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## SA LEADERS PLEDGE JOINT ACTION TO ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL EARLY LEARNING BY 2030 AT BANA PELE ROADMAP SUMMIT

Government, business, and the Early Childhood Development (ECD) sector representatives gathered at the 2030 Bana Pele Roadmap Leadership Summit to take decisive action toward achieving universal access to quality ECD by 2030.

Delivering the keynote address, President Cyril Ramaphosa underscored the urgency of this mission: “We’ve seen time and time again how South Africa excels when we come together. We have consistently shown that we can solve difficult problems when we unite for a common cause. We have an opportunity to rethink and restructure the entire ECD landscape, making it more effective, more inclusive, and more impactful than ever before.”

The Bana Pele Roadmap Leadership Summit convened 150 senior leaders from government, the private sector, donor organisations, and ECD delivery partners. Discussions focused on three key pillars—expanding access to ECD, improving learning outcomes, and mobilising investment for sustainable growth. The gathering was a pivotal moment in aligning South Africa’s leadership behind a single plan to close the ECD access gap, improve quality standards, and secure long-term funding for the sector.

### Key Outcomes & Commitments from the Summit

- **Adoption of the 2030 Bana Pele Roadmap:** The DBE-led plan was formally endorsed, with clear milestones set to expand ECD access and improve service delivery.
- **Strengthening public-private partnerships:** Leaders committed to deeper collaboration between government, business and social partners, building on successful public-private partnership models like the Mass Registration Drive and ECD Outcomes Fund.
- **Scaling ECD Infrastructure Investment:** A commitment was made to expand and improve ECD centres by prioritising infrastructure investment, ensuring that more children can access quality early learning facilities.
- **Expanding the ECD Workforce:** Recognising that teacher shortages and training gaps hinder quality learning, stakeholders pledged to formalise and train more ECD practitioners to ensure a well-supported workforce that can meet growing demand.

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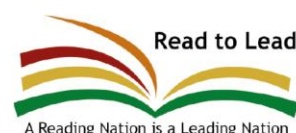
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- **Improved accountability and governance:** A Programme Management Unit (PMU) will track progress, drive implementation and ensure accountability across sectors, reinforcing shared responsibility for delivering results.

*Minister of Basic Education, Siviwe Gwarube, highlighted the role of government in ensuring execution: “By 2030, we want every child in South Africa to have access to quality early learning. But let me be clear—this is not about doing more of the same. It’s not just about more funding or more resources in a system that’s already under strain. This is about transformation. Impact. Results. It’s about fundamentally reshaping how we deliver early learning so that no child is left behind.”*

Business leaders, meanwhile, acknowledged that investing in ECD is not just a social good, but a critical economic strategy that benefits the private sector as much as society.

*Nonkululeko Nyembezi, BLSA Chair, reinforced this message: “The business of business is not just business. It is also about building a sustainable future. To do that, we need to invest in children today. For too long, ECD investment has been uncoordinated, limiting its impact. Now, with the DBE’s leadership, we finally have a national investment plan to get behind.”*

The Bana Pele Roadmap Leadership Summit laid the foundation for a national ECD social compact, built on shared responsibility and collective action across all sectors. Over the next 12 months, a joint task force comprising government, business, donors and social partners will develop a comprehensive resourcing plan to accelerate progress toward universal access. Leaders also committed to reconvening annually to review milestones and track impact.

This landmark event reaffirmed that the future of South Africa begins with early learning—not just as a foundation for education, but as a strategic investment in breaking the cycle of poverty and driving economic growth. The commitments made today must now translate into action, ensuring that every child, regardless of background, has the opportunity to thrive.

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