



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Address by the Basic Education Minister, Angie Motshekga,
at the RSA-Cuba High-Level Political Seminar on Basic
Education held at Freedom Park, Pretoria**

03 December 2021

Programme Director, South Africa's Deputy Minister of Basic Education, Dr Reginah Mhaule, MP,

First Deputy Minister for Cuba Education, the Honourable Mrs Cira Pineriro Alonso, MP,

South Africa Basic Education Director-General, Mr Mathanzima Mweli,

National Director: Early Childhood, Dr Maria de los Angeles Gallo Sanchez:

Cuban Technical and Vocational Education National Director, Mr Alexander Manso Diaz

South African Deputy-Director General for Delivery and Support, Ms S. Geyer,

Ladies and Gentlemen

I feel rejuvenated since the Cuban have been in town.

I can feel the energy and zest to liberate humanity from the poverty of the mind.

On behalf of the South African Government, I pass our people's gratitude to the Cuban delegation for gracing our shores with the warmth and open minds of genuine revolutionaries.

Our policy lodestar, the National Development Plan (NDP), enjoins us to improve the quality of basic education in South Africa.

It says, by 2030, South Africans should have access to education and training of the highest quality, leading to significantly improved learning outcomes.

Furthermore, it says that South African learners' performance in international standardised tests should be comparable to the performance of learners from countries at a similar level of development and with equivalent education access levels.

Deputy Minister, as you have visited a few provinces, you will appreciate that our role as the national department is limited to:

- Formulating national policy, norms and standards,
- Monitor and evaluate policy implementation and impact, and
- Lead the provision of the rights to basic education.

As this High-Level Political Meeting marks the conclusion of a week of fruitful engagements, it's time we focus on big-ticket items for collaboration.

Our most significant curriculum enhancement to date, we call it the Three Stream Model.

In addition to our Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS), since 2016, we now offer the Three Stream Model.

The Three Stream Model offers the Technical Vocational and Technical Occupational pathways added to the Academic pathway.

The curriculum shift towards the Three Stream Model owes its birth to the 2011 National Development Plan (NDP) policy's call for the differentiated pathways in the basic education sector.

The NDP says the different parts of the education system should allow learners to take different pathways that offer high-quality learning opportunities.

The introduction of the Three Streams Model has led to a plan to incrementally establish Focus Schools (Schools of Specialisation), including Maths-Science and Technology Schools, Schools of Engineering, and Art Schools.

The Three Stream Model is gaining momentum if one looks at learners' various national participation rates since introduction in multiple subjects, including Civil Technology, Electrical Technology, and Mechanical Technology.

We have since developed a Three Stream Model Master Plan with 10 key points.

The following 10 points were agreed upon to constitute the critical objectives of the Three Stream Model Master Plan, and these are:

1. Research to strengthen conceptualisation and roll-out of the Three Stream Model;
2. Technical Advisory Support in areas of need;
3. Vocationally Oriented Curriculum for the General Education and Training (GET) Phase;
4. Vocational, Technical and Occupational Curriculum for the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase;

5. General Education Certificate (GEC) Dashboard and Plan;
6. Teacher training and development;
7. Advocacy, Change Management and Communication;
8. Building partnerships;
9. HR and Funding Mobilisation;
10. Piloting the Three Stream Model (Vocational and Occupational Streams) in Schools.

We have established partnerships with the various Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs).

Other partnerships include Ford SA, which donated 240 engines, and UNICEF provides technical input into the Coding and Robotics curriculum.

The Sasol Foundation is helping in the Technical Mathematics and Technical Sciences space.

All Mobile Network Operators are assisting with connectivity issues.

The European Union supports the development of sector policies and reforms, improving governance and service delivery as part of the Education for Employability (E4E) Project.

The grand idea is to offer school technical subjects that lead to apprenticeship, some competence in a specific area before looking for learnerships, post-school education and the world of work.

One can say the Three Stream Model is a silver bullet to the dearth of skills in our country.

We need more technical support, training of teachers to offer our Three Stream Model curriculum and the actual investment in rolling out the Focus Schools and Schools of Specialisation.

However, we cannot ignore that we must build from below by strengthening early learning foundations.

According to the National Development Plan (NDP), we must make Early Childhood Development (ECDs) a top priority among measures to improve quality basic education and long-term prospects of future generations.

As you may be aware by now, the function shift of ECDs from Social Development to the Basic Education Department is almost complete.

Our focus now shifts to putting measures in place to increase the quality of provision early learning.

This will be done by shifting the focus from the current emphasis on child-care to a more holistic focus on nurturing, early stimulation and learning.

We are building on important policies already in place:

- National Curriculum Framework for children from Birth to Four (NCF),
- The National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement for the Foundation Phase (CAPS)
- The National Early Learning Development Standards (NELDS).

We have agreed on five strategies for improving the quality of ECD in South Africa:

These are:

- Curriculum-based early learning for all children birth to 5 years – implementing the NCF
- Early childhood development programmes for all children birth to 5 years – a continuum of programmes
- Training and development for all those working in ECD – career paths, with intensive but flexible training opportunities

- Coordination & integration of all early childhood development services
- A flexible funding and provisioning framework

We intend to develop a national integrated ECD monitoring, evaluation and research framework.

The framework will be informed by:

- Mechanisms and tools that measure learning outcomes,
- Compliance with quality standards,
- Equity and inclusive targets,
- Accountability and support mechanisms
- Integrate ECD into the EMIS system
- Develop an Early Years Index to track developmental outcomes
- Develop a well-designed Quality Assurance System

Programme director; we appeal for high-level collaboration in the area of ECDs.

These include:

- The development of a holistic and integrated parent support programme,

- In this regard, we are learning from Cuba's "Educate your child" parent support programme.
- South Africa recognises the importance that families play in Early Childhood Development.
- Families are considered as being primarily responsible for Early Childhood Development.
- The Departments of Basic Education, Health and Social Development need to ensure that families are empowered to fulfil this role.

We intend to develop an integrated parenting support programme for our newly integrated and much improved ECD sector with your support.

As I said earlier this week, we value our friendship and diplomatic ties with Cuba.

We are honoured by this high-level visit by the Cuban delegation led by you, Deputy Minister, Mrs Cira Piñeiro Alonso.

The best gift we can give to our forebears, the late Cuban president and international revolutionary Mr Fidel Castro and global peace icon Nelson Mandela is to free the potential of each child.

We owe that much to humanity.

I thank you.