

# Analysis of Vocational Education and Training

# South Africa



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## South Africa

### General

The new constitution of South Africa, based on the democratic and non racial starting points was implemented in 1994. The President has executive power, who is chosen by the National Assembly for a period of 5 years. The legislature lies at the Parliament (two Chambers; the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces). On the 14th of April 2004 the third national elections took place since the end of Apartheid. President Mbeki was rechosen.

South Africa has transformed and is rapidly emerging as a new society of energy and significance. Political violence has ceased and there is a sense of optimism and hope among all communities as they build a new nation. The country is fortunate to have a good infrastructure and diversified economy. It has made significant gains in improving the provision of basic services, such as water and sanitation, and reforming the education system, since its first democratic elections almost a decade ago.

44,3 million people live in the Democratic Republic of South Africa (2005, estimation of CIA, with the note that this number can be highly affected by AIDS mortality). 80 % of these people are Christians, the other people are Hindu, Muslim, Jewish people or have indigenous religions. Many different languages are spoken: African, English, Ndebele, North-Sotho, South-Sotho, Swasi, Tonga, Rswana, Venda, Xhosa and Zulu (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, 2006).

Table: Age categories population South Africa

Under 15 years	30,3 %
Between 15 and 64 years	64,5 %
Over 65 years	5,2 %

CIA, 2006

### Economy

BBP per capita is estimated on USD 3.489 in 2003. There are wide gaps between the rich and the poor people in the country. However, income distribution in the country is among the most unequal in the world. In 1996, almost 57 per cent of the population were living in poverty, and of these, two thirds were Africans. Racial inequalities do persist, with white per capita income being almost nine times higher than that of Africans (Ministerie Buitenlandse Zaken, 2006).

The workforce is equally divided over the different economic sectors.

	Share labour force	Share GDP
Agriculture	30 %	3,4 %
Industry	25 %	31,6 %
Trade and service	45 %	65,1 %

(Source: CIA, 1999 and 2005)

The industry sector produces mainly precious metals and gems, iron and steel, machines and mechanical tools.

The unemployment rate is high, in 2001 about 37 % of the labour force was unemployed in 2001 (Ministerie Buitenlandse Zaken, 2006). More than two-thirds of African males ages 16 to 19 are unemployed, and extremely high unemployment rates prevail among teenagers in other racial groups. In virtually every country unemployment among young people is more

severe than for other age groups, because as first-time job seekers they often experience a period of unemployment before securing a job; however, the South African problem is one of the worst in the world (World Bank / ILO, 2000). 70 % of the economically active population comprises black workers who are in the main, semi skilled, unskilled or unemployed. (Jinabhai, Dinesh, 2005)

South Africa has witnessed employment growth in the period 1995 – 2002. During this period, the economy created about 1.6 million jobs. However, this rate of employment growth lagged significantly behind the growth in both GDP and new entrants to the labour force. In the same period, 5 million new entrants to the labour force, creating extreme high levels of unemployment. The causes of this growing gap causing high rates of unemployment, especially for young people, are

- 1) The primary sector is increasing capital intensity in production, which is occurring simultaneously with the expansion of exports.
- 2) South Africa has a remarkably low, and declining share of exports that use unskilled labour.
- 3) There has been an ongoing skweing effect whereby manufacturing exports have tended to be capital and skill intensive, seemingly leading to an increase in demand for skilled labour.

Of the first time entrants into the labour market it is predicted that only 30 % will find jobs.

Table Transition from school (grade 12)

7 %	Enter public higher education
12 %	Enter other forms of further and higher learning (private higher education, public and private FET colleges and pre employment training)
30 %	Get jobs
51 %	Are unemployed (rises to 71 % per year for African first time entrants)

(Source: Department of Labour, 2005).

A national survey points out the share of trained workers per sector. People were asked if they had any kind of training, provided by the private sector.

