

data
driven
districts

DRIVING IMPACT, ENABLING CHANGE

2025 Provincial intervention impact report | Jan–Nov 2025

*A Data Driven Districts initiative, implemented in partnership with
the Provincial Education Departments of South Africa's Department of Basic Education*



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Foreword



Khodani Makatu
Chief Operating Officer
New Leaders Foundation
(DDD implementing partner)

The 2025 provincial intervention drive marks another significant step forward for the Data Driven Districts (DDD) programme – one that deepened our reach, sharpened our methods and expanded our ambition.

Building on the proof of concept established in 2024, this year we moved beyond demonstrating that data-driven interventions can work, to understanding more precisely how, where, and for whom they work best.

We extended our support into the Intermediate and General Education and Training (GET) phases for the first time, reaching primary school learners across four provinces. We also introduced a learner cohort tracking methodology (two groups of approximately 1 000 learners each) that gave both us and our provincial partners an unprecedented window into individual learner progress across the year.

The results are honest and instructive.

Where conditions were right – strong stakeholder buy-in, early intervention start, consistent data availability – the outcomes were compelling. Where they were not, we learned as much from the gaps as from the gains.

Above all, 2025 reinforced a truth at the heart of the DDD model: systemic change in education is possible when data, people, and partnership work in concert.

The foundation laid this year will directly shape a stronger, more targeted 2026.

We are grateful to our provincial partners, district officials, school leaders, and the dedicated DDD team whose commitment makes this work real.

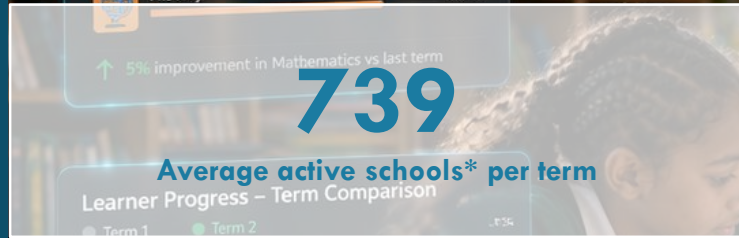
We look forward to sharing our journey with you.

Khodani Makatu

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AT A GLANCE

The 2025 DDD provincial intervention drive was a year-long, multi-province effort using data to drive targeted, measurable support for public school learners across South Africa, expanding for the first time into primary school grades. Free State participated in an onboarding capacity and is excluded from outcome and reach analysis.



28
Districts supported

263 451
Learners reached at peak (Term 3)

179
School officials surveyed



1 84 290
Average learners reached per term

Focus Group – Next Steps

Learner	Area to Support	Intervention	Target Date
Lerato M.	Mathematics	Peer support	18 Jul
Daniel R.	Reading Comprehension	Guided Reading	20 Jul

**DDD rated “highly effective”
by all 11 intervention owners surveyed**

**North West Grade 6 Maths:
+28,9% increase in learners scoring
above 50%**

**Master trainer model embedded into
provincial programmes in Limpopo,
North West and Gauteng**

* Active school: A school on the 2025 intervention masterlist with one or more active DDD Dashboard users in the term.

OVERARCHING GOAL

To partner with Provincial Education Departments on targeted, multi-level learner support interventions throughout 2025 that:

- Demonstrate how DDD Dashboard data guides officials toward effective, evidence-based interventions.
- Link data insights directly to learners who need – and receive – targeted support.
- Expand the intervention drive’s reach into Intermediate and GET phases for the first time.
- Deepen understanding of behavioural shifts in data use among officials.
- Generate measurable improvements in learner performance across Further Education and Training (FET) and GET phases.

OBJECTIVES

1. Department of Basic Education (DBE) mentorship (Eastern Cape & Northern Cape)

Capacitate DBE provincial officials in underperforming districts with data advisory support, enabling them to reduce the number of underperforming schools through improved learner performance.

2. Underperforming schools (Gauteng)

Reduce the number of underperforming schools by embedding targeted profiling practices that improve National Senior Certificate (NSC) pass rates to 85%.

3. District support (KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, North West)

Deepen data-led decision-making at district level through learner and subject profiling, enabling more effective targeted interventions.

4. Intermediate & GET Phase (NEW)

Extend DDD programme impact into the Intermediate and GET phases, improving Grade 6 and 9 performance through profiling and structured support.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

FET outcomes

- NSC pass rate
- Bachelor pass rate
- Learners missing 1 promotion criterion
- Schools meeting underperformance criteria, as per policy

GET outcomes

- Term promotion rate
- Maths & Language of Learning and Teaching pass rate
- % learners at levels 1-3
- Schools meeting primary underperformance criteria

DDD Dashboard usage metrics

- Active schools* and users
- Repeat users
- Weekly data submissions
- Number of education officials trained on the dashboard

Performance vs 2024 Term 4 baseline, by intervention theme



Note: All FET schools were pre-identified as underperforming. The 2024 Term 4 column reflects the prior learner cohort at those same schools. Declines in several provinces reflect cohort complexity and delayed intervention starts. Northern Cape (DBE Mentorship theme) and all GET results show positive year-on-year movement.

