



**basic education**  
Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Keynote Address delivered by Basic Education Minister, Mrs Angie Motshekga, MP, on the Occasion of the 2021 Teacher Education and Development Summit**

25 November 2021

Programme Director,

Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Mr Manamela,

Chairperson of the ETDP SETA, Mr Duncan Hindle,

Chief Executive Officer, Ms Sesi Nxesi,

Director-General of DHET, Dr Sishi,

Director-General of the Department of Basic Education, Mr Mathanzima Mweli,

Heads of Provincial Education Departments,

Principals of Teacher Unions,

Teacher Education and Development stakeholders' representatives,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am privileged to address the 2021 Teacher Development Summit.

In our inaugural summit held twelve years ago, we adopted a declaration that called for a new, Integrated National Plan for Teacher Development in South Africa.

We finally signed off on the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED) ten years ago.

We thank the Chairperson and the CEO of the ETDP-SETA for leading the calls to take stock of the progress thus far.

Perhaps it is about time to recalibrate our teacher development strategy to meet current and future challenges.

The initial teacher education plan sought to improve the quality of teacher education to improve the quality of teachers and, ultimately, learning outcomes.

The acute challenges we faced twelve years ago included the lack of access for prospective and practising teachers to quality teaching and development opportunities. Other challenges were:

- The reported mismatch between the provision of and demand for teachers of particular types,
- The failure of the system to dramatically improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools,

- A fragmented and uncoordinated approach to teacher development.

Lastly, the inefficient and poorly monitored funding mechanisms.

Clearly, COVID-19 has amplified some of these challenges, including the prevailing curriculum losses and higher than average dropout rates.

Not to mention the timetabling challenges such as rotational ones that sometimes means teachers need double the time to teach the same content.

Our Action Plan to 2024: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030 Goals 14 and 16 clearly articulate our vision to “attract a new group of young, motivated and appropriately trained teachers into the teaching profession each year”.

Notably, the Action Plan implores us to “improve teachers’ professionalism, teaching skills, subject knowledge and computer literacy throughout their entire careers”.

Appropriately, the Initial Teacher Education Plan designated the Department of Basic Education to be responsible for establishing a National Institute for Curriculum and Professional Development (NICPD).

Furthermore, we had to design robust processes to assist teachers in identifying their development needs, thus enabling them to access quality Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities.

Programme director, one of the new sector priorities for the sixth administration is to ensure that teachers and learners are supported to acquire skills and competencies for a changing world.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the urgency for the sector to migrate from manual and paper-based systems to the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

We are pleased with the strides we are making in this regard, although a lot still needs to be done.

One of our key achievements in this regard has been the development of a Teacher Development Framework for Digital Learning.

The Framework identifies a set of competencies that teachers need to acquire to master the use of ICTs in the classroom.

We are working with the South African Council for Educators (SACE) to ensure that all training service providers offer teacher development programmes that are ICT infused.

Through the partnership agreement between South Africa and the United Kingdom (UK), we have also achieved significant gains in

improving the English language content knowledge and pedagogical skills of a large number of our teachers.

We offer English language teachers an English Audio Programme (LEAP) aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning in Multi-Grade schools.

English language teachers also can upgrade their qualifications and enrol for the Certificates in Primary/ Secondary English Language Teaching (CiPELT).

Through the National Institute for Curriculum and Professional Development, we are also in the process of developing an online Teacher Development Platform.

We want to thank the partnership with the ETDP SETA for supporting us in this latest innovation.

Through the online Teacher Development Platform, we will finally be able to implement a system of teacher professional development that is coordinated and collaborative.

The platform will create opportunities for teachers to engage in ongoing professional development at their own leisure and convenience.

The platform will have a portal for self-reflection and assessment, and it will host a library of resources from the Department of Basic Education and its partners.

Furthermore, it will also generate opportunities for teachers to collaborate by creating online Professional Learning Communities.

For this platform to be effective, there is a need to have a strong theory of change that can assist teachers in transitioning from the manual to the online platform.

