



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE REPORT

Rural Education

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1. Purpose

This report presents to the Portfolio Committee progress that has been made on the support that is provided to rural schools.

2. Problem Statement

South Africa is facing immense inequalities and socio-economic challenges which are the effects of our history of segregation and land dispossession. These inequalities are mostly intense in rural areas. The majority of rural communities have poor socio-economic backgrounds which are characterised by, among others, poor housing, poverty and lack of fiscal power. These challenges translate into rural schools, which experience vast inequalities, and are confronted with problems such as poor infrastructure, inadequate resources and a shortage of qualified teachers. DBE has committed to improving the quality of rural education through developing and co-ordinating a multi-disciplinary approach for improving the quality of education, and subsequently learner performance, in rural schools.

3. Background

Rurality in the South African context is not a uniform structure but comprises of a number of diverse contexts. For example, it could refer to areas that consist of the many tribal lands controlled by traditional leaders. Also while 'rural' refers to those settings that are sparsely populated and where agriculture is the major means of economic activity, the definition could be expanded to include areas of dense settlement created by colonial and apartheid driven land settlements. 'Rural' can then be best understood by exploring the historical settlement on land ownership in rural areas, which are directly related to apartheid and colonial policies.

This understanding of rurality is supported in the Report on the Ministerial Committee on Rural Education (2005:3), which clearly explains that 'Colonialism and

apartheid left an indelible print on all aspects of rural life through land dispossession, resettlement policies and systematic exclusion from opportunity to improve personal and social well-being that made poverty the most endemic characteristics of rural areas'. Apartheid policies had major socio-economic inequalities which still exist. These inequalities cannot be separated from the unequal power relations between urban and rural, and within these contexts as well. After many interventions for rural development in the post-democratic era, rural areas still carry the brunt of the pre-democratic era as they are still characterised by, amongst others, poverty, poor infrastructure and unemployment. This historical and geographical context in South Africa has major implications for the quality of education in rural schools and therefore calls for a context-specific approach in supporting these schools.

Defining rurality remains a contested area, and as an interim measure the DBE has adopted the following working definition, until this is refined and finalised through the consultative process planned in the convening of the Rural Education Roundtable and the report that will emanate from the Ministerial Task Team on Rural Education: ***Rural Education is defined as the provision of quality education in schools in areas with tribal authorities, farming communities and densely populated settlements outside of urban areas***".

The report on the Ministerial Committee on Rural Education makes recommendations on the way forward to address the past imbalances in education for rural people. The following are some of the recommendations:

- Establishing inter-sectoral programmes to eradicate poverty;
- Increasing ICT access in rural areas to enrich learning;
- Strengthening governance and management by clarifying roles and responsibilities in districts and schools;
- Strengthening Professional Development for rural schools;
- Improving curriculum implementation in rural schools; and
- Strengthening the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) by forming partnerships to support rural schools.

DBE has introduced a number of reforms aimed at improving the quality of education in rural schools. These include: Norms and Standards for Funding; Norms and Standards for Infrastructure; National School Nutrition Programme; Learner transport; and Special Posts for schools in disadvantaged area.

Based on the Ministerial recommendations, the DBE has introduced a number of initiatives aimed at benefitting rural schools. These include:

- Establishment of the Rural Education Directorate;
- Support to Multi-grade Schools;
- Rationalisation of Non-viable Schools; and
- Connectivity to Rural Schools.

4. Establishment of the Rural Education Directorate

The newly established Rural Education Directorate is planning the following:

4.1 Inter-provincial Rural Education Committee (IPREC):

The Rural Education (RE) Directorate is in the process of establishing an Inter-provincial Rural Education Committee (IPREC). The main purpose of establishing IPREC is to create a forum for DBE and PEDs, as well as relevant stakeholders to collaborate in identifying, developing and implementing the context-specific and sustainable strategies for rural school improvement. The establishment of IPREC was approved by Senior Management and letters were sent to the Heads of Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) to nominate officials who will represent their respective provinces at the nationally convened IPREC meetings. The Western Cape and the Northern Cape Departments of Education have nominated and forwarded the names of their officials to DBE. The 2015 IPREC meetings are scheduled for 23 July and 16 October, and Heads of PEDs were informed about

these meetings. The Terms of Reference for IPREC were developed and approved by Senior Management and the document is attached (**Appendix A.1**).

