

National Education Collaboration Trust

Aide Memoire

2013 - 2018

Date: 19 November 2018

Venue: Business Leadership South Africa (BLSA)
61 Katherine Street, Sandton, 2193



basic education
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Education
DialogueSA
A PLATFORM FOR OPEN, HONEST AND MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT



NATIONAL
EDUCATION
COLLABORATION
TRUST

Table of Contents

I. Preamble	3
II. Education Environment.....	3
III. School Landscape, System Capacity and Output	4
III. Progress in the Implementation of the Education Collaboration Framework (ECF).....	6
Thematic Area 1 - Professionalisation of Teaching.....	6
Thematic Area 2- A Call for Courageous Leadership	8
Thematic Area 3: Improving the Capacity of the State to Deliver	10
Thematic Area 4: Improving Resources to Create Conducive and Safe Learning Environments: Teachers, Books and Infrastructure	11
Thematic Area 5: Community and Parent Involvement	11
Thematic Area 6: Learner Welfare and Support.....	12
IV. Special Initiatives	14
Special Initiative: The Future of Learning	14
Special Initiative: Project Management and Technical Support.....	14
V. Resourcing of the collaboration.....	15
VI. Future plans	16
VII. Acknowledgements	16
Aide Memoire Adoption page.....	17
Annexure 1: List of funding partners and contributors	18
List of Acronyms.....	19

Aide Memoire

I. Preamble

1. August 2012 saw the launch of the National Development Plan (NDP). On 6 December 2012, a strategic meeting between stakeholders – comprising private sector companies, teacher unions and civil society – and Government took place where an agreement was reached to set up an Education Collaboration Framework that would mobilise efforts to support the implementation of the NDP's education chapter. After extensive consultative activities involving key stakeholder groups, the former Deputy President, Kgalema Motlanthe, launched the Education Collaboration Framework (ECF) and its implementing vehicle, the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT), at the Presidential Guesthouse on 16 July 2013. The NECT was registered by the Master of the Gauteng North High Court on 12 July 2013 *'with the sole or principle objective... to support, develop and improve education in the Republic of South Africa by carrying on and/or, conducting and/or financially supporting and/or funding in the Republic of South Africa one or more of the [education] "public benefit activities"...*' (Section C of the NECT Trust Deed, 2013).

This Aide Memoire captures the progress made by the NECT and the basic education sector as a whole over the five years since the NECT's birth. Key needs in the national education system and proposals for consideration by the founders and partners of the NECT are also presented.

II. The National Education Environment

2. During the past five years of collaboration to improve education under the NECT umbrella, the national education system has enjoyed the political and administrative leadership and policy stability necessary for education improvement. The sector was fortunate to have had the same Minister and Deputy Minister for more than two political terms of office. In the same vein, at the level of the Council of Education Ministers (CEM), three provinces – Free State, Eastern Cape and Western Cape – have retained their Member of Executive Council (MEC) responsible for education. At Director General level, there was, unfortunately, a relatively higher turnover. At Director General level, there was, unfortunately, a relatively higher turnover rate. However, there has been a substantive Director General and Heads of Departments in all but one provincial education departments for a period longer than two years.

The education sector also enjoyed labour peace, a condition critical to more effective learning. The teacher unions and the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) played significant roles to sustain the level of labour stability enjoyed in the past five years. However, civil society protests on the condition of school infrastructure and general service provision outside the education sector have impacted negatively on the education sector in past years. Several policy pronouncements have been made and programmes agreed to in response to these issues. Greater consensus could be achieved among stakeholders on how to fast-track access to service provision and the maintenance of infrastructure and on society's role in protecting schools from undue disruptions and vandalism. A lack of school safety as relates to learners and teachers appears to increasingly threaten the Culture of

Learning and Teaching (COLTS) which the nation worked on achieving following the 1994 democratic elections.

In spite of the economic slump, education budgeting has been sheltered from drastic reductions. In the past six financial years, 2013/14 to 2018/19, the education budget decreased from 17,8% to 17,1% of the government spend, or from 4,9% to 4,7% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The Medium-Term Expenditure Framework estimates a further 0,4% decrease in the education budget as a proportion of Government spend, although education’s proportion of the GDP will remain at 4,7%. The unfavourable financial trends have occurred in a context where, in the period 2011-17, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) experienced a reduction of 0,8% in purchasing power concomitant with a 5% growth in enrolment.

3. The period of policy consistency enjoyed by the education sector has seen few changes in policy. The systemic level policy changes that have been adopted are in respect to: the introduction of the third curriculum stream aimed at improving learners’ access to the skills-oriented curriculum; active implementation of the progression policy that allows for progression of learners who have failed a grade in a phase twice (and subsequently the modularisation of the National Senior Certificate [NSC]); discontinuation of the Annual National Assessments (ANA), replaced by the new systemic evaluation; and the transfer of the Early Childhood Development (ECD) function from Department of Social Development to the DBE.

Policies that have proved successful include The National School Nutrition Programme, which has been hailed by analysts as a successful instrument for protecting children from hunger in spite of the increase in ‘household hunger’ reported by StatsSA, and the nation-wide school transport programme which has had similar equity enhancing effects among our poorer citizens.

