2025

The Reconceptualised Human Resource Development Strategy of South Africa

2025–2035

HRDC
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
of South Africa

LABOUR MARKET INTELLIGENCE

2025

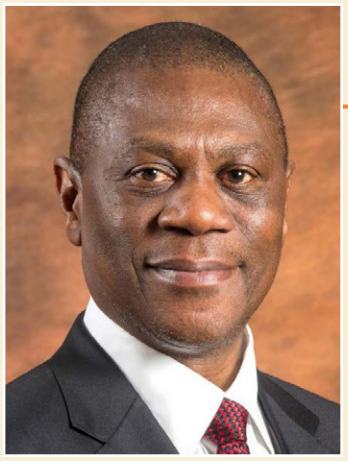
The Reconceptualised Human Resource Development Strategy of South Africa 2025–2035

ONE COUNTRY,
ONE STRATEGY,
ONE PLAN

November 2024

HRDC
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
of South Africa

LMI
LABOUR MARKET INTELLIGENCE



MR SHIPOKOSA PAULUS MASHATILE, MP

FOREWORD

DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA AND CHAIRPERSON OF THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

The Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) is a platform for social partners to address bottlenecks in South Africa's human resources and skills development. The council's primary responsibility is to develop a robust human resource base for a prosperous and inclusive South African society and economy.

Through the *Reconceptualised Human Resource Development Strategy of South Africa: 2025–2035 (HRDS-SA)*, which aligns with the *National Development Plan 2030*'s (NDP) vision, we emphasise the crucial role of education, training, and skills development in social and economic progress.

At the heart of the HRDS-SA is our shared vision for South Africa to develop "educated, skilled, and capable individuals who contribute positively to their communities and the nation." In pursuit of this vision, we will continue to work to solve the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty, and inequality while promoting economic growth for the benefit of all South Africans.

By targeting skills enhancement and employability, the strategy directly supports the NDP's goal of creating quality jobs, promoting meaningful economic growth, and improving education and training systems. It fosters a more inclusive economy by addressing skills gaps and ensuring that vulnerable groups have access to relevant training opportunities that enable them to participate meaningfully in the economy, whether through jobs or entrepreneurship.

Since the implementation of the country's first *Human Resource Development Strategy: A Nation at Work for a Better Life for All* in 2001, the government has significantly expanded education and training access; however, persistent challenges, rooted in the historical inequities of the apartheid era, remain.

The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed profound disparities in the education system, buttressing the divide between well-resourced private and public schools and under-resourced public schools. This reality demands that we intensify our efforts to close these gaps and elevate the quality of education for all South Africans.

The government's dedication to human resource and skills development is evident in the significant national budget allocated to public education and the progressive increase in the post-school education and training (PSET) budget.

Despite this commitment, education outcomes across the human resource development (HRD) system do not yet align with government investment, with critical skills shortages in key economic sectors posing a significant barrier to economic vitality.

In response, the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Science, Technology, and Innovation directed the Department of Higher Education and Training to develop a comprehensive *Master Skills Plan for South Africa: 2025–2030* (MSP), a countrywide approach aimed at addressing these entrenched challenges in human resource development.

This revised HRD strategy and the MSP outline targeted interventions to improve foundational education quality, enhance infrastructure, and strengthen system efficiencies. The strategy underscores the importance of quality early childhood development and literacy in the foundational phase of education, where reading comprehension is critical to lifelong learning success. In the PSET sector, the strategy prioritises aligning educational curricula and training with labour market needs. By giving salience to practical skills development and supporting growth-orientated career pathways, the HRDS-SA seeks to increase workforce readiness and ensure that educational institutions respond effectively to South Africa's economic and social demands.

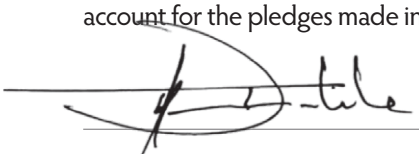
Feedback from employers in both public and private sectors reveals concerns about the work readiness of recent graduates. An inadequately prepared workforce can impact firm productivity, sector competitiveness, and economic growth potential. Therefore, this strategy calls for enhanced collaboration between the government, business, academia, and civil society to develop a skilled and competitive workforce capable of driving economic transformation. Furthermore, the strategy emphasises the need for demand-driven programmes that align education outcomes with labour market and entrepreneurial needs, bridging the gap between skills supply and industry demand.

In an era defined by rapid technological advancements and the rise of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the HRDS-SA and the MSP insist that skills development must evolve in tandem with the swiftly changing systems and processes in the workplace and business environment.

The strategy and the MSP advocate for a proactive integration of digital skills and emerging technologies into the education and training framework, encouraging role-players to modernise and adapt, thereby equipping the workforce with the necessary skills for a digital future.

Rooted in our constitutional commitment to advance the development and well-being of South Africa's people, this strategy adopts a holistic HRD value chain approach that spans education and training from early childhood to schooling, through to post-secondary education, and into the workforce. This integrated approach ensures that each stage of the HRD pipeline contributes to a cohesive national development effort, addressing needs at every level.

To all who have contributed to shaping this reconceptualised HRDS-SA and the MSP, your dedication to the future of South Africa is deeply appreciated. Your vision, commitment, and hard work reflect our shared aspiration for a prosperous and empowered South Africa. The HRDS-SA is a living document. Unlike past accords that were signed and forgotten, the signatories of this strategy will be held accountable over the next decade for their commitments to South Africa's people. They will be regularly reminded of their responsibilities and called to account for the pledges made in support of this national imperative.



MR SHIPOKOSA PAULUS MASHATILE, MP
Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa and
Chairperson of the Human Resource Development Council

DR NOBUHLE PAMELA NKABANE, MP

FOREWORD

MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The *Reconceptualised Human Resource Development Strategy of South Africa: 2025–2035* (HRDS-SA) and the *Master Skills Plan for South Africa: 2025–2030* (MSP) stand as a testament to the country's commitment to investing in its greatest asset—its people. In an era marked by rapid technological advancements, environmental challenges, and the imperative of a Just Energy Transition, the approach to human resource development (HRD) must be as dynamic and forward-looking as the world in which we live.

Since the inception of the first HRD strategy in 2001, South Africa has witnessed significant changes in its social, economic, and educational landscapes. Each iteration of the strategy has endeavoured to respond to these changes, ensuring continued relevance and impact. This sixth HRDS-SA, however, signifies a paradigm shift. It is characterised by a focused and collaborative approach that narrows its priorities to four critical areas, each of which holds the greatest potential for transforming the HRD landscape.

Thirty years into democracy, South Africa remains confronted by deep-seated challenges, including persistent inequalities and the need to build a developmental state that is capable of addressing these issues, as called for in the *National Development Plan 2030.* The reconceptualised HRDS-SA is a critical step towards achieving this vision, as it recognises that investing in human capital is paramount to fostering economic growth, social cohesion, and sustainable development.

The *White Paper for Post-School Education and Training* released in 2014 underscores the importance of a responsive post-school education and training (PSET) system. Such a system must align with the needs of society and the demands of the economy. However, the HRDS-SA goes beyond the scope of PSET alone. It advocates for an integrated and coordinated approach that spans the entire human development continuum—from early childhood development to school, to further education and training, and ultimately, to the labour market by preparing graduates for the world of work.

The strategy and the MSP are rooted in the understanding that a holistic approach to HRD is essential for achieving national development goals. This involves not only investing in education and skills development but also ensuring that youth who are not in employment, education, or training are supported in becoming productive members of society. The strategy places a strong emphasis on employability, recognising that equipping individuals with the skills and knowledge required by the labour market is key to reducing unemployment and promoting economic growth. Central to all these efforts, the reconceptualised strategy and plan recognise the significance of enhancing governance, leadership, and management in the public sector.

The HRDS-SA is also aligned with global imperatives such as the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the Just Energy Transition. In this context, the strategy prioritises the development of skills that are essential for thriving in a digital and green economy. By focusing on these critical areas, South Africa aims to position itself as a competitive player in the global economy, while also addressing pressing social and environmental challenges.

The point of departure for the MSP is both remarkable and compelling. The empirical research underpinning the recommendations and proposals within the plan is not only rigorous but also exemplary in its approach. This research underscores the commitment to evidence-based and evidence-informed policy and programme development—a critical framework for addressing the multifaceted challenges facing HRD in South Africa.

With this foundation, it is anticipated that the recommendations outlined in the MSP will be implemented by various role-players and stakeholders, as clearly delineated in both the HRDS-SA and the MSP. The plan meticulously details specific interventions and identifies responsible institutions, a key element for ensuring that custodians of the strategy are equipped to monitor and measure progress effectively. By establishing clear roles and responsibilities, the plan sets the stage for rigorous tracking of implementation, which is crucial for ensuring that the desired impact is achieved.

Ultimately, the success of the HRDS-SA and the MSP will hinge on the collective commitment to driving these interventions forward. The effective implementation of these initiatives, guided by the principles of accountability, transparency, and continuous evaluation, will be instrumental in achieving tangible, transformative outcomes for South Africa's HRD.

The reconceptualised strategy and plan represent a bold and innovative approach to HRD. The strategy is responsive to the realities of our time, yet firmly grounded in the long-term vision of building a prosperous and inclusive society. By investing in its people, South Africa is investing in its future. This strategy and its implementation plan provide a clear and focused roadmap for achieving that future—one where every South African has the opportunity to realise their full potential and contribute to the nation's development.

DR NOBUHLE PAMELA NKABANE, MP
Minister of Higher Education and Training

DR NKOSINATHI SISHI

FOREWORD

DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The goal is 'one country, one strategy, one plan'. In pursuit of this vision, the country's human resource development strategy has been reconceptualised as the *Human Resource Development Strategy of South Africa: 2025–2035* (HRDS-SA), and its implementation plan, the *Master Skills Plan for South Africa: 2025–2030* (MSP), has now been developed. This process is crucial for addressing the fragmentation and duplication of efforts in South Africa's skills development landscape, which have hindered the efficient and effective building of the country's workforce. The vision of the HRDS-SA and the MSP is to cultivate "educated, skilled, and capable individuals who contribute positively to their communities and the nation". This vision reflects a broader aspiration to empower individuals, enabling them to thrive and make meaningful contributions to local and national development. The mission of the HRDS-SA and the MSP is to "create a more coordinated, effective, and efficient human resource development system in South Africa that supports inclusive economic growth, reduces inequality, and improves the quality of life for all individuals". This mission underscores the need for a cohesive human resource development (HRD) system that fosters both economic growth and social equity.

To achieve this aim, the HRDS-SA and the MSP are designed to bring coherence and focus to the development of critical skills, ensuring a better balance between the supply and demand of skills in South Africa. These strategic frameworks, along with their associated processes and structures, will rationalise and enhance the efficiency of HRD and skills planning across the country. This effort will clarify institutional arrangements while establishing clear leadership and accountability for key education and training functions. Moreover, the strategy and the plan represent a commitment to best practices and collective will. They ensure that all social partners—the government, business, labour, and civil society—are aligned in addressing South Africa's HRD challenges. This unified approach is essential for building a more resilient and capable workforce that will drive the country's economic and social progress.

The MSP serves as the implementation plan for the HRDS-SA for the period 2025 to 2035. It closely aligns with national strategic policies such as the *National Development Plan 2030*, the *Medium-Term Strategic Framework: 2019–2024*, the *National Skills Development Plan 2030*, and the *Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan Skills Strategy*. Additionally, the MSP is harmonised with international initiatives including the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, the Southern African Development Community's *Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2020–2030*, and the *African Union's Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016–2025.*

By providing clear strategic directions, the MSP outlines the future development of provincial skills development plans, municipal integrated development plans, economic master plans, sector skills plans, post-school education and training plans, basic education plans, local economic development plans, and employer workplace skills plans. Collectively, these efforts address South Africa's HRD challenges holistically, ensuring the creation of a skilled and capable workforce that supports economic and social development.

Given the numerous HRD challenges in South Africa—ranging from early childhood development to tertiary education to workforce development—there are significant issues that span both formal and non-formal education and training. Stakeholders have expressed concern that the earlier iterations of the country's HRD strategy were too broad and academic, resulting in a 'lengthy shopping list' of issues. In response, this reconceptualised strategy and its plan have adopted guiding principles to ensure a meaningful impact across the entire education and training value chain:

- Brevity: Intended to be compelling and concise, avoiding the pitfalls of lengthy academic texts that can overwhelm the reader.
- Pareto principle: Focused on 20% of significant interventions that can yield 80% of the impact, helping streamline efforts and maximise effectiveness.
- Keep it short and simple: Designed to be accessible and applicable, ensuring clarity of message and ease of understanding.
- Evidence: Grounded in factual data to support informed decision-making and effective resource mobilisation.

