Action Step: National Model

basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

C S T L
CARE AND SUPPORT
FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING
SOUTH AFRICA

Acknowledgements

The National Support Pack has been adapted from the Care and Support for Teaching and Learning Programme (CSTL) SADC Regional Support Pack in consultation with directorates within the national and provincial Departments of Basic Education. It is a guide for implementing the CSTL Programme in South Africa which is aimed at mainstreaming care and support programmes in the education system. This is an ongoing process and as such, the National Support Pack is a working document that will require amendment over time. Any comments or suggestions for improving the National Support Pack are welcomed. Please send your comments or suggestions to the Director-General: Basic Education for the attention of the Health Promotion Directorate; Private Bag X895; Pretoria; 0001.

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Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ART	Antiretroviral Treatment
CSG	Child Support Grant
CSTL	Care and Support for Teaching and Learning
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DBST	District-based Support Team
DOH	Department of Health
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EFA	Education for All
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human Resource Development
GHS	General Household Survey
ILST	Institution-level Support Team
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal(s)
MER	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NIP	National Integrated Plan for Children Infected and Affected by HIV and AIDS
NPO	Not for Profit Organisation
NSP	HIV & AIDS and STI National Strategic Plan 2007– 2011
NSP CSTL	National Support Pack Care and Support for Teaching and Learning
NTT	National Task Team
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PSS	Psychosocial Support
PTT	Provincial Task Team
SA	South Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAPS	South African Police Services
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
SCCS	Schools as Centres of Care and Support
SCF (UK)	Save the Children Fund (United Kingdom)
SGB	School Governing Body
SIAS	National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
UNCRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Action Step Card

National Model

Background

This *Action Step: National Model* contains the CSTL *Conceptual Framework* which articulates the Department of Basic Education's approach to addressing barriers to teaching and learning, in particular for vulnerable children. It provides the overarching framework for the initiation, expansion and coordination of care and support activities, and identifies nine current care and support priority action areas.

The *Conceptual Framework* is intended to provide guidance to all role-players, within and outside of the Department of Basic Education, who support learners and educators in and through schools.

Activities

Before embarking on any care and support programme activities, it is important to consult the *Conceptual Framework*. In particular:

- You and your multi-sectoral partners should be familiar with the strategy outlined in the *Conceptual Framework* to ensure coordinated action and consistency in approach, priorities and programme implementation (*Action Step: Multi-sectoral Networking of Services; Action Step: Advocacy and Communication*).
- Your programme plans, and infrastructure, equipment and human resource audits of needs, as well as budget allocations, must be informed by the nine current care and support priority action areas listed in the *Conceptual Framework*. (*Action Step: Programme Plans; Action Step: Capacity for Implementation*).
- Your support structures at all levels should be guided by the approach adopted in the *Conceptual Framework* to ensure consistent and effective support and programme implementation (*Action Step: Support and Structures*).

For additional information, refer to the following section in the **Background:**

- **Background Reading**, which provides essential background information on rights-based programme development, policy requirements, and on mainstreaming care and support into the education system. It offers an important foundation for many issues you will encounter in your care and support work.

Executive Summary

Introduction

Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) is essential to addressing barriers to education for children in South Africa.

This *Conceptual Framework* articulates the intention of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) to significantly step up efforts to address barriers to education for vulnerable children through mainstreaming Care and Support for Teaching and Learning. The *Conceptual Framework* is intended to provide guidance to all role-players within and outside of the DBE who support learners and educators in and through schools. It defines two broad roles for the DBE, namely:

- To deliver and expand appropriate care and support services in and through schools, and
- To create an enabling environment within the education system for other stakeholders to support learners and educators.

The success of CSTL is ultimately determined by the extent to which we are able to ensure that all children are:

- Enrolled at school at an appropriate age;
- Able to attend school regularly and complete their schooling; and
- Provided with the opportunity and support to enable them to reach their full potential.

Importantly, CSTL is not a new "policy" or "programme" in itself. It is not intended to replace the numerous initiatives that already exist to support vulnerable learners. Rather, **it provides the overarching framework that has to date been lacking** for the initiation and expansion of care and support activities in and through schools. It is intended to coordinate and harmonise implementation to enable the delivery of a seamless package at school level, with the leadership of the Department of Education (national and provincial).

This South African initiative is part of regional efforts to strengthen CSTL within education. The content of this *Conceptual Framework* was informed by local practice and research in CSTL as well as the regional processes in this regard. The *Conceptual Framework* is intended as a guiding document and is included as a companion resource to the *National Support Pack* which constitutes the implementation guidelines and tools for Care and Support for Teaching and Learning.

The *Conceptual Framework* places the care and support needs of teachers centrally to ensuring optimum teaching and learning for all children, especially the most vulnerable. This area will be further developed and expanded in future revisions of this *Conceptual Framework*, with the active participation of educators and their representatives and structures.

Ecological Systems Approach to CSTL

The DBE has adopted an Ecological Systems approach to understanding and addressing barriers to education. The Ecological Systems model recognises that an individual's behaviour is determined by multiple spheres of influence. These range from very direct influences such as the child's relationship with a caregiver, to more indirect influences, such as socio-economic policies. Influences may be positive or negative and each sphere of influence therefore has the potential to increase risk and/or to offer protection.

Applying this approach to CSTL, the DBE recognises that barriers to education include:

- **Intrinsic barriers:** Located largely within the individual child, such as physical, mental and health-related problems.
- **Systemic barriers:** Such as inadequate infrastructure, inappropriate teaching methods or materials,

poorly trained teachers, insufficient support for teachers, and policy and curriculum issues.
- **Societal barriers:** Including severe poverty, unemployment, inadequate care-giving arrangements, child labour and violence against children, and HIV and AIDS.

This CSTL *Conceptual Framework* situates the DBE as a lead agency in addressing school-level barriers to education within a larger collaborative and multifaceted response that addresses the multiple barriers to education that vulnerable children face.

The Need for Care and Support for Teaching and Learning in South Africa

All children require care and support in order to thrive and learn. Some children however, particularly those from very poor communities, have additional support needs.

While South Africa has made good progress with learner enrolment rates for children aged 6 to 14 years since 1994, analyses of attendance by age shows a significant drop in attendance amongst children older than 14 years. In terms of education outcomes, South Africa fares poorly when compared with other countries internationally and regionally. Strikingly, only 36% of Grade 3 learners have age-appropriate literacy whilst 35% have the necessary numeracy skills. Despite pro-poor policy shifts, inequality in education remains a massive challenge. Not surprisingly, children from "disadvantaged" backgrounds – with limited economic resources, lower levels of parental education, or who have lost one or both parents – are less likely to enrol in school and are more prone to dropping out or progressing more slowly than their more advantaged peers.

As previously mentioned, barriers to education for vulnerable children include those within the education system itself (such as poor infrastructure and inadequate teaching materials), societal barriers (such as household poverty, high levels of violence and teenage pregnancy), and barriers which are intrinsic to the child, such as disability or mental illness.

Within these fragile communities and households, the role of the teacher as educator, mentor, role model and caregiver can be central to the wellbeing of vulnerable children. The increasing effects of poverty and HIV and AIDS on school communities simultaneously impacts educators' personal lives *and* places additional responsibilities on them to support learners. Studies which have been undertaken to determine the state of educator wellbeing show a decline in the number of educators in the system and a significant increase in morbidity- and mortality-related attrition amongst educators.

Given the crisis in education and the vulnerability of both learners and educators, the mainstreaming of care and support within the education system is essential for effective teaching and learning to take place.

The Benefits and Challenges of Care and Support in Schools

There are numerous benefits to providing care and support to learners and educators through schools. For the DBE however, the most important single driving factor for mainstreaming CSTL within education is the direct impact of CSTL on core education outcomes – namely improved access, retention and achievement outcomes.

The education system has several comparative advantages over other services when it comes to addressing vulnerabilities of childhood in South Africa. These include the fact that schools are relatively accessible and the schooling system reaches over 12 million children, almost on a daily basis. School-based support allows for the early identification of children at risk and enables service providers to identify needs that might otherwise not be addressed. Providing support to children through schools helps to keep children at school, which in turn helps reduce a child's risks across a range of dimensions. School-based services can also enable the transfer of skills to educators, and improve educator wellbeing.

Notwithstanding the many advantages to schools as sites of care and support, there are several challenges to the realisation of CSTL goals:

• Many educators lack the skills and motivation to provide care and support to children.
• A related challenge is the fact that assessments of school (and educator) performance are based almost entirely on academic outcomes. The criteria on which schools and school staff are evaluated should include consideration of the extent to which they fulfil their care and support mandates.
• Schools can be overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of children requiring assistance and in most instances schools that serve vulnerable communities are under-resourced.
• Human resource constraints and related challenges within other departments can hamper the ability of schools to respond to the needs of vulnerable learners.

Understanding and addressing these challenges is essential to ensuring that mainstreaming care and support within education *strengthens* schools and does not overwhelm them.

The Education Mandate for Care and Support for Teaching and Learning

International and regional agreements acknowledge and protect the right of all children to education. As a signatory, South Africa is obliged to deliver on the provisions of these international agreements and to report on delivery. In summary, these various documents oblige South Africa:

• To make primary schooling compulsory, accessible and available free to all children;
• To take measures to encourage attendance and prevent children from dropping out of school, including special measures to protect particularly vulnerable children; and
• To provide education that ensures the advancement of the cognitive, creative, emotional, mental and physical development of all children to their full potential.

The obligations imposed on states are not only to realise and protect children's rights, but to do so in a holistic manner through the provision of comprehensive programmes. The move towards a holistic approach to service delivery underpins developments in education policy in South Africa since 1994.

Firstly, the DBE is obliged to ensure access to basic education (Grade R to Grade 9) for all children in South Africa; this right is the only right in the Constitution not subject to progressive realisation (dependent on the availability of resources). Secondly, the DBE is bound by the Constitution to progressively improve access to further education and training (Grades 10 to 12). Thirdly, the DBE is required to deliver on a number of additional priorities, namely:

• To provide nutritional support and nutrition education to learners;
• To promote wellness, and prevent and address health-related difficulties;
• To provide appropriate infrastructure conducive to learning and to the health and wellbeing of learners and teachers;
• To enable and support teachers to respond appropriately to the welfare needs of vulnerable children;
• To respond to the emotional, behavioural and mental health and wellness needs of learners and teachers;
• To ensure the safety of learners and educators, including protection from stigma and discrimination;
• To ensure the delivery of quality education through a curriculum and language policy that is flexible enough to accommodate the needs of vulnerable learners;
• To provide adequate basic facilities for co-curricular activities for boys and girls in support of curriculum delivery; and
• To remove material and financial barriers to education for vulnerable learners.

These various obligations are intended to create a safety net of care and support that is inclusive of all learners. The concept of inclusive education is encapsulated in *Education White Paper 6* (2001) entitled *Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System. White Paper 6* forms the cornerstone of the Education Department's response to addressing barriers to education for vulnerable learners.

Creating an Enabling Environment for CSTL

Care and Support for Teaching and Learning cannot be a one-size-fits-all model. It must accommodate multiple and varied care and support requirements and initiatives across different school communities, drawing on multiple stakeholders within each. Underpinning these various initiatives however, is a set of core principles and prerequisites which were identified through extensive consultation with a range of key stakeholders.

Planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of CSTL at all levels should be guided by the following principles:

- The child is at the centre, and all interventions should be in the child's best interest and must seek to involve the child and to build on his/her strengths.
- Schools are best placed to facilitate access to care and support for vulnerable learners.
- Community participation is essential to the successful implementation of CSTL.
- CSTL should build on existing initiatives and structures, and strengthen DBE structures and systems.
- Prioritised interventions must be aligned with policy requirements.
- The provision of a comprehensive package of care and support services in and through schools involves a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach.
- The DBE leads in enabling, coordinating and facilitating the multi-sectoral response with schools.

The CSTL *Conceptual Framework* also identifies several prerequisites for the effective implementation of Care and Support for Teaching and Learning in South Africa. These are characteristics of an education environment which are essential for CSTL and include:

- Adequate human resources;
- Human resource development to strengthen the cadre of education personnel involved in CSTL;
- Well-defined partnerships between the DBE and other government departments, business and non-governmental organisations;
- An enabling policy framework;
- Provisioning and finances to enable the DBE to fulfil its mandate in terms of leadership, coordination and implementation;
- Effective and consultative programme planning;
- Governance, management and support structures at national, provincial, district and school levels; and
- Monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems that are aligned with existing MER systems within the DBE.

Current care and support priorities

The *Conceptual Framework* identifies national care and support *priority* interventions for vulnerable children. These types of interventions are prioritised because they are effective in addressing the systemic, societal and intrinsic barriers to education access, retention and achievement outcomes that are described earlier in the document. They also respond to the policy and legislative mandate place on the Department. Note that while these priorities may be appropriate for the country now, in time these may change as the socio-economic and educational landscape of the country shifts.

Importantly however, interventions within each of these priority areas should be adapted to fit local contexts, and priorities should be reviewed regularly to address the changing needs of learners and educators over time. Priority areas which are covered include:

Nutritional Support	Nutritional support is intended to address barriers to learning associated with hunger and malnutrition. It includes not just the delivery of school feeding programmes, but also measures to ensure food quality, to support the production of food through programmes such as school-based food gardens and to promote healthy lifestyles through amongst others, nutrition education and deworming programmes.
Health Promotion	Health promotion involves a process of enabling educators and learners to increase control over their health and its determinants, thereby improving and promoting their overall health and wellbeing. Health promotion interventions should address the risk and protective factors that impact the wellbeing of educators and learners.
Infrastructure, Water and Sanitation	This priority area involves the provision and maintenance of habitable and appropriate physical school structures designed to meet all of the accommodation requirements of school communities.
Social Welfare Services	This refers to the role of schools and educators in the implementation of child care and protection legislation and in promoting access to social welfare services, enabling documents (such as identity documents [IDs] and birth certificates) and social assistance grants.
Psychosocial Support	Psychosocial support involves the provision of care and support in response to the emotional, mental and social needs of learners and educators. All of these are critical for educational and overall development.
Safety and Protection	Schools should be free of all forms of violence, abuse and bullying. Safety and protection concerns are not limited to the physical infrastructure of the school (such as fencing and gates) but also refer to the psychological and emotional safety of learners and educators.
Curriculum Support	Curriculum support includes efforts to ensure that the curriculum is efficiently and effectively delivered to learners by appropriately skilled and supported educators with the necessary teaching and learning materials.
Co-curricular Support	Co-curricular activities in the context of care and support are intended to support and augment curriculum implementation in and outside of the school. Examples of co-curricular activities include peer education programmes, homework assistance programmes, social and drama clubs and sport-related activities.
Material Support	Material support refers to the provision of resources or services to address material or financial barriers to education, including school fees, uniforms and transport.

The role of the DBE in implementing these priorities is two-fold:

• Directly addressing education-specific elements of vulnerability through schools; and
• Creating an enabling environment for *other role-players* to provide care and support to teachers and learners in and through schools.

Schools functioning optimally as sites of care and support for vulnerable learners will have programmes in place to address all of the above priorities. Most schools however, will require substantial support to enable them to reach this point.

Supporting Implementation of CSTL in SA

Notwithstanding the many challenges that schools face, all school communities, regardless of their level of poverty, functioning, size or capacity, have resources and strengths. These are the building blocks on which every school can begin the journey towards creating an environment which is conducive to Care and Support for Teaching and Learning. The *National Support Pack* is intended to provide guidance at national, provincial and local levels for the roll-out of CSTL.

The *National Support Pack* is structured around 12 Action Steps, each of which is critical to effective mainstreaming of Care and Support for Teaching and Learning within South Africa. It is designed to be flexible as a resource that individuals and teams can use at any time to inform and strengthen efforts to mainstream care and support within schools.

The 12 Action Steps in the *National Support Pack* for CSTL are:

- Create an enabling policy environment.
- Conduct a situation and response analysis.
- Develop a national model.
- Formulate CSTL Programme plans.
- Identify and establish the necessary support and structures.
- Map capacity for implementation.
- Develop necessary materials and tools.
- Establish a multi-sectoral network of services.
- Design effective monitoring, reporting, evaluation and research mechanisms.
- Develop an advocacy and communication strategy.
- Conduct a CSTL pilot.
- Plan for scale-up and sustainability.

Introduction

The Bill of Rights in the South African Constitution has a section dedicated to the rights of children, including the right to education. Since 1994, this right has been reinforced through the development of a number of transformative national education, social and economic policies and through South Africa's stated commitment to realising international education goals (notably Education for All by 2015[a] and Millennium Development Goal number 2 for universal primary education[b]). Despite these significant developments however, vulnerable children still face considerable barriers to education. These barriers impact their ability to access school, to complete schooling and to achieve to their full academic potential.