Sector	Percentage skilled workers
Managers	24 %
Professionals	18
Technician	20
Administrative, secretarian	22
Service / sales	33
Craft / skilled trade	23
Agriculture	19
Operators	29
Elementary	27

Source: Department of Labour, 2005

## **Education**

Considering education there is much left to be done. Despite the end of apartheid policy, in practice many racial differences still exist. There are rich white private schools and poor black public schools. It has to be mentioned that more and more rich black pupils enter the white schools, yet poor schools remain black. An education law from 1996 establishes obligatory education for children from 7 to 15 years of maximum pupils of 40 per classroom. Still there are about 2 million children who are not in school. The effects of apartheid are felt in the universities as well, but more and more black students enter university nowadays (Min BuZa, 2006).

Adult literacy rate, 2000-2004*, male	84
Adult literacy rate, 2000-2004*, female	81
Primary school enrolment ratio (2000-2004*), net, male	89
Primary school enrolment ratio (2000-2004*), net, female	89
Primary school attendance ratio (1996-2004*), net, male	93
Primary school attendance ratio (1996-2004*), net, female	94
% of primary school entrants reaching grade 5, Admin. Data, 2000-2004*	65
% of primary school entrants reaching grade 5, Survey data, 1997-2004*	99
Secondary school enrolment ratio (2000-2004*), net, male	63
Secondary school enrolment ratio (2000-2004*), net, female	68
Secondary school attendance ratio (1996-2004*), net, male	41
Secondary school attendance ratio (1996-2004*), net, female	48

Source: Unicef information by country, 2006

Table: Structure of school system in South Africa

Schooling system	Grades eq. to years	Technical college training system	University en technikon system
Foundation phase (prim)	Grade 1		
	Grade 2		
	Grade 3		
Intermediate phase (Prim)	Grade 4		
	Grade 5		
	Grade 6		
Senior phase (1 yr prim, 2 yr sec)	Grade 7		
	Grade 8		
	Grade 9		
Senior secondary	Grade 10	National Technical Certificate NTC 1	
	Grade 11	NTC 2	
	Grade 12	NTC 3	
Post higher education and training		NTC 4	Year 1
		NTC 5	Diploma Year 2
		NTC 6	Diploma Year 3/ Bachelor of technology
			Honours degree and Professional degree (year 4)
			Masters degree doctorate

Source: Unesco, 2002

For university entrance, a matric "endorsement" is required (a minimum of three subjects passed at the higher, rather than standard, grade), although some universities do set their own additional academic requirements. A standard school-leaving South African senior certificate is sufficient for technikon or technical college study (Garson, ??).

Formal skill development (as a national curriculum, two / four years after secondary school) does not exist in South Africa. Informal skills development is organised by NGOs. The department of education is responsible, but they don't have the capacity to do all which is needed. Most (informal?) skills development is directed to disabled people in rural as well as urban areas. Skills development should be more open to the unemployed poor (interview Mfesane, 2006).

In 2001 there were 33 894 established public institutions and registered independent institutions in South Africa, namely, 27 458 ordinary schools and 6 436 other education institutions, including ABET (Adult Basic Education and Training), ELSEN (Education for Learners with Special Education Needs) and pre-primary/ECD (Early Childhood Development) schools or centres, public FET institutions and public HE institutions

(universities and technikons). Students from the former Colleges of Education were incorporated into the public HE institutions).

The 27 458 ordinary schools consisted of:

- 17 184 primary schools, with 179 829 educators and 6 286 723 learners;
- 5 670 secondary schools, with 111 523 educators and 3 475 418 learners; and
- 4 604 combined, intermediate and middle schools, with 62 849 educators and 1 975 985 learners
- 3 486 pre-primary/ECD centres
- 2 494 ABET centres
- 370 ELSEN centres
- 50 public FET institutions
- 36 public HE institutions (21 public universities, 15 technikons)

Of every 200 learners in the education system in South Africa:

- 171 were in ordinary public schools
- 10 were in public HE institutions
- 6 were in ABET centres
- 5 were in public FET institutions
- 4 were in ordinary independent schools
- 3 were in pre-primary/ECD centres
- 1 was in an ELSEN centre

(Source: Department of Education, 2003)

South Africa has a vibrant higher education sector, with more than a million students enrolled in the country's 21 public universities, 15 technikons and many colleges. All the universities and technikons are autonomous, reporting to their own councils rather than government (Garson, ??).