4.2 Computers Project for Rural Schools:

The Rural Education Directorate is currently working on a concept document outlining a plan for a Computer Project for Rural Schools. This project is aimed at facilitating the roll-out of computers to rural schools by creating links with the private sector and NGOs to fast track ICT access. The Directorate has collaborated with Directorates for Partnerships and for e-Learning project and has linked with the Gauteng Department of Education to pilot this project in Gauteng rural schools.

4.3 Audit of the Status of Rural Education in the sector:

In order for DBE to be able to plan interventions that are fit for the purpose of improving the quality of education in rural schools, it is crucial to have accurate and up-to-date data. RE Directorate will therefore conduct audits and produce reports on the following:

- Rural school teachers;
- Schools providing scholar transport;
- Rural education structures and stakeholder bodies at national/provincial levels;
- National and provincial programmes currently being implemented to improve the quality of education in rural schools;
- Programmes aimed at teacher development in rural schools; and
- ICT infra-structure and ICT skills for rural school teachers.

4.4 Rural Education Round-table

RE Directorate is in the process of planning for the First Rural Education Round-table. The theme of the Roundtable is 'Placing Rural Education on the Radar of the Basic Education Sector and Government'

The objectives of the RE Round-table is:

- To create an opportunity to discuss with stakeholders the strategic direction of government and the sector in Rural Education;
- To evaluate progress made by government and the sector in supporting Rural Education;
- To make an effort in strengthening intra and inter-sectoral strategic partnerships between government departments, NGOs, Private sector, as well as National and International donors;
- To create a platform to reflect on models that are working for Rural Education;
- To make contributions on the development and implementation of the strategy and the sector plan on Rural Education;
- To reaffirm the role of Monitoring, Evaluation and Research in measuring impact, tracking progress, and informing best practice.

The envisaged outcomes of the RE Roundtable includes:

- The strategic direction of government and the sector has been shared with stakeholders;
- Progress made by government and sector in supporting Rural Education has been evaluated;
- An effort has been made in strengthening intra and inter-sectoral strategic partnership between government departments, NGOs, Private sector, National, and International donors;

- Contributions have been made on the development and implementation of the strategy and the sector plan on Rural Education;
- The role of Monitoring Evaluation and Research has been affirmed in measuring impact, tracking progress, and informing best practice.

4.5 Ministerial Task team on Rural Education

The RE Directorate is in the process of compiling a submission requesting for the approval of the establishment of the Ministerial Task Team to conduct research and make recommendations on improving the quality of education and subsequently learner performance in rural schools.

5. Support to Multi-grade Schools

5.1 Background

Many learners in South Africa access basic education through schools that practise multi-grade teaching. These schools are mostly found in rural areas which are confronted with challenges of poverty, poor infrastructure and limited facilities. Some of these schools are located on private property owned by farmers or churches. According to the Report on the 2014 Annual Survey for Ordinary Schools there are approximately 5 153 public schools with multi-grade classes in the system, which are being supported by the Department of Basic education (DBE).