This *Conceptual Framework* articulates the intention of the DBE to significantly step up efforts to address barriers to education through Care and Support for Teaching and Learning.

The *Conceptual Framework* is further intended to provide guidance to all role-players outside of the DBE who support learners and educators in and through schools. This document will enable these role-players to situate themselves and their work within the context of the national model of care and support, hence creating more streamlined and systemic implementation of care and support at all levels.

The *Conceptual Framework* is therefore intended for use by a wide range of stakeholders – all of whom play an important role in supporting the DBE to achieve its constitutional mandate.

In this introductory section, the parameters of Care and Support for Teaching and Learning are outlined and the rationale and process behind the development of this *Conceptual Framework* are explained.

What is Care and Support for Teaching and Learning?

Care and Support for Teaching and Learning offers a comprehensive, coordinated, multi-sectoral response to address the barriers to teaching and learning for learners and educators. Its goal is to realise the education rights of all children through schools becoming inclusive centres of learning, care and support.

CSTL promotes mainstreaming of care and support into policies, structures, processes and programmes within education. Through CSTL, schools provide care and support for effective teaching and learning by working to **strengthen the protective factors** that promote the wellbeing of children and **reducing the risk factors** that make children vulnerable.

Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) are not new concepts. They have long been recognised as essential elements of an education system that seeks to ensure inclusion of all children of school-going age, to enable children to reach their full potential and to support educators in the important role they play in the lives of children. Care and Support for Teaching and Learning is *at the heart of education*. It is critical to the realisation of the fundamental goals of the South African education system.

Notes

[a]   The Dakar Framework for Action (2000) lays a framework for national plans of action for education to be integrated with wider development and poverty reduction strategies. It recommends a set of time-bound goals and strategies for ensuring "education for all" by 2015.

[b]   The Millennium Development Goals represent renewed commitment from 189 countries towards minimum development standards for the poorest. Millennium Development Goal number 2 is to achieve universal primary education, with the 2015 target of ensuring that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling.

A learner might come from a home where there are social problems – it might be issues around drugs, issues around alcohol, child(ren)-headed households, or a family that is headed by the grandmother where the parents have died, or maybe issues of abject poverty… So the student needs more than just teaching and learning… there is definitely a need for a holistic approach.

Provincial Education official (2010)[1]

The success of CSTL is ultimately determined by the extent to which we are able to ensure that all children are:

• Enrolled at school at an appropriate age;
• Able to attend school regularly and complete their schooling; and
• Provided the opportunity and support to enable them to reach their full potential.

Towards this end, Care and Support for Teaching and Learning aims to create schools that:[2, 3]

• Recognise and build on the strengths of their learners and educators;
• Are located within the communities they serve;
• Have appropriate infrastructure and good water and sanitation facilities;
• Have the necessary educational resources and supplies;
• Employ teachers who are appropriately trained, committed to excellent education, capable, well respected, supported and adequately compensated;
• Include a curriculum that is flexible to the needs of vulnerable learners and helps build:
  – life skills
  – life-affirming values and attitudes
  – health-related knowledge and skills
  – livelihood/vocational skills;
• Provide nutritional support to every child every school day;
• Are safe, supportive, gender-sensitive spaces;
• Institute zero tolerance for violence, sexual abuse, substance abuse, psychological abuse, stigma, discrimination and vandalism;
• Attend to the health needs of learners in partnership with community health services;
• Facilitate access for learners to a range of other services, including care and support for those infected or affected by HIV and AIDS;
• Identify and accommodate children with barriers to learning and development;
• Involve parents and other caregivers; and
• Achieve the above through clearly defined partnerships with other stakeholders and with the active participation of the communities they serve.

Numerous policies and programmes (targeting learners and educators) in South Africa have sought to promote and implement aspects of care and support within schools with varying degrees of success. The devastating impacts of poverty, HIV and AIDS and historical inequalities however, have combined to create a situation in which Care and Support for Teaching and Learning is no longer an optional extra. It is now (more than ever) absolutely essential to the core business of education.

CSTL is not a new "policy" or "programme" in itself. It will not replace the numerous initiatives that already exist to support vulnerable learners. Rather, it will provide the overarching framework within which these various activities will find an encouraging and accommodating home.

Equally important is the fact that CSTL cannot present a one-size-fits-all model for all schools. It needs to accommodate a range of approaches to enable schools to (1) respond to the care and support needs that learners and educators may experience within a particular school community, and (2) take into account the strengths and limitations of each school community and its implementation partners.

Why has this *Conceptual Framework* been developed?

> *The schooling system cannot pretend that its job is purely to teach because we are not teaching machines, we are teaching children who have to be cared for and supported in order for them to succeed.*
>
> *Provincial Education official (2010)*[4]

Improvements in school access, learner retention and education outcomes in South Africa hinge on the ability of the DBE to *engage and lead* its institutions and state and NGO partners in the implementation of Care and Support for Teaching and Learning. This *Conceptual Framework* was developed to support and guide the DBE in this important role.

The Rights enshrined in the *South African Constitution* cannot be realised in the absence of cooperative and coordinated governance. Section 41(1) of the Constitution requires that all spheres of government and all organs of state cooperate, assist and support one another and coordinate actions and legislation.

This *Conceptual Framework* draws its inspiration from the Constitution. It is intended to assist the Government to realise its Section 41 mandate in the sphere of Education. The obligation on the DBE to ensure access to education for vulnerable children is substantive. But the right to education is dependent on the realisation of so many other basic human rights that the task at hand is beyond the scope of any single stakeholder. Overcoming barriers to education for vulnerable children in South Africa is a challenge, more than any other in the history of our democracy, which calls for collaborative, coordinated action from multiple stakeholders.

In 1999, the then Minister of Education issued the *Tirisano Call to Action* to address an education crisis. It followed from an inquiry which concluded that "the educational conditions of the majority of people in this country amount to a national emergency".[5] In the decade that has since passed, many role-players in government and civil society have taken up this call – creating transformative policies and pockets of excellence in education practice. The education reality for most vulnerable children however, has not improved. The sheer scale of vulnerability amongst our learners and educators has created an education crisis of endemic proportions.

While many of the current school-based care and support initiatives have had positive impact on large numbers of learners and (to a lesser extent) educators, efforts to strengthen care and support within and through schools in South Africa have been fragmented, and many good intentions have not found fertile ground to grow. These initiatives have spawned and evolved *outside of any formal framework.* The lack of clarity and coordination has meant that:

- Initiatives are unevenly spread geographically;
- Care and support activities within the education system are poorly harmonised;
- Care and support activities are often not linked to core educational outcomes namely, access, retention and achievement;
- Care and Support for Teaching and Learning is not adequately or uniformly monitored and reported;
- Many non-governmental and community-based organisations working in schools lack an official mandate; and
- Inadequate investments have been made in developing the human resources and other capacity that is needed at all levels to address CSTL within the education system.

This *Conceptual Framework for Care and Support for Teaching and Learning* provides the overarching framework that has to date been lacking. The drafting of this document therefore marks the "end of the beginning" for CSTL in South Africa. It consolidates the current thinking around Care and Support for

Teaching and Learning in order to shape the way in which we move forward. It describes the rationale behind CSTL and **motivates for the mainstreaming of Care and Support within the Education System.**

The *Conceptual Framework* is intended as a companion resource to the *National Support Pack* which constitutes the implementation guidelines and tools for Care and Support for Teaching and Learning. This *National Support Pack* will assist National and Provincial Education Departments to fulfil two defined roles, namely:

• To deliver and expand appropriate care and support services in and through schools; and
• To create an enabling environment within the education system for other stakeholders to support learners and educators.

Who is this document intended for?

The target audience for this *Conceptual Framework* is necessarily broad. The range of stakeholders needed to implement the vision of CSTL includes, but extends well beyond, education. This *Conceptual Framework* targets:

• Decision-makers and managers at national and provincial level within the education system;
• Education officials working at district level to support schools and school clusters;
• School management teams and educators;
• Government officials from other departments (e.g. Social Development, Health, Home Affairs, Public Works and Agriculture) who play a role in addressing barriers to education; and
• Civil society partners and donors who work with and through schools to support vulnerable learners.

Each of these important role-players, irrespective of the focus of their care and support initiatives, should be able to situate themselves and their work within the overarching CSTL *Conceptual Framework*.

What processes informed the development of the CSTL *Conceptual Framework* in South Africa?

CSTL began its life as the Schools as Centres of Care and Support (SCCS) pilot project led by MIET Africa. An initial focus on *care and support* per se was later refined to make reference to *care and support for teaching and learning.* This is in recognition of the fact that care and support are essential to the core business of education and are necessary for the achievement of education outcomes.

Outcomes of the SCCS pilot were presented to Ministries of Education in the Southern African Region and the model was refined and formally adopted in July 2008 by fourteen[c] SADC Member States.[d] A significant milestone for CSTL was the official launch of the initiative at the SADC Education Ministers' Meeting in Kinshasa, DRC, on 18 March 2010. It is being implemented at the regional level between 2009 and 2014,[6] with the expectation that each country will tailor implementation to meet their own particular needs within the parameters of their available resources.

Care and Support for Teaching and Learning in South Africa is therefore part of a wider regional initiative, with consideration given to the unique South African reality. The content of this *Conceptual Framework* was informed by both regional and local processes, including the following:

• A *Baseline Study* was conducted in 2009/2010 to determine the extent of care and support services in place for learners in five SADC Member States, namely: the DRC, Mozambique, Swaziland, South

Notes
[c] Participating countries included: Lesotho, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mauritius and Seychelles.

[d] With start-up funding provided by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

Africa and Zambia. The purpose of the baseline study conducted in South Africa was two-fold. At the national level, the study assessed the readiness of the DBE to lead the adoption and implementation of CSTL. At school level, the study assessed the extent to which schools were currently assisting learners and identified the gaps which exist in the provision of care and support services to especially vulnerable children. The baseline study also formed an integral part of the drafting and development of a monitoring, evaluation and reporting (MER) framework for ongoing assessment of the implementation of the CSTL SADC programme.[7]

- Concurrently, a more in-depth national *Situation and Response Analysis* was undertaken – to gain a clearer picture of care and support strategies and programmes in the South African education system.[8] The research was conducted in all nine provinces and involved interviews and self-administered questionnaires with 92 officials from provincial departments of education (minimum of seven and maximum of 16 per province) and three officials from the National Department of Basic Education. Information was also gathered through informal interviews with Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) officials in seven provinces and through extensive policy and literature reviews.

- A series of inter-provincial forums was organised in SA to provide opportunities for provincial education officials to share their perspectives and perceptions of care and support within education. These forums brought together officials from various directorates[e] within provincial education departments, providing an invaluable opportunity for rich debate and discussion. Importantly, most officials supported the integration of CSTL within the education system, recognising that this was critical to the attainment of basic education outcomes. The forums provided an opportunity for provincial departments to arrive at a common understanding of CSTL, to agree on key terminology and to discuss core principles.

- A *South African National Policy Review* provided clarity on the scope of the education mandate for care and support,[9] nationally, regionally and internationally.

- The *Regional Support Pack* that was developed to support implementation of CSTL in Southern Africa was adapted for the South African context. This customised *National Support Pack* is presented as a series of user-friendly booklets, with guidelines and tools on how to mainstream care and support.

- In August 2010, a two-day workshop was held in Durban to review an earlier draft of the *Conceptual Framework* and consolidate inputs. The workshop brought together representatives from the DBE, provincial education departments, MIET Africa and other civil society stakeholders involved in the provision of care and support in and through schools. Inputs from this workshop informed the final drafting phase.

- In addition to the above, this *Conceptual Framework* draws on lessons from the implementation of Inclusive Education as outlined in *White Paper 6* (including the roll-out of Full Service Schools and the conversion of Special Schools into Resource Schools in selected districts), and on the implementation of various care and support pilot projects in South and Southern Africa e.g. the Schools as Centres of Care and Support Programme[f] (mentioned above) which was piloted in Swaziland, Zambia and South Africa between 2006 and 2008.

- And finally, the *Conceptual Framework* is fundamentally informed by the work of Bronfenbrenner (1979)[10] and his Ecological Systems Approach to understanding human behaviour.

Notes
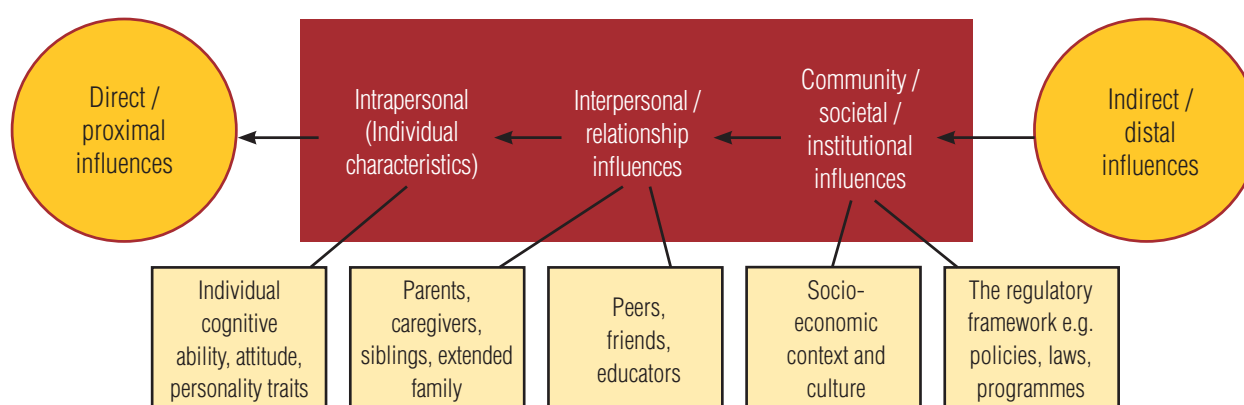[e] Including Gender, School Safety, HIV and AIDS Life Skills, Inclusive Education, School Nutrition, Health Promotion and Curriculum.

[f] The SCCS programme worked with clusters of schools to enable the identification and support of vulnerable learners. The model is based on having a resource school within each school cluster and included multi-stakeholder partnerships and active community participation.

Theoretical Framework for CSTL – An Ecological Systems Approach

An Ecological Systems approach underpins the *Conceptual Framework for Care and Support for Teaching and Learning*. Over half a century of investigation of human behaviour has revealed that behaviour is seldom the result of single, individually-attributable factors (also known as intrinsic factors). There is now substantive evidence that behaviour is as much influenced by physical and social environments, institutional behaviour (such as schools) and public policy, as it is by factors inherent to an individual. The ecological systems approach to development is founded on the premise that there are multiple sources of positive and negative influence in an individual's life emanating from the family, schools, communities and societies in which we live, work and play. These range from very direct influences (also called proximal) such as individual beliefs and attitudes, to more indirect (or distal) influences such as socio-economic factors and public policy, as illustrated in the diagram below. While the influence of distal factors on individual behaviour is sometimes mediated through more proximal factors, they are nonetheless powerful determinants of behaviour. Each level of influence, from direct to distal, has the potential to increase risk or offer protection.

The ecological systems approach: multiple sources of influence on an individual

The Ecological Systems model has been broadly applied to help practitioners understand and address various social issues[11, 12, 13] and development challenges, including barriers to education.

Applying an Ecological Systems approach to CSTL highlights the need for effective interventions at intrapersonal, interpersonal, community, institutional and societal levels, as part of a comprehensive approach to addressing the multiple manifestations of vulnerability. These interventions should aim to strengthen positive influences and to reduce or mitigate the negative ones.

White Paper 6 (2001) entitled *Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System* is one example of education policy that articulates a Systems Approach to education reform. The White Paper recognises that barriers to education can be located within the learner, within the site of learning or school, within the education system and within the broader social, economic and political context. It puts forward a role for schools in addressing the full range of learning needs created by these different barriers. The barriers can be usefully clustered as follows (these are discussed in greater detail in the section headed **Barriers to Education for Vulnerable Children**):

- **Intrinsic barriers:** These include those barriers located largely within the individual child, such as physical and mental health-related problems.

- **Systemic barriers:** This would include for example inadequate facilities at schools, overcrowded classrooms, inappropriate teaching methods or materials, poorly trained teachers, insufficient support for teachers, and policy and curriculum issues.

- **Societal barriers:** Including severe poverty, unemployment, inadequate care-giving arrangements, child labour, violence against children and HIV and AIDS.

