

President Thabo Mbeki

President of South Africa

Pretoria

16 October 2000

Dear Mr President

This report is the third of my quarterly reports to you. The main purpose of these reports is to brief you on progress in relation to specific strategic objectives that we have set ourselves in taking the project of education transformation further. Even though each of these reports has a specific objective and focus, there is an intended element of continuity between the reports as we seek to assess whether or not we are achieving the intended cumulative gains in turning around the crisis in education that I expounded upon in my Call to Action released on 27 July 1999. The content of this report therefore seeks to review the state of progress against the background of the baseline sketched in the first two reports.

This report is also different from the first two reports in one significant dimension. I have elected for this analysis to be much more analytical than the first two reports. This is reflected in the different methodology employed in conducting the analyses contained in this report. The analyses presented in the first two reports were based on information obtained from questionnaires administered in all the Provincial Education Departments. For this report, I deployed teams of senior officials to visit each of the provinces to solicit information first hand and to engage in conversations with senior political and professional officials responsible for education in the province. The outcome is that the information obtained has made it possible for me to provide a more in-depth and qualitative analysis of the state of education in the country in general and in the Provinces in particular. This exercise has proved to be extremely useful in making a diagnosis of the most pressing issues in education that require attention. It therefore lends itself to better problem solving in the follow-up to this report, which I will initiate with the co-operation of my provincial colleagues in the Council of Education Ministers.

In presenting this report, I am conscious of another important purpose of these quarterly reports. The follow-up strategies to be constructed on the strength of the analyses presented will assist in achieving common purpose across the system about the most important tasks for the next quarter. In this way we are able to focus our collective efforts and establish a basis for improved accountability.

This report is presented in two parts. The first part contains an analysis of key themes that emerge from the information obtained during the visits to Provinces. Each of these themes organises the analysis, while at the same time, serving to delineate priority areas for follow-up in the next quarter. The second part of the report presents, in collated form, information obtained on progress with the implementation of specific Tirisano objectives.

Yours sincerely

Prof. Kader Asmal

Minister of Education

PART ONE: KEY THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM THE ANALYSIS OF THE STATE OF EDUCATION

There is clear evidence of emerging good practice

I am very reassured that all Provinces have made progress in implementing strategies aimed at addressing some of the most intractable problems in the system. My officials were able to observe at first-hand some of the very innovative and promising strategies that are being implemented in the provinces. There are also activities in provinces that are aimed at addressing the very basic problems that contribute to making schools dysfunctional. Some of these relate to ensuring that schools start on time and on the first day of term; teacher absenteeism is reduced, time-on-task is improved and that effective management takes place. In this regard, there are very promising indications of involvement of MPs and MPLs in supporting schools and mobilising parents. Education Departments have also achieved some improvements in the level and regularity of professional support provided to schools. However, there is still much that needs to be done to improve that capacity and effectiveness of district-level support to schools. This matter is discussed in more detail below.

Effectiveness of institutions for governance, administration and implementation

The delivery of education for all except Higher Education (which is the sole competence of the Department of Education) is predicated upon a set of legislation, policies, institutions and procedures that give effect to co-operative governance. The creation of a functional link between national norms and standards, on the one hand, and implementation (delivery), on the other hand, represents the central aim of these arrangements.

The effectiveness of this link varies across provinces. There are instances where the effectiveness of delivery is less than satisfactory due to shortcomings in the effectiveness of this link. These shortcomings are evident in various elements of these arrangements.

I have found that in many provinces the institutions and relationships that link Provincial legislatures, the Education Standing Committee, the MEC for Education and the Provincial Education Department have

reached a high level of maturity and are working well to promote education service delivery in the province. In these provinces the oversight function of the political sphere is sustained through regular dialogue, accountability and reporting engagements that are effectively institutionalised. Further, the important delineation of responsibilities between the respective parties is clear, working relationships are good and the consequent impact on accountability and delivery is positive. However, there are still some provinces where frequent breakdowns in these links continue to impede the potential contribution of all spheres to improving the effectiveness of service delivery.