FET OUTCOMES NSC & BACHELOR PASS RATES						
Intervention	NSC 2024	NSC 2025	NSC change (percentage points)	Bachelors 2024	Bachelors 2025	Bach. change (percentage points)
DBE mentorship						
Eastern Cape	58,0%	63,9%	+5,9	18,3%	22,0%	+3,7
Northern Cape	63,1%	65,9%	+2,8	19,5%	10,8%	-8,7
Underperforming schools						
Gauteng (matched schools*)	65,8%	65,8%	0,0	24,5%	22,4%	-2,1
District support						
KwaZulu-Natal	57,1%	48,2%	-8,9	18,9%	14,7%	-4,2
Limpopo	59,6%	59,9%	+0,3	17,2%	19,4%	+2,2
North West	62,7%	60,7%	-2,0	21,2%	26,1%	+4,9

*Gauteng matched schools: The same six secondary schools with NSC data in both 2024 and 2025.

GRADE 6 SUBJECT PERFORMANCE: Term 1 2025 (baseline) vs Term 4 2025			
Mathematics:	44,8%	→	49,4% +4,5 percentage points
Home Language:	47,8%	→	54,7% +6,9
English First Additional Language:	36,1%	→	47,1% +10,9

Selected subject performance, submissions and dashboard usage figures are drawn directly from the DDD Dashboard.

GET / INTERMEDIATE TERM PROMOTION RATE			
Intervention & province	Promotion rate 2024	2025	Change
Grade 6 promotion rate			
Eastern Cape	97,5%	97,5%	0
North West	90,9%	97,9%	+7,0
Grade 9 promotion rate (subject Maths pass-rate data preliminary — pending final sign-off)			
Limpopo	90,0%	92,0%	+2,0
Northern Cape	91,0%	92,8%	+1,8

DDD DASHBOARD USAGE METRICS		
739 Average active schools*/term +25% weekly submissions	223 Peak repeat users (Term 3) District support theme	150 Officials trained on profiling of 179 school officials surveyed

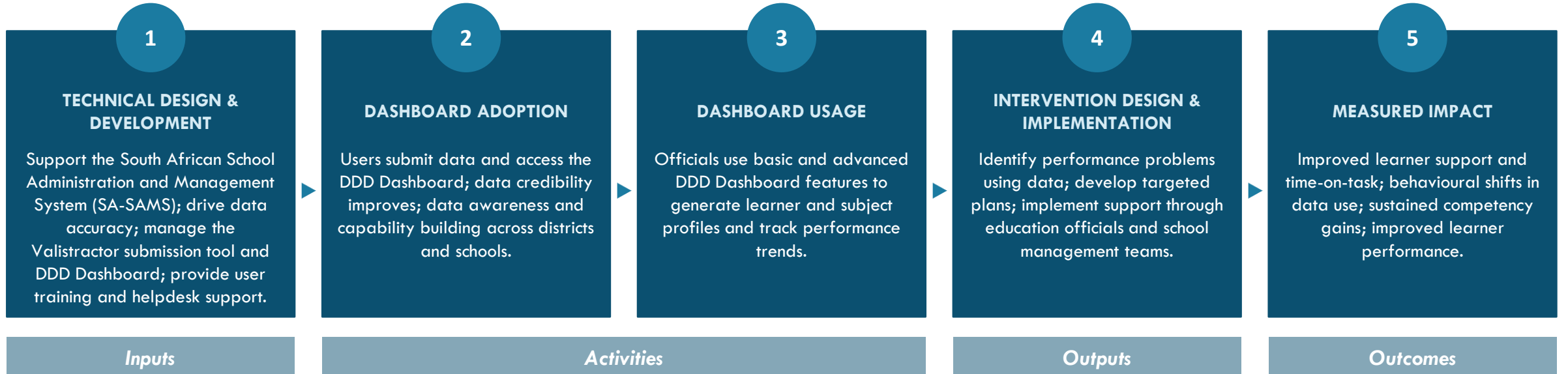
KEY SUBJECT HIGHLIGHTS (Term 4 2024 vs Term 4 2025):			
North West Grade 6 Maths above 50%:	37,7%	→	66,6% +28,9 percentage points
Limpopo Grade 9 Economic and Management Sciences above 40%:	44,9%	→	53,3% +8,4

OVERALL DESIGN

Theory of change & intervention themes



Effective intervention requires more than training. It requires a structured, evidence-based approach that connects data to action at every level of the system. The 2025 intervention drive was anchored in DDD's theory of change and delivered through four targeted intervention themes across six provinces.