Whereas the implementation of *White Paper 6* to date has focused primarily on disability-related barriers (intrinsic), its intention is to address the multiple levels of barriers to learning (including systemic and societal barriers). The CSTL *Conceptual Framework* adopts the holistic approach articulated in *White Paper 6* by considering the multiple sources of vulnerability that impact education access, retention and achievement outcomes. It draws on support from partners across other sectors, each of whom contribute to creating vibrant, sustainable school communities that are inclusive and nurturing.

In this way, the CSTL *Conceptual Framework* situates the **DBE as a lead agency** within an Ecological Systems approach **in addressing individual and school-related barriers to learning** – ultimately enabling the establishment of schools that are inclusive of all learners. It will also create an enabling environment for other government departments and social partners to address individual and societal barriers outside of the mandate of Education. Such an approach will ensure that schools are sensitive and responsive to the needs of the wider school community.

The Need for Care and Support for Teaching and Learning in South Africa

Education is the single largest line item in the national budget. And yet we lag behind on education outcomes in comparison to other countries in the region. Care and support efforts are needed to address barriers to education, ultimately increasing our return on this significant investment. Furthermore, the multiplier effect of education means that improvements in education access and outcomes will enhance the realisation of all other socio-economic rights.[14, 15]

This section provides a snapshot of the crisis in education – it includes information on educator vulnerability and the current state of learner access, retention and achievement outcomes. It goes on to discuss in greater detail the systemic, societal and intrinsic factors that combine to create barriers to quality education for vulnerable children and that serve to undermine our substantial investment in education.

Educator Vulnerability and Attrition

In 2010, there were 12.26 million learners in 25,850 mainstream public and independent schools in South Africa, and over 418,000 educators.[16] The delivery of quality education and the strengthening of schools as sites of care and support depend largely on the ability and buy-in of these 418,000 individuals. Well-trained and motivated educators are key to the achievement of Education for All goals by 2015.[17]

Teachers play a central role in the everyday life, education and wellbeing of learners. In fragile communities and households, the teacher often represents the only consistent, supportive adult relationship in the child's life. "Investing in teachers is an investment in learner support, education and care. Retaining teachers in the teaching profession and encouraging new teachers to join the profession is a key challenge in Africa, and one which impacts greatly on school improvement interventions. Educational leaders have the challenge of creating schools as work place environments that support teacher retention, development and wellbeing.[18]

Many South African teachers face the daily reality of teaching large classes, as well as coping with the added pressures of curriculum reform and high performance expectations, with limited resources and support. The increasing effects of poverty and HIV and AIDS on school communities place additional responsibilities on teachers to support the psychosocial needs of learners, in order to improve learner attendance and performance in the classroom. This situation is compounded in rural areas, where schools and communities have limited access to professional support services.[19]

In 2004, the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) commissioned a study[g] to review educator attrition, following worrying anecdotal reports that educators were leaving the education profession in large numbers. The results highlight the need for urgent interventions to better support educators.[20]

- Of the 17,088 educators who were tested, 12.7% were HIV positive. HIV prevalence is highest in the 25–34 age group (21.4%), followed by the 35–44 age group (12.8%). Provincial prevalence varied from less than 5% in the Northern Cape to over 20% in KwaZulu-Natal.

- The health status of educators appears poorer than that of the general population, and the most frequently reported diagnoses are stress-related illnesses, such as high blood pressure (15.6%) and stomach ulcers (9.1%).

- Fifty-five percent (55%) of educators have considered leaving the education profession due to inadequate remuneration, increased workload, lack of career development and professional recognition, dissatisfaction with work policies, job insecurity and lack of choice on where they wished to work. Two-thirds of those who were considering leaving the education profession were teaching in scarce fields, such as technology, natural sciences, economics and management.

- Drawing on primary data contained in government payroll databases and registers, the study found that the average number of educators in the system declined over seven years between 1997 and 2003. The three main causes of attrition were contract termination, resignation and mortality. The proportion of attrition due to mortality (all causes) increased from 7.0% in 1997/98 to 17.7% in 2003/04. The proportion of attrition due to medical reasons grew from 4.6% to 8.7% over the same period. These findings confirm patterns of educator attrition and mortality consistent with high HIV prevalence in South Africa.[21]

Given the above, efforts to improve educator wellbeing are essential to the integrity of our education system and to improving learner access, retention and achievement outcomes.

Learner Access, Retention and Achievement Outcomes

Pro-poor finance policies, such as school fee exemptions, no-fee schools and the school nutrition programme have all had positive results in terms of basic education access. South Africa has achieved significant improvements in school enrolment amongst children of compulsory school-going age. In 2010 ninety-nine percent of children completed compulsory Grades 1 to 9, compared to 80% in 1994.[22] This increase reflects one of the fastest growing basic education enrolment rates in the world. Recent enrolment gains have been most evident amongst younger children. The percentage of five-year-olds attending educational institutions increased from 40% in 2002 to 60% in 2007, whilst the percentage of learners in the 6-year-age group increased from 70% to 88% over the same period.[23]

Notwithstanding these achievements, the challenges within education remain enormous. Reported attendance rates drop off sharply as children get older, and over 400,000 children of school-going age do not attend school.[24]

Analysis of attendance by age shows a significant drop in attendance amongst children older than 14 years.[25] While 99% of 13-year-olds were reported to be attending an educational institution in 2008, only 87% of 17-year-olds were attending school in that same year.

Note

[g] The study, involving a consortium consisting of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Mobile Task Team on the Impact of HIV and AIDS on Education (MTT), was commissioned to investigate the validity of these anecdotal reports. The ELRC consist of the National (and provincial) Department of Education, the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), the National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA), the Suid Afrikaanse Onderwysers Unie (SAOU), and the National Teachers Union of South Africa (NATU).

Cost of education is the main reason for non-attendance in the high school age group, followed by a perception that "education is useless".[26] Other reasons for drop-out are illness and exam failure. While there is no significant difference in drop-out rates between boys and girls, pregnancy accounts for between 11% and 20% of drop-out amongst teenage girls not attending school.[27] Problems related to education access are most pronounced in rural areas, home to two-thirds of children living in poverty.[28]

Not surprisingly, children from "disadvantaged" backgrounds – with limited economic resources, lower levels of parental education, or who have lost one or both parents – are less likely to enrol in school and are more prone to dropping out or progressing more slowly than their more advantaged peers.

In terms of education outcomes, South Africa fares poorly compared with other countries internationally and regionally. Only 36% of Grade 3 learners have age-appropriate literacy skills and 35% have the necessary numeracy skills.[29] Furthermore, 14% of primary-school-age children are not enrolled at the appropriate education level.[30]

And despite pro-poor policy shifts, inequality in education remains a massive challenge – 80% of schools in SA produce only 7% of the matric passes. What quality does exist is highly skewed in favour of the white population with a black or coloured child twice as likely to drop out of school before Grade 12 as a white child, and one in 10 white children likely to get an A aggregate for Grade 12, as opposed to one in 200 coloured children and one in 1,000 black children.[31]

Why are we seeing such poor results despite significant investments in education? Why are so few children completing schooling? What needs to be done to increase retention and improve education outcomes? What are the barriers to Equal and Quality Education?

Barriers to Education for Vulnerable Children

All children require care and support in order to thrive and learn. *White Paper 6* however, highlights the fact that "vulnerable children" may require more intensive and specialised forms of support to be able to develop to their full potential.

The DBE has adopted the Department of Social Development's **definition of a vulnerable child** as *"a child whose survival, care, protection or development may be compromised due to a particular condition, situation or circumstance that prevents the fulfilment of his or her rights"*.[32]

Implicit in this definition is the recognition that "vulnerability" is not a constant state. It will change as a child's circumstances change and no child is immune from potential vulnerability. As such, any programme which seeks to address barriers to education for vulnerable children will have to be responsive to the changing needs of individual children and school communities (hence the need for ongoing screening).

The barriers presented below are significant current barriers to education, but they should not be seen as exhaustive or permanent.

Vulnerable children often face more than one obstacle to education, usually contending with a web of inter-related barriers at intrinsic, societal and systemic levels. We turn now to look at some of these barriers in more detail and to understand their impact on education.

Examples of Intrinsic Barriers to Education

Intrinsic Barriers – Impact on Education	
Disability	More than 22% of children with a disability are out of school, making up almost 10% of the total number of children who are out of school.[33] In addition, children with a disability (including learning disabilities) who are enrolled at school have a lower attendance rate than other children[34]
	Children with disabilities require specialised services and learning support to facilitate their meaningful access to school and to ensure quality educational outcomes. Few schools, especially in poorer and rural areas,[35] offer the necessary support or services, and 97% of public schools lack the infrastructure to accommodate a physically disabled child[36]
	Stigma and discrimination of children with disabilities contributes to erratic attendance and drop-out[37]
Childhood Illness	Illness is one of the main causes of absenteeism in schools in South Africa[38]
	The incidence of Attention Deficit Disorders and cognitive disabilities in HIV infected children (especially those with HIV encephalopathy) is greater than the rest of the population, requiring additional support within the education system[39]
Mental Health	The grief and trauma associated with factors such as violence and HIV and AIDS impacts school performance and can lead to extended periods of absenteeism and school drop-out. The absence of mental health care services within the education system exacerbates the problem

Examples of Societal Barriers to Education

Societal Barriers – Impact on Education	
Household Poverty	Children living in poor households are less likely to be able to afford costs associated with education, including uniforms, books, stationery and travel[40]
	Poor children are less likely to have attended preschool or to have had access to books and other educational resources in the home – missing out on grounding in basic numeracy and literacy skills[41]
	Hunger is a common feature for children living in poverty. It is estimated that 14% of children go to school having either had nothing to eat, or only a cup of tea, in the morning.[42] Nutritional deficiencies in primary-school-age children are among the leading causes of low school enrolment, high absenteeism, early drop-out and poor classroom performance[43]
Child Labour	Children living in impoverished households frequently supplement household income through paid labour, preventing them from attending school regularly or at all.[44, 45, 46] The need to work is recorded as the second most common reason for non-attendance and this has shown a rising trend since 2002.[47] The Department of Labour estimates that one million children between the ages of 5 and 17 are involved in child labour.[48] Children in deep rural areas are more likely to be engaged in economic work of three hours or more per week than their urban counterparts[49]

Basic Services	The absence of basic services in many communities increases the burden of domestic duties for children, threatening a child's education. This is particularly problematic in poor households without access to running water and electricity, where children may spend as many as 40 hours a week collecting water and wood.[50, 51] Results from a study by the Department of Labour show that 85% of children who were involved in fetching water were not in the appropriate age group for their Grade, compared to 15% of those who did not fetch water.[52] Incorrect age for Grade is one of the key risk factors for drop-out
	Not having electricity or alternative sources of power also makes it difficult for children to do their homework after dark[53]
Caregiving Arrangements	Children of school-going age are more likely to be out of school if they are living with adult relatives other than a biological parent or grandparent – 7.6% compared with 4% of children living with their biological parents. Children living with a non-relative adult are even more likely to be out of school (10.6% of these children are out of school)[54]
	17% of children who head up (child-headed) households are out of school[55]
Early Marriage	Child marriages undermine the wellbeing and development of children, especially girls. They tend to contribute to maternal and infant mortality and reduce girls' opportunities to access education[56]
Parent Education	Parent education is a strong predictor of educational outcomes. Children whose parents have not completed schooling are significantly less likely to matriculate than peers with better educated parents. Of children with at least one parent who has attained less than Grade 10, only 30% gain a matric. This rises to 56% where one parent has Grade 10 or 11, 74% where a parent has matriculated and 84% if a parent has a degree[57]
HIV and AIDS	HIV and AIDS compound many of the challenges experienced by poor households.[58] HIV-related illness and death increases the demands on children to contribute to household income and to take on domestic and childcare chores. This is a growing problem, and the number of children citing family commitments as a reason for non-attendance has increased since 2002[59]
	Children of school-going age who have lost one or both parents are more likely than their peers to be working[60]
	The grief and trauma associated with HIV and AIDS-related illness and death impacts school performance and can lead to extended periods of absenteeism and drop-out[61]
	Children may experience HIV-related stigma and discrimination which increase the risk of school drop-out
	Children who have been orphaned are less likely to be in the age-appropriate Grade[62] and maternal orphans typically complete fewer years of schooling[63]
Teenage Pregnancy	Consequences of teenage pregnancy include increased absenteeism, school drop-out, poor academic performance and lower educational attainment[64]
Violence Against Children	Children exposed to violence may become highly aggressive, use illegal substances and show other dysfunctional ways of dealing with anxiety, which often results in reduced school attendance and impairs concentration and cognitive development[65]
	In addition, unprotected, unlawful and exploitative sex creates the risk of HIV infection and other STIs and early pregnancies. This affects both teacher and student participation in education and contributes to early drop-out[66]

Examples of Systemic Barriers to Education

Systemic Barriers – Impact on Education	
School Infrastructure and Materials (including water and sanitation)	There is a significant body of research demonstrating a clear link between school infrastructure and resources and learner performance.[67] Recent analyses of data from SACMEQ II2[68] demonstrate that "in schools with access to more physical resources … students achieve at higher levels". South African school resources are very unevenly distributed – giving rise to a large divergence in performance between rich and poor schools
	There are substantial backlogs in education infrastructure in South Africa:[h] • 22% of schools are in poor condition, with a four-year backlog in planned maintenance. • 19% are in very poor condition, with a backlog in planned maintenance in excess of four years[69] • Inadequate infrastructure results in overcrowding in classrooms – this is particularly problematic in the early foundational years of schooling, and especially so in rural areas[70] Backlogs are greatest in schools that formerly provided education only for black learners, and most severe in the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape[71]
	Many schools lack appropriate water and sanitation services: • In 2009, 444 schools had no water supply, while a further 2,563 schools had an unreliable supply (e.g. relied on rain water harvesting/water tanks) • Only 7,847 schools (out of over 24,000 public mainstream schools) have municipal flush toilets, while 970 still do not have any ablution facilities and 11,231 use pit-latrine toilets[72]
	There is an urgent need for nationally established norms and standards for school infrastructure that is enabling of teaching and learning and that takes into account care and support needs of learners and educators[73, 74]
Transport	17% of primary school children have to travel long distances to the nearest school[75] impacting learner attendance, particularly for younger children and during inclement weather
Educator Skills and Capacity	A comparison of final exam results with continuous assessment scores in mathematics highlight the fact that teachers are not accurately assessing learners and that teachers' subject knowledge is poor – impacting significantly and directly on learner performance.[76] This is most evident in schools servicing more vulnerable communities
	There are an estimated 16,950 teachers in the system who lack the correct qualifications to teach, either because they are under-qualified or inappropriately qualified.[77] Furthermore, a survey of teachers in 2007 found that 30% of primary school teachers admitted spending no hours on their own professional development, despite a requirement that all teachers attend 80 hours a year of professional development training[78]
	Salaries are not commensurate with the responsibility teachers bear. While starting salaries for educators are comparable (at age 22), a gap rapidly opens, leaving teachers substantially underpaid relative to both public and private sector salaries of those with tertiary education The weak salary prospects lead to low motivation and low self-esteem making it difficult to retain teachers in the profession – particularly the better quality teachers.[79] More than 30,000 educators leave the profession each year, while only 7,000 enter the profession annually[80]
	Insufficient numbers entering the system places an undue burden on teachers and leads to high learner-to-teacher ratios. This is especially problematic in rural schools[81]
	Learner absenteeism and the culture of poor quality in schools are compounded by educator absenteeism[82]
	Given the ratio of female to male teachers (2:1) in South Africa, high AIDS-related mortality rates in females aged 24–49 years impacts directly on the education system[83]

Leadership and Support	There is a shortage of skills and leadership capacity at various levels of the education system
	80% of the 26,000 public schools in South Africa are largely dysfunctional, producing only 7% of all Grade 12 passes[84]
	Poor leadership capacity in schools serving vulnerable communities is compounded by the inability of parents (many of whom are illiterate) to support and ensure effective governance through School Governing Bodies
	Insufficient DBE capacity at district and provincial levels exacerbates the skills gaps within schools[85]
Curriculum	One of the most significant barriers to learning is the curriculum and the manner in which it is taught[86] Aspects of the curriculum that create barriers to learning include: • The content (i.e. what is taught); • The language or medium of instruction; • How the classroom is organised and managed; • The methods and processes used in teaching; • The pace of teaching and the time available to complete the curriculum; • The learning materials and equipment that is used; and • How learning is assessed. A more flexible curriculum is necessary in order to ensure that it is accessible to all learners, irrespective of their learning needs
Violence	The school environment features prominently as a site of victimisation for young people,[87] inevitably fuelling drop-outs. A national youth victimisation study (2005) found that 26% of young people aged 12–22 years who had been the victims of assault reported that the assaults had occurred at school
	Schools were also the single most common sites for sexual assaults (21.1%). In the majority of cases, the perpetrators of violent crimes against children at school were known to their victims[88]
Enabling Documents	The South African Schools Act[89] requires that children produce a birth certificate when enrolling at school. In South Africa, 22% of children's births are not registered at the time of the birth.[90] Children in rural areas are less likely to have the enabling documents required for school enrolment[91]

Obviously, many of the barriers described above fall outside of the traditional ambit of education. This *Conceptual Framework* aims to provide a virtual "space" within which various role-players – including government departments, the private sector and non-governmental organisations – can contribute more effectively to addressing these systemic, societal and intrinsic barriers *through* schools.