In developing the HRDS-SA and the MSP, rigorous criteria were established for selecting the goals and interventions through a comprehensive literature review. This thorough process resulted in the creation of six background papers, complemented by insightful interviews and stakeholder consultations. For effective prioritisation within the strategy and its plan, the identified goals had to satisfy the following criteria:

- High national priority: An issue that is a high national HRD priority requiring urgent intervention.
- Significant impact: An issue that significantly enhances the country's HRD.
- Public attention: An issue that requires the responsible public entity to provide adequate attention to it.
- Domino effect: An issue that has a domino effect on HRD in the country.
- Multi-level coordination: An issue that necessitates coordination across multiple levels of the government.

In line with these criteria, the HRDS-SA and the MSP have identified four key goals, each elaborated upon in detail within both reports:

1. Improving early learning and schooling outcomes
2. Improving the employability of youth who are not in employment, education, or training
3. Enhancing the responsiveness of the post-school education and training system to skills demand
4. Improving governance, leadership, and management in the public sector

It is important to note that the successful implementation of the strategy and the plan is not solely the responsibility of the Department of Higher Education and Training; it requires the collective effort of various government departments, government entities, and the private sector. By working together, a robust and coordinated approach to HRD can be ensured, addressing the pressing needs of the nation.

DR NKOSINATHI SISHI
Director-General of the Department of Higher Education and Training

MR MALIVIWE LUMKA

FOREWORD

HEAD OF THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL SECRETARIAT

The *Reconceptualised Human Resource Development Strategy of South Africa: 2025–2035* (HRDS-SA), along with its implementation plan, the *Master Skills Plan for South Africa: 2025–2030* (MSP), stand as a crucial framework for addressing South Africa's ongoing human resource challenges. In the face of pressing issues such as skills mismatches, high unemployment rates, and the increasing number of youths who are not in employment, education, or training, this strategy offers a renewed and strategic vision for overcoming these persistent barriers.

The HRDS-SA goes beyond being just a plan—it represents a comprehensive and committed approach to human resource development (HRD). By adopting an integrated and targeted framework, it underscores the critical need for collaboration across multiple sectors. This approach is essential to addressing the complex and interconnected challenges we face, while not only meeting immediate needs but also laying a solid foundation for sustainable and inclusive growth. In alignment with the *National Development Plan 2030* (NDP), which emphasises the need to improve systems for skills planning, the strategy and the MSP highlight the importance of adopting demand-driven skills planning by the government.

At the heart of this strategy is the enhancement of early childhood development (ECD), as outlined in the *National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy*. ECD plays a pivotal role in shaping health, well-being, and economic outcomes, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. While access to ECD has improved, significant disparities persist, leaving many children without quality early learning opportunities. This strategy places ECD as a national priority, aiming to address these gaps and ensure that all children, regardless of their socio-economic background, have the opportunity to thrive from the earliest stages of their development.

In addition to ECD, the HRDS-SA and the MSP aim to improve the responsiveness of our post-school education and training (PSET) sector. By more closely aligning the PSET system with the evolving needs of the labour market, the strategy seeks to address the mismatch between skills supply and demand. This alignment is crucial for driving economic growth, improving employment rates, and advancing social

development. Strengthening the PSET system will reduce inefficiencies, support local businesses, and foster innovation.

Another key focus of this strategy is the improvement of governance, leadership, and management within the public sector. The NDP highlights the importance of a capable, effective state in driving social and economic transformation. This strategy recognises the governance challenges within the public sector, and aims to support reforms that will enhance state capacity, improve policy implementation, and promote a more professional and ethical public service.

The reconceptualised strategy and plan are aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and reflect the national priorities set forth in the NDP. The strategy embodies a vision of collaborative progress and sustained impact, ensuring that South Africa's HRD efforts are future-focused while remaining firmly grounded in addressing the country's most critical challenges.

The MSP integrates the core elements of existing plans impacting skills development across the country. By bringing coherence to the skills development system, the MSP provides a common vision for HRD in South Africa. It clarifies institutional arrangements, providing clear leadership and responsibility for key elements of the skills system. This clarity is essential for implementing robust monitoring and evaluation processes that track progress and measure success. These processes are vital to the effective implementation of the strategy and the plan, ensuring a meaningful and lasting impact on the lives of South Africa's citizens.

The reconceptualised HRDS-SA and the MSP are not government-only initiatives; they are a call to action for all stakeholders and role-players within the HRD space. Their goal is to foster a coordinated and collective response to HRD, ensuring alignment and coherence while avoiding contradictions and duplications. Together, we can build a unified approach that drives meaningful change and strengthens South Africa's human resource capacity.

MR MALIVIWE LUMKA
Head of the Human Resource Development Council Secretariat

"The reconceptualised HRDS-SA and the MSP are not government-only initiatives; they are a call to action for all stakeholders and role-players within the HRD space. "

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD: DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA AND CHAIRPERSON OF THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL 2

FOREWORD: MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING 4

FOREWORD: DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING 6

FOREWORD: HEAD OF THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL SECRETARIAT 8

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS 11

01 INTRODUCTION 12

Background 12
The purpose of the strategy 14
The concept of human resource development 14

02 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY 16

Research methodology 16
The criteria adopted to identify key issues for inclusion in the strategy 18
Reflections on stakeholder inputs 29
The role of the Human Resource Development Council 30

03 THE SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT 31

The economy 31
The labour market 34
The social context 35

04 THE HRD ECOSYSTEM AND LANDSCAPE 36

The HRD ecosystem 37
An overview of the HRD landscape 38

05 VISION, MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: A SUMMARY 40

Goals, objectives and interventions 41

06 CONCLUSION 42

REFERENCES 43

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CET	Community Education and Training
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
dtic	Department of Trade, Industry and Competition
ECD	Early childhood development
ELP	Early learning programme
GDP	Gross domestic product
HEI	Higher education institution
HRD	Human resource development
HRDC	Human Resource Development Council
HRDS-SA	Human Resource Development Strategy of South Africa: 2025–2035
IMP	Industry Master Plan
JET	Just Energy Transition
LMIP	Labout Market Intelligence Partnership
MSP	Master Skills Plan for South Africa: 2025–2030
MTSF	Medium-Term Strategic Framework
NDP	National Development Plan 2030
NEET	Not in employment, education, or training
NIECDP	National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy
NPMN	National Pathway Management Network
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PSET	Post-school education and training
PYEI	Presidential Youth Employment Intervention
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SSP	Sector skills plan
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
WBL	Work-based learning

01

INTRODUCTION

> **HUMAN CAPITAL** – the potential of individuals – is going to be the most important long-term investment any country can make for its people's future prosperity and quality of life."
>
> – The World Bank, 2018

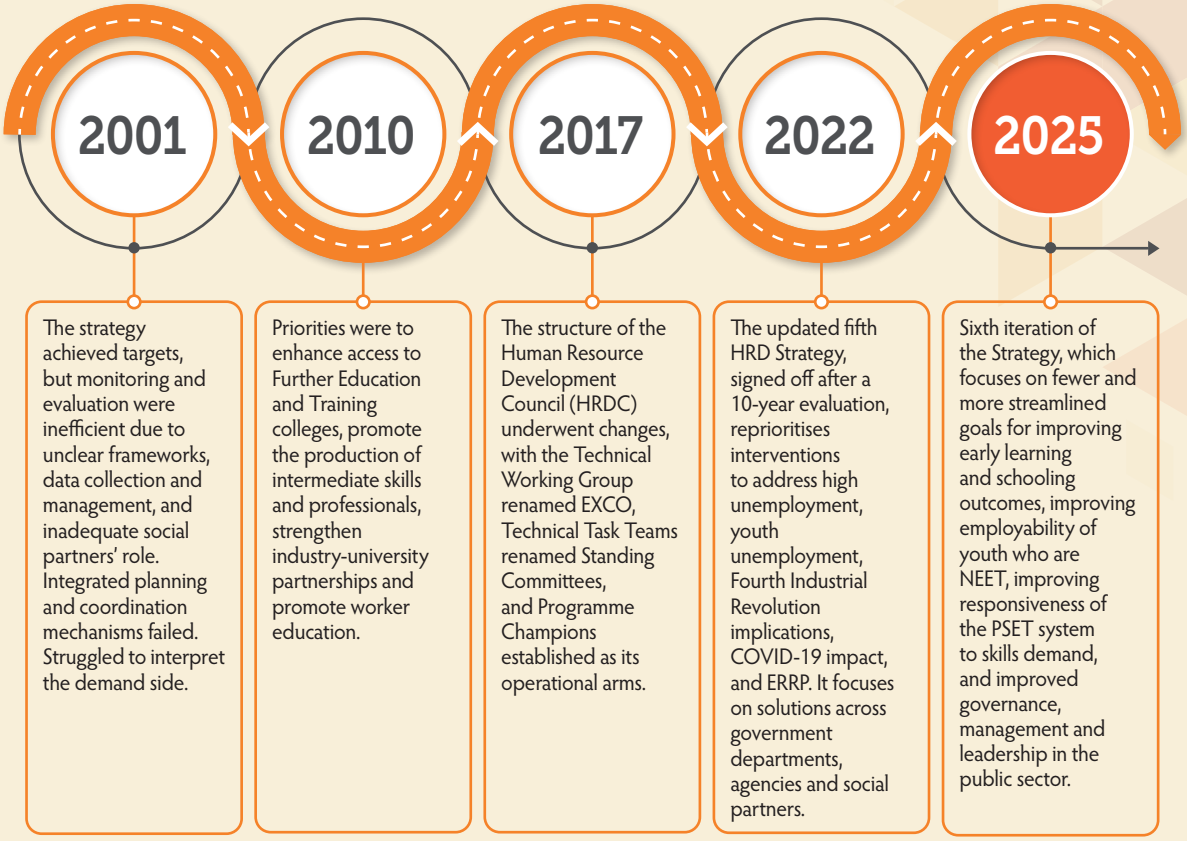
BACKGROUND

Education and training ensures that individuals have the foundational knowledge and skills to pursue lifelong learning in their personal, public, work and social lives. They equip people with life and employability skills to create sustainable livelihoods and to become productive members of society. It is imperative that human resource development (HRD) planning responds to labour demand, addresses environmental challenges, keeps employees abreast of technology developments, supports the Just Energy Transition (JET) and enables people to contribute to society in various ways. There is overwhelming evidence that countries that invest in their people tend to do better than those that do not. The World Bank emphasises that investing in human development is not only a moral imperative but an economic one as well.[1]

South Africa's HRD strategies go back to 2001. This reconceptualised strategy is the sixth iteration. Each strategy has been reviewed, usually after five years of implementation. Since the first HRD strategy, post-review changes have ensured relevance to changing contexts and priorities. Each iteration of the strategy has been characterised by adjustments that responded to the situation or environment that pertained to the time – at times, an emphasis on educational outcomes and, at others, on skills for work and productivity. Moreover, there has always been tension between the multiple purposes of education and training, namely their focus on individual development or on the needs of the economy versus on societal development. Over time, there has emerged a consensus that HRD includes the entire pipeline or value chain of education and training, from early childhood development (ECD) to school, to college and/or university, and to work and beyond. There are blockages along that pipeline that the country needs to address. Over the years, shifts in South Africa's HRD strategies have tried to respond to these blockages through programme selection, and the ensuing work of technical task teams and working groups to face identified HRD challenges.

1 The World Bank (2018). *Investing in people to build human capital*. Available at: https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/immersive-story/2018/08/03/investing-in-people-to-build-human-capital

HRDS TIMELINE



Source: HRDC (2017, 2022)

A criticism of previous strategies is that they have been too broad and have replicated what line departments are supposed to be doing. The *Reconceptualised Human Resource Development Strategy of South Africa: 2025–2035* (HRDS-SA) presents a paradigm shift in that:

- It has a narrower focus and has identified only four areas that could have the greatest impact on the system.
- It has a longer-term focus, which departs from the previous five-year term strategies.
- It acknowledges line departments as the leads of addressing proposals to respond to the identified HRD challenges, but admits that these departments on their own cannot address the challenges, which require a collaborative approach.
- It comes with a detailed five-year implementation plan.