I am reassured by observations in some provinces where the Education Standing Committee and the Legislature are effectively holding Education Departments accountable and, simultaneously, making an important contribution to the political mobilisation of constituencies for improving the effectiveness of education service delivery. There is emerging a clear and shared sense of the priorities in education and the political determination of the education mandate in the province is clearly articulated by the political sphere and is, in turn, internalised by the Provincial Education Department.

There are some notable developments that confirm the progressive unfolding of governance arrangements at provincial level. Almost all provinces have succeeded in coordinating the constituency work of MPs and MPLs in the drive to improve community involvement and support for effective education provision. Political office bearers receive regular briefings by education departments on developments in education. These briefings appear to facilitate constructive, substantive and critical engagement. There is evidence of successful attempts to enhance integration of delivery across provincial line functions through institutionalised meetings between MECs and departments.

There was reason in the past to be concerned about the poor relationships between the Treasury and Education functions in some provinces. It is reassuring that these relationships have improved significantly in most provinces. However, in a small minority of instances, it appears that much work is still necessary to improve this relationship, especially in terms of funding priority areas in education.

The way various stakeholders play out their respective roles in education has a material impact on whether or not the environment is conducive to effective service delivery. Progressive educational and broader labour unions, political structures, traditional leaders, student organisations and various civil society organisations are important and strategic partners in our education transformation project. While these relationships are broadly present in some provinces, in others divergent expectations and perspectives on the specific role

and powers of stakeholder organisations in policy formulation, governance and management of education have tended to dissipate valuable effort to improve service delivery. There must be clear political direction to ensure that service delivery must have priority and be accelerated.

I have stressed the importance of the effectiveness of institutions for governance, administration and implementation. My conclusion is that these institutions have reached a higher level of growth in most provinces. However, their contribution to effective service delivery in some instances is less than optimal and will require concerted effort in nurturing and developing. There is an urgent need for a higher degree of commitment and professionalism. This must be attended to at the political level.

Financing of education

There are clear signs that the vast majority of provinces have made significant progress in improving the budgeting process and expenditure planning and management. The pressures that contributed to disturbing expenditure patterns evident from about 1997 have receded significantly. The budget and expenditure trends for personnel and non-personnel expenditure appear to be on a much more favorable trajectory. However, while expenditure management has improved, evidence of serious budget pressure is still evident throughout the system and particularly in areas of Early Childhood Development (Pre-school), Adult Basic Education and Training, provision of textbooks and stationery, Further Education and Training and capital expenditure. The vast majority of district offices are unable to perform their vital function in providing administrative and professional support to schools effectively. The manifestation illustration of these pressures is quite serious in most provinces and there is a groundswell of dissatisfaction about the under-funding of certain essential inputs.

However the causes of this state of affairs are somewhat complex and cannot be reduced to whether or not budgetary allocations are sufficient. There are still considerable inefficiencies in the system on account of high failure and repetition rates. This results from low rates of success in learning and teaching across the system. The need to address the causes of high failure and repetition rates remains an important priority throughout the system. In this regard, numerous initiatives have been introduced to improve conditions in the system that are simultaneously aimed at reducing over-enrollment caused by under- and over-age learners and improving the effectiveness of learning and teaching. The age of admission policy and age-grade norms, which are aimed at addressing the former problem, is in the first year of implementation. Although it will take some time before the positive effects of these norms is fully reflected in the system, we

remain hopeful that they will have the desired effect. However, the potential impact of these norms are reduced on account that we do not yet have adequate provision for Grade R – to cater for children who turn six – and suitable alternatives for over-age learners.