Further Education and Training (FET) (including the former youth, community and technical colleges) and Higher Education institutions (HE) (including universities and technikons) come most close to VET in South Africa. VET is mostly called skills development (Department of education, 2003).

South Africa sought integration of all the different educational directions through a National Qualifications Framework (NQF). In October 1995, the South African Qualifications Authority Act was passed into law. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), responsible for overseeing the establishment of the NQF, was established in 1996.

The NQF is bold in its vision and ambitious in scope. It seeks to bring together education and training, skills development and the needs of a critical democracy, personal, social and economic development. The NQF provides for flexibility of delivery, portability of credentials and recognition of prior learning by promoting modular approaches, expressed through 'unit standards' and registered programmes. To support integration of the various components into a single system, all components, from Early Childhood Development to Higher Education, including workplace and vocational education, employ outcomes-based approaches. A single set of 'critical and developmental outcomes' overarches all programme development.

(Lifelong learning, Ministry of Education).

It is also stated that the National Qualifications Framework causes much discussion in South Africa. It is difficult to define in general what qualifications are necessary to fulfill a job, who defines these requirements? The status of NQF was highly valued initially, but becomes more and more disputable (Interview Ministerie Buitenlandse Zaken, Feb 2006).

## Vocational education and Training

How is VET defined? Formal, informal and non formal? Does it include training on the job?	VET is often called Skills development. Further Education and Training (FET) (including the former youth, community and technical colleges) and Higher Education institutions (HE) (including universities and technikons) come most close to VET in South Africa (Department of education, 2003). Learnerships are a method to bring VET into practice by learning on the job. Integration of the education and training systems will facilitate maximum flexibility for horizontal and vertical mobility between different levels. For example, on-the-job training and prior informal learning are recognized on an equal basis with skills and knowledge acquired through the formal education and training process, leading in each case to appropriate certification.
% youngsters in vocational education and training, regional differences	In 1999 technikons had 141.000 learners and FET colleges had 122.740 learners
Share of flow from regular education to vocational education and training	VET is merely focused on unemployed and poor people
Gender ratio in VET on national level, regional differences	Of all students in technical colleges, 44 percent are female and 56 percent are male.
Which institutions pay attention to VET? (private actors (local NGOs, Churches, private institutions), commercial (organised by trade and industry companies) and public actors)	The main institutional players in the vocational training system are the Department of Labour, the National Training Board (NTB), industrial training boards (ITBs), employers, and public and private training providers.
In which regions are they active, share urban / rural?	The South African government particularly worries about the marginal urban youth, who are unemployed and an easy target for the (semi) criminal environment. Short skills development training programs are developed for them (interview MinBuZa, Mr. de Nie, 2006). There are 152 technical colleges in South Africa, mainly located in the major cities (Atchoarena, 2002).

The notion of integrated education and training has only been formally popularised in the latest policy developments, notably the education White Paper of February 1995 and the Department of Labour's (DoL's) Skills Development Strategy for Economic and Employment Growth in South Africa Green Paper. Consequently, all education and training (ET) sectors reflect this thinking, at least in conceptual terms, as it were. We now speak of higher education and training (HET), further education and training (FET) and adult basic education and training (ABET) sectors, a progressive departure from a few years ago when we only had HE and ABE (Xulu, 1997).

The reform of the vocational education and training system (VET) is a central element in the broad process of social and institutional change in the country. Indeed, the development of the education and training system, and of efficiently functioning labour markets, are two areas that were particularly stunted during the apartheid period. There was broad consensus on the pressing need for change in the area of human resource development in general and VET in particular, as a necessary condition for achieving national objectives in the economic, industrial, and social fields (World Bank / ILO, 2000).

- The South African education and training system displays the classic division of responsibilities between the labour and education departments. Technical education institutions at the postsecondary level (68 technical colleges and 15 technikons) are run by the Department of Education and financed from central budgetary appropriations.