The new strategy must be read in conjunction with the separate *Master Skills Plan for South Africa: 2025–2030* (MSP), which sets out the progress expected over the next five years and provides the blueprint for implementing the HRDS-SA. The MSP is informed by this and other skills development

strategies and plans at national, provincial and local levels, and across economic sectors and ministries.

THE PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY

The HRDS-SA aims to identify the challenges to focus on over the next five years in the country's HRD efforts, to ensure the availability of human resources needed for South Africa's society and economy, and to address the imbalances of skills supply and demand in the country. In addition, the reconceptualised strategy and the MSP are expected to bring about coherence, rationalisation, and improved efficiency in HRD and skills planning in the country. The two documents will clarify institutional arrangements that provide clear leadership and responsibility for key elements of education and training (including the skills system) across the country.

The HRDS-SA is therefore expected to serve as an anchor for good practice, and as a political and collective commitment. The HRDS-SA and the MSP will build on existing national skills plans, such as the *National Skills Development Plan 2030*, the *Medium-Term Strategic Framework: 2019–2024* (MTSF), and the *Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan*. The development processes of the strategy and plan will direct how the planning for the country's human resource and skills needs in South Africa could be better coordinated. The HRDS-SA and the MSP are also intended to galvanise support from South Africans to pledge their political and collective will and commitment, including financial commitment, to the country's HRD efforts.

THE CONCEPT OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

A national HRD strategy takes its cue from the socio-economic development goals of the country. The HRDS-SA is premised on the notion that the contribution of HRD can lead to the achievement of economic and social development priorities through the construction of a capable developmental state:

> "The vision of a capable developmental state combines a human capability approach to development with modern reconstructions of traditional economic models of growth, whereby 'well-being' involves increasing contentment through socio-economic development and growth as well as building the capacity of human beings to achieve what they want to. This approach emphasises that human capabilities are both ends in themselves as well as the key means to socio-economic development and the construction of democratic institutions that help us to enhance the quality of life of our people". (HRDC, 2017, p. 14)

This strategy is therefore intended to propose which challenges should be addressed to most effectively and efficiently assist with achieving the economic and social goals of a better life for all. The strategy has a wider remit than supporting specific economic policy. It includes the public good dimensions of skills development (such as citizenship development) alongside employability, productivity and competitiveness.

THE HRDS-SA HAS THREE MAIN OBJECTIVES

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT OR CAPABILITY[2]

To enable people to make choices and live healthy, creative lives, they need a strong foundational education (literacy and numeracy) and opportunities for lifelong learning. With human development at its core, the HRDS-SA emphasises early learning and schooling.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT[3]

The focus here is on skills for the economy. HRD requires labour market analysis to determine over- and under-supply and skills imbalances. This analysis must also identify growth or potentially growing economic sectors and the skills to support them. Furthermore, labour market research should steer educational institutions to offer demand-led programmes. Therefore, the right subject choices should be made in schooling and followed through in post-school education and training (PSET). Dedicated career awareness and information is required for this to happen. A focus on those not in employment, education, or training (NEET) is imperative.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES[4]

HRD should support the national development goals towards education, employment and accountability. The strategy therefore identifies development priorities to accomplish these goals.

To achieve these objectives, HRD should happen in a continuum from early learning to post-school, and into the workplace and in homes for lifelong learning in formal and informal programmes.

TERMINOLOGY USED IN THE HRDS-SA AND THE MSP

A number of different terms are used by the various HRD role players. Those engaged in the schooling sector often use the term **education** to describe what they do, while those in the post-school sector describe what they do as **education and training**. Provision funded by the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and the National Skills Fund is generally referred to as **skills development**. In this strategy, the term **human resource development** is used, and it encompasses the education, training, and skills development that take place in all institutions, including homes and workplaces, both formal and informal.

2 See for example Lim, D. H. and Cho, D. (2015). Graduate HRD programs in South Korea. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*. Sage. Available at: https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/215302904.pdf

3 See for example The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (2021). *Human Resources Development Readiness in ASEAN—Singapore Country Report*. ASEAN Secretariat: Jakarta.

4 Human Resources Development Canada (2001). *Human Resources Development Canada's Sustainable Development Strategy II*. Human Resources Development Canada: Quebec.
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (2012). *2013–14 Report on Plans and Priorities*. Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

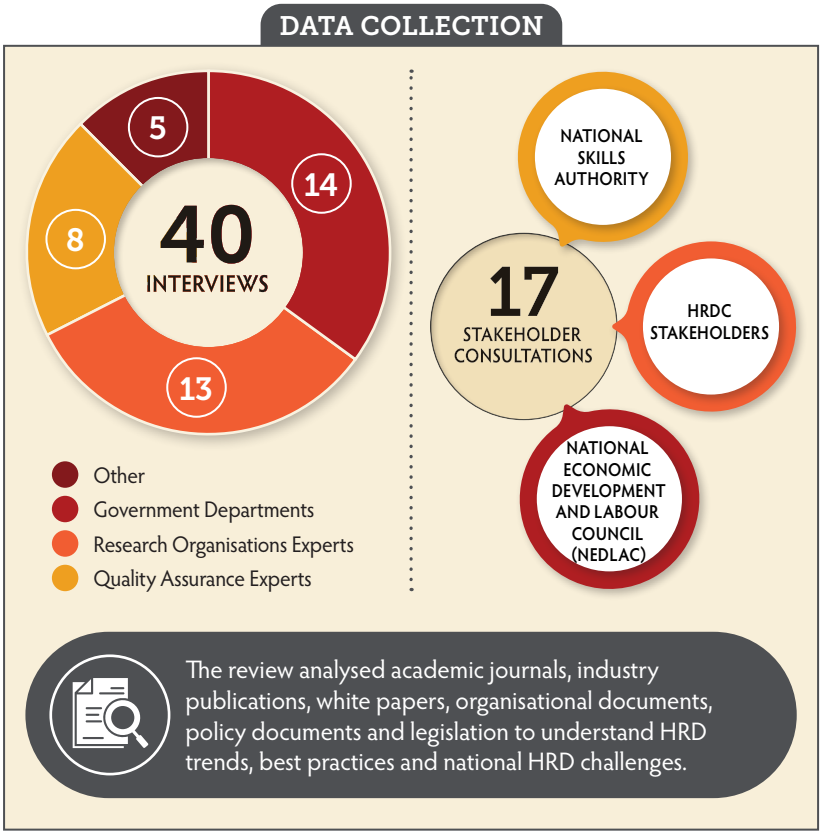
02

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The Strategy was developed with rigour using the following process that produced several outputs, including the Strategy.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW, INTERVIEWS, FOCUS GROUPS
2. BACKGROUND PAPERS
3. THEMATIC ANALYSIS
4. DRAFT HRDS
5. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS
6. FINAL HRDS

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



Stakeholder consultations took place from October 2023 to February 2024.

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

27 Oct 2023
Consultation with Ministry

6 Nov 2023
Community Education and Training (CET) ministerial Task Team

9 Nov 2023
Consultation with Department of Science and Innovation

13 Nov 2023
South Africa Qualifications Authority and Quality Councils

13 Nov 2023
HRDS Skills Planning Standing Committee

14 Nov 2023
SETA CEO Forum

14 Nov 2023
Presidency and Presidential Climate Commission

16 Nov 2023
DC Economic Sectors, Investment, Employment and Infrastructure Development (ESIEID) Cluster

17 Nov 2023
Department of Basic Education (DBE)

17 Nov 2023
Department of Employment and Labour, and Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (dtic)

23 Nov 2023
Human Resource Development Provincial Coordination Forum Meeting

28 Nov 2023
Deputy Generals of National and Provincial Government Departments

5 Dec 2023
National Skills Authority

12 Dec 2023
Nedlac

13 Dec 2023
Social Protection, Community and Human Development Deputy General Cluster

1 Feb 2024
HRDC Skills Planning Standing Committee

28 Feb 2024
Social Protection, Community and Human Development Cluster Technical Working Group

THE CRITERIA ADOPTED TO IDENTIFY KEY ISSUES FOR INCLUSION IN THE STRATEGY

The goals, strategic objectives and interventions identified in this HRDS-SA have been derived from meticulous research involving comprehensive national and international literature reviews, as well as engagement with a wide range of education role players, stakeholders and experts.

As anticipated, the research revealed significant systemic challenges in the South African education and training landscape, necessitating extensive and diverse interventions to address them. However, due to the broad scope of the challenges and a deliberate decision to focus on a small number of interventions that could bring about maximum impact, this strategy cannot encompass all the identified interventions needed to tackle the challenges of the South African education and training system. The HRDS-SA therefore draws attention to critical interventions that meet an agreed set of criteria:

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The issues in the strategy must be foregrounded and accentuated in the background papers available on the HRDC's website.

IMPACT

The goals for the strategy must reflect impactful, catalytic, influential, transformative and game-changing issues. The Pareto Principle was used to select the few interventions that would result in the biggest impact.

ALIGNMENT WITH NEEDS OF ECONOMY

The strategy must ensure that Industry Master Plans (IMPs) are supported with HRD, and that skills are adequate and appropriate to address the needs of the economy, including the digital economy, and the JET.

COORDINATION

The strategy must prioritise issues that require coordination across government departments, economic sectors, regions, the private sector, labour, and civil society. The strategy is not about repeating issues identified in existing plans; instead, it focuses on interventions to support the collective efforts of social partners to improve HRD outputs and outcomes.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Major cross-cutting issues, such as governance or public sector capacity, should be reflected in the strategy, as should the organisational development challenges experienced in education, training and development institutions.

THE FOLLOWING FOUR ISSUES WERE IDENTIFIED AS THE PRIORITIES FOR THIS STRATEGY, BASED ON THE ABOVE CRITERIA

GOAL 1

Improving early learning and schooling outcomes

RATIONALE

ECD improves health, wellbeing and economic outcomes globally, reducing unemployment, poverty and inequality. Research shows that quality ECD provision can positively impact children from low-income backgrounds.[5] The *National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy* (NIECDP)[6] states that ECD is central to the government's developmental initiatives, such as its global commitment to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and the UNESCO Education for All goals. The *National Development Plan 2030* (NDP) aims to "make ECD a key priority among the measures to improve the quality of education and long-term prospects of future generations".

ECD is included as an urgent national priority for this HRDS-SA because:

- Of the approximately 1.2 million children aged 50 to 59 months, only about 45–55% are reportedly attending some kind of early learning programme (ELP).
- Around 800 000 of these children reside in households with a per capita income below the poverty line.
- More than half (57%) of children in ELPs are falling behind on the Thrive by Five Index, including on gross motor development, fine motor coordination, early numeracy, early literacy, emergent literacy and cognition. Some of these children will never catch up.

> The first five years have so much to do with how the next 80 turn out."
>
> – Bill Gates

5 Department of Basic Education (2018). *Outline of a human resources development strategy for early childhood development based on the National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy*. DBE: Pretoria.

6 Department of Social Development (2015). *National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy*. DSD: Pretoria.

The Thrive by Five study revealed that one in eighteen children exhibits signs of long-term malnutrition, with 0.53% severely stunted.

The wealthiest 20% of the population has twice as many three-year-olds attending an ELP than the poorest 20%.

Most poor children (80% of the population) have limited or no access to quality ECD programmes.

Literacy and numeracy are national challenges that have been in the spotlight since the democratic dispensation. In 2006, South Africa's Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) revealed that only 22% of Grade 5 learners achieved basic literacy. This result accelerated efforts to improve literacy, but 10 years later, only 22% of Grade 4 learners achieved this level in 2016. The 2022 PIRLS report showed that only 19% of Grade 4 learners can read for meaning.[7]

South Africa's literacy challenges are not surprising, as the PIRLS 2016 report highlighted that children with high scores attended well-resourced, safe and academically oriented schools with diverse demographics, high reading instruction and regular attendance. A majority of South African children live in environments that don't align with these conditions. The recent National Reading Barometer highlighted that only 52% of adults read with children and access to books in homes is a challenge. Children's reading efforts should be supported at home and it is concerning that adult illiteracy is above 10%, with more than 4 million adults being functionally illiterate.