It is clear that some extraordinary interventions will be required to make these alternatives possible, given our constitutional obligations, the relationship between the availability of these alternatives and the factors that contribute to over enrolment and inefficiencies in the system. My Department is currently working hard at trying to find creative ways of implementing Grade R provision and for extending alternatives for over-age learners through Further Education and Training. Our success in this regard will depend on whether we are able to find solutions to the short-term fiscal pressures that have so far severely limited the scope of possibilities in this regard.

The solution to the present financial pressure is also linked to our efforts to improve educator effectiveness across the board, but particularly in languages, mathematics and the sciences. In this regard, all provinces have introduced strategies to improve educator professionalism; to turn around under-performing and dysfunctional schools; to improve the matriculation pass rate; and to improve whole school development. I referred above to some of the strategies in this regard that are being implemented in provinces.

Capacity for effective management and administration

The capacity for effective management and administration of education varies dramatically between provinces and even within some provinces. Some provinces continue to function fairly effectively, while others have shown dramatic gains in rolling back earlier problems. However, a few provinces continue to suffer the burden of very serious shortcomings in capacity across the system. Many of the present problems have their roots in the intractable shortcomings inherited from the former homelands and “independent” states. Without in any way minimising the complexity of the shortcomings, it is clear that present problems revolve around poor development and implementation of systems for management and administration.

The poor state of management and administration effectiveness begs an important question: why, six years after the first democratic elections, do the weaknesses and shortcomings continue to persist? A few generic reasons are evident from my assessment of conditions in provincial departments:

1. Owing largely to budgetary factors, there are a large number of vacant posts in those provincial administrations that present the most severe shortcomings. Many of these vacancies exist in strategic posts related to financial management and professional support services to schools.
2. Personnel are doing work beyond their capacity and unable to cope with their responsibilities
3. Systems are poorly developed and proper procedures are not always implemented.
4. Administration procedures are sometimes unnecessarily complex and time-consuming, which is not conducive to effective service delivery.
5. Poor capacity and weak administrative support systems at institutional (school and college) level, coupled with pressure that arise from a very low resource base, place additional demands on administrative systems at regional and provincial head office levels.
6. Uncertainty about budgets and pressures on provincial budgets result in *ad hoc* and unpredictable responses to requests for vital services.
7. Procurement and professional support systems, in particular, is taking tremendous strain resulting in delays in the delivery of services.
8. Finally, many provinces are finding it very difficult to recruit staff with the appropriate competence and experience for particular posts.

In the provinces where the above problems are most acute, indications are that the present shortcomings in management and administration result in accumulated backlogs, which in turn, place additional pressure on already weak system performance. The result is a vicious cycle of administrative breakdown and a cumulative decline in capacity.

Effectiveness of policy implementation

Officials in provincial head offices and district offices expressed strong concerns about a perceived "policy overload". They spoke passionately about the difficulties that arise from trying to implement many complex policies all at the same time. The volume of policies to be implemented, coupled with a lack of co-ordination

between the respective components responsible for individual policies, requests for information and interventions directed at schools, have contributed to an approach that is *ad hoc* and fragmented. Provincial head office officials and, particularly, district officials argue that this state of affairs removes the element of predictability necessary for effective planning of their work and valuable energy is dissipated as a result.

It would be unwise to underestimate the scope and scale of the enterprise to transform apartheid education. Even with the benefit of hindsight it remains clear that there was no option but to perform urgent and comprehensive surgery on the apartheid education apparatuses which were fundamentally untenable and antithetical to the progressive agenda of a democratic government. It must be acknowledged that the comprehensive and extensive reformulation of education policy and law was unavoidable. However, it must also be acknowledged that the perceived "policy overload" is relevant in any assessment of implementation effectiveness, particularly if we are to find effective solutions aimed at accelerating and improving effective service delivery.