South Africa does not appear to have traditional secondary vocational schools. The greatest area of concern is the poor levels of mathematics and science teaching across the system. (World Bank / ILO, 2000)

The public Further Education and Training (FET) sector has, in the past two to three years, undergone a massive transformation exercise. This is indicated by the rapid change in the number of institutions, by the growth in the number of learners, and by the changes in distribution patterns of the learners within the sector. The extent of these changes can be seen in, amongst others, the fact that there were 152 technical colleges in 2000, which have now been merged to form 50 super college institutions. These changes have had a marked impact on the majority of the colleges of the past, which previously formed part of a sector characterised by small, inefficient institutions with unnecessary duplication and poor facilities and resources. These institutions offered programmes, in many cases irrelevant and outdated, in poorly equipped workshops and facilities. They also reflected apartheid's spatial legacy of segregation and lack of proper development for those who were in the former homelands or in predominantly black or former "non-White areas" (Department of education, 2003).

### *Learnerships*

The learnership programme is the part of skills development where commercial business and industry are involved (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005). A learnership is a mechanism to facilitate the linkage between structured learning and work experience in order to obtain a registered qualification, which signifies work readiness (Department of education, 2003). Through learnerships, structured learning and work experience are organized for accreditation within the national qualifications framework. Learnership contracts are formulated between the learner, the provider of structured learning, and the organization providing work experience. Learnership coverage extends beyond the traditional blue-collar confines of the apprenticeship system to include a wide range of services. Access includes those in formal employment, in self-employment, in the informal sector, and in pre-employment, as well as members of special target groups, including unemployed young people and women in rural areas (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005).

The new government tries to skill the poor by the learnership programme. The government expects commercial actors from the market to train people on the job. They receive subsidy from the government to do so. The different VTCs struggle to place the trainees, because they work with other target groups.

The formal VET is directed to management and business, courses in which the poorest of the poor are not reached. These courses are only open to youth who have finished secondary school and need training to get experienced. There obligatory starting level for the students in formal VET training is a restriction for the poorest people who cannot afford to finish high school. The poorest of the poor is mentioned in the national policy as a target group for skills development, but in practice it fails to reach them. NGOs have to fill in this gap. Companies don't want to invest too much in new employees (interview Mfesane, 2006).

At least 107 000 young people were trained through learnerships and apprenticeships. In addition, 5.562.174 workers participated in structured learning programmes, of which 4.641.810 successfully completed their programmes (Ministry of Labor, 2005).

### Highest level achieved by race

	None / primary %	Secondary %	Matric 12 years %	Post matric %	Total %
African	19	55	21	6	100
Coloured	13	62	18	7	100
Indian	2	40	47	11	100
White	2	38	29	32	100
All	16	53	22	9	100

In 1998 of the 559.233 students completed high school in 1997, 122.740 entered in technical colleges (21,9 %). The fields they were enrolled were:

	Total share of the students	Male	Female	
Art/music	1,2 %	44 %	56	<b>100 %</b>
Engineering sciences	36,7 %	87	13	<b>100</b>
Educare / social services	2,9 %	23	77	<b>100</b>
Business studies	49,6 %	34	66	<b>100</b>
General education	2,0 %	43	57	<b>100</b>
Utility industries	7,5 %	42	58	<b>100</b>
	<b>100 %</b>			

Source: Atchoarena, 2002

A typical delivery agency of non-formal TVET would be a non-governmental organisation (NGO). This NGO may be offering a qualification for a Welder in the SME sector. Irrespective of the sector in which trainees will ultimately perform (whether formal or informal sector), the trainee will be expected to deliver goods to the nationally accepted standards as set in the NQF. It seems, though, that there may still very well be variations in the processes that learners may engage in under different learning contexts. One factor determining these variations is the nature of equipment that will be available for training purposes. Whereas the formal training institutions are more likely to have state-of-the-art technology, non-formal training providers may have low-technology equipment to use for training purposes (Xulu, 1997).