It is a government imperative to address barriers to learning for vulnerable children. But why and how should we do this through schools? What are the advantages and challenges of using schools as sites of care and support for vulnerable learners?

Notes

[h]   Status quo in 24,460 public mainstream schools (NEIMS 2009):
- 3,600 have no electricity supply, while a further 800 had an unreliable supply.
- Less than 8% of public mainstream schools have stocked and functioning libraries.
- Only 11.6% of public secondary schools have stocked laboratories and 60.2% have no labs.
- Many schools are hampered by insufficient desks and chairs for learners and educators.
- Problems are most pronounced in rural areas.

The Benefits and Challenges of Care and Support in Schools

Research highlights the important role that schools can (and many do) play in addressing barriers to education for vulnerable children – through school-based services and by leveraging other resources from within and beyond the school community.[92] We also know however, that school-based care and support programmes are not without their challenges.

The intrinsic benefits and evident challenges of school-based support are explored briefly in this section, highlighting both the opportunities and difficulties of operationalising CSTL through schools.

Benefits of School-based Care and Support

There are numerous benefits to providing care and support to learners and educators through schools. For the DBE however, the most important single driving factor for mainstreaming CSTL within education is the direct impact of CSTL on core education outcomes. The DBE's most recent Action Plan outlines 27 goals to be achieved by 2014.[93] Goals 1 to 13 deal with education **outputs** in relation to learning and enrolments. Goals 14 to 27 describe the things that need to be achieved in order to realise these education outputs. CSTL features strongly in this list. Most notably:

Goal # 17: Strive for a teacher workforce that is healthy and enjoys a sense of job satisfaction.

Goal # 24: Ensure that the physical infrastructure and environment of every school inspires learners to want to come to school and learn, and teachers to teach.

Goal # 25: Use the school as a location to promote access amongst children to the full range of public health and poverty reduction interventions.

Goal # 26: Increase the number of schools which effectively implement the inclusive education policy and have access to centres which offer specialist services.

The education system has several comparative advantages over other services when it comes to addressing vulnerabilities of childhood in South Africa:[94]

- Schools are relatively accessible and they often provide a physical infrastructure in communities where this is otherwise lacking. The education system in South Africa includes an existing infrastructure of around 25,850 mainstream public and independent schools. The buildings and grounds within these schools have the potential for expanded use.

- The education system reaches over 12 million children, almost on a daily basis, and children spend a large proportion of their time at school over a period of many years (spanning most of their childhood). The sheer scale of vulnerability in South Africa requires solutions that can reach significant numbers of children in a systemic way.

- Schools comprise many valuable components, including school staff, learners, their caregivers, school governing bodies and the broader school community. Each component is a potentially valuable resource for care and support. Schools, families and communities share a common responsibility and purpose in their commitment to the development of children and youth.

- The potential of enabling care and support through schools can be strengthened further if we think in terms of school clusters. Different schools have access to different resources (human, informational, infrastructural

and financial). By clustering schools, each one of these schools can benefit from the aggregate capacity of the school cluster and one school may serve as a resource to others (as articulated in *White Paper 6* for example, where Full Service Schools function as resource centres for other neighbouring schools). Clustering also increases the pool of individuals who could potentially "champion" the cause.

• School-based support enables service providers to identify needs that might otherwise not be addressed[95, 96] and allows for the early identification of children at risk. Locating health services in schools, for example, has been shown to improve access for health workers to children who were unlikely to have attended a health facility and would therefore not have been treated.[97]

• Schools are potentially a service conduit, not just to the children who attend the school, but also to their families and the communities in which they live. The provision of services at schools helps foster positive links between schools and the surrounding community and helps to promote a community that supports and values the school.

• Schools are permanent institutions which can help to sustain organisational structures and support services in the long-term.

• Caring and safe schools also provide a protective environment for children. Providing support to children through schools helps to keep children at school. And being at school reduces a child's risks across a range of dimensions. Regular school attendance, for example, improves children's health and has been shown to have a direct and positive effect on self-esteem.[98] Education in girls is associated with delays in first pregnancy, and educated girls tend to have fewer and healthier children. These factors in turn lead to lower infant and child mortality rates.[99]

Education also reduces the risk of HIV infection by increasing knowledge, awareness, skills and opportunities.[100, 101] Male youth who are in school report having fewer sexual partners than those who are out of school and female learners engage in less risky behaviour than their out-of-school peers.[102] Conversely, school drop-out is associated with increased risk and poor outcomes across a range of indicators. Keeping children in school, and strengthening schools as sites of care and support, is therefore an important strategy for reducing risk.

• If relationships in the child's immediate family break down, the relationships that children form at schools – with educators and peers – take on a new level of significance. For vulnerable children, schools can therefore provide a much-needed safe, structured environment in turbulent times[103] and enable access to the emotional support and supervision of adults.

• An effective response to the needs of vulnerable children must be inherently flexible in that it must be able to address simultaneously the needs of different children at their different levels of development. Because the ages of most children in school range between 5 and 18 years and the facilities are designed to address them differently at different ages and educational stages, there is great potential for the provision of age-appropriate care and support through the education system: that is, support that is developed in such as way as to respond to the "physical, cognitive, emotional, and psychosocial differences that characterise children and adolescents in different stages of development".[104]

Mainstreaming of care and support within education also enables transfer of skills to educators, increasing their understanding of emotional and behavioural difficulties and generally enhancing their capacity to support learners.[105] This in turn improves educator wellbeing. The reality is that teachers are often called upon – formally or informally – to play a role in assisting vulnerable children. Educators see children every day for five days of the school week and are therefore able to recognise behaviour change which might indicate vulnerability or risk. In most instances, they are not trained or supported within this role, making it difficult for them to cope emotionally and contributing to teacher burnout.[106, 107] Mainstreaming care and support within education can help ensure that teachers receive the support they need in order to respond appropriately to the needs of learners, and can at the same time provide teachers with tools for managing their own psychosocial wellbeing.[108]

All these learners, one finds that 50% come to school hungry. Rape cases. They have live-in partners as young as Grade 8. A lot of them have no money – nothing. Parents passing away. HIV and AIDS. Everything….Now you need professionals to deal with those cases! But at the end of the day, you end up going to your colleague.

Educator, rural school in KwaZulu-Natal

Mainstreaming care and support within schools will help to address the myriad of barriers to education faced by vulnerable children, ultimately improving school enrolment, attendance, retention and outcomes. There are already numerous examples of school-based initiatives in South and Southern Africa that have demonstrated success in this regard. These range from small scale interventions targeting individual schools or school clusters, to provincial and national programmes (such as the National School Nutrition Programme and the Schools as Centres of Care and Support Programme) reaching large numbers of learners. In most instances, these initiatives involve some form of collaboration between schools and other departments or NGOs. Lessons from these various initiatives have been considered in the development of the CSTL *Conceptual Framework* and in particular in the refinement of CSTL core principles.

Notwithstanding the many advantages to schools as sites of care and support, there are several **challenges to creating schools that are enabling of care and support**.[109] Understanding these challenges is essential to ensuring that mainstreaming of care and support within education *strengthens* schools and does not overwhelm them.

Challenges to School-based Care and Support

Care and Support for Teaching and Learning ultimately aims to create the kind of school described in the section headed **What is Care and Support for Teaching and Learning** – a safe school that builds on the strengths of its learners and educators, that has appropriate infrastructure and the necessary educational resources and supplies, that employs and respects motivated and competent teachers, and offers an appropriate curriculum and extra-curricular activities suited to the needs and capacity of its learners. The school works in partnership with caregivers and other service providers to offer or promote access to a suite of other services, including nutrition, health care, social welfare services, birth registration and social grants.

Clearly, for most mainstream schools, there are numerous challenges to achieving these ambitious objectives:

- Many schools do not have the most basic infrastructure in place, even for core academic activities.

- Many educators lack the skills and motivation to provide care and support to children, and may require additional training, mentorship and encouragement to effectively take on an expanded role in this regard.

- A related challenge is the fact that assessments of school (and educator) performance are based almost entirely on academic outcomes. An important component of accountability is being able to measure and reward performance. The criteria on which schools and school staff are evaluated should include consideration of the extent to which they fulfil their care and support mandates.[110]

- Even with the best of intentions however, schools can be overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of children requiring assistance. This is compounded by the fact that schools that serve the most vulnerable children tend to be the more "vulnerable" schools (poorly resourced, inadequately staffed, insufficient infrastructure, etc.). Within this context, educators may themselves be vulnerable and in need of additional support.

- And finally, schools frequently lack knowledge on the services available to them and their learners. And even when services are known, human resource constraints in other relevant departments (e.g. school health nurses and social workers) impact on the ability of schools to refer children or collaborate effectively.

The above points highlight the fact that, while schools are well placed to function as sites of care and support for teaching and learning, this can only be achieved with the provision of substantial additional support to school communities.

Existing initiatives that are already creating pockets of excellence within the education system can hopefully be scaled up or replicated under the auspices of CSTL, and new ventures launched under this banner of collaboration. These initiatives all serve to assist the DBE in delivering on its education mandate.

Education Mandate for Care and Support for Vulnerable Learners

As mentioned previously, a comprehensive *Policy Review* was undertaken to inform the development of this *Conceptual Framework*. The review first and foremost emphasises the right of all children in South Africa to basic education. This right is not subject to the progressive realisation clause which governs most of the other rights in the Constitution. What this means is that Government is obliged, with immediate effect, to ensure the full realisation of the right to education to *all* children, notwithstanding resource limitations.

This section summarises the obligations on the State to address barriers to education, as encompassed in international, regional and national policies.

International and Regional Obligations

International and regional agreements acknowledge and protect the right of all children to education.[111] As a signatory[i], South Africa is obliged to deliver on the provisions of these international agreements and to report on delivery (a list of international agreements and charters is included in Appendix 1).

In summary, these various documents oblige South Africa to deliver on the following:

- **Education Access**
  - Make primary schooling compulsory, accessible and available free to all children.[112]
  - Make secondary education available and accessible for every child and take appropriate measures to ensure that school fees do not exclude children from secondary school.

- **Education Retention**
  - Take measures to encourage attendance and prevent children from dropping out of schools.
  - Include special measures to protect particularly vulnerable children and to actively promote their inclusion and participation in school (including girl children, children with disabilities, refugee children, children who fall pregnant, children infected or affected by HIV and AIDS, etc.).

Notes

i The key international and regional commitments pertaining to care and support in education that the South African government has signed or otherwise ratified, include: The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1990 (UNCRC); The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1990 (ACRWC); Education for All, 1990, UNESCO (EFA); The Dakar Framework for Action; The Millenium Declaration (2000); The Declaration of Commitment on HIV and AIDS; United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV and AIDS, June 2001 (UNGASS Declaration); The African Youth Charter, 2006; The SADC Declaration on HIV and AIDS, Comprehensive Care and Support for Orphans and other Vulnerable Children and Youth (OVYC) in SADC: Strategic Framework and Programme of Action (2008–2015), 2008, SADC; International Labour Organisation, Code of Good Practice on HIV AND AIDS and the World of Work.

–   Protect children against discrimination.
–   Protect children from child labour (including economic exploitation and domestic work) that is harmful to the child's education or development.

- **Education Outcomes**
  –   Provide education that ensures the advancement of the cognitive, creative, emotional, mental and physical development of all children to their full potential.

Furthermore, government is obliged to take legislative, administrative, educational and social steps to protect and promote a number of rights that are *closely linked* to the right to education, and without which the right to education will not be realised. These include the rights to a name and to birth registration, to protection, care and support, to a decent standard of living, to health care and to adequate nutrition.

The obligations imposed on states are not only to realise and protect these various rights, but to do so in a holistic manner, with consideration of the "whole child" and through the provision of comprehensive programmes.[113]

The move towards a holistic approach to service delivery underpins developments in education policy in South Africa since 1994.

National Obligations

This section looks briefly at the obligations on the DBE to address barriers to education for vulnerable children. This information was drawn from an extensive list of national laws, policies, and policy frameworks, details of which are available in Appendix 1 at the back of this booklet. The table includes mention of the role of other departments in supporting vulnerable children in and through schools.

These documents articulate a role for schools as sites of integrated and comprehensive care and support for vulnerable children. As mentioned previously, this concept was first introduced in *Education White Paper 6* (2001) which forms the cornerstone of the Education Department's response to the inclusion of particularly vulnerable learners within the education system.

First and foremost, the DBE is obliged to ensure access to basic education (Grade R to Grade 9) for all children in South Africa and is bound by the Constitution to progressively improve access to further education and training (Grades 10 to 12). This includes the provision and maintenance of appropriate and sufficient infrastructure, the deployment and management of trained staff and a steady supply of adequate financial and material resources. Teachers are required to be trained and qualified and registered with the South African Council of Educators.[114] The council was established to promote the professional development of educators and to set, maintain and protect ethical and professional standards.[115] In terms of the council's code of ethics, educators are expected to uphold the "best interests of the child" principle.

These essential elements of basic education form the foundation on which to build Care and Support for Teaching and Learning. **In the absence of these basic provisions, the education system in itself constitutes a barrier to learning**. If the education basics are not in place, not only are schools unable to consider the additional requirements of care and support, but they may well be exacerbating the vulnerability of their learners.

…instead of ameliorating the inequalities in South African society by providing poor children with the knowledge and skills needed to escape poverty and contribute to national development, the majority of schools, at best, have no equalising effect; at worst they may even be further disadvantaging their pupils.

Quote in Equal Education submission to Education Portfolio Committee

The table on the next page summarises the obligations on the DBE to deliver on a number of additional priorities. These priorities were identified through secondary research and through consultation with a range of stakeholders. They are seen as essential to Care and Support for Teaching and Learning.

- **Nutrition:** Obligations on schools and the DBE to provide nutritional support and nutrition education to learners.

- **Health Promotion:** Obligations on schools and the DBE to promote overall health and wellbeing, and to prevent and mitigate the impact of health barriers to learning.

- **Infrastructure, Water and Sanitation:** Obligations on schools and the DBE to provide appropriate infrastructure conducive to learning and to the health and wellbeing of learners and teachers.

- **Social Welfare Services:** Obligations on schools and the DBE to respond appropriately to the welfare needs of vulnerable children, to address child labour as a barrier to education and to facilitate access to enabling documents (e.g. birth certificates and ID books) and social grants.

- **Psychosocial Support:** Obligations on schools and the DBE to respond to the emotional, behavioural, social and mental health and wellness needs of learners and teachers.

- **Safety and Protection:** Obligations on schools and the DBE to ensure the safety of learners and educators, including protection from discrimination.

- **Curriculum Support:** Obligations on schools and the DBE to ensure the delivery of quality education through a curriculum and language policy that is flexible enough to accommodate the needs of vulnerable learners.

- **Co-curricular Activities:** Obligations on schools and the DBE to provide adequate basic facilities for extra-curricular activities for boys and girls in support of curriculum delivery.

- **Material Support:** Obligations on schools and the DBE to remove material/financial barriers to education for vulnerable learners.

These various obligations are intended to create a safety net of care and support for vulnerable learners and educators.