Poor language skills in early grades persist, with 70% who enroll for a National Senior Certificate achieving low proficiency in languages.[8] Academically weak applicants to Bachelor of Education programmes continue to perform poorly in English and mathematics. The approaching wave of teacher retirements presents an opportunity to address teacher quality issues through strengthened initial teacher education.

Sources: DBE (2018); Thrive by Five (August 2022); DSD (2015); Howie et al. (1998)

IMPACT

Most children face learning backlogs in school, leading to lifelong disadvantages, including dropping out or lacking necessary skills, which perpetuates a cycle of disadvantages across generations.[9] Universal access to quality ECD is crucial for reducing structural inequality in South Africa, as most children enter the system with gaps that need to be addressed promptly.

7 Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (2023). *Basic education minister releases the PIRLS 2021 results*. CEA, University of Pretoria: Pretoria.

8 Department of Basic Education (2023a). *National Senior Certificate 2022 Examination Report*. Pretoria: DBE.

9 Oppenheimer Memorial Trust (2023). *Education Research Report*. OMT: Johannesburg.

Evidence indicates that quality ECD can mitigate inequalities and safeguard "children from the impacts of poverty, poor nutrition, inadequate healthcare, and lack of education".[10] Research indicates that language, mathematics, executive functioning, fine motor coordination and visual motor integration predict children's foundational schooling performance, while social and emotional development predicts adjustment and primary school achievements.

Investing in ECD yields high returns for individuals, families, communities and nations, promoting positive education, better health, reduced crime, increased productivity and adult earnings.[11] ECD investments can yield a return of 7–10% per annum.[12] ECD has been argued to have a triple impact investment case, as it addresses caregivers' childcare needs, supports child development and generates employment opportunities.

Furthermore, literacy has both a cognitive and socio-cultural function. From a cognitive perspective, the ability to read is a predictor of any print and text-based learning, which is the dominant form of learning in South Africa.[13] The entire education system from ECD to higher education requires reading skills. Further along in the education system, literacy skills that are required for academic engagement in higher education are developed in the earlier grades, where skills such as argumentation and critical engagement with text are developed.

The importance of strong foundational mathematics for developing a strong pathway towards mathematics-related careers cannot be understated. Maths has a hierarchical knowledge structure and learners have to understand early-level maths concepts for them to do well in the subject in later topics or grades. Failure to understand early-grade maths leads to conceptual gaps that, in turn, lead to decisions to drop the subject at school. The ability to do maths is also in part dependent on the ability to read, thus making reading an indispensable skill.

INVESTING IN ECD PROMOTES

POSITIVE EDUCATION

BETTER HEALTH

REDUCED CRIME

INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY

ADULT EARNINGS

10 Ashley-Cooper, M., Van Niekerk, L., & Atmore, E. (2019). Early childhood development in South Africa: Inequality and opportunity. In Spaull, N. & Jansen, J. D. (eds.), *South African Schooling: The Enigma of Inequality. A Study of the Present Situation and Future Possibilities*. Springer, pp. 87–108.

11 Oppenheimer Memorial Trust (2023).

12 Heckman, J. J. (2013). *Invest in early childhood development: Reduce deficits, strengthen the economy*. The Heckman Equation.

13 Polzer-Ngwato, T., Shilakoe, L., Morse, K., & Huston, K. (2023). *National Reading Survey 2023 Findings Report*. Nal'ibi Trust.

90%
OF FIVE- TO SIX-YEAR-OLDS ENROLLED IN GRADE R IN 2023

HOWEVER

OF PRACTITIONERS

50%
ARE UNQUALIFIED

AND

50%
LACK TRAINING

IMPROVEMENT

ECD access has improved, with over 90% of five- to six-year-olds enrolled in Grade R in 2023. However, 50% of practitioners lack training and 50% are unqualified. An additional 210 000 practitioners and support workers are needed.[14]

Various interventions are being implemented in basic education, including the Early Grade Study, the DBE's National Reading Framework, the Primary School Reading Improvement Programme, the Funda Wande: Teaching Reading for Meaning project, and out-of-school early literacy initiatives. These efforts have shown positive effects on literacy. However, improving reading remains a key focus for the DBE. Numeracy interventions are limited, impacting the building of strong foundations for science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Despite progress in numeracy, only 41% of Grade 9 learners reached the lowest achievement threshold in the 2019 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies.

Several measures are being implemented, including lesson plans in five African languages, collaborations with the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the National Education Collaboration Trust, and the Bala Wande: Calculating with Confidence project, focusing on the triple cocktail. According to Fleish (2018), the triple cocktail consists of three essential elements of intervention:

- Teachers' daily use of structured lesson plans, which systematically cover the curriculum;
- In-class support of teachers by coaches who are experts in reading instruction; and
- The provision of high-quality reading materials for use by children during lessons and out of school.

Poor foundational knowledge in maths leads to cumulative learning backlogs.

COORDINATION

The NIECDP highlights the need for effective coordination and monitoring to improve ECD provision, addressing human resource and material gaps through inter-departmental decision-making and prioritisation. Accountability for ECD in all government tiers is lacking and while public entities have ECD programmes, alignment is limited. The focus should be on enhancing alignment and coordination with civil society and corporate groups to also improve the efficiency of the resources channelled into this sector.

ECD responsibilities are distributed across government departments, including health, basic education, social development, and higher education and training, with various public entities contributing to the broader package of services.

The interventions available in maths and literacy are small-scale in nature, even those that have been proven to work. Concerted efforts between the various stakeholders working in this space can result in efficiencies and, most likely, greater impact and accountability.

14 Department of Basic Education (2021). *ECD Census 2021: Report*. DBE: Pretoria.

GOAL 2

Improving the employability of youth who are NEET

RATIONALE

The NDP emphasises the importance of full employment, decent work and sustainable livelihoods for improving living standards and ensuring a dignified existence for all South Africans. The most effective long-term solution for reducing inequality is to increase employment, productivity and incomes. The NDP aims to decrease unemployment to 6% and to achieve a 5.4% growth rate by 2030, primarily through the creation of youth employment opportunities.[15] Youth unemployment in South Africa limits earning potential, hinders business growth and threatens social cohesion. Long-term unemployment and demographic change will drag the economy as the population ages.[16]

South African youth aged 15–24 and 25–34 face high unemployment rates, with 32.7% who are NEET. These youth, mostly from poor households, are not in post-school institutions and often drop out due to financial reasons, lack of networks or because they live in remote areas where employment prospects are limited.[17] Youth employability in South Africa can significantly accelerate human development by transforming society through the skills, knowledge, expertise and attitudes of young people.[18]

IMPACT

Employment is key to harnessing the demographic dividend. In the absence of new jobs and ways to match them with new workers, the demographic dividend becomes a demographic liability: large cohorts of youth without work are a loss of human and economic potential. Addressing NEET youth is critical for three reasons:[19]

- Generating youth employment is a key accelerator and a multiplier for addressing poverty and income inequality.
- Productively engaging the youth addresses social cohesion and mitigates their exposure to social ills.
- Accelerated youth employment helps to expedite aggregate demand, and the formation of a formidable middle class that lays the foundation for inclusive economic growth and development.

IMPROVEMENT

The government, the private sector and civil society are making concerted efforts to tackle youth unemployment, including labour market policies, public employment programmes, job placement, wage subsidies and skills programmes. The Presidential Youth Employment Intervention (PYEI) is a multi-sector South African programme that is aimed at addressing youth unemployment. It includes a National Pathway Management Network (NPMN), agile workforce development, youth self-employment, workplace experience strengthening, enterprise in the township and rural economy, and the revitalisation of the National Youth Service programme.

15 National Planning Commission (2010). *National Development Plan 2030*. NPC: Pretoria.

16 Human Sciences Research Council (2022). *Human Development Report 2022: Harnessing the Employability of South Africa's Youth*. HSRC, United Nations Development Programme: Pretoria.

17 Maluleke, R. (2023). *Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) Q3: 2023*. Statistics South Africa.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

The PYEI is implemented by various government departments. The Department of Employment and Labour is responsible for the NPMN and supported by Harambee. The National Youth Development Agency is in charge of revitalising the National Youth Service programme. The Government Technical Advisory Centre and The Jobs Fund manage the PYEI. Lastly, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) leads the demand-led skilling component of the PYEI in partnership with the National Skills Fund.[20]

The PYEI has multiple implementation partners, with the DBE instituting the Basic Education Employment Initiative (BEEI) across all nine provinces. This intervention has reduced youth unemployment by providing school assistantship jobs to 879 498 youth from December 2020 to December 2023 in areas traditionally termed 'job deserts'. The BEEI has also achieved an impressive 65% employment rate for women, which is higher than the national average employment rate for women at 34.5% in 2022 and 2023. The programme also employed 75% of participants from quintile 1–3 schools, which are schools that do not traditionally get private sector hires.[21]

The Youth Employment Service (YES) is a private sector PYEI implementation partner that empowers businesses to create jobs for young people, providing 12-month quality work experiences that are made possible partly by the Employment Tax Incentive. The YES programme lobbies and advocates for policy changes to unlock earning opportunities for the youth. From October 2018 to March 2023, YES created 104 322 jobs.[22]

Harambee, a non-profit social enterprise operating in the PYEI space, has successfully addressed youth unemployment by providing 3.5 million work-seekers with millions of opportunities for job matching and training through the SAYouth platform, partnering with 1000 employers and ensuring R17.5 million income.[23] As the pathway manager for the NPMN, Harambee also works with YES for policy lobbying and demand-mapping. One of its successful initiatives is the inclusive hiring practices, where Harambee has worked with employers to motivate them to look beyond qualifications and experience when hiring, and to consider the ability to learn and problem-solving skills as predictors of good employees.[24]

COORDINATION

The business sector should be far more involved in connecting young people to the world of work. Businesses tend to engage when financial incentives are available for youth workplace opportunities. The state also tends to focus on large businesses and less on medium and small businesses, which comprise the majority. There are many civil society, provincial and local government initiatives to upskill youth and get them into employment. Although business involvement is improving under tough economic conditions, cooperation between businesses and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges is an exception rather than the rule. Efforts at addressing youth unemployment are still disparate and not well synchronised. Decisive action and coordination are critical and urgent.

20 The Presidency (2023). PYEI Partnerships Factsheet.

21 Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator (2023a). Inputs for PYEI poverty alleviation discussion. Harambee: Cape Town..

22 YES Annual Report (2023).

23 Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator (2023b). Solving youth unemployment through partnerships. Available at: *https://www.harambee.co.za/*

24 Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator (2020). *Breaking Barriers*. Harambee.

GOAL 3

Improving the responsiveness of the PSET system to skills demand

RATIONALE

The NDP emphasises education, training and innovation as key to South Africa's long-term development, advocating for a national skills planning system to address labour market research and skill scenarios.[25] The NDP aims to enhance access to high-demand occupations; prioritise skills for economic growth, employment and social development; and improve the responsiveness of the PSET system to skills demand.[26] The dtic is tasked with creating the Priority Skills Plan, a key component of the MTSF 2019–2024, to boost economic growth and job creation in the country.

The South African labour market faces a mismatch between skills supply and demand, intensified by skills-biased technological change, resulting in high unemployment and vacancy rates for skilled workers.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has identified significant occupational shortages in South Africa, with 38% of skilled agricultural workers and 94.2% of managers working in different fields from the ones they trained in, and a high degree of skills mismatch, particularly in community services programmes and financial services. Most TVET graduates were employed in these two sectors (59.2%). Engineering graduates are mainly employed in non-engineering industries.[27]

> The primary aim of determining occupations in high demand is to improve the responsiveness of the post-school education and training system to the needs of the economy and to the broader developmental objectives of the country."
>
> National Skills Development Plan 2030

25 National Planning Commission (2010). *National Development Plan 2030*. NPC: Pretoria.

26 Department of Higher Education and Training (2019). *National Skills Development Plan 2030*. DHET: Pretoria.

27 Vandeweyer, M. and Verhagen, A. (2022). *Skills Imbalances in the South African Labour Market: Detailed results from the OECD Skills for Jobs database*. Produced for the Department of Higher Education and Training as part of the Labour Market Intelligence research programme.

IMPACT

Skills mismatches in the labour market lead to inefficiencies, slow productivity, and economic growth. Local businesses struggle to find skilled workers, resulting in decreased output and unemployment. This promotes increased social welfare costs, wage disparities and higher training costs. Additionally, skills mismatches hinder innovation and productivity growth, as businesses struggle to adopt new technologies or processes.