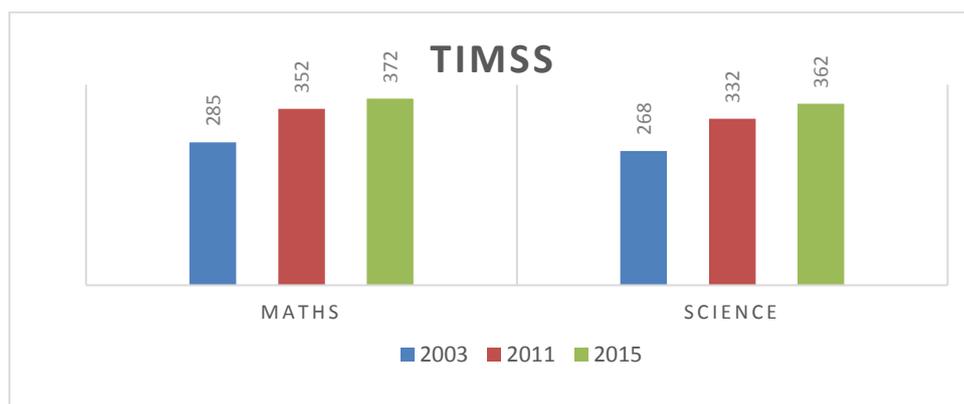
III. School Landscape, System Capacity and Output

4. Ninety-five percent of the 12,9 million school-going children are in the public school system, comprising 93% of the schools in the country. The public schooling system, however, employs a proportionally smaller number (91%) of the 418 613 teachers in the schooling system nationally. The number of independent schools has grown at a rate of 5,5% a year and by a margin of 24,1% between 2013 and 2017. The number of the learners who successfully reach Grade 12 remains a concern, as only about 629 155 of the 1 186 011 learners that entered Grade 1 in 2004 ultimately reached Grade 12 in 2015. This means that roughly half of the Grade 1s enrolled reach Grade 12. Among the many initiatives to solve this problem, the DBE has introduced progression measures that allow more learners to modularise their NSC examinations, meaning that learners can take more than one year to complete the qualification. This action will enable growth in the number of young people attaining their NSC qualification, which research has highlighted as a significant determinant of employability.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
NSC passes	67,8	70,2	73,9	78,2	75,8	70,7	72,5	75,1
Bachelor passes	23,5	24,3	26,6	30,6	28,3	25,8	26,6	28,7

5. Since 2014, when the ANA was discontinued, the NSC and a few international comparative studies serve as the most reliable benchmarks of learner performance in the system. According to the NSC results, the pass rates have gradually increased, after peaking in 2013. As per the table above, the rates of bachelor passes have followed a similar trend.

While there have been slight increases and decreases in the pass rates over the past eight years, the system appears to have the capacity to produce an average NSC pass rate of 73% and a bachelor pass rate of 27%. The key questions are whether these are indications of the output that the country can produce, what needs to be done to increase the sustained output rate and by what margin the rate can be increased. Mathematics participation has gradually increased from 245 344 in 2013 to 276 084 in 2017, and the pass rates were sustained in the same period at just around 50%. Physical Science participation rates are lower (187 109 in 2013 and 197 960 in 2017), with a pass rate ranging between 67,4% in 2013 and 58,6% in 2015. The country’s performance in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) appears to be improving, albeit gradually. As the figure below shows, the Science scores also increased, although by a smaller margin, in the period between 2011 and 2015. The challenge is to get the country to meet the 2023 target and the 500 centre-point by 2030.



The levels of reading in the country are low. While there are technical problems still being addressed, the 2016 report of the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) indicates that 78% of our learners cannot read for meaning. Reading is a challenge that spills over the borders of the school. For this reason, the DBE introduced the Read to Lead Campaign that advocates for and supports reading in schools and their surrounding communities. The DBE has also introduced, in collaboration with the NECT and the Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA), a multi-year programme that aims to train and support teachers in the teaching of reading. NECT and DBE are establishing a National Reading Coalition (NRC) - a self-sustaining, agile ecosystem of reading initiatives across the country, networking government and civil society activities for reading improvement. The NRC is designed to coordinate, align and support reading initiatives in the areas of Initial Teacher preparation by universities, on-the-job professional development of teachers, learner access of reading resources, community reading activities, continuous policy analysis on reading, and research monitoring and evaluation on reading initiatives.

III. Progress in the Implementation of the Education Collaboration Framework (ECF)

The collaboration work of the NECT was organised around the six thematic areas defined in the ECF: 1. Professionalisation of teaching; 2. Promotion of Courageous and Effective Leadership; 3. Improvement of the Capacity of the State; 4. Increased resourcing of schools and classrooms; 5. Improved community and parent involvement; and 6. Improved learner welfare. While the six themes were seen as the focus areas of the collaboration nationally, the NECT crafted six educational programmes under which it designed practical programmes to implement. Most of these programmes were initiated during 2014 after the necessary systems and processes were put in place and resources confirmed. By 2018, the NECT had mobilised over 5 592 South Africans around the ECF, directly engaged over 4 500 people in education dialogues pertinent to the NDP, engaged 1 430 experts and over 60 organisations and raised over R1,1 billion for education improvement. The NECT has created a powerful and effective national convening authority, practically demonstrating the idea of 'active citizenry' that runs through the NDP.

Thematic Area 1 - Professionalisation of Teaching

6. The ECF includes commitments to supporting the setting up of frameworks, materials, systems and processes to build teachers' capacity to perform more effectively in classrooms. The ECF laid out a set of success conditions which Government and stakeholders were to work towards to ensure achievement of the goal of teacher professionalisation. Most of the conditions linked to this goal have been secured over the past five years by means of establishing a protocol for classroom visits, better coordinated training plans and integration of professional development into the school calendar. Additionally, there has been progress in the recruitment of district directors and curriculum experts and enrolment of recruits into teaching through the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme. Investigations into the latest teaching trends, processes of addressing misconduct and addressing outstanding teacher remuneration issues have also contributed. However, not much progress has been made in measuring the performance of teachers and the appointment of principals and school managers.