Government Obligations to Provide Care and Support In and Through Schools

Care and Support Priorities	DBE Roles and Responsibilities	Examples of roles played by other departments working in or through schools
Nutrition	The Department / Schools / Teachers are required to: • Provide one meal per day to all learners in Quintiles 1, 2 and 3 public primary schools, and to all learners in Quintile 1 secondary schools • Establish school food gardens and other food production initiatives • Promote healthy lifestyles amongst learners[116] and safe nutritional practices[117]	The **Department of Agriculture** has assisted some schools in establishing food gardens by donating utensils and seeds The **Department of Health** provides quality assurance for food safety provisioning and nutritional adequacy in the NSNP
Health Promotion	The Department / Schools / Teachers are required to: • Introduce, strengthen and evaluate life skills, sexual and reproductive health (SRH) education and HIV prevention programmes in all primary and secondary schools (reaching 98% of institutions by 2011)[118] • Enhance training of teachers and NGOs to ensure quality delivery of life skills, SRH and HIV prevention programmes in schools (80% training completed per district by 2011)[119] • Introduce, evaluate and customise behaviour change programmes for out-of-school youth, and for primary and secondary school children (reaching 100% of districts by 2011)[120] • Identify interventions targeted at reducing HIV infection, and prioritise implementation in schools reporting high rates of teenage pregnancy (implemented in 90% priority schools by 2011)[121] • Develop and distribute national guidelines and information materials on the rights of children to access to information, prevention, treatment, care and support[122] • Strive to prevent early pregnancies amongst learners by educating them through Life Skills programmes about the risks of early sexual activity, and strongly advising them to avoid early sexual encounters[123] • Provide information and education on various health and wellness-related issues to learners, educators and school communities[124] • Support educators in identifying and responding to the needs of learners with particular health needs e.g. via health guide/resource booklet for educators • Ensure that all schools follow universal precautions when it comes to blood and blood products and that every school has an adequately stocked first aid kit[125] • Implement an HIV and AIDS Life Skills Education Programme • Develop the capacity of schools, educators and early childhood development centres to provide treatment adherence support to children on ARVs[126] • Ensure that all schools have clear policies on prevention and intervention in relation to drug abuse. Schools should draw in outside organisations specialising in drug education to assist in the prevention and management of drug use at schools[127]	The **Department of Health** should ensure that skilled health professionals are in place to prevent child abuse through the promotion of better parenting practices, and through school-based nurses[130] The **Department of Health** is responsible for community out-reach services through schools, including: – Provision of basic health care services in schools – Health assessments and nutrition screening and counselling – Counselling on sexual activity – Counselling on trauma and violence – Hearing, vision and speech assessments of children in Grades R and 1 – Health promotion and education for children in Grades 2–12 – Regular and timely screening to detect disabilities – Identification and rectifying of immunisation gaps – De-worming and general parasite control – Responding to disease outbreaks at schools – Providing assistive devices – Providing comprehensive ART services for learners and educators

Care and Support Priorities	DBE Roles and Responsibilities	Examples of roles played by other departments working in or through schools
Health Promotion (continued)	• Assist with the early identification and referral of health and wellness-related issues among learners and educators[128] • Identify when illness becomes a barrier to learning • Ensure that no learner (or parent on behalf of a learner) is forced to reveal his or her HIV status to a school. Learners who are HIV-positive have the right to attend any school or institution, and their needs should as far as is possible be accommodated[129] • Create supportive environments for health and development through the establishment of "Health promoting schools" and through the integration and coordination of School Health Services within education programmes	The School Health Policy is an inter-sectoral strategy between the **Departments of Health** and **Basic Education** to optimise the healthy growth and development of children and the communities in which they live
Social Welfare Services	The Department / Schools / Teachers are required to: • Develop programmes and systems for use in schools to enable teachers to identify vulnerable children and to link them to the necessary care and support[131, 132] • Assist the Department of Social Development to identify cases of child labour impacting on schooling[133] and include indicators of child labour into existing information management systems to help identify which groups are at particular risk[134] • Ensure that work-related diseases and injuries among children and young people are identified as work-related, and reported by educators to labour inspectors[135] • Address the issue of child labour through inclusion of child labour-related issues in the curriculum, the provision of childcare facilities to accommodate younger siblings, and through assisting working children to return to school[136] • Monitor enrolment and attendance of all learners whose parents/caregivers are receiving the child support grant (CSG) and notify the Department of Social Development of any child who is receiving the CSG who is not registered at or attending school[137] • Lodge a report with a designated Child Protection Organisation (CPO), the provincial department of social development or a police official if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is being physically abused, sexually abused or deliberately neglected[138, 139] • Establish relationships with external service providers like the police, NGOs and the DSD, and establish joint procedures for the referral of children identified as abused or neglected[140] • Support the DSD in identifying, tracking and linking vulnerable learners and those in child-headed households to grants, benefits and social services[141]	In the case of a child receiving the Child Support Grant (CSG) who is found not to be attending school, a **social worker** must, in consultation with the DBE, investigate and report as to why the child is not enrolled or attending school. The DSD must take steps to ensure that the child is enrolled or does attend school[142] The **police or social workers** are obliged to investigate cases reported to them by teachers and others. The results of the investigation are considered by the Children's Court which will make an order as to whether the child is in need of care and protection or not The **Department of Labour** must investigate reported cases of child labour and the National Child Labour Programme of Action obliges the Department of Labour to raise public awareness on child labour and advises working through schools[143]

Care and Support Priorities	DBE Roles and Responsibilities	Examples of roles played by other departments working in or through schools
Infrastructure, Water and Sanitation	The Department / Schools / Teachers are required to: • Provide a safe supply of potable, clean water at schools[144, 145] • Ensure adequate sanitation that meets the needs of both girls and boys, with a prohibition on plain pit latrines and bucket toilets • Provide some form of electricity in accordance with the National Building Regulations • Provide some form of connectivity for communication e.g. telephone, fax, internet access • Ensure road access and building access for learners with disabilities • Address inequalities in infrastructure provisioning by improving access to furniture, equipment, books, teaching and learning materials, teaching and learning spaces, such as school laboratories, libraries, school halls, gyms, counselling centres, health centres, sports facilities, facilities for school nutrition and basic services	The **Department of Public Works** has a dedicated unit responsible for the building and maintenance of public schools, including service infrastructure such as water tanks and solar panels[j] The **Department of Health** supports schools in developing infrastructure that is able to respond to injury and illness among learners and educators
Psychosocial Support	The Department / Schools / Teachers are required to: • Play an important role in the provision of psychosocial support to vulnerable learners[146] • Assist school-based support teams to identify at-risk learners and address barriers to learning[147] • Put in place learner and educator support services, such as psychologists and occupational therapists, to assist in identifying and addressing learner, educator and institutional needs[148] • Ensure learner support for stress and depression through appropriate referrals to professionals[149] • Establish peer educator groups for children in Grades 6–12 through the peer education and support programme[150] • Maintain open channels of communication with families affected by HIV, and support affected learners and caregivers wherever possible[151] • Provide access for educators to appropriate pre-service and in-service education and training and to professional support services • Ensure that the norms and standards for the education and training of educators include competencies in addressing barriers to learning, life skills orientation, counselling and learning support[152] • Ensure that the Continuing Professional Teacher Development Programme provides teachers with training and education in identifying and addressing barriers to learning and in creating an enabling environment for all learners[153]	Schools may draw on professional services (such as psychiatrists and psychologists) within the **Departments of Health** and **Social Development** Drop-in centres are community-based centres run by registered non-profit organisations (NPOs) which are registered with the provincial **Department of Social Development** (and are often partially funded by the DSD). They must comply with national norms and standards, and can provide a range of services including counselling, psychosocial support, school attendance support and educational programmes

Notes
[j] Although the Department's responsibility for school maintenance is currently under review.

Care and Support Priorities	DBE Roles and Responsibilities	Examples of roles played by other departments working in or through schools
Safety and Protection	The Department / Schools / Teachers are required to: • Prohibit the use of corporal punishment in school. Any person administering corporal punishment at a public school can be found guilty of assault[154] • Secure the safety of learners. Principals may undertake body searches and urine tests if there is reasonable evidence of illegal activity and if it is in the best interest of that child or any other child in the school. The Act puts in place measures to safeguard against abuse in these circumstances[155] • Fence schools and provide some sort of security (e.g. burglar bars) and fire prevention and fire fighting equipment[156] • Screen all employees to ensure that anyone convicted of a serious crime is not employed within schools. The DBE is required to screen candidates via Part B of the National Child Protection Register[157] which records the details of people who are unsuitable to work with children • Look out for and address instances of discrimination, abuse and bullying within the education system[158]	The Safer Schools Project involves the **Department of Community Safety** and **South African Police Service** in schools. It aims to establish strategic partnerships between schools and the local community police, and to develop strategies to address challenges such as bullying, use of dangerous weapons, gangs, substance abuse, and other criminal actions **The Department of Transport** hosts School Road Safety events to promote greater awareness of road safety for children when travelling to and from school
Curriculum Support	The Department / Schools / Teachers are required to: • Ensure that all children of school-going age attend school regularly. The National Policy on Learner Attendance (2010)[159] clearly stipulates the roles and responsibilities of schools and district and provincial education departments in monitoring and ensuring school attendance • With the support of district support teams, create a flexible curriculum that accommodates a range of learning needs, including learners' preferred language of instruction[160] (within reason). This includes sign language and all the languages referred to in the South African Constitution • Ensure that special schools, created in terms of White Paper 6, provide additional professional support in curriculum, assessment and instruction to mainstream public schools (in addition to the services provided to the learner base within these special schools)[161] • Equip Full Service Schools with the necessary skills and capacity to deal with a greater range of learning needs • Enable home schooling for learners who are too ill to attend school. This decision is made by the Provincial Head of Department, after consultation with the principal, the parent or caregivers and a medical practitioner.[162,163] In such a case, the school is required to make schoolwork available to the learner for study at home and to support continued learning. Older learners may be provided with distance education. Learners and students who are ill and unable to attend school may also be placed in specialised residential institutions for Learners with Special Education Needs (LSEN). However, availability of special schools should not be used as an excuse to remove sick learners from mainstream schools[164] • Develop the capacity of schools, educators and early childhood development centres to provide educational support to children in need[165] • Establish partnerships with parents to enable them to participate in the planning and implementation of inclusion activities for children with disabilities or chronic illnesses[166]	The **Department of Social Development** is responsible for the registration of ECD centres for children aged 0–4 years and for subsidisation of their fees through the ECD subsidy.[167] They are also responsible for monitoring quality

Care and Support Priorities	DBE Roles and Responsibilities	Examples of roles played by other departments working in or through schools
Extra-Curricular Support	The Department / Schools / Teachers are required to: • Have the basic minimum space for soccer or rugby and a space for netball or volleyball[168] • Ensure that no learner may be prevented from participating in extra-curricular activities because of the non-payment of school fees, or because they don't have the prescribed uniform	The **Department of Arts and Culture** has several programmes targeting schools to foster appreciation of South African heritage, promote art and music in schools, and address gender issues[169] The **Department of Sports and Recreation** also partners with Education to host/fund various sports events and workshops to promote sports in schools[170] Several departments also visit schools to provide information on career opportunities

Material Support	The Department / Schools / Teachers are required to:
	
	• Ensure that no learner may be deprived of his or her right to participate in any aspects of the school programme because of non-payment of school fees. These learners may not be victimised in any manner, including: suspension from class, verbal or non-verbal abuse, denial of access to cultural, sporting or social activities of the school or denial of access to the school nutrition programme. Learners may also not be denied a school report or transfer certificate for non-payment[171]
	• Implement the no-fees policy. Primary and secondary schools in the poorest areas in South Africa, namely Quintiles 1, 2 and 3, are categorised as no-fee schools. They are therefore not allowed to charge school fees (or any registration, administration or other fee)[172]
	• Implement the fee exemption policy. Poor and otherwise vulnerable learners attending schools that do charge school fees are exempt from paying school fees:[173] Schools must notify caregivers of their right to an exemption and must grant children living in poverty either a full or partial exemption upon application by the caregiver/parent and in accordance with the prescribed means test. Automatic exemptions are granted to:
	  – a child in foster care
	  – a child in an orphanage
	  – a child who is living with an extended family member because they have been orphaned and abandoned and have no visible means of support
	  – a child in receipt of a child support grant
	  – a child in a child-headed household
	• Assist learners who are unable to afford school uniforms, subject to the financial means of the school[174]
	• Enable learners to get to school. Learners who live more than 3 km away from their nearest school must be provided with free transport to and from school and/or with safe and secure hostel accommodation with adult supervision[175]
		The **Department of Health** is required to provide children with moderate and severe disabilities with assistive devices, such as wheelchairs, walking aids, hearing aids and spectacles[176]
		
		The **Department of Home Affairs** assists learners and community members to access enabling documents (such as ID books and birth certificates) through school-based registration campaigns. These documents are necessary for grant access
		
		The **Department of Social Development** works with schools to ensure access to social grants for eligible children and to monitor school attendance of grant recipients. Children who receive a CSG are automatically exempt from school fees

As can be seen from the table above, existing policy makes provision for a comprehensive package of services and support for learners and educators through schools. The policy framework recognises the inter-dependant nature of children's rights and promotes a collaborative, multi-sectoral response.

Notwithstanding the positive developments in policy reform over the past decade, several important policy gaps remain. The policy review[177] commissioned by the DBE highlights the following important gaps:

- *Primary school is not universally free:* Policies make education more affordable through the introduction of no-fee schools in poor areas and through the availability of a school fee exemption for caregivers and children living in poverty. However, the policy stops short of making primary school free for all and free of all associated costs (e.g. uniforms and stationery). Furthermore, the quintile ranking system is problematic, excluding many eligible poor children from the benefit of no-fee education.
- *There are no clearly mandated referral mechanisms or processes for linking vulnerable children with enabling documents (e.g. birth certificates / ID books)*: The South African Schools Act requires interim registration of children with no documents, but does not oblige schools to take any steps to assist the child in obtaining the relevant documents (whereas it does make provision for steps to get the child immunised if an unimmunised child applies for registration).
- *The Learner Attendance Policy does not provide guidance for following up with the vulnerable absentee learner:* The Policy and Procedures provide a useful tool to aid schools in identifying vulnerable learners more systematically, but they do not provide any guidance to educators and schools on appropriate responses vis-a-vis the learner who is frequently absent.
- *There are no nationally established norms and standards for school infrastructure* that are enabling of teaching and learning and that take into account the care and support needs of learners and educators.

The fundamental barriers to the provision of care and support in education however lie in the challenge of implementation, rather than in the lack of a mandate. Challenges that inhibit full implementation of the policy mandate include:

- *An overwhelming number of obligations on schools* – in addition to those covered within the core mandate of teaching and learning;
- *Insufficient resources to implement policy* – including human resources (within the DBE and within other critical services e.g. school nurses and psychologists), infrastructure and funding;
- *Difficulties with coordinating and sustaining collaborative initiatives* – both within the DBE and between DBE and other partners (government and non-governmental); and
- *The lack of an overarching framework* – to bring all of these different policies and role-players together under one "conceptual roof".

Provincial Education Department officials who participated in the *Situation and Response Analysis* expressed dismay at the plethora of policy that exists, and called for a **focus on supporting implementation** rather than the drafting of additional policy documents.

> *Don't give us another policy please, don't make another law; don't come with another something, because we are battling just to implement.*
>
> *Provincial Department of Education official*[178]

The Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) initiative aims to address the above challenges. It provides an overarching framework to aid coordination, motivate for resource allocation and enable prioritisation of activities. It is intended to support the translation of **existing** policy from strategic intent to effective implementation. It reflects the intentions of the DBE to mainstream care and support into all aspects of the education system, rather than creating new systems or structures.

Creating an Enabling Environment for CSTL

There is enormous variability in the functioning and capacity of the approximately 25,850 schools that exist in South Africa and in the needs of the communities that these schools serve. And there is variability in the range of risk and protective factors and in the interventions that already exist to address care and support issues in and through each of these schools.

As such, Care and Support for Teaching and Learning cannot be a one-size-fits-all model. It must accommodate multiple and varied care and support requirements and initiatives across different school communities, drawing on multiple stakeholders within each.

Underpinning these various initiatives however, is a set of core principles and prerequisites.

Core Principles of CSTL in SA

The following core principles were agreed during extensive consultation with key stakeholders. These principles are based on an examination of the policy framework and draw on lessons learnt through existing care and support initiatives, particularly lessons from the implementation of the Schools as Centres of Care and Support (SCCS) programme. The principles are intended to guide and inform planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of CSTL activities at all levels within the education system.

The Child at the Centre

All children enjoy the right to education equally and no child should be discriminated against in access to learning and the provision of care and support. Furthermore, children have a right to be heard in all matters affecting them and to participate in decisions taken about them.

White Paper 6 commits to a learner-centred approach to addressing barriers to learning and exclusion. It recognises the importance of developing learners' strengths and of empowering and enabling learners to participate actively and critically in the learning process. Within this approach, age- and gender- sensitivity and inclusiveness should be emphasised.

Schools as Sites of Care and Support

For a host of reasons described earlier, including the fact that more children are found at schools in concentrated numbers than anywhere else, the model must facilitate access to support services through schools. The direct and positive impact of school-based support on core education outcomes (including enrolment, retention and achievement) reinforces this fundamental principle.

Schools will not necessarily be able to deliver all of the services themselves, but can take on varying roles, depending on the kinds of services already available in the school community, resources on hand and the level of capacity and support from within and outside of the school.[179]

Importantly, there is a need for continuity of care within the system, from preschool to primary and to secondary schools.