I believe that the key problem relates to fragmentation with respect to communication and implementation strategies. The priority therefore is urgently to improve co-ordination and to systematise the sequencing and integration of policies and interventions in our programme for implementation. For my part, I will ensure that institutions such as the Council of Education Ministers (CEM), the Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM), and the various HEDCOM sub-committees take further steps to improve co-ordination and integration. I will also call on my provincial colleagues to ensure that similar steps are taken to do likewise with respect to institutions at provincial level. I have already called on my department to give considered attention to how integration and co-ordination between national and provinces can be improved.

I have already commented on some other praise-worthy projects being implemented across all provincial departments. These projects appropriately focus on the centrality of General and Further Education and Training, and the improvement of learning and teaching. They include strategies aimed at school improvement, educator professional development and improvements in learning and teaching methodologies, assessment, strategies and community involvement. However, there is evidence that some of the responses to clear educational challenges appear to have become routinised to the extent that they are implemented as a set of mechanical steps without due regard being given to feasibility and their impact. Too often, problems and challenges in education invoke conditioned responses without sufficient analysis of the nature of the problem and feasibility of solutions.

Despite the current budgetary pressures, I believe that there is considerable scope to improve the effectiveness with which we in education are able to convert financial resources into having a real impact on learning and teaching. Our efforts are focused on developing the competence of educators in facilitating learning, the competence of School Governing Bodies and the provision of adequate support services to schools. However, there is a continuing tendency to use discretionary funding for projects that are not adequately conceived, planned and implemented. There is an over-reliance on workshops and consultants that respond to quick and ill-conceived briefs. Although there is very little hard data available, evidence suggests that the impact of these projects is less than satisfactory thus far.

There are some planning and administration rigidities that impede effective service delivery. We are constantly confronted with situations where performance of professional duties is rendered less effective because essential non-personnel inputs, such as the availability or total unavailability of transport, is not available. There are some district offices in the country where highly skilled personnel are unable to visit schools because of restrictions on the availability of transport. This is unacceptable because the high expenditure on personnel cannot be effectively converted into real impact through the functions that these personnel are expected to perform. It is essential that we continue with our efforts to reform and improve management and provision regulations to allow for a more rational managerial approach to service delivery.

This round of visits to provinces has provided further evidence of an apparent divergence between certain government policies and public perceptions about these policies. This phenomenon is illustrated in some of the responses encountered from educators and parents about government's policies on corporal punishment, sex education and the rights of pregnant girls to continue with their schooling. These perceptions raise significant challenges for the effective implementation of key strategies aimed at coping with and preventing HIV/AIDS while simultaneously upholding human rights. We will clearly have to work even harder to ensure that people understand clearly the importance of government policies to ensure that the provinces are able to implement effectively such policies.

PART TWO: PROGRESS WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TIRISANO

Programme 1: HIV/AIDS

All provinces have funds set aside to combat the scourge of HIV/Aids. Most of the funds are obtained from Provincial allocations, conditional grants and funds from the HIV/AIDS National Co-ordination Project.

All the provinces have made progress with the advocacy campaign and training of educators at school level. The level of awareness among learners and educators was enhanced further by the distribution of the guidelines on HIV/AIDS for Educators prepared by the Department of Education. However it is not possible yet to assess the impact of the campaign in a qualitative way. There are challenges that have to be overcome. Cultural and religious communities are still against the teaching of sex education in schools. While there are reports of the success of the campaign in schools, there are very few programmes that target members of the public in general.

All provinces distributed the National Policy on HIV/AIDS for learners and educators in Public Schools, and students and educators in Further Education and Training institutions. (Government Notice No 20372 of August 1999). There are however challenges which arise from the HIV/AIDS policy. These have been highlighted chiefly by KwaZulu-Natal where the incidence of HIV/AIDS is very high. Challenges that have been cited include the following:

- Where an infected teacher's condition deteriorates to the extent that a substitute teacher has to be provided, there are additional cost to the Department.
- Where a teacher's condition degenerates and his attendance becomes erratic, steps, for example counseling, may not be when the teacher's HIV status has not been disclosed.
- Where a learner can no longer attend school because she is succumbing to an AIDS-related illness – could the school appoint itinerant teachers to visit the sick learners in their homes. In the rural areas where learners' homes are far from the school, when and how does the teacher get to the learner's homes?
- Sick rooms for physically incapacitated learners may have to be built in schools, with additional cost, not forgetting that some of the schools do not even have sufficient learning space.