7. To address the goals of teacher professionalisation, the NECT established the following objectives: build professional routines; provide adequate managerial support; and, enable the national and provincial departments to improve the professional development of teachers. In this regard, the NECT undertook extensive research and development to produce the necessary tools and materials, engaged the relevant technical expertise to train and coach subject advisors and teachers, supported provincial departments to improve their planning of professional development and organised relevant dialogues.

8. The NECT has produced and released into the system an extraordinary amount of outputs that support teacher professionalisation at scale. These outputs include 144 teacher development modules covering Mathematics, Science and Languages by grade, presented in seven official languages. A total of 5.7 million items of learning and teaching support materials (LTSM) were distributed to 61.5% of schools nationally. These materials include daily lesson plans pitched and paced against curriculum policy requirements, teaching methodologies and relevant assessments. The tools and approaches are designed to promote common routines across South African classrooms, to ground teachers in the

best teaching methodologies and to serve as the basis of professional development that is delivered per school term. In excess of 84 128 teachers from all provinces have been trained in the teaching methodology, and an estimated 70% of the national education system has had access to the methodology, mediated independently of the NECT through the Gauteng Department of Education, the DBE's Early Grade Reading Study in Mpumalanga and North West and Save the Children in the Free State. The NECT is in discussion with Kagiso Trust about plans to replicate the same methodology across the Free State province. Through the collaboration, a national approach to professional development has emerged. Of cardinal importance is the fact that 671 (30%) subject advisors have been trained and involved in this methodology over the past three years, thereby creating a firm basis for sustainability. Over 73 802 hours of coaching and teacher support has been injected into the testing and onboarding processes of this methodology. It is pleasing to note that the three largest provinces responsible for over half of the schools nationally – Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo – have adopted the methodology as part of their Annual Performance Plans.

9. Instructive evidence is emerging about the impact of the teacher professionalisation initiatives implemented by the NECT. The evaluation carried out in pilot schools between 2015 and 2016 showed an average of a 30% increase in curriculum coverage in the beneficiary schools. Other evaluations have shown an increase of up to 13,5% in subject advisor content knowledge pre- and post-training and an increase of 21% in Grade 2 and 3 learners' reading comprehension scores. The NECT has contributed to strengthening the Teacher Union Collaboration (TUC) programme that the DBE initiated in 2011. In this regard, the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) and the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) have been working with the NECT and the DBE to provide training and support to a total of 1 444 schools. Teacher unions are taking a central and strategic role in the professional development of their own members. More should be done to support these initiatives.

10. The use of the professional development tools referred to above has also yielded very useful information about teaching and learning in the classrooms. There is an evidence-base suggesting that many teachers are unable to allocate the correct amount of time to the various sections and topics of the subjects in the curriculum, leading to underperformance in some sections of Mathematics, Language and Science subjects. Throughout the phases and grades, teachers appear to spend more than the required time on easier sections and topics, for example, *Language use and Structure* in English, at the expense of other, more complex sections such as *Writing and Comprehension*; similarly, they spend more time on *Number Operations* in Mathematics at the expense of other sections such as *Mental maths; Patterns, functions and relationships, Space and shape* and *Data handling*. For example, in Grade 8, the teaching of some of the higher order skills/topics, measured on the basis of written exercises, was found to range between 0% and 25% of what is expected by the Grade 8 curriculum.

11. On the positive side, the NECT has established instructive evidence that curriculum coverage is correlated to learner test scores and that the longer the teachers use the Learning Programmes tools provided, the more they increase curriculum coverage – as has been the case in King Cetshayo and Pinetown districts in KwaZulu-Natal: these districts have reached over 80% curriculum coverage over three to four years of using the tools. In these two districts, the NECT has observed a point of

diminishing returns, where the increase in coverage does not translate into the same gains in learner scores. More investigations are required to determine what could be slowing learner achievement benefits at these points. It has also been observed that the higher the grade, the lower the rate of curriculum coverage. This observation shows that teachers find it increasingly difficult to keep pace with the expected curriculum. More investigations are required to establish the cause of this pattern.

12. Concerns have constantly emerged during the implementation of the teacher professionalisation programme (and were raised at the Aide Memoire national stakeholder consultative meeting held on 9 November 2018) as to whether the Learning Programmes, which comprise structured daily lesson plans and curriculum trackers, among other elements, have the potential to 'deprofessionalise' our teachers. Firstly, the Learning Programmes have been developed on the basis of the expected coverage and pacing stipulated in the National Curriculum Policy Statements (NCS). Secondly, Learning Programmes tools are expected to serve as guides for the minimum teaching required in every classroom. Thirdly, the Learning Programmes include advice on relevant teaching methodologies and assessments and protocols for teacher reflection, all of which should improve rather than detract from the professionalisation of teachers. Fourthly, the observation of the NECT at the end of 2015 was that teachers covered 30% of the curriculum on average. Fifthly, the curriculum trackers which accompany the Learning Programmes are designed to cover 34 teaching weeks instead of the entire annual school calendar allocation of 43 weeks. This means that teachers have nine weeks within which they can exercise flexibility in pacing, including slotting in revision time. What the concerns indirectly suggest is the need for a clear message that teachers, school management teams and their subject advisors have the room to and should exercise professional judgement, particularly once they have taught the minimum required by the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). On the other hand, it is possible that the curriculum could be overloaded, as some teachers maintain. Closer analysis is required in this regard. A deliberate, long-term vision and plan should be developed on how we will organically and consistently support our teachers to a point where they enjoy full professional autonomy.