Provinces, districts & learners reached in 2025

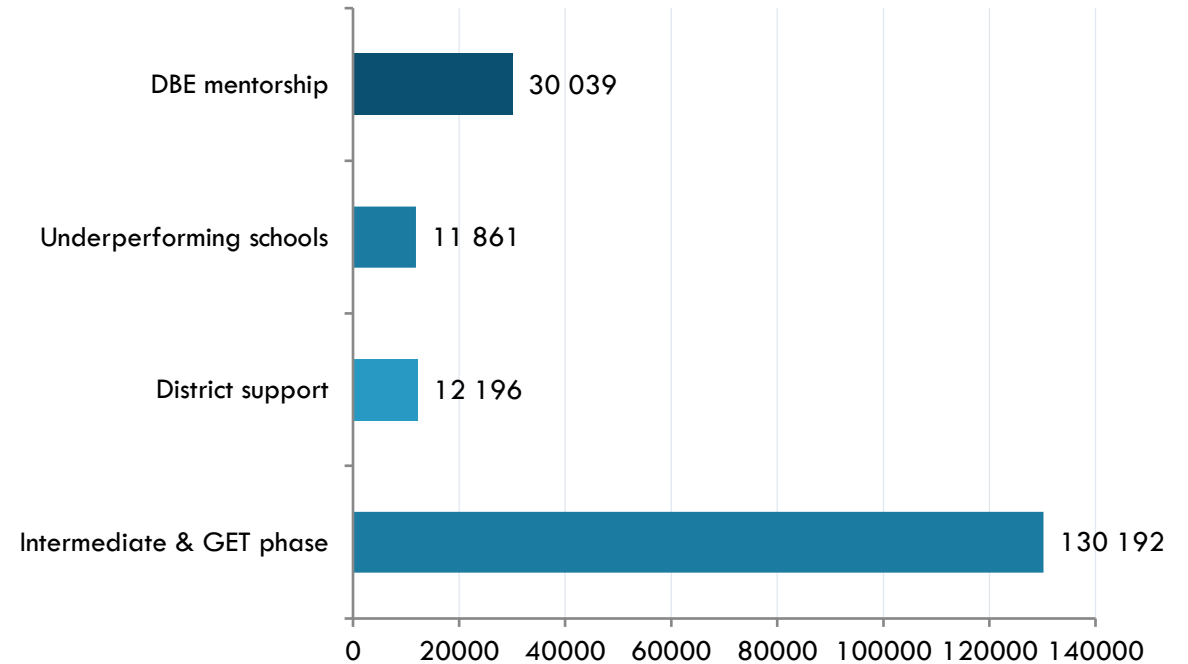


The 2025 intervention drive operated across six provinces simultaneously, supporting schools from Grade 4 through Grade 12. Four distinct intervention themes were active throughout the year, each targeting a different level of the system.

Province	Districts	Schools	Themes
Eastern Cape	2	213	DBE mentorship, GET phase
Northern Cape	2	168	DBE mentorship, GET phase
Gauteng	All	96	Underperforming schools
KwaZulu-Natal	2	64	District support
Limpopo	2	668	District support, GET phase
North West	All 4	210	District support, GET phase

School counts reflect the confirmed 2025 school participants out of the total targeted 1 650. A school is only formally accepted as an intervention school if it has an active user over the intervention period, as reflected in the above table. Free State participated during the province's DDD onboarding period and therefore these schools are excluded from this count.

Average learners reached per term



263 451 Peak learners reached, Term 3 2025

184 290 Average learners reached per term, overall

71% Of total reach from the new GET & Intermediate theme

739 Average active schools* engaging with the DDD Dashboard per term

*Active school: A school on the 2025 intervention masterlist with one or more active DDD Dashboard users in the term.

INTERVENTION 1 | DBE MENTORSHIP

Eastern Cape & Northern Cape



AT A GLANCE

Provinces	Eastern Cape, Northern Cape
Districts	OR Tambo Coastal; Francis Baard and Pixley Ka Seme
Schools	80
Target	Grade 12 learners
Timeline	Eastern Cape: Jan-Oct Northern Cape: Mar-Nov
Focus	NSC pass rate improvement; 30% bachelor passes

30 039
Average learners reached per term

35
Active schools*

226
Peak repeat DDD users
(Northern Cape, Terms 2–3)

22
Highly active user schools
(Northern Cape, Term 3)

Please note that these performance statistics are not derived from the total average reach figures quoted on page 4. Selected subject performance, submissions and dashboard usage figures are drawn directly from the DDD Dashboard.

OUR APPROACH

DDD capacitated provincial curriculum, district and Education Management Information System (EMIS) officials to use DDD Dashboard data systematically in their support of underperforming Grade 12 schools. Advisors worked alongside DBE-assigned mentors to embed data-led planning, monitoring and intervention, using the dashboard's Learner Chart, FET Promotion Profiles and School Achievement reports as core tools.

IMPACT ACHIEVED

- Northern Cape: Exceptional district buy-in. Directors and circuit managers attended all DDD engagements.
- Northern Cape: 17% growth in weekly DDD data submissions vs Term 1 baseline; 22 highly active user schools in Term 3.
- Eastern Cape: 5,2% Grade 12 improvement recorded between Terms 2 and 3 (in-year comparison).
- FET Promotion Profiles report adopted as a core planning tool by district officials in both provinces.

CHALLENGES & LESSONS

Delays in DBE mentor contract renewals slowed the start of the intervention drive in both provinces. On a like-for-like intervention school basis, Term 4 NSC results showed year-on-year improvement in both provinces (Eastern Cape: 63,9% vs 58,0% baseline; Northern Cape: 65,9% vs 63,1% baseline), though both remained below the 85% target, underscoring the complexity of the schools targeted and the need for sustained multi-year support.

PATH FORWARD

Earlier mentor appointment; proactive district categorisation using Grade 11 internal assessment data to identify at-risk cohorts before they reach matric; continued focus on Northern Cape's buy-in model as a template.



