZulu-Natal - Department of Education	5 678 139	9 031 248	5 431 997	20 141 384
ETDP SETA -Teacher Testing			4 990 000	4 990 000
Department of Education-Free State			1 882 368	1 882 368
Department of Education-Eastern Cape			30 892 165	30 892 165
Department of Basic Education EU			40 014 019	40 014 019
ETDP SETA			7 359 151	7 359 151
	-	-		
Total Government & SETA	121 578 139	115 742 248	574 850 453	812 170 839

Business

First Rand Empowerment Foundation	28 863 763	27 703 562	104 241 664	160 808 989
Standard Bank South Africa	5 217 391	3 913 043	43 878 719	53 009 153
Old Mutual South Africa Ltd	3 000 000	5 987 035	21 046 290	30 033 325
Nedbank Ltd	2 000 000	1 200 000	13 227 194	16 427 194
Woolworths Holdings Ltd	2 000 000	2 000 000	10 010 000	14 010 000
MMI Foundation NPC	1 645 782	2 045 782	7 985 025	11 676 589
Telkom SA SOC Ltd	1 104 267	1 249 712	4 266 285	6 620 264
Nedbank Private Wealth Educational Foundation	1 000 000	-	2 000 000	3 000 000
IBM services	1 396 080	-	-	1 396 080
JSE Ltd	300 000	300 000	1 853 319	2 453 319
Private Individuals	3 300	5 500	15 000	23 800

Government & SETA	2020	2019	2014-2018	Total Contributions
Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa Ltd	-	500 000	2 000 000	2 500 000
Imperial Holdings Ltd	-	-	5 075 198	5 075 198
ABSA Bank Ltd	-	-	14 000 000	14 000 000
Hollard Group Ltd	-	-	5 000 000	5 000 000
Sasol Inzalo Foundation	-	-	1 282 198	1 282 198
Ernst & Young Inc	-	-	1 820 000	1 820 000
IT Master Information Technology Consultants/Vodacom	-	-	500 000	500 000
The South African Breweries (Pty) Ltd	-	-	4 000 000	4 000 000
Sishen Iron Ore Community (SIOC) Development Trust	-	-	18 207 480	18 207 480
Business Leadership South Africa/ USAID	-	-	894 400	894 400
Anglo Gold Ashanti Ltd	-	-	1 899 915	1 899 915
Investec Ltd	-	-	1 781 971	1 781 971
Liberty Group Ltd	-	-	2 000 000	2 000 000
Murray & Roberts Holdings Ltd	-	-	895 921	895 921
Alexandra Forbes Ltd	-	-	569 692	569 692
Credit Suisse Securities Pty Ltd	-	-	250 000	250 000
Deloitte South Africa Inc	-	-	1 000 000	1 000 000
Kagiso Tiso Holdings Pty Ltd	-	-	300 000	300 000
Massmart Holdings Ltd	-	-	1 335 488	1 335 488
Anglo American Chairman's Fund Trust	-	-	5 000 000	5 000 000
Safika Holdings	-	-	500 000	500 000
Total Business Contributions	46 530 584	44 904 634	276 835 760	368 270 978

Foundations & Trusts	2020	2019	2014-2018	Total Contributions
	R	R	R	2014-2020
Zenex Foundation	6 003 029	7 386 570	51 255 516	64 645 115
DG Murray Trust	-	-	900 000	900 000
Total Foundations & Trusts	6 003 029	7 386 570	52 155 516	65 545 115
Labour				
Education Labour Relations Council	-	220 003	998 572	1 218 575
Total Labour Contributions	-	220 003	998 572	1 218 575
Special Projects				
ETDP SETA	37 311 638	50 230 970	73 958 042	161 500 650
Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC)	10 464 842	9 897 321	7 802 582	28 164 745
Assupol	12 919 032	8 471 782	-	21 390 814
Michael and Susan Dell Foundation	494 234	5 428 742	930 991	6 853 967
Department of Basic Education	26 715 361	3 467 550	-	30 182 911
Firststrand Empowerment Foundation	4 862 297	2 398 925	269 858	7 531 080
Old Mutual South Africa Ltd	20 142 342	908 708	2 730 550	23 781 600
Eskom Development Foundation NPC	865 924	576 433	1 100 000	2 542 357
Department of Arts and Culture	90 184	399 833	1 150 000	1 640 017
Momentum	2 087 559	364 058	-	2 451 617
Unicef	1 600 248	-	2 000 420	3 600 668
Woolworths Holdings Ltd	500 000	-	-	500 000
Standard Bank South Africa	1 000 000	-	-	1 000 000
NESTLE	750 000	-	-	750 000
Tshikululu Investments	1 000 000	-	-	1 000 000

Foundations & Trusts	2020	2019	2014-2018	Total Contributions
Government Grants - Gauteng Department of Education-SA SAM	44 237	187 379	-	231 616
Save the Children SA	-	2 569 998	605 486	3 175 485
ELMA Philanthropies Foundation	-	1 443 779	271 470	1 715 249
Railway Safety Regulator	-	318 427	-	318 427
Department of Basic Education (SA SAMS)	-	-	4 000 000	4 000 000
Department of Basic Education Gauteng (SA SAMS)	-	-	2 925 696	2 925 696
Road Accident Funds in South Africa	-	-	500 000	500 000
Department of Basic Education Western Cape (SA SAMS)	-	-	9 975	9 975
Vuwani crowd-funding initiative	-	-	10 691 274	10 691 274
NGO Summit	-	-	649 528	649 528
Government Grants-Kwazulu Natal Provincial Government-SA SAM	-	-	1 643 885	1 643 885
SA Sugar Association	-	-	350 000	350 000
New Leadership Foundation- SA SAMS	-	-	400 000	400 000
Total Special Projects	120 847 896	86 663 907	111 989 756	319 501 558
Total	294 959 648	254 917 362	1 016 830 056	1 566 707 066

NECT PATRONS



President Cyril Ramaphosa
Government and Business



Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka
Civil Society

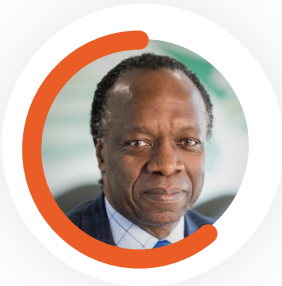


Bobby Godsell
Business



Dr James Motlatsi
Labour

NECT TRUSTEES



**Sizwe Nxasana
(Chairman)**
Business



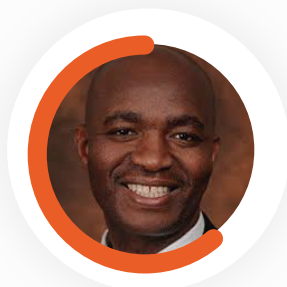
**Minister
Angie Motshekga**
Government



Basil Manuel
Labour



Futhi Mtoba
Business



Mathanzima Mveli
Government



Nkosana Dolopi
Labour



Tebele Luthuli
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