- The Psychological Guidance and Special Education services may have to be expanded so that when the need arises relevant counseling and education support may be provided to both infected and affected teachers and learners.
- How to incorporate estimates for the impact of HIV/AIDS when the budgets are drawn up. It is not yet possible to make any accurate provision in the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) when accurate statistics and projections are not available?
- The physical planners may have to revisit their plans for the building of schools in view of the learner enrollment figures, which may begin to decline gradually or even rapidly.
- Teachers in class may have to become more creative in their presentations in order to ensure that the curriculum is equally accessible to all learners regardless of their health condition.

In all provinces there is a shortage of trained personnel to handle the teaching of life skills. It appears that educators who are sent for training feel uncomfortable with the training. The reason for this is that they do not have the guidance and counseling skills to handle learners infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, and are not involved in guidance and counseling in schools where they teach. These educators also do not use the skills they acquire as they do not feel comfortable to speak about their own sexuality. While learners in Grades 1 to 4 have life skills as a learning area it is often found that the scope of the area is so large that very little time is devoted to HIV/AIDS.

Only learners who are following Curriculum C2005 receive life skills training. There is very little or no life skills training offered in the Grades still following the old curriculum. This leaves about half of the school going population with no life skills training. For the year 2000 learners in Grades 5, 8, 9 10, 11 and 12 who follow the old curriculum have no life skills training at school level. In almost all the provinces much emphasis is placed on examination subjects. These learners therefore remain exposed, especially considering that they fall within the age group which is already sexually active. They do not have sex education in the classroom and thus depend on programmes that are run outside the classroom.

It has not been possible to assess the impact of current campaigns against HIV/AIDS as there are no indicators. Although some schools and clinics continue to distribute condoms, teenage pregnancy has been reported to be on the rise in KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Northern Province. The North West reported a decrease in teenage pregnancy among school going youth. Provincial officials at District level attribute this

decrease to the success of the programmes that are conducted at school and at local level. This is an area which has to be investigated further.

Programme 2: School effectiveness and teacher professionalism

Elections of school governing bodies were successfully conducted in most schools in the provinces. Some provinces have completed training the new governing bodies. There are however a few challenges facing the governing bodies:

Most members of governing bodies in rural areas have low literacy levels. This makes training difficult as they do not cope with the material presented in training manuals. Migration of literate members of society to urban areas reduces the number of persons available to serve on the governing bodies.

The separation of the concept of school governance from management poses challenges for most school governing bodies even for governing bodies with literate members. As a result there is often tension between the principal and members of the governing bodies. Governing bodies tend to see themselves as employers even for educators who are state employed and tend to interfere in professional matters. A typical example is when disciplinary action of one kind or another has to be instituted against an educator.

School success depends on a well-functioning school governing bodies. Most of the schools that are functioning properly are reported to have well functioning school governing bodies. This is the case not only for former Model C but for other schools including those in rural areas.

Educator development is addressed in all the provinces through the implementation of the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS). The DAS has an instrument which is used to identify personal and professional needs of serving educators. Such information is used to plan and provide relevant (INSET) Programmes in order to enhance learner achievements. However it would be important in the implementation of the system to guide educators and education unions on issues to be assessed to ensure that the appraisal system is clarified and transparent.

Intensive educator training is undertaken in most provinces on an ongoing basis as we continue to phase in the new curriculum. Provincial departments of education have also taken the inauguration of teacher awards to recognise excellence in education as well as an attempt to boost educator morale.

