



NATIONAL
EDUCATION
COLLABORATION
TRUST

NECT Impact Dashboard

2013 - 2025

NECT
+ NDP =



OUR MASSIVE TRANSFORMATION PURPOSE

Identify opportunities and create platforms for
future collaborations which will benefit



13 million
Learners



500 000
Teachers

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Advancing Coordinated Reform to Improve Learning Outcomes

Established in 2013 in response to the National Development Plan's call for coordinated reform, the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT) was designed as a multi-stakeholder platform to align government, labour, business and civil society around systemic improvement in basic education.

Since inception, NECT has:

- Mobilised over **R3 billion** in combined public and private investment
- Convened more than **140 partners** across sectors
- Contributed to sustained system stability — a critical precondition for improving teaching and learning outcomes

An independent evaluation (2014–2021), commissioned by the FirstRand Foundation, confirmed that NECT delivered meaningful impact across its programme portfolio and strengthened collaboration within the national education ecosystem.

The sections that follow summarise NECT's impact across six improvement pillars aligned to the NDP and DBE priorities, alongside secondary outputs and key system-level challenges.

Impact in Brief

High-Level Indicators	Cumulative Reach
Teachers & School Managers	140,144 (~30%)
Subject Advisors	1,780 (~56%)
School Leaders & Circuit Managers	16,500+
Schools	22,812 (92%)
Districts Reached	75 (100%)
District, Provincial & National Officials	3,819+
Technical Assistance Deployed [DBE]	50+
Partnerships/Organisations	140+
Total Public & Private Investment Mobilised	R3+ billion
• DBE	51%
• Non - DBE	49%
Stakeholders Engaged Through Dialogue Platforms	43,641

Impact in Brief

continued...

High-Level Indicators	Cumulative Reach
National & Provincial Dialogues Convened	199
Learner & Teacher Support Materials Distributed [Including Storybooks]	35.4 million
Schools Supported through Infrastructure Interventions (Sanitation, Infrastructure repairs and Handwashing)	740
Provinces with Multi-Year Partnership Agreements	5
ECD Centres Supported through Flood Response	382
Children Supported through Emergency Nutrition	11,272
Meals Delivered (Flood Response)	1 million+
Civil Society Forums convened to strengthen sector coordination (Covid-19 Response)	15+
Learners Reached through Remote Learning (COVID-19 Response)	6 million+
Beneficiaries supported through psychosocial interventions (Covid-19 Response)	65,000

Beyond its planned programmes, the NECT demonstrated agility in responding to national emergencies, including the COVID-19 pandemic, Vuwani shutdown in 2016, the July 2021 civil unrest, and the April 2022 floods in KwaZulu-Natal.

1. Teacher Professionalisation



**141 924
(10 376) teachers
and school
managers** reached
across all nine
provinces



Over
**22 812 (92%)
schools**
reached across
all nine
provinces

A professional teaching corps is a backbone to an excellent and sustainable education system. To strengthen teacher professionalisation, NECT supported DBE to drive institutionalisation of professional routines, strengthening instructional leadership, and supporting districts to improve the planning and delivery of teacher development.

Since inception, NECT has:

- Supported **140,144 teachers and school managers**, covering **25% of the national teaching workforce**
- Trained and collaborated with **1,780 subject advisors** to improve reading and maths
- Reached **22,812 schools nationally**, representing **92% system-wide coverage**

These interventions strengthened curriculum delivery, reinforced subject advisory capability, and embedded more structured and accountable professional development systems at district level. They scale up innovations from the Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS) to other provinces. (DBE Priority 3)

2. Strengthening State Capability to Deliver Quality Education



**3 819
District, provincial and
national level officials**
reached through the
Winter School, District
Fundamentals of
Performance (FoPs)
Workshops and district
coaching and
mentoring



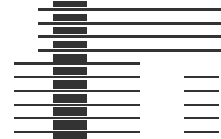
**+50
Technical assistants**
deployed into the DBE to
drive critical policies.

Effective district and provincial administration is central to improving school performance. NECT's interventions focused on strengthening planning, performance management and school support systems across district, provincial and national levels.

Since inception, NECT has:

- Reached **3,819 district, provincial and national officials**
- Strengthened the education middle tier - Subject Advisors and Circuit Managers to provide structured school support and monitoring
- Supported districts to improve professional development planning and delivery
- Deployed **targeted technical assistance** to cross-pollinate district innovation and to unlock implementation bottlenecks

These efforts contributed to improved planning discipline, more consistent monitoring and support to schools, and enhanced system responsiveness to emerging priorities.