Thematic Area 2- A Call for Courageous Leadership

13. The NDP and the DBE's Action Plan for education improvement recognise school management as a key cog for improving education. In particular, the Action Plan presents a management change theory that is based on increased accountability and competencies to comply with the management processes and competency assessments for principals. The ECF, on the other hand, outlined success conditions that presented a more sophisticated change theory based on the following tenets: 1) a shared vision and priorities, 2) external monitoring and support, 3) increased use of data for monitoring and decision making, and 4) performance incentive and accountability. In this regard, DBE progress over the past five years has been the adoption of the standards for principalship. Not much beyond the standards have been registered in securing these success conditions. A close analysis of the two change theories (Action Plan and the ECF's) suggest a bias towards a transactional leadership approach. The starting point of the NECT programme, on the other hand, proposed a more transformational approach to management – Courageous and Effective Leadership.

14. Although the management and leadership of schools have always been seen as an important ingredient in education improvement, the ECF has highlighted 'courageous leadership' as a critical and missing requirement in education and school management. It confirms that leaders and managers seem to find it difficult to make hard decisions. This, as a result, has been the focus of NECT's programming for leadership and management in schools. The NECT has focussed on the courageous leadership of principals in creating and managing functional schools and has emphasised the exercise of leadership in curriculum management, in school self-assessment and planning, and in building and nurturing positive school cultures. These areas have been selected as the pillars of educational transformation in schools. In practice, the NECT implemented leadership improvement interventions comprising aspects of curriculum coverage, self-assessment for planning and data utilisation.

15. A total of 14 districts and 5,692 schools have benefited from this programme. Through the programme, 11,916 SMT members have been trained and supported to implement the programme. The curriculum management module that was developed by the programme has now been adopted by the three largest provinces for provincial-wide training of principals. There are signs of increased alignment between management processes and activities in the classroom from the approaches, tools and materials that clarify for management the teaching and learning dynamics taking place in the classroom; school management teams are beginning to undertake practical and daily routines that are necessary for school functionality and curriculum delivery; and there is widespread awareness of 'time eaters' in curriculum delivery and consistent action in terms of planning and monitoring to ensure that teaching takes place for most of the 43 weeks allocated. SADTU works with school management teams from two districts (Sekhukhune and Butterworth) to build the necessary management capacity in the schools.

16. The management and leadership programme of the NECT has been one of its more successful programmes. The key to the success of the programme includes: practice-based and activity-focussed modules which confront the real issues faced in administering schools; embedding the programme in the exercise of courage in leadership in all aspects of school management; and a focus on curriculum management and institutional leadership in support of curriculum coverage and enhanced learner performance.

17. The implementation of the management and leadership component has unveiled insights useful for the system. Among these is the misalignment between the school calendar year on the one hand which expects teaching to take place in 43 weeks, and the practice where schools teach for 32 weeks, i.e. an average of 28% less than is expected. Data collected during the first half of the year in 2017 shows that most of the time is lost towards the end of the school terms (in February and May) when schools presumably reduce the number of teaching activities to focus on termly assessments. In half of the eight districts where data was collected, the schools had recorded nil written exercises by learners. This was the case even in the Foundation Phase where learners do not have to prepare for examinations. It is possible to address this situation in the same way that the country mobilised schools to teach on the first day of school some 15 years ago.

18. The NECT interventions in leadership and management development have not reached a full stage of maturity. More still needs to be done to yield evidence on what works to strengthen

management at scale, particularly with respect to the transformational leadership aspects. It appears more feasible to direct more attention to the preparation and support of Circuit Managers who will, in turn, drive the management change process in schools through training and support of principals on an ongoing basis. The NECT, therefore, proposes that firstly a shared national discourse for education management development (EMD) is driven. A good basis has already been laid by an extensively consultative Education Management Tasks process of 1996 that culminated in a national report on EMD. An independent process like that which was followed to arrive at the King Code of Good Governance should be explored. The process should aim to arrive at proposing what Mahmood Mamdani refers to as 'lived laws' as opposed to 'observed laws'. Experienced and practising principals, their associations, unions, academics and officials should be mobilised to develop a code of practice for school management.

Thematic Area 3: Improving the Capacity of the State to Deliver

19. The NDP recognises the importance of the capability of the state to effectively plan and deliver services. In relation to education, the ECF highlights the importance of effective management processes and systems in all schools, district, provincial and national offices. In particular, the ECF highlights the role of district offices and circuit offices in providing frequent and good quality monitoring and support services to schools. The sentiment is echoed in Goal 27 of the Education Action Plan to 2019.

20. The conditions of success proposed by the ECF require further attention. Key to these are those that relate to the improvement of the teacher provisioning model and human resources profiling and planning including the assessment of national teacher training capacity. The South African Council for Educators (SACE) has, however, made some progress in developing Professional Teaching Standards. While data is available on the shape and size of the teaching corps, it would be necessary to carry out further modelling and planning for the key functions and positions at the various levels of the system. Also to be addressed under the resource planning process is the downstream challenge of low absorption of the newly trained teachers which stands at 85%.

