

EQUAL EDUCATION'S



PRESENTATION TO THE
APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE

ON THE 2022
APPROPRIATION BILL

OVERVIEW

1. The right to basic education
2. Basic education funding trends
 - 2.1. Consolidated budget
 - 2.2. Infrastructure
3. Expenditure
4. Higher education
5. Recommendations

1. SOUTH AFRICA'S CURRENT CONTEXT

As we move into a new phase of the pandemic, the need to mitigate the immediate and long term consequences of Covid-19, as well as the burdensome systemic and historic inequalities on our schools, has become overwhelming.

1. SOUTH AFRICA'S CURRENT CONTEXT

PRE COVID-19

Before the pandemic, South Africa's education system was already characterised by :

- inadequate funding
- inequality
- poor service delivery
- decreasing per learner expenditure
- a chronic lack of basic and safe resources

IMPACT OF COVID-19

Covid-19 has also created unique challenges :

- severe budget cuts
- high learning losses as a result of school closure.
- remote learning
- Increased hunger and poverty
- Additional costs for the sector (PPE etc.)

2. THE RIGHT TO BASIC EDUCATION

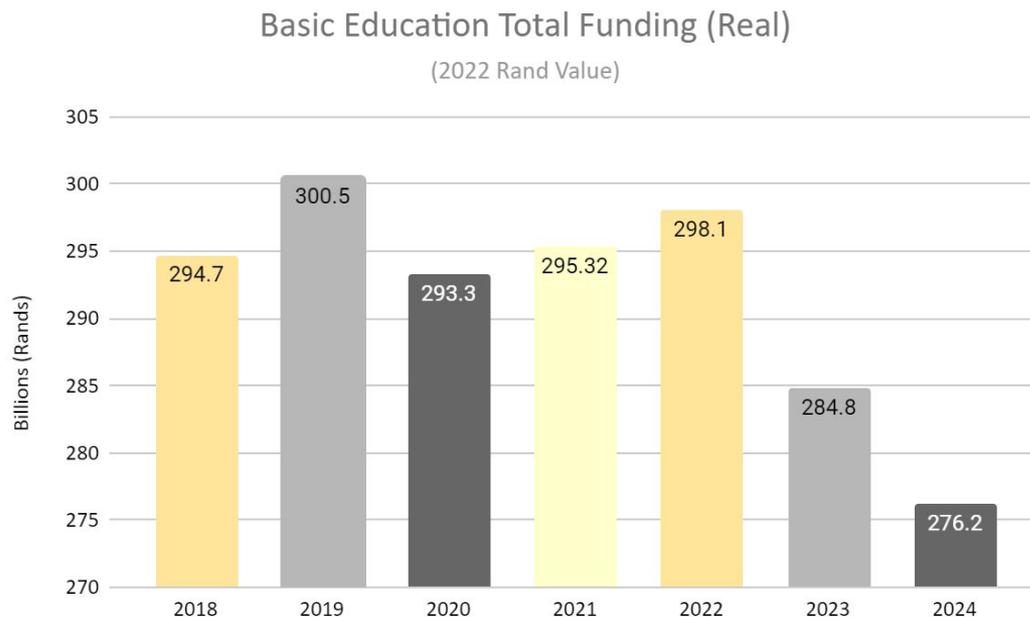
- Immediately realisable
- Intrinsically linked to the realisation of equality, dignity, and freedom for all
- Courts have recognised certain core components of the right including: safe and appropriate infrastructure, furniture, teaching and learning materials such as textbooks, and scholar transport

“The single most important investment any country can make is in its people. Education has intrinsic and instrumental value in creating societies that are better able to respond to the challenges of the 21st century.”