IMPROVEMENT

There are concerted efforts at a national level to improve the responsiveness of the PSET system to meet skills demand in the labour market. The Labour Market Intelligence Partnership (LMIP), initiated in 2012, is a multi-year research programme aimed at integrating skills planning into government strategies and workforce development. It aims to prevent skills from limiting economic growth and promotes the use of labour market intelligence for skill provisioning. The National List of Occupations in High Demand, the Critical Skills List, the Skills Gap Report and sector skills plans (SSPs) are used by various departments to support planning in the PSET sector, update immigration policies, and measure skills supply and demand imbalances. SSPs aid economic and social development by providing an evidence-based understanding of skills and occupations, with employers, the dtic and departments developing IMPs and skills development plans.

COORDINATION

The NDP suggests enhancing skills planning systems and promoting skills production, while the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training emphasises intergovernmental coordination for policy alignment and implementation. Recognising the lack of coordination among government departments and non-profit organisations, the National Plan for Post-School Education and Training: 2021–2030[28] proposes the establishment of "clear and streamlined roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders and role players involved in education and training". The current skills planning regime is criticised for its lack of coherence and coordination, and for the poor clarity of institutional arrangements regarding skills development.

28 Department of Higher Education and Training (2021). *National Plan for Post-School Education and Training: 2021–2030*. DHET: Pretoria.

GOAL 4

Improving governance, leadership and management in the public sector

RATIONALE

The NDP[29] indicates that "in a society with deep social and economic divisions, neither social nor economic transformation is possible without an effective state. The state provides the institutions and infrastructure that enable the economy and society to operate. Its ability to carry out its functions profoundly impacts the lives of all South Africans". The National Planning Commission identifies issues like state capacity imbalance, political–administrative tensions, leadership instability, procurement irregularities, fraud, corruption, skills deficits, low productivity and low government morale, especially in historically disadvantaged areas.[30]

Numerous reports show that weak institutional governance is a huge challenge in the education and training system. From reports of fraud in schools to accounts of divisions in university councils and extraordinarily high salaries for university vice chancellors,[31] to accusations of TVET colleges being 'taken over' administratively by the minister of higher education and hundreds of vacancies in many TVET college councils,[32] the crisis of poor institutional governance cannot be ignored.

> *Corruption Watch* flagged almost 3500 cases of governing bodies involved in abuses – often in cahoots with the principal."
>
> *Daily Maverick*, 3 March 2024

IMPACT

Poor service delivery, infrastructure maintenance, procurement irregularities and inefficient state-owned enterprises negatively impact the economy, leading to low productivity and a lack of clear vision for future generations.

29 National Planning Commission (2010) *National Development Plan 2030. NPC: Pretoria.*

30 Ibid.

31 Council on Higher Education report on salaries of university vice-chancellors, to be published (2024).

32 Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2023). Report of meeting of the Higher Education, Science and Innovation Parliamentary Portfolio Committee.

The *State of the Public Service Report 2021/22*[33] makes several findings on state capacity and the capability of the public service:

- The weakening of state capacity and capability over time varies widely, with major deficiencies in many departments and specialisations existing side by side with pockets of strength and excellence.
- Fiscal consolidation has reduced headcount, and budget cutbacks have eroded state capacity and capability.
- Inefficient resource allocation and its conversion into outcomes are a cause and manifestation of state capacity and capability challenges.
- The growing state capacity crises have slowly shifted to the courts, increasingly taking up space to resolve matters.
- South Africa has good policies, but poor implementation makes it difficult to deliver on these policies.

The Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture, Corruption and Fraud in the Public Sector (otherwise known as the Zondo Commission) showed that state capacity is undermined by corruption and deliberate efforts to compromise state machinery.

IMPROVEMENT

The government recognises the importance of nonpartisan public service, ensuring departments remain insulated from politics and allowing public servants to continue their duties despite changes in government leaders or political parties.

The *National Framework for Professionalisation of the Public Service* proposes reforms like merit-based tenure, competency assessments and professional development. The MTSF for 2019–2024 aims to build a capable, ethical and developmental state through professional, meritocratic public administration.

COORDINATION

From an HRD perspective, there needs to be better coordination, cooperation and collaboration at all government levels, with joint action from the public and private supply-side institutions, notably the National School of Government.

33 Public Service Commission (2022). *State of the Public Service Report 2021/22*. PSC: Pretoria.

REFLECTIONS ON STAKEHOLDER INPUTS

Three main dispositions were exhibited during the development of the HRDS-SA, particularly during stakeholder interviews and at the consultation stage:

DISILLUSIONMENT

Many stakeholders have become disillusioned by the many iterations of the strategy, with not much change. As a result, they expressed the sentiment that nothing would change even if they gave inputs, since the government knows what needs to be done but has no capacity to implement. This perspective suggests that some work is needed to galvanise support for the strategy, which can be undertaken by the HRDC and its structures.

LOCALISED VIEWS

Most stakeholders cannot see beyond their line functions, and the belief that government should be the implementers and problem-solvers. As a result, they want the solutions to come from the same line departments that have been battling to achieve outcomes. Furthermore, this thinking made it difficult to distinguish which are HRD strategy interventions and which are line department interventions. This reconceptualised strategy advances the view that the government can achieve more by working with external stakeholders, as illustrated in the promotion of collaboration and coordination.

RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

Some stakeholders felt that there are others who want to maintain the status quo, especially with regard to the skills system, mostly to protect self-interests.[34] The HRDC is adopting the position that no institution is untouchable, especially if it is an obstacle to progress and the advancement of the country. Hence, the fourth priority that has been proposed – improving governance, leadership and management in the public sector.

These three challenges pose significant threat and risk to the achievement of the goals of the strategy, and should be dealt with expeditiously.

34 This sentiment was expressed by several stakeholders in the various engagements.

THE ROLE OF THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

To provide the authority needed to ensure implementation, the custodian of the HRDS-SA is the HRDC, a multi-stakeholder national advisory body. It is chaired by the South African deputy president, giving it the status to provide direction on the policies and plans across government departments. The council comprises several government ministers, senior business leaders, representatives from organised labour and associations, the youth sector, academia, civil society and co-opted experts.

The HRDC acts as the key institutional mechanism driving the implementation of South Africa's HRD strategy, and advises the government on the implementation of HRD policies and strategies across all sectors. Specifically, the council is mandated to:

Facilitate conditions that promote the optimal participation of all stakeholders in the planning, stewardship, monitoring and evaluation of HRD activities in the country.

Build the HRD base required to ensure a prosperous and inclusive South African society and economy.

Create a platform where social partners can engage to find ways to address bottlenecks in the development of human resources and skills in the country.

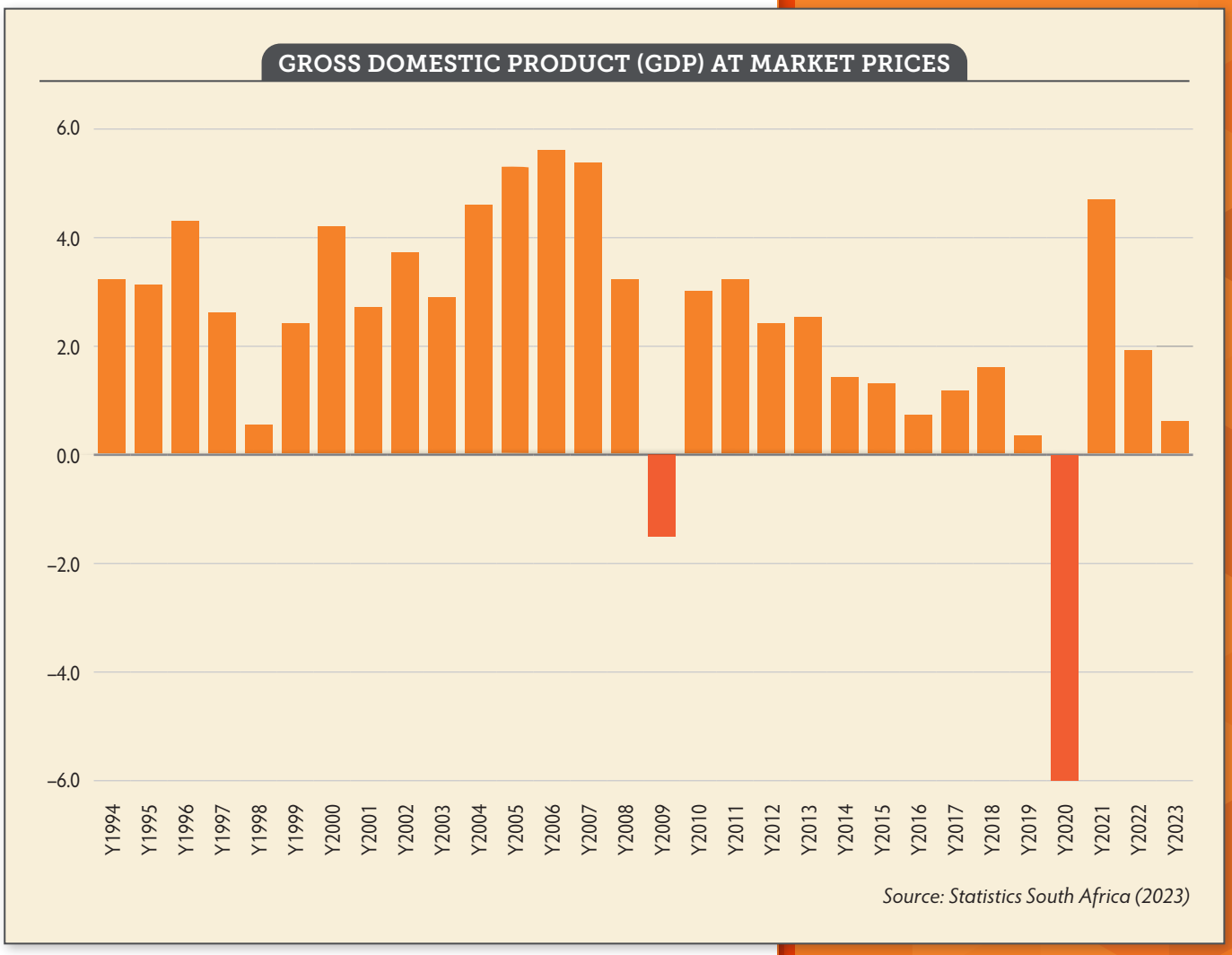
Ensure that all relevant policies, programmes, projects, interventions and strategies are streamlined and optimised to support overall government objectives rather than merely sectoral imperatives.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

03

THE ECONOMY

After a period of reasonable growth from 2004 to 2007, the South African economy experienced a period of contraction untill 2020, when the biggest decline was witnessed due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. There was a notable recovery in 2021, building from a low base in the previous year, and the growth after 2021 has been muted, as the time series below shows.



