

Teacher shortage problem a self-inflicted one, says School-Days CEO

Nearly three weeks after the Minister of Basic Education of South Africa Angie Motshekga confirmed that teacher vacancies in South Africa have skyrocketed to 31,000, CEO of education rewards company School-Days, Paul Esterhuizen, has said the problem is a self-inflicted one.



Source: [Unsplash](#)

“Teachers are the first to suffer the consequences when budgets for basic education are cut. Given the large class sizes in most public schools, we can’t afford to now make these classes even bigger because we don’t have the budget to employ more teachers.

“Given the budget constraints all public schools in South Africa currently face, class sizes are unlikely to be reduced any time soon.

“South Africa allocated around 6.2% of GDP to education in 2022, according to the World Bank, which is more than the four to 6% recommended by the Education 2030 Framework for Action.

“The unfortunate reality is the problems in our education system are not due to a lack of resources but rather the mismanagement of those resources that means we are not getting bang for our educational budget,” he said.

Teacher shortages are, however, not a problem unique to South Africa. Unesco’s Global Report on Teachers reveals that 44 million additional teachers are required globally to achieve universal primary and secondary education by 2030.

Saharan Africa, for example, needs 15 million more teachers as a result of a rapidly expanding school-age population. Higher-income countries, on the other hand, are struggling to retain teachers in the profession.



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Paul Esterhuizen 12 Jan 2024



The report says the global teacher shortage is affecting access to and the relevance of education, leading to overcrowded classrooms diminished teaching quality and limited learning opportunities, especially in underserved communities.

According to Motshekga's response to the Democratic Alliance's (DA) Baxolile Nodada on the number of teacher job openings, KwaZulu-Natal is the province with the highest number of vacancies at 7,044.

The Eastern Cape follows with 6,111 openings, and Limpopo ranks third for the most number of postings with 4,933. The Western Cape and Gauteng tally 4,497 and 3,898 respectively.

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