

Spending on Education

South Africa spends a bigger share of its gross domestic product on education than any other country in Africa.

-UNICEF

Matriculation and Rankings

Only one in six students gets as far as a university education. A third drop out within a year. Employers often complain that universities are churning out graduates who are largely unemployable.

-The Economist

Officially, 25% of South Africans are unemployed; the real figure is probably nearer 40%. Yet there are more than 800,000 vacancies crying out for suitable applicants in the private sector alone, even as 600,000 university graduates can't tap into the job arena.

-The Economist

Of the 1.1 million children born in Mandela's 1994 year of change, fewer than half made it far enough to take the graduation exams. Of those who did, the percentage that passed was 73.9%.

To pass, they need only to receive scores of 40% on three exams and 30% on three others.

-The LA Times

The World Economic Forum said last year that South Africa ranked 132 among 144 countries in primary school education and 143 in math and science.

-The LA Times

LA Times: <http://articles.latimes.com/2013/jan/04/world/la-fg-south-africa-schools-20130104>

The Economist: <http://www.economist.com/node/21543214>

UNICEF: http://www.unicef.org/southafrica/education_344.html

Quality of Education

Many children experience a broken journey through school, interrupted by irregular attendance, absent teachers, teenage pregnancy and school-related abuse and violence. Around 27 percent of public schools do not have running water, 78 percent are without libraries and 78 percent do not have computers. There is limited provision for preschool and special education.

-UNICEF

"The implication is that we are not building a united society. The student body of every township and rural school is 100% poor and black. These young people do not have a stake in modern, urban, prosperous South Africa."

-The LA Times

The South African education system was ravaged by apartheid. Today its legacy is seen in the mass of impoverished and run-down rural and townships schools that cater to the majority of African children. Opportunities for better education are limited to a number of well-resourced former white state schools. Low exam pass rates, school dropout, violence and sexual abuse in schools as well as teenage pregnancy and HIV infection are tragic consequences of the deep inequalities in school communities.

-UNICEF