Notable system-level contributions include:

- Supporting the **ECD function shift** from Department of Social Development to the Department of Basic Education
- Contributing to the establishment of the **National Language Unit** and progress in **Mother-Tongue Based Bilingual Education**
- Advancing **Curriculum Modernisation**, including implementation of the Three-Stream Model (NDP/MTDP)

3. Securing the Foundations for Effective Teaching and Learning – Resourcing



35.4 million
Learner and Teacher
Support Materials
(LTSM) distributed
across the country



740
Sanitation facilities,
infrastructure repairs
and handwashing
stations provided to
schools

NECT facilitated the development and distribution of over **35.4 million Learner and Teacher Support Materials** nationwide, significantly strengthening learning and teaching practices and curriculum coverage across the system. This included the distribution of approximately 3 million foundation phase reading resources, including African Storybooks

In addition, NECT supported infrastructure improvements in **740 schools across four provinces** through the Presidential

Sanitation Appropriate for Education Initiative (SAFE) with UNICEF, including:

- Sanitation facilities (90 facilities with private sector)
- Infrastructure repairs
- Handwashing stations during COVID - 19 pandemic

These interventions addressed urgent health and safety risks, stabilised school functionality, and improved learning conditions — particularly in historically under-resourced communities and were relevant Covid - 19 pandemic.

In addition to planned infrastructure support, the SAFE Initiative provided rapid response assistance during periods of crisis, Vuwani Shutdown, the **July 2021** unrest and the **April 2022 floods in KwaZulu-Natal**, enabling affected schools to restore functionality and resume teaching and learning with minimal disruption. (DBE priority 3)

4. Dialogue to Reinforce Common Understanding and Action

A stable and collaborative education system is built on sustained dialogue. Sustained community and stakeholder engagement is essential for policy adoption, public accountability and system stability. NECT has prioritised structured dialogue as a mechanism to strengthen collaboration across government, labour, civil society and business.



199

Educational Dialogues and stakeholder engagements hosted, reaching over

43 641

people

Since inception, NECT has:

- Convened **199 national and provincial educational dialogues**
- Engaged **43 641 stakeholders** across the education sector

These platforms have strengthened cooperation with teacher unions, School Governing Bodies and civil society partners, contributing to improved sector stability and sustained alignment around reform priorities.

Over the past decade, the basic education sector has experienced relative labour stability, supported by ongoing dialogue, inclusive consultation processes and strengthened partnerships across stakeholders.

5. Courageous and Effective School Leadership is at the Center of Learning Outcomes Improvement

Leadership development approach emphasised transformational, practice-based management focused on curriculum delivery and accountability.



16 511

school managers

upskilled on curriculum and learning management

Since inception, NECT has:

- Trained and supported over **16,500 school principals, circuit managers and education leaders**
- Strengthened curriculum management and instructional oversight at school level
- Promoted data-informed decision-making and accountability practices

The programme's success has been anchored in practical, activity-based modules covering curriculum management, instructional leadership, data-informed planning, performance accountability and school improvement management. (DBE Priority 3)

6. Strengthening Wellbeing and Support Systems for Learners and Teachers

Sustainable improvements in learner performance require attention to the broader social, emotional and developmental needs of learners.



7 078

Community and school-based beneficiaries

upskilled to provide psychosocial support to learners and teachers



9 879

Learners reached through the Ubuntu Youth Leaders Programme, building servant leaders amongst the youth

In support of a holistic approach to education, NECT has:

- Upskilled **7,078 community- and school-based beneficiaries** to provide psychosocial support to learners and teachers
- Reached **9,879 learners through the Ubuntu Youth Leaders Programme**, strengthening youth leadership and promoting values of service and responsibility
- NECT further coordinated the **Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL)** Investment Portfolio, mobilising non-state capacity and resources in support of the DBE's care and support mandate and aligning investments to nationally identified priorities.

These interventions contributed to safer, more supportive school environments and strengthened learner resilience, wellbeing and engagement. (DBE Priority 4)

7. Advancing Education Improvement Through Strategic Programme Management

NECT has played a strategic coordination and implementation support role in advancing key national reform initiatives, most notably the modernisation of the **South African School Administration and Management System (SA-SAMS)**.

