

**Featured SET policy:**

## Section 9 of the NSTF series – Positioning South Africa in the world (Chapter 7, NDP)

In a series of articles, the NSTF is unpacking the National Development Plan (NDP). The focus is on understanding it from a science, engineering, technology (SET) perspective. The NDP is seen as a blueprint/guiding document for South Africa. The NDP aims to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality by 2030.

- The complete document – ‘[National Development Plan – vision for 2030](#)’
- The executive summary ‘[National Development Plan 2030, Our future – make it work, executive summary](#)’.

<p>NDP chapter: <b>Overview</b></p> <p>This considers the context and background of the NDP. See <a href="#">1 – Understanding the context of the National Development Plan (NDP)</a>. It also sets the stage for understanding what makes a developmental state. See <a href="#">2 – The National Development Plan and the developmental state</a>. There is also a summary of the plan and key targets and actions.</p>	
<p>NDP chapter 1: <b>Key drivers of change</b></p> <p>The synopsis is called <a href="#">3 – Science and technology as drivers of development</a>.</p>	
<p>NDP chapter 2: <b>Demographic trends</b></p> <p>The synopsis is called <a href="#">4 – Demographic trends PLUS the NDPs 5th anniversary</a></p>	
<p>NDP chapter 3: <b>Economy and employment</b></p> <p>The synopsis is called <a href="#">5 – National system of innovation and R&amp;D critical for growing the economy</a></p>	
<p>NDP chapter 4: <b>Economic infrastructure</b></p> <p>The synopsis is called <a href="#">6 – Developing a strong network of economic infrastructure – transport, energy, water resources, and ICT</a></p>	<p>An economy that will create more jobs </p>
<p>NDP chapter 5: <b>Transition to a low carbon economy</b></p>	<p>Transition to a low-carbon economy </p>
<p>NDP chapter 6: <b>Inclusive rural economy</b></p>	<p>An inclusive and integrated rural economy </p>
<p>NDP chapter 7: <b>Positioning South Africa in the world</b></p>	<p>Reversing the spatial effects of apartheid </p>
<p>NDP chapter 8: <b>Human settlements</b></p>	<p>Improving the quality of education, training and innovation </p>
<p>NDP chapter 9: <b>Improving education, innovation and training</b></p>	<p>Quality healthcare for all </p>
<p>NDP chapter 10: <b>Promoting health</b></p>	<p>Social protection </p>
<p>NDP chapter 11: <b>Social protection</b></p>	<p>Building safer communities </p>
<p>NDP chapter 12: <b>Building safer communities</b></p>	<p>Reforming the public service </p>
<p>NDP chapter 13: <b>Building a capable state</b></p>	



## Chapter 7, National Development Plan – Positioning South Africa in the world

**As stated in the National Development Plan (NDP), “the world has become increasingly interconnected”.** This ranges from trade in goods and services to the spreading of information. The interconnectedness is so prevalent that it has been included in national policies, procedures, and structures. It has also meant further standardisation of banking, financial, and legal activities.

**The interconnected world means that countries are increasingly interdependent.** There are many advantages, such as the growth of emerging economies. However, it also means that countries are more exposed to financial, economic and social crises on a global scale.

**There are opportunities for South Africa to maximise regional and international influence,** such as through the BRICS group. (BRICS stands for Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.) The NDP notes that the regional and international positioning should be South Africa-centric. This means growing the economy, reducing poverty, and improving the quality of life of all South Africans. Overall, “South Africa’s international relations are guided by the promotion of wellbeing, development and upliftment of its people, protecting the planet for future generations and ensuring the prosperity of the country, region and Africa.”

**Various kinds of global and regional trade agreements are discussed.** These are time specific to 2011 and a fair amount has changed since then. Examples of change include the USA isolationist position and Brexit. Regardless, there is still a need for developing trade agreements, especially more intra-African trade. Typically trade agreements aim to:

- Promote market integration
- Develop regional infrastructure
- Strengthen stability, predictability and transparency in regional governance

**The NDP notes that there has been a drive towards a united Africa** and this still needs to be investigated. There is also a drive towards regional integration.

**Africa is seen to be “richly endowed with natural resources” that are unevenly distributed.** Some places have underused land and water while others cannot “sustain growing populations and suffer degradation as a result”. The NDP calls for infrastructure development, among other things.

**The NDP emphasises addressing economic water scarcity ie where “human, institutional and financial capital limit access to water to meet human needs”.** This is, again, time relevant. Over a decade later, the state of water supply is affected by far more than economics. The impact of climate change is a stand-out example, particularly the drought in the Western Cape. However, the 2011 NDP did forecast an increase in environmental refugees.

**Of interest to the SET community is the section on ‘Knowledge-sharing’ and the context.** “Regional integration and the provision of public goods across national boundaries can be improved significantly by sharing knowledge and information. This is true in areas such as health, climate, natural resource management, research and development, and innovation”. Economic integration is important when considering both technology diffusion and commercialising innovations. A favourable economic climate facilitates the achievement of these goals, which are essential for Africa’s progress.