



higher education
& training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING, MR
MDUDUZI MANANA**

2014 – 2024 DECADE OF THE ARTISAN

UMFOLOZI TVET COLLEGE, ESIKHAWINI CAMPUS

PROGRAMME THEME: “IT’S COOL TO BE A 21ST CENTURY ARTISAN”

Programme Director

MEC for Education, Ms NP Nkonyeni MPL

The District Mayor, Cllr. TBV Mnchunu

The Principal of Umfolozi TVET College, Mr SZ Zungu

The LGSETA Administrator, Mr Nqaba Nqandela

Distinguished Guests, in particular the social partner representatives from Industry,
Community and Municipalities

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning,

To ensure that need for artisans for the economy and job creation is given the highest possible profile in the country; the Minister declared 2013 as the Year of the Artisan in February 2013 and the Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training became a champion of this advocacy programme.

All provinces were visited and over 13 000 young people from schools were involved in a process to encourage young people in Grade 8 and 9 to consider artisan development as the preferred option for a career and not only a university qualification. The Year of Artisan programme was so successful that I then decided to extend the programme over the next ten years to continue to build the emphasis. The revised programme known as the Decade of the Artisan was launched in February 2014 at Ekurhuleni East College in Springs, and is being rolled out every quarter until 2024. The Decade of the Artisan advocacy programme has a focus on employers opening up workplaces for more artisan learners, particularly apprenticeships. To achieve such a significant growth not only needs considerable investment and commitment by all artisan development role players with a special focus on workplaces in South Africa, but will also require sustained, committed and high profile political leadership. The lack of artisans in our country could have a devastating impact on our economy down the line as artisans play a crucial role in the delivery of services, especially in engineering trades. At present, the average age of artisans is 55 years old. This means that within the decade, artisanship will become a really scarce skill. If we do not have enough artisans to meet the demands of business, business will go elsewhere.

Through this programme, we aim to create a pipeline of qualified artisans who can play a crucial role in growing the emerging sectors of our economy such as Oil and Gas. This programme also gives young people the necessary information they need on how to become a qualified artisan and become gainfully employed.

That is why after much consideration, and re-evaluating the programme for the Decade of the Artisan, we saw it fit to move the focus from learners in the TVET colleges, because we have a lot of them studying at colleges, but we have less and less number of employers willing to open up their doors and take these learners to go and do experiential training in their companies. The response from young people wanting to participate has been overwhelming. Many aspirant artisans remain unemployed due to the lack of opportunities at host companies to complete the required in-service training, this in particular our girls who want to become artisans, who are still unfortunately being discriminated against by the system.

Following completion of the course at a TVET college, young people who have theoretical knowledge of artisanship but have not been able to find placement at a host company are placed in an 18 month apprenticeship with a relevant and suitable host company. There they get to sharpen their skill, prepare for the trade tests and receive valuable work experience. Thereafter, they return to be examined for their trade test which is the final hurdle that enables them to become fully certified and qualified artisans. Many of the newly qualified artisans have returned to full time positions in these companies. The focus is mainly on building skills in boiler making, welding, fitting and turning and the electrical trades, as these trades continue to be the priority skills required in the market. To name but a few, the following skills are needed and in high demand: bricklayer, carpenter, electrician, millwright, boilermaker, carpenter and joiner, plumber, painter, plasterer, welder and pipe fitter amongst others.

The artisan training space has moved away from a period of great uncertainty to one of certainty and clarity. This has in turn paved the way for the pace of delivery of qualified artisans into the South African economy to increase.

1. Stronger collaboration between government, business and labour, as well as communities, arising mainly out of the National Skills Accord (NSA); and
2. A multi-pronged strategy to make Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges function as high quality institutions that produce critical middle-level skills and are integrated with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF); the general and the higher education landscapes; SETAs; employers – both private and public; and unions.

The event is divided into two sessions: The morning session with the stakeholders and the Afternoon session with the learners.

- Here, I get to engage more with public and private employers with the aim of getting them to open up their workplaces for artisan learners and to become more involved with World Skills South Africa Skills Competition Programme. We have a consultative Imbizo style session with the following stakeholders who are involved in artisan development.