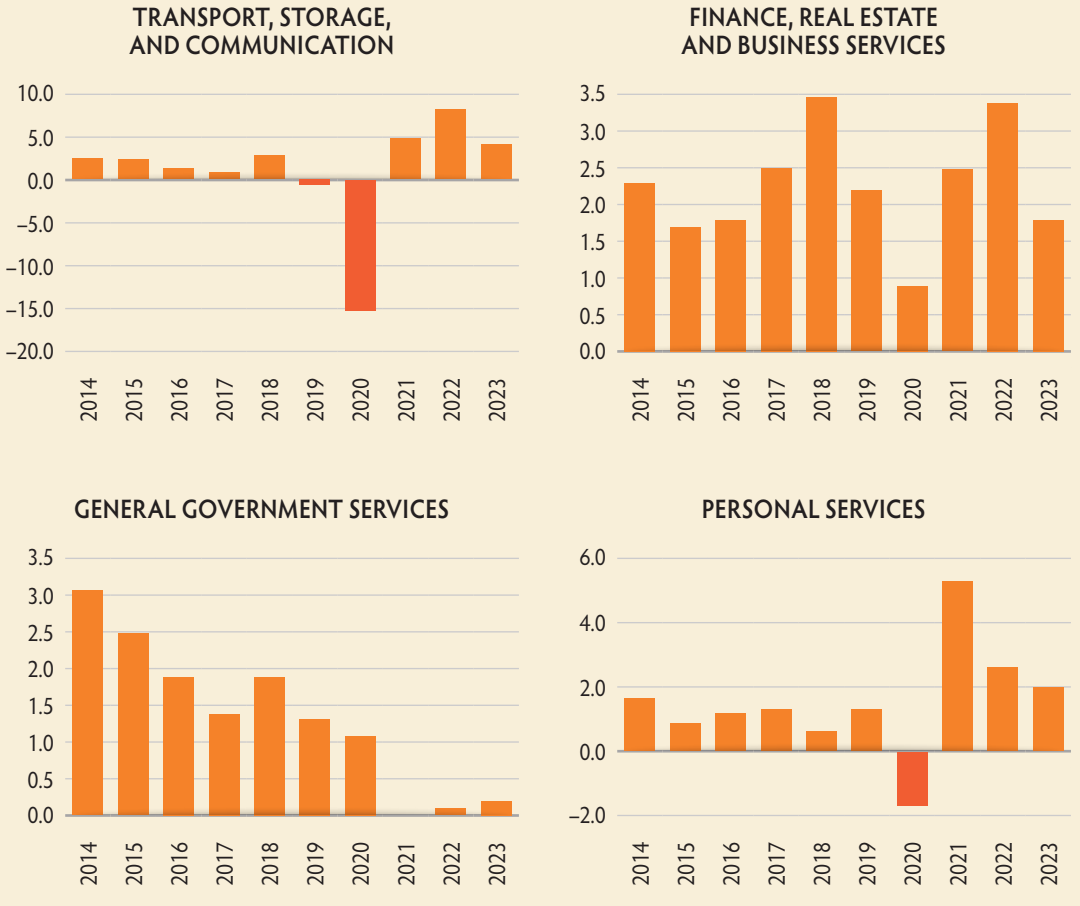
Source: Statistics South Africa (2023)

GDP performance has been mostly positive for general government services, and the finance, real estate and business services. These sectors, together with the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industry, did not experience the COVID-19 stress that most sectors did. Global business services; agriculture, forestry and fisheries; and personal services are envisaged to become employment creators in the next few years and are referred to as 'the sunrise sectors'.[35] Although the agriculture, forestry and fisheries industry recorded a contraction in 2023, there are opportunities for growth in horticulture, agro-processing and associated value chains.[36]

South Africa's economy grew by a marginal 0.1% in the fourth quarter (October–December), taking the annual growth rate for 2023 to 0.6%.

Real GDP in the fourth quarter was R1 158 billion.
This is above the pre-COVID-19 reading of R1 150 billion but still below the peak of R1 161 billion recorded in the third quarter of 2022.

SECTORAL GDP BREAKDOWN (2014–2023)



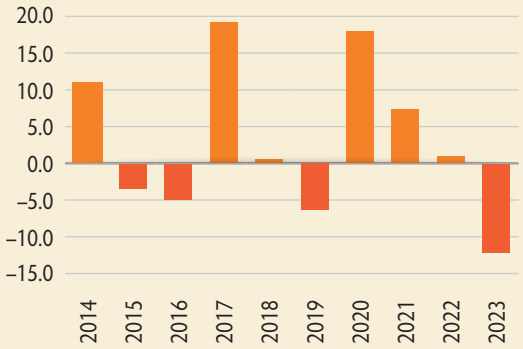
Source: Statistics South Africa (2023)

While global business services; agriculture, forestry and fisheries; and personal services have seen growth, the mining and quarrying; manufacturing; electricity, gas and water; and trade, catering and accommodation industries are experiencing a decline in GDP contribution, which will affect jobs in these sectors.

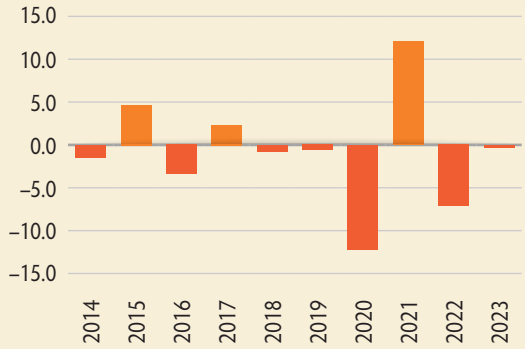
35 Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator (2022). *Breaking Barriers: Quarterly Employment Report, February 2022*. Harambee.
36 Ibid.

SECTORAL GDP BREAKDOWN (2014–2023)

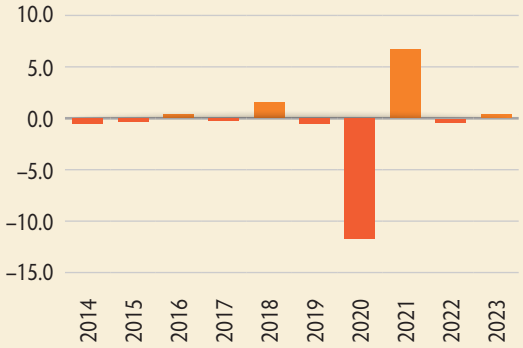
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES



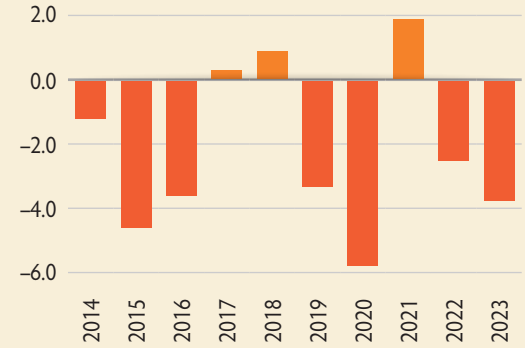
MINING AND QUARRYING



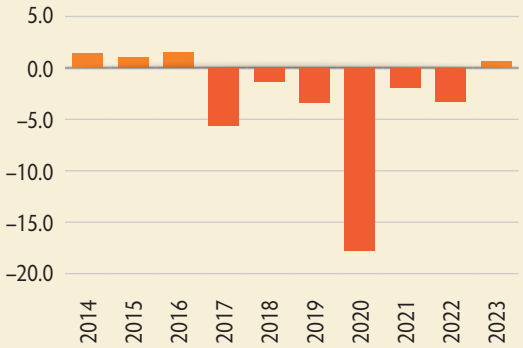
MANUFACTURING



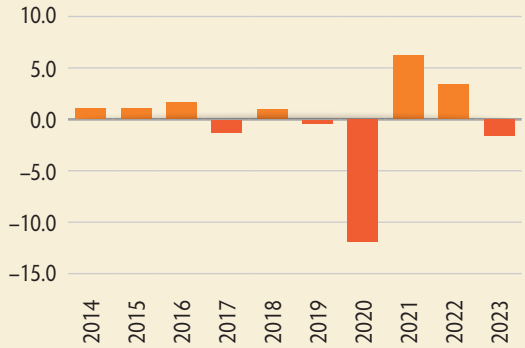
ELECTRICITY, GAS AND WATER



CONSTRUCTION



TRADE, CATERING AND ACCOMMODATION



SECTORAL OVERVIEW 2014–2023

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total value added at basic prices	1.5	1.1	0.8	1.2	1.6	0.2	–5.5	4.4	1.9	0.6
Taxes less subsidies on products	0.3	2.9	–0.8	1.1	0.8	0.6	–9.9	7.3	1.8	1
GDP at market prices	1.4	1.3	0.7	1.2	1.6	0.3	–6	4.7	1.9	0.6

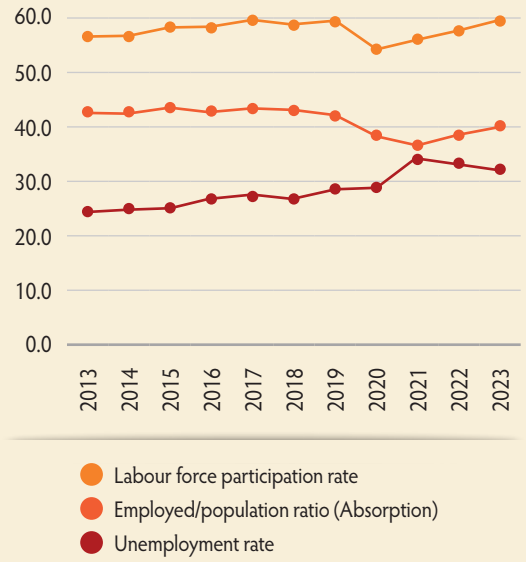
Source: Statistics South Africa (2023)

THE LABOUR MARKET

The South African labour market is slowly recovering from an unprecedented contraction of employment during COVID-19 business closures. The participation and absorption rates have started rising, and the unemployment rate has decreased slightly after a spike during the height of the pandemic. Positively, there was a slight drop in youth unemployment, although the youth still carry the heaviest burden of unemployment, as highlighted in the previous section.

In Q3:2023, the official unemployment rate was 31.9%, with an increase in employed persons to 16.7 million. Unemployed persons decreased by 72 000 to 7.8 million. The number of not economically active individuals decreased by 160 000 to 13.1 million, with discouraged work-seekers decreasing by 26 000 compared with Q2:2023.

EMPLOYMENT RATE (2014–2023)



2023 SAW A DECREASE IN YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

45.3%
IN Q2:2023

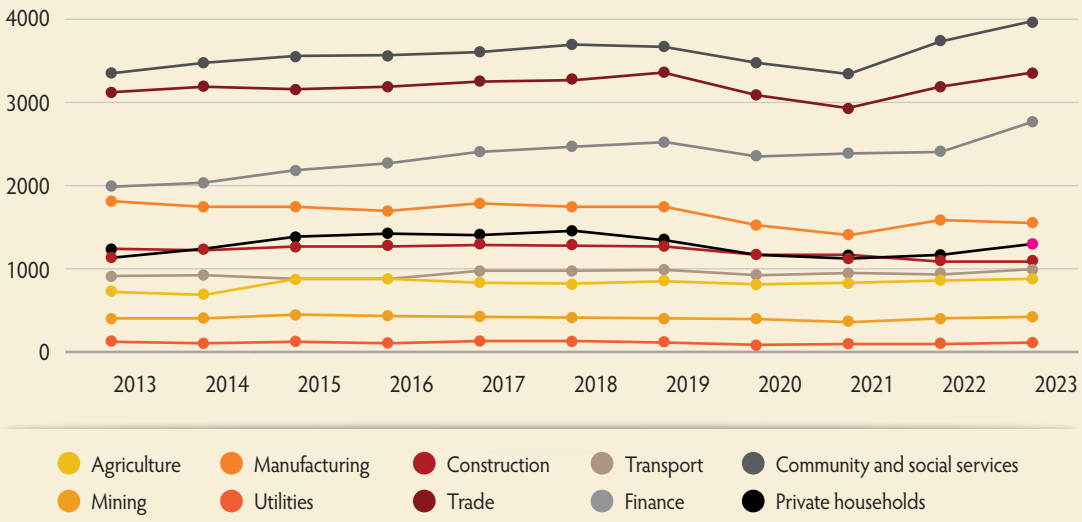
43.4%
IN Q3:2023

HOWEVER
THE YOUTH REMAIN VULNERABLE IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Source: Statistics South Africa (2023)

It is not surprising that the sectors with positive GDP growth are providing the most jobs.

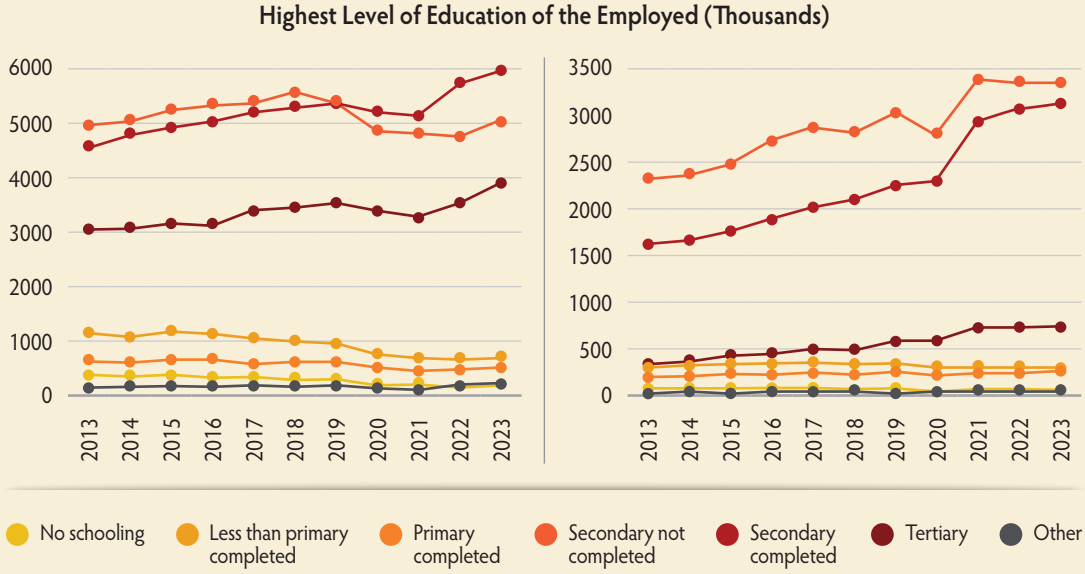
EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR (THOUSANDS), 2013–2023



Source: Statistics South Africa (2023)

Individuals with higher qualification levels fare better in the labour market, which makes the NPMN's promotion of inclusive hiring practices a critical component of Goal 3 of this strategy.