AT A GLANCE

Province	Gauteng
Schools	96 (Secondary underperforming schools, as identified by the South African Schools Act)
Target grades	Grade 12
Timeline	Term 1 start; full year
Focus	NSC pass rate; learner profiling; subject improvement

65
Average active schools per term

11 861
Average learners reached per term

EFAL
English First Additional Language was the strongest subject (average 85,6% above 40%)

Maths
Most critical risk – average 43,6% above 40%

Please note that these performance statistics are not derived from the total average reach figures quoted on page 4. Selected subject performance, submissions and dashboard usage figures are drawn directly from the DDD Dashboard.

OUR APPROACH

DDD supported provincial and school officials across all Gauteng districts to profile Grade 12 cohorts using the FET Promotion Profiles report , and Grade 6 using circular D3 to identify at-risk learners, and develop targeted subject improvement plans. The Learner Chart and School Achievement reports were used throughout to track progress and measure the impact of support provided.

IMPACT ACHIEVED

- Learner profiling formally adopted. Learners categorised into green/amber/red performance groups.
- District camps, peer teaching, and enrichment programmes implemented based on DDD profiling data.
- Schools reported up to 50% improvement in individual learner outcomes following profiling-based intervention (school-reported, Term 1 to Term 4 comparison).
- English First Additional Language was the strongest performing subject across Terms 1-3 (average 85,6% of learners above 40%); Mathematics showed a critical Term 2 decline and was the highest-risk subject (average 43,6% above 40%), both measured against the Term 1 baseline.

CHALLENGES & LESSONS

Active school numbers declined across terms (71 in Term 1, 74 in Term 2, 64 in Term 3, 52 in Term 4). Large training cohorts (provincial officials including more school-level officials than agreed) made sessions harder to manage effectively.

PATH FORWARD

Formalise training cohort agreements with provincial departments upfront; strengthen post-training follow-through at district level; embed DDD support into first term district planning cycles.



INTERVENTION 3 | DISTRICT SUPPORT

KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo & North West



AT A GLANCE

Provinces	KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, North West
Districts	7
Schools	436
Target	Grade 12
Timeline	Feb-Nov
Focus	NSC pass rate $\geq 85\%$; 5% improvement on prior cohort

129

Active schools* at peak (Term 4, up from 84 in Term 1, +54%)

12 196

Average Grade 12 learners reached

87,6%

The highest in-year term pass rate was Term 3, Limpopo Grade 12 (vs 85,3% 2024 Term 4 baseline)

1 228

Active DDD users in Limpopo Term 3 – highest across all provinces and terms in 2025

Please note that these performance statistics are not derived from the total average reach figures quoted on page 4.



*Active school: A school on the 2025 intervention masterlist with one or more active DDD Dashboard users in the term.

OUR APPROACH

A holistic district-wide approach built data culture and capability among provincial officials, circuit managers and school management teams. Training was anchored on the FET Promotion Profiles report, with the Learner Chart report used to support profiling and targeted intervention. In Limpopo, EMIS master trainers embedded DDD Dashboard practices directly at school level.

IMPACT ACHIEVED

- Limpopo master trainer model successfully embedded. DDD training integrated into provincial programmes, creating a sustainability anchor.
- FET Promotion Profiles report enthusiastically adopted across all provinces; additional training sessions requested by officials.

CHALLENGES & LESSONS

KwaZulu-Natal: Term 3 data uploaded after the provincial deadline, preventing planned last-push pre-exam activities – a significant lost opportunity. North West showed inconsistent term performance, reflecting the complexity of districts with fluctuating baselines.

PATH FORWARD

KwaZulu-Natal to shift focus from training to embedded support meetings; Limpopo to expand master trainer model to Capricorn North district; North West to deepen school-level engagement beyond district officials. Free State was onboarded onto the DDD Dashboard in 2025 as a new province, with district-owned activities completed despite it being an early-stage year. Province to be fully included in 2026 impact measurement.



INTERVENTION 4 | INTERMEDIATE & GET PHASE – new in 2025

Eastern Cape, Limpopo, North West & Northern Cape



AT A GLANCE

Provinces	Eastern Cape, Limpopo, North West, Northern Cape
Schools	872
Target grades	Grade 6 (primary) & Grade 9 (senior phase)
Timeline	Q1–Q4
Focus	LOLT & Mathematics pass rates; term promotion rates

137

Average active schools* per term – highest of all four themes (of 872 earmarked)

130 193

Average learners reached per term (approximately 71% of total)

+28,9%

North West Grade 6 Maths: learners above 50% (vs 37,7% in 2024 Term 4)

+8,4pp

Limpopo Grade 9 Economic and Management Sciences: learners above 40% (vs. 44,9% in 2024 Term 4)

Please note that these performance statistics are not derived from the total average reach figures quoted on page 4.



OUR APPROACH

For the first time, the 2025 intervention programme extended structured support into the Intermediate and GET phases. Using the DDD Dashboard's intermediate and senior phase promotion criteria tools, officials were trained to profile Grade 6 and Grade 9 learners, identify those at risk of failing promotion requirements, and implement targeted support before cumulative gaps became insurmountable.