➤ The Artisan Ambassador Training Programme

To ensure that the programme leaves an impact at the community within the footprint of the college, a workshop is held in the morning at the TVET College with local Community Development Workers, Life Orientation Educators, Ward Committee Members, Career Guidance Counselors, and Student Support Services officers from the college to capacitate them to become “Artisan Development Ambassadors” by giving them career guidance strategies on artisan related careers and through assisting persons in their communities after the event with registration at the National Artisan Development Support Centre (NADSC-Kwa-Thema) within following categories:

- Who are young people (under 35) with relevant engineering qualifications and want to be registered on an artisan learning programme placement database;
- Who are people with at least five years’ artisan related work experience and want to be registered on a RPL placement database;
- Who are employers (government, state owned companies, private sector, community) who want to recruit learners for artisan learning programmes in their organizations; and
- Who are qualified, practicing artisans who wish to be registered on the National Database of Artisans as is required by Section 26C of the Artisan Development.

All of the Community Development Workers, Career Orientation Teachers and Ward Committee members that attended the morning workshop at the College will also be in attendance at the afternoon session to meet the Deputy Ministers and receive letters of recognition as “Artisan Development Ambassadors”.

➤ The National Artisan Development Support Centre

NADSC situated at the Ekurhuleni East TVET College in Kwa-Thema, Springs. The NADSC is thus positioned to collect, collate and report on all data related activities to support national artisan development. As such this is also an interim solution to the development and maintenance of a single national artisan development database as a precursor to a national artisan development database that is integral to the post school education and training management information system.

◆ The NADSC has thus a simple vision of being a one stop shop for all artisan data and related processes. This includes the following services:

◆ Linking SETAs with engineering graduates from TVET Colleges

◆ Linking approved artisan workplaces with TVET Colleges

◆ Matching of supply and demand of artisan learners

◆ Recording and reporting on all artisan related data

◆ Track and trace artisan learners from registration, certification and employment.

➤ The annual Open Week for TVET Colleges

This is where colleges are encouraged to open up their doors and invite learners to come and see what they have to offer, this is done in the form of exhibitions by the college. Other activities and events taking place during the TVET Week and TVET Month include open days, free assessments, regional skills competitions in preparation for future participation in the international World Skills Challenge, college campus tours and numerous other exciting activities.

➤ World Skills South Africa Competition

- ◆ South Africa has been a member of World Skills International (WSI) since 1990. Founded in 1950, World Skills is a global organization that promotes vocational, technological and service oriented education and training. We promote skilled careers in 72 countries and regions, all working with youth, educators, governments and industries to help prepare the workforce and talent of today for the jobs of healthy future. World Skills brings youth, industries, and educators together to give youth the chance to compete, experience, and learn how to become the best in their skill of choice. From the traditional trades to multi-skilled technology careers in the industry and service sectors, supported by partners, industries, governments, volunteers and education institutions. World Skills is making a direct impact on raising the level of skills throughout the world.
- ◆ Membership now spans the Americas, much of North and South-East Asia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). It is worth noting also that the member countries of BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South-Africa), and IBSA (India-Brazil-South-Africa (IBSA)) are all affiliates of WSI, committed to the common goal of growth with sustainability.
- ◆ WSI provides an excellent networking platform for member agencies or bodies, which have national or regional responsibility, for promoting vocational education and excellence in their respective countries. Through the use of cutting edge web and software technologies it is able to provide its members with access to current developments on skills standards, competition events and specialist discussion forums and it promotes artisanship as a career of choice.

- ◆ Within the South African context participation in the World Skills competition holds huge potential to influence the development and employability of the South African Youth. In addition to this it acts as an effective vehicle to increasing awareness of apprenticeship and artisanal skills, raising the standard of vocational education and training and artisanal skills. It has the potential to bring together industry and FET stakeholder and links into the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) : 'Decade of the Artisan'.
- ◆ Subsequent to the launch of World Skills South Africa (WSSA) by the Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training in 2013, the Department: Higher Education and Training set in motion a process to establish and operationalise a formal governance structure for World Skills South Africa under the leadership of Dr Florus Prinsloo, the Acting Chief Director: National Artisan Development.
- ◆ In the interim, to allow for continuity and prepare for the next World Skills Competition in Brazil 2015, the activities of WSSA will be coordinated by the SETA CEO Forum Artisan Development Sub Committee. This is the most appropriate structure to utilise as the majority of the occupations involved in the world skills competitions are artisan related and this subcommittee reports to the SETA CEO Forum. This Sub Committee also has a reporting line to the Human Resource Development Council Artisan Development Technical Task Team.
- ◆ During the month of October 2014, youths aged between 18 (eighteen) and twenty two (22), whom are competent

in one of 22 skills areas/ trades, are invited to register online to participate in regional skills competitions.