DBE developed the Multi-grade Sector Plan (**Appendix A.2**) that provides common direction for all parties in order to support multi-grade teaching, learning and assessment in multi-grade schools. It maps out key activities in support of multi-grade schools and will also serve to co-ordinate all deliverables and activities targeting multi-grade schools across the system. The strategy emphasizes the importance of streamlining all these activities and strengthening reporting on

progress on all activities that are rolled out at provincial level. The accompanying table indicates the number of rural schools exist in the system:

Province	Number of Rural Schools	Number of Secondary schools	Total Number of Rural Schools
Eastern Cape	1498	334	1832
Free State	375	105	480
Gauteng	120	35	155
KwaZulu-Natal	2895	1145	4040
Limpopo	2167	1175	3342
Mpumalanga	202	115	317
North West	288	99	387
Northern Cape	140	40	180
Western Cape	507	12	519
TOTAL	8192	3060	11252

Approximately 45.8% of these schools deliver the curriculum to their learners through multi-grade teaching. The accompanying table indicates the number of schools in the system that practice multi-grade teaching:

Province	Primary Schools	Combined Schools	Secondary Schools	Total Number Of Schools
Eastern Cape	1 008	758	45	1 811
Free State	282	30	4	316
Gauteng	33	1	0	34
KwaZulu-Natal	877	176	80	1 133
Limpopo	591	50	35	676
Mpumalanga	245	57	23	325
Northern Cape	138	10	1	139
North West	318	21	37	376
Western Cape	303	39	1	343
TOTALS	3 795	1 142	226	5 153

The need to support the implementation of the CAPS in multi-grade schools was recognised as important if learner performance is to be improved in all multi-grade schools. A number of interventions have already been introduced to do this. The orientation of provincial and district officials to the CAPS, ongoing teacher orientation and the development of support materials for CAPS has focused on multi-grade teaching and learning. The NSLA further provides clear guidance to the system on what needs to be improved if there is to be an impact on learner performance in the nearly 6 000 multi-grade schools. An implementation plan was developed and approved by HEDCOM and CEM. These activities have been mapped out over the next three years and will be rolled out across all provinces and schools.

The progress report on the support that is provided to multi-grade schools is focusing on three initiatives:

5.2 Learn English Audio Project

The Department of Basic Education in collaboration with the British Council are currently piloting the Learn English Audio Project (LEAP) in three provinces namely, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga. The project targets 168 schools, 327 teachers and 24 subject advisors as indicated in the accompanying table:

Province	District	Number of schools	Teachers	Subject advisors
Mpumalanga	Gert Sibande	59	118	5
KwaZulu-Natal	Uthukela	25	50	4
	UMkhanyakude	25	50	4
Eastern Cape	Butterworth	25	50	4
	Mt Frere	25	50	4
	King Williams Town	9	9	3
Total		168	327	24

The LEAP project is aimed at improving the teaching and learning of English First Additional Language in multi-grade schools.

The Goal of the project is to effect change in classroom practice using audio materials in order to improve teaching and learning of English First Additional Language (EFAL) in multi-grade primary schools in South Africa.

The objectives of the project are:

- To support teachers with a reliable means of playing audio content in their English classes;
- To increase the use of relevant audio resources for the development of listening and speaking skills;
- To enable learners to self-access audio resources;
- To enable teachers to manage multi-grade classes effectively; and
- To ascertain any changes in the use of English (listening, speaking, reading and writing) by learners and teachers.

The schools that are piloting the LEAP project are provided with MP3 Life Players whose benefits include the following:

- A change in classroom methodology. By using this technology, learning can become an interactive experience by reducing teacher centred activities and promoting learner centred activities and increasing learner autonomy;
- The provision of a sustainable energy efficient solution to CD players and computers to schools with intermittent or non-existent electricity supplies for listening activities; and
- Reinforcing the teaching and learning of listening and speaking skills through audio content uploaded on the MP3 Life Players.

In order to take the project forward, 30 subject advisors were trained on monitoring and evaluation. During the training session, monitoring and evaluation instruments were developed and these will be used during the monitoring and evaluation of the project.

The trained subject advisors will monitor and evaluate the LEAP in the 159 schools that are piloting the programme in Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal from March 2015 to October 2015.