Employment prospects for FET graduates remain low, even after attaining additional vocational qualifications to supplement after already achieved school matriculation. 33,6 % of FET graduates finds a job, split this number up in black graduates (69,7 % unemployed) and white graduates (24,2 %), it is clear that racial differences still have their traces in society. This number is also broadly influenced by the location and lack of industrial experience available at many FET colleges with a predominantly black enrolment. 35 % of the FET graduates continues studying, of whom 75 % goes to college. It is unknown if a higher education has a positive effect on the chances of employment, or if the will to continue studying is merely a chance to postpone the status of unemployed worker (Department of Labour, 2005).

Success factors for skills development are:

- 1) market studies to find out what is relevant for the market, to tune the supply to the demand.
- 2) Cooperation between VTCs can be useful to avoid overlap in supply of similar graduates.
- 3) Financial sustainability, enough resources
- 4) Capacity building of the trainers

(Source: interview Mfesane, 2006)

Only one-quarter of Regional Training Centres graduates found work in the sector; a third of these workers started their own businesses. In 1995, 26,500 people were trained at RTCs. There were some 1,400 private training centres in 1995 established by employers registered with the Department of Labour. These centres provide certain skills training for the unemployed under contact with the Department of Labour. In 1995 more than 130,000 people were trained under this scheme but with questionable effectiveness. Follow-up support was limited and placement rates were low (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005)..



## ***Governmental policy and organisation of VET***

Perhaps the most significant development in the sphere of education and training in the period 2004 – 2005 is that skills development strategies are being aligned with governments economic and social programmes to a far greater extent than ever before. This alignment takes place against the backdrop of both an economic upswing in the first economy but with continuous conditions of joblessness and poverty in the second economy. The government will stress the importance of alignment between the following key education challenges and broader socio economic objectives:

- Improving the quality and impact of education as an underpinning foundation for all future training
- Improving the articulation of education with the world of work
- Improving employment opportunities for graduates from schools, FET colleges and HE institutions (Department of Labour, 2005)

The National Training Strategy Initiative is the base document for the reform of the VET strategy in South Africa. The national qualifications framework (part of the reform) has been widely welcomed, but a note of caution is in order. Although the advantages of the new system are manifest, it is likely to be extremely costly. Moreover, by making skills more portable, the framework will increase the probability that workers will leave for other employment after training (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005).

The central government provides a national framework for school policy, but administrative responsibility lies with the nine provinces, which must decide how to spend their education budgets. Power is further devolved to grassroots level via elected school governing bodies. They have a significant say in the running of their schools, and many now employ their own teachers to improve teacher/pupil ratios and keep class sizes manageable.

The higher education sector falls under the auspices of national government. Private schools and higher education institutions have a fair amount of autonomy, but are expected to fall in line with certain government non-negotiables. Theoretically, no child may be excluded from a school on grounds of his or her race or religion, for example (Garson, ??).

Broad agreement has been reached on the need for national coordination and strategic direction of the training system. Unlike the situation in many other African countries, the **Department of Labour's** role in both the provision and financing of training is marginal. It does not operate its own vocational training centres, nor does it finance training to any major extent. However, the department does participate in financing training through the partial subsidization of a number of training programs, as well by bearing part of the administrative costs of the apprentice training scheme and the costs of running the trades test centres. The only major program that is financed wholly by the department is training for the unemployed. Earlier funding was inadequate to meet needs, training efforts were insufficiently focused on particular needs, courses were too short and of a low standard, and coverage was poor. Broad agreement has been reached on the need for national coordination and strategic direction of the training system. The NEDLAC Counterpart Group favoured a tripartite coordinating body.

