

*Every child is a National Asset*

# **Going Beyond Policy: Unpacking the implementation imperatives of the new Department of Basic Education National Policy on HIV, STIs & TB**

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Policy, Systems and Interventions  
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# Outline of the presentation

- Background & context
- DBE Policy
- DBE Policy Goals
- DBE essential elements of HIV prevention
- Theme 1: Prevention
- Theme 2: Treatment, Care, Counselling & Support
- Enablers
- Limitations
- Conclusion

# Background & context (1)

- South Africa accounts for 17% of global HIV infections, and is home to the largest ART programme in the world
- HIV and TB constitute a major management challenge for DBE
  - Negative health outcomes for educators, officials & learners
  - Negative effects on learners such as absenteeism, poor academic achievement & increased vulnerability amongst learners due to either being infected or affected by HIV
- Estimated 2000 new HIV infections per week amongst girls and young women
- About 10% of learners enrolled in the education system are orphans

## Background & context (2)

- Globally, recognition of the crucial role of the DBE in the prevention and management of HIV&TB
- The department is guided by key government and departmental seminal documents e.g.
  - National Development Plan
  - National Strategic Plan for HIV, STIs & TB 2017-2022
  - National youth policy 2015-2020
  - DBE Policy on HIV, STIs & TB
  - Outcome 1: quality basic education; and the DBE Action Plan to 2019 (Goal 25)
  - Care and Support for Teaching and Learning Programme
- Programmatic level implementation include
  - HIV & AIDS Life Skills Education Programme
  - Integrated School Health Programme
  - Peer education Programmes
  - Other pro-poor programmes that enable access, retention and support of learners

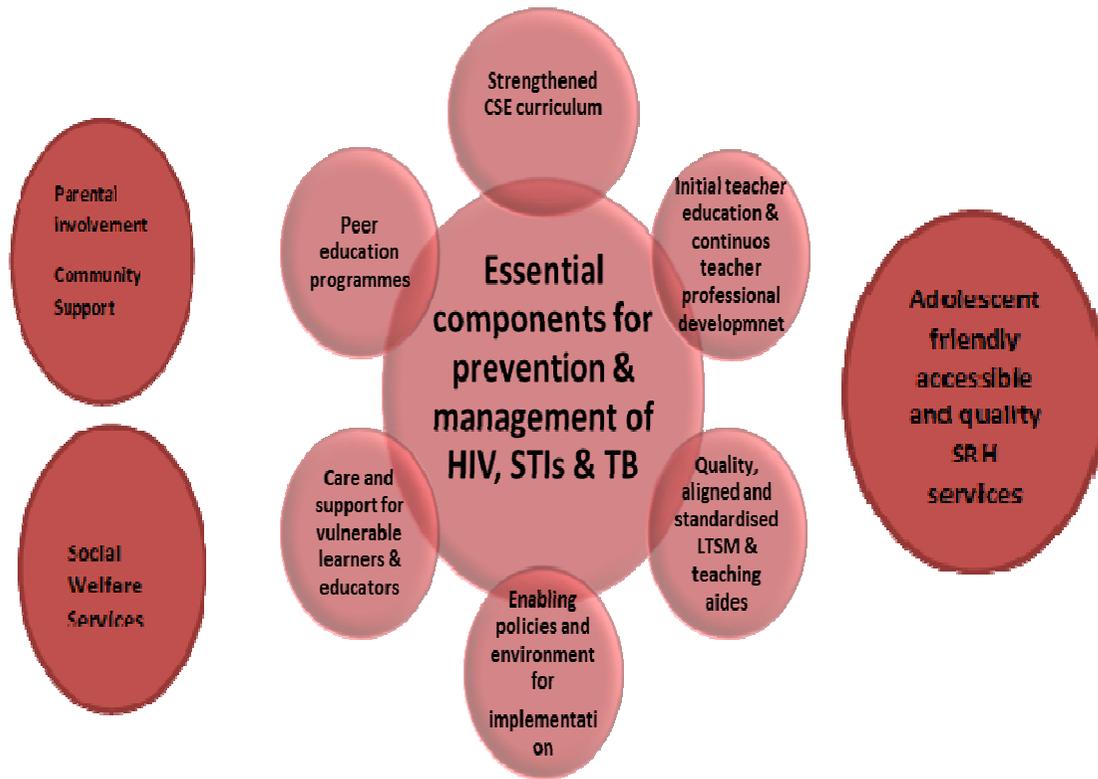
# DBE Policy on HIV, STIs & TB

- The approval of the new DBE National Policy on HIV, STIs and TB in 2017 was a milestone and landmark in the Department's response
  - Development of this policy informed by the lessons learned through the implementation of the HIV and AIDS Life Skills Education Programme since 2000.
  - Embeds CSE in the curriculum across all grades, through the Life Orientation Subject
  - Based on the available best practice models and key lessons on HIV Programming in education (nationally and internationally)
  - Richly enhanced by the wide consultation with all stakeholders and experts at a national and international levels,
  - This policy is a first in addressing HIV as well as TB in an education sector.

# DBE Policy Goals

- Improved **co-ordination and mainstreaming** of the sector's response to HIV and TB, to accelerate implementation of a comprehensive strategy for prevention, treatment, care and support;
- Increased **knowledge, cognitive skills and life skills** in general and on HIV and TB in particular, to inform the life choices of all learners, educators, school support staff and officials to protect them from infection and disease;
- Improved **access to** HIV and TB prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care and support **services** to reduce the incidence and impact of HIV and TB within the sector; and
- Increased **retention** of learners, educators, school support staff and officials **in a safe and protective education environment** to improve system efficiency, quality and output.

# Essential components for prevention & management of HIV, STIs & TB



# Treatment, Care, Counselling & Support

- Theme 2 of the policy
- Information & awareness
- Treatment, care, counselling & support
  - ISHP including Psychosocial Support services
  - Adolescent-friendly SRH health services
- Reasonable accommodation
  - Accommodate reasonable absence for treatment with flexible learning
  - Length of absence due to TB determined by health provider
- Gender issues
  - Vulnerability of young girls & women to HIV
  - School as a protective factor against HIV, early pregnancy
  - Hostel facilities make provision for protection of male & female learners
  - Teach about gender roles, power dynamics (Curriculum and Co-curricular). Focus also on boys
- Referral & strategic partnerships

# Enablers of mainstreaming of implementation (1)

- Strengthened curriculum for Compulsory CSE
- Focus to both the high level strategic aspects of planning and to give sound articulate implementation plans
- Seamless implementation at all levels that will positively impact on children
- Buy-in of parents and communities
- Implementation of programmes in schools complemented by other coordinated community/partner interventions and services
- Addressing issues of GBV, unequal gender and age power relations, alcohol and drug use and multiple concurrent relationships as part of the combination prevention response

# Limitations to successful implementation

- Inadequate educators who have appropriate knowledge and pedagogy on the CSE
- Rotation of educators affect delivery of CSE
- Implementation of CSE and access to SRH education and services through schools characterized by:
  - Contextual attitudes and perceptions
- Lack of evidence on strategies to increase condom use and uptake of SRH services by young people
- Financial and human capacity implications for the Department
  - Commitment of Department strong

# Conclusion

- The DBE by definition hosts the largest cohort of children on daily basis
- Education is a societal issue; participation of all key stakeholders
- After the family/home, schools have a great influence on the development of positive behaviour of children and youth
- **Comparative advantage:** Availability of resources outside of the DBE (other government departments, development partners and NGOs who have SRH services that can be utilised for provision in schools) through a negotiated space.

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*Thank you!*

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