

# New Life Orientation book rolled out to schools in Waterberg District



The front page of the book, *Every Step Counts*. Photo supplied

SAICA.

It is this conviction that underpins all SAICA's education initiatives, including its latest project: a Life Orientation (LO) reader for Grade Nine learners and their teachers in an often under-resourced subject, called *The All Stars: Every Step Counts*.

Combining aspects of the LO curriculum with an illustrated narrative featuring four typical Grade 9 learners – Zinzi and her friends – as they deal with various issues at school and in their community, *Every Step Counts* aims to inculcate strong ethical values in young people, while

also teaching them the benefits of financial prudence, career planning, and helping to foster a culture of reading.

"The importance of all learners passing Mathematics, Science and Languages by at least 50% by 2030 – an objective of the NDP – supports our own professional intake requirements, and so the project is one that happily helps to achieve both our own profession's needs and those of the nation," said SAICA CEO Dr Terence Nombembe.

The reader is a collaborative effort between SAICA and several public and private sector partners: auditors EY and PwC, the Financial Services Board (FSB), express courier and logistics specialist SkyNet, and the National Education Collaboration Trust (the NECT).

"The NECT is facilitating the pilot roll-out of *The All Stars: Every Step Counts* to Fresh Start Schools in five provinces and eight school districts, including the Waterberg District. If the pilot proves successful, the team will be able to offer the reader to more schools in more districts," Magome said.

"The project specifically targets Grade Nine learners because this is the year in which they must make subject choices that can influence their career paths. *Every Step Counts* is aligned to the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), and SAICA believes it is an excellent example of how public-private sector collaborations can help to improve education in line with the objectives of the NDP," according to Magome.

The LO teacher's challenge is to guide and inspire learners from diverse backgrounds, many of them from home lives deeply affected by poverty. To provide as much teacher support as possible, *Every Step Counts* includes a document explaining the purpose of the book, the areas of the curriculum it covers, and guidelines on how to teach the content.

Teachers are also given detailed lesson plans for each chapter, along with time breakdowns, learner exercises after each chapter, and topics for discussion. With *Every Step Counts* – as with its other initiatives supporting basic and higher education – SAICA is reminding government that it is seriously committed to proactive partnerships in the interests of transforming the economy.

## Marlene Vermaak

The South African institute of Chartered Accountants helped to develop and distribute a new Life Orientation book to all schools in the Waterberg District.

"In supporting government and the National Development Plan (NDP) in creating quality education, a new Life Orientation reader, providing curriculum support to Grade Nine learners and their teachers on vital issues, *The All Stars: Every Step Counts*, is the latest addition to The South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) proactive engagement in support of government's NDP goals," said spokesperson Kibi Magome

President Jacob Zuma and other members of his cabinet have on numerous occasions called for more private-sector investment in the transformation of basic education.

"Government acknowledges that it cannot achieve one of the objectives of the National Development Plan (NDP) – namely, ensuring that 90% of learners are obtaining matric passes of 50% or higher in Mathematics, Science and Languages by 2030 – on its own, and that only the expertise and financial muscle of big business, working in collaboration with NDP policy, can make this objective feasible," Magome explained.

The biggest obstacle to this collaborative solution is a perception in some sections of the private sector that education is "government's problem", and that private companies have no responsibility in this area.

The South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA), in contrast, has completely the opposite view. The institute's commitment to funding and supporting education is fuelled as much by solid business sense as it is by a moral imperative.

"If South Africa is to develop the stable and growing economy that SAICA members rely on for their livelihoods, improved basic education and a thriving entrepreneurial spirit are essential. Without them, we cannot tackle the twin brakes on development of unacceptably high unemployment rates, and the resultant growing burden of social grants on South Africa's budget," Magome said on behalf of