Community Participation

While national and provincial commitment, support and facilitation of care and support are essential conditions, the importance of a child's immediate environment cannot be over-emphasised. The rationale behind many models of school-based care and support is that a large number of resources already exist in the community that can be harnessed to support the school and vice versa.[180]

Community participation should be enabled and encouraged in order to ensure a continuum of care and support between the school and the home.

Strengthened school communities that create a positive and enriching environment and that actively participate in the identification, support and development of vulnerable children is critical. Activities such as home visits, lay counselling, establishing food gardens, childcare services and homework clubs are best conducted with the participation of communities. Community involvement is also essential to reach out-of-school youth.

Within the CSTL *Conceptual Framework*, caregivers are consulted as equal partners in the education of their children. Responsibilities of parents include a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school-going age are enrolled at school and attend school regularly. And educators are encouraged to involve parents in the screening of children and the identification of learning barriers.[181]

Building on Existing Initiatives

Much is already happening in the field of care and support for teaching and learning, both within and outside of the DBE. *CSTL is not intended as an additional "programme" in itself.* And it will not replace the numerous initiatives that already exist to support vulnerable learners e.g. the National School Nutrition Programme and the HIV and AIDS Life Skills Education Programme.

The CSTL *Conceptual Framework* aims to harness, build on and extend the reach of successful existing initiatives. To reduce costs, improve programme efficacy and avoid duplication, delivery and coordination activities will be aligned with functional existing structures (such as the School-based Support Teams) wherever possible – even those that operate outside of the education sector, but that have mandates relating to children and/or education-linked care and support.

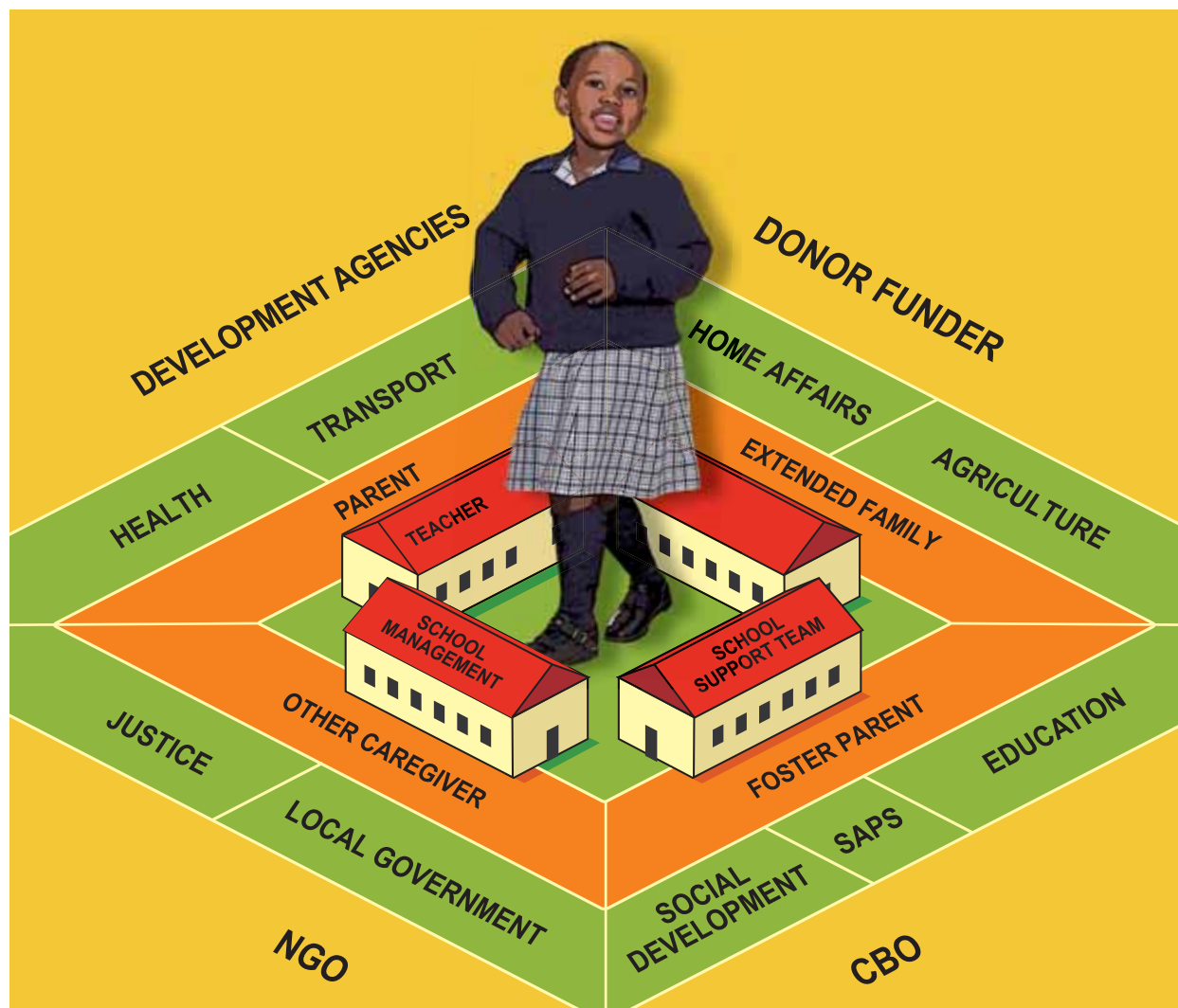## Aligning Priorities with Policy Requirements

The education and training system in South Africa has undergone major transformation since 1994. The post-apartheid decade was devoted to dismantling apartheid structures and systems and creating a policy framework for a unified and more equitable education system. The framework provides a clear mandate for the provision of free, basic education and the delivery of a range of support services to improve school access, increase attendance and enhance educational outcomes.

Policy developments have also responded to the particular needs of children living in poverty, children affected by HIV and AIDS, children with disabilities and other potentially vulnerable groups. Interventions to ensure care and support for teaching and learning in South Africa need to be aligned to clearly articulated policy mandates, contributing to the attainment of national, regional and international targets and tapping into existing resource allocations.

A Coordinated Multi-sectoral Approach

Realising the extensive mandate for care and support for vulnerable children necessitates a collaborative and multi-sectoral response including a range of government departments and non-governmental partners. Care and support for teaching and learning is not the sole responsibility of the DBE. For effective care and support programmes to be delivered, political will, commitment and buy-in from all role-players is necessary.[182] Multiple stakeholder collaboration and coordination is required at a community, district, provincial and national level.[183]

The diagram on the next page illustrates a learner-centered, collaborative, multi-stakeholder approach to care and support in and through schools. Within this model, various stakeholders (from caregivers to government departments) have responsibilities to ensure that the learner is able to attend school, complete school and achieve to his/her maximum potential.

A learner-centered, multi-sectoral approach to care and support for teaching and learning

The Lead Role of the DBE

The DBE has the mandate to ensure that educational outcomes are met and that the right to education for *all* children is realised. The DBE therefore has lead responsibility for the provision of a comprehensive school-based package of services and support through integrated multiple-stakeholder programmes and initiatives.

Strong management structures are needed at all levels within the DBE to lead and coordinate the provision of care and support in and through schools. In particular, the DBE will need to:

- Clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities of various state and non-governmental role-players;
- Ensure good communication of intentions and actions with stakeholders through key cooperative governance structures, such as the National Action Committee for Children and HIV/AIDS (NACCA), the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC), the National Child Care and Protection Forum (NCCPF), the National Child Labour Programme of Action Implementing Committee, the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee on Disability, the Social Cluster and the National Interdepartmental Committee on ECD, amongst others;
- Establish a representative, credible, coordinating structure that is accountable in the provision of school-based care and support;
- Facilitate coordinating mechanisms and processes at all levels for the planning, budgeting, financing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of care and support initiatives delivered within and through schools; and
- Provide the necessary tools and resources to inform and support implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Prerequisites for CSTL in SA

The following characteristics of an education environment were identified by stakeholders as prerequisites for the effective implementation of Care and Support for Teaching and Learning in South Africa. These are fundamental characteristics of an education system that would form the backbone to mainstream care and support through education in the identified priority areas for the country. Prerequisites include:

- Adequate human resources (including teacher buy-in)
- Human resource development
- Well-defined partnerships
- Enabling policies
- Provisioning and finances
- Programme planning
- Governance, management and support structures
- Monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems

Each of these is discussed briefly below. More detailed information on these prerequisites is available in the *National Support Pack*.

Adequate Human Resources

Without the necessary human and physical resources, schools cannot be fully functional and effective. CSTL requirements may necessitate the employment of additional staff, e.g. counsellors, class-based assistants and additional teachers, but in most instances the mainstreaming of CSTL calls for better training and more intensive support for *existing* staff, and the identification of individuals who can play a leadership role.

As per *White Paper 6*, educators are seen as the primary resource for achieving the goals of CSTL. Buy-in from teachers is therefore critical to the success of the model. A systemic review is required of all HR processes to ensure that mainstreaming of care and support is a consideration in staff recruitment, inductions, the development of job descriptions and performance reviews.

Human Resource Development

White Paper 6[184] emphasises that the success of the Department's efforts to address barriers to learning lies with education managers and educator cadre, with particular emphasis on the role of the classroom teacher. Human resource development is therefore a fundamental prerequisite for CSTL.

Human resource development involves the identification of HR needs and existing provisions, and the development and retention of staff. In the case of CSTL, HR development should include activities within the DBE as well as the development of human resources outside of education, to support learners and educators in and through schools.

Educators must ultimately view CSTL as an integral part of teaching and learning and should "demonstrate an ability to develop a supportive and empowering environment for the learner and respond to the educational and other needs of learners and fellow educators."[185] Staff development at the school and district level is therefore critical. This will need to be supported through ongoing assessment of educators' needs and structured programmes to meet these needs.

The skills needed by educators are numerous and diverse. According to the policy framework, educators are expected to have the skills and tools necessary to:

- Monitor learner attendance and behaviour;
- Create a flexible curriculum that accommodates a range of learning needs and implement multi-level classroom instruction;

- Recognise signs of vulnerability in learners;
- Deal appropriately with learners who have behavioural problems;
- Deliver HIV and AIDS awareness and education;
- Promote healthy life choices and lifestyles;
- Provide psychosocial support and counselling to children;
- Implement universal precautions at schools in the case of exposure to blood and other body fluids;
- Provide treatment adherence support to children on ARVs;
- Identify when illness becomes a barrier to learning and enable home schooling for learners who are too ill to attend school;
- Assist the Department of Social Development to identify cases of child labour;
- Watch for signs of abuse, record it, and report the abuse to the relevant authorities;
- Establish peer educator groups for older learners;
- Recognise and respond to instances of discrimination;
- Ensure the safety of learners;
- Support the DSD in linking vulnerable learners to grants, benefits and social services; and
- Establish partnerships with parents to enable them to participate in the planning and implementation of inclusion activities for children with disabilities or chronic illnesses.

In addition to the above, educators in Full Service and Special Schools require skills to enable them to provide a higher level of support to learners with special needs and to support other educators working in neighbouring mainstream schools.

The 80 hours annual in-service education and training requirement of the government in respect of educators should be structured in such a manner that it includes the development of skills necessary to enable educators to perform these vital CSTL functions.

Similarly, education personnel at district and provincial levels require skills development in order to fulfil their role in enabling school-based care and support.

Well Defined Partnerships

As can be seen from the policy mandate, Care and Support for Teaching and Learning is contingent on effective partnerships between the DBE and several other government departments, including the Departments of Health, Social Development, Agriculture, Public Works and Home Affairs.

The CSTL programme is also founded on a public–private partnership involving government and NGOs.

The NGO presence allows for innovation, while involving the government allows for institutionalisation of the programmes and lessons learned

National DDG for Social and School Enrichment

Care and support interventions at school level are frequently initiated, funded and coordinated by non-governmental or community-based organisations working in and through schools. These partnerships between schools and NGOs or CBOs are usually informal and currently operate outside of any clearly defined mandate. This raises a host of challenges which can impact negatively on schools, learners and implementing partners.

Well-defined partnerships, with clearly articulated parameters, expectations, roles and responsibilities are a prerequisite for the realisation of care and support objectives.

At community level, the DBE is expected to build a network of identified service providers and to coordinate referrals and collective action to address the needs of vulnerable learners[186] (School-based Support Teams, described below, play an important role in this regard).

Partnerships between schools and parents/caregivers are also fundamental to CSTL. The policy framework makes several references to the importance of working with caregivers in the identification and support of vulnerable learners and out-of-school youth.

Enabling Policies

Policies and laws define Government commitments and guide budgets. In order to mainstream care and support within education and ensure adequate resource allocation, it is essential to ensure an enabling policy framework that makes the appropriate provisions.

Within the South African context, this policy framework exists. As noted earlier – while some policy gaps remain, barriers to the provision of care and support in education lie predominantly in the sphere of implementation.

Provisioning and Finances

Despite the policy mandate, lack of funding emerged from the *Situation and Response Analysis* and the *Baseline Study* as a common challenge to the implementation of CSTL nationally and in the region. Dealing with funding and provisioning requirements is fundamental to the Department's overall leadership and coordination function.

Working in collaboration with implementation partners (such as NGOs, CBOs and other government departments) can assist schools in more impoverished communities to realise their care and support obligations without having to raise significant additional resources.

Programme Planning

Given the range of stakeholders involved in the implementation of Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (including several different education directorates, other government departments and non-governmental partners), effective and consultative programme planning is necessary.

At national and provincial levels, programme planning is largely strategic, with operational planning happening at district and school levels. Where implementation partners are involved, joint planning is essential. It is also important to ensure that care and support issues feature on the agenda of all relevant education directorates as a consideration in their programme planning.

Governance, Management and Support Structures

Care and Support for Teaching and Learning requires that structures are in place to support integration at national, provincial, district and school levels. In line with the core principle of collaboration in CSTL, structures should be multi-sectoral, bringing relevant stakeholders together to play their respective roles within the education system.

The *National Support Pack* recommends constituting task teams at national and provincial levels to manage and guide implementation.[k] At the local level, the nature, purpose and composition of structures may vary from one school community to another. However, *White Paper 6* does suggest the establishment of particular structures for the implementation of care and support in and through schools. These include

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Notes
k   Refer to the *Action Step: Support and Structures* for details on the terms of reference for each of these structures.

District-based Support Teams, School-based Support Teams, Special Schools as Resource Centres and Full Service Schools.

Roles and responsibilities of the various structures as defined in *White Paper 6* and the *National Support Pack*

National Task Team (NTT)
The main function of the National Task Team (or National Steering Committee) is to provide strategic direction and guidance to CSTL. The team should comprise specialists with the necessary expertise and skills, including representatives from the relevant DBE directorates at national level and provincial Departments of Education. Relevant NGOs and other government departments should be co-opted on an ad hoc basis to participate in the National Task Team.

Provincial Task Team (PTT)
Provincial Task Teams should be in place to coordinate and guide CSTL activities across the province. These Teams include Department of Education personnel (e.g. specialist learner and teacher support personnel, governance and management experts, administrative staff and representatives from the school districts in each province). Once again, partners from other government departments and from civil society may be co-opted as required.

District-based Support Team (DBST)
District-based Support Teams are central to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of CSTL. They provide a coordinated professional support service that draws on expertise in further and higher education and local communities. Their primary function is to build the capacity of schools (and other educational institutions) to recognise and address barriers to learning and to accommodate a range of learning needs. Importantly, the DBSTs are also required to develop and coordinate school-based support for *educators*. In collaboration with provincial departments of education, DBSTs provide access for educators to appropriate pre-service and in-service education and training and professional support services.

Institutional-level Support Team (ILST) also called School-based Support Teams
Institutional-level Support Teams operate at the level of the school, to coordinate learner and educator support services. These teams are made up of school management, educators, parents / caregivers and learners (where applicable). Where appropriate, these teams should be strengthened by expertise from the local community, DBSTs and higher education institutions. DBSTs provide the full range of education support services to these Institutional-level Support Teams.

Special Schools as Resource Centres
White Paper 6 envisaged that Special Schools would be converted into Resource Centres. These centres have two primary responsibilities. Firstly, they provide an improved educational service to their targeted learner populations (i.e. learners who require high level support). Secondly, the skill set available within these schools would be integrated into the District-based Support Teams. In this way, Special Schools can provide specialised professional support in curriculum, assessment and instruction to neighbouring mainstream and Full Service Schools.