The National Training Board does not function as a national training authority and it has no executive powers. Established under the 1981 act, the NTB advises the minister of labour on

policy matters arising from the act and, more generally, coordinates, facilitates, and promotes training. The NTB is restructured into a new tripartite **National Skills Authority**. Although it is given "much stronger advisory powers than the old NTB," it remains purely as an advisory body to the minister of labour. The NSA has members from business, labour, and government, training providers, community organizations, and special interest groups. The NSA's main work is conducted by committees, such as those concerned with artisans, in-service training, and the disabled. Specialist regional training committees also exist. The flagship training institutions in South Africa are the nine **regional training centres**. They operate as autonomous organizations, each with an independent governing body, although they maintain close ties with the Department of Labour. Together with some 60 satellite campuses and 165 mobile units, RTCs mainly provide training for the unemployed. Capacity utilization at RTCs is low, estimated at less than 50 percent, and a number of satellites have closed in recent years because of a lack of funding. Most training courses are heavily subsidised but RTCs may offer courses to any organization (or individuals) prepared to finance the training. However, they have not proved successful in broadening the scope of their non subsidized activities in this way (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005).

### ***Main goals on VET in national policy***

The goal of VET is to educate the unemployed and the poor; to create more skilled workforce. The courses are aimed at equipping unemployed people with appropriate skills for informal sector employment or to operate as independent entrepreneurs. However, the outcomes are poor (Source?).

The lack of a central coordinating institution meant an absence of any national strategy, targets, or agreed priorities for funding and promoting training. The system did not facilitate the shifting of resources between industries to meet the needs of emerging sectors. These shortcomings were of particular concern in an economy such as that of South Africa, which is undergoing considerable structural change, with major shifts in the composition of output and employment.

The National Skills Development Strategy was written for 2005 – 2010. In this Strategy 5 principles are mentioned:

- 1) Support economic growth for employment creation and poverty eradication.
- 2) Promote productive citizenship for all by aligning skills development with national strategies for growth and development
- 3) Accelerate Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment and Employment Equity. (85 % Black, 54 % Women and 4 % people with disabilities, including youth in all categories). Learners with disabilities to be provided with reasonable accommodation such as assistive devices and access to learning and training material to enable them to have access to and participate in skills development.
- 4) Support, monitor and evaluate the delivery and quality assurance systems necessary for the implementation of the NSDS
- 5) Advance the culture of excellence in skills development and lifelong learning.

The main objectives are amongst others:

- 1) Prioritising and communicating critical skills for sustainable growth, development and equity
  - a. Skills development supports national and sectoral growth, development and equity priorities
  - b. Information on critical skills is widely available for learners. Impact of information dissemination researched, measured and communicated in terms of rising entry, completion and placement of learners
- 2) Promoting and accelerating quality training for all in the workplace

- a. By March 2010 at least 80 % of the governments departments spend at least 1 % of personnel budget on training and impact of training on service delivery measured and reported
  - b. By March 2010 at least 700.000 workers have achieved at least ABET level 4
  - c. By March 2010, at least 125000 workers assisted to enter and at least 50 % successfully complete programmes, leading to basic entry, intermediate and high level scarce skills.
- 3) Promoting employability and sustainable livelihoods through skills development
- a. By March 2010 at least 450.000 unemployed people are trained. Of those trained at least 70 % should be placed in employment, self employment or social development programmes including EPWP, or should be engaged in further studies.
  - b. By March 2010, at least 2000 non levy paying enterprises, NGOs, CBOs and community based co operatives supported by skills development
  - c. By March 2010 at least 100.000 unemployed people have participated in ABET level programmes and at least 70 % have achieved ABET level 4
- 4) Assisting designated groups, including new entrants, to participate in accredited work, integrated learning and work based programmes to acquire critical skills to enter the labour market and self employment
- a. By March 2010 at least 125.000 unemployed people assisted to enter and at least 50 % successfully complete programs, leading to basic entry, intermediate and high level scarce skills.
- 5) Improving the quality and relevance of provision
- (Source: National Skills Development Strategy, 1 April 2005 – 31 March 2010)

### ***Relation government and trade and industry (private) companies in VET***

South Africa faces a human resources crisis with the shortage of skilled employees exacerbated by the high rate of unemployment among unskilled workers. South Africa is therefore also faced with the enormous challenge of training and development of its workforce to increase productivity. It is essential for all skills training and development interventions to be fully explored to alleviate the shortages experienced by South African organisations (Jinabhai, 2005).