– South Africa’s National Development Plan

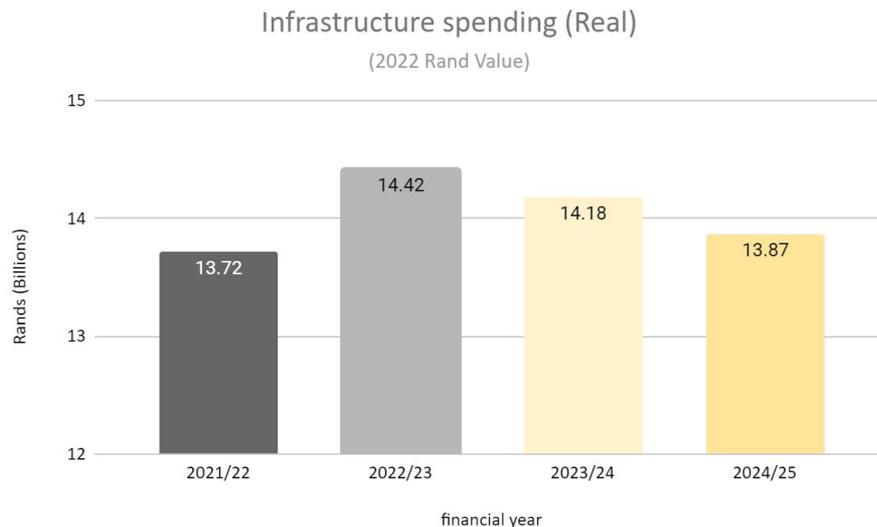
3. BASIC EDUCATION TRENDS - CONSOLIDATED BUDGET

- deep and regressive cuts made to basic education in the past two years are not continued.
- real growth in the 2022 budget
- over the medium term we see that these funding levels are not sustained
- these funding projections do not reflect the additional and unique challenges that basic education faces as a result of COVID-19



3. BASIC EDUCATION TRENDS - INFRASTRUCTURE

- the Minimum Norms and Standards for School Infrastructure deadlines have not been met
- COVID-19 had a big impact on many school infrastructure projects were postponed or canceled
- our existing infrastructure resources are fastly deteriorating
- we are also seeing that infrastructure funding is increasing in 2022/23 by approximately R700 million.
- beyond 2022/23 infrastructure funding once again decreases in real terms.



1. EXPENDITURE

Expenditure issues in the basic education sector and fundamentally undermine government's functionality.

- Since 2012/13 at least R2.7 Billion has been irregularly spent through the Accelerated School Infrastructure Delivery Initiative (ASIDI).
- Between 2011 and 2019, 30 percent of ASIDI funding was not even spent.

Both National Treasury, and the Appropriations Committee, along with other key players are mandated to take an active role in the oversight and capacity-building of provincial and municipal governments and their departments.

1. HIGHER EDUCATION

Access to higher education is an **important socio-economic right**. A tertiary qualification significantly improves an individual's employment prospects, and the sector is essential to **economic growth**. It therefore remains a critical **responsibility of the State to ensure that higher education is accessible**.

- In 2012 a report commissioned by Higher Education Minister Blade Nzimande was completed.
- The report found that free university education for the poor is feasible and should be pursued, even if the costs are high.
- However, little progress was made on the recommendations of the report.

1. HIGHER EDUCATION

While the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) would be the appropriate channel to ensure that students from poor and working class households access higher education institutions the scheme has for years been dysfunctional.

During a parliamentary portfolio committee on higher education meeting in February 2021:

- Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) revealed that it was still owed R430 million by NSFAS
- Wits University stated that the net outstanding for 2020 is approximately R150 million.
- North-West University (NWU) stated that R38 million for last year was still outstanding.

1. RECOMENDATIONS

- Advocate for basic education to receive funding that grows in line with learner enrolment and inflation and is pro poor and gender inclusive.
- Call on the National Treasury to provide meaningful oversight of the sector.
- Engage National Treasury on the decision to reduce infrastructure funding over the medium term, once inflation is taken into account.

- Ensure that PEDs have sufficient funding to meet the national minimum thresholds for per learner funding.
- Ensure that National Treasury and DHET, develop a cohesive policy that ensures that all learners have access to higher education.
- Hold DBE and PED's to account for irregular expenditure, underspending, and fruitless and wasteful expenditure.

Thank you for the
opportunity to
present to this
committee.



