

Republic of South Africa

National Statement of Commitment

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

1. Prioritise the recovery of learning losses in early learning (ECD), basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training and skills development by 2023 through the implementation of a national education recovery plan and the allocation of resources towards this commitment.
2. Develop a national plan of action based on the insights obtained through the national consultations with due consideration of existing national plans and policies to accelerate the achievement of the national and international goals and commitments set out in the National Development Plan: Vision 2030 (NDP), Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all South Africans. This shall include the education and training system as defined in the National Development Plan: Vision 2030 (NDP) and include early childhood development (early learning), basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training and skills development.
3. Children, young people and adults are supported and have access to quality and inclusive education. In this regard, quality education is defined against practical benchmarks that aims to transform education in the country to ensure that 2030 targets are met as well as educational approaches and pedagogies to facilitate knowledge and skills needed for a changing world and the associated world of work in the 21st century.
4. Foundational literacy and numeracy skills are essential for learning, and important for lifelong learning that is imperative in enhancing the country's human capital; and should be embedded in early childhood development programmes and the foundation phase of basic education (Grades R to 3) through active play-based pedagogies.
5. Education outcomes for literacy, science, technology, engineering, the arts, mathematics and life skills requires an integrated approach starting in early childhood development and continuing seamless throughout basic education system into post-school education and training system supported by appropriately qualified education workforce, curricula and learning programmes.
6. Recognise that inclusive and quality education and training are influenced by factors and challenges beyond the pedagogical approaches and learning programme, inside and outside the early childhood development programmes /school/post-school education and training (PSET) institutions to be addressed in an appropriate, inter-sectoral and sensitive manner. Addressing these programmes need to be implemented and monitored against existing and/or adjusted policies to ensure safety, non-discrimination, prevention of violence (general and gender-based violence), prevention and managing of drug and alcohol abuse, impacting on children/young people and educators. Issues like health, nutrition, diversity, ability, care and support and life skills need to be integrated across the education and training system.
7. Comprehensive sexuality education, inclusive of sexual and reproductive health rights, needs to start early in early childhood development programmes and continue throughout basic education and post-school education and training (PSET) in an age-appropriate manner as to provide children and young people with the required knowledge to make informed decisions.

8. Ensuring the continuation of education and training in the case of a disaster/ emergency (including emergency preparedness, modalities of learning in early childhood development, basic education and post-school education and training, psychosocial support for children/ students, educators, lecturers, training facilitators, infra-structure, budgets, amongst others).
9. Children, young people and adults living with disabilities have the right to education and training and have equal access to early childhood development, basic education, technical and vocational education and training, higher education and skills development, and where such educational opportunities do not meet their specific needs, are supported and have access to special education and learning opportunities that will afford them their right to education and training. Provision for children, young people and adults with severe to profound intellectual disabilities need to be addressed at system level, inclusive of financial and human resources. For realisation of potential for learners with disabilities, we need to ensure digital infrastructure for all educational institutions to enable effective learning.
10. Fit-for-purpose education programmes through appropriate and accessible modalities to be provided for children in difficult circumstances and/or at risk to be excluded from education and training such as children/young people living and working on the streets, refugee children/ youth, undocumented persons, severely disabled children, young people in detention/ prison, amongst others, whom cannot be accommodated due to multiple contributing factors in mainstream schools or education programmes (such as ABET), as to ensure that their right to basic education is afforded.
11. Build on the adaptations made in education when dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic such as virtual classrooms solution for teaching and learning, broadcasting (TV and Radio), online content and support resources, use of social media platforms and online platforms as a transformative impetus in the country's education and training system.
12. Give priority to ensure that the education workforce has the required knowledge, skills and qualifications to provide quality and inclusive early childhood development programmes, basic education, special needs education, technical and vocational education and training, higher education and skills development; and effectively utilises the transformative power of education in the 21st century. Educators to be able and supported in the use of hybrid models of education including in-person and e-learning through digital platforms. This to be supported by a Human Resource Development Strategy and its Implementation Plan to ensure that education workforce meets the demands of quality and inclusive education as well as the skills and knowledge needed in transforming education in the country; as well as conditions of service of educators, including remuneration, needs to be market related and match their qualifications, experience, performance, position and specialised skills and knowledge.
13. Continue to give priority to the professional recognition and professionalisation of the education workforce in early childhood development, basic education, special needs education and post-school education and training based on minimum standards in terms of proficiency (qualifications, knowledge and skills) and professional conduct, and required to be registered with the South African Council for Educators (SACE) or other professional Councils as appropriate for educators in the post-school education and training (PSET) sector. Continued proficiency through continuing professional teacher development (CPTD) should be a requirement imbedded in professional recognition and registration.
14. All educators need to have a basic training on the inclusion of all children/students in learning environment (including disability, gender, diversity, sexual orientation, special educational needs, similar) as part of their pre-service training as well as post qualification continuing professional

teacher development (CPTD). Educators working with children/young people with special education needs such as those with severe to profound intellectual disabilities need to have the appropriate knowledge and skills and be accredited through South African Council for Educators (SACE) that they are proficient in providing education to these children/young people.

15. Post-school education and training (PSET) focusses on the skills, research and innovation capacity that the country needs and responds to the world of work that includes gainful employment as well as enhanced entrepreneurship.
16. Integrate transversal skills such as critical thinking, creative thinking, communicating, and collaborating, information and technology literacy, flexibility, inter-personal and social skills that are important for adaptation, success and resilience as to be prepared for an uncertain future need to be embedded in the curricula for early childhood development, basic education, special needs education and post-school education and training.
17. Learning and skills for life and the world of work should be integral to education and training, while ensuring that adolescents and young people have opportunities by offering life skills through multiple pathways; the education and training of persons with disabilities, including skills training is supportive of their employment with support from the industry; and that inclusive and quality Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) follows inclusive and active pedagogical approaches, and is fully incorporated in the education and training system's transformation for the 21st century.
18. Sustainable development (linked to all 17 SDGs) is integrated in a practical manner in all education curricula facilitate knowledge and skills to address challenges such as environmental and climate change, poverty, inequality, war and others.
19. Close the digital divide in terms of access to data/ internet for educational purposes by ensuring that free, high-quality access is available to all through regulation and adequate resourcing.
20. Embed the use of technology, internet, digital skills in educational learning programmes through transformative and active pedagogical approaches that will prepare and enable children, young people and adults to engage with and respond to the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century and the 4th Industrial Revolution.
21. Create an enabling environment for digital learning and transformation of education through a review of national policies and plans as to adapt and integrate digital learning and transformation of education in the 21st century, and e-Education is fully integrated into schools and post-school education and training (PSET) institutions by 2030 with high quality.
22. Public funding allocated to education should be sufficient to ensure that children, young people and adults' right to inclusive and quality education is realized and that all have opportunities and access to early childhood development, basic education, special needs education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training, adult basic education and training and skills development.
23. Accountability for the allocation and expenditure of the education budgets against clear norms and benchmarks for funding in education and training should be implemented continuously and transparently with an emphasis on accountability to the nation and the world.