Full Service Schools
At least one primary school within each of the 81 school districts should operate as a Full Service School, to accommodate learners that require moderate to high level support. These schools are provided with physical and material resources and the staff and professional development that are necessary to accommodate learners with the full range of learning needs. Ultimately, all schools should function as Full Service Schools, gradually offering support for an increasingly wider range and level of support needs.

Importantly, the names and nature of these various structures are less important than their functions. Where relevant structures already exist within schools (e.g. school management teams) and school districts, CSTL activities should be mainstreamed within these structures rather than creating additional/parallel structures. Mainstreaming of CSTL within existing education structures and systems will help reduce duplication and avoid unnecessary additional burdens on education personnel.

More information on specific structures is available in the *National Support Pack*.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

The implementation of care and support must be monitored, evaluated and reported on, to track the impact of CSTL on *educational outcomes,* to monitor efficacy and to justify the expenditure and motivate for the continuation of CSTL.

The Department of Basic Education has a host of obligations in terms of monitoring school enrolment, learner attendance, learner performance, etc., and it has various systems in place to track these indicators. Where possible, monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems for CSTL should be aligned with existing M&E systems within the Department of Basic Education, e.g. Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), Learner Unit Record Information Tracking System (LURITS) and Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS).[i] Efforts should be made to align data collection tools and processes with the normal routines and operating procedures within schools, and to integrate data analysis and reporting within existing DBE M&E processes. Furthermore, indicators and measures for determining CSTL impact should be linked to core education priorities, namely education access, retention and achievement outcomes.

When reviewing appropriate CSTL indicators, it is also important to consider inter-departmental reporting obligations for care and support (as outlined in the section headed **National Obligations**).

Notes

[i] To support implementation of Inclusive Education (through *White Paper 6*), schools are provided with SIAS tools. These are intended for use by educators to help identify barriers to learning and to establish appropriate support packages for learners experiencing these barriers. The SIAS strategy was developed to ensure a more rigorous and consistent approach to screening, identification, assessment and support of learners across the system.

Current Care and Support Priorities

The core principles and prerequisites described above form the foundation on which to build care and support for teaching and learning in and through schools – ultimately enabling schools to progressively deliver on their care and support obligations.

As mentioned previously, individual school programmes should be tailored to the needs and capacities of each school community. In designing programmes to support vulnerable learners however, schools and their implementation partners should consider the *current* priorities listed below:

- Nutritional Support
- Health Promotion
- Infrastructure, Water and Sanitation
- Social Welfare Services
- Psychosocial Support
- Safety and Protection
- Curriculum Support
- Co-curricular Support
- Material Support

These types of interventions are prioritised because they are effective in addressing the systemic, societal and intrinsic barriers to education access, retention and achievement outcomes that were described earlier in this document.

The list draws on the findings of the *Baseline Study,* the *Situation and Response Analysis*, and the inter-provincial forum meeting with Provincial Education Departments. These priorities also reflect obligations articulated within the education policy framework (as described in the section headed **National Obligations**). The priorities were also cross-referenced against roles and responsibilities identified in other multi-sectoral frameworks such as NACCA and SANAC.

It is worth restating here that the role of the DBE in implementing these priorities is two-fold:

1. Directly addressing education-specific elements of vulnerability through schools; and
2. Creating an enabling environment for *other role-players* to provide care and support to teachers and learners in and through schools.

The pages that follow provide more information on each priority – revisiting (briefly) the education mandate for each, and providing examples of relevant programmes. These examples are intended to stimulate thought and discussion within various levels of the education sector, and are not meant to be prescriptive or limiting.

Interventions should be adapted to fit local contexts – schools and their implementing partners should review the priority list in light of the needs and the capacity of their particular school community and design or plan interventions accordingly.

Furthermore, the needs of individual learners and school communities change over time. Any care and support system is only as good as its ability to adapt to the changing needs of learners and teachers. The nature, target and scope of programmes must be responsive to these changing needs.

Nutritional Support

Nutritional support is intended to address barriers to learning associated with hunger and malnutrition. Nutritional support enhances the learning capacity of learners through the provision of a daily hot, cooked, nutritious meal to learners. It includes not just the delivery of feeding programmes, but also measures to ensure food quality, the creation of sustainable food production initiatives through, amongst others, school-based food gardens; and the promotion of healthy lifestyles through, among others, nutrition education and deworming programmes.[187]

Programme Example: National School Nutrition Programme

Through the National School Nutrition Programme, the DBE provides one meal per school day to all learners in Quintiles 1, 2 and 3 public primary schools, and to all learners in Quintile 1 secondary schools. While the programme is managed by the DBE, the Department of Health plays an important role in supporting the programme.[188] Some provinces are working with the DoH to develop menus for the feeding programme in order to ensure that the food provided to learners is the most nutritious possible within budgetary constraints.

The Department of Agriculture also assists schools with seedlings, equipment and expertise to establish food gardens which help supplement the feeding programme.

Health Promotion

Health promotion involves a process of enabling educators and learners to increase control over their health and its determinants, thereby improving and promoting their overall health and wellbeing.[189] Health promotion interventions should address the risk and protective factors that impact the wellbeing of educators and learners. Such programmes may focus on sexual and reproductive health, including teenage pregnancy and HIV, drug and substance use, personal hygiene and environmental health, as well as programmes to screen learners for health barriers to learning, such as developmental delays and disabilities.

The DBE is also responsible for the provision of information and education on various health and wellness-related issues to school communities more broadly,[190] and for supporting educators in identifying and responding to the needs of learners with particular health needs.

Programme Example: HIV and AIDS Life Skills Education Programme

The HIV and AIDS Life Skills Education Programme was initiated in 2000 and is implemented in all public institutions with a focus on learners in Grades 1–12. The main objectives of the Life Skills Programme are to integrate HIV and AIDS and relevant life skills into the school curriculum as a strategy to mitigate the spread of HIV and AIDS, and to provide care and support for learners who are infected and affected by HIV and AIDS. In this regard, a cross-curricular approach has been adopted. Although life skills and HIV and AIDS education is primarily located in the Life Orientation learning area, some aspects of the programme have also been integrated into other learning areas.

The Life Skills HIV and AIDS programme focuses mainly on curricular activities as per the following focal areas:

- Training of educators to teach aspects of the programme within the curriculum;
- Peer education activities for learners to support curriculum implementation;
- Capacity building of School Management Teams to develop school support plans or action plans for HIV and AIDS; and
- Care and support activities for learners and educators.

Infrastructure, Water and Sanitation

This priority area involves the provision and maintenance of habitable and appropriate physical school structures designed to meet all of the accommodation requirements of the school, including classrooms, library, administration areas, adequate toilets, clean and consistent water supply including safe drinking water, playgrounds, sports and catering facilities and a sick bay. All of these should be situated within the fenced grounds of the school. The manner in which the physical environment, such as buildings and grounds, is developed and organised contributes to the level of independence and equality that learners with disabilities enjoy. As such, infrastructure should be designed in such a way as to be accessible for learners and educators with disabilities.

This priority area puts a focus on water and sanitation because they are fundamental determinants of learner and educator health and wellbeing as well as primary markers of the state of development of the school. In addition, they are key targets of the MDGs on which the global community is lagging behind.

The DBE is required to ensure a safe supply of potable, clean water at schools, adequate sanitation that meets the needs of vulnerable children, access to electricity and a communication system.

Programme Example: Ecolink Rainwater Harvesting

Ecolink is a service organisation that provides training and support to disadvantaged communities. Through their Water Care Programme, community members are trained in water tank construction and water conservation and management. This programme functions to alleviate water stress and scarcity in schools, clinics, pension points and community projects.

Social Welfare Services

This priority area refers to the role of schools and educators in the implementation of child care and protection legislation[191] and in promoting access to social welfare services, enabling documents (such as IDs and birth certificates) and social assistance grants, such as the child support grant.

Teachers have a legal obligation to report cases of physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect.[192] Schools also have an obligation to report incidences of exploitative child labour. The Education Department must notify the DSD of any child who is receiving the CSG who is not registered at or attending school. And educators should be equipped with the skills and tools necessary to identify vulnerable children and to refer them appropriately. Towards this end, schools, through their School-based Support Teams, must build and maintain a network of identified service providers within their community.

Programme Example: Integrated Service Delivery Days

Several organisations have partnered with schools to coordinate integrated service delivery days. These events bring together a range of service providers on the premises of a school over a period of one or two days. Having all of these role-players under one roof creates a temporary and highly effective one-stop shop for services for vulnerable children.

In most instances, these multi-service events promote access to social grants. Typically, a caregiver wishing to apply for a grant will have to negotiate her way through up to seven different government departments, a process that can take in excess of 12 months and involve repeat visits to several different government offices. Travel costs, illiteracy, ignorance and fear prevent the most vulnerable households from negotiating this system. Using a local school as a central and easily accessible venue, these events

bring together civic and traditional leaders and officials from all relevant government departments to enable caregivers to go through the full process of applying for a grant, often within a few hours! With plenty of on-site support, every effort is made to assist every person who comes through the doors.

Role-players that are usually involved in such events include: The South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), the DBE, the Department of Home Affairs, the Department of Social Development, the Department of Justice, the South African Police Services, traditional and civic leaders, Local Government and the Department of Health.

In addition to enabling access to services, these events encourage collaboration between various government departments at local level and between government and civil society service providers.

Psychosocial Support

The Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative (REPSSI) defines psychosocial support (PSS) for children as a "continuum of care and support by which children, families, service providers, and the broader community can influence children's social environment as well as their individual capacities for both individual benefit and community societal development".[193] Psychosocial support is provided in response to the emotional, mental and social needs of learners and educators. All of these are critical for educational and overall development. These needs arise from traumatic events such as extreme poverty, absence, illness or death of parents and exposure to violence. They can manifest in, amongst others, depression, behavioural difficulties, withdrawal, extended or repeated absenteeism and failure to perform at school, amongst other signs.

While PSS interventions are intended to promote the psychological and social development of the child, they should also be tailored to strengthen protective and preventive factors that will limit negative consequences for children. Schools have an important role to play in the provision of psychosocial support to all children, and in particular vulnerable learners, and in fostering supportive relationships with caregivers of vulnerable children. Schools are also required to establish peer educator groups that can offer ongoing support and to maintain open channels of communication with families. Educators should be provided with the skills and support necessary to fulfil these roles, and should be able to draw on professionals located within the school community, District-based Support Teams and Special Schools as Resource Centres when necessary.

Programme Example: Childline in Schools

Childline is a non-profit organisation that works with schools and communities to help protect children from all forms of violence and to create a culture of children's rights in South Africa. Childline offers prevention and education programmes in schools to provide information to learners and educators on children's rights, child abuse, HIV and AIDS, relationships and responsible sexual behaviour. Childline also provides information for educators via its website.

Safety and Protection

One of the priority mandates of the DBE is to ensure that a school is a safe and protective environment for both learners and educators. This mandate includes ensuring that the physical environment of the school is free of all forms of injury, violence and physical abuse. This can be achieved through fencing and installing security gates and developing a code of conduct for the school. But safety and protection concerns are not limited to the physical infrastructure of the school (such as fencing and gates). It also refers to the psychological and emotional safety of learners and educators by focusing on factors such as stigma, discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment. A useful definition of a safe school follows on the next page:

A safe school may be defined as one that is free of danger and where there is an absence of possible harm; a place in which non-educators, educators and learners may work, teach and learn without fear of ridicule, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, or violence. A safe school is therefore a healthy school in that it is physically and psychologically safe. Indicators of safe schools include the presence of certain physical features such as secure walls, fencing and gates; buildings that are in a good state of repair; and well-maintained school grounds. Safe schools are further characterised by good discipline, a culture conducive to teaching and learning, professional educator conduct, good governance and management practices, and an absence (or low level) of crime and violence.[194]

Any person employed within a school environment should be screened in terms of the National Child Protection Register[195] (which records the details of people who are unsuitable to work with children), and in accordance with the South African Schools Act, no corporal punishment is permitted in schools.

Programme Example: Operation Hlayiseka "Early Warning System" Safe Schools Project

Hlayiseka is a joint programme between the DBE and the Department of Community Safety. The programme was developed by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP), and was recommended to all provinces by the national DBE.

The programme involves working individually with each school to develop a comprehensive, tailor-made School Safety Plan. Once the plan has been designed, the programme works to enhance the capacity of the school management and educators to cope with the unique crime and safety challenges found in its school environment. The implementation of each School Safety Plan requires active involvement of a wide range of players. These include principals, teachers, learners, parents, other government departments, civil society and the broader community. As with the other cross-cutting programmes, Operation Hlayiseka is improving collaboration between government departments, and focusing service provision on each school's individual needs.

Curriculum Support

Curriculum support includes efforts to ensure the creation of a learning environment that reflects and celebrates diversity, as well as creating experiences that acknowledge learning rates levels and styles. Curriculum should be tailored to efficiently and effectively meet the needs of those learners who are experiencing barriers to learning, those who have behavioural problems and those who have high levels of ability and learn much faster than other learners.[196]

Curriculum support activities should aim to develop teacher skills in curriculum adaptation/differentiation, alternative assessment strategies, the use of assistive devices, life skills education, Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support Tools and referral mechanisms, and learner support programmes.

School management and educators should ensure a flexible curriculum that accommodates a range of learning needs, including learners' preferred language of instruction (within reason). Learners who are too ill to attend school should be supported to study at home or be accommodated in residential institutions for learners with special education needs.

Programme Example: LEAP Life Orientation Initiative

Life orientation (LO) is a compulsory and examinable subject in all South African schools up to the end of Grade 12. Schools are required to devote three periods per week to the subject which focuses mainly on the external components of life skills, such as time management, study skills, job applications, healthy lifestyles and general societal and environmental issues.

LEAP schools have taken Life Orientation a step further.

The communities and families from which LEAP students come are often disempowered, and many learners have absent parents and direct experience of violence, death and illness of family and community members. Under these circumstances, trust, autonomy and initiative stages of development will not be adequately enabled or achieved. As a result, many students are likely to have problems in forming concrete personal identities, making them susceptible to behaviour which is harmful to themselves and to others.

LEAP have therefore extended the LO curriculum with an emphasis on the personal development aspects of the subject. LEAP devotes one lesson a day to Life Orientation – from Grades 9 to 12. Lessons are held without desks and with learners sitting on chairs in a circle. The lesson is not "taught" but rather discussion is facilitated around themes. The LO facilitators are often healthcare professionals (e.g. occupational therapists or nurse therapists) who partner with the school to help facilitate the development of strongly-grounded, non-prescriptive values system, self-respect and respect for others, in every student.

Co-curricular Activities

Co-curricular activities in the context of care and support are intended to support and augment curriculum implementation in and outside of the school. They assist in promoting the physical, social and emotional health and wellness of learners, and can provide useful diversion from undesirable and destructive behaviour on the part of learners outside of school hours. Examples of co-curricular activities include peer education programmes, homework assistance programmes, social and drama clubs, and sport-related activities. All schools are required to have facilities for at least one extra-curricular sporting activity for boys and girls.

Programme Example: Collaborative Peer Education Initiative

Save the Children (SCF) UK has partnered with the DBE to help transform schools into sites of care and support for vulnerable learners. As part of this multifaceted programme, SCF works with local NGOs to train youth facilitators to help students deal with social problems and promote key skills, such as leadership and teamwork. The facilitators also identify children who have dropped out of school, and work collaboratively to encourage and enable their return.

Material Support

Material support refers to the provision of resources or services to address material or financial barriers to education.

Education policy requires that the DBE establish no-fee schools in the poorest communities and institute fee exemptions for vulnerable children attending fee-charging schools. The DBE is also required to provide learning and teaching support materials, to assist with uniforms for children who cannot afford them, to

assist learners to access assistive devices where necessary, and to provide learners with transport or accommodation if no school is available within reasonable walking distance of their homes.

Programme Example: Fee-free Schools and Fee Exemptions

Primary and secondary schools in the poorest areas in South Africa, namely Quintiles 1, 2 and 3 schools, are categorised as no-fee schools. These schools are not permitted to charge school fees (or any registration, administration or other fee)[197] and receive additional subsidies from the DBE in lieu of fees. In addition, poor and otherwise vulnerable learners attending fee-charging schools may be exempt from paying school fees[198] if they qualify according to a prescribed means test. Certain categories of children are automatically exempt, including children who have been orphaned, children in foster care, children receiving the child support grant and children living in child-headed households.

Schools functioning optimally as sites of care and support for vulnerable learners will have programmes in place to address ALL of the above priorities. Most schools, however, will require substantial support to enable them to reach this point.