School safety and vandalism continue to be a problem in most provinces. Provinces have adopted different strategies to address the problems. The strategies that have been adopted are implemented in collaboration with the South African Police Service (SAPS), in all provinces except Mpumalanga. Although all provinces have links with the SAPS, seven of the provincial departments of education do not have formal links with the SAPS under the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS). Only Free State and KwaZulu-Natal have formalised partnership with the SAPS under the NCPS. The degree of success of school safety programmes varies from province to province depending on cooperation among the participating partners. In the Gauteng Province, where reported crimes have been investigated only after two weeks, have been reported. While these strategies point us in the right direction, an ideal situation would be an increase in the "ownership" of the school by the communities they serve. It is in this way, that schools would become community centres.

The elimination of infrastructure backlogs continues to be a challenge for most provinces, particularly those with large rural areas for example, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Northern Province. The issue of providing services (water and sanitation particularly) continues to be a challenge for the provinces with a large number of farm schools as is the case in the Free State and North West. In such provinces the situation is exacerbated by low numbers of learners, which make some of the schools not viable educational institutions. Provincial departments continue to examine alternatives, which in some cases may result in having to merge farms schools. This however would require the provincial departments to consider building boarding facilities to cater for learners who come from long distances to attend the school. Very few contracts have been entered into with farmers in eight of the provinces, because of lack of administrative capacity and the resistance of farmers.

Programme 3: Literacy

The development of education provisioning for adults is at different stages in the different provinces. ABET centres are used in most provinces as finishing schools for candidates that could not pass the senior certificate at school level rather than concentrating on literacy programmes. This then tends to skew the subject offering in favour of academic subjects for senior certificate rather than literacy.

Inadequate resources have been set aside for Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) from provincial budgets. Most of the ABET programmes are funded through donor assistance, notably the European Union in KwaZulu-Natal and the Swedish International Development Agency in North West. There is a shortage of ABET educators in all the provinces. Tuition is offered by full-time educators supplemented by unemployed qualified educators on a part-time basis.

Provincial departments of education are implementing within available resources some form of ABET. In the Western Cape the issue of ABET does not appear to be a priority or urgent issue, and no programme has been set up and no resources have been allocated to combat illiteracy. This in part may be due to the fact that the African population constitutes a minority, but it is not a satisfactory reason.

While the policy framework is in place, the system is not yet developed sufficiently to cater for all adult learners particularly those who are illiterate. In some cases there is a shortage of staff within provincial departments of education to collect and capture information on adult learners. There are no developed systems for Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) and assessment. The situation must improve in time as the implementation of Tirisano progresses.

Programme 4: Further education and training

Restructuring of further education and training and higher education systems is continuing in all the provinces. Initiatives to rationalise and incorporate colleges of education into the higher education institutions will be completed by 1 January 2001. Provincial plans differ on what the each individual province

will do with the colleges that will not be incorporated. Some provinces have plans to convert these into FET institutions or educator development centres.

Plans have been made to restructure the technical college sector. Approximately 150 existing technical colleges will be merged into 40 – 60 multi-campus institutions in the further education and training band. These multi-campus institutions will through a process set out in the FET Act, 1999 be declared FET institutions. The Department of Education in collaboration with the National Business Trust has established a College Collaboration Fund (CCF) which is targeted at the improvement of the management and delivery of services at these multi-campus institutions. One of the programmes of the CCF is an International Exchange Programme (IEP) through which middle managers in the technical colleges are placed at overseas institutions for a period of three months to understudy their counterparts. Approximately 24 educators, selected from all the provincial technical colleges, have been placed on this exchange programme for the period 28 August to 30 November 2000. Preparations are under way to send the next group of educators after November 2000.

Provincial departments of education have put great effort towards improving the end-of-the-year senior certificate results. The focus is on improving the skills of Grade 12 learners in a variety of subjects with particular attention given to schools that under-performed in the 1999 examinations. In most provinces schools that had a pass rate of less than 40% have been targeted. The approach used by most provincial departments of education is to hold extra classes over weekends, holding winter schools, and the introduction of trial examinations. All provinces held preparatory examinations this year.