OVERVIEW OF EDUCATION RATES AMONG THE EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED (2014–2023)



Source: Statistics South Africa (2023)

THE SOCIAL CONTEXT

In order to achieve goals 1 and 3, the interventions to be implemented must be holistic, and must also take care of the socio-economic and socio-cultural needs of children and young people. It is important to note that:[37]

- Approximately 62.1% of children aged 0–17 years in South Africa are multi-dimensionally poor. Within this age group, children aged 5–12 exhibit the highest rate of multi-dimensional poverty at 63.4%, closely followed by those aged 13–17, also at 63.4%.
- Higher multi-dimensional poverty rates are observed among specific groups, including Black African children, single orphans (those with living mothers only), double orphans, children from households with low education levels, households with many members, households with many children and households with no employed adults.
- Children from rural areas experience higher deprivation rates across all dimensions except for protection, where urban children have higher deprivation rates.
- There is significant disparity in deprivation rates between children aged 13–17 in rural and urban areas.

Furthermore, 47% of South Africans rely on social grants, which shows that the majority of children and youth who need support with access to education and jobs are under socio-economic stress. Wellbeing and psycho-social support are significant aspects and the NPMN has long recognised this. One of the PYEI partners is implementing an intervention that supports youth in Atlantis, Cator Manor and Orange Farm, with coaching to address psycho-social issues. The intervention works within communities where the youth live and refers them to seek services within their communities, for their wellbeing and for transitioning to earning opportunities.[38]

37 Plagerson, S. & Mthembu, S. (2019). *Poverty, Inequality and Social Exclusion in South Africa: A Systematic Assessment Of Key Policies, Strategies and Flagship Programmes*. Centre for Social Development in Africa: Johannesburg.

38 Graham, L., De Lannoy, A. Rosa, S., & Breakey, J. (2019). *Towards a basic package of support for youth in South Africa.* SALDRU Working Papers 254, Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit, University of Cape Town.

04

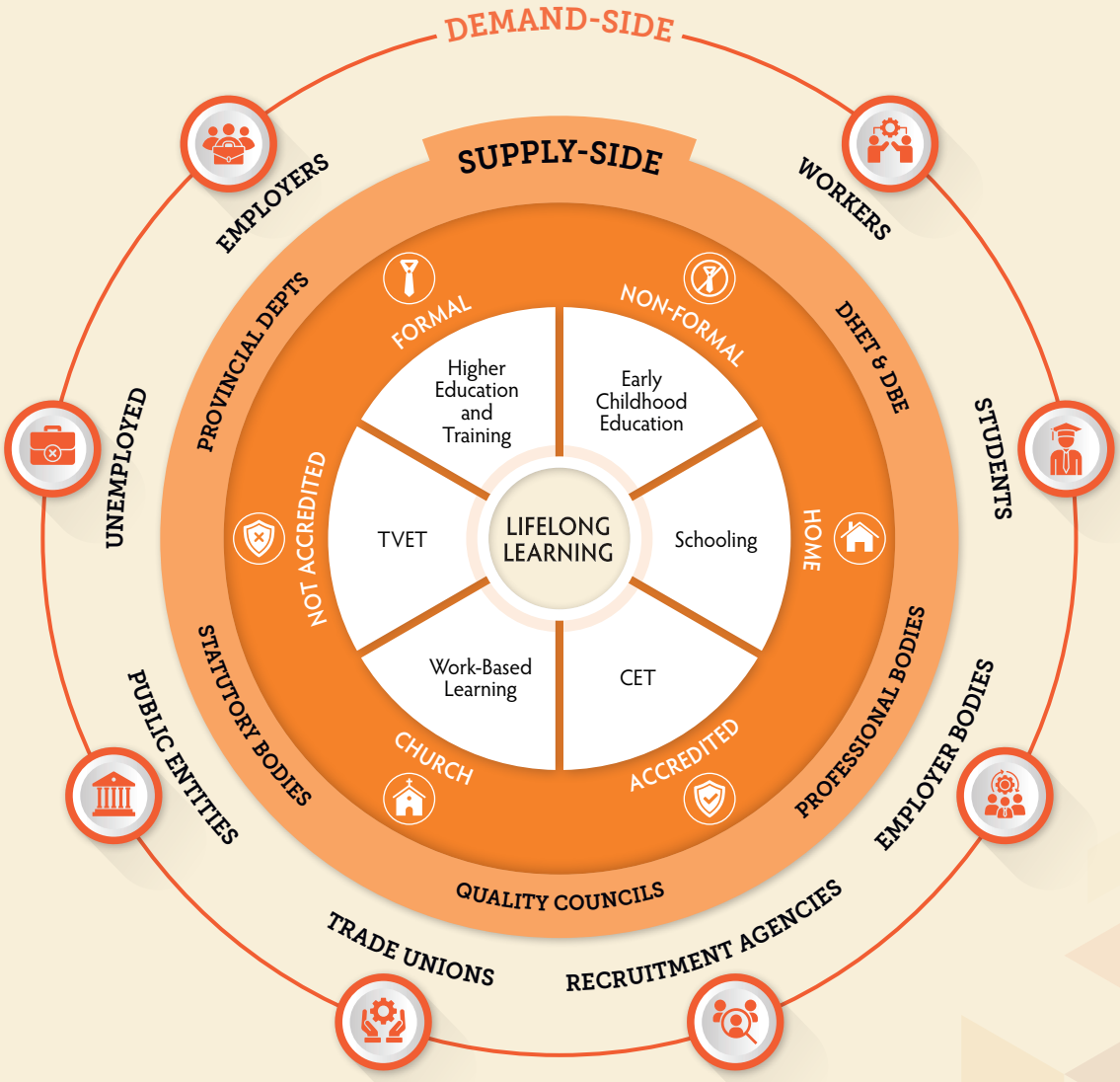
THE HRD ECOSYSTEM AND LANDSCAPE

- **HRD** refers to all forms of knowledge, education and skills acquisition. It often occurs in any interactive human setting. HRD can be formal, informal and non-formal, as well as accredited and non-accredited. There are short courses, formal qualifications and emerging formats, such as online, blended and micro-credentialing.
- The **scope of coverage** includes ECD, schooling, TVET, higher education and training, and workplace skills training.
- The HRD ecosystem covers **skills supply and demand** in the labour market. The former comprises ECD centres, homes, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations, schools and PSET facilities, skills development providers, and workplaces. These institutions straddle the public-private continuum. The latter refers to labour market demand.
- **Statutory bodies, agencies and entities** range from quality councils, the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), the National Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences, the National Artisan Moderation Body and professional bodies, such as The Welding Institute. Quality councils include the South African Qualifications Authority, the Umalusi Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, the South African Council for Educators, the Council on Higher Education, the Higher Education Quality Committee, the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations, and the SETAs.
- The main **demand-side organisations** are the social partners – the state, employer representative bodies, trade unions and civil society.
- The HRD ecosystem includes **different economic sectors**, government tiers, employers from corporates to micro-enterprises, individual workplaces, diverse educational institutions and civil society organisations.
- It combines the **diverse HRD streams** into a coherent whole for better coordination, collaboration and implementation.
- The ecosystem **enables access** to learning for individuals who have completed their studies, have not completed their studies, or have never attended schooling, regardless of age, gender, race, location and socio-economic background.

South Africa's HRD landscape is underpinned by a National Qualifications Framework, which has created a unitary HRD system that facilitates mobility across different levels of the system. The system has grown exponentially since 1994, and the government has invested significantly in expanding access and improving quality.

THE HRD ECOSYSTEM

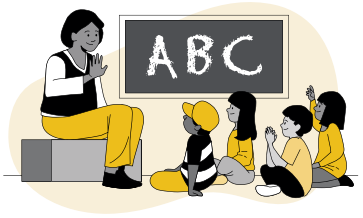
The HRD ecosystem is expansive and complex:



AN OVERVIEW OF THE HRD LANDSCAPE

A look at the size and shape of the HRD landscape highlights how education and training institutions are serving the needs of millions of young people in the country.

IN 2021, THERE WERE:

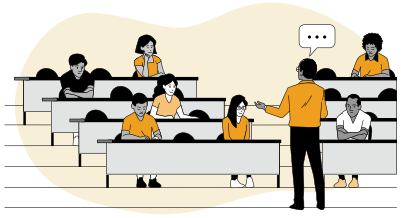


1

42 420 ELPs
48% were in quintiles 1 and 2
60% were in urban areas
198 361 staff were employed
1 660 316 children were enrolled in these programmes

9 CET colleges
143 031 students were enrolled in CET colleges
47% of the students were enrolled for the Grade 12 certificate
11 812 lecturers were employed in CET colleges

2



3

50 Public TVET colleges
589 083 students were enrolled in public colleges
30.7% of students were enrolled in the National Certificate (Vocational) (NC[V])
21.2% in office administration
38.8% were enrolled in Report 191 programmes

26 public universities, 124 private higher education institutions (HEIs)
Over 1.3 million students enrolled
82.1% – over 1 million were enrolled in public universities
Only 36% of the students studied through distance mode
Over 61% of students were female
29.4% of students were enrolled in science, engineering and technology fields.

4

5

9598 students were registered for internships and 71 921 were registered for learnerships
44 164 students were certificated for learnerships and 3 607 for internships

24 871 ordinary schools, 22 589 of these public and 222 independent
450 993 educators were employed in these schools
13 419 971 learners were enrolled in all the schools

6

7

21 SETAs
A quality council for each sector
HRDC supports the HRDS
Social partners who support HRD
Private and public registered Skills Development Providers, provincial academies, municipalities and NGOs also provide training
NSFAS that provides funding to eligible students

Source: DBE (2022b); DBE (2022a); DHET (2021)

However, while access has been expanded, it is far from being successful. There have been improvements over the last three decades, though, and there are many opportunities that can be capitalised on to strengthen the system.

STRENGTHS

- Comprehensive legal framework
- Some strong HEIs
- Reasonable financial investment in education and training, and skills
- Strong research institutions
- Strong access to schooling and improving access to PSET
- Some parts of the system are improving e.g., dropout rate and grade repetition are decreasing, so completion rates are increasing in basic education (DBE, 2022a). The number of learners attaining matric has been increasing (DBE, 2023a)
- Funding of thousands of students through NSFAS

WEAKNESSES

- Young learners are unable to read for meaning
- Curriculum is not relevant in some instances
- Inequitable quality of basic education as well as PSET
- Inefficient and ineffective institutional management and governance
- Some improvements, e.g., in Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS), mask the fact that learners are achieving at a low cognitive level (DBE, 2023b; Graham, 2022)
- Lack of alternate pathways after Grade 9 in the schooling system. Children compelled to select academic pathway
- Mismatches between needs of economy and education and training provision
- The numbers of young people benefiting from internships, learnerships and apprenticeships is very low

OPPORTUNITIES

- Youth bulge presents a pipeline of young workers
- Advances in technology and digitisation, as well as potential growth of Green Economy
- Entrepreneurship not fully exploited
- The function shift of the 3000-plus Adult Education Centres to DHET
- Global partnerships especially through BRICS
- Demand for TVET colleges is high, with 1 454 592 applications in 2023 (DHET, 2023b)
- Increased spotlight on literacy and maths because of PIRLS and TIMSS (CEA, 2023; DBE, 2023b)
- COVID-19 disrupted the upward trajectory in the undergraduate success rate as 2021 saw a dip compared to the upward trend in 2018, 2019 and 2020. There is an opportunity to achieve positive growth in student learning outcomes (DHET, 2023b)
- TVET curriculum reform underway to institutionalise occupational programmes and phase off Report 191 programmes may improve responsiveness (stakeholder consultations)

THREATS

- Triple challenges of poverty, inequality and high unemployment, especially among youth
- Brain drain attributed to high crime rates and unemployment
- Slow economic growth
- Inefficient use of resources: only a third of South African children attending an ELP are on track developmentally, both physically and cognitively (Giese et al, 2022)
- Service delivery protests partly due to lack of qualifications, skills and integrity in local government
- Political instability
- Global competition for labour
- Education spending constrained by shrinking fiscal resources (Sachs et al, 2023)

05

VISION, MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: A SUMMARY

VISION

"Educated, skilled and capable individuals who contribute positively to their communities and the nation."

