



NECT Convention reflects on 10 years of Collaboration to enhance education reform and improvement

The Convention attracted educationists representing various role players.

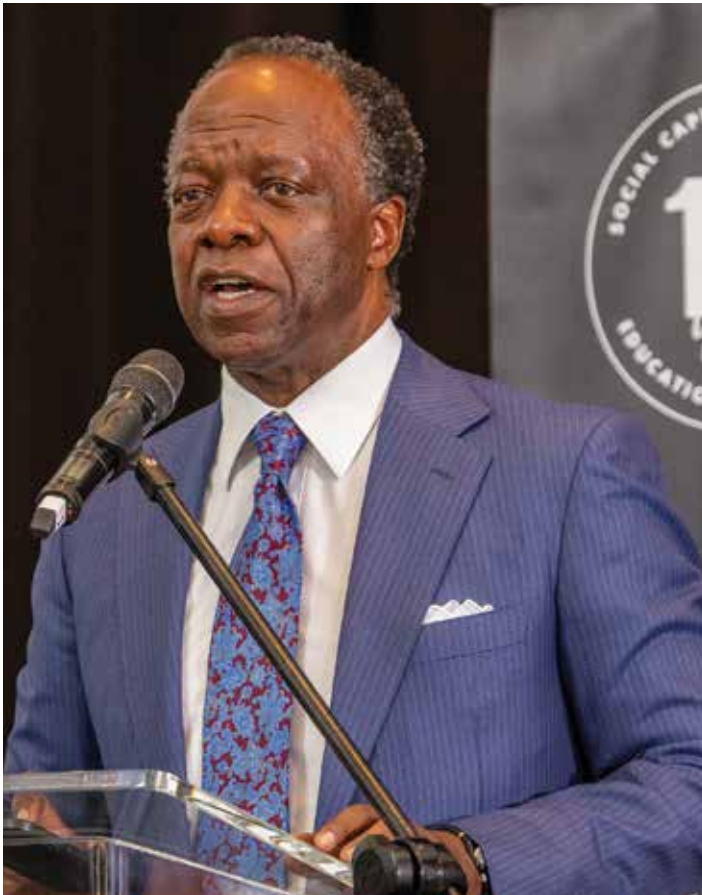
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On the 11th and 12th of September 2023, over 300 stakeholders from across the education sector gathered at the Birchwood Hotel for the National Education Collaboration Trust's 10th Anniversary Convention. The stakeholders representing government officials, the private sector, teacher unions, teachers, academia, and community leaders gathered to engage with over 60 local and international experts on the collaborative education improvement experiences coordinated by the NECT in the past 10 years.

Since its formation the NECT has successfully partnered with over 120 organisations across, government, business, civil society and unions to pool resources and capacity geared towards systemic education improvement.





The chairman of NECT Mr Nxasana delivers the opening address.

Pivotal to this, has been the ongoing support of the Department of Basic Education under the stewardship of Minister Angie Motshekga. This was echoed by the Chairman of the NECT Mr Sizwe Nxasana during his Convention opening address - *"We have been fortunate in the basic education sector that we have had a Minister who is supportive and passionate about pooling resources from various stakeholders to drive education improvement in our country"*.

Minister Motshekga who is a trustee of the NECT Board, reflected on the strength of the collaborative efforts steered by the NECT over the past decade. *"Today stands as a testament to our collective resolve as we reflect on a decade of tangible progress, it is a time to celebrate the synergies formed & to rekindle our collective spirit as we continue to forge paths that enhance educational landscapes and fostering environments that are increasingly inclusive, equitable, & oriented towards excellence"*, the Minister remarked.



Minister Angie Motshekga reflects on the DBE's partnership with the NECT

The CEO of the NECT – Dr Godwin Khosa – presented a reflection on the past ten years of the NECT, where through various interventions, the organisation reached 90% of the schooling system, resourcing and training of 115 000 (25%) teachers and subject advisors from all 75 education districts. Dr Khosa also highlighted the future strategic orientation of the NECT which seeks to deepen the role of collaborations in the sector. The NECT is focusing and urges partners to focus on improving operations as it is the most sustainable way of improving learning outcomes in classrooms.

The 2 – day Convention further reflected and deliberated on numerous topics that were organised under four categories: Districts and Schools, Systemic Improvement Programming, Policy and Partnerships and Collaboration.



The following sets of opportunities, challenges and commitments were arrived at:

Overarching observations

The Convention acknowledged with appreciation the success of the education collaboration and the collaboration model that was established through the NECT, which:

- i. Galvanised the national focus on education improvement, channelled boundless critical energies and social capital to uplift teacher and management knowledge, to complement the DBE's expertise and connect our national policy process to the global developments.
- ii. Contributed significantly to supporting the improvement of basic methodologies, delivering critical teacher development initiatives that have reached around 25% of the teachers in the 10 years and over 60% of the approximately 3600 subject curriculum advisors in the national system.
- iii. Supported system stability, the adoption of new thinking about improvement, complemented delivery capacity and played a critical role in managing the negative effects of the Covid-19 on education in South Africa, to the extent that our schools reopened in a matter of weeks compared to periods extending to two years in some countries.