A concern that is recognised by all the provinces is the focus on Grade 12 learners. It is the view of most of them that a strategy for improving Grade 12 performance must include the entire Senior phase, Grade 10 to 12. There have been no clear activities reported that indicate that provincial departments have started with such an approach. If they have, this has not been reported.

Programme 5: Organisational effectiveness

All the provinces are making progress with linking departmental plans to the budget. Provincial plans in the main reflect both national and provincial plans. The major challenge is dealing with the split in the budget between personnel and non-personnel expenditure. Table 1 reflects the situation for the 2000/01 financial year.

Table 1: State Budgets of Provincial Education departments for 2000/01

PROVINCE	Personnel		Non-personnel		TOTAL
	Expenditure		Expenditure		
	(R'000)	(%) of Total	(R'000)	(%) of Total	
Eastern Cape	6 672 955	90.4%	706 140	9.6%	7 379 095
Free State	2 651 950	86.3%	420 889	13.7%	3 072 839
Gauteng	5 823 569	85.2%	1 011 915	14.8%	6 835 484
KwaZulu-Natal	7 344 688	90.0%	813 528	10.0%	8 158 216
Mpumalanga	2 653 844	91.3%	253 231	8.7%	2 907 075
North West	3 320 265	91.6%	303 691	8.4%	3 623 956
Northern Cape	793 533	82.4%	169 806	17.6%	963 339
Northern Province	5 623 160	90.5%	588 805	9.5%	6 211 965
Western Cape	3 547 292	87.0%	530 557	13.0%	4 077 849
TOTAL	38 431 256	88.9%	4 798 562	11.1%	43 229 818
1) Source: National Treasury					

All the provinces are making efforts to increase non-personnel expenditure, which in most cases accounts for less than 15% of the provincial education budget, while the personnel expenditure is more than 85%. Only the Northern Cape has a non-personnel expenditure greater than 15%.

The impact of the conditional grants is appreciated by all the provincial departments of education. It is through these grants that provinces have realised the implementation of programmes, which would not have been possible through the line budget. The distribution of the grant is shown in Table 2. The conditional grant for the financial year 2001/01 is R272 million. Of this amount R70 million is allocated to the national Department and R202 million to provincial departments.

Table 2: Conditional grants for the 2000/01 financial year

Pro v	Programmes and allocations													
	CUR	FET	SS	DDP	QA	TD	EMD &G	SD	EMIS	COM	TR	SP	HIV	Total

													/	
													AID	
													S	
EC	1511 1					5400	2256	1141 2	1584	109 1			2000	3885 4
FS	4872						4609	2615						1209 6
GA	7587	1369		1200 0			2201	459						2361 6
KZ N	9055	7538	3759	9180	193 7	1316	9257	2253			147 0			4576 5
MP	4453		1885				4620	2558				500		1401 6
NC	600	1096	530				1229					193		3648
NP	1242 0	7638	926	8022	159 4		2877							3347 7
NW	3732	1864	1000	4807	126 4		1300		1393					1536 0
WC	7048				145 0		3740	1150				580		1516 8
TO TA L	648 78	207 05	810 0	340 09	62 45	671 6	320 89	204 47	297 7	10 91	14 70	12 73	200 0	202 000

Programmes that are funded through the conditional grants included:

- Curriculum development and training (CUR);
- Further Education and Training (FET);
- Safety in schools (SS);
- District development (DDP);
- Quality Assurance (QA);
- Teacher Development (TD);
- Education Management Development and governance (EMD + G)
- Systems development (SD);
- Development of education management information systems (EMIS);

- Communication (COM);
- Transformation (TR);
- Strategic Planning (SP); and
- HIV/AIDS

Progress has been made by most provinces towards streamlining processes for the procurement and distribution of learning support materials. Most of the provinces manage the process from the provincial office of the department to cater for rural schools. Only Gauteng and the Western Cape have an open system which allows schools to purchase their learning support materials. A few other provinces, Northern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, are moving in the direction of an open system for those schools which have the management capacity. Table 3 shows amounts allocated by each province for the procurement and distribution of learning support materials for the years 2000 and 2001.