- ◆ Regional competitions have been held at TVET Colleges during November 2014 and the winners of these competitions participated in the internationally aligned National competition in Cape Town in January. Winners of the Nationals will be sponsored and coached to represent South Africa at the international “skills Olympics” competition in Brazil 2015.

Some benefits for the youth who compete in competitions

- training, qualifying and competing in the World Skills International competition equals 4 to 5 years of professional training.
- builds character, confidence, commitment and self-esteem
- helps align and increase the quality of the required standards in vocational and education training systems -helps benchmark the educational education training system against industry, public demand, and across borders
- the challenge of a competition brings fun and excitement elements into the teaching and training environment
- provides the validation that mastery of a skill requires practical learning and training over time
- raises quality, promote professional development, and drive improvements in vocational training

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4. A multi-pronged strategy to make Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges function as high quality institutions that produce critical middle-level skills and are integrated with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF); the general and the higher education landscapes; SETAs; employers – both private and public; and unions.

The DHET's overall strategy is to put in place a single, cross-sectoral artisan training system and in parallel, do away with sector-specific programmes coupled with SETA-issued certificates of competence.

One of the most important changes that has occurred as part of the implementation of the new national artisan development system that has been welcomed by industry and by many artisan learners and qualified artisans is the removal of the old industry / SETA / sector based artisan certificates on 1 October 2013 and the implementation of the new national artisan certificate. The new national certificate was developed and implemented through close collaboration between the QCTO and NAMB. Since its introduction on 1 October 2013 over 13 000 new national certificates have been issued.

This new certificate also levels the playing field for employability among persons who qualify and receive the new "red seal" certificate as the route or learning pathway that led to the certificate is immaterial. This means that a person who is trained as an artisan through a learnership or an apprenticeship or recognition of prior learning (RPL) receives exactly the same certificate because they all pass exactly the same trade test. In the past some sectors of the economy has discriminated between programme learners (known as Section 13 learners) and recognition of prior learning candidates (known as Section 28 learners). This new certificate removes this discriminatory practise in the country.

It is also stressed that artisan trade certificates that were previously issued under Section 13 and Section 28 of the Manpower Training Act and Section 26D of the Skills Development Act have absolute equal status in terms of occupational competence and a person with a “red seal” remains a valuable person that can add huge value to an employer.

The overhaul of the SETA landscape and the SETAs themselves was thus a crucial first step in rolling out this strategy. Meanwhile, business, government and labour committed to training 30 000 new artisans with the recent signing of the NSA. Of this figure, 13% is to come from state-owned companies, 31% from government and the majority – 56% – from business.

As part of the NSA, private companies have committed to ramp-up their training-spend to well over the compulsory 1%-of-payroll training levy, a significant proportion of which will be steered towards the TVET colleges.

DHET has highlighted the production of quality, qualified artisans as a key goal of the public TVET sector. TVET colleges have everything going for them to take centre stage in providing the theoretical qualification component of artisan – as well as other occupational training – requirements.

I am sure you will appreciate the fact that, there has been a shift in the TVET college management from regional to national government, as well as a set of multi-pronged initiatives that will ultimately see the 50 public TVET colleges spread across South Africa:

- Offer full qualifications;
- Align programme offerings with local and regional industry needs;
- Ensure effective articulation with both general and higher education;
- Improve programme quality;
- Increase enrolment of youths and adults;
- Develop and attract qualified, full-time teaching staff; and
- Create positive perceptions about colleges as institutions of choice for vocational post-school learning.

It is worth bearing in mind the artisan-technician-engineer ratios set by industry which indicate that for every eight artisans, three will become technicians and one will become an engineer. These ratios are significant for manpower planning at organisational level, but also at the systemic level.

Of course, there is much work to be done by all stakeholders, but it will be interesting to assess the impact that these measures have on boosting our current output of 5 600 qualified artisans every year to the ideal target of 12 500.

Here are some statistics on how artisan development is going in our country. We have a total number of:

- 27 670 of learners registered in artisan learning programs during the period 2013-14 nationally
- 18 110 learners that completed artisan learning programs in 2013-14, nationally
- 81% of learners that registered in artisan learning programs in the same period (2013-14) are YOUTH (persons under 35 years of age)
- Gauteng had the highest number of learners registering on artisan learning programs, registering 7 173 learners in 2013-14, Mpumalanga was the third registering 1 864 learners.
- In conclusion, I would like to urge all employers here today to sign a pledge to assist the college in whatever form they can, be it money or resources.

With this kind of intervention, we hope to reach our targets of producing 30 000 qualified artisans per year by 2030.

I thank you.

