



# higher education & training

Department:  
Higher Education and Training  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## **ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

WORLD SKILLS SOUTH AFRICA OFFICIAL TEAM SEND-OFF FUNCTION

ST GEORGE HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTRE, CENTURION

24 July 2015

Good Morning,

Distinguished Guests, the World Skills South Africa initiative is one of government's flagship programmes that the Department of Higher Education and Training is privileged to champion. This programme is suitably located within our Department as it directly links to our key objective as stated in the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training. The main emphasis is to build and develop an expanded, effective and integrated post-school system so as to uplift the image of vocational skills and the quality of vocationally skilled individuals.

WorldSkills International was founded in the 1950s as a non-profit organization, with the mission to promote and facilitate – through co-operation and worldwide awareness – the essential contribution that skills and competitive standards make to the achievement of economic success. This global movement promotes vocational, technological and service orientated education and training in more than 72 countries and regions, all working with youth, educators, governments and industry to help prepare the workforce and talent of today for the jobs of the future. From the traditional trades to multi-skilled technology and service sectors, WorldSkills makes a direct positive impact on raising the levels of skills throughout the world.

Integrating the WorldSkills programme into our existing activities therefore offers the department the opportunity to expand and strengthen the post-school system. This it does by promoting the exchange of skills, experience and technological innovations; raising the understanding in government, education and industry to the importance of skills training; and

increasing the awareness of youth and those who influence the youth to opportunities available in skilled professions.

WorldSkills achieves success mainly through the introduction of skills competitions into the post-school education and training system. A culture of skills competitions have proven to be an effective and efficient method through which a country's post school education and training system is strengthened, in that it augments already existing partnership relationships between the private sector, public and private training providers and the youth.

Globally, skills competitions are located almost without exception within the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Systems, and have a direct influence on the continuous improvement of both curriculum and teaching and learning processes in the relevant TVET System.

The competitions are central to bringing career advisory processes alive, and making technical and vocational careers the career of choice among young people as they have an opportunity – through visits to skills competitions – to see, feel, touch and live vocational careers, and not just read about them in books or social media.

Through the adoption of the WorldSkills Programme the Department can practically address the youth unemployment crisis as it shows young youth and their parents, guardians and teachers that taking the responsibility of making informed career choices will result in improving their employability.

The Department is serious about the World Skills South Africa initiative. Following the 2013 official launch and the National Skills Competition in January this year, we went ahead and established the WorldSkills Directorate in April 2015. The work of the Directorate is to grow and roll out the activities of World Skills South Africa to the farthest reaches of all provinces.

The work of the Directorate will be guided by an already-established Interim Steering Committee consisting of representatives from various DHET Branches (VCET, Skills Development), the Department of Basic Education, SETAs, Provincial Artisan Development Committees and TVET Colleges.

I am proud to announce that during the past 2 days the Steering Committee, as well as representatives from TVET Colleges, attended a Capacity Building Event to inform the next round of Provincial Skills Competitions, and to plan towards the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Skills South African National Skills Competition. I am convinced that this will enable us to find more and

more highly motivated and talented young people that will become the skills ambassadors of the future.

World Skills South Africa has the potential to remove the divide between the demand and supply side of skills development, as the skills competition system is being built as an integral part of the public TVET College system. Many employers from various economic sectors are lining up to support WorldSkills South Africa, and welcome government's drive to adopt a global model that supports economic growth and the skilling of youth.

WorldSkills adds value to industries and society by challenging young people to take on vocational careers and to become the best in the skill of their choice, thereby providing a steady stream of competent and committed human resources.

I would like to end my greetings by welcoming the real VIPs at this event, our WorldSkills South Africa team, the committed competitors and their experts. This occasion is only possible because of you. Your dedication, hard work and personal sacrifices are the reason we are able to organise events of this nature. You now have the historical right to "brag" that you are one of the first-ever official World Skills South Africa team members to participate in the global Olympics of Skills. Ladies and gentlemen, I believe our participants deserve a round of applause.

The WorldSkills initiative compliments the work done by the Human Resources Development Council (HRDC) and National Development Plan (NDP). It is therefore appropriate to introduce you to the Chairperson of the South African Human Resources Development Council and Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa, Hon. Cyril Ramaphosa.