The Schools as Centre of Care and Support Programme facilitated by MIET Africa is an example of a collaborative initiative between an NGO and the DBE that provides support to schools to enable them to become sites of care and support for learners and educators. A school principal involved in the programme had this to say:

The SCCS programme has increased our knowledge and understanding of HIV and AIDS. And it has helped the community get birth and death certificates for children who don't have them, and access grants. It has also helped us build a new classroom, taught our Grade 1 and Grade 6 learners how to do art, brought us sport equipment and taught the learners how to play volley ball, soccer and netball...

It has helped us learn how to treat learners who are sick and how to involve the community in our school, by working together… Parents used to run away from school because they thought school was high. But now we are all members of a family.[199]

School principal

The challenge lies in taking these kinds of initiatives to scale. The CSTL *Conceptual Framework* and accompanying *National Support Pack* aim to do just this.

Supporting Implementation of CSTL in South Africa

This final chapter of the *Conceptual Framework* takes the discussion one step further. It reiterates the notion of the school community as a web of relationships between numerous role-players, with the learner and educator at the centre. The chapter introduces elements of the National Support Pack – which is intended to facilitate operationalisation of the CSTL vision.
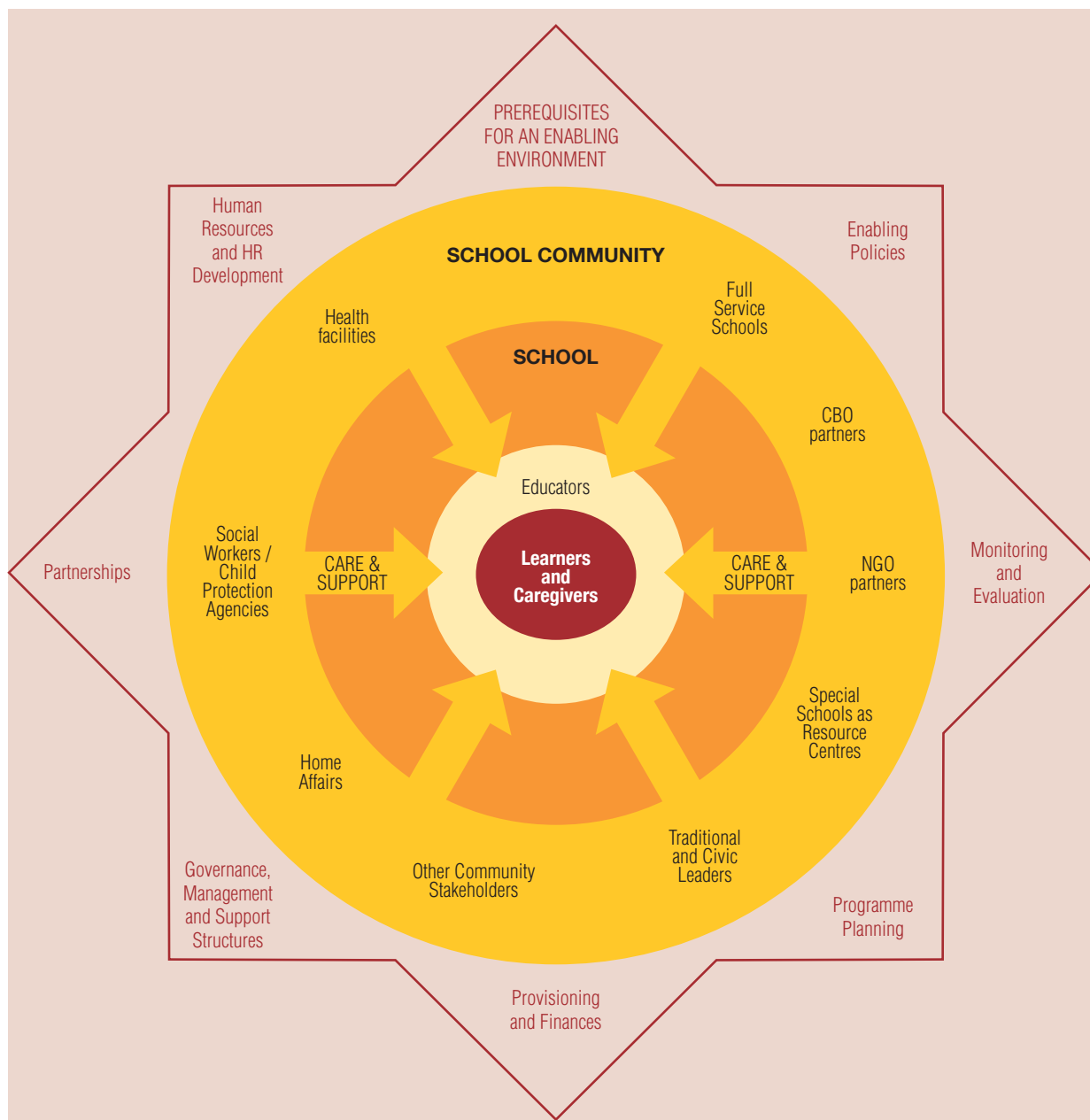
Strengthening School Communities

The vast majority of schools in South Africa fall into the category of mainstream public schools. The vast majority of vulnerable learners attend these schools.

At present, and for the foreseeable future, most mainstream schools do not have the in-house skills and resources to fully implement CSTL. For these ordinary schools struggling with extraordinary challenges, additional support is needed "on the ground" to realise the objectives of CSTL. The focus needs to be on putting in place processes and strategies to facilitate collaboration between mainstream public schools and formal and informal support structures within the broader school community. The role of School-based Support Teams and District-based Support Teams are critical in this respect.

All school communities, regardless of their level of poverty, functioning, size or capacity, have resources and strengths. These are the building blocks on which every school can begin the journey towards creating an environment which is conducive to Care and Support for Teaching and Learning. These building blocks may be as basic as a motivated and committed school principal, a positive relationship with the community, good infrastructure or an active NGO in the area. Every school has assets at its disposal! In moving forward, we need to shift our conversations from the "problems" of community to the "possibility" of community.[200]

The diagram on the next page attempts to encapsulate the core elements of CSTL as presented in this *Conceptual Framework*. It includes as a backdrop the prerequisites for an enabling environment for CSTL in schools. The diagram places the learner at the centre, and recognises the importance of her/his relationship with caregiver and educators. The school is positioned within a broader school community that includes numerous potential partners, including Special Schools as Resource Centres and Full Service Schools as envisaged in *White Paper 6*. The list of partners is not intended to be exhaustive but simply illustrates the range of stakeholders that can (and do) work with schools to support learners and educators. The arrows represent the delivery of care and support to learners and educators through schools. The idea of schools as conduits of care and support for learners and educators is central to CSTL.

The core elements of CSTL

Where to from here? Introducing the *National Support Pack*

The attainment of basic education objectives rests heavily on the ability of the education system to eliminate barriers to education for vulnerable children. This requires a new level of innovation and collaboration across various directorates within Education, between different government departments and between government and civil society stakeholders.[201] The *National Support Pack* was designed to help guide the DBE through the process of implementing CSTL. The Pack includes information, case studies and tools for use and adaptation by National and Provincial CSTL Task Teams.

The *National Support Pack* is structured around 12 Action Steps, each of which is critical to effective mainstreaming of Care and Support for Teaching and Learning within South Africa.

The 12 Action Steps described in the *National Support Pack*

Action steps	Brief description of each step
Create an enabling policy environment	Includes information on how to conduct a policy audit and highlights the importance of inter-sectoral advocacy in creating an enabling policy environment
Conduct a situation and response analysis	Describes how to conduct a situation and response analysis in order to understand the factors that render children vulnerable and to identify existing interventions
Develop a national model	Contains the Conceptual Framework which articulates the DBE's approach to address barriers to teaching and learning for vulnerable children
Formulate CSTL Programme plans	Provides guidance on planning and costing a CSTL Programme to suit each particular context
Identify and establish the necessary support and structures	Describes the various structures that need to be in place and provides guidance on the composition, scope and terms of reference of these structures
Map capacity for implementation	Identifies the capacity needed for implementation of the CSTL Programme plan (including human resources, skills and knowledge, infrastructure and equipment) and considers opportunities for mainstreaming
Develop necessary materials and tools	Describes the purpose and content of materials and tools needed to support mainstreaming of CSTL and provides guidance on where to access new resources and/or how to adapt existing resources
Establish a multi-sectoral network of services	Outlines processes and considerations for establishing effective partnerships and networks to support learners and educators
Design effective monitoring and evaluation, research and reporting mechanisms	Explains the importance of monitoring, evaluation, research and reporting and describes ways of designing and implementing these
Develop an advocacy and communication strategy	Describes steps in the development of an effective advocacy strategy to promote mainstreaming of CSTL
Conduct CSTL pilot	Explains the importance of piloting interventions before finalising the model, tools, training and processes
Plan for scale up and sustainability	Outlines requirements for taking the pilot to scale, including systems, resources, infrastructure, HR provisioning, targets and timeframes, etc

These Action Steps are purposefully not numbered. This is because there is no prescribed sequence for when the steps should be undertaken, and CSTL Task Teams may work on several steps concurrently. The

Action Steps are also not equal in size or complexity – some may take months and maybe even years to achieve fully; others can be completed more rapidly.

The *National Support Pack* is designed for flexible use. It is a resource that individuals and teams can use at any time to inform and strengthen efforts to mainstream care and support within schools.

The primary target audience for the *National Support Pack* is the Task Team that is established at national and provincial levels to direct the CSTL Programme. However, other role-players may well find elements of the *National Support Pack* useful. These role-players include DBSTs, ILSTs, NGO partners, and donors and development agencies.

Conclusion

Care and support within the education environment is not an end in itself. Its value and impact must be measured by the extent to which it contributes to and improves teaching and learning outcomes. Because of the multiple manifestations of vulnerability, multi-stakeholder partnerships are essential for the provision of care and support. Both the former and the latter mean that the delivery of care and support in the education environment is inherently complex. This *Conceptual Framework* is an attempt to bring conceptual clarity to the approach of the Department of Basic Education, to care and support, and should be applied equally by the range of stakeholders working in and through schools to improve the lives of learners and educators.

Appendix1: Policy Framework for Care and Support for Teaching and Learning

International Obligations[202]

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1990: South Africa ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1995, recognising the right of the child to holistic education, with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity.

- The World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, echoed the provisions of the UNCRC that all children, young people and adults have the fundamental human right to a basic education.[203]

- The vision of Education for All was further elaborated at the World Education Forum meeting in Dakar, Senegal (April 2000), through the formulation of the *Dakar Framework for Action*. This framework calls for national plans of action for education to be integrated with wider development and poverty reduction strategies. Citing civil society as important role-players in the process, it recommends a set of time-bound goals and strategies for ensuring "Education For All" by 2015.

- The *United Nations Millennium Declaration* was adopted by 189 nations (including South Africa) and signed by 147 Heads of State and governments during the United Nations Millennium Summit in September 2000. The Declaration commits signatories to the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These are eight goals to be achieved by 2015 that respond to the world's main development challenges. The process represents renewed commitment from countries towards minimum development standards for the poorest. Millennium Development Goal number 2 is to achieve universal primary education, with the 2015 target of ensuring that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling.

- The *UNICEF Framework for the Care and Protection of Vulnerable Children* emphasises that any effective response must draw on the resources and energy of public, private and civil society groups, through a shared responsibility for the protection and wellbeing of vulnerable children.[204]

Pan-African and Regional Agreements

- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1990
- African Youth Charter, 2006
- SADC Declaration on HIV/AIDS, 2003
- The Strategic Framework and Programme of Action (2008–2015): Comprehensive Care and Support for Orphans and other Vulnerable Children and Youth in SADC and Business Plan, April 2009 – March 2015: Implementation of the Strategic Framework and Programme of Action (2008–2015)

In addition to the basic obligations to all children, international and regional frameworks recognise that orphans, other vulnerable children and youth (OVCY) are particularly at risk of not accessing their right to a basic, affordable education. To address this, countries are required to undertake special measures to protect these vulnerable children and youth, and to promote their inclusion and participation in education. Most of these measures are well-aligned with the ideals of care and support, and include:

- Ensuring equal access to female and disadvantaged children;
- Protecting children from discrimination and any denial of their human rights, including the right to education;
- Making education accessible to children with mental or physical disabilities;

- Ensuring refugee children are accessing their rights, including the right to education;
- Protecting children from child labour;
- Supporting teen mothers to continue their education prior to, and after, the birth of their child;
- Ensuring that children affected and/or infected by HIV and AIDS are not discriminated against in their access to, enrolment in or attendance at school; and, to provide these children with protection, care and support at school;
- Protecting children from physical, mental and sexual abuse, exploitation and neglect. Measures must include prevention measures, identification, reporting, referral and follow-up;
- Providing the support necessary for parents to fulfil their obligations to provide children with an adequate standard of living;
- Protecting and ensuring access to health care services, preventing malnutrition and ensureing access to food and nutrition and social security; and
- Protecting children from the use and abuse of narcotic drugs and other illegal substances.

South African Frameworks and Policies that refer directly to the DBE's role in facilitating care and support through schools

- Tirisano – A Call to Action (1999)
- Education *White Paper 6*: Special needs education – building an inclusive education and training system, 2001
- The National Integrated Plan for Early Childhood Development in South Africa, 2005–2010
- National Policy on HIV and AIDS for Learners and Educators in Public Schools, and Students and Educators in Further Education, 1998
- Norms and Standards for Educators (2000)
- The HIV/AIDS Emergency: DBE Guidelines for Educators (2002)
- Policy Framework on Orphans and Other Children Made Vulnerable by HIV and AIDS, South Africa (2005)
- The National Action Plan for Orphans and Other Children Made Vulnerable by HIV and AIDS, South Africa 2009–2012
- The HIV and AIDS and STI National Strategic Plan (2007–2011)
- School Health Policy and Implementation Guidelines (2003)
- Children's Act, 2005 and Children's Amendment Act, 2007

Other Relevant National Policies and Laws

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
- The National Integrated Plan for HIV and AIDS (2000–2004)
- Employment Equity Act, 1998 and Code of Good Practice on Key Aspects of HIV and AIDS – Regulation no 390 of 2000
- Policy Guidelines for Youth and Adolescents Mental Health, 2001
- Social Assistance Act, 2004 and the Social Assistance Amendment Act, 2008
- The Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997
- The Child Labour Programme of Action (2008–2013)
- Policy Guidelines for Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 2001
- School Health Policy and Implementation Guidelines, 2003

DBE Policies and Laws

- Admissions Policy for Ordinary Schools Act No 27 of 1996
- Amended National Norms and Standards for School Funding, 2006
- Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Inclusive Education: District-based Support Teams (2005); Special Schools as Resource Centres (2005); Full Service Schools (2005) and Draft Guidelines for the Inclusive Learning Programmes (2005)
- Develop an HIV and AIDS plan for your school – A Guide for School Governing Bodies and Management Teams, 2003, DBE

- Draft Framework Document on Health and Wellness, July 2006
- Education Laws Amendment Acts No 24 / 2005 and No 31 of 2007
- Education White Paper 5 on Early Childhood Education, 2001
- Health Promoting Schools Initiative, Department of Health
- Manage HIV and AIDS in your province: A guide for Department of Education provincial and district planners and manager, Department of Education, 2003
- Measures for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy, 2007
- National Guidelines on School Uniforms, 2006
- National Minimum Norms and Standards for School Infrastructure, 2008
- National Norms and Standards for Grade R Funding, January 2008
- National Policy for an Equitable Provision of an Enabling School Physical Teaching and Learning Environment, 2008
- National School Nutrition Programme – A guide for Secondary Schools, 2009
- Norms and Standards for Educators
- Policy for the Registration of Learners for Home Education
- Policy Framework for the Management of Drug Abuse by Learners in Schools and in Public Further Education and Training Institutions, 2002, DoE
- Regulations for Safety Measures at Schools
- Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) for Grades R-9 and the National Curriculum Statement for Grade 10–12, 2005
- Signposts for Safe Schools, DoE and the Department of Safety and Security
- Social Assistance Act No 13/2004 and the Social Assistance Amendment Act 6/2008
- The Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 75/1997
- The Department of Education Strategic Plan 2009–2013 and Operational Plans 2009–2010
- The Employment of Educators Act, 1998
- The Exemption of Parents from the Payment of School Fees Regulations, 1998 and Revised Exemption of Parents from the Payment of School Fees Regulations, 2006
- Learner Attendance Policy and Procedures, 2009: For Public Comment (Draft)[205]
- National Education Policy Act, 1996
- The South African Schools Act, 1996
- National Norms and Standards for Public School Funding, 1998
- National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa, 2007
- National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support – Operational Manual, 2008
- Department of Education Workplace Policy for HIV and AIDS
- Language in Education Policy, 1997 and the Norms and Standards regarding Language Policy, 1996

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Notes