The Manpower Training Act, as amended in 1990, places primary responsibility for formal sector vocational training firmly on the shoulders of employers. The Department of Labour assumes a mainly supportive role. This supportive role comprises a number of functions, including creating an appropriate legal and administrative framework. The amended act paved the way for the introduction of a largely new training system based on the establishment of industry-based training boards, the mechanism through which business assumes responsibility for training within its sector, including the structuring and control of apprenticeship training (Jinabhai, 2005).

South Africa's **industrial training boards (ITB)** are a unique feature of its training system; they are sector based and voluntary. Industries may voluntarily decide to establish an ITB. Besides accreditation and setting standards, the functions of ITBs vary. Most do not engage in training provision. Only about a third of South African industries are represented by an ITB, lacking in the government sector and in service sectors such as retail, banking, insurance, and health. Given the traditions of volunteerism in the training sector, the NEDLAC Counterpart Group has overall responsibility for developing national policy, national research capacity, and monitoring and evaluation studies. It also coordinates the activities of ITBs and provides them with advice and support. Retaining and expanding the role of the industrial training boards keeps training decisions close to beneficiaries and provide a mechanism for coordinating the national qualifications framework and in-service training expenditures at the sectoral level (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005).

In practice, this new system has displayed a number of weaknesses, particularly in relation to coverage, control, national accountability and financing (Jinabhai, 2005).

There is very little connection between the private sector, commercial business and industry and vocational training centres (interview Mfesane, 2006).

### ***Relation between governmental and private initiatives on VET***

The education system is characterised by diversity: schools and universities vary greatly in terms of quality, financial resources, ethos and size. Top quality schools and universities are to be found in both the state and the private education sector. Most institutions fall under the auspices of the state, but due to an emphasis on local or community-based governance, and a strong and growing private school and higher education sector, the educational landscape is colourful.

Most state schools are state-aided to some extent: the government provides the minimum, and parents contribute to basics and extras in the form of school fees. Fees vary considerably, depending on factors such as class size, facilities and the quality of teaching offered (Garson, ??).

### ***International donors / INGOs involved in VET***

**Novib**

Volgt nog informatie van Mfesane

### ***Networks around VET***

There is not a formalised network of VTCs. The different actors know each other, but there is little sharing in information or in tuning the activities. There are some first initiatives on this aspect since the end of last year. It is a constraint that many VTCs are more in competition with each other, because of the limited funds available. The governmental administration is poor and the funding is unstable (interview Mfesane, 2006).

Historically, links between Regional Training Centres and industry have been weak, with few courses offered being recognized or accredited by the relevant industry sector (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005).

FET colleges have been encouraged to develop partnerships to enhance responsiveness, particularly in relation to curriculum development and work experience. The number of linkages or joint projects with industries, communities, NGOs and government has grown to a recorded 1.852 in 2002. The majority is with business, some 51 %, and only 3 % with SETAs (Sector Education & Training Authorities). On average nationally, there are 39 partnerships projects per institutions, although there is a wide range of between 3 to 150 projects. The purpose of these partnerships are primarily as providers of training, some 42 % whether training for students, for community members or to industry. Only a very small proportion, 7 %, of the partnerships focused specifically on developing new programmes or curricula. There are encouraging signs of emergent responsiveness, in that 50 % of the partnerships with industry focused on learner placements and the provision of training, and more than 50 % of the partnerships with the government focused on community training, provision of training and work placements (Department of Labour, 2005).

## ***(New) initiatives / intentions from the trade and industry (private) sector around VET***

The new skills development strategy is comprehensive in its coverage of in-service and pre-service training. Learnerships are an innovation to broaden apprenticeship and dual training systems and to link training more firmly with work experience. Public technical training institutions will now have to compete with the private sector for public funding (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005).

### ***Education of teachers***

The teachers are trained in the technical colleges themselves. The graduates can start to work in teaching skills development (interview Mfesane, 2006).

### ***VET specialisations***

Secondary schools offer mainly academic programs, but a few schools provide technical courses, including practical workshops in such traditional vocational education areas as

- woodworking,
- metalworking,
- electrical and electronics,
- motor mechanics, and, more recently,
- bricklaying and plastering (World Bank / ILO, 2000).