MISSION

"To create a more coordinated, effective and efficient HRD system in South Africa that supports inclusive economic growth, reduces inequality and improves the quality of life for all individuals."

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND INTERVENTIONS

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	INTERVENTIONS
1 **Improving early learning and schooling outcomes**	1.1 Provide universal developmentally appropriate early learning opportunities for young children from birth.	1.1.1 Implement *South Africa's 2030 Strategy for Early Childhood Development Programmes (2023).*
	1.2 Enable 10-year-old learners to read for meaning.	1.2.1 Update and support implementing the recommendations outlined in the *National Integrated Reading Sector Plan* (2019).
	1.3 Ensure a high-quality school curriculum relevant to the 21st century, with differentiated pathways.	1.3.1 Establish an HRDC task team to support and monitor curriculum and pathway initiatives in the schooling system (including the DBE's Three Stream Model).
2 **Improving employability of youth who are NEET**	2.1 Expand the provisioning of in-demand short courses.	2.1.1 The DHET (through the LMIP) produces an annual in-demand short course list. 2.1.2 Undertake training programmes linked to the list of short courses in demand.
	2.2 Increase work-based learning (WBL) opportunities for NEETs.	2.2.1 Increase the number of NEETs enrolled in WBL through internships, apprenticeships and learnerships.
	2.3 Increase entrepreneurship development opportunities for NEETs.	2.3.1 Establish an Entrepreneurship Development Forum to coordinate and increase NEET entrepreneurship development programmes.
	2.4 Strengthen the coordination of youth employment schemes.	2.4.1 The Project Management Unit in the Office of the Presidency establishes a Youth Employment Forum.
3 **Improving the responsiveness of the PSET system to skills demand**	3.1 Align skills supply to labour demand in the economy, and to green and digital skills development.	3.1.1 Identify skills needed to support the *Just Energy Transition Partnership* (2021)[39] and the *National Digital and Future Skills Strategy* (2020).[40] 3.1.2 Provide career guidance to promote enrolment in green and digital skills programmes. 3.1.3 Undertake programmes to reskill and upskill displaced workers as part of the JET.
	3.2 Utilise labour market intelligence for skills planning.	3.2.1 Implement the List of Occupations in High Demand (2023). 3.2.2 Implement the report on skills gaps (2023).
	3.3 Strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the skills levy system.	3.3 1 Establish a task team to determine how the skills levy system can improve effectiveness and efficiency.
4 **Improving governance, leadership and management in the public sector**	4.1. Develop a capable public-sector workforce.	4.1.1 Monitor the implementation of the *National Framework towards the Professionalisation of the Public Service* (2022).
	4.2 Improve governance in public education and training institutions.	4.2.1 Adopt programmes to improve governance in schools, universities and TVET colleges.

39 Objectives for green skills include: coal workers transitioned; workers in priority sectors reskilled, upskilled and retrained; and the youth trained for the energy transition.

40 Refers to: basic and intermediate digital skills; digital futures and mastery; skills for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Industry 4.0) and the world of work; creating society 4.0 and addressing the digital skills divide; building digital skills awareness; research and monitoring on digital skills; coordination across government, industry, labour and other stakeholder groups; and funding for digital skills.

06

CONCLUSION

HRD in South Africa faces numerous challenges, with the stakeholders who were engaged for the development of the HRDS-SA describing many institutions unfavourably. Descriptions used include "dysfunctional", "compliance-driven", "inflexible", "bureaucratic" and "sites of corruption". Accountability is a major concern, with some viewing it as a failure of governance and others blaming the system. Implementation is a challenge and certain programmes are not funded properly. The HRDC is raising the issue of institutional capacity and the alignment of resources to priorities. There is also a lack of coordination and collaboration between government departments and employers, and the view that more could be achieved through partnerships, joint projects and public-private partnerhsips, which has been addressed in this strategy. The reconceptualised strategy focuses stakeholder attention on the underlying weaknesses in the HRD institutions, and on exploring ways of improving outcomes through enhanced coordination and partnerships.

The HRDS-SA is an overarching strategy that encompasses other education and training and skills sectors that are focused on specific sub-sectors, or industry-related strategies and plans. The HRDC and Secretariat provide the centralised system that can coordinate, incentivise and support institutions to align programmes with the the new strategy, implement interventions and achieve the targets set out in the MSP. The HRDC will establish appropriate coordinating structures to ensure that multi-stakeholder collaboration is supported to realise the goals and objectives of the HRDS-SA.

The strategy has a 10-year horizon and will be evaluated every five years, based on the targets set in the MSP.

REFERENCES

Ashley-Cooper, M., Van Niekerk, L., & Atmore, E. (2019). Early childhood development in South Africa: Inequality and opportunity. In Spaull, N. & Jansen, J. D. (eds.), *South African Schooling: The Enigma of Inequality. A Study of the Present Situation and Future Possibilities*. Springer, pp. 87–108.

Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (2023). *Basic education minister releases the PIRLS 2021 results*. CEA, University of Pretoria: Pretoria.

Department of Basic Education (2018). *Outline of a human resources development strategy for early childhood development based on the National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy*. DBE: Pretoria.

Department of Basic Education (2021). *ECD Census 2021: Report*. DBE: Pretoria.

Department of Basic Education (2022a). *General Household Survey: Focus on Schooling 2020–2021*. Pretoria: DBE.

Department of Basic Education (2022b). *School Realities 2022*. Available at: *file:///C:/Users/monic/Downloads/School%20Realities%20December%20 2022%20(2).pdf*

Department of Basic Education (2023a). *National Senior Certificate 2022 Examination Report*. Pretoria: DBE.

Department of Basic Education (2023b). Progress update on capacity building of SA educators for learners' improvement in maths, science and technology. Presentation to the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education. DBE: Pretoria.

Department of Higher Education and Training (2012). *White Paper for Post-School Education and Training*. DHET: Pretoria.

Department of Higher Education and Training (2019). *National Skills Development Plan 2030*. DHET: Pretoria.

Department of Higher Education and Training (2021). *National Plan for Post-School Education and Training: 2021–2030*. DHET: Pretoria.

Department of Higher Education and Training (2023a). *Adult Illiteracy in South Africa*. DHET, LMI: Pretoria. Available at: *https://appetd.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Fact-Sheet-Adult-Illiteracy-in-South-Africa-March-2023.pdf*

Department of Higher Education and Training (2023b). National enrolment monitoring report 2023 student intake: Monitoring the implementation of the SOP on student enrolment. DHET: Pretoria.

Department of Social Development (2015). *National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy*. DSD: Pretoria.

Fleisch, B. (2018). *The Education Triple Cocktail: System-wide instructional reform in South Africa*. Cape Town: UCT Press & Juta

Giese S, Dawes A, Tredoux C, Mattes F, Bridgman G, van der Berg S, Schenk J and Kotzé J (2022). *Thrive by Five Index Report 2022.* Innovation Edge: Cape Town.

Graham, L., De Lannoy, A. Rosa, S., & Breakey, J. (2019). T*owards a basic package of support for youth in South Africa.* SALDRU Working Papers 254, Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit, University of Cape Town.

Graham, M. A. (2022). Relationship between school climate and South African grade 9 learner achievement in mathematics and science. *Education and New Developments,* p.196–200. Available at: *https://doi.org/10.36315/2022v2end042*

Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator (2020). *Breaking Barriers*. Harambee.

Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator (2022). *Breaking Barriers: Quarterly Employment Report, February 2022*. Harambee.

Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator (2023a). Inputs for PYEI poverty alleviation discussion. Harambee: Cape Town.

Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator (2023b). Solving youth unemployment through partnerships. Available at: *https://www.harambee.co.za/*

Heckman, J. J. (2013). *Invest in early childhood development: Reduce deficits and strengthen the economy*. The Heckman Equation.

Howie, S., Combrinck, C., Roux, K., Tshele, M., Mokoena, G., & McLeod, P. (2016). *Progress in International Reading Literacy Study 2016: South African Children's Reading Literacy Achievement*. Centre for Evaluation and Assessment: Pretoria.

Human Resources Development Canada (2001). *Human Resources Development Canada's Sustainable Development Strategy II*. Human Resources Development Canada: Quebec.

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (2012). *2013–14 Report on Plans and Priorities*. Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

Human Resources Development Council (2013). *Review of the Skills System in South Africa*. HRDC: Pretoria.

Human Resources Development Council (2017). *The Human Resource Development (HRD) Strategy Towards 2030* Available at: *https://hrdcsa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/HRD-Strategy-Towards-2030-web.pdf*

Human Resources Development Council (2022). *The Human Resource Development Strategy Towards 2030*. Available at: *https://hrdcsa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/HRD-Strategy-Towards-2030-web.pdf*

Human Sciences Research Council (2022). *Human Development Report 2022: Harnessing the Employability of South Africa's Youth*. HSRC, United Nations Development Programme: Pretoria.

Lim, D. H. and Cho, D. (2015). Graduate HRD programs in South Korea. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*. Sage. Available at: https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/215302904.pdf

MacNamara, L. (1998). The congruency between home and school literacy practices in a South African primary school. Dissertation submitted for the degree of Masters in Education, University of Witwatersrand.

Maluleke, R. (2023). *Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) Q3: 2023*. Statistics South Africa.

National Planning Commission (2010). *National Development Plan 2030*. NPC: Pretoria.

Oppenheimer Memorial Trust (2023). *Education Research Report*. OMT: Johannesburg.

Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2023). Report of meeting of the Higher Education, Science and Innovation Parliamentary Portfolio Committee.

Plagerson, S. & Mthembu, S. (2019). *Poverty, Inequality and Social Exclusion in South Africa: A Systematic Assessment Of Key Policies, Strategies and Flagship Programmes*. Centre for Social Development in Africa: Johannesburg.

Polzer-Ngwato, T., Shilakoe, L., Morse, K., & Huston, K. (2023). *National Reading Survey 2023 Findings Report*. Nal'ibali Trust.

Public Service Commission (2022). *State of the Public Service Report 2021/22*. PSC: Pretoria.

Rasool, H. (2020). *SETA Interview Report on Skills Development*. DHET: Pretoria.

Sachs, M., Amra, R., Madonko, T., & Willcox, O. (2023). Austerity without consolidation: Fiscal policy and spending choices in Budget 2023. Public Economy Project. SCIS Working Paper Number 60.

Statistics South Africa (2023). Economic growth muted as 2023 draws to a close. Available at: *https://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=17053*

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (2021). *Human Resources Development Readiness in ASEAN—Singapore Country Report*. ASEAN Secretariat: Jakarta.

The Presidency (2023). PYEI Partnerships Factsheet.

The World Bank (2018). *Investing in people to build human capital.* Available at: https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/immersive-story/2018/08/03/investing-in-people-to-build-human-capital

TIMMS and PIRLS International Study Center (2016). What makes a good reader: International findings from PIRLS 2016. TIMMS and PIRLS International Study Center: Boston.

Vandeweyer, M. and Verhagen, A. (2022). *Skills Imbalances in the South African Labour Market: Detailed results from the OECD Skills for Jobs database*. Produced for the Department of Higher Education and Training as part of the Labour Market Intelligence research programme.

Youth Employment Service (2023). Annual report. Johannesburg.

https://hrdcsa.org.za/

https://lmi-research.org.za/

HRDC
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
of South Africa

LABOUR MARKET
INTELLIGENCE