At the conclusion of the Convention, delegates committed to an action plan for exploring critical issues in the education sector. These include the role of structured learning programmes, better alignment between the DBE and DHET – particularly in relation to the training of future teachers; establishing collaborations with sectors like professional associations. Crucially, as the country moves closer to the NDP 2030 milestone, the Convention resolved to recommend the revision of targets for education to ensure they are more realistic and benchmarked against the context of the covid 19 and looming budgetary constraints.

As the NECT embarks on its second decade, the consensus amongst delegates was that of Minister Motshekga's characterisation of the NECT as 'a story of ten years of systems improvements, scientific interventions, and remarkable improvements', was an appropriate summary of the NECT and should serve as the springboard for its second decade of its existence.



The CEO of the NECT launches book on Collaboration in Development



Inspired by his doctoral dissertation titled *"Modelling Multiple Stakeholder Approach to Education Services Improvement: A Case study of the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT)"*, Dr Godwin Khosa, CEO of the NECT launched the publication at Inanda Sandton on 12 September.

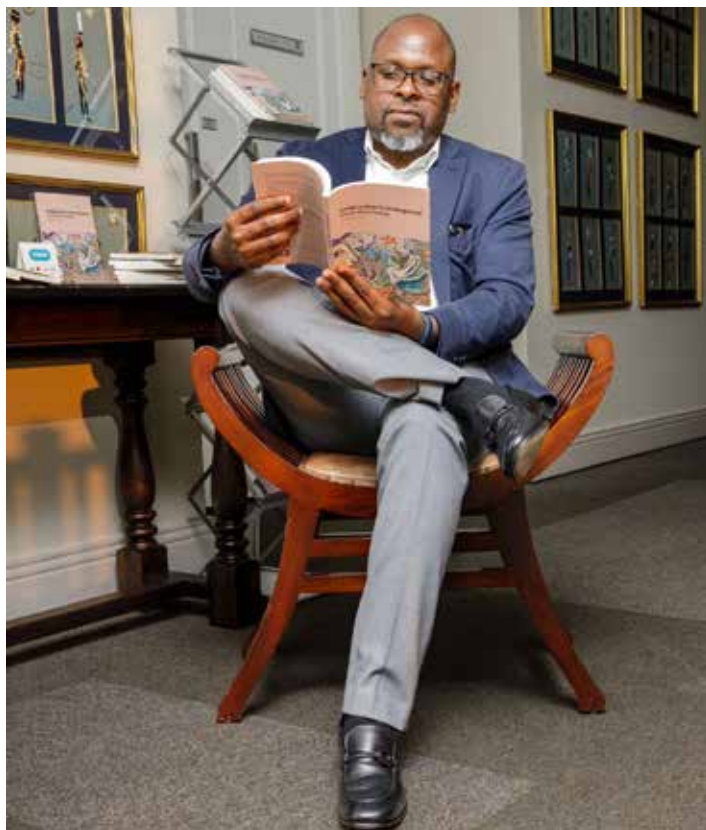
The book titled: *Collaboration in Development - A South African Heritage* provides a synthesis of the model that was used to launch the NECT in 2013– a multistakeholder collaboration model and the role of social capital, national heritage and networking theory in operationalising partnerships with the aim of driving education improvement.

Speaking at the book launch, Mr Sizwe Nxasana, Chairman of the NECT, said, "It is pleasing to see a PhD thesis being translated into a book, that provides practical solutions to address the challenges that we face in our communities; as many PhD thesis sit and

collect dust, while others remain purely for academic purpose."

He highlighted that, "We need to build on this body of work, to ensure that the work being done in academia find its way to society to truly address the social and economic challenges that such body of work seeks to resolve."

In the book, Dr. Khosa explores collaboration at the core of discussions and the moral of South Africa's national strategy approaches. The book identifies what South Africans are known for and whether what they are known for is a result of conscious choices of national artefacts that make up the South African identity. Dr. Khosa questions, whether South Africans simply seek to fit in or pursue reconciliation opportunities anywhere and everywhere in the world, as they have in the past, or they will look for opportunities to trade competitive advantages in the fields of philosophy culture & science.



Dr Khosa contends that, collaborations specifically the multiple stakeholder approach (MSA), is a common feature in South African history, both before and during the democratic era. The MSA was used during the apartheid era by non-governmental organisations as a method for driving the development of the non-white populace who suffered inferior public services and political disenfranchisement.

He further highlights that post-1994, the MSA was evident in national policies, macro-development programmes and plans, and organisations. The multiparty peace negotiations, dubbed the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), can be seen as the MSA in practice, bridging the apartheid and the post-apartheid eras.

“South Africa is under capitalising on its rich ways of doing business – collaboration, and this approach should be promoted to the same extent that the Japanese have entrenched and exported their ‘small incremental improvement’ Kaizen approach,” says Dr. Khosa.