In April 2015, the project was expanded to more schools in the Eastern Cape. 220 MP3 Life players and resources were distributed to 23 districts and 88 subject advisors were trained on the LEAP programme.

5.3 Multi-grade Toolkit

The Multi-grade Toolkit to support teachers in the delivery and mediation of the curriculum in multi-grade schools was developed and finalized in December 2014.

The purpose of the Multi-grade Toolkit is:

- To give guidance to teachers on how to approach curriculum delivery in multi-grade settings;
- To strengthen curriculum implementation in multi-grade classes through planning and assessment; and
- To improve learner performance in all subjects.

The completed multi-grade toolkit comprises:

- Preface/Preamble;
 - Purpose of the Multi-grade Annual Teaching Plans (MATP)
 - Guide on how to use the MATP and the exemplar lesson plans
 - Guide on how to plan a lesson using the MATP
- Annual Teaching Plans;
- Exemplar lesson plans; and

- Assessment tasks and worksheets.

It is envisaged that 12000 copies of the Multi-grade Toolkit and 1000 copies of the multi-grade teacher training manual will be printed and distributed to all provinces estimated at R6.5 million.

In terms of the implementation of the Multi-grade Toolkit in provinces the update is as follows:

- The Multi-grade Teacher Training Manuals have been developed and have been provided to all provinces in the compact disks so that provinces can be able to print the additional materials that they require for the training of their teachers and subject advisors;
- Provinces developed and submitted plans on the implementation of the Multi-grade Toolkit;
- KwaZulu-Natal trained 270 subject advisors on the Multi-grade Toolkit from 2 - 6 March 2015;
- Mpumalanga trained 252 subject advisors on the Multi-grade Toolkit from 11 - 15 May 2015;
- North West has trained 85 subject advisors on the Multi-grade Toolkit;
- Limpopo trained 33 subject advisors across all their districts on 28 to 29 May 2015.
- Free State have trained Technology, Natural Science, Economic Management and Sciences, Social Sciences, Life Orientation and Creative Arts subject advisors from 9 to 12 June 2015.
- R6.5 million has been requested to print and distribute 12 000 copies of the Multi-grade Toolkit and 1000 copies of the Multi-grade Teacher Training Manuals.

5.4 Training of Teachers in Multi-grade Teaching

The challenge faced by teachers who serve in multi-grade schools is that the majority of them have not been trained on how to deal with multi-grade classes. Higher Education Institutions do not train teachers in multi-grade teaching. In order to ensure that teachers serve in these schools are trained on the requisite skills and knowledge to teach effectively in multi-grade classes, the Department embarked on the training of teachers in multi-grade teaching.

The objectives of the training included amongst others:

- To familiarise teachers with multi-grade teaching methods and empower them to apply those methods;
- To replace a teacher-centred, mono-grade approach with one that meets the multi-grade learning needs of learners viewed as members of a community;
- To arrange and organise instructional resources and the physical environment in order to facilitate children's learning, independence as well as interdependence;
- Planning, developing and implementing instructional strategies and routines that allow for maximum co-operation and self-directed learning; and
- Constructing a suitable time-table for the class to provide an effective teaching and learning programme for multi-grade classes.

The content of the training included the following:

- 1) Introduction: Rationale and Philosophy on multi-grade teaching; summary, historical view, assignments and procedures;
- 2) Classroom organization and management: classification, organization, rules, and discipline, ethos, learning climate and peer tutoring;
- 3) The curriculum: Planning, timetabling, integrating and compacting of the NCS outcomes;

- 4) Focus in the curriculum: Mathematics, Reading and subjecting integration;
- 5) Methodology: Teaching and learning strategies, self-directed learning;
- 6) Assessment, evaluation, recording and reporting; and
- 7) CD on ICT: Tutoring on computer literacy.