The modernisation programme upgrades the legacy platform to a secure, web-enabled, cloud-based system built on OpenEMIS technology, designed to:

- Improve data accuracy and integrity
- Enable real-time reporting
- Streamline administrative processes
- Strengthen evidence-based school management

The upgraded system includes offline functionality to ensure accessibility for schools with limited connectivity, enhancing system resilience and inclusivity.

8. System Resilience During Periods of Crisis

Beyond its planned programmes, NECT demonstrated agility in responding to national emergencies, including the **COVID-19 pandemic**, **Vuwani Community/School Closure (2016)** the **July 2021 civil unrest**, and the **April 2022 floods in KwaZulu-Natal**.

During COVID-19, NECT:

- Conducted **four phases of independent School Readiness Assessments** to support evidence-based reopening decisions
- Worked with private sector and DBE to implement remote and digital learning support reaching over **6 million learners, teachers and parents**, mitigating learning loss during school closures
- Reached nearly **65,000 teachers, learners and community members** through targeted psychosocial support programmes
- Convened over **15 Civil Society Forums**, strengthening coordination between DBE, NGOs, unions and sector partners

Through the SAFE Initiative, NECT also provided rapid infrastructure support following the 2021 unrest and 2022 floods, enabling affected schools to restore functionality and resume teaching and learning with minimal disruption. In partnership with the DoMore Foundation and seven implementing NGOs, NECT further coordinated emergency nutrition support to **382 ECD centres** across KwaZulu-Natal, delivering over **1 million meals** to **11,272 children** over four months.

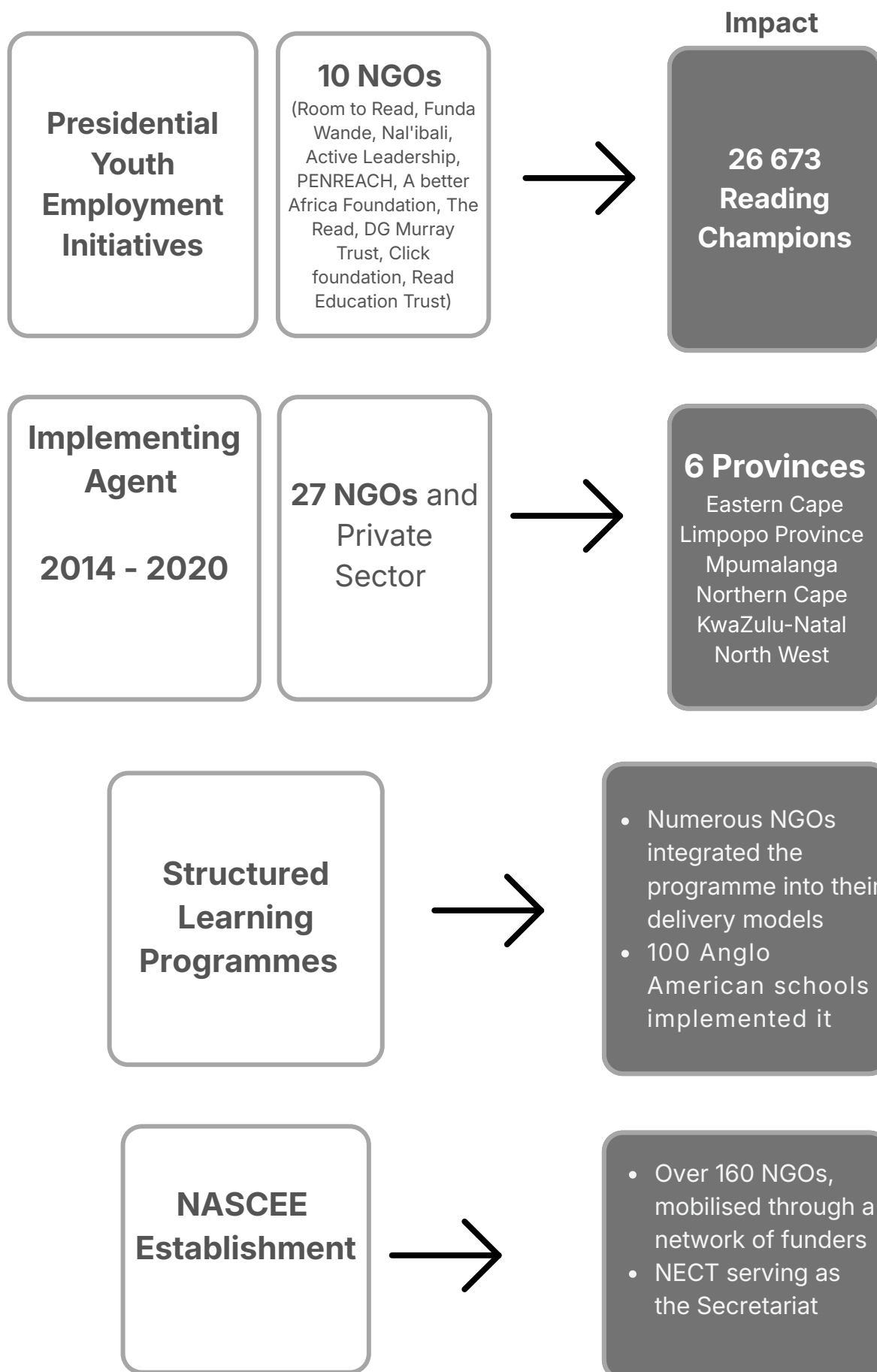
These interventions reinforced system stability, safeguarded learner wellbeing, and demonstrated the value of coordinated public-private collaboration during times of crisis.

