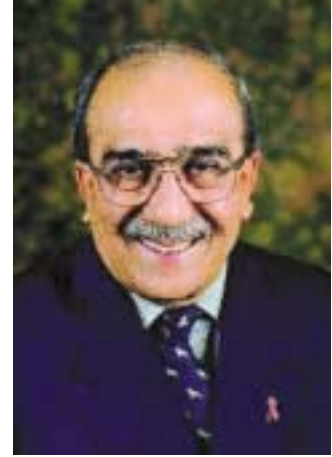


# FOREWORD

President Thabo Mbeki  
Union Buildings  
Pretoria



Dear Mr President

This is my fifth report to the Presidency on the state of education in the provinces. The report focuses on aspects that are of interest to government and the general public in the provision of education. Aspects that are described can be summarized under three broad headings. The first is the preparedness of provincial departments of education and their respective schools to receive learners during the opening of schools in January 2002. The issues that are reported on cover general attendance by learners and educators, the provision of learning support materials, the start of lessons and the general condition of the schools.

The second broad heading is an assessment of the extent of provision of and utilization of financial resources provided by government to support various activities. Financial resources comprise line budgets and budget support, which include conditional grants and donor funding. The report explores the activities and the level of expenditure in the provincial departments of education. The report seeks to demonstrate that there have been improvements in the way money is spent in some of the areas of education delivery. However, there are still areas that require improvement.

The third broad heading is an assessment of the human resource capacity at management level in the provincial departments. In assessing the human resource capacity, the report explores the extent to which critical management positions are filled at provincial head office, regional or district and at school level. This is considered to be important to report on since all implementation depends on the capacity to plan and manage various activities at the different levels. I believe that without the necessary human resource capacity the provision of education might be severely compromised. In this regard the report shows that some of the provinces, particularly the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal have not performed well in this area, particularly with respect to the position of the Provincial Head of Education. I remain concerned at the attitude and pace with which the matter is being addressed.

I am pleased to report on the progress that has been made by the various provinces on the one hand, but sad to say that the report also shows areas of low performance. Even so I am confident to report that purposeful strides have been made in the three years of the second term of government. This would not have been possible without the cooperation of my colleagues, the Members of the Executive Council, as well as the dedication of the officials. Our commitment to the spirit of Tirisano remains very strong.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kader Asmal". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Professor Kader Asmal, MP

Minister of Education

April 2002