Every child is a National Asset

NAST NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2026

"Preparing tomorrow through skills"

Expansion of Focus Schools & way forward

basic educ
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOU

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2030

Read to Lead

Adoption of the Guidelines for Focus Schools and deliverables as per HEDCOM's recommendations

- CEM: On 30 January 2026, CEM adopted the Guidelines for Focus Schools and instructed an audit of these type of schools.
- In response to HEDCOM, the following deliverables have been achieved:
  - ✓ Revisited the Guidelines on terminology for class sizes instead of teacher: pupil ratio and amended the class sizes in line with the PAM/PPN (Adopted by CEM)
  - ✓ **List of proper Focus Schools compiled;**
  - ✓ Draft Business Model for Focus Schools completed;
  - ✓ Draft funding model for Focus Schools completed;
  - ✓ Draft Criteria for designation of Focus Schools completed;
  - ✓ **Draft Policy for Focus Schools completed;**
  - ✓ **Draft Criteria for the selection of Principals for Focus Schools completed;**
  - ✓ **Draft 10-Year Plan for implementation of Focus Schools completed;**
  - ✓ **Draft time-tabling model for Schools of Specialisation (SoS) that fully incorporates Work-Integrated Learning (WIL); and**
  - ✓ **Post Provisioning will be clarified in the revised PPN and PAM early 2026.**