21. In response to this vision, the NECT has focused on building the capacities of district offices to plan effectively, Subject Advisors and Circuit Managers to serve and support schools, provincial departments to plan and deliver professional development, and the national education system to upgrade the school administration system and to take advantage of technology in planning and delivering education services. In addition, the NECT organised dialogues to enable education officials and stakeholders to discuss and manage pressing issues of the times relating to the Education system and NDP vision.

22. The NECT worked with the DBE to design an approach and system - Fundamentals of Performance - that assists districts to assess their performance across 10 functional areas on the basis of which they plan improvements. Thirty-four (45%) of the districts have been involved in the process and 24 of them have already developed improvement plans on the basis of the profiles. 1 709 district officials have been trained in the FOP Self-Assessment process and a national profiling of district improvement needs is being developed from this process. As more districts are being introduced to

the programme, the DBE and NECT are supporting the provincial departments to integrate the process into their plans. A total of 671 subject advisors have been trained in supporting schools in curriculum delivery and school management. The Foundation Phase subject advisors make up the majority of these officials as they comprise over 60% of the FP officials nationally.

23. Following some functional and technical assessments on the school administration system (SA-SAMS), the NECT and DBE have engaged with four funding partners (Zenex Foundation, FirstRand Empowerment Fund, Michael and Susan Dell Foundation and Elma Philanthropies) to develop the user requirement specifications for the modernisation of the school administration system. The NECT has subsequently set up a Public Private Partnership involving these four funding partners, the DBE and the nine provinces, and the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) to modernise the SA-SAMS into a web-enabled system with capabilities for more efficient uploading of data by schools and increased data utilisation by the various levels of the system. The process has successfully navigated the challenging processes of procuring the technology service provider and will start with the solution development before piloting it in the Free State and North West provinces. Linked to this theme, the DBE, NECT and provincial departments are finalising a year-long process of developing an ICT strategy for the education sector.

24. Dialogue is the bedrock of the National Development Plan and the basis on which the NECT has been founded. The NECT has convened over 28 multi-stakeholder dialogue sessions that have involved over 4 500 participants. The dialogues have covered a wide range of pertinent topics including the professionalisation of teaching, the currency of the National Senior Certificate, the role of NGOs in supporting the NDP, competitive aspects of school uniform provision, language policy and bilingualism, school safety, roundtables and a 300-person summit on the education policies of the past 20 years. The dialogues have informed various academic, administrative and political processes such as the ruling party's 2017 policy conference and the national parliament.

25. Continued, deliberate improvement of the capacity of the state should remain a central focus. It is envisaged that the efforts in this regard will focus on an increase in public governance training for managers, data management and quality assurance of education programmes, exploration of 'virtual monitoring and support' for schools, teacher provisioning model, rationalisation of schools and a more rigorous human resources deployment and development strategy.

Thematic Area 4: Improving Resources to Create Conducive and Safe Learning Environments: Teachers, Books and Infrastructure

26. Updates on this theme are addressed in the other five thematic areas.

Thematic Area 5: Community and Parent Involvement

27. Parent and community involvement is an education input construct whose importance is well understood but difficult to improve, especially in the poorer rural schools. The intent of the theme, therefore, was to bring stakeholders closer to the education sector, to enable more involvement with

schools, and to promote public accountability and civic responsibility through public participation. According to the ECF, attaining the goals of this theme was conditional upon the participation and effectiveness of SGBs, ongoing cooperation with the unions, and the availability of regular and credible data (e.g. ANA) upon which schools can be held accountable for their performance. In this respect, cooperation with unions has improved, but ANA as a regular source of performance information was suspended in 2014 with a new less regular system designed. Within it, in-school and district moderated assessments are required to provide a more regular valid and reliable performance yardstick in schools.

28. In addressing this theme, the NECT sought to advance the agenda of stakeholder engagement, and, because of the priorities given by the DBE to parental education and building capacity in parents to support their children at school, the NECT embraced parent empowerment as part of its programming. Its objective over the five year period was to promote stakeholder engagement and to empower parents to support schools and to support their children at school.

29. Although it was initiated as a pilot programme in 120 schools in 6 districts across 3 Provinces, the parent involvement programme was adopted by the DBE and has been extended to 7 provinces and 29 districts. Over 8 100 parents have been trained through the DBE and NECT joint efforts. More thought is required on how to deliver a parent mobilisation model that sufficiently permeates the society.

30. Community involvement was also enhanced through the establishment of District Steering Committees (DSCs). These DSCs sought to strengthen and improve the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement in education at the district firstly by ensuring effective oversight on the implementation of the NECT programmes and secondly to mobilising the required support. A total of 13 DSCs were established, and as many as 400 DSC members were trained in Public Governance, Conflict Management and Stakeholder Mobilisation. Some of these DSCs have been effective in resolving conflicts in the communities, in implementing local educational programmes and in building structures for educational accountability in the district. Cases in point are the Vuwani protests that split two ethnic groups and resulted in school closures and the teacher union dissatisfaction with the NECT programme implementation in schools. In both cases, the DSCs organised consultative engagement processes which were received as credible, independent processes that helped address the challenges. This model needs to inform the Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign (QLTC) and be used to proactively address growing vandalism and school closures around the country.