To date the following number of teachers and subject advisors has been trained in multi-grade teaching:

Province	2010/11		2011/12		2012/13	
	Teachers	Subject Advisors	Teachers	Subject Advisors	Teachers	Subject Advisors
Eastern Cape	20	3	20	3	45	3
Free State	12	3	12	3	30	3
Gauteng	10	3	10	3	15	3
KwaZulu-Natal	20	3	20	3	45	3
Limpopo	12	3	12	3	40	3
Mpumalanga	10	3	10	3	30	3
North West	10	3	10	3	30	3
Northern Cape	10	3	10	3	30	3
Western Cape	0	0	10	3	30	3
TOTAL	104	24	114	27	295	27

5.5 Training of Subject Advisors

A five-day workshop for subject advisors was held from 22 to 27 February 2015.

5.5.1 Purpose of the Workshop

The purpose of the workshop was:

- a) To train the subject advisors in multi-grade teaching;
- b) To orientate the subject advisors on the multi-grade toolkit that will strengthen the implementation of the curriculum in multi-grade schools;
- c) To prepare for the orientation of teachers in their provinces on the use of the toolkit in multi-grade teaching; and
- d) To produce provincial plans for the implementation of the toolkit and the training of teachers in multi-grade teaching.

5.5.2 Target of the Training

The accompanying tables indicate the number of subject advisors that were trained in all the nine provinces per subject in the General Education Training Band:

PROVINCE	SUBJECTS/ PHASE				
	Mathematics	Languages	Creative Arts	Life Orientation	MGT
Eastern Cape	1	2	2	1	1
Free State	1	2	1	1	1
Gauteng	1	2	1	1	
KwaZulu-Natal	1	2	1	1	1
Limpopo	1	2	2	1	
Mpumalanga	1	2	1	1	1
Northern Cape	1	2	1	1	1
North West	1	2	2	1	1
Western Cape	2	2	2	1	1
TOTAL	10	18	13	9	7

PROVINCE	SUBJECTS/PHASE				
	Social Sciences	Economic Management Sciences	Natural Science and Technology	Foundation Phase	Technology
Eastern Cape	1	1	1	4	1
Free State	2	1	1	3	1
Gauteng	1	1	1	3	1
KwaZulu-Natal	1	1	1	4	1
Limpopo	1	1	1	3	1
Mpumalanga	1	1	2	4	1
Northern Cape	2	1	1	3	1
North West	1	1	2	3	1
Western Cape	1	1	2	3	1
TOTAL	11	9	12	30	9

5.5.3 Resources for the Training

During the training, each subject advisor was provided with a file containing the following:

- The Multi-grade Toolkit for the respective subjects that they are responsible for; and
- Multi-grade Teacher Training Manuals (participants and facilitator's manuals)

5.5.4 Achievements of the Training

- Subject advisors were orientated on the Toolkit; its content and how teachers will use it in delivering the curriculum in their classes;

- Facilitation manuals and presentations were developed that will be used in the training of teachers on how the Toolkit can be used;
- Gaps in the toolkit particularly in Technology and Natural Sciences were closed;
- The subject advisors were also trained in multi-grade teaching. Concepts such as time-tabling, teaching strategies and co-operative learning; classroom management and organisation; and dealing with diversity were dealt with during the training.
- Provinces developed and submitted plans clearly indicating timeframes and activities that will be carried out towards the implementation of the Multi-grade Toolkit and the training of teachers in multi-grade teaching.

5.6 Supply of Trolley Libraries to Multi-grade schools

The table below shows multi-grade schools which were equipped with library trolleys with 800 books, Flat Screen Television, DVD Player and DVDs.

Province	Number of schools	Number of Units
Eastern Cape	18	18
Limpopo	10	10
KwaZulu-Natal	06	06
North West	16	16

5.7 Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Supporting Multi-Grade Schools

The Multi-disciplinary Committee that was established to provide a multi-disciplinary approach to supporting multi-grade schools made progress in these areas:

5.7.1 Physical Planning

(a) Merger and Closure of Small and Non-viable Schools

An Inter-provincial Committee on Rationalisation of Schools was established and the committee had its first meeting during the third quarter of the 2014/15 financial year.