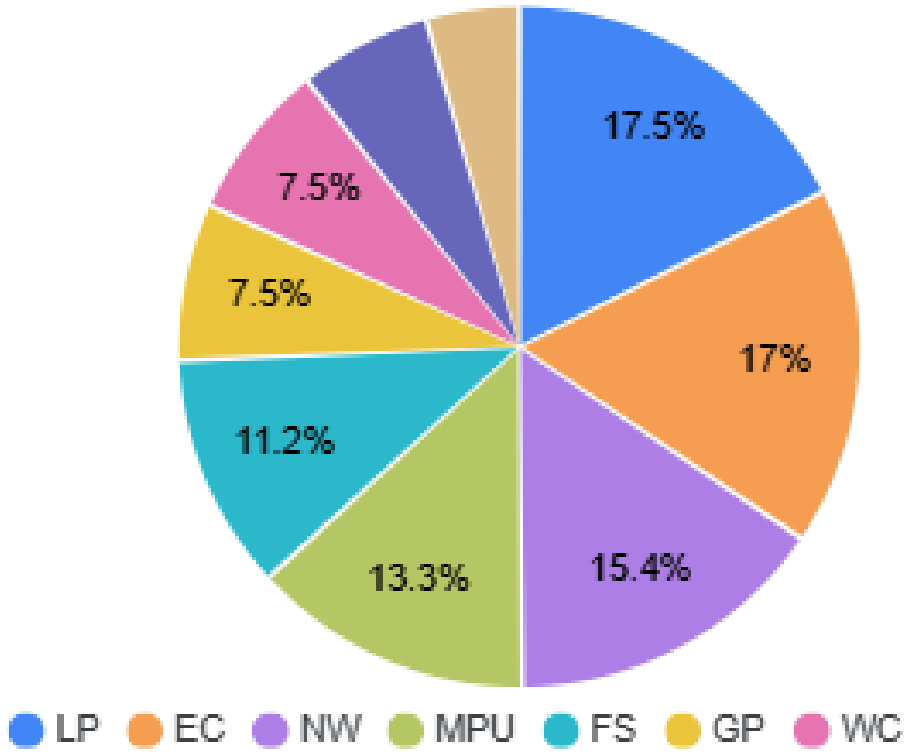
Audited Schools

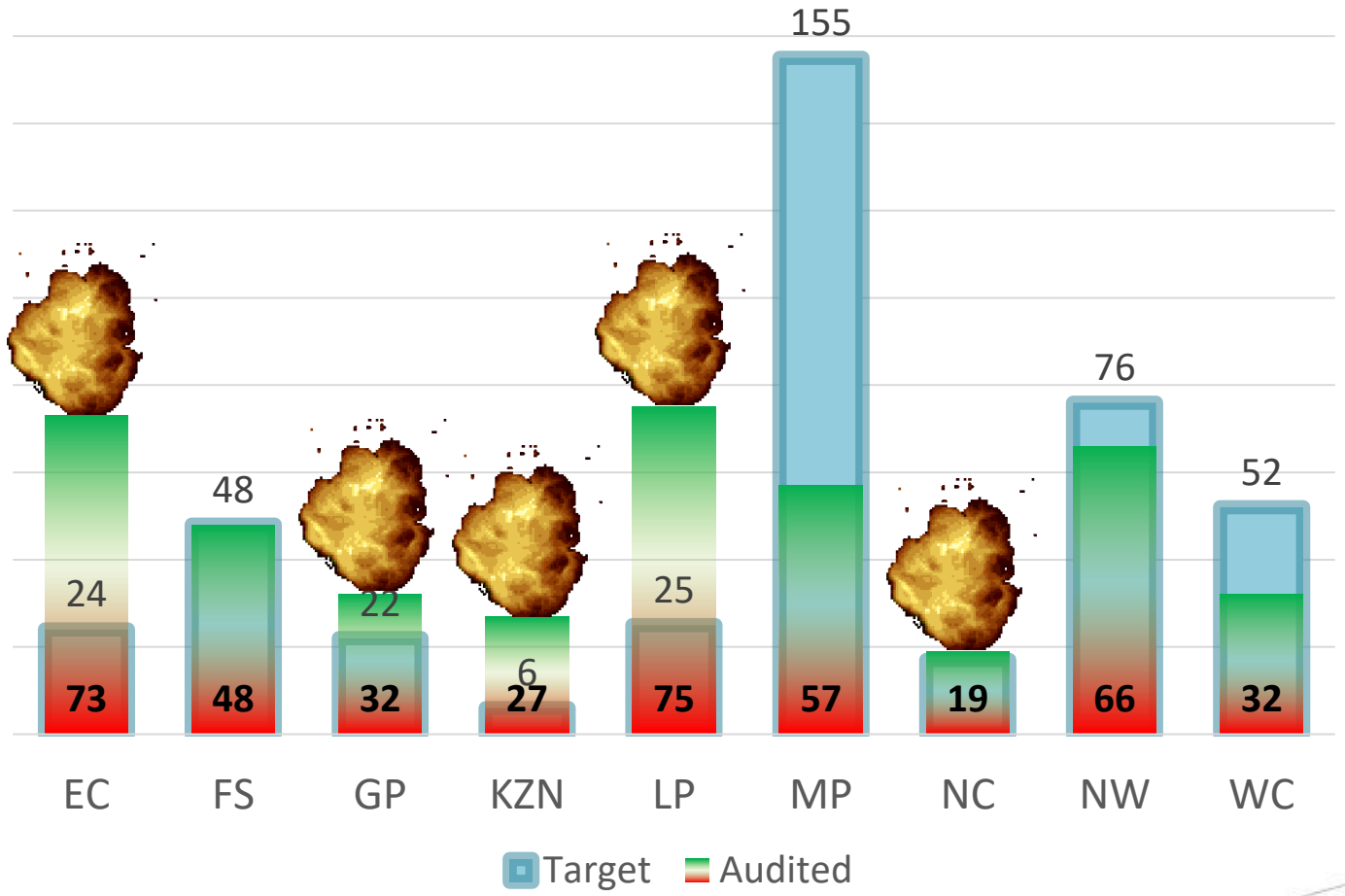
Categories

Findings

Eligible schools

Audited Schools





Presentation outline

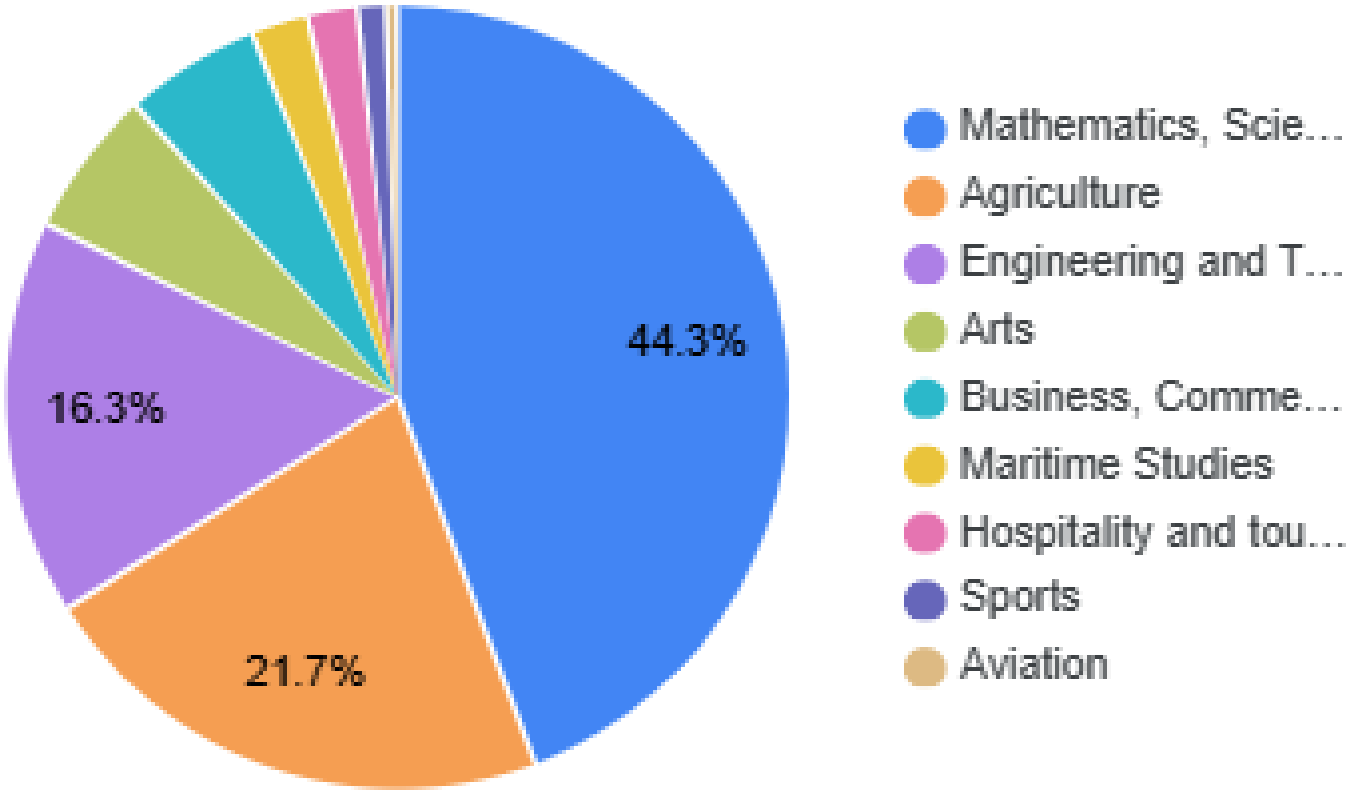
Audited Schools

Categories

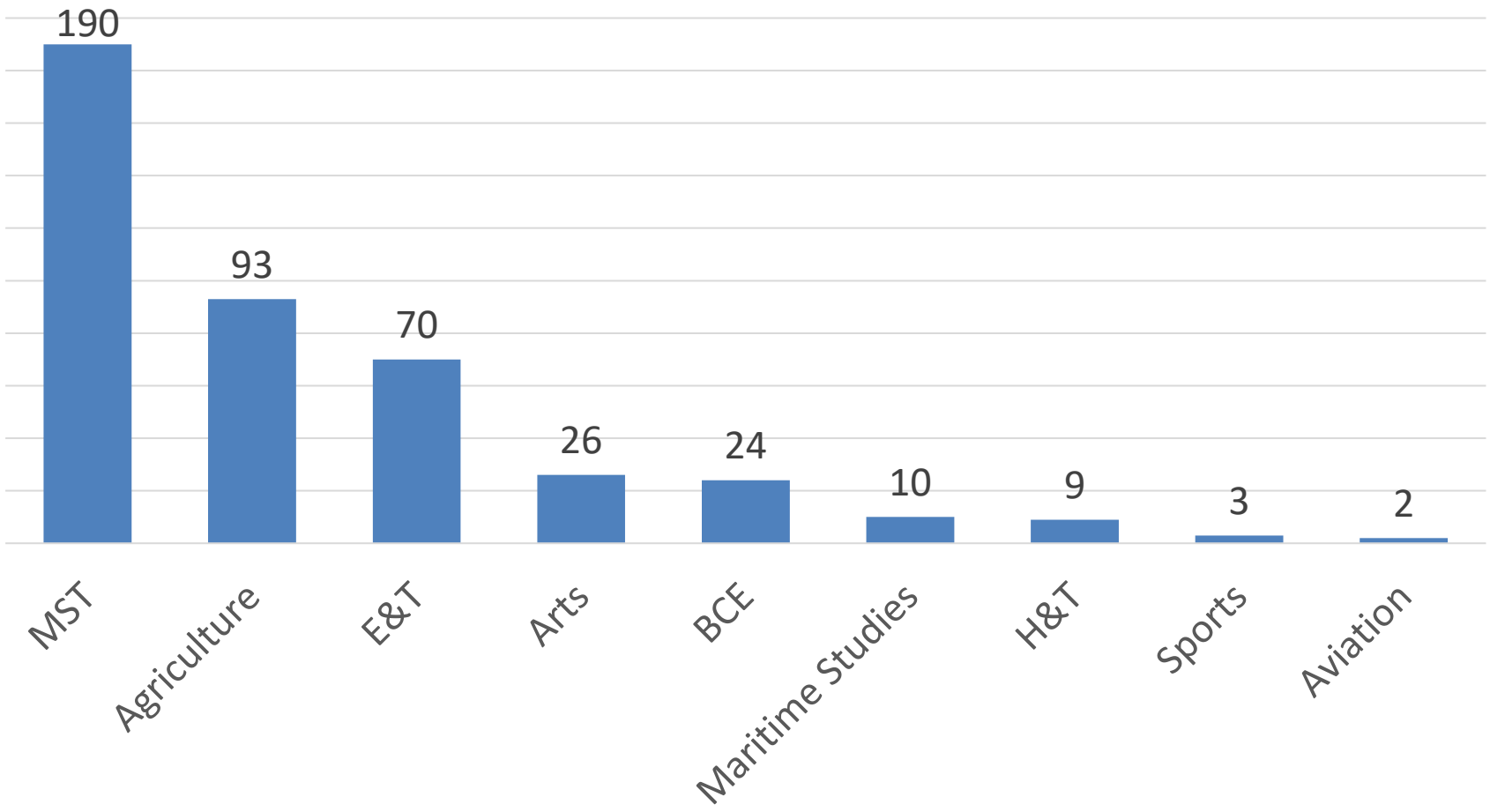
Findings

Eligible schools

Categories


44.3%
21.7%
16.3%
Mathematics, Scie...
Agriculture
Engineering and T...
Arts
Business, Comme...
Maritime Studies
Hospitality and tou...
Sports
Aviation

Categories


190
93
70
26
24
10
9
3
2
MST
Agriculture
E&T
Arts
BCE
Maritime Studies
H&T
Sports
Aviation

Presentation outline

Audited Schools

Categories

Findings

Eligible schools

Findings






Findings

Critical Deficiency in Basic Infrastructure

54.1% of schools

Report a **shortage** of classrooms, leading to **potential overcrowding**

Findings

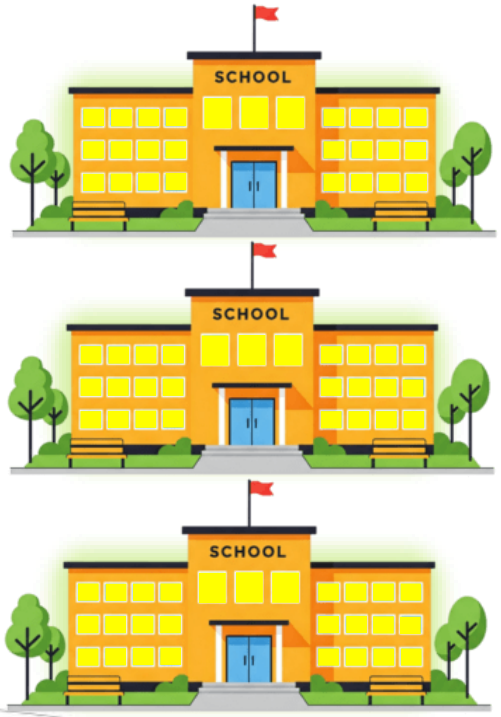
Critical Deficiency in Basic Infrastructure

61.8% of schools

Do **not** have **enough furniture** in their classrooms.