Table 3: Comparison of provincial budget allocations for the procurement of learning support materials for the year 2000 and 2001

Province	Amount reserve for textbooks (R millions)	
	Year 2000	Year 2001
<i>Eastern Cape</i>	120.0	176.0
Free State	72.1	94.0
Gauteng	95.4	100.01
KwaZulu-Natal	156	110.0
Mpumalanga	53.0	70.0
Northern Cape	27.7	30.0
Northern Province	148.3	170.0
North West	65.2	56.0

Western Cape	57.0	113.0
TOTAL	794.7	919.0

All the provinces have reported increases in their allocations for LSM except KwaZulu-Natal and North West. The amounts reflected for the two provinces probably exclude allocations for stationery. Current values show an over all increase of R124.3 million compared to the year 2000. I have requested my Department to undertake provincial visits during the month of October 2000 to monitor the state of readiness of provincial departments in preparation for the opening of schools in January 2001. My report later this year will include a full report in this regard.

Some of the provincial departments of education (Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, North West, Western Cape) are reviewing their organisational structures to achieve efficiency. The developments have been restructuring at head office level as well as at district level. The restructuring at district level has in most cases been budget driven with a view to eliminate overspending. Examples of the restructuring at district level are in the Eastern Cape, the North West where there is almost a 50% reduction in the number of districts. Whether there will be accompanying efficiency gains will be clearer when the restructuring processes are completed and implemented.

Issues that require follow-up by the Department of Education

The provincial visits provided invaluable insights into issues and problems that relate to specific national education policies. These insights have assisted us to strengthen our efforts to clarify policies and support effective implementation strategies. In this regard, I have asked my Department to pay particular attention to clarifying and addressing issues and problems raised during the visits in respect of the following:

- i. National Norms and Standards for School Funding - ensuring especially that the needs of poorer schools are addressed. This will include examining closely the mechanisms by which resources are distributed to the different schools.

- ii. Further Education and Training - to design strategies to improve learning at the senior phase (Grade 10 –12).
- iii. Adult Basic Education and Training - to ensure adequate provision and improvement of the quality and relevance of programmes to reduce illiteracy.
- iv. Implementation of Curriculum 2005 - monitoring of progress as we approach the introduction of the new curriculum in the FET phase.
- v. Teacher Development - especially training in outcomes based education as we continue to phase in the new curriculum.
- vi. Farm schools - ensuring that contacts/agreements between the MEC and each farmer are signed and improvements of conditions in schools are effected.
- vii. Education for Learners with Special Education Needs; and
- viii. HIV/AIDS – to sustain the campaign and to ensure that parents are involved in the fight against the scourge of the disease

THE WAY FORWARD

I believe that the provincial visits served the purpose of providing information that is qualitative and rich because it springs from an interactive process. This has assisted in achieving my objective: to make this report more analytical than the previous reports. We managed to achieve this objective without undermining the other important objective of this report which was to assess progress in respect of specific activities outlined in the Tirisano implementation plan.

I will now initiate discussions in Council of Education Ministers (CEM) to focus attention on strategies to deal with the specific issues identified in the areas listed below. I have also directed that my Department to facilitate discussions in the Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM) to formulate approaches in response to each of these identified areas:

- i. Consolidating and extending existing good practice and success stories;

- ii. Improving the effectiveness of institutions for governance, administration and implementation;
- iii. Continuing with our efforts to address problems related to financing of education;
- iv. Improving capacity for management and administration;
- v. Improving the effectiveness of implementation; and
- vi. Responding to the issues that require follow-up by the Department of Education.

The above areas will collectively constitute a key focus of our work for the next quarter.