The most taught skills are in textile, leatherwork, weaving, welding, carpentry and brick making etc. for blind and otherwise disabled people. The attention for specific sectors in skills development depends on the availability in the area where it is given. More developed areas teach more in auto industry skills for example (interview Mfesane, 2006).

### ***Strengths and weaknesses***

<b><i>Strengths</i></b>	<b><i>Weaknesses</i></b>
The image of VET is mixed, but improving. First it was something for poor and disabled people, but now the government is paying more attention to VET in general, people value skills development better. There is a shift from practical training to more engineering as well (interview Mfesane, 2006).	A contributing constraint on throughput from school to further and higher education is the poor mathematics and science performance of schools. Not only the poor number of graduates, but also the extremely poor quality of mathematics and scientific literacy contributes to the meagre flow (Atchoarena, 2002).
Perhaps the most significant development in the sphere of education and training in the period 2004 – 2005 is that skills development strategies are being aligned with governments economic and social programmes to a far greater extent than ever before (Department of Labour, 2005)	Most students study full time with no employer sponsorship. Job placements rates after training are estimated to be at an average of about 15 percent (Atchoarena, 2002).
The reform of the vocational education and training system is a central element in the broad process of social and institutional change in the country. There was broad consensus on the pressing need for change in the area of human resource development in general and VET in particular, as a necessary condition for achieving national objectives in the economic, industrial, and social fields (World Bank / ILO, 2000).	The governmental plans on paper are not bad, but the implementation of it is low (interview Mfesane, 2006).
The new skills development strategy is comprehensive in its coverage of in-service and pre-service training (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005).	Only one-quarter of Regional Training Centres graduates found work in the sector; a third of these workers started their own businesses (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005).
Learnerships are an innovation to broaden apprenticeship and dual training systems and to link training more firmly with work experience (National	RTCs have questionable effectiveness. Follow-up support was limited and placement rates were low (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005).

Skills Development Strategy, 2005).	
FET colleges have been encouraged to develop partnerships to enhance responsiveness, particularly in relation to curriculum development and work experience (Department of Labour, 2005).	ITBs possess neither the resources nor the expertise to identify strategic trends and introduce cost-effective, efficient management of the training system. No central body has been charged with these tasks of research monitoring and evaluation (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005).
There are encouraging signs of emergent responsiveness, in that 50 % of the partnerships with industry focused on learner placements and the provision of training, and more than 50 % of the partnerships with the government focused on community training, provision of training and work placements (Department of Labour, 2005).	The ITB system has failed to address the non formal segments of the labour market in any meaningful way. The emphasis on sector-based training and the lack of national coordination of the training system have resulted in considerable under provision of skills development to meet social needs, particularly in relation to school leavers, the unemployed, and rural populations (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005).
	Programs meeting the needs of special and disadvantaged groups (including the long-term unemployed, the disabled, and retrenched workers) are limited in coverage and poorly responsive to market needs (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005).
	The biggest program is the Scheme for the Training of Unemployed Persons, administered and financed by the Department of Labour. Funding was on a cost basis, rather than on the basis of outcomes, such as achieving a qualification, finding a job, or starting a business. Placement rates were low, around 20 percent (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005).
	The national qualifications framework (part of the reform) has been widely welcomed, but a note of caution is in order. Although the advantages of the new system are manifest, it is likely to be extremely costly. Moreover, by making skills more portable, the framework will increase the probability that workers will leave for other employment after training (National Skills Development Strategy, 2005).

### **Information sources available**

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### ***Recommendations for further research***

1. The VET system has major reforms. Mfesane claims that there is no formal kind of VET in South Africa at the moment. The Learnership programme is an informal kind of VET, where responsibility is mainly given to trade and industry enterprises. The technikons and FET institutions are not seen as formal VET? Is that true and why?
2. Which are fail factors in general for VET in South Africa?
3. Are any fail factors known specifically for South Africa?
4. Which international donors / NGOs are working on skills development?
5. What is the main role for international NGOs in South Africa in skills development?