Findings

Critical Deficiency in Basic Infrastructure



1 in 3

35.2% of schools

Report **insufficient** lighting in classrooms

Findings

Critical Deficiency in Basic Infrastructure

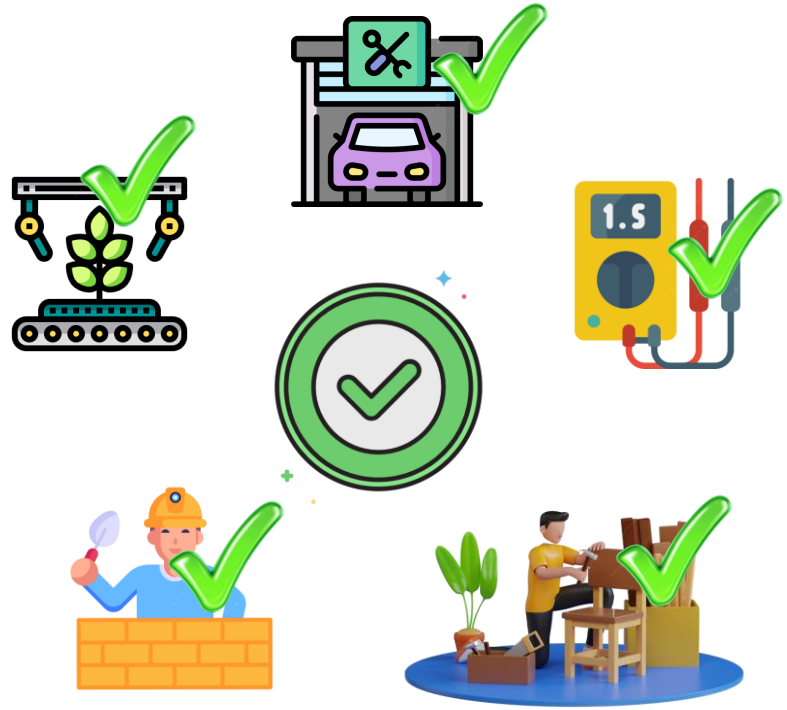
54.3% of schools

Do **not** have **workshops** on their premises.

More than 1 in 2

Findings

Critical Deficiency in Basic Infrastructure



62.2% of schools

Do **not** have **enough** workshops to meet their educational needs

122 out of 196

Findings

Digital and Power Barrier

+1 every 10

Is **not connected** to a reliable source of electricity

12.8%

Findings

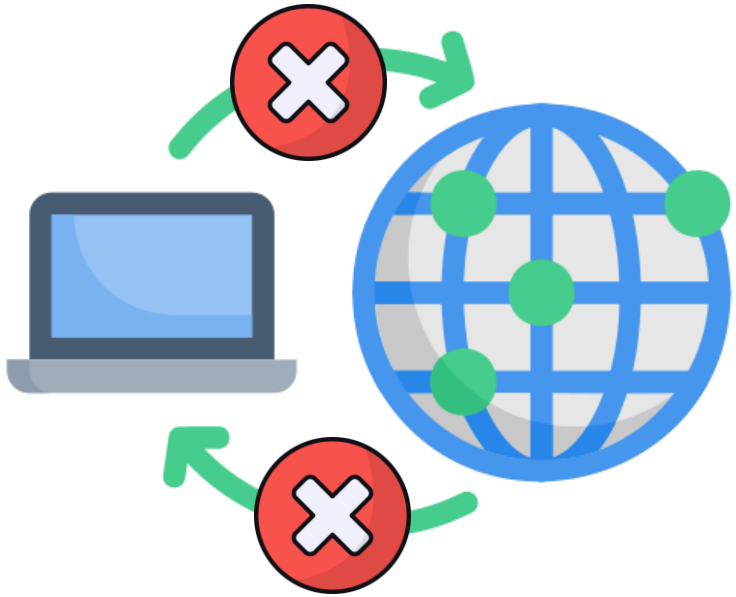
Digital and Power Barrier

66.2% of schools

Do **not have** Backup power systems

Findings

Digital and Power Barrier



50.6% of schools

Report **not having reliable connectivity**

1 every 2 schools

Findings

Rural-Urban Disparity

Power Gap

24% of schools have power backup

52.3% of schools have power backup

Findings

Rural-Urban Disparity

Furniture Gap

32.5% of schools have adequate furniture

49% of schools are adequately equipped

Findings

Rural-Urban Disparity

Internet Gap

42.5% of schools have **reliable internet access**

62.4% of schools have **reliable internet access**

Findings

Resource Mismatch

49.8% of schools

Engineering, MST, and Agriculture

Have at least one workshop in the premises

176 out of 353

Findings

Resource Mismatch

38.6% of schools

Engineering, MST, and Agriculture

Report having enough workshops for practical learning.

67 out of 176

Findings

Resource Mismatch

196 schools have at least 1 workshop

67.3%

Do **not have** enough furniture in their workshops.

Findings

Resource Mismatch

64.8% of schools with workshops

Do **not have** enough consumables in their workshops.

Read to Lead
A Reading Nation is a Leading Nation

Findings

Resource Mismatch

72.4% of schools

Do **not have** enough equipment and machinery.

Findings

Resource Mismatch

This mismatch forces teachers to teach practical subjects theoretically, undermining the primary purpose of a specialized "Focus School."

Findings

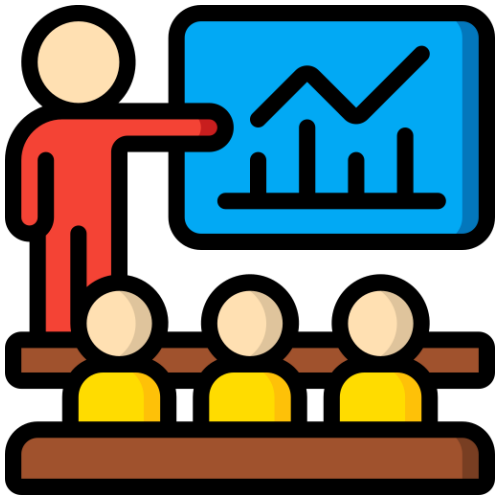
Specialized Human Capital Gap

20.3% of schools

Report **NOT all teachers offering focus area subjects were trained**

Findings

Specialized Human Capital Gap



60.8% of schools

Report they **do not have** enough teacher to offer the focus area subjects

Findings

Specialized Human Capital Gap

32.1% of schools

Report they **need more specialized teachers and training**

Findings

Specialized Human Capital Gap

This shortage leads to increased workloads for specialized staff and forces schools to use non-specialist teachers, **compromising the depth of the technical curriculum**

Findings

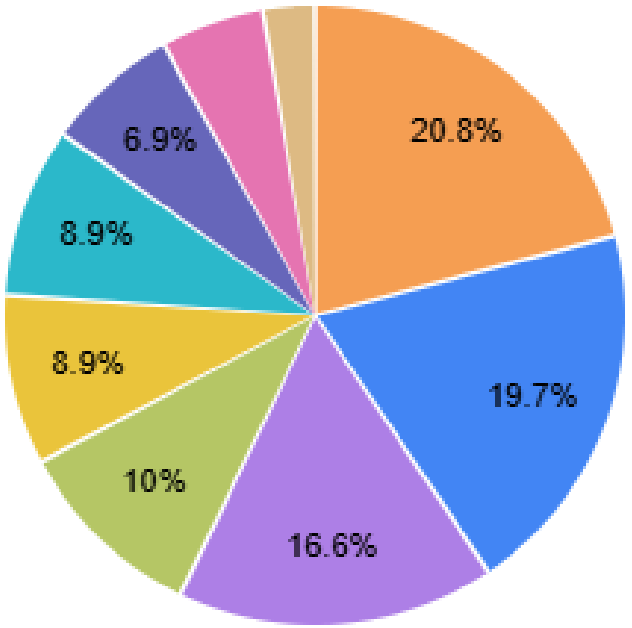
Levels of Focus Area "Integration"

13.3% of learners

Are enrolled in focus area subjects

Findings

Levels of Focus Area "Integration"