He argues that there are many such under-explored indigenous ways of doing business in Africa, and particularly of development and organisation performance.

What we need is not so much building new capacities as discovering and implementing more strategic and effective utilisation of existing indigenous ones. We need to get African cultures to inform science, and this should be done by documenting these cultures and formalising them.

Collaboration in Development: A South African Heritage offers a tapestry of knowledge resources, deep insights, diverse perspectives, and interesting ideas about the strategies that we deploy as a country and what informs those strategies – and furthermore – some of the strategies that we can deploy around collaboration to drive education reform, healthcare reform and reform across other areas in the public sector ecosystem.



Reflecting on 10 Years of Impact

A STORY OF COLLABORATIONS TO IMPROVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

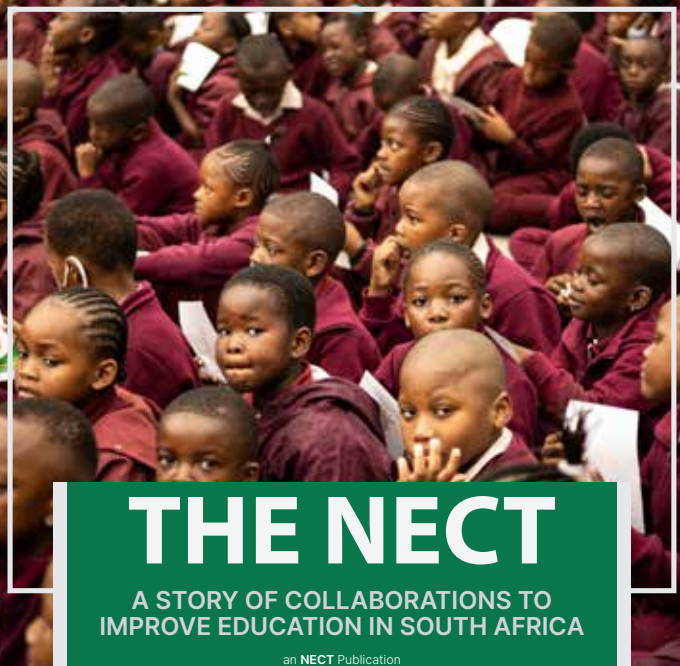
Discover the inspiring journey that began with a dream and a handful of visionaries in 2012. 'The NECT: A Story of Collaborations to Improve Education in South Africa' pulls back the curtain on a decade of daring initiatives and transformative partnerships. When the National Development Plan issued a call to action, a fearless group of patriots answered—uniting Business, Civil Society, Unions, and Government under one ambitious umbrella.

Ten years and countless milestones later, this coffee-table book illuminates the extraordinary impact of the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT). More than just a tale of educational reform, it's a masterclass in the power of collaboration. Learn how the NECT harnessed social capital like a lightning rod for change, sparking a movement that's been nothing short of revolutionary. Immerse yourself in the hard-won successes and invaluable lessons of a decade-long quest to reshape the educational landscape of South Africa.

Join us in celebrating the indomitable spirit of collective action, and be inspired to confront society's greatest challenges through the lens of unity.



THE NECT: A STORY OF COLLABORATIONS TO IMPROVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA



The formation of the NECT 10 years ago compelled the organisation to put on its reflection glasses to take stock of the success, lessons and draw insights on the journey of education improvement.

As part of this exercise we developed an array of publications and an inspiring documentary that narrate the story of collaboration and impact in the education sector.

NECT Story: A story of Collaboration Improvement Education in South Africa

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[To access the story click here](#)

[To watch the documentary click here](#)

FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Embark on a transformative journey through the pages of this extraordinary book, where nearly fifty mini lessons unveil a decade's worth of insights and wisdom cultivated by the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT).

Unlike a series of technical reports, this collection weaves a vibrant tapestry of knowledge, breathing life, fresh perspectives and reimagined ideas to redefine our approach to educational enhancement. Within these pages, you will gain access to the minds of NECT's passionate implementation staff, each contributing their unique and diverse viewpoints to enrich the depth and breadth of this work.

The authors' unwavering dedication to advancing education radiates from the engaging and thought-provoking reflections on their daily pursuits. These mini lessons, written by individuals with varying levels of writing experience, all share a crucial commonality - authenticity. They authentically represent the invaluable lessons learned through firsthand experiences.

While this book may not possess all the answers to the intricate challenges of education improvement, it can serve as a catalyst for ongoing discourse and the collaborative exploration of groundbreaking solutions. Join this intellectual discourse that promises to reshape our understanding of education's transformative potential. Unearth the treasures of insight within and become a part of the movement to drive positive educational change across South Africa.



TEN YEARS OF IMPACT

Our Learning Legacy of Empowerment, Innovation, and Transformation

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Our Learning Legacy of Empowerment, Innovation, and Transformation

Compiled and Edited by:
**DR GODWIN KHOSA &
DR LORRAINE MARNEWECK**

an NECT Publication

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[Click here to read the publication](#)