IMPACT ACHIEVED

- Profiling tools widely adopted – 75% of 120 responding schools reported implementing learner profiling practices.
- North West Grade 6 showed improvement across all five subjects monitored, compared to 2024 baseline.
- Strong stakeholder appetite: additional training sessions requested across all four provinces
- GET intervention schools showed the highest and most consistent active school numbers of any theme (average 137/term vs 65 for underperforming schools theme).

CHALLENGES & LESSONS

Grade 6 failure rates remained persistently high across Term1-3 in all provinces, with Term 4 improvement driven largely by progression rather than genuine attainment, raising concerns about curriculum coverage and teaching quality in the intermediate phase. Note: Grade 9 Mathematics subject pass-rate data for Limpopo and Northern Cape is preliminary pending final analyst sign-off; figures will be confirmed before the 2026 planning cycle.

PATH FORWARD

Expand GET support to additional districts; develop simplified profiling tools for lower grades; capacitate master trainers on intermediate and senior phase promotion criteria; begin exploring Foundation Phase inclusion.



*Active school: A school on the 2025 intervention masterlist with one or more active DDD Dashboard users in the term.

Tracking 2 006 learners across the year

In 2025, DDD introduced an individual learner tracking methodology – following two groups of approximately 1 000 learners each, across all four terms. This approach moved beyond aggregate pass rates to examine why learners succeed or fail, term by term, using promotion criteria as the diagnostic lens.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Individual learner tracking enables officials to intervene before a learner fails – not after. It shifts the support model from reactive to proactive, and gives district leaders the granular evidence they need to prioritise their limited resources effectively.

WHAT IT TELLS US ABOUT THE SYSTEM

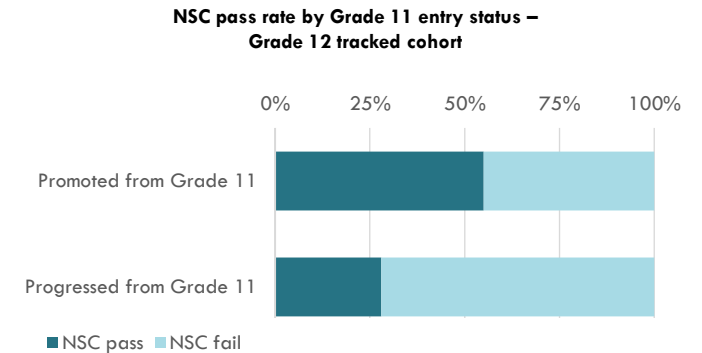
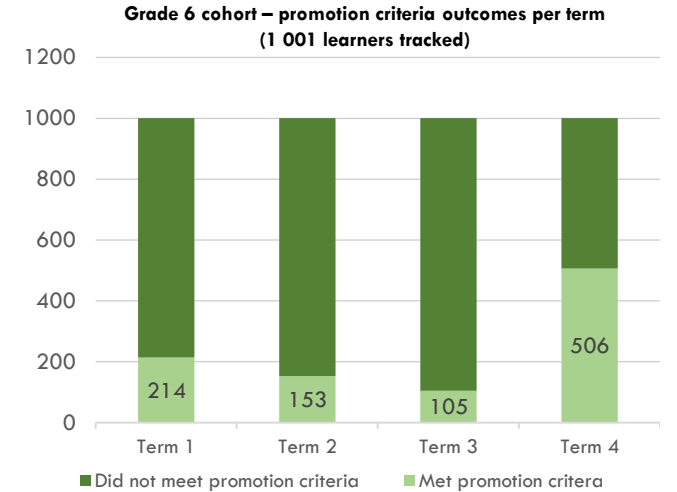
Data from both cohorts points to a deeper quality-of-teaching challenge in the schools targeted – one that data-driven interventions can help address, but that will require sustained, multi-year commitment to resolve.

GRADE 6 COHORT: What the data showed

- Across Terms 1-3, an average of over 800 learners failed to meet promotion requirements each term – a failure rate that increased by ~33% term-on-term.
- Home Language was the strongest performing subject; Mathematics and First Additional Language showed consistently low average pass marks.
- Term 4 showed a dramatic improvement, but driven primarily by progression (automatic advancement), not genuine attainment.
- The data strongly suggests that curriculum coverage, teaching quality and assessment rigour in Grade 6 require urgent system-level attention.

GRADE 12 COHORT: What the data showed

- Each term, the number of learners failing exceeded the number passing, consistently across Terms 1-3.
- The most common reason for failure was missing multiple promotion criteria simultaneously – a pattern that grew more pronounced each term.
- Learners missing a single criterion (eg, the 30%+ requirement) declined across Terms 1-3, suggesting some targeted support was working.
- Of the tracked cohort's final NSC results: 379 passed, but only 5 achieved a bachelor pass, highlighting a significant quality-of-passes challenge.
- Mathematics recorded the lowest average pass mark of any subject at 13,4% across the tracking period.



Based on learners with confirmed NSC outcomes (871 of 1 005 tracked). Learners with unknown Grade 11 entry status excluded.

Province breakdown, prior-year baseline status & subject starting points

Key finding: Approximately 40% of Grade 6 and Grade 12 learners entered the year via progression (automatic advancement) rather than genuine promotion, meaning that both cohorts were already high-risk at the start of 2025.