Agile and trusted communication during crisis played a strategic role in managing risks associated with Covid-19

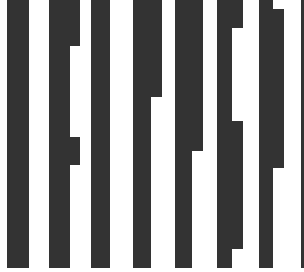
- **4 School Readiness Assessments conducted to guide safe reopening**
- **6+ million learners, teachers and parents reached through remote and digital learning support**
- **65,000 beneficiaries supported through psychosocial interventions**
- **15+ Civil Society Forums convened to strengthen sector coordination**

- **Rapid infrastructure support following 2021 unrest and 2022 KZN floods**
- **382 ECD centres supported across KwaZulu-Natal**
- **Ensured daily nutrition for 11,272 children during post-flood recovery**
- **1+ million meals delivered**

9. Highlights of NGO Beneficiation



10.Sustaining Reform Momentum: Key System-Level Risks



Assessment Performance and NSC Trends

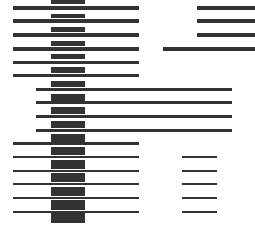
While several performance indicators show improvement, progress remains uneven and fragile — particularly in foundational and intermediate phases.

Assessment Study/ NSC Results	Latest Score				Variance to 500 Multipoint
	2022	2023	2024	2025	
TIMSS – Maths Gr5	-	362	-	-	-138
TIMSS – Science Gr5	-	308	-	-	-192
TIMSS – Maths Gr9	-	397	-	-	-103
TIMSS – Science Gr9	-	362	-	-	-138
SEACMEQ Reading	-	-		-	+5
SEACMEQ Maths	-	-	-	-	+25
SASE Gr 3 Reading Lit	438	-	-	-	-62
SASE Gr 3 Maths	428	-	-	-	-72
Total learners who wrote	724146	691160	705 291	746 110	n/a
Pass Rate	80.1	82.9	87.3	88	n/a
Bachelor pass	38.4	40.9	47.8	46.4	n/a
Pass by 60% (Maths)	33874	41273	44635	34243	n/a



These trends suggest that while targeted interventions yield results, systemic strengthening across all phases remains essential to secure durable learning gains.

Some Insights



Achieving the NDP 2030 Performance Target

The National Development Plan sets a target that 90% of learners should achieve at least 50% in Mathematics, Science and languages — a benchmark that signals system-wide quality and coherence, beyond headline pass rates...

Despite measurable gains, progress toward this target is constrained by:

- Persistent weaknesses in foundational learning
- Declining participation in pure Mathematics
- Gaps between policy design and implementation capacity
- System-level performance bottlenecks across district and national layers

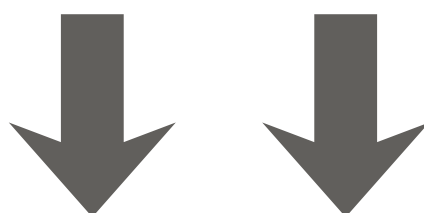
NECT's recent investigations have identified critical performance variables within this system layer, particularly in allocation and utilisation efficiencies relating more than **R300 billion in annual education expenditure**.