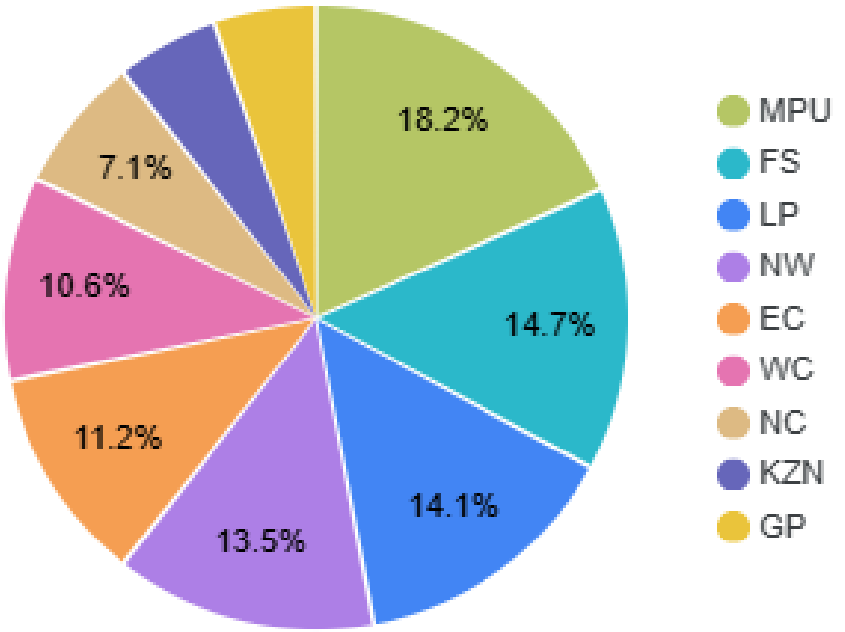


60.3% of schools

Have more than 50% enrolment in the focus area subjects

Findings

Levels of Focus Area "Integration"

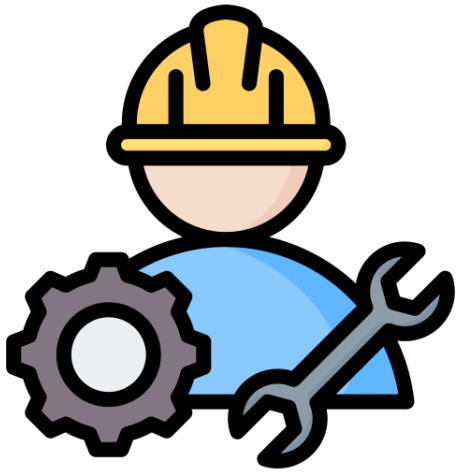


2 in 5 schools

Have **less than 50%** enrolment in the focus area subjects

Findings

Levels of Focus Area "Integration"



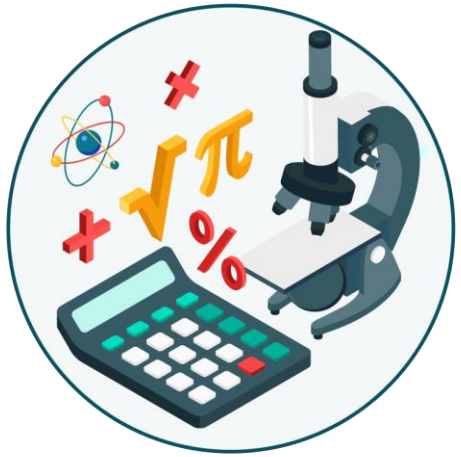
Engineering and Technology

37.1% of schools

Have **less than 50%** enrolment in the focus area subjects

Findings

Levels of Focus Area "Integration"



Math, Science and Technology (MST)

37.8% of schools

Have **less than 50%** enrolment in the focus area subjects

Findings

Levels of Focus Area "Integration"