GRADE 6 COHORT 1 001 Learners tracked		
Province	Learners	Intervention theme
North West	403	GET phase
Limpopo	305	GET phase
Eastern Cape	237	GET phase
Gauteng	56	Underperforming schools
TOTAL	1 001	

GRADE 12 COHORT 1 005 Learners tracked		
Province	Learners	Intervention theme
Gauteng	464	Underperforming schools
Eastern Cape	205	DBE mentorship
Limpopo	128	District support
KwaZulu-Natal	81	District support
Northern Cape	73	DBE mentorship
North West	54	District support
TOTAL	1 005	

Grade 5 (2024) promotion status at entry to Grade 6

Promoted from Grade 5: 447 (44,7% of cohort)

Progressed (auto-advanced): 394 (39,4% of cohort)

Not promoted: 53 (5,3% of cohort)

394 learners entered Grade 6 without meeting Gr5 promotion requirements. The remaining 107 learners (10,7% of the cohort) could not be tracked due to missing promotion data.

Grade 11 (2024) promotion status at entry to Grade 12

Properly promoted from Gr11: 440 (50,5% of cohort) *Calculated as % of known outcome subset of 871*

Progressed (auto-advanced): 350 (40,2% of cohort)

Not promoted: 12 (1,4% of cohort)

Approximately 40% entered Grade 12 without meeting Gr11 promotion requirements

Subject baseline: Average % mark at Term 1 2025 (start of year)

Mathematics: 44,8% → 49,4% by Term 4 **+4,5 percentage points**

Home Language: 47,8% → 54,7% by Term 4 **+6,9**

English First Additional Language: 36,1% → 47,1% by Term 4 **+10,9**

Final 2025 NSC outcomes for tracked cohort

NSC passed: 379 learners (43,5% of cohort with known outcome)

NSC failed: 492 learners (56,5% of cohort with known outcome)

Of the 440 properly promoted learners, 55% passed NSC; of 350 progressed learners, only 28% passed.

Intervention vs control group breakdown: The specific support activity received by each tracked learner's school (and control district assignments) is maintained in the DDD tracking database. A more detailed intervention-vs-control breakdown by school is available from the programme team on request.

DDD programme-wide dashboard impact – all four interventions



Taken together, the 2025 intervention drive reached learners at scale, shifted behaviour among officials, and generated measurable gains in dashboard engagement and learner performance.

6

Provinces participating in 2025 interventions*

28

Districts targeted across all four intervention themes

739

Average active schools** per term

1 650

Schools earmarked for intervention

FET PHASE HIGHLIGHTS

- Limpopo Term 3 Grade 12 pass rate: 87,6% – highest in-year result (vs 85,3% 2024 Term 4 baseline).
- Limpopo: +2,2 percentage point increase in bachelor passes year-on-year.
- Northern Cape’s Pixley Ka Seme district: strong director-level attendance throughout.
- Gauteng: Schools reporting up to 50% improvement in learner outcomes post-profiling (school-reported, Term 1 to Term 4 comparison).

GET & INTERMEDIATE HIGHLIGHTS

- North West Grade 6 Mathematics: +28,9% increase in learners above 50% (37,7% → 66,6%, Term 4 2024 vs Term 4 2025).
- North West Grade 6 Social Sciences: +24,1% increase in learners above 50% (Term 4 2024 vs Term 4 2025).
- Limpopo Grade 9 Economic Management Sciences: +8,4 percentage point increase above 40% (44,9% → 53,3%, Term 4 2024 vs Term 4 2025).
- North West Grade 6: Improvement recorded across all five subjects monitored.

DDD DASHBOARD USAGE

- 1 228 active DDD users in Limpopo in Term 3 – a high across all provinces.
- 25% overall growth in weekly submissions across participating districts (Term 1 2025 to Term 3 2025 peak).
- Repeat users peaked at 223 in Term 3 (district support theme).
- Master trainer model in Limpopo, Gauteng, North West; embedded DDD directly into provincial programmes.

Selected subject performance, submissions and dashboard usage figures are drawn directly from the dashboard, not the M&E dataset.

“DDD is highly effective in providing support to improve learner outcome interventions.”

Intervention owner survey respondent

“I have been able to track the progress of individual learners and offer personalised support, leading to significant improvement.” School principal, Limpopo

“We were able to differentiate our approach in class, and categorise learners according to their strengths and weaknesses.” Educator, Gauteng

*Free State participated in an onboarding capacity in 2025 and is excluded from outcome and reach analysis.

**Active school: A school on the 2025 intervention masterlist with one or more active DDD Dashboard users in the term.

Survey insights – officials & schools



In September 2025, DDD conducted formal surveys with both intervention owners and school-level officials. A total of 179 school officials responded, including principals, deputy principals, department heads and educators, as well as 11 intervention owners.

HOW DDD IS BEING USED

The most valued DDD Dashboard tools across all respondents were the FET Promotion Profiles and the Learner Chart reports – rated as the most useful for planning and implementing support.

