

Sona 2020's impact on the learning year ahead

By [Devan Mbonsamy](#)

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The State of the Nation address for the year 2020 most certainly has been a memorable one. Despite the 90-minute delay, South Africans were enlightened by the hope of a positive year ahead with many opportunities.



Devan Mbonsamy, CEO of The ICHAF Training Institute

President Cyril Ramaphosa delivered his fourth State of the Nation address. This set the tone for the growth and development that the year ahead promises. Some of the notable points that definitely stood out included news on hope for South Africans. President Cyril Ramaphosa did indicate that load shedding will continue, however he did announce that private companies will be able to produce their own power.

There was some gold star news for the evening with announcement that nine TVET colleges will be built, as well as a new science university in Ekurhuleni. This is spectacular news for the training and learning front as this provides many more opportunities to those who are in need of further education and training.

There was also splendid news on the technology front with coding and robotics being introduced at grades R to 3 in 200 schools in the country, with a plan to make this possible across the board by the year 2022.

Grant funding

However, the best news that we can take from the address is that the President said that the National Youth Development Agency and the Department of Small Businesses and Development will be providing grant funding and business support to 1000 young entrepreneurs in the next 100 days.

The President added that this is part of a more ambitious plan and programme to help 100,000 young entrepreneurs over the next three years to access business skills, training, funding and market facilitation.



[#Sona20 hits the pain points, but follow-through is vital](#)

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Data price drops

A personal favourite had to be news on free data for South Africans. The President said that the competition authorities were working on a possible solution to force mobile operators to enact "deep cuts" to data prices across pre-paid monthly bundles.

Additional discounts will be targeted to low-income households, a possible free daily allocation of data and free access to educational and other public internet websites were also on the table.

New official language

And finally, we will now have 12 official languages. Following the Department of Basic Education's recognition of South African Sign Language as a home language in 2018, and the recommendation by the Parliamentary Constitutional Review Committee, sign language is set to become the country's 12th official language.

So overall there were some golden eggs that we could take back from the speech. Now we cross our fingers as we wait for the financial budget.

ABOUT DEVAN MOONSAMY

Devan Mbonsamy is the CEO of ICHAF Training Institute. ICHAF offers SETA-approved training in business skills, computer use, and soft skills. Devan specialises in conflict and diversity management, and regularly conducts seminars on these issues for corporates. To book a seminar with Devan or for other training courses, email devan@ichaftraining.co.za or call +27 (0)11 262 2461.

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