Agriculture

35.4% of schools

Have **less than 50%** enrolment in the focus area subjects

Presentation outline

Audited Schools

Categories

Findings

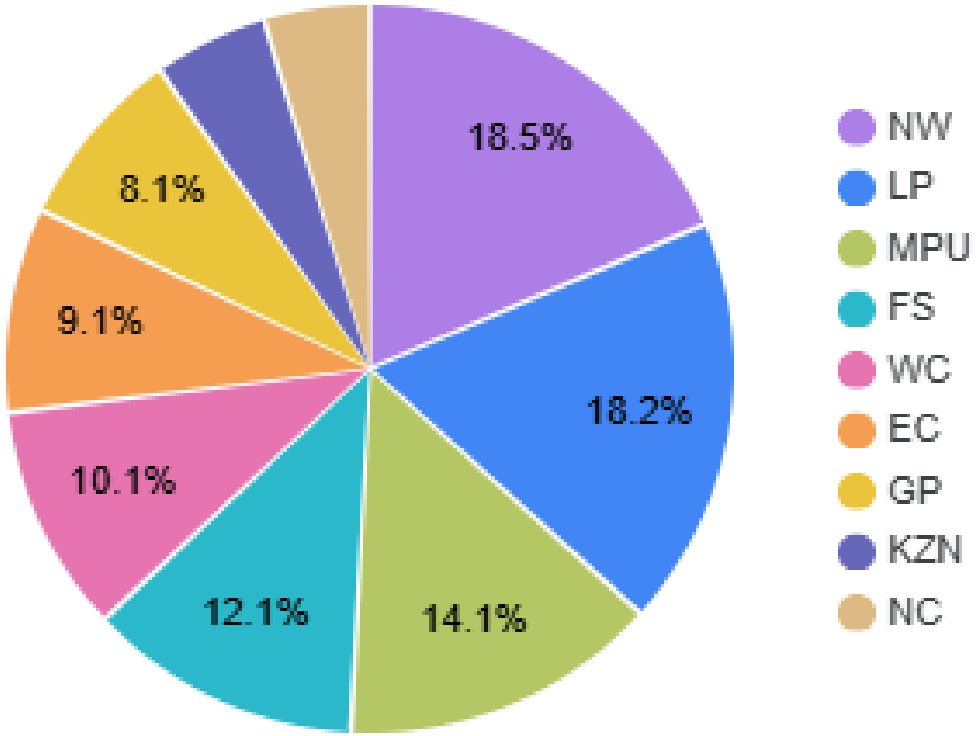
Eligible schools

Eligible Schools

Infrastructure

297 schools

69.2% of total audited schools

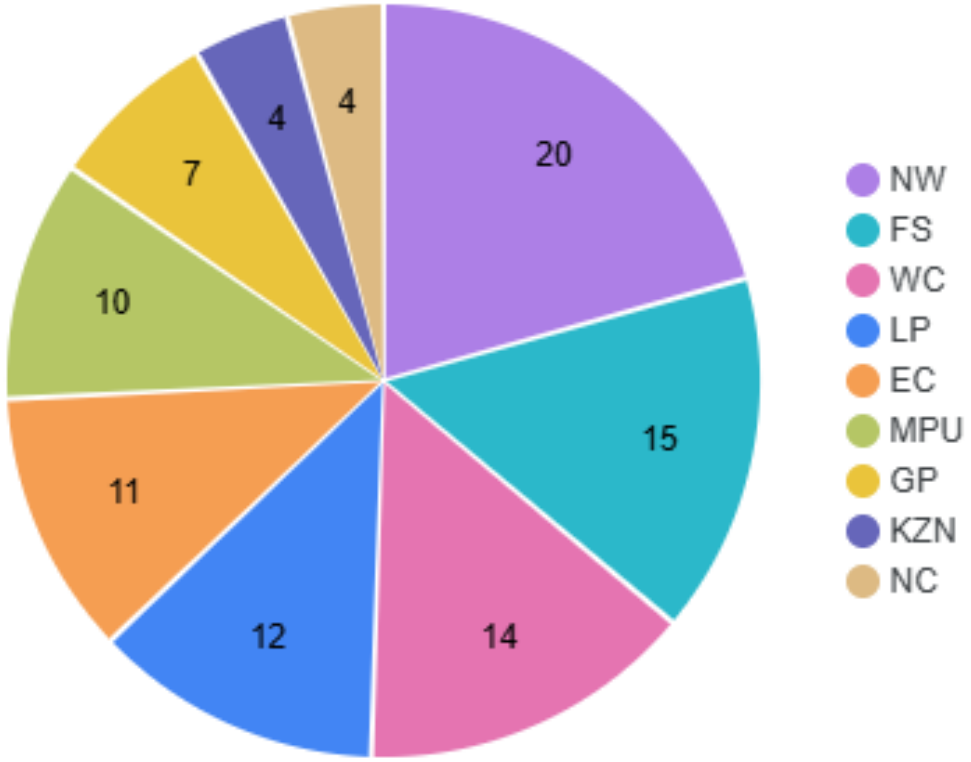


Eligible schools

Infrastructure

97 schools

22.6% of total audited schools

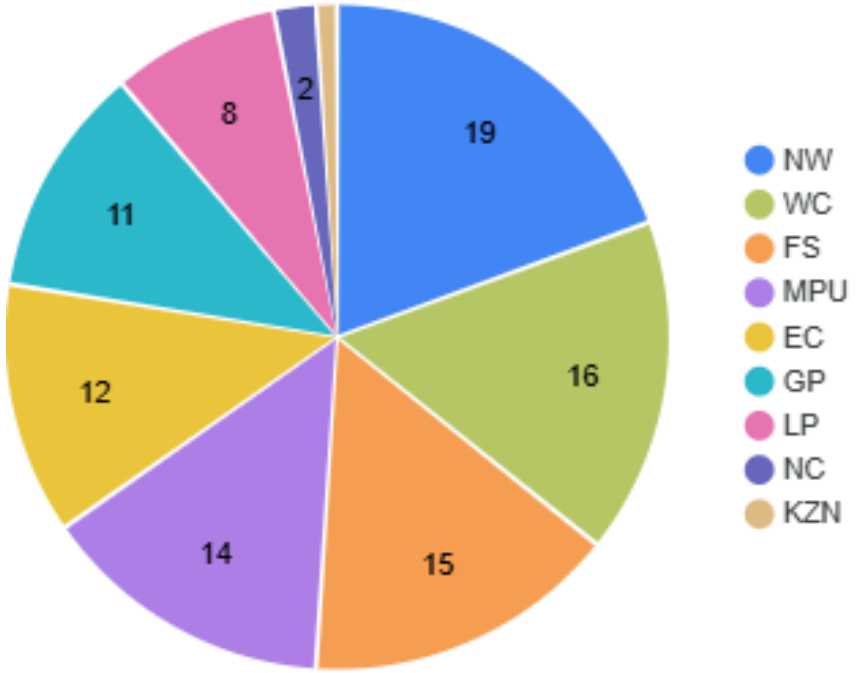


Eligible schools

146 schools

34% of total audited schools

Personnel

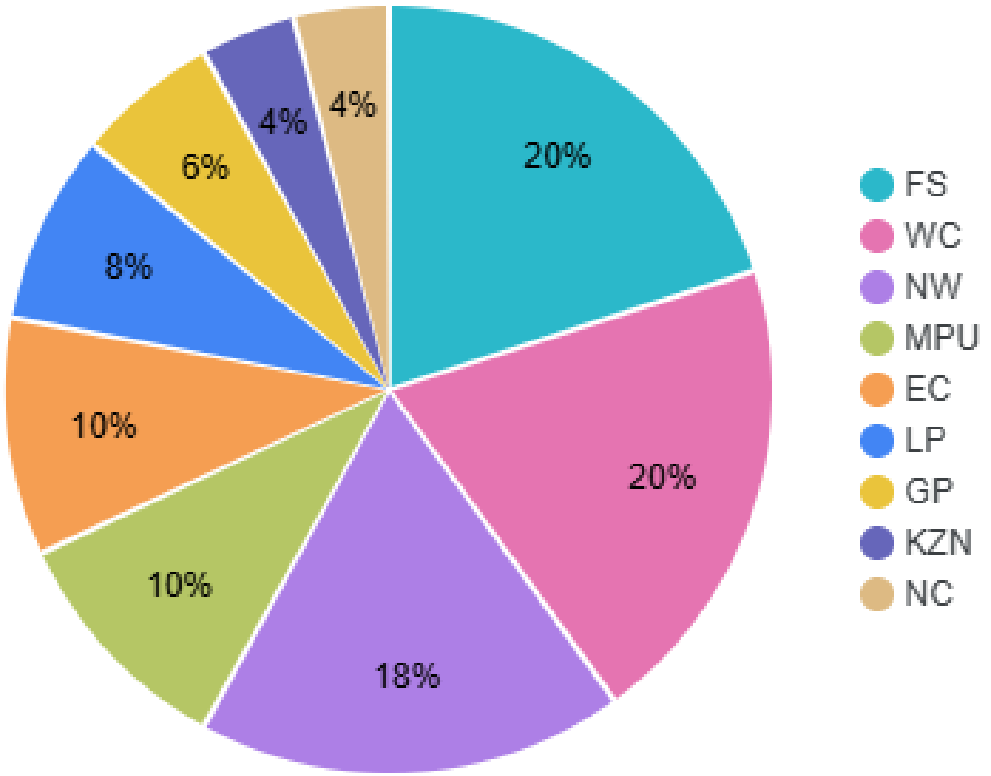


Eligible schools

50 schools

11.6% of total audited schools

Personnel + Infrastructure

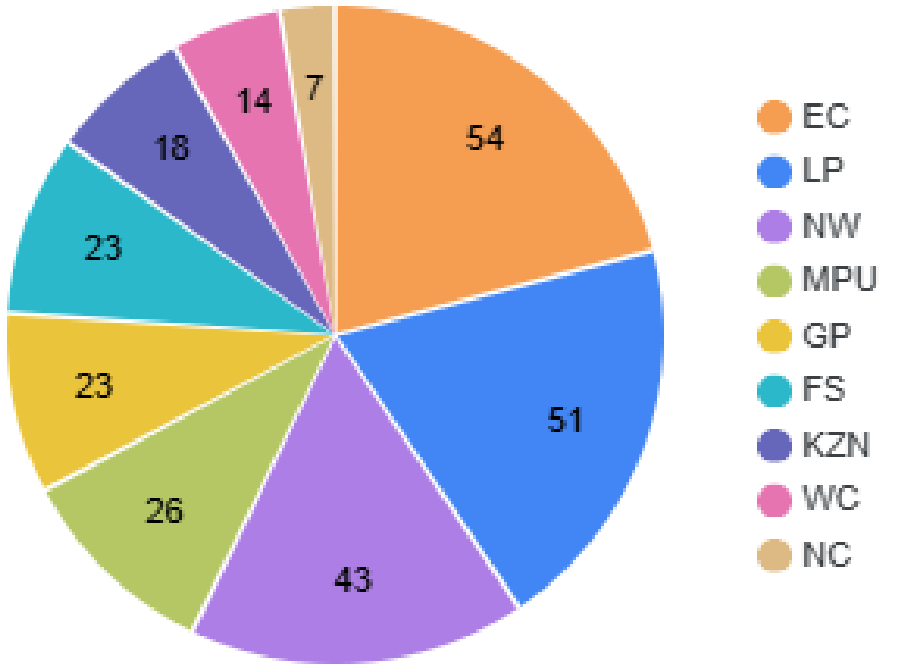


Eligible schools

259 schools

60.3% of total audited schools

Learners

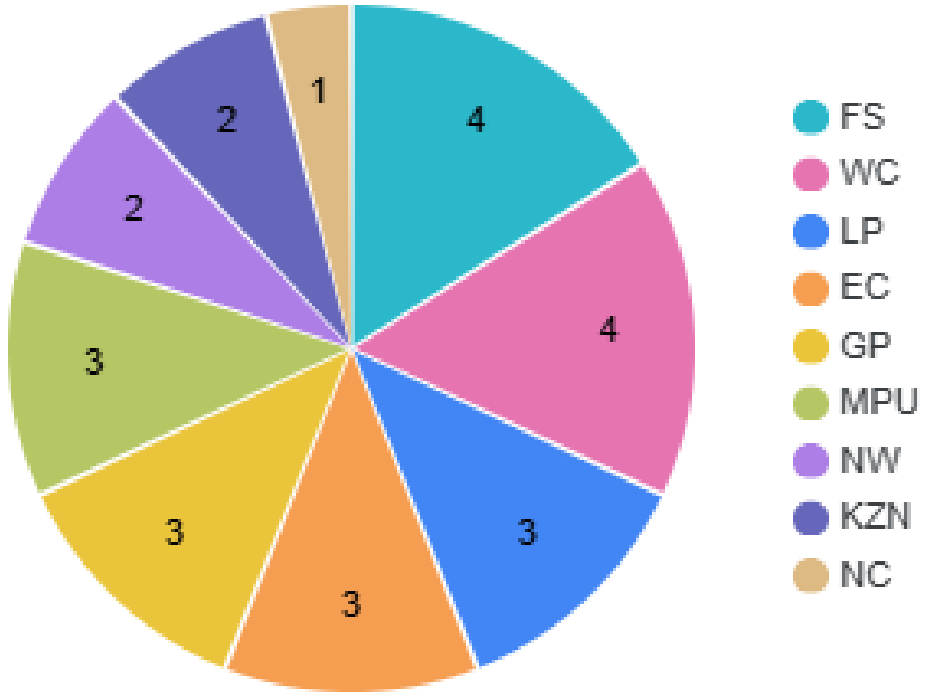


Eligible schools

25 schools

5.8% of total audited schools

Learners



Eligible schools

Basic
functionality

Enabling
functionality

Excelling
functionality

Eligible schools

Agriculture

9	4	1

Agriculture

9

1.	Jacobsdal Landbouskool	FS
2.	Hoërskool Sannieshof	NW
3.	Dotsepu	LP
4.	Mandela Barlow Agricultural High School	LP
5.	Augsburg Agricultural Gymnasium	WC
6.	DE RUST FUTURA AKADEMIE	WC
7.	Trio High School	FS
8.	Hoopstad CS	FS
9.	SEOTLONG AGRICULTURE AND HOTEL SCHO...	FS