Officials reported using the DDD Dashboard primarily to:

- Identify learners at risk of failing promotion requirements.
- Target and prioritise underperforming schools.
- Monitor term-by-term learner progress and subject performance trends.
- Inform subject improvement plans and resource allocation decisions.

In Gauteng, the dashboard was also used to monitor weekly and termly data submissions – building accountability into the intervention process itself.

150 of 179 school officials surveyed attended at least one DDD profiling workshop

WHAT CHANGED IN SCHOOLS

Following profiling training, officials described concrete changes in how they supported learners:

- Learners categorised into performance groups – green, amber, red – based on DDD Dashboard data, and supported accordingly.
- High-risk learners and high performers identified separately, enabling differentiated classroom approaches.
- Enrichment programmes such as district camps, additional classes, and peer teaching groups were organised on the basis of profiling data.

“These interventions contributed to improved learner performance, with schools reporting significant improvements, including up to 50% improvement in learner outcomes.”

“Data from the dashboard supported better monitoring and decision-making, enabling educators to analyse data more easily and identify root causes of poor performance.”

Limpopo had the highest survey participation – 95 respondents – reflecting the depth of engagement in that province

WHAT STILL NEEDS TO IMPROVE

Respondents were candid about ongoing challenges and unmet needs:

Challenges:

- Scheduling conflicts prevented some officials from attending training sessions.
- Large class sizes made profiling strategies difficult to implement consistently.
- The DDD Dashboard login process was described as complex and time-consuming in live training settings.
- Some officials found profiling training insufficiently clear for immediate classroom application.

Further support requested:

- Refresher training and continuous learning as new DDD Dashboard content is introduced.
- Simplified resources for lower grades and Foundation Phase contexts.
- Regular district visits and ongoing monitoring by curriculum specialists.
- Access to learner data from previous schools to enable year-on-year individual tracking.



What we experienced; what we will do differently



CHALLENGES FACED

Mentor contract delays

Late DBE appointment of mentors in Eastern Cape and Northern Cape delayed intervention start, limiting support depth in Term 1.

Data availability

KwaZulu-Natal Term 3 school data uploaded after the provincial deadline, preventing last-push pre-exam activities.

Attendance and continuity

Scheduling conflicts, union strikes, and workload pressures caused some officials to miss key training sessions.

Login complexity

The dashboard login process was consistently cited as a barrier, particularly during live training sessions with large groups.

Cohort size

PEDs regularly included more school-level officials than agreed, making sessions harder to manage effectively.

Compliance vs value

In some provinces, official participation reflected compliance rather than genuine engagement with dashboard potential.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD

“The interventions improved significantly in 2025 and the buy-in by district management teams made everything easy.”

– Northern Cape DDD Provincial Manager

“Interventions work is the core of what we do as the DDD team. The work requires us to deepen our support and impact to schools to improve learner outcomes.”

– Gauteng DDD Provincial Manager

“The biggest hindrance is the late availability of data, which limits support and engagements – particularly in supporting the district.”

– KwaZulu-Natal DDD Provincial Manager

“The experience was foundational – what worked and what did not work – we were not selling the idea anymore.”

– Eastern Cape DDD Provincial Manager

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2026

- **Start earlier:** Intervention sign-offs, school masterlists, and stakeholder agreements must be finalised in January, aligned to district planning cycles.
- **Resolve contract issues proactively:** DBE mentor appointments must be tracked and escalated independently to avoid repeat delays.
- **Scale the master trainer model:** Limpopo and Gauteng have demonstrated its value. Extend this to additional provinces as a sustainability and embedding mechanism.
- **Formalise monitoring and evaluation practices:** Introduce a dedicated resource; track intervention workshops via the DDD Dashboard directly.
- **Simplify the login process:** Conduct pre-training login clinics (online and in-person) to reduce friction during live training sessions.
- **Expand scope deliberately:** Extend GET support to additional districts; explore Foundation Phase inclusion with appropriate methodology.
- **Shift from compliance to value:** Deepen the “why” narrative with officials; use survey data and school-level stories to build genuine ownership.

What the 2025 evidence tells us



DDD DATA USE DRIVES BETTER DECISIONS

Training and support on how to use the DDD Dashboard's Learner Chart, FET Promotion Profiles and School Achievement reports demonstrably shifted how officials planned and implemented support. The link between dashboard engagement and improved intervention quality was consistent across all four themes, and most clearly evidenced in provinces where buy-in was strongest, such as Northern Cape and Limpopo.