Thematic Area 6: Learner Welfare and Support

31. The success of educational improvement is generally judged by the quality of learner level outcomes or the level of academic performance of learners on a wide range of standardized measures. The ECF has highlighted, however, that the performance of learners will not be fully realised unless learners are viewed holistically, and attention is given to the needs and circumstances of learners which inhibit their learning and impede their success. In this light, the ECF has identified aspects of health, nutrition, psychological support, sports and culture as important components in a holistic approach to learning and teaching. It has, on this basis, committed to supporting the improvement

provision of psychological services and nutrition to schools, and to ensure that learners have access to sports and culture. In relation to these commitments, the ECF identified only one success condition upon which the attainment of the goals in this theme depend. The condition is that enough funding be made available for the school nutrition programme.

32. While there is increased funding to an increasingly more effective school nutrition programme and some progress in the provision of psychological support to learners in schools, the area of learner support and wellbeing still needs due attention in order to meet the goals of the ECF and the provisions of the Education Action Plan. The NECT has established a learner empowerment programme which seeks to capacitate learners to take responsibility for their learning, their schooling and their success.

33. To this end, a multi-stakeholder pilot study was conducted to provide health and psychological support services to learners in schools under the ambit of the DBE's Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL). Through an inter-agency body of social and health service agencies, 200 learners were screened and referred for services in exploring the feasibility of a collaborative structure for supporting learners. The pilot study was effective in terms of the screening and referral of learners. However, because of the lack of a proper follow-up and follow-through mechanism in schools, many of the learners did not fully benefit from available treatment. It was observed in this and other similar programmes, that while learners are successfully screened, there is a lack of proper tracking and follow-through of services because of the absence of the infrastructure in many schools to keep track of and manage learners who are in treatment. In this regard, the NECT has developed and proposed to the DBE a management structure for identifying learners in need, with a process for tracking and supporting learners while they are in treatment. This should greatly improve the quality of support services given to learners.

34. Through the DBE, much progress has been made in sports and culture with the support of the Department of Arts and Culture, the Department of Sports and Recreation and a wide range of private partners and supporters. Even so, the participation of schools in sports and culture could be vastly improved.

35. Some progress has been made by the NECT in empowering learners to manage their schooling and providing them with the capacity to take full responsibility for their learning. In this regard, the NECT has developed a series of practice-based learner empowerment modules with activities that are intended to prepare learner leaders in schools, to teach learners the disciplines of self-management, and, among others, to build viable reading cultures and reading habits in schools and among learners. Through this process, 2 656 learner leaders have been trained in 3 of the modules in 6 districts, across 4 provinces nationally. The training has created a greater awareness among learners about their roles and responsibilities in managing their learning, and it has served to reinforce the life skills programme in schools through practice-based and interactive learning materials. Of all the interventions undertaken by the NECT, its programme in learner support and wellbeing was the least successful. The NECT is working with the DBE to reconceptualise and design a programme that will more effectively support this theme.

IV. Special Initiatives

Special Initiative: The Future of Learning

36. The NECT is spearheading the design and piloting of the 21st Century learning in education. The innovation unit (EdHub) has joined other similar units across that work on reviewing how we educate the children for the fourth and subsequent revolutions. The EdHub has worked with the DBE and partners to review curricula of education systems that have started this journey. A framework for 21st Century learning has been developed and 10 public schools (Sandbox schools) have been selected from three circuits in the Waterberg district where a pilot will be initiated from the beginning of 2019. The University of Johannesburg is arranging to have their ‘teaching school’ in Soweto (Funda Ujabule) to join the pilot. The pilot is meant to establish lessons on how the 21st Century competencies could be implemented in public schools. A few lessons have emerged from the research undertaken. Among these are: education systems respond to the Fourth Industrial Revolution by undertaking measures that go beyond the introduction of new technologies in schools. The response includes a more deliberate teaching of cross-disciplinary knowledge, skills, character and meta-learning (life-long learning and growth mindset). The development requires retraining of teachers and changed school environments. As is the case with many transitions, the jury is out in South Africa on whether any focus should be directed at these initiatives at the expense of improving the foundational skills in reading, writing and mathematics. The answer provided by research and lessons from elsewhere is that the two are not binary options but should be a well-managed transition. The NECT has partnered with the Harvard University-affiliated Centre for Curriculum Review (CCR) in the USA, Russia-based Global Education Futures and the University of Johannesburg to drive the implementation of this initiative.

37. In addition to the 21st Century Sandbox, EdHub supports three ‘startups’: Syafunda whose platform focuses on improving Mathematics and Science learner outcomes by providing additional learner and teacher aid resources through their digital library; School-in-a-Box who through using the blended learning approach (with content-rich tablets), seek to address gaps in student comprehension in both Mathematics and English, and CRSP DSGN who provide affordable educational robotics toys to schools. CRSP design has seen early traction and success due to their ability to effectively engage teachers and use them as a catalyst to develop curiosity, critical thinking and other 21st century skills among learners.

Special Initiative: Project Management and Technical Support

38. *Sanitation Appropriate for Education (SAFE)*: Following the loss of a five-year-old after falling into a pit latrine in the Eastern Cape, the NECT at the request of the DBE/Presidency is supporting a campaign to eradicate inappropriate sanitation infrastructure in our schools. The support involves coordinating and managing the private sector contributions to this cause.

39. *New Life Skills textbooks project*: The NECT is supporting the DBE through fundholding and coordination support and a dedicated project management team in the development of the textbooks.

40. *National Institute for Curriculum Professional Development (NICPD)*: The NECT has been requested by the DBE to assist in the development of the framework and structure of the institute.

41. *Early Childhood Development (ECD)*: NECT will facilitate a dialogue series that will bring together the stakeholders that operate in the sector - government, service providers, NGOs, funders and practitioners - to meaningfully participate and contribute to the migration of the ECD function from the Department of Social Development to Education.