4

1

Agriculture

6

4

1.	DE RUST FUTURA AKADEMIE	WC
2.	Augsburg Agricultural Gymnasium	WC
3.	Trio High School	FS
4.	Jacobsdal Landbouskool	FS

1

Agriculture

9

4

1

1.	Augsburg Agricultural Gymnasium	WC

Eligible schools

Arts

6	**2**	**2**

Arts

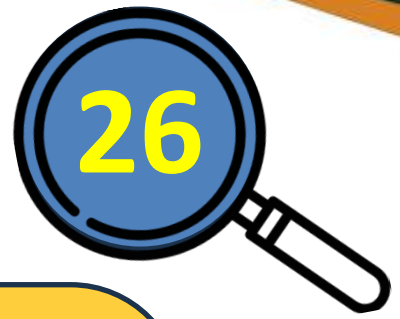
6

1.	Hoërskool Brits	NW
2.	Pro Arte Alphen Park	GP
3.	ALEXANDER SINTON HIGH	WC
4.	POTCHEFSTROOM GIMNASIUM	NW
5.	Hoër Volkskool Potchefstroom	NW
6.	Belhar High School	WC

2

2

Arts



6

2

1.	POTCHEFSTROOM GIMNASIUM	NW
2.	Hoërskool Brits	NW

2

Eligible schools

Aviation 2

0	0	0

2 schools not aligned with focus area subjects

Eligible schools

Business 24

3	1	1

1 school not aligned with focus area subjects

Business

3

1.	Hoërskool Standerton	MPU
2.	De Rust Secondary School	WC
3.	ID MKIZE HIGH SCHOOL	WC

1

1

Business

3

1

1.	Hoërskool Standerton	MPU

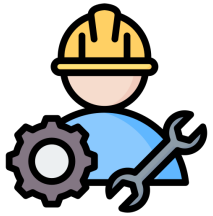
1

Eligible schools

Engineering and Technology

15	4	2

3 schools not aligned with focus area subjects



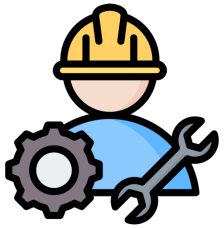
Engineering and Technology

15

1.	ISIKHOBA NOMBEWU T.S.S.S	EC
2.	Oziel Selele	FS
3.	George Campbell Technical High School	KZN
4.	RAMOTSHERE TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL	NW
5.	Katlehong Engineering School of Specialisation with …	GP
6.	Ermelo Hoërskool	MPU
7.	Hoërskool Secunda	MPU

4

2



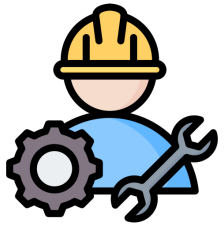
Engineering and Technology

15

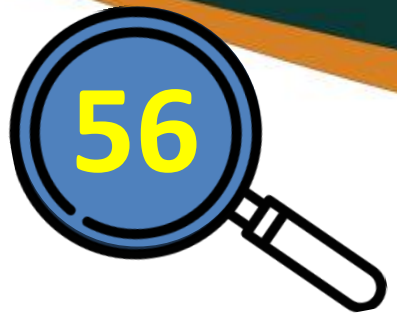
8.	Kusasalethu secondary	MPU
9.	Tom Naude THS	LP
10.	Phaladingoe Technical High	LP
11.	Soshanguve Engineering school of specialisation	GP
12.	Martie du Plessis School	FS
13.	PORT REX TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL	EC
14.	Buchule Technical High School	EC

4

2



Engineering and Technology

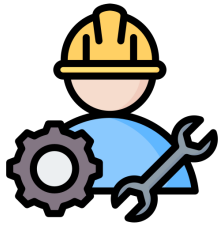


15

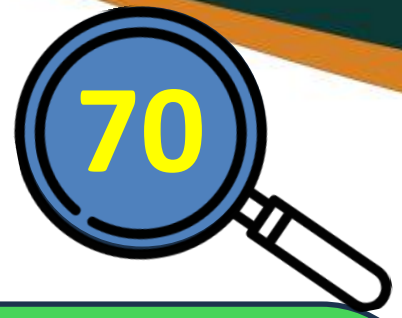
4

1.	George Campbell Technical High School	KZN
2.	Ermelo Hoërskool	MPU
3.	Martie du Plessis School	FS
4.	PORT REX TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL	EC

2



Engineering and Technology



15

4

2

1.	George Campbell Technical High School	KZN
2.	PORT REX TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL	EC

Eligible schools

Hospitality

6

4	0	0

Hospitality

4

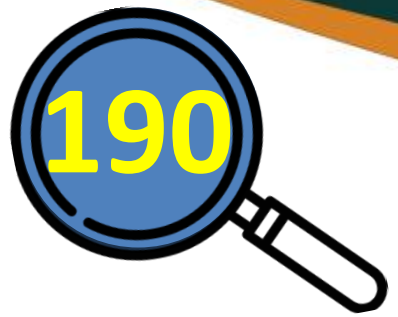
1.	Voortrekker Comprehensive SS	FS
2.	Outeniqua High	WC
3.	Oosrand Commerce Entrepreneurship School of S...	GP
4.	Camps Bay High School	WC

0

0

Eligible schools

MST



25	**9**	**4**

MST

190

25

9

4

1.	Hoërskool Hans Strijdom	LP
2.	Oaklands High School	WC
3.	Middelburg College	MPU
4.	Mapenane Math,Science and ICT SOS	GP

Eligible schools

Maritime Studies 10

1	0	0

1 School not aligned with focus area subjects

Eligible schools

Sports

2	0	0

3 Schools not aligned with focus area subjects

Eligible schools

Functionality scale

Recommendation 1: Adopt a Differentiated Improvement Model

DBE should categorise schools into three intervention levels:

Category	Status	Strategic Intervention
Green (9)	Fully compliant	Maintain standards and use as Centres of Excellence and mentor schools
Amber (20)	Enabling	Targeted support to reach full compliance within 2 years
Basic (65)	Minimum requirements not yet met	Comprehensive recapitalisation and institutional strengthening
Remaining Schools	Varying levels	Progressive support according to identified gaps

Recommendation 2: Infrastructure Development

🏗️ Priority Investments	⚙️ Infrastructure Modernisation	🤝 Strategic Actions & Partnerships
Construction and refurbishment of: • Engineering workshops • Automotive centres • Agricultural facilities • ICT laboratories • Hospitality and tourism training spaces • Robotics and coding laboratories	**Modernisation of:** • Electrical installations • Water and sanitation infrastructure • Connectivity and broadband • Safety and security systems	**Strategic Actions** • Ring-fenced conditional grant for Focus Schools and SoS • Integrate SoS needs into Provincial Infrastructure Plans **Strategic Partners** Eskom • Transnet • Denel • Sasol • Anglo American

Recommendation 3: Equipment and Learning Resources

NATIONAL RECAPITALISATION PROGRAMME

1. MINIMUM EQUIPMENT STANDARDS

DBE will develop minimum equipment standards for each specialisation:

- Engineering and Manufacturing
- Agriculture
- Maritime Studies
- Mining
- Aviation
- ICT and Coding
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Renewable Energy Technologies

2. FUNDING SOURCES

- National Treasury
- SETAs — Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs)
- Industry Partners
- Skills Development Levy Funding
- Public-Private Partnerships

3. PROVINCIAL SHARED RESOURCE CENTRES

Where schools cannot afford expensive equipment individually, provinces should establish regional specialist centres serving clusters of schools.