We are working with the South African Council for Educators and other stakeholders to ensure that teachers are rewarded with points for participation and create incentives for teachers to achieve their learning targets.

Our District Teacher Development Centres and Provincial Teacher Development Institutes will further strengthen the use of the online platform, thus creating additional opportunities for teachers.

We want to thank our partners including Vodacom, MTN and Unisa for their continued support to our Teacher Centres through valuable ICT resources.

We encourage our teachers to take full advantage of the resources that have been deployed in these Teacher Centres.

Programme director, at the heart of the Teacher Development Framework for Digital Learning is recognising that teachers can manage their own learning at their own pace.

Subsequently, teachers need to have access to non-punitive self-diagnostic assessments to inform their teacher development activities.

To this end, we are rolling out Teacher Diagnostic Assessments in Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Accounting and Economics to determine teacher content and pedagogical needs.

These assessments have assisted us in developing focussed continuous teacher professional development programmes which address the deficits identified.

Our teachers have responded very well to the rollout of digital learning, and the uptake is impressive, although it can be much better.

To strengthen the identification of training needs, a significant change in the teacher development landscape in 2022 will be the introduction of the Quality Management System (QMS) for all school-based educators in the public schooling system.

The Quality Management System is a performance management tool for school-based educators.

The tool is designed to evaluate the performance levels of individuals to achieve high levels of school performance.

The QMS requires all members of the School Management Team (SMT) to agree on an Annual Work Plan with their immediate supervisors, which will be measured twice annually.

This will lead to the identification of training and development needs for teachers.

It is important to note that the QMS has the full support of all teacher unions in the country to effect sustainable improvement in our basic education system.

Furthermore, in the quest to meet the targets set by the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development, we have also developed a research agenda through several research projects.

One of them is the 2019 research titled “Teachers Speak: Acting on Teachers’ Professional Development Benefits and Needs”.

Through this study, teachers voiced their developmental needs and benefits of Continuous Professional Development.

We have further developed tools to determine the impact of any Continuous Professional Development Programmes offered by all providers of teacher development.

This intends to reduce the number of training programmes that do not impact positively on curriculum delivery.

Programme director, as early as 2007, the McKinsey report concluded that three things matter most to ensure high performing education systems:

- Get the right people to become teachers.
- No education system can exceed the quality of its teachers.
- Develop teachers to become effective instructors.

Therefore, it is clear that the only way to improve outcomes is to improve instruction to ensure that every child succeeds.

Achieving universally high educational outcomes is only possible by putting mechanisms, systems and targeted support to ensure that teachers deliver high-quality instruction to every learner.

To this end, through the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme, we have made a considerable contribution to the development of new entrants into the teaching profession.

The merit-based criteria for awarding bursaries has contributed to a higher calibre of students entering Initial Teacher Education programmes.

We have awarded a whopping one hundred and forty-four thousand and thirty-five (144 035) Funza Lushaka bursaries between 2011 and 2021.

The number of bursaries awarded in 2020/21 is 12 500.

Impressively, the Funza Lushaka bursary programme awarded 66% of all bursaries available in 2020 to female students.

To ensure quality into the teaching training ecosystem, we introduced in 2012 a District-Based Teacher Recruitment Campaign.

And, in 2013, a Community-Based Teacher Recruitment Campaign targeted learners coming from rural and poor communities to assist them in accessing the Funza Lushaka bursary programme.

Programme director, in the face of COVID-19 induced learning losses and possible dropouts, we have adopted the “Assessment for Learning (AFL)” as a pedagogical strategy and teacher mediation programme.

For us, this marks a significant policy shift and a critical step to addressing the challenge of recognising and enabling teachers as the primary agents of facilitating learning.

The Assessment for Learning strategy is a progressive step towards modernising pedagogical practices that facilitate active classroom engagement and deeper learning.

In conclusion, the central role of today's summit is to take stock of the progress made, fill policy gaps identified and troubleshoot to address implementation bottlenecks.

I thank you.