The meeting focused on the following:

- Ratifying the Terms of Reference for the rationalisation of small, non-viable schools;
- Developing a plan of action;
- Reporting on and agreeing on targets per province; and
- Developing a reporting modality.

(b) Infrastructure:

The Directorate has come up with three prototype architectural designs for micro schools (1-25 learners), medium micro schools (26-65 learners) and large micro school (66-125). A number of rural schools, inclusive of multi-grade schools, have been identified for upgrading in all the nine provinces. Though the initiative to upgrade the schools is not funded, assessors will be sent to these schools to assess and evaluate their conditions.

When funding becomes available the schools will be upgraded as per the recommendations of the assessors.

5.7.2 Continuing Professional Teacher Development

The unit has supported the development of Multi-grade Teacher Training Manuals and the training of 100 subject advisors in multi-grade teaching and on the use of the Multi-grade Toolkit that took place from 22 to 27 February 2015.

5.7.3 Education Human Resource Planning

The Directorate appointed a service provider to conduct research aimed at identifying gaps in the current norms and standards for all schools in this first phase. Elements that affect multi-grade schools will also be addressed during the review of these norms and standards.

Phase two will focus on the actual review of the norms and standards. A tender to appoint a service provider for this process was advertised and the bidders have already been interviewed. The successful bidder will therefore work on addressing the gaps that would have been identified during phase one of this process.

5.7.4 National Assessments

The National Assessments Directorate will provide the assessment data and reports that will be used for monitoring improvement in the multi-grade schools.

Guidelines (exemplars) of what is going to be assessed in ANA 2014 have been made available on the DBE website. The provincial multi-grade co-ordinators have provided the guidelines to all multi-grade schools through their district offices that are without access to the internet.

Furthermore, the National Assessments Directorate has undertaken to provide a baseline on a learner performance in 600 identified multi-grade schools. This baseline report will be provided in December 2015 after learners have sat for the September 2015 Annual National Assessments.

5.7.5 Curriculum Innovation

The fifty multi-grade schools that were provided mini libraries, flat screen televisions, and DVD players in North West, Limpopo and Eastern Cape were provided with a

broadcasting solution that will support and promote the teaching and learning mathematics and science in the schools.

5.7.6 The Reconstitution of the Multi-disciplinary Committee

In 2015 the Multi-disciplinary Committee to support multi-grade schools was reconstituted and its scope was broadened to support all rural schools. The committee members now include officials from Curriculum Innovation; Continuing Professional Teacher Development; National Assessments; Mathematics, Science and Technology; Education Human Resource Planning; Physical Planning; and Curriculum Implementation and Monitoring. The committee will meet frequently to discuss the provision of support to rural schools and it will ensure that all strategies that are implemented to support all public schools are also harnessed to support rural schools. Committee members will present quarterly reports on the initiatives that their respective Directorates have towards supporting rural schools.

The first meeting of the Rural Education Multi-disciplinary Committee was convened on 10 June 2015. Issues that were discussed included:

- A Plan for the Rural Education Directorate
- Multi-grade Schooling;
- Merger and Closure of Non-viable Schools; and
- Computer Project for Rural Schools

This committee will be strengthened by requiring Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) to establish multi-disciplinary committees that will ensure that rural schools are provided with the support that they require. Furthermore, PEDs will be required to identify one official per district to liaise with Multi-disciplinary committees on rural education matters.

The role of these committees will be to provide support to rural schools as well as to ensure that all initiatives to support all public schools are also harnessed to benefit rural schools.