V. Resourcing of the collaboration

42. Since inception, the NECT has raised R1.1 billion from government, private sector, foundations and trusts. The growth and split in funding from the various stakeholder groups is presented in the Table below.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 (Projected)	Total
TOTAL INCOME	117 531 424	186 542 790	182 774 681	275 582 398	285 104 959	1 047 536 251
Government & SETAs	77 982 985	122 178 234	77 051 685	139 973 019	144 244 676	561 430 599
Business	36 249 867	56 955 037	69 204 862	61 507 150	57 225 299	281 142 215
Foundations and Trusts	2 300 000	7 409 519	16 686 907	15 721 879	3 604 159	45 722 464
Labour	998 572	-	-	705 255	700 000	2 403 826
Special Projects	-	-	19 831 227	56 888 831	79 330 825	156 050 883
Other income	-	-	-	786 264	-	786 264

43. As can be deciphered from the table above, funding has been on a consistently upward trend following the maturation of the programmes that we designed and piloted from the earlier years. Government has (including DBE, provincial departments and entities such as the ETDPSETA and ELRC) contributed a total of R648,3 million (62% of the funding) and non-governmental organisations including (companies, trusts and foundations) have contributed R399,3 million. The total invested funding includes both ring-fenced project budget and core-budgeting support.

44. On average, the NECT has spent 94% of the budget on education-specific programmes and 6% on administration overheads. Within these programmes, Theme 1, professionalisation of teaching, has received the largest proportion of the funding (79%), followed by Administration costs (6%), Courageous and Effective leadership (6%), Improvement of the capacity of the state (3%), Monitoring and Evaluation (3%), Community and parent involvement (2%) and Learner welfare (1%).

VI. Future plans

45. In the four to five years of the collaboration, and 12 years before the 2030 NDP target line, there is still a lot that education stakeholders need to work on together to achieve the targets set in the NDP. The NECT, therefore, needs to continue to mobilise additional resources, technical capacity and social capital to support the DBE to expedite its progress towards the attainment of the NDP goals. The NECT should continue to implement interventions in the six thematic areas which remain relevant. New sets of success conditions need to be identified for the stakeholders and government to continue to work on with a view to make the education improvement environment more conducive. It is proposed that the NECT, among other things, continues or starts work on the following initiatives: institutionalisation of the teacher professionalisation initiatives which have already reached 61,5% of the schooling system, collaboration with the teacher unions to further strengthen their professional development programmes, facilitation of a process of defining a South African relevant school management philosophy, introducing a national reading initiative (National Reading Coalition) that will coordinate and align government and non-governmental interventions more comprehensively, modernisation and rollout of the revamped school management system, convening of education dialogues, provision of further support to the DBE to research and design effective and scalable parent involvement initiatives and to rollout the CSTL, piloting and onboarding of 21st Century learning approaches, and providing project management and technical support to strategic initiatives as and when it becomes necessary.

VII. Acknowledgements

46. The Board and the Founders of the National Education Collaboration Trust wish to acknowledge the achievements made in the sector, and hereby accept and endorse this Aide Memoire reflecting on the progress of the collaboration over the last five years. We recognise that the progress and achievements of the sector have resulted from the commitment, efforts and hard work of a wide range of partners and stakeholders who have contributed to the initiatives and programmes of the NECT. We recognise further, that these efforts have continued in the preparation of the Aide Memoire, and wish to thank partners and stakeholders for their inputs, comments and honest assessments of the sector's progress, the issues we still face and the prospects for the future. In this light, we wish to thank the staff of the NECT secretariat who have been at the core of the initiatives taken; the officials of the DBE who have supported and strengthened the NECT's efforts over the years, and those officials who have contributed to the development of the Aide Memoire. We wish to thank the participants in the Aide Memoire National Consultative meeting held on 9 November 2018 (cf Annexure 1) who have openly shared their views and have assisted in shaping the perspectives taken and the solutions proposed in the document. Most importantly, we wish to thank the funders of the NECT without whose contribution, progress in attaining the goals of the ECF and the achievements of the sector would not have been possible. In honour of these contributions, we, as the Board of the NECT, will use the Aide Memoire as the basic document which will inform our decision on a way forward in pursuing the vision of the NDP and the agenda of the ECF in improving educational outcomes through collaboration.

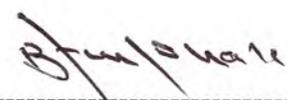
Aide Memoire Adoption page

We, the founding partners of the National Education Collaboration Trust, acknowledge receipt of the Aide Memoire documenting the progress of the sector in attaining the goals, and in meeting the conditions of success set out by the ECF as the guiding document for the work of the NECT.

We commit to continued collaboration towards the goals of the National Development Plan.