Outcome: Well-equipped Schools of Specialisation delivering quality skills for the economy

Recommendation 4: Specialised Teacher Recruitment and Development Programme

Recruit	Reskill	Industry Exposure
Specialist Teachers Engineering Agriculture Mechatronics Coding & Robotics IT Hospitality Maritime	**Continuous Professional Development:** Industry 4.0 & AI Digital Pedagogy Workshop Methodologies Competency-Based Assessment Vocational Pedagogy	**Skills Refresh Every 3 Years** Industry Attachments Teacher Internships Professional Exchanges
Incentives Bursaries Scarce Skills Allowances Rural Incentives Housing Support	**Partners** SACE QCTO CHE Universities TVET Colleges SETAs	**Outcome** Industry Integration-Ready Teachers

Recommendation 5: Appointment of Artisans and Industry Experts

The shortage of specialised teachers requires a flexible staffing model. DBE should:

1. Artisan-to-Teacher Pathways	2. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	3. Adjunct Teacher Model
👨‍🔧 **Qualified Artisans**	🤝 **Collaboration between:** • QCTO • Universities • TVET Colleges	👴 Retired Artisans
🔧 **Technicians**		🏭 Industry Professionals
⚙️ **Engineers**		🛠️ Master Craftsmen
🌱 **Agricultural Specialists**		
🏢 **Industry Practitioners**		
Teach practical subjects while completing pedagogical qualifications	**Develop RPL pathways leading to teacher qualifications**	**Serve schools on a part-time basis**

Recommendation 6: Strengthen Industry Partnerships

DBE should establish:

Provincial Industry Advisory Committees

Membership should include:

- SETAs.
- Chambers of Commerce.
- Manufacturing industries.
- Mining companies.
- Agricultural associations.
- Universities.
- TVET Colleges.

Functions

- Identify skills shortages.
- Support equipment procurement.
- Provide workplace exposure.
- Offer apprenticeships and learnerships.
- Align school specialisations with provincial economic priorities.

Recommendation 7: Develop Centres of Excellence

- The nine green schools should become:
  - Demonstration schools.
  - Teacher development hubs.
  - Provincial innovation centres.
  - Centres for curriculum support.
- These schools should mentor amber and basic schools through twinning arrangements.

Recommendation 8: Sustainable Funding Model

DBE should motivate for a dedicated:

- Focus Schools/Schools of Specialisation Conditional Grant

Funding should support:

- ✓ Infrastructure.
- ✓ Equipment.
- ✓ Teacher development.
- ✓ Connectivity.
- ✓ Maintenance.

- Additional funding can be leveraged through:
  - ✓ SETAs.
  - ✓ National Skills Fund.
  - ✓ Industrial Development Corporation.
  - ✓ Public-private partnerships.

Recommendation 9:Monitoring and Quality Assurance

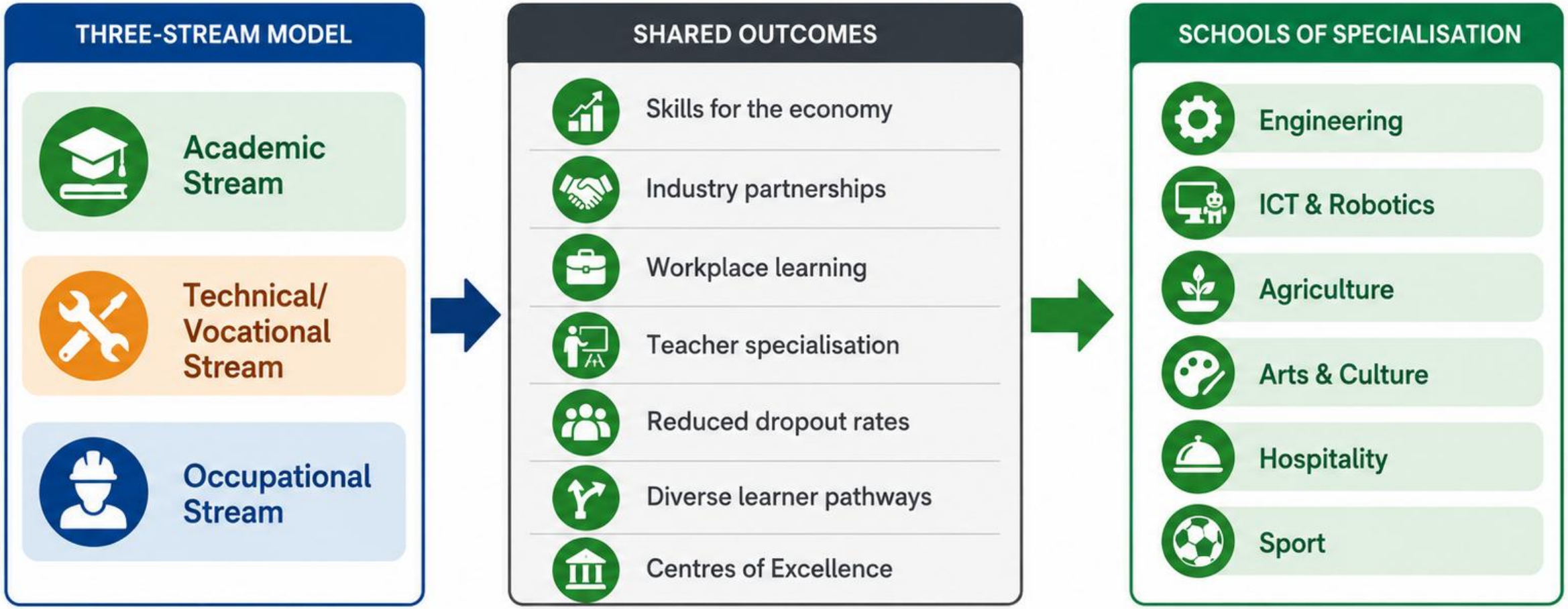
DBE should establish a National SoS Monitoring Framework with:

- Infrastructure standards.
- Equipment norms.
- Teacher qualification standards.
- Learner enrolment targets.
- Industry partnership indicators.
- Graduate destination tracking.

Annual audits should classify schools as:

- Green.
- Amber.
- Red.

Synergy Between Schools of Specialisation and the Three-Stream Model



WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

COMMITTED TO IMPROVING THE STATE OF THE WORLD

SOUTH AFRICA EDUCATION ACCELERATOR

basic education
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Read to Lead
A Reading Nation is a Leading Nation

BACKGROUND

SOUTH AFRICA EDUCATION ACCELERATOR

A PARTNERSHIP FOR SKILLS, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

DBE

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

In November 2025, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the World Economic Forum (WEF) signed a Letter of Intent to launch a collaboration between the DBE and the WEF over three years.

WHAT ARE ACCELERATORS?

Multi-stakeholder platforms where government, business, and civil society work together to improve education and employment.

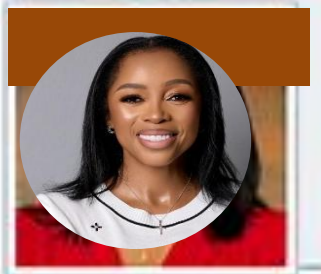
BUSINESS

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS CIVIL SOCIETY

OUR INTENT

WEF has worked with **over 40 countries** to drive reform and success

Ms Siviwe Gwarube, MP
Minister of Basic Education



Ms Phuthi Mahanyele-Dabengwa
CEO of Naspers

In 2026, **South Africa** was added to that number.

TOGETHER, WE CAN ACCELERATE PROGRESS, CLOSE THE SKILLS GAP AND BUILD A FUTURE OF OPPORTUNITY

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Department: Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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PRIORITIES FOR THE SOUTH AFRICA EDUCATION ACCELERATOR

SOUTH AFRICA'S EDUCATION ACCELERATORS

Based on national priorities, the following **two Accelerators** were identified towards transforming learning from the **earliest grades** to **career pathways**, thereby strengthening **foundational learning**, while opening **multiple routes** for young people to succeed in work and life.

TWO ACCELERATORS FOR TRANSFORMATION

1 QUALITY FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING: PROPOSED PROJECT

Building strong foundational skills in the early grades for lifelong success.

Research on Early Grade **Mathematics**

Stronger foundations. Better learning outcomes.

2 MULTIPLE LEARNING PATHWAYS: PROPOSED PROJECT

Expanding opportunities and pathways that connect learning to meaningful work.

School–Industry **Collaboration**

More pathways. More opportunities. Better futures.