6. Rationalisation of Non-viable Schools

The South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996) (the SASA) in section 12A provides for the merger and section 33 for the closure of public schools. The merger and closure of schools should aim to improve the quality of education, to expedite the resourcing of schools, to promote access to schools and to ensure the retention of learners and educators. The rationale aims and processes relating to the closing, merging and rationalization of schools should be coordinated and uniform across the sector.

To this effect, an Interprovincial Committee on school rationalization was established. The committee comprises the Department of Basic Education (Branches: Planning, Information and Assessment, Curriculum Support; District Coordination; Teacher Development and Legal Services) as well as representatives of Provincial Departments of Education.

Further, Draft Guidelines on the Rationalization Process were developed and approved by the Council of Education Ministers (**Appendix A.3**).

The table below shows the annual timeframes for the merger and rationalization process which were also approved by CEM.

Timeframes for the merger and rationalisation process	
Activity	Timeframe
Reasons for closing a public school	Previous school calendar year
Identifying a public school for possible closure	Previous school calendar year
Submit recommendations to the MEC for schools earmarked for closure	Annually on or before the last day of the third term of the previous calendar year
Giving notice to the School Governing Body (SGB) of the school concerned	Before the second term of the school calendar year
Granting the SGB of the concerned school a reasonable opportunity to make representations	10 working days from receiving MEC's notice
Conduct a public hearing	A date not fewer than 20 working days before the end of the third term
Consideration of representations received	Between conclusion of public hearing and decision to close
Decision to close a public school	By end of third term of school calendar year
Implementation of decision to close a public school	Fourth term of school calendar year

Tables below show schools that are gazetted for closure, closed schools, and merged schools in each province as at the end of the 2014 calendar year.

Summary of Schools Gazetted for Closure in each PED	
Eastern Cape	310
Free State	0
Gauteng	11
KwaZulu-Natal	58
Limpopo	0
Mpumalanga	36
Northern Cape	48
Northwest	0
Western Cape	11
Total	474

Summary of Schools Closed in each PED	
Eastern Cape	0
Free State	0
Gauteng	11
KwaZulu-Natal	28
Limpopo	4
Mpumalanga	81
Northern Cape	31
Northwest	81
Western Cape	4
Total	240

Summary of Schools Merged in each PED	
Eastern Cape	4
Free State	0
Gauteng	4
KwaZulu-Natal	56
Limpopo	0
Mpumalanga	81
Northern Cape	31
Northwest	0
Western Cape	2
Total	178

7. Connectivity to Rural Schools

The 2005 Ministerial Committee on Rural Education in 2005 recommended exploration of best practices that would provide learners in rural schools increased educational access through ICT. This includes provision of computers in all rural schools. The department recognises that access to ICT is an urgent requirement for advancing teaching and learning in rural schools and has coordinated a number of projects aimed at promoting connectivity to rural schools.

The table below shows a comparison of rural and urban schools connected.

Province	Total No. of Schools	Schools Connected	Rural Connected Schools	% of Rural Connected Schools	Urban Connected Schools	% of Urban Connected Schools	To be confirmed	% of Schools to be Confirmed
EC	5727	252	1113	44%	1200	48%	208	8%
FS	1327	78	21	3%	731	94%	29	4%
GP	2183	2164	130	6%	2004	93%	30	1%
KZN	5937	1578	650	41%	597	38%	331	21%
LP	3924	1150	752	65%	91	8%	307	27%
MP	1948	879	79	9%	639	73%	161	18%
NC	573	460	192	42%	102	22%	166	36%
NW	1542	1136	26	2%	6	1%	1104	97%
WC	1614	1610	741	46%	853	53%	16	1%
Total	24775	12279	3704	30%	6223	51%	2352	19%

8. Conclusion

The Department of Basic Education has committed to improving the quality of rural education through various interventions to support rural schools. The establishment of the Rural Education Directorate whose purpose is to develop and co-ordinate a multi-disciplinary approach for improving the quality of education, will strive to develop, co-ordinate and support initiatives and programs aimed at supporting rural schools.