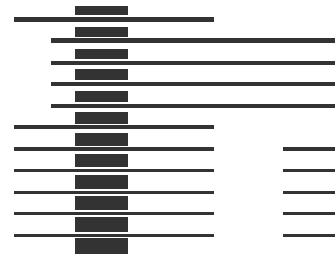
Accordingly, NECT has increasingly prioritised strengthening system-level coordination and implementation capacity to enable sustainable improvements in classroom outcomes.

12. Driving System-Level Innovation for Sustainable Reform

NECT has strengthened its approach through the adoption of a **Systemic Implementation Support (SIS)** model, recognising that sustainable improvement depends on capable district and provincial systems that enable, monitor and support instructional practice at scale.

To promote stability and continuity, NECT has transitioned to multi-year programming, formalised through partnership agreements with five provinces — Northern Cape, Limpopo, North West, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal — with the Eastern Cape agreement currently under review.





NECT has launched the **Education Systems for Instructional Performance** initiative, currently piloted in the Northern Cape. The initiative aims to strengthen provincial and district capability to improve classroom practice and learner outcomes by enhancing system coherence and execution capacity.



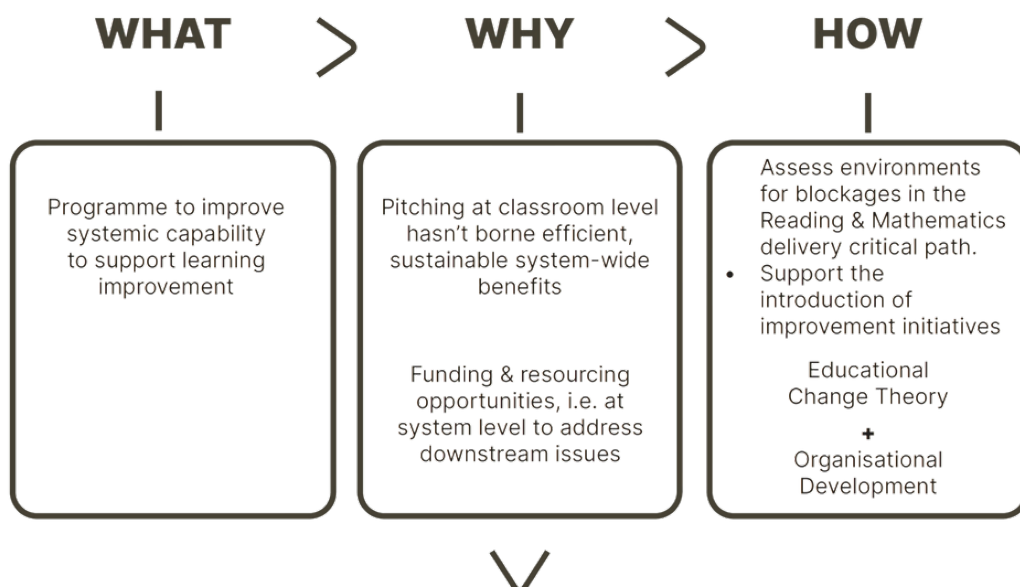
Why the education system is not achieving the expected learning outcomes.

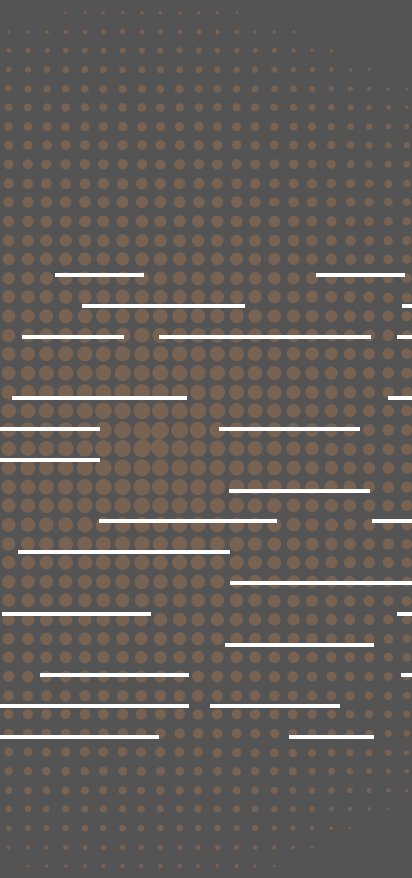
VALUE PROPOSITION

Launching a multiyear programme aimed at strengthening the strategic capabilities of provincial education departments to drive classroom level improvement.

R220 Billion

Enhancing efficiency in the R220 billion provincial education budget can transform resource utilisation and drive lasting improvements in learning.





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