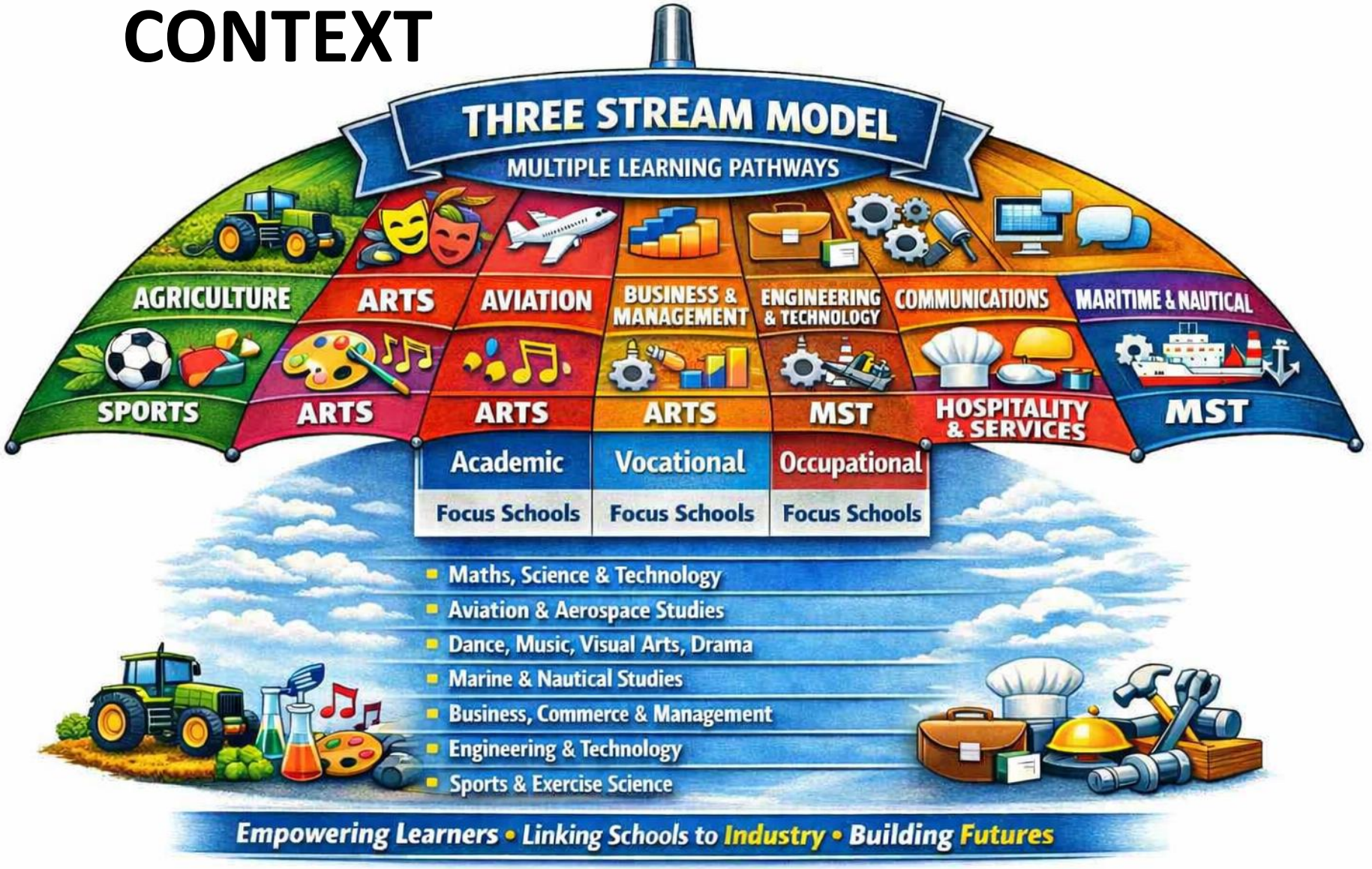
TRANSFORMING LEARNING. EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE.
STRONG FOUNDATIONS. MULTIPLE PATHWAYS. LIMITLESS POTENTIAL.

MULTIPLE LEARNING PATHWAYS

Education Accelerator


School-Industry Collaboration
Bridging Education to the World of Work
Career Pathways
Internships & Apprenticeships
Technical Training
Workplace Experience
Mentorship Programs
Skill Development
Job Placements
Empowering Learners • Driving Economic Growth

CONTEXT


THREE STREAM MODEL
MULTIPLE LEARNING PATHWAYS
AGRICULTURE
ARTS
AVIATION
BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT
ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY
COMMUNICATIONS
MARITIME & NAUTICAL
SPORTS
ARTS
ARTS
ARTS
MST
HOSPITALITY & SERVICES
MST
Academic
Vocational
Occupational
Focus Schools
Focus Schools
Focus Schools
Maths, Science & Technology
Aviation & Aerospace Studies
Dance, Music, Visual Arts, Drama
Marine & Nautical Studies
Business, Commerce & Management
Engineering & Technology
Sports & Exercise Science
Empowering Learners • Linking Schools to Industry • Building Futures

NUMBER OF FOCUS SCHOOLS

FOCUS SCHOOL TYPE	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
Agriculture	85
Arts	33
Business/Commerce	6
Engineering and Technology	163
Maritime/ Marine/ Nautical	4
MST	125
Services/Hospitality	8
Sports	2
Total	**426**

CIVIL, ELECTRICAL, AND MECHANICAL TECHNOLOGIES

Preparing today's learners for tomorrow's economy

Industry–School Collaboration

Building Skills for a Modern Economy

CONSTRUCTION
WOODWORKING
CIVIL SERVICES
POWER SYSTEMS
ELECTRONICS
DIGITAL ELECTRONICS
AUTOMOTIVE
FITTING & MACHINING
WELDING & METAL WORK

464 high schools offer one or more specialisation areas in **Civil, Electrical,** and **Mechanical Technologies.**

121 are **Focus Schools** – offering 4 or more of the specialisations.

343 are in the academic stream offering between **1 and 3 specialisations.**

Strong partnerships. Relevant skills.
Brighter futures for every learner.

KEY ACTIONS FOR SCHOOL–INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP

Review Practical Activities
Assess requirements

Provide Equipment & Machinery
Invest in tools & technology

Train Teachers
On the latest equipment & machinery

Industry Demonstrations
Experts lead lessons 4 times a year

Industry Visits
Learners & teachers visit 4 times a year

PREPARE • ENGAGE • INSPIRE

PROGRESS TO DATE

Building momentum. Delivering impact.

1. LAUNCH ACHIEVED

On 28 May 2026, the Minister of Basic Education and the CEO of Naspers, together with WEF, **launched** the South Africa Education Accelerator in Cape Town.

2. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

Leading up to the launch, **briefing meetings** were held with business and other partners.

3. ACTION PLANS IN PLACE

Detailed **Action Plans** are in place.

4. PLEDGES ON TRACK

Pledges from businesses are scheduled to come in by 25 June.

5. PROVINCES BEING BRIEFED

Provinces are being **briefed** on the Accelerator and provincial roles in this programme.

TOGETHER, WE ACCELERATE LEARNING TODAY TO BUILD A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR EVERY YOUNG PERSON.

NEXT STEPS

From commitments to action, collaboration and impact

1 CONSOLIDATE PARTNER COMMITMENTS

Review and validate the pledges received from business partners.

2 CLUSTER AREAS OF SUPPORT

Categorise commitments into common priority areas to ensure alignment and avoid duplication.

3 FORMALISE AGREEMENTS

Hold detailed discussions with partners and finalise Declarations of Intent to secure commitments.

4 ACTIVATE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

Convene Steering Committees for each project to oversee implementation and monitor progress.

Working together to deliver on our commitments and improve foundational learning outcomes.

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ROLE OF PROVINCES

Working together to deliver quality foundational learning

1 PROVIDE ESSENTIAL DATA

Submit requested information, including lists of focus schools offering technology subjects, physical addresses and contact details, and learner/teacher numbers per grade (Grades 9–12).

2 NOMINATE A PROJECT CHAMPION

Designate an official to serve as the provincial lead, liaising with DBE and business partners to drive implementation.

3 MONITOR AND SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION

Oversee progress at provincial level, guide schools, and ensure alignment with project objectives.

4 PARTICIPATE IN COORDINATION

Attend project meetings convened by DBE to ensure consistent communication and collective problem-solving.

5 REPORT PROGRESS

Submit monthly updates to DBE , highlighting achievements, challenges, and recommendations for improvement.

Your leadership and collaboration are key to delivering impactful projects and improving learning outcomes for all.

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Thank you!