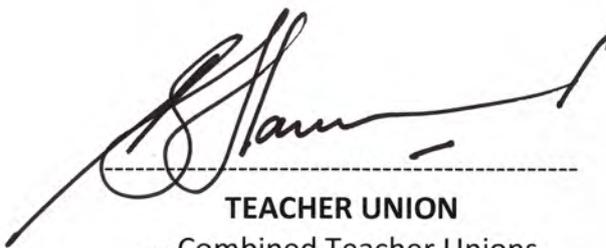
GOVERNMENT
(Represented by Hon. Minister of Basic Education: Ms Angie Motshekga)



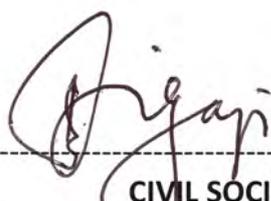
PRIVATE SECTOR- BSLA
(Represented by CEO Mr Bonang Mohale)



TEACHER UNION- SADTU
(Represented by General Secretary: Mr Mugwena Maluleke)



TEACHER UNION
– Combined Teacher Unions
(Represented by Director: Mr Basil Manuel)



CIVIL SOCIETY
(Represented by Prof. Brian Figaji)

Annexure 1: List of funding partners and contributors

NECT FUNDING PARTNERS SINCE 2014	PARTICIPANTS AT THE NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE MEETING 9 November 2018
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ABSA Bank Ltd 2. Alexandra Forbes Ltd 3. Anglo American Chairman's Fund Trust 4. Anglo Gold Ashanti Ltd 5. Business Leadership South Africa (USAID) 6. Credit Suisse Securities Pty Ltd 7. Department of Arts and Culture * 8. Department of Basic Education 9. DG Murray Trust 10. Education Labour Relations Council 11. ELMA Philanthropies Foundation 12. Ernst & Young Inc 13. Eskom Development Foundation NPC * 14. ETDP SETA 15. First Rand Empowerment Foundation 16. Hollard Group Ltd 17. Imperial Holdings Ltd 18. Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa Ltd 19. Investec Ltd 20. Master Information Technology Consultants/Vodacom * 21. JSE Ltd 22. Kagiso Tiso Holdings Pty Ltd 23. Liberty Group Ltd 24. Massmart Holdings Ltd 25. Michael and Susan Dell Foundation 26. MMI Foundation NPC 27. Murray & Roberts Holdings Ltd 28. Nedbank Ltd 29. Old Mutual South Africa Ltd 30. Railway Safety Regulator * 31. Road Accident Funds in South Africa * 32. Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC) * 33. South African Sugar Association * 34. Safika Holdings 35. Sasol Inzalo Foundation 36. Save the Children South Africa 37. Sishen Iron Ore Community (SIOC) Development Trust 38. Standard Bank South Africa 39. Telkom SA SOC Ltd 40. The South African Breweries (Pty) Ltd 41. Unicef 42. USAID 43. Woolworths Holdings Ltd 44. The Zenex Foundation 	<p>Members from academic community Ria de Villiers (Jika); John Volmink (Independent)</p> <p>Members from private sector Khanyisa Diamond (Old Mutual); Thabo Qoako (MMI); Zanele Shabalala (Standard Bank)</p> <p>Members from government and statutory bodies Granville Whittle (Department of Basic Education); Elijah Nkosi (Mpumalanga Department of Education); Molly Mogotlhane (North West Department of Education); Onica Dederen and Komane Mphahlele (Limpopo Department of Education); George Moroasui (South African Council for Educators); Cindy Foca (Education Labour Relations Council); Cecil Dingoko (ETDP SETA)</p> <p>Members from labour organisations Ted Townsend (SAOU); Cindy de Lange and Renny Somnath (SADTU); Puseletso Hoaeane (NAPTOSA)</p> <p>Members from trusts and foundations Dr Fatima Adam (Zenex)</p> <p>NECT/ Delivery Team Members Godwin Khosa (CEO), Lorraine Marnewick (Class Act); Mary Metcalfe and Jonathan Godden (Programme to Improve Learning Outcomes); Michelle Moodie (PWC Consortium); Letlhogile Lecogo, Clyde Maurice, Atli Skosana, Japtha Mametja, Bailey Nkuna, Pat Sullivan, Phutumile Dumisa, Bheki Mthiyane, Fred Baron, Kondi Tshivhase, Deva Govender, Andy Bassingthwaighe, Nimrod Mbele and Dhanaraj Chetty</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">AIDE MEMOIRE INTERVIEWS</p> <p>Dr Moses Simelane - Director: Inclusive Education & Special Needs Mr Sifiso Ngobese - Director: School Sports and Culture Ms Kulula Manona - Director: LTSM Policy Development and Innovation Mr Sifiso Sibiya - LTSM Project Manager Mr Solly Mafoko - Director: Infrastructure Planning Ms Faith Mmola - Deputy Director: Psychosocial Support Directorate Mr Phillip Tshabalala - Director: Education Districts Mr Enoch Rabotapi - Director: Teacher Education; Mr Mmboniseni Nematangari - Chief Education Specialist</p>

List of Acronyms

ANA	Annual National Assessments
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements
CEM	Council of Education Ministers
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DG	Director General
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECF	Education Collaboration Framework
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
ETDP SETA	Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
LTSM	learning and teaching support materials
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers' Organization of South Africa
NCS	National Curriculum Policy Statements
NDP	National Development Plan
NECT	National Education Collaboration Trust
NSC	the National Senior Certificate
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TUC	Teacher Union Collaboration
SMT	Senior Management Team
EMD	Education Management Development
EAP	Education Action Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SACE	South African Council for Educators
FOP	Fundamental of Performance
SITA	State Information Technology Agency
SA-SAMS	South African – School Administration and Management System
CCR	Centre for Curriculum Review
SAFE	Sanitation Appropriate for School
NICPD	National Institute for Curriculum Professional Development
ELRC	Educator Labour Relation Council
QLTC	Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign
CSTL	Care and Support for Learning and Teaching Programme
DSC	District Steering Committee

Mission

Mobilising national capacity to assist government to achieve **distinctive, substantial and sustainable** improvements in education

Ensuring that children have **skills, knowledge and attitudes** that enable them to live economically gainful and fulfilled lives