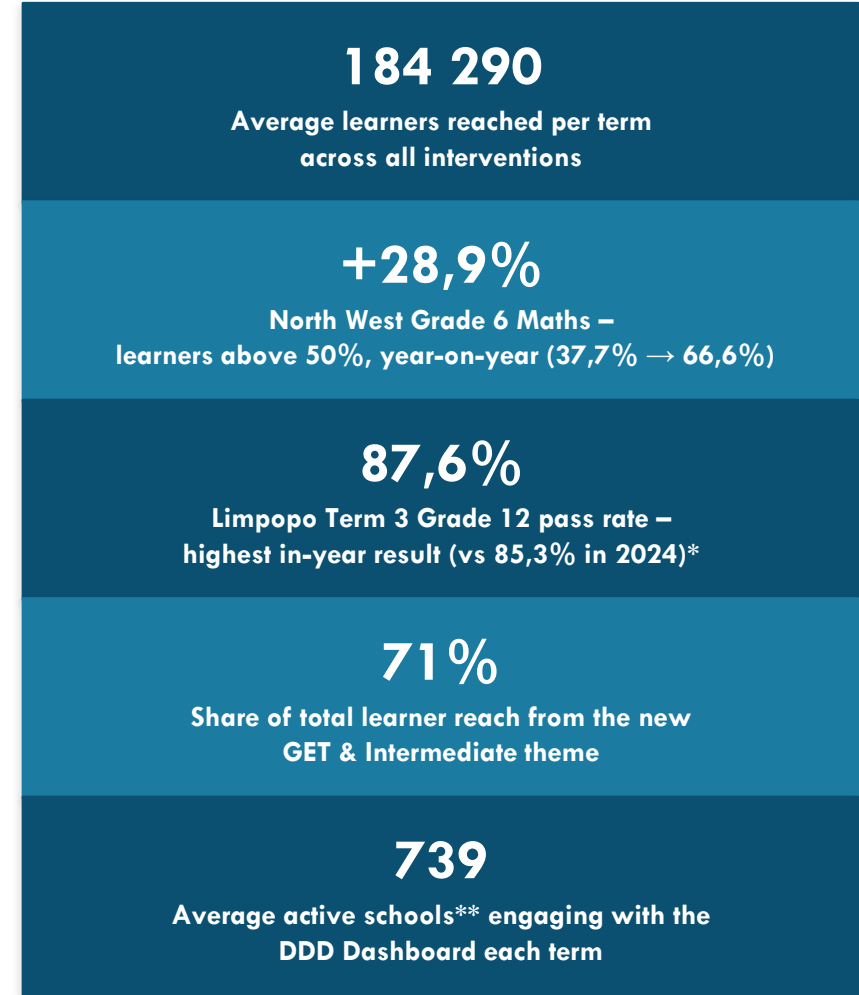
TARGETED INTERVENTIONS REACH LEARNERS WHO NEED IT MOST

The 2025 intervention drive reached an average of 184 290 learners per term – with the new GET and Intermediate Phase alone accounting for 71% of that reach. In every theme, learner profiling enabled a shift from generic support to targeted, needs-based intervention. Schools that implemented profiling consistently reported the most meaningful changes in learner outcomes.

SYSTEMIC IMPACT TAKES TIME – BUT THE EVIDENCE IS BUILDING

Where multi-year engagement exists (as in Northern Cape, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal) the cumulative effect of DDD support is increasingly visible in both usage patterns and performance trends. The 2 006-learner tracking cohort and the control vs treatment analysis both support the conclusion that observed improvements are attributable to DDD intervention activities, not external factors alone. All quantitative comparisons in this report use 2024 Term 4 as the year-on-year baseline, or Term 1 2025 as the within-year baseline, as noted per metric.

A control vs treatment analysis was maintained throughout 2025, comparing performance in targeted districts against selected control districts across all four intervention themes. Results in provinces with the strongest buy-in (Northern Cape, Limpopo) were most clearly differentiated from control district trends. This supports the conclusion that observed improvements are linked to programme activities rather than external factors alone.



*DDD Dashboard data, in-year Term 3 assessment

Way forward: 2026 plans & closing



TERM 1 Jan-Mar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention sign-offs and stakeholder agreements • School masterlist confirmation and categorisation • Launch intervention tracking tool pilot • Interventions kick-off sessions with PED owners • Term 4 2025 performance review and baseline analysis
TERM 2 Apr-Jun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training rollout across all four intervention themes • Coaching, mentoring and district support meetings • Term 1 performance analysis and learner profiling • Master trainer follow-through sessions
TERM 3 Jul-Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-year training and district support meetings • Monitoring and evaluation review and course correction • Launch interventions support survey • Term 2 performance analysis • Last-push planning, subject-specific pre-exam support
TERM 4 Oct-Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last-push activities, online and in-person • Term 3 learner performance analysis • Ongoing coaching and mentoring • Intervention close-out reporting and 2026 planning

The DDD intervention drive has now completed two full years of structured, province-wide implementation.

In 2024, we proved the concept. In 2025, we deepened the reach, expanded the scope and built the evidence base.

The work ahead is both more ambitious and better understood. We know which conditions enable success – early starts, strong district ownership, consistent data, and the kind of sustained, relationship-based engagement that turns compliance into genuine practice.

DDD's role is to ensure that the data exists, that officials know how to use it, and that no learner falls through the gap unnoticed.

That work continues in 2026.

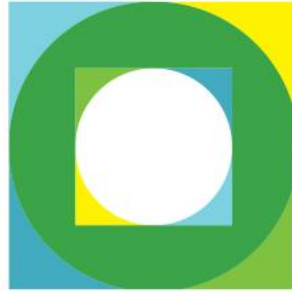
For more information about the intervention initiatives or measurement covered in this report, please contact the New Leaders Foundation team.



CONTACTS

Khodani Makatu: Chief Operating Officer, New Leaders Foundation
khodani@newleaders.co.za

Catherine Nell: Chief Executive Officer, New Leaders Foundation
cathy@newleaders.co.za



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